

Scottish Correspondence Chess Association

Magazine No.114

Summer 2011

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4 Printed Issues
Price £5 per annum



Photograph from National Museums Scotland



Spring was followed by winter here in traditional Scottish fashion, with tornados, deluges and overnight frosts to cheer the locals (and their utility suppliers). Let's hope edition 114 will cast a little ray of sunshine here and there.

We held our AGM on 5th June in Perth. Both George Livie and Colin Macgregor demitted office and we thanked them kindly for their work. No new office bearers came forward, so we have allocated duties on what I hope will be a temporary basis. I've provided the minutes and Gordon Anderson has done his usual efficient job on the accounts.

George Pyrich analyses the third ICCF rating list of 2011 and has added a couple of new entrants as well as removing some more inactive ones.

Kevin has provided an update on the Challengers cycles including an entertaining game between John Armstrong and Pat Moir.

Bernard Milligan hasn't been keeping too well of late, so I've edited some games from his pending file for the Games Column – all wins by Black as it happens.

Bernard's CD/DVD Review Column features studies by Andrew Martin, Viktor Bologan and Loek van Wely.

I'm pleased to include a lengthy article by Morten Lilleøren on the origins of the Lewis chess pieces, sparked by a claim that they were of Icelandic origin. Morten disagrees and has supplied a well-researched and well-written analysis.

George Pyrich has provided another international round-up including a game by Kevin from the Thor Løvholt Memorial U-2300 team tournament.

Entries closed on July 1st for VWC4, the last ICCF Veterans' World Cup cycle sponsored and administered by SCCA. Alan reports a record entry of 401 players which is a great achievement.

Neil Limbert of BFCC has been in touch to promote a new webserver league tournament starting in November. You can read more on <http://www.bfcc-online.org.uk/>.

Finally, we managed to win two friendly internationals in the same year – Ecuador and Cape Verde! George Pyrich is negotiating with Rockall as we go to press...

SCCA Membership

Annual: £10/year buys you entry to all SCCA domestic events and friendly international matches, plus 4 quarterly e-magazines.

Life: £100 gets you annual membership for the rest of your days (plus a year's worth of printed magazines to try out).

Patron: £125 (+ any further donation you care to make) gets you life membership and your name on something commemorative.

SCCA Webserver Events



<http://www.iccf-webchess.com/>

To view tables and games in the SCCA Webserver Open, Championship Cycle and Leagues, you don't need to register on the ICCF server - go to the website (above), click Tables and Results, then National Federation Events then Scotland Events.

Some games have a time delay, e.g. current position is 5 moves ahead of what you can see.

Recent 100 Club Winners

2011	1st	2nd
June	M E Hardwick	S R Mannion
May	R W M Baxter	Mrs D Livie
April	S R Mannion	S G Mackenzie

SCCA Officials

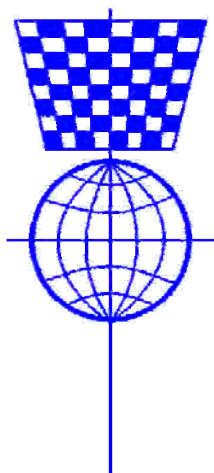
Position	Name	Address	Contact	Email
President	Iain Mackintosh	7 Tullylumb Terrace, Perth PH1 1BA	+44 (0) 1738 623194	president@scottishcca.co.uk
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NB Secretarial duties will be undertaken by Kevin Paine (enquiries), Jim Anderson (domestic events) and Iain Mackintosh (minutes) pro tem.



AGM 2011

By Iain Mackintosh



- Meeting:** The 34th AGM of the Scottish Correspondence Chess Association.
- Venue:** Sunday 5th June, 4pm, 2011 at Tullylumb Terrace, Perth.
- Present:** Iain Mackintosh (Chair), Jim Anderson, Alan Borwell, Kevin Paine and George Pyrich (Skype).
- Apologies:** Gordon Anderson, George Livie, Colin Macgregor.

Minutes of the 33rd AGM

On the proposal of Jim Anderson seconded by Alan Borwell the minute of the meeting held on 20th June 2010 was accepted as an accurate record and approved.

Matters arising from the 33rd AGM

Coverage of domestic events in the magazine had increased during the year. SCCA fees were revised in line with ICCF fee reductions.

President's Remarks

Iain Mackintosh summarised another active and eventful year for the SCCA.

On the domestic front, membership renewals and event entries held steady. Stuart Graham won his first Scottish Championship outright. Perth Correspondents and Social Stars continued their domination of the Leagues. Geoff Lloyd and Stuart Graham both received the SM title.

Internationally, we remain active in the 8th European Team Championships, the 18th Olympiad, the Thor Løvholt Memorial plus numerous friendly matches. We plan to field a team in the new Europa Cup event. Through Alan Borwell, we continue to organise and sponsor the ICCF Veterans' World Cup, with cycles 2 and 3 in play and cycle 4 accepting entrants. Tom Matheis was awarded the IM title.

Our e-magazine celebrated 10 years of production in April 2011. Our sponsorship from Opening Master concluded in January 2011, with 20+ of our members receiving free copies of their opening database for a year. Once again the SCCA has been indebted to its hard-working committee members and event controllers, all of whom deserve thanks for their efforts and enthusiasm.

Secretary's Report

No secretary's report had been received.

Domestic events were proceeding smoothly and the final of the 2nd Webserver Open officially starts on June 10th.

Treasurer's Report

Gordon Anderson presented a full set of accounts and expressed his thanks to Alan Hind for an efficient audit. We ended the year to 31st March 2010 showing a surplus of £239.45.

Income was down by just under £20 from 09-10. Membership and printed magazine income were slightly down but offset by higher donations and 100 Club unit sales. Expenditure was down by around £430 from 09-10. ICCF event entry fees and ICCF Congress attendance decreased, while ICCF server costs increased with greater usage and committee expenses were up slightly.

The surplus is encouraging and our overall financial position remains very satisfactory. Iain Mackintosh proposed a vote of thanks to Gordon which was unanimously agreed. Jim Anderson moved adoption of Gordon's report, seconded by Alan Borwell and unanimously agreed.

International Secretary's Report

George Pyrich reported that the Association continues to be very active in team and individual events. Friendly matches, European Team Championships, the Olympiad, Champions League and Thor Løvholt Memorial all had Scottish teams participating, and individual entries to ICCF events continue to be healthy.

Alan Borwell proposed adoption of George's report, seconded by Kevin Paine and unanimously agreed.

Grader's Report

George Pyrich proposed the following change to SM qualification rules:

- Rule 2(d) – 50% or more of the points in an ICCF World Semi-final or 60% or more of the points in an ICCF World Preliminary.

This was seconded by Alan Borwell and agreed unanimously.

Election of Office Bearers

The following were elected to office for 2011-12:

Office	Name	Proposer	Seconded
President	Iain Mackintosh	Alan Borwell	Jim Anderson
Vice President	George Pyrich	Iain Mackintosh	Kevin Paine
International Secretary	George Pyrich	Iain Mackintosh	Kevin Paine
Secretary	See note *	George Pyrich	Alan Borwell
Membership Officer	Kevin Paine	Alan Borwell	Iain Mackintosh
Treasurer	Gordon Anderson	Iain Mackintosh	Kevin Paine
Committee Members	Alan Borwell Jim Anderson	Kevin Paine Iain Mackintosh	Jim Anderson Alan Borwell

* No nomination received. Kevin Paine (enquiries), Jim Anderson (domestic events) and Iain Mackintosh (minutes) would provide interim cover.

Appointment of Auditor

Alan Hind was proposed by Gordon Anderson, seconded by Jim Anderson, and duly reappointed.

Subscriptions

Gordon Anderson proposed no change to domestic membership and entry fees for 2011. This was seconded by Iain Mackintosh and unanimously agreed.

AOB

Alan Borwell proposed a vote of thanks to Iain Mackintosh for his work as president, webmaster and magazine editor, which was unanimously agreed.

If you were unable to attend the AGM, but would like to help in some way, then please get in touch with any of the committee members. You don't have to hold an official position to help - maybe you can do some part-time things like controlling an event, helping with administration or publicity, or backing up somebody who is otherwise very busy!



SCCA Accounts 2010-11

By Gordon Anderson

2009-10			Profit & Loss	2010-11		
Income	Expenses	Net		Income	Expenses	Net
			General			
285.00			Annual Members (@£7)	273.00		
0.00			Life Members (@£100)	0.00		
0.00			Patron Members (@£125)	0.00		
227.50			Donations	263.00		
560.00			Chess Scotland Grant	560.00		
241.03			Bank Interest	156.31		
	0.00		Cheque Stopped		0.00	
	138.18		Committee Expenses		224.97	
	35.00		Chess Scotland Affiliation Fee		40.00	
	60.08		ICCF Affiliation Fee		64.50	
	70.00	<u>1010.27</u>	Auditor's Fee		70.00	<u>852.84</u>
			Domestic Competitions			
51.00			Individual Entry Fees	33.00		
34.00			Team League Fees	103.00		
	73.30		ICCF Webservice Fees		200.95	
	340.00		Prizes & Trophies (incl VWC)		370.00	
	0.00	<u>-328.30</u>	Controllers' Expenses		0.00	<u>-434.95</u>
			International Competitions			
2.00		<u>2.00</u>	International Match Fees	0.00		<u>0.00</u>
			ICCF Competitions			
229.00	285.60		Individual & Team Fees	215.50	155.86	
	16.61	<u>-73.21</u>	Bank Transfer Fees		0.00	<u>59.64</u>
			Magazine			
162.00			New Magazine Email (@£3)	117.00		
95.00			New Magazine Printed (@£5)	100.00		
	200.60	<u>56.40</u>	Printing & Postage		190.08	<u>26.92</u>
			Website			
47.40	47.40	<u>0.00</u>	ISP Connection Fees (Donation)	56.88	56.88	
			Domain Registration (Donation)	7.18	7.18	<u>0.00</u>
			100 Club			
1026.00			Units Bought	1075.00		
	540.00		Prizes		540.00	
	0.00	<u>486.00</u>	Repayment of Units		0.00	<u>535.00</u>
			Other			
19.00	5.20		Miscellaneous	0.00	0.00	
	250.00		BCCF Donation		0.00	
	1086.02	<u>-1322.22</u>	ICCF Delegate Travel		800.00	<u>-800.00</u>
<u>2978.93</u>	<u>3147.99</u>	<u>-169.06</u>	Surplus/Deficit	<u>2978.93</u>	<u>3147.99</u>	<u>-169.06</u>

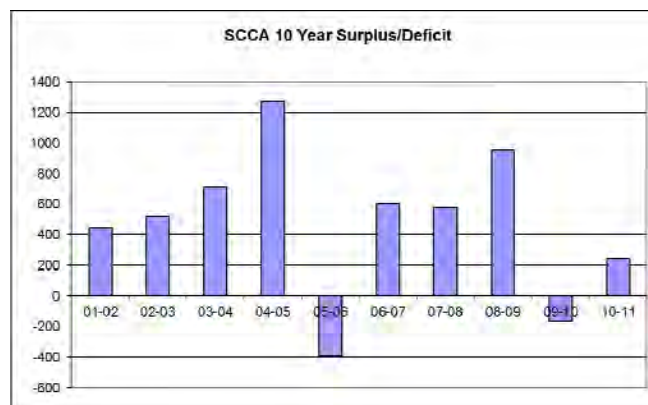
Balance Sheet 2010-11

Bank Summary	Opening	Payins	Withdrawn	Written Off	Transfers	Closing	2009-10
BoS Current	1735.02	2516.47	2236.77	0.00	0.00	2014.72	
Standard Life	7759.38	154.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	7913.72	
	9494.40	2670.81	2236.77	0.00	0.00	<u>9928.44</u>	<u>9494.40</u>
Net Opening/Closing	<u>434.04</u>						
Liabilities		Creditor	Debtor				
Accrued Prizes – ICCF VWC2		250.00					
100 Club Prizes Uncashed		135.00					
100 Club Fees Cheque Unpresented		15.00					
Accrued Prizes – ICCF VWC3		250.00					
100 Club Cash received for 10-11		199.00					
Cheque K Paine Expenses		143.27					
Cheque Trophy World		120.00					
Deposit not yet in Account			174.00				
Subtotals/Net		<u>1112.27</u>	<u>174.00</u>			<u>-938.27</u>	<u>-743.68</u>
Net Assets at March 31, 2011						<u>8990.17</u>	<u>8750.72</u>
Capital Account							
Balances b/f						7750.72	7919.78
Surplus/Deficit						239.45	-169.02
Subtotal						<u>7990.17</u>	<u>7750.72</u>
Less Allocation to Development Account						0.00	0.00
Balances c/f						<u>7990.17</u>	<u>7750.72</u>
Development Account							
Balance b/f						1000.00	1000.00
Allocation from Capital Account						0.00	0.00
						<u>1000.00</u>	<u>1000.00</u>
Account Totals						<u>8990.17</u>	<u>8750.72</u>

Auditor's Report

I have examined the foregoing accounts and have obtained such explanations as I considered necessary. In my opinion these accounts have been properly prepared from the accounting records of the Association and are in agreement therewith.

Alan Hind, May 2011





2011/3 Grading List

By George Pyrich

The third ICCF grading list for 2011 has been published and the new grades are based on 3 months' results from 1 March to 31 May 2011. The grades will apply to internationally graded games starting between 1 July and 30 September 2011.

Further players have been deleted from this list due to inactivity or lapsed membership. Stuart Graham and Geoff Lloyd are now Scottish Masters (SM).

You need to complete 12 ICCF-eligible games to obtain a provisional rating (* below). Provisional ratings apply until 30 games have been processed. Rating changes are denoted by arrows. Email grader@scottishcca.co.uk if you have any queries.

No.	Name	Results	Grade	No.	Name	Results	Grade
318	Almarza Mato, C	535	2029 ↑	256	Lennox, C J (SM)	155	2273 ↔
518	Anderson, G M	189	2324 ↓	503	Livie, G W G (IM)	194	2337 ↓
121	Anderson, J	204	1754 ↓	264	Lloyd, G (SM)	445	2310 ↑
049	Armstrong, A	129	1888 ↑	337	Loughran, R	104	1555 ↔
313	Armstrong, J McK	143	1691 ↑	367	MacDonald, P H	39	1952 ↔
511	Beecham, C R (IM)	337	2496 ↓	584	MacGregor, C A	281	1889 ↓
599	Bell, A D	86	2359 ↑	532	Mackintosh, I (IM)	489	2380 ↑
501	Bennett, P G	92	2252 ↑	216	MacMillen, A N	493	1853 ↑
431	Binnie, J	26	1617 ↔ *	566	Marshall, I H	309	2087 ↑
509	Borwell, A P (IM)	760	2199 ↓	434	Matheis, T (IM)	154	2442 ↔
427	Brooksbank, Dr K	65	1844 ↓	083	Maxwell, A	45	2183 ↔
215	Brown, Dr A C (SM)	206	2318 ↔	591	May, M A	78	2283 ↔
424	Burridge, R J	35	1834 ↑	352	McDonald, G R	79	1921 ↔
435	Cairney, J	23	2096 ↑ *	525	McKerracher, D	4	0 ↔ *
423	Calder, H	96	2055 ↔	412	McKinstry, J	50	1627 ↑
173	Cook, W M	67	1909 ↔	401	Moir, P J	100	1632 ↑
364	Coope, D W	462	2094 ↓	598	Montgomery, R S	173	2304 ↑
247	Cormack, W H	51	1957 ↓	564	Murray, J S	27	1958 ↓ *
527	Craig, T J (SM)	340	2356 ↓	440	Neil, C	62	1677 ↓
166	Cumming, D R	471	2296 ↑	453	Newton, A	24	1773 ↓ *
422	Dawson, Prof A G	58	2193 ↓	429	O'Neill-McAleenan, C	73	1961 ↑
572	Dempster, D	600	1849 ↓	444	Paine, Dr K A	103	2241 ↑
595	Domnin, M	6	0 ↔ *	1012	Paulin, A	29	2039 ↑ *
030	Dyer, M T	96	2094 ↑	379	Phillips, G H	213	2114 ↑
371	Edney, D	152	1949 ↑	432	Price, D	112	2030 ↑
372	Flockhart, H	25	2122 ↔ *	048	Pyrich, G D (IM)	765	2211 ↓
459	Fraser, R A	41	1894 ↓	136	Reeman, I F	127	2306 ↔
086	Gillam, S R (SM)	123	2340 ↔	437	Roberts, A	146	1711 ↓
124	Goodwin, B J	136	2021 ↑	398	Rough, R E	29	1880 ↑ *
445	Graham, S (SM)	278	2321 ↑	522	Savage, D J	74	1956 ↔
399	Grant, J	23	1745 ↓ *	449	Scott, A	46	1871 ↔
327	Hammersley, C	18	1753 ↔ *	454	Sheridan, N	12	1535 ↔ *
596	Hardwick, M E	155	1373 ↑	439	Smith, M J	29	1885 ↔ *
063	Harvey, D	77	2035 ↓	1125	Spencer, E A	12	1877 ↔ *
515	Jack, J P E	26	1772 ↔ *	448	Sreeves, C	15	1918 ↔ *
447	Jamieson, I M	35	2032 ↑	546	Stewart, Dr K W C	132	2118 ↑
322	Jessing, M	27	2094 ↓ *	442	Swan, I	55	2394 ↔
1126	Kelly, J	12	1728 ↑	1120	Taylor, W	20	2104 ↑ *
548	Kilgour, D A (GM)	292	2347 ↓	452	Toye, D T	50	1695 ↓
260	Knox, A	64	1678 ↑	530	Watson, J (IM)	141	2291 ↑
1117	Laing, D	18	2084 ↓ *	065	Young, S M	58	1772 ↓
419	Lees, J A	83	2055 ↔				

Statistical Analysis

Total listed	83
New entrants	2
Deletions (inactive, lapsed or non-members)	10
Full grades (30+ games)	64
Provisional grades (<30 games)	19
Grading increases (↑)	32
Grading decreases (↓)	25
Grading static (↔)	26

Top 30 Grades

Beecham, C R (SIM)	2496	Cumming, D R	2296
Matheis, T (IM)	2442	Watson, J (IM)	2291
Swan, I	2394	May, M A	2283
Mackintosh, I (IM)	2380	Lennox, C J (SM)	2273
Bell, A D	2359	Bennett, P G	2252
Craig, T J (SM)	2356	Paine, Dr K A	2241
Kilgour, D A (GM)	2347	Pyrich, G D (IM)	2211
Gillam, S R (SM)	2340	Borwell, A P (IM)	2199
Livie, G W G (IM)	2337	Dawson, Prof A G	2193
Anderson, G M	2324	Maxwell, A	2183
Graham, S (SM)	2321	Phillips, G H	2114
Brown, Dr A C	2318	Stewart, Dr K W C	2118
Lloyd, G (SM)	2310	Coope, D W	2094
Reeman, I F	2306	Dyer, M T	2094
Montgomery, R S	2304	Marshall, I	2087

Top 30 Games Played

Pyrich, G D (IM)	765	Phillips, G H	213
Borwell, A P (IM)	760	Brown, Dr A C (SM)	206
Dempster, D	600	Anderson, J	204
Almarza-Mato, C	535	Livie, G W G (IM)	194
MacMillen, A N	493	Anderson, G M	189
Mackintosh, I (IM)	489	Montgomery, R S	173
Cumming, D R	471	Lennox, C J (SM)	155
Coope, D W	462	Hardwick, M E	155
Lloyd, G (SM)	445	Matheis, T (IM)	154
Craig, T J (SM)	340	Edney, D	152
Beecham, C R (SIM)	337	Roberts, A	146
Marshall, I H	309	Armstrong, J McK	143
Kilgour, D A (GM)	292	Watson, J (IM)	141
MacGregor, C A	281	Goodwin, B J	136
Graham, S (SM)	278	Stewart, Dr K W C	132

Other Notes

This list includes a number of our members who are registered with other countries, and members who have played <12 games and have yet to receive a provisional rating. Players registered as SCO with ICCF, but who are not SCCA members, have been filtered out.

To check your rating online at any time, go to the ICCF webserver site (<http://www.iccf-webchess.com/>), click on the Rating list link then complete the search boxes.

The main ICCF website (<http://www.iccf.com/>) allows you to download a free program which allows you to analyse your previous and future rating performance.

Go to ICCF Ratings on the main menu then click on the Download Eloquery link. Various zip files are available, containing the program, ratings database, historical and tournament data.



Challengers 2011

By Kevin Paine

Current Standings

Standings at 1st July are as follows:

2010-11 Cycle	Games	Completed	Ongoing	Points
Armstrong, J McK	8	8	0	2½
Anderson, J	4	2	2	1
Brooksbank, Dr K	8	8	0	4
Cumming, D R	18	18	0	14½
Fraser, R A	8	8	0	3½
Graham, S	22	22	0	17½
Hardwick, M E	8	8	0	0
Macgregor, C A	2	2	0	0
Moir, P J	14	14	0	4½
Neil, C	2	0	2	0
Roberts, A	6	6	0	1
Smith, M	6	6	0	3½
Toye, D T	14	14	0	6

2011-12 Cycle	Games	Completed	Ongoing	Points
Armstrong, J McK	10	7	3	2
Binnie, J	2	0	2	0
Brooksbank, Dr K	8	5	3	1
Cumming, D R	8	8	0	8
Hardwick, M E	6	6	0	½
Knox A	6	5	1	5
Moir, P J	8	3	5	1
Toye, D T	8	8	0	3½

There are currently eight players competing in the 2011/12 Challengers cycle. To date 14 matches (2 games per match) have been undertaken, both by post (5 matches) and on the webserver.

David Cumming currently leads with 8 points (from 8 games), although Arthur Knox on 5/5 also has a 100% score with one game against John Armstrong ongoing. Daniel Toye is third on 3.5 although he may yet be caught by John Armstrong, Dr Ken Brooksbank or Pat Moir.

However, since all games starting before 31 December 2011 will count towards the 2011/12 cycle, standings are likely to change as new players join and/or new matches are started.

Should any members wish to join or play more matches in the current cycle, either by post or email, could they please contact me.

Sample Game

SCCA Challengers 2011–12

White: Armstrong, J McK

Black: Moir, P J

Reti [A05]

1.g3 g6 2.Bg2 Bg7 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.O–O O–O 5.d3 d6 6.Bg5 Nbd7 7.Qd2 c6 8.c3 Qb6 9.b4?!

9.Na3 or Bc3 looked preferable.

9... h6 10.Bxf6?

Why not 10.Bxh6 or Bc3?

10... Nxf6 11.a4 Bg4?!

Maybe 11... a5 was better.

12.h3 Be6 13.a5 Qc7 14.Na3 Qd7 15.Nd4?

This just loses a pawn.

15... Bxh3 16.f3?! e5?!

16... e5 was better still.

17.Ndc2 cxb4 18.cxb4 Nh5!

Hitting a1 and sparking off the tactics!



19.Rab1?

19.g4 was necessary.

19... Nxb3 20.Rf2 Nh5 21.d4 Rfc8 22.Qe3 Bf5 23.Rb2 e5 24.dxe5 Bxe5 25.Nd4 Bf4 26.Qb3 Rc1+ 27.Rf1 Rxf1+!?

27... Rac8 is a crusher.

28.Kxf1 Ng3+ 29.Ke1 Rc8 30.e3 Bxe3 31.Ne2 Nxe2

31... Qe7 looks best.

32.Kxe2?!

32.Qxe3 holds out longer.

32... Re8!?

32... Bd4 now is the pick of the bunch.

33.Kf1 Bd4 34.Re2 Rxe2 35.Kxe2 Qe7+ 36.Kd2

36.Kd1 makes it a little harder for Black.

36... Qg5+ 37.Kd1 Qxg2 38.Qd5

38.Nc2 was the only move to avoid a quick mate.

38... Bc3 39.Qc4 Qd2#

0–1

Both players missed optimum moves, but Black was the stronger in this enjoyable tactical battle.





First Steps in Attack By Andrew Martin



This new series for ChessBase is aimed at players below 2200. The idea of the series is to provide a basic grounding on a variety of subjects, which will assist general all-round improvement.

On 'First Steps in Attack', Andrew Martin treats the viewer to a selection of classic attacking games and lays out a foundation course in the art of attack.

Key thinking points reinforce the analysis and the games. The DVD is designed to be as easy to understand as possible.

System requirements are Pentium-Processor at 300 Mhz or higher, 64 MB RAM, Windows XP, Windows Vista, Windows 7, DVD drive, mouse, soundcard.

Beating the Sicilian By Viktor Bologan



Out of the dozens and dozens of openings played nowadays the Sicilian Defence remains the most fascinating, entertaining and complex opening. Here White understands that Black will not be a patient lamb but will try to get at him at the very first opportunity.

For those who are ready to take on the challenge and plunge into the wonderful world of combinations, attacks and

counter-attacks, for those who really love chess... this DVD is designed for you.

In the first volume of the Open Sicilian for White we present all black reactions to 2...Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4. This includes the Sveshnikov/Cheliabinsk Variation, the Rauzer Attack, the Maroczy Bind and a few other minor side lines.

The approach is typical for Bologan's DVDs, as he tries to describe in a compact format plans and reactions from White's point of view.

With the help of this DVD one can forget about fears concerning the tons of theory in the Open Sicilian and can get straight into the real fight! Video running time: 6 hours.

System requirements are Pentium-Processor at 300 Mhz or higher, 64 MB RAM, Windows XP, Windows Vista, Windows 7, DVD drive, mouse, soundcard.

Fighting Against the King's Indian By Loek van Wely



In 60 minutes you can get an idea how to play versus the Kings Indian like an expert like GM Loek van Wely, known for his epic battles in the King's Indian with Teimour Radjabov. The contents are:

1. Mainline: Van Wely-Radjabov
- 2 & 3: King's Indian the positional way: exd4 and Na6
- 4: Sidelines

System requirements are Pentium-Processor at 300 Mhz or higher, 64 MB RAM, Windows XP, Windows Vista, Windows 7, mouse, soundcard.





[Ed - Bernard hasn't enjoyed the best of health lately, so I've edited some of the games he had pending for this edition. I hope he's on the mend soon!]

First up is prolific annotator David Cumming who describes one of his victories in our current friendly international against Hong Kong.

Scotland vs. Hong Kong, 2011
White: Leung, Hin Sing (Henry)
Black: Cumming, David R.
QGD, Chigorin Defence [D07]
[Notes by David Cumming]

- 1. d4 d5
- 2. c4 Nc6
- 3. Nc3 dxc4
- 4. Nf3 Nf6
- 5. d5 Na5

This apparent blunder is in fact a good move, indeed the only good move in the position for Black! Note, had both King's knights not been developed then this move would have indeed been a blunder, but in that instance I would have played ...Ne5.

- 6. Qa4+ c6
- 7. b4

"If White does not win the piece, Black simply completes his development and achieves a good game, for example 7.dxc6 Nxc6 8.e4 a6 9.Bxc4 e6 10.0-0 Bd7 11.Qd1 b5 12.Bd3 Qc7 13.h3 Bc5 with counterplay (Angskog-Brynell, Stockholm 1998/99)." Alexander Morozevich.

- 7... b5
- 8. Qxa5 Qxa5
- 9. bxa5 b4
- 10.dxc6

Morozevich comments further "If White is afraid, he can immediately return the piece, but this does not do him any good." 10. Nd1 cxd5 11. Ne5 e6 12. Rb1 Bd6 13. Nc6 b3 14. axb3 Bb7 15. Nd4 {1-0 Kudryavtsev, Y-McDonald, G Lechenicher SchachServer 2010/OM Corr.

- 10... bxc3
- 11. e3

Morozevich says "White lacks the resource e2-e4, and therefore it is hard for him to combat the

opponent's pawn chain, the root of which extends back to f7". However, I personally am not so sure, I feel that 11.e4!? may well work out for tactical reasons, eg:- 11. e4 Ba6 12. Ne5 Nxe4 13. Nxc4 e6 14. Rb1 White's dark-squared Bishop is free and unfettered at this early stage, and castling queenside for Black is surely suicidal, an option which comes in handy for Black in the main game! Deep Junior 10 gives Bc5 15. Nd6+ Nxd6 16. Bxa6 Kd8 17. Bb7 Rb8 18. Kd1 f6 19. Kc2 Kc7 20. a6 Bxf2 21. Rd1

- 11... Ba6
- 12. Ne5 e6N

This move is a common sense approach to the position, however the game is still equal.

[A] 12... Nd5 13. Bxc4 (if 13. a3 g6 14. Nxc4 Nc7 15. a4 Bg7 16. Ba3 Bf6 17. O-O-O O-O 18. Rd7 Rfc8 19. Nd6 exd6 20. Rxc7 Bxf1 21. Rxc8+ Rxc8 22. Rxf1 Rxc6 23. Kc2 Rc4 24. Kb3 Rc6 25. Rc1 Kf8 26. Bb4 Ke7 27. Bxc3 Bxc3 {Kovalenko Igor (UKR) (2453)-Stefansky Mikhail (UKR) (2267) Dnepropetrovsk (Ukraine) 2008/OM 2.04/1-0 (38)) (or if 13. Rb1 e6 14. Bxc4 Bxc4 15. Nxc4 Nb4 16. Rb3 Rc8 17. Ba3 Nc2+ 18. Ke2 Nxa3 19. Nxa3 Bxa3 20. Rxa3 Rxc6 21. Rc1 c2 22. Kd2 Ke7 23. Rxc2 Rd8+ 24. Rd3 Rxd3+ 25. Kxd3 Rxc2 26. Kxc2 a6 27. Kd3 Kd6 {Schneider, P (2307)-Peek, M (2465)/IECG 2003/OM Corr/1/2-1/2 (38)

13... Bxc4 14. Nxc4 Nb4 15. Ke2 Nxc6 16. Ba3 g6 17. Rab1 Bg7 18. Rb7 O-O 19. Bxe7 Nxe7 20. Rxe7 Rac8 21. Na3 Rfd8 22. Rxa7 Rd2+ 23. Kf3 Rxa2 24. Nb5 c2 25. Nc7 Bb2 26. Nd5 c1=Q 27. Rxc1 {Arauz Alonso, F (2140)-San Juan Rodriguez, M (2073)/Madrid ESP 2010/OM 2.04/0-1 (47)

[B] 12... Rc8 13. Rb1 e6 14. Nxc4 Nd5 15. Nd6+ Bxd6 16. Bxa6 Rd8 17. Ke2 O-O 18. Rb3 Bc7 19. e4 Nf6 20. f3 Bxa5 21. Be3 e5 22. Rc1 Nh5 23. Rxc3 {1-0 Meins Gerlef (GER) (2443)-Arndt Stefan (GER) (2206) Essen (Germany) 2007/OM 2.04

13. Rb1?! Paranoia about a possible .Bb4 perhaps? White should have kept up

the tension and a dynamic equality with 13.Nxc4! and if Black insists on playing ...Bb4? he's forced to backtrack on 14.Nd6+! Bxd6 15.Bxa6, and White is close to winning this position I feel.

13... O-O-O!!=/+



A spectacular move, seemingly a blunder, but not so, as follows...

14. Be2 This guards against ...c2 followed by ...Rd1+, so now the knight fork on f7 is back on! (14. Nxf7?? c2 15. Ra1 (15. Rb2 Rd1+ 16. Ke2 c3+ 17. Kf3 cxb2 18. Bxa6+ Kc7) 15... Rd1+ 16.Ke2 c3+ 17. Kf3 Bxf1 18. Nxb8 Ba3)

- 14... Rd5
- 15. Nxf7 Rg8
- 16. O-O Rxa5
- 17. e4! g5!

Black has to guard against 18.Bf4!! and all of a sudden White is winning because of his mating threat on b8.

18. Be3?! White's best here was to contest g5 with 18.h4, when Black pushes ...h6, 19.hxg5 hxg5 20.Be3 Nxe4 21.Bg4! with a sharp game.

- 18... Nxe4 -/+
- 19. Bxa7 Bc5!
- 20. Rb8+?

My silicon monster prefers 20.Bxc5 but after ...Nxc5 White is probably losing anyway.



All the same, acceptance of the Rook gambit with White's actual move was tantamount to resignation, viz:

20... **Kc7**
 21. Rxg8 Bxa7 22. Bf3 Bxf2+ 23. Rxf2 Nxf2 24. Kxf2 Rxa2+ 25. Ke1 c2 26. Rc8+ Kb6 27. Rb8+ Kc5 28. Rb5+ Bxb5 29. Be2 c1=Q+ 30. Kf2 Qf4+ 31. Ke1 c3 32. c7 Ra1+ 33. Bd1 Qd2#

So, instead of allowing all of this, White did the honourable thing and fell on his sword.

0-1



David's domestic performances with the Black pieces this year have also been good. Here he features a game against Ian Jamieson, a recent Championship contender.

SCCA Premier A, 2011

White: Jamieson, Ian M.
Black: Cumming, David R.
 Sokolsky [A00]
[Notes by David Cumming]

1.b4

The Sokolsky Opening, or Orangutan. At any rate, I was going to do my best to make sure Ian wasn't going to make a monkey out of me, and I chose the sharpest response to it.

1... **e5**
2. Bb2 **Bxb4**
3. Bxe5 **Nf6**
4. c4 **d6**
5. Bb2 **O-O**
6.Nf3 **Nc6**
7. e3 **Re8**
8. Be2 **Bg4**
9. O-O **Qe7**
 9... Ne5 10. d4 Nxf3+ 11. Bxf3 Bxf3 12. Qxf3 Ne4 13. Qf5 Qg5 14. Qxg5 Nxg5 15. Bc3 a5 16. a3 Bxc3 17. Nxc3 Ne4 18. Nd5 Rac8 19. Ra2 Kf8 20. f3 Ng5 21. Rb2 b6 22. Kf2 Ne6 23. h4 Rb8 24. Rd1 Holtzmann,S (1738)-Larsen,J (2004)/Borup DEN 2010/OM 2.04/0-1 (46)

10. Ne1N
 [A] 10.d4 Ne4 {10... Rad8 11. Nbd2 d5 12. cxd5 Nxd5 13. Nc4 Nc3 14. Bxc3 Bxc3 15. Rb1 Nxd4 16. Nxd4 Bxe2 17. Qxe2 Rxd4 18. Rxb7 a5 19. Rfb1 g6 20. h3 Qe4 21. Na3 Rd2 22. Qc4 Qf5 23. Rf1 Bb4 24. Nb5 Rc2 25. Qb3 {Zeberecki,

D-Duszenko,M (1781)/Lubawka 2008/OM 2.04/1-0 (58)}
 11. Nfd2 (11. Qa4 a6 12. Qc2 Ba5 13. a3 Nd8 14. Nc3 Nxc3 15. Bxc3 Bxc3 16. Qxc3 Ne6 ½-½ Hofmann,B (2095)-Wurzer,G (1845)/Wattens 1997/OM 2.04})
 11... Bxe2 12. Qxe2 Nxd2 13. Nxd2 Bxd2 14. Qxd2 f6 15. Rfe1 Rad8 16. Rac1 b6 17. e4 Na5 18. f4 c5 19. d5 Qd7 20. Qc2 Qg4 21. g3 Qf3 22. Qe2 Qxe2 23. Rxe2 Re7 24. Kf2 Rde8 Borucki,B (2000)-Adamowski,A (2000)/Poland 1992/OM Corr/½-½

[B] 10.Nc3 Ne5 11. Nxe5 Bxe2 12. Nxe2 dxe5 13. d3 Rad8 14. Ng3 Qe6 15. Qb3 Bd6 16. Rac1 b6 17. Rfd1 h5 18. e4 Bc5 19. h3 g6 20. Ba3 Bd4 21. Ne2 c5 22. Nc3 g5 23. Nb5 Rd7 24. Bb2 h4 {Reimer,K (1559)-Wild,H (1755)/Kaiserslautern 2006/OM 2.04/½-½ (41)
10... **Bxe2 =/+**
11. Qxe2 **Rad8**
12. Nd3 **Ba5**
13. Bc3 **d5!**



Taking advantage of Black's lead in development and opening lines in the centre for Black's rooks.

14. cxd5 **Nxd5**
15. Bxa5 **Nxa5**
16. Nc3 **Nxc3**
17. dxc3 **Qf6**
18.Rfd1 **Rd6**
19. Rac1 **b6**
20. Nb2 **Rxd1+**
21. Qxd1 **h6**
22. Qc2 **Rd8**
23. Rd1 **Rxd1+**
24.Nxd1 **Nc4 -/+**



25.Nb2 **Nd6**
26.Nd1 **Qe6**
27.Qe2 **f5**
 Restraining White on e4.
28.f3 **Nc4**
29.Kf2 **b5**
30.Nb2 **Nd6**
31.Nd1 **a5**
32.Qb2 **a4**
33.Qc2 **a3! -/+**
34.h3 **Nc4**
35.Ke2 **Nb2!**
 Forcing White into a totally passive position.
36.Qb1 **Qc4+**



And it was a technically won ending for Black, for example:

37. Ke1 Nxd1 38. Kxd1 Qf1+ 39. Kc2 Qxg2+ 40. Kb3 Qxf3 41. Qd3 Qxh3 42. Qxb5 Qf3 43. Qd7 Kh7 44. Kxa3 h5 45. Qe7 f4 46. Qf7 h4 47.exf4 Qxc3+ 48. Ka4 Qc5 49. f5 Qc6+ 50. Kb3 Kh6 51. Qe7 Qf3+ 52. Kc4 Qg4+ 53.Kb3 Qg3+ 54. Ka4 h3 55. Qe4 Kg5 56. Qe7+ Kxf5 57. Qf7+ Ke4 58. Qc4+ Kf3 59.Qc3+ Kg2 60. Qb2+ Kh1 61. Qc1+ Qg1 62. Qc6+ Kh2 63. Qc3 Qd1+ 64. Ka5 Qd5+ 65.Ka6 Qa8+ 66. Kb5 Qb7+ 67. Ka4 Qe4+ 68. Kb3 g5 69. a4 Kg2 70.Qd2+ Kf3 71. Qd7 Qe3+ 72. Kc2 Kg2 73. Qxc7 Qf2+ 74. Kb1 h2 75. Qc6+ Kg1 76. Qc3 g4
0-1



Now David clocks up a hat-trick of wins with Black, this time versus Paisley player Roland Fraser.

SCCA Premier B, 2011

White: Fraser, Roland A.
Black: Cumming, David R.
 French Classical [C14]
[Notes by David Cumming]

1.d4 **Nf6**
2.Nc3 **d5**
3.Bg5 **e6**
4.Nf3 **Be7**
5.Bxf6 **Bxf6**

6.e4 O-O
7.Bd3 c5
8.e5 Be7
9.h4

9. dxc5 Bxc5 10. h4 Nc6 11. Qd2 Bd7 12. O-O a6 13. a3 Rc8 14. Qf4 Qc7 15. Ne2 b5 16. Qg3 f5 17. Rfe1 Bb6 18. h5 Rfe8 19. h6 {1-0 Angus,G (1873)-Fave,A (1682)/IECG Email 1997/OM Corr 9... cxd4

9... f5 10. exf6 Rxf6 (if 10... gxf6 11. dxc5 Nc6 12. a3 Bxc5 13. b4 Nxb4 14. axb4 Bxb4 15. Bxh7+ Kxh7 16. O-O b6 17. Qd3+ Kg7 18. h5 Qe8 19. Ne2 Qxh5 20. Qb5 Ba5 21. Ra4 Kf7 22. Qc6 Ba6 23. Ng3 Qh7 24. Qc7+ Kg8 25. Rg4+ Underhill,G-Staynes,W/corr 1935/OM Corr/1-0) (or if 10... Bxf6 11. Ng5 h6 12. Qh5 Qe8 13. Bg6 Qe7 14. dxc5 Na6 15. Nb5 Nxc5 16. g4 Bxb2 17. Rb1 Qf6 18. Rxb2 Qxb2 19. Bf7+ Kh8 20. Qg6 Qb1+ 21. Ke2 Qxb5+ 22. Kf3 Rxf7+ 23. Nxf7+ Kg8 24. Nxb6+ Kh8 25. Nf7+ Von Feilitzsch,B-Nowarra,H/Germany 1938/OM Corr/1/2-1/2)

11. dxc5 Nc6 12. Qd2 Bxc5 13. O-O Bd7 14. Rde1 Rxf3 15. gxf3 Nd4 16. Qg5 Qxg5+ 17. hxg5 g6 18. Rh3 Kg7 19. Nd1 e5 20. Rg3 Bd6 21. c3 Ne6 22. Bc2 Nf4 23. Ne3 Bc6 24. Ng4 Buckley, D-Hayward, K/corr USA 1992/OM Corr/1-0 (49) **10.Bxh7+**



I was almost starting to panic after this thematic bishop sacrifice, it had me urgently grabbing for my copy of "Art of Attack in Chess" (Vukovic), but I seemed to be doing fine according to my silicon monster, but I wasn't altogether sure that I could trust its' judgement in such a position.

10... Kxh7
11.Ng5+ Kh6
12.Qd3 g6
13.h5 Kg7
14.Nxf7N

14. hxg6 Rh8 15. Nxf7 Rxh1+ 16. Ke2 Rxa1 17. Nxd8 Bxd8 18. Nb5

Bd7 19. Nxd4 Nc6 20. Nxc6 bxc6 21. Qh3 Kxg6 22. Qg4+ Kh6 23. Qh3+ Kg7 24. Qg4+ Kf8 25. Qf3+ Kg7 26. Qg4+ Kh6 27. Qh3+ Kg5 28. g3 Rxa2 Florian, B-Formanek, E/US op 1966/OM 2.04/1/2-1/2 (49)

14... Rxf7
15.Qxg6+ Kh8
16.Qxf7 dxc3
17.O-O-O cxb2+
18.Kb1

According to my silicon monster I was winning at this stage of the game. It would all depend on whether or not White could drum up serious enough mating threats on my denuded kingside to win the game....

18... Nc6!
19.h6 Qf8
20.Qxf8+ Bxf8
21.f4 Bd7
22.g4 Bc5!



Preventing a White rook from landing on g1 with serious pressure, and supporting the dangerous pawn advance on the kingside.

23.Kxb2 Rf8
24.g5 Rxf4
25.g6 Nxe5
26.g7+ Kh7
27.Rde1 Nc4+
28.Kc1 e5!

Creating luft for my light-squared bishop, and also gaining space in the centre.

29.Re2 Rf6
30.g8=Q+ Kxg8
31.Rg2+ Kh8
32.h7 Ba3+!



33.Kb1?
 33. Kd1 Ne3+ was the lesser of the

evils, now White is going to get mated...

33... Rb6+
34.Ka1 Bb2+
35.Kb1 Na3#
0-1



Finally, here's yet another game where Black comes out on top. David is again involved, but lucklessly plays White this time.

SCCA Championship 2011-12

White: Cumming, David R.

Black: Mackintosh, Iain
 QGD Declined [D37]

[Notes by Iain Mackintosh]

This year's encounter with David follows and yet again, the webserver has given me the Black pieces...

1.d4 Nf6
2.c4 e6
3.Nf3 d5

Often I play the Nimzo-Indian, but that curried no favour this time.

4.Nc3 Be7
5.Bf4 O-O
6.e3 Nbd7
7.Be2

7. c5 and 7. a3 are more common, but common people are not fashionable now.

7... dxc4
8.Bxc4 c5
9.O-O

9. dxc5 is the crustaceously drawish alternative.

9... cxd4
10.Qxd4

Not 10. Nxd4? e5!

10. exd4 and White seems ok with the IQP.

10... Nb6
11.Be2 Qxd4
12.Nxd4 Bd7
13.Rac1 Nfd5
14.Bg3 Nxc3
15.Rxc3 Bf6
16.Rfc1 Nd5
17.Rb3 Bxd4
18.exd4=

Pretty even you'd have to say, though David's king pawn has become an IQP now.

18... Bc6
19.f3 Rfd8
20.Bd3 a5
21.Bb1 Rac8
22.Kf2 a4
23.Ra3 f6
24.Re1 Kf7

25.Rd3 Bb5
 26.Rd2 g6
 27.h4 Rd7
 28.h5 Rcd8
 29.Red1 Nb6
 30.b3 axb3
 31.axb3 Nd5

Black has achieved a small positional plus but has nothing forcing. White now tries to create some activity on the 7th, a plan which seems sensible enough.

32.Rc2 Ne7
 33.Rc7



33... e5!

Here I got the scent of a prawn cocktail based on a d-file pin and locking up the White Bb1.

34.Rxd7 Rxd7
 35.Ke1 exd4

The whiteleg prawn goes and a tiger prawn replaces it.

36.Bf2 Nc6
 37.Kd2 f5

Helping to restrict the Bb1.

38.Rh1 Kf6
 39.f4 Nb4

40.Bh4+ Kf7
 41.Bf2 d3

Completing the prawn sandwich on the Bb1.

42.hxg6+ Kxg6
 43 g4 Bc6

44.Rh4 fxg4

45.Rxg4+ Kf5

46.Rg8 Be4!

The best move, pretty much tying up White. 46...Kxf4 also wins for Black.

0-1

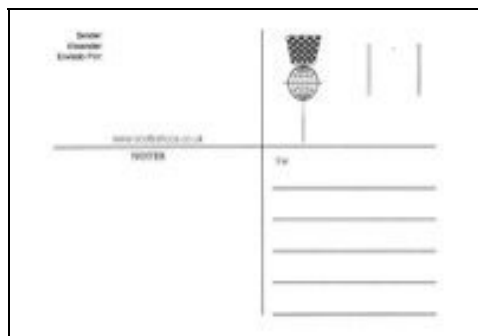


After the game David said: "that prawn on d3 is sticking like a herring bone in the throat of my position, my light-squared bishop is horrible!! I am therefore busted, and I have resigned this game, congratulations."

No prawn traps or mating nets were used in the making of this game. If you're thinking prawn crackers, you're probably right.



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The Lewis Chessmen Were Never Anywhere Near Iceland!

By Morten Lilleøren



[Ed –my thanks to Morten for submitting this article which is very relevant to Scotland – the chessmen were discovered at Uig in Lewis (left) in 1831. The piece has been published previously in *The Chess*

Café Skittles Room and abridged in *ChessBase News*.]

The Author

Morten Lilleøren was born in 1955 and has lived most of his life in Oslo. He is a rock fan who owns several thousand albums, and chess addict who started to play competitive OTB chess when he was 21 and has (had) a rating of around 2100 FIDE. Morten has played over 1000 OTB tournament games over the years. He is better at correspondence chess than OTB. Over the years he played more than 450 games. In 2003 he got the ICCF IM title and in 2007 the GM title. In 2007 he became Norwegian champion and a member of the Norwegian team that won the 15th Correspondence Chess Olympic final. He usually prefers thematic tournaments, which give the players more room to research one opening.

Morten is not a book collector, but cannot resist buying them. He has somewhere around 7000 books, out of which there are a little over 1500 chess books. Somewhere along the road he discovered that the history of chess in northern Europe in medieval times was almost uninvestigated. Future plans include making a list of all chess pieces in Norwegian museums and all chess pieces found in the ruins of the Norse settlements in Greenland.

Introduction

The Lewis chessmen are possibly the most famous chess pieces ever made. They were found on the island of Lewis in the Hebrides in 1831. Altogether the finding contains 93 items, of which 78 are chessmen. 67 of them are in the British Museum (some shown in fig. 1) and 11 are in the Scottish National Museum. They are regarded as some of the most remarkable artefacts from the Middle Ages.



Figure 1. The Lewis Chessmen. Twelfth century, British Museum, London.

In September 2010, I came across an Internet article entitled "The Enigma of the Lewis Chessmen," by Gudmundur G. Thorarinsson, with a preface by Einar S. Einarsson (Thorarinsson, 2010). Since the content is literally filled with faults and oversights, I originally paid it little attention. Now there is good reason to address the content of this site. It seems as though portions of the chess world have accepted the proposed theories with too few reservations, a notable exception being Dr. Alex Woolf (McClain, 2010). In the notes I provide a list of Internet sites that have perpetuated Thorarinsson's views, some with critical remarks, others without (1). The Wikipedia entry "chess bishop" has been edited along the lines of Thorarinsson (Wikipedia, 2011a).

Another marker event occurred that upset me and stimulated me to further action. I received *Chess Masterpieces: One Thousand Years of Extraordinary Chess Sets*, by Dean and Brady (2010). I do not intend to review this book here, but must note that it is a handsome-looking, large, hardcover book about chess pieces and their history. It must have been a labour of love and truly a costly production. They even managed to get Garry Kasparov to write a preface. Unfortunately the work is partly spoiled because it perpetuates the arguments of Thorarinsson (Dean and Brady, 2010, pp. 39-40).

Thorarinsson's Contentions and Arguments

In brief, Thorarinsson claims that the Lewis chessmen were made in Iceland. His main contention is that Icelandic and English are the only languages that use the words bishop/biskup and rook/hrokur, with Iceland using the words earlier than England. Thus, since there are several bishops amongst the Lewis pieces, Iceland is their most probable source as only they were using the word "bishop" for this piece at the time the pieces were made.

A similar argument is made for the rook. Another focal point is the shape of the horses used for the knights. They allegedly strongly resemble the Icelandic horse race. The fourth contention is that there were many good walrus-ivory carvers in Iceland, with a final contention that there was a good deal of trade between Iceland and Greenland, the source of the ivory material for the chessmen.

These are Thorarinsson's main arguments in support of his theory. We'll begin to analyze his points, first covering chess terminology.

The Language Contention

Einarsson (in Thorarinsson 2010), states on page three: "The word "bishop" for a chess piece is only used in two languages, Icelandic and English." They stumble at the start. There are several languages that use this term nowadays: English, Icelandic, and Faroese are in one special group, as they have the most names in common.

In The Faroe Islands the names of the game is "skáktalv," and the major pieces are "rókur," "riddari," "bispor," "frúgv," and "kongur" (Merkistein, 1997 and Wikipedia, 2011b). The Faroese language is spoken by around 50,000 people living in the islands and 10-20,000 people living abroad. As Thorarinsson's main point is based upon the assumption that Iceland and England alone are using these terms for the pieces today, his very first point is shown to be incorrect. But it does not end there.

The Bishop

"Bishop" is also used in Ireland (easpag), Wales (esgob; both the Irish and Welsh usage derive from Gaelic), and Portugal (bispo). Thorarinsson (2010) states on page 16 "The Lewis Chessmen are the only chess pieces that connect chess with the church."

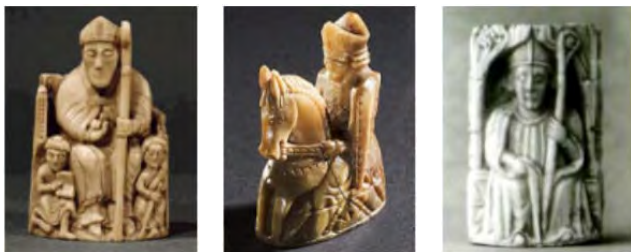


Figure 2. Bishop, Twelfth Century, English, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Figure 3. Bishop, Twelfth Century, National Museum, Copenhagen. Wichmann no. 46 (1960).

Figure 4. Bishop, Fourteenth Century, Staatliches Museum, Berlin. Greygoose no. 21 (1979) (Cazaux, 2010).



Figure 5. Bishop, Fourteenth Century, Staatliches Museum, Berlin. Greygoose no. 26 (1979) (Cazaux, 2010).

Figure 6. Bishop, medieval/undated, Kgl.Museet, Stockholm. Mackett-Beeson no.9 (1969).

Figure 7. Bishop, Fourteenth Century, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich. Wichmann No. 64 (1960) (Cazaux, 2010).

Figures 2-7 show that Thorarinsson is wrong in this respect. All these bishops are from findings other than the Lewis chessmen. In the Wichmann's book on chess pieces, still a major reference work fifty years after publication (1960), we find pieces made like bishops in five pictures, all dated between the 12th and 14th centuries. Other books on chess pieces also have other "bishop" type bishops portrayed. It culminates nicely in Hollander's statement:

Der "reitende bischof" ist als schachfigur besonders aus dem 14. Jahrhundert bekannt" (Hollander, 2005, p. 60).
Translated "As a chesspiece the riding bishop is well known, in particular from the 14th century."

In this matter Thorarinsson (2010) states on page 16: "The Lewis Chessmen are the only chess pieces that include bishops with crosier and mitres and full ceremonial

clothing." Clearly he missed out on something. Einarsson, in Thorarinsson (2010) continues: "In most other languages, including Norwegian, this piece was – and still is – called a 'runner'" (ibid., p. 3). Thorarinsson himself states: "In Scandinavia and elsewhere in Europe, this piece is called "löber" or "Leufer," meaning runner or messenger. As far as is known, Norwegians have never called this piece a bishop" (ibid. p. 9). Figures 2-7 above show us something quite different.

Additionally, a Danish/Norwegian-Latin dictionary has the following entry: "Bisspe paa Skackspil" (Colding, 1626, p 49) (translated: "Bishops in chess") (2).

The Courier

The name "läufer" comes into conventional chess at a late stage, briefly outlined here. "Läufer" is a synonym for "kurier," or in English, "courier." In medieval times, there was a chess variant played on a twelve by eight board, adding four pieces and four pawns to the armies. The most substantial addition was two "couriers" at each side. Back then bishops proper only moved two squares diagonally. These new pieces, the "couriers," moved like the bishops of today – as far as they could along a diagonal.

The game "kurierspiel" ("Courier game" or "courier chess") is first mentioned around 1200 A.D., and continues to be played in this style in Germany and some neighbouring countries for centuries. Then something happens: Ordinary chess is reformed in Valencia, Spain, around 1475 (Garzón, 2005). Suddenly the new bishop moves just like the courier in the courier game. This probably caused a mix-up in Germany at some junction in time – and the name of the bishop changed and became the "courier," or to be exact, the "läufer."

It is important to note that it could not have taken place before the reformation in Valencia, when the bishop and queen were accorded their now modern style of movement. As a matter of fact, it happened much later. The first known time the term läufer/runner is mentioned as the German word for the piece is in Hyde's *History of Chess* (1694, p. 75). On the very same page the names of the Danish pieces are mentioned. The bishop was still "biscop" or "bisp."

Thorarinsson misses the target by half a millennium. Even in their claim regarding the use of "bishops" on English soil, Thorarinsson and Einarsson get it wrong: "The only other language where a "runner" is called a "bishop" is English – but that did not occur until after 1450" (Thorarinsson, 2010, p.3).

The Dominican monk Jacobus de Cessolis left out the clergy from the allegory he wrote at the end of the 13th century (de Cessolis, 2008). In this allegory he used the chessboard and the pieces as the framework for his morality. When he left out the clergy (and thereby even the bishops proper) from his sermon, he put the part of the chess world which used the word "bishop" for the chess piece in a difficult position. In translating this book, naming the piece a "bishop" was not an option. It had to be a term not associated with the clergy.

This is the reason why Thorarinsson's reference in English, Caxton's *The Game and Playe of the Chesse* (1474), could

not use the word "bishop" for the piece – Caxton's book was a translation of the book by de Cessolis. Because the clergy/bishops have been left out of the moralisation, we can pay no attention to the name of this piece in the whole family of de Cessolis manuscripts in German, English, and Scandinavian in medieval times.

The Rook

Now to the rook. First, the use of "berserker." Thorarinsson states: "The rooks are berserkers, who figure prominently in contemporary Icelandic writings but are not known from written works in Norway at the time" (Thorarinsson, 2010, p. 14). Further "Berserkers are presumably an older phenomenon and are well known from Scandinavia, but they were at the forefront of Icelanders' consciousness at this time. They occur in Icelandic writings – Snorri describes berserkers in *Heimskringla*" (ibid., p. 12).

Here Thorarinsson fails to mention one crucial point: *Heimskringla* is a chronicle about kings. No king has ever lived in Iceland. Still the story is about kings – the Norwegian kings. *Heimskringla* is a story primarily about Norwegians. The author may be Icelandic, but the content is mostly Norwegian.

Now to the rooks proper: "English and Icelandic speak of a rook (hrókur). Berserkers seem to figure nowhere except among the Lewis chessmen" (ibid., p. 12). Again Thorarinsson (2010) is wrong. There are not as many old pieces of rook-warriors as there are bishops, but they do exist. The best one was undoubtedly found in Öland, Sweden, shown in the figure below.



Figure 8. Warrior rook, Thirteenth Century, Kgl.Museet, Stockholm. Found in Öland. A.Goldschmidt: Vol. IV, no.250 (1923-26).O.Ferm et al. (2005, p. 33).

Figure 9. Warrior rook. Twelfth Century, National Museum, Copenhagen. This one is Hollander no. 25 (2005).

We also have in this case several written sources, including Scandinavian ones, directly proving Thorarinsson wrong. The first is *Schacktafvæls Lek* (Klemming, 1881), a Swedish translation of de Cessolis' allegory. *Schacktafvæls Lek* still exists in two hand-written manuscripts, one in Stockholm, dated 1476, and one in Copenhagen, dated 1492. They are both copies from at least one older manuscript (Blomquist, 1941, p. 101 ff). In *Schacktafvæls Lek* the rook is named "rok," plural "rokkin" (Klemming, 1881, p. 201 ff). There is also the Colding dictionary mentioned earlier. The entry relevant to the rook is "Rocke paa Skackspill" (Colding, 1626, p. 481).

Hyde is again relevant, providing "Rock" or "elephant" (Hyde, 1694, p. 75). In Poland the following was used for a bishop or rook, according to Hyde: "Pòp," meaning priest, and "roch." Murray (1913, p. 420) indicates that a Czech *SCCA Magazine 114*

fourteenth century vocabulary gives exactly the same two words.

The German word throughout the whole medieval period is – "roch." The word appears in the *Schachzabelbuch* by Heinrich von Beringen (approx. 1300, p. 93, verse 2699 ff), and Konrad von Ammenhausen (1337, column 301, line 7839 ff), and as late as 1843 in Bilguer (von der Lasa, 1843, p. 2).

Obviously oblivious to all this, Thorarinsson writes: "In Scandinavia and Germany, this chess piece is called "tower," Swedish torn, Danish tårn" (Thorarinsson, 2010, p. 12). The fact is that in medieval times Rok/roch/rokur was the name of the piece in Germany, most of northern Europe, and the whole of Scandinavia (3).

Thorarinsson and Einarsson give the impression that they believe that because the names are proper usage today, it must always have been this way.

Rewriting History

Now let us turn to another point with serious implications. Iceland was inhabited from 870 onwards mainly by Norwegians (the "landnaam"). The Icelanders themselves wrote about it, for example, in *Landnaamabok* (Pálsson and Schei, 1997) and *Islendingabok* (Fróde and Jonsson, 1930). Therefore, this history is fairly well-known.

This shows that the Icelanders spoke the Old Norwegian (West Norse) language. In a way they still do, at least they are much, much closer to the old language than the Norwegians are. The languages were almost the same until the middle of the fourteenth century. Then what happened? The Plague or Black Death (1350) was definitely the worst disaster ever in Norway. It killed more than half the Norwegian population, simultaneously more or less destroying the written language – too many people of literacy died. Looking at the documents produced shortly after the plague, one can see that the scribes had difficulties in handling their duties.

At the same time, the political ruling class was decimated and, a little after 1350, personal unions between the Scandinavian kingdoms were formed. Norway became a part of Denmark, and after a while all official documents were written in Danish. The clergy were recruited from Denmark, and especially after the reformation in 1536, the church was literally Danish. Finally, in 1604, when the old laws were revised, the written language was gone. The West Norse language in Norway now became an oral language only. It remained this way for centuries (Leitne et al., 1975; Hovdhaugen et al., 2000) (4).

The old (West) Norse language never reappeared in Norway. This is why we today have two written languages in Norway: One is called "bokmaal" or the book language. One is called "nynorsk," the new Norwegian, which stands in opposition to the old, now essentially extinct Norse language, which only has usage to a certain degree in Iceland.

The first is based on the Danish language, the second is based on the oral language that still existed, mainly in rural, western parts of the country around 1850. None of them

were close to the Old Norse. But the language did exist in Norway when the Lewis pieces were made. It has therefore no merit to claim that Norwegians have never used the word "biskup." The word "loeper" wasn't even invented until centuries later. So if the Icelanders used the word "biskup," the Norwegians must have done the same!

"In 1939, the Arnamagnæan Commission in Copenhagen initiated the preparation of a new dictionary of Old Norse prose (*Ordbog over det norrøne prosasprog*)...., its scope was Icelandic prose writings up to 1540 and Norwegian up to 1370" (Hovdhaugen, et al., 2000, p. 272).

These years, 1540 and 1370, are the years when the languages "left" Old Norse, separated and became something else (5).

In chess circles there are various proverbs beginning with, "Every Russian schoolboy knows..." Similarly, "Every Norwegian schoolboy knows" that the languages in Norway and Iceland were the same until Norway became a part of the twin kingdom of Denmark-Norway. One would assume that the Icelanders know this history as well. But Thorarinsson claims that he has "...lectured on various subjects including the origin of the Icelandic people" (Thorarinsson, 2010, p. 4). How can he have lectured on Old Norse history and not know basic facts like this?

The Knight

Now let us turn to the knight – Thorarinsson states:

"The knights are mounted on horses that seem Icelandic in both size and head shape" (ibid., p. 14).

and, just to be sure we have treated him fairly:

"They are so small that they are reminiscent of the Icelandic horse, and the shape of their heads seems Icelandic. Horses of this kind were extremely scarce in Scandinavia" (ibid., p. 12).



Figure 10. Knight, Twelfth Century, Museo Bargello, Florence. A.Goldschmidt: vol. IV, no.264 (1923-26).

Figure 11. Queen, Fourteenth Century, National Museum, Copenhagen (Cazaux, 2010).

Figure 12. Knight, Fourteenth Century, Staatliches Museum, Berlin (Cazaux, 2010).

Figure 13. Knight, Museo Bargello, Florence. Sanvito p. 48 (1992) (Cazaux, 2010).

These images of other medieval chess pieces are shown because they have horses of a similar shape as the Lewis chess pieces.

This whole argument seems far-fetched. The Lewis chessmen using horses are highly stylised. Therefore the size and shape of them cannot be taken as an argument for any particular horse breed.

A horse is by nature, seen from above, of a more or less rectangular shape. Unfortunately this shape does not fit too well into the squares of the chessboard, which are quadratic. Therefore the horses as chess pieces are very often re-shaped to fit into the squares. To this end I have to add that the knights have another limitation. They should not be taller than the kings. This is an unwritten rule affecting all chess sets to the modern day. Both these limitations point towards a compact knight piece.

The material for the Lewis chessmen – walrus tusk – has its limitations: These are explained in the pamphlets of the British Museum (Stratford 1997 p. 37; Robinson 2004 p. 58). I would here only point at the importance of keeping the pieces as compact as possible. If they were not (for example by carving out a horizontal horse, saddled by an upright knight), the pieces could easily break.

In order not to do injustice against Thorarinsson, here is a brief survey of some aspects of the relevant horse breeds. When the settlers came to Iceland, there were initially no horses there. The horses came along with the immigrants. Some were probably from the British Isles and many of them came from Norway and the Norse territory. This gives us an idea of the nearest "relatives" to the Icelandic horse: the Fjording and Northland horse, both rather small – and Norwegian. And of course the Shetland pony is even smaller. Again pictures tell more than words.



Figure 14. Northland horse (6).



Figure 15. Fjording (6).



Figure 16. Icelandic horse (6).



Figure 17. Shetland pony (6).

Even if it is not a major point here, figures 14-17 show that Thorarinsson's statement:

"Horses of this kind were extremely scarce in Scandinavia"

is dubious.

To summarize: The Lewis chess horses are not shaped and formed after the horse's natural shape. It is mainly the chessboard and the shape of the other pieces that determine the form of this piece. Then the material used and its durability shapes the piece.

The Carvings

Now to the alleged similarity between the ornamentation on the back of the pieces' thrones and Icelandic carvings. Thorarinsson states:

"Decorative art and carving were highly developed in Iceland at this time. Many examples are known of Icelandic bishops' sending or bringing fine gifts carved from walrus tusks to foreigners. Artists, goldsmiths, and master carvers were employed at the bishops' seats, and written records state outright that walrus tusk was among their raw materials" (Thorarinsson, 2010, p. 14).

And the evidence is:

"The pattern of carving on the chessmen is in a Romanesque style. This style is well known in Iceland from the time of these carvings to the present day."

And then:

"In Ellen Marie Magerøy's book *Planteornamentikken i islandsk treskurd*, there are pictures of contemporary carvings that do not seem to bear much resemblance to the patterns on the Lewis chessmen."

Of course, this is not much of a proof, so he adds:

"This still tells but half the story, since only a small minority of the wood carvings from this time period have been preserved" (ibid., p. 7).

I could not have proven my point better myself; the proof of the pudding is in the eating.

In the aftermath of Darwin's publication of *On the Origin of Species*, an important aspect of older archaeology was summarised as: What species are for the science of nature, type/form is for archaeology. This was later modified. The form doesn't always change according to utility, but more according to whims of fashion.

To recast Darwinism: In archaeology it is "the survival of the prettiest" that guides an aspect of the art. In a way this is similar to perhaps the most important ability of a chess player, generally recognized as "pattern recognition". The chess player in a way assimilates the positions in front of

him to find chunks of pieces and clusters that form a familiar pattern.

Archaeologists do the same, looking for fragments that have a familiar design. This means that it is possible to locate shapes, forms, figures, whatever – by resemblance, both geographically and in time. This is where Thorarinsson fails (see above) and where Trondheim/Nidaros as the source (same city with two names) during time has added up points as the logical source (7).

The pamphlets of the British Museum make a thorough research in this respect. Taylor (1978) devotes a major part of his pamphlet to this (pp. 8-15, including many pictures, showing the resemblance between the carvings and similar ornaments of Scandinavian – non-Icelandic – origin). Stratford (1997) devotes pp. 41-47 to the same, and Robinson (2004), pp. 30-37 and p. 58.



Figure 18. Lewis chess king, back of throne.

Figure 19. Lewis chess king, back of throne.

Figures 18-19 show the backs of some of the pieces. Many other pieces have similar ornaments. These ornamental patterns, with plants and animals, are particularly associated with locations in ancient Norway. Liebgott (1985) writes in the discussion of a similar object:

"The circular plant patterns are in its structure common throughout northern Europe. What makes the carving so distinctly Norwegian, is the peculiar animals that grab hold of each other" (Liebgott 1985, p. 30).

This pattern is called the "Urnes" style in Norwegian. Caldwell et al. writes:

"...most scholars would at present expect to locate the manufacture of such pieces in a town or large trading centre... (The craftsmen) had a good understanding of the robes, vestments and protective clothing worn by kings, queens, bishops and knights. This surely suggests that they had access to such people, or were perhaps employed in workshops provided by a king or archbishop. Lewis had no towns at the time in question, but there were strong links..(to) major Norwegian towns..." (Caldwell et al., 2010, p. 66).

Iceland did not have any such towns. Throughout his text, Thorarinsson makes a particular point of the fact that Iceland never had a king nor queen living on the Island.

The Source of the Lewis Pieces?

Robinson (2004) concludes:

"Trondheim is the most likely candidate"(p. 58).

Stratford (1997):

"Trondheim or another Scandinavian town is at the moment the strongest candidate"(p. 47).

Why do they come to this conclusion? There have been some major findings that make Trondheim the likely place of origin, the most important being this diagram:



Figure 20. Trondheim chess queen, image taken from McLees and Ekroll (1990).

I quote at length from the article reporting the (re)finding:

"The figurine is directly comparable with the queen pieces from the Isle of Lewis chess sets in terms of raw material, size, form and sculptural details. Regarding raw material, Krefting states that the piece consisted of ivory, and the probability is that it comprised walrus ivory. The eight Lewis queens vary considerably in size; however, the dimensions of the Trondheim figurine's surviving portion, at 4.5 cm high, would be compatible with an original height somewhere in the region of c.9 cm (an additional 4.5 cm would accommodate a suitably proportioned lower body and throne), comparing favourably with the two tallest Lewis queens. The most striking and evocative trait, however, is the characteristic, indeed, idiosyncratic, pose adopted by the figure, where the right hand rests against the right cheek. This is the most eloquent clue to the piece's particular iconographic and functional status, and, with the design of the folded shoulder-length kerchief, places it conclusively in the company of the chess queens from Lewis" (McLees and Ekroll, 1990, p. 151).

"There can be no doubt that the Trondheim queen derives from the same workshop which produced the Lewis pieces. By virtue of its arthistorical dating, it is almost certainly the earliest chess piece yet found in Norway, and is possibly one of the earliest representational forms of chess piece known from Scandinavia. The presence of this new member of the 'Lewis family' on Norwegian soil in the very heart of one of the country's most important 12th-century cities also serves to focus attention on contemporary developments in and around the city of Trondheim itself. These may have some relevance to any discussion relating to the location of the workshop in question. The manifest competence, inventiveness and interaction of local schools of Romanesque minor and monumental carving is well documented: the long-established presence in the town of professional woodcarvers and boneworkers who produced items of superior quality; the characteristic 'Trondheim Group' of stave-church portals; the local strain of ornamental stone carving in the district's Romanesque stone

churches, centered particularly, from c.1120, on the cathedral workshops; and, if the inferences implicit in the motifs common to a number of carved ivories, including a possible crozier head found on the nearby island of Munkholmen, can be trusted, the range of skills and motifs shared by local sculptors also extended to the intricate carving of walrusivory" (McLees and Ekroll, 1990, p. 153).

Tithe and Trade

"Iceland had a strong connection to Greenland at this time. Icelanders settled Greenland with a large fleet of ships, and these Greenlanders had many friends and relatives in Iceland. Records describe bishops' ships that brought goods from Greenland at that time.... Icelanders thus had access to walrus tusks and other raw materials from Greenland" (Thorarinsson (2010), p. 14).

For once I agree with Thorarinsson. Both Norwegians and Icelanders travelled to Greenland, and all three areas eventually became united under the rule of the Norwegian king. But long before this happened, the churches of the two islands were connected to Trondheim/Nidaros. That happened when the archbishopric of the north/Nidaros was founded in 1152/53. From then on, the provinces had to pay tithe to the archbishopric. This was in addition to commercial trade, social and family relations between the three countries. Walrus tusk came from the arctic region, from the shores of what is now known as Russia, but a lot of it came from Greenland. Written documents show that Greenland paid their tribute in naturals, amongst them walrus ivory. This means that when the archbishopric was established, Nidaros all of a sudden received a lot more ivory than before. Note the concurrence of the new archbishopric and the dating of the Lewis chessmen. It can of course be a coincidence, but the two parts fit well together. Again I quote McLees and Ekroll:

"A potential catalyst uniting home-grown talent with an assured source of appropriate raw material may be sought in the city's establishment as the seat of the Archdiocese of Nidaros in 1152/3, the resulting influx of walrus ivory as payment of tithes from the diocese of Greenland possibly engendering the local production of sophisticated carved ivories, perhaps under the aegis of the archbishopric itself. Such a workshop, drawing on a pool of indigenous skills and techniques, an abundant supply of ivory, and located in an appropriate and dynamic cultural setting, might conceivably have produced objects as extraordinary and as expressive of their time as the Lewis and Trondheim chess pieces" (McLees and Ekroll 1990, p. 154).

Before summarizing, I add another quote:

"According to Dr. Alex Woolf, director of the Institute for Medieval Studies of the University of St. Andrews, reasons for believing the chess pieces probably came from Trondheim include: a broken queen piece in a similar style found in an excavation of the archbishop's palace (it appeared the piece was broken as it was being made), the presence of wealthy people in Trondheim capable of paying craftsmen for the high quality pieces, similar carving in Nidaros Cathedral in Trondheim,

the excavation in Trondheim of a kite-shaped shield similar to shields on some of the pieces, and a king piece of similar design found on Hitra Island, near the mouth of Trondheim Fjord. He said that the armour worn by the chess figures includes "perfect" reproductions of armour worn at the time in Norway" (8).

Conclusion

For a conclusion, one starts by simply considering the trade route and the tithe from Greenland to Norway in relation to the earlier presented material.

A review of the figures showed that bishops and rooks were found in various parts of northern Europe. Look at the chess knights' horses: They are stylised. Can they be used to sort out an existing horse breed? If so: Would it then be the Icelandic horse that had to be the chosen one? Is this at all a valid argument? I say no on both counts.

Add to this the philology, which provides written evidence of the existence of the cited names for the pieces almost all over northern Europe. The final, and certainly not least important philologic point is: How can Thorarinsson claim that Norwegian words are differing from the Icelandic, when authoritative dictionaries and books on Norse language history indicate that Icelandic and Norwegian were a common Old Norse language at least until the Plague, the Black Death, in 1350?

Apparently Thorarinsson and Einarsson made the mistake all beginning researchers are warned against, starting with the conclusion that Iceland is the place where the pieces were made. Then selectively all arguments that might possibly contribute to the foregone conclusion were added, without addressing such mundane matters as historical facts, the proper exercise of source criticism and other scholarly necessities.

"When the beginning is a frenzy, the outcome often becomes an oddity" Ibsen (1867, *Peer Gynt*, Act 4).

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Notes

(1)

[Medieval Archives](#)

[Elginism](#)

[The Telegraph](#)

[The Scotsman](#)

[Zimbio](#)

[The New York Times](#)

[ipagan.org](#)

[Scotclans.com](#)

[The New York Times Gambit Blog](#)

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(2)

The *Dictionarium Herlovianum* (The Herlufsholm Dictionary), the oldest and quite extensive Danish-Latin dictionary, was compiled in 1626 by the headmaster of the Herlufsholm school, Poul Jensen Kolding (or Colding) (1581-1640) (Colding, 1626).

(3)

As an appendix: The Germans are the first to use the word "turm," meaning "tower," for the piece. This tendency seems to have started with Vida's chess poem (1512) where he renamed the rook to an elephant (with a tower at his back). This poem became very popular, with numerous editions through the years (in the L/N-list there are seventy-four(!) editions mentioned). Several figurative chess sets started to be made after the names of the pieces in the poem. Now the rooks were pictured as elephants, with towers on their back. One day someone dropped the elephant, and only the rook as tower was left. The rest is history, as they say.

Perhaps this part of the history can be interpreted otherwise. But there is no literary proof of any "turm/tårn/torn/tower" in the languages of Scandinavia and Germany in medieval times.

(4)

The Danes, on the other hand, were under severe pressure from Germany (for example, by way of pressure from the minority population in Slesvig). This way even Danish changed severely and quite rapidly during medieval times and early modern times. It is estimated that around 1700 up to 25% of the population in Copenhagen spoke German.

(5)

There were some minor differences between the Icelandic and the Norwegian written language back then: One was that the Icelanders used an h in front of many words, like hr- and so on. This means that the old board game "nefatafl" were written "hnefatafl" in Iceland. And the chesspiece "rook" was written "hrokur" in Iceland. In Norway therefore, it had to be written "rokur." This is closer to the English, and therefore a more probable link. This is exactly the same spelling as the Faroese.

(6)

[Akersmus.no](#)

[Shetlandspinni.info](#)

[hest.no](#)

[pbase.com](#)

(7)

This is also why the reference to Madden (1832) is not relevant anymore. He neither had access to the material (most of the findings were made after he wrote his article – in 1832 – the others he was unaware), nor knowledge of the method mentioned. The article is mostly based on philological evidence, which was in large part incorrect (see A.v.d.Linde's somewhat harsh criticism in "Nordisk Skaktidende," 1874). And the few archaeological remarks

he made (on the "Charlemagne pieces"), were based on wrong information and even wrong descriptions of the pieces – he had not seen them himself, so he relied on a second-hand(false) description. So, by today's standards and knowledge, Madden's article has little value as a reference, apart from being the first to record the findings of the Lewis Chessmen.

(8)

Dr. Woolf's statement (McClain, 2010) should have been a killer ("A hell of a lot of walrus ivory went into making those chessmen, and Iceland was a bit of a scrappy place full of farmers," Dr. Woolf said. The pieces are also exquisite works of art, he said, adding, "You don't get the Metropolitan Museum of Art in Iowa.") But because the journalist hid these statements inside an article entitled "A New Theory on the Origin of the Lewis Chessmen," they lacked the impact they should have made.

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9th European Team Championship

Play is just about to start on the ICCF server in the Preliminaries of the 9th European Team Championships. Despite fielding perhaps our strongest possible team (1. Richard Beecham 2. Tom Matheis 3. Iain Mackintosh 4. Alan Bell 5. David Kilgour 6. Gordon Anderson 7. Stuart Graham 8. Geoff Lloyd) we find ourselves ranked 24th of the 34 teams taking part and placed in a section of 12 teams with opposition from Romania, Finland, Spain, Poland,

Luxembourg, Switzerland, Czech Republic, Russia, Lithuania, Belarus and Austria.

With 3 sections in the Preliminaries, the top 3 finishers will go forward to the Final of what is ICCF's strongest team event where only 2 of the 36 countries eligible to enter (Greece and Malta) failed to enter teams.

European Postal Cup



Play has just recently started in another new team event, the ICCF Europa Postal Cup. The event is the brain-child of the ICCF EU Zone President, Gian-Maria Tani (ITA), and is rather a postal version of the ICCF Champions League

where teams of 4 players may be drawn from more than 1 country and may play under colourful names!

This inaugural event has 23 teams drawn from 15 countries and includes our "Scottish Claymores" (1. Stuart Graham 2. Geoff Lloyd 3. Ian Marshall 4. Raymond Burrige) who is in a section of 8 teams with opponents from Germany, Sweden, England, Spain, Italy, Netherlands and the Czech Republic.

35th World Championship

Play started back in March in the Preliminary Sections of the 35th ICCF World Championships and, to date, our 2 representatives, Stuart Graham and Alan Borwell, would appear to be doing quite well. In Preliminary Section 9 Stuart has finished 11 games already (!) and is unbeaten

with 6½ points. With 3 games to finish Stuart may be optimistic of achieving a place in the next stage, the Semi-finals. Thus far, Alan is proceeding at a more sedate pace and has yet to finish any games.

Thor Løvholt Memorial

MT-Løvholt /sf1		Thor Løvholt Memorial U-2300 Team Tournament SF1										TD Pheby, Ian M. (IA)							
Nr.	Team	ELO	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Score	%	+/-	Team results	FG	RG	Place
1	Austria	2235	2.5	2	3	2	1.5	1.5	1.5	2.5	3.5	20	51	1	3	39	15	1	
2	Czech Republic	2203	3.5	2	1.5	1.5	2.5	2	2.5	0.5	2	18	58	5	2	31	23	2	
3	Poland	2216	2	2	1	2	2	3	2.5	1	2	17.5	56	4	1	31	23	3	
4	France	2183	3	1.5	1	2	2	2.5	1.5	1	2.5	17	54	3	1	31	23	4	
5	Latvia	2211	2	1.5	2	2	1	2.5	1	0.5	3	15.5	53	2	1	29	25	5	
6	Bulgaria	2184	1.5	1.5	2	2	1	4	1	1	1	15	53	2	2	28	26	6	
7	Scotland	2124	2.5	1	1	1.5	1.5	1	1.5	1.5	3.5	15	40	-7	2	37	17	7	
8	Spain	2239	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1	1	2.5	0.5	3.5	14.5	53	2	2	27	27	8	
9	Belarus	2166	1.5	0.5	1	1	1.5	1	2.5	0.5	1.5	11	52	1	0	21	33	9	
10	Cape Verde	1935	1.5	1	1	0.5	1	1	1.5	0.5	1.5	9.5	29	-13	0	32	22	10	

Our team in the Thor Lovholt under 2300 Team Tournament have thus far enjoyed some mixed fortunes, achieving a score to date of 15 from 37 completed games. On board 4, our Membership Secretary scored a nice win against an Austrian opponent:

Paine, Dr. Kevin (2182) – Detela, Walter (2244)
 Thor Løvholt Memorial U-2300 Team Tournament ICCF,
 09.01.2011

3.Bb5 a6
4.Ba4 Nf6
5.0-0 Be7
6.Re1 b5
7.Bb3 0-0
8.h3 d6

1.e4 e5
2.Nf3 Nc6

9.c3 Na5
10.Bc2 c5
11.d4 Qc7
12.Nbd2 cxd4
13.cxd4 Nc6
14.Nb3 a5
15.Be3 a4
16.Nbd2 Bd7
17.Rc1



17... Qb7

One of numerous long theoretical lines in the Ruy Lopez where White always seems to have an edge.

18.Bb1

18.Qe2 and; 18.Nf1 are alternatives here.

18... h6?!

An odd choice here which doesn't achieve much at all. Both 18...Bd8 19.Qe2 Bb6; and 18...Rfc8 look more to the point.

19.Nf1 Rfe8

20.Ng3 Bd8

21.Qe2 Bb6

22.dxe5

22.d5!? Ne7 (not 22...Nd4?! when 23.Bxd4 exd4 24.Qd3 is good for White) 23.Bd3 Ng6 is comfortable for Black.

22... Nxe5

23.Nh4 d5!

With an equal position.

24.Nhf5

Eyeing d6.

24... Nc4

25.Bf4 Nxe4

Not 25...dxe4 26.b3 axb3 27.axb3 and the knight comes to d6.

26.Bxe4 Bxf5
 Again 26...dxe4 27.b3
27.Nxf5 Rxe4
28.Qg4 g6
29.Rxe4 dxe4
30.b3

30.Nxh6+ looks tempting although it possibly comes to the same thing.

30... axb3

31.axb3



31... Nb2

Either here or on the previous move 31...h5 looks interesting.

32.Nxh6+ Kh7

33.Be5!

33.Qh4!? Bd8 34.Bg5 Bxg5 35.Qxg5 Nd3 and Black should hold.

33... Bxf2+

33...Nd3 34.Nxf7 Bxf2+ 35.Kh2 is the same as the game.

34.Kh2 Nd3

35.Nxf7 Qe7

35...Nxe5 36.Nxe5 Qg7 37.Qxe4 is winning for White; and 35...Qxf7 36.Rc7 also looks bleak although after 36...Nxe5 37.Rxf7+ Nxf7 38.Qf4 e3 39.Qxf7+ Kh6 the win for White may take a little time.

36.Bd6

and here Black resigned! After 36...Qh4 37.Qd7 Ra7 38.Rc7 White should be winning but maybe Black could have struggled on.

1-0

Current Friendly Internationals

Start	Boards	Opponents	Mode	For	Against	Void	Result
Mar 2011	20	Romania	Server	5	8		
Mar 2011	32	France	Server/Post	4	13		
Jan 2011	10	Hong Kong	Server	5	7		
Nov 2010	15	Cape Verde	Server	16½	4½		win
Nov 2010	30	Finland	Server/Post	14	22		
Sep 2010	32	Sweden	Server/Post	13½	28½		
Apr 2010	10	Lithuania	Server	8	12		loss
Mar 2010	20	Scheming Mind	Server	10½	29½		loss
Feb 2010	20	Ecuador	Server	29½	10½		win



General Information

Members of the Scottish CCA are eligible to play in ICCF postal, email and webserver tournaments, which cover European and World, Open (O - under 1900), Higher (H - 1900-2100) and Master (M - over 2100) classes. Entries to H or M class events for the first time require evidence of grading strength, or promotion from a lower class. O and H classes have 7 players/section, with M class having 11. It is usually possible to interchange between playing modes when promotion from a class has been obtained.

New World Cup tournaments start every 2-3 years, with 11-player sections of all grading strengths, and promotion to 1/2 finals and final. Winners proceed to the Semi-Finals, and winners of these qualify for a World Cup Final. The entry fee covers all stages, and multiple entries are allowed, though Semi-Finals are restricted to 2 places per individual.

Master and GM Norm tournaments with 13-player sections are available for strong players. Master entry level is fixed ICCF rating of 2300+, (2000 ladies); non-fixed ICCF 2350+ (2050 ladies); or FIDE 2350+ (2050 ladies); while medal winners (outright winners ladies) in national championships are also eligible. GM entry levels are 150 rating points higher. A player can enter only one section per playing mode per year. Section winners who do not achieve norms receive entry to a World Championship Semi-Final.

International numeric notation is the standard for postal events, while PGN is normal for email and webserver play. Playing rules and time limits are provided for each event, and the usual postal limit is 30 days per 10 moves, with 60 days for 10 moves in email and webserver. Players may take up to 30 days leave per calendar year.

Use air mail stickers to all destinations to speed postal play, and be aware that some patience is required, as games may take up to 3 years against opponents in countries with poor mail services. Silent withdrawal is bad etiquette! International CC postcards are recommended, and can be obtained from the SCCA. Email and webserver have speeded up many events, and made it cheaper to play. Generally, you play less email/webserver games simultaneously than postal because of the faster play.

A prerequisite for entry via the SCCA is that the player remains a full member of the SCCA for the duration of the tournament. We wish you great enjoyment from your overseas games, and from making new chess friendships!

Current tournament fees are shown on the Fees page of the SCCA website, and all Scottish players competing in ICCF events have bookmarks from the SCCA site to the relevant ICCF cross-table for easy checking of results. The SCCA international secretary can advise on all aspects of play, how to enter, current entry fees, etc.

Thematic Tournaments

Postal Events 2011

Theme 4/11: Queen's Gambit Tarrasch Variation, D32-4

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 c5

Entries by 15 September; play starts 1 October

Theme 5/11: Latvian Gambit, C40

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 f5

Entries by 15 November; play starts 1 December

Webserver Events 2011

Theme 5/11: Metz Attack, C31

1.e4 e5 2.f4 d5 3.exd5 c6 4.Qe2

Entries by 1 September; play starts 15 September

Theme 6/11: Benoni, A56-9

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5

Entries by 15 October; play starts 1 November

Note there are no Email Events in 2011.

News

- ❑ Veterans' World Cup 2 semi-finals commenced on 1st June as scheduled.
- ❑ Veterans' World Cup 4 entries closed on 1st July with a record number of 401 participants.
- ❑ Direct Entry 5th Anniversary event started play on 5th April, the exact start date of DE.
- ❑ The ICCF Diamond Jubilee is being celebrated by a Webserver and a Postal World Cup. Entries for both close on 1st September.
- ❑ ICCF is also organising a 960Chess World Cup, with entries open until 30th September .
- ❑ The 31st World Championship Candidates stage starts on 10th September with entries closing on 20th July.
- ❑ The 9th Ladies Team Championship commences on 1st September with entries closing on 20th July.
- ❑ The 2011 ICCF Congress will be held in Järvenpää, Finland, from 31 July – 5 August.

Further details of all ICCF activities and events; entries to events, and orders for ICCF publications may be obtained via George Pyrich at: international@scottishcca.co.uk

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