



FOUR NATIONS CHESS LEAGUE

Division 1 Round 8 report by Jack Rudd

The first group stages were now over, and teams from one pool would be playing teams from the other. We shall start with Jonathan Rogers's characterization of the formation of the two pools in question...



“Looking at the former pools A and B which played the first seven rounds in the first division, it seems that they were very differently constituted. In pool A the four top teams were far above the bottom four and it was a matter of some surprise that there was as much as a single draw (South Wales Dragons v Barbican 1) in any of these matches between these sides. In pool B, all the teams (Guildford 1 apart) seemed much more closely matched, and the surprise was rather that there were not more than three good results by the lower four teams (Barbican 2 beat ADs, North West Eagles drew with ADs, and Bristol beat Pride and Prejudice). This is because Wood Green 2 did much better than expected, beating all the lower four teams in the pool despite tending not to have much (or any) overall rating advantage in these matches.”

Will the difference in make-up of the two pools affect the second stage results? We shall see.....

Championship Pool

Wood Green Hilsmark Kingfisher 1 vs. WGHK 2

Nobody was expecting this match to be anything other than a one-sided demolition job, and it could have been more so if Matthew Broomfield had not had peaceable intentions in his game against Sarah Hegarty.



Congratulations to Stephen Gordon, who made sure of his final GM norm with one round to spare by beating Chris Briscoe:

Briscoe, Christopher (2268) - Gordon, Stephen J (2524) [E33]

4NCL Hinckley Island (8.112), 22.03.2009

[Rudd, Jack]

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Qc2 Nc6 5.Nf3 d6 6.a3 Bxc3+ 7.Qxc3 0-0 8.b4 Re8 [8...Ne4 9.Qd3 f5 10.g3 a5 11.b5 Nb8 12.Bg2 Nd7 13.0-0 Qe7 14.Bb2 c5 15.d5 Nb6 16.Rac1 exd5 17.cxd5 Bd7 18.Ba1 a4 19.Nh4 Rae8 20.Rfe1 Rf7 21.Bf3 Qg5 22.Ng2 Nd2 23.Nf4 Khurtsidze,N (2430)-Maksimovic,S (2276)/Kusadasi 2006/1-0 (44)]

9.e3 [9.b5 Ne7 (9...Nb8 10.g3 Nbd7 11.Bg2 a6 12.a4 axb5 13.axb5 Ne4 14.Qb2 Rxa1 15.Qxa1 Nb6 16.Qa2 d5 17.c5 Nc4 18.Qb3 c6 19.0-0 cxb5 20.Be3 Qa5 21.Ng5 Nxc5 22.Bxc5 Bd7 23.e4 dxe4 24.Bxe4 Lilienthal,A-Rovner,D/Leningrad 1938/0-1 (62)) 10.g3 (10.Qc2 Ng6 11.h4 h6 12.Bb2 Ng4 13.e3 e5 14.Bd3 exd4 15.Bxd4 N6e5 16.Bh7+ Kh8 17.Be4 Nf6 18.Rd1 Qe7 19.Nxe5 dxe5 20.Bb2 Qc5 21.0-0 a6 22.bxa6 Rxa6 23.Rd2 Rb6 24.Bf3 Bd7 Hort,V (2580)-Unzicker,W (2480)/Germany 1989/½-½) 10...Ng6 11.Bg2 e5 12.dxe5 Nxe5 13.0-0 Ne4 14.Qc2 Nxf3+ 15.exf3 Nc5 16.Bb2 b6 17.f4 Bb7 18.Bxb7 Nxb7 19.Qc3 f6 20.a4 a5 21.Ba3 Qd7 22.Qf3 Nc5 23.Bxc5 dxc5 Alekhine,A-Najdorf/Makarczyk/Elpern/Warsaw 1935/½-½ (48); 9.Bb2 e5 10.d5 Ne7 11.e3 a5 12.Nd2 axb4 13.axb4 Rxa1+ 14.Bxa1 c6 15.dxc6 Nxc6 16.b5 Nd4 17.Bd3 Ne6 18.0-0 Nc5 19.Bc2 b6 20.e4 Bb7 21.f3 Nh5 ½-½ Kuzmin,A (2568)-Satyapragyan,S (2354)/Calcutta 2002] **9...e5 10.dxe5** [10.d5 Ne7 11.Bb2 transposes to the Kuzmin - Satyapragyan game given in the last note.] **10...dxe5 11.Bb2 e4 12.Nd4 Ne5 13.h3 Qe7**



14.0-0-0!? A bold decision - the white king's cover is already not the most secure, but there is play for a kingside attack. [14.Be2 c5 and I think I'd rather have black, although there's a lot of play for both sides.] **14...Bd7 15.f4 exf3 16.gxf3 c5 17.bxc5 Rac8 18.c6 bxc6 19.e4?!** Fixing the kingside pawns seems to weaken white's position too much. [19.Rg1 seems to keep things more evenly balanced. Black cannot win a pawn with 19...c5 20.Nc2 Nxf3?? because of 21.Rxd7 Qxd7 22.Qxf6] **19...Nh5 20.Rg1 Rcd8 21.Ne2 Qf6 22.Bg2**



22...Bc8! A nice little aggressive retreat, preparing a nasty pin on the a6-f1 diagonal. **23.Kb1** [23.Rxd8 Qxd8 and the inevitable ...Nd3+ will also give black a clear advantage.] **23...Ba6 24.Rxd8 Qxd8 25.f4** Anything else loses the c-pawn. **25...Qd3+** **26.Qxd3?** [26.Ka1 gives white drawing chances: 26...Qxe2 27.fxe5 Qf2 28.Qd4 Qxd4 29.Bxd4 Bxc4 30.Bxa7 Rxe5 is not going to be easy for black to win.] **26...Nxd3 27.Bf3?** [27.Bd4 avoids the pin, although the central pawns are doomed. 27...Ndx4 28.Nxf4 Nxf4 29.Bf3 g6] **27...Rb8 28.Bxh5 Rxb2+ 29.Ka1 Bxc4 30.Rd1** [30.Nc1 Rd2 31.Be2 Nb2] **30...Ra2+ 31.Kb1 Rxa3 32.Nc1 Rc3 33.Ne2 Rb3+ 34.Ka1** [34.Kc2 g6 35.Rg1 Nb4+ is also going to be fairly quickly terminal.] **34...g6 35.Bg4 Ra3+ 36.Kb1 Ba2+ 0-1**

RD 8		WOOD GREEN HILSMARK KINGFISHER 1	2395	v	WOOD GREEN HILSMARK KINGFISHER 2	2214
1	w	Greet, Andrew N	2446	1 - 0	Sowray, Peter J	2303
2	b	Gordon, Stephen J	2524	1 - 0	Briscoe, Christopher	2268
3	w	McDonald, Neil	2401	1 - 0	Lee, Graham D	2269
4	b	Houska, Jovanka (F)	2392	½ - ½	Lindner, Daniel	2243
5	w	Tiller, Bjorn	2370	1 - 0	McFarland, Robert S	2218
6	b	Martin, Andrew D	2421	1 - 0	Fowler, Simon	2210
7	w	Farrand, Tom	2266	1 - 0	Hasman, Cengiz	2111
8	b	Broomfield, Matthew	2340	½ - ½	Hegarty, Sarah (F)	2088
				7 - 1		

White Rose 1 vs. Pride and Prejudice

A hard-fought draw between two relatively evenly-matched sides. It is said that white's advantage of the first move comes across most strongly in such encounters, and this was certainly true of this match: all four decisive games were white wins,

including the win by Regina Pokorna (pictured).



RD		WHITE ROSE 1	2279	v	PRIDE AND PREJUDICE	2298
1	w	McNab, Colin	2473	½ - ½	Ward, Chris G	2426
2	b	Wells, Peter K	2513	½ - ½	Emms, John M	2488
3	w	Palliser, Richard	2406	1 - 0	Hunt, Harriet (F)	2463
4	b	Gourlay, Iain	2362	0 - 1	Pokorna, Regina (F)	2384
5	w	Barrett, Steve J	2234	1 - 0	Allicock, Rawle A	2300
6	b	Gayson, Peter M	2258	0 - 1	Kilpatrick, Callum	2211
7	w	Townsend, Paul	2197	½ - ½	Winkelmann, Elena (F)	2101
8	b	Hollingsworth, Evie (F)	1790	½ - ½	Auckland, Elliott	2014
				4 - 4		

Barbican 1 vs. GAMBIT ADs

This match became notorious for the mobile phone incident in the game Davies-D'Costa. I will not go into detail about it here; discussions of the event are available on both the English Chess Forum and the Atticus Forum for those who are interested. This proved to be the only game the ADs won, and the second wins of the weekend from Devereaux, Ferguson and Lauterbauch gave their side a 5-3 victory.

Ferguson, Mark (2404) - Taulbut, Shaun M (2400) [B01]

4NCL Hinckley Island (8.133), 22.03.2009

[Rudd, Jack]



1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Nf6 3.d4 Bg4 4.Nf3 Qxd5 5.Be2 Nc6 [5...e6 avoids the central pawn push that white gets in this game.] 6.h3 Bh5 7.c4 Qd7 8.g4 Bg6 9.d5 Nb4 10.Ne5 Qd6 11.Nxg6 hxg6 12.Nc3 c6 [12...e5 13.g5 Nh5 14.Ne4 Qd7 15.Bg4 Qe7 16.a3 Na6 17.Qa4+ Kd8 18.Be3 Qe8 19.Qa5 f5 20.gxf6 Nxf6 21.Bg5 Be7 22.d6 Nxg4 23.dxe7+ Kc8 1-0 Montilla Carrillo,E (2355)-Triquell Sanchez,M/Badalona 1999] 13.a3 Na6 14.dxc6



14...bxc6? [14...Qxc6 15.Qa4 leaves white with the two bishops and a mobile queenside majority, but would be better for black than what happens.] **15.Qxd6 exd6 16.Bf3 Kd7 17.Be3** With the unsubtle but hard-to-meet threat of b4-b5. **17...Nc5 18.0-0-0 Ne6?!** [18...Nb3+ 19.Kc2 Na5 gives black some chances to hold on, although white is still clearly better.] **19.b4 Rc8?** Giving white some vital tempi, thus ensuring the position goes past the point of no return. [19...Be7 , planning to meet 20.b5 with 20...Nd8 , is ugly, but doesn't immediately lose material.] **20.Bxa7 Ra8 21.Be3 Rxa3 22.Kb2 Ra6?** [22...Ra8 is better, but still losing: 23.b5 Nd8 24.Bb6 and white wins a pawn.] **23.b5 1-0**

RD 8		BARBICAN 4NCL 1	2373	v	THE GAMBIT ADS	2323
1	w	Turner, Matthew J	2512	½ - ½	Speelman, Jonathan S	2536
2	b	D'Costa, Lorin A R	2445	0 - 1	Davies, Nigel R	2483
3	w	Ferguson, Mark	2404	1 - 0	Taulbut, Shaun M	2400
4	b	Devereaux, Maxim	2437	1 - 0	Richardson, John R	2312
5	w	Cox, John J	2364	½ - ½	Snape, Ian	2210
6	b	Knott, Simon	2349	½ - ½	Wheeler, Darren P	2231
7	w	Berry, Neil	2317	½ - ½	Anderton, David	2225
8	b	Lauterbach, Ingrid (F)	2154	1 - 0	Bellin, Jana (F)	2184
				5 - 3		

Guildford 2 vs. Guildford 1

This was the major shock of the round: not only did Guildford 1 not win the match, they did not even win a single game. Wins for Tissir and Shaw against Howell and Hebden respectively resulted in an unlikely 5-3 win for their second team.

This is likely to have repercussions for the final match of the season, in that Guildford 1 will probably need to win, and if Rogers's observations on the strength of the pools are correct, they may need to win heavily.

RD 8		GUILDFORD-A&DC 2	2411	v	GUILDFORD-A&DC 1	2513
1	w	Plaskett, James	2491	½ - ½	Rowson, Jonathan	2585
2	b	Tissir, Mohamed	2466	1 - 0	Howell, David W L	2622
3	w	Cherniaev, Alexander	2438	½ - ½	Pert, Richard G	2456
4	b	Berzinsh, Roland	2420	½ - ½	Pert, Nicholas	2536
5	w	Shaw, John K	2464	1 - 0	Hebden, Mark L	2522
6	b	Buckley, Graeme	2399	½ - ½	Conquest, Stuart C	2531
7	w	Povah, Nigel E	2324	½ - ½	King, Daniel J	2512
8	b	Sandu, Mihaela (F)	2285	½ - ½	Lalic, Susan (F)	2340
				5 - 3		

Relegation Pool

Northwest Eagles vs. South Wales Dragons

The other major shock of the round. The Dragons had easily been the best of the four relegation-pool teams in their group during the group stages, while the Eagles had only achieved one win,

which was effectively wiped out by their first-round defaults. But in this round, the latter suddenly came to life, and won 7½-½.

Graham Morrison pretty much ensured he would get an IM norm with victory in this chaotic game:

Cooper, John Grantley (2362) - Morrison, Graham (2342) [A36]

4NCL Hinckley Island (8.152), 22.03.2009

[Rudd, Jack]

1.c4 c5 2.g3 g6 3.Bg2 Bg7 4.Nc3 Nc6 5.a3 b6 6.e3 [6.Rb1 Bb7 7.d3 d6 8.e4 e6 9.Nge2 Nge7 10.h4 Qd7 11.h5 0-0-0 12.b4 Kb8 13.Bf4 Ne5 14.Qd2 h6 15.a4 N7c6 16.b5 Nb4 17.Rxb4 cxb4 18.Na2 g5 19.Bxe5 dxe5 20.Nxb4 Bf8 0-1 Bareev,E (2709)-Ivanchuk,V (2709)/Frankfurt 2000] **6...Bb7 7.Nge2 Qc8** [7...Na5 8.Bxb7 Nxb7 9.b3 e6 10.d4 Ne7 11.Bb2 0-0 12.Qd2 cxd4 13.Nxd4 d5 14.cxd5 Nxd5 15.Rd1 ½-½ Semyonov,V (2089)-Barron,M (2214)/Kitchener 2006]



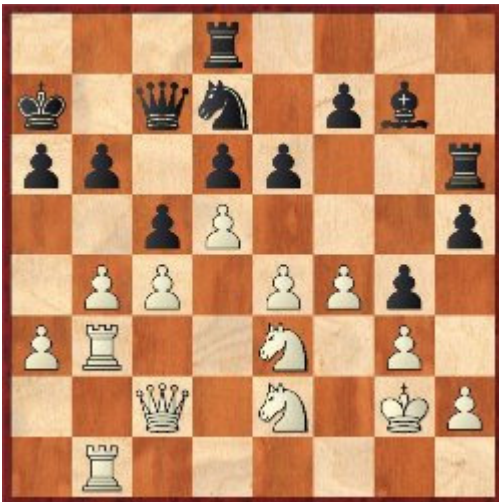
8.0-0 [8.d3 Nf6 (8...Nd4 9.e4 Nxe2 10.Qxe2 a6 11.Nd5 Bxd5 12.exd5 d6 13.0-0 Nh6 14.Re1 0-0 15.Rb1 Re8 16.Bf3 Nf5 17.Bg4 Nd4 18.Bxc8 Nxe2+ 19.Rxe2 Raxc8 20.a4 b5 21.axb5 axb5 ½-½ Schlemmermeyer,W (2275)-Mattick,L (2280)/Berlin 2000) 9.0-0 0-

0 10.f4 (10.Rb1 e6 11.e4 Ne7 12.f4 Ne8 13.g4 d5 14.cxd5 exd5 15.f5 d4 16.Na2 Kh8 17.Bg5 Ng8 18.Qd2 Nef6 19.Bxf6 Bxf6 20.g5 Be5 21.f6 a5 22.Rf3 Qe6 23.Nac1 Qd6 24.Qe1 Nxf6 Kruppa,Y (2475)-Brodsky,M (2520)/Nikolaev 1993/1-0 (39)) 10...e6 11.e4 Nd4 12.Nxd4 cxd4 13.Nb1 Ne8 14.f5 exf5 15.exf5 Bxg2 16.Kxg2 Qc6+ 17.Kg1 Nf6 18.Bg5 h6 19.Bxf6 Qxf6 20.Nd2 gxf5 21.Nf3 Rae8 22.Nh4 Re5 Thiede,L (2421)-Meier,V (2288)/Germany 2000/½-½ (76)]

8...Ne5 9.b3 Bxg2 10.Kxg2 Qb7+ 11.f3 g5 12.e4 Nd3 Investing some tempi to obtain the "minor exchange". **13.Qc2 Nxc1 14.Raxc1 h5 15.Rcd1 Nf6 16.d4 g4 17.Qd3 Rh6**



18.d5 [18.f4 , keeping the centre fluid, was another option. It's hard to know what the best way to play this position is.] **18...d6 19.f4 Nd7 20.b4** With e5 firmly clamped down on, white goes for a different pawn-break. **20...a6 21.Rb1 Qc7 22.Nd1 0-0-0 23.Ne3 e6 24.Qc2** [24.Rfd1 might be an idea, in order to see how black defends the d-pawn. 24...Bf8 is probably best.] **24...Kb8 25.Rb3 Ka7 26.Rfb1**



26...Bd4!? A bold attempt to wrest the initiative from white. Which way it should go is anyone's guess. **27.bxc5!?** [27.Nxd4? cxd4 28.Nd1 Rc8 and black's pressure on the c-pawn gives him the advantage.; 27.Qd3 seems to keep things roughly level.] **27...Bxc5 28.Qd2 Nf6 29.Nd4!** Forcing a queen-for-two-rooks position. Anything else just leaves white worse. **29...Nxe4 30.Qd3 Bxd4 31.Qxd4 Nc5 32.Rxb6** Otherwise white just remains a pawn down. **32...Qxb6!?** [32...Rd7 is the safer way to play this: with the text, Morrison is clearly going for the win.] **33.Rxb6 Kxb6 34.Qg7 Rhh8 35.Qxf7 Rd7 36.Qf6 Re8**



Fritz evaluates this position as +2.41; although I agree white is better, I don't think it's anything like as clear as that evaluation suggests. The black rooks currently look clumsy, but in some lines they can come into the game with decisive effect. **37.Qg6 Rdd8 38.Qxh5 e5 39.f5 Ka5 40.Qxg4 Rb8 41.Qe2?** [41.Qg6! may be best, trying to force the f-pawn home with the queen's help. After this, white may well be winning.] **41...Rb3 42.h4 Rg8 43.f6?** [43.g4 is probably better, keeping the kingside pawns well-connected.] **43...Rf8** All of a sudden, white's kingside pawns are going nowhere, and the black threat of marching the a-pawn down has become severely strong.

44.Ng4 Ka4 45.h5 Kxa3 46.Kh3 a5 47.h6 a4 At this point white overstepped the time limit. His position is probably still technically better, but in practice either side could have won. **0-1**

RD 8		NORTH WEST EAGLES	2228	v	SOUTH WALES DRAGONS 1	2218
1	w	Lyell, Mark	2287	1 - 0	Cobb, James E	2440
2	b	Morrison, Graham	2342	1 - 0	Cooper, John G	2362
3	w	Coates, Kenneth G	2234	½ - ½	Dineley, Richard D P	2275
4	b	Hague, Ben	2282	1 - 0	Morris, Charles F	2189
5	w	Redmond, John	2207	1 - 0	Zeidler, Sven P	2231
6	b	Hulmes, David I	2219	1 - 0	Smith, Jeffrey R	2209
7	w	Jaunooby, Ali	2162	1 - 0	James, David J	2123
8	b	Grigoryan-Lyell, Meri (F)	2092	1 - 0	Wilson, Julie (F)	1916
				7½-½		

Bristol 1 vs. Cambridge University 1

This could have been so different. We had winning positions in a number of games, but couldn't put them away, and in the end succumbed to a miserable 6-2 defeat. This result makes Cambridge's place in the top division next season almost secure, while edging us closer to the drop.

RD 8		BRISTOL 1	2191	v	CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY 1	2289
1	w	Rudd, Jack	2334	0 - 1	Pinter, Gabor	2355
2	b	Cobb, Charles	2397	0 - 1	Dearing, Eddie	2394
3	w	Beaumont, Chris	2308	½ - ½	Mah, Karl C C	2404
4	b	Sherwin, James T *	2232	½ - ½	Moskovic, David M	2307
5	w	Buckley, David E	2245	0 - 1	Gara, Anita (F) *	2318
6	b	Dilleigh, Stephen P	2151	½ - ½	Quist, Sven Roy	2136
7	w	Collier, David O	2083	½ - ½	Churm, Rohan M	2192
8	b	Yap, Xiu-Huan (F) **	1776	0 - 1	Pickard, Charles	2207
		** - ineligible player as filler		2 - 6		

Barbican 2 vs. Richmond

A convincing win for Barbican 2 against the seven men of Richmond. The only joy for the latter was a win for Richard Bates on top board; this result does not quite consign them to relegation, but even if they win their last three matches, it may not be enough.

RD 8		BARBICAN 4NCL 2	2234	v	RICHMOND	2255
1	w	Rogers, Jonathan W	2330	0 - 1	Bates, Richard A	2392
2	b	Piper, Matthew S	2287	1 - 0	Bisby, Daniel L	2304
3	w	Bigg, Andrew J	2285	1 - 0	Wall, Gavin	2302
4	b	Dorrington, Christopher	2265	½ - ½	Muter, Donny	2207
5	w	Ynojosa, Felix J	2174	½ - ½	Osborne, Marcus E	2192
6	b	Taylor, Peter	2252	½ - ½	Meyer, Gordon	2160
7	w	Coleman, David	2208	1 - 0	Franklin, Michael J	2226
8	b	Bhatia, Kanwal K (F)	2067	1 - 0	default	
				5½-2½		

Betsson.com vs. Sambuca Sharks



Another match where every Sharks player was weaker than the opposition board seven produced another predictable result. To their credit, two of their players managed wins against much higher rated opponents: captain Ben Purton beat David Ledger, while Liam Varnam followed up his draw against Houska the previous day with a win against Simon Ansell.

RD 8		BETSSON.COM	2288	v	SAMBUCA SHARKS	2008
1	w	Hunt, Adam C	2431	1 - 0	Armstrong, Malcolm	2060
2	b	Ansell, Simon	2405	0 - 1	Varnam, Liam D	2109
3	w	Ledger, Andrew J	2431	1 - 0	Kafka, Graeme *	2104
4	b	Eames, Robert G	2335	1 - 0	Makepeace, Philip J	2032
5	w	Ledger, David J	2265	0 - 1	Purton, Ben J	2103
6	b	Nelson, Jonathan	2252	1 - 0	Russell, Chris	2076
7	w	Ledger, Stephen C	2150	½ - ½	Willis, Rupert	1990
8	b	Yurenok, Maria S (F)	2035	1 - 0	Sainbayar, Anuurai (F)	1590
				5½-2½		

The pattern here is that in the championship pool, it was pool A teams that did well (only White Rose failed to win), whereas in the relegation pool, it was pool B teams (Bristol the only exception).

Or, as Rogers put it:

“So perhaps it was not very surprising that in round eight, the powerful top four from group A did so very well against the top four from group B (three wins and a draw) even though Guildford 2's win was obviously a shock. But conversely, as though to even things up, the battle hardened bottom four teams from pool B made three wins in their first face to face encounters against the bottom four from pool A, including a score-line between North West Eagles and South Wales Dragons which simply defies belief.”

You can find all of the games from this round here:

PGN http://www.4ncl.co.uk/0809_div1-08.pgn

Game viewer http://www.4ncl.co.uk/0809_div1-08viewer.htm

And view results and information about the 4ncl here: <http://www.4ncl.co.uk/>