

FURNESS ON CHESS

This is the fifth and final part of the late Richard Furness's reminiscences of his life in chess. Part four appeared in the August issue. Games annotations are by John Saunders.

OWENS CORNING

The five Owens Corning tournaments at Wrexham (1994-98) figure amongst the most enjoyable with which I have been involved. Played at the splendid Redwither Tower they were ten-player all-play-alls and the organisers mustered some interesting players. DGT clocks were used with a 30-second increment. This required the players to keep score throughout the game. If they made a move with only one second left, they still had to keep recording since they immediately had 31 seconds and a few quick moves could see them building up a time reserve.

Players of the older generation often found this a difficult rule to observe since for them a lifetime of chess playing had seen them able to dispense with scoring when short of time. Two elderly players who found this tricky were Vlastimil Jansa and Mark Taimanov. I attempted to forestall any offence by standing by their board and pointing to their scoresheet whenever they were about to make a move without having recorded up to their previous one. This seemed to avoid any problem but was only possible because there were only five games per round for me to monitor.

At one pre-event meeting, the players agreed that discussing the issue with them prior to the event was equivalent to a warning and that any infringement should result in an immediate time bonus for the opponent.

Owens Corning 1998

□ **Richard Dineley**

■ **Steffen Pedersen**

French Tarrasch C06

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘d2 ♘f6 4 e5 ♘fd7 5 ♙d3 c5 6 c3 ♘c6 7 ♘e2 ♗b6 8 ♘f3 cxd4

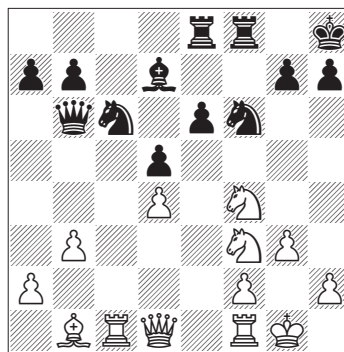
9 cxd4 f6 10 exf6 ♘xf6 11 0-0 ♙d6 12 b3 0-0 13 ♙f4 ♙xf4

13...♘xd4!? 14 ♘fxd4 e5 15 ♙e3 exd4 16 ♙xd4 ♗d8 is about equal.

14 ♘xf4 ♙d7 15 ♗c1 ♗ae8 16 ♙b1 ♖h8

16...♘e7 17 g3 ♘f5 18 ♗e1 ♘d6 19 ♘e5 ♙c8 20 h4 and White had an edge in Dineley-Easton, 4NCL 1999; 16...♘e4!? as played in S.Buckley-C.Cobb, Newport 1999, looks quite interesting. Black won that game.

17 g3



17...e5

A perfectly understandable move, but it meets with a sharp response. 17...♘xd4 18 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 19 ♘xd4 e5 was Emunds-Becker, Germany 2002, and now 20 ♗c7 looks like it should keep the edge for White.

18 ♗xc6!?

The reasoning behind this is that White will gain a preponderance of minor pieces to strike against the black king on the kingside, whilst knocking out one of Black's defenders.

18...♗xc6 19 dxe5 ♘g4?

Black has to play 19...♘e4 and after 20 e6 ♙xe6! 21 ♘d4 ♗d7 22 ♘fxe6 ♗xe6 23 ♘xe6 ♗xe6 24 ♗d4 he has nothing much to fear. He can try 24...♘f6!? when 25 ♗xa7 is met by 25...♗h3 with ♘g4 to follow.

20 e6 ♖xe6

Now if 20...♙xe6 21 ♘d4 the g4 knight will be hanging after an exchange on e6.

21 ♘d4 ♖c8

21...♗d6 (or 21...♗a6 22 ♙d3 and then 22...♗d6) 22 ♖xg4 ♙e4 23 ♗d1 ♙xf4 24 gxf4 ♗xf4 25 ♘e2 and White can protect his kingside and win with his extra material.

22 ♖xg4 ♙e1 23 ♘g6+!

The only way to win but not too hard to find.

23...♙g8

23...hxg6 24 ♗h4+ ♙g8 25 ♙xe1 also wins.

24 ♙xe1 1-0**4NCL AND INTEL**

The 4NCL has been one of my major responsibilities since 1997 and yet it hardly figures in my reminiscences, the reason being that it has run so smoothly with players being aware of the rules and conforming to them. Despite its competitive nature it has been played with a fine display of sportmanship. Yes, two captains almost came to blows last season but that was a trivial incident!

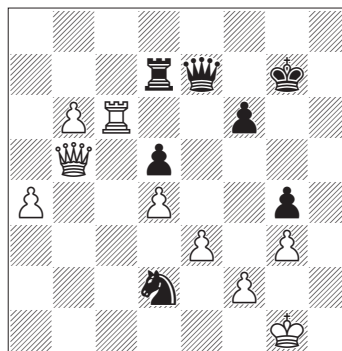
The closest finish I have had to deal with occurred in 1995 at the Intel World Grand Prix in London. With a prize fund of \$130,000 and players such as Anand (who was to play Kasparov for the world title about ten days later), Adams, Ivanchuk, Kramnik, Lautier, Morozevich, Dreev, Piket, Short, Speelman, Miles, etc., it was a star-studded event.

The tight finish involved Vishy Anand and Alexei Dreev. With the vast prize fund, an audience of several hundred, and TV cameras shooting from all angles, it was rather tense. Still in the late middle game, Vishy had 23 seconds left and Alexei only 19. After a further move each the times remaining were 20 seconds and 14 seconds. Then after each player had made a move the times went down to 18 and 12, then 15/11, 13/10, 12/9, 10/6 (surely Dreev must lose). 9/5, 4/4, 3/3, 2/2 and Vishy's time ran out as he tried to promote a pawn. How can I remember such detail you

wonder? Soon afterwards I obtained a video of the event so I have been able to re-live this epic encounter many times.

THE CROWD GOES WILD

My most memorable match occurred at the same event and was between wildcard Tony Miles and Vladimir Kramnik. The match was drawn 1-1 so the players entered a blitz play-off where Vladimir as White had five minutes and Tony four. A draw meant Black would go through. Tony played about 25 moves in his first minute to make up his time. As the seconds ran down and moves were being played instantaneously, it was clear Tony was not losing. The spectators began to stand, clap, shout and cheer. As Tony triumphed, his arm rose and he punched the air to by far the biggest round of applause I have heard at a chess encounter. What a wonderful moment that was! Here is game one of the mini-match:

Intel London Quickplay 1995
Miles - Kramnik**60 ♙c8! ♖f7**

Black falls for the tactic at the heart of White's idea. He should play 60...♘c4 but then White could probably even play 61 a5!? allowing 61...♘d6 since after 62 ♗c6 ♘xc8 63 ♗xc8 White's advanced passed pawns will be too much for Black's rook.

61 ♗xd7! 1-0

61...♗xd7 62 ♙c7 wins easily.

The next day Tony lost in the semi-final to Michael Adams who went on to beat Dreev in the final to scoop the first prize and give England a superb winner.

My remaining outstanding occasions were two simultaneous displays I organised. Both had audiences of several hundred. The first was given by Viktor Korchnoi in 1980, after his defection from the Soviet Union and his great first battle with Karpov for the World title. It was sponsored by Benedictine and held at the Free Trade Hall in Manchester. The second was given in Chester in 1989 by the then new World Champion Gary Kasparov. It remains his only public appearance in the North of England. His triumphant entry into the hall was to the accompaniment of the Grand March from *Aida*. He lost two games, one to David Tebb and the other to my 16-year-old son Robert.

NOT CHESS AS WE KNOW IT

It is surprising how the media likes to link chess with other sports. During a Rugby World Cup in the 1990s the *Daily Telegraph*, reporting on an England v Australia, match had this to say, "It was a gripping struggle of stomach-turning excitement, a form of muscular chess in which the result might have gone either way."

More recently a football commentator said, "With the ball at Beckham's feet, England were setting the tempo, moving like chess grandmasters in a hurry."

Another commentator said, "They keep kicking the ball from one end of the field to the other. It is just like a game of chess."

Summing up the Wimbledon semi-final between Martina Hingis and Jana Novotna, Pam Shriver said, "Each player was running before the ball was hit. Just like a chess game."

Channel 4 coverage of the 1997 Tour de France: "Cedric Vasseur led for most of the day, taking the main time bonuses and leaving the pack playing a game of chess behind him."

Once I was involved in a radio interview with veteran wrestler Abe Ginsburg. The interviewer asked us what the similarities were between our two diverse activities. We agreed that the idea was to tie one's opponent up in knots, and to force a submission (resignation) or a knockout (checkmate).

IT'S ARBITER FUN

Continuing on a less serious aspect of arbiting, at a Monarch tournament during the 1990s the players included Leslie Stuart, Stuart Conquest and Ken Norman. I did not manage the Stuart-Conquest pairing but round eight did see Norman-Conquest. The players told me it had had happened a number of times previously.

Arbiters do sometimes enjoy a little light relief by indulging in imaginary potty pairings like Chambers-Potts, Stephenson-Rockett, Wood-Carver, Fry-Bacon, Wade-Anker, Arnold-Palmer, Fox-Hunt, Bailey-Bridge, Shoulders-Alms, Wiley-Persson, Farmer-Giles and Silver-Birch. Thanks to a few of my arbiter colleagues for most of these. The only condition for this exercise is that the names must appear in the grading list.

During the 1990s the *Daily Telegraph* carried an article about arbiters. It had this to say. "With a magical balance he has contrived on one hand to be a character, a comic, an entertainer, and on the other an absolutely impartial and dedicated arbiter, as near flawless in his decision-making as it is possible for a human to be." Who could they have been referring to? Was it Harry Baines, Stewart Reuben, David Welch or even the writer of these reminiscences? Surprisingly the person being described wasn't an International Arbiter nor even a BCF Arbiter. He was a Yorkshireman who was generally seen wearing a white coat. He didn't sell ice cream. He was cricket umpire Dickie Bird. As I began this article, so I end it, by linking two of my lifetime interests. This time it is chess and cricket.