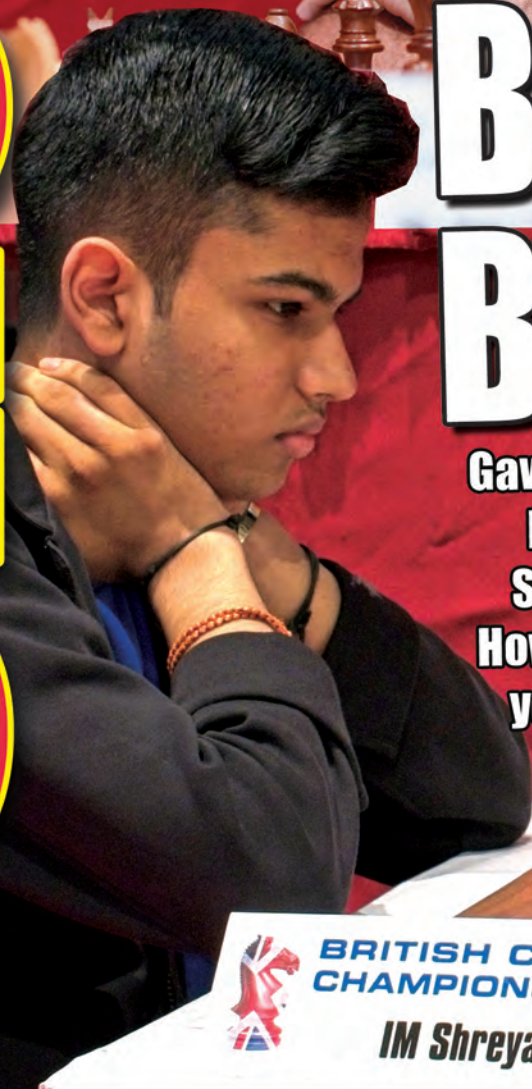


BRITISH

BEST OF BRITISH

Gawain Jones captures his third British title after a playoff, Shreyas Royal breaks David Howell's record to become UK's youngest-ever GM at age 15!



BRITISH CHESS CHAMPIONSHIPS



IM Shreyas Royal

1

ISSN 0964-6221



Brilliant British – Matthew Wadsworth and Shreyas Royal annotate and make norms



Rise of Epsom – Marcus Gosling on the new club which won the Surrey League



The Nearly Men – Ben Graff on Carl Schlechter, David Bronstein and Viktor Korchnoi

Chess

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Chess Magazine (ISSN 0964-6221) is published by:
Chess & Bridge Ltd, 44 Baker St, London, W1U 7RT
Tel: 020 7486 7015 (9:30am - 5pm Monday to Friday)
Email: info@chess.co.uk, Website: www.chess.co.uk

Twitter: @CHESS_Magazine
Twitter: @TelegraphChess - Malcolm Pein
Twitter: @chessandbridge

Subscription Rates:

United Kingdom

1 year (12 issues)	£50
2 year (24 issues)	£90
3 year (36 issues)	£125

Europe

1 year (12 issues)	£60
2 year (24 issues)	£115
3 year (36 issues)	£165

Rest of World (Airmail)

1 year (12 issues)	£75
2 year (24 issues)	£145
3 year (36 issues)	£210

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FRONT COVER:

Cover Design: Matt Read
Cover image: Melinda Wilde (Gawain Jones)
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Printed in the UK by The Magazine Printing Company using only paper from FSC/PEFC suppliers www.magprint.co.uk

Contents

Editorial	4
Malcolm Pein on the latest developments in the game	
A Brilliant British	8
Gawain Jones won, Shreyas Royal and Matthew Wadsworth annotate	
A Fistful of Pawns	15
Luke McShane played an amazing game at the World Open	
How Good is Your Chess?	18
Daniel King saw the 'Messi of Chess' in action in Barcelona	
Readers' Letters	21
King and Pawn Endings: Part One	22
Mike Read presents a fascinating king and pawn endgame	
Find the Winning Moves	24
A bumper edition to warm you up for the new season	
Studies with Stephenson	28
Brian reports on world solving gold medals for Great Britain	
Epsom Chess Club	30
Marcus Gosling on a new club who are already Surrey Champions	
By Hook or by Rook!	32
The Ginger GM, Simon Williams, made his Chessboxing debut	
A Pint with Kevin	33
Geoff Chandler caught up with comedian Kevin James Doyle	
The Nearly Men	34
Ben Graff on Carl Schlechter, David Bronstein and Viktor Korchnoi	
Never Mind the Grandmasters...	37
Emanuel Lasker and the Cambridge Springs are praised by Carl	
How to Beat a Grandmaster	40
Paul Littlewood pays tribute to star organiser and IM Nigel Povah	
Best of British	41
A breakdown of all the winners from the British Championships	
Nature Read in Tooth and Claw	42
Adrian Harvey on the no-holds-barred world of Victorian journalism	
Chess Gladiator	44
Julian Way celebrates the life and legacy of C. H. O'D. Alexander	
Mea Culpa, Mr Morrison!	46
John Henderson makes a small correction to the record	
Forthcoming Events	47
Will you be taking in any of the regular September congresses?	
Overseas News	48
Success for Daniel Fernandez, Le Quang Liem and Tan Zhongyi	
Home News	52
Andrew Greet is the 2024 Scottish Chess Champion	
Solutions	53
This Month's New Releases	54
Sean Marsh enjoyed Elk & Ruby's third volume on Korchnoi	
Saunders on Chess	58
John uncovered a gem while checking gamescores from Hastings	

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A Fistful of Pawns

Luke McShane returned to the World Open, where he won an astonishing game, in which his initiative and passed pawns outclassed an extra rook, as he explains

I decided to try my luck in the World Open this year. The event was held in the Sheraton Philadelphia Downtown hotel, with well over 1,000 participants across all the sections. In the U.S. players are expected to provide their own sets and clocks, which gives the event a spartan feel. In Philadelphia, the organisers made an exception for the top four boards which were broadcast live with standard DGT equipment. I had forgotten to pack my own, but since I was the third seed, I played the initial rounds in relative comfort. Then a couple of early draws sent me down the rankings and scrambling to borrow some equipment.

By the time the following game was played, I had worked my way back to the second board, half a point off the lead. Needless to say, I was keen to win this game, against a strong grandmaster, originally from Cuba, but who now represents the U.S. Alas, despite this win, I lost my final game to the 21-year-old grandmaster Awonder Liang, who played superbly to win the event with 8/9.

One oddity of events in the U.S. is the use of a 30-second delay, instead of a 30-second increment. Playing with increment, it is possible to build up your time by playing a few quick moves. With delay, your time never increases, but you get a 30 second grace period at the start of each move, after which your clock resumes its countdown. I prefer playing with increment, since I am far more used to it. Delay has its quirks. Navigating one episode of time trouble in a different game, I was faced with an obvious recapture, which I would usually make in a few seconds. But I knew my opponent was trying to pressure me on the clock, so bearing in mind the delay, I realised that my best policy was to use the spare seconds to take a few deep breaths and relax before executing the move.

L. McShane-F. Corrales Jimenez
World Open, Philadelphia 2024
Sicilian Moscow

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 d6 3 ♙b5+ ♕d7 4 ♘xd7+ ♖xd7 5 0-0

5 c4 is the other major continuation, aiming for d2-d4 with a Maroczy bind set-up.
5... ♖c6 6 ♗e1 ♘f6 7 c3 e6 8 d4 cxd4 9 cxd4 d5 10 e5 ♘e4 11 ♖bd2 ♘xd2 12 ♘xd2 ♗e7 13 ♗c1 0-0 14 ♗c3

This move may appear to be a preparation

for stacking major pieces on the open c-file, but its real purpose is quite different. The main idea is to swing the rook across the third rank (after a future ♘f3-g5, perhaps) to pursue an attack on Black's king.

14... ♗fc8

I decided on this opening line over the board, inspired by the vague memory of a rapid game Jones-Gelfand, London Chess Classic 2013. It continued 14... ♗ac8 15 a3 ♘b8 16 ♗d3 ♖b5 17 ♗b3 ♖c6 18 ♘g5 ♙xg5 19 ♙xg5 ♘d7 20 ♖g4 f5 21 ♖h4 ♗fe8 22 ♙f6! and Gawain's attack proved too difficult to handle.

15 a3 b5 16 ♗d3



Keeping ammunition on the board is more important than concerns about ceding the c-file. The rook also briefly occupied this square in Jones-Gelfand. It is useful, sometimes, to overprotect the d4-pawn in order to free up the knight on f3.

16... ♖b4 17 a4 h6 18 h4 ♘h8 19 ♘h2

19 ♗e3 is an intriguing suggestion from my engine. Wondering what could be the purpose of deploying both rooks on the third rank, I dug a bit deeper: 19... ♖e8 20 ♘g5!? and the knight cannot be taken: 20... ♗xg5? 21 ♖h5+ ♘g8 22 ♗xg5 g6 23 ♖h2!. Posting the queen behind the rook has a beautiful point: 23... ♙f8 24 ♗h3 ♙g7 25 ♖h7! and there is no good answer to ♖xg7+ followed by ♖h6+ and ♗h3. That's why both rooks were needed!

19... ♖e8!

An excellent defensive idea, preparing to bring the queen to h7 to fortify the kingside. A similar manoeuvre (with a slightly different purpose) is known from the Winawer variation of the French Defence: for example, A.Sokolov-Yusupov, 1st matchgame, Riga 1986:



13... ♘d7 14 ♙e3 ♖g8 15 ♖d2 ♖h7 and Black went on to win.

20 ♖g4

Foreseeing the queen's arrival on h7, I no longer saw a clear way forward for the attack. I lost the thread of the game and was outplayed over the next ten moves.

20... ♖g8 21 ♗f3 ♗f8 22 ♗f4 ♖h7 23 ♙e3 ♗ac8 24 ♘f1 ♘d8 25 ♘d2 ♗c2 26 b3

Evidently, Black has made dangerous inroads on the queenside, and the knight manoeuvres have been a waste of time. But at least for the time being, the knight on d2 puts a break on the deteriorating queenside situation.

26... ♗c3 27 ♖h5 ♖c2 28 ♖e2 ♘c6 29 g3 ♖d3 30 ♖h5

With my pieces shackled to the b3- and d4-pawns, I was not feeling optimistic. I was also far behind on the clock. My opponent had executed his plan quickly and confidently, and had 50 minutes left, while my fruitless hunt for ideas on the kingside had left me with less than two minutes.

30... ♘g8



A natural way to defend f7, but there is a

snag. It was better to play very patiently: 30...♖d8 followed by ...♗h7 and ...♘g8, and eventually the knight could come back to c6 and a5.

31 ♖e4!

Necessity is the mother of invention! This move entered my head as my opponent pondered his previous move, and I knew it had to be tried, because the alternative loses without a fight: 31 ♖g4 ♗f5! kills the attack. After 32 ♗xf5 exf5 33 ♖f4 g6 Black's queenside pressure will soon tell. The move 31 ♖e4 is a spanner in the works, since after the knight is captured, the black queen's retreat is obstructed.

31...dxe4 32 ♖g4

With the dual ideas of ♖xh6 and ♖xg7+.

32...♖c8

A bold attempt to play for the win by doing a runner with the king.

32...♖xd4 (32...♖h7 meets with the same) 33 ♖xg7+ leads to a draw by repetition. During the game I was trying to find a win in the variations which follow, but in vain – the position is drawn: 33...♘xg7 34 ♖xh6+ ♖h7! (34...♘g8? 35 ♗g4+ forces mate) 35 ♖xf8+ (35 ♖e3+ followed by ♗h5-g4+ also draws) 35...♘g8 36 ♖xe7 ♖f3+ 37 ♖h1 ♖xe1 38 ♗g5+ with a draw.

33 ♖xh6 ♖f8?

Running too early. 33...♖f8! was essential, though my opponent may have rejected it on the grounds that White can force a draw: 34 ♖xg7+ ♖xg7 35 ♗g5 ♖f8 36 ♗xg7+ ♖e8! 37 ♗f8+ ♖d7 38 ♗d6+, with a repetition.

34 ♖xg7 ♖e8



35 ♗xf7+?

The wrong capture.

35 ♖xf7! was much stronger. I was fixated on ways to dislodge the e7-bishop, missing a different direction of attack. 35...♖d7 36 ♖d1! prepares to crash through in the centre and after 36...♗c2 37 d5 exd5 38 e6+ Black's position collapses.

35...♖d7 36 ♖e3

36 ♖g5 ♖e8 is a dead end, since 37 h5 ♗xd4 threatens ...♖f3 or even ...♖xg3+.

36...♖e8 37 h5

At this point, I had very little time left and not much clue how to evaluate this mess. In such situations, it feels reassuring to just push a pawn. In fact, it is the best move, because there is not much else to do.

37...♖xd4 38 ♖g2?

During the game, I hardly considered



London Chess Classic regular, Luke McShane, ran into a red-hot Awonder Liang in the final round of the World Open, but did enjoy better fortune against Alan Merry in the last round in Hull.

38 ♖xd4, so I was surprised to learn after the game that it leads to some kind of dynamic equality: for example, 38...♗xd4 39 ♗f4 (White is threatening ♖xe4-d4+) 39...♖f3 40 ♗xe4 ♗xf2+ 41 ♖h1 ♗d2 42 ♗b7+ ♖d8 43 ♗b8+ leads to a repetition. Here 39...♖xb3! is also good fun: 40 ♖xe4 ♖b1+ 41 ♖h2 ♗d5 42 f3 ♗a2+ 43 ♖h3 ♖h1+ 44 ♖g4 ♗f2 threatens ...♖h4+, so: 45 ♖d4+ ♖c8 46 ♖c4+ ♖b8 47 ♖xb4+ ♖xb4 48 ♗xb4+ ♗b6 49 ♗e4 which is... equal! In practice, I fancy White's chances, since the king on g4 has a bit more shelter than its counterpart on b8.



38...♖f5?

Ten moves earlier, my opponent held a significant advantage on the clock and the

board. Despite the turbulence on the board, he continued trying to pressure me on the clock. I failed to exploit his earlier mistake, but this knight jump is another serious error. This was a good moment to spend time exploring the alternatives.

38...♖f3 is the move I was worried about, but 39 ♖h1 ♖xe5 40 ♗f4 is surprisingly fine for White, since the h-pawn remains dangerous. However, the strongest move in the position wins, 38...♖c2!. During the game, I suffered a blind spot, not even noticing the possibility, and I suspect the same was true for my opponent. Perhaps it is counterintuitive that the knight moves away from the kingside action. The rook must move from e1, but after the capture on e3 White's position is collapsing.

39 h6 ♖cc8

39...♖xg7 40 hxg7 ♖cc8 stops the pawn, but with both rooks tied to the back rank Black is the one in trouble. 41 ♖h3 ♗xb3 42 ♖g5! threatens to promote on g8, so 42...♖h8+ is already forced, but after 43 gxh8 ♗xh8+ 44 ♖g4 ♖e8 45 ♖c1 White is pressing.

40 ♖g6

As I recall, I dismissed 40 h7 ♖f8! as hopeless. That is true, but there is a bit more to the story: 41 ♗xf8 ♖xf8 42 ♖g8 ♖f7!! 43 h8 ♗ ♖xe3+ 44 ♖xe3 ♗d2 and Black's attack will land first.

40...♖d5

Thankfully, this was the fortieth move, so I had time to gather my senses before playing the next move.

Instead, 40...♗xb3!? 41 ♖xe6 ♖c3 (a surprising only move, whose purpose is to defend the queen on b3 from a discovered attack) 42 ♖xe7+ ♕xe7 43 ♗g7 is apparently equal. No, I don't understand either.

41 ♖xe6!



The rook is immune, because 41...♗xe6 loses on the spot: 42 ♖d1+ ♕d6 43 ♖xd6+, etc. 41 h7 ♖f8 is just as hopeless as a move earlier.

41...♖c6?!

This move does not lose the game, and I must give credit to Corrales Jimenez for continuing to play for a win. That said, it was a questionable practical decision, since the complications which follow are far harder for Black to navigate. During our brief chat after the game, I understood that my opponent calculated the same forced draw as I did after 41...♕xe3+ 42 ♖xe3 ♗d2+ 43 ♖h3 ♗xe1 44 ♖d6+ ♖c7 45 ♗c4+ ♖b8 46 ♗b5+ ♖a8 47 ♗d5+ with a perpetual (47 ♖d7? backfires: 47...♗h1+ 48 ♖g4 ♖g8+, etc.).

42 ♗xf5

The game continuation looked promising, so I felt confident when I went for this.

42 ♖d6+ is also possible, but I disliked the fact that Black can force an exchange of queens: 42...♖xd6 43 ♗xf5+ ♗e6! (43...♖e6 transposes to the game) 44 ♗xe4 ♗d5 45 ♗xd5 ♖xd5 46 f4. This, too, is 'equal', but Black has a simple plan of going after the b3-pawn, while choosing which kingside pawn to push looks more confusing.

42 ♖xe7+ ♕xe7 43 ♗h5 was an interesting alternative which I hardly considered at all. After 43...♗e6! 44 ♖d1+ ♕d5 45 h7 ♖h8 46 ♖xd5+ ♗xd5 47 ♗g4+ ♖d8 48 ♗g7 ♖xh7 49 ♗xh7 the position is yet again 'equal', though as usual, it is much easier to play with the safer king.

42...♖xe6?

42...♗xe6 43 ♗xe4 is – dare I say it – equal! But during the game I felt that my chances would be excellent, not only because of the four connected passed pawns, but also because the queens are not being exchanged any time soon, and Black's king has no realistic prospect of finding shelter.

43 ♗g4!

Sometimes there can be echoes of a single

idea across many variations in a game. This move prepares ♖d1, to which Black has no good response. Similarly, at an earlier stage of the game, 35 ♖xf7! was much stronger than the move I played, because keeping the queen on h5 could support ♖e1-d1.

43...♗xe5 44 ♕f4 ♗f6



The queen must stay protecting the rook on e6.

45 ♖xe4?!

I didn't hesitate over this one. The rook is pinned, so why not grab the pawn? But strictly speaking, this move throws away the win, and there was a tactical opportunity for a knockout. Why, then, mark the move as dubious, when it's clearly a mistake? I believe Black's defence here is so infeasibly difficult to find, that for practical purposes this move is good enough.

45 ♖d1+ ♖c8 46 ♗h5! was much stronger: 46...♖h8 (46...♖d8 is no better: 47 ♖xd8+ ♖xd8 48 h7 wins) 47 ♗d5 and there are far too many threats against the king. 45...♕d6 46 h7



One square closer, and the pressure ramps up. Frankly, I felt confident I was going to win. What is Black to do? It is not easy to find a move: for example, 46...♖h8 47 ♖xe6 ♗xe6 48 ♗g7+ wins, or 46...♗f7 47 ♖d4 ♖c7 48 ♖c4+ ♖b6 49 ♗f3! with decisive threats.

46...♕xf4

This loses without a fight. 46...a5!! was the only move, to defend the pawn on b4, though it is far from obvious why that matters. The first thing to notice is that, despite appearances, White has no direct threat. Indirect threats include ♖c4 (preparing ♗f3-b7+) and ♕e3-d4. If Black just passes with 46...a6, White wins after 47 ♖c4 ♕xf4 48 ♖xf4 ♗e5 49 ♖f7+ ♖d8

50 ♗h4+ ♖c8 51 ♗c4+ ♖d8 52 ♖a7, threatening ♗h4+ and h8♗, combined with a ♖a8+ skewer. So: 52...♖h6 and even here the knockout is not evident, but the computer's suggestion 53 a5 seems to place Black into zugzwang, which makes my head spin.

Returning to 46...a5!! when 47 ♖c4? (47 ♕e3 is better, but after 47...♗f7 48 ♖xe6 ♗xe6 49 ♗g7+ ♕e7 50 h8♗ ♖xh8 51 ♗xh8 ♗xb3 the endgame remains roughly equal, and the pawn on a5 is useful) 47...♕xf4 48 ♖xf4 ♗e5 49 ♖f7+ ♖d6 shows the value of the pawn on a5. With ♗xb4+ off the menu, Black should soon trade queens and win.

47 ♖xf4 ♗e5 48 ♖f7+ ♖c8

48...♖e7 49 ♖xe7+ ♖xe7 50 ♗h4+ is a crucial tactic, and the pawn promotes.

49 ♗f3



With Black's king pinned on the back rank, forcing a queen exchange wins easily.

49...♗e4 50 ♗xe4 ♖xe4 51 ♖xa7 ♖b8 52 ♖g7 ♖h8 53 g4 ♖xh7

53...♖ee8 only delays the end: 54 g5 and with both rooks immobilised on the back rank, the pawns march to victory.

54 ♖xh7 ♖xg4+ 55 ♖f3

With two extra pawns, the rest is trivial. 55...♖d4 56 ♖e3 ♖d6 57 ♖h4 ♖b6 58 ♖c4 ♖b7 59 f4 ♖a6 60 f5 ♖a5 61 ♖c5+ 1-0

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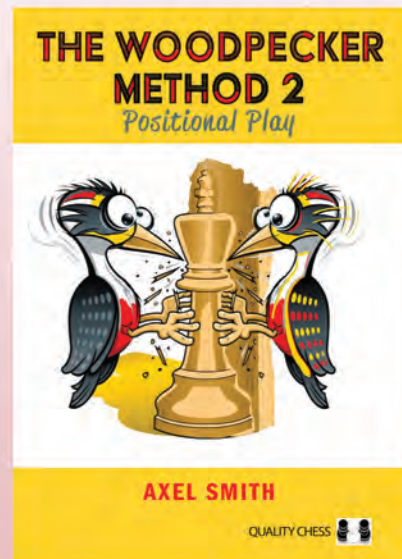
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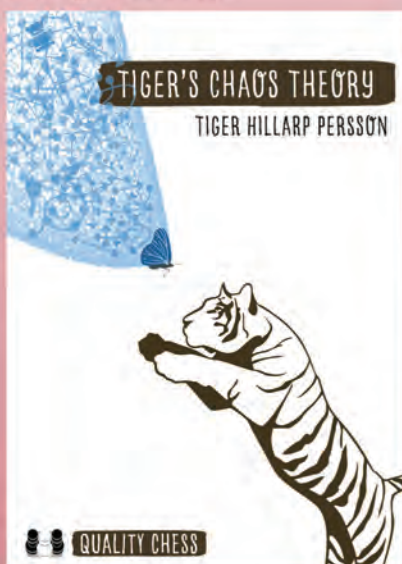


Tiger Hillarp Persson: Tiger's Chaos Theory

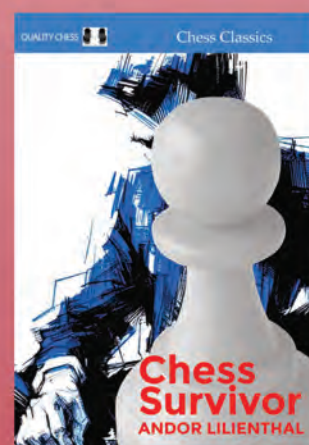
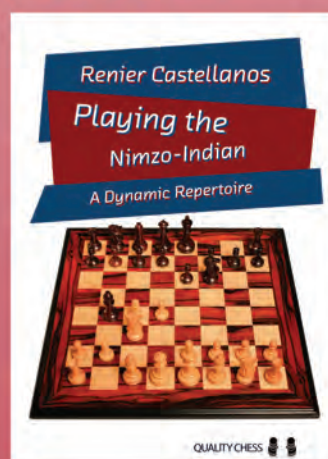
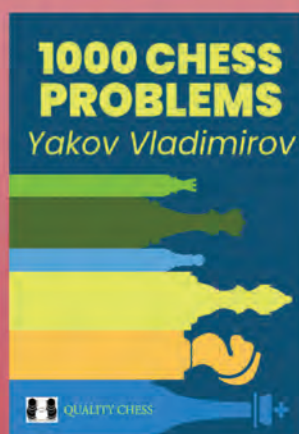
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By Hook or by Rook

Matt Read reports from Chox Con, the inaugural chessboxing festival in Norfolk

Simon 'The Ginger GM' Williams made history in July, when he became the first UK grandmaster to try his hand at Chessboxing. Never one to shy away from a challenge, Simon's debut fight was for the British Heavyweight title, as he took on Matt 'The Minotaur' Coldwell, who is rated 1762 and has a few amateur boxing bouts already under his belt.

The bout, which was the headline event of a ChessBoxing Festival, Chox Con, held on a farm in rural Norfolk, lived up to its top billing. The GingerGM suffered a broken nose and knockdown in round one of the boxing, which alternated with the chess. He then blundered his queen in a later chess round, but some trademark tricks and powerful blows from Simon saw him recover the position and win on time with mere seconds left before another boxing round was due to begin.

M. Coldwell-S. Williams

Worstead (blitz) 2024

French Defence

1 d4 e6 2 e4 d5 3 e5 c5 4 ♘f3 ♘c6
5 ♙d3!? cxd4 6 0-0 f6 7 ♙b5 ♙d7 8 ♚e1
fxe5 9 ♙xc6 bxc6 10 ♘xe5 ♘f6 11 ♙g5
11 ♗xd4 ♙d6 12 ♙f4 followed by ♘d2
also makes sense.

11...♙d6 12 ♗xd4 0-0 13 c4 c5 14 ♗d3

Black has the centre and soon starts to take over after this, so 14 ♗h4!? might have been a better try, especially at blitz where the initiative is ever important, and if 14...♗c7 15 ♘xd7 ♗xd7 16 ♘c3.

14...♙xe5 15 ♚xe5 ♗c7 16 ♚e2 ♘e4



17 ♙h4?! 17 ♙e3 was a safer policy.

17...♗f4

17...♗f4!? 18 g3 ♚xh4?! 19 gxh4 ♗f4 must also have tempted Williams, although Black shouldn't have quite enough after 20 cxd5.

18 ♙g3??

The pressure gets to Coldwell, although it might not have been obvious in the ring that



18 ♘d2! works in view of 18...♘xd2 19 ♙g3.

18...♗c1+ 19 ♚e1 ♗xe1+ 20 ♗f1

31 ♗xd2 would have been somewhat safer, leaving White with excellent chances to win.

29...d2



A good, old back-ranker has netted a rook, but now, with his nose broken and ears ringing, Williams in turn makes a howler.

20...♗d2?? 21 ♘xd2 ♘xd2 22 ♗e2 ♘xc4 23 b3 ♘b6 24 ♙e5

24 ♙d6! ♚fc8 25 ♙e5 followed by ♗g4 would have left White doing very well, although the text is also plenty good enough. 24...♚f5 25 f4 d4 26 ♗c1 ♘d5 27 ♗g4 g6 28 ♚xc5 d3!? 29 ♙f2?

Trying to use all the pieces, but having an exposed king is rarely a good idea against the Ginger GM and here 29 ♗f3! d2 30 ♗d3 ♘xf4



30 ♗e2??

The third and final blunder of this adrenaline-fuelled game. Instead, 30 ♚xd5! (30 ♗d1 ♘xf4 isn't so clear) 30...exd5 31 ♗d1 would still have left White clearly for choice.

30...d1 ♗+! Whoops! 31 ♘xd1 ♘e3+ 32 ♙e2 ♘xg4 33 h3 ♘xe5 34 fxe5 ♚af8 35 ♚c7 ♙b5+ 36 ♘d2 ♚xe5 37 ♚xa7 ♚d8+ 38 ♘c3 ♙f1 39 g4 ♚c8+ 40 ♘b2 ♚e2+ 41 ♙a3 ♚cc2 42 ♘b4 ♚e4+ 0-1

And here, just four seconds away from another round of boxing, White's flag fell.

A Pint with Kevin

by Geoff Chandler

Your Editor me asked if I could get an interview with Kevin who is appearing in a one-man show at the Edinburgh Fringe. He does a chess-themed comedy act, *After Endgame*, which I caught – very good and enjoyable. After the show I dragged him into Sandy Bell's and did a quick interview over a couple of pints. Kevin, like millions of other chess players, is not an officially rated player; he plays for the love of the game. He teaches mainly beginners in New York and has been doing this for 14 years. I had a copy of *CHESS* with me, so I structured the interview around the '60 Seconds' format.

Born: 13th October 1985, Ohio.

Place of Residence. Brooklyn, New York.

Occupation: Comedian and chess coach.

Enjoyable? Yes, very enjoyable.

And Home Life? Alone and Peaceful.

But Sometimes to Escape To? Travelling in Europe, there are some great cities. London, Paris...Edinburgh!

Sports Team You Follow? THE OHIO STATE BUCKEYES (a college football team; Kevin insists his team is mentioned in full capitals).

Favourite Novel? *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy.

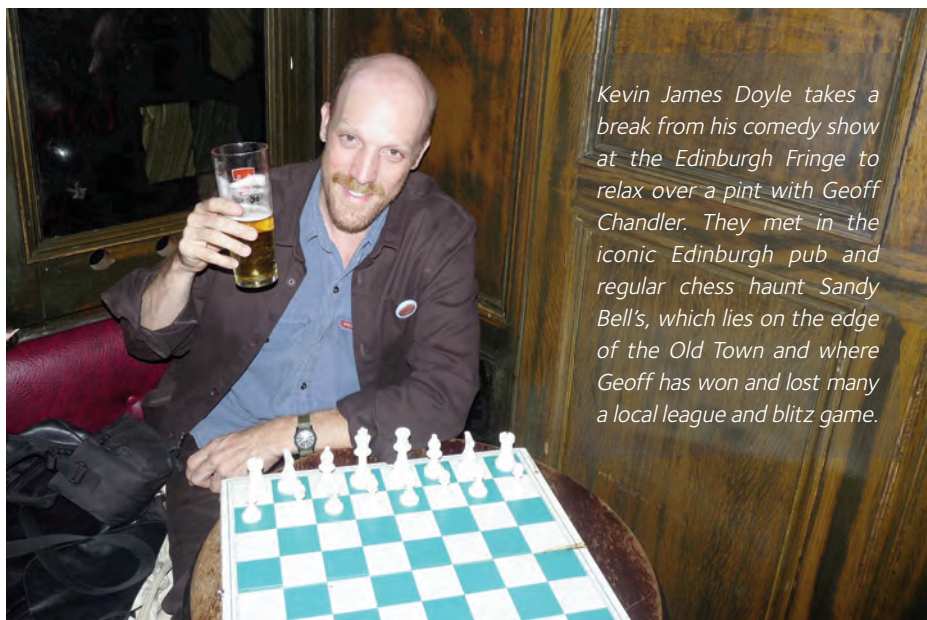
Favourite Music? Bob Dylan and Tom Waits. (Here the interview was interrupted as we discussed our favourite Bob Dylan songs including 'Not Dark Yet' and all of 'Desire'.)

Favourite Film? *The Apartment* with Jack Lemmon.

Favourite TV Programme: *The Office*, the BBC version. Kevin added it is far superior to the American version. (Again the interview was interrupted as we discussed our favourite parts of the series. Kevin does a good interpretation of 'That Dance'.)

Favourite Thing About Chess? Having a chess buddy, someone you play with over and over again. You form a special kind of relationship.

Worst Thing About Chess? Making a blunder that turns a won game into a straight loss. (It's good to know that players without a rating suffer like we do.)



Kevin James Doyle takes a break from his comedy show at the Edinburgh Fringe to relax over a pint with Geoff Chandler. They met in the iconic Edinburgh pub and regular chess haunt Sandy Bell's, which lies on the edge of the Old Town and where Geoff has won and lost many a local league and blitz game.

Best Move? That was a while ago in a New York chess club. I was losing, but pulled off a well planned combination ending in a skewer that turn the loss into a win.

Favourite Game? Fischer-Byrne, New York 1956 ('The Game of the Century').

23 ♖g1 axb6 24 ♜b4 ♙a4 25 ♜xb6 ♜xd1 26 h3 ♜xa2 27 ♜h2 ♜xf2 28 ♜e1 ♜xe1 29 ♜d8+ ♜f8 30 ♜xe1 ♜d5 31 ♜f3 ♜e4 32 ♜b8 b5 33 h4 h5 34 ♜e5 ♜g7 35 ♜g1 ♜c5+ 36 ♜f1 ♜g3+ 37 ♜e1 ♜b4+ 38 ♜d1 ♜b3+ 39 ♜c1 ♜e2+ 40 ♜b1 ♜c3+ 41 ♜c1 ♜c2# 0-1

Favourite Chess Books? *Bobby Fischer Teaches Chess* – I give a copy to each student. I prefer going online to chess books, we are in a modern era, and I pick up a lot of tips from various websites and streamers, especially Hikaru Nakamura.

Matters regarding FIDE and how to improve it are not relevant to Kevin so I asked him:

Do Comedians Have a Governing Body? It is a self governing body, highly regulated based on merit only (laughs).

Any Suggestions For Improvement? Make it easier to get into comedy and be friendlier to those starting out.

Can Chess Make You Happy? Yes, till it makes you sad again.

Tips for Beginners. Look at every game after you have played it, especially the losses and never be disappointed or downhearted if you make a mistake – you can learn from them! Or some such. By now Kevin had been recognised and it was selfie time for the tourists. A great bloke, a great night, and a great show. (There is a wee fib in the title, we had more than a pint.)

D.Byrne-R.Fischer New York 1956 Grünfeld Defence

1 ♜f3 ♜f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♜c3 ♜g7 4 d4 0-0
5 ♜f4 d5 6 ♜b3 dxc4 7 ♜xc4 c6 8 e4
♜bd7 9 ♜d1 ♜b6 10 ♜c5 ♜g4 11 ♜g5
♜a4 12 ♜a3 ♜xc3 13 bxc3 ♜xe4 14 ♜xe7
♜b6 15 ♜c4 ♜xc3 16 ♜c5 ♜fe8+ 17 ♜f1



17...♜e6!! 18 ♜xb6 ♜xc4+ 19 ♜g1 ♜e2+
20 ♜f1 ♜xd4+ 21 ♜g1 ♜e2+ 22 ♜f1 ♜c3+

2...f5! 3 xf5 exf5 4 xd8+ xd8 would have won, as shown by John Watson's neat line 5 c2 h8! 6 g1 c6+ 7 f1 d8! 8 g2 f3+ 9 e1 d3! and wins.

28) Cunningham-Raff

1 g1+! (Black was able to defend in the game after 1 d3? h8! and it should be pointed out too that 1 g3!? f6 2 e2! f3 3 g1+ h8 4 d3 is another way to win) 1...h8 (if 1...hxh7? 2 f6+! h6 3 h7#) 2 d3! (threatening h3) 2...h6 3 g5! (LeMoir) threatens 4 xf7+! and wins after 3...b7 (or 3...f5 4 0-0-0! b7 5 d2!) 4 e4! xe4 5 xe4 f6 6 e3 h2 7 0-0-0.

29) Kuhn-Chigaev

1 a4! (1 c6? f3+ 2 a4 was preferred in the game, where Black might have drawn with 2...a3+! 3 b5 and then 3...c3 or 3...d3 4 c7 c3) 1...f3 (still fairly critical; instead, 1...g4 2 c6 f3 3 d6! wins, and if 3...a3+ 4 b5 c3 5 b7 or 3...g3 4 c7

c3 5 e7 g2 6 e1 followed by 7 d7) 2 d6! a3+ 3 b5 d3 (alternatively, 3...c3 4 b7 is a key resource, White winning after 4...b3 5 d7 b2 6 c6 and, likewise, 3...b3 4 b7! wins) 4 b7! leaves White too far ahead in the race: for example, 4...g4 (or 4...a4 5 c4! c3+ 6 d4 c1 7 xb4 followed by d5 or 7...d1+ 8 e4 f5+ 9 e5 g4 10 xa4 g3 11 a2) 5 d7 g3 6 c6 g2 7 b8 h7 8 c7 g1 9 d8 xd8 10 cxd8 and the extra rook will quickly make its presence felt.

30) Pal-Hobson

1 f6+! gxf6 (or 1...h8 2 f5! g6 3 xg6!) 2 xf6 a7 (2...xb2 3 e6! also forces mate) 3 xh6! xb2 4 f5 1-0

31) Nguyen-Vidit

1 d7! (1 a3? c5 2 xa2 xb5 3 e7 g8 was fine for Black in the game) 1...cxd8 2 d4! wins, and if 2...xd7 (or 2...c5 3 b4! g5 4 e7 a5 5 h4 h5 6 g4!) 3 h4 h5 4 xh5+! gxh5 5 g5, forcing mate.

32) Liu Zhaoqi-Shankland

1...a1! (1...b1? was seen in the game, where Black went on to win after 2 xa6? xc1 3 e2 c4, but 2 e1! xc1 3 xa2 would have won for White) 2 c2 (2 xa1? xc4+ 3 e1 xd5 4 xa7 c6 only leaves Black with winning chances) 2...b2! is a fantastic resource pointed out by Milos Pavlovic in his ChessPublishing column, and if 3 c3 b3! 4 c2 b2, etc.

33) Robson-So

1 g5!! (a decisive blow, whereas 1 xh6? gxh6 2 xh6? g6! would see Black survive, and more) 1...e8 (of course, if 1...hxg5?? 2 h8# and 1...f6? 2 xf6+! gxf6 3 xh6 is also devastating, and if 3...f5 4 g3+ g4 5 g6+ g7 6 xe6+; finally, 1...c7 2 xh6! gxh6 3 xh6 g6 4 xe6! crashes through too, as shown by John Emms on ChessPublishing, and if 4...fxe6 5 xg6+ g7 6 xe6+ f7 7 xc6) 2 xh6! g6 (if 2...gxh6? 3 f6+) 3 g5 f6 4 e1! a7 (4...fxg5? 5 xg5 is devastating) 5 xf6+! xf6 6 xe6 f7 7 xf6! gxf6 8 xg6+ f8 9 h8+ 1-0

This Month's New Releases



Korchnoi Year by Year: Volume III (1981-1991)

Hans Renette & Tibor Karolyi, 438 pages
Elk and Ruby
RRP £35.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £32.35**

Elk and Ruby's excellent series on Viktor Korchnoi continues with this highly-anticipated third volume. After the bizarre, controversial and extremely close world championship of 1978, which saw Korchnoi fight back against Anatoly Karpov from 2-5 down to 5-5, only to fall at the final hurdle, one might think that Korchnoi's story was virtually over, at least in terms of being a major force in the chess world.

In fact, nothing could be further from the truth, for this volume "encompasses Korchnoi's famous world championship match with Karpov at Merano in 1981, his candidates matches against Portisch and Kasparov in 1983, Hjartarson in 1988 and Sax and Timman in 1991, as well as the candidates tournament of 1985 at Montpellier, the GMA world cup series and

major tournament performances."

That clearly represents a large slice of chess history and also an exceptional set of performances for a player who had already passed the 50-year-old mark. To the untrained eye, Korchnoi's 1983 Candidates match with Garry Kasparov looks like a simply commanding demolition job by the future world champion, but that is not the full story. First of all, Korchnoi won the match after 1 d4 when Kasparov was not allowed to travel to Pasadena to compete and it was only down to Korchnoi's sporting nature that he allowed the match to be rescheduled, in London.

Korchnoi, who was of the opinion that Kasparov's style was merely "one big punch", was in control of the match up until the sixth game, when his over-optimism caused him to press too hard and end up losing a reasonably simple (for him) rook and pawn ending. After that, Kasparov moved up a gear and, of course, eventually became the new champion of the world, but there is no doubt that Korchnoi played a big part in this pivotal moment of chess history.

Korchnoi's style changed considerably over the years. His endgame skills were still exemplary, of course, but instead of snatching semi-poisoned pawns and having to defend throughout difficult middlegames, he was often seen sacrificing material, in a style more commonly associated with a man five years his junior, Mikhail Tal.

V.Korchnoi-R.Hübner Johannesburg 1981



15 xd5!?

"How could I refrain from such a tempting combination with a temporary piece sacrifice, even if its consequences could not be calculated to the end?"

15...xd5 16 a5!

Taking back the piece gives Black no problems, but I am not sure anyone would have suspected this move would be the follow-up to the initial capture. Korchnoi is more interested in bringing almost unbearable pressure to pile up on Black's position.

After a few more moves, Hübner felt he had to give back the piece anyway, but it

didn't save him from further tactical blows and a speedy defeat:

16... ♖f6 17 e4 ♗c8 18 ♖c1 ♘xe4
19 ♘xe4 g6 20 ♗c6!! ♘f6 21 ♘xf7
♗xd4 22 ♘g5+ ♖h8 23 ♘c3 1-0

Korchnoi found it much harder to control matches as the years went by and controversy was always in the air. One would have thought that Candidates battles against Johann Hjartarson and Gyula Sax would have dominated by the much more experienced man, but he lost the former (despite doing his best to smoke out his opponent, in more ways than one), and only just squeezed past Sax after setting up an unlikely endgame fortress. Incidentally, it took me by surprise that Sax was such a difficult opponent for Korchnoi. Prior to their Candidates match, Sax had a very healthy score of 5-2 in wins against him.

Away from the board, there is some intriguing material on Korchnoi's wife and son, who had been left behind when Korchnoi defected from the Soviet Union in 1976. They were finally freed, but, of course, Korchnoi was never likely to leave Petra Leeuwerick, despite his protests to have his wife and son released. His life was as complex as his games over the board.

Not everyone was a Korchnoi fan by any means. His lawyer, Alban Brodbeck, split from him in 1982 and there are scathing quotes from him, such as: "Korchnoi has never had a friend throughout his entire life, because he is incapable of friendship and collegiality and the self-promoter and manic egoist Petra belongs to the same category."

Even by Elk and Ruby's high standards, this is an exemplary series. For Korchnoi fans, every volume is a must-buy, and the same goes for anyone who is simply interested in fighting chess, in which every game is a full-blooded struggle. As I understand it, there is one volume left to come, which will be published either later on this year or possibly in 2025.

Don't be fooled by the post-Baguio era; this volume is every bit as exciting, entertaining and instructive as the first two books in the series.

Sean Marsh



The Mental Game

Alexander Galkin, 288 pages
Quality Chess

RRP £24.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £22.49**

This is an unusual book (a translation of a Russian original, published in 2019), which starts from a fairly standard premise: "We all have an intuitive feeling of the stress, pressure and frustration on the path to winning a World Championship in sport, but rarely will you get as unfiltered and raw an

insight into the struggle to succeed as in *The Mental Game*."

Blurbs help to sell books and often the contents don't quite match their promises. How raw and insightful would this one prove to be?

This is not a sweeping survey of general improvement points for those looking to improve their game, but instead it follows the difficult rise of a single player, Aleksandra Maltsevskaya, who won the 2018 World Junior Championship and 2022 European Women's Rapid Championship.

The book only covers an 18-month period of time, during which Maltsevskaya "worked with Grandmaster Alexander Galkin. A year later, Maltsevskaya became World Junior Champion. Galkin holds nothing back in revealing the highs, lows, jubilations and frustrations that were experienced in their collaboration, all while providing expert insights that will benefit chess players and coaches alike."

The author states: "Through the eyes of a trainer, I have tried to set down everything that might help young players to gain good competitive results. This includes the errors and shortcomings of both me and my student, although an amicable and positive tone is adopted throughout."

This really is a 'warts and all' presentation of a difficult working relationship between a player and her coach, and it is highly apparent that tension is there from the start. Sometimes, much to Galkin's consternation, Maltsevskaya would vary from their preparation. "What was wrong with spending a couple of minutes writing a note on Facebook to the effect that you'd looked at our variation, had another think, and decided to play such-and-such? That's the normal approach when you work together with someone."

The criticism of Maltsevskaya's play is consistent; we find quotes such as these all through the book: "I was struck by dim vision, some heavy weather in games with amateurs, incomprehensible moves, inadequate time management, a general lack of care. The result was a dreadful performance in the region of 2000 and the loss of 37 rapid rating points."

There are numerous illustrative games showing Maltsevskaya letting excellent positions slip away, or allowing wily opponents to land tactical blows, such as this one.

G. Matjushin-A. Maltsevskaya

Taganrog 2016



35 ♖xh7+! ♘xh7 36 ♗xf7+ 1-0

"The game showed that Sasha wasn't yet able to compete on an equal footing with players rated over 2400 (despite her revealing that she was inwardly ready to do so)."

In what becomes an increasingly uncomfortable read, the criticism keeps coming. Here is another case in point: "An extremely low level, it's appalling. It's a miracle you didn't lose. You mustn't play like that. You've got to pull yourself together. What sort of play was that for a first-round game? You must shake yourself up. The tournament will fly by. Your opponents aren't interested in your problems, in the fact that you aren't on form. Pick your form up. Work at it."

Summing up, I was left with the uncomfortable feeling that I was reading something I shouldn't be. It is a strange book, far more raw than insightful and one which wasn't my cup of tea at all.

Sean Marsh



Black and White:

The Rise and Fall of Bobby Fischer

William Wagner & Julian Voloj,
168 pages, hardback

£18.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.09**

You might have thought that every type of book devoted to Bobby Fischer had been written, but think again! This new release is a graphic novel following his life from child prodigy to world champion, then on to withdrawing from the game and paranoid later years. Beautifully illustrated throughout, author Voloj and illustrator Wagner succeed in telling Fischer's story while contextualising his lasting impact on pop culture.



Chess Informant 160 – Step Ahead

Various authors, 320 pages, paperback
RRP £39.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £35.95**

The latest 'Informator' looks back at both Prague and the Candidates, as well as the often neglected but pretty strong Austrian Bundesliga. Contributors include Jon Speelman, Douglas Griffin and Ian Rogers, with their articles and others providing plenty to read, in contrast to which all the latest leading games, novelties, combinations and studies are annotated in traditional languageless fashion.

Also released of late by Chess Informant is *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings A13*, which

is a 288-page hardback production (RRP £44.95; Subscribers £40.45) devoted to a highly detailed opening monograph on the 'A13' ECO code, which equates to 1 c4 e6. Play may then transpose into a QGD, but only the Reti lines count as A13, i.e. 1 c4 e6 2 ♖f3 d5 3 g3 and 3 b3, variations which have certainly been quite topical of late.



Chess Survivor

Andor Lilienthal, 344 pages, hardback
RRP £27.50 **SUBSCRIBERS £24.75**

This is a somewhat more heart-warming read than another recent Quality Chess release, as reviewed above. Andor Lilienthal (1911 – 2010) was one of the first grandmasters to have the title conferred on them by FIDE in 1950, and outlived the other 26. The Hungarian Grandmaster is especially famous for his win against Capablanca (20 exf6), and played or met all the world champions of the 20th century. Now a new generation can enjoy his life story, translated from the original Russian work by Douglas Griffin, who has also added 17 games to the 60 which Lilienthal annotated.



ChessBase Magazine 220

ChessBase PC-DVD

RRP £19.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.95**

The latest issue of *CBM* is for July/August 2024 and features Dommaraju Gukesh on the cover. Inside there is detailed coverage of the Candidates and a special feature on Gukesh himself, with Mihail Marin and Karsten Müller focussing on both his strategic prowess and endgame ability. In all there are over six hours of video on the DVD, as well as much interesting theoretical coverage on the likes of 1 e4 c5 2 ♖f3 ♗c6 3 ♘b5 ♖f6 and 1 d4 ♗f6 2 ♘f4 g6 3 ♗c3 d5 4 e3 ♘g7 5 h4.



Drill Your Chess Strategy!

Miloje & Milovan Ratkovic,
336 pages, paperback

£34.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £31.45**

This new release from Informant

Publishing features 500 positions to solve, largely taken from recent games and ones you may well not have seen before. The IM and GM author team don't give any clues or structure the material around specific themes, making this the best type of puzzle book: one where you may need to find a neat sacrifice in one position, then come up with a positional manoeuvre in the next. The solutions are sufficiently detailed and it's not hard to believe that working one's way through this book won't just improve sharpness and knowledge, but also creativity.



How to Avoid Mistakes and Boost Your Winning Rate

Vishnu Prasanna, PC-DVD;

running time: 4 hours, 26 minutes
RRP £32.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £29.65**

Answering the pertinent questions of IM Sagar Shah, Vishnu reveals that many players keep making the same type of mistakes and highlights the most common categories of them: unforced errors, tactical mistakes, positional slips, psychological issues and calculational and assessment problems. Using his own games, as well as those of his immensely strong students, Gukesh and Mendonca, on this highly thought-provoking DVD Vishnu highlights how to tackle each of those types of error and so improve your game.



Knight Endgames – GM Endgames Collection II

Vlado Kovacevic, 344 pages, hardback

RRP £27.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £25.15**

This Chess Fortress production aims to improve the hardworking reader's knowledge of the knight by focussing on that piece's role in a great number of endgames. The highly experienced Croatian GM and author covers a large number of practically and theoretically important endgames, including a knight battling one or more pawns, with the material progressing through to endings with a knight and three pawns each.

There's also a companion work, *Knight Endgames Workbook* (172 pages, paperback), in which Branko Tadic presents 300 knight endgames to solve for the price of £14.95 or £13.45 for Subscribers. Note too that both *Knight Endgames* books can be purchased together from Chess & Bridge for the special price of £40.00 or £36.00 for Subscribers.



Master Class Vol.17 – Boris Spassky

ChessBase, PC-DVD;

running time: 8 hours, 22 minutes
RRP £30.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £27.85**

ChessBase's *Master Class* series features the tenth world champion, one of the most talented players of all times. As well as discussion of Spassky's lengthy career and best games, there is good coverage of how his style evolved over time, as well as his favourite openings and impressive endgame technique, with each of the ChessBase regulars Dorian Rogozenco, Mihail Marin, Karsten Müller and Oliver Reeh contributing well over an hour of insightful video.

Talking of German IM Reeh, ChessBase have also released his *Master Class Tactics – Train your combination skills! Vol.3*, which features Reeh's favourite tactics from recent issues of *CBM*. In total there are 150 video questions, all with hints if you're stuck or get the answer wrong, as well as full solutions. Topics covered include mating attacks, winning material and power play, with the DVD running to over five hours of coverage while retailing at £29.95 or £26.95 for Subscribers.



Middlegame Secrets Vol.5 – The Inner Strength of Kings

Jan Markos, PC-DVD;

running time: 4 hours, 46 minutes
RRP £30.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £27.85**

Jan Markos continues his popular series for ChessBase, this time focussing on a oft neglected topic: the power of the king. Unsurprisingly there is plenty of material on the role the king plays in defence, as well as on when one should castle and even evacuate the monarch to the other side of the board. However, the active ability of the most important piece is also given good coverage – both in the endgame and even in assisting the odd attack.



Playing the Nimzo-Indian

Renier Castellanos, 440 pages, paperback
RRP £24.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £22.49**

Castellanos might be in his forties, but earned his final GM norm soon after completing this detailed repertoire work for Quality Chess. His love of the Nimzo-Indian is clear throughout, as is his experience with it. As such, the reader will quickly learn which are the more important lines to focus on from a practical perspective. After 1 d4 ♖f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗b4, Castellanos covers everything from the trendy ♗d2 set-ups to the old main line and still very important 4 e3, against which he advocates 4...0-0 5 ♗d3 d5, and if 6 ♗f3 dxc4 7 ♗xc4 c5, while 4 ♗c2 is met with 4...d5, and if 5 cxd5 exd5 6 ♗g5 h6 7 ♗h4 ♗c6!?

Do note too that this impressively detailed Nimzo-Indian repertoire is also available in hardback form if you prefer, retailing at £29.50 or £26.55 for Subscribers.



The Flexible Taimanov Sicilian

Robert Ris, PC-DVD; running time: 9 hours
RRP £43.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £27.85**

ChessBase have certainly been busy of late and this is another highly detailed production, this time from the popular presenter, Robert Ris. The Dutch IM maps out a thorough repertoire with one of his favourite openings, 1 e4 c5 2 ♗f3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♗xd4 ♗c6. All White's trendy and less fashionable attacking attempts receive full coverage, as do the more positional lines, with coverage complimented by a recommendation of test positions to play out, as well as a database of 200 model games.

Ris has also recorded a companion DVD, *A Complete Guide for Black against the Anti-Sicilian*, which runs to seven hours of footage and retails at £34.95 (£32.45 for Subscribers). On it he examines White's various important third move alternatives, including 3 c3, 3 c4, 3 d3 and 3 g3, as well as the various Anti-Sicilians based around non-♗f3 lines, such as the Grand Prix Attack and Smith-Morra.



The London against the Dutch

Kiril Georgiev, 200 pages, paperback
RRP £23.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £21.55**

The London System remains popular and can very much be played too after 1 d4 f5. Indeed, Georgiev covers the immediate

2 ♗f4, as well as the related lines 2 ♗f3 e6 (and 2...d6) 3 ♗f4 and 2 c4 ♗f6 3 ♗c3 e6 4 ♗f3 followed by 5 ♗f4. White can play for the c4-c5 break or prefer something more aggressive, often going h2-h4 combined with ♗f3 and 0-0-0. This work follows the popular step by step approach beloved of publisher Chess Stars and also contains many illustrative games. If you're looking to cause Dutch players problems at an early stage of the game, a quick ♗f4 may fit the bill.



The Woodpecker Method 2: Positional Play

Axel Smith, 316 pages, hardback
RRP £29.50 **SUBSCRIBERS £26.55**

The Woodpecker Method was released in 2018 and quickly became popular with hard-working players who were keen to improve their tactics. Now Swedish GM Axel Smith has released a follow-up work, this time focussing on positional play. Once again the aim is that the reader will solve the 1,000 positions, then do so again and again until all the ideas are embedded deep in the subconscious. Smith and Quality Chess supremo, Jacob Aagaard, tested a draft of the material on a number of players, including Nodirbek Abdusattorov no less, whose feedback was used to improve the detailed solutions.



Tiger's Chaos Theory

Tiger Hillarp Persson, 280 pages, hardback
RRP £29.50 **SUBSCRIBERS £26.55**

Many players enjoy seeing crazy and highly complex games, while believing that they could never play in such a fashion. Highly-acclaimed author Tiger Hillarp Persson begs to disagree and here demonstrates how to navigate the seemingly outrageous. Drawing largely on his own highly-creative in some detail many cases where material isn't the most important feature of a position. As well as tackling several long-term sacrifices, he also looks at structure and stability, and even has a chapter on "Channelling Karpov" in this fascinating and wide-ranging work.



A little bird just told me

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

Shreyas Royal - @shrez_royal09

Grand Master!!! After 5 narrow misses, I finally clinch my final norm at the British Chess Championship. It's truly been a remarkable journey and I cannot thank everyone, who has helped me, enough. Namely, @demishassabis, @ecfchess, @TelegraphChess for their support.

Shreyas Royal - @shrez_royal09

I'd like to add that I'd attended a training camp in Zagreb with @Kasparov63 prior to achieving my GM title. It was reassuring to hear Garry's words upon hearing about my 5 narrow final GM norm misses. It helped me finally break the UK's GM record. Huge thanks to @Kasparov_Chess.

Malcolm Pein - @TelegraphChess

Everyone in English chess is proud of you. Thanks also to @DCMS for their support which enabled @ecfchess to make this the strongest British Ch for many years. Onward and upward. Next stop 2600.

David Howell - @DavidHowellGM

Thanks for everyone's support during the British C'ship! I enjoyed coming out of retirement for my first Swiss tournament in 3 years! Obviously gutted to have come within 1 move of winning the title, but this was Gawai's year. Many congrats to him and Shreyas!

Biel Chess Festival - @BielFestival

Liem Le won this year's Masters at the #bielchess festival! Congratulations on the third consecutive win! What a performance by the Vietnamese GM! #chess #grandmaster @LiemChess

Grand Chess Tour - @GrandChessTour

Following his recent win in the 2024 Superbet Chess Classic Romania, GM Caruana dominated the field in Zagreb – securing the win with five rounds to spare. He also matched GM Magnus Carlsen's record from 2019 of the most points earned in a Grand Chess Tour rapid and blitz event.

2700chess - @2700chess

Tan Zhongyi wins the Belt & Road tournament with 7/9, becoming the World Women #3. This is currently her highest ranking and rating. The 2025 Women's World Championship match between Ju Wenjun and Tan Zhongyi promises to be unpredictable.

Tarjei Svensen - @TarjeiJS

Three of the six highest-rated players under 10 are from England.



LONDON'S STARRY AFFAIR

Global Chess League
Season 2 | Starts 3rd Oct, 2024



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Euston Rd., London