



Dublin Chess Club's **Armstrong Cup** Winning Team May 2024 flanked by the Bodley Cup (left) and the BEA Cup (right). **The Dublin Chess Club Team:** From left to right) **Oisin Benson, Robert Murtagh, John Kennedy, Martin Schmidt, Max Lohr, Jonathan O'Connor, Daniel Otero** (kneeling), **WIM Trisha Kanyamarala, Tarun Kanyamaral** & the late **Eddie O'Connor**.

The end of summer heralds the return of the Leinster Leagues and the Bodley, BEA, O'Hanlon, Ennis, Heidenfeld and Armstrong Cups. The first division, the Armstrong Cup, has an especially illustrious tradition and is one of the longest running chess leagues in the world. Inaugurated in 1888, W. Armstrong presented a perpetual trophy to the victorious Phoenix Chess Club in 1889, who finished ahead of City and Kingstown (Dún Laoghaire).

The Armstrong Cup was contested every year until 1915 when a succession of political, military and civilian crises occasioned by the 1916 Easter Rising and the War of Independence (1919-1921) led to the cancellation of league fixtures. The league recommenced in 1922 when Dublin Chess Club took the title. The league continued every year until 2020 when Gonzaga were proclaimed champions after nine rounds owing to Covid restrictions. The league was cancelled for the same reason in 2021 and 2022.

The picture above features the current champions, Dublin Chess Club, and includes the late and much lamented Eddie O'Connor, a hugely popular player who passed away after a short illness this summer. One of Eddie's most spectacular wins will feature in a future edition of the Bulletin.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam.

Anyone interested in learning more about Irish Chess History should visit Sean Coffey's superb website, which is an extremely valuable historical resource and from which I garnered many of the above facts.

[View Sean Coffey's irlchess.com site by clicking here.](http://www.irlchess.com)

In this day and age, when weekend tournament games are live streamed on digital boards, it seems strange that nobody gets to see the games of the Leinster Leagues, especially as the games are played at a classical time control and are FIDE rated. The fact that only one game is played per day ensures a high standard of play, with players being able to prepare for their likely opponent in the weeks leading up to a match.

The puzzle sections of this Bulletin feature eight puzzles from the first two rounds of the Leinster Leagues as well as an extended analysis of the middlegame and endgame from my own Round 1 Armstrong Cup encounter against current Irish Champion IM David Fitzsimons. The Chess Bud Bulletin invites the submission of any interesting or important games from the Connaught, Leinster, Munster or Ulster Chess leagues.

[Click here for the latest results from the Leinster Chess Leagues!](#)

This edition also reports on the recent Cork Chess Congress. Special thanks to Mark Watkins, Andrew Murphy, Nitish Arun and Conor Sheehan for sending on some interesting games and photos, including Nitish's defeat of his first International Master IM Oleg Gubanov. Special thanks also to Lorcan Heron of Galway Chess Club for annotating his fascinating game against Cian Ward from the ESCC School Championships last June,

Finally, in international news, the young American GM Christopher Yoo was expelled from the US Championships, when he lost the run of himself after losing to top seed Fabiano Caruana, who boldly sacrificed the exchange with **13... Nxe5!** in the below position and went on to win a memorable game.



[Click here to view Jonzer and Marko's extended analysis of Yoo versus Caruana.](#)



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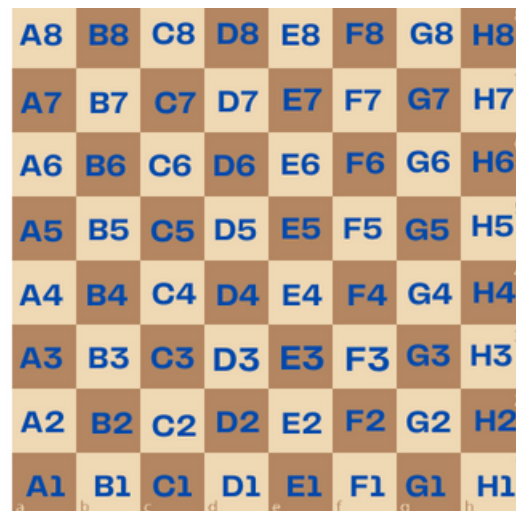


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How to Read Chess Notation: The Lowdown on Algebraic Notation!

- A chessboard has **64 Squares**.
- **Every square has a specific co-ordinate** which allows players to pinpoint the square they move a piece to.
- This helps players to write down the moves of their games and also to read and play through the games of other players in magazines, newspapers or books.
- **At the beginning of a game, the a1 square is always occupied by a white rook** and all of the other white minor pieces and the white king and queen are lined up on the first rank with the other white rook resting on h1. The white pawns start on the second rank from a2-h2.
- **Similarly, the black rooks always sit on a8 and h8 at the beginning of a game.** The black minor pieces and the king and queen are lined up on the eighth rank and the black pawns sit on the seventh rank from a7-h7.
- When a chess piece captures another piece, i.e. a white rook on a1 captures its black counterpart on a8, **the letter 'x' is used to indicate that the capture** of a piece has taken place, i.e. **Ra1 x Ra8**.
- Players who are used to notating their games, will often shorten this to **Rxa8**, indicating that a white rook has captured whatever black piece stood on a8. This is the short-hand notation used in every chess publication including this bulletin.
- If the white rook had taken its black counterpart on a8 with check, you add a plus sign to denote the check, i.e. **Rxa8+**
- **Castling Kingside** (short castling) is denoted by **0-0**
- **Castling Queenside** (long castling) is denoted by **0-0-0**
- Pro-tip. When writing down a pawn move, such as opening the game with the white king's pawn and moving it two squares, i.e. **1. e2-e4**, you can simply write down **1. e4**. If black were to respond with the Scandinavian Defence and move his or her d-pawn two squares, this would be denoted by **1...d5** (as in the diagram on the right and the illustrative game below).
- When making a move with a knight, bishop, rook or queen you must always specify which piece moved to that square, i.e. Rc3, Qa4, Nxe6 & Bc4+.



Master the Skill of Reading and Annotating Chess Games in Three Easy Steps!

1) [Play through the world's oldest known game - Francesco di Castellvi vs Narciso Vinyoles, Valencia, Spain, 1475 - on Chess.com by clicking here](#) 

2) Then try to play the game yourself on a real chess board by reading the game score below from 549 years ago!

1.e4 d5 2. exd5 Qxd5 3. Nc3 Qd8 4. Bc4 Nf6 5. Nf3 Bg4 6. h3 Bxf3 7. Qxf3 e6 8. Qxb7 Nbd7 9. Nb5 Rc8 10. Nxa7 Nb6 11. Nxc8 Nxc8 12. d4 Nd6 13. Bb5+ Nxb5 14. Qxb5+ Nd7 15. d5 exd5 16. Be3 Bd6 17. Rd1 Qf6 18. Rxd5 Qg6 19. Bf4 Bxf4 20. Qxd7+ Kf8 21. Qd8# 1-0

3) [Finally practice and learn how to master the co-ordinates of a chess board by clicking on this link to complete the Lichess Notation Challenge!](#)



1. e4 e5 2. Qh5 Nc6 3. Bc4



The **Beginner's Corner** begins where we left off in **Bulletin No. 1**. The white queen and bishop stand primed to deliver mate on the 'magic square' on f7. Black must react!

3... g6!



A natural reflex. What better way to prevent checkmate on f7 by blocking with the g-pawn and attacking the white king in the process? Both 3...Qe7 or 3...Qf6 would also have scuppered white's nefarious intentions.

4. Qf3



A tactical retreat with a deadly threat. This time the white queen attacks the 'magic square' from a different direction - along a vertical line - from the f3 to the f7 square. Many players starting out in chess fall for this version of **Scholar's Mate**, as they forget that the queen operates and creates threats on vertical and horizontal lines as well as on the diagonal (i.e. from h5 to f7).

4... Nf6



Black takes the opportunity to block the queen attack on f7 by developing the knight to f6. Note how the white queen has already moved twice and is now sitting on the best square for white's king's knight, i.e. on f3.

5. Qb3?



The white queen moves yet again. That's three times in five moves! White is breaking the maxim that **'You should never develop your queen too early in the game and ignore developing your minor pieces, i.e. your bishops and knights'**. White will soon regret this cavalier attitude to development.

5...Nd4!



The counter-attack begins! The black knight lands on d4, attacking the white queen on b3 and standing supreme in the middle of the board, its sphere of influence radiating out - like an octopus - in eight different directions encompassing the c2, b3, b5, c6, e6 f5, f3 & e2 squares.

The premise of white's opening set-up is to take on f7. If white declines to do so now, all of white's play thus far will have been in vain. In for a penny, in for a pound!

6. Bxf7+ Ke7 7.Qc4



Take note of how many times the white queen has moved already. Four times in seven moves. And now it is under attack again and will soon move for a fifth, sixth and seventh time etc.

When you bring your queen out too early, she can get bounced around the board leading to a loss of time and eventually material. The variation in question is a textbook example of how neglecting your development in favour of attacking with your queen can quickly go wrong.

7... b5!



After this dynamic queenside pawn advance, the white queen is unable to protect the white bishop on f7 any longer. The b3 square is out of bounds owing to the black knight on d4, the d5 square is covered by the black knight on f6. Moving the queen to e6 is also out of the question owing to dxe6 or Nxe6. The bishop on f7 is lost.

8. Qc5+



The black king can already take the white bishop on f7, as the white queen is no longer defending it. What about black's e5 pawn you may ask? When black takes the bishop, can't the white queen simply capture the e5-pawn?

Before white gets too excited about the prospect of gaining a pawn for a piece, however, there is an important question white had better consider.

Q. What is the white queen doing on c5 that it won't be doing if it stands on e5?

Let's take a closer look at the choice facing white after black captures the bishop.

8... Kxf7



The capture of the bishop on f7, places the white queen in immediate danger from black's dark-squared bishop on f8 which is no longer blocked by the black king. The white queen cannot, therefore, remain on c5.

Surveying the above position, however, we also see that the white queen is in fact protecting the c2 pawn. Caught between a rock and a hard place, something has to give.

A. If the white queen captures the black pawn on e5, black's knight on d4 will swoop on the c2 pawn forking the white king on e1 and the white rook on a1.

It transpires that white can win the pawn by 9. Qxe5 but any celebration would be short-lived as black win end up a rook and bishop to the good!

9. Qc3



The white queen moves for the 6th time in 9 moves. All this time, the white knights and dark-squared bishop on c1 stand idle on the first rank, having a grand old time of it!

9... Bb7!



Setting a trap for white. Black could also be winning easily after the simple capture 9...Nxe4!

10. d3?



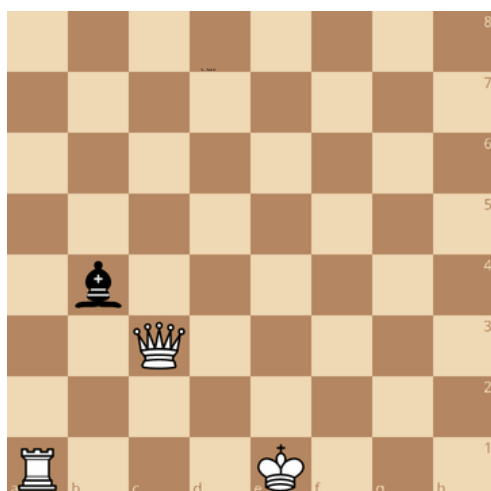
The most natural move but, as it happens, a fatal mistake. Now black has a fantastic '**combination**,' i.e. a '**tactical sequence**' that wins the black queen!

10... Bb4!!

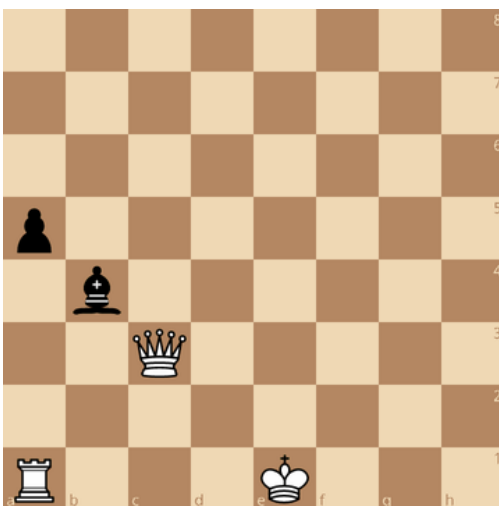


Hang on a second, black has just moved his bishop to b4, a square attacked by the white queen. Has black just lost the plot? Or is there some clever strategy in play? Let's unpack the idea tactic by tactic.

The Bishop Pin



The black bishop has landed on b4 where it is attacking the white queen on c3 and x-raying the white king on e1 behind it. Here, if white were to try to move the queen out of danger to the b3 or d3 squares for example, this would place the white king in check. This would be an illegal move as a king can never be placed in check. In the position above, as in the game, the white queen can simply capture the bishop as no black pawn or piece is defending it. Let's consider the above position, with one major difference...



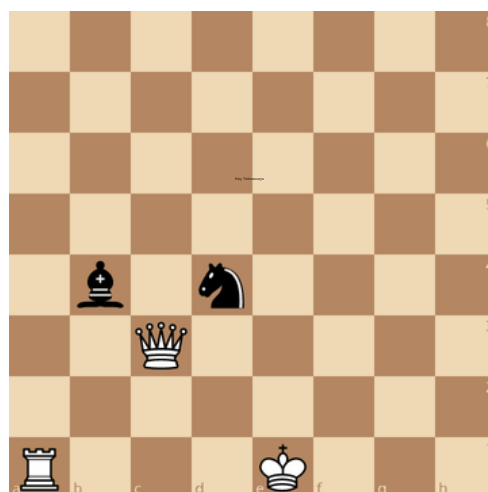
In this example., the black pawn on a5 defends the black bishop on b4. This means that if the white queen were to capture the bishop on b4, the pawn on a5 would take back.

Unfortunately, this represents a bad trade for white when one considers the **'Relative Values of Pieces'**.

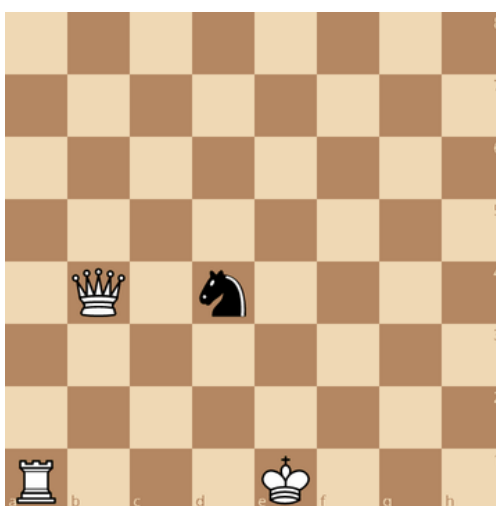
A queen is worth nine points, whereas, the bishop is only worth three points.

The Knight Fork

Let's continue unpacking the combination in the main game where - you may remember - a black knight already stands on d4 when black lands their bishop on b4.



Here, the white queen cannot take the black knight on d4 as this would place the white king on e1 in check from the black bishop on b4. There is no reason why white cannot capture the bishop, however, and white must in fact do so, as the bishop will capture the queen on the next move.



The white queen captures the bishop, but any celebration is shortlived as black now has a winning tactic to capture white's queen. Black used a clever bishop pin to lure the white queen to the b4 square. Now, a simple knight fork on c2 can bag the queen.

A knight fork is a tactic whereupon a knight attacks two or more pieces at the same time.

A Royal Fork



Forcing the white queen to capture the bishop on b4.

11. Qxb4



Now black has a brilliant *coup de grâce* that completes the tactical 'Combination.'

11... Nxc2+!!



When a knight attacks an opponent's king, rook and queen simultaneously, this is known as a **'Family'** or **'Royal Fork.'** There are few more pleasing ways to win your opponents queen! Play through this line over a board again and again until you know it by heart. This is the way!

Position 1

Suzana Posmuga (1816) vs Nitish Arun (1912), Rd. 1, Masters Section, Cork Chess Congress 2024

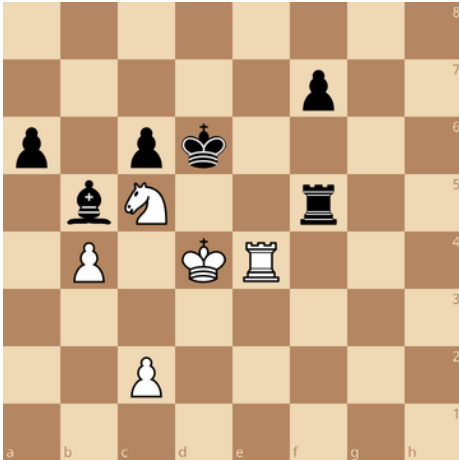


Black to play.

Black has a simple tactic to win material. *Clue: Imagine the Impossible, i.e. what would you play if white had no pawn on d4?* Now find a way to make the impossible a reality!

Position 3

Liam Moran (1376) vs Hugh Taylor (1577), Bray-Greystones 'B' vs Bray-Greystones 'A', Rd.1, Bodley Cup South 2024



White to play

White to play has a simple way to win material here. Can you see how?

Position 2

Will Sidney (1879) vs CCIM Jonathan O'Connor (2159), Dublin vs UCD, Rd. 1, Armstrong Cup 2024



White to play

The black queen is about to capture the white rook in the corner. Only an immediate queen exchange will save the day. Can you see how white managed to force the queens off the board?

Position 4

Conor Sheehan (1876) vs Nitish Arun (1912), Rd. 3, Masters Section, Cork Chess Congress 2024



Black to play

Black has a simple plan that leads to the win of white's pawn on e5. Can you find it?



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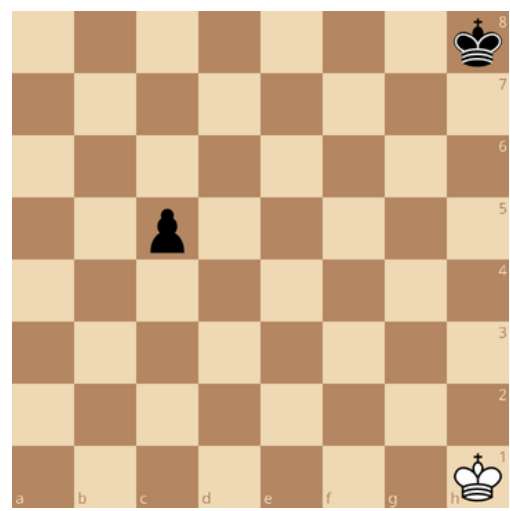
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**The 2024 Irish
Champion IM David
Fitzsimons**

Importance of occupying the promotion square

King and Pawn Endings are the only endings where counting squares can be as important as calculation.



Black to play

The above position is a case in point. If you find yourself playing black in this position, before pushing the c-pawn, in a bid to promote to a queen, you should first count how many squares the pawn needs to traverse to get to c1. It transpires that the pawn must pass through four squares: i.e. c4, c3, c2 & c1, before it can become a queen.

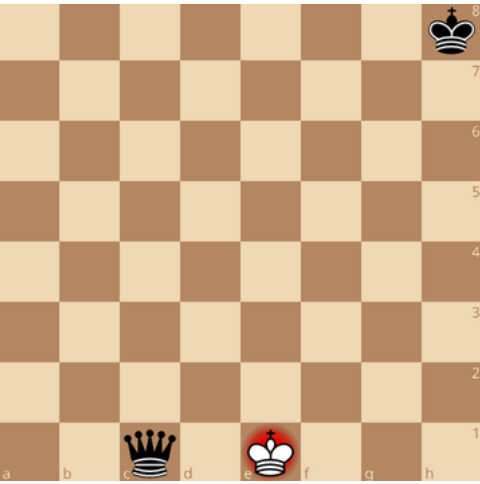
Your next task is to work out how much time, i.e. how many squares, the white king must traverse to gain control over the queening square.

The d2 square is white's desired destination as it is adjacent to black pawn's queening square on c1. A quick count reveals that the white king must also travel across four squares, i.e. g1, f1, e1, d2. It is black to play, however, so what does the advantage of the first move signify? Can the white king catch the black pawn if black moves first? Let's find out!

1...c4 2. Kg1 c3 3. Kf1 c2 4. Ke1

The black pawn is but one square from promotion. Unfortunately, for white, their king comes up one move short and is unable to stop the pawn.

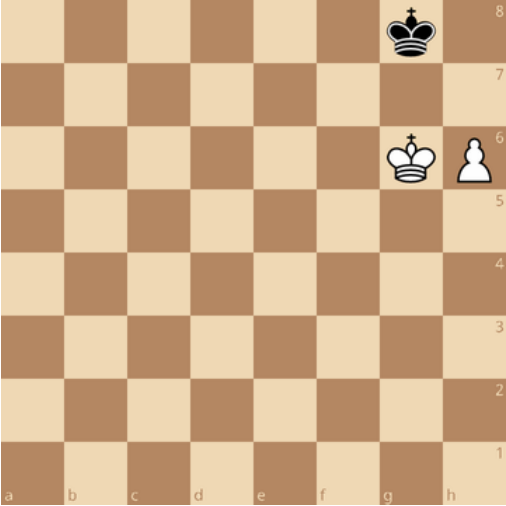
4... c1 = Q+



The key takeaway we can glean from this endgame is that white would have had to have moved first in the initial position, i.e. **1. Kg1 c4 2. Kf1 c3 3. Ke2 c2 4. Kd2** to have been able to stop black from safely promoting the pawn, as now **4...c1 = Q** sees the newly crowned queen's reign come to an abrupt end after **5. Kxc1** with a draw.

If black manages to queen safely, as in the above diagram, mate should quickly follow as long as black knows how to mate with a king and queen! If you are not sure how to do it, why not test yourself!

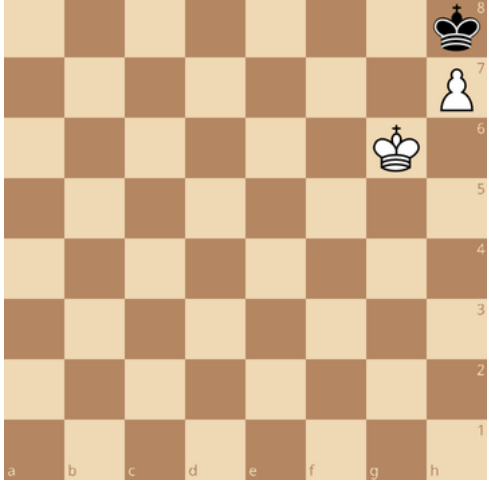
King and Rook Pawn vs King



Black to Play
Theoretical Draw

One of the most important theoretical positions in chess. White is a pawn up but cannot win as there is no way to budge the black king from the corner, where it stands on the queening square. Attempts to push the king out of the corner end in stalemate.

1...Kh8! 2. h7 Stalemate



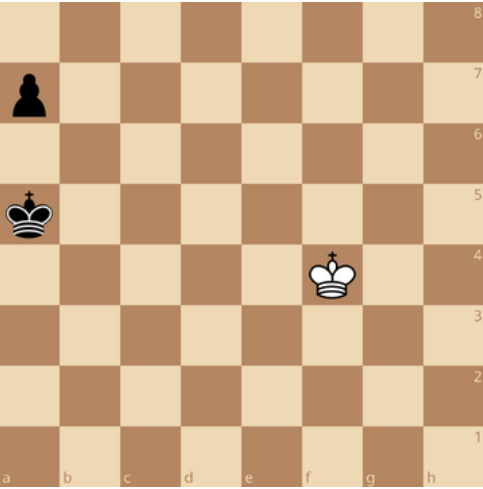
The game ends in stalemate, as the black king is not in check and has no legal move. It can neither take the h7 pawn which is defended by the white king on g6, nor can the black king move to the g8 square which is attacked by the h7 pawn.

Knowing that a '**King and Rook-pawn versus King**' is a **theoretical draw** is important. The opportunity might arise for you to offer your opponent the chance to exchange pieces into this ending. Calculating that they will be a pawn up, they might just go along with your plan. And before they realise what is happening, your king will have managed to get to the queening square or the square beside it, after which the game is drawn.

This is one of the many advantages of studying basic endgames. Not only does knowledge of theoretical positions help you to draw or win a specific position, such knowledge also enables you to strategise and try to bring about a drawn ending through judicious strategic exchanges in the late middlegame or early endgame.

One of the principal reasons why Russia became such a powerhouse in world chess from the 1930s, something which endures to the present day, is because chess students in Russia are given a thorough grounding in how to play the endgame when starting out in chess. The reasoning is that if you can master basic, simple positions, you will be much better prepared to master more complex ones.

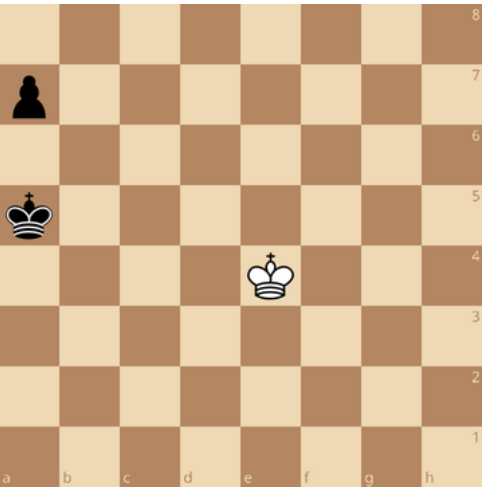
Berger - James Mason,
Breslau, 1899



White to play and draw

The battle is drawing to a close. The player playing black is none-other than James Mason, the Kilkenny-born nineteenth century Master who was one of the greatest chess players of the Victorian era. Mason has his sights set on queening his a-pawn. With best play, however, the position is an easy draw for Berger. White must get his king to a1 where it can occupy the queening square. Failing that, the white king needs to trap the black king on the queening square. All shall be revealed. Play on...

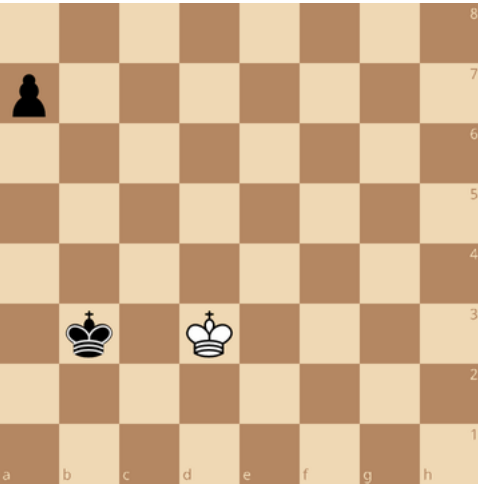
Line 1: White allows black to gain 'The Opposition'.



1...Ke4??

... allows the black king to shut the white king out of the corner... by achieving a position known as 'The Opposition'.

1...Kb4 2. Kd3 Kb3!



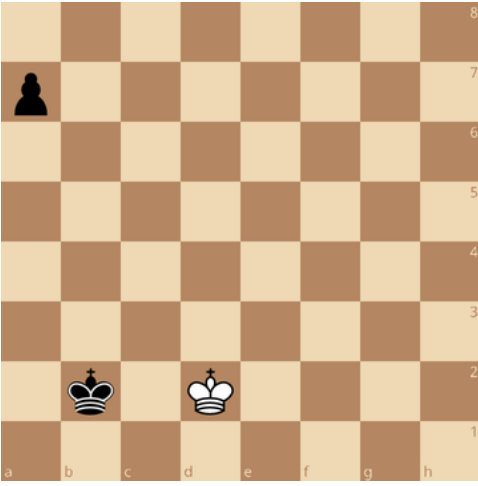
The Opposition:

When two kings stand opposite each other, as in the position above, they are said to be 'in opposition.' Whichever side has to move first, in this case white, is said to 'lose the opposition.'

3. Kd2

The black king must now regain the Opposition.

3... Kb2!



The path of the white king to the queening square on a1 is now permanently blocked. This clears the way for the black a-pawn to march up the board.

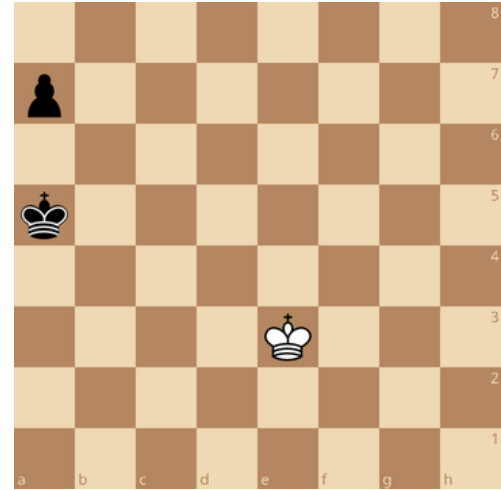
4. Kd3 a5! 5.Kc4 a4 6. Kb4 a3

And the black a-pawn coasts home to a1 and victory. Unfortunately for James Mason, Berger knew the way to secure a draw.

The concept of 'The Opposition' introduced above, will be expanded upon in the next bulletin.

Line 2: Forcing stalemate on the King in the Corner

1. Ke3!



The race is on! White needs to head for the first rank taking the fastest and most direct route.

1... Kb4 2. Kd2

White continues the quest to reach a1.

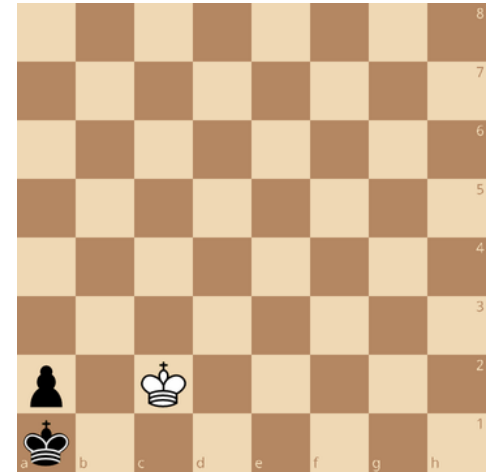
2... Kb3 3. Kc1

The white king has reached the first rank but cannot gain access to a1. There is a clever way to draw this ending, however, based on the concept of 'The Opposition' discussed earlier.

3... Ka2 4. Kc2 a5 5. Kc1 a4 6. Kc2 a3 7. Kc1

The moment of truth. If the black king stays on a1, it will be trapped in the corner by its own pawn leading to stalemate (see the diagram below). If on the other hand, the black king moves to b3, the white king stands ready to occupy the promotion square and secure a draw.

7...Ka1 8. Kc2 a2 Stalemate 1/2-1/2



Position 1

Ronán Kelly (1389) vs Vincent O'Connor (1518), Rd. 1, Minor Section, Cork Congress 2024



White to play

How can white now force a breakthrough on the queenside and gain the advantage.

Position 3

Dylan Duggan (1625) vs John Dunne (1711), Rd. 2, Kilkenny vs Inchicore, O'Hanlon Cup 2024

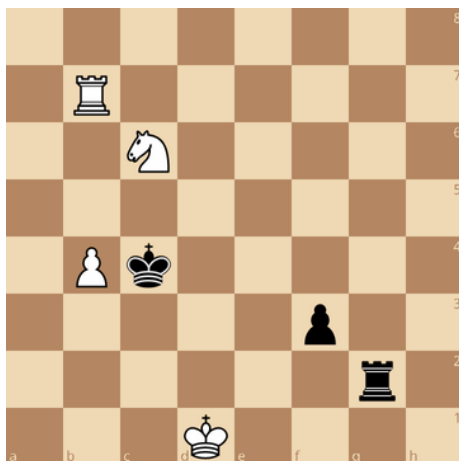


White to play

Black has just captured the white pawn on a5. Was this a wise move?

Position 2

Liam Moran (1376) vs Hugh Taylor (1577), Bray-Greystones 'B' vs Greystones 'A', Rd.1, Bodley Cup South 2024

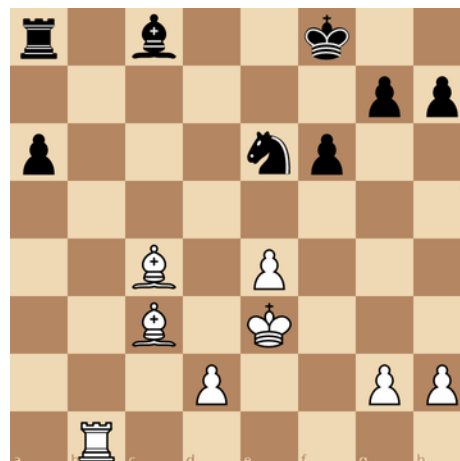


Black to play

After stirling defence, black can now obtain a drawn position with precise play. What should black play? Analyse the ending as far as you can till the game is an obvious draw.

Position 4

IM David Fitzsimons (2315) vs Dimitrios Mastrovasilis (2550), Ireland vs Greece, Rd. 3, Budapest Olympiad 2024



White to play

How did the current Irish Champion quickly force the resignation of his Grandmaster opponent at the recent Budapest Olympiad?

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Mark analysing with an opponent during a simultaneous display at the **Custom House, Dublin**, as part of **World Car Free Day**, 22nd September 2024

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A snap-shot from Round 1 of the Minor Section minutes after the commencement of the Cork Chess Congress 2024. **Ronán Kelly** (centre left) plays the London System against **Vincent O'Connor**. **Sean Kelleher** who finished on 4/5 and a share of 3rd-5th place in the Minor also appears (bottom left), while **Maksym Saltykov** (top left) contemplates what to play against **Adrien Metge's** French Defence. Photo: **Andrew Kelly**



The spacious, comfortable and well-lit playing venue at the **Blarney Woolen Mills**. Photo: **Andrew Kelly**



Cork Chess Congress Organiser **Mark Watkins** (left) presenting joint third place prize in the Masters Section to Will Sidney (right) of Enniscorthy. Photo: **Andrew Kelly**

Photo of the Fortnight!



Andrew Kelly took this nice shot of **Milan Cogelja** deep in thought analysing a rook endgame, during the Cork Chess Congress. Milan recently decided to take up chess, as his son Nico who scored 3.5 in the Majors is a serious player and Milan is regularly accompanying him to play chess tournaments. Milan scored an impressive 2.5/5 points in his tournament debut in the Minor Section. The photographer, inspired by Milan's success, is intending to make his own debut at the forthcoming Limerick Open. Best of luck Andrew!

If you would like to submit an interesting photograph from a recent Irish Tournament for a future bulletin email the editor at mark@chessbud.ie

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 exd4 4. Nxd4



The essential starting position of the Scotch Game. The exchange of the d-and e-pawns leads to what is known as an 'Open Position'. Open positions are generally recognisable as positions where both sets of bishops have open lines and opportunities to enter or influence the game. In 'Closed Positions,' where no pawns have been exchanged, knights reign supreme, as they can hop around the board, leaping over any obstacles in their path.

4... Bc5



The most dynamic and forcing option available to black. The white knight on d4 is immediately challenged. The most popular move is 4....Nf6 leading to highly complex middlegame positions after 5. Nxc6 bxc6 6. e5 Qe7 7. Qe2 Nd5

The other main possibility 4... Qh4?! has not fared well in the cyber age, as our silicon friends have found numerous ways to punish black for bringing the queen out to h4 so early.

Finally, black should avoid the beginner's error 4... Nxd4? when white has complete control of the centre of the board after the simple 5. Qxd4!

5. Be3 Qf6 6. c3



Both sides employ strategies aimed at fighting for control over d4 and the central dark-squares. White's last move propping up the centre by 6. c3 is something of a concession as the b1 knight is denied its most natural development square (c3) and can now only dream of landing on the 'd5' square. Here, black must choose a long-term strategy!

6... b6!



This was the weapon I had prepared against Cian. The idea is to long-castle and get two deadly bishops staring down the enemy king once white short-castles.

7. Bc4 Bb7 8. f3?!

This move bolsters the e4 pawn, but also weakens the g1-a7 diagonal, and in a way, strengthens my bishops.

8... Nge7 9. O-O O-O-O 10. Qd2

We now arrive at the first critical moment of the game. Here, Lorcan seizes the initiative and never let's it slip for the entirety of the game. Games like this are reminders to us all - regardless of our level - that 'A faint heart never won a fair point.'



Here, I had thought for a long time about playing g5 or h5, and starting some attack, and just before I was about to push one of those pawns, I realised that I could possibly play ...d5 and blow up the center. After calculating for about ten minutes, I realised it had to be the right move.

10...d5!



The thematic strike in the centre made even more powerful by the fact black has castled queenside and the black rook stands on d8 x-raying the white queen.

11. exd5?!

Somewhat suspect. White should keep the center closed and drop the bishop back to b3 instead.

11... Nxd5 12. Bg5?



This move looks like it just wins, but I have a strong tactical resource.

12... Nxd4!!



The weakened g1-a7 diagonal comes in handy!

A beautiful tactical idea. If white immediately captures the queen on f6, black captures on f3 with discovered double-check and then bags the white queen on d2. Heron's cool calculation here and as the game plays out is exceptional.

13. Kh1!

Ward finds the only move to stay in the game!

Sidestepping the deadly bishop on c5. Alternatively, if white tries 13. Bxf6 Nxf3+ 14. Kh1 Nxd2 15. Bxd8 Nxf1 16. Bxf1 Rxd8 black wins a piece. Taking the knight 13. cxd4 also fails to solve white's problems after 13... Qxd4+ 14. Qxd4 Bxd4+ 15. Kh1 Bxb2.

13... Qg6?!



This was the wrong move order, since now white can take the knight and be in a worse (but playable) position.

14. Bxd8?

White gets greedy! Relative best was 14. cxd4 f6 15. dxc5 fxg5 when black has a significant advantage.

14... Nxf3!!



A desperado, while also weakening the back rank and activating all of Black's pieces.

Another brilliant intuitive sacrifice. Heron's sacrifice follows the maxim of the first world champion Wilhelm Steinitz, that, 'When you have the initiative you have to pursue it or risk losing it.' The additional knight sacrifice, ignoring the fact that white has just captured his rook on d8, is entirely in the spirit of his combative play so far in the game. Rather, than pulling on the breaks with 14... Rxd8, black throws caution to the wind and bravely goes for an all-out-attack.

15. Rxf3 Rxd8 16. Bd3 Qh5



17. Bf5+ Kb8 18. Be4 Rd6

Defending the rook to get rid of the pin on the knight

19. Rd3 Nb4



Not the best idea, but the most flashy one. My other candidate move was 19... Be3, but after some calculation I decided that this was best.

20. cxb4

Alternatively, if 20. Bxb7 Rxd3 21. Bf3 Rxf3! is crushing for black.

20... Bxe4 21. Rxd6 Bxd6



White is up an exchange, but all three of Black's pieces are in perfect coordination, and White's only developed piece is the queen, which is only one square away from its home square.

22. h3 Qxh3+!



Black's enterprising tactical play and flurry of sacrifices, finally pays dividends as the black queen crashes through white's kingside pawn defences. The win is now a matter of technique.

23. Kg1 Qh2+ 24. Kf1 Qh1+ 25. Ke2 Qxg2+ 26. Ke3 Qf3+ 27. Kd4

King hunts in the middle of the board may seem straightforward, but you should not let yourself get carried away when mate seems imminent. This is in fact the time, when the greatest focus and precision is required. One false move and the enemy king may escape mate and survive into an ending.

On many occasions, I have had the opportunity to witness first-hand the calm focus that English GM Mark Hebden brings to the final phase of his games. Many players get up and walk around and start following other games, once they think the hard work is done. I have often noted how Hebden brings his complete focus to positions when the full-point is within reach, presumably so as to avoid getting distracted or to break his train of thought. Returning to the game in question, there is little chance of the white king escaping. Still, you never know!

27...Bd5!



Threatening ...c5 check and checkmate with a pawn.

28. Qe3 c5+ 29. Kd3 Be4+ 30. Kd2 Bf4!



Forcing white's resignation on the 30 move mark. **(1-0)**

This brilliant game is worthy of study by tactically-minded players. Great credit is owed to both players for entering whole-heartedly into the spirit of gambit play and creating this memorable encounter.

Devotees of the Scotch Game who employ the variation as white should probably focus their energies on the immediate 5. Nb3! rather than trying to bolster the white knight in the centre with 5. Be3 & 6. c3

It is fair to say that the variation employed by Ward is under something of a cloud after this and other games in the 6... b6! variation. Theory is fickle, however, and the line may make a comeback. We'll just have to wait and see. Many thanks to Lorcan Heron for annotating this game.



Lorcan Heron getting ready to compete in round 3 of the Cork Chess Congress 2024. Lorcan is 13 years old and attends the Bish in Galway. He represents Galway and Galway Junior chess clubs.

Photo: Fender Jackson,
www.theirelandpodcast.com

The Chess Bud Bulletin welcome submissions of annotated games from readers of all levels for inclusion in future bulletins.

Not all games submitted can be published in their entirety, however, so before annotating your game(s) and sending them to us, we would be grateful if you might create a lichess study with your game or games and then invite Chess Bud Ireland to view your Study. We will come back to you and let you know which game or games we would be interested in publishing.

Position 1

Remi Zdenko (1744) vs Bernard Boyle (1843), Kilkenny vs Elm Mount Rd. 1, Heidenfeld Cup 2024



White to play

White is an exchange and a pawn for a rook down. Black has a passed h-pawn. White can create a strategically won position by a clever manoeuvre however. Can you find white's winning set-up?

Position 2

Anahi Alexandra Munoz Cortez, (1868) vs IM Gulnar Mammadova, (2339), Rd. 1, Budapest Olympiad 2024



Black to play

The white position stands on the brink. How can black now force mate in a few moves?

Position 3

Lorcan Heron (1627) vs Adrian Metge, Irish Championships Open Weekender 2024

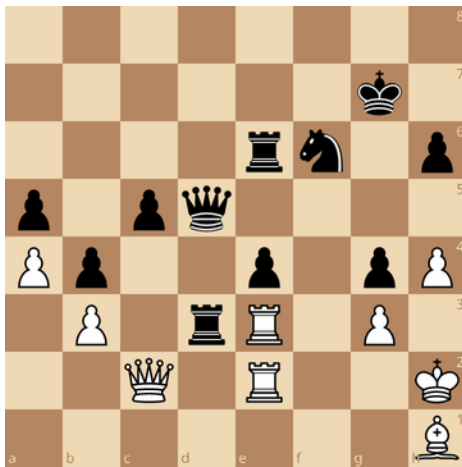


White to play

Here, white quickly broke down the black kingside defences to deliver a swift mate. Can you see how?

Position 4

Nitish Arun (1912) vs IM Oleg Gubanov (2275), Masters Section, Rd. 4, Cork Chess Congress 2024



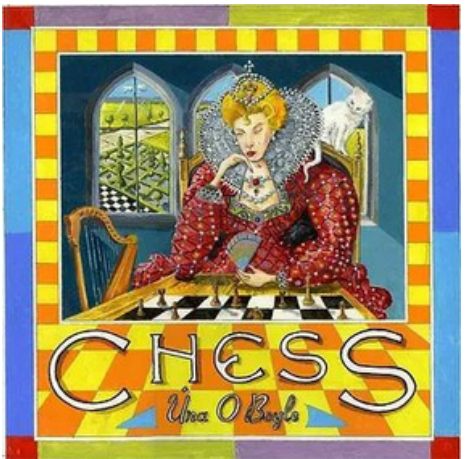
White to play

One of Ireland's strongest juniors found a clever way to enter a winning endgame and defeat his first IM. Can you see how?

Any chessplayers interested in learning chess through Irish need look no further than Úna Boyle's ground-breaking chess primer for beginners 'Ficheall'.



Una's Chess Primer proved to be such a success in Irish, that she translated it into English. I myself (The editor) have used both books to learn how to teach chess through Irish.



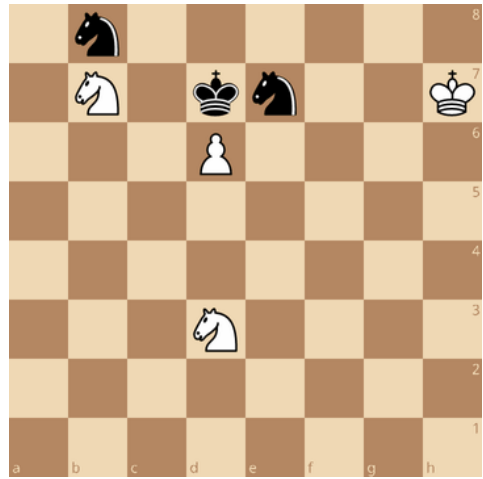
Una provides chess programs to primary and secondary school in both English and Irish. Her school programs include:

- **Workshops in the classroom**
- **Workshops in the Hall**
(large group with support from teachers)
- **Overseeing School Chess Clubs**
- **Organizing School Chess Tournaments**
- **Bespoke TY programs**

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It is often said that chess is an art, a science and a sport. Most chess fans live mainly in the science and sporting worlds, but chess has its artists, the chess composers. They often create seemingly simple positions, that hide fantastic and bewildering surprises. These are known as 'Chess Compositions.'

This bulletin's composition has a big surprise. It is well known in chess that two knights can't mate a king on their own. However, if there are any other pieces on the board, then, in the right circumstances, these pieces can be utilised to help block a king's escape. This is the theme at play in our first chess composition column.

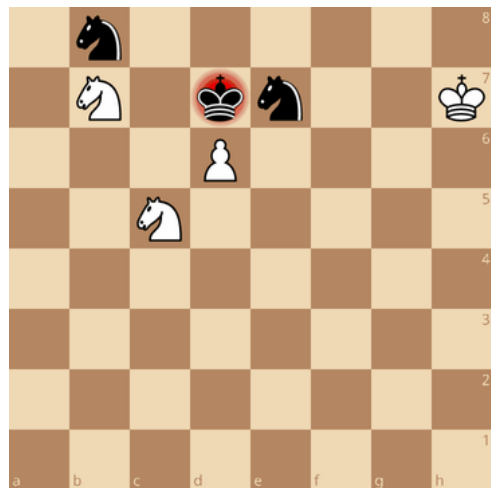


White to play.

Composer Unknown

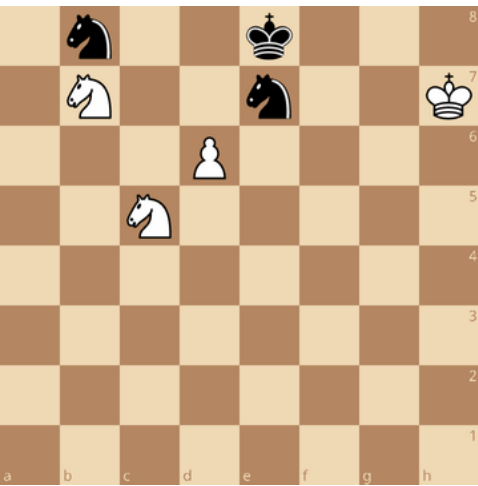
In the current position, white would like to take black's knight with their pawn, but then black would take the pawn, and there would be insufficient mating material. So, instead white comes up with a very clever idea. Can you spot it?

1.Ndc5+!



Let the king hunt begin!

1... Ke8

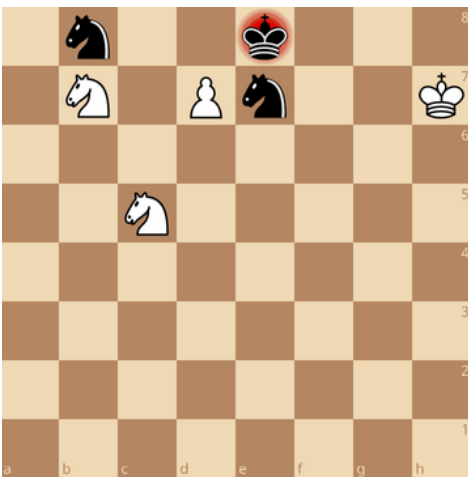


If instead, the black king had moved to c8 or c6, then white could have taken the knight with the pawn, and black would not then be able to prevent the pawn from queening.

For instance after 1...Kc8 2.dxe7 Nd7 hoping to fork the queen and king by playing Nf6 fails to 3.e8=Q+ Sadly for black it's check, so black can't move their knight now.

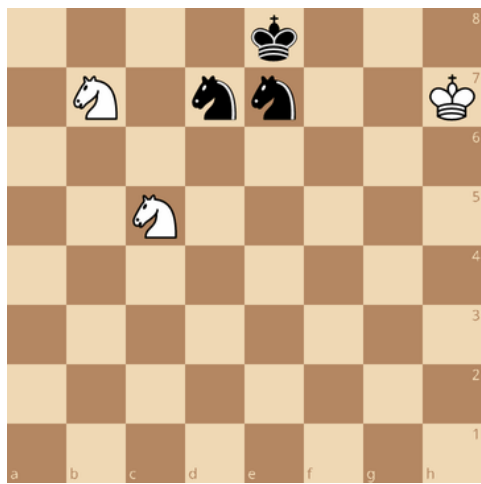
Escape also prove elusive after square 1...Kc6 2.dxe7 Nd7 3.e8=Q In this case the black knight is pinned to the king, and so it still can't move.

2. d7+!!



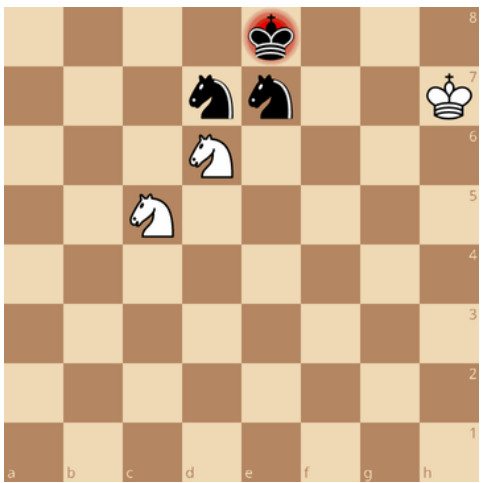
White ignores the drawish tendencies of only having a pair of knights left on the board and sacrifices their remaining pawn. Chess problems are excellent for putting your calculation ability to the test. The positions are incredibly tricky on first sight, but are usually solved with clear thinking.

2...Nxd7



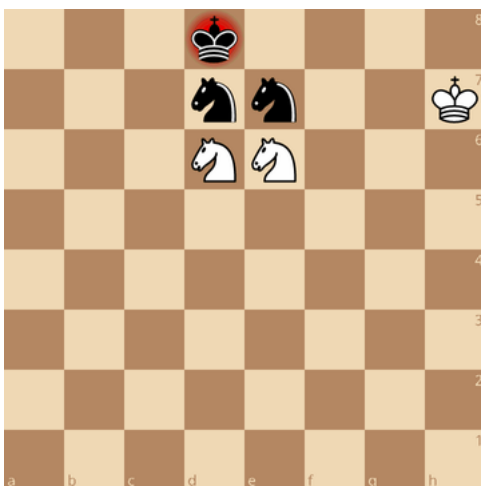
Ironically, regaining material parity leads the black king into a mating net.

3. Nd6+!



And the black king is trapped. Trying to escape the kingside by 3...Kf8 is to no avail, as white's king cuts off the g7 and g8 squares. And white mates with 4.Ne6#

3...Kd8



4. Ne6! mate!

If you solved this, don't forget to sign off Q.E.D. See you next time with another mind-bending composition!

Middlegame Magic! Attack like a Master No. 2:
IM David Fitzsimons (Elo 2315) vs IM Mark Quinn (Elo 2367)
Armstrong Cup 2024, Round 1, Kilkenny vs Elm Mount

This bulletin's **Attack like A Master Column** features my recent game against the current Irish Champion **IM David Fitzsimons** in the first round of this year's Armstrong Cup.

After a tense opening, a middle-game emerges where white is focused on encircling black's weak pawns on a6 and c4. Black's opening set-up is premised on creating a kingside attack. If black fails to break open lines of attack against the white king, black will have a hard time of it in the ending.

In the below position, White has just played **25. Nc5?!** missing the much stronger **25. Na5!** This lucky break was all the encouragement I needed.



With a queen already on c7, gazing at a potential 'magic square' on h2, I set about priming my pieces for a possible kingside attack. Speculative play of this kind is highly risky and there is no guarantee of success. I don't get to play as often as I used to these days, owing to work and family commitments. With nothing to lose, I tend to play for the attack. Games against David are always highly entertaining. Like myself, his play suggests that he is not adverse to taking major risks to win. Subscribing, perhaps, to my chess philosophy that 'A faint heart, never won a fair point'.

When conceptualising a long-term speculative attack, I find it helpful to think in terms of stages that need to be completed for that attack to become a genuine threat. Essential to that thought process is working out the best or ideal order in which to complete those stages.

Stage 1: Ignore the offer of exchanging the knight on c5 and instead choose to eliminate the white knight on f3, an important defender of white's kingside.

25...Nde5 26. Nxe5 Nxe5



The black knight takes up a powerful position on e5 where it eyes both the f3 and g4 squares, one of two squares the black knight must occupy if it is to assist the black queen in landing safely on h2. Hang on a second, I hear you say. You're playing the Irish Champion and an IM to boot. He's not going to fall for a simple mating attack on h2. Mark, keep it real!

I'd argue however that the ability to visualise a potentially winning position and the willingness to think of ways to make that fantasy a reality by reverse-engineering that imagined position, is a crucial part of the creative process that every chess player uses when attempting to convert a winning position.

In his thought-provoking new book, *The Success Complex*, Adrian Kelly explores some real world examples of how the process of visualization and reverse-engineering that chess players engage in instinctively, is an essential component in real-world problem solving and is particularly useful in attempting to come up with solutions to apparently unresolvable crises or extremely challenging situations. Kelly calls this thought process, the act of '*Imagining the Impossible*.'

Let's return to the game and see how this optimistic approach to decision-making and plan formation plays out. Where was I? Ah, yes...

Stage 2: Re-deploy the black rook to the g-file, so as to begin eyeing up the white king on g1.

27. Bd4 Rg8!



Little by little, black's pieces are becoming more active. Now, I expected David to play 28. f3 when 28... Nxf3+ leads nowhere after 29. gxf3 Qg3+ 30.Bg2 Bxd4+ 31. cxd4 e5 32. dxe5 Bxh3 33. Rd2 g4 34. Qe3. Much to my surprise he preferred instead to allow my attack.

28. Rd2?!

Stage 3: Open lines against the white king by pushing the g-pawn.

28... g4!

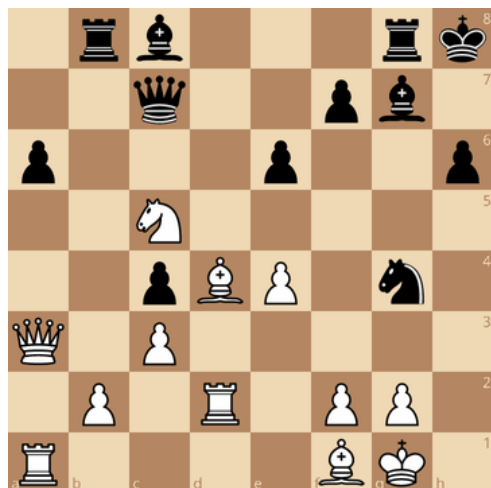


Stage 4: Manoeuvre the black knight to either f3 or g4 to assist a future Qh2+

29. hxcg4

An unfortunate necessity, as the alternative 29. h4? allows the stunning knight sacrifice 29...Nf3+! after which black has a winning attack. Note how both the queen on c7 and the knight on f3 would then be attacking the magic square (h2) threatening mate in one. Black is now winning after 30. gxf3 gxf3 31. e5 Qd8! 32. Ne4 Bf8+ with a nice discovered check that picks up the white queen.

29....Nxg4!



I am conferring this obvious forced recapture with an exclamation mark to commend the black knight for *actually* managing to arrive on g4. This seemed a remote if not downright impossibility several moves before. And yet now, there it is, on the very square I had optimistically visualised it on, from the first moment my queen landed on c7 early in the opening.

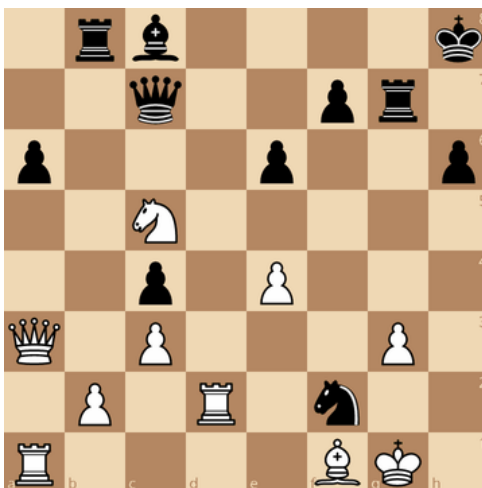
Seemingly out of nowhere, black is threatening mate on h2 as well as the pawn-push e6-e5 after which the white bishop on d4 would have to retreat to e3. In that eventuality, the black knight would immediately capture on e3 and destroy white's pawn structure in one fell swoop. White's next two moves are forced...

30. Bxg7+ Rxg7 31. g3



With white's g-pawn now blocking the path of the black queen to h2, I now had to search for a new way forward. First task, identify or create a new magic square to target. With so many black pieces primed to attack, there has to be a way...

32... Nxf2!!



This knight sacrifice signals the end of the strategic phase of the game. Tactical considerations and accurate calculation are now the order of the day. Black has the initiative and must pursue it. Steinitz's maxim.

32. Rxf2

Alternatively, after 32. Kxf2? the white king comes under a ferocious attack after 32... Qxg3+ 33. Ke2 Qf4! preventing the escape of the white king to the queenside and threatening to play ...Rg1.

32... Qxg3+ 33. Rg2 Qe3+ 34. Kh2 Rxg2+ 35. Bxg2



I had to be happy with this position 'in my head' before committing to 31... Nxf2. Finding the winning plan, was easy enough, however, as I had only one piece that could realistically join the attack on the kingside. My rook on b8. And only one point of entry.

The black rook now rides to the rescue and justifies black's speculative play earlier in the game, most specifically the subsequent knight sacrifice on f2.

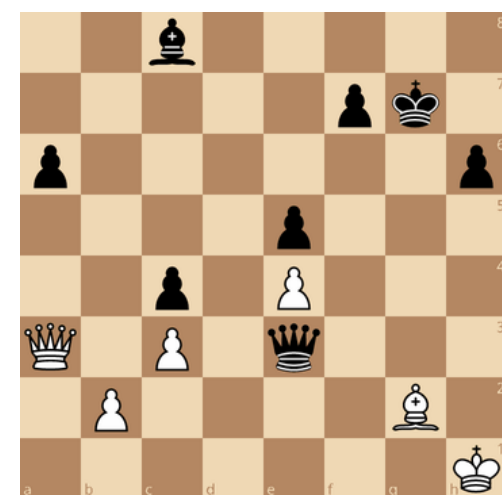
35....Rb5!!



After the game, I learned that this was the move that David has missed when he played 28. Rd2?

White's problem is that his major pieces are all stranded on the a-file, while black's remaining queen, rook and bishop are all poised to launch a winning attack against the white king.

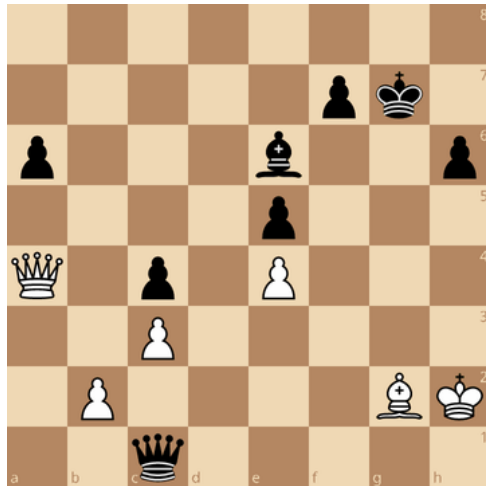
36. Rf1 Rxc5 37. Rf3 Rh5+ 38. Rh3 Qf4+ 39. Kg1 Rxh3 40. Bxh3 Kg7 41. Bg2 Qe3+ 42. Kh1 e5!



An important moment, consigning white's light-squared bishop to defensive duties. There is now no way for white's bishop to play an active part in the game.

43. Qa4 Qc1+ 44. Kh2 Be6

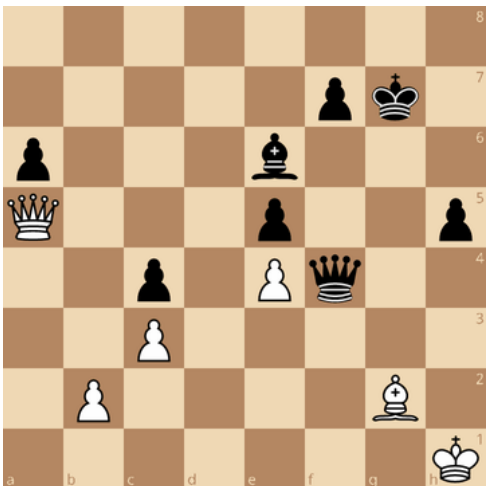
Offering white the a-pawn. White can take it, but either the b-pawn would immediately drop, or black could switch the focus to a kingside attack with h5-h4. Thanks to black's bishop on e6, white's b-pawn cannot get out of the starting blocks. Black's endgame strategy is based on preventing white from generating any counterplay.



45. Qa5 Qf4+

Guarding the valuable e5 pawn, which blocks key lines of attacks against the black king. The stage is now set for black to win on the kingside.

46. Kh1 h5!



The disruptive power of the black h-pawn quickly leads to the unraveling of white's kingside defences.

47. Qa1 h4 48. Qe1 Kh6

The temptation to push the pawn to h3 is strong, but being two pawns to the good and with time running down on the clock, I decided the simplest approach was to force the exchange of queens and bishops and head for a winning king and pawn endgame.

49. Kg1 Qg3 50. Qd2+ Kg7 51. Kf1 Bh3 52. Bxh3 Qxh3+ 53. Kg1 Qg3+ 54. Kh1 h3 55. Qe2 Kg6 (0-1)

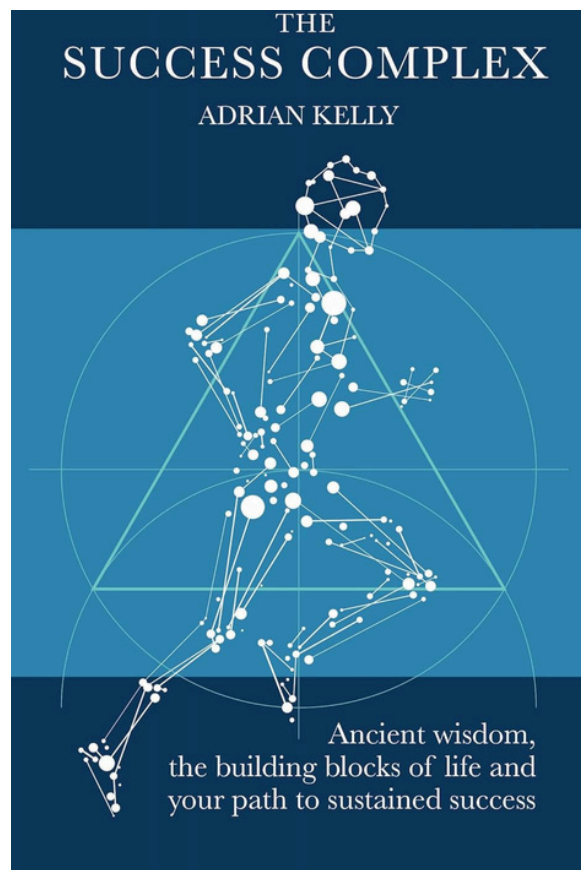
Black carries the day with a little bit of 'magical thinking', a lot of luck and an excessively optimistic mindset. If you just want to enjoy your chess and aren't afraid of losing, I can highly recommend this approach.

Anyone who has competed in the Cavan Chess Congress in recent years, will doubtless be familiar with Adrian Kelly, who is one of the organizers of the event. A passionate chess enthusiast, outside of chess, Kelly is a qualified solicitor, lecturer and current Performance Coach to the Monaghan Women's Gaelic Football Team. As of last Monday, Kelly has also become a published author. At an early stage of this project, I was interviewed and asked to explain how chess players visualize a winning position in their imagination and then attempt to reverse-engineer how that position might have come about, so as to select the correct approach to arriving at an actual winning position. As a contributor, I received an advanced copy of *The Success Complex* and have been quite literally blown away at the range of Kelly's ideas and thinking. Ideas and practical guidance, that I hope will have a positive effect on my chess, not to mention my life.

As a professional chess coach, I particularly welcome Kelly's advocacy of Anders Ericsson's ground-breaking concept of 'deliberate practice.' Lately, I have come to realise that I have already been utilising many of Ericsson's training methods without realising it in individual, and to a lesser extent, in group classes. Thanks to Kelly's in-depth discussion of Ericsson's approach, I hope to fine-tune many aspects of my training, to the benefit of my students. Time will tell obviously, but Kelly's book has certainly shown me how to address my own limitations as a chess player, by tackling other aspects of my life. Everything is connected.

Any chess player, and here I include myself, who has ever wondered why they have stopped improving and been eclipsed by contemporaries of a similar strength or talent, may find the book particularly helpful in plotting a path forward, whether it be on the chess board or in the great game of life. I cannot recommend *The Success Complex* enough and hope it reaches a wide audience.

[You can purchase The Success Complex on Kindle at the Following Link](#)

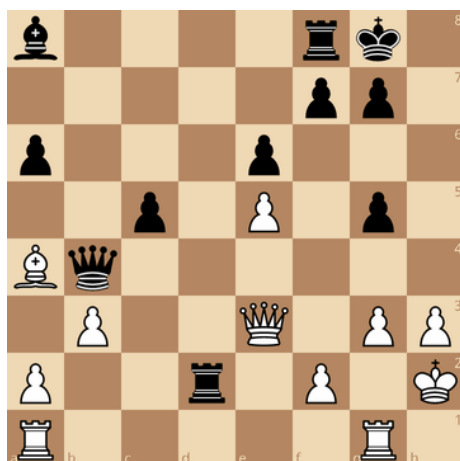


"I wish they taught some of these fundamentals in school as many of the skills and learnings covered can make all the difference when it comes to achieving our goals."

Simon Pond, Major League Baseball Player & Olympian

Position 1

Nicole White (1620) vs Conor Sheehan (1786), Masters Section, Rd. 2, Cork Chess Congress 2024



Black to play

How did black quickly bring about the collapse of the white defences?

Position 3

CCIM Jonathan O'Connor (2159) vs FM Henry Li (2290), Dublin vs Gonzaga, Rd. 2, Armstrong Cup 2024



White to play

In light of the powerful black bishop on g7, can white risk capturing the black pawn by Nfxd4? Analyse to a depth of 5 moves.

Cork Chess Congress 2024

One of Ireland's most famous towns, Blarney, County Cork, played host to the recent Cork Chess Congress. The event was held in the perfectly situated Blarney Woolen Mills, a stone's throw from the centre of the town and local amenities. You couldn't ask for a more perfect venue for a weekend chess tournament!

The event attracted 129 players of all ages and levels players far and wide, with many strong performances from local players. Special mention goes to two of Cork's rising stars from Carrigaline, **Rahul Arun** tied for first place in the Major Section with **Aaron McGee** on 4.5/5 points, while his brother **Nitish** beat his first International Master **IM Oleg Gubanov** on his way to a share of third place in the Masters Section.

Maryna Petrenko triumphed in the Masters and we hope to publish a game or two of hers in a future bulletin. The highly successful event was expertly run by Mark Watkins and Cork Chess Club.



Rahul & Nitish Arun flying the flag for Carrigaline, County Cork at this year's Cork Chess Congress.

To see all the results of the Cork Chess Congress click [here](#)

Position 2

IM Mark Quinn (2367) vs Shane Melaugh (2171), Kilkenny vs Malahide, Rd. 2, Armstrong Cup 2024



White to play

The black queen has just landed on a5 attacking the undefended a2 pawn and threatening Qf5 swapping queens if white defends by Kb1. How should white respond?

Position 4

Robert Murtagh (1853) vs John Waldron (1865), Dublin vs Gonzaga 'B', Rd. 2, Armstrong Cup 2024



White to play

White has numerous attacking options here. Which you one would you choose? Analyse to a depth of 5 moves.

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BULLETIN NO. 1 - 30TH SEPTEMBER 2024

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

Complete Beginners Section pg. 5

1. **1. Nd6+** The white knight lands on the unoccupied d6 square, simultaneously attacking the black king on f7 and the black rook on c8.
2. **1. Bxg7+ Rxd7 (If. 1...Kh7 2. Bf6+ Rg7 3. Rxd7+ Kh8 4. Ra8 mate) 2. Rxd7 Bc3 3. Rb7 Bg7 4. Rb8+ Bf8 5. Rxf8** mate
3. **1...Bc3!** attacking the knight on b2 and the white pawn on d4. **2. Nd1 Bxd4+ 3. Kh1 b2! 4. Nxb2 Bxb2** and black has the simple winning plan of Bc3, Bxa5 and queening the a-pawn.
4. **1. Qg5+** when the white queen chases away the only piece (i.e. the black king) defending the black knight on f6. After **1...Kh7 2. Qxf6** white enters a winning endgame.

Experienced Beginners Section pg. 8

1. Black has a forced mate in three moves after **1... Qa2+ 2. Kc1 Qa1+!** Sacrificing the queen!
3. Nxa1 Rxa1 mate
2. **1. Qxf8+!** Another queen sacrifice **1... Kxf8 2. Rc8!** mate
3. Here black has the surprising **1...Qxa2!** which looks like a mistake until you realise that the white knight on c3 is pinned by the black bishop on b4 and cannot capture the black queen.
4. Black gains control of the promotion square after **1...Re2+! 2. Kf3 Re1!** when white must give up the rook on d1 by prevent the black d-pawn from queening, i.e. **3. Rxd2 Rxd2!**

Intermediate Section pg. 12

1. The black king is in trouble on the light square diagonal from a4-e8. Black was forced to resign after **1. Bf3! Qe6 2. Qa4+ Nd7 3. Bd5! Qg4 4. h3 b5 5. Qxb5**
2. White played the nice tactic **1. Ne6!** forcing **1...fxe6** when white picks up the bishop by **2. Rxc6! Nf5 3. Rxe6** bagging an extra pawn. After **3...Nb6 4. b5!** the win was assured.
3. Here black played the surprising **1... exd4!** (encouraging 2. Qxh6? which fails to 2...Qe1! mate). Instead, white tried **2. Qc1** which fails to **Nc5! 3. Qd1 Nd3+ 4. Kg1 Re1+** winning
4. The elegant **1. Rg6!** wins on the spot as black cannot capture 1...Bxe6 as it allows a family fork.

Advanced Section pg. 14

1. Caruana forced his opponent's immediate resignation after the brilliant **1...f4!** as if white captures **2. exf4**, the simple **2...Rb8!** quickly leads to the collapse of the white position.
2. It is easy to miss the winning idea **1. Re4!** Black has no way to defend against the simple threat of **2. Ra4** so white wins the knight on a6.
3. Here, black played the superb combination **1...Bxa4!** forcing **2. Qxa4** when the white king is hopelessly exposed and got mated after **2... exf2+ 3.Kxf2 Qb6+ 4. Rd4 Qxb2+ 5. Kf1 Nxd3+ 6. Kg1 Rxe1+ 7. Kh2 Nf1+ 8. Kh3 Re3+ 9. Nf3 Rxf3+** with mate to follow on h2.
4. White dodged a major bullet by avoiding **1. Qa5** owing to the spectacular **1...Bb4! 2, Qxb4 c5!** when white has to give up the queen to avert mate on g2.