

The Middle Game

Newsletter of the MCCU August 2008

Peter Gibbs MCCU's New President

Ray Collett, with biographical details from E.B.Chapman.

Peter is an elder statesman of the game. He has played at elite level, been a national organiser, and was for many years Chess Correspondent for the *Birmingham Post*.

Born in Bradford, he won the Yorkshire Title at the age of 17, and was British Universities Champion in 1955 and 1956. He represented England in international team tournaments. Within the MCCU, he was Central Counties Champion (Staffs, Warks, & Worcs) 5 times and several times Warwickshire Champion. He continues to play over-the-board with a healthy grade of 156 and is also active in correspondence chess.

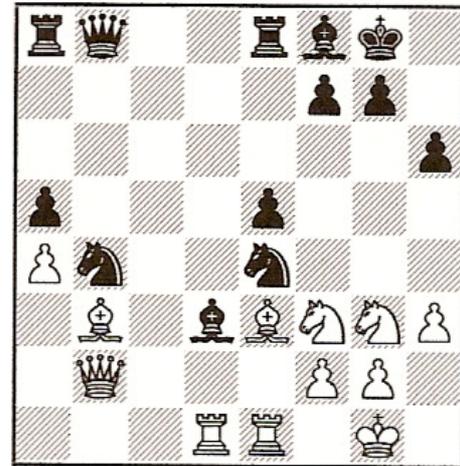
As an organiser, Peter is an ECF accredited chess coach, and Arbiter, was a member of the BCF national committee and he is life Vice-president for both Yorkshire and Warwickshire. He continues to be active in organising events for the Braille Chess Association.

Featured Game

This game from two MCCU contenders for the British Chess Championship in Liverpool was played 30 July and judged best in round 3.

Horner, J (2372) - Hebden, M (2520)
Two Knights Defence

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6 4.d3 Be7 5.0-0 0-0 6.Bb3 d6 7.c3 Na5 8.Bc2 c5 9.Nbd2 A move tried by Kosten in several games. It leads to persistent white pressure that can lure black into a premature break. Immediately sharper is 9.b4 cxb4 10.cxb4 Nc6 11.b5 Na5 12.d4 exd4 13.Nxd4 Bd7 14.Nd2 Rc8 15.Bb2 Kramnik-Polgar, J, Moscow, 1996 **9...Re8** Two other moves have been tried by black here: 9...b5 10.Re1 Re8 11.Nf1 Nc6 12.Ng3 Bf8 13.h3 Rb8 14.d4 cxd4 15.cxd4 a5 Kosten-Smagin, Hastings, 1989; and 9...Qc7 10.Re1 Be6 11.Nf1 Nc6 12.Ng3 Rad8 13.h3 h6 14.Nh4 d5 15.exd5 Nxd5 16.Nhf5 Nf4 17.Qg4 Ng6= Kosten-Flear, Paris, 1988 **10.Re1 Bf8 11.Nf1 h6 12.Ng3 Nc6 13.Bb3** 13.h3 g6 14.a3 Bg7 15.b4 b6 16.Be3 cxb4 17.cxb4 Kosten-Murrey, France, 1990 **13...b5** 13...Na5 has also been played in this position. 14.Ba4 Bd7 15.Bxd7 Qxd7 16.Bd2 Rac8 17.c4 Nc6 18.a3 a5 19.Ne2 b6 20.Nc3 g6 Torre-Quebec, Manila, 1991 **14.h3 a5 15.a4 b4 16.d4** 16.Bc4= prevents black's bishop getting the a6-f1 diagonal. **16...bxc3 17.bxc3** 17.dxc5 c2 18.Qxc2 dxc5 19.Bc4= **17...cxd4?! 17...exd4 18.cxd4 d5 19.e5 c4= 18.cxd4 Ba6** 18...exd4 19.Bb2± **19.Be3?! 19.Bb2** exd4 20.Nxd4 Nb4 21.Re3 stops the black knight from riding all over white's position. **19...Nb4 20.Qd2?! 20.Bd2** maintains equality **20...Bd3 21.dxe5 dxe5 22.Qb2 Qb8** (see diagram) 22...Nxe4 is less good: 23.Nxe5 Rxe5 24.Qxe5 **23.Rad1 Nxe4 24.Bxf7+?** 24.Nxe4 Bxe4 25.Rd7 (25.Ba7 Rxa7 26.Rxe4 Bd6 with advantage to black) 25...Bg6 (25...Nd3 26.Bxf7+ Kh7 27.Qe2 Nxe1 28.Nxe1 and white has good compensation for the exchange, for example:



Horner-Hebden after 22...Qb8

28...Re7 29.Bxh6 Bg6 30.Bxg6+ Kxg6 31.Rxe7 Bxe7 32.Bd2 Bf6 33.Qe4+ Kf7 34.Bc3) 26.Nh4 Kh7 27.Nxg6 fxc6 28.Red1 and white has a good attack for the pawn **24...Kxf7 25.Qb3+ Re6** 25...Kg6 26.Rxd3 Nxc3 27.Rd7 Kh7 28.fxc3 e4 29.Bf4 Qb6+ 30.Nd4 Bc5 31.Be3 Nd3 with advantage to black **26.Nxe4 Bxe4 27.Rd7+ Be7 28.Rxe7+** 28.Bc5 **A)** 28...Bd5? 29.Rxd5 Nxd5 30.Qxd5 Bf6 (30...Bxc5? 31.Nxe5+); **B)** 28...Nc6 29.Rb7 Bc2 30.Qb2 Qc8 is unclear **28...Kxe7 29.Bc5+ Kf6 30.Rxe4 Na6 31.Qc3 Nxc5 32.Qxc5 Qb1+ 33.Re1 Qb4** Black has now consolidated the advantage of the exchange. **34.Qd5 34.Qe3!? Kf7 35.Nxe5+ Kg8 36.Qe4µ]** **34...Rae8+→** Black prepares e4 **35.Nd2 e4 36.Rb1 Qxa4 37.g4 37.Nc4 Qc2 38.Rd1 Qb3+→ 37...Kf7 38.Nc4 Kg8 39.Ne5?!** not the greatest defence 39.Nxa5 is better, but not sufficient 39...Qa3 40.Rb3 Qa1+ 41.Kg2 **39...Kh7 40.Nf7** White intends g5 [40.Nc4 Qc2 41.Rb7 Rf6 also wins for black **40...Qc6** is more than adequate but 40...e3 is even stronger **41.Qf5+ Kg8 42.g5 h5 0-1**

The Editor Writes ...

I was foolish enough to volunteer to help the MCCU at the AGM and was appointed as "Public Relations Director".

I have always thought that regional and national chess bodies appear remote from ordinary players and I hope that *The Middlegame* helps bring players in the MCCU's areas together. It will be distributed mainly electronically and it is planned to produce 3 further issues in the 2008-9 season. This will be possible only if secretaries and captains tell me results and give me news items to include. I hope that Club secretaries will find time to print off a copy and place it on the club's notice board for members.

This issue is something of a trial run. I would like to include in each issue: a featured game, notes of any changes of county, league and MCCU officials; a list of future tournaments run by MCCU affiliates; summaries of results of MCCU events and news items related to MCCU players that would not ordinarily reach *Chess Moves*, *Chess*, or *The British Chess Magazine*.

Ray Collett,

MCCU News

Fourteen representatives attended the AGM held at Syston, Leics at the end of June. The Officers' reports for 2007-8 were accepted.

On the financial side, there was a surplus of about £500 and a balance of about £4,300. Income came principally from affiliated organisations. Expenditure was principally expenses of running competitions, internal communications, donations and a bursary. Some £200 of the accrued surplus is earmarked for expenditure on junior chess and monies from the John Robinson Trust and some expenses from 2007-8 have not yet been paid. In the budget, it was agreed that subscriptions from affiliated counties would remain the same.

Last year, the MCCU ran the union stage of the inter-counties team tournaments, controller Cyril Johnson, with a total of over 700 games being played, the Midlands Grand Prix was launched, a jamboree junior event was run, and the feasibility of running a Midlands Club Championship is being investigated. Officers for 2008-9 were elected (see page n left/right hand column). Recent changes in the ECF were discussed and ways to capitalise on the Chess in Schools initiative in the MCCU areas were discussed. The date of the next AGM is provisionally set for 21 June 2009.

The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting are on the MCCU website at http://www.mccu.org.uk/MCCU_AGM_2008_Minutes.doc (MS Word format).

The MCCU

The Midland Counties Chess Union (MCCU) currently includes the chess associations of Derbyshire, Herefordshire, Leicestershire & Rutland, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire and the Manchester Chess Federation. The major purpose of the MCCU is to encourage the development of chess in the areas of affiliated members by organising tournaments, and encouraging the teaching and study of chess. The MCCU is a constituent part of the English Chess Federation (ECF) and has the right to nominate county teams and individuals to participate in English Championship events.

MCCU volunteer officers manage the day-to-day affairs of the union. They serve for one year and are elected at the Annual General Meeting of representatives of organisations. Each organisation is entitled to send up to four representatives. At the last AGM, neither Herefordshire nor Shropshire were represented. If you are a player in Shropshire or Herefordshire and would like to be invited to the next MCCU general meeting, please ask your County Secretary to nominate you. Only one county, Staffordshire, sent a full complement of four representatives, so if you play in any of the other counties and are interested in promoting chess in the MCCU area, please speak to your county secretary and ask them to nominate you as a representative for your organisation.

MCCU website: <http://www.mccu.org.uk/>

Chess in Schools

At the end of July a General Meeting of the ECF Council overwhelmingly endorsed the Chess in Schools policy and requested a loan facility of up to £100,000. There is a background paper on the ECF website is at http://www.englishchess.org.uk/organisation/meetings_reports/chessforschoolspaper_jul08.htm

The free chess sets are manufactured and donated by Holloid Plastics, Basingstoke. A trial pre-production set and board was shown. A few schools had received an early allocation of sets to provide PR photo-opportunities, which are valued by the sponsor Holloid. The donation, worth millions of pounds, is the largest sponsorship ever for chess in England.

Holloid requires the sets to go directly to schools and county chess organisations will not be able to collect sets from depots. They plan to get sets to schools during the 2008-9 school year. Already, several thousand schools have applied for free sets. If you know a local school that has not yet applied for 10 free sets, please ask the Head Teacher to e-mail <chessforschools@englishchess.org.uk> with the school's name and contact details.

ECF want to work with existing junior chess organisations so long as they were properly constituted charitable companies whose directors and agents are Criminal Records Bureau checked and which have policies and procedures that safeguard children, protect data, and promote equal opportunities. The reason for these stringent requirements is that schools cannot work with organisations that are not compliant with legislation. The ECF hopes to provide 10 weekend training courses for adults who wish to seek ECF accreditation as school coaches and to sell tuition materials to schools.

The ECF Board don't plan to borrow £100,000 in one go, but to stage requests for funds as the programme develops. If there is insufficient progress, the full £100,000 will not be used. The Chief Executive Officer promised to provide regular progress statements so that Council members can call a halt if things do not go well.

For the first time, the ECF Board is planning to support chess at grassroots level and I hope that some of you will be enthusiastic enough to volunteer to help in schools.

Future Tournaments

The **Leicester** FIDE rated 10 player all-play-all two weekend event will take place **23-25 August and 6-7 September 2008**. British contenders David Coates, Chris Gibson and teenage contender Brandon Clarke will be competing in an international field. See www.leicesterchess.co.uk

The 36th **Hereford Chess Congress** is at Aylestone School, Broadlands Lane, Hereford HR1 1HY takes place **Saturday 23 August to Monday 25 August 2008**. Entry forms from Alan Archer, 75 Aylestone Hill, Hereford HR1 1HX (Tel: 01432 265712). See <http://home.clara.net/collett/hfd/hct.htm>

Notts Juniors Win EPSCA Title

In the English Primary Schools Chess Association semi-finals held at Prestatyn in June, several MCCU area schools were at the top. Nottingham HS juniors were first in both the under 9s and under 11s. Another Nottingham school, Jesse Gray Primary, was 3rd in the under 11s, sharing the place with Hulme Court School, Oldham. Hallfield School, Edgbaston, Birmingham were second in the under 9s.

In the National Finals at Brean Sands in July, Hallfield School were 3rd in the under 9s. Further information about this schools competition is at <http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/staffordshire.chess/epscanpsc.html> or contact Mrs Traci Whitfield at 01782 623361

Gigaglory for MCCU young players

The UK Chess Challenge claims to be the largest youth chess tournament in the world with over 70,000 players competing. At the Northern Gigafinals of the UK Chess Challenge played at the University of Manchester on 5 and 6 July 2008 winners of county finals competed for titles of Ultimo (boys) and Ultima (Girls) titles. Title winners from MCCU areas are listed below. They are in action again in the Terafinals on 16 & 17 August 2008 in Sheffield.

Under 8 Boy, Mark Kenyon (Ravenshead School, Notts); Under 8 Girl, Amber Carter (Brocks Hill School, Leics); Under 9 Boy, Saaras Mehan (Nottingham HS Junior, Notts); Under 10 Boy, Sohun Dhir (Nottingham HS Jun, Notts); Under 10 Boy, Joseph McPhillips (Edgworth School, Lancs); Under 11 Boy, Athar Mehmood (Old Hall School, Shrops); Under 11 Boy, Daniel Lea (Hulme Court School, Lancs); Under 11 Boy, Tom Adams (Foremarke Hall School, Derbys); Brandon Clarke (Littlethorpe School, Leics); Under 12 Boy, Nathan Taylor (Bolton Boys School, Lancs); Under 12 Girl, Isobel Cotogni (Bolton Girls School, Lancs); Under 13 Boy, Craig Whitfield (Foremarke Hall School, Derbys); Under 14 Boy, Astghik Stepanyan (Sutton Coldfield School, Warks); Under 15 Boy, Michael Rabbitte (Tameside Junior Chess Club, Lancs); Under 16 Boy, Kaiser Malik (King Edward's School, Edgbaston, Warks); Under 18 Girl, Sara Latif (King Edward's Five Ways School, Worcs).

MCCU Affiliates

Derbyshire

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Secy: Maurice Bissell, 01562 60146, no Internet

Liverpool ECF Tourney

Stuart Conquest beat former Droitwich and Worcs player Keith Arkell in the play-off for the British Championship at Liverpool. Keith, picks up the English Championship title. British Ladies Champion is Jovanko Houska. See <http://www.britishchess08.com/> for pictures and games scores.

MCCU Officers 2008-9

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Secretary: Julie Johnson (as above),

Webmaster: Sean Hewitt (as above)

ECF delegate: Julie Johnson (as above)

2008 Grades

The new grades have been published on-line and sent by post to ECF Direct Members.

The ECF Grading list is also available as print copy for £22.50 (incl P+P) See <http://www.englishchess.org.uk/products/grading.htm>

The Middlegame

The Middlegame is an occasional newsletter of the Midlands Counties Chess Union edited and produced by Ray Collett, MCCU Public Relations Director. Views are those of contributors alone and do not necessarily represent MCCU policy. If you have comments, wish corrections to be made, or want news items included, please contact Ray Collett, 7 Ogilvy Square, Worcester WR3 7LU, telephone 01905 454754, e-mail collett@clara.co.uk.

I would particularly like to receive notices of future tournaments in MCCU areas, changes in county officials, and results of MCCU county matches, scores of interesting games, problems or end game studies by MCCU players. Thanks - Ray