

Dear Dragons,

Welcome to Edition 4 of the Weekly St George Club Champs newsletter! This week sees a far shorter newsletter, as it was the first catch-up night. There were 9 games played – 4 postponed, 5 played in advance – with all divisions represented except Division 1. Despite the paucity of games, the players still managed to play some thrillers that went right down to the wire, even featuring a fightback – and a missed draw – when a piece down! All good fun; so let's see how it all transpired this week...

### Division 3

**Brian Allison 0.5-0.5 Christian Lagarez (Round 8):** Brian's 1.f4 opening did not really work here, Christian equalising easily and still equal on Move 20. Shortly afterwards, his e5 pawn push allowed Brian to saddle him with an isolated d-pawn. But in a simplified position, Christian's centralised queen meant that Brian could not exploit this; so they agreed a draw on Move 28 in a dead level position.

**Andres Perez 1-0 John Karabatsos (Round 5):** Andres' aggressive attack annihilated Karabatsos' keenly kind king here! First, a common trend in this event so far: Black equalised from the opening and was even at Move 10. Then John's errant central pawn capture gave Andres the edge, which had grown to a winning advantage by Move 15. But then Andres missed a winning Nxe5 tactic, and John was able to hang in, even offering a draw on Move 19 when he was still worse. Andres declined and his advantage grew again, especially when the enemy king had to move; it was trapped and helpless in the centre, and John resigned when facing mate and/or massive material loss. See game below.

**Perez, Andres (1652) - Karabatsos, John (1597), St Geo Club Champs Div 5 Round 5, 25/03/2025**  
1.d4 c5 2.e3 e6 3.Nf3 Nc6 4.c3 Nf6 5.Bd3 Be7 6.0-0 d5 7.Nbd2 c4 8.Bc2 b5 9.Qe2 b4 10.e4 dxe4 11.Nxe4 Na5 12.Nxf6+ gxf6 13.Qe4 Bd7 14.cxb4 Bxb4 15.d5 e5 16.Nh4 Rb8 17.f4 Bc5+ 18.Kh1 Bd4 19.fxe5 Bxe5 (=) 20.Nf5 Bb5 21.Rb1 c3 22.Bd3 Bxd3 23.Qxd3 cxb2 24.Bf4 Nc6 25.Ng7+ Ke7 26.Nf5+ Ke8 27.Ng7+ Ke7 28.Qa3+ Nb4 29.Bxe5 fxe5 30.Qxa7+ Kd6 31.Nf5+ Kxd5 and Black resigned before White could reply 1-0

**Ghassan Beydoun 0.5-0.5 Malachi O'Donoghue (Round 3):** Mal's own words: "This is not a game I am proud of. Black plays unconventionally in the opening, yet still gets a reasonable position. But he is outplayed until the ending, when salvation beckons in the form of a bishop vs knight endgame"...

A marathon that went nearly 100 moves saw Black with the two bishops and hence the early edge after queens came off. But then White equalised and gradually got the advantage against Black's isolated pawns. He won both of them and seemed well on the road to victory in a knight vs bishop ending two pawns up. However, he blundered back both pawns into a drawn ending with a pawn each! Finally Ghassan reached king and pawn vs king with a blockade; this was agreed drawn several moves later.

### Division 5

**Telephones Tilt 1-0 Basic Prose Kiosk (Round 7):** A first loss for Basic Prose was a game where his errant fifth move cost him dearly, a pawn down with his king forced to move by Move 10. From there he simply blundered a rook, moving his queen to unprotect it! The game was totally gone from there, Telephones winning when Basic Prose resigned on Move 27; see game below.

**Tilt, Telephones (1377) - Kiosk, Basic Prose (1370), St Geo Club Champs Div 5 Round 7, 25/03/25**  
1.e4 Nc6 2.f4 d6 3.Nf3 e5 4.Bc4 Bg4 5.0-0 Nd4 6.Bxf7+ Ke7 7.c3 Nxf3+ 8.gxf3 Bd7 9.Bxg8 Rxg8 10.fxe5 dxe5 11.d4 Ke8 12.Qb3 Rh8 13.Qxb7 g5 14.Qd5 Qe7 15.Qxa8+ Kf7 16.Qd5+ Be6 17.Qxe5 Rg8 18.d5 Bh3 19.Qxe7+ Bxe7 20.Rf2 g4 21.fxg4+ Ke8 22.g5 h6 23.Rf3 Bc5+ 24.Kh1 Bg4 25.Rf6 Rf8 26.Rxf8+ Bxf8 27.h4 1-0

**Maan Beydoun – Sam Sharkawy (Round 1):** This game was postponed again by Maan.

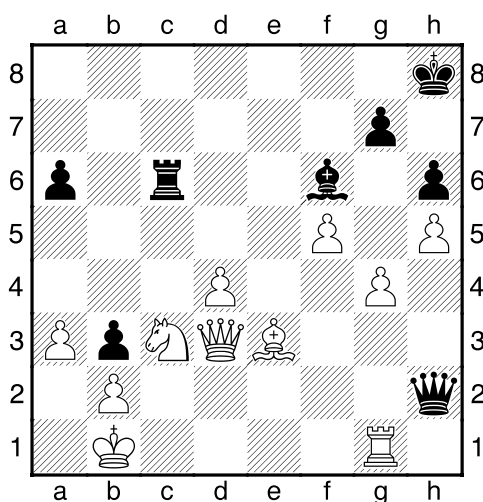
## Division 7

**Dimitrios Gourlas 1-0 Reno Sciberras (Round 1):** Here Reno popped a piece on Move 12, moving his bishop to h4 – attacked twice and only defended once! Dimitrios just took it to be a whole piece ahead. Trading, he then won the exchange; a whole rook up, he had no trouble winning from there.

## Division 6

**The Spicy One 0-1 Fast Food's Most Powerful Piece (Round 1):** A quiet opening saw Spicy doing all right early on, equal after 10 moves. Then FFMPP broke The Golden Rule, taking the enemy queen knight pawn with his queen – and he was soon winning! Within four moves he had an overwhelming position, the exchange and a pawn ahead; he soon won a piece to boot, going on to win on Move 30.

**Nihal Scammell 1-0 Ralph Mitchell (Round 8):** Interesting lesson here: sometimes you can be *too* careful! After an even opening, Ralph just blundered two pawns. Then he popped a piece two moves later! He kept fighting, trying to keep pieces on the board; but Nihal maintained a huge advantage. She locked down and was far too careful, however! This was fine until they reached the position below.



Here Nihal blundered with 42.Qe4?, allowing Ralph to win his piece back with 42...Rxc3! You cannot take the rook due to Qa2+ and the b-pawn queens; so you probably have to take a draw by perpetual check. But Ralph missed this, instead blundering a rook and losing on time; what a struggle!

## Division 4

**John Parissis 0-1 Emmanuel Vardakis (Round 5):** A bold opening saw Emmanuel equalise easily; and they traded queens into a dead level ending by Move 18. Then John swapped rooks unnecessarily with his queenside undeveloped, walking into a decisive pin! He broke out of it eventually, but only at the cost of three pawns; and Emmanuel went on to easily win the resultant rook ending.

## Division 2

**Jose Escribano 1-0 George Morgan (Round 2):** A game that was mostly even for the first 20 moves, despite much interesting play. Then after Jose got a slight edge, George got greedy: he took a poisoned pawn on c3! The result was a winning attack for Jose, with a brilliant 26th move; see game below.

**Escribano, Jose (1739) - Morgan, George (1685), St Geo Club Champs Div 2 Round 2, 25/03/2025**  
1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.f4 g6 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Bb5 Nd4 6.0-0 a6 7.Bd3 e6 8.e5 d5 9.Nxd4 cxd4 10.Ne2 Qb6 11.Kh1 Ne7 12.c3 Nc6 13.Qe1 0-0 14.Qf2 f6 15.exf6 Bxf6 16.b3 Bg7 17.Ba3 Rf7 18.Qg3 dxc3 19.dxc3 Qa7 20.Rac1 b5 21.Ng1 e5 22.fxe5 Bxe5 23.Qh4 Rxf1 24.Rxf1 Bxc3 25.Rf8+ Kg7 26.Bxg6 b4 27.Rf7+ 1-0