



# Barbican stun Guildford

## Matt Lunn reports from the 4NCL Rapidplay Championship

The 4NCL Team Rapidplay Championship was held on Saturday 5th October at the Daventry Court Hotel, a popular venue known for its open plan bar and labyrinthine corridor system. Seven rounds were played over seven hours, with the winner to be decided by collective game points. The 19 teams contained a veritable hotchpotch of professional, strong county, club and junior players. Although this resulted in some uneven tussles, the ultra rapid time controls (10 minutes for the game plus a 10 second increment per move) were conducive to blunders from even the strongest players (see Wall-Riley below). This event also afforded many competitors their first opportunity to play on DGT boards – sixteen of which were used each round – and some players also got their first taste of Grand-master opposition.

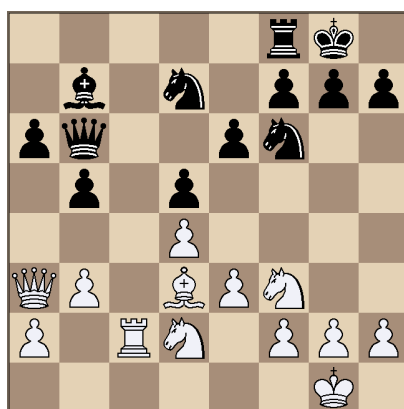
### M.Hebden-D.Young

Round 1:

Guildford vs. Bristol University

How does Black assess this position? Objectively he stands a little worse, as White's pieces are more actively placed and

his light-squared bishop on b7 is penned in by pawns. 18...a5 or 18...b4, seeking to resolve these problems, are probably the most sensible choices, although White is still better after he doubles his major pieces on the c-file. Black's next move is natural considering the rating disparity, but the consequences are catastrophic.



18...xc8?

As material is equal and the pawn structures are near symmetrical, Black offers to exchange another piece.

19 ♖xc8 ♙xc8 20 ♔e7!



Incredibly Black is now close to lost, as there is no easy way to deal with his long-term weaknesses on the back rank and f7. 20...♖b7 is probably best, although Black must go into a queen and minor piece ending a pawn down after 21 ♗d8+ ♕f8 22 ♘e5 ♘6d7 23 ♘xd7 followed by 24 ♙xh7+.

20...h6??

Missing that White now has 21 ♘e5!, after which Black must lose a piece or be mated. Black called it a day a couple of moves later.

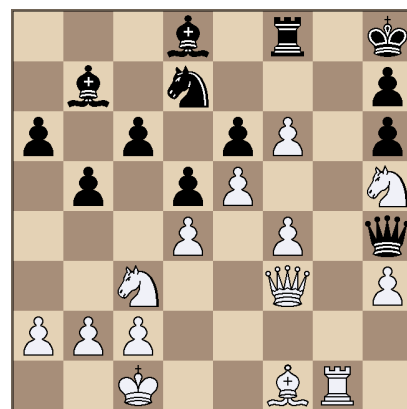
Yet it was not all doom and gloom for the weaker players in the early rounds.

### G.Wall-A.Riley

Round 2:

Oxford vs. Guildford

Black is not enjoying himself: outrated by 650 points, he is a pawn down, his pieces are inertly positioned, and White is gearing up to blow open his kingside.



23...xf6

Sacrificing on f6 is more or less forced here.

24 exf6 ♘xf6 25 ♘xf6 ♗xf6

Black has a doubled h-pawn to compensate for the missing knight, and a semblance of activity. However, once White defends his f-pawn there is little Black can do to avoid being forced back, and ultimately overrun: for instance, 26 ♖g4 ♗e1+ 27 ♘d1 h5 ♗g5 and he has no counterplay.

26 ♘e2

This defends the f-pawn, but now neither White's knight or queen are covering the d1-square.

26...♗e1# 0-1

Oh dear.

Although Guildford's team of masters, whose ratings averaged over 2500, amassed an early lead, Barbican 1 were soon

### Final Scores

Barbican 1	22
Guildford	21½
R.S.J.	18
Barbican 2	16½
S.M.P.S.	16
C.S.C. 1	15
Warwickshire Select	14½
M.K. Phoenix	14
West is Best	14
Oxford	14
C.S.C. 2	13½
Leeds University Old Boys	13
Bristol University	13
BCM Dragons	12½
C.S.C. 5	11½
C.S.C. 3	11
C.S.C. 6	10½
C.S.C. 4	9½
Bucks Juniors	6

# CHess SHOP MANAGER REQUIRED



A fantastic opportunity has arisen to manage our retail shop situated on Baker Street in the heart of London's West End, which benefits from a high percentage of regular customers as well as a significant amount of passing trade.

Chess & Bridge has been the UK's leading retailer of traditional board games since it was established in 1992. The company also has a vibrant mail-order business and publishes books and magazines. Responsibilities of the Shop Manager include:

- Managing/training shop staff
- Ensuring customer service is of the highest possible standard
- Merchandising the store to its full potential
- Injecting personality and charisma into the store.

Candidates should be:

- Able to inspire and motivate a talented team
- Have previous experience in a retail or sales environment
- Confident, commercial, approachable and flexible
- Self-motivated with a commitment to getting the job done
- Enjoy working with customers.

A knowledge of chess and bridge is preferred but not essential.

Location: Baker Street, Central London

Salary: £20,000 basic + £25,000 OTE

Job Type: Permanent

For further information and to forward your CV contact Matthew Read via [matt@chess.co.uk](mailto:matt@chess.co.uk) or call him on 020 7288 1305

hot on their heels. Their title defence faced an early setback with a round three loss to SMPS, but a 4-0 rout of Oxford afforded them their chance to seize the lead, albeit with an unlikely 3-1 or better victory over Guildford. Incredibly this was achieved with ease; John Cox's solid draw with David Smerdon prefaced fine wins by Jonathan Rogers and Matthew Piper over Mark Hebden and Gawain Jones respectively.

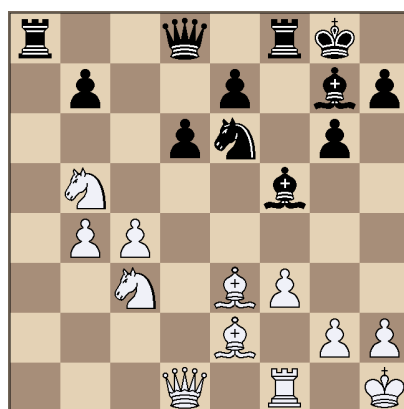
Elsewhere RSJ, whose structural soundness was exemplified by having a player of Paul Talsma's calibre on board four, made their aspirations known by tearing through MK Phoenix.

can 1, which left the latter 1½ game points clear of Guildford going into the final round. The defending champions were drawn against their second team, who boasted Craig Pritchett on board one and an in-form Kanwal Bhatia on four. With Guildford outrating their final round opponents (West is Best) by an average of 600 points per board, a 3-1 victory was necessary for Barbican 1 to retain their crown.

## C.Pritchett-M.Piper

Round 7:

Barbican 2 vs. Barbican 1



Black has been playing extremely well against the two-time Scottish Champion, but he now has a decision to make. How does he stop White playing 21 g4, trapping the bishop?

White is clearly winning, but to play endings accurately at this time control is no mean feat.

**50 b4!**

The exclamation mark is not just for the move's merit, but for White's fearlessness; rather than eking out his material advantage, he uses his precious time to calculate a forced winning line.

**50...b5 51 b6! bxb6**

After 51...b5+ 52 g4 h2 53 a6 the a-pawn will ultimately promote.

**52 axb6 d6 53 b5!**

A nice touch, although 53 g4 is sufficient too. The game concluded:

**53...d7 54 g4 h6 55 f4 c8 56 e5 b7 57 f6 bxb6 58 xg6 bxb5 59 xh6 c6 60 g6 d7 61 f7 1-0**

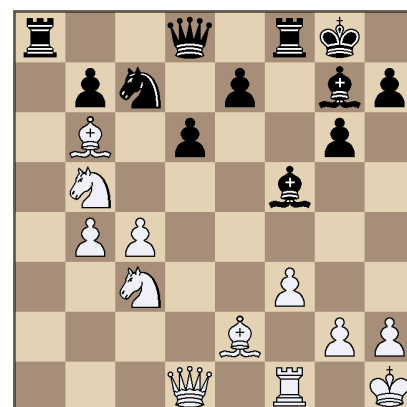
Nevertheless RSJ's title chase came to an end after their round six loss to Barbican 1.

**20...c7**

Walking into a pin, although the alternative, 20...xc3 21 xc3 c7, leaves White with reasonable compensation for the pawn.

**21 b6?!**

Matthew Piper now revealed that he had a rather sneaky idea in mind.



**21...xb5!**

The queen on d8 cannot be taken; Black obtains three minor pieces for it after 22 xd8 xc3 followed by 23...fxc8, leaving him effectively an exchange up with the better position.

**22 d5+**

22 d5 is met by 22...c3!

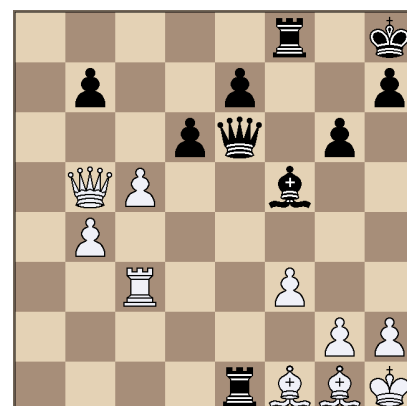
**22...h8**

Now taking on d8 is probably best, although after 23 xd8 xc3 White only has a slightly improved version of the variation in the note to Black's 21st move.

**23 bxb5 c8 24 c1?**

Losing immediately, although White's chances of survival are slim after 24 d1 e6.

**24...xc3 25 xc3 a1+ 26 g1 e6 27 c5 e1 28 f1**



**28...e5!**

Now White cannot prevent Black's queen joining the rook on the back rank.

**29 a3 b2 30 a7 b1 0-1**

Sedate draws on boards two and three and a win for Isaac Sanders on four were enough for Barbican 1 to clinch the title for a second year running. Congratulations to them!