

**CHESS**

by Alan Dommert

DIAGRAM 1

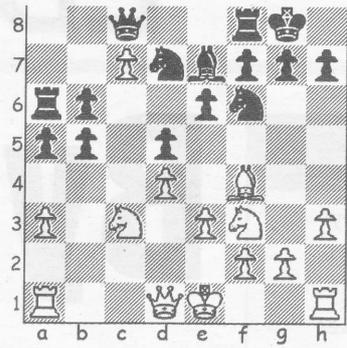
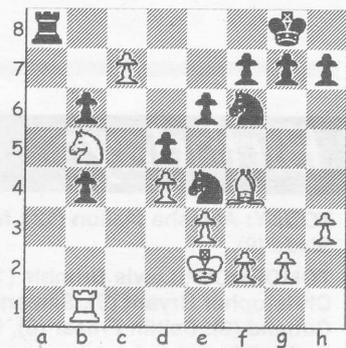


DIAGRAM 2



Southbourne B have failed in their bid to avoid relegation to Division 2 of the Bournemouth League after John Harris drew his adjourned game with Ringwood A's Peter Donaldson, thereby completing a set of four in the match.

Southbourne had needed a win to retain top flight status at the expense of Lymington A, but the sharing of points led to the teams finishing level at the foot of the table and Lymington's superior games difference became the crucial factor in avoiding the drop.

Southbourne C achieved some consolation for the club by gaining promotion from Division 2 in what turned out to be another remarkably close finish for the honours. At the start of the final round of matches all six teams in the division were potential title winners and relegation candidates. A convincing 3-1 victory for Southbourne C against Wimborne C proved decisive at the top, while Bournemouth A's 1.5-2.5 defeat to Poole A led to relegation, even though they were only two points away from being top of the table!

The following game, taken from the final round match in the 4NCL Championship Pool between the title-winners Wood Green and third-placed Barbican, is a sharp encounter full of attacking play that could easily have gone against the eventual winner.

**Pert, N - Collins, S**

**4NCL Sunningdale, 2010**

**Queen's Gambit Declined (D37)**

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 Be7 5.Bf4 The main line alternative is 5.Bg5, which often leads to an exchange of minor pieces at f6, after 5...0-0 6.e3 h6, whereas here White prefers the bishop on the b8/h2 diago-

nal as he plans to restrict his opponent on the queenside. 5...0-0 6.e3 Nbd7 7.c5 Another approach would be 7.Rc1 followed by an opening of the c-file, but this advance is in keeping with the restrictive strategy. 7...c6 8.h3 b6 9.b4 a5!? Black gives himself some air and at the same time leaves his opponent little option but to complete the pawn chain. 10.a3 Ba6 11.Bxa6 Rxa6 12.b5?! Taking the game into muddy waters and clearly playing for a win! 12...cxb5 13.c6 Qc8 14.c7 (Diag 1) Bxa3!? In Svirin-Bryzgalin (Smolensk, 1997) Black tried the equally combative 14.b4 but, after 15.Nb5 a4 16.axb4 Bxb4+ 17.Ke2 Ra5 18.Rxa4 Rxb5 took a draw rather too hastily, through fear of 19.Qd3 winning his rook. In fact 19...Ne4! (threatening 20...Nc3+) would have saved the day and, if 20.Rc1 Rc5! 21.dxc5 Ndx5, Black was still better due to the final fork on queen and rook. 15.Nxb5 Bb4+ 16.Ke2 Ne4 17.Qc2 Ra8 The dust settles with Black a pawn up, but having to contend with another on his seventh rank that proves virtually irremovable. 18.Rhb1 Qe8 19.Qc6 Ndf6 20.Ne5 Qe7 21.Nd3 Qe8? Desperate to solve the problem by exchanging queens, Black blunders into a forcing line and a lost position. 22.Qxe8 Rfxe8 23.Nxb4 axb4 24.Rxa8 Rxa8 (Diag 2) 25.f3! and this final threat to a knight led to resignation, as there is only one safe square and, after 25...Nc3+ 26.Nxc3 bxc3 27.Rxb6 Nd7 28.Rb8+, Black ends up a piece down.

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