

The Pittsburgh Chess Club's
TUESDAY NIGHT BULLETIN
 Vol. II, No. 1: PCC championship 2009, Round 1
 (edited by Federico Garcia)

26 players signed up for the 2009 PCC championship. This tournament will determine the 2009 PCC champion, and will award Grand Prix points for the Tuesday Night Grand Prix that the club is inaugurating in 2009.

Upset draws

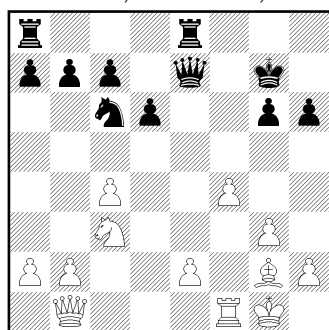
There were two surprise draws (the games Szurek-Garcia and Schragin-Galanter) in the first round, that started as usual pairing the higher rated half of the roster against the lower rated.

Both games were very interesting. In my game, Jim played an English opening with White, and I adopted a reversed Closed Sicilian setup:

□ Szurek, J. (1615) Pittsburgh 2009
 ■ Garcia, F. (2031) English – A26

1 c4 e5 2 ♘c3 ♘c6 3 g3 g6 4 ♙g2 ♙g7 5 d3 d6 6 ♜d2 f5 7 f4 ♘f6 8 ♖b1 0-0 9 ♘h3 e4. White's early ♖b1 gives Black the option of this pawn advance, because from f5 the queen's bishop would pin a knight. In the game, with the white knight on h3, the push is even more attractive, since White cannot really win the pawn (the ♙g2 is tied to the defense of the ♘h3). 10 0-0 ♙e6?! [10... ♗e8] 11 ♘g5 ♙d7 12 d×e4 h6 13 ♘h3 [13 ♘f3!? f×e4 14 ♘h4 was interesting; even better was 13 e×f5 ♙×f5 (13... h×g5? 14 f×g5 ♘g4 15 f6) 14 e4] 13... f×e4 14 ♘f2 ♗e8 15 ♘f×e4 ♘×e4 16 ♘×e4? [16 ♙×e4! ♗×e4 (16... ♙×c3? 17 ♙d5+) 17 ♘×e4 ♙f5 18 ♘c3 is similar to the game, but White is not down in material] 16... ♙f5 17 ♙c3! ♗e7 [17... ♙×e4?? 18 ♙×e4 ♗×e4 19 ♗d5+, winning] 18 ♙×g7 ♙×g7 19 ♘c3 ♙×b1 20 ♗×b1 (D)

Szurek, J.–Garcia, F.

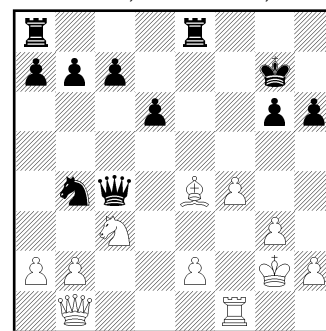


20 ♗×b1

Ok: so now I have an exchange for a pawn. At first sight I should be winning, but a closer look revealed that White had very good compensation. The ♙g2 is great on the long diagonal, holding my knight back (20... ♘d4?

21 ♙×b7 ♗b8 22 ♙f3). The check on e3 looks very tempting, but it won't actually do anything more than providing White with another target: imagine a knight on d5. I realized I had to go for the control of the light squares, and for a queen trade. 20... ♗f7 21 ♗d3! I was hoping for 21 ♙d5?!, that looks better than it is: d5 should be kept for the knight. 21... ♗f5! 22 ♙e4?! This time Jim did fall into temptation—the attack on g6 seems really good! But I was preparing a shrewd variation to simplify. In this sense it was better to play 22 ♘d5 ♗×d3 23 e×d3 ♗e2, and the game is on. 22... ♗c5+! 23 ♙g2 ♘b4! [23... ♘e7? gives up the initiative and the game to 24 f5] 24 ♗b1 ♗×c4 (D). This is what I wanted: a way to forget about my bad weaknesses on g6 and b7, by trading one of them for the powerful c4 pawn.

Szurek, J.–Garcia, F.

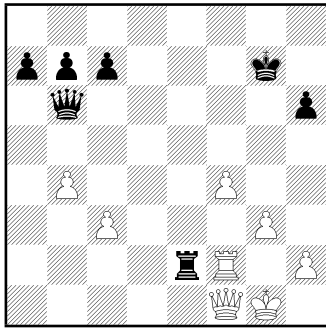


24... ♗×c4

Now an interesting thing happens: this whole variation was forced starting three moves ago, and since it involved opening up my king's position and moving my knight away from the battle, I had to verify nothing terrible was looming. Among all the other moves, for the current position I checked that I had an answer to the aggressive 25 a3. I did have an answer, and went ahead with the variation. Now Jim did in fact play 25 a3, to which I responded 25... d5?—the wrong move! Back at move 22 I had discovered the sensational 25... ♘a2!!, that wins outright (since it forces a healthy simplification, as you can check). But the move is so inconceivable, that three moves later I just went for the obvious candidate—after all, I had decided a3 was not to be feared, and simply assumed that it was this move that had been checked and approved!

After this mistake I am forced to give the exchange back, emerge a pawn down, and try to make the best of my initiative. 26 ♙×g6 d4 27 ♙×e8 ♗×e8 28 a×b4 d×c3 29 b×c3 ♗×e2+ 30 ♗f2 ♗c6+!? [30... ♗d5+ 31 ♙g1 ♗×f2 32 ♙×f2 ♗d2+ 33 ♙g1 ♗×c3 ensures the draw, but at this point I saw the position in the diagram below, which looked promising] 31 ♙g1 ♗b6!? 32 ♗f1 (D)

Szurek, J.–Garcia, F.



32 ♖f1

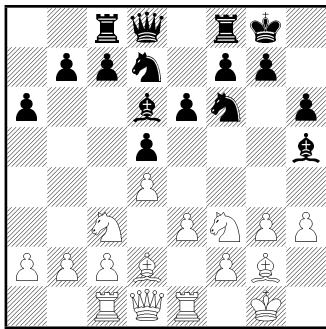
And White is (or looks) completely tied up. I thought I might have time to prepare a pawn endgame where my majority would win. In reality I don't, because my queen is in the way of my pawns, and cannot move. I tried **32... ♖c2 33 ♖e1!** [33 c4? ♖d4! and now we might be talking] **33... ♗f7 34 ♗f1 ♖b5+ 35 ♗g1 ♖b6 36 ♗f1** and draw by repetition. Actually, White had reasons to try for more: his pieces are tied, but Black's are tied up tying them up! The extra pawn, pointing at the black king, might easily tell.

1/2 : 1/2

□ Schragin, J. (1879) Pittsburgh 2009
 ■ Galanter, G. (1513) Queen's Pawn – D02

1 d4 d5 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 g3 ♗f5 4 ♗g2 e6 5 0–0 ♗bd7 6 ♗c3 ♗d6 7 ♗g5 h6 8 ♗d2 0–0 9 ♖c1 a6 10 ♗e1 ♖c8 11 e3 ♗g4 12 h3 ♗h5 (D)

Schragin, J.–Galanter, G.

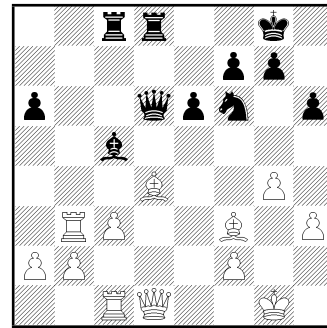


12... ♗h5

After pursuing a passive setup, White is now forced to attempt a liberation in the center. This opens opportunities for Black. **13 e4 dxe4 14 ♗xe4 ♗xe4 15 ♖xe4 ♗f6 16 ♖e3?! c5! 17 ♗c3?! cxd4?! [17... ♗d5! 18 ♖e4 ♗xc3 19 bxc3 ♖f6! would have given Black a clear advantage, with every piece cooperating on all the open, or potentially open, lines.] 18 ♗xd4 ♗c5 19 ♖d3!?** Objectively, White should probably simplify here with **19 ♗xc5 ♖xc5 20 ♖xd8**. The position is drawish and Jeff wanted to complicate, but the complications will end up benefiting Black. The battle now is all about the pin on the d-file (that will soon prove to be a pin on White, not on Black), with auxiliary motives on the c-file and the light-square long diagonal. **19... ♖b6 20 ♖b3 ♖d6 21 g4**

♗g6 22 ♖xb7? ♖fd8! 23 c3 ♗e4! 24 ♖b3 ♗xf3?! [24... e5!] 25 ♗xf3 (D)

Schragin, J.–Galanter, G.



25 ♗xf3

25... ♗xd4? This recovers the pawn, but, as is well known, a threat is often more powerful than its execution. The array of pins that Black has constructed is well worth more than a pawn, and here there was a way to cash in for its real value with the wonderful **25... ♖f4!**, that at one stroke multiplies pressure on d4, d1, c1, and f3—more than White can resist. Black threatens the ♗d4 (since the c3 is pinned), and after **26 ♖b1 e5** closes the trap. **26 cxd4 ♖xc1 27 ♖xc1 ♖xd4** Now Black has some structural superiority, but it is very hard to prove. The game now continues for a while, with both opponents looking for (and occasionally giving) attack opportunities. In the end they both emerge alive. **28 ♖c2 ♖f4 29 ♖c6 ♖d6 30 ♖c2 ♖d8 31 ♗g2 e5 32 ♖c7 ♖d2 33 ♗f1 ♖d4 34 ♗e2 ♗e4? 35 ♖b8+ ♗h7 36 ♖xf7 ♗d6 37 ♖f3?** [37 ♖g8+ ♗g6 38 ♖e6+ ♗h7 39 h4 with a strong attack] **37... e4 38 ♖f4 ♖xe2 39 ♗xe2 ♖d3+ 40 ♗e1 ♖b1+41 41 ♗e2 ♖d3+** 1/2 : 1/2

The openings

1 e4: 6 games

- └ Double King's Pawn: 3 games
 - └ Ruy López (Classical 3... ♗c5): 1 game (1–0)
 - └ Italian game (Evans Gambit): 1 game (1–0)
 - └ Four Knights (4 d3): 1 game (0–1)
- └ Sicilian: 3 games
 - └ Grand Prix: 1 game (0–1)
 - └ Wing Gambit: 1 game (1–0)
 - └ 2 ♗a3: 1 game (1–0)

1 d4: 3 games

- └ Double Queen's Pawn: 2 games (½–1½)
- └ Indian Defenses: 1 game
 - └ Queen's Indian (4 a3): 1 game (0–1)

1 c4: 3 games

- └ Closed Sicilian reversed: 2 games (1½–½)
- └ 1... e6 (by tr.): 1 game (0–1)

1 f4: 1 game (0–1)