

# Chess

## ARJUN ASCENDS

Arjun Erigaisi becomes  
the newest member  
of the 2800 club



- From The Shark Tank - Ben Purton watched the English teams in Europe
- Christmas Stockings - Let Sean Marsh be your guide over what to request
- Mr Fischer, Be Seated! - John Henderson on a famous chair and new film

# Chess

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# SPTW Step Up

## Lorin D'Costa was delighted with how his She Plays To Win team coped at the EWCC

The She Plays To Win Lionesses embarked on their second odyssey to the European Women's Club Cup in Vrnjacka Banja, Serbia, after their first attempt in Albania last year. Three of the four players were different to that Albania trip (university and exam preparation of course getting in the way for many of the squad), but noticeable was the average age of the team being around 16 years old. She Plays To Win is committed to giving these opportunities to our young female talents in the UK, and the Club Cup is an excellent event for the girls to play some of Europe's top female players.

She Plays To Win were seeded 16th of the 18 teams, and came 16th with a result of +1 -2 -4. This does not tell the full story though, as three of the four losses were by 2½-1½ against much higher-ranked teams. The women's event was won by Tajfun Ljubljana, with Garuda Ajka in second and Superchess third.

The big success for SPTW was Alannah Ashton making the WCM title at the event. She also became a teenager during the tournament (winning a five-hour game on her birthday), and was, of course, thrilled with this achievement.

Trisha Kanyamarala played well on board 1 and could count herself unlucky not to do even better than her 2255 performance. She started with a bang, with a win over 2465-rated IM Yulia Osmak.

**Y.Osmak-Tr.Kanyamarala**  
Gambit Bonnevoie vs She Plays To Win  
*English Opening*

**1 c4 e5 2 ♘c3 ♗f6 3 ♗f3 ♖c6 4 g3 d5 5 cxd5 ♗xd5**

Trisha also defeated Andreea Navrotescu later in the tournament with the same line.

**6 ♗g2 ♗b6 7 0-0 ♗e7 8 a3 0-0 9 b4 ♗e8 10 d3 ♗f8 11 ♗b2 a5 12 b5 ♗d4 13 ♖c1**



13 ♗xd4 exd4 14 ♗e4 a4 is a structure

Black tends to like. The e2- and b5-pawns are always a future target.

**13...♗g4 14 ♗d2 ♖c8 15 a4 ♗b4 16 ♗e1 ♗d8 17 ♗c4 h6 18 ♗c3 ♗a3 19 ♗a1 ♗e7 20 ♗b3 ♗d5**



**21 ♗d2**

It's understandable that the higher-rated player wants to keep the pieces on the board, but clarifying the situation with 21 ♗xd4 might have been easier when 21...♗xc3 22 ♗xc3 exd4 23 ♗d5 ♗d6 24 ♖c1 ♗d7 25 ♖c4 ♗e5 26 ♖c2 favours White.

**21...♗b4 22 ♗xd4 exd4 23 ♖c1 b6 24 ♗f4 ♗a7 25 ♖b2 ♖e6 26 ♖ac1 f5**

Both players were already getting short of time, and the fireworks are set to begin.

**27 f3?! ♗h5 28 g4? fxg4?**

28...fxe4 29 gxh5 exd3 30 exd3 ♖f7 is good for Black.

**29 fxg4 ♗xg4 30 ♗xc7 ♗d7 31 ♗g3**

Throwing 31 ♗b8 in and misplacing the a7-rook seemed better to me, and only then 31...♗ab7 32 ♗g3.

**31...♗d8 32 ♖c4 h5 33 ♗f2 ♗ad7 34 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 35 ♗xd4 h4!?** 35...♗xd4

36 ♖xd4 ♗c2 37 ♖c3 ♗xe1 38 ♖xe1 ♖a2 was an alternative, regaining the pawn.

**36 ♗f2**

36 ♗xg7 seems risky, but the engine says this is the way for White, and if 36...h3 37 ♗h1 ♖g6 38 ♗e5 ♗xe2+ 39 ♗g3 with rough equality. **36...♖g6 37 ♗f1** 37 ♗h1? fails to the neat 37...h3 38 ♗f1 ♗xd3!.

**37...h3 38 ♗h1 ♖f8**

The players were in a time scramble and the position is very complicated.

**39 ♖e5 ♗h4 40 ♖c1 ♖f7**

The last move before the time control. Amazingly enough this doesn't win, although it ends up doing so, and most other moves were more clinical: 40...♗h8, 40...♖h6 or even 40...♗xe2+! 41 ♗xe2 ♖g4+ 42 ♗f1 ♗xf2 43 ♗xf2 ♖xf2+ 44 ♗xf2 ♗xd3+.

**41 ♖c7 ♗xe2+!**



Trisha Kanyamarala shone on board 1 for SPTW.



**42 ♗xe2?**

Played quickly, but underestimating the black attack. Instead, 42 ♗e1! ♗xf2+ 43 ♗xe2 would have left all results possible, since after 43...♖a2+? 44 ♗d2 White is completely winning, as shown by 44...♖f6 45 ♖c8+ ♖f8 46 ♖xf8+ ♗xf8 47 ♗e4 ♗c5 48 ♗g6.

**42...♖a2+ 43 ♗d1 ♖b3+ 44 ♗d2 ♖xd3+ 45 ♗c1**

Likewise, if 45 ♗e1 ♖e3+ 46 ♗d1 ♗d8+. This check is the key idea, as per the game.

**45...♖f1+ 46 ♗d2 ♗d8+ 47 ♗e3**

Trisha told me after the game she planned this nice mate: 47 ♗d6 ♖xf2+ 48 ♗d1 ♗xd6+ 49 ♖xd6 ♖e1#.

**47...♗xf2+ 48 ♗xf2 ♖e1+ 49 ♗f4 ♖f8+ 0-1**

A fantastic win.

She Plays To Win would like to thank the John Robinson Youth Trust for supporting us, as well as private sponsors who believe in the project to get more girls into chess at all levels. The girls really enjoyed the experience and the team camaraderie such an event brings.

# Twin Georgian Successes in Italy

## Terry Chapman reports from the European Seniors on Italy's Adriatic Coast

The European Seniors Championships took place at Lignano Sabbiadoro, a town on the coast between Venice and Trieste, from 25th October to 2nd November 2024. The number of entrants was similar to the previous event in Acqui Terme last year, with 68 competitors in the 50+, 10 in the women's 50+ and 99 in the 65+.

The over-50's was strikingly weaker than the over-65's, with three GMs including Paul Motwani of Scotland, but only one player rated above 2400, IM Edwin van Haastert of the Netherlands. Why this should be so led to some speculation. Perhaps some strong over-50 players were more likely to have working commitments incompatible with participation, while others for whatever reason did not feel ready for the switch from open events...

The tournament was won by GM Kekelidze of Georgia. Paul Motwani featured throughout, but a last round loss ended his medal chances. Steve Dishman also showed strongly, as last year, but his loss to the eventual winner in round 7 effectively ended his hopes for the title. The women's title went to IM Silvia Alexieva of France.

The over-65's looked set to be an interesting contest with four of the players who finished in last year's five-way tie on 7/9 in action – top seed and the title holder, our own John Nunn, GM Fernandez Garcia of Spain, GM Ftacnik of Slovakia and myself – the gold medal winner from the 2023 World Team Championship GM Rainer Knaak, and GM Zurab Sturua of Georgia, who won the over-50's last year, but has now graduated.

In fact one player dominated, Sturua racing to 6½/7, with convincing wins against three of the GMs, then halved out for the title. Following several tournament victories, Nunn was a little out of sorts this time, but after a tremendous escape against IM Renman in round 8 none the less finished unbeaten, with 6½/9, equal third. Meanwhile despite what seemed at times to amount to an obstinate refusal to win won positions, I also managed an unbeaten 6½/9, equal third and, as last year, fourth on tiebreak.

Among the other British players Edinburgh's Raj Bhopal distinguished himself, losing only one game against a field including 4 FMs, an IM, and a GM, drawing with the legendary Gaprindashvili, and gaining 32 rating points.

This was objectively my worst game of the

tournament (as far as I know I was never clearly worse in any of the others), but boy was it fun!

### T.Chapman-C.Holst European Over-65 Ch., Lignano Sabbiadoro 2024 *Reti Opening*

1 ♖f3 ♜f6 2 c4 e6 3 g3 b6 4 ♙g2 ♙b7  
5 0-0 ♙e7 6 ♜c3 0-0 7 b3 d5 8 e3 dxc4  
9 bxc4 c5 10 ♙b2 ♜c6 11 ♚e2 ♜c8  
12 d3 ♚c7 13 ♜ad1 ♜fd8 14 ♜e1 ♚b8  
15 f4 a6 16 g4 b5 17 g5 ♜d7 18 cxb5  
axb5 19 ♜e4 ♜b4 20 ♜f3??



Realising what I had done as I took my hand off the piece. Why does that happen? Instead, 20 a3 ♜d5 21 f5 is apparently equal, though obviously there's a lot going on.

20...♜xd3

A catastrophe not just for the pawn, but for White's position.

21 ♜h3!?

Deciding to burn all boats and hope. It's all about maximising any practical chances now (21 ♚xd3 ♜e5 22 ♙xe5 ♜xd3 23 ♜xd3 ♚a8! is prospectless). Objectively the game is gone.

21...♜xb2

My beautiful bishop! R.I.P.

22 ♜xd7 ♜xd7 23 ♚h5 ♙xe4

I had not despaired of 23...h6 24 ♜f6+ ♙xf6 (after 24...gxf6?? White mates in two) 25 gxf6 when Black is winning, but can go wrong. For example, 25...♜d1? (after 25...♚d6 26 ♜g3 ♚d1 27 ♜xg7+ ♙f8 28 ♚h4 Stockfish gives 0.00; 25...♙f8 26 ♚h4 gxf6 27 ♚xf6 ♜d1 28 ♜xh6 ♜xe1+ 29 ♙f1 ♙e8 is winning for Black) 26 ♜g3 turns out to be

completely winning for White: 26...♜xe1+ 27 ♙f1 ♙f8 28 ♜xg7 (threatening mate on f7) 28...♚c7 29 ♜g8+ ♙xg8 30 ♚xh6.

24 ♙xe4 ♙d8

24...h6 25 gxh6 g6 26 ♙xg6 ♙h8 wins, but I suppose you can see why Black was wary.

25 ♚xh7+ ♙f8 26 ♜f3 ♜c4 27 ♚h8+ ♙e7 28 ♚xg7



White still has ideas, but Black is winning if he plays the correct defensive moves in the right sequence.

28...♜d1+ 29 ♙f2 ♚a7 30 ♜h8 ♙d6

Or 30...♚xa2+ 31 ♙g3 ♜d6 (31...♜xe3? loses here: 32 ♚f8+ is mate in six).

31 ♜f8

Psychologically I believe it was ♜h8 and ♜f8, introducing new threats, which disturbed my opponent.

31...♚xa2+ 32 ♙g3 ♚a1

32...♜xe3 is now winning.

33 ♚xf7 ♜g1+ And here 33...♜d2 should win.

34 ♙h4 ♜xe3?



But now it's losing.



### 35 ♖e8?

Missing a defensive idea. The absolutely fantastic 35 ♖h5!!, calmly preventing ...♗g5+, turns out to be the move, and Black is helpless against White's attacking ideas.

### 35...♗g4+?

Also missing it. Instead, 35...♗xg5+ 36 fxg5 ♖xe8 37 ♗xe8 ♗g4+ 38 ♖h5 ♖xe4 39 ♗d8+ is a draw by perpetual.

### 36 ♖h5

And *Stockfish* gives me mate in 15. It's true I was beginning to be hopeful.

### 36...♗a2 37 ♗f8+ ♖d7 38 ♗f7+ ♖d6 39 ♗f8+ ♖d7 40 ♖xd8+

Now it's mate in four.

### 40...♖xd8 41 ♖e5+ ♖c8 42 ♗xc5+ 1-0

While as always grateful to the organisers for their efforts, there were some criticisms. For example: too often arbiters themselves turned out to be the source of distracting noise during rounds; the hotel service was inconsistent (closing the coffee bar in the half hour before rounds started was hardly attentive to players' needs); the venue was more than slightly faded; our first impression was of an almost entirely closed holiday resort. However, the food was good, the



The crowd surround Terry Chapman's round 8 game, where he had Black against Spanish GM Ruslan Pogorelov, drawing a complex endgame next door to John Nunn pulling off a great escape.

town became livelier at weekends, and after a couple of days of heavy rain, serene, sunny weather set in. During that we found our way to the splendid sandy beach, to the woodland and waterside walks and bike-rides, to such cafes as were open and to other points of

interest, and for the most part decided it was not such a bad place after all.

After the closing ceremony, thoughts turned immediately to the World Seniors Championship, only two weeks away, in Porto Santo.



# Forthcoming Events

**December 1 Bolton Rapidplay**  
congress.org.uk/congress/467/home

**December 1 Ealing Rapidplay**  
londonfidecongress.com/ealing-rapidplay

**December 1 Livingston Allegro**  
congress.org.uk/congress/479/home

**December 1 Lowestoft Rapidplay**  
suffolkchess.org/category/events

**December 5 Hendon Blitz**  
hendonchessclub.com

**December 7 City of Bangor Winter Rapid**  
ulsterchess.org/events

**December 7 Wimbledon Rapidplay**  
londonfidecongress.com/wimbledon-rapidplay

**December 8 Swinton Rapidplay**  
swintonandworsleychessclub.com/next-swinton-worsley-congress

**December 14-15 Coulsdon Late Autumn Standardplay Congress**  
ccfworld.com/Chess/Adult Competitions/Longplays\_info.htm

**December 14-15 Keith Escott Memorial Congress, Sutton Coldfield**  
congress.org.uk/congress/469/home

**December 14-15 London Junior Championships, Marylebone**  
ljcc.co.uk

**December 14-15 Northwick Park Congress**  
congress.org.uk/congress/462/home

**December 14-15 Southall Congress**  
londonfidecongress.com/southall-congress

**December 27-30 Bristol Open**  
chess4us.uk

**Dec 28 - Jan 5 Hastings International Congress**  
hastingschess.com

**December 28-30 London Christmas Congress, Harrow**  
congress.org.uk/congress/485/home

**December 28 Ulster Blitz Championship, Groomsport**  
ulsterchess.org/events

*And for the Online Connoisseur:*

**Nov 25 - Dec 13 FIDE World Chess Championship, Singapore**  
worldchampionship.fide.com; it's the big one, Ding Liren vs Gukesh!

**Nov 29 - Dec 7 London Chess Classic**  
londonchessclassic.com; Adams, Hong, Jones, Ju, Mamedyarov, Royal, Vidit & Vitiugov.

**December 26-31 World Rapid & Blitz, New York**

*Congress organisers – Don't forget to email editor@chess.co.uk to ensure your event is listed, or if you really want to guarantee a good entry, contact tao@chess.co.uk to discuss having it advertised.*

# Winning by the Book

## Neil Hickman revisits one of Matthew Sadler's most striking, and fastest, wins

While his 13-mover against Shirov (Game 84 in *Memorable Games of British Chess*) was spectacular, Peter Wells later remarked (in *Chess Improvement*, written with Barry Hymer) that being remembered just for one of his opponents forgetting the relevant bit of opening theory "became a source of considerable irritation". I doubt, however, that Matthew Sadler will object to being remembered for this game.

Again, a little context. As well as running out the winner of this Zonal tournament, Illescas was then rated 2620, 26th in the world. The fact that he was able to come back from this catastrophe in round 3 to win the tournament says a lot for him.

### M. Illescas Cordoba-M. Sadler

Linares Zonal 1995

Queen's Gambit Accepted

#### 1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 e4 ♘c6

In principle, people generally avoid blocking the c-pawn with a knight in queenside openings, but as Sadler is about to demonstrate in remarkable fashion, the concrete features of a position may be more important than general principles.

#### 4 ♙e3 ♜f6 5 ♜c3 e5 6 d5 ♘a5

'A knight on the rim is dim' they say; but this one proves to be a bait that Illescas can't resist.

#### 7 ♜f3 ♙d6

7...a6 8 ♘e5 b5 had been played previously, Black giving up the e-pawn in return for a menacing-looking queenside pawn mass. Kamsky-Salov, 5th matchgame, Sanghi Nagar 1995, however, had seen White come out on top.

#### 8 ♖a4+

Safer, according to Mickey Adams in the *Telegraph*, was 8 ♘d2 0-0 9 ♘xc4 ♘xc4 10 ♙xc4, though *Fritz* then reckons Black is better. But that involves a large amount of being wise after the event.

#### 8...♙d7!!



Apparently this was a novelty at the time. It seems that Illescas was expecting 8...c6, and after 9 dxc6 ♘xc6 10 ♙xc4 White has "a clear and comfortable edge" according to Keene in *The Spectator*, though Moiseev-Gusev, Tula 2001, finished in a draw. 10 0-0-0, following the trend of White castling long in the Queen's Gambit (cf. Speelman-Short, Game 70 in *Memorable Games*), may also be good.

#### 9 ♖xa5 a6!

A vicious little move. White suddenly realises that Black threatens ...b6 and his queen has no squares.

#### 10 ♘b1??

Superficially logical. White presumably missed Black's startling 11th move. Byron Jacobs' suggestion of 10 ♘a4 aims to return material to achieve a playable position after 10...♖e7 (if Black replies 10...b6, White has 11 ♘xb6!). Keene suggested then 10...0-0 11 ♘d2 ♜g4 12 ♙c5 with an unclear position. Another try is 10 b4, but then there is 10...b6 11 ♖a3 a5 12 ♖b2 axb4 13 ♘d1 b5, with what Adams describes as a rolling maul of pawns on the queenside. No less than Karpov tried 10 ♙xc4 against Lautier (Amber Rapid, 1996), and after 10...b6 11 ♖xa6 had rook, bishop and pawn for the queen, and managed to draw.

#### 10...♘xe4

Coolly depriving White of two possible retreats for the queen, on c3 and d2. But...

#### 11 ♘d1



...surely this is sufficient? White is still a piece to the good.

#### 11...c3!! 0-1

There's hardly any escape from the threatened ...b6. Really the only way for White to continue seems to be 12 b4 b6 13 ♖a3 a5 14 ♖c1 axb4 when although there doesn't seem to be an immediate knockout, Black has three pawns for his piece, the "rolling maul" is in full swing, White has



The QGA was a key part of Matthew Sadler's repertoire, but rarely led to such quick wins.

lost the right to castle and two of his queenside pieces are buried alive.

With eight rounds still to play, Illescas took the startling, courageous and ultimately justified decision to resign rather than tiring himself out with a long defence that was probably doomed to fail.

Illescas was the winner of this tournament, finishing with 8/11 having had 1½/3 after this game. This was the only game he lost; and he was able to look forward to taking part in the 1996 Interzonal in Yerevan.

Unfortunately, the chess world was still in turmoil following the decision of Kasparov and Short to contest a version of the world championship outside the jurisdiction of FIDE, and FIDE itself was in turmoil under the successive inglorious Presidencies of Campomanes and Ilyumzhimov. The 1996 Interzonal never took place, and Illescas, who attained his peak rating around this time, was never to get any nearer to the world championship.

*Ed. – Neil's enjoyable Memorable Games of British Chess is available from Chess & Bridge, retailing at £17.99. You may also be interested in his Norfolk colleague David LeMoir's recent Down-Home Chess: The Best of En Passant Volume 1, which is available for £10.00.*





# 60 Seconds with... Kyla Zhao

Author of *May the Best Player Win*



**Born:** 21st May 1998, Singapore.

**Place of residence:** California, USA.

**Education and Occupation:** Graduated from Stanford University in 2021 – M.A. in Communications, B.A. in Psychology. I'm now a Silicon Valley techie by day, an author by night.

**Enjoyable?** More often than not.

**And home life?** My family is still in Singapore while I reside in the US. I wish I had a dog.

**But sometimes good to escape to:** I love Asian cities like Tokyo and Seoul.

**Sports played or followed:** I used to play football and still follow it now. I'm a Real Madrid fan – just like Magnus Carlsen.

**A favourite novel?** *Charlotte's Web*. It's the first book I read that didn't have an entirely happy ending, and that made a deep impression on 10-year-old me.

**Piece of music?** *Too Sweet* by Hozier.

**Film or TV Series?** I'm watching the TV series *Mr. and Mrs. Smith* right now. It's a lot more enjoyable if you don't compare it to the movie starring Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie. Despite sharing the same title, the two have significantly different premises.

**What's the best thing about playing**

**chess?** Discovering a nice combination.

**And the worst?** Losing without knowing why.

**Favourite opening?** The Ruy Lopez. It's the first opening I learned and I'm a creature of habit.

**Can chess make one happy?** Of course!

**A tip please for the club player:** Play against people who are stronger than you.

**A tournament memory?** At my first-ever tournament, I lost almost all my games on time. I forgot I had to press the clock after making a move, and my opponents were quite happy to let my clock run.

**Favourite game of all time?** Game 6 of the Carlsen-Nepomniachtchi World Championship match. Vintage Carlsen through and through, the GOAT of chess.

## M.Carlsen-I.Nepomniachtchi World Ch. (Game 6), Dubai 2021



41 ♖ac2 ♕f8 42 ♜c5 ♜b5 43 ♜d3 a3  
44 ♜f4 ♜a5 45 ♖a2 ♕b4 46 ♜d3 ♜h6  
47 ♜d1 ♜a4 48 ♜da1 ♕d6 49 ♜g1 ♜b3  
50 ♜e2 ♜d3 51 ♜d4 ♜h7 52 ♜h2 ♜e4  
53 ♖xa3 ♜xh4+ 54 ♜g1 ♜e4 55 ♖a4  
♕e5 56 ♜e2 ♜c2 57 ♖1a2 ♜b3 58 ♜g2  
♜d5+ 59 f3 ♜d1 60 f4 ♕c7 61 ♜f2  
♕b6 62 ♖a1 ♜b3 63 ♖e4 ♜g7 64 ♖e8  
f5 65 ♖aa8 ♜b4 66 ♖ac8 ♕a5 67 ♖c1  
♕b6 68 ♖e5 ♜b3 69 ♖e8 ♜d5 70 ♖cc8  
♜h1 71 ♖c1 ♜d5 72 ♖b1 ♕a7 73 ♖e7 ♕c5  
74 ♖e5 ♜d3 75 ♖b7 ♜c2 76 ♖b5 ♕a7  
77 ♖a5 ♕b6 78 ♖ab5 ♕a7 79 ♖xf5 ♜d3  
80 ♖xf7+ ♜xf7 81 ♖b7+ ♜g6 82 ♖xa7  
♜d5 83 ♖a6+ ♜h7 84 ♖a1 ♜g6 85 ♜d4  
♜b7 86 ♖a2 ♜h1 87 ♖a6+ ♜f7 88 ♜f3 ♜b1  
89 ♜d6 ♜g7 90 ♜d5 ♜a2+ 91 ♜d2 ♜b1  
92 ♖e2 ♜b6 93 ♖c2 ♜b1 94 ♜d4 ♜h1  
95 ♖c7+ ♜f6 96 ♖c6+ ♜f7 97 ♜f3 ♜b1  
98 ♜g5+ ♜g7 99 ♜e6+ ♜f7 100 ♜d4 ♜h1



101 ♖c7+ ♜f6 102 ♜f3 ♜b1 103 ♜d7  
♜b2+ 104 ♜d2 ♜b1 105 ♜g1 ♜b4 106  
♜d1 ♜b3 107 ♜d6+ ♜g7 108 ♜d4 ♜b2+  
109 ♜e2 ♜b1 110 e4 ♜h1 111 ♜d7+  
♜g8 112 ♜d4 ♜h2+ 113 ♕e3 h4 114 gxf4  
♜h3+ 115 ♕d2 ♜xh4 116 ♜d3 ♜f8  
117 ♖f3 ♜d8+ 118 ♕e3 ♜a5 119 ♜f2  
♜a7+ 120 ♖e3 ♜d7 121 ♜g3 ♜d2+  
122 ♜f3 ♜d1+ 123 ♖e2 ♜b3+ 124 ♜g2  
♜b7 125 ♜d2 ♜b3 126 ♜d5 ♕e7 127  
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130 ♜h3 ♖e6 131 ♕h4 ♜h6+ 132 ♜h5  
♜h7 133 e6 ♜g6 134 ♖f7 ♕d8 135 f5  
♜g1 136 ♜g7 1-0

**Is FIDE doing a good job?** The chess scene feels more stable now than in the past. We're also in the middle of a chess boom, so there's a lot of exciting potential.

**Or your National Federation?** Singapore is hosting the world championship this year and has secured Google as the match's corporate sponsor – a massive coup. The federation is also led by people who are genuinely passionate about growing the game.

**Any advice for either?** With the rise of AI and variants like Chess960 becoming more popular, there are many directions the chess world can go in. It would be interesting to see the chess leadership's long-term approach.

**What's your chess novel about?** Like a family-friendly version of *The Queen's Gambit*, this book follows a chess prodigy who must confront gender stereotypes and the pressure to succeed – all while struggling with her performance and how she feels about the game.

**Based on any real-life chess player?** None in particular, but stereotypes and performance anxiety are universal challenges that a lot of chess players (and non-players) can relate to.

*Ed. – May the Best Player Win is out in the US, online and will be released in Europe in 2025.*

# Christmas Stocking Fillers



**Uncertain what you want for Christmas?  
Let Sean Marsh be your guide!**

Yes, it is that time of the year again. Time to leave your copy of *CHESS* open, 'non-suspiciously', at these pages in the hope that the family will take the hint and place a big order at Chess & Bridge. If the hint is not taken, then just order one or more of the books for yourself, safe in the knowledge that there are much worse things you could be doing.

The following recommendations include books on openings, middlegames, endings, fabulous games and even a novel with a murder. There is also, of course, a new book covering the best games of Indian superstar Gukesh Dommaraju, who stunned the chess world in 2024 with his terrific results and surprise assault on the ultimate chess title.



## My First Chess Opening Repertoire

Christof Sielecki, 264 pages  
Chessable

RRP £18.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.05**

Christof Sielecki's courses and books for Chessable have all been well received, with his *Keep it Simple* repertoire books proving to be particularly popular. This time he has opted to keep it even simpler in this work subtitled 'A Complete and Easy-to-Learn Guide for Beginners and Improvers'. He supplies a whistle-stop tour of a full repertoire – for both colours – offering a very basic spin though his current recommendations. 1 e4 for White is

matched by the equally combative Sicilian Four Knights and the Tarrasch Defence for Black.

This book does exactly what it says on the tin: "What do you need to master the opening phase of the game successfully? It all depends on your playing level and your experience. If you have only recently started playing chess or are looking for a compact start in the world of openings, this book is for you. It covers a repertoire for both colours, focusing on the most essential information."

It should also prove useful for more experienced players who are thinking of making a major switch from an old, established repertoire to something new, although anyone going down that particular route would definitely need to add a few volumes of 'further reading' rather swiftly. Just to give an idea of where the analysis typically ends, here is the last position in the coverage of the Caro-Kann Defence, against which the Panov-Botvinnik Attack is the recommendation.



There are then several paragraphs covering the basic plans which can be adopted from this point onwards.

Summing up, if you are a club player needing to know the very basics of an opening repertoire, then this is the book for you.

## Lessons on Uncompromising Play

David Navara, 352 pages

Thinkers Publishing

RRP £37.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £34.15**

David Navara is an excellent writer who always has something very interesting to say. Uncompromising play is, of course, the best cure for 'draw death', although it does carry an extra element of risk too. Navara has aimed this book, which is subtitled 'Mastering Strategies for Winning Concepts', "at strong club players who want to improve further". He explains his own personal approach to playing chess via several key points:

i. "I am a fighting player who likes to play and therefore only rarely agrees to a draw in unclear/undetermined positions."

ii. "I have my own chess philosophy which helps me to play daring, uncompromising chess while being a rather friendly and timid person."

iii. "In most games, you first need to gain the initiative, then transform it into a positional advantage or into an attack and eventually win the game."

iv. "Or you might find yourself in a bad position in an important game and need to do the best to save it."

In short, this book, a showcase of Navara's own most interesting games, aims to inspire a much more combative and creative approach to chess battles, with very little scope for compromise or compliance. When playing against a player of a similar style, the sparks certainly fly.

## G.Jones-D.Navara

Charity Cup (online rapid) 2022



What to make of this position? It looks very bad for Black and Gawain's next move, **26 ♖f7xh7**, appears to be a winning blow. However, being armed with a thoroughly uncompromising attitude allows a player to be ever-alert in good and bad positions. Navara found the almost unbelievable move **26...0-0!!**, proving 26 ♖xh7 was actually a blunder and completely turning the tables (0-1, 30).

This intriguing book is full of such sparkling play, with never a dull moment.



Navara certainly plays interesting chess and his annotations are excellent too. This is a book which will help readers to change their way of thinking, in a very positive way. As such, it comes highly recommended.

### The 100 Tactical Patterns You Must Know

Frank Erwich, 352 pages

New in Chess

RRP £22.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £20.65**

The catchily-titled series of books featuring a number of things 'you must know' continues and this nomenclature seems to have replaced the formerly mandatory 'secrets of...' titles, adopted by most publishers for a considerable period of time. Very few people can keep secrets, so it is better to be up front about the fact the knowledge is being shared openly, rather than whispered in dark corridors behind semi-covered mouths.

The book is designed to help readers "Learn to Recognize Winning Chess Moves". According to the blurb, the tactics covered here occur most frequently, are easy to learn, and explain ideas that are useful in practical games. The author offers "a unique perspective. While presenting a diverse array of tactical themes, I focus not only on general positional features like undefended pieces or an exposed king, but also on the specific arrangement of chess pieces, a crucial factor in executing successful tactics. Focusing on typical piece configurations allows you to evaluate and decide more quickly and efficiently in certain positions."

It is interesting to see top players fall for standard tactics; it gives us all hope. Here is former title challenger, Boris Gelfand, falling for two tricks one would be more accustomed to seeing down at the local ches club.

### D.Andreikin-B.Gelfand

World Blitz Championship, Astana 2012



6...♙g4?? allows not one, but two excellent replies, namely: 7 ♜xf7+ ♖xf7 8 ♜e5+ ♜e8 9 ♜xg4, as played in the game, and 7 ♜e5 ♜e6 8 ♜xe6 fxe6 when White hasn't won a pawn, but has a clear advantage nonetheless. The attraction of the second line is that some players will reply with 7...♙h5?? which seems to deal with both problems, but allows 8 ♖xh5! with a winning advantage. In

blitz chess, of course, anything can happen, as evidenced by the fact that Gelfand still went to win the game (0-1, 48). The next example, however, was played at the very highest level, with plenty of thinking time available and the ultimate title at stake. Perhaps the additional pressure is to blame when such errors occur.

### V.Anand-B.Gelfand

World Championship (Game 8)

Moscow 2012



"Black's 14...♗d8-f6 was a blunder." It certainly was, as after 15 gxf3! ♗xf3+ 16 ♜c2 ♗xh1 the rook turned out to be poisoned, since the world champion of the time simply played 17 ♖f2! and Gelfand threw in the towel – 1-0 – rather than face the prospect of ruinous material losses.

A companion volume, *The 100 Tactical Patterns You Must Know Workbook*, also by Frank Erwich (New in Chess, 2024), is available too, offering "over five hundred carefully selected exercises to accompany the book *100 Tactical Patterns You Must Know*." Buy both of these excellent books, work hard on the examples, and in 2025 show the world how much of a tactical live wire you have become.



### 100 Endgame Studies You Must Know

Jan Timman, 232 pages

New in Chess

RRP £22.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £20.65**

Sticking with the running theme of 'you must know' titles, we find Jan Timman on sparkling form as he delves into one of his favourite subjects: chess studies. It is not so common to find a chess player who excels at the practical side of playing chess and creating studies, but Timman definitely falls into that category. How did it all start for him? "My fascination for endgame studies, even in my younger years, was mainly caused by the fact that they forced you to think backwards. It

had always been so self-evident to think forwards, to ruminate about how a position would develop. This was a new experience that gave me an intellectual stimulus."

Books on studies, like this one with the subtitle 'Chess Artistry to Enjoy and Learn From', are usually keen on bridging the gap to over-the-board play, knowing that practical players are quick to find reasons not to enter this rather strange world, where things are rarely what they seem to be. "It is a well-known fact that various top chess players occupy themselves with endgame studies. This is regarded as a good method for finding practical solutions in the endgame and – possibly – for discovering secrets."

Back to secrets again! Strange how things come full circle in our square old world.

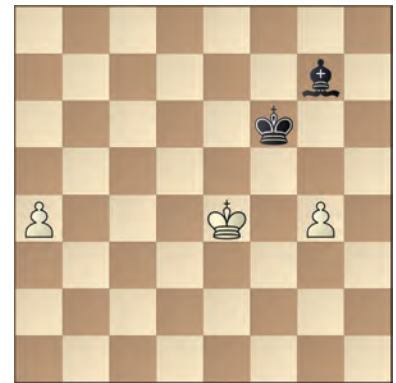
The layout of this book is exceptionally clear and accessible. Each of the 100 studies is given a double-page spread, with the study and biographical information for the composer on one side and the solution – with pertinent annotations and explanations – on the other.

The first study to be considered is the famous Richard Reti one, featuring just a king and one pawn each. I am sure readers will be familiar with that one, and it serves the purpose of easing the reader into the tougher material ahead. Indeed, the first chapter is 'Elementary endings' and by the time we reach the fifth and final chapter we are into the world of 'Complex studies'.

Here is one for readers to ponder.

### Henry Otten

New York Sunday World, 1891



White to play and win

The basic moves, to put readers out of their misery, are: 1 a5 ♙f8 2 ♗d5 ♙h6 3 g5+! ♙xg5 4 ♖e4 ♙h4 5 ♖f3. "And so, the black bishop is outplayed by the white king. In all its simplicity, this is a convincing study that has served as a basis for further ideas by various composers." Consult the book for Timman's explanations on the finer points of the sequence of moves.

As most readers are probably in the 'practical player' category rather than study specialists, the desire will be to find material of relevance to real life and Timman has certainly produced the goods in this fine book. Even the staunchest of over-the-board

traditionalists will be hard-pushed to deny the transferable skills of studies such as these.



### The Sponsor

Fred Das & Jeroen Terlingen, 224 pages  
New in Chess  
RRP £17.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £16.15**

As the dark (k)night continues to draw in, some readers may prefer a book to actually read from cover to cover. Chess novels are rare, but can flourish beyond the bounds of the printed page in future years (as proved by *The Queen's Gambit*, which, to the average viewer's surprise, started life not as a television series, but as a run-of-the-mill novel by Walter Tevis, back in 1983).

As the world awaits a potential sequel to the life and times of Beth Harmon, it is a good idea to get ahead of the game with the latest contribution to the genre, on "Murder at the North Sea Chess Tournament". It is difficult to say any more than that without spoiling the story, so just give it a go if you fancy a little bit of chess murder between league matches.



### From Boy to Man to Challenger: The Fiercest Battles of Gukesh D

Cyrus Lakdawala, 256 pages  
Elk and Ruby  
RRP £23.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £21.55**

There is usually a race to publish books on a potential new world champion of chess and this time the winner is definitely Elk and Ruby. Everyone else seems happy to sit on the fence until this year's title match is over, but the fact is that the games of Gukesh have

already been worthy of a published collection for some time, despite him being only 17 when this book was published.

Playing through the games – in which his victims include Magnus Carlsen, but not, alas, Ding Liren, who held an undefeated plus score against the Indian superstar at the time of writing – brings home just how strong Gukesh is, even some time before his latest exploits, including his superb performance on board one at this year's Olympiad.

Lakdawala curbs his overtly flowery prose this time around, making the reading experience altogether tighter and more interesting. After all, with a player of Gukesh's quality, the games can easily be allowed to speak more or less for themselves – which they do, with flying colours. Here is case in point.

### D.Gukesh-A.Fier Gijon 2022



### 30 ♖xe5! 1-0

"30...♖xe5 31 ♜xf7+ ♔h7 32 ♜xh6 leaves White up a piece."

The Indian chess explosion is the most exciting thing to happen to our game in many years, especially as there are no prima donnas and no sign of anyone having to endure a punch to the head after a player suffers a defeat. Of course, the story of Gukesh will continue for some time to come and this will not be the last volume to cover his life and games. However, this is a very enjoyable book which makes a strong impression.

That concludes this year's stocking fillers, which cater for a plethora of subjects. Surely, every reader will have at least one of these impressive books on their Christmas lists?



## A little bird just told me

**A round-up of what the top players and chess personalities have been saying on Twitter**

### 2700chess - @2700chess

25-year-old Aravindh (2718.1) surprisingly wins the 2024 Chennai GrandMasters after defeating Erigaisi in Round 6, then winning with Black against Maghsoodloo in Round 7, and finally beating Aronian 2-0 in blitz tiebreaks.

### London Chess Classic - @london\_chess

We are excited to announce that GM Peter Svidler @polborta will be the main commentator for the @txmarkets London Chess Classic! Join us for insightful commentary from one of the game's greats. #London-ChessClassic #ChessCommentary

### Peter Wells - @GMPeteWells

Great moment just now about the dangers of positions where you stand better and have many options. There are often limits to what you can control and so it's "important not to be afraid of getting a little bit dirty" – Indjic. Love the advice – not so easy in practice #chesspunks

### Onetotwo - @onetotwo

English players at the European individual championship today. Vitiugov on 3/4 after a draw. Daniel Fernandez draws with Irish FM Tarun Kanyamarala. Matthew Wadsworth makes a determined draw against a 3rd 2600+, GM Navara. The man is bulletproof!

### Carl Portman - @Carl\_Portman

Okay the word is out and I keep getting asked, so... I recently received an award from FIDE for my work with the global 'Chess for Freedom' programme. It is an honour, but my greatest reward is seeing the difference that chess makes to prisoners.

### Shivani Raja MP - @ShivaniRaja\_LE

Great to meet one of my constituents, Taran, who brought the Warwick University & Alumni Chess team to Parliament for a match against the UK Parliamentary Chess Club. Warwick were worthy winners, 7.5-2.5, and it was great to see both clubs flourishing!

### Kaja Snare - @KajaSnare

We have created a chess show! Weekly takes from our chess studio. In the first one we dig into the minds of two great business men @MagnusCarlsen and @matsandre! Hope it will make you smile (even laugh?) #proud #chess @TakeTakeTakeApp

### English Chess Federation (ECF) - @ecfchess

Great to see @bbcSomerset highlighting the young Bristol chess scene along with ChessMoves regular writer Christopher Jones and 91 year old Jim Sherwin.





## NEW FROM QUALITY CHESS



### Beating the Queen's Gambit - Indian Style!

by Renier Castellanos

This book advocates the 1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 move order for Black. By waiting for 3.♗f3 or 3.g3 before playing 3...d5, Black reduces White's options. This is the companion work to the recent *Playing the Nimzo-Indian*. Together, the two books offer a complete, counterattacking and dynamic repertoire for Black against 1.d4.

321 pages €27.99 (pb) €32.99 (hc) €23.99 (eBook)



### Conceptual Rook Endgames: Workbook

by Jacob Aagaard

This fabulous new book offers a surefire way to improve your skills in the most common type of chess endgame, with 208 instructive exercises, each relating to an important concept of rook endgames.

160 pages €19.99 (pb) €24.99 (hc) €15.99 (eBook)



### Magic Chess Moves

by Michal Konopka

*Magic Chess Moves* is a book that will enthral you while testing and improving your chess abilities. You will be invited to solve a collection of exercise positions, but the accompanying text contains far more than simply the solutions.

368 pages €32.99 (hc) €37.99 (hc) €28.99 (eBook)



### Reimagining 1.e4 - Cunning, Crafty & Concise

by Nikolaos Ntirlis

Get ready for a new style of opening book! Correspondence IM and opening mastermind Ntirlis presents an arsenal of fresh ideas for 1.e4 players, challenging all of Black's major defences while keeping things simple and easy to learn for White.

304 pages €27.99 (pb) €32.99 (hc) €23.99 (eBook)



## NEW FROM POPULAR CHESS



### Strategic Play with 1 e4

by Milos Pavlovic

Milos Pavlovic's 1.e4 repertoire is based on lines where an understanding of plans and strategic ideas is more important than rote memorisation. Pavlovic examines the key aspects of play and provides the reader with well-researched, fresh, and innovative analysis.

320 pages €23.99 (pb) €29.99 (hc) €19.99 (eBook)

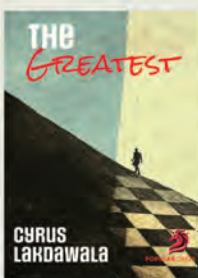


### The Tricky Tromp

by Richard Palliser

A perennial favourite of creative players, the 'Tromp' sets Black complex problems from the very beginning. The Trompowsky has been played by Anand in a World Championship match and is used as a surprise weapon by many other top players. While offbeat, the Trompowsky is difficult to face.

272 pages €23.99 (pb) €29.99 (hc) €19.99 (eBook)



### The Greatest

by Cyrus Lakdawala

Who is the GOAT (Greatest of All Time), and who are the top ten? These are questions that will always, with absolute certainty, generate heated debates. And how do you measure greatness anyway? Prolific author Cyrus Lakdawala tackles this subject head-on, carefully establishing criteria for making such judgments - and then making them.

352 pages €23.99 (pb) €29.99 (hc) €19.99 (eBook)

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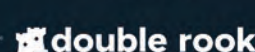


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## 6) Alekhine-Boekdrukker

1...♟xh3! 2 ♜xa6 ♟h2+ 3 ♟h1 ♟xg2+ 4 ♟xg2 bxa6 5 ♜xc6 (it looks as if the black queen is overloaded, but...) 5...♞xe3! 6 fxe3 ♞g3+ 7 ♟h1 ♟g1 8 ♞f2 ♟xf2 and Black wins.

## 7) Gereben-Komarov

1...♟f3+! 2 ♟h2 (or 2 ♟g1 ♞xh3! 3 ♜xh3 ♞xh3, mating) 2...♞xh3+! 3 ♜xh3 g4 0-1 White is a queen up, but cannot prevent the threat of 4...♞xh3+ and 5...♞h1 mate. In their

book *Modern Chess Miniatures* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1960), authors Barden and Heidenfeld gave the entire game writing: "The winner, a schoolboy, is likely to be the first player to be included in an anthology of chess games on the merit of his performance against a master giving a simultaneous display."

## 8) Benitez-Euwe

1 ♞a3! g6 (if 1...♞xa3 2 ♞d8+ ♟e7 3 ♞e8 mate) 2 ♞d8+ 1-0 2...♟g7 3 ♞xg8+! wins

the black queen.

## 9) Dvoirys-Spassky

No! 1...♞xc3? 2 ♟c4+! ♞xc4 (or 2...♞xc4 3 ♞d8+) 3 ♞xd8+ ♟f7 4 ♞xf5+ ♞f6 5 ♞d7+ 1-0

## 10) Pachman-Welling

1...♞c7+ 2 ♟g8 ♞c8+ 3 ♟g7 ♞h8! 4 ♟h8 ♟f7 0-1 White will have to play 5 b4 when 5...axb3 promotes to a queen.

# This Month's New Releases

## Capablanca's Endgame Technique

Alex Colovic, 120 pages  
Chessable

RRP £18.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.05**

It has been a very long time since Jose Raul Capablanca occupied the chess throne, so what can today's players and students of chess learn from him?

The answer is: quite a lot, of course, as shown in this work, suitably subtitled 'The Astonishing Chess Logic of the Third World Champion'. The back-cover blurb reveals: "Although Jose Raul Capablanca was the World Chess Champion a century ago, his games remain among the most interesting to study. The clear logic and simplicity of his moves inspired other great players such as Mikhail Botvinnik and Bobby Fischer. And the clarity of his play will boost the confidence of any chess student."

Alex Colovic is an excellent writer (and, incidentally, a real gentleman), whose literary output is usually to be found via Chessable courses and blog posts. We don't see enough of his work in actual book form, which is something which should be addressed and rectified as soon as possible. Naturally, this book started life as a Chessable course too.

After a three-page preface summing up the basics of Capablanca's life and chess career, there is an introduction detailing why Capablanca and his games appeal to the author. "It is the absolute clarity of Capablanca's moves, the apparent logic and simplicity, that show how ideal chess should be played." Fittingly, the book focuses on Capablanca's endgames, which is the phase of the game for which he is best known.

Production values are impressive, as is usually the case with Chessable books. This one comes as a sturdy hardback, with colour diagrams, a very clear layout and a sprinkling of photographs showing the great Capablanca in action. There are six chapters, covering a range of Capablanca's endgame skills and they are: The complete Capablanca,

Conversion of an advantage, The principle of two weaknesses, Double-rook endgames, Piece activity in the endgame, and Drawn endgames.

The reader is challenged in various places by questions, such as at this point, where Capablanca missed the best move and nearly let slip the win (a reminder not to build pedestals to heroes too high).

## J. Capablanca-V. Ragozin

Moscow 1936



"In this position White has a tactical possibility that wins by force. Can you find it?"

In a rare endgame slip, Capablanca played 45 ♟d4?. "What Capablanca missed was the tactical shot 45 f5+! gxf5 46 ♜f4+ ♟e7 47 ♜d5+ ♟f8 48 ♜xc7 which obtains two connected passed pawns on the queenside, with a straightforward win." Ragozin missed the best chance here (45...♟b5! may well have drawn the game), and Capablanca went on to win (1-0, 63).

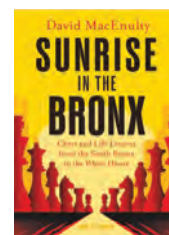
The only negative aspect is that the book is too short. There are 15 endgames split into the six chapters, but at just 120 pages there is clearly scope for a lot more. It seems the balance between a Chessable course – which, of course, contains video content – and a

printed version of the material isn't doing the latter many favours when it comes to the page count. However, it is not entirely clear how to fix this issue. Adding extra material to the book would only upset those who have already bought the course. Perhaps the compromise would be to add an extended version of the biographical material?

Do not let the negative part put you off. This is a handsome tome, written in good style; Colovic avoids hyperbole and sticks to the facts. Naturally, there is some crossover with an earlier book on the same subject, the classic *Capablanca's Best Chess Endings* by Irving Chernev (originally published by the much-missed, chess-wise, Oxford University Press, but latterly to be found under the Dover flag).

Yes, there is still a lot we can learn from the classics and anyone wanting to improve their understanding of the endgame will find the material presented to be very useful indeed. Meanwhile, let us have more books from Alex Colovic.

Sean Marsh



## Sunrise in the Bronx

David MacEnulty, 224 pages  
New in Chess

RRP £18.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.05**

Here is something rather different to the norm and a book which contains virtually no authentic chess content. However, before dismissing it out of hand, it is important to understand what it is all about. The subtitle is the intriguing 'Chess and Life Lessons – From the South Bronx to the White House', while we learn of the author that:

"In the 1990's, despite the many skeptics and the scarcity of resources, he became a

pioneer of chess in the public schools of the Bronx. The obstacles were formidable – poverty, crime, racism, and ignorance. Yet, with unwavering dedication, MacEnulty and his students defied all expectations. In *Sunrise in the Bronx*, MacEnulty describes his transformative journey from fumbling substitute teacher to legendary chess coach.”

The titular reference to sunrise ties in with the author’s experience of driving to work in the Bronx and watching dawn break along the way. “I wanted to give them, each and every day, a fresh start. It began with the hopeful symbol of the sunrise.”

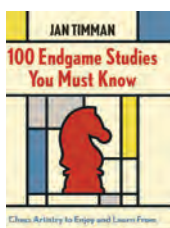
MacEnulty charts his story through 17 chapters, from ‘I Said Yes’ to ‘Final Thoughts’. What he said “yes” to was covering a chess class for the legendary Bruce Pandolfini. MacEnulty then, on Pandolfini’s advice, quit his job in building management and became a chess teacher for the American Chess Foundation. This “meant a significant pay cut from my previous employment, but at least I could feel good about what I was doing.”

It was never going to be an easy job, as “two-thirds of the New York state prison inmates came from the New York City neighborhoods where I would be teaching.” His aim wasn’t simply to teach the basics, but “I wanted to go head-to-head with the most elite schools in the United States, where dedicated parents had unlimited resources, the coaches were usually masters, and the children had every reason to believe in themselves.”

We are introduced to MacEnulty’s Nine Laws; his “guiding principles throughout my teaching years.” These include ‘Discipline Wins’ and ‘Help the Whole Child’. The book also details the benefactors who helped the school team to flourish, praises the parents and concludes with words from the children themselves, who sum up their experiences and what a difference it made to their lives. There are also thoughts on success and failure, cheating and intimidation, and various other topics which are all relevant to the rags to riches tale of a group of children from the Bronx who were eventually invited to a dinner at the White House.

This book will not help to improve your chess, but it will help you see things from a different perspective. A chess book with just one chess diagram may sound dry, but it is a very readable account of an inspirational journey and how much hard work and determination is required to succeed. As transferable lessons go, these are the big ones.

Sean Marsh



**100 Endgame Studies You Must Know**  
Jan Timman, 232 pages, paperback  
RRP £22.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £20.65**

Jan Timman has long been fascinated by endgame studies and now the leading Dutch author presents what he considers to be the best 100 studies ever composed, with everything clearly explained in this work which may inspire even those stubborn players who believe that endgame studies have little to offer them. Sean Marsh certainly enjoyed this welcome new work – see page 27. Please note too that a hardback version is also available from Chess & Bridge, retailing at £29.95 or £26.95 for Subscribers.



**Bologan’s Chess Academy Vol. 1 – Practical Endgames**

Victor Bologan, PC-DVD;  
running time: 5 hours, 7 minutes  
RRP £34.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £31.45**

The popular Moldovan Grandmaster Victor Bologan makes a welcome return to the ChessBase studio, aiming to help the viewer improve their endgame play, particularly the practical aspect of the key final phase of the game. Bologan shares a number of lessons, some learnt the hard way, while aiming throughout to emphasise many key endgame principles. He examines the role of each of the pieces in some typical endgames, including pawn levers, before looking at three useful practical topics: mating with bishop and knight, queen versus rook, and rook and bishop against rook.

There’s also a companion DVD, *Bologan’s Chess Academy Vol. 2 – Dynamic Play*, which runs to 4 hours and 47 minutes of video, while retailing at £34.95 (£31.45 for Subscribers). Bologan builds on what he was taught by the great Vecheslav Chebanenko as he explains how to identify and exploit both tactical and structural weaknesses in the endgame, before progressing to discuss the importance of control and containing any potential counterplay. Note too that it’s also possible to buy both companion Bologan DVDs together for the special price of £65.00.



**The Chess Revolution**

Peter Doggers, 416 pages, paperback  
RRP £20.00 **SUBSCRIBERS £18.00**

This is a chess publication from a big mainstream publisher, Robinson, an imprint of Hachette, in which the well-known internet chess journalist Peter Doggers (Chess Vibes, Chess.com) explores chess as a cultural

phenomenon, looking at its influence on the arts and also science, as well as its meteoric rise in recent years. If your non-chess-playing friends raise the subject of chess over the coming months, they may well have read this entertaining account of our favourite game.



**ChessBase 18 – Starter Package**  
ChessBase PC-DVD

RRP £225.00 **SUBSCRIBERS £202.50**

The latest version of the world’s leading chess software, the famous database program *ChessBase*, has just landed at Baker Street. This ‘Starter Package’ contains not just *ChessBase 18*, but *Big Database 2025*, as well as a one-year update service and a year’s subscription to premium ChessBase membership. New features include access to the 6 billion games on Lichess, with the ability to search both those and on Chess.com for games played by your next prospective opponent, on whom the ChessBase software can now even analyse their playing style.

It’s also possible to purchase as a stand-alone product *ChessBase 18* for £175.00 (Subscribers: £157.50), or to upgrade from *ChessBase 17* for £135.00 (Subscribers: £121.50). If you’re upgrading so, please supply the existing program key when ordering from Chess & Bridge.

Available too is *ChessBase 18 – Mega Package*, which is the same as the *Starter Package*, but comes with the annotated version of the main ChessBase database, *Mega Database 2025*, and retails overall for £325 (Subscribers: £292.50). Finally, there’s *ChessBase 18 – Premium Package*, available for £425 (Subscribers: £382.50), and the same as the *Mega Package*, but with users receiving extra features, most notably *Corr Database 2024* and a year’s subscription to *ChessBase Magazine*.

If you’re happy with your existing ChessBase software, but would like a new database, *Big Database 2025* might fit the bill, retailing at £79.95 (Subscribers: £71.95), while nowadays containing a whopping 11 million games, played between 1475 and 2024. More serious players may prefer the same data, but with over 120,000 of the games being annotated, as is the case with *Mega Database 2025*. Those who purchase this database are also promised a weekly update of over 5,000 games throughout 2025, so long as the database is being used in *ChessBase 16, 17* or *18*. The latest *Mega Database* retails at £195.00 or £175.50 for Subscribers, while those who wish to upgrade from *Mega Database 2024* may do so for £95.00 (Subscribers: £85.50). Finally, do note that even older *Mega Database* users may also upgrade, for £135.00 or £121.50 for Subscribers. If you are upgrading so, please



return your DVD or supply the existing program key



### The Art of Combination in Chess

Maxim Blokh, 256 pages, paperback  
RRP £21.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £19.75**

Leading Russian chess coach, GM Maxim Blokh presents 1,500 positions to solve, many of which are quite complex and almost all of which contain just the one winning move. The material gradually becomes harder, while interestingly 200 of the positions are winning for whichever side is to move.

Publisher Russian Chess House have also just released *2452 Chess Combinations* by Gipslis, Kirillov, Tal and Zhuravlev, which is also a joint English and Russian production, this time based on a great many positions to solve which first appeared in the 1980s in the famous Soviet, Riga-based magazine *Sahs* ('Chess').



### My First Chess Opening Repertoire

Christof Sielecki, 264 pages, hardback  
RRP £18.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.05**

This is a basic but also complete repertoire for both Black and White, designed to get those fairly new to the game and improving fast, up and running with an easy-to-learn and fairly active repertoire. Please see page 26 for Sean Marsh's thoughts on this latest release from Chessable.



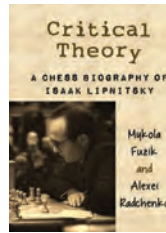
### The ultra-creative neo-London system

Elisabeth Pähtz, PC-DVD;  
running time: 9+ hours

RRP £42.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £38.65**

This is a detailed recording in Hamburg by one of Germany's most famous players, GM Elisabeth Pähtz. And what is the Neo-London System? No, it doesn't involve an early  $\text{d}3$ , but rather after  $1 \text{ d}4 \text{ d}5 2 \text{ f}3 \text{ f}6$  the aim is  $3 \text{ c}3$ , as played by Ding Liren no less back in the last world championship match. White waits a move with  $\text{f}4$ , thereby creating the option of meeting the ever-critical  $3... \text{c}5$

with  $4 \text{ dxc}5$ !?. Instead, against  $3... \text{e}6 4 \text{ f}4$  a standard London is the plan, while after  $3... \text{f}5$  Pähtz is keen on immediately tickling  $\text{b}7$  with  $4 \text{ f}3$ .



### Critical Theory

Mykola Fuzik & Alexei Radchenko,  
264 pages, paperback

RRP £23.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £31.45**

This is the latest fascinating historical work from Elk and Ruby, 'A Chess Biography of Isaak Lipnitsky'. Even older readers may not fully recall the chess achievements of Isaak Lipnitsky (1923 – 1959), but he was a leading Ukrainian player in the post-war era, finishing second to Keres in the 1950 USSR Championship, as well as the author of the famous textbook *Questions of Modern Chess Theory* (Quality Chess, 2008) This biography was first published in Ukraine in 2018 and provides a detailed account of Lipnitsky's fascinating if tragic life, while also including 63 of his best games, many annotated by Lipnitsky himself. It's also available in hardback format should you prefer, retailing at £31.99/£28.79 for Subscribers.

Also recently released by Elk & Ruby is *Play the Mackenzie!* by American FM and regular *Chess Life* contributor David Gertler (108 pages, paperback, £14.99, Subscribers £13.49). If you're looking to jazz up your repertoire after  $1 \text{ e}4 \text{ e}5$  the Mackenzie might fit the bill, the aim being to surprise Black after  $2 \text{ f}3 \text{ c}6 3 \text{ b}5 \text{ a}6 4 \text{ a}4 \text{ f}6$  with  $5 \text{ d}4$ !?. White develops quickly and aggressively, forcing Black to be careful, while Gertler also includes a useful bonus chapter on meeting the Berlin Defence,  $3... \text{f}6$ , with  $4 \text{ d}4$ .



### King's Anti-Sicilians for Black

Daniel King, 280 pages, hardback  
RRP £26.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £24.25**

Our popular columnist has tweaked and updated his second successful Chessable course for this latest publication, produced by New in Chess for Chessable. It's the companion work to *King's Kalashnikov Sicilian*, as Daniel clearly and thoroughly completes a repertoire for Black after  $1 \text{ e}4 \text{ c}5$ , and if  $2 \text{ f}3 \text{ c}6$ . The Rossolimo is met with the uncompromising  $3... \text{f}6$ !?,  $2 \text{ c}3$  with a King favourite,  $2... \text{e}6$  not fearing transposition to a French Advance, and the likes of the Grand Prix and Smith-Morra also receive good coverage from the black side.



### Tactical Endgames

Karsten Müller & Jerzy Konikowski,  
198 pages, paperback

RRP £21.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £19.75**

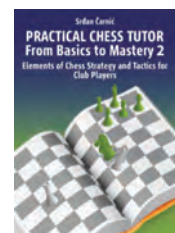
Two highly experienced authors team up, and not for the first time, in this latest English language production from Joachim Beyer Verlag. As Müller and Konikowski are at pains to point out, endgames can become highly tactical. They begin by presenting 100 important positions, grouped in five chapters: the active king, pawn power, zugzwang, mating motifs, and other tactical motifs. These are followed by 50 exercises to solve and 100 endgame studies, whether to solve or simply enjoy.



### Lessons on Uncompromising Play

David Navara, 352 pages, hardback  
RRP £37.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £34.15**

This is a big book and from one of the world's best authors, the long-time Czech no.1 David Navara, who draws heavily on his own games to present a number of highly entertaining middlegames, while revealing a number of handy practical tips along the way, as well as plenty of food for thought. For more on this fascinating new release, do see page 26.



### Practical Chess Tutor: From Basics to Mastery 2

Srdjan Carnic, 280 pages, hardback  
RRP £29.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £26.95**

The highly-experienced Serbian coach and FM Srdjan Carnic continues his quest to explain every important element of chess strategy to the club player. Over 100 instructive games are examined with topics including such important ones as strong and weak squares, handling the minor pieces, pawn structure and prophylaxis. Informant Publishing have included plenty of diagrams to this textbook, which does have the more important comments supplied verbally, although there are also plenty of languageless variations.



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