

# Third Weekend Report

By GM Nick Pert

The top 3 Divisions of the 4NCL passed the halfway stage this weekend as the De Vere Hotel in Wokefield Park played host to rounds 5 and 6. The weekend started off with the awarding of the President's award to Paul Littlewood. Paul has contributed an enormous amount to chess, in Particular the 4NCL where he was Chairman, and captain of the champion Wood Green team for so many years.

Claire Summerscale has taken over as Chairman and was quick to announce the first season of the Junior 4NCL, an age handicapped event designed to encourage younger players to play under proper tournament conditions. It's not too late for any juniors looking to join, as there is an expectation this will grow rapidly. The next weekend is back in Wokefield Park on 1-2 March 2008. It is worth reinforcing that it is NOT in the Paragon Hotel as previously advertised. Thanks go to Mike Truran and the 4NCL board for rearranging this at such short notice after being let down by the Paragon hotel.

Onto the chess and it was business as usual as Nigel Povah's Guildford ADC 1 return to the top of the table with wins over a tricky ADS team (5.5-2.5), and a complete routing of a weakened Slough Sharks side (7.5-0.5). It's not over yet though, they are equal on match points (11 each) with Barbican 1 who also won both their matches this weekend against North West Eagles 1 (5-3) and Cambridge University (7-1). Also with 11 Match Points were the former league leaders Betsson.com. They would have been disappointed to share the points with Cambridge University but made amends by beating North West Eagles 1 (6-2). The final team in the title race in Guildford ADC 2 (10 Match Points) who have won all their matches since losing to the first team in the opening weekend.

Next weekend will be a big one for Barbican 1 as they meet the other 2 leading teams, which will surely shuffle the leading pack.

In division 2 White Rose secured a significant win (5-3) against their main rivals, Bristol 1. That leaves them 3 Match Points clear at the top of the table and surely hot favourites to clinch the title. Into Division 3 and a shock defeat of Jutes of Kent at the hands of South Wales Dragons 2 (4.5-3.5) has opened things up at the top of the table as Warwickshire Select share the lead with Jutes of Kent on 10 Match Points.

Onto the games:

On the Saturday I was paired against Nigel Davies, a very solid Grandmaster.

(26) Pert,Nicholas (2528) - Davies,Nigel R (2480) [E62]  
 4NCL/Div1/ADs1-GUI1 Wokefield Park (5.2), 12.01.2008  
 [Pert]



I found myself in an endgame position where I possess a slight edge due mainly to my control of the d-file, and the fact black has potential weaknesses on e6 and g6, if I can ever break in to the position. The problem is it is difficult for me to make progress. If I move my Knight then he can play Nd4. If I move a piece off the d file without an idea then black can simply play Rd7, leading to exchanges. So the best option is to manouvre and wait for the mistake. 39...Kf7 40.Qe2!? Kg8! [The idea of the plan was 40...Rd7 41.h5 gxh5 42.Nh4 and white may gain some options of coming in on the kingside.] 41.Qd3 Now I must stop Rd7 again since my plan of h5 doesn't work with the black king on g8. [41.Kh2?! Rd7 42.h5 gxh5 43.Rxd7 Qxd7 44.Nh4 Qf7 and there is no way in.] 41...Kf7 42.Bd8 Again I give black a choice. 42...Rc8! [42...Nxd8 43.Qxd8 Qxd8 44.Rxd8 And white has chances to manouvre his king and knight to cause some problems.] 43.Bf6 [43.Bb6 Be7 44.Qd7 Qxd7 45.Rxd7 Rb8 and black will evict the rook with Ke8.] 43...Rc7 44.Kh3



I slightly improved my king position and opened the option of a possible g4 break. g4 is a double edged move to play, it opens lines to the enemy king but weakens my own king and worsens my pawn structure. 44...h5? This gives white something for nothing - the g5 square, and with the black king on f7 white must strike quickly to maximize the effect before black has a chance to move it. [44...Kg8 45.g4 fxe4+ 46.Kxe4 Ne7 47.Qd8 Qc6 48.Bxe7 Rxe7 49.Qd6 With a minimal plus for white.] 45.Bd8 Back to a previous plan but with a significant difference. 45...Rc8 46.Bb6 Nb8 Now Be7 is not sufficient as white can simply play Ng5+ and black must exchange his defensive bishop. 47.Ba7 Be7 Now white can remove the clutter and open a route into the black position for his heavy pieces. 48.Bxb8 Rxb8 49.Ng5+ Bxe5 50.hxe5 Qe7 51.Qd7 b6 [51...Qxd7 52.Rxd7+ Kf8 53.Rh7 Rd8 54.Rxb7 Black has a long defensive task ahead.; 51...Re8 52.Qb5 Rd8 53.Rxd8 Qxd8 54.Qxb7+ Again looks like a tough ending.] 52.Qc6! Rd8 53.Rd6 Now black is forced to give white a strong passed pawn on d6. 53...Rxd6 54.exd6 Qd8



Ok now white has a plan he can execute at almost any point of playing Qc7 and after Ke8, Qg7 where black can capture the d6 pawn, but white will get the g6 and h5 pawns. The problem for white is that if he goes for it immediately, the king on h3 is quite open to perpetual checks. Ideally white would prefer to have the king on h4 as it is easier to hide from checks behind the black pawns! 55.Kg2! I'm looking to get the same position with black to play to take away the option of Qa8. [55.Kh4 The king on h4 is slightly vulnerable since if a queen threatens to go to h1 checkmate threats are hard to parry. 55...Kf8 56.Qc7 Qa8 This gives black an extra option where I was concerned the strong checkmate threats may force white to take a perpetual.(56...Ke8 Black can transpose to the game continuation in any case.) ] 55...Kf8 Black cannot move the queen or move the king away as this opens up the d pawn. 56.Kh2 Kf7 [56...Kg8 57.Qc7 Qa8 58.d7 wins] 57.Kh3 Triangulation in a queen ending!! 57...Kf8 58.Kh4 Qb8? an oversight, but black is lost anyway. [58...Kg8 59.d7 (59.Qc7?? Qa8 could be embarrassing!) 59...Kf7 60.Qd6 Qa8 61.d8N+ Kg8 62.Qxe6+ Kh8 63.Qf6+ Kg8 64.Qxg6+ with mate to follow.; 58...Kf7 59.Qc7+ Ke8 60.Qg7 Qxd6 61.Qxg6+ Kd7 62.Qf7+ Kc6 63.g6 And the g pawn will touch down while the white king can escape up the board from any potential perpetuals.] 59.d7! and Ke7 can be met by Qc8 when white wins easily. 1-0

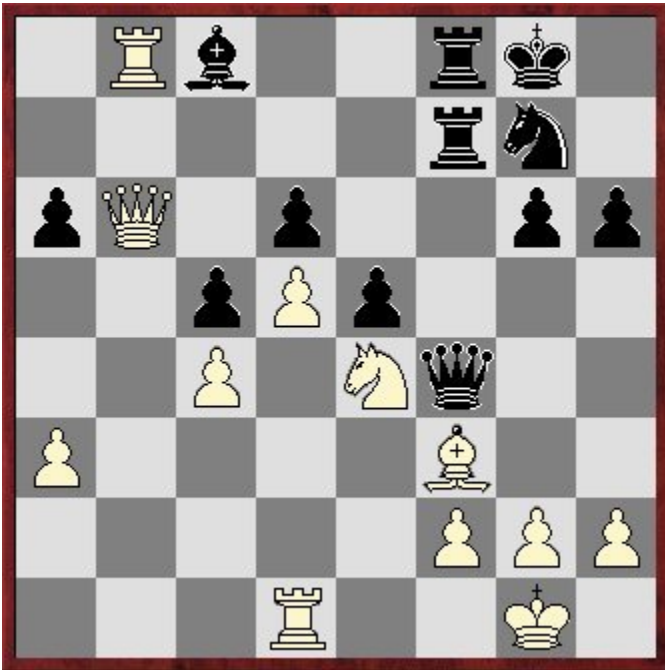
The top board from that match paired two of England's most well known Grandmasters.

(25) Speelman,Jonathan S (2491) - Hebden,Mark L (2530) [E92]

4NCL/Div1/ADs1-GUI1 Wokefield Park (5.1), 12.01.2008

[Pert]

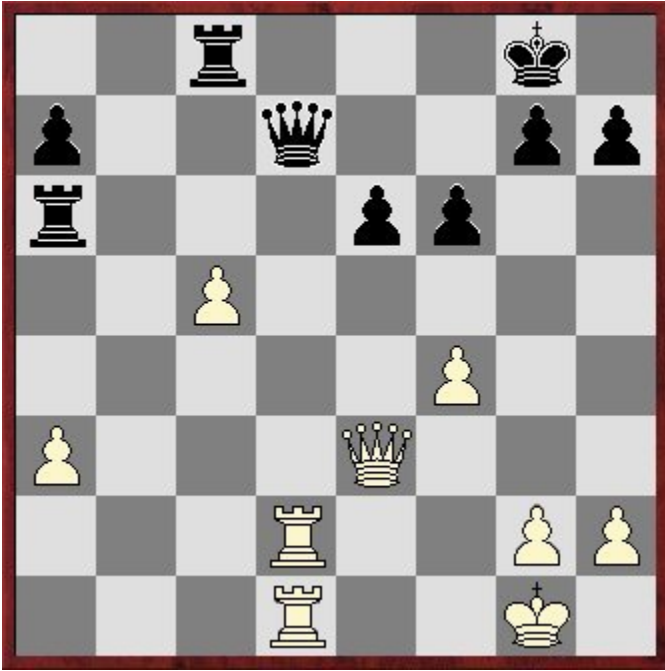
1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.c4 Bg7 4.Nc3 0-0 5.Bg5 c5 6.d5 d6 7.e4 a6 8.Nd2 h6 9.Bh4 e5 10.Be2 Qd7?! I don't like this move. In this position every black piece wants to use this square! I've previously had this position against Mark and he played Qe8 which seems a much more preferable way to break the pin. 11.a3 Nh7 12.b4 b6 13.0-0 Bf6 14.Bxf6 Nxf6 15.Rb1 Qc7 Black wastes time getting the queen out of the way, but white's space advantage and lead in development promise him the advantage. 16.Rb3 [16.bxc5 opening the b-file 16...bxc5 17.Qa4 Looks interesting when 17...Nbd7 18.Qc6 is favourable to white.] 16...Nbd7 17.Qc2 Ra7 18.Rfb1 Ne8 19.Qb2 Qd8 20.Na4 Ng7 21.bxc5 bxc5 22.Nb6 Nxb6 23.Rxb6 f5 24.Rb8 Raf7 25.Qb6 Probably white should be more cautious and play a move like Qc3 when the queen can help out in defending a potential kingside attack. 25...Qg5 26.Rd1 fxe4 27.Nxe4 Qf4 28.Bf3



28...Bg4? This makes life easy for white as he can simplify to an overwhelming endgame. [28...Bf5! 29.Nxd6 Rxb8 30.Qxb8+ Rf8 31.Qb2 e4 32.Nxf5 Qxf5 Leads to double edged play.; 28...Nf5 Was the players post game suggestion, which is also a big improvement. 29.Qb1! Nd4 30.Rxc8 Rxc8 31.Nxd6 Nxf3+ 32.gxf3 Qxf3 33.Nxf7 Qg4+ Would likely lead to a perpetual check. 34.Kh1 Qf3+ 35.Kg1 Qg4+ 36.Kf1 Qxc4+ 37.Ke1 Kxf7 38.Qb7+ Kf6 39.Qxc8 Qe4+ 40.Kd2 Qxd5+ 41.Kc1 Qc4+ 42.Kb2 Qe2+=] 29.Bxg4 Qxg4 30.Rxf8+ Rxf8 31.f3! Rxf3 32.Qd8+ Kh7 33.Re1 Rf7 34.Nf6+ Rxf6 35.Qxf6 Qd4+ 36.Kh1 Qd2 37.Rg1 Nf5 38.Rb1 Ng7 39.h4 g5 40.h5 Qd3 41.Qg6+ Qxg6 42.hxg6+ Kxg6 The Knight and King will be powerless to stop white's a pawn. 43.Rb6 Nf5 44.Rxa6 g4 45.a4 e4 46.a5 e3 47.Kg1 g3 48.Kf1 h5 49.Ra8 Kf7 50.a6 Nh4 51.Rb8 1-0

Mark made amends for this defeat by winning is his typical grinding style with the white pieces.

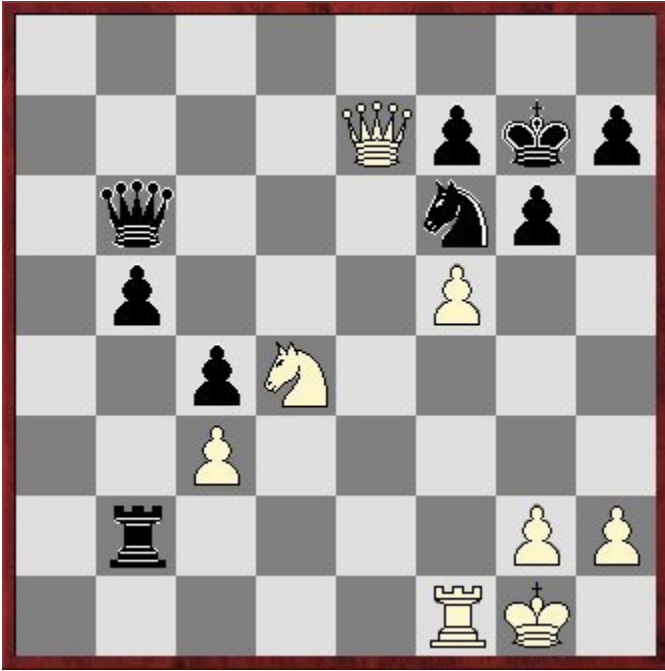
(73) Hebden,Mark L (2530) - Greet,Andrew N (2444) [D05]  
4NCL/Div1/GUI2-HK1 Wokefield Park (6.1), 13.01.2008  
[Pert]



White has the edge with better placed pieces and a passed c pawn. Here black goes badly wrong, allowing a quick finish. 29...Qe7? [29...Qe8 Keeps black in the game if still slightly worse.] 30.f5! Rc7? Ending the fight. [30...Qxc5? 31.Qxc5 Rxc5 32.Rd8+ Kf7 33.R1d7# Is the point.; 30...e5 31.Qb3+ Kh8 32.Qb7 Is equally devastating.; 30...Re8 31.Rd7 Qf8 Is black's best chance, but it's not going to be easy.] 31.Rd6! The rest is easy. 31...Rac6 32.fxe6 h6 33.Qe4 f5 34.Qxf5 Rc8 35.Qd5 R6c7 36.Rd7 Qf6 37.Rxc7 Rxc7 38.e7+ 1-0

Mohamed Tissir made it off the mark with 2 draws, if slightly fortunate in this game.

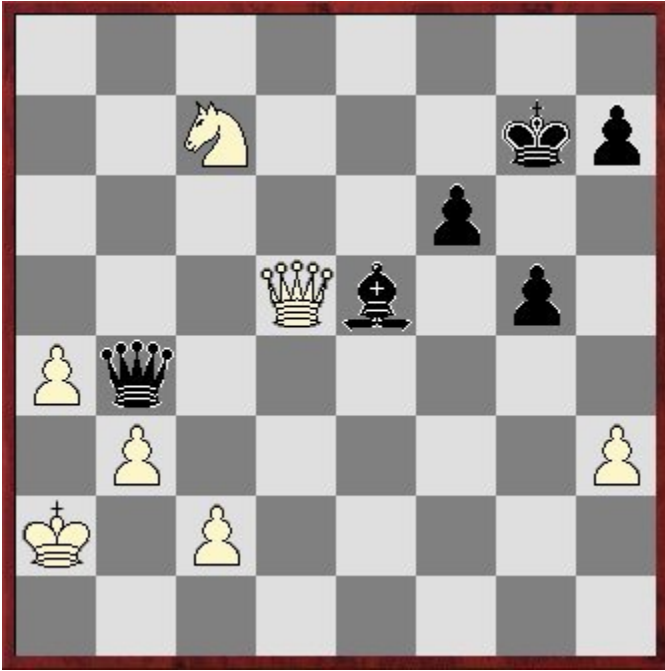
(37) Bigg, Andrew J (2231) - Tissir, Mohamed (2444) [B06]  
4NCL/Div1/BAR2-GUI2 Wokefield Park (5.5), 12.01.2008  
[Pert]



26.Kh1 [26.fxg6! hxg6 27.g4 Followed by g5 wins for white.] 26...Ng8! 27.Qd7 [27.Ne6+?? Qxe6 is the point.] 27...Nf6 28.Qe7 Ng8 29.Qd7 Nf6 30.Qe7 ½-½

Another interesting endgame that arose on Saturday, once again showed how the aggressors king is often more favourably placed the further up the board it goes, when trying to avoid potential perpetual checks.

(19) Collins, Sam (2394) - Coates, Kenneth G (2242) [B01]  
4NCL/Div1/BAR1-NWE1 Wokefield Park (5.3), 12.01.2008  
[Pert]



30... Qc3?! [30... Qe1! forces a draw, leaving the c3 square free for the bishop against Ka3. 31.Ne6+ Kh6 32.Nd4 Qc3 33.Nf5+ Kg6 34.Ne7+ Kh6 35.Ka3 Bf4 36.Nf5+ Kg6 37.a5 Bd2 Stopping black from running up the board and threatening Qa1 mate. 38.Ne7+ Kh6 39.Nf5+=] 31.Ne6+ Kh6 32.Ka3 Qxc2 [32... Qxh3!? 3 connected passed pawns each, white has a slight head start, but one slip could turn the tables.] 33.a5 Bc3? [33... Qc8 Necessary to slow down that a pawn!] 34.a6 Qe2 35.Qc4 Qb2+? The final mistake, black forces the white king up the board, where it is most comfortable. [35... Qe3 Gives the best defensive chance.] 36.Ka4 Qa2+ 37.Kb5 Qa5+ 38.Kc6 Be5 39.b4 Qa4+ 40.Kb6 Qd7 41.Qc6 Qe7 42.b5 And black justifiably resigned, although I thought Bb8 was worth a shot with the idea Ba7 and Qa3 mate!! 1-0

Finally I would like to give a couple of plugs for upcoming tournaments. The next couple of weekends is the Wellington International, a 9 round FIDE rated event held over 2 weekends (18-20 and 26-27 Jan) with IM and probably GM norms available.

Further Details from John Rawlinson, Wellington College, Crowthorne Berks RG45 7PU (Tel: 07717 337185, email: [jcr@wellingtoncollege.org.uk](mailto:jcr@wellingtoncollege.org.uk) )

On 8<sup>th</sup> March I'm holding a 15 minute tournament and training day for Juniors up to age 14 in Basingstoke followed by a Simultaneous display, which the parents are welcome to join in. See [www.nickpert.com](http://www.nickpert.com) for more details, and reports from previous events. I'm expecting a strong top section with several FIDE rated juniors.

That's it until next weekend, 1-2 March Wokefield Park.