

a/j/d

DIAGRAM 1

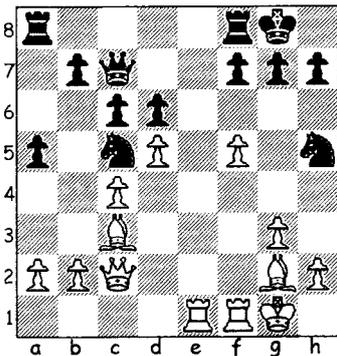
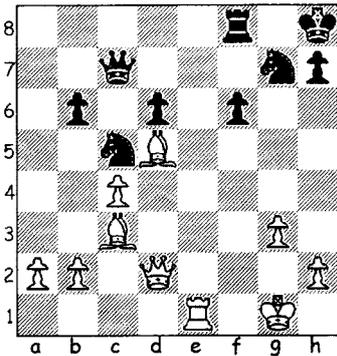


DIAGRAM 2



THE 2009-10 Hastings Masters has ended in a four-way tie for first place, between Mark Hebden, British champion David Howell, Andrei Istratescu and Romain Edouard.

The two leaders going into the last round, Hebden and Istratescu, agreed an eleven-move draw to reach 7/9, but were eventually joined on the same score after wins for Howell, when his opponent lost his way in a time scramble and Edouard, who defeated Simon Ansell with the black pieces.

The following game, taken from the second round, is an impressive victory for Mark Hebden and is a good example of the use of the long-range power of bishops and the limitations of knights in this respect.

Hebden, M – Worek, J

85th Masters Hastings, 2009
Bogo-Indian (E11)

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 e6 3.c4 Bb4+ 4.Bd2 Qe7 5.g3 Nc6 6.Nc3

Hebden's preference, the main line being 6.Bg2 Bxd2+ 7.Nbxd2 d6 8.0-0 a5 when both sides have a solid set-up that often leads to agreement on an early draw.

6...Bxc3 7.Bxc3 d6?! Handing White the initiative, whereas in Hebden-Jacobs (Haringey, 1988) Black played more positively with 7...Ne4 and, after 8.Rc1 0-0 9.Bg2 a5, had a comfortable position. 8.d5 Nb8 9.Bg2 e5 10.Qc2 0-0

11.e4 a5 12.0-0 Nbd7 13.Nh4!? Taking advantage of Black's slow re-routing of the knight to target the f5 square and also open the f-file. **13...Nc5 14.Rae1 c6 15.f4 exf4 16.Rxf4** White threatens to capture on f6 and shatter his opponent's defence completely, leaving him no alternative but to continue to place his minor pieces on awkward squares. **16...Nh5 17.Rff1 Bg4 18.Nf5 Bxf5 19.exf5 Qc7 (Diag 1) 20.f6!** Breaching Black's defence at g7, as 20...g6? 21.g4 wins the knight. **20...Rae8 21.fxg7 Nxd7 22.Qd2** More than just a doubling of the attack on the a-pawn, the queen also looks to add to the pressure on the kingside. **22...Rxe1 23.Rxe1 f6** After 23...a4 24.Qg5 f6 25.Bxf6 Qf7 26.Bd4 Black cannot avoid further loss of material on the queenside, so the pawn is jettisoned. **24.Bxa5 b6 25.Bc3 cxd5?** A move that simply increases the power of the bishop pair, especially when measured against the ineffective knights, and White soon finds a path to victory. **26.Bxd5+ Kh8 (Diag 2) 27.Qh6!** and Black resigned, realising that there is no adequate defence of the f-pawn. If 27...Qd8 28.Rf1 Nd7 29.Be4! and the knight must be given up to prevent mate.

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