



FOUR NATIONS CHESS LEAGUE

Division 1 Round 4 report by Jack Rudd

Pool A

Guildford 2 vs. Wood Green Hilsmark Kingfisher 1

Regular followers of Bogdan Lalic will not exactly be astonished to hear that his game ended in a draw; the more surprising news was that it was the only drawn game in the match to last more than 18 moves. One of the four short draws was Ketevan Arakhamia-Grant's against Mark Hebden, a result which may well take her to the magic 2500 mark and therefore the GM title.



Two other members of the Wood Green Hilsmark Kingfisher squad, Stephen Gordon and Andrew Greet, have just two GM norms to their name each and are searching for their final ones. Their results in this round were perfect for this purpose: both beat grandmaster opposition to help their side to a 4½-3½ victory.



RD 4		GUILDFORD-A&DC 2	2460	v	WOOD GREEN HILSMARK KINGFISHER 1	2468
1	w	Pert, Nicholas	2532	½ - ½	Lalic, Bogdan	2531
2	b	Hebden, Mark L	2515	½ - ½	Arakhamia-Grant, Ketevan (F)	2448
3	w	King, Daniel J	2518	½ - ½	Szabo, Krisztian *	2520
4	b	Kosten, Anthony C	2510	½ - ½	Berczes, David	2514
5	w	Cherniaev, Alexander	2438	0 - 1	Gordon, Stephen J	2521
6	b	Prie, Eric	2491	0 - 1	Greet, Andrew N	2440
7	w	Buckley, Graeme	2399	1 - 0	Berczes, Csaba	2399
8	b	Sandu, Mihaela (F)	2273	½ - ½	Tiller, Bjorn	2370
				3½-4½		

Richmond vs. Barbican 1

Some teams would be satisfied with just one 7½-½ victory in a weekend. Barbican 1 are evidently not among them; they defeated Richmond with the same score as they had achieved against Sambuca Sharks the previous day. Among the highlights of the match were the games Cox-Muter and Meyer-Ferguson, both featuring interesting rook and minor piece endings.

RD 4		RICHMOND	2219	v	BARBICAN 4NCL 1	2382
1	w	Bates, Richard A	2387	½ - ½	Parker, Jonathan	2538
2	b	Wall, Gavin	2307	0 - 1	Turner, Matthew J	2505
3	w	Bisby, Daniel L	2287	0 - 1	Eggleston, David J	2368
4	b	Muter, Donny	2190	0 - 1	Cox, John J	2381
5	w	Meyer, Gordon	2161	0 - 1	Ferguson, Mark	2398
6	b	Franklin, Michael J	2232	0 - 1	Knott, Simon	2348
7	w	Mitchem, Nicholas D	1971	0 - 1	Berry, Neil	2323
8	b	default		0 - 1	Regan, Natasha (F)	2197
				½-7½		

White Rose vs. Cambridge University 1

White Rose recovered from their disaster the previous day with a 6½-1½ win against Cambridge University 1. Among their wins was the following, for which the winner has kindly provided his annotations:

Conlon, Joseph P (2212) - Barrett, Steve (2225) [B81]

4NCL Barcelo Hotel, Hinckley (4.136), 07.12.2008

[Barrett, Steve]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 d6 6.g4 e5 7.Nf5 h5 8.Bg5 hxg4 9.Nd5 Bxf5 10.Bxf6 gxf6 11.exf5 Rh4 12.Qd3 Bh6 13.Qb5+ Nd7 14.Qxb7 Kf8 15.Bg2 Rc8 16.Qxa7 Rxc2 17.b4?! Kg7 [17...Bd2+μ] 18.0-0 Bf4 19.Nxf4 exf4 All hail the f pawns **20.Qd4 [20.Bd5 Ne5 21.Rfc1 Rxc1+ 22.Rxc1 Nf3+ 23.Bxf3 gxf3** Obviously not the best line, but neat to have six f pawns on the board... A unique type of position?]

20...f3 21.Bxf3 Ne5 22.Bd5 [22.Bg2 Rc4 23.Qd5 Nf3+ 24.Bxf3 gxf3+ 25.Rfe1 Qh8 26.Qxf3 Rhg4+ 27.Kf1 (27.Kh1 Rcf4+) 27...Rcf4+] 22...Rc4 [22...Qh8+] 23.Qe3 [23.Qa7 Nf3+ 24.Kg2 Rxh2+ 25.Kg3 Rh3+ 26.Kg2 Rc7 27.Qa8 Qe7 28.Rh1 Qe5 29.Rxh3 gxh3+ 30.Kf1 (30.Kxf3 Qxa1+) 30...Rc2+] 23...Nf3+ 24.Bxf3 gxf3 25.Rfc1 [25.Qxf3 Rcg4+ 26.Kh1 Qh8+] 25...Rcg4+ 26.Kf1 Qa8+ 27.Rc7 [27.Rc3 Rxh2 28.Qxf3 Qxf3 29.Rxf3 Rh1+ 30.Ke2 Rxa1+] 27...Qa6+ 0-1

RD 4		WHITE ROSE 1	2315	v	CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY 1	2283
1	w	Wells, Peter K	2516	½ - ½	Pinter, Gabor	2355
2	b	Jones, Gawain C B	2548	½ - ½	Dearing, Eddie	2393
3	w	McNab, Colin	2455	1 - 0	Mah, Karl C C	2408
4	b	Palliser, Richard	2407	½ - ½	Wong, Zi Jing	2414
5	w	Gayson, Peter M	2254	1 - 0	Alfred, Nathan	2323
6	b	Barrett, Steve J	2226	1 - 0	Conlon, Joe	2212
7	w	Adams, David M	2177	1 - 0	Churm, Rohan M	2207
8	b	Maroroa, Sue (F) *	1938	1 - 0	Broomfield, Lucy (F)	1949
				6½-1½		

Sambuca Sharks vs. South Wales Dragons



Another win for the Dragons raised them to the unfamiliar heights of third place in the pool; the Sharks' lack of strength in depth told here, as they won two of the top three games, but only got one point on the bottom five boards.

The Sharks' top board Thomas Rendle.

RD 4		SAMBUCA SHARKS	2108	v	SOUTH WALES DRAGONS 1	2200
1	w	Rendle, Thomas E	2385	1 - 0	Cobb, James E	2451
2	b	Kreising, Jan	2287	0 - 1	Cooper, John G	2362
3	w	Martyn, Rafe	2293	1 - 0	Morris, Charles F	2195
4	b	Williams, Samuel G	2218	½ - ½	Zeidler, Sven P	2224
5	w	Purton, Ben J	2106	0 - 1	O'Neill, Paul	2204
6	b	Coddington, Oliver	1975	0 - 1	James, David J	2137
7	w	Makepeace, Philip J	2027	½ - ½	Roberts, David L	2144
8	b	Milson, Amy (F) *	1570	0 - 1	Blackburn, Suzie (F)	1883
				3 - 5		

Pool A So Far

Wood Green Hilsmark Kingfisher 1 now look home and dry. With eight points from their first four matches, they should finish in the top half unless some really screwy results happen in the last three games, and with wins against White Rose, Guildford 2 and Barbican 1 already in the bag, they are highly likely to carry forward maximum points.

White Rose are also highly likely to go forward with them, and their win against Guildford 2 could be crucial in the championship group. My prediction for the other two to join them would be Guildford 2 and Barbican 1; despite South Wales Dragons' current third place, they have yet to face Wood Green Hilsmark Kingfisher 1, White Rose or Guildford 2, three opponents against whom they'd be severe underdogs.

However, even if, as seems likely, the Dragons finish in the bottom half, they already have five points in the bag from their matches against the three teams who will almost certainly join them in it: Cambridge University 1, Richmond and Sambuca Sharks. Cambridge University have yet to play the other two relegation battlers; these matches are now destined to have enormous significance.

Pool B

Betsson.com vs. Wood Green Hilsmark Kingfisher 2

A narrow victory for Wood Green Hilsmark Kingfisher 2, matching exactly the pattern of their first team's match – two wins, five draws and a defeat. In this case, the two wins came from Matthew Broomfield, who trapped Dave Ledger's queen on the side of the board, and Sarah Hegarty, whose savage attacking play won her a rook early on.



WGHK board 1 and 8 –
Jovanka and Sarah



RD 4		BETSSON.COM	2284	v	WOOD GREEN HILSMARK KINGFISHER 2	2303
1	w	Hunt, Adam C	2431	½ - ½	Houska, Jovanka (F)	2399
2	b	Ledger, Andrew J	2429	½ - ½	Martin, Andrew D	2425
3	w	Webb, Laurence E	2347	½ - ½	McDonald, Neil	2398
4	b	Eames, Robert G	2329	1 - 0	Sowray, Peter J	2316
5	w	Ledger, David J	2254	0 - 1	Broomfield, Matthew	2344
6	b	Nelson, Jonathan	2247	½ - ½	Lindner, Daniel	2242
7	w	Ledger, Stephen C	2151	½ - ½	Fowler, Simon	2214
8	b	Chaumont, Adeline (F) *	2083	0 - 1	Hegarty, Sarah (F)	2088
				3½-4½		

GAMBIT ADs vs. Guildford 1

This was the closest of any of Guildford 1's matches this season; they won by the narrow margin of 6-2 without losing any individual games. In one of the games, Cafferty-Tissir, a dispute broke out over whether a draw by repetition claim was valid; it seemed that it was not, but that neither player could sensibly escape the repetition anyway.

RD 4		THE GAMBIT ADS	2332	v	GUILDFORD-A&DC 1	2501
1	w	Speelman, Jonathan S	2530	½ - ½	Rowson, Jonathan	2596
2	b	Chandler, Murray G	2515	0 - 1	Howell, David W L	2593
3	w	Davies, Nigel R	2490	½ - ½	Cornette, Matthieu	2548
4	b	Richardson, John R	2308	0 - 1	Conquest, Stuart C	2526
5	w	Snape, Ian	2219	0 - 1	Shaw, John K	2469
6	b	Wheeler, Darren P	2234	0 - 1	Flear, Glenn C	2473
7	w	Cafferty, Bernard	2179	½ - ½	Tissir, Mohamed	2463
8	b	Bellin, Jana (F)	2183	½ - ½	Lalic, Susan (F)	2341
				2 - 6		

Pride and Prejudice vs. Northwest Eagles

Another bad day for the Eagles, as Pride and Prejudice's extra strength at the top proved the critical factor. They are now at the foot of the table with no points, as their win against Bristol was cancelled out by their defaults against Wood Green Hilsmark Kingfisher. Some consolation for them lies in the form of their top board Graham Morrison, who played one of the most chaotic games of the round:

Emms, John M (2489) - Morrison, Graham (2328) [B22]

4NCL Barcelo Hotel, Hinckley (4.171), 07.12.2008

[Rudd, Jack]



1.e4 c5 2.c3 d5 3.exd5 Qxd5 4.d4 e6 5.Nf3 Nf6 6.Na3 Qd8 7.Nc4 Nc6 8.Nce5 cxd4 9.Bb5 [9.Nxc6 bxc6 10.Nxd4 Qb6 11.a4 a5 12.Nxc6 Bc5 13.Qc2 Ng4 14.Nd4 0-0 15.h3 Nxf2 16.Qxf2 e5 17.Be3 exd4 18.cxd4 Bb4+ 19.Kd1 Be6 20.Bd3 Bb3+ 21.Ke2 Rfe8 22.Qh4 h6 23.Rhf1 Be7 Moreda,L (2364)-Alza,A (2084)/Buenos Aires 2006/1-0 (33)] 9...Qd5 [9...Bd7 10.Nxd7 Nxd7 11.Nxd4 Nxd4 12.Qxd4 a6 13.Ba4 b5 14.Bc2 Nf6 15.Qh4 Nd5 16.Qe4 Be7 17.0-0 Rc8 18.Rd1 Qc7 19.Bd3 Nb6 20.Bf4 Qc6 21.Be5 f6 22.Qg4 fxe5 23.Qxg7 Rf8 24.Qxh7 ½-½ Belozarov,A (2541)-Tiviakov,S (2613)/Krasnoyarsk 2003]

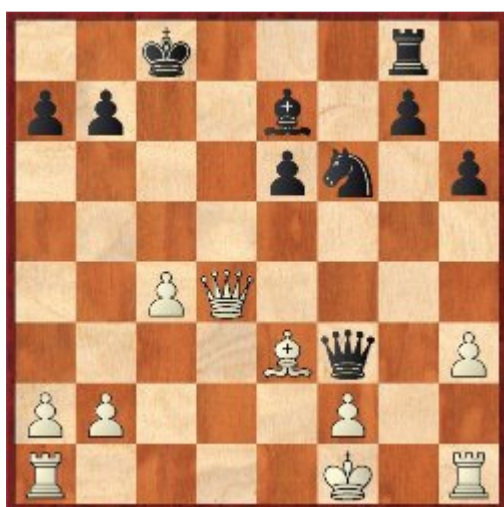
10.c4 Qe4+ [10...Qc5 11.a3 Nd7 12.b4 Qb6 13.Bb2 Bd6 14.Nxd7 Bxd7 15.Bxd4 Qc7 16.c5 Be7 17.Bb2 0-0 18.0-0 Rfd8 19.Bd3 a6 20.Qc2 h6 21.Rfe1 Be8 22.Rad1 b6 23.cxb6 Qxb6 24.Qe2 Rd6 25.Ne5 Skoko,M (2337)-Sibarevic,M (2346)/Yugoslavia 2000/1/2-1/2 (45)] **11.Kf1**



11...Bd7!? [11...d3 12.Be3 (12.Nxf7?? Qe2+) 12...Ng4 13.Nxg4 Qxg4 14.Qxd3 gives white a nice position with a lead in development.] **12.Nxf7 Rg8 13.N7g5 Qf5 14.Bxc6 Bxc6 15.Nxd4 0-0-0 16.Be3**



16...Rxd4!? Courage or desperation? Any other move just allows white to take on e6 with a winning position, so this is probably the best gamble. **17.Qxd4 Be7 18.h3** [18.Qf4 requires some accuracy, but seems to beat off the attack: 18...Qd3+ 19.Kg1 Rd8 20.Rf1 Bd6 21.Qh4 Qg6 22.Qh3] **18...h6 19.Nf3 Bxf3 20.gxf3 Qxf3**



21.Rg1? [Black seems to be struggling to justify his invested material after 21.Rh2] **21...Qxh3+ 22.Ke2 Qh5+ 23.Kf1** Emms decides not to risk playing for a win. [23.f3 b6 24.Rh1 Qg6 gives black plenty of compensation for the sacrificed material.] **23...Qh3+ 24.Ke2 Qh5+ 25.Kf1 Qh3+ 1/2-1/2**

RD		PRIDE AND PREJUDICE	2285	v	NORTH WEST EAGLES	2169
1	w	Emms, John M	2489	½ - ½	Morrison, Graham	2328
2	b	Summerscale, Aaron	2467	1 - 0	Coates, Kenneth G	2241
3	w	Hunt, Harriet (F)	2462	½ - ½	Hulmes, David I	2203
4	b	Ward, Chris G	2431	1 - 0	Redmond, John	2199
5	w	Sahl, Sheila (F)	2219	1 - 0	Charleshouse, Glenn L	2194
6	b	Kilpatrick, Callum	2184	0 - 1	Jaunooby, Ali	2145
7	w	Auckland, Elliott	2017	½ - ½	Mulligan, Stephen	2113
8	b	Summerscale, Claire E (F)	2007	½ - ½	Morrison, Lynne (F)	1926
				5 - 3		

Barbican 2 vs. Bristol 1

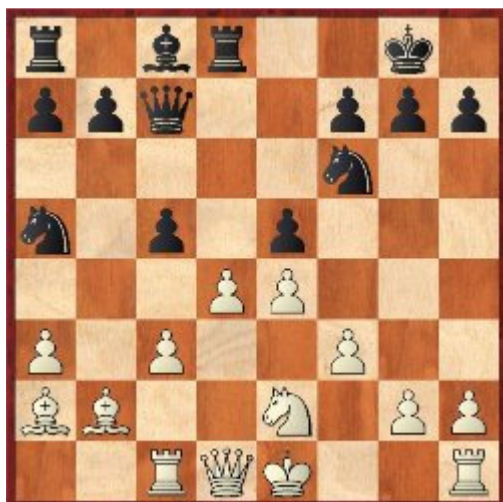
We finally started to trouble the scorers with a win against Barbican 2. The first decisive result of the match went in their favour, though, as Venezuelan-born Felix Ynojosa beat Andy Pickering. I then managed to level the scores with this win against Craig Pritchett:

Rudd,Jack (2344) - Pritchett,Craig William (2308) [E24]

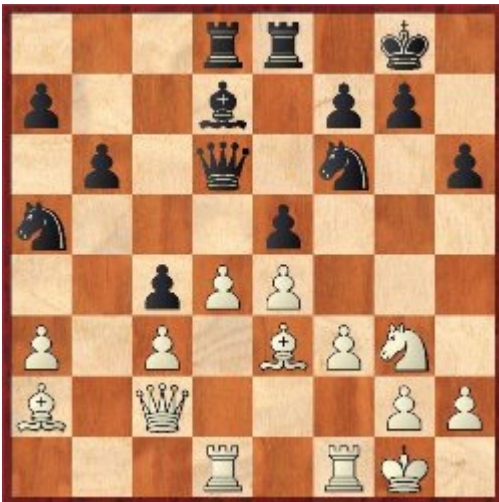
4NCL Barcelo Hotel, Hinckley (4.182), 07.12.2008

[Rudd, Jack]

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.f3 d5 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 c5 7.e3 [I knew that the theoretical move was 7.cxd5, but I didn't really know the theory. So instead I opted for an unambitious line that goes into more traditional Nimzo-Indian territory.] **7...0-0 8.Bd3 Nc6 9.Ne2 dxc4** [9...b6 10.0-0 Ba6 is also perfectly playable.] **10.Bxc4 e5 11.Bb2** [11.0-0 Re8 12.d5 Na5 13.Bb5 Bd7 14.Bxd7 Nxd7 15.e4 Nc4 16.Qe1 Nd6 17.Qg3 Qf6 18.Qh3 Rad8 19.Ng3 Nf8 20.Ra2 Ng6 21.Nh5 Qe7 22.Qg4 Qd7 23.Qg5 f5 24.Ng3 f4 25.Nh5 Nf7 Granara Barreto,S (2292)-Mahia,G (2377)/Buenos Aires 2003/½-½ (74)] **11...Qc7** [11...Qb6 12.Qb3 Qxb3 13.Bxb3 exd4 14.cxd4 Re8 15.Kf2 Na5 16.Ba2 Be6 17.dxc5 Bxa2 18.Bxf6 gxf6 19.Rxa2 Rac8 20.Rc2 Re5 21.Rd1 Rxc5 22.Rxc5 Rxc5 23.Rd8+ Kg7 24.Nf4 f5 25.Nh5+ Kh6 26.g4 Jorczik,J (2170)-Graf,F (2209)/Willingen 2006/½-½ (50)] **12.Rc1 Na5** Perhaps this is wrong; the knight ends up doing little on the queenside. [12...Rd8 13.Ba2 exd4 14.cxd4 cxd4 15.Nxd4 Qe7 16.Kf2 Nxd4 17.exd4 Be6 18.Bb1 Rac8 19.Qd3 Bd5 20.Rhe1 Qd6 21.Re5 Rc6 22.a4 Rxc1 23.Bxc1 Ba2 24.Be3 Bxb1 25.Qxb1 Nd5 26.Qxb7 Nxe3 27.Rxe3 ½-½ Schaffer,H (2209)-Siepmann,M (2103)/Dortmund 2003] **13.Ba2 Rd8** [13...e4!? is worth considering.] **14.e4**



This position is a curious one: it doesn't look as if white has any advantage, but something happens over the next few moves to alter this. Perhaps the problem is that it's difficult for black to find a constructive plan; his pieces don't seem as if they have obviously better squares to go to. **14...c4 15.0-0 Bd7 16.Rb1 Rac8 17.Qc2 Re8 18.Bc1 h6** [18...exd4 19.cxd4 b5 is Fritz's idea. It's got a point; the queenside majority is an asset, although it will surely take far too long to convert.] **19.Be3 b6 20.Rbd1 Rcd8 21.Ng3 Qd6**



22.dxe5 Time to resolve the centre. The idea of f4, e5, and Bb1 is simple and strong. **22...Qxe5 23.f4 Qb5 24.e5 Nh7** [24...Nd5 25.Bd4 Qa4 26.Qc1 and f5-f6 will be coming.] **25.Bb1 Nf8 26.Bd4 Qb3 27.Qf2 Bg4** [27...Qxa3 appeals to Fritz until it starts looking a bit deeper: 28.f5 Ba4 29.Rde1 Nc6 30.Nh5 Nxd4 31.cxd4 Qc3 32.Re3 Qxd4 33.Qg3] **28.Rde1 Bc8 29.f5 Nc6 30.Nh5** The plan from here is simple: get a major piece onto the g-file and crash open lines. **30...Nxd4 31.cxd4 Qc3** [31...Nh7 32.Re3 c3 33.Qg3 Ng5 34.h4] **32.Re4 Nh7 33.Rg4 Kh8 34.e6 Ng5** [34...fxe6 35.f6 g5 (35...gxf6 36.Bxh7 Kxh7 37.Nxf6+) 36.f7 Rf8 37.Bxh7 Kxh7 38.Qf6] **35.h4 Nxe6 36.fxe6 Bxe6 37.Rxg7 Qxd4 38.Rh7+**

[38.Qxd4 Rxd4 39.Rf6 is a slightly faster way to mate, but I'd already found a win.] **38...Kg8 39.Nf6+ Kf8 40.Rh8+ Ke7 41.Rxe8+ 1-0**

With the other five games being drawn, it was up to captain David Buckley to get a result, which he duly did, exploiting his material advantage in a rook ending against Peter Taylor. This made the score 4½-3½ to Bristol.

RD 4		BARBICAN 4NCL 2	2242	v	BRISTOL 1	2213
1	w	Rogers, Jonathan W	2347	½ - ½	Cobb, Charles	2407
2	b	Pritchett, Craig W	2308	0 - 1	Rudd, Jack	2344
3	w	Dorrington, Christopher	2259	½ - ½	Beaumont, Chris	2317
4	b	Taylor, Peter	2254	0 - 1	Buckley, David E	2244
5	w	Piper, Matthew S *	2290	½ - ½	Curtis, John	2122
6	b	Ynojosa, Felix J	2145	1 - 0	Pickering, Andrew *	2160
7	w	Franklin, Samuel	2156	½ - ½	Dilleigh, Stephen P	2147
8	b	Lauterbach, Ingrid (F)	2178	½ - ½	Smith, Olivia (F)	1961
				3½-4½		

Pool B So Far

Guildford 1 appear to be sweeping all before them; nothing new there. It's highly likely that Pride and Prejudice will join them in the championship pool, as will Wood Green Hillsmark Kingfisher 2. The latter team are only on five points, but have already played the two teams above them, and with their first team's being pretty much ensured qualification on maximum points, could well be boosted for later matches.

The fourth place in the championship pool is not yet decided, and there could be huge ramifications; the pool already has one "Condorcet Cycle" in it (Barbican 2 beat the ADs, who beat Bristol 1, who beat Barbican 2), and there could be more by the end of the pool stage. With this set-up, it's likely that the set of relegated teams could depend on which of the five teams currently at the bottom of the pool moves up – and therefore doesn't have its results against the other four counted in the second stage.

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

PGN http://www.4ncl.co.uk/0809_div1-04.pgn

Game viewer http://www.4ncl.co.uk/0809_div1-04viewer.htm

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