

Media Release: Ballarat Welcomes Chess Players at Begonia Festival

by Paul Power, Australian Chess Federation

Chess players from Australia and overseas converge on Ballarat this long weekend for Australia's largest regional chess tournament.

A strong field in the Ballarat Begonia Open led by UK Grandmaster Gawain Jones, Australian Grandmaster Zong-Yuan Zhao and record holding winner of 14 Ballarat Open titles Grandmaster Darryl Johansen, defending champion International Master James Morris and Woman Grandmaster Julia Ryjanova compete for the title and over \$12,000 prize money.

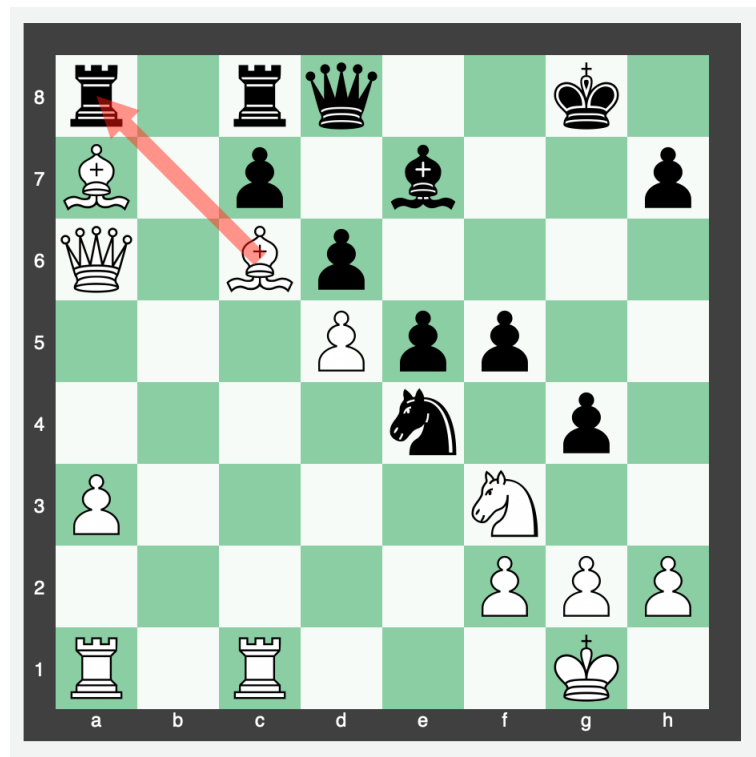
Players from most Australian states with representatives from UK, Serbia, Ireland, Vietnam and Nigeria make a record entry list of 225 .

The tournament runs over 7 rounds over the three day long weekend at The Ballarat Tech School.

Australia's first Grandmaster and winner of 10 Ballarat Open titles, Ian Rogers, will give live on-site commentary.

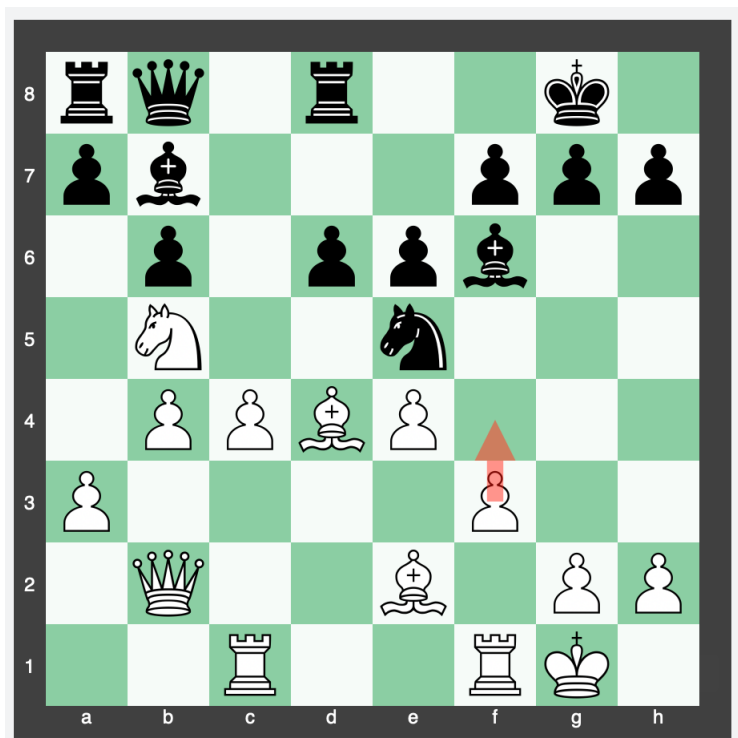
In **Round 1**, the top half players were matched against each other.

On **board 1**, Gawain Jones of UK was untroubled against Harry Harrison, winning a Bishop in the Opening and the Exchange of Rook for Bishop on move 24.



Board 2 was a different story, where veteran Colin Savage (White) strongly contested the opening game with second seed Zhong-Yuan Zhao.

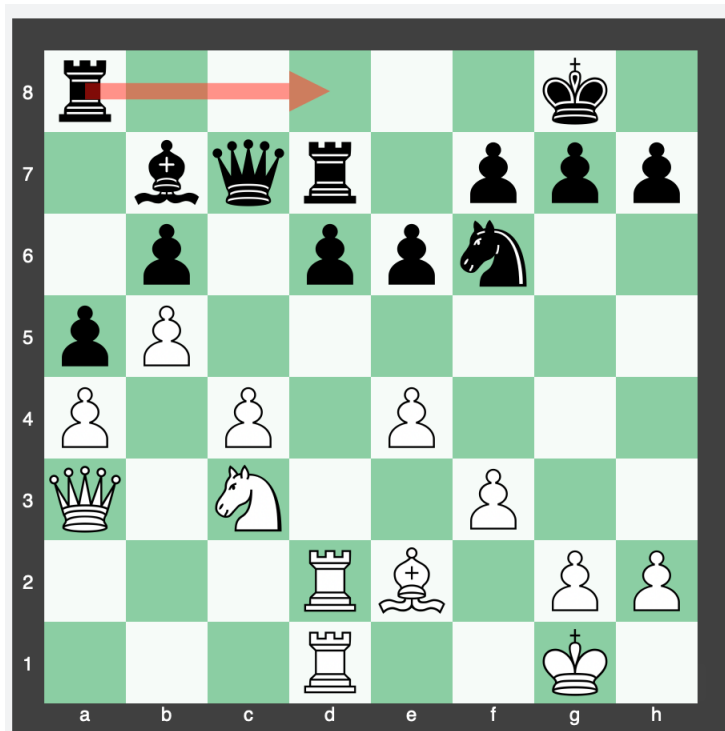
After 17... Bf6 in Zhao's Sicilian Defence,



Savige could press the initiative with 18. f4 Nd7 19. Rcd1 Bxe4 20. Nxd6 Bxd4+ 21. Rxd4 Bc6 22. b5 Bb7 23. Nxb7 Qxb7 24. Qd2 (or 24. Rfd1) with a bind.

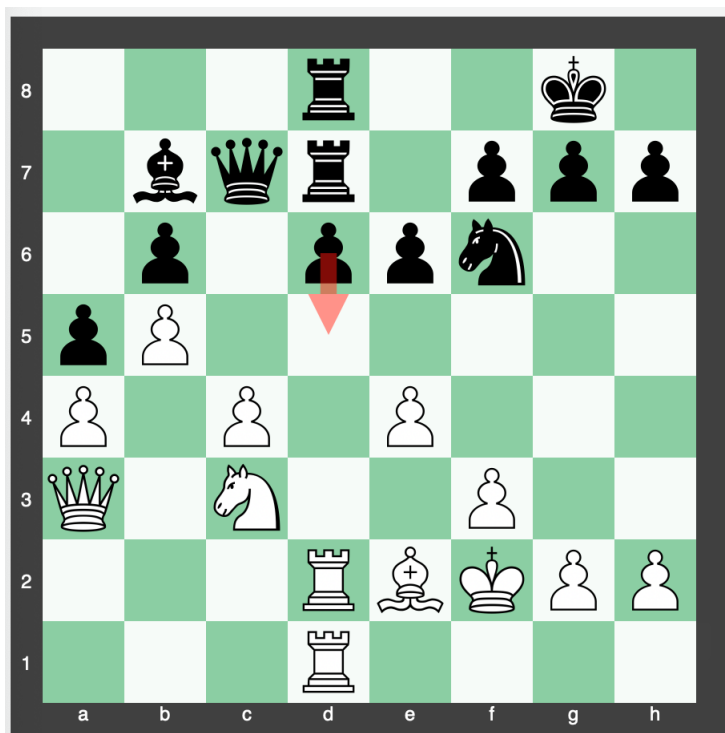
But, instead, Savige chose 18. Rfd1, building pressure on Black's d-pawn.

Reaching a critical position after 26... Rad8

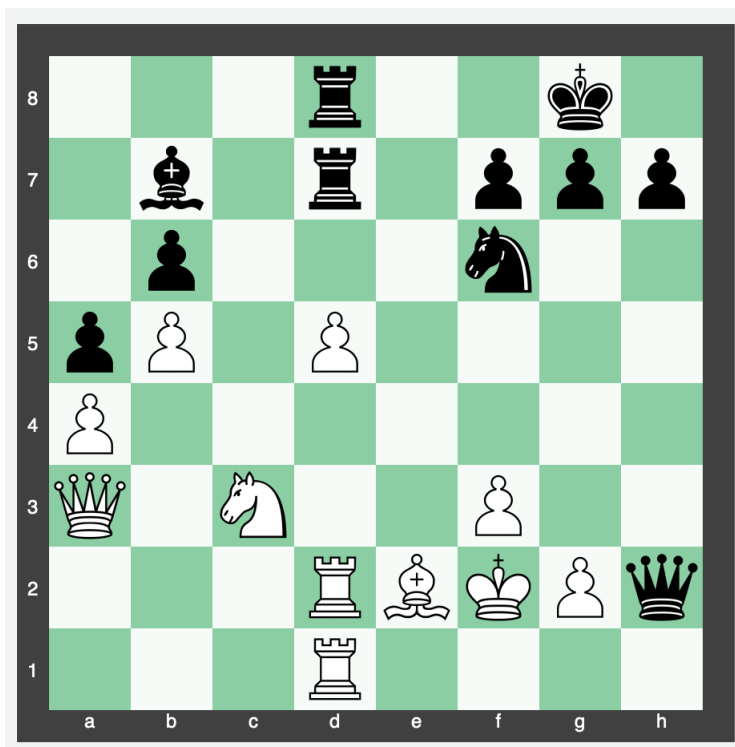


Here, Savige played 27. Kf2

and, after Zhao liquidated the d-pawn on 27... d5



White's h-pawn was exposed to 28. exd5 exd5 29. cxd5 Qxh2

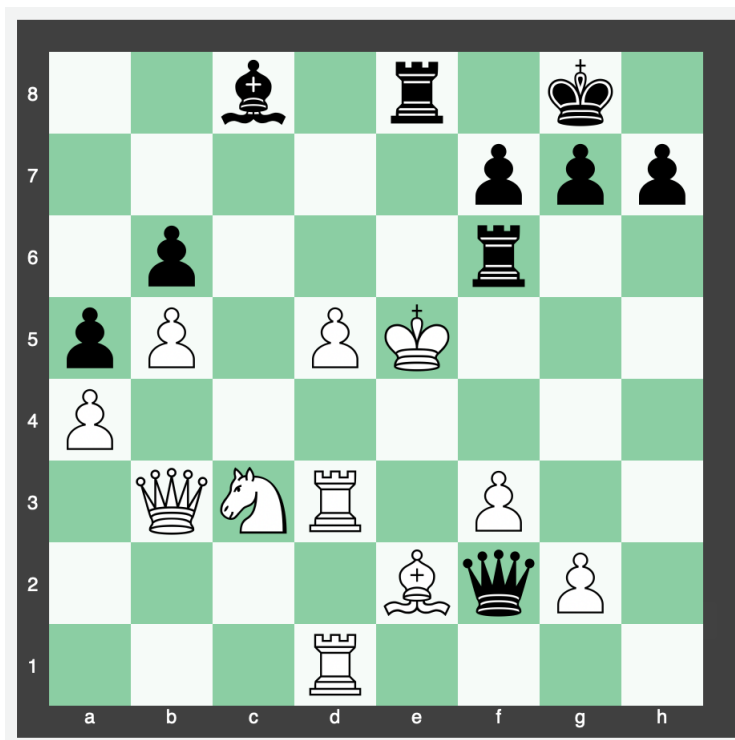


exposing White's King and challenging White to find the best defence, where 30. Rd4 or 30. Qc1 may enable White to survive to an ending.

But, instead, White played 30. Qb3 and there followed 30... Qf4 31. Kg1 (31. Rd4 is better) 31... Qe3+ and Black's Queen is poised to make inroads, with other pieces optimally placed.

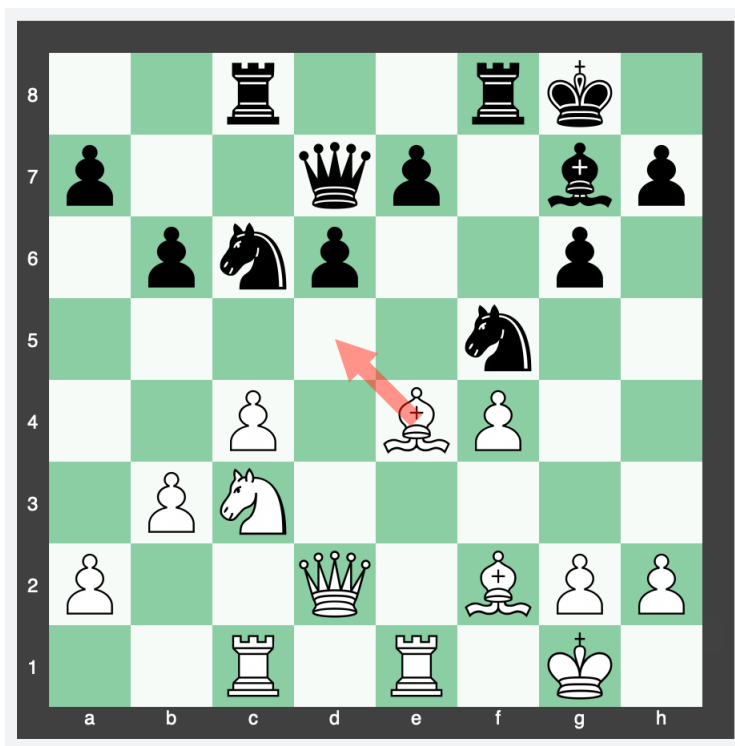
There followed 32. Kh2 Rd6 33. Rd3 Ng4+ 34. Kg3 (34. fxg4 Rh6#) 34... Qf2+

and ultimately

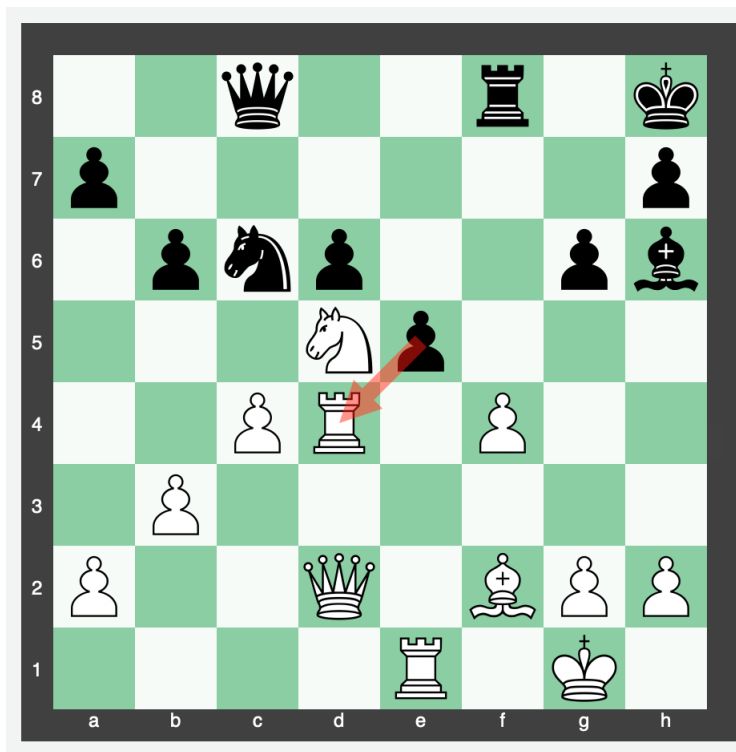


Checkmate

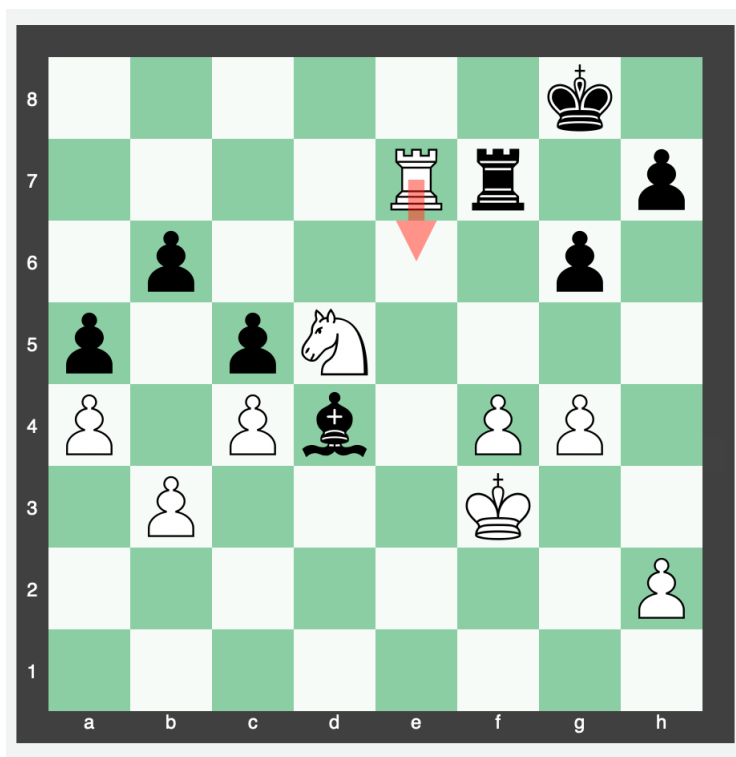
On board 3, Radovanovic (White) won the Exchange of Rook for Bishop by move 25



returned the Exchange for Knight and Pawn and position on move 31

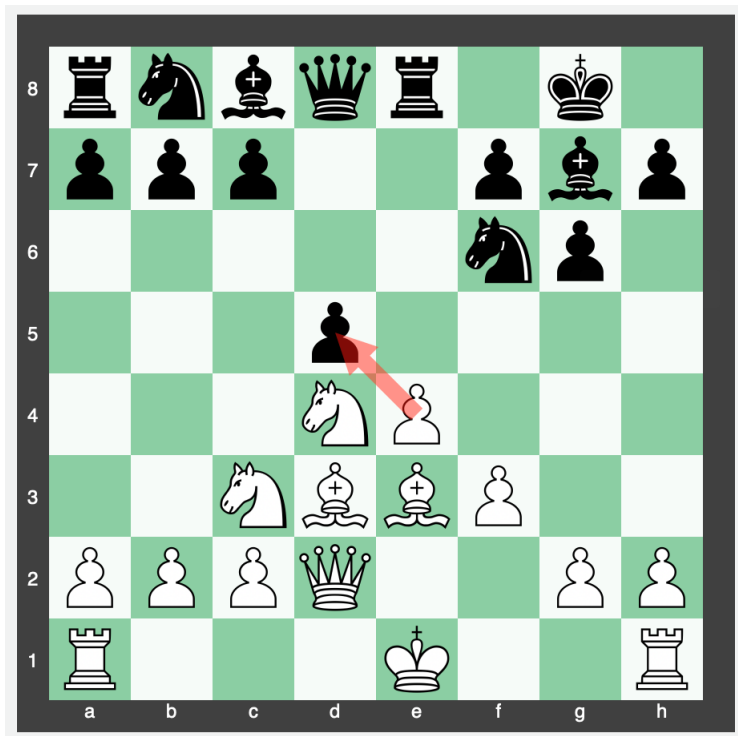


and achieved a winning bind by 42. Re6



Meanwhile, on **board 4**, Ballarat stalwart Bas Van Riel overcame a potential loss of a Knight in the Opening only to succumb to a James Morris middlegame attack against Van Riel's compromised King position.

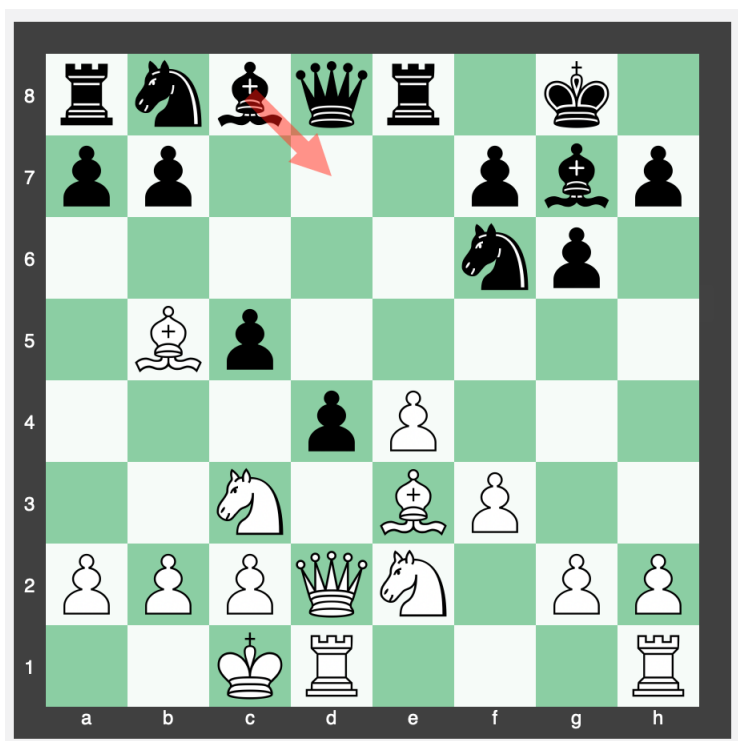
Van Riel (White) v defending champion Morris after 9... d5



Here, White should liquidate threats with 10. exd5, but instead castled long.

Typically alert to opportunity, Morris played 10... c5, winning a piece, as ... d4 threatens.

After 10. O-O-O c5 11. Nde2 d4 12. Bb5

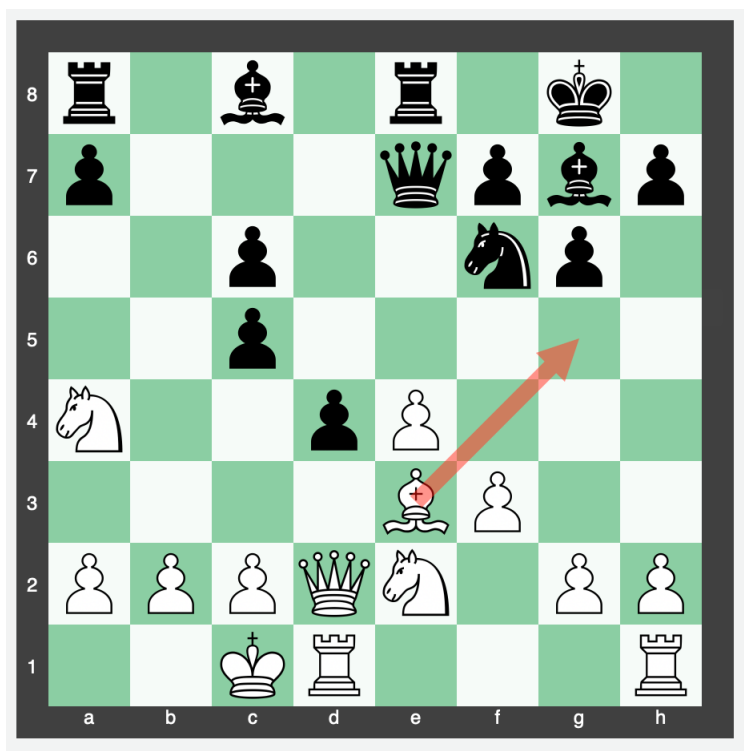


where, simply 12... Bd7 13. Bh6 dxc3 14. Nxc3 wins White's Knight.

But, instead, Morris played 12... Nc6

and, after 13. Bxc6 bxc6, White's Knight escapes 14. Na4 and so does the Bishop, as the d4 pawn is pinned.

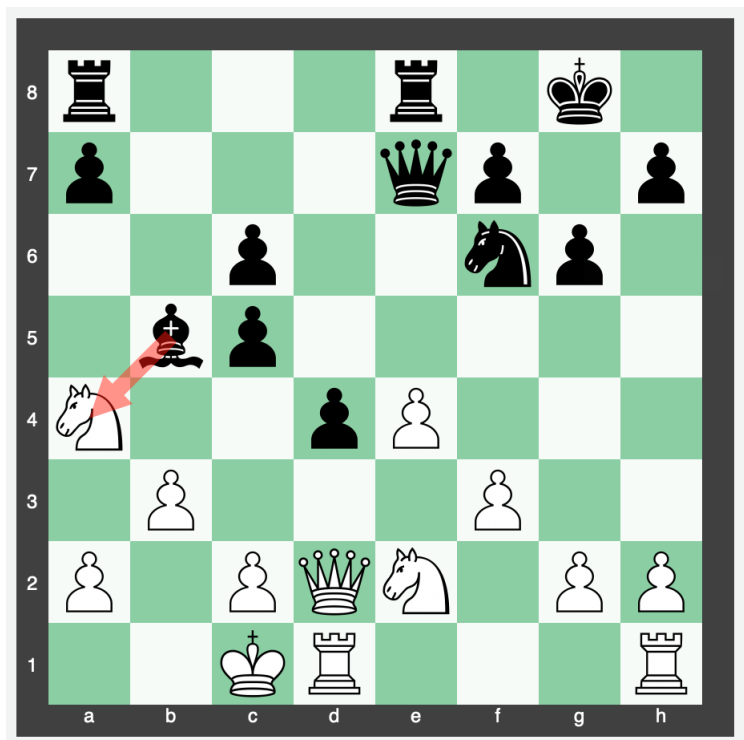
After 14... Qe7,



White can minimise damage by 15. Bg5, placing the Bishop on a square that is not attacked, 15... Ba6 16. Rhe1, over-protecting White's Knight, freeing the Queen to go to the aid of the other Knight with Qa5 in response to ... Bb5

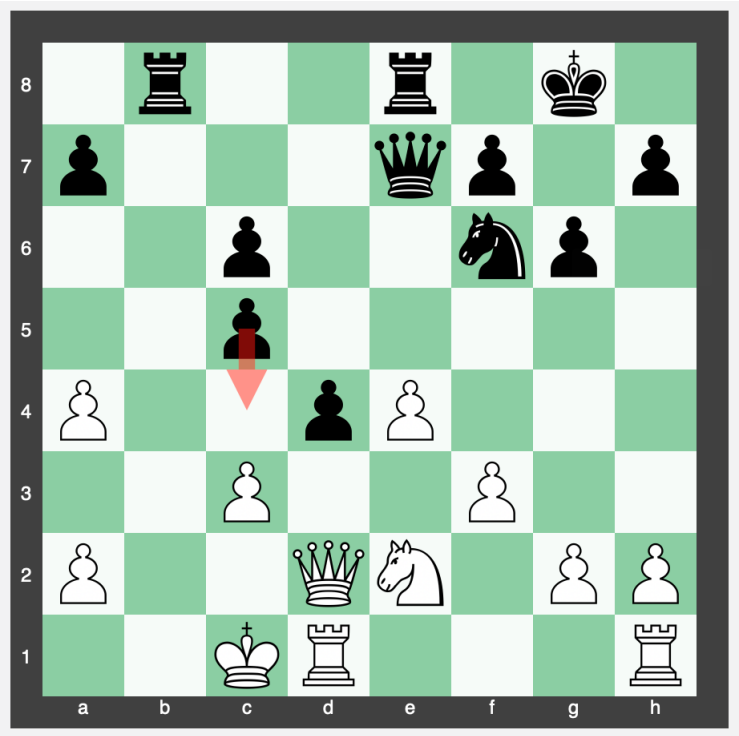
But, instead, White played 15. Bh6

There followed 15... Bxh6 16. Qxh6 Ba6 17. Qd2 Bb5 18. b3 Bxa4



and, after 19. bxa4 Rab8, White's King is fatally exposed.

and, after 20. c3 c4, White resigned

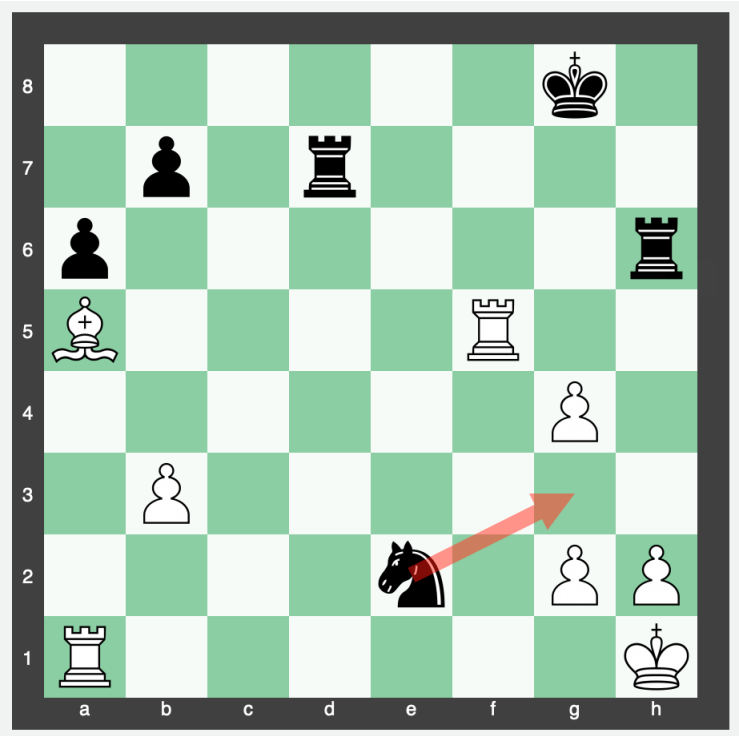


as White's King is at the mercy of Black's Queen and Rook. (On 21. Qxd4 Qa3+ 22. Kd2 Rd8)

Higher ranked players won on the top 10 boards, except for McClymont-Kalina and Coracas-Ryjanova, who drew.

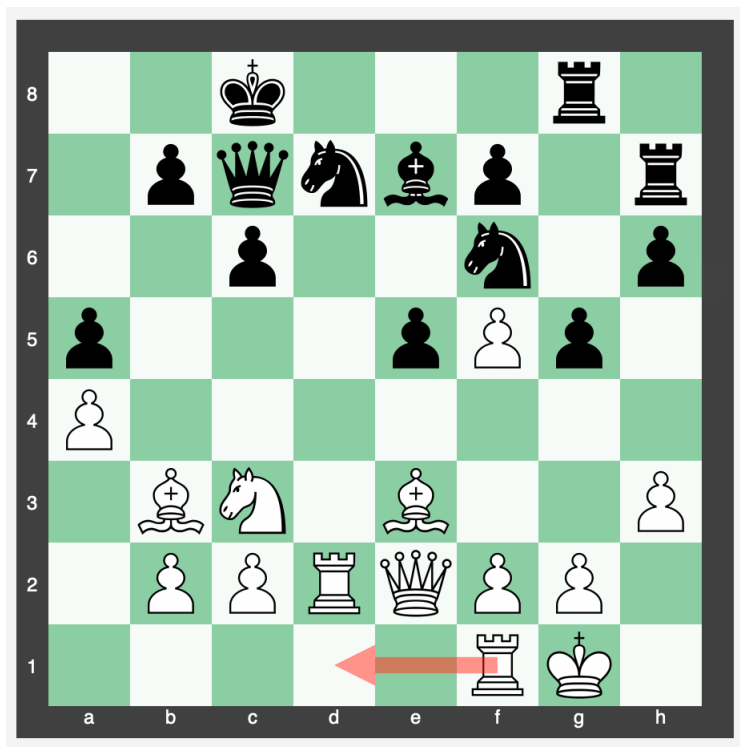
Round 2

Board 1, Li, White, lost to Jones after playing 29. Rf1xf5,

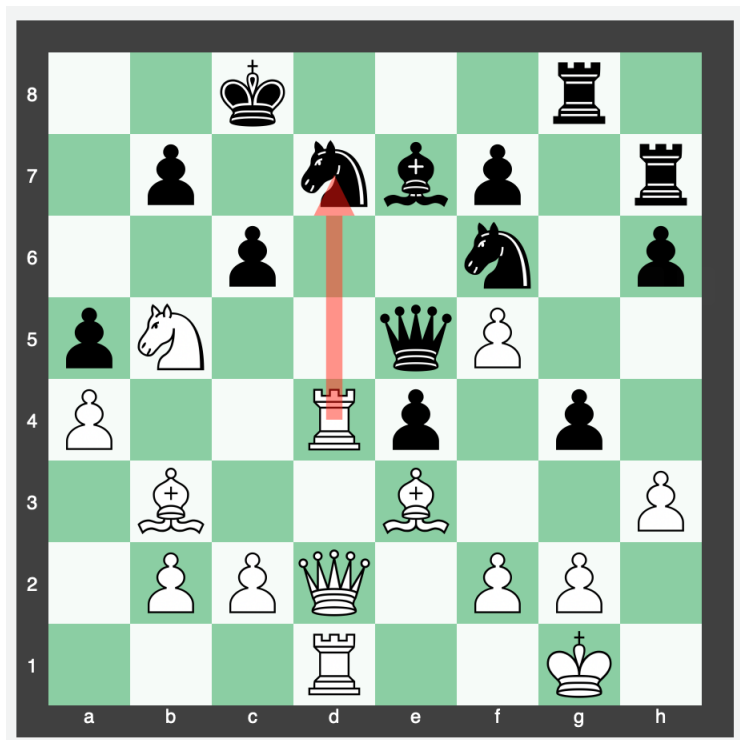


allowing 29... winning Rook for Knight

Board 2, Zhao, White, outplayed Gibson to dominate the d-file by 17. Rfd1



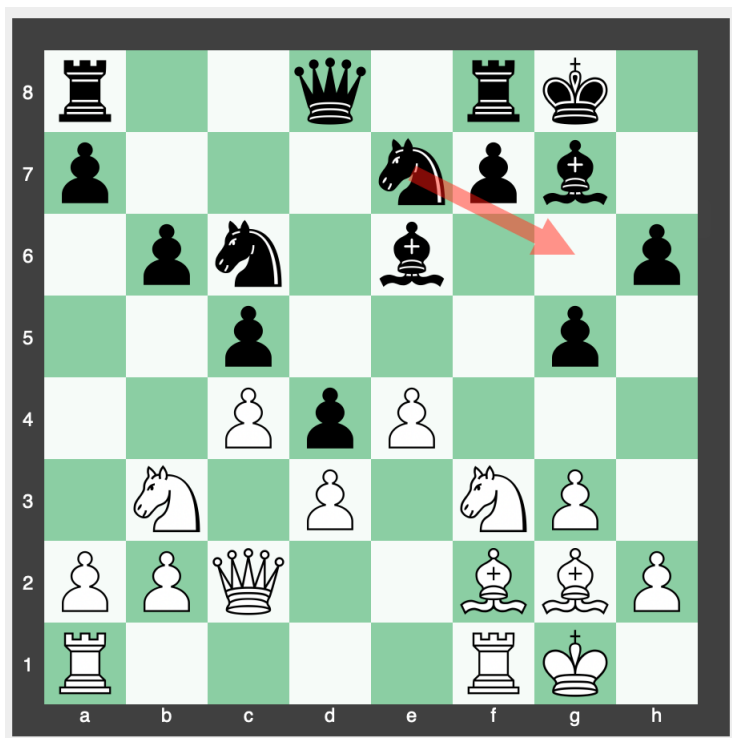
and by 23. Rxd7,



it was essentially game over.

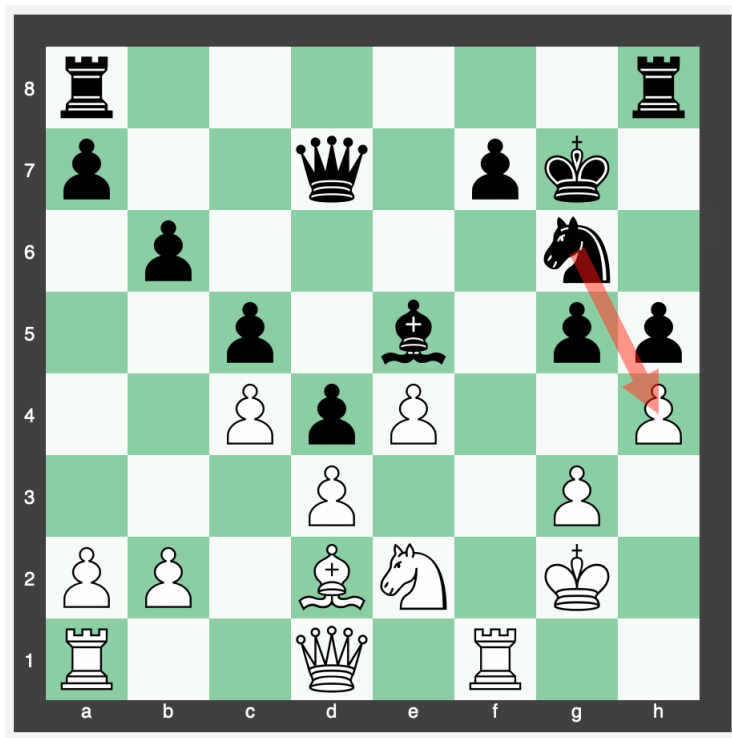
There followed 23... gxh3 24. Bf4 Rxd2+ 25. Kh1 Ng4 26. Rd8+ with mate to follow.

Board 3, saw Radovanovic (Black) achieve a significant space advantage over Tang by 15... Ng6

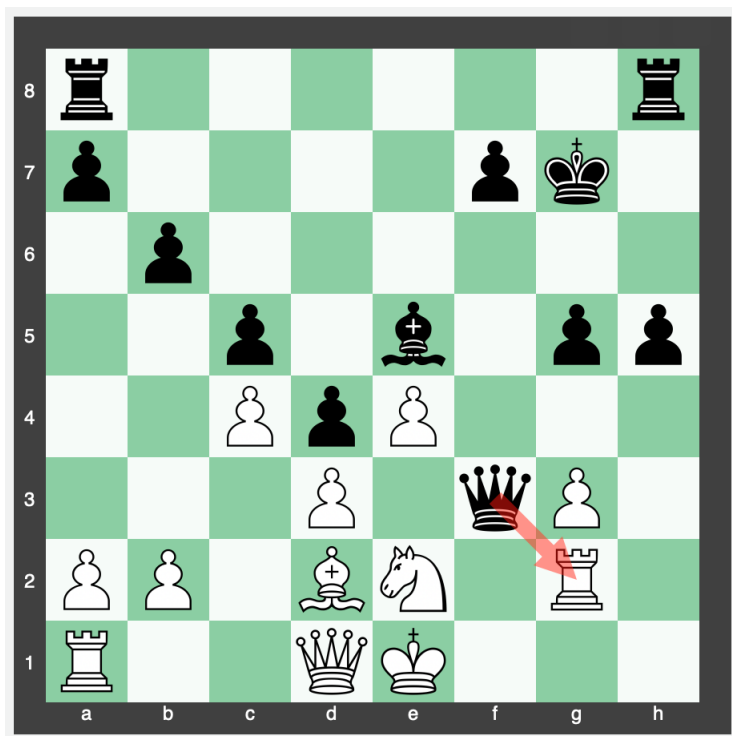


and by move 24 the advantage was such, as Carlsen would say, "Look for the tactics!"

Radovanovic found 24... Nxe4

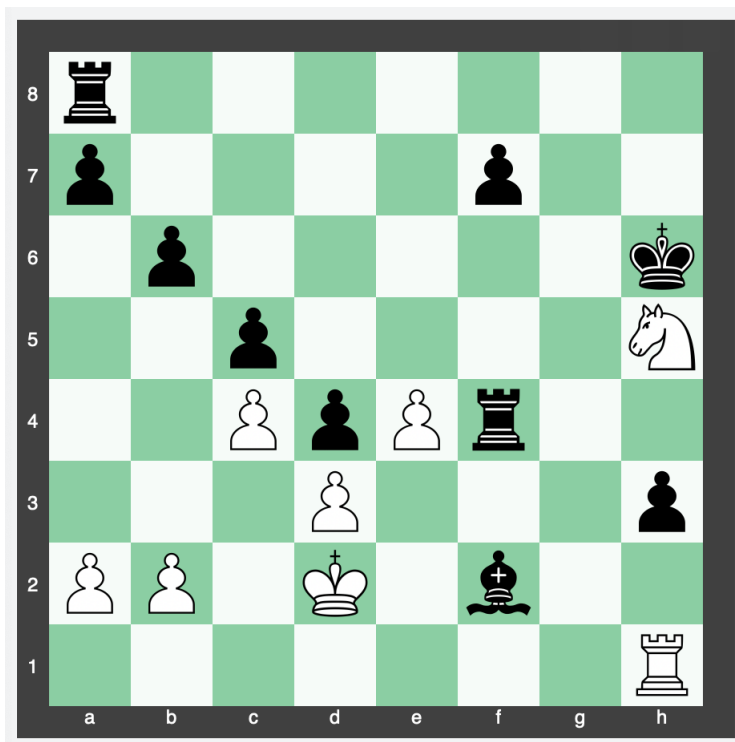


There followed 25. Kf2 (25. gxh4 Qg4+ leads to Checkmate) 25... Qg4 26. Rg1 Qf3+ 27. Ke1 Ng2+ 28. Rxg2 Qxg2



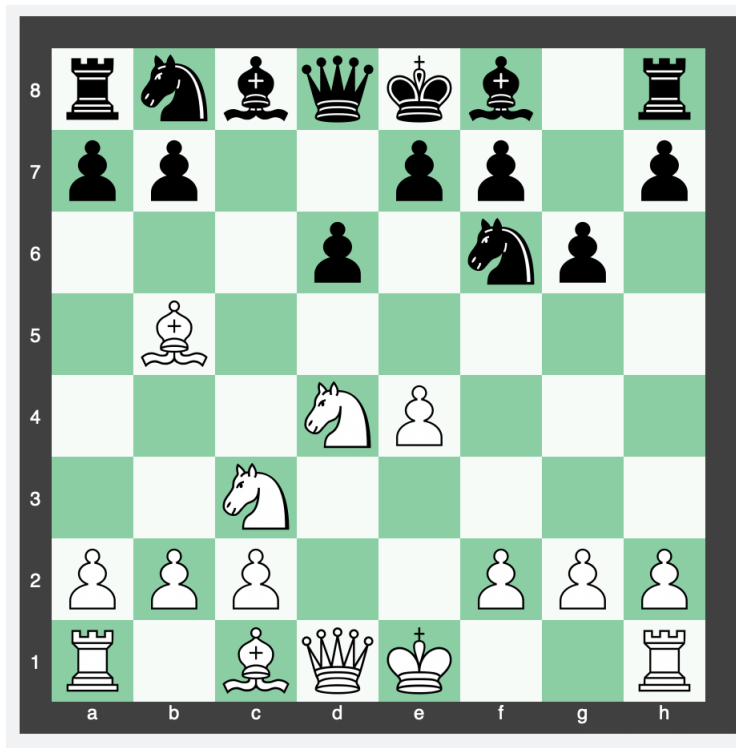
with a winning material and positional advantage.

White resigned at 36.. Kh6

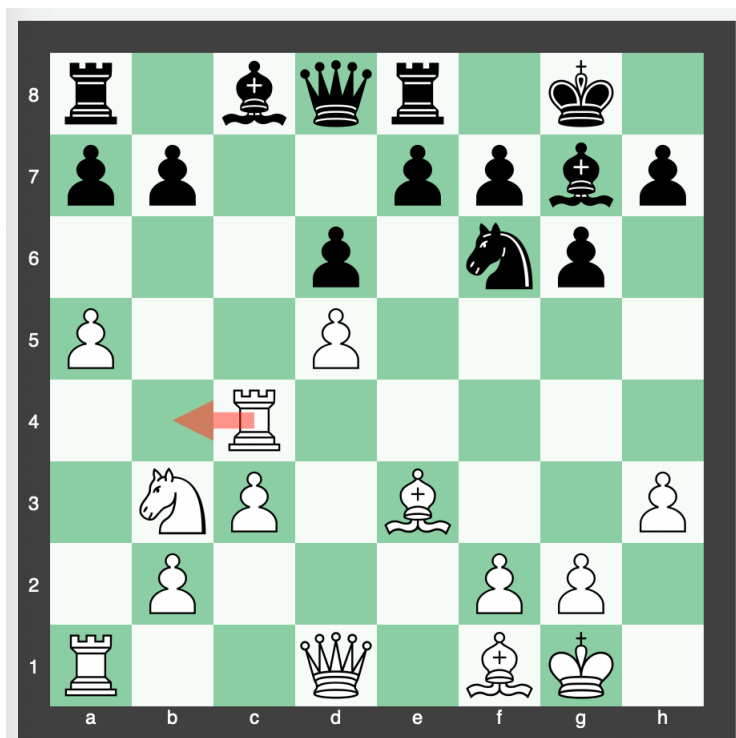


as 37. Nxf4 Be3+

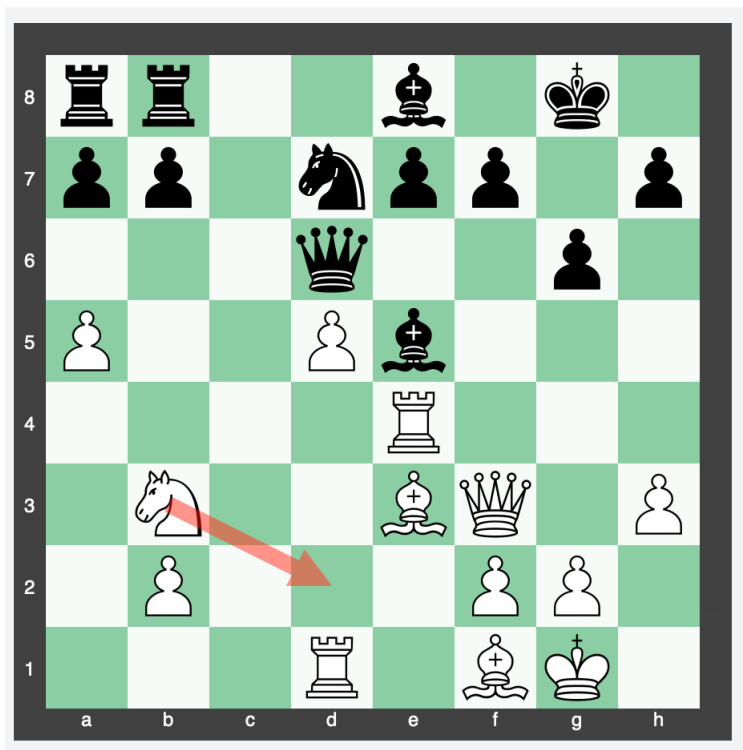
Board 4 James Morris met a Sicilian Dragon from Svetozar Stojic and played the rare 6. Bb5+



achieving an aggressive setup and space advantage by 20. Rb4



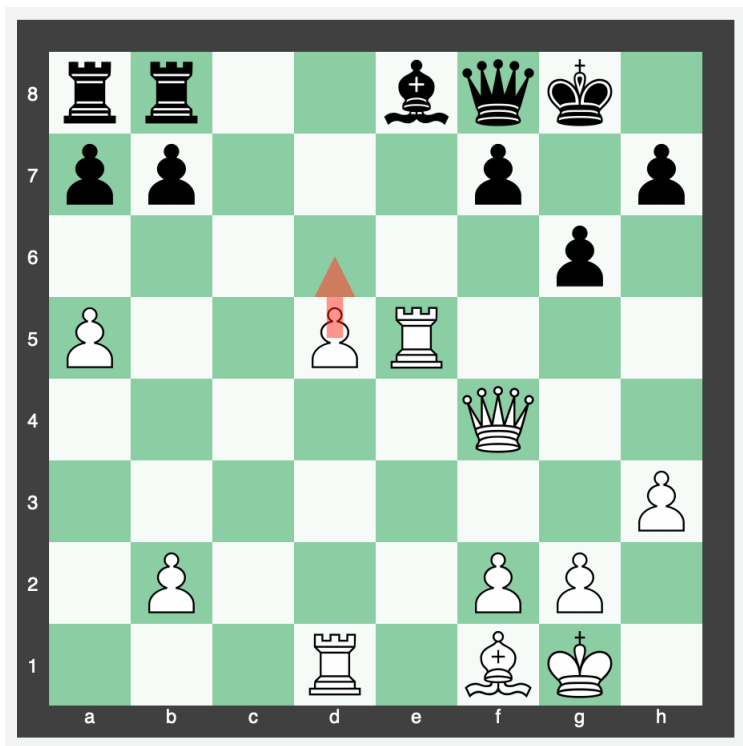
Morris continued the methodical advance after 26... Qxd6 (Better was 26... Bxd6) with 27. Nd2



intending 28. Nc4

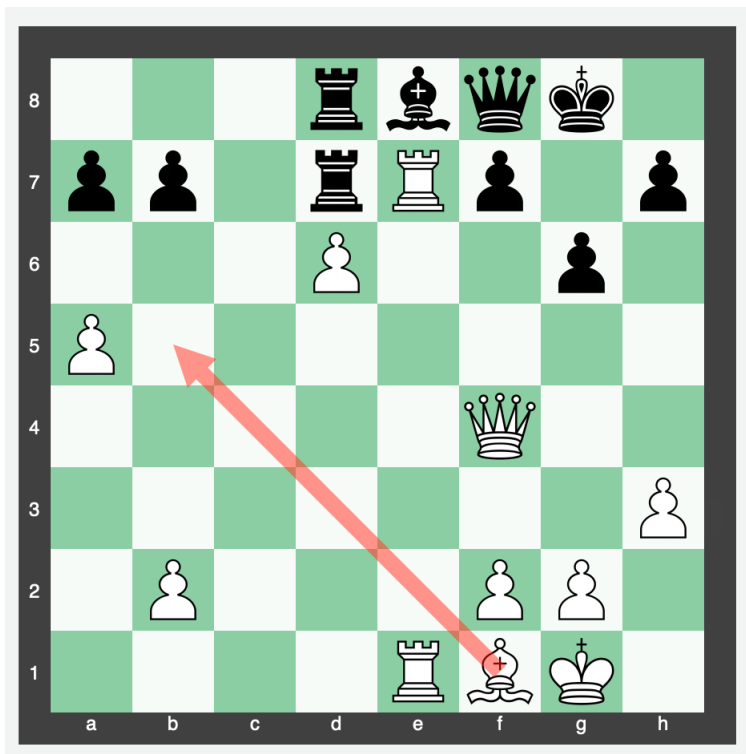
There followed further advance with 28. Nc4 Bd6 29. Nxd6 exd6 30. Bd4 Ne5 31. Qf4 Qe7 32. Bxe5 32... dxe5 33. Rxe5

After 33.. Qf8, White can play 34. d6



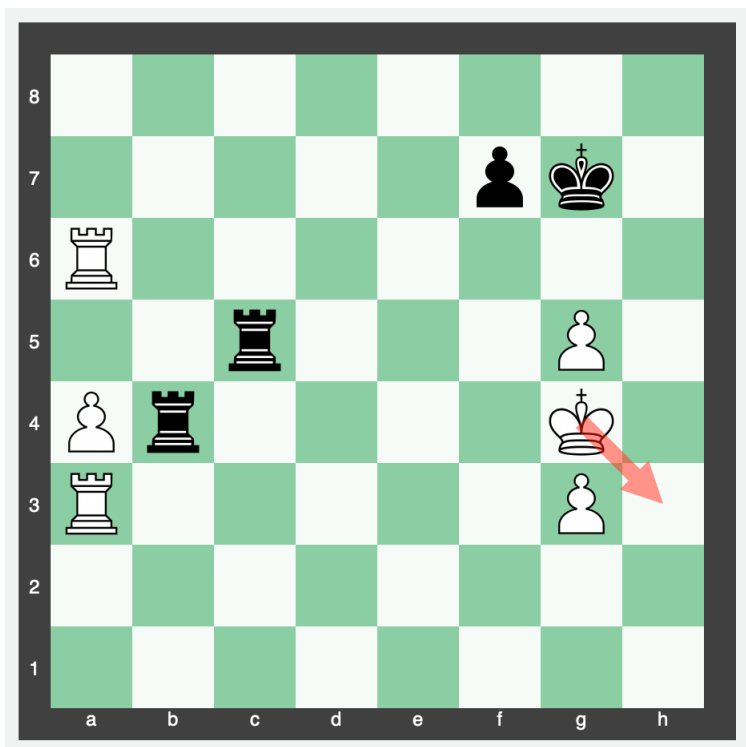
establishing "passed Pawn plus 7th rank" à la Nimzovich and Black is busted.

Black resigned at 37. Bb5



On **board 5**, nine year old Reyaansh Chakrabarty of NSW sensationally defeated Darryl Johansen.

After a relatively non-combative game, Chakrabarty, Black, played 52... Rb4+



after which 53. Kh3, or 53. Kf3 is equal.

But, instead, White played 53. Kh5, which immediately loses to 53... Rc1 or 53... Rc2

There were no other surprises on the top boards, except for the draw between Stephen Solomon and Saisiddharth Naraharasetty.

Round 4 begins 9:30am Sunday, although seven players have elected to have an optional half point bye.

The tournament runs until 5pm Monday 11 March at The Ballarat Tech School, Federation University, 136 Albert St, Ballarat.