

FIFTY YEARS AGO: THE IRISH CHAMPIONSHIP BELFAST JULY 1950

The games and annotations are taken from the Belfast News-Letter. The winner of the championship was Vincent Maher with a score of 7½ out of 8. 22 competed.

Bewley, T.H. - Nash, W. [D85]

Irish Championship Belfast, July 1950

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.e4 Nxc3 6.bxc3 c5 7.Be3 Bg7 8.f4

A risky variation involving pawn sacrifices.

8...Qa5

But this is a bad reply, taking the Queen rather out of play. In this game the queen takes no further part. Better is 8...Nc6 or 8...cxd4

9.Kf2

Allowing the pawn to go but gaining time by avoiding a possible check.

9...0-0 10.Nf3 Nc6 11.d5 Rd8 12.h4 Bxc3 13.h5 e5

He cannot afford to take the rook, but the text move prevents the return of the bishop to the defence of the king and makes the eventual discovered check more powerful. 13...Bg7 was perhaps best.

14.hxg6 fxc3 15.Bc4 Be6

All very nice until the white queen moves.

16.f5 gxf5 17.Ng5 f4 18.Qh5

Very fine leaving two pieces en prise.

18...fxe3+ 19.Kg3 Rd7 20.dxe6 Re7

20...Rg7 21.e7+ Kh8 22.Qxh7+ and mate next move.

21.Nf7

RR 21.... Kf8 22.Qh6+ Ke8 23.Qxh7 Rc7 24.Qg8+ Ke7 25.Qg5+ Kf8 26.Rh8#
1-0

Maher, V - Jackson, D.G. [B03]

Irish Championship Belfast, July 1950

1.e4 Nf6 2.e5 Nd5 3.c4 Nb6 4.d4 d6 5.f4 dxe5 6.fxe5 Nc6 7.Be3 f6

Always a bad move in Black's defence. Here it opens to White a distinct and promising line of attack. 7...Bf5 is correct.

8.Bd3 g6 9.e6

White would do better to defend the e-pawn by 9.Nf3 or else exchange it off.

9...f5

An oversight probably. Best was 9...Bxe6 getting three dangerous pawns for the knight and ending the attack.

10.Bxf5 Bg7

Of course if 10...gxf5 11.Qh5#

11.Qg4

Threatening 12.Bxg6+ again.

Nxd4 12.Bxg6+ Kf8 13.Ne2 Nxe2

13...Nxe6 was the best defence but still hardly adequate.

14.Rf1+

And White now forces mate.

14...Nf4

RR 14...Kg8 15.Bf7+ Kf8 16.Be8+

A. 16...Kxe8 17.Qh5#;

B. 16...Bf6 17.Bh6+ Kxe8 18.Qh5#;

C. 16...Nf4 17.Qxf4+ Bf6 (17...Kxe8 18.Qf7#; 17...Kg8 18.Qf7#) 18.Qh6+ Kxe8 19.Qh5+ Kf8 20.Qf7#;

D. 16...Kg8 17.Rf8+ Kxf8 18.Qf5+ Bf6 19.Bh6+ Kxe8 (19...Kg8 20.Bf7#) 20.Qh5#]

15.Qxf4+ Bf6 16.Qh6+ Kg8 17.Bf7# 1-0

Heaney,R.A. - Tormey,T.T. [B92]

Irish Championship Belfast, July 1950

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 Nf6 4.Nc3 cxd4 5.Nxd4 a6 6.Be2 e5 7.Nb3 Be6 8.0-0 Nbd7 9.Kh1 Nb6 10.f4 Qc7 11.fxe5 dxe5 12.Bg5 Be7 13.Nd2 Rd8 14.Qe1 Ng8 15.Bxe7 Nxe7 16.Rd1 0-0 17.Bd3 Nc6 18.a3 Nd4 19.Qh4

In view of the position of the white bishop this move should have warned Black of his danger.

19...Nc4

But Black just plays the move White probably hoped for. 19...g6 first was necessary.

20.Nd5

Neatly cutting off the knight from the support of the bishop, and by the threat to the queen and the subsequent threat of mate, winning a piece.

20...Bxd5 21.exd5 g6 22.Nxc4 Rxd5 23.Ne3 Qd8 24.Qh6 Rd6 25.Bc4 g5 26.Qh5 1-0