

# 2009 Kolty Chess Club Championship

## Round 2 • Games from June 18



Was your opponent in Round 2 20 or more years younger than you are? If so, you probably lost.

On boards 1 and 3, Mike Splane and Alexander Levitan – who have won four club championships between them – both lost to little kids, and there were at least three other games won by the much younger player.

White: Christopher Tsai (1772)

Black: Mike Splane (2206)

Pirc Defense

**1. e4 d6 2. d4 Nf6 3. Nc3 g6**

The Pirc is riskier than the King's Indian. White plays c4 in the KID, which is not an active move, but against the Pirc, White can play f4 (which aims for e5 violence) or make a developing move.

**4. Bc4 Bg7 5. Nge2**

White can prepare his e-pawn's advance with 5. Qe2, which leaves the d4-pawn unguarded. Then if 5...Nc6, White ignores the threat: 6. e5 Nxd4 7. exf6 Nxe2 8. fxg7 Rg8 9. Ngxe2 and White has sacrificed his queen and two pawns for three active minor pieces. I liked the games IM Jay Whitehead was playing with this line 30 years ago, and I got my chance once: 5...e6 10. Bh6 d5 11. O-O-O?? Qh4 0-1, which I offer as another example of why it's far more important to learn tactics than opening theory.

**5. ... O-O 6. O-O Nxe4 7. Bxf7+ Rxf7 8. Nxe4 d5**

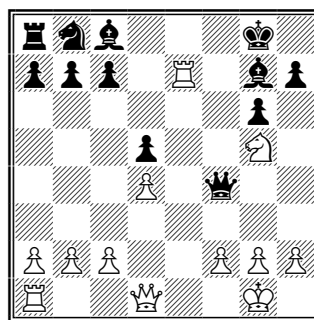
Black is a little behind in development, which he ought to correct before

moving a pawn a second time. At least Black should prefer ...e5 in order to fix its backwardness (Black didn't play ...e5 now because 9. Bg5 would be uncomfortable). 8...Nc6 is in accord with both notions, as in Fink-Chajes, Chicago 1926, 1/2 in 92 moves.

**9. Ng5 Rf8 10. Nf4 Qd6 11. Re1**

Giving up two minor pieces for a rook and pawn is usually a bad idea early in the game because the minors can be coordinated long before rooks and pawns gain value (rooks and pawns are more valuable late in the game when pawns can promote and rooks can roam). In this position it is even more dubious because the pawn involved in the transaction is a weak one.

**11. ... Rxf4 12. Bxf4 Qxf4 13. Rxe7**



**13. ... Bd7**

13. ... Qxg5 isn't as good: 14. Re8+ Kf7 (two pieces are pinned after 14...Bf8 15. Rxc8) 15. Rxc8 plus 16. Qe2-e8+ or 16. Rxc7+.

**14. h4 Qxh4**

Black is threatening g5 and d4, but he didn't account for White ignoring

both threats. Instead, 14. ... h6 15. Nf3 Qd6 16. Re3 Nc6 gives Black some advantage.

**15. Qf3! 1-0**

White: Cameron Wheeler (1768)

Black: Alexander Levitan (2028)

Bishop's Opening

**1. e4 e5 2. Bc4 Nc6 3. Nf3 h6**

A silly move. If Black wants to avoid Ng5 in a passive way, then 3...Be7.

**4. O-O d6**

Better is 4...Nf6, developing with a threat, but since Black wasted a move with 3...h6, White is a move ahead in a Two Knights game: 5. d4 and White is better. Then if 5...exd4, here is another Koltanowski game: 6.Nxd4 Bc5 7.Nxc6 bxc6 8.e5 Nh7 9.Qh5 Qe7 10.Bf4 O-O 11.Nc3 Kh8 12.Rad1 Ng5 13.h4 Ne6 14.Bxh6 gxh6 15.Qxh6+ Kg8 16.Rd3 f5 17.Rg3+ Kf7 18.Qg6# 1-0 Koltanowski-NN, blindfold simultaneous exhibition, Los Angeles 1942.

**5. c3 Bg4 6. d3 Qf6 7. Be3 Nge7 8. Nbd2 a6**

Pointless. In an almost identical position, GM Blatny played ...g5 to free his king bishop, and in advance of ...Ng6 and ...Nf4.

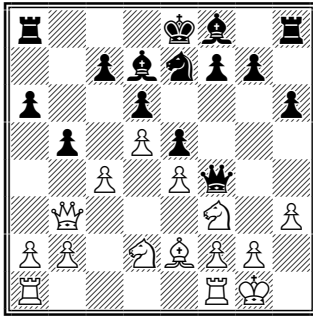
**9. h3 Bd7 10. d4 Ng6 11. d5 Nce7**

Black regrets not having played ...g5. For one thing, his bishop is blocked.

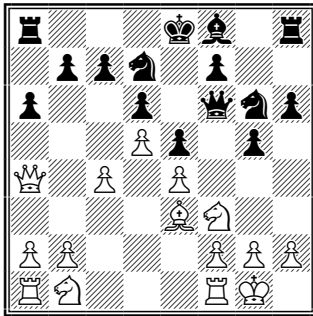
**12. Qb3 b5 13. Be2 Nf4 14. Bxf4**

If there were a pawn on g5, White is reluctant to make this capture because ...gxf4 opens a line right into the white kingside.

14. ... Qxf4 15. c4



Compare this to the position reached in the grandmaster game Kuczynski-Blatny, 1991:



In the master game, Black is two moves away from castling kingside, and his bishop may develop. In the amateur game, Black is three moves from castling kingside because his bishop is stuffed, while his extra pawn move on the queenside enables White, whose queen knight is developed, to create threats.

15. ... Rb8

This is how experienced experts lose to little kids: clinging to material instead of striving for mobility. Black loses a pawn on 15...c6 16 dxc6 Bxc6 17 cxb5 Rb8 18 b6 Nc8 19 Bxa6 Rxb6, but he has some center and some activity, while White's queenside motion is further back.

16. cxb5 axb5 17. a4 b4

Struggling to save weak pawns while three moves away from castling.

White is four moves from queening.

18. Rfc1

Developing the last piece with a threat.

18. ... c5 19. dxc6 Nxc6 20. Bb5

Improving the least active piece with a threat.

20. ... Nd4 21. Nxd4

Curious that White didn't play Bxd7+ here or on his next move.

21. ... exd4 22. Qxb4 Bxb5 23. axb5 Be7 24. Qxd4 O-O 25. Qd3 Bf6 26. Rc2

No matter which rook steps off the back rank, the other rook will be unguarded, so a pin will be created. 26. Ra2 self-pins the knight, whereas 26. Rc2 self-pins a pawn. Better to opt for the lesser evil.

26. ... Rfd8

Another passive move. 26...Rfe8 is more active.

27. Nf3

Threatening to trap the queen with 28. g3.

27. ... h5 28. Ra6 g6 29. g3 Qh6

Compare the activity of the heavy pieces. Black's troubles can be traced all the way back to idle P-R3 moves in the opening. Chess teacher Dan Heisman wrote the good article "A Guide to P-R3" at chesscafe.com. He said bad players make that move often.

30. Rxd6 Qg7 31. Rxd8+ Rxd8 32. Qe2 Qf8 33. e5 Re8 34. b6 Bg7 35. b7

White's next move should be 36. Qa6.

35. ... Qb4 36. Rc8 Qxb7 37. Rxe8+ Bf8 38. e6

A good move. The queenside skirmish is over, so White played in the place where he had a concentration of

force, and it's more powerful because he is going after the king.

38. ... fxe6 39. Qxe6+ Qf7 40. Qxf7+

It's in the bag, but 40. Ng5 is stronger still.

40. ... Kxf7 41. Rxf8+ Kxf8 42. Ne5 Kg7 43. b4 Kf6 44. f4 g5 45. b5 gxf4 46. gxf4 Ke6 47. b6 Kd6 48. h4 1-0

White: Salman Azhar (1563)  
Black: Gary Kelly (1807)  
French Defense

1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. Nc3 Nf6 4. Bd3

Unguards the d-pawn, so the most common move for Black is 4...c5, which attacks d4 and gives him some additional center influence.

4. ... Bb4 5. Bg5

Now it is an unusual MacCutcheon French. When Capablanca played the French, he opted for the MacCutcheon. Alekhine had this position once, and he played 5...c5.

5. ... dxe4

Not a bad move. Black will gain the bishop pair.

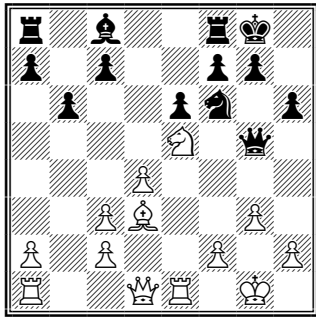
6. Bxe4 h6 7. Bxf6 Qxf6 8. Nf3

8. Ne2 might be preferred for three reasons: 1) If ...Bxc3+, White can retake with a piece; 2) The bishop keeps the option of staying on the h1-a8 diagonal; 3) The f-pawn is free for 0-0, f4, f5.

8. ... Bxc3+ 9. bxc3 Nd7 10. O-O Qf4

In Weaver-Factor, 1936 U.S. championship, Black had a good plan: 10. ... O-O 11. c4 e5 12. c3 c5, where Black's pawns are on the right-colored squares of his bishop, while the white c-pawns are fixed as targets.

11. Re1 Nf6 12. Bd3 O-O 13. Ne5 b6 14. g3 Qg5



White can win rook for bishop by  
15. f4 Qh5 16. Qxh5 Nxh5 17. Be4  
Rb8 18. Nc6 Nf6 19. Nxb8 Nxe4.

### 15. Qf3 Rb8

White can still attack on the long  
diagonal instead of retreating in order  
to defend it: 16. h4 Qh5 17. Qxh5  
Nxh5 18. Nc6 Ra8 19. Be4 Kh8 20.  
Ne5.

### 16. Bf1 Bb7 17. Qd3 h5

The flank attack shouldn't suc-  
ceed while Black is worse in the center.  
Black should be looking to advance  
...c7-c5 while rooks are on c8 and d8.

### 18. Bg2 Bxg2 19. Kxg2 h4

White reacts well, gaining a move  
while Black squirms to keep his pawn.

### 20. Nf3 Qd5 21. Re5 Qb7 22. Kg1 hxg3 23. hxg3 Rfd8 24. Kg2 Rd5 25. Rh1

Not so good. Black should play 25.  
... Rxe5 26. dxe5 Ne4, and then ...Ng5  
would be annoying, so 27. Kg1 Qd5  
threatens to win a pawn.

### 25. ... g6? 26. Rxe6 Rf5 27. Re3

Weak. 27. Re5 is an attacking  
move.

### 27. ... Rd8 28. Rh4 c5 29. Kg1 c4

Hard to find good moves for Black.  
...c4 prepares ...Qa6 as an attacking  
move.

### 30. Qe2 g5 31. Rh2 Ng4

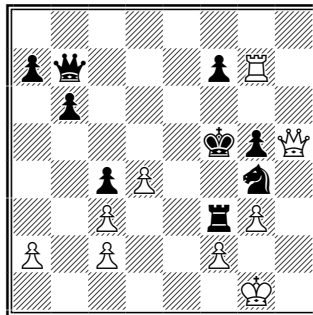
Enables White to get behind en-  
emy lines. 31...b5 has merit: Only the  
possibility of ...Rxf3 prevents Qxc4,

so ...b5 frees the rook to move, while  
preventing Ne5 from making a threat.

### 32. Re8+ Rxe8

Better to give up the exchange to  
get the pieces working: 32. ... Kg7 33.  
Rxd8 Qxf3 34. Qxf3 Rxf3 is a touchy  
endgame.

### 33. Qxe8+ Kg7 34. Qh8+ Kg6 35. Rh7! Rxf3 36. Rg7+ Kf5 37. Qh5



### 37. ... Nf6

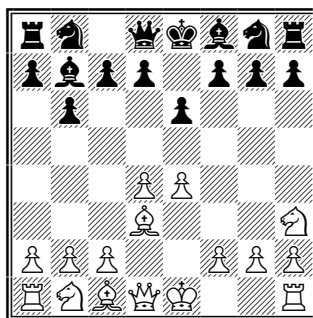
White wins on 37. ... Ke6 38.  
Qxg4+ Rf5 39. Rxg5 Qf3 40. Qxf5+  
Qxf5 41. Rxf5 Kxf5 42. f3.

### 38. Qxg5+ 1-0

Black resigned in view of 38. ...  
Ke6 39. Qe5+ Kd7 40. Rxf7+ Kc8  
41. Qe6+.

White: Frisco Del Rosario (2054)  
Black: Gerald O'Flaherty (1775)  
Owen's Defense

### 1. d4 b6 2. e4 Bb7 3. Bd3 e6 4. Nh3



A simple but farsighted positional  
move introduced in Morphy-Lequesne,  
Paris 1858. White has a better center,

will be ahead in mobility as long as he  
keeps developing, and he is ready to  
castle. A very general formula for win-  
ning chess games: Get better center  
control, better development, and better  
king safety, then from that superior  
position, attack the enemy king by  
opening lines for the heavy pieces – 4.  
Nh3 prepares to open a file by f2-f4-f5.

### 4. ... d6 5. O-O Nd7 6. f4 g6 7. Be3 Ne7 8. c4 Bg7 9. Nc3 a6 10. f5 c5 11. fxe6 fxe6

If 11. ... cxd4 12. exf7+ Kf8, the  
h3-knight gets back into play with  
Ng5.

### 12. Ng5 Nf8 13. d5

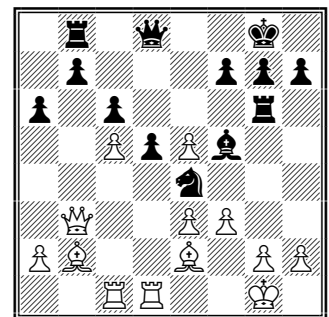
13. Nf7 and 14. Nf7 make less  
thematic use of the f-file.

### 13. ... e5 14. Qf3

White won.

White: Michael Lico (1667)  
Black: Bill Halpin (1446)  
Queen's Gambit

### 1. d4 d5 2. Nf3 Nf6 3. e3 Bf5 4. c4 e6 5. Nc3 Bb4 6. Be2 Ne4 7. Qb3 Nc6 8. O-O Bxc3 9. bxc3 O-O 10. cxd5 exd5 11. Ba3 Re8 12. Rac1 Rb8 13. Rfd1 a6 14. c4 Be6 15. c5 Bg4 16. Rc2 Bf5 17. Rcc1 Re6 18. Ne5 Nxe5 19. dxe5 c6 20. Bb2 Rg6 21. f3



### 21. ... Rxg2+! 22. Kxg2 Qg5+ 23. Kh1

23. Kf1 Bh3+ 24. Ke1 Qg1+ 25.  
Bf1 Qxf1#.

### 23. ... Nf2# 0-1