

# New Englander

## Chess Club Update – July 2025

### Chairman's Chatter

The quieter summer season is upon us and it seems that our venue is catering best for casual games to keep us entertained. Nevertheless, changes are afoot on the organisational side and the Cambridgeshire AGM has a number of interesting rule and structural changes to debate for next season. The next newsletter will carry a summary but I trust there will be nothing to disrupt the intentions approved at our own AGM or our enjoyment during the coming year.

*Paul Hanks*

### Puzzle Problem

White to play and mate in 2. The position is the starter problem for the [Winton British Chess Solving Championship](https://wintonchess.com/). Entries solutions should be sent to [winton@theproblemist.org](mailto:winton@theproblemist.org) by 31<sup>st</sup> July.



Last Month's solution (Lewis 1985)

Position : 7K/5R2/5npk/8/5P2/6N1/8/8

1 Rg7 g5 2 fxg5# [1 ... N any 2 Rh7#]

### Diary Dates

8<sup>th</sup> July            Cambridgeshire    County    Chess  
Association AGM at Ivy Leaf Club, St  
Ives from 7-30pm

28<sup>th</sup> September County Raidplay at Whittlesford  
Memorial Hall. Click for online [Entry details](#).

### Website to Watch

The top players indulge in rapid and blitz play at the start of July. The Grand Chess Tour circuit rolls on to Zagreb, Croatia but not much of the sponsorship money is being spent on the IT. Various dates appear on websites such as <https://2700chess.com/> (1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>) and <https://cgct.eu/> (30<sup>th</sup> June to 7<sup>th</sup> July) which when translated, contains a misspelt link to the official but vacuous website <https://grandchesstour.org/>.

Better luck may be had from 14<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> July with the [Biel International Chess Festival](https://biel.chessfestival.com/) in Switzerland. Not such big names or any promise of live viewing but the competitors have reputations for lively chess.

### Match of the Month

In May, we were able to thank the outgoing captain of our Team7000 squad Ed Knox for the sterling work he has done in the role since 2021. In this time, the team won the North division on two occasions and were runners-up in the other seasons. Not a bad record despite never taking the top honour in the North v South play-off.

Thankfully, despite his professional duties, a worthy replacement stepped forward to carry the baton. In the early months of this year, he took a lengthy sabbatical in the USA during which he managed to fit in some congress play and has submitted the following game from his time there.

**J Sutherland v S Xia**

Washington DC Met Open; 04.02.2025

1            b4

Take a sample of over 50,000 grandmaster games and this opening will appear 10 times or less. Having written a book in 1963, Alexey Sokolsky essayed it in correspondence games and normally, the system is named after him. There are also references to it as the Polish Opening and the Orangutan.

In addition to avoiding masses of opening theory, White grabs space on the queenside but lets Black occupy the centre. Much depends on whether the second player opts for pawn exchanges to burst open lines for the stronger pieces.

1            ...            e5  
2            Bb2            d6

An old "Openings Book" bundled with Fritz gives this continuations as scoring 50% in its two available games whereas 2 ... Bxb4 hits 70% in five outings. An example of how the game can progress with a more open pawn structure appears in the Eye Opener section.

3            e3            Nf6  
4            c4            Be7

5	a3	0-0
6	Nf3	Nbd7

Here, or on the next move, Fritz would prefer Black disrupting White's development with 6 ... e4 7 Nd4 c5 but there is little difference in its assessment.

7	Be2	b6
8	0-0	Bb7
9	d3	e4
10	dxe4	Nxe4
11	Nc3	Nxc3
12	Bxc3	Bf6
13	Bxf6	Nxf6

Black has taken a cautious approach, going for simplification instead of than tactical clashes. The result is a level position, if rather sterile.

14	Qc2	Qe7
15	Rfd1	Rad8
16	Qb3	Rd7
17	Rac1	c5
18	b5	Rfd8
19	a4	d5

Black has prepared this central break well with nicely co-ordinated pieces and strategically, forcing a passed c pawn is a good idea. I have no weaknesses, however, and it is hard to see how Black can improve methodically.

20	cx d5	Bxd5
21	Qa3	h6
22	h3	Ne4
23	Qb2	Ng5

Black has 23 ... Re8 but I can usefully defend against the sacrifice on f2 with 24 Bd3 or even ignore it viz. 24 Qc2 Nxf2 25 Kxf2 Qxe3+ 26 Kf1 Bb3 27 Rxd7 Bxc2 28 Rxc2.

**24 Ne5**

If I comply with my opponent's steadfast wish to swap pieces, I could end up worse after 24 Nxg5 Qxg5 when 25 Bf1 Bxg2 and 25 g3 Qf5 (heading for e4) give me problems.

**24 ... Rd6**

I have a little combination coming. Black can negate it with 24 ... Rc7 which will also support the push c5-c4 but to do so, he must shift my knight from e5 with 25 ... f6 and that bumps into 26 Rxd5 Rxd5 27 Bc4.

25	Rxd5	Rxd5
26	Nc6	Qc7
27	Nxd8	Qxd8
28	Qc2	

If 28 Bc4, I had to guard against 28 ... Rd1+ 29 Rxd1 Qxd1+ and 30 ... Qxa4.

28	...	Qd6
29	h4	Rd2
30	Qc4	Nh7
31	Bf3	Nf6
32	g3	Qd7
33	Qf4!?	



At this point, Black had an alternative that leads to a fascinating example of why the interplay queen and knight is such a killing partnership. Garry Kasparov was a great exponent and the variations pass through positions in which discovering quiet moves and correctly evaluating tempi can subtly lead to the defence having no resource – a skill that is the hallmark of grandmaster practice.

The computer points out the tactic 33 ... Rxf2 34 Kxf2 Qd2+ 35 Be2 Qxc1 but follows it with 36 Qb8+ Kh7 37 Qxa7 drawing. There is a difference, however, between boring equality and sweating to find the fine line to salvation, particularly under time pressure. Let's run the movie on a few further frames with 37 ... Ne4+ 38 Kf3 (38 Kg2 Qxe3) 38 ... f5.

- It is still not looking too dangerous but if White continues to pick off the pawns with 39 Qxb6, 36 ... Qe1 or 36 ... Qg1 suddenly threatens checkmate on f2 and g3. The only escape is 40 Kf4 losing a piece to 40 ... Qxe2.
- Protecting g3 with 39 Qc7 makes matters worse due to 39 ... Qg1 40 Kf4 (again forced) 40 ... Qxg3+.
- Immediate flight by 39 Kf4 Qe1 40 Kxf5 (other moves transpose) 40 ... Nxg3+ also wins the bishop.
- Moving the bishop from harm's way by 39 Bd3 fails to 39 ... Qd1+ 40 Be2 and now the surprise change of direction 40 ... Qd6 leads to checkmate e.g. 41 Bd1 Qxg3+ 42 Ke2 c4 (the quiet move) 43 Bc2 Qf2+ etc.
- So, to which square can the white queen safely move? Against 39 Qd7, Black can try 39 ... Nxg3 40 Kxg3 Qg1+ with perpetual check or 39 ... Qh1+ to transpose into the second subvariation below.
- If 39 Qf7,

- 39 ... Nxb3 now allows 40 Bc4 when saving the knight costs the black king e.g. 40 ... Qg1/Ne4 41 Qg8+ Kg6 42 Qe8+ Kh7 [42 ... Kf6 43 Qe6#] 43 Bg8+Kh8 44 Bf7+
- 39 ... Qh1+ 40 Kf4 Qh3 41 Qxf5+ Qxf5+ 42 Kxf5 Nxb3+ 43 Kg4 Nxe2 44 a5 and now it is Black's turn to sweat! Fortunately for him, 44 ... c4 45 a6 c3 46 a7 c2 47 a8=Q c1=Q 48 Qe4+ with perpetual check.

It is interesting how the white bishop covers the light squares around his king but the black knight on e4 gives many possibilities on the dark squares.

33	...	Qd6
34	Qxd6	Rxd6
35	Kf1	Kf8

Black could become more active in the endgame with 35 ... Rd2 but I can exchange it or penetrate to the back ranks with 36 Rd1 Ra2 37 Rd8+ Kh7 38 Rf7 Kg6 39 Be2 Rxa4 40 Bd3+ when I have threats! If 40 ... Kh5 41 Rxf7, I might be able to construct a mating net based on 41 ... Kg4 42 Kg2 Ne4 43 Be2# or 41 ... Ne4 42 Rxg7.

36	Ke2	Ke7
37	Rc4	Ke6
38	Bc6	Ke7
39	Bf3	Nd5
40	Bg2	f6
41	Bf3	Nb4
42	Bg2	Kf7
43	Bf3	1/2-1/2

## Eye Opener

**Lindqvist v Soerenfors**  
Correspondence; 1975

1	b4	e5
2	Bb2	Bxb4
3	Bxe5	Nf6
4	c4	

Fritz already decries White's tardy development and recommends 4 Nc3, 4 Nf3, 4 e3 or even 4 a3 in preference. The first of these blocks the retreat on the long diagonal and seems strange because 4 ... Nc6 appears to gain a tempo. However, 5 Bxf6 Qxf6 6 Nd5 swaps off Black's counterpart dark-squared bishop after 6 ... Qd6.

4	...	0-0
5	e3	d5

5 ... Nc6 would indeed now gain that tempo forcing 6 Bb2. Opening the centre is nevertheless just as good.

6	cxd5	Nxd5
7	Nf3	Re8
8	Be2	

The text move unwittingly opens the floodgates. Instead, White has a range of options starting with 8 a3 providing he has assessed the threats following 8 ... Nc6 9 Bxg7 Kxg7 10 axb4 Qf6. The computer is happy but it looks scary to a human.



8	...	Rxe5
9	Nxe5	Qf6
10	f4	

This looks to be an automatic reaction but White has some tactical resources to test Black e.g. 10 Bg4 when 10 ... Qxe5 11 Bxc8 Qxa1 12 Bxb7 turns the tables. 10 ... Nc6 would be the best reply because the obvious 10 ... Bxg4 11 Nxb4 Qxa1 12 Qb3 leaves Black needing to save his queen after 13 0-0 and 14 Nc3.

10	...	Nxe3
11	Qb3	Nxb2+
12	Kd1	Nxf4
13	Nxf7	

Ha ha! 13 ... Qxa1 14 Nh6+ leads to checkmate.

13	...	Qxf7
14	Bc4	

14 Qxb4 Nxe2 15 Kxe2 is level on material but after 15 ... Nc6, all the black pieces can spring in action against the exposed white king.

14	...	Be6
15	Bxe6	Nxe6
16	Re1	Nc6

16 ... Nd4 is supposedly stronger. It allows 17 Re8+ Bf8 but then, White has to exchange queens with a material deficit. Likewise 17 Qxb4 Nbc6 when the black knights have too many possibilities such as 18 Qc3 Qh5+ 19 Kc1 Ne2+.

17	Qxe6	Qxe6
18	Rxe6	Bd6
19	h4?	Be5
20	Nc3	Rf8

Avoiding 21 ... Rf1+ by 21 Ke2/Kc2 allows 21 ... Nd4+ with a fork. 21 Ke1 Bg3+ is no better and 21 Kc1 Rf1+ 22 Kb2 Rxa1 23 Kxa1 Kf7 trapping the rook.