

BCCF E-MAIL BULLETIN #230

Your editor welcomes any and all submissions - news of upcoming events, tournament reports, and anything else that might be of interest to B.C. players. Thanks to all who contributed to this issue. To subscribe, send me an e-mail (swright2@telus.net) or sign up via the BCCF webpage (www.chess.bc.ca); if you no longer wish to receive this Bulletin, just let me know.

I want to take this opportunity to wish you all the best of the holiday season - see you in 2012!

Stephen Wright

HERE AND THERE

London Chess Classic (December 3-12)

The third edition of the London Chess Classic, this year coinciding with the 160th anniversary of the first international tournament (London 1851), was won by Vladimir Kramnik, ahead of Hikaru Nakamura and Magnus Carlsen. The Classic had no Canadian content, although Nakamura was briefly based in Vancouver a few years ago, but visiting Brian McLaren was able to take in the tournament as a spectator and played in a couple of the side events, scoring 2.5/4 in Weekender B before withdrawing to watch the big boys. There was wonderful web coverage of the festival at <http://www.londonchessclassic.com/> which is still available. This includes videos of all the live commentary done during the games of the Classic, along with post-game commentary by the players.

December Active 1 (December 11)

A crosstable for this twenty-two player event is not available, but it was won by Dragoljub Milicevic with a perfect score, while Robert Chow was a half point back. Sylvain Gaudreau took the U1900 prize, Joshua Doknjas and Nathan Shao split the U1600, and Joshua also collected the upset prize for defeating Dale Haukenfrers. The organizer and director was Luc Poitras.

<http://chess.bc.ca/Reports/December%20Active%201.pdf>

December Active 2 (December 18)

The following Sunday the second active in as many weeks attracted an additional nine players to the Vancouver Bridge Centre, resulting in the event being split into two sections. The Open was won by a familiar victor in these tournaments, Mayo Fuentebella, with 3.5/4 while second was shared by Brian McLaren and Sheng-Jun Xu on 3.0. Also scoring 3 was Jofrel Landingin, but he took the U1900 prize. The ten-player U1700 Section resulted in a three-way tie for first between Brian Sullivan, Andrew Lee, and Omar Jessa.

<http://chess.bc.ca/Reports/December%20Active%202.pdf>

CHESS AT LANSDOWNE

Chess returned to Lansdowne Centre in Richmond on the weekend of December 3-4 with two events, a two-day Open tournament including adults and several one-day junior only sections on December 4 restricted to those under 1500. The fifteen-player Open section boasted three participants over 2300 (Butch Villavieja, Mayo Fuentebella, and Vicente Lee Jr.), but it was Vicente Lee who came through with a perfect score to win the guaranteed \$250 first prize. Villavieja lost to Lee and drew with John Doknjas in tying for second with Matthew Herdin, who had another strong event and became an A-player for the first time as a result; Matthew was also the recipient of the U1800 prize. Fuentebella was on the receiving end of the tournament's biggest upset in the first round when he lost to Omar Jessa (1479) and finished with 3.0 points; achieving the same score were junior Edwin Xu and newcomer Charlie Ritchie (playing in his first rated event).

In the junior-only sections, Conrad Burgert reached 1300 for the first time by winning Advanced section 1 with a perfect score, while Luke Pulfer and Tony Cheng tied for second. In Advanced section 2 Yekta Saremi was the perfect winner and Daniel Chen, Samuel Chen and Paul Brewster tied for second. The Intermediate section saw Lahiru Jayaweera emerge victorious ahead of Tiger Zhao, Ashley Tapp, and Andrew Toi, while Nikita Olechko topped the Beginners with a perfect 5.0/5, trailed by Mila De, Jackie Dong, Aiden Zhou, Kerry Zhang, and Benjamin Dou. A total of eighty-two juniors participated in the various sections. Many thanks to organizer Ken Jensen and to all the volunteers who help make these events happen.

Crosstables:

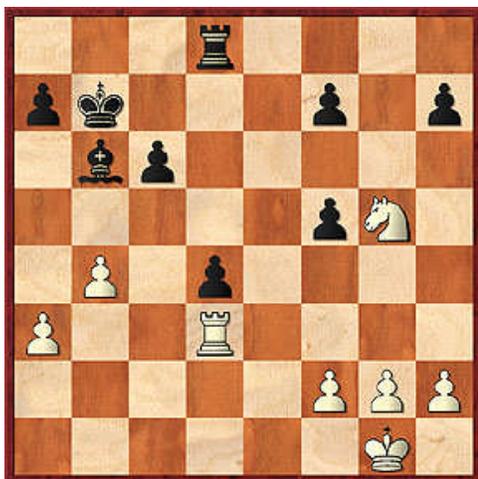
http://chess.ca/crosstable?tournament_check_number=201112003&key=ad82140cafe816c41a9c9974e9240b7a

http://chess.ca/crosstable?tournament_check_number=201112001&key=ad82140cafe816c41a9c9974e9240b7a

http://chess.ca/crosstable?tournament_check_number=201112002&key=ad82140cafe816c41a9c9974e9240b7a

BROWSING FOR ENDGAMES by Dan Scoones

Here is an instructive rook + minor piece ending from the game **Taimanov – Gligoric, Zurich (ct) 1953**. It is on the menu today because it demonstrates some aspects of good endgame technique.



Can Black win this?

In the diagrammed position the queens have just been exchanged on d3, and Black is about to play his twenty-seventh move. Although Black has the advantage of an extra pawn as well as bishop vs knight, there are two factors working against him. For one thing, the extra pawn is securely blockaded on a dark square, where it interferes with Black's bishop. For another thing, White's knight is counterattacking Black's kingside pawns. The best way forward is not immediately apparent, but Gligoric has noticed some other factors that help Black, and he brings them into play immediately.

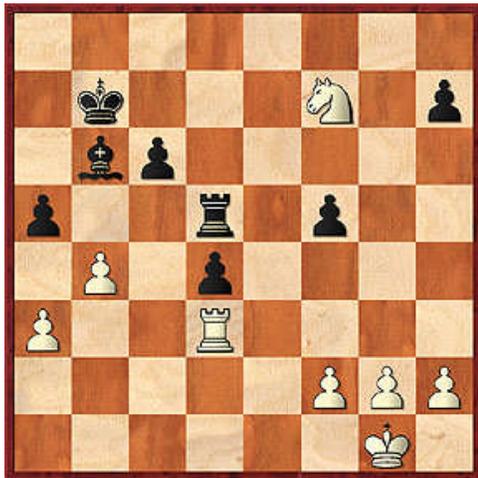
27...a5!

A very strong move. Black's king is more active than White's, and this means his queenside play will almost certainly be faster than anything White can muster on the opposite wing. By bringing up his king and attacking White's queenside pawns, Black will try to create two connected passed pawns on the queenside. If unopposed, this plan will decide the game without much further difficulty.

28.Nxf7

The alternative 28.bxa5? would fall in with Black's plan: 28...Bxa5 29.Nxf7 Rd5, and there is little to oppose the threat of ...c5-c4. Later on we will take a look at 28.Nxh7, an attempt at counterplay through creating a passed h-pawn.

28...Rd5!



Centralization

From its central post on d5 the rook dominates White's knight and prevents it from taking part in the queenside battle. All White can do is bring over his king and hope for the best.

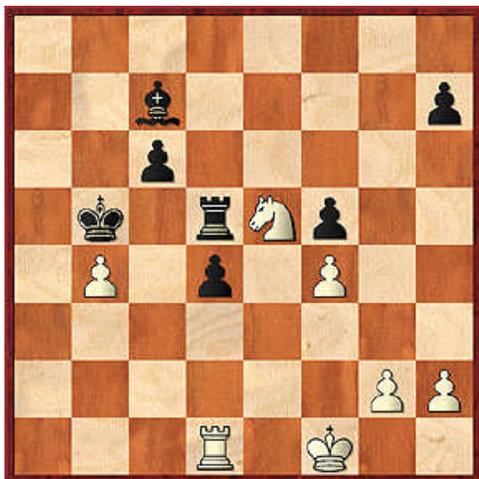
29.Kf1 axb4 30.axb4 Ka6 31.f4 Kb5 32.Ne5

White has made the best of a bad situation and has set up a counterattack on Black's c-pawn. He is ready to meet 32...Kxb4 with 33.Nxc6+ Kc4 34.Ke2 when he is still hanging on.

32...Bc7!

The primary threat is 33...Bxe5 34.fxe5 35.Kc4! followed by either 36...Kxb4 or 36...Rxe5 depending on White's reply. The secondary idea is to attack White's b-pawn with ...Bd6.

33.Rd1!



Making the best of it

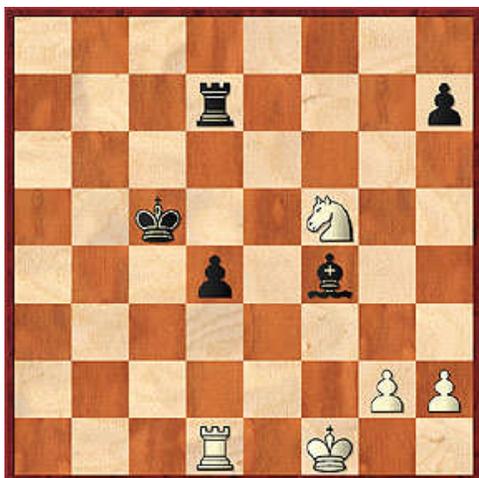
The best defence, meeting Black's immediate threat and also setting a couple of devious traps.

33...Bd6!

There were two ways for Black to go wrong here:

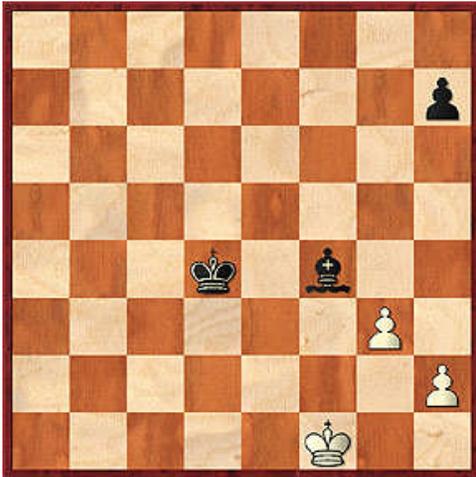
A. 33...Bxe5? 34.fxe5 Kxb4 35.e6! Rd8 (and not 35...Re5? 36.Re1! and White wins) 36.e7 Re8 37.Rxd4+ Kb5 38.Rd7 and White is drawing comfortably.

B. 33...Kxb4? 34.Nxc6+ and now: a) 34...Kc3 35.Nxd4! Rxd4 36.Rc1+ Kd3 37.Rxc6 Rxf4+ 38.Kg1 and neither side can win against best defence; b) 34...Kc4 35.Rc1+! and now 35...Kd3? loses to 36.Nb4+ while other moves allow 36.Nxd4 as above; c) 34...Kc5 35.Ne7 Rd7 36.Nxf5 Bxf4.



White to play and draw

White can now reduce the game to a positional draw with 37.Rxd4!! Rxd4 38.Nxd4 Kxd4 39.g3!



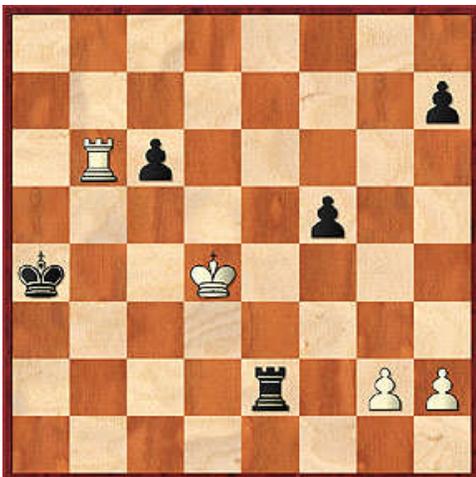
The wrong bishop

Black's bishop is on the wrong-coloured square. Even if he wins both of White's pawns, he can never queen his h-pawn. This is a technical device that is well worth remembering.

34.Ke2?

A bad mistake, greatly simplifying Black's technical task. White should play 34.Ra1 (threatening 35.Ra5+ Kxb4 36.Rxd5 cxd5 37.Ke2 with a positional draw), when there are two main variations:

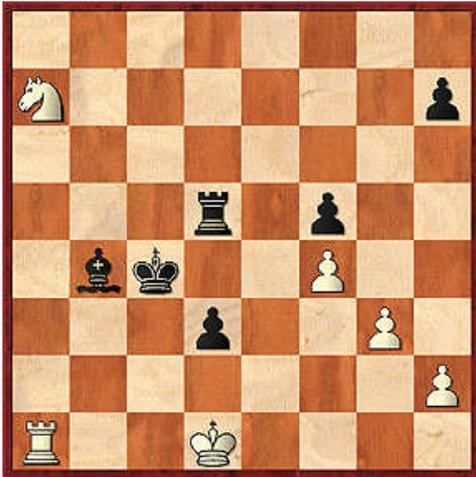
A. 34...Bxb4?! 35.Ke2 Bd6 (if 35...c5 then 36.Ra7! c4 37.Rb7+ Kc5 38.Rc7+ with ongoing technical problems for Black) 36.Rb1+! Ka4 37.Kd3 Bxe5 38.fxe5 Rxe5 39.Kxd4 Re2 40.Rb6!



Black cannot win

Black's king remains stranded and despite the extra pawn he cannot force a win, which the reader is welcome to verify.

B. 34...Kxb4! 35.Nxc6+ Kb5 and now: 1) 36.Ne5? Bxe5 37.fxe5 Rxe5. From White's perspective this is a better version of the game, but he is still lost; 2) 36.Na7+! Kc4 37.g3 d3 38.Ke1 Bb4+ 39.Kd1.

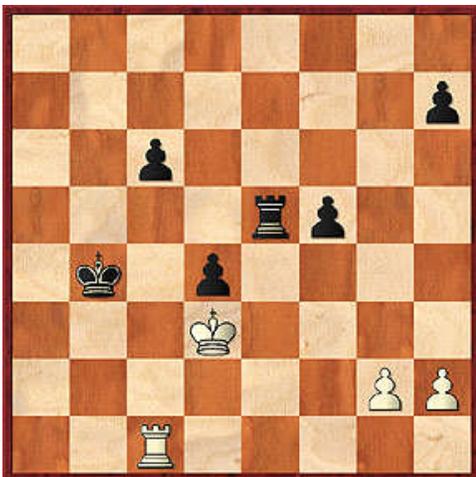


Still hanging on

White has managed to avoid immediate disaster and has incidentally equalised the material situation. At the same time it is hard to believe that Black cannot win eventually after (say) 39...Rc5, which as before dominates the knight. But this is how it goes sometimes. Like all good defenders, White must try to find the strongest line of resistance and hope that Black becomes demoralised to the point of committing an error.

Back to the game. The big problem with 34.Ke2? is that it allows the knight to be captured with tempo, reducing the game to an indefensible rook ending.

34...Bxe5 35.fxe5 Rxe5+ 36.Kd3 Kxb4 37.Rc1



Technique required

Of course not 37.Kxd4? Rd5+ winning immediately.

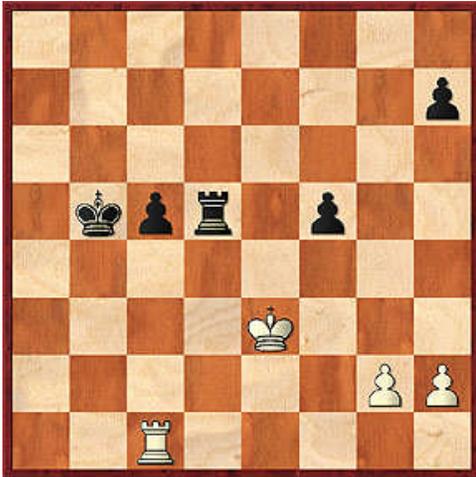
37...Kb5!?

Black is two pawns up and could hang onto both of them with 37...c5, but after 38.Rb1+ Ka3 his king would again be cut off on the a-file. Even then it is highly unlikely that White could save the game. However, Gligoric has spotted a clever technical device and therefore he acquiesces to returning one of the pawns.

38.Kxd4 Rd5+!

White's king must now go back to the e-file, since 39.Kc3? loses to 39...Rc5+, exchanging rooks and transposing to a winning king and pawn ending.

39.Ke3 c5!



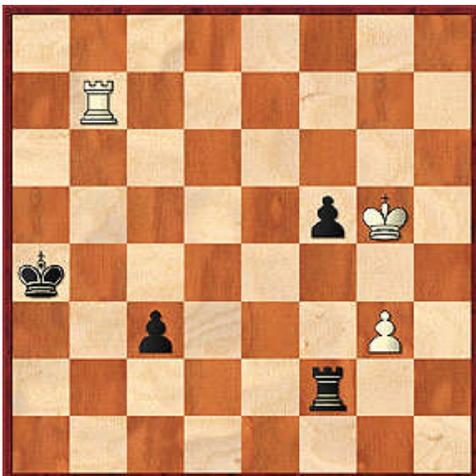
Cut 'em off at the pass

Now it is White's king that is cut off. Black's c-pawn cannot be prevented from queening except through a rook sacrifice.

40.Rb1+ Ka4 41.Rb7 h5!

Now if White chases the h-pawn he will give Black an extra tempo for queening his c-pawn. It's not a big deal, but every move counts in the endgame.

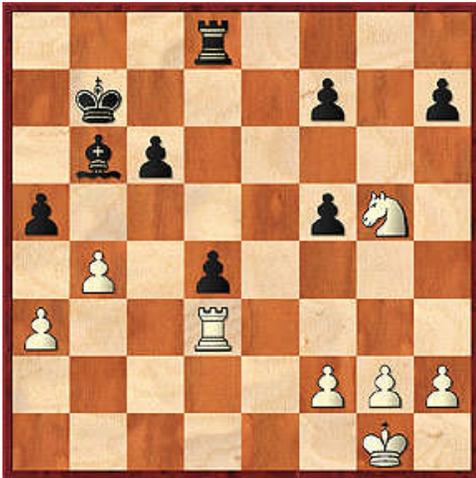
42.Kf4 c4 43.Kg5 c3 44.Kxh5 Rd2 45.g3 Rxh2+ 46.Kg5 Rf2!



This is the end

Black wins White's rook, and meanwhile White cannot create a passed pawn on the kingside. White therefore **resigned**.

To round things off, let us return to the position after 27...a5 and take a look at what happens if White captures the h-pawn instead of the f-pawn.



Trying for counterplay

28.Nxh7 axb4 29.axb4 Ka6 30.Ng5 f6! 31.Nf7

Unfortunately for White, 31.Ne6 fails to 31...Re8. The knight cannot move because of the back-rank mate, and therefore Black wins a piece.

31...Rd7 32.Nh6 Kb5 33.Nxf5 Kxb4



The race is to the swift

White has recovered the pawn, but his position is completely lost. Black's attack is much too fast, and White's h-pawn will never get anywhere.

34.Rd1 d3 35.Kf1 d2 36.Ke2 Kc3 37.g4

If 37.Ne3 then 37...Bxe3 38.fxe3 Kc2 39.h4 c5 40.h5 c4 41.h6 c3 followed by ...Rh7 and ...Rxh6.

37...Kc2 38.h4 Rd8 39.g5 fxg5 40.hxg5

White has done his best to create counterplay, but as usual it is just too slow.

40...Bxf2! 41.Ra1 Rd5!

White is out of ammunition and can safely resign here. The conclusion is that capturing on h7 is a fool's errand and that White was correct to prefer the more centralizing 27.Nxf7.

2011 CANADIAN CHESS PLAYER OF THE YEAR by David Cohen

2011 Canadian Chess Player of the Year is Grandmaster Mark Bluvstein of Toronto, Ontario, the fourth time he has won this honour. The highlight of Bluvstein's year of international competitions was his tie for first place in the Pan-American Chess Championship in April. Second place in the voting was taken by Grandmaster Bator Sambuev of Montreal, Quebec, who won the Canadian Chess Championship in May, thereby setting a record for the highest ever Chess Federation of Canada rating by a Canadian. Third place was earned by Michael Song of Toronto, Ontario for his Bronze Medal at the World Under-12 Chess Championship in November.

The 9th annual vote was conducted by a poll of Canadian Chess Journalists. One ballot is reserved for voting by chess fans. In the Fan Ballot, the winner is Melissa Giblon of Thornhill, Ontario. Giblon won the Canadian Girls Under 12 Chess Championship with a perfect score in July. Second place went to Nikolay Noritsyn of Richmond Hill, Ontario, winner of the Quebec Open Chess Championship in July. He was followed by Bluvstein in third place.

Past winners:

<http://www.canadianchess.info/canadianchesshistory/CanadianChessPlayerYear.html#WINNERS>

Canadian Chess Player accomplishments in 2011:

<http://www.canadianchess.info/canadianchesshistory/CanadianChessPlayerYear.html#2011>

January Active

Date: Monday, January 2, 2012

Location: Vancouver Bridge Centre, 2776 East Broadway (at Kaslo), Vancouver

Rounds: 4

Round Times: RD1: 11:00am Rd2: 12:30 Lunch Rd3: 2:30 Rd4: 4:00

Type: Regular Swiss.

Time Controls: G/30 + 10 sec. increments or G/35.

Entry Fee: \$15

Prizes: 1st \$100 2nd \$70 BU1900 \$60 BU1600 \$60 Upset \$10 based on 30 entries. The Vancouver Active rating will be used or the CFC regular

Registration: On site at 10:30am or contact Luc Poitras at (778) 846-0496

Email: lucque@shaw.ca

Bring your chess set and clock if you have one. No membership required

John Schleinich Memorial

This series of round robins commemorating the life of one of Canada's first International Arbiters will be held in Calgary on the weekend of January 20-22, details at

<http://www.calgarychess.com/Schleinich.html>. If you are interested in playing a limited number of billets are available, contact Tony Ficzere at tonyficzere@gmail.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

Junior

<http://www.bcjuniorchess.com/calendar/>

<http://victoriajuniorchess.pbworks.com/Tournament-Schedule>

UBC Thursday Night Swiss

Thursdays, 6:30 pm, Irving K. Barber Learning Centre room 158, 1961 East Mall, University of British Columbia

entry fee \$21 adult, \$16 junior

Contact Aaron Cosenza, xramis1@yahoo.ca

For details of the following see www.chess.bc.ca

January Active

January 2, 2012, Vancouver Bridge Centre

John Schleinich Memorial

January 20-22, 2012, Calgary

<http://www.calgarychess.com/Schleinich.html>

B.C. Active Championship

January 28-29, 2012, Vancouver Bridge Centre

Grand Pacific Open

April 6-9, 2012, Victoria

Paul Keres Memorial

May 19-21, 2012, Richmond

Canadian Open

July 8-13, 2012, Victoria

U.S. Open

August 4-12, 2012, Vancouver WA