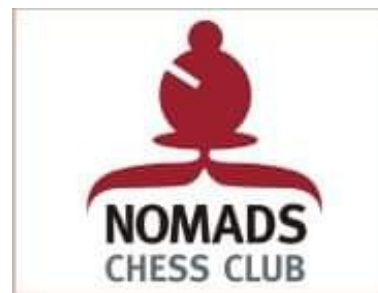


# OVERBOARD

Nomads' newsletter #2 - Autumn 2023



Summer's here (at least when I started writing it was) and gone.

But... it's still hot (the newsletter not the weather), so grab yourself something cold and relax while reading! It gets hotter the more people submit stuff, let's get it blazing! Even if your analysis is a bit iffy and you didn't check it, don't worry, Mr. Stockfish (3500 FIDE) [honorary Nomads member, but unfortunately not allowed to play in matches] will be helping you out, and I'll put in my tuppence – think of it as free group coaching! Happy to answer your chess questions, maybe some silly questions as well so long as I can find an entertaining answer that doesn't offend anyone.

We should be having our club championship soon. It'll be time handicapped blitz (the higher you're rated, the less time you get and the more your opponent does), and has in the past been called a leveler. So it won't be just the same few contenders, it's up for grabs by anyone - could it be you? Hey Mr. Treasurer, will there be a prize or trophy?

Oh you can grab me when I'm not playing a match from some coaching or other chess advice. It makes a change from seeing Shane's Black Lion for the 20<sup>th</sup> time 😊

Enjoy,

David Flynn

Ps. Curry?

## Club News Latest

We're running 3 teams this year and the season has just begun, so attached are the fixtures. If you don't currently play for a team, but you can make legal moves and write them down, not leave too many pieces en-prise (first team players too!), and use a clock why not have a go? Grab a captain and ask them to show you the ship!

There is also a Whatsapp group for the club which is really quiet right now. Join and let's chat!

# Annotated Games

Essex vs Yorkshire, semi-final 10/06/2023

D. Flynn vs A. Baker

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Bd3!?

The Schlechter French. Missed out from most books prior to 2010, this weird move actually is quite tricky to handle as Black. Best estimate is somewhere from = to =+ with best play, but there again unless your opponent is 2600+ it's unlikely that that best play will be seen. Practically White gets a small advantage or at least good chances.

3...Nf6?!

And this is not the move to refute it. Black typically assumes this will be like the Tarrasch where Bd3 is a normal move, but it doesn't work out that way. White has no compulsion to put their N on d2 and waste moves rejigging the knights.

4.e5 Nfd7 5.c3 c5 6.Ne2 Nc6 7.a3 Qb6 8.b4 cxd4 9.cxd4



9...Be7?

9...Nxd4?? looks tempting, but after 10. Be3 the knight is fatally pinned. There are various ways Black can get 2 or 3 pawns for the piece, but as long as White is careful the pieces win before the pawns become a problem. Lots of easy points in blitz.

9...f6 or a5 probably is best here with +/- as White usually gets a nasty attack in. After Be7 Stockfish thinks it's +2

10.Be3 f6? Fatal. Now White according to Stockfish is nearly +3.



11.exf6?! I'd forgotten the move is Nf4 here (o-o is also good) and it's practically handshake, gg: e6 hangs and Qh5 is a threat.

(cf. Flynn, D – Vaughan, B 1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. Bd3 Nf6 4. e5 Nfd7 5. Ne2 c5 6. c3 Nc6 7. a3 cxd4 8. cxd4 Be7 9. b4 Qb6 10. Nbc3 a6 11. Rb1 f6 12. b5 axb5 13. Nxb5 Qd8 14. Nf4 Kf7 15. Qh5+ g6 16. Bxg6+ hxg6 17. Qxg6+ 1-0)

11...Nxf6 12.0-0 0-0 13.Nbc3?! Natural looking, but allows Black to rearrange his bishop on d6 where the knight would be better on f3 via d2.

13...Bd6 14.Ng3 to try to start something on the kingside via Nh5.

14...Bd7 15.Nh5?! Better was Na4-c5

14...Be8 16.Nxf6+ Rxf6 17.Bg5 Rf8



18.Be3?! A better try was Qg4 and if Nxd4, Be3 Be5 Rae1 with a mess.

18...Bf4? Inviting... 19.Qg4 Bxe3 20.fxe3 now the centre is shored up against the attack, the dark squared bishop was Black's good bishop and the f-file is open while Black has a bishop blocking the action of his rooks.

20... Rxf1+?? hands White the open file as well

21.Rxf1 Nd8 22.Qh4 h6



23.Ne2? The move was Qe7 which I was looking at. Obviously there is a mate on f8, Nf7 invites Bg6 and after Bf7 if only I'd been Stockfish then I'd have seen the plan of Nb5 blocking out the queen, followed by h3 to keep the back rank mates out followed by Rf3-g4 and Qf6.

23...e5 24.Qf2 Ne6 25.dxe5 Bh5 26.Nd4 Rf8



27.Qb2? Missing 27.Bf5 and if Nc7 or Ng5 h4, then Bh7+ follows

27...Rxf1+ 28.Kxf1 Nc5 29.Bf5 g6?? another fatal error. Now as well as the knight on c5 hanging as soon as the queen moves, if the bishop moves then g4 is a threat trapping the Bh5. You shouldn't give your opponent resources like this, because tactics eventually happen.



30.Bh3 Qa6+ 31.Kg1 Nd3 32.Qc3 Qc4 33.Qxc4 dxc4 34.g4 1-0

## Fail Wall



This issue's blunders for your education. We all make them from beginner to World Champion and by seeing examples and understanding why it may help us make fewer. Feel free to submit some of your own or your opponents (only mine have permission to be used for entertainment/ridicule).



Black plays the Fraser variation of the Latvian Gambit (1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 f5?! 3. Nxe5 Nc6??), one of those openings no doubt recommended on YouTube to beat even grandmasters! In reality, it's a dodgy opening, not good for your chess, and losing if White sees through (likely be decried by true zealots as fake news!).

After 4. Qh5+ (Nxc6 is safer but not as much fun) g6 5. Nxe6 it's not looking good for Black, but White must find/remember the next few moves. Which I thought I did... In the diagram Qh3 is the right move here and after Rxe4+ Be2 we can sac the rook on a1 after Nb4/d4 say. We play Nc3 and capture back on e4 after Nxc2+ Kd1 Nxa1. Unfortunately, but not fatally I played Qh6?! to which my opponent replied Rxe4+ then Kd1? which gives Black the advantage.

What did Black play next and what did White reply before resigning? (answer at end of newsletter)

Advice: If you go wrong, relax, don't get flustered as it's usually the next move you make that's the fatal one. Also remember an opponent may have more than one threat (if you even bother asking what do they want).



In this Sicilian Black's king looks in a bit of bother. Nb6+ is an easy win. What did White play and how did Black respond?

Advice: Don't trust an opponent (or me in this case).

## Reviews

The Wolf Of Chess Street: Mastering the art of piece trading, GM Gabuzyan, Chessmood (members only)

Perhaps the most unusual name of a chess course ever, it also rates as one of the best. It's all about exchanges (trading – get it now?) and there are few if any courses on this subject, usually it's buried in some other course. I've been saying to many players that even if the nominal material is the same (a bishop for a bishop, a rook for a rook, pawn for a pawn), an exchange rarely is equal. Sometimes both sides will benefit in some way, and lose out in others. Often though an exchange is good for one side only, and a big part of becoming a good chess player is recognising whether it's good or not and taking the appropriate action. Many players, particularly weaker ones, will always exchange: perhaps the certainty of an obvious move or some naivety that a simpler position will be easier to play. Often though this is where the stronger player will end up getting the advantage. Attacking? Then making/accepting exchanges is probably wrong as you want all your force (unless you are destroying defenders), but as a defender we probably want to exchange off dangerous attackers, particularly the queen. If you have pawns on the colour of your bishop, get the bishop off or trade/sac those pawns – an open line or two minus a pawn is better than a shut-in bishop moping around that no one invites him to the party! Losing? - No exchanges of pieces if we can avoid it, just the pawns (or if really lost, take aim at the king). Winning? - Try to exchange the pieces not the pawns to win the ending and remove any hope of counterplay.

Trade decisions happen in every game multiple times, making the wrong decisions consistently will probably do more to keep your rating down than missing the occasional tactic, and certainly a lot more than forgetting what move 23 was in an obscure line of the Ruy Lopez you see once every five years. However we spend far more time on tactical chess puzzles (and openings!) than thinking about our exchange strategy (or decisions we made when we analyse our past games)!

What's in the course?

- . Common and uncommon rules of trading
- . 1 question to ask when evaluating any trade <spoiler – WHY? Ask why it's being offered and whether it's good or bad>
- . discussion of trades in the opening, middlegame, endgame, when winning or losing
- . guidance for each piece type
- . reminder quizzes

Certainly a lot of detail on a topic one might have thought to be simple. Many examples given in different scenarios from weaker players to World Champions. I've learned a fair bit here myself, and am far more likely to consider what and if to offer to trade or accept. Very well explained with a good section which covers much of what has been said earlier in the course but for each piece type acting as a reminder why we should or not swap something. One good reason to consider a Chessmood membership.

When it comes to trading, be a wolf, not one of the sheep!

Total run time ~ 8 hours. Aimed at 1800-2600 (online rating, but will be of benefit to 1500s as well IMO) - My rating: 10/10

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Techniques of Positional Play, Presented by GM Nielsen, Chessable (original FM Terekhin, IM Broznik)

This was a famous Russian book on positional play which was translated to English and published by New In Chess. Now Magnus Carlson's coach goes through this book on Chessable and adds a whole new dimension to it on the video, and it sparkles.

I've currently covered the section on paralysing the knight with the duo of wing pawns. This refers to a knight which lands on g3/g6 or b3/b6. Often we can advance our h-pawn (Go Harry!) or a-pawn (supported by the g or b-pawn) to push the knight away to a bad square which often leads to a collapse of the position, particularly when encroaching on the king. Some very memorable examples here and some additional computer based input making this even more modern and correcting some original analysis faults. For example suggestions of bringing the queen to g4/g5 to support the h-pawn to h4 instead of the g-pawn while Nd7-f6 gets played being even stronger than Botvinnik's original play. Very well and thoroughly explained by the video making parts of classic games very accessible to club players and making a good book outstanding.

Topics:

- . Restricting the Enemy Pieces
- . Create Breathing Space for your Pieces!
- . The Clash between Pawn Formations
- . The Rook Pawn – an Underrated Fighter
- . Techniques in the Fight for an Open File
- . Some Aspects of Piece Exchanges
- . Working with the King
- . Developing and Activating Pieces
- . Along the Diagonals

. Other methods

Chessable courses are usually eye-watering expensive for the video content (and having produced tuition video, but not on chess, I can understand why given the time that goes into it), however in this case I would purchase the video when it goes on offer next. So much is added by having a top GM give another dimension of explanation. For anyone looking to get above 2000 and on to 2200+ this appears to be one of the essentials and is highly rated by others who became titled. Would recommend to 1800 and above. If the video is too expensive, get the book (either Chessable or another site, or in paper), but the video here is extra special and you'd be missing out. Ask Santa for it!

You can try a sample free lesson - Position Play: Free Lesson.

Video run time 22 hours (2 hours free), 417 trainable variations, 74 informational

My rating: 10/10

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Power Up: Visualization, FM Viktor Neustroev, Chessable

It's rare there is a course on the subject of visualisation. It's hard to separate the teaching from relying on planning, evaluation and calculation skills, it's subjective (different people 'see' a future position differently), and for many it develops over a lifetime of practice so very hard to make any sort of training method. Often all that's written on the subject is picturing square colours, diagonals, knight tours, and maybe a game walk-through in your head, so this course was a novelty and worth taking a look at. After all I believe calculation and seeing can decide most games U2000 (even when losing due to a mistake or bad positional decisions, often there is that one chance to fight back if only you see it).

Unfortunately I found the course teaching more practical aspects of visualisation, not the how-to, as well as the structure being muddled. It had a lot of potential if structured right, with the addition of a good part on the how-to, perhaps gained from research gained from teaching [the author's students]. On the good side, the author was patient and I felt my visualisation was better simply by taking the time before looking for moves, but I feel this was more a side-effect than a stated intention. Some useful advice (but not enough focus on), but I felt not much more than guided puzzle solving or something that could be worked on via a good calculation or tactics course. I decided to return the course for not doing what it said on the tin.

Video run time 16 hours (1:35 free), 118 trainable variations, 7 informational

My rating: 5/10

## Chess Improvement

"I don't know how to attack!", he screamed at me after a frustrating loss. It's a good point though. How does one attack? It's easy to teach tactics and mating patterns, you just gather lots of examples, walk through some of them and give the rest to the student to practise. Attack, while drawing on known patterns, is a bit of a different animal. The problem with attack (and to simplify we'll assume it's on the king), is that while it's possible to calculate a mate in 4 or a tactic to win a piece, often an attack is hard to see to the definite conclusion. In addition not all the moves involved are forcing (else it would be a combination), so the opponent gets to defend, counter-attack or just ignore you. You often have to use a

combination of calculation and feeling/intuition to know your attack will be successful or at least make some sort of gain.

Let's understand what we need to do to have a successful attack:

To mate we need 2 or 3 pieces to checkmate with (without a rook or queen involved it's usually 3), and we should understand the common mating patterns. We will need a piece for every good defender to distract, capture or sacrifice for. We will also need a piece for every pawn around the king we sacrifice for (Kasparov said that a pawn in front of the king is worth a piece).

Thus we need 2 to 4 more attackers than defending pieces. This is part of the intuition bit. If we can see a position where we have 2 to 4 more attacks than defending pieces and the king is looking a bit starkers, well possible that's good enough. Another bonus is if we can see an 'emergency exit', that is if it goes a bit 'Pete Tong' on you, if we know we have a perpetual check or can bail with an okay position, it might give us a bit of confidence to try for it.

Some simple rules to help you:

Rule one: Bring the pieces! (also stated as invite all the guys to the party) The more pieces you can bring into the attack the more successful it's likely to be. Attacks often fail because we run out of wood, and sometimes that means we need to prepare first by getting pieces into place and bring our forces up the board.

Rule two: Open lines. The long ranged pieces need lines, so sacrificing pawns can be worth it. If opposite castled, sacrificing pawns to open lines for the rooks (even not bothering to capture back for more speed) is a good idea.

Rule three: Create and occupy weak squares, particularly with the knight.

Rule four: Eliminate defenders (swap them off, distract them), cut off their ability to get to their king.

Rule five: Avoid exchanges unless for defenders or sacrificing to open lines / the king's shelter. Often if the queen is swapped the attack ends.

Rule six: Use hooks. If your opponent plays say h6 or g6 then it's often easier to open lines by attacking those pawns with one of your pawns (even if undefended) then swapping. If the opponent captures, or advances their pawn to avoid the exchange, it usually leads to further weakness. Without hooks these unmoved defending pawns are easier to lock with your advancing pawns, preventing opening lines, which will then require a sacrifice.

Rule seven: Having opposite coloured bishops means an unopposed bishop and so benefits the attacker (draws are only a problem when the endgame approaches). Ensure your pawns don't block its path (and ideally block your opponent's one).

Rule eight: Opponent's king stuck in the centre? Open lines and don't let it castle to safety (make it or the rook move, tie it to defence, cover the castling squares, don't let blocking pieces get off the back rank).

Rule nine: With opposite castling, aim to attack quickly before the opponent does (though don't forget central control is important). Throw the pawns forward (even sacrifice to open lines for rooks and



bishops) as needed. If same side-castling, then the centre should be closed, or well controlled, before moving pawns in front of your king (often Harry the h-pawn is an exception but still can weaken your king's position). Experience helps, so what better than to learn from someone else's mistakes (and wins) by looking at the classics.

Want to know more? (Fearless Warrior < 1800 ECF, Attack like a Viking >= 1800 ECF courses on Chessmood are probably the best on the subject as I found many other sources needlessly complicate with difficult to calculate examples).

## Upcoming Events

Want to take it a bit more seriously, how about a tournament? Tournament experience is a great way to improve as well as meeting more chess enthusiasts including masters. Those new to tournaments are suggested to try a rapidplay first as the games are quicker and it's all over in a day.

22<sup>nd</sup> October – Birmingham Rapidplay: <http://www.birminghamchess.org.uk/rapidplay>

27-29<sup>th</sup> October – Scarborough: <https://www.scarboroughchess.uk/>

18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> November – 4NCL weekend 1 (talk to Neil Graham of Ashfield to express interest)

25-26<sup>th</sup> November – Birmingham Open: <http://birminghamopen.warwickshirechess.org/>

10<sup>th</sup> December – Lincoln Rapidplay

28<sup>th</sup> December - 7<sup>th</sup> January – Hastings International: <http://www.hastingschess.com/>

Hastings is a great tournament (probably the second most important in the calendar and world renowned for its past glory days) if you're stuck for something to do over the New Year, and there are several different tournaments depending on your level and commitment.

Also there is 4NCL online (45 15) every other Tuesday (talk to Neil Graham of Ashfield or me to express interest).

We also have the Nottinghamshire Centenary Chess Invitational (GMs and strong juniors) from the 30<sup>th</sup> October to the 3<sup>rd</sup> November – not sure about spectator arrangements at present.

More events can be found by searching for the ECF calendar

## Sign Off

It's bye for now. Remember get thinking and submitting, this newsletter is so much better if you all contribute. Cheers!

David Flynn,  
Editor

Fail Wall answers:

Black played Ng4 and White played c3?? stopping the mate 🤔

White played Qe6+?? (knights can move backward) and Black responded Kc6?? 😞 resigning after Rac1+