

## FURNESS ON CHESS

*Richard Furness was recently awarded the British Chess Federation's 2004 President's Award after a lifetime of remarkable service and achievement, mainly as a tournament director and arbiter, but also in many other chess-related capacities. Sadly, Richard was recently diagnosed as suffering from motor neurone disease and, just as we go to press, came the desperately sad news that he has died (see page 245). In his final days he had lost nothing of his habitual determination and good humour, and kept himself busy writing up his memoirs for our delectation. He also put his photographic scrapbook at our disposal (see pages 276 and 277). Games annotations are by John Saunders. Part two will appear in the June issue.*

I WAS TEN years old when my father taught me how to play chess using an old red and black solid lead set of chess men which he was given whilst serving in the Royal Air Force in Malta during the wartime siege of the island. Later, I discovered two chess books in the school library. They were bound volumes of the Sutton Coldfield magazine *Chess*. During my schooldays at Eccles Grammar School, I kept those books on almost permanent loan. They opened my eyes to the world of international chess. These bound volumes covered the period around 1950. I read about Botvinnik winning the World Championship in 1948 ahead of Smyslov, Keres, Reshevsky and Euwe. I never thought I would later attend a dinner where Max Euwe would be guest of honour, that I would meet Smyslov who would refer to me as a "true gentleman" or that forty years later I would wheel David Bronstein the length of Hastings pier as he sat on an old railway luggage trolley. Later David and I had meals together when he played in the Owens Corning Tournament at Wrexham.

My first experience of Soviet chess came during the mid-1960s when I played in a few international postal chess events. One of my first opponents was from Siberia. This was the era of Krushchev and soon after the Cuba missile crisis. I recall going into my village post office at Worsley near Manchester. It was a tiny grocery shop with a post office counter at one end. The shop was full of customers. When my turn came I asked what the postage rate was to Siberia.

Instantly the entire shop fell silent. Everyone eyed me with suspicion and later backed away as I left the shop.

### THE HILLS ARE ALIVE

Yes, with "The Sound of Music" said Rogers and Hammerstein. What has this to do with chess? Quite a lot, since it was a holiday in the Swiss Alps which motivated me into moving from junior to national, and then international events. After a number of mountain walking holidays in the Austrian Alps and then in Norway, 1969 saw me book a walking holiday at the little village of Adelboden, set in a quiet valley in the Bernese Oberland. Later I discovered, to my delight, that my holiday would coincide with the Clare Benedict Cup which was being staged at a hotel not far from mine. During the first few days I did little walking, preferring to watch Jonathan Penrose, Ray Keene, Bill Hartston and Peter Lee for England competing against teams from Holland (the eventual winners), Switzerland, West Germany, Spain and Austria. On my return home, I visited the British Championships at Rhyl. I was hooked. I wanted to organise a chess tournament.

I soon persuaded the Manchester and District Chess Association to organise a weekend open on the lines of the highly successful Islington Open. It was held in July 1970, and I was the Congress Director. I had twice the number of players I had expected –

142 – and these included a teenager from the Netherlands named Jan Timman. He was favourite to win, but after losing to Liverpool's John Carleton in round one had to be satisfied with taking the junior prize.

*Manchester Open 1970*

□ **Jan Timman**

■ **John Carleton**

*Reversed KID A14*

1 c4 e6 2 ♘f3 d5 3 g3 ♘f6 4 ♙g2 ♙e7 5 0–0 0–0 6 b3 c5 7 ♙b2 ♘c6 8 e3 b6 9 ♚e2 ♙a6 10 d3 ♚d7

10...♚c7 is perhaps the more natural choice of square.

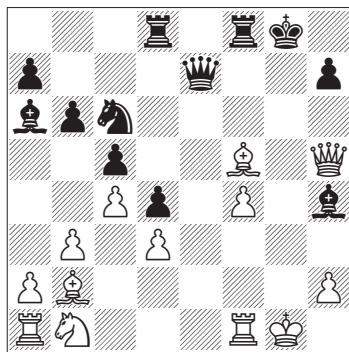
11 e4 ♚ad8 12 ♘c3

Allowing Black a spatial advantage in the centre. 12 e5 ♘e8 13 ♘c3 ♘c7 14 ♚fd1 b5 15 a4 b4 16 ♘b5 was equal in Wolf-Brueggemann, Bundesliga 1993.

12...d4 13 ♘b1 e5 14 ♘h4 g6 15 f4 exf4 16 gxf4 ♘g4!? 17 ♙h3 ♙xh4 18 ♙xg4 f5 19 ♙h3 ♚c7 20 exf5

This plan proves to be too risky. White is safe enough after 20 e5

20...gxf5 21 ♚h5 ♚e7 22 ♙xf5?



22...♚xf5!

It seems incredible that Timman's sense of danger did not alert him to this shot, young as he was. The open g-file and a8-h1 diagonals, together with the disappearance of the light-squared white bishop, all add up to huge trouble on g2.

23 ♚xf5 ♚g7+ 24 ♙h1 ♙b7 25 ♚e4

There is no viable defence. 25 ♚g1 allows 25...♘e5+ 26 ♚e4 ♙xe4+ 27 dxe4 and 27...♘g6 saves Black's queen.; After 25 ♚f3 Black coolly plays 25...♙h8! followed by ♚g8 and a mighty attack down the g-file.

25...♘e5 26 fxe5 ♙xe4+ 27 dxe4 ♚xe5 28 ♘d2 ♚f8 29 ♚xf8+ ♙xf8 30 ♚f1+ ♙g8 31 ♚f5

Not the best choice, though White's chances of defending are slim anyway.

31...♚e6 32 ♙c1 ♚h6 33 ♚f1 ♙g5 34 ♚d1 ♙e3 35 b4 ♚g5 36 ♚f1 ♚g4 37 ♚e1 h5 0–1

Following the Fischer-Spassky match, the 1970s was a great time for chess activity and within a few years my Manchester Congress had mushroomed to be the largest British Congress outside London, with over six hundred players. Readers of more mature years will recall that this was before the introduction of the quickplay finish. It was customary to give free entry to the strongest half dozen players and as soon as the four-hour playing session was over, they would tour the hall doing instant adjudications of the unfinished games.

With only an hour between the rounds on a three-round Saturday and a two-round Sunday, there was little time. The adjudications were followed by the pairing process (no computers) and then having to write out by hand all the pairings (no pairing boards at that time), a hasty visit to a photocopier (yes, we did have one of those) and then publication of the pairings about five minutes before the round was due to start. It was not unusual to have 150-200 players in one section. One year I had ten players called Smith in the same section. Getting the right Smith to the correct board was quite a challenge. I still have an entry form for the 1971 Manchester Congress. The entry fee was £2 and a further £3 covered two nights' bed and breakfast. A fiver for the weekend! Perhaps the title of this article should be changed to "Those Were the Days".

*Manchester op, 1976*

□ **Jonathan Mestel**

■ **John Hall**

*Sicilian B50*

**1 e4 c5 2 ♖f3 d6 3 ♜c3 g6?!**

Some commentators give this a question mark, though a number of grandmasters have gone into this line with their eyes open.

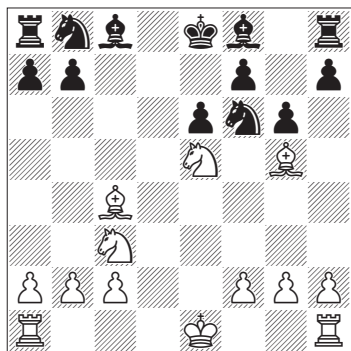
**4 d4 cxd4 5 ♖xd4 ♜f6 6 e5 dxe5**

6...♜c6 7 ♗b5 ♜h5!?! has been tried by no less a name than Benko. After 8 e6 ♗g7 9 exf7+ ♜f8 10 ♖c4 Black can play 10...d5!?! though it doesn't necessarily justify the pawn sacrifice.

**7 ♖xd8+ ♜xd8 8 ♜xe5 ♗e8?**

Black is definitely lost after this. He must try 8...♗e6.

**9 ♗c4 e6 10 ♗g5**



**10...♗g7**

10...♜fd7 11 ♜b5!?! ♜xe5 12 0-0-0 should net a clean exchange for White.

**11 ♜b5 ♜a6 12 0-0-0 ♗e7**

12...0-0 would be good here but sadly it is illegal.

**13 ♜d6 h6 14 ♜xc8+ ♖axc8 15 ♖d7+ ♗e8 16 ♖xf7 1-0**

Black can probably avoid losing pieces here but more pawns have to disappear.

When the Manchester Congress grew to a mammoth size I decided to hold it over consecutive weekends with the Major and Minor on the first and the Open and Intermediate on the second. This enabled

the fanatics to play on successive weekends, have twelve games and receive a discount for their double entry. A player from Leeds took advantage of this in an unusual way. Expecting the two sections to be played in the same hall, he entered the Major and the Minor. When he arrived he found they were being played in separate buildings about a hundred yards apart on Manchester University's fine Owens Park campus. He got plenty of exercise.

By the mid-1970s, chess was booming and I was involved in the establishment of a variety of congresses, notably those at Blackpool and at Chorley. At the Blackpool prize-giving in 1978 there were only two of us on the stage. I was doing the announcing and the other person was doing the presenting. Very few eyes were on me. The presenter was Miss United Kingdom.

The event was covered by Jeremy Silman in the US Chess Federation's "Chess Life and Review". His article ended, "So the tournament was over, but the fun was just starting. You see, I had to attend the awards ceremony, where Miss United Kingdom would give out the prizes with a kiss. A happy end to the story. A smile on my face, lipstick on my cheek and money in my pocket."

## THE BENEDICTINE

During this exciting decade the Lloyds Bank Masters was established and this was soon copied by the Benedictine International in Manchester which ran from 1978 until 1983. For the first three I was organiser, chief arbiter, press officer and sponsor's representative! Later I reduced my commitment to just two of those tasks.

This event brought many interesting players to Manchester where they enjoyed the presence by each board of two little bottles of Benedictine liqueur. Some were consumed before the opening moves had been played. A photo taken at the 1978 Benedictine shows the Hungarian grandmaster

Gyozo Forintos playing Tony Kosten. Not many years later they were father-in-law and son-in-law!

*Benedictine International 1978*

□ **Oliver Jackson**

■ **Rosendo Balinas**

*Ruy Lopez C92*

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♙b5 a6 4 ♙a4 ♘f6 5 0-0 ♙e7 6 ♚e1 b5 7 ♙b3 d6 8 c3 0-0 9 h3 ♚e8 10 d4 ♙b7 11 ♘bd2 ♙f8

Asking for trouble.

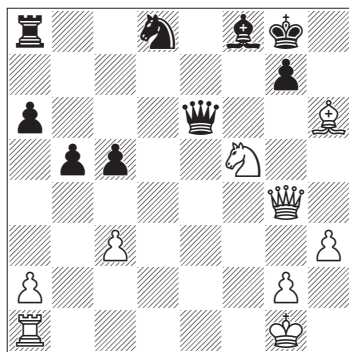
12 ♘g5 ♚e7 13 f4 exd4

After 13...h6 two sacrifices have been tried: both 14 ♘df3!? and 14 ♘xf7 ♚xf7 15 ♙xf7+ ♘xf7 16 ♚b3+ ♘e8 17 ♘f3 give Black a lot to think about. 13...♚e8 is another possibility. The text is reasonable but allows White relatively easy play.

14 e5!? dxe5 15 fxe5 ♘d5

15...dxc3 16 bxc3 ♚xe5!? is playable because after 17 ♘xf7 ♚xe1+ 18 ♚xe1 ♚e7! 19 ♘d8+ ♘h8 20 ♚xe7 ♙xe7 21 ♘xb7 ♚b8 winning back the piece. But it would also hand White (a much lower-rated player) a draw on a plate with 21 ♘f7+ ♘g8 22 ♘d8+, etc. Black is still hoping for more, but he gets less.

16 ♚h5 h6 17 ♘xf7 ♚xf7 18 e6 ♚e7 19 ♙xd5 ♘a5 20 ♙xb7 ♘xb7 21 ♘f3 dxc3 22 bxc3 ♚e8 23 ♚g4 ♘d8 24 ♘d4 c5 25 ♘f5 ♚xe6 26 ♚xe6 ♚xe6 27 ♙xh6



27...g6?

White seems to be making all the running, but there is nothing necessarily wrong with Black's

position. After 27...♚a7 there is no obvious way to further the attack. But the text is a fatal weakening which White immediately exploits.

28 ♚f1! ♙xh6

Everything else loses even more quickly.

29 ♘xh6+ ♘g7 30 ♚f7+ ♘h8 31 ♚f8+ ♘g7 32 ♚xe6 ♘xe6 33 ♚xa8

And now it is simple.

33...♘xh6 34 ♚xa6 ♘f4 35 ♘f2 ♘d5 36 c4 bxc4 37 ♘e2 c3 38 a3 ♘f4+ 39 ♘d1 ♘xg2 40 ♚e6 ♘f4 41 ♚e5 c4 42 h4 ♘g7 43 ♘c2 ♘f6 44 ♚e4 ♘d5 45 ♚xc4 1-0

Usually "The Benedictine" began a few days after the end of the Lloyds Bank event so many foreign players went from one to the other. I remember an Israeli IM confiding in me that the Benedictine was better than Lloyds Bank. My ego was instantly boosted. I asked him why. He replied that our coffee was free whereas at Lloyds Bank it was 50p a cup. In fairness I should add that our event was always restricted to about 60 players whereas Lloyds Bank had many times that number.

One of the great characters was IM Bednarski from Poland, an inveterate time-trouble merchant. Since "The Benedictines" were the first occasions when I had to deal with so many titled foreign players, I was nervous. Bednarski gave me plenty of experience in dealing with time scrambles. Spectators would gather around his board as would several players who deliberately left their own games to watch the fun.

With flag hanging, his hand would move, spectators would watch in expectation, then he would reach into his pocket for a packet of cigarettes. The next move was to place a cigarette in his mouth. His other hand would then make a move and out would come his lighter. Generally the flag would fall and he could then light his fag. Time trouble often came early in the session for Bednarski. In one game he thought for over an hour over his fourth move as White in what was a book line in the Sicilian.

*Benedictine International 1982*

□ **Jacek Bednarski**

■ **RA Doney**

*French Guimard C04*

**1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘d2 ♗c6 4 ♗gf3 ♗f6 5 e5 ♗d7 6 ♙e2 f6 7 exf6 ♖xf6 8 ♗f1 e5 9 ♗e3 e4**

Rather too provocative. White is obliged to sacrifice but the attack plays itself.

**10 ♗xd5 ♖d6 11 ♙c4 exf3**

Laszlo Szabo very unwisely played down this line in a game in the 1970s and now continued 11...♗b6? against a little-known player. White played 12 ♙f4! when Szabo found himself forced to give up his queen with 12...♖xd5 13 ♙xd5 ♗xd5 14 ♖e2 ♙f5 15 ♙g5 h6 16 ♖b5 ♙e6 17 ♖xb7 ♗d7 18 ♗e5+ ♗xe5 19 dx5 ♙b4+ 20 c3 ♖hb8 21 ♖a6 ♗xc3 when Szabo would surely have lost had Black played 22 ♙d2 or 22 a3. As it was, he even managed to win.

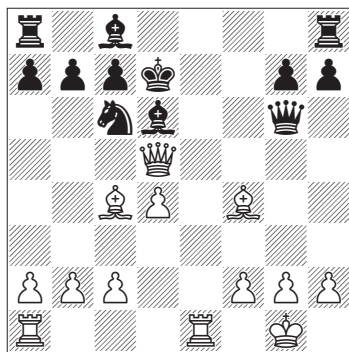
**12 0-0**

After 12 ♙f4 ♖g6 13 ♗xc7+ ♗d8 14 gxf3 ♗b6 15 ♙d3 ♖f7 16 ♙g3 ♗a4 17 ♖b1 a draw was agreed in Kudrin-Lakdawala, USA 1990. Bednarski's plan is more to the point.

**12...♗b6 13 ♖e1+ ♗d7 14 ♙f4 ♖g6 15 ♖xf3! ♗xd5**

15...♗xc4 allows a mate in three after 16 ♖h3+, etc.

**16 ♖xd5+ ♙d6**



**17 ♖e6!**

Equally impossible to meet is 17 ♙g5! threatening 18 ♖e6+ and soon to be followed

by a piece-winning discovered check.

**17...♗e7**

The best defence, but it is a hopeless task.

**18 ♖b5+! c6 19 ♖xg6 hxg6**

19...cxb5 20 ♖xd6+ ♗e8 21 ♙xb5+ leaves Black three pawns down and still facing a massive attack.

**20 ♖g5 ♖h5 21 ♖g3 ♙xf4 22 ♖xf4 ♖f5**

**23 ♖e4 ♗d5 24 ♖e1 ♗c7 25 ♙xd5 cxd5**

**26 ♖e7+ ♙d7 27 ♖c5+ ♗d8 28 ♖e7 1-0**

Bednarski's compatriot Krzysztof Pytel also competed on a couple of occasions and on one of these his wife Bonzena, a WIM, also played and they had their young son with them. To help keep the little boy entertained, we bought him a Rubik's cube which was all the rage at the time. All went well until he sat down, with Rubik's cube, next to his father who was playing Ray Keene. Not surprisingly Ray found the constant movement of the cube a great distraction and asked me to do something about it. My knowledge of Polish matched Krzysztof's ability to speak English – about zero. However sign language came to my aid and the little boy was banished to a lower board to sit beside his mother.

The same year I had my highest ranked demonstration board operator. A key game was reaching a time scramble and it was clear to Ray Keene that the youthful demo board operator would not be able to cope with the flurry of moves which were imminent. He quietly took over the demo board and enabled the spectators to follow the game to its conclusion. This was the only time I have had a grandmaster demonstration board operator – and for no fee.

In the 1979 Benedictine, the north-west's 14-year-old prodigy Nigel Short took part. To get round the problem of him having to attend school, I arranged for his games to start a couple of hours later than officially scheduled. No opponent raised any objection to this, each being willing to assist an up-and-coming player of the next generation.

Given the late start to his games, all the other players had finished their games and had their evening meal before the completion of any lengthy game involving Nigel.

One evening he was clinging to a draw in a tight endgame with an Israeli player. I was watching from the side of the board where I could also see the clocks. There was a mass of spectators on the other side. There came a point where I recognised that if the Israeli moved his king, a draw would result. His hand came out and around the king, but I was on the wrong side. I could only see the back of the hand and not whether finger and thumb had closed and touched the king. The hand moved away. Nigel said, "You touched the king." "No, I didn't", was the reply. Oh dear! What to do? How could I be sure? Then I saw Israeli grandmaster Yair Kraidman who was sitting beside the board on the other side. His jaw dropped and he looked at his compatriot in astonishment. That was all I needed. "The king was touched," I said. It was moved and very soon the draw was agreed. As I

#### TRAINING NEW ARBITERS

*Chief Arbiter to Inexperienced Assistant:*  
"I'm just popping out for ten minutes. If a dispute breaks out, try to keep it going until I get back."

accompanied the player to the dining room for his specially arranged late meal, he said to me, "I don't know why I said I didn't touch it". Relief for me. The correct decision had been made. Thank you, Yair.

My final Israeli anecdote from a Benedictine event was when we also had a player from Syria. After a couple of rounds the Israeli came to me very quietly and said it would not be possible for him to play a player from Syria. Soon afterwards the Syrian came to me and asked not to be paired with anyone from Israel. Fortunately they were all middle-of-the table players so keeping them apart was not a problem. We also ensured they were never on adjacent boards.

*Part Two will appear in the June issue*

#### RICHARD FURNESS (12 v 1937 - 15 iv 2004)

Just as we go to press, the sad news comes through that Richard Furness passed away on 15 April 2004, aged 66. I scarcely need to say any more here about his chess career, as Richard tells the story in the above article, continuing next month. It just remains for *BCM*, and me as a personal friend, to pay tribute to one of the hardest workers for British chess over the past 35 years. It was typical of the man to spend so much of the little time left to him writing up this article, as well as tidying up the loose ends of his other chess endeavours, including the 4NCL (of which he was a director). Until the end of last year he was also one of the driving forces behind the Monarch Assurance International. As such, he was associated with two of the most successful and forward-looking chess competitions in the UK, but these were just the latest in a long list of successful events to which he contributed so much.

Richard brought a range of outstanding personal qualities to his chess work as an arbiter and organizer including integrity, common sense, hard work and a dry sense of humour. As an arbiter he was firm but fair, and always ready to explain why he had given a decision.

Richard liked to talk about his experiences in the game, and his scrapbooks of photos and cuttings inspired me to ask him to write his reminiscences for *BCM*. In January his worst fears were realised when motor neurone disease was diagnosed. With the help of his family, he stuck to the task and produced all the necessary materials on time – as always.

Richard Furness will be sorely missed by his many chess friends around the world. On behalf of *British Chess Magazine* and its readers, I send our deepest condolences to his wife Judy, children Robert and Clare, and father Harry.