



Report on Divisions 3 and 4 Weekend 5 by Steve Burke

As the season reached its climax, the race for promotion from Division 3 South was always going to be a fight between the top five teams. With several of them playing each other, the top three stretched away on the Saturday as Barnet, Wessex and Brown Jack all won. On the Sunday, leaders Barnet clinched their promotion by beating Brown Jack, while their other challengers Wessex could only draw with CSC.

So on the Monday, while Barnet played out a six draw match with CSC, Wessex and Brown Jack went head to head for the second spot. Not being there, I can't be sure, but it seems that Wessex got off to a terrible start with two spectacular losses. However they fought back to level the match and, as Brown Jack had to win it, Wessex secured promotion. (One of their critical victories is shown below.)

3 South pool C

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	GP	Pts
1 Barnet Knights 1		4½-1½	4-2	3-3	5½-½	3½-2½	4-2	4-2	28½	13
2 Wessex A	1½-4½		3-3	3-3	5-1	4-2	3½-2½	4½-1½	24½	10
3 Brown Jack 1	2-4	3-3		3-3	4-2	4-2	3-3	5½-½	24½	9
4 CSC 1	3-3	3-3	3-3		2½-3½	2-4	5-1	3-3	21½	6
5 MK Phoenix 1	½-5½	1-5	2-4	3½-2½		2-4	4-2	4-2	17	6
6 Rhyfelwyr Essyllwg	2½-3½	2-4	2-4	4-2	4-2		2½-3½	3-3	20	5
7 Oxford 2	2-4	2½-3½	3-3	1-5	2-4	3½-2½		3½-2½	17½	5
8 Cambridge University 2	2-4	1½-4½	½-5½	3-3	2-4	3-3	2½-3½		14½	2

Moving on to the relegation group, this was obviously all about avoiding the bottom two relegation places. It all came down to the last round where West is Best needed a big win over the Full Ponty to overtake them, but could only manage a draw. That meant that Hackney could save themselves with a win against the Rookies, but despite a good effort they could only draw, so that they join West is Best in the drop zone.

3 South pool D

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	GP	Pts
1 Leeds University Old Boys		½-5½	4½-1½	3½-2½	4½-1½	4½-1½	3-3	5-1	25½	11
2 The Rookies	5½-½		2½-3½	3½-2½	3½-2½	5½-½	3-3	3-3	26½	10
3 Sussex Martlets 2	1½-4½	3½-2½		2-4	3½-2½	3-3	3½-2½	4½-1½	21½	9
4 Fermented Sharks	2½-3½	2½-3½	4-2		5½-½	2-4	3½-2½	5½-½	25½	8
5 Anglian Avengers 2	1½-4½	2½-3½	2½-3½	½-5½		5-1	3½-2½	4½-1½	20	6
6 The Full Ponty	1½-4½	½-5½	3-3	4-2	1-5		3-3	3-3	16	5
7 Hackney	3-3	3-3	2½-3½	2½-3½	2½-3½	3-3		3-3	19½	4
8 West is Best 3	1-5	3-3	1½-4½	½-5½	1½-4½	3-3	3-3		13½	3



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Moving on to Division 4 South, and who will replace the above in the new season, there was much more movement than in Division 3. Both Iceni 2 and Oxford 3 blew their leads scoring only 2 points and 0 points respectively from their three matches.

This opened the door for the following teams, and Surbiton surged to the top spot, beating the two former leaders on their way. Having already played the leading teams, CSC 2 had a relatively easy route to claim second spot after picking up another 5 points.

With the variability of team locations, there was still some hope of promotion for teams finishing third to sixth, and in the end the most likely third and fourth places were both occupied by the Iceni teams, 1 and 2.

After the teams relegated from Division 2 elected where they would play next season, Iceni 1 were the beneficiaries of three teams (King's head, Barbican Youth and Poisoned Pawns) choosing to play in the South.

Division 4 South

		rd 1	rd 2	rd 3	rd 4	rd 5	rd 6	rd 7	rd 8	rd 9	rd 10	rd 11	P	W	D	L	GP	Pts	
1	Surbiton	sur	sxm3 4½	wesb 2½	wat 4½	inv 5	wib4 5	cro 2½	brj2 4	csc2 3	aad 4	oxf3 4	ice2 4	11	8	1	2	43	17
2	CSC 2	csc2	csc3 3½	blk2 4	psp2 3½	mkp2 5	oxf3 3	aad 4	ice2 2½	sur 3	cro 3	ice1 3½	tit 4½	11	7	3	1	39½	17
3	Iceni 1	ice1	cam3 6	tit 3½	wib4 4	csc3 4½	cro 3½	oxf3 2½	aad 2	fis 4½	ice2 4	csc2 2½	wesb 3½	11	8	0	3	40½	16
4	Iceni 2	ice2	oxf3 2	brj3 5	bkn3 5	pit 4	wat 4½	wesb 3½	csc2 3½	cro 3½	ice1 2	tit 3½	sur 2	11	8	0	3	38½	16
5	Crowthorne	cro	kkg2 4	brj2 3½	bkn2 4	cyj 5	ice1 2½	sur 3½	oxf3 4	ice2 2½	csc2 3	kes 4	aad 2	11	7	1	3	38	15
6	All Anands on Deck	aad	ice3 4	psp2 4	tit 3	kkg2 4½	wesb 4½	csc2 2	ice1 4	oxf3 2	sur 2	brj2 3½	cro 4	11	7	1	3	37½	15
7	Kent KJCA Kestrels	kes	brj2 3	inv 4½	wesb 1	brj3 4	tit 5½	fis 2	kkg2 3	mkp2 3½	cyj 4	cro 2	oxf3 4	11	6	2	3	36½	14
8	MK Phoenix 2	mkp2	wib4 3	pit 2	sxm3 2½	csc2 1	cyj 5	oxf4 4½	psp2 4½	kes 2½	wesb 3	fis 5½	csc2 4	11	5	3	3	37½	13
9	Wessex B	wesb	inv 5	sur 3½	kes 5	brj2 3	aad 1½	ice2 2½	fis 3	kkg2 4½	mkp2 3	cam3 3½	ice1 2½	11	5	3	3	37	13
10	Oxford 3	oxf3	brj3 5½	ice2 4	pit 5	bkn3 4	csc2 3	ice1 3½	cro 2	aad 4	tit 2	sur 2	kes 1	11	6	1	4	36	13
11	Throw in the Tail	tit	oxf4 3½	ice1 2½	aad 3	sxm3 5	kes ½	wib4 4	wat 5	brj2 3½	oxf3 4	ice2 2½	csc2 1½	11	6	1	4	35	13
12	Brown Jack 2	brj2	kes 3	cro 2½	inv 4½	wesb 3	csc3 4½	wat 3½	sur 2	tit 2½	fis 4	aad 2½	cam3 2 ; kkg2 2	11	5	2	4	36	12
13	Poisoned Pawns 2	psp2	cyj 3	aad 1	csc2 2½	bkn4 5	pit 2½	csc3 5	mkp2 1½	sxm3 4½	kkg2 4	wat 3	fis 3	11	5	2	4	35	12

In the North, to the surprise of few, Gonzaga clinched the top spot with a round to spare, allowing us to give them a round of applause before the last matches started.

Going into these matches three teams were in contention, but none were playing each other. Shropshire 1 were favourites on 16 points, followed by 3Cs 2 on 15 points and Bradford Knights A on 14.

As the afternoon wore on this contest was looking closer and closer and, if I recall correctly, 3Cs were the first to “crack”, losing to Cheddleton 2. I had finished my game for Ashfield-Breadsall 2 and was chatting with players from Bradford, who had also finished. They were getting excited as Shropshire seemed to be losing to our first team. This would set up an unlikely promotion for them – if they could beat their B team!

At the time that was not looking at all a certainty to me. However, in the end it worked out for them, as Shropshire could not save their match and their A team pulled through.



Division 3 North

		rd 1	rd 2	rd 3	rd 4	rd 5	rd 6	rd 7	rd 8	rd 9	rd 10	rd 11	P	W	D	L	GP	PT	
1	Gonzaga	gon	soab 4½	ash1 4	brab 5½	cas 4½	ash2 5½	che2 4	shr1 4	3cs2 3½	braa 3	wks2 4½	hol 5	11	10	1	0	48	21
2	Bradford DCA Knights A	braa	ash2 4½	shr1 1	jor 5½	enn 4½	man2 3½	wks2 3½	3cs2 3	che2 2	gon 3	ash1 5½	brab 4	11	7	2	2	40	16
3	Shropshire 1	shr1	man4 5	braa 5	wks2 3	man3 3	brab 3	jor 4	gon 2	soab 3½	3cs2 3½	che2 3½	ash1 2½	11	7	2	2	38	16
4	3Cs 2	3cs2	enn 4½	brab 4½	man2 4	ash2 5½	cas 4	soab 4½	braa 3	gon 2½	shr1 2½	hol 3½	che2 2	11	7	1	3	40%	15
5	Cheddleton 2	che2	hol 4½	man2 3½	ash1 3½	soab 2	sh2 5	gon 2	jor 4	braa 4	wks2 3	shr1 2½	3cs2 4	11	7	1	3	38	15
6	Ashfield-Breadalls 1	ash1	shr2 3½	gon 2	che2 2½	3cs3 6	man3 3	hol 2½	cas 6	man2 4½	jor 4½	braa ½	shr1 3½	11	6	1	4	38%	13
7	Warwickshire Select 2	wks2	cas 4½	jor 2½	shr1 3	hol 3½	man4 5	braa 2½	soab 3½	man3 3	che2 3	gon 1½	man2 2½	11	5	2	4	34%	12
8	Holmes Chapel	hol	che2 1½	3cs3 4½	sh2 4	wks2 2½	ash1 3½	man3 2½	brab 3½	jor 4½	soab 3½	3cs2 2½	gon 1	11	6	0	5	33%	12
9	Manchester Manticores 2	man2	3cs3 4½	che2 2½	3cs2 2	brac 2½	braa 2½	sh2 3½	ash2 4½	ash1 1½	enn 2½	man3 4½	wks2 3½	11	5	1	5	34	11
10	Bradford DCA Knights B	brab	brac 4½	3cs2 1½	gon ½	sh2 2	shr1 3	man4 3½	hol 2½	3cs3 3½	man3 3½	soab 4	braa 2	11	5	1	5	31	11
11	Jorvik	jor	man3 3	wks2 3½	braa 2½	man4 5½	brac 3½	che2 2	hol 1½	ash1 1½	ash2 4	soab 3½	11	5	1	5	30%	11	
12	Bradford DCA Knights C	braa	man4 1½	ash2 3½	man4 2½	ash2 3½	10	4	1	5	25	10							

Star Game

There were some very exciting games in the match between Wessex and Brown Jack that settled the second promotion spot to Division 2. Perhaps this wasn't so spectacular as a couple of Brown Jack wins (I'd suggest you take a look at them) but this was an important one that helped turn the tide.

It also demonstrates the importance of how and when to transpose into an ending.

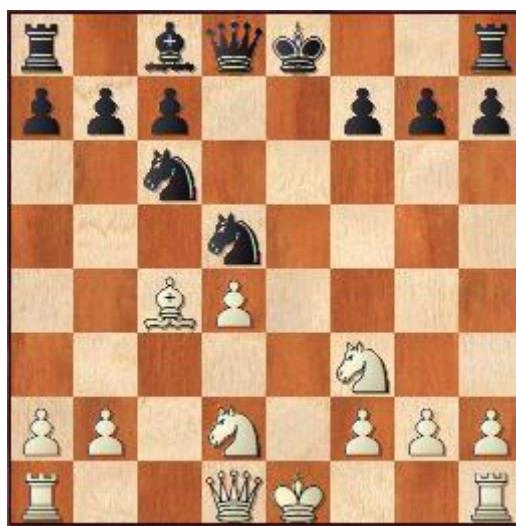
[Download the below game in PGN](#)

Clark,Ian C (2006) - Rabbitt,Michael (2043) [C54]

4NCL, Wessex v Brown Jack (11), 07.05.2018

[Burke, Steven J]

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.c3 Nf6 5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4 Bb4+ 7.Bd2 Bxd2+ 8.Nbxd2 d5 9.exd5 Nxd5



10.0-0= The other main line here is 10.Qb3 Nce7 11.0-0 0-0 12.Rfe1 c6=

10...0-0 11.Rc1 Bg4 12.h3 Bh5 13.Bxd5 Qxd5 14.Rc5 Bxf3



15.Rxd5?! Komodo and Stockfish both prefer 15.Nxf3 Qxa2 16.d5 Nb4 17.Rxc7 Qxd5 18.Qxd5 Nxd5 19.Rxb7= but perhaps white needed to keep things more complex due to the match situation.

15...Bxd1 16.Rxd1 Rfd8 17.Rxd8+ Rxd8 18.Nf3 Kf8 19.Rc1 h6

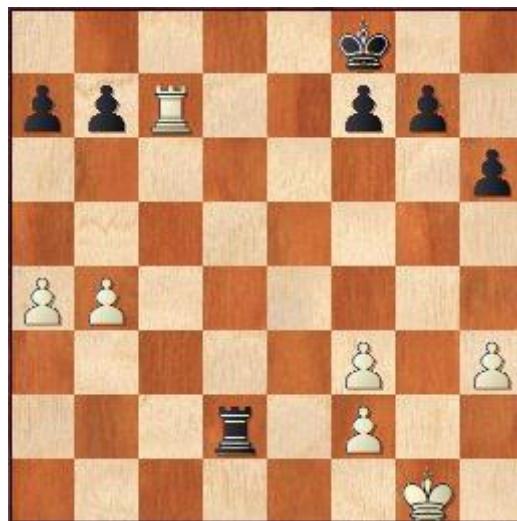


20.b4?!

20.Kf1 Rd7 21.Ke2 would keep black's advantage due to the IQP to a minimum.

20...Nxd4?= It's easy to see why black chose this simplification, but black is better after 20...Rd5! with the plan 21.-- Ke7 22.-- Kd6 23.—Nxd4

21.Rxc7 Nxf3+ 22.gxf3 Rd2 23.a4



23...Rb2? A (probably) decisive misjudgement of the endings that can arise here.

23...b5 24.Rxa7 Rb2 25.axb5 Rxb4~/=

23...Ra2 24.a5 b6 25.axb6 axb6 26.Rb7 Rb2 27.Rxb6 g6~/=

24.Rxb7 a5?+- This gives white a protected passed pawn that should be decisive. 24...a6 would still have given some chances to save the game.

25.b5 Rb4 26.Ra7! Rxa4 27.b6 Rb4 28.b7+- 1-0