

IRISH CHAMPIONSHIPS 1999

A report on this year's championships by Donal O'Boyle

The 1999 Irish Chess Championships were played in Drogheda for the first time over the Easter break. Under the astute stewardship of Chief Controller Andrew Thomson and his team, the Championships were played in the magnificent surroundings of the Boyne Valley Hotel & Country Club. The Inter-Regionals took place on Good Friday and set the stage for what was an exciting nine days of chess (results below). Thanks to the many sponsors who contributed to the event, the host club was able to offer increased prize fund in each section, despite a slight drop in entries over the previous year. To this end, Drogheda Chess Club would like to place on record their thanks to Coca-Cola Atlantic, The Boyne Valley Hotel & Country Club, Drogheda Corporation, Rogers Garage, Dundalk, and Eagletons Shoes, Pat Constant and the Irish Chess Union for their support.

The action commenced on Saturday morning with the Weekender consisting of 37 entries including Paul Delaney making a welcome return to competitive chess. In fact, Paul's experience was to prove crucial as he scored a maximum 5/5 to take first place. He was closely followed by Kieran Coughlan (Dundalk), Ola Winfriddson (Galway) and Kevin Butler (Phibsboro).

The Senior commenced in the afternoon with 18 entries and all but one of the top seeds came safely through the first round. The combination of Colm Daly's erratic form and Tom Clarke's three straight wins left the leader board looking as follows after three rounds: Tom Clarke 3, Joe Ryan & Jonathan O'Connor 2½, Mel O'Conneide & Ray O'Rourke 2.

The results of the fourth round made interesting reading with Joe Ryan going to the top of the leader board following his win over Tom Clarke. Jonathan O'Connor's draw with Peter Cafolla and Michael Dooley's win over Gerry O'Connell certainly closed the gap at the top. Richard O'Donovan stayed in contention following his third consecutive win. However, Ryan's reign was short lived following 3 draws in the next three rounds. Meanwhile Tom Clarke took over the lead with wins over Jonathan O'Connor and Stephen Brady. In round eight, Colm Daly defeated Clarke to take a half point lead into the final round.

There were only four players (Clarke, Daly, Orr and Ryan) in contention for the title, with Colm Daly having the outcome in his own hands. As both Tom Clarke and Joe Ryan won their final matches, Daly had to defeat Orr to take the title. This he did to retain the title for another year.

Senior Championships (Sponsored by Coca-Cola Atlantic)

1st Colm Daly 7; 2nd Tom Clarke 6½; 3rd Joe Ryan 6; 4th-5th Stephen Brady, Mark Orr 5½; 6th-8th Jonathan O'Connor, Michael Dooley, Peter Cafolla 5; 9th-12th Gerry O'Connell, Richard O'Donovan, Mel O'Conneide, Jim McCarthy 4½; 13th Ray O'Rourke 4; 14th Anthony Fox 3½; 15th-16th John Nicholson, Eric Bennett 3; 17th John Kennedy 2½; 18th David Path 1½.

Intermediate Championship (Sponsored by The Boyne Valley Hotel)

1st Colm Fitzpatrick 5½; 2nd John Loughran 4; 3rd Sam Moore 4; 4th Brendan Bruen 4; 5th-6th Roland McDermott, Ray Kane 3½.

Junior Championship (Sponsored by Drogheda Corporation)

1st Shay Scott 5½; 2nd Paul McLoughlin 5; 3rd Declan O'Keeffe 4½.

Veteran Championship (Sponsored by Eagletons Shoes, Drogheda)

1st Andrew Thomson 4; 2nd Tom Cummins 3½; 3rd John Strawbridge, Alan Burns 3.

Weekender (Sponsored by Rogers Garage, Dundalk)

1st Paul Delaney 5; 2nd Kieran Coughlan 4; 3rd-4th Ola Winfriddson, Kevin Butler 4.

Overall, the tournament was a great success mainly due to the hard work behind the scenes by Andrew Thomson, Ciaran Quinn, Donal O'Boyle, Eugene McMorrow and the many members of Drogheda Chess Club.

INTERPROVINCIALS RESULTS - Semifinals: Ulster 8 Connacht 2; Leinster 7½ Munster 2½.
Third place play-off: Connacht 5 Munster 5 (Connacht win on tiebreak). **Final:** Ulster 7 Leinster 3.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE IRISH CHAMPIONSHIPS

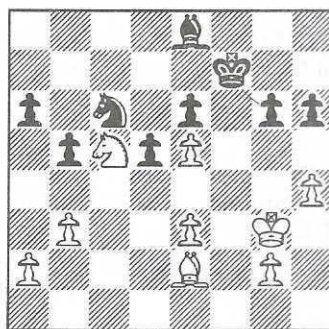
Gerry O'Connell - Colm Daly
Round 2

Slav Exchange

Notes by Gerry O'Connell

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 e6 4.cxd5 (I could not figure out which variation Colm was heading for and so decided to avoid it.) **4...cxd5 5.Nc3** (We have entered the realms of the Slav Exchange Variation where White can look forward to a small but long term plus, due to his one move lead in development and Black's poor white squared bishop.) **5...Be7** (This is committal, Black normally develops a knight first here and often plays ...Bd6 in reply to Bf4 by White.) **6.Bf4 a6 7.e3** (7.e4 was very tempting in view of Black's lack of development, but this would give Black certain long-term advantages.) **7...Nf6 8.h3** (Giving the bishop a nice retreat on h2.) **8...0-0 9.Bd3 b5 10.0-0 Bb7 11.Ne5** (This is the key square for White in this variation.) **11...Nc6 12.Rc1 Rc8** (Both sides have completed their development and White has come out slightly better in view of his better placed pieces.) **13.Bb1** (Creating the possibility of Qc2 and Qd3, doubling up on the b1-h7 diagonal.) **13...g6?! (Weakening the dark squares around the black king.) 14.Bh6 Re8 15.f4** (Gaining space and cementing e5, White's advantage is now significant, if **15...Bf8 16.Bg5** is good.) **15...Nd7 16.Qf3** (Preventing any immediate exchange on e5 due to pressure on the f-file.) **16...Rc7! (Covering the bishop on b7 and the pawn on f7 in some lines.) 17.Kh2** (I was convinced that I had a winning advantage here, however despite 30 minutes of analysis neither **17.Nxd7 Rxd7 18.f5** nor **17.Nxf7 Kxf7 18.f5 gxf5 19.Qh5+ Kg8 20.Rf3 Kh8** nor **17.Nxd5** nor **17.f5** seem to work!) **17...Ndx5 18.fxe5 Bg5** (Black has opened up the f-file it

is true, but he has rid himself of that powerful knight on e5 and White's aggressive bishop on h6 and his rook on c7 covers the f7 square.) **19.Bxg5 Qxg5 20.Qg3** (This move swapping off queens offers White an advantage in the ending. The alternative was **20.Nd1-f2-g4-f6** but Black can prevent this with ...h5 or ...Rec8, ...Nb8, ...Nd7.) **20...Qxg3+ 21.Kxg3 Rec8 22.Ne2 Na5** (Heading for the lovely square c4.) **23.b3 Bc6 24.Bd3 Kg7 25.h4** (Trying to control g5 later on.) **25...Be8 26.Rxc7 Rxc7 27.Rc1 Rxc1 28.Nxc1 f6!** (A very good move, if White takes **29.exf6+ Kxf6** and ...e5 follows freeing Black's position, so...) **29.Be2! fxe5 30.dxe5 Nc6 31.Nd3** (All of Black's pawns are on the same colour as his bishop, however White's e5 pawn is very weak.) **31...h6 32.Nc5! Kf7**



33.Kf4? (Missing **33.Nxa6 Nxe5 34.Kf4 Kf6 [34...Nc6 35.Bxb5 e5+ 36.Kg3 d4 37.Nc7 Bd7 38.exd4 exd4 39.a4 winning] 35.Nc7 Bc6 36.Nxb5 g5+ 37.hxg5 hxg5+ 38.Kg3** and White is a very dangerous passed a-pawn to the good.) **33...Nb8 34.Bg4 Bd7 35.b4 Ke7 36.a3 Bc8 37.Be2 Nc6 38.Nd3 Bd7 39.g4 a5 40.g5 h5 41.Bd1 Be8 42.Bc2 axb4 1/2-1/2.**

Mel O'Cinneide - Tom Clarke
Irish Senior (2) 1999

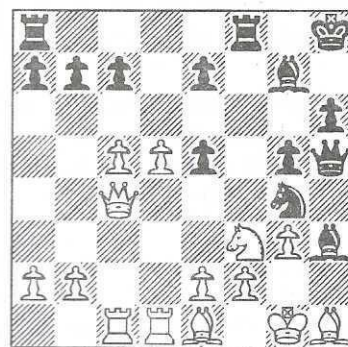
Leningrad Dutch

1.d4 f5 2.g3 Nf6 3.Bg2 g6 4.Nf3

Bg7 5.0-0 0-0 6.c4 d6 7.Nc3 Nc6

Usual is **7...c6** but this leads to more tactical middlegames as Black presses for a kingside attack.

8.d5 Ne5 9.Nxe5 dxe5 10.Qb3 h6 11.c5 Kh8 12.Rd1 g5 13.Bd2 f4 14.Be1 Bg4 15.Qc4 Qc8 16.Ne4 Bh3 17.Bh1 Ng4 18.Rac1 Qe8 19.Nd2 Qh5 20.Nf3 f3 21.hxg3



21...Bf1!? 22.Qe4 Rf7 23.Rc4 Raf8 24.d6 exd6 25.cxd6 cxd6 26.Rxd6 Nf6 27.Qc2 e4 28.Ne5 Re7 29.g4 Qe8!

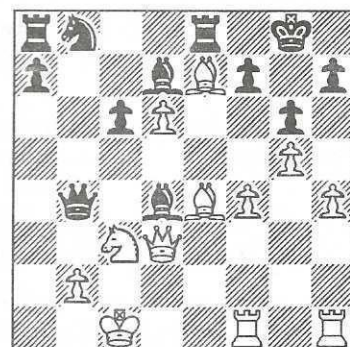
A star move which makes it extremely difficult for White to organise his pieces.

30.Bc3 Rxe5 31.Bxe5 Qxe5 32.Rxf6 Qxf6 33.f3 exf3 34.Bxf3 Bxe2

The bishop has remained untouched on f1 for 13 moves!

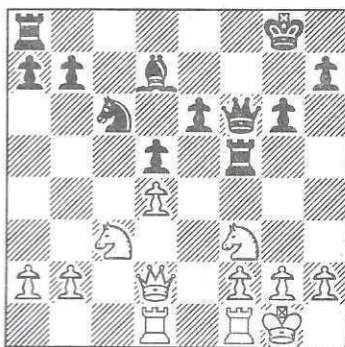
35.Bxe2 Qf2+ 36.Kh1 Qe1+ 37.Kg2 Rf2+ 0-1.

In the next diagram, it's Black to move from Eric Bennett v David Path in round 3.



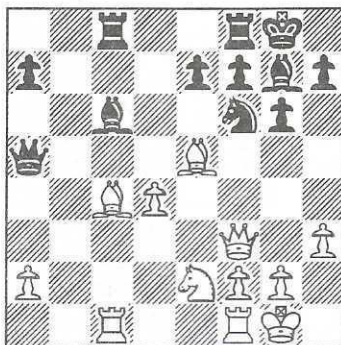
In the game between the lowest rated players in the event, Black found an interesting way to develop his queenside: 29...Na6! (threatening 30...Nc5) 30.Qxa6 Bxc3 31.bxc3 Qxe4 32.Rh2 Rab8 33.Qa2 Bf5 34.Rb2 Qe3+ 35.Rd2 Rb1+? (35...Qxc3+) 36.Qxb1 Bxb1 37.d7 Qxc3+ 38.Kd1 Qb3+ 39.Kc1 Qc3+ 40.Kd1 Qb3+ 41.Kc1 Qc4+ 42.Kxb1 Qxf1+? (42...Rb8+ 43.Rb2 Qxf1+ 44.Ka2 Rxb2+ 45.Kxb2 Qe2+ and 46...Qxe7) 43.Kc2 Qc4+ 44.Kd1 Qb3+ 45.Kc1 Qc3+ 46.Kd1 Qb3+ 1/2-1/2.

In this French-type position from Stephen Brady v Mark Orr in round 3, Black seems to have a promising position. What should he play?



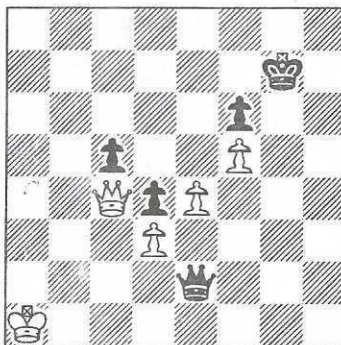
He could continue with 19...Rf8 with the idea of sacrificing the exchange on f3 and taking on d4 if given the opportunity. White is tied to the defence of d4 and lacks an active plan. However the move he plays allows White to gain the initiative with an unexpected manoeuvre: 19...g5 20.Ne2! g4 21.Ne1 Ne7 22.Ng3 Bb5? (22...Rg5) 23.Nxf5 Nxf5 24.Nd3 Rf8 25.Rfe1 Bxd3 26.Qxd3. Black has insufficient compensation for the exchange and lost in 55 moves. Going back to the diagram position, Black could also have played 19...h5 (to meet 20.Ne2 with 20...h4), and only then proceed with ...g5-g4. However White could change plans with 20.Nb5 heading for d6.

Here Black has just played 20...Bd7-c6. Was this a good move?



In Peter Cafolla v Jim McCarthy from round 3, White continued 21.Bxf7+ Kxf7 22.Rxc6 Rxc6 23.Qxc6 Qxa2 (Black has restored material equality and gained a passed a-pawn into the bargain, but his king position has been weakened) 24.Nf4 Rd8 25.Rd1 g5 (This second weakening is too much for the black position to bear) 26.Nd3 Qe2 27.Qc4+ Kf8 28.Ra1 a5 29.Qc7 Ra8 30.Nc5 Kf7 31.Qc6 Qb2 32.Rf1! (Once the rook joins the attack it's all over) 32...Re8 33.f4 gxf4 34.Rxf4 Qc1+ 35.Kh2 Qc4 36.d5 Qa2 37.Qe6+ Kg6 38.Rg4+ 1-0.

An endgame exercise: can White play for a win by taking on c5?



It does seem that 1.Qxc5 Qxd3 2.Qe7+ Kg8 3.Qe8+ Kg7 4.Qg6+ Kf8 5.Qxf6+ gives White good winning chances, however in Daly v O'Connor from round 3, Black engineered a position where he could take the d3 pawn without losing the f6 pawn, and thereafter his passed d-pawn was

the strongest factor in the position: 55.Qxc5 Qd1+! 56.Kb2 Qd2+ 57.Qc2 Qb4+ 58.Ka2 Qa5+ 59.Kb2 Qb4+ 60.Qb3 Qd2+ 61.Kb1 Qe1+ 62.Ka2 Qd2+ 63.Qb2 Qxd3 64.Qb7+ Kh6 65.Qe7 Qc2+ 66.Ka1 Qc3+ 67.Ka2 d3 68.Qd6 d2 69.Qf4+ Kg7 70.Qg4+ Kf8 71.Qd1 Qc1 72.Qh5 Qc2+ 73.Ka3 Qd3+ 74.Ka2 d1=Q 75.Qh8+ Kf7 76.Qh7+ Ke8 77.Qg8+ Kd7 78.Qe6+ Kc7 79.Qe7+ Qd7 80.Qc5+ Qc6 81.Qe7+ Qdd7 0-1.

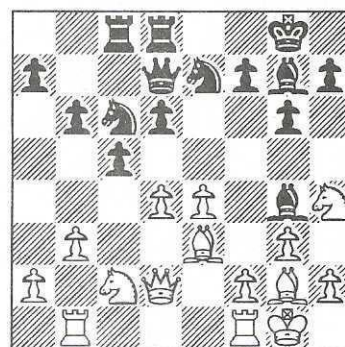
Anthony Fox

Richard O'Donovan

Irish Senior (4) 1999

King's Indian Attack

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d3 g6 4.g3 Bg7 5.Bg2 d6 6.0-0 e5 7.c3 Nge7 8.Be3 0-0 9.Na3 Rb8 10.d4 exd4 11.cxd4 b6 12.Qd2 Bg4 13.Nc2 Qd7 14.Rab1 Rbc8 15.b3 Rfd8 16.Nh4?!



Of course Nh4 is a normal move in the King's Indian Attack, but here it puts the knight offside just long enough for Black to clarify the central tension.

16...cxd4 17.Nxd4 d5! 18.Nxc6 Rxc6 19.exd5 Nxd5 20.Qxd5 Qxd5 21.Bxd5 Rxd5 22.Rbc1 Rxc1 23.Rxc1 Rd1+ 24.Kg2 Rxc1 25.Bxc1 Bd1

Black has the smallest of advantages in the ending, two bishops versus bishop and knight, but the problem for the knight is that it has no good outpost square.

26.Nf3 Bc3 27.Nd2 f5 28.Nc4 b5 29.Ne3 Be2 30.Nd5 Bg7 31.a3 Bd1 32.Nc7 Bxb3

33.Nxb5 a6 34.Nc7 Bc4 35.f3 Kf7 36.Be3 Bf8 37.a4 Bb4 38.Na8 Ba5 39.Nb6 Bb3

The bishops prove their superiority and the a-pawn is lost.

40.Nd7 Bxa4 41.Ne5+ Ke6 42.Nd3 Bb5 43.Nf4+ Ke5 44.h4 Bb4 45.h5 g5 46.Nh3

The knight is not much more effective on h3 than h4, even if it has travelled there via a8.

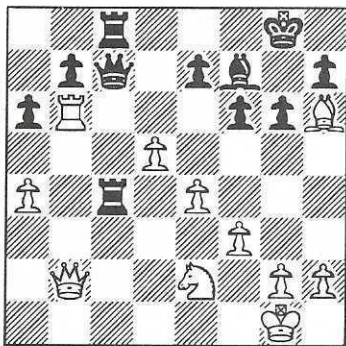
46...g4 47.fxg4 fxg4 48.Ng5 Bd3 49.Nf7+ Kf6 50.Nd8 Be4+ 51.Kf2 Ba5

And now the knight itself is dominated by the bishops.

52.Bd4+ Ke7 53.Ke3 Bf3 54.Kf4 Bxd8 55.Kg5 Ke6+ 56.Kh6 Be4 57.Bf6 Bc7 58.Bh4 Bf5 59.Kg7 a5 60.Kh6 a4 0-1.

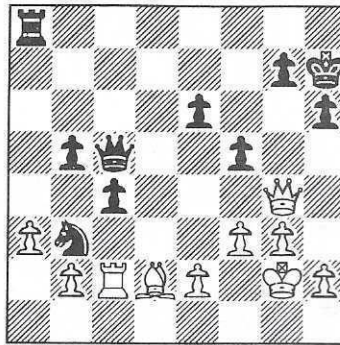
A textbook display of endgame technique by Black.

In the diagram below White has played a theoretical exchange sacrifice line in the Grunfeld Defence. Has he a decisive continuation of his attack?



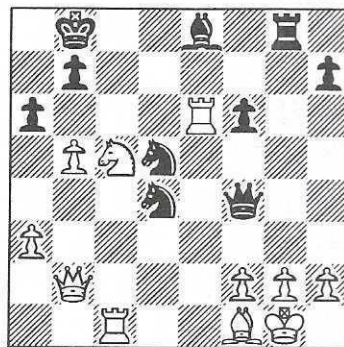
In O'Connell v Dooley from round 4 White played 25.Rxf6 exf6 26.Qxf6 but after 26...Bxd5! 27.exd5 Qf7 the attack was easily repulsed: 28.Qa1 Qd7 29.Ng3 Rxa4 30.Qb2 b5 31.Ne4 Qa7+ 32.Kf1 Qd4 33.Qxd4 Rxd4 34.d6 Rd8 35.d7 Kf7 36.Nc5 a5 37.Nb7 R8xd7 38.Nxa5 0-1.

In the next diagram, the white queen has just been attacked by ...f7-f5. The question he faces is, where should he move the queen?



1.Qh4 is interesting, and if 1...Qd5 (going after the rook on c2) 2.Bc3 Qd1? 3.Bxg7! Kxg7 4.Qe7+ with perpetual check, while if 2...Rg8 White has time to free his rook with 3.e4. In O'Connell v Dooley in round 4, White protected his bishop with 34.Qf4 but after 34...g5! 35.Qe3 Qxe3 36.Bxe3 e5, Black's space advantage and control of the d-file gave him a decisive advantage: 37.Bd2 Kg6 38.h3 Kf6 39.e4 f4 40.g4 Ke6 41.Bb4 Kd7 42.h4 Ke6 43.hxg5 hxg5 44.Rf2 Rd8 45.Rf1 Rd3 46.Rh1 Nd4 47.Rh3 Kf6 48.Kf2 Kg6 49.Bc3 Re3 50.Kg2 Re2+ 51.Kf1 Rc2 52.Ke1 0-1.

A tactical exercise: White has a promising attacking position, but can you see a forced win?



There is a forced win by 1.Nxa6+ bxa6 2.Rxe8+ Rxe8 3.bxa6+. In Dooley v O'Rourke from round 5 White played 28.Nxa6+ bxa6 but missed 29.Rxe8+ and allowed his opponent to make some aggressive moves of his own before submitting: 29.bxa6+? Bb5 30.Bxb5 Rxb2+ 31.Kxb2 Qg4+ 32.Kf1 Qh3+ 33.Ke1 Qxe6+ 34.Be2+ Qb6 35.Qxb6+

Nxb6 36.Rc5 f5 37.a7+ Kxa7 38.Rc7+ Ka8 39.Rxb7 f4 40.Bd3 Kb8 41.h4 1-0.

How small an advantage do you need to win a chess game? Or is White just lost after 13...Rb8.?

Jim McCarthy - Mark Orr
Irish Senior (5) 1999

English Symmetrical

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 e6 3.c4 c5 4.Nc3 cxd4 5.Nxd4 Nc6 6.a3 d5 7.cxd5 Nxd5 8.Nxc6 bxc6 9.e4 Nxc3 10.Qxd8+ Kxd8 11.bxc3 Bc5 12.Bc4 e5 13.Ke2 Rb8 14.Ra2 Ke7 15.Be3 Bxe3 16.Kxe3 Rd8 17.Ke2 Be6 18.Bxe6 Kxe6 19.Rd1 Rxd1 20.Kxd1 Rb1+ 21.Ke2 Kd6 22.Rd2+ Kc7 23.Ra2 Rh1 24.g3 Rxh2 25.Ra1 Rh6 26.Rb1 Rd6 27.Rb4 Rd7 28.a4 Rd8 29.Rb2 h5 30.Rb1 g6 31.Ke3 Rb8 32.Rc1 Rb2 33.f4 exf4+ 34.Kxf4 Ra2 35.Ke5 Rxa4 36.Re1 f5 37.exf5 Ra5+ 38.Kf6 Rxf5+ 39.Kxg6 Rc5 0-1.

The Ruy Lopez opening is seen a lot less than it used to be. The following game provides a good example of its merits, as White builds up a promising attack but Black generates just enough counterplay to hold the draw.

John Nicholson - Anthony Fox
Irish Senior (5) 1999

Ruy Lopez

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.d3 d6 6.c3 b5 7.Bc2 Be7 8.0-0 0-0 9.d4 Bg4 10.d5 Na5 11.h3 Bxf3 12.Qxf3 c6 13.Nd2 Qc7 14.Qd3 c5 15.f4 c4 16.Qf3 Nd7 17.Qg3 Bf6 18.Nf3 Kh8 19.fxe5 Bxe5 20.Qh4 f6 21.Be3 Nb7 22.Nd4 Rf7 23.Rf5 g6 24.Rf3 Qc8 25.Raf1 Nbc5 26.Nc6 Qe8 27.Nxe5 Nxe5 28.Rxf6 Ncd7 29.Rxf7 Nxf7 30.Qf2 Kg8 31.Bd4 Nfe5 32.Qg3 Qe7 33.Bd1 Rf8 34.Rxf8+ Kxf8 35.Bg4 Nxg4 36.Qxg4 Kf7 37.h4 h5 38.Qf4+ Ke8 39.Kf2 a5 40.b3 cxb3 41.axb3 a4 42.bxa4 bxa4 43.g3 a3 44.Qc1 Qxe4 45.Qxa3 Qxd5 46.Qa6 Ke7 47.Qd3 Ne5 48.Qe3 Kd7 49.Bxe5 dxe5 50.c4 Qxc4 1/2-1/2.

A trio of hard fought draws, including two by tournament leader Joe Ryan.

Joe Ryan - Stephen Brady

Irish Senior (5) 1999

Queen's Indian Defence

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 e6 3.e3 c5 4.Bd3 b6 5.0-0 Bb7 6.c4 Be7 7.Nc3 0-0 8.d5 exd5 9.cxd5 d6 10.e4 a6 11.a4 Nbd7 12.h3 Ne5 13.Nxe5 dxe5 14.f4 Bd6 15.f5 Ne8 16.Be3 Be7 17.Qg4 Kh8 18.Rf3 Nf6 19.Qg3 Rc8 20.Qf2 Ne8 21.Qe2 Ra8 22.Raf1 Bg5 23.Bf2 Qe7 24.Qe1 Nc7 25.h4 Bf6 26.g4 g5 27.fxg6 fxg6 28.Bg3 Bg7 29.Rxf8+ Rxf8 30.Rxf8+ Qxf8 31.Qf2 Qxf2+ 32.Kxf2 Ne8 33.b3 Kg8 34.Kf3 Kf7 35.Nb1 Nd6 36.Bf2 Bf8 37.a5 bxa5 38.Bxc5 Nb5 39.Bxf8 Nd4+ 40.Ke3 Kxf8 41.Bc4 Ke7 42.Nd2 Kd6 43.Kd3 h6 44.g5 hxg5 45.hxg5 Kc5 46.Kc3 Bc8 47.Bd3 Nb5+ 48.Bxb5 axb5 49.Nf3 Kd6 50.Nh4 Bg4 51.Nxg6 Bf3 52.Kd3 a4 53.bxa4 bxa4 54.Nh4 a3 55.Nf5+ Kc5 56.Ne3 a2 57.Nc2 Bh5 58.Kc3 Bg6 59.Kd3 ½-½.

Tom Clarke - Michael Dooley

Irish Senior (6) 1999

Trompowsky

1.d4 Nf6 2.Bg5 Ne4 3.h4 d5 4.Nd2 Bf5 5.e3 c5 6.Ngf3 Nc6 7.c3 Qb6 8.Qb3 Qxb3 9.axb3 Nxg5 10.hxg5 cxd4 11.exd4 a6 12.b4 Rc8 13.b5 axb5 14.Bxb5 Bd7 15.Nb3 e6 16.Ke2 Bd6 17.Rh4 Ke7 18.Bd3 Ra8 19.Rxa8 Rxa8 20.Rxh7 Ra2 21.Rxg7 Rxb2+ 22.Nfd2 Kf8 23.Rh7 e5 24.g6 Be6 25.Bf5 exd4 26.cxd4 Bb4 27.Bxe6 fxe6 28.Rxb7 Bxd2 29.Rf7+ Kg8 30.Nxd2 Nxd4+ 31.Kd3 Nc6 32.Kc3 Rb6 33.Nf3 e5 34.Ng5 d4+ 35.Kc4 Na5+ 36.Kd5 Rxg6 37.Rf5 d3 38.Ne4 Rxg2 39.Kxe5 Nc4+ 40.Kd4 d2 ½-½.

Colm Daly - Joe Ryan

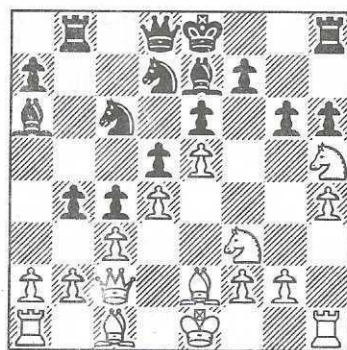
Irish Senior (6) 1999

Reti

1.c4 c6 2.Nf3 d5 3.e3 Nf6 4.h3 e6 5.b3 Nbd7 6.Bb2 Bd6 7.Nc3

a6 8.d4 0-0 9.Bd3 Re8 10.0-0 e5 11.dxe5 Nxe5 12.cxd5 cxd5 13.Na4 Nc6 14.Bxf6 Qxf6 15.Nb6 Rb8 16.Nxd5 Qh6 17.Re1 Be6 18.Nf4 Bxf4 19.exf4 Qxf4 20.Re4 Qf6 21.Rc1 Rd8 22.Qe2 Bf5 23.Re3 Bxd3 24.Rxd3 Rxd3 25.Qxd3 Rd8 26.Qe4 h6 27.Re1 Qd6 28.h4 Qd5 29.Qf4 Qd7 30.a3 Re8 31.Rxe8+ Qxe8 32.b4 Qd7 33.Qe4 Qe7 34.Qf5 Qd8 35.g3 Ne7 36.Qf4 Nc6 37.Qe4 Qe7 38.Qxe7 Nxe7 39.Kf1 Nc6 40.Ke2 Kf8 41.Kd3 Ke7 42.Ke4 Kd6 43.h5 g6 44.hxg6 fxg6 45.Nh4 Ne7 46.f4 Ke6 47.Nxg6 Nxg6 48.f5+ Kf6 49.fxg6 Kxg6 50.Kd5 Kg5 51.Kc5 Kg4 52.Kb6 Kxg3 53.Kxb7 h5 54.Kxa6 h4 55.b5 h3 56.b6 h2 57.b7 h1=Q 58.b8=Q+ Kf2 59.a4 Qd5 60.a5 Ke1 61.Qb1+ Kd2 62.Qb2+ Kd1 63.Qb1+ Kd2 64.Qb4+ Kd1 65.Qg4+ Ke1 66.Qg3+ Kd2 67.Qf4+ Kd1 68.Kb6 Qd8+ 69.Qc7 Qd4+ 70.Kb7 Qd5+ 71.Kc8 Ke1 72.Kb8 Qb3+ 73.Ka7 Qe3+ 74.Kb7 Qb3+ 75.Kc8 Qg8+ 76.Kd7 Qd5+ 77.Ke8 Qg8+ 78.Ke7 Qg5+ 79.Kd7 Qd5+ ½-½.

In the diagram position, what should White do about his attacked knight?



In Fox v Path from round 6, White showed that Black had not paid enough attention to king safety: 17.Ng7+ Kf8 18.Nxe6+ fxe6 19.Qxg6 Bf6 20.Bxh6+ Rxh6 21.Qxh6+ Bg7 22.Qxe6 Qc7 23.Ng5 Ndx5 24.Nh7# 1-0.

Gerry O'Connell

Peter Cafolla

Irish Senior (6) 1999

Chigorin Defence

Notes by Gerry O'Connell

1.d4 d5 2.c4 Nc6 (The Chigorin.) 3.Nc3 (Last time against Peter I played 3.Nf3 Bg4 4.cxd5 Bxf3 5.gxf3 Qxd5 6.e3 e5 7.Nc3 Bb4 8.Bd2 but could not prove an advantage so I tried something different.) 3...dxc4? (Giving up the centre, better is 3...Nf6 4.Nf3 Bg4 5.cxd5 Nxd5 6.e4 Nxc3 7.bxc3 e5 8.d5 Nb8 9.Qa4+ Nd7 10.Nxe5 Qf6 with a lively game where White still has a small advantage after 11.Nxg4 Qxc3+ 12.Kd1 Qxa1 13.Bb5.) 4.Nf3 (Consolidating d4 and preventing ...e5 by Black.) 4...Bg4?! 5.d5 Bxf3 6.exf3 (This is far superior to the more natural 6.gxf3 taking towards the centre.) 6...Ne5 7.Bf4 (Keeping the knight on the move while developing.) 7...Ng6 8.Bxc4!! a6 (The bishop on f4 is taboo, as 8...Nxf4 allows 9.Bb5+ c6 10.dxc6 winning. 8...Qd7 9.Bb5 c6 10.dxc6 bxc6 11.Qxd7+ Kxd7 12.O-O-O+ Ke6 13.Bxc6 Nxf4 14.Bxa8 Nxg2 15.Rd4 wins. 8...c6 9.Qa4!) 9.Qa4+ Qd7 (If 9...b5 10.Nxb5!; if 9...c6 10.dxc6 b5 11.Nxb5 axb5 12.Bxb5 Rxa4 13.c7+ Qd7 14.c8(R) mate. All of this demonstrates the weakness of the white squares b5, c6 and d7 without Black's white squared bishop.) 10.Bb5 axb5 11.Qxa8+ Qd8 12.Qxd8+ Kxd8 13.Bg3 f5! (White has won the exchange, but Black is not ready to call it a day yet, f4 winning a piece is threatened. The alternative 13...c6 hanging onto a pawn does not look much after 14.O-O-O Kc8 15.Rhe8.) 14.h4 h5 (15.h5 was threatened.) 15.Nxb5 f4 16.Bh2 Nf6 17.0-0-0 Kc8 18.Kb1 e6 (Sacrificing to activate his pieces, but the material deficit is getting very large.) 19.dxe6 Bb4 20.Rd4 c5 21.Rc1 Kb8 22.Bxf4+ (Sacrificing a pawn to simplify.) 22...Nxf4 23.Rxf4 Bd2 24.Rf5 Bxc1 25.Kxc1 (Three pawns up

in an ending, victory is in sight.)
25...b6 26.Rg5 Re8 27.Rxg7
Rxe6 28.Rg6 Kc8 29.Nc3 (The
 pin on f6 is decisive.) 1-0.

Michael Dooley

Stephen Brady

Irish Senior (8) 1999

Reti Opening

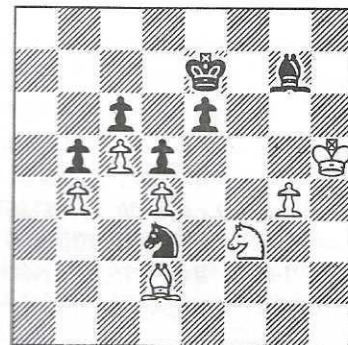
Notes by Michael Dooley

The day before this game I rang up to get the draw and found out that I was playing Stephen so I decided to prepare with the aid of my database.

1.c4 e6 Somehow when I was quickly looking through the games of my opponent I thought he played 1...e6. In actual fact he nearly always plays 1...e5 here. So I prepared for 1...e6 and not 1...e5. Later after the game Stephen said he had played this to avoid my preparation! **2.Nf3 d5 3.b3 Nf6 4.Bb2 Be7 5.g3 a5 6.Bg2 a4 7.Qc1 0-0 8.0-0 Nc6?! Blocking the c-pawn.** Better was 8...c6. In the English, with its similarities to d4 openings, it is normally a good idea to advance your c-pawn before developing the knight. **9.d4 Bd7 10.Rd1 axb3 11.axb3 Rxa1 12.Bxa1 Qa8** Black grabs the a-file however we now see the drawback of the knight on c6: the bishop on d7 is a miserable piece with little scope. **13.Bb2** Here 13.Bc3 is well met by 13...Ne4. **13...Qa7 14.Nbd2** The best square for this piece. It covers c4, e4 and b3. **14...Ra8 15.Bc3** Only now Bc3 as ...Ne4 is no longer a viable option. White must challenge Black on the a-file so first he makes some space for his queen. **15...Be8 16.Qc2 [16.Qb2?! Ba3 17.Qc2 Nb4 18.Bxb4 Bxb4] 16...Nb4 17.Qb2 b5** After the game Stephen said that he played this to generate imbalance. A good idea against a lower rated player. **18.c5 Nc6 19.b4** Closing everything up however my dark squared bishop could be considered no more than a large pawn! **19...Qa3 20.Rb1 Nd7 21.Ne1!?** I like this move for

several reasons. Now White plans to play e4 and has the idea of resolving the situation on the queenside. **21...f5 22.Nc2 Qxb2 23.Rxb2 g5 24.e3 Nf6 25.Bf1 Nd8 26.f3 c6 27.Bd3** A mistake as later we will show. **27...Bg6 28.Kf2 f4 29.Bxg6 fxe3+ 30.Kxe3 hxg6** Now looking at the position black bishop is hemmed in by its own forces. **31.Ne1 g4 32.f4 Nf7 33.Rb1 Nh6 34.Ra1 Nf5+ 35.Ke2 Rxa1 36.Bxa1 g5 37.Nd3** At this stage both players were short of time so most of the next few moves were played in a matter of seconds. **37...gxf4 38.Nxf4 Kf7 39.Nb3** Eyeing the c6 pawn. **39...Bd8 40.Nc1 Bc7 41.Ncd3** Here we just reached the time control. Best here is 41...Bxf4 swapping off the bishop for the good knight. **41...Ne4 42.Ng2 Kf6 43.Ne3?! A mistake;** by keeping the pieces on White ensures that Black has no way left to advance. **43...Nxe3 44.Kxe3 Kf5** In this position I felt it necessary to tie the king or knight down to prevent me coming in with Na5. **45.Nc1 Kf6 46.Nb3 Ke7 47.Bb2 Ng5 48.Nd2 Nf7 49.Nb3 Nh6 50.Bc3 Nf5+ 51.Kd3 Kd7 52.Nd2 Bd8 53.Nb3** For the last few moves Black has been trying to make progress but White's position is fine. **53...Bf6 54.Ke2 Ne7 55.Nc1 Nf5 56.Nb3 Bg7 57.Kd3= Ne7 58.Ke2 Ng6 59.Kf2** After the game it was suggested that 59...e5 be played here. **59...Bh6 [59...e5 60.dxe5 and (a) 60...Bxe5 61.Bxe5 Nxe5 62.Ke3 Nf3 (62...Ke6 63.Nd4+=) 63.h4±; (b) 60...Nxe5 61.Kg2=] 60.Kg2 Ne7 61.h3 gxh3+ 62.Kxh3** Now White is better. **62...Bg7 63.Nd2 Nf5 64.Nf3 Ne3 65.g4 Nd1 66.Bd2 Nf2+ 67.Kh4** Of course not 67.Kg3?? Ne4+. **67...Ke7 68.Kh5** Here Stephen made what in actual fact turned out to be a blunder. It accompanied a draw offer and in the sixth hour of play I didn't look at the position too closely. Obviously the lesson to be

learned from this is to take your time. **68...Nd3? ½-½.**



White could have won by **69.Kg6! Bf8 [69...Kf8 70.Ng5 Bh8 71.Nxe6+ Ke7 72.Kf5 Nf2 73.g5 Ne4 74.Be1 Ke8 75.Bh4+-; 69...Bh8 70.Kh7+-] 70.g5 Nf2 71.Ne5 Ke8 72.Nxc6+-.**

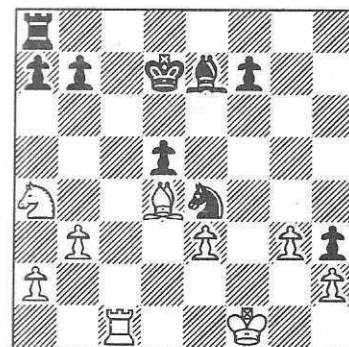
Colm Daly - Mark Orr

Irish Senior (9) 1999

Slav Exchange

1.Nf3 d5 2.d4 c6 3.c4 Nf6 4.cxd5 cxd5 5.Nc3 Nc6 6.Bf4 Bf5 7.e3 e6 8.Bd3 Bd6 9.Bxf5 exf5 10.Bg5 h6 11.Bxf6 Qxf6 12.Nxd5 and White won with his extra pawn in 66 moves...1-0.

In the final diagram, White would like to get his offside knight into the game. Should he play Nc5+, Nc3 or Nb2?



1.Nb2 is safe enough, meeting **1...Ba3** with **2.Rc2**, while **1.Nc3 Rc8 2.Ne2** is also adequate. In Kennedy v Cafolla from round 9 White picked the worst of the three options: **28.Nc5+? Nxc5 29.Bxc5 Rc8 30.b4 b6 31.Rd1 bxc5 32.Rxd5+ Ke6 33.Rh5 c4 0-1.**