

BCCF E-MAIL BULLETIN #394

Your editor welcomes any and all submissions – news of upcoming events, tournament reports, and anything else that might be of interest to BC players. Thanks to all who contributed to this issue. To subscribe, send me an e-mail (swright2@telus.net); if you no longer wish to receive this Bulletin, just let me know.

Stephen Wright

HERE AND THERE

Juniors to Masters International Team Match (May 10)

On May 10 a friendly match on twelve boards was played online between the Juniors to Masters Canada team and the LPS Satu Mare and Friends Romania Team. The former, including BC players John Doknjas, Joshua Doknjas, Neil Doknjas, and Joshua Imoo, drew a two game rapid match 12-12 but won a similar blitz match 13-11. [Detailed report](#)

[Vancouver Rapid Chess League](#)

At a recent meeting of the team captains it was decided due to continuing public health issues to postpone the 2019-2020 playoffs until September/October, with the proviso that teams may play online before then if they both agree.

ROOK ENDING FAILURES by Duncan Haines



Duncan (left) in action at the 2019 BC Senior (photo by Paul Leblanc)

I really like looking at endgames, especially rook endgames, because they are complex, full of subtleties and their variety is endless. The fact they often arise when we are tired after hours of play and/or short of time adds to their difficulty. They are hard even for titled players so we amateurs often completely botch them and I find myself asking "What were they thinking?" For about forty-five years, when *Chess Life and Review* would arrive in my mail, the first article I turned to was Pal Benko's "Endgame Lab" (subsequently taken over by Daniel Naroditsky) and if rook

endgames were being analyzed I was hooked. Naturally I also really enjoy Dan Scoones' "Browsing for Endgames." Inspired by Dan, I thought I would "browse" a few of my own rook endgames to try to understand and learn from how I or my opponent went wrong. I found it a valuable exercise to update my analysis and memories of these games to shine light on "What was I thinking?" There is nothing quite like seeing the thoughts of players involved so publishing them seemed like a good idea.

Diemert, Elroy (1694) – Haines, Duncan (1762) [B21] Saanich inv 1 (3), 08.06.2013



Game one was played in 2013, only fourteen months after my return to tournament chess following a thirty-five year absence. To say that I was rusty would be an understatement. My play in the opening was truly awful and the game should have ended in under twenty moves but I was let off the hook. White's advantage is now only minimal, with his extra pawn partially balanced by Black's active pieces. **36.Ne4 Re5 37.Nf2 h4?! A risky plan.** Being optimistic, I thought there was a good chance the knights would be traded and my king could become active, with White's h-pawn as a target. I was trying to give myself more chances to win as otherwise I would have played hxg4 to reduce material while still having White's g-pawn as a target.

38.Nd3 Two things we are always told about rook endings are, rooks belong behind passed pawns and activate your pieces at all cost. In this case, White is better off activating his rook to target Black's pawns while retaining his knight as a defender and seeing his passed b pawn as a longer term asset. **38.Ra1** \square **38...Rb5 39.Nxb4 Rxb4 40.b3 Kf6 41.Kd3 Ke5** The exchange of knights allows White to advance his b pawn but Black now has considerable counterplay. **42.Kc3 Rb8 43.b4 Ke4**



At the time I first looked at this in 2013, my computer program had real difficulties with this position. From one move to the next the evaluation would make big jumps up and down and I spent a lot of time working my way through it. Now, in 2020, Houdini just calls it 0.00. Same for Stockfish 11. **44.Kc4 e5**

Physically it is but of course in chess moves it isn't. When I look at it now, it just seems obvious to me to attack Black's rook from c7 rather than a7 because it saves two tempi. But when I looked at this as a "newbie" in 2013 it wasn't obvious at all! **54.Kb6!= 54...g5 55.Ka7 Rxb7+ 56.Kxb7**



56...h2? This gives away the win; I just thought everything was winning for Black. I didn't realize or calculate how quickly White's king could get back into play. By this point my brain had decided it had suffered enough abuse and was refusing all orders. **56...Kf3-+; 56...Kh4-+ 57.Kc6 Kh3 58.Kd5 g4 59.Kxe5 g3 60.Kf4 g2 61.Rb3+!**



61...Kh4 I still thought I was winning... **62.Rb8 Kh5 63.Kf5 Kh6 64.Kf6 Kh7 65.Rb7+!** Now I get it, it's a draw! **65...Kh6 66.Rb8 Kh5 67.Kf5** A game I'll never forget.... 1/2-1/2

Haines, Duncan (1531) – James, Rowan (1021) [A38] BC op (4), 11.02.2013

Game two was also played in 2013. Are my opponent's age (eight), and rating (1000) relevant to the lessons of this game? Maybe, although like many juniors, his actual strength was well above his rating. I decided to start here even though the actual lessons come much later.



21...Rb2 22.Rc1 Perhaps today I would be more patient, play a3 and slowly try to make my extra pawn count but my plan was to get my rooks active, tie Black down and advance my kingside pawns. I also thought I could bring my king over to the queenside and attack Black's pawns. **22...Rxa2 23.Rc7 b5 24.Rdd7 Rf8 25.Ra7 Ra4 26.Rd4 Kg7 27.g4 Kh6 28.h4 Kg7 29.g5 h6 30.Kf1 hxg5 31.hxg5 Rc8 32.Rf4 Rf8 33.Kg2 Kg8 34.Kf3 Kg7 35.Ke2 Kg8 36.Kd3 Rd8+ 37.Rd4 Rf8 38.f4 Ra3+ 39.Kd2 Ra4 40.e4 Ra2+ 41.Ke3 Ra4 42.e5 Ra3+ 43.Ke4 Ra4 44.f5**



Many of the previous moves may not make much sense but I had spent a lot of time trying in vain to make progress so, frustrated and close to playing on increment, I just pushed my pawns to force a liquidation. **44...gxf5+ 45.Kxf5 Ra1 46.Rdd7 Rf1+ 47.Ke4 Re1+ 48.Kf4 Rf1+ 49.Ke3 Re1+ 50.Kd2 Rxe5 51.g6 Rf5 52.gxf7+ R5xf7 53.Rxf7 Rxf7 54.Rxa6** Now, over thirty moves since my initial comment, what looks like, and is, a dead equal R+P endgame has arisen. However, I am well down into playing on increment and, having to make only a few more obvious moves to secure a draw, my opponent, seemingly distracted by my time shortage, began to blitz his moves.



This was a sudden and otherwise inexplicable change from his previous methodical and effective defence. **54...Rf2+?** This move gets a question mark because it started the impetuous losing sequence. **55.Kc3 Rf3+?? 55...Kf7= 56.Kd4** With the passage of only a few seconds and a couple of moves, out of nowhere Black is lost. Is this lesson is too obvious? Don't blitz moves if you don't have to and don't make your opponent's problem (time shortage) your problem! However, in the next game I make the same mistake; needlessly blitzing moves. **56...Rf4+ 56...Rf5 57.Rd6+- 57.Kc5 Rf5+ 58.Kb6 Kf7 59.Ra5 Rf6+ 60.Kxb5 Ke7 61.Ra6 Rf5+ 62.Kc6 Rf1 63.b5 Kd8 64.Ra7 Rc1+ 65.Kb6 Rg1 66.Rh7**



Just seconds left and I was moving while frantically trying to recall forty year old memories of rook endgame studies. Which rank does my rook go to? Building a bridge? So the second obvious lesson is to learn the basics, you never know when you will need them and you might not have twenty minutes to figure things out! Kevin Spraggett covers this theme in an excellent blog post from July 7, 2016 titled "[A Common Ending](#)." White did go on to win this game but by this point my scoresheet had become so illegible I was unable to decipher it later. **1-0**

Cronin, Kent (1743) – Haines, Duncan (1772) [A30] GPO (4), 05.04.2015



Game 3 is from April 2015. Black is up a piece and a pawn so why are we looking at this game? Well, the horror that ensues is a great advertisement for never resigning. **49.Rb7 Ra3+ 50.Kf2 Nxf4?** As I picked up the knight to take on f4 I realized to my dismay that my other knight was hanging with check. I put my knight back down but acknowledged that I was required to move it. After brief thought I continued with **Nxf4. 51.Rxb4+ Ke5 52.Rb5+ Kf6 53.g5+ Kg7 54.Rb4 Nd3+ 55.Bxd3 Rxd3 56.Kg2 h6 57.Ra4 hxg5 58.hxg5 Rd5 59.Rg4 f5?** Maybe doesn't deserve a question mark but it sets the stage for what is to come. **60.gxf6+ Kxf6** This was the last game of the round still in progress so other players had gathered to watch. I thought this would now be a relatively simple win and I began to blitz my moves; my turn to make the same mistake as occurred in the previous game. **61.Re4 Rf5 62.Kg3 e5 63.Ra4 Kg5 64.Rg4+ Kf6 65.Ra4 g5??**



Words fail to describe how awful this move is. To me it is the worst move I have ever made under tournament conditions. I've made lots of game losing one move blunders but I accept these as oversights that come with my age and rating. But blitzing out the last five moves was no oversight; I am going to call it pure hubris. The spectators could only gaze in disbelief. Maybe in chess, just like in life, tiredness and stress expose personality defects... To quote Hans and Franz, "Hear me now and believe me later." **66.Ra6+ Kg7 67.Kg4 Rf6 68.Ra5 Re6 69.Kxg5 e4 70.Ra7+ Kf8 71.Ra1 e3 72.Re1 e2 73.Kf4** What could I do except offer the draw, stand up and admit my stupidity? $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$

On the good side, my friend Kent took advantage of his good fortune in this game and scored 1.5 points in the last two rounds to finish tied for first in the U1900 section. He took the trophy on tiebreak and made a nice speech!

To be continued ...

VANCOUVER 1975 (17-25 May 1975)

Forty-five years ago BC was hosting one of the biggest and richest events ever held on Canadian soil, Vancouver 1975. In the wake of the Fischer boom chess was more popular than ever and the concept of the big money class tournament was in the air. In 1973, the year the first World Open took place, Victoria player-organizer-chess journalist Ray Kerr envisaged a similar style of event in British Columbia:

I had an idea that our province was ready for a world-class tournament catering both to top players and the masses – all I needed was someone to pat me on the back and say “Ray, that’s a good idea.” I didn’t have to wait long. A brief conversation with former *Colonist* reporter Bill Barringer in a downtown restaurant was enough to trigger a chain of events which eventually led to ours having the largest-prize-fund chess open tournament in the world in 1975. [*Daily Colonist*, 2 May 1976]

It became apparent that Victoria did not have the facilities to handle such a large event and the site for the tournament switched to Vancouver and the campus of the University of British Columbia, specifically to the Totem Park Convention Centre. Apart from Kerr himself a key figure in the organizational work was Jonathan Berry, BCCF President for 1974-75, who also acted as chief TD for the tournament. Provincial funding was sought for the endeavour which eventually resulted in a grant for \$7,500 from the Special Events Fund. This meant that 100% of the entry fees could be returned as prizes.

The resultant tournament, called simply Vancouver 1975, was a ten-round Swiss in six sections. Anyone could enter the Open Section (but mandatory for those rated over 2200), otherwise players

had the choice of entering their class section or the one above it. Entry fees ranged from \$45 (early bird) to \$65 (full price); by comparison, entry at the BC Open the previous October was \$10/\$12 and an adult CFC membership at the time was \$9. The pre-tournament advertised prize fund of \$29,000 based on six hundred entries proved overly optimistic; the three hundred and twenty actual entries resulted in \$16,128 being given out in prizes, far more than the 1974 Canadian Open in Montreal (six hundred and thirty-six players) and within \$1,000 of the 1974 World Open (\$17,000 with seven hundred and ninety-one players, the record at the time).

With a record Canadian prize fund Vancouver 1975 attracted many strong players including five grandmasters: US Champion Walter Browne, Hungarians Gyozo Forintos and Istvan Bilek, Vancouver's own Duncan Suttles, and Estonian legend Paul Keres. The class of the field in more ways than one, Keres gave up but three draws in winning the Open Section with a magisterial 8.5/10. Sadly Keres was unable to enjoy his earnings – within two weeks he was dead, having suffered a fatal heart attack in Helsinki on his way home to Estonia. Tying for second were Forintos, future author John Watson, and six-time BC Champion Elod Macskasy, fifty-six years old at the time, with 7.0 points. An unusual feature of Vancouver 1975, unlike many large class events, was that each section had an individual winner: in the Expert Section Bob Zuk was first, a point ahead of Robert Chow; Nigel Fullbrook won the A Section with Ray Stone, Harry Kaminker, Neil Salmon, and John Donaldson tied for second; Gary Burk was first in the B Section and William Schill, Matt Edwards, and Eric Tangborn placed second; Frank Szarka played the Grob (1.g4) in all his white games en route to winning the C Section with 9.5/10; and Paul Sontag was the clear winner of the D and Unrated Section.



Helping Chief TD Jonathan Berry in the directing duties were two husband and wife teams, Ray and Eunice Kerr and Rusty and Kathy Miller. Also providing assistance during the event were Werner Segnitz, Mike Westbrook, Elliot Bold, and Paul Brown. These days Vancouver 1975 is largely remembered as Paul Keres' last tournament victory and thus the precursor to the Keres Memorial events (Vancouver 1976 was the first Paul Keres Memorial) but its size and scope (still the largest adult event in this country west of Toronto) demonstrate the degree to which British Columbia was at the forefront of tournament organization at the time. [Crosstables](#)

Macskasy, Elod – Browne, Walter S. [A35] Vancouver 1975 Vancouver (3), 19.05.1975

1.d4 c5 2.e3 Nf6 3.Nf3 g6 4.c4 Bg7 5.Nc3 0–0 6.Be2 cxd4 7.Nxd4 Nc6 8.Nxc6 bxc6 9.e4 d6 10.0–0 Be6 11.Be3 Rb8 12.Qc2 Qa5 13.a3 Ng4 14.Bf4 Bxc3 15.b4 Bxb4 16.axb4 Qxb4 17.Rxa7 Rb7 18.Rxb7 Qxb7 19.h3 Ne5 20.Bh6 Rb8 21.f4 Qa7+ 22.c5 Nd7 23.f5 Bb3 24.Qd2 Qxc5+ 25.Kh1 f6 26.Rc1 Qe5 27.Rxc6 Qxe4 28.Rc7 Nf8 29.Bd3 Qe5 30.Bf4 Qa1+ 31.Kh2 g5 32.Qe2 Re8 33.Bxd6 Bf7 34.Bg3 Qd4 35.Bb5 Rb8 36.Qxe7 [Time] 1–0

Watson, John L. – Williams, Leo [B43] Vancouver 1975 Vancouver (8), 23.05.1975

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 a6 5.Nc3 Qc7 6.g3 Bb4 7.Nde2 Nf6 8.Bg2 Nc6 9.0–0 Be7 10.b3 d6 11.Bb2 0–0 12.h3 b5 13.Qd2 Bb7 14.Rad1 Rfd8 15.Qe3 Rab8 16.Kh2 Ne5 17.Kh1 b4 18.Na4 Bc6 19.f4 Nc4 20.bxc4 Bxa4 21.e5 Ne8 22.f5 exf5 23.e6 f6 24.Nf4 Bc6 25.Nd5 Bxd5

26.Bxd5 Qa5 27.Rxf5 Qxa2 28.Qd4 Qa4 29.Rdf1 Rdc8 30.g4 b3 31.g5 bxc2 32.gxf6 Nxf6 33.Rxf6 gxf6 34.Rg1+ 1-0



Browne-Keres, with Bill Wall looking on.

Browne, Walter S. – Keres, Paul [C66] Vancouver 1975 Vancouver (10), 25.05.1975

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nf6 4.d3 d6 5.c3 Be7 6.Nbd2 0-0 7.0-0 Bd7 8.Re1 Re8 9.Nf1 Bf8 10.Bg5 h6 11.Bh4 Be7 12.Ne3 Ng4 13.Bxe7 Nxe7 14.Nxg4 Bxb5 15.Nh4 Bd7 16.Re3 Kh7 17.Rg3 Ng8 18.Nf3 Bxg4 19.Rxg4 Nf6 20.Rh4 Kg8 21.Rh3 d5 22.Qe2 Qd7 23.Nh4 dxe4 24.dxe4 Rad8 25.Nf5 Qd2 26.Qf3 Re6 27.Rg3 g6 28.Rf1 Qf4 29.Rd1 Ree8 30.Ne7+ Kg7 31.Nd5 Qxf3 32.Rxf3 c6 33.Ne3 Rxd1+ 34.Nxd1 Rd8 35.Ne3 Nxe4 36.h3 Ng5 37.Rg3 f5 38.Nxf5+ gxf5 39.h4 f4 40.Rg4 Kg6 41.hxg5 hxg5 42.g3 Kf5 43.f3 Rd1+ 44.Kg2 0-1

Forintos, Gyozo – Bilek, Istvan [D77] Vancouver 1975 Vancouver (10), 25.05.1975

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.g3 g6 3.Bg2 Bg7 4.0-0 0-0 5.d4 d5 6.c4 dxc4 7.Na3 Nc6 8.Nxc4 Be6 9.b3 Bd5 10.Bb2 Qc8 11.e3 Rd8 12.Qc2 h6 13.Rfd1 a5 14.a3 Qe6 15.Rac1 Be4 16.Qe2 Bd5 17.Ne1 Bxg2 18.Nxg2 g5 19.Ne1 b6 20.Nd3 Nxd4 21.Bxd4 Rxd4 22.Nce5 Rd5 23.Rc6 Rd6 24.Qf3 g4 25.Rxd6 gxf3 26.Rxe6 fxe6 27.Nc6 Kf7 28.Nde5+ Ke8 29.Nxf3 [Time] 1-0

Whitehead, Paul – Reeve, Jeff [A15] Vancouver 1975 - X Vancouver (2), 18.05.1975

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.b3 Bg7 4.Bb2 d6 5.g3 0-0 6.Bg2 e5 7.0-0 c6 8.d3 Na6 9.e4 Nh5 10.Ne1 Nc5 11.b4 Ne6 12.Nc2 Ng5 13.h4 Nh3+ 14.Kh2 N5f4 15.Bc1 Nxg2 16.Kxg2 f5 17.Kxh3 f4+ 18.g4 f3 19.Bg5 Qd7 20.Rg1 h6 21.Be3 h5 22.Nc3 Rf4 23.Bxf4 hxg4+ 24.Kg3 exf4+ 25.Kxf4 Qf7+ 0-1

Green, Matthew – Chow, Robert [E83] Vancouver 1975 - X Vancouver (10), 25.05.1975

1.c4 g6 2.Nc3 Bg7 3.d4 Nf6 4.e4 d6 5.f3 0-0 6.Be3 Nc6 7.Nge2 Rb8 8.Qd2 Re8 9.Nc1 e5 10.d5 Nd4 11.Nb3 c5 12.dxc6 bxc6 13.Nxd4 exd4 14.Bxd4 d5 15.cxd5 cxd5 16.Bb5 Rxb5 17.Nxb5 Nxe4 18.fxe4 Rxe4+ 19.Be3 Bh6 20.Nc3 Rxe3+ 21.Ne2 Qh4+ 22.g3 Qe4 0-1

UPCOMING EVENTS

Washington Open (online)

May 23-25, chess.com

[Details](#)

Online BC Senior Championship

June 12-14, chess.com

[Details](#)

Vernon Open

July 3-5, Vernon

[Details](#)