

THE OUTPOST

SPRINGFIELD CHESS CLUB NEWS



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THE NEWSLETTER RETURNS

by Dylan Mounts

When I was a kid my dad used to go to chess club every Friday night. He'd leave sometime after dinner, and he'd come back sometime after I'd gone to sleep. He didn't talk much about the club, but for the rest of the week he'd spend his time after work hunched over a chessboard analyzing his games. These are some of my earliest childhood memories: my father staring at an indecipherable formation of abstract pieces sprawled across a checkered board.

There was never a time when chess wasn't a part of my life. My dad taught me to play when I was seven, but even before then it was a constant. I was always aware that chess was something that my dad did, even when I didn't know what chess was. I didn't understand it, but I wanted to be good at it, because if my dad thought it was worth doing then it must be something important.

I'm convinced that chess passion and chess skill are genetic, even if the two don't necessarily coincide. My dad, objectively, was not great at the game, but he loved it. He loved its beauty, its artistry, its ingenuity. He loved the camaraderie and the competition. He loved those moments of inspiration and surprise when a certain move at a certain moment just plays itself. And on those rare occasions when everything went the right way, he loved to win.

I'm the same way. I'm not very good at the game, and objectively I never will be. This game is so much larger and more complex than I can understand, and the farther I delve into it the more I realize how

bad I really am. It takes a certain kind of crazy to devote so much of your life to something you'll never be good at, but chess is in my blood and in my bones. It's a part of my heritage, and I'll always find my way back to it.

The first rated game I played in Springfield was against Marty Phillips. I sat down and he asked, "Are you Dan Mounts's son?" Marty beat me soundly, as he usually does, but I wouldn't realize until later how serendipitous that encounter was. Marty was the editor-in-chief for The Outpost while my dad was still playing, and also the club's chief TD. He invited me to the club, and after a little prodding from Mike Little, I started showing up.

It's amazing how many of the regulars from the time my dad played still play every week, but that is a testament to the club's commitment and passion for the game of chess. Roger, Afzal, Marty, John, Joe, Stan, and Mike—these old-timers played against my dad back in the 90s, and they're still here, week after week, to play against us kids. They are true ambassadors for both the game and the club.

In the few months I've been coming here I've been struck by how invested our senior leadership is. They go out of their way to promote and encourage a healthy interest in the game: of, for, and by the community. I'm constantly amazed that this chess resource costs \$10 for an entire year, and guarantees you a year's worth of rated games.

The Outpost was begun by Marty Phillips in the late 80s as a way of encouraging club interest and promoting club participation. With

Marty's blessing, I'm taking up that mantle. I will try, to the best of my abilities, and with your help, to release an engaging snapshot of our club's activity. I'll try to provide annotated games from a range of skill levels. I'll try to include every member, at some point, as long as they send me a game to include.

But most importantly, I'll try to stay true to the values of my father's chess club: Chess is a beautiful game. No matter who you are, no matter what, if you want to play chess, we'll play chess with you. Stop by for a game. Stay awhile.

Note: For those unfamiliar with chess annotations, the following chart outlines some commonly used symbols. These will be placed after a move to denote some quality of the move—whether it is good or bad, etc.

Common Annotation Symbols

?	Bad move
??	Blunder
!	Good move
!!	Great move
?!	Dubious move
!?	Interesting move
□	Only move
+	Check
# or ++	Checkmate

WEEK #17 (6/16)

STANDINGS	NAME/RESULT	Vs	STANDINGS	NAME/RESULT
1	John Last - 0	Vs	2	Ethan Stech - 1
4	Ben Elliott - 0	Vs	6	Dylan Mounts - 1
8	Stan Horton - 1	Vs	12	Mike Little - 0
18	Thomas Ulatowski - 0	Vs	19	Harper Smith - 1
21	Afzal Chowdhury - 1	Vs	24	Kai Bailey - 0

John Last (1621) vs

Ethan Stech (1677)

Comments and annotation by Ethan Stech
(except for those in italics)

Time trouble has been a theme of this year's ladder play. When the ladder began, our time control was g60, no delay. Later, a five second delay would be added. Week #17 was the first week to feature g90, d5, but even that wasn't enough to prevent time trouble from rearing its ugly head. Unfortunately we don't have the end of this exciting game, but the ideas we do have—along with Ethan's insightful commentary—certainly warrant it a page in the newsletter.

1. c4 e6
2. Nc3 Nf6
3. g3 d5
4. d4 c6
5. cxd5 exd5
6. Bg2 Bf5
7. Nf3 h6
8. a4

I was expecting a3, with the idea of preparing a thematic minority attack with Rb1, b4, and b5. a4 doesn't have nearly as much bite, and leaves a hole on b4 that I immediately fill.

- 8...Bb4
- 9.0-0 0-0
- 10.Qb3 Qb6

I'm hoping for an eventual queen trade on b6, which will double my pawns but open my rook up to his pawn on a4. All in all, his queenside seems a bit unstable, and maybe later in the game I can take advantage of that.

11. Na2 Be7
12. Qxb6 axb6
13. Nc3 Bc2

A bit too hasty, trying to win his pawn too soon.

14. Bf4 Nbd7
15. Rfc1 Bf5

I realize that I'm in over my head, and just move back. Sometimes it's necessary to just confess your sins and move a piece right back to where it came from.

16. Nd2 Rfe8
17. e4 dxe4
18. Ndx4 Nxe4
19. Nxe4 Bxe4
20. Bxe4 Bf6

Bg5 would have been better. White's bishop pair becomes difficult to deal with later on, even after I've won material.

21. Bf5 Nf8
22. Be3 Ra5
23. Bg4 Rea8
24. b3 b5
25. Bd2 R5a7
26. Be3 bxa4
27. bxa4 Rxa4
28. Rxa4 Rxa4
29. Rd1 c5

Taking advantage of a nice pin to win a second pawn.

30. Bc8 cxd4
31. Bf4 Ne6?

I honestly don't really remember why I played this, since the pawn on b7 is now just hanging. I think around this point my clock was starting to run low, and I was thinking if he took I could take his bishop, double his pawns, and get rid of his bishop pair, but I must not have noticed that would leave me just one pawn up in a bishops of opposite color position that would be much harder to win, and maybe impossible.

32. Bd7 Rb4
33. Bd6 Rb6
34. Bb8 Rb3
35. Ba4 Ra3
36. Bb5 Be7
37. Kf1 Bc5
38. Bc4 b6

Better would have been 38...b5, pushing the passed pawn and taking advantage of the fact that if he takes it, 39.Bxb5, I have 39...Rb3 skewering his bishops.

39. Ke2 Ra4
40. Kd3 Kf8
41. Be5 Ra3+
42. Ke2 Ra4
43. Bb3 Ra7

At this point in the game I had less than five minutes left on my clock, and thus stopped recording moves, so unfortunately I don't have the rest of the game, but essentially I had a great deal of difficulty making progress because of his bishop pair until he left himself open to a knight fork that won one of his bishops. (0-1)

**Afzal Chowdhury (1839) vs
Kai Bailey (1229 P8)**

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 e6
3. Nc3 Bb4
4. e3 b6
5. Nf3 O-O
6. Be2 Ba6

Admittedly I'm not a Nimzo player, but this doesn't feel natural to me. When the knight develops the bishop will be left hanging and will likely be moving back to g7 anyway.

7. O-O d5
8. Ne5 dxc4
9. Bxc4 Bxc4
10. Nxc4

And now Black's traded off what should be a very powerful Bishop.

- 10...Nbd7
11. a3 Bxc3
12. bxc3 Qe7
13. a4 Rfd8
14. Qc2 Rac8
15. e4 c5
16. e5 Nd5
17. Nd6

To Kai's credit, the computer thinks Afzal is the first one to make a misstep. 17. Nd6 allows cxd4, sating the exchange for enormous pressure along the half open file.

- 17...Rc7

Black misses this engine assisted nuance.

18. Qb3 f6
19. c4 fxe5?
20. Nb5

White parries the attack and delivers an attack of his own against the rook. Unfortunately Black zigged when he should have zagged, and now must choose which piece he doesn't want.

- 20...Rb7
21. cxd5 exd5??

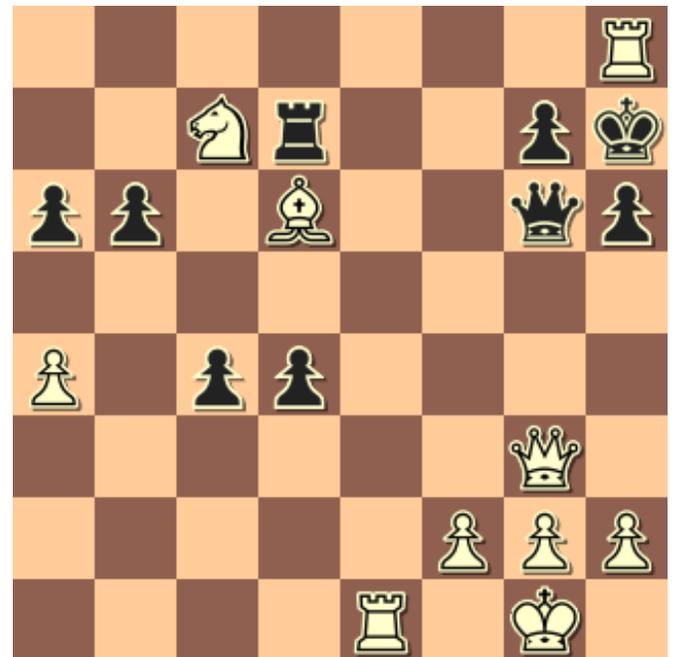
And it appears that despite its best efforts, the rook is still destined to die.

22. Qxd5+ Kh8

23. Qxb7 exd4
24. Bf4 Qf6
25. Qd5a6
26. Nc7??

Perhaps growing comfortable in his advantage, White misses the skewer of 26. Bg5.

- 26...Nf8
27. Qe5 Qf7
28. Qg5 Rd7
29. Rfe1 Ng6
30. Re8+ Nf8
31. Rae1 h6
32. Qg3 c4
33. Bd6 Kh7
34. Rxf8 Qg6
35. Rh8+!



After patiently and meticulously applying pressure, Afzal delivers a beautiful and instructive distraction to seal the game.

- 35...Kxh8
36. Qxg6 Rd8
37. Re8+ Rxe8
38. Nxe8 b5
39. Qxg7# (1-0)

WEEK #18 (6/23)

STANDINGS	NAME/RESULT	Vs	STANDINGS	NAME/RESULT
2	John Last – 1	Vs	6	Ben Elliott – 0
4	Dylan Mounts – 0	Vs	17	Harper Smith – 1
7	Stan Horton – 1	Vs	28	Rob Fridge – 0

Harper Smith (1993) vs Dylan Mounts (1517)

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 g6
3. Nc3 Bg7
4. e4 d6
5. f4 0-0
6. Nf3 Nbd7
7. Bd3 Re8?

I'm never completely sure how to approach the Four Pawn's Attack. In traditional King's Indians Black wants to play e5 to challenge White's center. My instincts say that f4 prevents e5 ideas, and Re8 is a misguided attempt to salvage ideas that I understand. In reality Black can still happily play 7...e5 here, because after 8. fxe5 dxe5, if White gets greedy with 9. dxe5 Black can simply sidestep with 9...Ng5, and White won't hold onto the pawn.

The text move, 7...Re8, is simply incorrect, as Harper was happy to demonstrate.

8. e5 dxe5
9. fxe5

And now the rook is sitting on the knight's ideal square.

- 9...Ng4
10. e6?!

In the actual game I took the pawn without much thought, because what choice does Black have? White is forcing Black to destroy his own pawn structure, blocking in his already cramped bishop and his misplaced rook. On the other hand, a pawn is a pawn. The computer doesn't approve of this pawn sacrifice, but it certainly poses some difficult questions for a human.

- 10...fxe6
11. h3 Nh6
- 12 0-0 Nf5
13. Ne3 c5!

I started getting nervous here. I felt like Black must be winning, but the rating difference says I definitely shouldn't be. White doesn't want to push to d5 and solve Black's doubled pawn problem, but how to defend a pawn attacked twice on d4?

14. Ng5

By attacking, of course!

- 14...Qb6

Defending e6, putting another attacker on d4, and influencing the weak a7-g2 diagonal.

15. dxc5

Probably not what White wants to do, but it's hard to find a lot of other ideas.

- 15...Nxc5
16. Bxf5 exf5

Black is allowed to undouble his pawns and now has dreams of playing e5, which would be disastrous for White.

17. Be3

Probably the only move.

- 17...Qd6

And again, probably the only move.

18. Qe1?!

I don't like Qe1, simply because it allows the text move. White certainly doesn't want to trade queens. This would activate Black's long dead rook and actually open up a pin which we'll look at more closely in a few moves. But allowing Black's knight to d3 doesn't seem like the correct answer.

- 18...Nd3
19. Qh4 h6
20. Nf3

Black plays f4 here, missing a straight-forward, game winning tactic. If it's any consolation, it seems Harper also missed it in postgame analysis.

- 20...f4??

The correct move is 20...Qe6!, pinning the bishop and the knight. While play can reasonably continue, Black wouldn't have minded a free piece.

- 21 Nxf4 g5

Black goes for the less obvious and less effective tactic.

22. Qh5 gxf4??

When Harper and I went over the game afterwards he gave me the benefit of the doubt and assumed this was a reasoned, calculated sacrifice. It wasn't. I simply didn't see that my rook was hanging. This is chess blindness at its best.

23. Qxe8+ Kh7

24. c5 Qe6

There aren't really any great squares for the queen, but it may be better for Black to offer the queen trade with 24...Qg6 or 24...Qd7. I wanted to keep my queen because I didn't see how I could win without it, but Black will simply lose if White is allowed to keep his.

25. Bd2 b6

26. Qh5

Threatening a crucial tactic, which I completely missed.

- 26...Ba6?
27. Ng5+! (1-0)

WEEK #19 (7/7)

STANDINGS	NAME/RESULT	Vs	STANDINGS	NAME/RESULT
1	Ethan Stech – 0	Vs	6	Stan Horton – 1
3	Martin Phillips – 1	Vs	4	Dylan Mounts – 0
5	Ken Brown – 1	Vs	11	Rod Garrett – 0
7	Ben Elliott – 0	Vs	15	Harper Smith – 1
10	James Latham – 1	Vs	26	Brayden Miao – 0
13	Adam Whitaker – 0	Vs	18	Jake Nevills – 1
17	Mustafa Farid – 1	Vs	25	Nick Whitaker – 0
28	Rob Fridge – 0	Vs	30	Jay Howard – 1

Ken Brown (1708) vs. Rod Garrett (1514)

I include this game with apologies to Rod. He sent it to me as a favor, because I was short on games and needed material, and it doesn't show his best side. However, this miniature does feature an exciting sacrifice from Ken Brown, who is currently undefeated on the ladder with eight(!) games played. In Rod's defense, I've yet to play a game against him which I deserved to win.

1. d4 Nf6
2. Bf4 e6
3. e3 Nd5
4. Bg3 Bb4+?!

This seems hasty. White has no problems playing c3; the knight will happily live on d2 for the time being, and over defending d4 never hurts. Black's bishop gets bullied, and for what?

5. c3 Be7
6. Nd2 O-O
7. Ngf3 b6
8. Bd3 Bb7
9. h4!?

White isn't playing around! After e4 and Qc2, White can comfortably castle long and continue the attack along the kingside. But as we'll see, White has no interest in playing comfortably.

- 9...d6
10. Bxh7+?!



A Greek Gift! Although, as we'll see in this case, Troy would do well to accept it. Still, Black must tread carefully.

- 10...Kxh7
11. Ng5+ Kg8
12. Nde4? Nf6?

As is often the case in chess, mistakes beget mistakes. White's more forcing plan is 12. e4!, which after 12...Nf3 13. f4 threatens e5, driving away Black's only defender of h7 and allowing the queen to enter h5.

Black attempts to defend with an early 12...Nf6, but this expends the knight too quickly. After the knights are exchanged Black is out of defensive resources, and White's sacrifice is justified. Better for Black would have been 12...Nd7, providing crucial backup once the knight arrives on f6.

13. Nxf6+ Bxf6
14. Qh5 (1-0)

Martin Phillips (1840) vs Dylan Mounts (1514)

Comments and annotation by Martin Phillips

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 g6
3. Nc3 Bg7
4. e4 d6 5.
5. f3 O-O
6. Be3 Nbd7

Last Fall, in the Springfield Open at MSU (10/23/2016), NM Ken Jones played this move against me and I mishandled it and got crushed. He annotated the game for the Missouri Chess Association (MCA). I thought that maybe Dylan had seen that game and boned up on the line? However, I had seen a game by WFM Alexandra Botez from Canada in which she blew her opponent away with tactics, so I spent some time with this line. When Ed Rysal played this line against me in the Springfield Championship in April this year, I was ready and played a good game that ended in a draw.

This system surged in popularity after GM Nunn won some nice games with it in the 1980's. - NM Ken Jones [MCA]}

7. Nh3 c5
8. d5 Ne5

...8. Re8 (Unless it transposes, this move is not in ECO. Played in WFM Alexandra Botez-Alderon, no other information is shared on ChessBee.com on FB.) 9. Be2 a6 10. O-O Rb8 11. a4 Ne5 12. Nf2 h5 13. h3 Nh7 14. f4 Nd7 15. Qd2 e6 16. dxe6 Rxe6 17. f5 Bxc3? 18. bxc3 gxf5 19. exf5 Re8 20. Bxh5 Ndf6 21. Bg5 Bxf5 22. Bxf6 Qxf6 23. Ng4 Qe6 24. Rxf5! Qxf5 25. Nh6+ Kh8 26. Nxf5 (WFM Alexandra Botez-Alderon, 1-0, ChessBee At one point it said Cakderson?) 1-0 "Who knew the Saemish could be so much fun?" – Alexandra Botez

9. Nf2 a6
10. Be2 Ne8

There is no book on this opening yet, but there are many games online. Black had a couple other choices,

including 10...Rb8 & 10...h5, but Black is still playing thematically at move 10.

11. O-O Nc7!?

I guess I should have realized that Black was intending to play ...Nc7 when he played ...Ne8, but I was more focused on development at this point.

12. a4

I'm not really interested in transposing into a Benoni type of setup if I allow ...b5.

- 12...Rb8

White still has 4 pieces covering the b5 square so he continues to develop.

13. Qd2 f5

Giving up on ...b5 for a while, Black switches back to the thematic f-pawn push.

14. f4

White is also not interested in allowing an attack on the f-file. In truth, he'd like to attack down that avenue himself.

- 14...Nf7

If 14...Ng4!? it's not clear that White wins the pawn on g4 after the exchange.

15. Bd3 Nh6
16. h3 fxe4
17. Nfxe4

After the pawn exchange, White's pieces seem to be more actively placed than Black's pieces. However, Black's knight on h6 is going to gallop across the board threatening everything in its path.

- 17...Nf5
18. Bf2 Nd4

Big sigh. I was prepared for ...Nd4 and ...Nb3, but I did not see a much bigger

threat after ...Nd4. If 19. Rae1, which is what I was planning, then ...Bxh3! 20. gxh3?? Nf3+ with family fork winning the queen. Dylan told me after the game that he didn't see the family fork but he was considering playing 19...Nf3+ 20 gxf3 Bxh3 after which the rook on f1 is trapped. Suddenly, Black's pieces seem to be very fluid!

19. Bxd4 Bxd4+
20. Kh2 e5?!

Black trapped his monster bishop with this move.

21. Ne2

I'm going to take that B off the board.

- 21...b5!?

Black finally achieves ...b5.

22. Nxd4 cxd4
23. fxe5

White is hoping for 23...dxe5 24 d6! Ne6 25 c5 when White now has a pair of connected passers of his own.

- 23...Rxf1?!

Black volunteers to give up the f-file giving White attacking chances.

24. Rxf1 bxc4
25. Bxc4 dxe5
26. Qh6!

White has seized the initiative and has gone into full attack mode.

The following diagram is an excellent study. I've given you a huge hint by setting the diagram up after White has played 26. Qh6! Can you visualize White's attack? White is threatening check with all four of his pieces. Can Black defend? I have found that taking a position like this where I suspect there are tactics, that visualizing the attack without moving the pieces has increased my tactical ability the most in all the years I have played chess. This is like doing online chess puzzles, but with puzzles, you

know there are tactics that will win the game. OTB, you have to develop a sense of when tactics exist and when to move along, in other don't waste your clock trying to calculate something that's not there. In this case, you can see the threats of 37 Nf6+ or 37 d6+ and Rf8+, but what brings home the bacon?



26...Bf5

This was a very good move and nearly forced. Unfortunately, it allows White's discovered check to have some teeth.

27. d6+ Kh8

If 27...Ne6? 28. Bxe6 Bxe6 29. Nf6+ when ...Kh8 30. Qxh7++ or ...Kf7 30 Qxh7+ Kf8 31. Nd7+ wins the rook and mates quickly thereafter. Dylan pointed out this continuation in post game analysis. BTW, on 27...Be6 28. dxc7 Qxc7 29. Bxe6+ Kh8 30. Rf8+ Rxf8, 31. Qxf8++

28. dxc7

28. Rxf5!! I looked at this during the game and just did not see that Black's queen did not have any squares to defend the mate threats gx5 29. Nf6! when even exchanging the queen for the knight does not stop mate. 28...Qd7 does not help, 29. Rf8+ Rxf8 30. Qxf8++

28...Qxc7

29. Ng5 e4+!

30. Kh1 Qg7

31. Nf7+ Kg8

32. Qg5! Rf8

32...h6!? in that it gives Black a luft on h7.

33. Nh6+

Many years ago, we had a new good overly eager player join the club. We were playing a Saturday 1-day tournament in the old building. It was very quiet in the room when the new player suddenly announces check in a loud excited way. The old room would kind of echo, but before the echoes died down, he exclaims, "No! Double check!" We still chuckle about this pronouncement 20+ year later, but it truth, announcing check is the equivalent of a bat flip in baseball. It unnecessarily shows up your opponent and is considered rude over the board by experienced players. However, in this position, Black is in double check, which forces the king to move.

33...Kh8

34. g4!

A bold move that wins the game. I had to be very certain that Black could not break through and draw the game with repetitive checks.

34...Be6

35. Rxf8+ Qxf8

36. Qe5+! (1-0)

If 36...Qg7, then 37. Qxe6 when Black cannot take the knight on h6 because of 38. Qh8++.

WEEK #20 (7/28)

STANDINGS	NAME/RESULT	Vs	STANDINGS	NAME/RESULT
1	Martin Phillips – 1	Vs	5	Stan Horton – 0
6	Dylan Mounts – 1	Vs	13	Mike Little – 0
8	Ben Elliott – 1	Vs	15	Mustafa Farid – 0
17	Adam Whitaker – 0	Vs	22	Stan Jackson – 1
24	Kai Bailey – 1	Vs	29	Rob Fridge – 0
30	Charles Burrow – 1	Vs	31	Isaac Drum – 0

Charles Burrow (1819) vs Issac Drum (1669 P19)

Comments by Charles Burrow

1. Nc3 d5
2. Nf3 Bg6

White developing the knights to influence the board while keeping options open for pawn development later in the game.

3. g3 Nc6

Pawn to g3 readies the bishop to develop to g2 making the a8 to h1 diagonal strong. The plan is to develop the bishop to the diagonal then mold the pawns into the center once I control the center from a distance. (Hypermodern theory)

4. Bg2 e5
5. d3 Nf6
6. 0-0 Qd7

Black puts pressure on White's kingside pairing up the bishop and queen while leaving open the option of a future strategy of planting the bishop on the h3 square.

7. a4 d4

The a4 pawn moving out starts to open up lines for attacks on Black's queenside especially when it seems he might castle the king to that corner, but it also makes it possible for either knight to develop to the c4 square without being bothered by Black's queenside pawns.

8. Nb1 0-0-0

The knight retreats back to the b1 square with the future plan set forth already to develop it to the c4 square in just a few moves.

9. Na3 Bb4
10. Nc4 Rhe8
11. Nfd2 Nd5

Bringing another knight into the fight with Nfd2 to strengthen the other but being very careful not to have the knight wander from the kingside completely as it is an excellent defensive piece if my opponent decides to commit to a hasty kingside attack.

12. a5 f5
13. h3 Bh5

The move h3 and Kh2 develops the kingside making it flexible and ready for an attack.

14. Kh2 g5

Black has committed to an attack on White's kingside so the knight naturally comes back to meet the threat with Nf3. While Black attacks, his structure also becomes weak in areas ready to be harassed by the defensive knight and future development of the dark squared bishop.

15. Nf3 g4
16. Nh4 Bg6
17. Bg5 Be7
18. Bxe7 Qxe7

A dark squared bishop trade is favorable for White in this instance since White has the defensive knight embedded in the attacking pawn structure and solidified on a dark square where it is tough to remove.

19. e4 dxe3

Taking the center with pawns as mentioned before.

20. fxe3 Qg5
21. Qe2 h5
22. e4 Nd4
23. Qf2 fxe4
24. Nxe6 Qxe6
25. Bxe4 Qg7

I believe dxe4 running the knight off would have been a better winning move.

26. Qg2 gxh3
27. Qxh3+ Qg4
28. Qg2 Qe2

Black misses the strategy of opening up the h file with h4 instead of moving Qe2 which would have given White much grief. Black could have turned the game around and won due to White's mistake with accurate play but misses it.

29. Rf2 (0-1)

With too much pressure on Black's pieces Black resigns.

**Stan Horton (1485) vs.
Marty Phillips (1840)**

Comments and annotations by Martin Phillips

1. d4 d6
2. Bf4 g6
3. Nf3 Bg7
4. e3

Stan chooses one of the less frequently played lines against the King's Indian Defense, probably more closely related to the Modern or Pirc.

4...Nf6

ECO has 4...Nd7 5. h3 e5 6. Bh2 e4 7. Nfd2 f5 8. f5 g4!? 9. g4!? Nh6 10. gxf5 Nxf5 11. Nxe4 O-O 12. Nbc3 Nh4 13. Be2 b5! - Kudiševic-Nicklaevskij, SSSR 1970 (9/61) with compensation for the material - ECO A41 1 #3. I don't own Informator #9, so that's all I have on this line. This is a really complex position that looks unclear to me.

5. h3

White takes a tempo to stop the thematic ...Bg4 pinning the knight. I was thinking about playing that move next so I just continued to develop instead.

- 5...O-O
6. Bd3 Nc6
7. O-O Re8

Of course I'm looking to push the e-pawn and break in the center, which should open up opportunities on the long diagonal.

8. Bb5

By pinning the knight, White stops Black from immediately playing e5.

8...Bd7

Breaks the pin and develops a piece

9. Bxc6

By exchanging, White attempts to stop e5 more permanently. However, Black has a plan.

9...Bxc6

10. c4

c4 is a good move, Black would not be happy if he allowed d5. However, this move does not hinder Black's plan.

10...Bxf3

By exchanging the bishop for the knight, Black can now play ...e5 unimpeded.

11. Qxf3 e5

White does not have time to take the b-pawn.

12. dxe5 dxe5
13. Bg5

For some reason, I incorrectly assumed that White would play 13 Bg3. Breaking this pin will take some doing, but White's lack of development allows Black to take his time. But first, Black needs to resolve his b-pawn issue.

- 13...e4
14. Qe2

(14. Qf4 Nh5! 15. Bxd8 (15. Qg4!?) Nxf4 16. Bxc7 Ne2+! 17. Kh1 Bxb2 -/+)

14...Qe7

No reason to break the pin just to allow White to gain a tempo by hitting the queen on the d-file.

15. Nc3 c6

A little prophylaxis can be helpful!

16. Rad1

Now, for the point of 14...Qe7.

16...Qc5

Black attacks the bishop so White continues as earlier and exchanges again.

17. Bxf6 Bxf6

Black has the potential to double White's pawns on the c-file. White

succumbs to the pressure of weaving through Black's attempts to wrestle away the initiative.

18. Qc2?

This move stops Black's potential to double the pawn, but unfortunately, it drops the c-pawn.

18...Qxc4

But as often occurs, when White drops a pawn or piece, his opponents position may be compromised by the unintentional gain.

19. Rd7

White gains the 7th without a fight, now Black has to take some chances in order to avoid giving back the pawn.

19...b5!?

Black threatens to win the knight pinned to the queen.

20. a3

White counters stopping ...b4.

20...a5

Black re-ups the ante, basically forcing the rook to the c-file.

21. Rc1

Black is out of tricks at this point. Now, he needs to solidify his position.

21...Rac8

22. Ne2

Now, not only is Black retreating White has gained the initiative back.

22...Qe6

23. Rcd1

White seizes his opportunity and threatens to play 24. R1d6 winning the c-pawn.

23...c5!?

Black has painted himself into a corner. With 24. R1d6 imminent, Black needs a quick plan to keep from losing his bishop on f6.

24. R1d6 Qe5
25. Nc3

This move surprised me. I was expecting Rd5.

25...b4!?

Hoping for 26. Nd5, but that drops the b-pawn, so White pressures the queen and e-pawn.

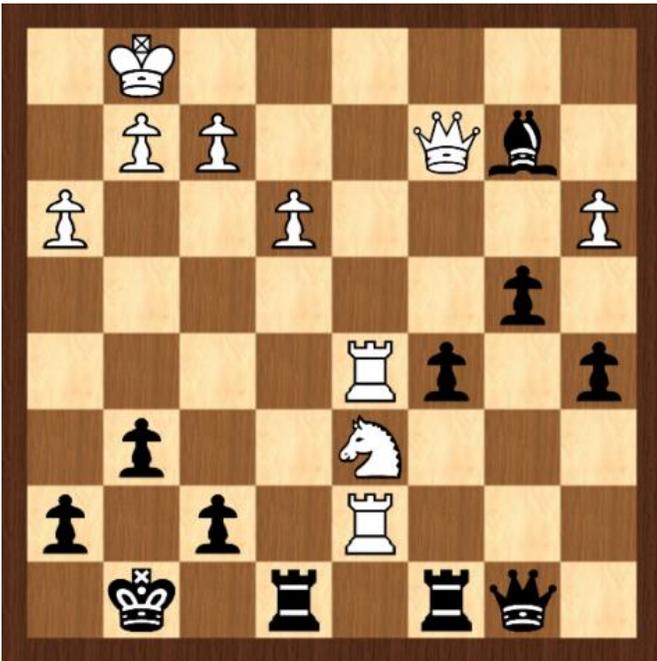
26. Rd5 Qb8!?

Black gives the pawn back and sets into motion a scary, tricky, tactical plan.

27. Nxe4 Bxb2!?

If 28. Qxb2, then 28...Rxe4. Of course, if 28. Nf6+?, then Rxf6. So the idea behind 27...Bxb2!? is allowing a knight fork that drops an exchange.

28. Nd6



28...bxa3!

The trap is sprung! White may temporarily gain material, but will have to give it up to keep Black from gaining two queens!

29. Qb1 Qb3
30. Nxe8?!

White must try 30. Nxf7! with the idea of 31. Nh6+ when Black's best may be to accept the draw by repetition! (30.

Nxf7! a2 31. Nh6+ Kh8 (31...Kf8?? 32. Rf7++) 32. Nf7+ Kg8 (32...Kg7 33. Nd6+ Kh6? 34. Nf5+! (If 34...Kh4 or Kg4, White wins the queen with 35. Nd4+, so...)) 34...gxf5 35. Qxf5! Black can get a second queen with check, but White just moves to h7 where there are no more intelligent checks. Black can try to sack his first queen for the rook on d5, but it's a futile attempt as Rxh7++) Therefore, Black should take the draw by playing back to h8.

30...Rxe8
31. Rd3

White may have been better off to have played 31. Qf1 first.

31...a2!
32. Qf1

If 32. Rxb3, then 32...axb1=Q+

32...Qa4
33. Rd1 a1=Q
34. Rxa1 Bxa1
35. Qd3 Bd4
36. exd4? Qxd7 (0-1)