

CHESS by Alan Dommett

DIAGRAM 1

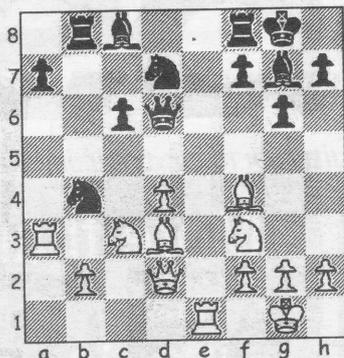
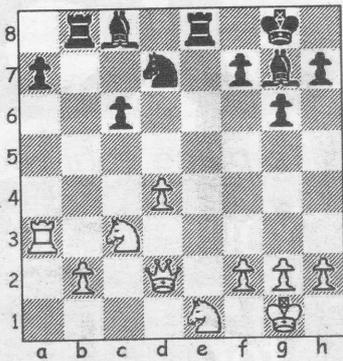


DIAGRAM 2



DESPITE Wessex 1 doubling their points tally in the latest rounds of 4NCL Division 2 matches with a 4.5-3.5 victory over Anglian Avengers, a 2.5-5.5 defeat to divisional leaders Barbican Youth ensured that the team remain just two points away from the foot of the table.

Sadly, with one match left in the provisional pool and still three points adrift of a top-four position, Wessex cannot take a final championship pool place and must fight against relegation for the remainder of the season.

However, in Division 3, Wessex 2 still have high hopes of promotion after a 3.5-2.5 win against FCA Solutions took the team to an 8/12 score and just a single point away from a top-four place with the remaining rounds due to be played later this month and at the end of April.

The following game is taken from the Dorset Closed Championship and features some unusual opening play followed by a solid middlegame from the eventual winner.

Heard, A - Aston, P
Dorset Closed, 2010
Grunfeld Defence (D95)

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Qb3 The Russian System, although this ultra-early development of the queen usually follows 4.Nf3 Bg7 and is best met by an immediate capture of the c-pawn. Black's reply shows signs of confusion as he attempts to switch to a Grunfeld Slav, thereby cutting a swathe through the normal tactical play in this defence. **4...c6 5.Nf3 Bg7 6.e3 0-0 7.Bd3 dxc4 8.Bxc4 b5 9.Bd3 Nfd7?!** Preparing to advance his e-pawn, Black could have achieved the same objective by developing his queen's knight, as in Alexander-Hartston (New Delhi, 1982) which continued **9...Nbd7 10.0-0 Bb7 11.Rd1 a6 12.e4**, whereupon Black

got in his thematic **12...c5** break and went on to win in 23 moves. **10.0-0 e5 11.a4 exd4 12.exd4 bxa4 13.Nxa4 Na6** The knight has little option but to get into the game via the rim while White has more natural developing squares available for his minor pieces. **14.Be3!?** Turning down **14.Bf4**, which would have prevented Black from freeing his queenside pieces quite so easily as he does in the next few moves, but White has seen other possibilities. **14...Rb8 15.Qd1 Qf6 16.Qd2 Nb4 17.Bg5!** Suddenly the black queen is in danger of being hunted down... **17...Qe6 18.Rfe1 Qb3 19.Ra3 Qd5 20.Nc3 Qd6** ...and forced on to a square that gives his opponent two opportunities to win material. **21.Bf4 (Diag 1) Qxf4!?** A shock response that picks up bishop and rook for the queen, confirming that White would have been better off playing **21.Be7 Qc7 22.Bxb4 Rxb4 23.Nd5!**, winning the exchange. **22.Qxf4 Nxd3 23.Qd2 Nxe1 24.Nxe1 Re8 (Diag 2) 25.Nf3!** Fine judgement! The a-pawn is poisoned, as after **25.Rxa7? Rxb2! 26.Qd1 Bxd4** White is in serious trouble. **25...a6 26.Na4 Rb5 27.Re3 Rd8** Black finds it difficult to co-ordinate his minor pieces, in contrast to White's steady build-up of pressure on the kingside in the next passage of play. **28.Qc2 Bb7 29.Qc4 Rd5 30.Nc3 Ra5 31.h3 Bf8 32.Ne4! Kg7 33.Nfg5!** The knights attack in tandem and Black, unable to protect f7 adequately, soon blunders into a hopeless position. **33...Rd5 34.Rf3 Kh6 35.Nxf7+ Kg7 36.Nxd8 Resigns.**

● Any enquiries regarding the Chess column should be addressed to Alan Dommett by emailing a.j.dommett@btinternet.com

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