

CHESS

by Alan Dommett

DIAGRAM 1

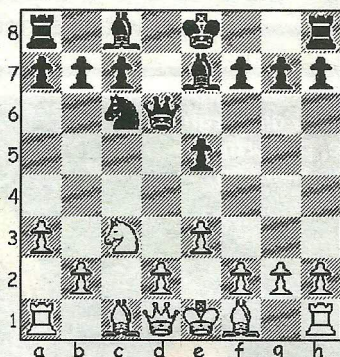
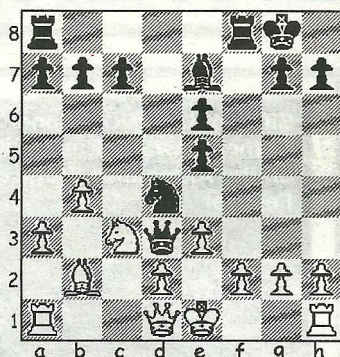


DIAGRAM 2



BOURNEMOUTH and Dorset League representation at last weekend's Frome Congress reached an impressive total of eighteen players and the county was duly rewarded when Bruce Jenks won the Open event with a superb 4.5/5 score. The victory secures a British Qualifying place (in Sheffield) for the Southbourne player who continued his fine form of the previous week when he won both his games for Wessex 1 in the 4NCL.

There was further local league success in the Intermediate (Under 140) event with Paul Brackner (Weymouth) and Paul Errington (Bournemouth) compiling 4/5 scores that secured a share of second place, a half-point adrift of title winner Roger Walker (Belper).

The following miniature, taken from the 4NCL top division Championship Pool match between Guildford A&DC and Cheddleton, features a brilliancy that stuns an ex-British Champion into early submission.

Conquest, S - Hawkins, J
4NCL Hinckley Island, 2011
English Opening (A25)

1.c4 Nf6 2.Nc3 e5 3.e3 An early divergence from the current main line English preference for 3.Nf3/g3, this move was played far more regularly a few centuries ago. **3...Nc6 4.Nge2** However, developing the knight via e2 is a rarity that leaves a swathe of opening theory in its wake. **4...Be7 5.a3 d5 6.cxd5 Nxd5 7.Nxd5 Qxd5 8.Nc3 Qd6** (Diag 1)

Whether aware of it or not, Black is following an AEGON computer tournament game (Tudjman-Comp Fidelity, The Hague, 1991) where the machine went on to lose in 62 moves! White tried a cautious 9.Be2 back then, but here Conquest stakes a claim for control of the a2/g8 diagonal. **9.Bc4 0-0 10.b4 Be6 11.Nb5 Qd7 12.Bxe6!** An understandable exchange of bishops that forces Black to double pawns on the e-file, but White's d-pawn soon proves to be just as much of a liability. **12...fxe6 13.Nc3 Qd3** Fixing the backward pawn before uncorking an astonishing follow-up move. **14.Bb2 Nd4!!** (Diag 2) The knight is suddenly thrown at White's solid defence at a time when most players would have given more thought to sacrificing on the b-pawn, although closer inspection reveals that 14.Bxb4 15.axb4 Nxb4 16.Qe2 Nc2+ 17.Kf1 Qxe2+ Nxa1 simply hands over the initiative. **15.Rc1** A sad necessity for White, as he realises that capturing the piece is fatal in every line. For example, 15.exd4 Rxf2! 16.Kxf2 Rf8+ could not only end with 17.Kg1 Qxd4 mate, but, after 17.Qf3 Bh4+ 18.Kg1 Qxd4+ 19.Kf1 Rxf3+ 20.Ke2 Rf2+ 21.Kd1 Qxd2, or 17.Ke1 Bh4+ 18.g3 Bxg3+! 19.hxg3 Qxg3+ 20.Ke2 Qf3+ 21.Ke1 Qf2, the outcomes are the same! **15...Bh4 16.Rf1 Qf5 17.g3** Stemming the tide of attacks on f2, but the resultant white-square weaknesses are easily exploited. **17...Nf3+ 18.Ke2 Rad8 19.d3 Ng1+** and this decisive check led to White's immediate resignation, as removal of the knight walks into a mate in one, whilst using either king escape square sees Black make a crushing 20.Rxd3 breakthrough.

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