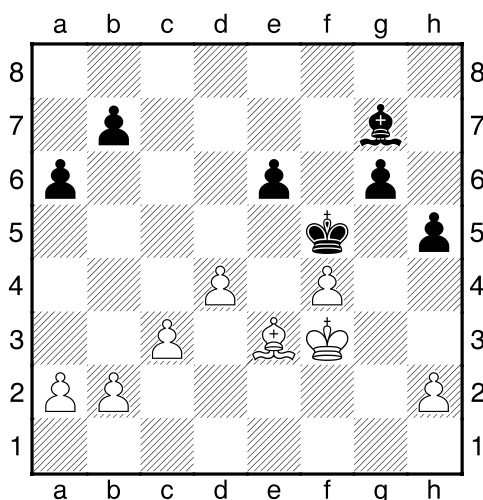


Dear Dragons,

Welcome to Edition 8 of the Weekly St George Club Champs newsletter! This catch-up newsletter actually comprises two playing nights: the original one on Anzac Day, and the extra one I scheduled the night after. With 16 games played, I can finally clarify the standings a bit in each division! The top division (with 3 games outstanding) sees John Stuart Plant on 5.5/6 and Daniel Melamed on 5/5; while in Division 2, Celina Wu on 5/6 heads Brian Allison, Michael Babic and John Karabatsos, all on 4.5. Division 3 has John Parissis on 5/6, with Stuart Taylor on 4.5/5; and Division 4 has all games played, with Chris Brown (4.5/6) ahead of Sait Buzgan and Elijah Udovitch on 4. Finally, Division 5 (having been clarified by the withdrawal of Zain Mokhtar and a few forfeits) sees Faaiz Malik on 6/6 above Kevin Liu on 5; and Division 6 has Ethan Currie on 5/6, with Lisa Brandenburg and William Liu on 4. All very exciting; so let's see how the players got there on catch-up nights 2 and 3!

### Division 3

**John Parissis 0.5-0.5 Colin Goldsmith:** This Round 6 game, the only postponed game in Division 3, was a fascinating one! After a quiet opening, John got an edge when Colin gave him the two bishops, then was losing a pawn by force. All seemed to be going swimmingly for John when he traded into a won bishop ending. But then for some reason, he put almost all his pawns on the same coloured squares as his bishop! Still, he was winning when they reached the intriguing position below.



Here 34.c4 is still won for White; but after 34.h4 instead, all his advantage is gone! When I looked, I felt Colin was the one playing for a win after 34...Bf8 35.c4 (one move too late!) Bb4 36.Bf2 Bd2 37.Bg3 Bc1 38.b3 Bd2 39.a3 Bc3 40.d5 exd5 41.cxd5 Bb2 42.a4. Engine evaluation 0.00: White can do nothing! I find such positions very interesting; only 2 White pawns on dark squares, but his bishop is still so bad as to be useless. The game ended 42...Ba3 43.Bf2 Bd6 44.Be3 Be7 45.Bf2 Bd6 46.Be3 Be7 47.Bb6 (Black could have played for a win with Bxh4) Bd6 48.Be3 Be7 ½-½ – a terrific battle!

### Division 4

**James McGrouther 0-1 Brian Connell:** An even Round 4 game, with a sad end! White expanded on the queenside and the centre for a slight edge. He won a pawn, then lost his advantage by failing to put his rook on the seventh. So it should have been a draw. Instead, James left a rook en prise and lost...

**Huey Teng 0-1 James Bullen:** Cow M is really finding his feet in competition chess now: he played a great game here in this Round 5 battle! After equalising in a Giuoco Piano, he was better once he got his knight to f4. Then he was far better when he got some mate threats! Huey defended quite well till James found a crushing exchange sacrifice. From there he won queen and many pawns for two rooks. It all ended when Huey's king was too brave and walked into mate in two. See game next page.

**Teng, Huey (Unrated) - Bullen, James (Unrated), 2023 St George CC Div 4 Round 5, 25/04/2023**

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6 4.d3 d6 5.h3 Be7 6.Nc3 0-0 7.0-0 Be6 8.Nd5 Qd7 9.Nxe7+ Nxe7 10.Bxe6 fe6 11.Qe2 Ng6 12.c3 Rae8 13.d4 ed 14.cd d5 15.e5 Nh5 16.Be3 Nhf4 17.Bxf4 Nxf4 18.Qe3 Qf7 19.Nh2 Qg6 20.Qf3 Rf7 21.Qg4 Qe4 22.Nf3 Ref8 23.Kh1 h5 24.Qh4 Qg6 25.Qg5 Qe4 26.Qg3 Ne2 27.Qg5 Rxf3 28.gxf3 Rxf3 29.Kh2 Nf4 30.Qd8+ Kh7 31.Qh4 Rxf3+ 32.Qxf3 Nxf3 33.Kxf3 Qxd4 34.Rae1 Qxb2 35.f4 g6 36.Kh4 c5 37.Kg5 Kg7 38.Rg1 Qc2 39.Rgf1 Qf5+ 40.Kh4 Qg4# 0-1

**Stephen Manwarring 1-0 Mary Hunt:** Mary did well to hang for as long as she did in this Round 4 encounter, after being behind from Move 15 despite an equal opening. That was when she played the loose g5; but Stephen did not really take toll until Mary blundered a pawn on Move 28. From there a pin won him the exchange, then he won another exchange; and he went on to win in 48 moves.

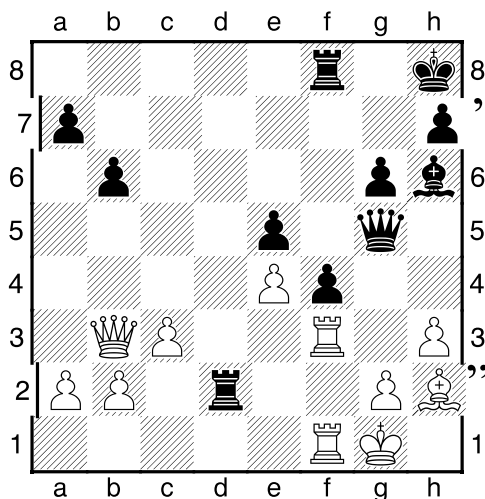
**William Liu 1-0 Ethan Riegman:** It was William's turn to play well here; and he was always on top in this Round 5 game. Ethan got into trouble when he put his knight on a6; with his king stuck in the centre, he had to defend carefully to stop mate! White won a pawn and kept attacking. Then a touch move saw Ethan drop a rook to a knight fork. William had no trouble winning the game from there.

**Mary Hunt 0-1 Mark Boan:** Fully recovered from COVID, Mary played two nights in a row here to catch up the games missed. But she could not stop the Moan Bark Express in this Round 3 battle! Mary was better early, as Mark's opening got him in trouble. But then he nearly trapped her queen! She saved it but lost a piece, then another; and she resigned on Move 44 after blundering her queen.

**Division 5**

**Ashton Li 1F-0F Zain Mokhtar:** Zain thought his opponent couldn't make it for this Round 2 game, so he did not turn up himself! Ashton was there to score a forfeit win. Zain has since withdrawn from the event completely; so all his remaining games (including postponed ones) will be scored as forfeits.

**Geoff Hyde 0-1 Kevin Liu:** A Round 5 game, this was a demonstration by Geoff of how not to play against Kevin, who loves to attack! Mind you, a quiet opening saw not much happening for 20 moves. Then Kevin got a slight edge; and he had just played 26...Rd2 when they reached the position below.



Here Geoff is hanging on with 27.R3f2; but after 27.g4 instead, all hell broke loose! Play continued 27... fxg3 28.Rxf8+ Bxf8 29.Rxf8+ Kg7 30.Qf7+ Kh6 31.Qf1 Qe3+ 32.Kh1 Rxf2# 0-1. An amazing position! The Black king is safe on h6; and White can't defend against mate. A nice finish by Kevin!

**Zain Mokhtar 0-1 Aaron Hu:** A convincing 19 move win by Aaron in this Round 5 game. Mind you, White was better for the first 15 moves! But then a passive 16.Bd1 by Zain let Black attack. Aaron did not need a second invitation. A discovery attacked a rook; Zain missed it and was mated in one move.

**Ashton Li 0.5-0.5 Ken Eldridge:** This Round 4 game saw solid play by both players, with a draw being a fair result in the end! Ken equalised in a Bb5+ Sicilian, and the players traded off all the minor pieces. Ashton was better in the resultant heavy piece ending, but missed a chance to win a pawn. Then they traded rooks into an even queen ending. A draw by repetition was then a natural result...

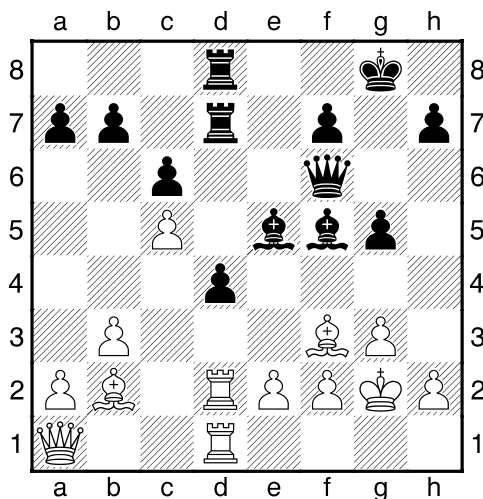
**Aaron Hu 1-0 Dimitrios Stathos:** See game below: a heartbreaking Round 4 game for Dimitrios! He equalised easily in the opening, then was better by Move 7 due to weak enemy pawns. The pawn he won meant little, though, as his own pawns were doubled; and he had to give it back. But he won another, and was better until he gave that one back too. Then he gave Aaron a passed a-pawn! Initially that was fine; but he let it advance too far. So he had to give up his rook for it; and this proved fatal.

**Hu, Aaron (967) - Stathos, Dimitrios (1218), 2023 St George CC Division 5 Round 4, 25/04/2023**  
 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Nc3 Nc6 4.d4 exd4 5.Nxd4 Bb4 6.Nxc6 bxc6 7.e5 Qe7 8.Qe2 Nd5 9.Bd2 Nxc3 10.Bxc3 Bxc3+ 11.bxc3 d6 12.0-0-0 Qxe5 13.Qxe5+ dxe5 14.Re1 f6 15.f4 Be6 16.fxe5 f5 17.Bd3 Rb8 18.Rhf1 g6 19.a4 a5 20.g4 fxg4 21.Rf6 Ke7 22.Re4 Rhf8 23.Bc4 Bxc4 24.Rxc4 Rxf6 25.exf6+ Kd7 26.Rxg4 Rf8 27.Rg5 Rxf6 28.Rxa5 Rf1+ 29.Kb2 Kd6 30.Ra8 Rh1 31.a5 Rxh2 32.a6 Rh5 33.Rd8+ Ke7 34.a7 Rb5+ 35.Kc1 Ra5 36.a8Q Rxa8 37.Rxa8 h5 38.Kd1 Kf6 39.Ra4 Kf5 40.Ke1 g5 41.Kf2 Ke5 42.Kg3 Kf5 43.Rc4 1-0

## Division 2

**Srijan Badam 0-1 Brian Allison:** This Round 5 game was the shortest of the night – just 14 moves! Brian was equal by Move 9, then better by Move 10. Soon he began attacking, and he set up a mate threat; Srijan missed it and resigned immediately, as he had to give up his queen to avoid mate.

**Andrew Li 0-1 Celina Wu:** An interesting Round 4 game! It looked to me like Celina, who equalised early as Black, was soon the one with all the pressure; but in fact it turns out that Andrew was fine all along... He just had to be careful; and he was not careful enough in the critical position below.



You just can't play moves like 23.e3 in a position like this! After 23...g4 24.Be2 Be4+ 25.Kg1, Celina found the forced win with 25...dxe3 26.fxe3 Bxb2 27.Rxb2 Rxd1+ 28.Bxd1 Rd2 0-1. On the last move, she can even win with 28...Rxd1+, winning a piece; but her win is neater and cleaner...

**John Karabatsos 1-0 Pieter Stoltz:** Pieter equalised well early in this Round 5 game; but then John gradually built up pressure ! He got the two bishops, and was winning when Pieter tried to take a "free pawn". But it was poisoned; he had to trade queens to save his queen, and he lost a piece (his bishop was trapped). Then John gave the piece back! A case of mutual chess blindness, as they both missed that the White bishop had a square to keep guarding its rook... Never mind, said John, as he doubled rooks on the seventh rank; he went on to win the ending anyway with connected passed pawns...

## Division 1

**Robert Kovacs 0-1 Jose Escribano:** An unhappy Round 3 game for Robert, who never got a chance to build up an attack in the way he likes to! Jose simply traded queens early, left White with doubled isolated f-pawns and soon won a pawn. White had the two bishops; but it wasn't enough! Many moves later, Jose won a second pawn via a pin. Then he won all of Robert's pawns, and traded off one of the bishops to boot! The result in the rook ending was inevitable: Jose won in 53 moves.

**Arthur Huynh 0-1 Daniel Melamed:** See game below: a crucial Round 5 game! Daniel equalised in a Gruenfeld, then was a bit better when White allowed his knight to get to d3. Still, Arthur was able to equalise again; and he was OK till he put his queen on a7! From there he had to give up two exchanges to avoid losing his vital f2 pawn. That's just too much to concede to Daniel, who went on to win in 42 moves via a neat tactical finish sacrificing both exchanges back to skewer and win the enemy queen.

**Huynh, Arthur (2053) – Melamed, Daniel (2035), 2023 St George CC Div 1 Round 5, 25/04/2023**  
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 d5 4.g3 dxc4 5.Bg2 a6 6.0-0 Nc6 7.Nc3 Bd7 8.e4 Be7 9.d5 exd5 10.exd5 Nb4 11.Ne5 Bf5 12.Bg5 0-0 13.a3 Nd3 14.Nxc4 h6 15.Bxf6 Bxf6 16.Qd2 Re8 17.Rad1 b5 18.Ne3 Bh7 19.Qe2 Bxc3 20.bxc3 Ne5 21.Qa2 Qd6 22.a4 Rad8 23.axb5 axb5 24.Ra1 Rb8 25.Qa3 Qf6 26.Qa7 Nf3+ 27.Kh1 Nd2 28.Qxc7 Nxf1 29.Rxf1 Rbc8 30.Qb7 Bd3 31.Kg1 Bxf1 32.Bxf1 Rxc3 33.Qxb5 Rd8 34.h4 Qe5 35.Qb6 Rb8 36.Qa7 Rb1 37.Qa8+ Kh7 38.Qa2 Qe4 39.d6 Rxe3 40.fxe3 Qxe3+ 41.Kg2 Qe4+ 42.Kg1 Rxf1+ 0-1

**Mario Falchoni 1-0 Stevo Acevski:** Stevo is actually moving just a bit slower generally, and he did so in this Round 5 game; but he still got beaten! He was worse from the opening, as Mario got superior development and a positional advantage. Then it was a slow torture! Mario won a backward d-pawn, with huge pressure via tripled major pieces on an open d-file. When he won the enemy a-pawn too, the end was nigh; and Stevo resigned when he lost a piece and Mario got his passed pawn to c7.

And now for my final catch-up trick: anagrams, but with a twist! These are not Club Champs players... The first three are former Australian Number 1 chess players; and the last three are World Chess Champions. Who are Sir Orange; Motor Inn Vans; I Vend Odd Arms; Red Lining; Cleans Gun Arms; and I'm A Hall Kit? A secret reward (more than my eternal admiration!) for the first person who sends me the correct answers by email; come on, have a go!