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# Chess



## **SERGEY KARJAKIN** **wins the 2016 Candidates** *Match against Carlsen set for New York in November*



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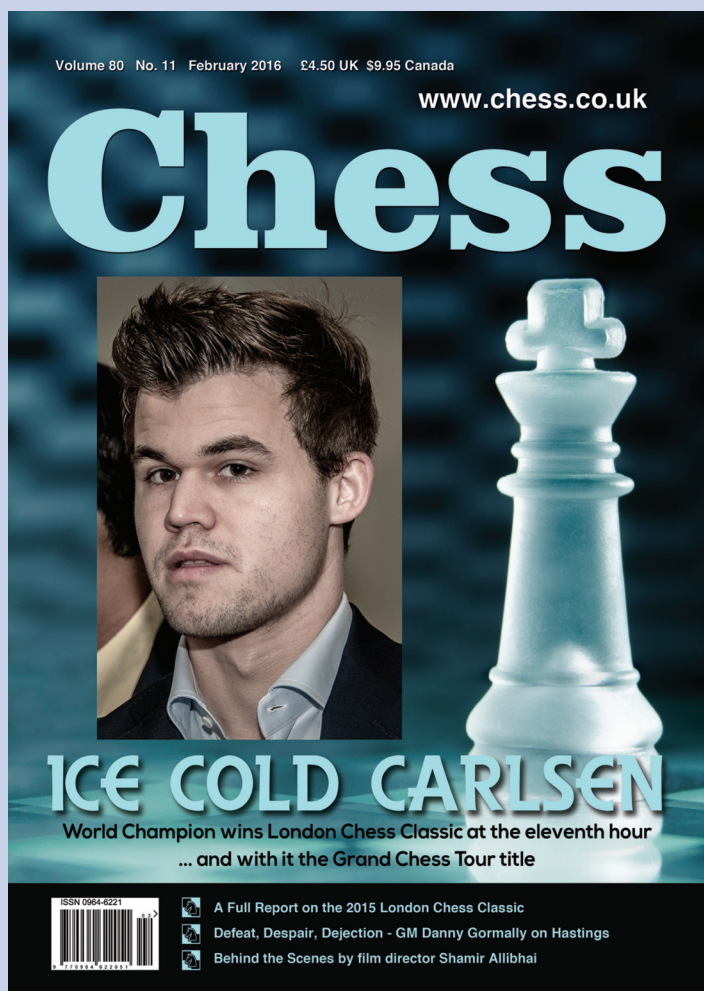


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Founding Editor: B.H. Wood, OBE. M.Sc †  
Executive Editor: Malcolm Pein  
Editors: Richard Palliser, Matt Read  
Associate Editor: John Saunders  
Subscriptions Manager: Paul Harrington

Twitter: @CHESS\_Magazine  
Twitter: @TelegraphChess - Malcolm Pein  
Website: www.chess.co.uk

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# Contents

<b>Editorial</b> .....	4
Malcom Pein on the latest developments	
<b>60 Seconds with...</b> .....	7
IM Lorin D'Costa	
<b>Karjakin holds his nerve to win Candidates nail-biter</b> .....	8
Steve Giddins very much enjoyed watching the action unfold	
<b>How Good is Your Chess?</b> .....	16
Daniel King reflects on Sergey Karjakin's success	
<b>Defensive Grit</b> .....	20
Karjakin's career-best result was based on some fine defence	
<b>Opening Trends</b> .....	23
Guess which opening sails on at the top of the chart?	
<b>Brutal Attacks</b> .....	24
And there were some in the latest 4NCL weekend	
<b>A Celebration of Chess</b> .....	26
Carl Strugnell enjoyed his return to Cappelle-la-Grande	
<b>How to Prepare</b> .....	30
Danny Gormally draws some important lessons	
<b>A Glut of Endgames</b> .....	34
John Cox shares a number of interesting endings with readers	
<b>Studies with Stephenson</b> .....	37
Can you solve Sir Jeremy Morse's composition to win a prize?	
<b>Never Mind the Grandmasters...</b> .....	38
Carl Portman explores the world of the simultaneous display	
<b>Find the Winning Moves</b> .....	40
<b>Old World, New World</b> .....	44
Amatzia Avni ponders the role of the computer in endgames	
<b>Forthcoming Events</b> .....	45
Where will you be playing in May?	
<b>Home News</b> .....	46
A full round-up of the Easter Congresses and the CCCC	
<b>Overseas News</b> .....	50
Success for Nils Grandelius, Abhijeet Gupta and Nigel Short	
<b>Readers' Letters</b> .....	53
Important information on <i>Chinook</i> and Asia's first grandmaster	
<b>Solutions</b> .....	54
<b>New Books and Software</b> .....	55
Sean Marsh reviews books by Danny Gormally, and Regan & Sadler	
<b>Saunders on Chess</b> .....	58
John has been pretty busy of late with his BritBase project	

*Photo credits:* cappelle-chess.fr (pp.7, 27), Bob Jones (p.49), Eteri Kublashvili (pp.1, 8, 10-12, 14-15, 20-21), Ray Morris-Hill (p.47, right), Fiona Steil-Antoni (pp.24, 47, centre, 48, 50-51).

# Brutal Attacks

The latest 4NCL weekend featured a number of crushing performances, and not just by the top two sides, Guildford and Cheddleton, who both remain on 100%

The 4NCL remains on course for its traditional final round showdown between the 'Big Two', these days Guildford and Cheddleton. All the action will unfold over the first May Bank Holiday weekend, so if you're near Birmingham Airport why not pop down to the Holiday Inn? Alternatively, simply follow the live coverage via [www.4ncl.co.uk](http://www.4ncl.co.uk).

Defending champions Guildford ensured they topped Pool B with a 100% score after whitewashing South Wales Dragons in round 7, a result which effectively put paid to the Welsh side's hopes of reaching the Championship Pool. In contrast Guildford II had just about managed to qualify for that, so round 8 brought a Guildford derby and a 6-2 victory for their first team, who won on the top three and on board 8. We've already seen Matthew Sadler's rapid transformation of a solid structure into a most unbalanced one and something similar was to happen one board down too.



Gawain Jones was probably expecting a tough and tricky day at the office against Daniel Fernandez, one of the UK's best young players, but after taking on f7...

## G. Jones - D. Fernandez

Guildford I vs Guildford II

French Defence

**1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♖d2 dxe4 4 ♗xe4 ♙d7 5 ♗f3 ♙c6 6 ♗eg5!?**

Aggressive and an idea seen too in the Caro-Kann. The calm route to an edge is 6 ♙d3 ♗d7 7 0-0 ♗g6 8 ♗ed2.

**6...♗d7**

The most natural. Neil McDonald preferred 6...♙d6 in his *How to Play Against 1 e4*, but this too hardly seems entirely comfortable for Black after 7 ♗xf7!? ♗xf7 8 ♗g5+ ♗e8 9 ♗xe6 ♗f6 10 ♙c4 ♗g6 11 ♗g5.

**7 ♙c4**

Building up, since Black appears to be OK after 7 ♗xf7 ♗xf7 8 ♗g5+ ♗e8 9 ♗xe6 ♗e7 10 ♗e2 ♗f7, and if 11 ♗g5+ ♗e8 12 ♗e6 ♗f7.

**7...♙d5?**

A natural attempt to cover e6, but it actually fails to dent the strength of White's sacrificial intent. Black should also avoid 7...♗g6? 8 ♗xf7! ♗xf7 9 ♗g5+ ♗e8 10 ♗xe6 ♗e7 11 0-0, but maybe he can survive 7...h6!? 8 ♗xf7 ♗xf7 9 d5 exd5 10 ♙xd5+ ♗e8 11 0-0 ♙c5. Those not feeling that brave could also consider 7...♗e7, and if 8 0-0 (8 ♗xf7? ♗xf7 9 ♗g5 ♗g6 leaves Black counterattacking against g2 and set to go long) 8...0-0-0.



**8 ♗xf7!! ♗xf7 9 ♗g5+ ♗e8 10 ♗xe6 ♙xe6 11 ♙xe6 ♙d6 12 0-0**

This is the position which clearly appealed to Jones when he took on f7. White has only two pawns for the piece, but his bishop is an absolute monster on e6. In practice Black's game is most unpleasant and even objectively one suspects that he is simply in some trouble. **12...♗df6 13 ♗e1 ♗f8 14 c4**

Calmly seizing space and strengthening White's position. There's no need to rush.

**14...c6 15 ♙d2 ♗e7**

The silicon monster indicates that this knight had to remain at home, but if so then something is most certainly rotten in the state of Fernandez's castle.

**16 ♗f3 ♙c7 17 ♗ad1!**

Now 17...♗xd4 18 ♙g5 ♗xb2 19 ♗e2 would decisively drive the black queen off the long diagonal, but even the desperate text was never going to save Black.

**17...b5 18 ♙g5 ♗g6 19 ♗xc6 bxc4 20 ♙xc4 ♗b8 21 ♙xf6 gxf6 22 ♗e8+!**



Winning material as it's mate after 22...♗xe8 23 ♗xf6+.

**22...♙g7 23 ♗xd8 ♙xd8 24 ♗d7+ ♗h6 25 ♗d3 ♗xb2 26 ♗h3+ ♙g5 27 ♙d3 ♗e7 28 ♗g3+ ♗h6 29 ♗h3# 1-0**

Meanwhile in Pool A Cheddleton were finishing on 100% after overcoming White Rose II 6-2. In round 8 they faced a stiffer test in the shape of Blackthorne Russia, but



ran out the victors by an impressive 6½-1½. David Howell outplayed Danny Gormally on top board, but on board 2 Jonathan Hawkins had to dig deep to first survive and then win against the in-form Harriet Hunt. Elsewhere Tamas Fodor, Simon Williams, Ezra Kirk and Fiona Steil-Antoni triumphed too, with just Richard Bates replying for Blackthorne.

Guildford II finished Pool A by routing Spirit of Atticus 7-1, but qualified for the top section more due to results elsewhere. 3Cs were always unlikely to leapfrog them, but despite the absence of Christian Bauer produced a fine result to defeat Barbican 4½-3½, thanks to wins from Alan Walton, Daniel Abbas and Mathilde Congiu. Oxford did, however, have a chance of claiming the fourth promotion spot (Barbican and Wood Green were already through), but despite a valiant effort simply found former champions Wood Green too strong, going down 5½-2½.

One would imagine that both 3Cs and Oxford will stay up, but the latter at least still have work to do after beginning the Relegation Pool with a 5-3 reversal at the hands of arch rivals Cambridge. Indeed, bar the doomed White Rose II anyone could yet go down, with Atticus giving their survival prospects a major boost by stunning a slightly demoralised looking Grantham Sharks 4½-3½ in round 8.

Back in Pool B White Rose took a clear second place, finishing by whitewashing Sussex Martlets, which left two Championship spots up for grabs in round 7. Blackthorne Russia claimed one of those and third place after crushing Cambridge 6-2, but Barbican II were only to pip the Dragons to fourth by two board points after they both finished on six points (from 14 available). While Barbican I were struggling, Barbican II showed the way to go, overcoming the Sharks 5-3, largely aided by crushing wins from Isaac Sanders, Ryan-Rhys Griffiths and Peter Sowray on the top three boards.

Following a 5½-2½ victory in the round 8 Barbican derby, Barbican I currently have a handy two-point advantage over their nearest pursuers in the battle for third and the three European Cup places available in the Championship Pool. That lead would, however, have been but a point had White Rose not encountered stubborn endgame resistance from Wood Green. By holding the last three games to finish, Wood Green ensured that the match finished 4-4 and earlier, for the second year in a row, your editor had found himself on the wrong end of a miniature.

**N.McDonald-R.Palliser**  
Wood Green vs White Rose  
*Sicilian Najdorf*

**1 e4 c5 2 d4 f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 dxd4 d6 f6 5 dxc3 a6 6 g5 e6 7 f4 h6 8 g4 h4 b6 9 d2 xb2 10 b1 a3 11 e2**

11 f5 and especially 11 e5 are more topical in this Delayed Poisoned Pawn variation, but there's nothing too much wrong

with a slower approach as McDonald demonstrates.

**11...e7 12 0-0 d7 13 f3 c5 14 f2 c7 15 fe1 c5**

Ambitious. 15...0-0 and if 16 g3 b6 would have been somewhat more prudent.

**16 e5! dxe5 17 fxe5**



**17...h7?**

And this is too much. I had simply missed White's brutal 21st, otherwise, of course, I would have settled for 17...d7 18 g3 0-0 when 19 d5 can be met by 19...exd5 20 e6 d8.

**18 f5! exf5 19 d5 d7**

Played to avoid 19...d8 20 c3 when I could see nothing better than 20...g5 (20...e6 21 b6 d7 22 e1 0-0 23 c7 regains the material) 21 e1 e6 22 b6 d7, but White has several scary looking moves here, including 23 d5.

**20 c3!**

Much stronger than 20 a5 e6 21 b6 c7 when Black just about survives after 22 a4+ d7 23 xa8 xa4 24 xc7+ xc7 25 xb7 e6.

**20...a4?**

20...g5 had to be tried, no matter how much 21 e7 ce4 22 e4 xe4 23 e4! fe4 24 c5 looks like pretty powerful compensation for the exchange and leaves Black's position completely cut in two.

**21 e6!!**



**21...xc3**

Already there's simply no defence, as if 21...fxe6 22 xg7 f8 23 xh7 f7 24 h5.

**22 exd7+ xd7 23 xe7+ f8 24 xb7 d6 25 c5 1-0**

*The final round of this season's 4NCL will take place over the first Bank Holiday weekend in May. Full coverage of the race for the Championship in our June issue.*

4NCL 2015/16: Demotion Pool											
Team		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	GP	Pts
1	3Cs 1		3½-4½		4½-3½			7-1	6½-1½	21½	6
2	Oxford 1	4½-3½			5-3	3-5			6-2	18½	6
3	South Wales Dragons					5-3	4-4	4-4	4½-3½	17½	6
4	Spirit of Atticus A	3½-4½	3-5				4½-3½		5-3	16	4
5	Cambridge Uni 1		5-3	3-5			2-6	6-2		16	4
6	Grantham Sharks 1			4-4	3½-4½	6-2		3½-4½		17	3
7	Sussex Martlets 1	1-7		4-4		2-6	4½-3½			11½	3
8	White Rose 2	1½-6½	2-6	3½-4½	3-5					10	0

4NCL 2015/16: Championship Pool											
Team		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	GP	Pts
1	Guildford 1	X			7-1		6-2	6-2	4½-2½	23½	8
2	Cheddleton 1		X	5½-2½		5-3	6½-1½	5½-2½		22½	8
3	Barbican 4NCL 1		2½-5½	X		4½-3½		5-3	5½-2½	17½	6
4	White Rose 1	1-7			X	4-4	4-4		6-2	15	4
5	Wood Green HK		3-5	3½-4½	4-4	X		4½-3½		15	3
6	Blackthorne Russia	2-6	1½-6½		4-4		X		4-3½	11½	3
7	Guildford 2	2-6	2½-5½	3-5		3½-4½		X		11	0
8	Barbican 4NCL 2	2½-4½		2½-5½	2-6		3½-4		X	10½	0