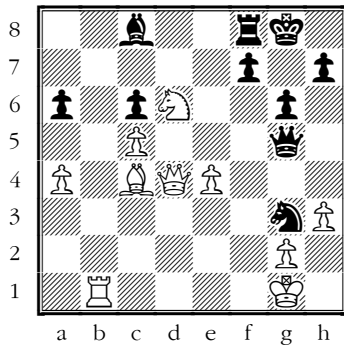
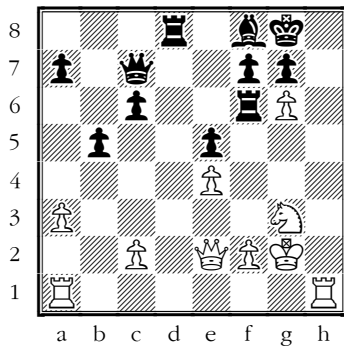


Test Yourself!

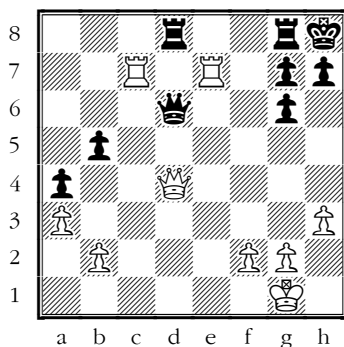
Anand (2791) - Leko (2751)
 Amber Blindfold Nice (1), 14.03.2009



R. Mamedov(2638) - V. Popov(2561)
 European Ch Budva (8), 14.03.2009



Andriasian(2564)- Pr. Nikolic(2623)
 European Ch Budva (8), 14.03.2009



World Chess News

18th Amber Tournament

Blindfold chess, round 1 results:

Kramnik - Morozevich 1-0
 Carlsen - Kamsky 1-0
 Anand - Leko 1-0
 Aronian - Ivanchuk 1-0
 Karjakin - Wang Yue ½-½
 Radjabov - Topalov ½-½

Rapid chess, round 1 results:

Morozevich - Kramnik 1-0
 Kamsky - Carlsen 1-0
 Leko - Anand 1-0
 Topalov - Radjabov ½-½
 Wang Yue - Karjakin ½-½
 Ivanchuk - Aronian 0-1

The tournament was off to a great start, with several interesting games, a few openings novelties and some tactical fireworks. Black certainly was not OK on day one, when White scored +7 -1 =4. After the first day Levon Aronian (Armenia, 2750) is leading with 2/2. His opponent in round 1, Vassily Ivanchuk (Ukraine, 2779) has no points, while everyone else is on 1 point.

Blindfold chess, round 2 pairings:

Ivanchuk - Carlsen
 Leko - Aronian
 Kamsky - Anand
 Morozevich - Wang Yue
 Topalov - Karjakin
 Kramnik - Radjabov

Blindfold chess, round 2 pairings:

Carlsen - Ivanchuk
 Aronian - Leko
 Anand - Kamsky
 Wang Yue - Morozevich
 Karjakin - Topalov
 Radjabov - Kramnik

The World's No 1 player, Veselin Topalov turns 34 today.

[Official website](#)

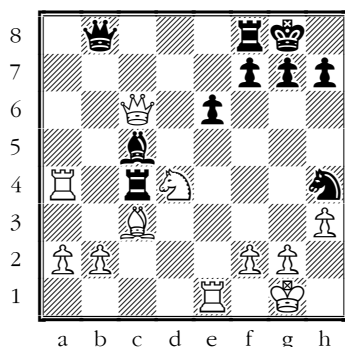
European Ch, Budva

Round 8 top results:

Volokitin (6) – Jobava (5½) 0–1
Navara (5½) – I. Sokolov (5½) ½–½
Inarkiev (5½) – Papaioannou (5½) 1–0
Meier (5½) – Grachev (5½) ½–½
Bocharov (5½) – Sjugirov (5½) ½–½

The leader made a poor decision in a critical situation:

Volokitin (2671) – Jobava (2669)
European Ch Budva (8), 14.03.2009



27...♖f3+! 28.♜xf3?

White must avoid 28.♖xf3?? ♕xf2+ 29.♜xf2 ♜xc6+, but after 28.gxf3! ♕xd4 29.♜xc4 ♜g3+ 30.♜h1 ♜xh3+ 31.♜g1 ♜g3+ 32.♜h1 Black has nothing more than a perpetual check (32...♜h4+ 33.♜g2 ♜xf2+ 34.♜h1 ♜xf3+ 35.♜h2 ♜f2+ 36.♜h1 ♜f3+), as 32...♕xf2?? loses after 33.♜g4 ♕xe1 34.♜xg3 ♕xg3 35.♜g4.

White's mistake cost him an exchange and eventually the game:

28...♜xa4 29.♖c6 ♜b6 30.♖e5 ♜c7 31.♜d1 ♕d6 32.♖g4 f5 33.♖e3 ♜xa2 34.♖d5 ♜b8 35.♜d3 ♜d8-+ 36.♜h1 ♜a7 37.♖b4 ♜a1 38.b3 ♜xd1+ 39.♜xd1 ♜xf2 40.♖c6 ♜d7 41.♜a1 h6 42.b4 ♜f4 43.♕e5 ♕xe5 44.♖xe5 ♜d4 45.♜a6 ♜d1+ 46.♜h2 ♜d6 47.♜b5 ♜d8 48.h4 ♜b8 49.♜xb8 ♜xb8 50.♖d3 ♜b5 51.h5 e5 0–1

Round 9 top pairings:

Jobava (6½) – Inarkiev (6½)
Malakhov (6) – Bocharov (6)
Nyback (6) – Volokitin (6)
Mamedov (6) – Tomashevsky (6)
Sjugirov (6) – G. Guseinov (6)
I. Sokolov (6) – Meier (6)
Grachev (6) – Navara (6)

[Official website](#)

Women's Grand Prix, Istanbul

Standings after 7 rounds:

1. Hou Yifan – 6½;
2–3. Zhao Xue – 6;
3. Koneru – 5;
4. Danielian – 4½;
5–8. Chiburdanidze, Stefanova, Sebag and Fierro Baquero – 3½;
9–10. Cramling and Shen Yang – 2;
11. Z. Mamedyarova – 1½;
12. Yildiz – ½.

[Official website](#)

European Women's Championship, St Petersburg

After defeating the leader IM Lilit Mkrtchian (Armenia, 2460) in round 7, GM Hoang Thanh Trang (Hungary, 2483) is now leading with 6/7. Twelve players are on 5½ points. Today is a rest day at this event.

[Official website](#)

Alexander Grischuk gets an invitation to Bilbao

Alexander Grischuk received an invitation from the Grand Slam Chess Association to participate in the Masters Final which will take place in Bilbao during the first two weeks of September 2009. He has been invited as winner of the "Ciudad de Linares" tournament. Grischuk joins Veselin Topalov, winner of Nanjing Pearl Spring Tournament (China) and Sergey Karjakin, winner of Corus 2009 Tournament in Wijk aan Zee (The Netherlands), both of them have already received their invitations.

The Grand Slam Association consists of the following tournaments: Nanjing Pearl Springs (China), Corus–Wijk aan Zee (Holland), Ciudad de Linares (Spain), Mtel Masters–Sofia (Bulgaria) and the Masters Final, which will take place in Bilbao.

Review of round 1 in Nice

by GM Alex Baburin

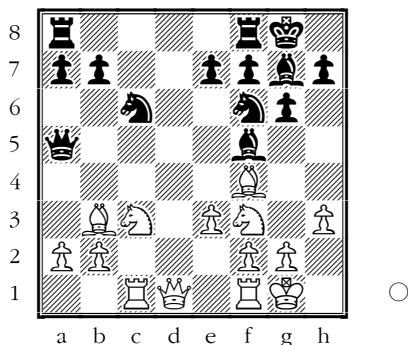
Here I would like to comment on the most interesting (in my opinion) games, played on day 1 of the Amber tournament.

Kramnik (2759) – Morozevich(2771)

Amber Blindfold Nice (1), 14.03.2009

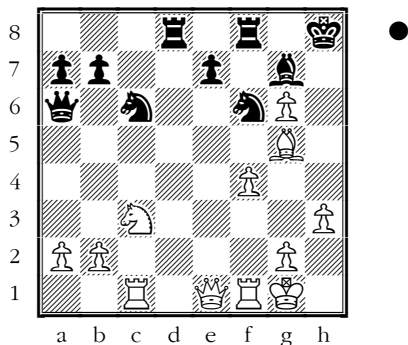
The Gruenfeld Defence; D82

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 d5 4.♙f4
♙g7 5.e3 c5 6.dxc5 ♖a5 7.♞c1
dxc4 8.♙xc4 0-0 9.♗f3 ♗xc5
10.♙b3 ♗c6 11.0-0 ♖a5 12.h3
♙f5 (D)



13.♗g5!?N The main line runs 13.♖e2 ♗e4 14.♗d5 e5.

13...♗a6?! Black should not push his opponent to take on f7, as the line 13...h6?! 14.♗xf7 ♞xf7 15.♙xf7+ ♗xf7 16.♖b3+ ♗f8 17.♖xb7 looks good for White. After 13...♞ad8 which seems to be Black's critical reply, White might consider playing 14.♙xf7+ ♞xf7 15.♖b3 ♗d5 16.♙c7 ♖xc7 17.♗xd5 ♖d6 18.♗xf7 ♗xf7 19.♗f4+ ♗f8 20.♖xb7 with very unclear play. 14.e4! ♞ad8?! 15.♙xf7+! ♗h8 16.♖e1 h6 17.exf5 hxg5 18.♙xg5 ♞xf7 19.fxg6 ♞ff8 20.f4 (D)

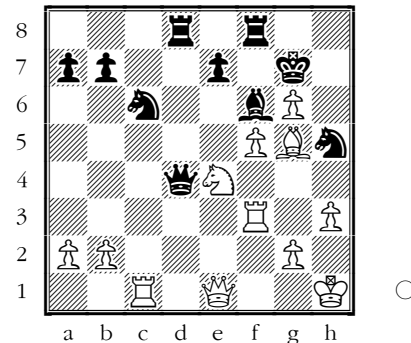


The black king is weak, so three pawns are worth more than a knight

here. 20...♗d3 21.f5 ♗h5 22.♞f3 ♗d4+ 23.♗h1 ♙f6 24.♗e4!

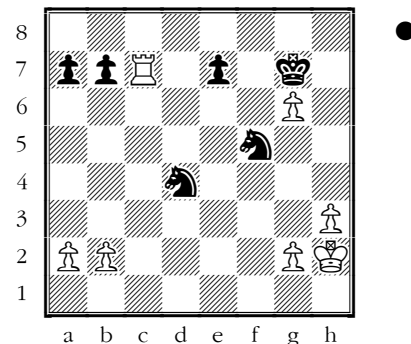
White did not want to get involved in complications after 24.♞f4!? ♙xg5 25.♞xd4 ♗xd4.

24...♗g7 (D)



25.♗c5 Here White missed a much better option – 25.♗xf6! exf6 26.♞xc6! ♖d1 27.♞c7+ ♗g8 28.♙h4+-.

25...♞d6 26.♙xf6+ ♞dxf6 27.♗e6+ ♞xe6 28.♖xe6 ♞f6 29.♖e3 ♞xf5 30.♖xd4+ ♗xd4 31.♞xf5 ♗g3+ 32.♗h2 ♗gxf5 33.♞c7 (D)



In the endgame a rook and two pawns are usually much stronger than two knights. Here Black has no counter-play, so he is doomed.

33...♗xg6 34.g4 Kramnik did not want to allow any counter-play, possible after 34.♞xb7 e5 35.♞xa7 e4. 34...♗d6 35.♞xe7 ♗f6 36.♞e3 b5 37.h4 ♗c4 38.♞e4 ♗e6 39.♗g3 a5 40.b3 ♗d6 41.♞e1 ♗c5 42.g5+ ♗f5 43.♞f1+ ♗e5 44.♗g4 ♗ce4 45.h5 1-0

Aronian (2750) – Ivanchuk (2779)

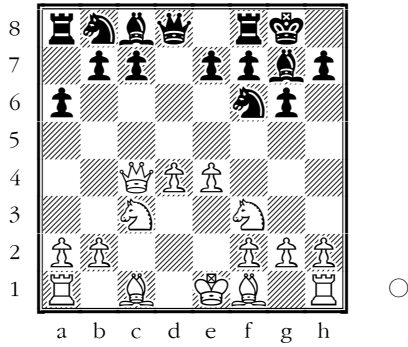
Amber Blindfold Nice (1), 14.03.2009

The Gruenfeld Defence; D97

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 d5 4.♗f3
♙g7 5.♖b3 dxc4 6.♖xc4 0-0 7.e4
a6 (D)

This issue is prepared by GM Alex Baburin; technical editor: Graham Brown

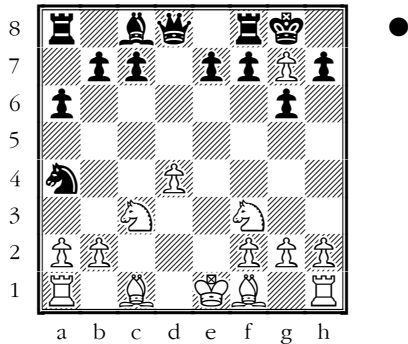
Subscription is 15 euro for 3 months. For further details please refer to <http://www.chesstoday.net>



8.♖a4 This is a very rare move. White's most popular options are 8.e5 and 8.♗e2.

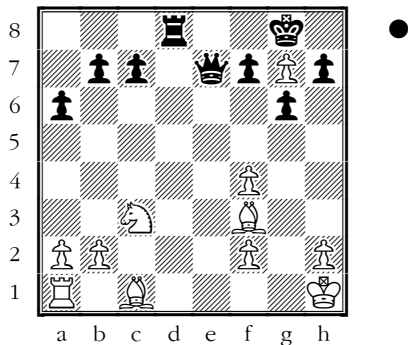
8...♗bd7 9.e5 ♗b6!?N 10.exf6?! This leads to a very unbalanced position. 10.♖a5 ♗fd5 11.♗e2 was a safer option.

10...♗xa4 11.fxg7 (D)



11...♞e8!? Black wants to break open the centre. 11...♞xg7 12.♗xa4 ♗g4 was a worthy alternative.

12.♗xa4 e5 13.dxe5 ♗g4 14.♗c3 ♗xf3 15.gxf3 ♞xe5+ 16.♗e2 ♖e7 17.f4 ♞e6 18.♞f1 ♞d8 19.♗f3 ♞e1+ 20.♞g2 ♞xh1 21.♞xh1 (D)



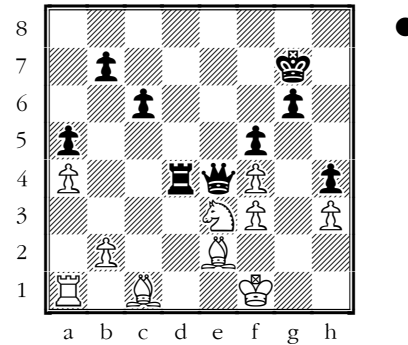
White's minor pieces are uncoordinated and don't have any targets to attack, so Black has a better game.

21...♞d3 22.♞g2 c6! 23.♗e4 f5 24.♗c3 ♞xg7 25.a4 a5 26.♗d1 h5 27.♗e3 h4 28.h3 ♖e6 29.♞f1 ♞d4

30.♗e2 ♖e4 It was time to collect some material - after 30...♞xf4!

31.♗d2 ♞h7 Black is winning.

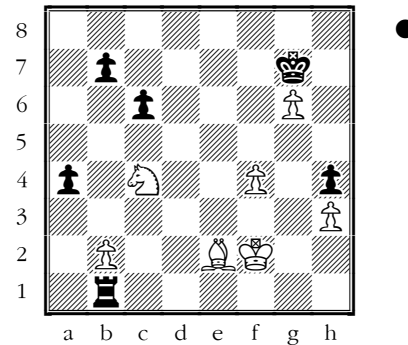
31.f3 (D)



31...♞xa4? It seems that Ivanchuk misjudged the resulting endgame. Correct was the patient 31...♖e6.

32.fxe4 ♞xa1 33.exf5 ♞xc1+

34.♞f2 ♞b1 35.♗c4 a4 36.fxg6 (D)



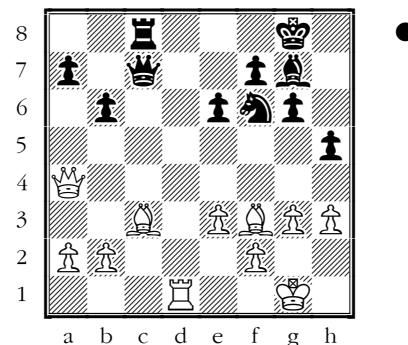
36...♞xb2?? That was clearly an oversight. Black should be still OK after 36...b5 37.♗d3! ♞d1 38.♗e5 b4

39.♞e3 a3 40.bxa3 bxa3 41.♗c4 ♞c1. 37.♗xb2 a3 38.♗c4 axb2 39.♗d3+- c5 40.♞e3 b5 41.♗b1 b4 42.♞d3 ♞xg6 43.♞c4+ 1-0

Leko showed great endgame technique in the rapid chess:

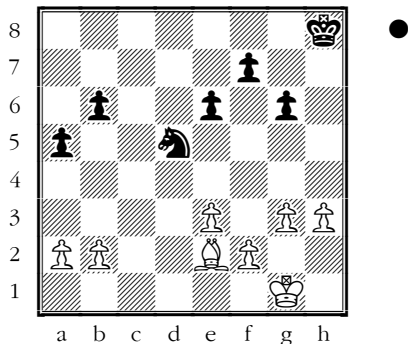
Leko (2751) - Anand (2791)

18th Amber Rapid Nice (1), 14.03.2009



A bishop pair gives White better chances – Black can't offer the exchange of bishops yet, as ...d5 loses a pawn, while any other knight move allows e7!. Black can't play 23...d8, as after 24.e8+ xe8 the a7-pawn drops. So, he has to weaken his queenside.

23...a5 24.g2 d8
 24...h7!? 25.d7 c4 26.xc4 xc4
 27.xg7 xg7 28.b7 b4 29.b3 a4
 30.d1 axb3 31.xb3+.
25.f4! e7 26.xd8+ xd8
27.g5! h7 28.d4! g8 29.g1
h8?! 30.xh5! d5 31.xd5
xd5 32.xh8 xh8 33.e2 (D)



and White converted his extra pawn.
33...g7 34.f1 e5 35.c4 f6
36.h4 e4 37.e2 d6 38.d5 f6
39.f3 g5 40.hxg5 fxg5 41.g4
f6 42.f4... (1-0)

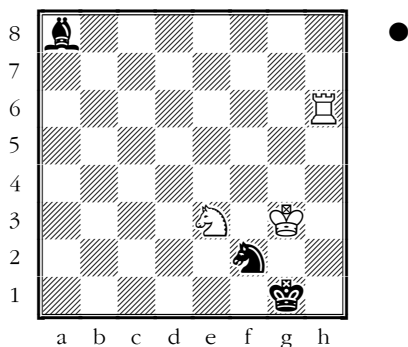
Two Rare Endings

by GM Alex Baburin

I'd like to share with CT readers two curious pawnless endgames.

Bocharov (2647) – Sjugirov (2562)

European Ch Budva (8), 14.03.2009



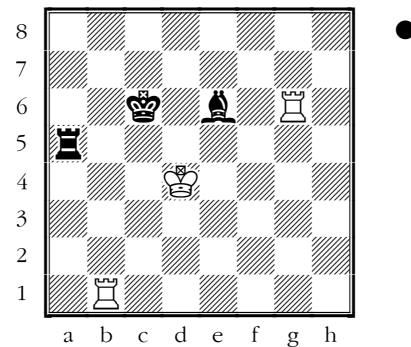
Normally such endings are drawn, but here the black king is dangerously placed, so White wins (checkmate in

59 against the best defence) – if you have a computer chip and tablebases embedded into your head!
102...e4+ 103.f4 c3 104.f5?
 White wins after 104.g4! f1
 105.a6 b7 106.a3 d1 107.a7
 c6 108.a2 e8 109.h2+ e1
 110.f3+ f1 111.d4 f7 112.c2,
 but against best defence it will take another 50 moves!

104...f2! Now Black is OK and a draw was agreed 49 moves later.

Ovod (2430) – Tomilova (2300)

European w Ch, St Petersburg, 2009



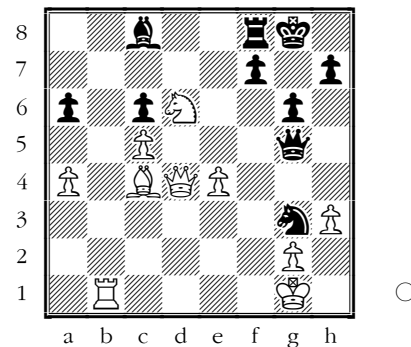
The last pawn was taken on move 54 and Black has been defending quite well. However, here she failed to find the only move – 87...d7! 88.b7+ c8, for example: 89.h7 d7
 90.g8+ c7 91.gg7 a4+ 92.d3
 a3+=. The game went:

87...d5+? 88.e4 d6 89.e5
d7 90.g7+ c6 91.c1+ 1-0

Solutions to our Quiz:

Anand (2791) – Leko (2751)

Amber Blindfold Nice (1), 14.03.2009



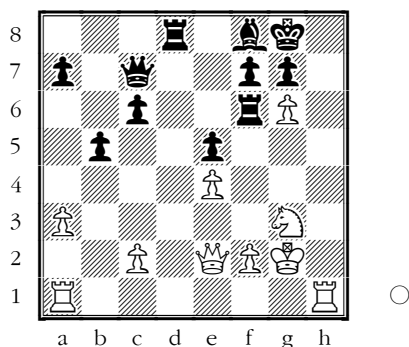
35.xf7+! xf7 36.h8+!! 1-0

This finish closely resembles the ending of game 10 of the Petrosian – Spassky match in 1966.

This issue is prepared by GM Alex Baburin; technical editor: Graham Brown

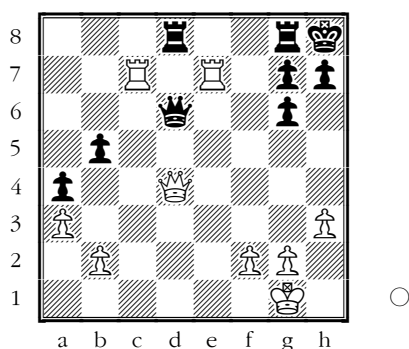
Subscription is 15 euro for 3 months. For further details please refer to <http://www.chesstoday.net>

R. Mamedov(2638) – V. Popov(2561)
European Ch Budva (8), 14.03.2009



29. ♖h8+! 1-0

Andriasian(2564)– Pr. Nikolic(2623)
European Ch Budva (8), 14.03.2009



33. ♖xg7! ♜xc7 34. ♖d7+ 1-0

Contact information. Have some comments about Chess Today? [E-mail us](#) – we appreciate your feedback! **Chess Today** is published by Alexander Baburin, 3 Eagle Hill, Blackrock, Co. Dublin, Ireland. Tel: (353-1) 278-2276. Fax: (353-1) 283-6839. E-mail: ababurin@iol.ie Website: <http://www.chesstoday.net> Editors: GMs Baburin, Scherbakov and Golubev. IMs Barskij, Notkin and Deviatkin. Technical editors: Graham Brown and Ralph Marconi.

Chess Today is copyright 2000–2009 by Alexander Baburin and protected intellectual property under the International Copyright convention. Subscribers are allowed to non-commercially distribute copies of Chess Today at their chess club, chess tournaments and via e-mail (on an occasional basis). Any other use and distribution (reproduction, via print, electronic format, or in any form whatsoever), as well as posting on the Web, is strictly prohibited without express written permission.