

CHESS minister !

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88



the magazine of the

CLERGY CORRESPONDENCE CHESS CLUB

Affiliated to British Postal Chess Federation

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GREETINGS

Greetings to two NEW MEMBERS: Though listed on the players' sheet for the season, J.A. Bickerstaff joined too late to be given a welcome in the last issue of 'Chess Minister!' He feels unable to take on a full season of CCCC games, but will play a 'friendly' with anyone interested, and hopefully for our team. Another new member is Justin Caldwell, St. Mary's Priory, Brownedge Lane, Bamber Bridge, Preston. PR5 6SP. He joins as an associate member for the time being, prior to tackling his first proper season in 1988/9. Again, he will play for our team, and would play a 'friendly' with anyone interested.

TEAM NEWS

Mention of our Team leads to our MATCH against Social CCA. At the time of writing full results are not in, but the state of play is on the back cover. After the good start mentioned in the last issue, a few losses were reported. We are still ahead, but not so far...

I will be arranging another match for 1988. See back page for details.

RULES

New RULES were adopted last year by the British Postal Chess Federation. As an affiliated organization we obviously adopt them too. A copy is enclosed and there is an article in this issue about them.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

We suspect that one of the reasons that many members never get around to paying their subs. to CCCC is that it is such a small amount that it is hardly worth writing a cheque for. Thus our committee has decided to introduce a category of LIFE MEMBERSHIP. We are setting this at £1 for every year of the Club's age, so it begins this year at £21, and will increase £1 annually from now on. Allowing for inflation I estimate that anyone who aims to remain in CCCC for ten years would be better off paying as a Life Member. Just one payment of £21 and you need never worry about CCCC subs. for the rest of your days! Cheques payable to 'Clergy Correspondence Chess Club' to Gordon Geddes please.

Gordon and I decided that, as Founder of the Club, our President Ivor Davies should become our first (honorary) Life Member and he has accepted. I will put my money where my mouth is and sign up also. A list will be in the July issue of everyone who takes up the offer...

WANTED

Information about you. Though people say it is a good idea, no one seems willing to write their BIOGRAPHY for the 'Getting To Know You' page. I have bullied a member of my own division into it for this issue (a second one didn't appear in time). Please send in yours. The single GAME in this issue is the last one I have on file. Please send in your annotated games for future issues.

ALICE

This issue begins with Ivor Davies' article on the Chess problem from 'ALICE' which he mentioned in his biography. I asked Ivor if we could reproduce it, and we are grateful to him, and the 'Anglo-Welsh Review' (where it was first printed) for letting us have the article.

The next issue of 'Chess Minister!' is due in July, just before the end of the current season. Material to me by 1st June please.

RESPOND TO THE TWO PLEAS ABOVE, OR IT WILL BE A VERY THIN MAGAZINE!

Looking-Glass Chess

Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* is the best known of all books to do with chess. Yet the game which provides the framework of the story has always puzzled chess players because it seems to break so many rules.

The position at the beginning of the book is this (in Forsyth notation): 6n1; 8; 2K5; 5N2; 4k3; 8; 3Pq3; 2Q2R2. (The reader unfamiliar with chess technicalities will find an explanatory diagram in *Through the Looking-Glass*.)

The moves made during the course of Alice's adventures are as follows (with notes by Carroll himself¹): 1. . . . Q-R4; 2. p-Q4 (by railway; Tweedledum and Tweedledee); 3. Q-B4 (after shawl); 4. Q-QB5 (becomes sheep); 5. p-Q5 (shop, river, shop); 6. Q-B8 (leaves egg on shelf); 7. p-Q6 (Humpty Dumpty); 8. Q-B8 (flying from Red Knight); 9. p-Q7 (forest), N-K2ch.; 10. NxN; 11. N-B5; 12. p-Q8 (Q) (coronation), Q-Krch. (examination); 13. Q-R6 (goup); 14. QxQ mate (feast).

There are two things seriously wrong with this sequence of moves from the point of view of ordinary chess. Firstly, White makes thirteen moves to Red's three. Secondly, White's last move but one, Queen to Rook six, ignores the check on the White King.

For these reasons, commentators on *Through the Looking-Glass* have taken the view that the chess is part of the nonsense fantasy and therefore not subject to the rules. F. Madan complains that "the chess framework is full of absurdities and impossibilities" and that "hardly a move has a sane purpose."² A. L. Taylor thinks that the author "was not interested in the game as a game."³ Even Lewis Carroll seems to have felt the need of some sort of explanation. In a new Preface written in 1896 he says: "As the chess-problem . . . has puzzled some of my readers, it may be well to explain that it is correctly worked out; so far as the *moves* are concerned. The *alternation* of Red and White is perhaps not so strictly observed as it might be."

D. M. Liddell in his brilliant article on "The Chess of Alice Through the Looking Glass"⁴ takes this to be an admission that the game might be improved upon: "We are indeed to agree with him as to 'alternation,' for White takes eight moves in succession, enough to wipe out the entire Red force, which is scarcely to be called Chess, while the above play is not 'Alice,' because a large number of the characters she meets in the book are not to be found on the board." Liddell goes on to present a game of his own composition beginning with the bizarre Bird's Opening (pawn to King's Bishop four) and ending with Alice mating the Red King at the sixty-sixth move.⁵

M. Gardner allows that the queening of Alice and the checkmate as described in the text are orthodox but despairs of a rational explanation of the other apparent violations of the rules.⁶

The trouble with all these interpretations is that Lewis Carroll (alias Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, lecturer in logic and mathematics at Christ Church, Oxford) was the last man to break any rules. He loved complicated games and invented many of his own, including Court Circular (card game), Croquet Castles, Syzygies (word game) and Lanrick (using a chess board).⁷

Suppose *Through the Looking-Glass* is based on a real game of chess. Is there any possible set of circumstances that would allow for such seemingly irregular moves?

Carroll learned to play chess as a child at Croft Rectory. But his mature knowledge of the game must have come from his reading. This is confirmed by the fact that, after his death, three chess books were found in his rooms: Walker's *Art of Chess-Play*⁸, Staunton's *Chess-Player's Companion* and Staunton's *Chess Tournament*.⁹ Carroll's literary biographers have noted his ownership of these books, but none appears to have examined their contents. The works of both Walker and Staunton are historical as well as instructive and both include codes of law that differ in important respects from the rules of modern chess. Difficulties vanish away when Alice's adventures are looked at anew in the light provided by these early Victorian masters. Not only does the chess become intelligible, it reveals something fresh and disturbing about the meaning of the looking-glass world.

The problem of the disregarded check on the White King is easily solved. Walker's Law XX states: "When you give check, you must apprise your adversary, by saying aloud 'check'; or he need not notice it, but may move as though check were not given."¹⁰ The Red Queen did not say, "Check"! Her silence was entirely logical because, at the moment of her arrival at King one, she said to Alice, who had been crowned on Queen eight, "Speak when you're spoken to!" Since no one had spoken to *her* she would have been breaking her own rule had she said, "Check."

There remains the second and greater difficulty. How, under any circumstances, could White make thirteen moves while Red makes only three?

Four possible explanations suggest themselves. Firstly, Red might move the White pieces by mistake. Under Law IX White could insist that the moves stand. Secondly, according to Law XIV, if White were moving out of turn Red could insist that the moves stand. Neither of these contingencies is very likely in view of the number of consecutive moves made by White. Thirdly, the game might be played at odds. Both Walker and Staunton devote much space to various methods of giving odds to a weaker player. But the order of the moves—one Red, eight White, one Red, three White, one Red, two White—would imply an impossibly difficult mathematical basis for the giving of odds.

There remains a fourth possibility. Book V of Staunton's *Companion* is entitled "On Odds."¹¹ Staunton begins with a discussion of the origins of chess and remarks that at first the giving and receiving of odds was unnecessary because the game was not one of pure skill.

At the remote period of its birth in India it belonged to the widespread family of human games based on chance and "the moves were governed by the casts of dice"¹². These significant words occur in the very first sentence of the treatise Staunton wrote and Lewis Carroll bought. They provide a key that turns easily in the lock of the door to Alice's secret garden. White has more moves than Red because White wins on the throw of the dice more often than Red!

"They don't keep this room so tidy as the other," thought Alice to herself when she arrived behind the looking-glass and discovered a world beyond the care of providence or the decrees of fate. How disturbing if Carroll is suggesting that this 'other world' is, after all, the real one and that it is ruled by the principle of uncertainty! A pawn's progress towards the eighth rank is hazardous in the hands of a skilled chess player. In looking-glass chess its survival depends on the casting of unseen dice by an invisible master. No wonder Alice cried as she threw herself down on the last square, "Oh, how glad I am to get here!"

IVOR DAVIES.

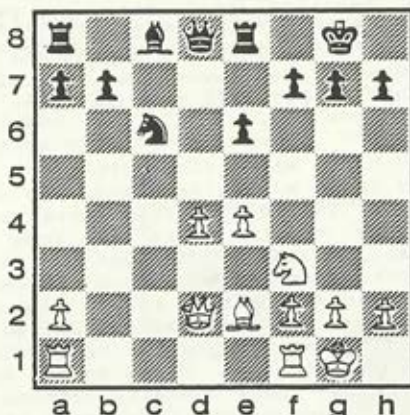
NOTES

1. The reference to the castling of the three Queens is disregarded since the meaning is explained in the Preface: "Merely a way of saying that they entered the palace.
2. Sidney H. Williams and Falconer Madan: *A Handbook of the Literature of the Rev. C. L. Dodgson* (1931), p. 48.
3. Alexander L. Taylor: *The White Knight: A Study of C. L. Dodgson* (1952), p. 101.
4. Donald M. Liddell in *The British Chess Magazine*, May 1910 (Vol. 30, p. 181).
5. Liddell's ingenuity deserved a kinder fate than was accorded it in a letter in the subsequent (June 1910) number of the *B.C.M.*: "We played over the whole of Mr. Liddell's game for the benefit of a young lady of about Alice's own age who wanted a story to be read to her, and she wasn't a bit pleased. Indeed, not to mince matters, she was very cross."
6. Martin Gardner: *The Annotated Alice* (1960), p. 170.
7. The rules of these and other Carrollian games may be found in *The Works of Lewis Carroll* edited by Roger Lancelyn Green (1965), p. 1007f.
8. George Walker (1803-1879): *The Art of Chess-Play: A New Treatise on the Game of Chess* (1846).
9. Howard Staunton (1810-1874): *The Chess-Player's Companion; Comprising a New Treatise on Odds, and a Collection of Games* (1849); *The Chess Tournament, A Collection of the Games Played at this Celebrated Assemblage* (1852). The "celebrated assemblage" was the tournament held at the St. George's Club in 1851 to mark the Great Exhibition.
10. These are the Rules of St. George's Chess Club, London, drawn up in 1841 and still in force in England when *Through the Looking-Glass* was written in 1871.
11. It is based on *Il Gioco degli Scacchi* of D. Pietro Carrera (1617).
12. Staunton, *op. cit.*, p. 380.

HURT V CARLIN

Yes, another game of mine! But it is submitted and annotated by my opponent, Arnold Hurt. A couple of times I have come up against Arnold and the games usually turn out to be exciting. He usually wins them too! This is from Division 2B, 1986/7.

- | | | |
|----|------|-------|
| 1 | d4 | d5 |
| 2 | c4 | e6 |
| 3 | Nc3 | Nf6 |
| 4 | Nf3 | c5 |
| 5 | cxd5 | Nxd5 |
| 6 | e4 | Nxc3 |
| 7 | bxc3 | cxd4 |
| 8 | cxd4 | Bb4+ |
| 9 | Bd2 | Bxd2+ |
| 10 | Qxd2 | O-O |
| 11 | Be2 | Nc6 |
| 12 | O-O | Re8 |



I saw danger in two pawns on the Queen side against one of mine. My pawn on d4 is weak, and too many pieces are tied up defending it.

- | | | | |
|----|--------------|------|-----|
| 13 | e5 | b6 | |
| 14 | Rfd1 | a5 | |
| 15 | Bb5 | Bb7 | |
| 16 | Qe3 | Qd5 | |
| 17 | a4 | Red8 | |
| 18 | Rac1 | Nb4 | |
| 19 | Being cheeky | Bc4 | Qd7 |
| 20 | Bb3 | Nd5 | |
| 21 | Qd2 | ... | |
- covering two useful diagonals
- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 21 | ... | Rac8 |
| 22 | Ne1 | Rxc1 |
| 23 | Rxc1 | Bc6 |
| 24 | Rc4 | ... |
- seemed more active than Ra1

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 24 | ... | b5 |
| 25 | axb5 | Bxb5 |
| 26 | Rc5 | a4 |
| 27 | Bxd5 | exd5 |
| 28 | Qb4 | Bc4? |
| 29 | h3 | ... |

a safety move to avoid any chance of being mated on the back rank.

- | | | |
|----|-----|----|
| 29 | ... | g5 |
|----|-----|----|

An imaginative effort to regain control. Perhaps a bit risky but it nearly paid off.

- | | | |
|----|------|-----|
| 30 | Re5 | g4 |
| 31 | h4 | g3 |
| 32 | fxg3 | Qg4 |

On move 30 Black gave up hope of saving his a-pawn. But his activities on the K side prevented any action there, and that pawn went on...

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 33 | Qc3 | Qd1 |
| 34 | Qe3 | ... |

protecting pawns on d4 and g3 as well as N. Threat of Qg5+, capturing R and mate in four.

- | | | |
|----|------|-----|
| 34 | ... | Rb8 |
| 35 | Kh2 | Qb3 |
| 36 | Qg5+ | Kf8 |
| 37 | Nf3 | a3 |



- | | | |
|----|----|-----|
| 39 | e6 | ... |
|----|----|-----|

forcing Q to move back to avoid mate by Q on f7.

- | | | |
|----|-----------|-----|
| 39 | ... | Qb7 |
| 40 | Ng5 | Qe7 |
| 41 | Qh8+mate. | |

CHess EXPERT : A REVIEW

One of the limitations of a dedicated chess computer is that whenever an improvement is made your machine becomes obsolete. If you want to keep up to date you have to buy a whole new machine at considerable expense. The Sargon/Great Game Machine was an attempt to overcome this with its interchangeable game cartridges, but they were still relatively expensive, and in any case it seems to have gone out of production. Although a microcomputer represents a substantial investment (it is presumably being bought for other reasons anyway), once it has been bought it becomes a very cheap way of providing a computerised chess opponent since the hardware remains good for years to come and whenever an improvement is made all you need is a new program disk for your chess at around £15-£20. Thus, ever since buying a BBC micro 5 years ago it is that that I have used for chess playing aswell as much else (including administering the CCCC!!!).

But whilst good chess playing programs have been available for the BBC micro, I have always had the feeling that there should be something more! With the capabilities of a computer at our disposal why not some kind of tutorial program aswell? A couple of months ago Chess Expert arrived to confirm my long held feelings that this was really possible! It opens up a whole new dimension in chess computing. I make no apologies for taking space to review it as I know I am not the only member of CCCC to have a BBC micro. Even if you haven't a BBC micro, read on - you may find it interesting and you will at least know what you are missing!

Chess Expert is a program for the BBC Micro with disk drive(s). Its author, Bernard Hill, is naturally a chess enthusiast, and also a Lay Reader in the Scottish Episcopal Church. In its full form there is a 400K database providing you with an opening book of some 700 variations (40,000 lines 25 moves deep), roughly equivalent to Modern Chess Openings. But unlike a printed opening book this one can be constantly updated and modified. Whenever you enter in a new game (your own, from a newspaper, or whatever) the database is updated and the new line or variation is added for future recall. You are welcome (indeed encouraged) to make your own back-up disks so you could categorize them if you wished. For instance there would be nothing to stop you making a complete opening book of the 100+ games of the "two-Ks" over the last few World Championships!!!

The program is easy enough to learn. Much of it is self-explanatory from on-screen prompts but there is an instruction manual supplied for further help. Although it is quite possible to enter an entire game on Chess Expert (up to 64 moves each), as it is mainly intended for openings you will find one or two peculiarities later in a game. For example it knows nothing of draws (even stalemate), or even check. Thus you have to be your own arbiter against such things as castling across check etc. This has been deliberately left out in order to leave more space for the actual opening books, but these peculiarities apart it is generally au-fait with the rules of the game.

You can either follow through one of its 'book' openings as far as you want to (or as far as it goes) or enter in your own game. You can add standard punctuations like ! or ? and even name the opening (after yourself perhaps!) or write in a brief comment at various points. You can take back up to 9 complete moves to explore a different line whenever you like, or even select an opening at random if you so desire. The board can be orientated from either the white or black side, and changed at any point.

It is not finished here though, since if you possess White Knight Mark 12, or Colossus (and can use the 64k B+ or Master version) you can load openings from Chess Expert into the main program at any point and continue playing from there. Anyone who uses any chess program will be well aware of their lamentably small opening repertoire, and here is the solution par excellence. Now you can play any opening you care to name (or invent!) against your computer...

Hopefully on its way from the same author is a program to enable you to print out your games from Colossus / White Knight in any notation you choose, hopefully even figurine algebraic - now that would really enhance this magazine, wouldn't it?

Chess Expert comes in three forms: the program and a small 28K database is £10 and is available for 40 or 80 track disk. The full 400K Openings database requires 2x80 track disk surfaces (either a single double sided drive or a twin drive - state which when ordering) and costs a further £15. Alternatively the two together are available at a reduced combined price of £20 (again state whether for Drives 0&2 or 0&1). If you are not yet convinced, send just £1 for a demonstration disk, stating whether 40 or 80 track. Cheques should be payable to Braeburn Software and sent to them at: Hawthorn Bank, Scott's Place, Selkirk, TD7 4DP. If you have a BBC micro (or know anyone else who has one) and play chess, it really is a must!

I print below the Christmas card sent to me by Bill Lockett (the designer of our 'logo' and magazine cover), as I felt it was worth sharing with other members. Thanks, Bill.



CLERGY CORRESPONDENCE CHESS CLUB

THE NEW RULES

Together with this magazine you will receive a copy of our new playing rules. They come into effect immediately.

They are headed CCCC rules because this edition is produced by us. However, with the exception of our domestic rules at the end, I believe that they are an accurate representation of the British Postal Chess Federation Playing Rules. It must however be stated that in outside matches the official publication of the rules is binding. This is available in a booklet (which includes rules for BPCF tournaments) from the BPCF Secretary: Malcolm Peltz, 14 Linden End, Aylesbury, Bucks. HP21 7NA. No price had been set at the time of going to press. The BPCF are themselves producing a single sheet edition of the playing rules, and this should be available later this year.

Basically the rules are those of the International Correspondence Chess Federation, modified for British use. Unlike the Official publication I have incorporated these modifications within the rules themselves, rather than as a supplement. I believe this makes them easier to follow providing you only play in British events. If you play in International events then you MUST obtain the official rules booklet as some of the ICCF rules have been extensively modified.

Among the main changes that affect us are:

Rule 2: The default notation is now Algebraic. This does NOT mean that you have to use algebraic, but it does mean that to use any other notation BOTH players must agree.

Rule 12: Playing time remains 20 days for each 10 moves, with time saved carried forward. However if you reply on the same day that you receive your move, NO TIME counts at all (it used to be half a day). This could be useful in catching up if you have got into time trouble.

Rule 13: It might be worth drawing some people's attention to this one! You cannot just sit on a move indefinitely without telling your opponent. This way he isn't wondering if it has got lost in the post.

Please also note our own supplementary rule 1, allowing either player to insist on 1st class post within three months of the end of a season to try to ensure that a game is finished.

I have also received a few clarifications or guidelines that ICCF have issued over the years, a couple of which are worth mentioning:

Rule 4: Although a valid move once posted, can in no way be taken back, if an opponent consents to continue the game with a new move this is considered a gentlemen's agreement and the new move becomes valid for the rest of the game. (I have sometimes been asked to judge on this one - this is apparently the official position).

You can, if you wish, share the results of your other games with an opponent, but you also have the right not to give such information.

Finally, I would hope that the publication of a new set of rules (any organization has to have rules of course) will not in any way hamper the friendly spirit in which most Clergy CCC games are conducted. It is worth quoting another ICCF guideline, relating to Rule 26: "Correspondence chess tournaments exist to please correspondence chess players and to cultivate friendly relations. Therefore they must be conducted in a good sporting spirit."