



Chess Kids National Schools Finals 2013 at Melbourne University

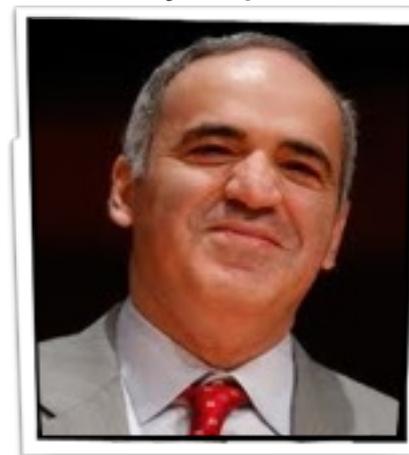


Melbourne High School - Chess Premiers 2013

Nigel Short



Gary Kasparov



CHESS ROYALTY TO VISIT AUSTRALIA!

Would you like to rub shoulders with “chess royalty?” Grandmasters Nigel Short and Garry Kasparov, who contested a World Championship match in 1993, will both be visiting Australia shortly! Short will drop in to the Ballarat Begonia Open on Monday 10th March whilst Kasparov will visit the Doeberl Cup in Canberra over Easter.

RJ SHIELD REPORT

23rd February 2014



The first RJ Shield tournaments for the year were held on 23rd February at Tucker Road Primary School and in Yarrowonga.

RJ Shield Bentleigh

Leading Scores (over 10s) - 29 players

- 6.5 M.Gershenzon
- 6 H.Lai
- 5.5 M.Zillmann
- 5 J.Lipp & G.Umansky

Leading Scores (under 10s) - 30 players

- 6 G.Rips, M.Goswami & E.Chowmuku-Huang
- 5 S.Zillmann, M.Thiagarajan & A.Khominsky

RJ Shield Yarrowonga

Leading Scores - 25 players

- 7 S.Trewin
- 6 C.Pang
- 5 M.Coombes, C.Lindsay & K.Stewart

There were a number of new players in the Tucker Road event plus 4 or 5 players who could challenge the top seed, Henry Lai. Henry in fact stumbled against Michael Gershenzon in round 5 which meant that it all came down to the last round game between Michael on 6 points and Matthew Zillmann on 5 points. For some strange reason Matthew agreed to an early draw in a favourable position thus allowing Michael to win his first ever RJ Shield. Well done Michael, who picked up 51 rating points on the event.



Michael Gershenzon with RJ

The Under 10 event was very close with a three-way tie for first with Gabriel Rips winning the title on count-back.

The Grandmaster Move Challenge

Part of the fun at the RJ Shield is the "Find the Grandmaster Move Challenge" whereby I set up a position from a famous game on the demonstration board and invite the kids to guess the next move that the grandmaster makes. This time I chose a very strange move from Averbach v Spassky 1956 but nevertheless 8 juniors still managed to find the correct move! Well done to all. Spassky deliberately moved his N to a square where it could be taken by a pawn simply because he wanted to activate his otherwise cramped pieces.



Shawn Zillmann demonstrates the winning move in the "find the grandmaster move challenge."

Message from the Guru

Welcome everyone to 2014... the year of online chess coaching!

For a number of years it's seemed like online chess coaching was going to take-off, but it just never did. Perhaps it was the technology that wasn't quite up to speed or perhaps here in Australia our slow internet speeds have held us back. I can certainly understand the face-to-face and social aspect of chess coaching are really important, but I think that 2014 is going to be the year that we see a lot more web-based coaching taking place.

The Top 5 game-changing innovations in 2014:

1. Access to GM Talent

Grandmaster RB Ramesh is a world class player and an even better coach. His academy in India is dedicated to turning IM's into GM's, he thinks it is "easy" to coach any of our students to become IM's! Amazingly, lessons with GM Ramesh are only \$50 per hour... what a great deal!



GM R.B.Ramesh

2. Online games and video lessons

We are encouraging everyone to join this global site with coaching videos, puzzles and live games. Joining via the www.chesskid.com/aus link you are

instantly connecting to other kids in Australia (important because you can only chat to your connections). So now you can play games online and see the same friends at face-to-face tournaments. Anyone who wants the GOLD membership upgrade, Chess Kids offers a \$10 discount from the regular US\$ price!



3. Game saving and sharing tools

Using www.chessmicrobase.com and Skype you can now do instant online lessons. Just share a link and whatever you do on the screen will instantly show up on the viewer's browser as well. No memberships, logins or transferring files. At the end of the lesson, keep a copy of the moves with one-click add it to your free microbase account!

4. **The OzSchools Chess Challenge** is a great in-school tournament where the winners progress to online tournaments and eventually to a \$1000 cash prize! See www.chesschallenge.com.au for details.



5. Online coaching

IM Robert Jamieson conducts an on-line lesson every Thursday night. These lessons are video recorded and are thus available for viewing at a later time.



David Cordover,

Managing Director,
Chess Group of Companies

BASIC PRINCIPLES by IM Robert Jamieson

To start off the year I thought that it would be a good idea to review the four basic elements that underpin chess strategy so that you all thoroughly understand the basics.

These elements are:

- King Safety
- Material
- Time
- Space

KING SAFETY

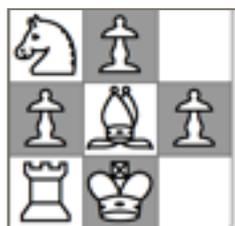
The most important principle! If your King is not safe you will probably get checkmated and lose the game. How do we make our King safe? Generally by castling early in the game to hide our King away in a corner of the board.



The only exception to this plan is if the Queens and some pieces have been exchanged very early in the game such that our King is in no danger of being checkmated. In such cases

(when we are approaching an endgame) the King is often better placed in the centre where he can help the other pieces.

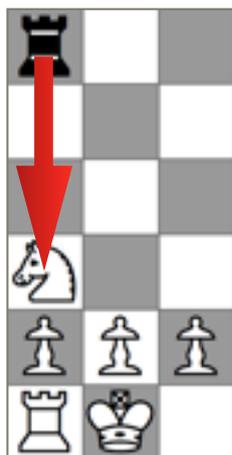
In the above diagram if Black attacks g2 or h2 we can just move the pawn up one square and our King will still be safe. If we want to make him really safe then leave a few pieces around your king, such as in the



finchettoed bishop position on the left.

It is important to understand how you can sacrifice one of the four elements above to gain an advantage in one of the other elements.

In the position on the right



Black should consider 1...Rxf3. This loses him material (R for N) but if White has to recapture 2.gxf3 then his King safety has been badly compromised. If Black can follow up with an attack on g2 or h2 or f3 (all squares which have now been weakened) he may be able to checkmate White. Black has given up **material** to give his a disadvantage in **King safety**.

MATERIAL

The next most important element in chess is probably material. All things being equal, if my army is bigger than yours I should win. Of course material is of no current use if it is not deployed on the battlefield so if I have 4 pieces developed and attacking whilst you have only 2 I should win that battle - you don't want to leave your troops at home in their barracks.

There is a strategy that we employ if we are ahead on material - the general rule is if you are ahead then it is good to exchange pieces as that will increase your relative advantage. For instance if I have 5 pieces to your 4 then my army is 25% larger than yours but if I can swap off two pieces then my army is 3 pieces to 2 - a 50% advantage.

The other thing to bear in mind is that the measure of your material (e.g. a rook is worth 5 points) is only a general valuation and really depends on how well your piece is placed. A knight on a1 for example can only go to two squares and is thus pretty useless whereas a knight established in a "hole" on d6 may be worth a rook! So use your material wisely!

TIME

One of the skills in chess is to use "time" wisely and get your pieces out into battle quickly. I tell my students to (in the opening) "move each piece only once and place it on the best square." If you move your Bishop to g5, then h4, then g3 you are probably just wasting time and your opponent should be able to get out more pieces than you as you have wasted time moving the same piece again and again.

How can we gain time to get an advantage on our opponent? Answer, "gambit" some pawns to free up your position and make it easy to develop. For example in the opening 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd 4.c3 dxc 5.Bc4 cxb 6.Bxb2 White has gambited two pawns to get his pieces out quickly (he has 3 pieces developed to Black's one).



So how do we compare extra material with extra time? Let me give you an example. Suppose we remove White QR so White is down 5 points ... but in exchange I give you 5 free moves so long as you dont capture anything. Would you rather play White (ahead on time) or Black (ahead on material)?

I would chose White and play 5 moves to reach the position below.



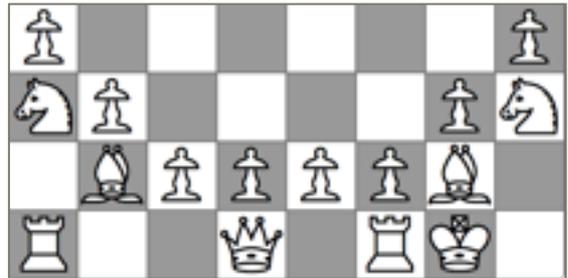
No matter what Black does I now have mate in two moves! Time has triumphed over material.

As a general rule it is considered a fair trade to sacrifice a pawn for 3 moves in development.

The final element is

SPACE

When I was a junior I invented my own chess opening called the "saucer attack." My first 9 moves gave me the following set-up.



My idea was that I have protected my weak points on f2 and c2 and placed my Bishops in the two best diagonals. My King is safe ... so surely this is a great opening? Unfortunately I have overlooked the fourth element, space, so my opponent will probably use his 9 moves as follows:



Clearly Black has more space (he controls the centre) which means that it will be easier for him to deploy his forces where he wants to attack. If Black wants to attack on the kingside his queenside pieces will have no trouble joining in the attack. On the other hand if White wants to attack on the kingside there is no way his queenside pieces can join in the attack as they can't get passed Black's centre.

STUDYING GAMES by IM Robert Jamieson

To become a strong player one of the better ways to improve is to play through the games of stronger players and try to guess their moves before you see what they played. You can either do that on-line by hiding the move list or if you are using a book just cover up the moves with a piece of board.

If you'd like to improve your tactics I've selected a game from the Australian Masters Championships played in December 2013 for you to have a look at. Both players in this game love tactics and they are constantly trying to "trick" their opponent with an unexpected tactical idea. See how many of their ideas you can spot.

Australian Masters
2013

Karl Zelesco 2145

Eddie Levi 2146

Dutch Defense

1.d4 f5 2.Bg5 g6

3.h4 Bg7 4.h5 h6

5.Bc1 g5 6.g4?

A weird idea. You could mistake White for a beginner so far.

6... fxg4 7.Bg2 d5 8.c4

dxc4 9.e3 Nf6 10.Qc2 O-O 11.Qxc4+ Kh8

12.Nc3 c6 13.Nge2 Nbd7 14.e4 Nb6 15.Qb3

g3!

A sacrifice to clear g4 for a piece.

16.f3 Qe8?

Missing White's tactical reply.

17.Bxg5 e5 18.dxe5 Nh7 19.Bf4 e6 20.Qc2

Rd8

White is ahead on material but his King is stuck in the middle.

21.Rd1 Nc4 22.Qc1 Nxe5 23.Bxe5 Bxe5

24.Qxh6 Qe7 25.Qc1 Qc5 26.Rf1 Bc4 27.f4

Bd4 28.Rf3 Bf2+ 29.Kf1 Nf6 30.Bh3 Bd4?

Better was 30...Bxd2 31.Nxd2 Rxd1+ 32.Qxd1

Qxh5 and White's King is in trouble.

31.Bf5 Nxh5 32.Kg2 Kg8 33.Rh1?

Missing 33.Na4! winning material.

33...Bf7 34.Nxg3 Nf6 35.e5 Bxc3 36.Rxc3

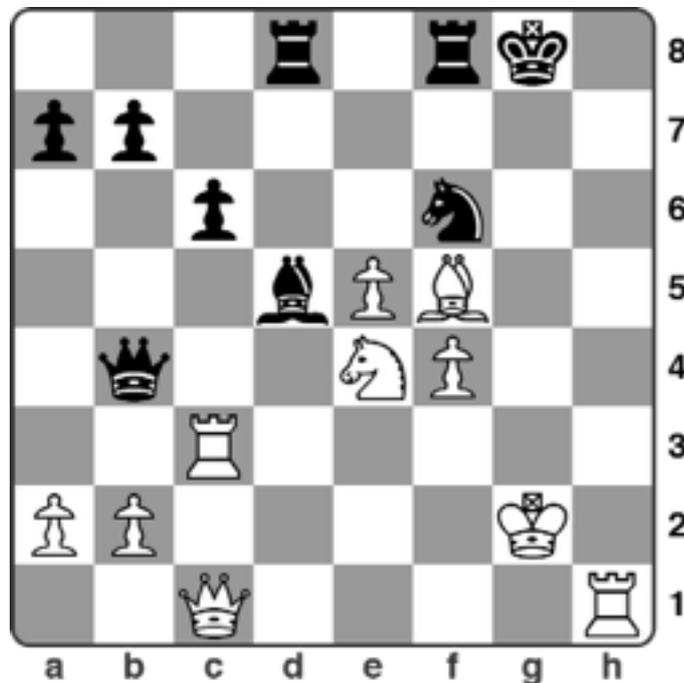
Bd5+ 37.Ne4?



Karl Zelesco

37.Kf1! was safe enough. Now the pin is annoying.

37...Qb4



White to Play

White seems to be in trouble but he has a sneaky reply....

38.Be6+!

Did you find this one?

38...Bxe6 39.Nxf6+ Rxf6 40.exf6 Bd5+

41.Kh3 Bxh1?

The obvious move but it's a pretty good B! 38...Kf7 would have been more threatening exploiting White's exposed King

42.Qxh1?

The obvious move but did you look at 42.Qg1+ Kf7 43.Qg7+ Ke6 44.Re3+ Be4 45.f7 and White is winning.

42...Kf7 43.Kg4 Rg8+

It's tempting to check but better was 43...Qd4 and it's even as the f6 pawn falls.

44.Kf3 Qf8 45.Qh5+

Better was 45.Qh7+ Kxf6 46.Qxb7

46.Kxf6 46.Qe5+ Kf7 47.Rd3 Rg7 48.Qh5+

Kg8 49.Rd2 Qe7??

The final blunder. Better was 49...Rg1.

50.Re2 Rh7 51.Qg4+ Qg7 52.Re8+ 1-0

A great tactical struggle.

PLAYER OF THE MONTH - SAM TREWIN

Yarrowonga, on the Murray River in Northern Victoria, does not sound like a great centre of chess activity yet it manages to hold its own RJ Shield Tournament and has produced one very promising junior, 12 year old Sam Trewin.



Sam Trewin playing in the State Finals

Sam started playing when he was 8 years old when his grandpa taught him the moves.

He has a weekly on-line lesson with IM Robert Jamieson and is hoping to play in both the upcoming Ballarat and Doeberl Cup tournaments to give him a chance to keep improving.

Sam doesn't have much opposition in his local area so is coaching his fellow school students to improve their standard and give him some more opposition. He tries to do at least 5 Chess Tempo puzzles each night as well as playing a couple of on-line games.

His chess ambition is just to "get as good as he can get." Sam's March 2014 ACF rating is 1152, up 163 points, which makes him the no. 6 on the most improved list for March. Let's hope he can keep that rate of improvement up and become a chess champion!

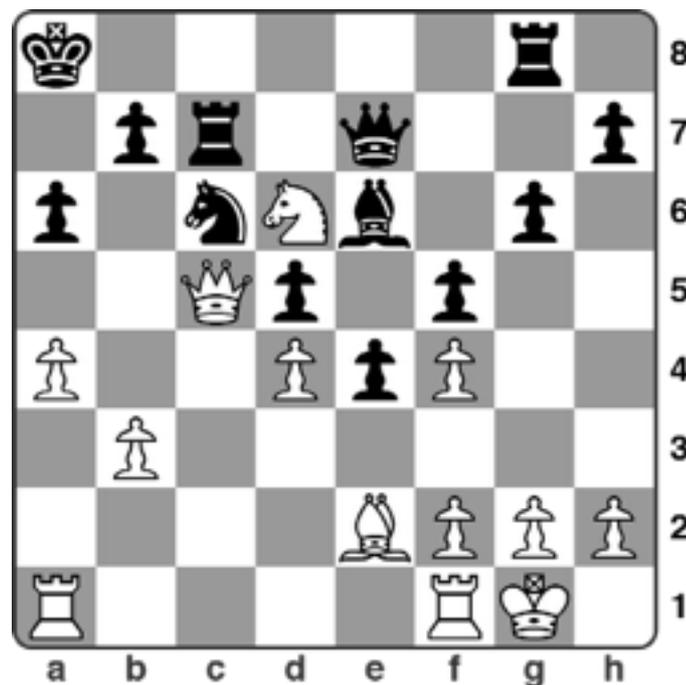
Mildura Open 2013

Kevin Perrin 1500

Sam Trewin 900

Dutch Defence

1.c4 e5 2.Nc3 f5 3.e3 Nf6 4.d4 e4 5.Be2 c6
6.Nh3 d5 7.cxd5 cxd5 8.Nf4 Bd6 9.Bh5+ g6
10.Be2 Bxf4 11.exf4 Nc6 12.b3 Be6 13.Bb2
Qe7 14.Nb5 O-O-O 15.a4 a6 16.Qc2 Kb8
17.Ba3 Qd7 18.Bd6+ Ka8 19.Nc7+ Ka7
20.Nb5+ Ka8 21.Qc5 Ne8 22.Be5 Rg8 23.Qb6
Rc8 24.O-O Qd8 25.Qc5 Qe7 26.Bd6 Nxd6
27.Nxd6 Rc7



White to Play

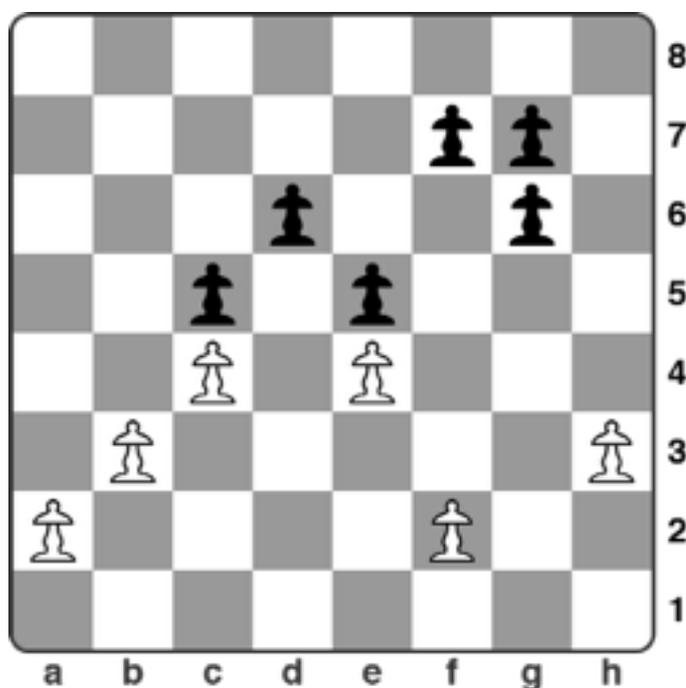
28.Rfc1 Rd8 29.Nxb7 Kxb7 30.Bxa6+ Kxa6
31.Qb5+ Ka7 32.Rxc6 Rxc6 33.Qxc6 Qd7
34.Qc5+ Ka8 35.Qa5+ Kb7 36.Rc1 Rc8 37.Rc5
Rxc5 38.dxc5 Qc6 39.Qc3 Qd7 40.g3 d4
41.Qb4+ Kc8 42.Qb6 d3 43.Qa6+ Kd8 44.c6
Qd6 45.Qa8+ Bc8 46.Qa5+ Ke8 47.Qd2 Qxc6
48.Qa5 Qc1+ 49.Kg2 d2 50.Qe5+ Kf7 51.Qd5+
Be6 52.Qb7+ Kf6 53.Qxh7 d1=Q 54.Qh4+ Kg7
55.Qe7+ Bf7 56.Qe5+ Kh7 0-1

PAWN STRUCTURES by IM Robert Jamieson

The famous 18th Century chess player, Philidor, said “pawns are the soul of chess” so today I’ll explain the basics of pawn structure to you.

There are a number of pawn types as follows:

- Isolated pawn
- Doubled pawn
- Backward pawn
- Pawn chain
- Pawn island
- Passed pawn



Have a look at the diagram above. Can you identify an example of each of the pawn types?

- Isolated pawn h3
- Doubled pawns d6 & f2
- Backward pawns c4 or e4
- Pawn chain a2, b3, c4 or c5, d6, e5
- Pawn islands White has 3 and Black has 1, e.g. h3 is a pawn island or f2 & e4.
- Passed pawn a2

Having identified the various types of pawns we next need to know how to handle them in a game.

Basically pawns are very social animals that like to be surrounded by their buddies. If one pawn is attacked he can rely on a neighbouring pawn to protect him.

An isolated pawn therefore, with no pawns on either side to give support, is a weakness that will be in trouble if attacked.

A doubled pawn is two pawns on the same file. This is normally bad as they get in each other’s way, but if a side pawn has moved towards the centre and become doubled (such as the h7 - g6 pawn in the diagram) then it is covering more important centre squares and may not be such a problem.

A backward pawn is in similar difficulty. He has a buddy pawn next to him but that pawn is in front of him and cannot offer any protection. The worst sort of backward pawn is a backward pawn on an open file (such as the d6 pawn in the diagram).

A pawn chain is a good pawn structure, such as the a2-b3-c4 chain. The pawns defend themselves so to attack this structure you need to get to the base of the pawn chain, i.e. a2 in this case.

Pawn islands are just groups of pawns - so the fewer islands you have the better. In the above position White has 3 islands to defend whereas Black has only 1.

A passed pawn is one that does not have its path to becoming a queen blocked by any rival pawns. Consequently it is a big advantage in endgames. To quote a famous player “passed pawns should be pushed!”

The pawn structure will often determine how the game will be played out and where you place your pieces. For example in the diagram White would place his rooks on the “d” to pressure the backward pawn on d6. White would love to have a N or B in the “hole” on d5 whereas Black can put his N or B on f4 or d4. All these squares cannot be attacked by pawns.