

New Englander

Chess Club Update – October 2025

Chairman's Chatter

We seem not to be making best use of home advantage in the early stages of the season (P4 D2 L2) whereas our only away matches was a whitewash victory! Looking on the bright side, we have drawn against last year's champions in Division One and should be congratulating the C team on making a winning debut.

There is a long way to go and this month sees the announcement of the draw for the Club Championship which begins in November. Please put these fixtures in your diaries - it is going to get quite busy.

Paul Hanks

Puzzle Problem

White to play and mate in 2.



Last Month's solution (A Studenetsky 1958)

Position : 6K1/8/2Q5/8/6B1/8/5pP1/5kr1

1 Qh6 Rxc2/Ke1 2 Qc1# [1 ... Kxc2 2 Qh3#; 1 ... Rh1 2 Qxh1#]

Diary Dates

12th October An event of three rounds of rapidplay for the East Anglian Counties Junior (U18) Championship staged in King Edward VII hall, Newmarket. Enquiries by parents to Paul Kemp at paulkemp64@gmail.com.

22nd-23rd November County Individual at Christie Hall, Wansford. Click for [Entry details](#)

Website to Watch

Europe has more than its fair share of championships in October.

From 5th to 14th, Georgia hosts the [European Team Chess Championship](#) in Batumi with both Open and Women's events broadcast live.

From 19th to 25th, it will be the [European Club Cup](#) in Rhodes.

Both events may be short of American participation as they overlap the [US Championship](#) being held in St Louis from 12th to 24th. Please note the latter event has a "Fischer bonus" of \$64,000 for anyone who wins all 11 games!

Result Round-up

New England Club Ladder

White		Black	
B Sivaraj	1	0	C Russell

Position	Change		Player	Record @ 24/09/25
	Month	Overall		
1			M Patrickson	1
2			P Spencer	0
3			B Sivaraj	1
4			C Russell	0

Cambridgeshire League

New England A	1	Peterborough A	4
P Walker	0	F Kaichinger	1
M Patrickson	0	D Walton	1
R Ilett	½	N Chedd	½
B Stephens	0	A Akintola	
P Spencer	½	D Redden	½

New England A	2½	St Neots A	2½
P Walker	½	A Chapman	½
M Patrickson	½	R Gompelman	½
R Ilett	1	J Vieira	-
P Hanks	½	P Barkas	½
P Spencer	0	M Cooper	1

New England B	1	St Ives B	3
B Stephens	0	D Fleming	1
P Spencer	½	S Caraway	½
B Sivaraj	½	R Ling	½
S Walker	0	M Rippon	1

New England B	2	Peterborough B	2
M Patrickson	0	D Redden	1
B Stephens	1	G Hristov	0
P Spencer	0	J Blair	1
B Sivaraj	1	L Galea	0

Rookwood B	0	New England C	3
D Laker	0	J Sutherland	1
L Levet	0	J Peoples	1
M Teague	0	A Thobani	1

New England Grand Prix

Player	Champ	Ladder	League			Cup	Team 7000	Total	TPR*
			A	B	C				
B Sivaraj		1	1½					2½	1815
R Ilett			1½					1½	1968
M Patrickson		1	½	0				1½	1678
P Spencer		0	½	½				1	1490
J Sutherland					1			1	1759
J Peoples					1			1	1766
A Thobani					1			1	1751
B Stephens			0	1				1	1644
P Hanks			½					½	1781
P Walker			½					½	1761
S Walker				0				0	1393
C Russell		0						0	1325

* Tournament Performance Rating is approximate

Match of the Month

I am presenting the game I played in the final round at Manchester. It was significant for me because it secured me joint second place in the minor section, winning 4 of 5, and it was the first time I've won against anyone over 1600 in a classical game. However, I'm somewhat embarrassed to share it because we both made loads of mistakes and I only really won because my opponent failed to notice a mating threat at the end.

John Peoples

Thomas Marwood v John Peoples Manchester Summer Congress Rd 5; 17.08.2025

1 d4 d5
2 Nf3 Nf6
3 c4 c6
4 g3 dxc4

The Catalan is sufficiently tricky to have been chosen as an Opening of the Month studied earlier in the year in the Club's online Masterclass sessions. Our focus there was the tactics that can arise on the long light-squared diagonal if Black tries to maintain the pawn advantage with b7-b5. Here, Black steers clear of these complications.

5 Bg2 Bf5
6 b3

It is always pleasant to get the endorsement of elite players by finding one of their games that followed the same course as your play. Sadly, this is not the case because generally White plays Nf3-e5 at some point with attacking possibilities whilst also planning to recover the c4 pawn.

6 ... e6
7 0-0 Nbd7

White is determined to play a gambit and Black equally firmly refuses! With the black bishop covering the b1 square, acceptance on either of the previous two moves may be possible because 7 ... cxb3 8 Qxb3 Nbd7 9 Qxb7 is met by 9 ... Rb8 winning a piece.

8 bxc4 Be7
9 Nc3

Around here, the computer points out 9/10 Nh4 as an alternative to secure the bishop pair for White.

9 ... 0-0
10 Re1 Nb6
11 Qb3 Qc7

This develops but is wayward. White can gain time with the actual reply or space with 12 e4. Instead, Black could deny White further occupation of the centre with 11 ... Ne4 or, according to Fritz, the surprising 11 ... e5. The hidden point after 12 dxe5 Nfd7 is that 13 ... Be6 will overload the knight on f3 which cannot both defend the pawn on e5 and that on c4 with Nf3-d2.

12 Bf4 Qc8
13 a4

Whilst this is a sensible choice, 13 e4 would be consistent with move 10 and the chance may not come again!

13 ... c5
14 dxc5

Black has rightly challenged White's central control and threatened the weak pawn with 14 ... cxd4 15 Nxd4 Qxc4 though 16 Qxc4 Nxc4 17 Bxb7 keeps the material balance. However, the vulnerability remains in an exacerbated form after the text move isolates the pawn. White cannot resolve this immediately with 14 d5 due to the zwischenzug 14 ... exd5 15 cxd5 c4

with 16 Qb5 Bd7 17 Qa5 Bd8 to follow but 14 a5 Nbd7 15 d5 removes this option by blocking d7 and presses for a passed pawn.

14 ... Bxc5

Why not 14 ... Qxc5? It could become quite fun after 15 Nd2 Ng4 (e.g. 16 Nd1/Rf1 e5 when the bishop is embarrassed) 16 Nce4 Bxe4 17 Nxe4 (17 Bxe4 allows mate in 2) 17 ... Qxc4. With the move played, there is a crafty trap i.e. if 15 a5, then 15 ... Nxc4 due to the discovered check after 16 Qxc4.

15 Ne5 Bd4
16 Rac1 Bxc3

Black could again exploit the undefended f2 square with 16 ... Qc5 and place the knight on e5 under double attack.

17 Rxc3

This appears to be an automatic response but it takes a computer to look deeper and investigate 17 Qxc3. It might be rejected by a human out of hand due to 17 ... Nxa4 but after 18 Qa3

- 18 ... Nc5, there is the surprise 19 Nc6.
- Against 18 ... Nb6, the analysis is more nebulous but typical of Catalan pressure. The basic idea is 19 e4 Bg6 20 Qb4 (threatening 21 c5 Nbd7 22 c6) 20 ... Nbd7 21 Nxg6 hxg6 22 e5 and 22 Bxb7.

17 ... Ne4
18 Rcc1 Nc5
19 Qb5 Be4

Having brought the knight across, 19 ... Nxa4 must be examined but which knight? 19 ... Ncxa4 allows 20 c5 but 19 ... Nbxa4 20 e4 Bg6 21 Nxg6 hxg6 22 Bd6 Rd8 23 e5 gives White an initiative. Nevertheless, it is probably the best try.

20 Bxe4 Nxe4
21 a5 Nd6

Now Black must fight to save the knight on b6. 21 ... f6 immediately keeps material most equal after 22 axb6 fxe5 23 Qxe5 but Black remains indelicate with a poor structure.

22 Qb4 f6
23 axb6

A reprieve. 23 Nd3/Nf3 leave Black with too much en prise.

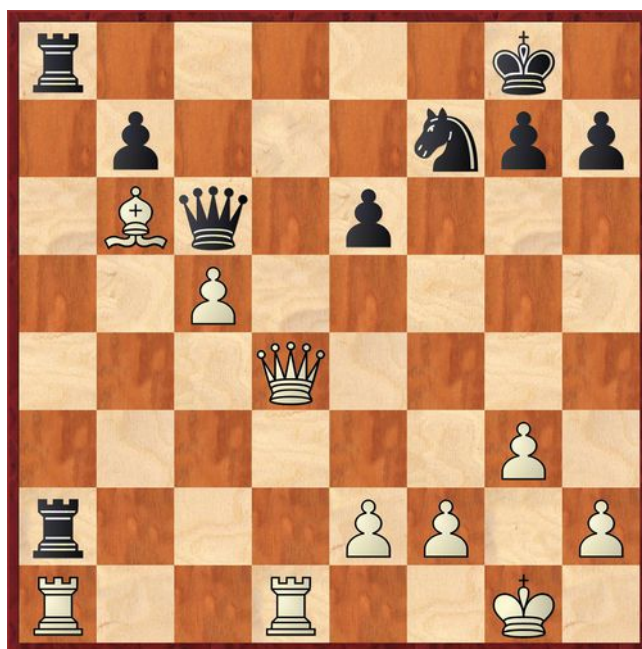
23 ... fxe5
24 Bxe5 Nf7
25 Bc7

Fritz rates this as almost the worst bishop move but it is hard to see why. Maybe, it is about exploiting the long diagonal by 25 Bc3 axb6 26 Qxb6 Ra6 27 Qb2.

25 ... axb6
26 Bxb6 Ra6
27 c5 Qc6
28 Red1 Rfa8
29 Qd4 Ra2

Black has counterplay which White tries to snuff out with exchanges.

30 Ra1



30 ... Rxa1

Black will see the right idea but objectively too late. If 30 ... Ng4 is played here with the threat of 31 ... Nh3+ 32 Kf1 Qh1#, the defence 31 f3 is less effective due to the shot 31 ... Qxf3 when

- 32 exf3 Nxf3+ 33 Kf1 (33 Kh1 Rxh2#) Nxh2+ leads to a standard perpetual check.
- If 32 Qd8+ Rxd8 (leave 32 ... Qf8 as a calculation exercise!) 33 Rxd8 Kf7 34 exf3 Nxf3+ 35 Kf1 Nxh2+ 36 Ke1 Rxa1+ is to Black's advantage and 34 Rd7+ Kg6 will effectively transpose.

A firework finale!

31 Rxa1 Rxa1+
32 Qxa1 Ng5
33 Qe5??

Black would not have the above resources after 33 f3 and instead of the drawing perpetual check, would be left with a difficult endgame. However, sometimes luck lends a hand...

34 ... Nh3+ 0-1