

MK Phoenix 2017-8 Weekend 3

Another mixed weekend for the squad. This time the seconds did well while the first team struggled. In the final qualification round we have a one match point advantage, but need to get a point against a very interested party, being 4th placed Oxford 2. The key games may be elsewhere where Rookies play Brown Jack.

Our talisman this season has been Paul Habershon. He has not played on a losing side albeit one spell was broken when the seconds finally got the first victory without him in a side on Sunday.

Three players won both games over the weekend. Alan Brown was the only reader though, the reporters making up the rest. Anyone wanting to improve their results might want to join the editorial team.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	GP	Pts
1 CSC 1		<u>3-3</u>	<u>2½-3½</u>	<u>5-1</u>	<u>3½-2½</u>		<u>4½-1½</u>	<u>6-0</u>	24½	9
2 Brown Jack 1	<u>3-3</u>		<u>4-2</u>	<u>3-3</u>		<u>4-2</u>	<u>2½-3½</u>	<u>4-2</u>	20½	8
3 MK Phoenix 1	<u>3½-2½</u>	<u>2-4</u>			<u>3-3</u>	<u>3-3</u>	<u>4-2</u>	<u>4-2</u>	19½	8
4 Oxford 2	<u>1-5</u>	<u>3-3</u>			<u>2-4</u>	<u>4½-1½</u>	<u>3½-2½</u>	<u>4½-1½</u>	18½	7
5 The Rookies	<u>2½-3½</u>		<u>3-3</u>	<u>4-2</u>		<u>2½-3½</u>	<u>3½-2½</u>	<u>3-3</u>	18½	6
6 Sussex Martlets 2		<u>2-4</u>	<u>3-3</u>	<u>1½-4½</u>	<u>3½-2½</u>		<u>2-4</u>	<u>4½-1½</u>	16½	5
7 Fermented Sharks	<u>1½-4½</u>	<u>3½-2½</u>	<u>2-4</u>	<u>2½-3½</u>	<u>2½-3½</u>	<u>4-2</u>			16	4
8 West is Best 3	<u>0-6</u>	<u>2-4</u>	<u>2-4</u>	<u>1½-4½</u>	<u>3-3</u>	<u>1½-4½</u>			10	1

Obviously we need a draw v Oxford 2 to guarantee a place in the Promotion Pool. If we lose, and it may depend by how much, we need the right result from Brown Jack v The Rookies. I don't think Brown Jack are mathematically safe either, so they have an incentive to beat The Rookies.

Saturday - Round 5

	MK Phoenix 1	2075		Brown Jack 1	2120
361	w	Friedgood, David	f	2206 ½ - ½	Mihalik, Agoston 2157
362	b	Fraser-Mitchell, Jeremy N		2091 ½ - ½	Truran, Michael C 2172
363	w	Tippleston, Charles E	c	2086 ½ - ½	Onslow, Alfie 2177 e
364	b	Smith, Graham		2042 0 - 1	Martin, Lewis 2067
365	w	Freeman, Richard C P		2014 ½ - ½	Headlong, Timothy c 2130
366	b	Elwin, Adrian G		2012 0 - 1	Tucker, David S 2020 e
				2 - 4	

Coming to the weekend at second place in the table with seven match points, we needed to win one of the two matches to reach the promotion pool. With just a loss and a draw we didn't succeed so a crucial

Round 7 looms next time.

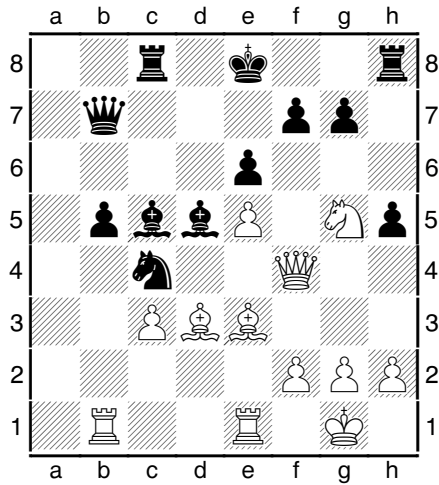
I don't know in what order the above games finished so here is a summary in board order.

Bd 1: David 'won' two minor pieces for rook and pawn but could not do quite enough to win as exchanges reduced material to 3 minor pieces v rook, bishop and pawn at the end.

Bd 2: Jeremy agreed a draw after 19 moves with few exchanges made.

Bd 3: Charles built up a strong position whose zenith was here after 25...Bf8-c5.

Onslow (Brown Jack)

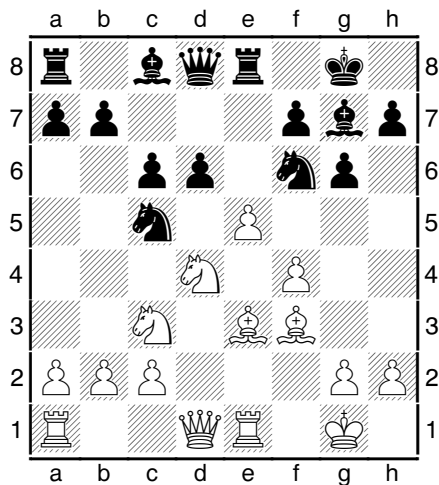


Tippleston (MK Phoenix) to move.

Instead of 26 Bxc5, leading eventually to a draw, the recommendation is 26 Bxc4! Bxc4 27 Bxc5 Rxc5 28 Ne4 +-

Bd 4: Graham succumbed rather rapidly in the position below after White's 12 e4-e5.

Smith (MK Phoenix) to move

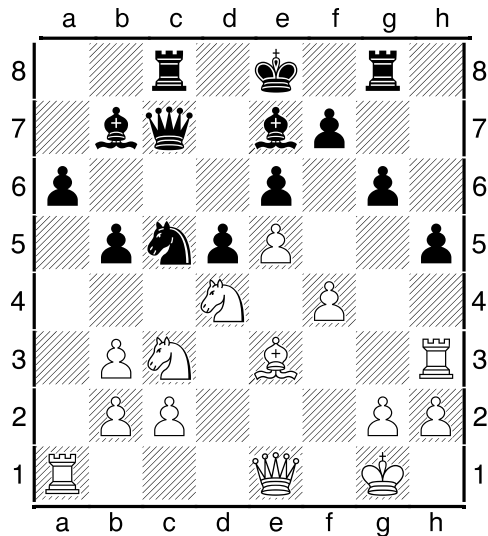


Martin (Brown Jack)

Comparatively best is now 12...dxe5, although it allows the desperado 13 Nxc6 winning a pawn. However, after Graham's 12...Nd5 13 Nxd5 cx5 14 Nb5! Black is lost. **1-0 (17)**

Bd 5: Richard's opponent seemed flummoxed by the 3 Bb5 Sicilian opening and when the draw was agreed Fritz thinks White is better.

Headlong (Brown Jack)

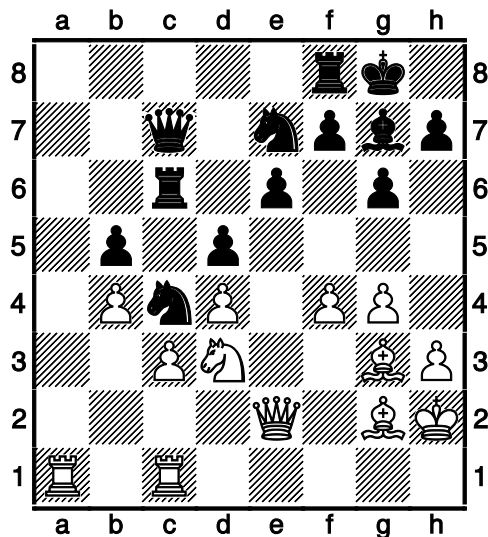


Freeman (MK Phoenix)

Final position after 18...Rh8-g8 (½-½)

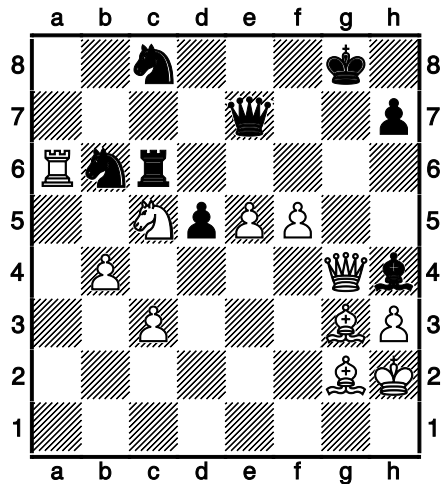
Bd 6: Adrian's position was tolerable until this point after White has just played 28 Kg1-h2.

Elwin (MK Phoenix) to move



Tucker (Brown Jack)

28...f7-f5? Proves to be a fatal weakening of e6. The immediate follow-up was 29 Nc5 Qd6 30 Ra7. It eventually led to this final position after 39 Qe2-g4+.

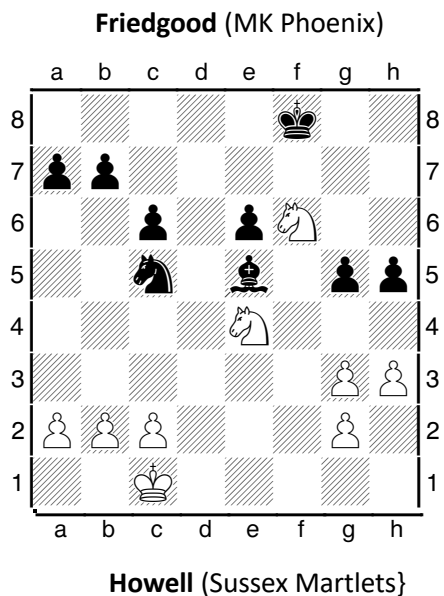


Black resigns.

Round 6 -Sunday

	Sussex Martlets 2	1957		MK Phoenix 1	2062
371	w Howell, Chris I	2012	e 1 - 0	Friedgood, David	f 2206
372	b Salmons, Calum	2035	e ½ - ½	Fraser-Mitchell, Jeremy N	2091
373	w Graham, William M	1905	0 - 1	Smith, Graham	2042
374	b Batchelor, Paul A	1922	e 1 - 0	Elwin, Adrian G	2012
375	w Sutton, Daniel	1960	e ½ - ½	Freeman, Richard C P	2014
376	b Ifalore, Michael	* 1912	0 - 1	Habershon, Paul F	2011
			3 - 3		

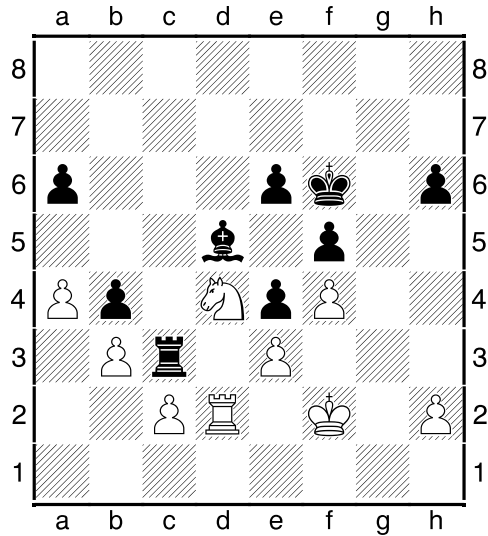
Bd 1: David's Modern Defence come under pressure early on, but he recovered to equalise and in this position, after 28 Nc3-e4 White offered a draw.



David declined the draw with 28...Kf7, but after 29 Nxc5 Kxf6 30 Nxb7 Bxg3 he soon lost his a-pawn and the advance of White's a pawn proved decisive. **0-1 (53)**.

Bd 2: Jeremy opened 1 f4 and was slightly worse for most of the game. Despite opposite-side castling it came down to an ending:

Salmons (Sussex Martlets)

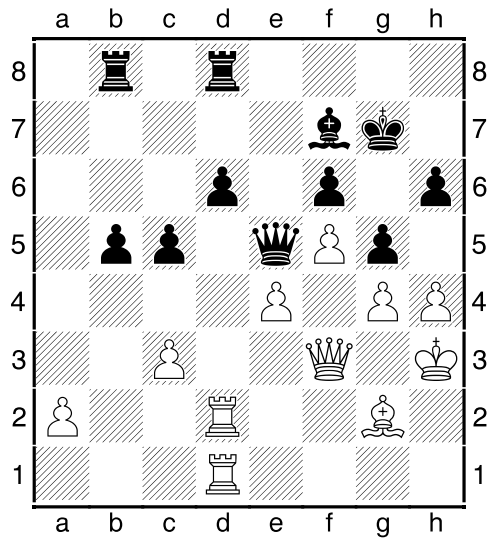


Fraser-Mitchell (MK Phoenix)

Final position after 39...Rc8-c3 1/2-1/2

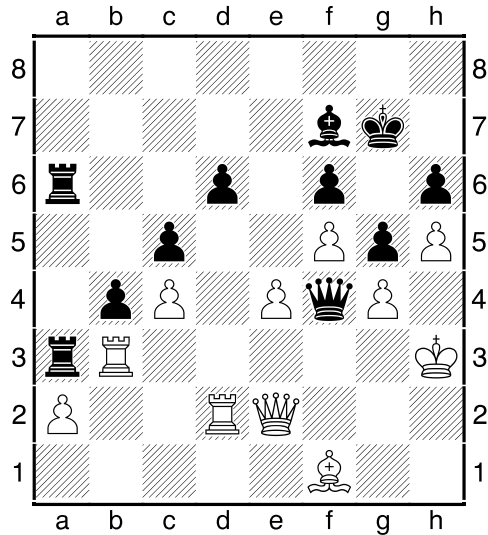
Bd 3: Graham first got the advantage of the two bishops, then exchanged one to weaken White's Q-side pawns. Things began to go seriously wrong for White in the following position:

Smith (MK Phoenix)



Graham (Sussex Martlets) to move

Here White should challenge Black's queen with 30 Qg3. Instead 30 Bf1? b4 31 c4 Ra8 gave Black a big initiative, soon leading to this overload combination:

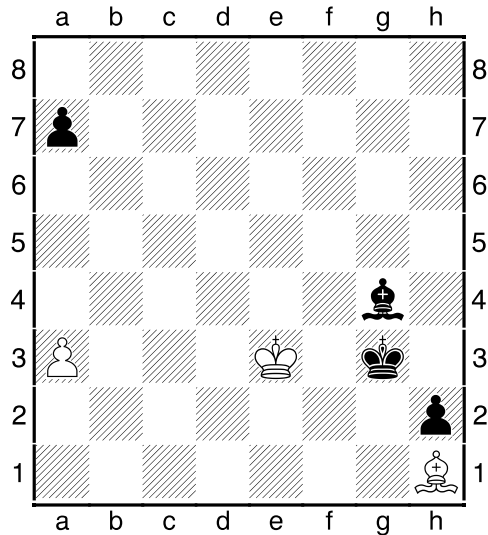


Black to move: 36...Bxc4! and White eventually succumbed to a mating attack. **1-0 (43)**

Bd 4 Adrian got into an ending with a bad bishop. After a lot of manoeuvring a pawn was lost, the last pair of rooks came off and Adrian was unable to sacrifice his bishop for the key black h-pawn.

See diagram for final position:

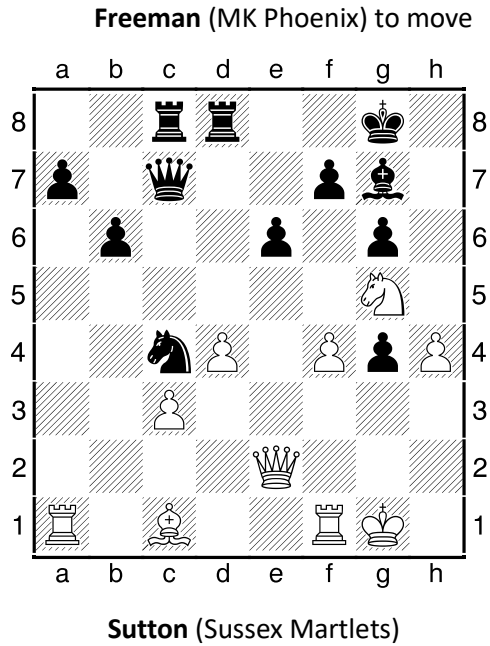
Batchelor (Sussex Martlets)



Elwin (MK Phoenix) to move.

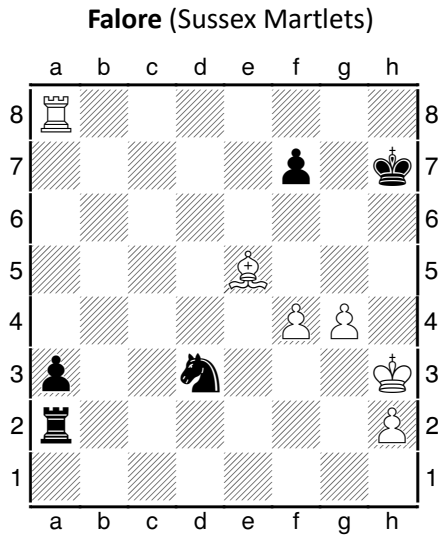
0-1 (70). White cannot prevent Bh3 and Bg2.

Bd 5: Richard agreed a draw in this position:



The computer likes this a lot for Black but justifies it with the fiendish variation 29...Rxd4 30 Nxe6 Re8. Not surprising that Richard, short of time, took the half point.

Bd 6: I certainly had an inferior position at times, but Black went wrong in the ending and my rook, having been keeping a careful watch on the Black a-pawn, is suddenly able to deliver mate on the other side of the board:



Habershon (MK Phoenix)
Position after 40 Nb4-d3.

Play continued: 41 Rh8+ Kg6 42 f5+ Kg5 43 Rh5++
Paul Habershon

The seconds finally emerge from the mire

It is a pleasure to have something to write about! Although both matches were harder than the results suggest we won and have climbed to slap bang mid-table.

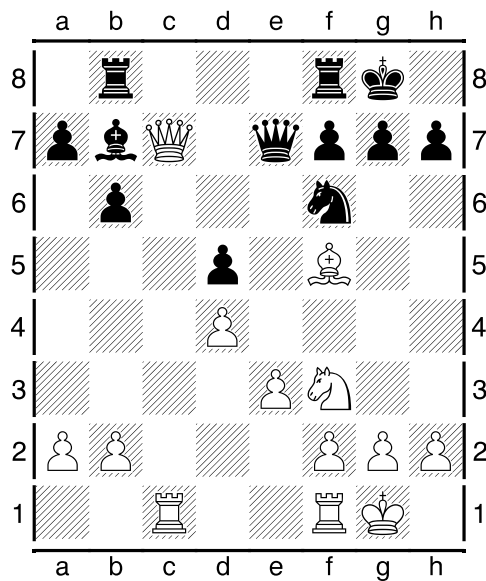
	Camberley Juniors 1778	MK Phoenix 2	1845
511 w	Stoyanov, Viktor	2125 e 0 - 1 Habershon, Paul F	2011
512 b	Isaksen, Peter A	1945 e 0 - 1 Lambourne, Dan M	1970
513 w	Kadambadi, Nikhil	1922 e 0 - 1 Brown, Alan M	1962
514 b	Thornley, Oliver	1675 e 0 - 1 Valentine, Brian J	1904
515 w	Clarke, James	1577 e 0 - 1 Matthews, Adrian M S	1837
516 b	Saxena, Kshitij	1427 c 1 - 0 Miller, Max C	1389

1 - 5

A bit of chaos was nipped in the bud when Adrian arrived about 30 mins late, just as the committee were looking to throw in a substitute. Adrian won quickly and departed back to distant Leighton Buzzard with hardly a word exchanged.

Very early on Max trapped a Knight mid board becoming a complete piece up. He then rushed his moves and returned the favour in spades, getting his rook trapped mid-board.

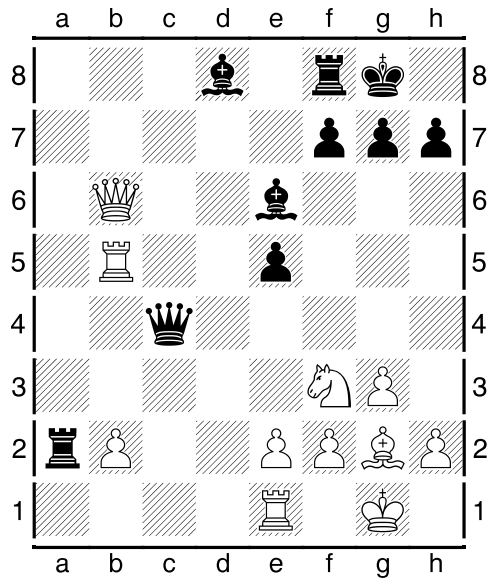
Dan made early progress; opening theory ended around move 11, Dan won a pawn by move 15.



Lambourne v Isaksen, black to play

Here his opponent decided to throw the dice with 15....Qb4, but after 16. Ne5 he is busted because of his back rank and f7 weaknesses.

On board 1, our evergreen correspondent was up against a top 10 U15 English player. Our man soon proved too wily.



Stoyanov v Habershon, White to move

Paul has some compensation for his pawn loss. For instance, white has to negotiate 22. Qb7 Ra7 with 23. b3 to keep an edge. However he spies a juicy 2nd pawn 22. Nxe5, only to be rocked with 22...Qxe2!!

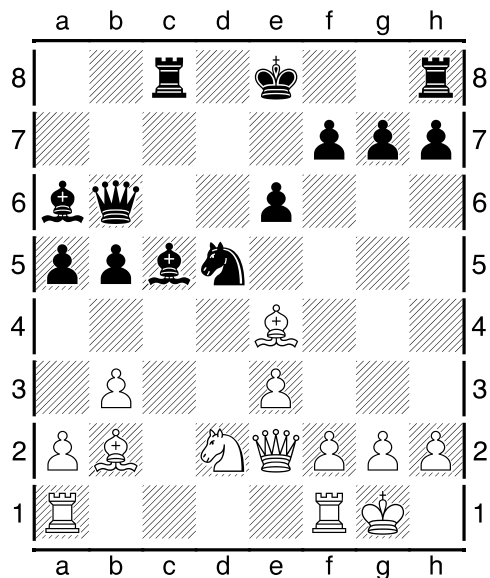
Adrian understood the middle game themes in the Benko better than his opponent. I played a strong attack against my opponent's king only to miss the main denouement ideas, finally winning a drawn R+2 v R+1 pawn ending. Alan won a pawn very early on, took a second gambitted pawn and held them to win a long manoeuvring game.

So onto Sunday, and another elephant trap to avoid.

Oxford 4	1678		MK Phoenix 2	1801
501 w Cole, Graham	1842	½ - ½	Lambourne, Dan M	1970
502 b Hameed, Asif	1787	c 0 - 1	Brown, Alan M	1962
503 w Burcham, Tony	1624	0 - 1	Valentine, Brian J	1904
504 b Henbest, Kevin B	1650	0 - 1	Williamson, Kevin J	1906
505 w Beckett, Richard	1665	1 - 0	Shaw, John S	1680
506 b Matilal, Tamal	1504	0 - 1	Miller, Max C	1389
		1½ - 4½		

Dan had a quiet draw.

Alan kept his opening advantage and then Hameed lost the plot during a piece exchange.

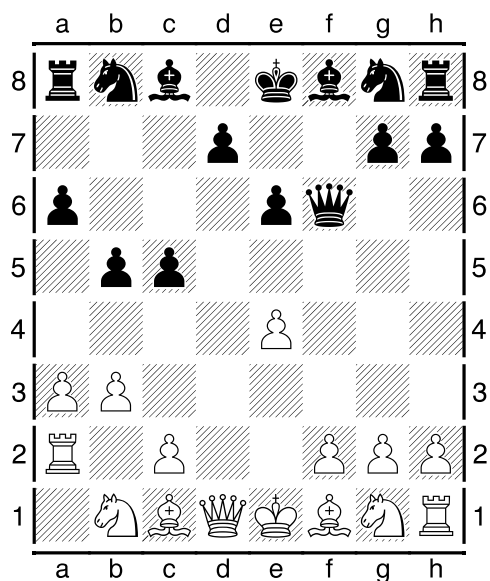


Brown v Hameed, Black to play

The essential features here are the control of the a6-f1 diagonal and black's uncastled king. His choices are to castle or risk going into the complications of 17...b4 18. Qg4 (if white blocks the diagonal with Nc4 or Bd3, black exchanges and then secures his king safety) Bxf1 19. Qxg7 Rf8. Instead he played the tame 17...Nf6. Now white controls a6-f1 by 18. Bd3 with a pin. A pawn dropped, and the king remained in the centre. Alan was winning and converted.

Kevin was given a piece on move 13. John failed to show his Gibraltar form, misjudging a seemingly innocuous looking ending.

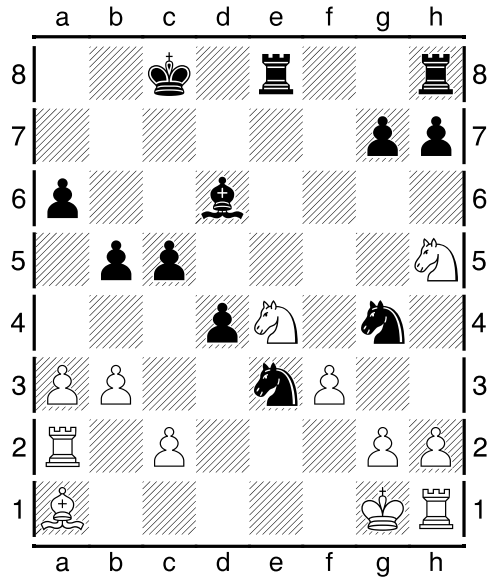
In the world of AlphaGo out views of chess are evolving. It is becoming clear that us dinosaurs are playing outdated openings. Max is able to pick up these new paradigms. For example, here is the position after 7 moves.



Miller v Matilal, black to move

The game has been off human radar since move 4. To my untrained eye, I think the idea is not to move a piece till you can ascertain its best square. Note that black has already gone wrong since his queen will be hit by Bb2.

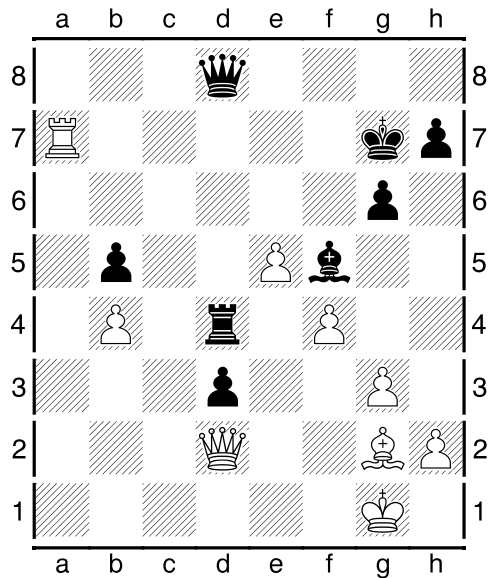
The game went on and Matilal missed his big opportunity



Miller v Matilal, Black to move

Here he played 24...Bxh2, when 24...Rxe4 would win the house, since the f-file becomes exposed. Max then played carefully and he showed that in his hands, two pieces were better than the rook.

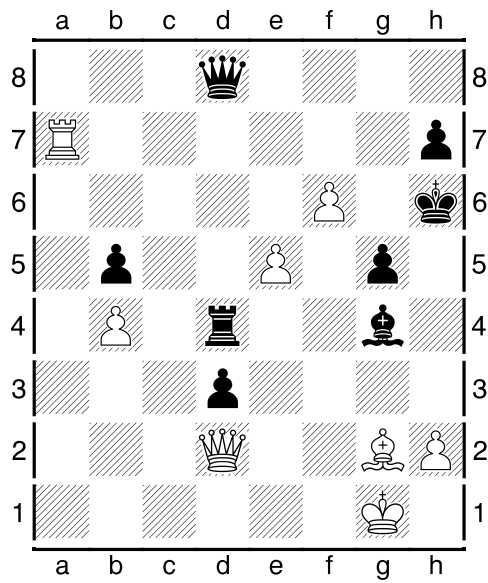
At the time, this looked a very useful result since I was struggling. Approaching time control we reached this position



Burcham v Valentine, black is in check

Here my assistant indicates that I could equalise with ...Rd7. Nevertheless, I chose to be more adventurous, with king march where I could not see a mate.

34....Kh6?! 35. g4 Bxg4 36. f5+ g5. And here he misses an obscure winning idea: 37. Ra6+ Kh5 38. h3 Be2 39. Qe3! Instead he played 37. f6.



Burcham v Valentine, black to move

Now the a7-g1 diagonal comes into play: 37....Rf4 and as his clock ran down he saved his rook, but vacated the defence of a1, play concluded. 38. Rb7 Qd4+ 39. Kh1 Qa1+.

We look to harder matches in March.

Brian Valentine