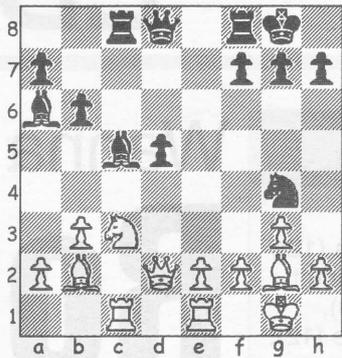


CHESS

by Alan Dommett

DIAGRAM 1



SOUTHBORNE A have retained the Bournemouth League 1st Division title by inflicting a 2.5-1.5 defeat on their nearest rivals Wimborne A in what turned out to be a nail-biting final match of the season.

The result remained in doubt until the very last game after an early draw on board 2, between Phil Taylor-Bowd and Martin Simons, was followed by a further sharing of points on the boards beneath, where Mike Waddington took on Russell Pegg and Graham Willetts was up against Graham White.

This left a crucial top-board encounter between Ian Clark and Walter Braun to decide the issue and during a tense quickplay finish Braun duly uncorked a stunning sacrifice to secure the win and the title.

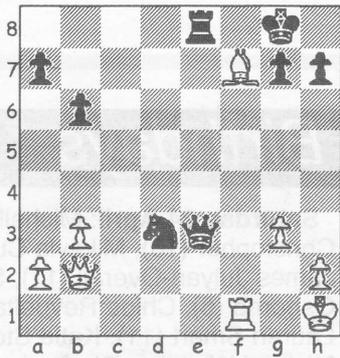
The following game is another taken from the opening round of the Dorset Congress featuring an interesting opening battle that hinges on the pros and cons of the isolated queen's pawn.

Pleasants, A – Heard, A
Dorset Closed, 2010

Queen's Gambit Declined (D30)

1.Nf3 d5 2.c4 e6 3.g3 Nf6 4.Bg2 Be7 5.0-0 0-0 6.b3 The main line alternative is 6.d4, which tends to lead to a Queen's Gambit Accepted, but White has no intention of occupying the central squares at this point in the opening. 6...c5 7.Bb2 Nc6 8.cxd5 exd5 9.d4 However, now that the opportunity may arise to isolate Black's d-pawn, the advance is made. 9...b6 10.Nc3 Ba6 11.Rc1 Rc8 12.Re1 In Inkiöv-Bjerring (Copenhagen, 1988) it was White who released the tension in the centre with 12.dxc5 and, after 12...bxc5 13.Na4 c4 14.Nd4 Nxd4 15.Bxd4 cxb3

DIAGRAM 2



16.Rxc8 Bxc8 17.a3, took full advantage of his opponent's weak pawns to win in 29 moves. With no such break in the offing, Black makes the decision to play with an IQP. 12...cxd4 13.Nxd4 Nxd4 14.Qxd4 Bc5 15.Qd2 Ng4?! (Diag 1) 16.e3?! Missing 16.Nd1! which not only defends the f-pawn but threatens 17.b4 followed by a series of pawn moves forcing the minor pieces to retreat. 16...d4 17.Nd5 dxe3 18.fxe3 Re8 19.Bd4 Suddenly it is White who has to defend an isolated pawn and the next passage of play sees Black target the weakness. 19...Ne5 20.Rcd1 Bb7 21.Qb2 Bxd4 22.Rxd4 Bxd5 23.Bxd5 Qe7 24.Rf1! By activating his rook White ensures that any knight move is not without risk and further pressure along the f-file soon leads to a speculative response. 24...Rc7 25.Rdf4 Nd3? The knight fork is inviting, but fraught with danger. 26.Rxf7 Qxe3+ 27.Kh1 Rxf7 28.Bxf7+ (Diag 2) Kf8 A sad necessity, as 28...Kh8? 29.Bxe8 Qxe8 (29...Nxb2?? 30.Rf8 mate) 30.Qe2! wins the knight due to the threat of a back rank mate. 29.Bxe8+ Kxe8 30.Qg2 Ne1 No more than a token attack on the queen leaving White free to pursue a long king hunt that nets a pawn and eventually leads to an exchange of queens and an easily won ending. 31.Qc6+ Ke7 32.Qc7+ Ke8 33.Qc8+ Ke7 34.Qf8+ Kd7 35.Qxg7+ Kd6 36.Rf6+ Kd5 37.Qd7+ Kc5 38.Qd6+ Kb5 39.Qd5+ Kb4 40.Rf4+ Ka3 41.Ra4+ Kb2 42.Qd4+ Resigns.

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