

Newbury Chess Club

Newsletter – Summer 2008



Welcome to our summer newsletter, which gives details of the progress (or otherwise!) of our club teams. General chess chit-chat occurs at our regular Thursday meetings. For those who come rarely, or who have yet to come, we hope this newsletter plugs some of the gaps and perhaps encourages you to join us.

Newcomers are always welcome. Just contact me or Mike, to find out more.

David Skyrme, Editor.

Ferocious or Friendly?

The answer is both! When some of our hardened players face each other in over-the-board combat, it sometimes seems that chess is a ferocious game. This is particularly true when the chess clock is ticking, typically giving each player only 5 or 10 minutes to make **all their moves**. All the casual observer sees is rapid hand movements, pieces jumping into new positions and hears the loud thumping as the players fingers hit the clock. Then suddenly, all is quiet – another sigh of relief, shrug of the shoulders, and after a few seconds break, the clocks are reset for another game.

For the rest of us, the game is more leisurely. We don't limit ourselves by being slaves to the clock. We take whatever time we need. Whilst we typically have 2-3 matches a night each – and swap opponents during the evening – it sometimes happens that there is a grand intellectual tussle that takes most of the evening.

However, whichever type of game you like, even the fast and furious, at our club it is all done in a friendly atmosphere. That's why we call it social chess. And – as the writer has discovered – you don't need to talk your opponents language to have a good chess game, as he has done on many occasions on holiday, such as at the 24-hour a day club at Santiago de Cuba.

Chess Laws: Did You Know?

"If a game has begun with colours incorrectly reversed, then it shall continue if more than one quarter of the time allocated to both players to the first time control has elapsed." (FIDE Rule 8.6)



The club meets every Thursday evening from 7.30pm at Mary Hare Grammar School (room 16 in the main teaching block). If you need directions and a map, visit our website or contact David Skyrme (david@skyrme.com).

Summer break - our last club evening before the break is 31st July. The club re-opens on Thursday 4th September.



First Team Has Best Season For Years

Since Christmas, the first team (Newbury A) have played four matches and managed only two draws – against Reading B and Crowthorne. In spite of this, it has been our best season from many years. We were unable to play already relegated Bracknell, who were unable to make any of the rescheduled dates offered. The net result is that we finish up exactly half-way down the league table (fifth out of nine teams in Division 1) with the following results:

Played 8; Won 3; Drawn 3; Lost 3.

The games have been so tough that on top board, Mike Marlow did not win a single match and yet his grading went up ten points! Everybody else won at least one game, and the other players were Lewis Martin (a student at Mary Hare School), Danny Sparkes, Clive Walley, Martin Bush and long-serving captain, Keith Savoy.

Mike Marlow, Club Chairman

Problem Answer (see overleaf)

No! The play continued 27..... Nh4!! 28 resigns. White cannot take with his knight (he loses his queen). If Qxh4, then 28 ... Qxg3 threatening Rxg4. Black's queen can also go later to e2 threatening to take White's bishop. White has to play carefully. Several variations are mate in 3 moves and even with smarter moves like Kh2, white does not have much hope. According to Fritz, white's best response is 28. Be3. However white's previous move 27. g4 is seen as "strolling merrily down the path to disaster". 27 Rcd1 was better.

Second Team Struggle Against The Odds

The second team (Newbury B) have generally played somewhat better than their losing 6-0 whitewash against Eton at the beginning of the season. In recent matches the losing margin has varied from 4 (against Camberley C) to more modest levels of 2 (vs. Sandhurst B) and only one (on two occasions vs. Bourne End B and Reading E).

We never did regain the heady heights of a draw in November against Maidenhead C. Only a win through default by Wellington College stopped us being bottom of the table.

This year, with the odd exception, we have been able to field full teams for away games, which has been our Achilles heel in the past. This is due to regular participation by our recent joiners, including Ben Dyer, Steve Morgan, David Nicholls and Rena Fuell. In fact, to give everyone a chance to play, we have rotated players on the bottom two boards.

Why have we done so badly? Put simply, our opposing teams are much stronger than us. In more than half the games, the rating difference was on average over 30 points. It is therefore commendable that Paul Cope, Ben Dyer, Steve Morgan and David Skyrme drew or beat opponents with gradings 40 points higher than theirs. Holding their own (generally through draws) on top boards were Jim Delderfield and Brian Medhurst.

David Skyrme: B Team Captain.

A Move In Time?



A. 40 moves (per player) in 90 mins plus 30 minutes (to complete all moves) plus 30 seconds per move.

- B. 40 moves in 2 hours, then 1 hour
- C. All the moves in 30 minutes
- D. 30 moves in 75 minutes then 15 minutes
- E. 36 moves in 90 minutes then 90 minutes
- F. All the moves in 75 minutes

Confused? These are some of the time controls for various leagues and tournaments.

- A. FIDE standard tournament rules
- B. 4 Nations League
- C. Typical RapidPlay tournament

D. Berkshire League Division 1

E. Ditto – if both players agree to adjournment

F. Berkshire league Division 3.

So if you play in more than one league or event, it is worth double checking before you start to play! Note, also that with modern digital clocks, more events and leagues are using Fischer-type (named after Bobby) controls where time is added after each move. For example, the Surrey Border League has adopted 60 minutes plus 60 seconds per move.

It's generally thought that time controls were first used around the 1860s when referees or 'timing secretaries' used stop watches to time moves. The invention of the mechanical chess clock is attributed to generally Thomas Wilson of Manchester, although it was patented by Amandus Schierwater of Liverpool in 1884. It was used for the London international tournament of 1883. It was not until 1899 that the flag to indicate 'time up' was proposed by Dutchman H. Meijer. In these early days it was considered unsporting to claim a win on time! *

Problem: Did the Knight Retreat?

The following is the position after white's move 27 in a recent game between our Chairman Mile (playing white for Slough Sharks in the NC4L league) and Daniel Bisby of Richmond. Black has some pressure on but the route to victory is not immediately clear cut – or is it?



Q. Which piece is reknowned for its excesses?

A. The knight. It goes over the top!

* Source: www.chess.about.com