

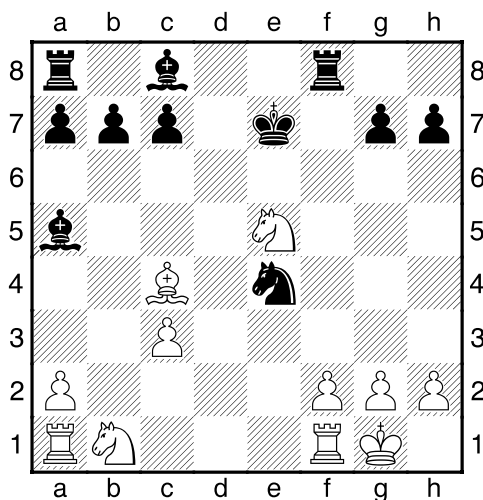
Dear Dragons,

Welcome to Edition 3 of the Weekly St George Club Champs newsletter! While there were not as many long games as Round 2, there were still lots of exciting ones – and just two draws! The spirited fighting chess continues... But before I report on the games, some nicknames! “The Cowboy Hat Tree” = John Stuart Plant (a tree is a plant, and he always wears a cowboy hat); “The University Degree” (BA) is Brian Allison; “Washington” (DC) is Darren Curtis; “The Politician” (MP) is Mario Parissis; “Dr Jekyll” goes together with Mr Hyde, i.e. Geoff Hyde; and “Smear Cartilage” = Mark Boan (a mark is a smear, and cartilage goes with bone!). How many of these did YOU get? OK, I admit that most people don’t think like I do when it comes to such things, which is probably a good thing... So let’s get back to Round 3 instead; lots of fun games on which to report!

### Division 5

**Kevin Liu 1-0 Ashton Li:** Ashton was relatively equal early in a standard Nimzo; but then Kevin gradually outplayed him! He got a grip on the centre; and the two bishops began to mean something. Soon Aaron’s rook was trapped in the corner, and he had to lose material. Kevin won the exchange, and had beautiful active pieces with control of the open d-file. Ashton fought on, but to no avail; he lost his weak pawns, and resigned when about to lose his knight to a pin.

**Ali Murtazaev 0-1 Faaiz Malik:** An amazing game – and a lucky escape for Faaiz! Ali gambited a pawn as early as Move 4, which had the desired effect: it seemed to make Faaiz overconfident... By Move 10, Ali was winning it back. On Move 12, he was actually the one a pawn ahead! By trying to win it back, Faaiz got into trouble; and the fun began in the position below after Black’s 14th move.



White played the correct 15.Re1 Bf5, which was at least +2 for him had he played 16.g4. Instead he played 16.f3, giving Faaiz a chance; there followed 16...Bb6+ 17.Kf1, when Faaiz really erred by playing 17...g5. Again White was better had he played 18.g4, while the tempting 18.fxe4 was even after 18...Be6+ – but Faaiz played 18...Bxe4+, a major error! Now 19.Nf3 would have left Ali two pieces up, and Faaiz could have resigned. After 19.Ke2 Rf2+ 20.Kd1 Rd8+ 21.Nd3, White was still two pieces up and winning. But five moves later, he moved a rook en prise and lost it for nothing! He then dropped a piece too; there were no further turnarounds, Faaiz prevailing in 45 moves.

**Geoff Hyde 1-0 Aaron Hu:** A convincing win for Geoff, although he could in fact have won even more quickly... He was already ahead after a good opening; then an errant Black knight move on Move 8 gave him an advantage of over +4 by Move 10! His active pieces were able to viciously attack the enemy king, and he missed a mate in 4 on Move 14. But it didn’t matter, as he won a rook anyway! Aaron fought on, but it was hopeless. Ten moves later there was another checkmate, only this time Geoff did not miss it; and Aaron resigned one move before the mate on Move 25.

**Dimitrios Stathos 1-0 Peter Swinton:** Dimitrios got a little gift from Peter in this one! After queens were traded early, Peter was dead level if he had protected a pawn with his king on Move 11. Instead he castled, giving his opponent a free pawn! Dimitrios was then able to swap off everything into a winning bishop ending by Move 27. Ten moves later the bishops came off too. Peter thought he missed a chance in the resultant king and pawn endgame, but he was wrong; it was always dead lost, and Dimitrios prevailed in 46 moves.

**Zain Mokhtar – Ken Eldridge:** Zain was a no-show in this one, only giving notice of his absence the next day; but hopefully they will be able to play this game on one of the catch-up nights.

## Division 6

**Reno Sciberras 1-0 Ethan Riegman:** A great game by Reno! After an even opening, he missed the chance to win a piece via a knight forking tactic; but he still had the edge due to his more active centrally placed minor pieces. He won a pawn, then proceeded to simplify! When he saddled his opponent with 4 isolated pawns (2 of them doubled), the rook ending was clearly winning for White. And Reno made no mistake: he won 3 more pawns, queened and mated his opponent in 53 moves.

**William Liu 0-1 Lisa Brandenburg:** Another top quality game, proving again the bottom division players could match it with the best of them in terms of interesting games! See game below. The players were even after 10 moves of a Nimzo; then William gradually got the edge after Lisa's errant pawn push 11...d5. A wrong recapture meant the pin on her f6 knight was an issue; William actually let her escape, but then Lisa took a poisoned pawn with 16...Nxc3. So 18.Nd2 would have won piece and game for William; but he let Lisa out again, and they settled into a tough battle! William won a couple of pawns and was winning with the knight fork on Move 27; he won the exchange, but then he let his king get into trouble and had to give up his queen. There were not too many more adventures after that, Lisa finishing with a very nice mate – what a game!

### **Liu, William (553) - Brandenburg, Lisa (UR), 2023 St George CC Div 6 Round 3, 21/03/2023**

1.d4 e6 2.c4 Nf6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Nf3 0–0 5.Bg5 b6 6.e3 Bb7 7.Be2 Bxc3+ 8.bxc3 h6 9.Bh4 Nc6 10.0–0 Na5 11.Bd3 d5 12.cxd5 Bxd5 13.e4 Bb7 14.e5 g5 15.Bg3 Nd5 16.Bc2 Nxc3 17.Qd3 Ne4 18.Qe2 Qd5 19.Rfe1 f5 20.exf6 Nxf6 21.Bxc7 Rf7 22.Be5 Raf8 23.Qd3 Qd8 24.Qg6+ Rg7 25.Qxh6 Nc6 26.Nxg5 Qe7 27.Nxe6 Nxe5 28.dxe5 Ng4 29.Qh5 Rxf2 30.Nxg7 Rxg2+ 31.Kf1 Nxe2+ 32.Qxh2 Rxh2 33.Nf5 Qg5 34.Re2 Ba6 35.Nd4 Qf4+ 36.Kg1 Qg3+ 37.Kf1 Qf2# 0–1

**Ethan Currie 1-0 Samuel Slings:** Again Samuel played excellently in the initial phase of this game, developing nicely and staying even early. But then he erred on Move 13 and lost a pawn, followed by a second on Move 18. The latter was more critical, as he also lost the exchange by force (his rook was trapped). Then he lost a piece. More material followed; and he was mated by force on Move 27.

**John Matson 0-1 Stephen Manwarring:** Stephen doesn't like me looking at his games, but after this I have no idea why – he played very well! He kept things solid as Black in a Sicilian, even having a slight edge by Move 12. From there much manoeuvring ensued, Stephen obtaining a strong central knight that got to e3. This led to a big advantage when he won a key g2 pawn. His knight was traded off, but the White king got into trouble; soon after Stephen won a rook and the game to a discovery.

**Mary Hunt – Mark Boan:** This game was postponed by Mary, who unfortunately had COVID; we wish her a full and speedy recovery!

## Division 2

**Peter Bogdanoski 0-1 Andrew Li:** A sad game for Peter! He had the advantage by Move 10, with a protected passed pawn and Black's pieces tied up. But he gave it up by Move 15, then walked into a pin and lost the exchange in a tactical melee; and he resigned on Move 24 when he also lost a piece.

**Malachi O'Donoghue 0-1 Brian Allison:** A nice game by Brian, who is in really good form! After the players traded blows early with no clear advantage, it was Mal who erred on Move 15. Brian's reply, 15...Ne5, left him with a problem with both the d3 and f3 squares! His "solution" lost the exchange and a pawn. Brian was very efficient from there; he gave the exchange back to hound the enemy king, and Mal resigned when loss of queen and mate were inevitable. See game below.

**O'Donoghue, Mal (1766) - Allison, Brian (1704), 2023 St George CC Div 2 Round 3, 21/03/2023**  
 1.e4 d5 2.Nc3 d4 3.Nce2 Nc6 4.d3 e5 5.f4 f6 6.Nf3 exf4 7.Bxf4 g5 8.Bg3 Bg4 9.h3 Bh5 10.Bf2 Bb4+ 11.c3 dxc3 12.bxc3 Ba5 13.g4 Bf7 14.Nfd4 Nge7 15.Nb3 Ne5 16.Nec1 Bxc3+ 17.Ke2 Bxa1 18.Nxa1 Qd6 19.Nab3 Qa3 20.Qc2 N7c6 21.Bc5 Qa4 22.Kf2 0-0-0 23.Be2 h5 24.d4 Nxd4 25.Bxd4 Rxd4 26.Nxd4 Qxd4+ 27.Kg2 Bg6 28.Bf3 Nxf3 29.Kxf3 hxg4+ 30.Kg3 Qe3+ 0-1

**Albert Tjahja – Pieter Stoltz:** This game was postponed by Pieter due to work commitments.

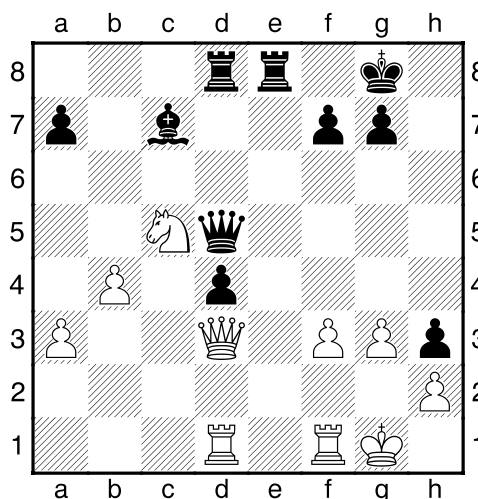
**Srijan Badam 0-1 Michael Babic:** Poor Srijan is having a rough time of it in this event; he's getting good positions, but then erring and losing! And this game was no different... A normal opening saw equality for the first 10 moves; but then Srijan pushed his h-pawn and gained the edge! Michael had to defend, and did a good job of it. Soon he had the pawn centre and the advantage. He hounded the enemy queen and won a pawn. Then he swapped off into a winning bishop endgame; Srijan resigned when he saw he would have to give up his bishop to stop the Black g-pawn from queening.

**John Karabatsos 1-0 Celina Wu:** Like Brian, John is also in very good form, this upset victory enabling him to reach 2.5/3! Moreover, it was a miniature – it was all over in just 20 moves... When queens came off early, the game seemed quite tame; yet White still managed to gain the two bishops and the advantage. But it was not too serious – until Celina walked into a pin and got her pieces in a tangle! Still, I could not help but feel that her resignation was a bit premature... She was losing a piece for a pawn, but could have fought on; see game below.

**Karabatsos, John (1554) - Wu, Celina (1649), 2023 St George CC Div 2 Round 3, 21/03/2023**  
 1.e4 e5 2.f4 d5 3.exd5 Bc5 4.d3 Qxd5 5.Nc3 Qe6 6.fxe5 Qxe5+ 7.Qe2 Qxe2+ 8.Bxe2 Ne7 9.Bf4 c6 10.Ne4 Nd7 11.Nxc5 Nxc5 12.Nf3 Be6 13.0-0 0-0-0 14.Ng5 Nd5 15.Nxe6 Nxe6 16.Bd2 f6 17.Bg4 Rhe8 18.Rae1 Ndc7 19.Bf4 Rd4 20.c3 1-0

### Division 1

**Stevo Acevski 1-0 Jim Mavroidis:** As Jim himself put it, this was "basically the clash of the club's tortoise and hare when it comes to time management!" I am indebted to Jim for the following description of the game: "How I lost was intriguing. After gradually building up a promising attack, I reached the following position after White's 26.f3:



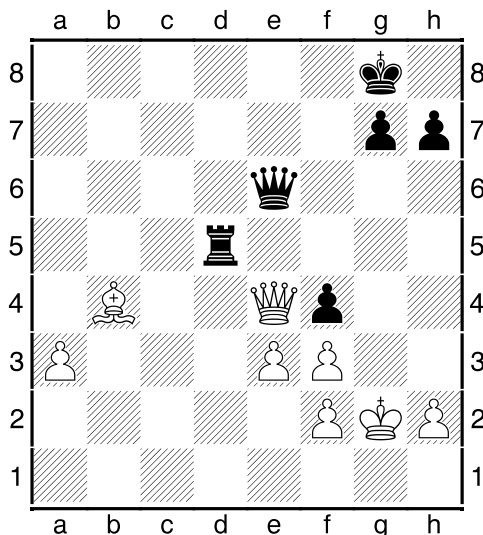
Despite taking a painstaking amount of time after each move leading up to here, I played 26...Re3 instantly, confident that the “securely defended rook” will chase away the queen and crash through on the kingside. Of course, I was also thinking that Stevo's blitz play had simply overlooked this. My shock after 27.Qxe3 rattled me so much that I soon followed up with an inaccuracy and a decisive mistake, despite Stockfish claiming that I still had an advantage even after 27.Qxe3...”. In fact Jim lost his weak h3 pawn a few moves later, then eventually his e3 pawn as well. Two pawns down, he could not really hope to survive; he battled on, but went down in 71 moves.

**Richard Eccles 0-1 Daniel Melamed:** Despite White’s slight space advantage, Daniel equalised quite easily here, then eventually pushed his h-pawn to go on the attack! His knight settled on g3, and he was a little bit better. But it was not a real plus until Richard played b4 and walked into a rook fork! Daniel won a pawn by force, and Richard’s best course then was to give up the exchange for a pawn. Soon he was dead lost; queens were coming off, and the b-pawn forced his resignation.

**Robert Kovacs – Jose Escribano:** This game was postponed by Robert.

**Mario Falchoni 1-0 Graham Saint:** Finally, Mario’s first Club Champs win in 17 years! Mind you, Graham equalised early, and there was some manoeuvring until Mario got the edge. His pieces were a bit more active, and he went on the attack on the kingside. Graham traded queens, but it cost him a pawn. The resultant rook and opposite coloured bishop ending was tough, but better for Mario; he eventually won another couple of pawns and checkmated Graham on Move 51.

**Arthur Huynh 0.5-0.5 John Stuart Plant:** A battle royale, worthy of the top two seeds! After an even opening, it was John Stuart who got the initiative on the queenside. Rather than being passive (which he never likes), Arthur gave up the exchange for a pawn; he had the two bishops, but he could not keep them. As a result, he was still fighting to equalise when they reached the position below.



After 41...Rg5+ 42.Kf1, Daniel Melamed (watching the game) instantly said 42...Qxe4 followed by 43...f3 was winning for Black. He was right! It’s amazing how hard this position is to defend for White; all engines say it is indefensible... But understandably, JSP chose to keep queens on and try to attack Arthur’s king with 42...Qa6+ 43.Ke1 Rg1+ 44.Kd2 fxe3+ 45.fxe3 Rg2+ 46.Kc3 Qf6+ 47.Kc4 Qa6+ 48.Kc3 Qf6+ 0.5-0.5. In the end, Black has no better than a draw; a fun game!

#### Division 4

**Mario Parissis 1-0 James Bullen:** There’s really not too much to say about this one! After 15 moves of even manoeuvring, James simply left a bishop en prise on g4. Then he lost the exchange to a knight fork, and it was all over; it took a while, but Mario pocketed the full point in 41 moves.

**Huey Teng 0-1 James McGrouther:** James' first win in a long time control game at the club was a good one! Equal by Move 12, he won a pawn after Huey made a mistake on Move 18. A second pawn followed soon after, James taking advantage of Huey's isolated d5 pawn. Then Huey made a tactical miscalculation and lost a piece. It was all over soon after, James winning in 42 moves.

**Brian Connell 0-1 Elijah Udovitch:** Given how tactically these two like to play, this was always going to be a fun game; but as it turned out, it was Elijah having all the fun! His French equalised by Move 10; then he trapped the enemy bishop on e3 with 20...f4. A piece up, he was able to attack the enemy king with impunity; and Brian resigned one move before mate on Move 42.

**Chris Brown 1-0 Sait Buzgan:** A solid game by Chris; he always had a slight edge, and he gradually ground Sait down! Eventually he won a pawn, with powerful doubled rooks on the open f-file. At one point he missed a forced mate in 7, but he was still able to convert into a winning endgame; and Sait resigned on Move 55 after Chris gave the pawn back to force a won king and pawn ending.

**Anthony Lopes 0-1 Euan Marquez Zarauz:** A tragedy for Anthony, a victim of Euan's persistence! Euan blundered on Move 12, giving White a powerful attack. Anthony won a pawn, then chose to simplify to a winning knight vs bishop ending. It looked hard for Euan, who also had doubled pawns; but he kept fighting! Soon his pawns were even weaker, and I felt he had no chance. But Anthony's errant 43rd move let Euan's king in, and suddenly the passed Black d-pawn became a problem! In the end, Anthony had to sacrifice his knight for it, and resigned one move later. See game below.

**Lopes, Tony (1338) - Marquez Zarauz, Euan (1357), 2023 St George CC Div 4 Round 3, 21/3/23**  
1.c4 e5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.e4 Bc5 4.Nf3 d6 5.h3 Nbd7 6.d4 exd4 7.Nxd4 0-0 8.Nf5 Bb6 9.Bd3 Nc5 10.0-0 Nxd3 11.Qxd3 Re8 12.Bg5 Re6 13.Nd5 Qf8 14.Bxf6 gxf6 15.Qg3+ Kh8 16.Qh4 Qg8 17.Nxf6 Qg6 18.Nd5 Bd7 19.Nde7 Qf6 20.Qxf6+ Rxf6 21.Nd5 Rg6 22.Nxb6 axb6 23.Rfe1 Re8 24.Ng3 Bc6 25.Re3 Rge6 26.Rae1 h5 27.Nxh5 Rxe4 28.Rxe4 Rxe4 29.Rxe4 Bxe4 30.Nf6 Bb1 31.a3 Ba2 32.Ne8 Bxc4 33.Nxc7 d5 34.f4 Kg7 35.Kf2 Kf6 36.Ke3 Ke7 37.Kd4 Kd6 38.Ne8+ Ke7 39.Ng7 Kf6 40.Nh5+ Kf5 41.g4+ Kg6 42.Ke5 Bf1 43.f5+ Kg5 44.Nf4 d4 45.h4+ Kxg4 46.h5 d3 47.Nd5 Kxh5 48.Kd4 d2 49.Nc3 Be2 50.Ke5 d1Q 51.Nxd1 Bxd1 52.Kf6 Bb3 0-1

### Division 3

**Colin Goldsmith 1-0 Sam Sharkawy:** See game below: a crazy game! As early as Move 9, Colin made a move that let loose fireworks which could have resulted in a perpetual check... Instead Sam declined the enemy queen sacrifice, lost a pawn and found himself passively defending his king for ages. But just when I was sure Colin would win, he gave Sam counterplay against his own king... Sam got close to equality; then Colin erred on Move 38, and Sam was winning! He missed forced mates on Moves 44 and 46; then he went passive with his queen, and he was lost again. Colin queened his h-pawn, and there were no more dramas; he won with a nice mate on Move 59.

**Goldsmith, Colin (1513) - Sharkawy, Sam (1448), 2023 St George CC Div 3 Round 3, 21/03/2023**  
1.e4 e5 2.f4 Nc6 3.Nf3 d6 4.Bc4 Bg4 5.0-0 h6 6.Nc3 Nf6 7.d3 a6 8.fxe5 Nxe5 9.Nxe5 dxe5 10.Bxf7+ Kd7 11.Qe1 c6 12.h3 Be6 13.Bxe6+ Kxe6 14.Be3 Bb4 15.a3 Ba5 16.b4 Bc7 17.Na4 b6 18.Qc3 Kd7 19.Kh1 Rf8 20.Rf5 Re8 21.Raf1 Re6 22.Qe1 Kc8 23.Qf2 Kb7 24.Bxh6 Ng4 25.hxg4 Rxh6+ 26.Rh5 Rf6 27.Qe2 Rg6 28.g3 Qd7 29.Rff5 Re8 30.Qf3 Qe6 31.c4 Rh6 32.Rh4 Reh8 33.Rfh5 Rxh5 34.gxh5 Bd8 35.Rh2 Bg5 36.Qf2 Bd8 37.Qf5 Qe8 38.g4 Rf8 39.Qg6 Qd7 40.Rg2 Qe7 41.g5 Qd7 42.Kh2 Rf4 43.h6 Rh4+ 44.Kg1 gxh6 45.gxh6 Qd4+ 46.Kf1 Rf4+ 47.Ke2 Qd7 48.h7 Bh4 49.h8Q Bf6 50.Qhh7 Be7 51.Qg3 a5 52.Nxb6 Kxb6 53.Qe3+ c5 54.Rg6+ Kc7 55.Rg7 Kd6 56.Qxc5+ Ke6 57.Rg6+ Bf6 58.Qhe7+ Qxe7 59.Qd5# 1-0

**John Parissis 0.5-0.5 John Nichas:** Our second draw favoured Nichas when his queen got into the enemy position, supported by his knight. But he traded queens, and any chance of an advantage was gone... They played on forever in a drawn rook ending; but in the end, they bowed to the inevitable.

**Darren Curtis 1-0 Netra Bhatt:** Another even opening here, with Netra in fact getting a small edge by Move 13. But then Darren went on the attack, winning a pawn with a Bxh6 sacrifice that Netra could not accept without being checkmated! When Netra doubled and isolated Darren's h-pawns in a tactical melee, it looked like he had some compensation for his pawn minus. But White got his rook to the seventh rank, and Netra's pawns started to fall like ripe apples! Darren ended up three pawns ahead in a rook ending; and Netra resigned when Darren was about to checkmate his king on h8.

**Ludwig Wolf 0-1 Ghassan Beydoun:** Another tough loss for Ludwig! Ghassan's French soon gave him an edge, but nothing to speak of; and the players fought toe to toe for many moves. Ludwig missed one winning piece sacrifice that would have allowed his queen in to attack the enemy king; and in the end, Ghassan attacked his king! He won a pawn, then a piece to a queen fork. Another piece fell soon after; and Ludwig resigned when about to lose the exchange and get checkmated.

**Louis Jeff 0-1 Stuart Taylor:** One of those games where the players castled on opposite sides; who would get there first? Answer: Stuart! Mind you, Louis was doing fine when he won a pawn and could have had two rooks for his queen. But when he spurned this, his king got into real trouble! A piece sacrifice by Stuart led to a pin which won the enemy queen for a rook. In the end, it was this material advantage which proved decisive, Stuart going on to win the game in 53 moves.

And in conclusion, now for my final trick: chess jokes! These come from the famous stable of the Cowboy Hat Tree JSP himself. I hope you find them as funny as his students do!

Did you hear about the sheep who won his chess game really easily? He won it in a lambslide...

Remember: if you ever forget the rules of chess, don't worry, you're allowed to check...

Did you know, Spider-Man never has to read any chess books; he gets it all from the web...

What do blitz chess players eat before they play chess? Nothing; they fast...

Why are birds so good at chess? Because they always worm up before their matches...

Did you hear about the new craze of online chess tennis? The only problem is the servers are down...