

BERNARD CAFFERTY

A 90TH BIRTHDAY TRIBUTE



Bernard Cafferty – player, author, writer and translator

Bernard Cafferty has been one of the most important figures in British chess for over 60 years and it is hard to think of an aspect of the game that he has not embraced. As a player, he has won British titles at junior level, correspondence chess and lightning chess. He played in every British Championship between 1957 and 1971, and although he never became full British Champion, he is one of a select group of players to have amassed over 100 points in British Championships. His international career embraced representing England in the annual Anglo-Dutch matches in the 1960s and individual appearances in the master group at Beverwijk (now Wijk aan Zee) and the Hastings Premier. As a Russian translator, he is world-famous, having translated, among other things, Botvinnik's memoirs. He also edited the British Chess Magazine for ten years from 1981 to 1991, was chess correspondent of the Sunday Times from 1983 to 1997 and wrote a chess column in the Birmingham Evening Mail for some 35 years, starting in 1967.

As a player, the one British title that eluded him was the British Championship itself. The closest he came was in 1964, when he shared second place. It was Bernard's misfortune that his best years coincided with those of Jonathan Penrose, who won no fewer than 10 titles in the 12 year span from 1958-1969. But with Penrose as almost the single exception, Bernard beat every top British player of the 1960s, including Peter Clarke, Stuart Milner-Barry, John Littlewood, Owen Hindle, Bob Wade and many others.

Among his international performances was victory in the 1959-60 Hastings Premier Reserves Major, as it was then called. He won the 10-player all-play-all with 6/9, half a point ahead of Leonard Barden. This qualified him for the following year's Premier and although he finished in last place in the latter, he did earn draws against two former World Championship Candidates, namely Szabo and Bondarevsky (the latter being Spassky's hugely influential trainer). A decade later, at the very strong Teesside tournament, he held draws against many-times Candidate Lajos Portisch, as well as GMs Bilek, Ree (then still an IM but later a GM) and Gheorghiu.

Although born in Blackburn, Bernard moved to Birmingham as an adult and was closely associated with the city for some 30 years. In that capacity, he was influential in helping a talented Birmingham schoolboy called Tony Miles and when the latter won the 1974 World Junior Championship, held in the Philippines, Bernard was there as Tony's second. Bernard then moved to Hastings in 1981, after accepting the Editorship of the BCM, which had its offices in the town at the time. During his decade as Editor, he had little time for playing chess and so did not join the Hastings club, but once he retired in 1991, he became an active member of the club, which he remains to this day. By a nice irony, his first major chess success, joint first in the 1952 British Boys Championship, occurred Hastings, as the club hosted the event. Bernard's name can be seen on the plaque which lists past champions, in the downstairs playing room at Pelton House.

As an author and translator, Bernard has written numerous books, including best game collections of Spassky and Tal, opening books and an award-winning history of the USSR Championships, co-edited with the great Mark Taimanov. For decades, he was the doyen of Russian translators in the West, the highlight perhaps being his translation of Botvinnik's memoirs, *Achieving the Aim*.

Steve Giddins writes:

Dear Bernard

All of the biographical information above is to be found by research on the internet (specifically, on the Wikipedia page created, it turns out, by John Saunders – see below!) and one could go on and on reciting your successes. But what the records cannot express is the personal regard and respect

you inspire among those who know and have worked with you. My first acquaintance with your name came in the pages of *Chess* in 1974 and I still remember an article entitled "A Little Bit of Horseplay", showing some nice examples of repeated moves by black knights in the opening – your favourite Alekhine's Defence, of course. One of the victims was the appropriately-named D G Horseman!

Our personal acquaintance began in the 1990s, when we both played for the BCM team in the 4NCL. As a Russian speaker myself, I can testify that, without any exaggeration, your encyclopedic knowledge of Russian is greater than that of any other non-Russian I have known. I learnt my Russian by living and working in the country after Communism fell. You, by contrast, have only ever spent a total of about ten weeks in the country – a two-month language course in 1963 and a couple of weeks visiting in 1991. Despite this, your knowledge is far greater than mine. When visiting your book-crowded flat, I still to this day marvel at seeing Russian-language textbooks (several of them written in German!) covered in handwritten corrections, as your eagle eye spots grammatical mistakes and incorrect stresses! When I worked in Moscow, you would occasionally email me queries to ask my Russian colleagues. On every occasion, they expressed amazement at the erudition and detailed knowledge your queries revealed.

Your contribution to chess in this country for the past 70 years has been unquantifiable and you remain passionately in love with the game and still a very strong player.

As the Russians say, "с юбилеем!".

John Saunders writes:

Dear Bernard,

I was very pleased to be given this opportunity to congratulate you personally on your 90th birthday. You are one of a dwindling band of chess players whose names I have been familiar with since I became a competition player and it was one of the greatest pleasures of my life to work alongside you for some 11 years when I took the helm at BCM in 1999. Your advice and support were invaluable during that time. In advance of our first meeting on "finishing off day" Murray Chandler gave me an excellent piece of advice: "you ignore Bernard at your peril." That demonstrates the esteem in which my great predecessor holds you and I never forgot his advice (not that there would have been much chance of me ignoring you anyway - I was fully aware of your value to the operation).

"Finishing off day" (as we termed the day when an issue of the magazine was put to bed) could be a fraught occasion for the editor but in fact I looked forward to it as I enjoyed your company and that of the late Pat Aherne. As well as spotting typos and factual hostages to fortune, you often found something in the proofs that reminded you of an anecdote which you would recount to entertain us as we worked. When you identified something in the proofs that might lead BCM into hot water, there was a slight hint of Sir Humphrey (you) warning Jim Hacker (me) of potential danger. I can't remember a specific example, but I'm not sure we ever did commit a publishing blunder of sufficient magnitude to cause me to lose any sleep, thanks to you. Those are very happy memories for me and I hope they are for you.

Later I was able to repay your kindness and support in a small way by creating a Wikipedia page for you and digitising a large number of your games for my Britbase website. Playing Boswell to your Dr Johnson! Well, sort of. BritBase has become my retirement hobby of choice and I spend a lot of time combing through old magazines. I often come across your numerous contributions to both BCM and CHESS. The period after the war up to the time I joined the chess world has always been my favourite period of chess history, for reasons I can't fathom. Perhaps everyone is sentimental about the time they fell in love with the game. I always enjoy reading your old magazine articles and can only wish we had chess writers of your erudition and wit to entertain and enlighten us in the

modern era.

I was very proud to be your colleague and (still) your friend. Enjoy your celebration, Bernard.

Grandmaster Murray Chandler writes:

It is with pleasure that I take up this kind invitation to write a few words. Many years ago I worked with Bernard at the British Chess Magazine, initially in my role of minority investor / roving contributor, and later as Editor / Proprietor. Originally Bernard had been catapulted in as BCM Editor in 1981 at short notice, following the untimely death of Freddy Reilly. Bernard's heroic efforts saved the magazine from a grim outcome. When later caretaker owners the British Chess Federation involved me, I had the opportunity to work alongside this erudite gentleman, always ready with a droll insight into the latest Soviet chess gossip. As BCM went through further changes over the next decade – including opening a bespoke chess shop in London – Bernard's wise counsel and support was invaluable. These were Halcyon days for English chess, full of drama and fun on a world stage. I am grateful to have shared that amazing experience with my friend Bernard, and I wish him all the very best on the occasion of his 90th birthday.

Selected games

(1) Clarke, Peter Hugh - Cafferty, Bernard [A50]

British CF-44 Championship Plymouth/ Devon (1), 19.08.1957

IM Peter Clarke was one of the strongest British players of the 1950s and 1960s, a regular member of the England Olympiad team and his prizewinner in the British Championship. A rock-solid positional player, he also had a reputation for being just about the toughest player to beat in English chess!

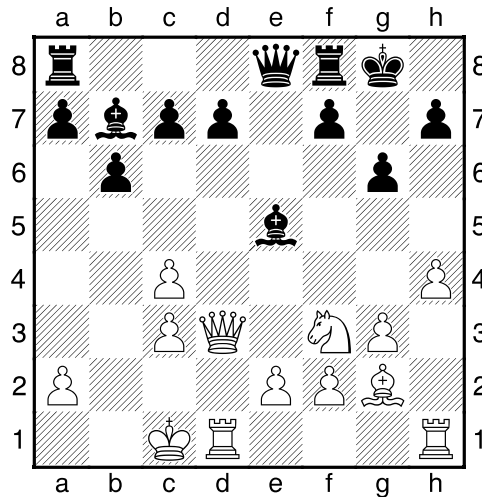
1.Nf3 Nf6 2.g3 b6 3.Bg2 Bb7 4.c4 g6 5.d4 Bg7 6.Nc3 Ne4 7.Qd3 Nxc3 8.bxc3

A slightly surprising idea. In return for accepting doubled pawns, White keeps his queen pointing at the enemy kingside and has ambitions to exploit the absence of the defensive knight from f6.

8...0-0 9.h4 e5

Following the classical precept of meeting a flank attack with a central counter.

10.dxe5 Nc6 11.Bg5 Qe8 12.Bf4 Nxe5 13.Bxe5 Bxe5 14.0-0-0?

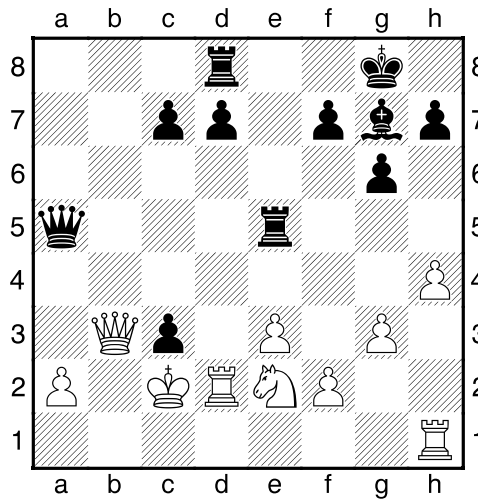


Continuing his ambitious play, but this is asking too much of White's position. Short castles would have maintained rough equality.

14...Bg7 15.Ne1 Bxg2 16.Nxg2 Qe5 17.Nf4 Rfe8 18.e3 Rad8 19.Kb2 Qa5

Black has a winning attack.

20.Ne2 a6 21.Rd2 b5 22.cxb5 axb5 23.Qd5 Re5 24.Qb3 b4 25.Kc2 bxc3



26.Rd4

26.Nxc3 Rc5 is hopeless.

26...Rb5 27.Ra4 Rxb3 28.Rxa5 Rb2+ 29.Kd1 c2+ 0-1

30.Kd2 c1Q+ 31.Kxc1 Rxe2 wins a piece.

Cafferty,Bernard - Milan,Slade [D98]

British Corr Championship 1959/60

As mentioned in the biography section, Bernard was one of the leading correspondence players in Britain in the 1950s and 60s, winning the 1959-60 British Correspondence Championship. Here is his crucial win from that event. His opponent, Slade Milan, a post-war Yugoslav emigre who worked as a bus driver in the Midlands, was defending champion and won the British correspondence title no fewer than 5 times between 1958 and 1968.

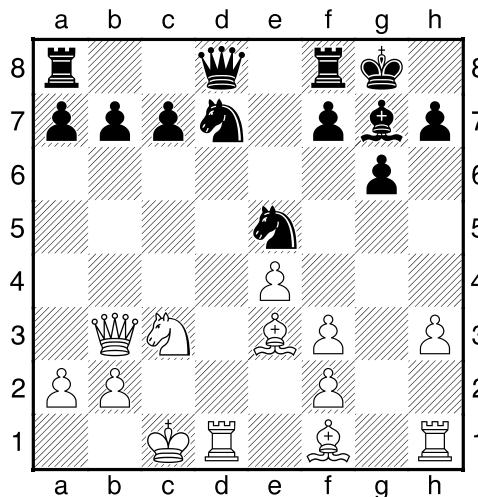
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Qb3

As befits a Russophile, Bernard chooses the so-called Russian System against the Grunfeld.

5...dxc4 6.Qxc4 0-0 7.e4 Bg4 8.Be3 Nfd7

The Smyslov system, in those days pretty much ubiquitous against 5.Qb3.

9.0-0-0 Nc6 10.h3 Bxf3 11.gxf3 e5 12.dxe5 Nxe5 13.Qb3



Black has not reacted well to White's long castling and now faces being bombed out of teh centre by f4 and e5. He decides on a desperate pawn sacrifice to get some air.

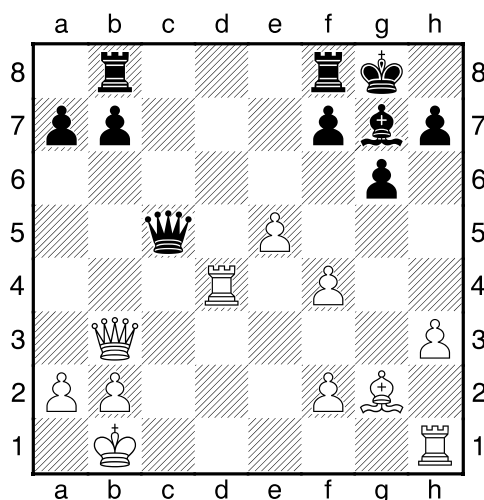
13...c5 14.f4 Nc6 15.e5 Qc8?!

This passivity only compounds things. Black should be consistent and try 15...Nd4 although he does not really have enough for his material after 16.Qxb7 Rb8 17.Qxa7 Nb6.

16.Bg2 Rb8 17.Ne4 Qc7 18.Kb1 Nd4

Finally carrying out his intended pawn sac, but it is too little, too late.

19.Bxd4 cxd4 20.Rxd4 Nc5 21.Nxc5 Qxc5



The remainder is a nice illustration of how opposite-coloured bishops, whilst known to be a drawing factor in the endgame, are the reverse in the middlegame. The pawn structure shuts out Black's bishop on g7, whilst White will direct his kingside attack at the light squares, on which his bishop has no opponent and White has effectively an extra piece.

22.Rhd1 b5 23.h4 h5 24.Be4

Threatening 25.Bxg6.

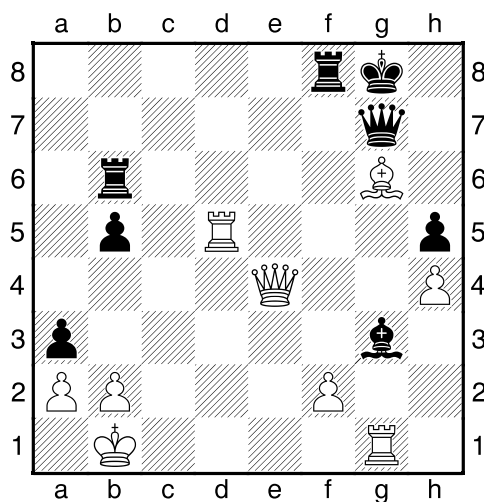
24...a5 25.Qf3

25.Bxg6 a4 26.Qc2 is actually still playable and winning for White, but Bernard sticks with the middlegame.

25...a4 26.Rd5 Qe7 27.f5

Note how every White piece is on a white square!

27...Bxe5 28.fxg6 fxg6 29.Qg2 Rb6 30.Bxg6 Qg7 31.Rg1 a3 32.Qe4 Bg3



An ingenious last try, threatening both Qxb2 mate and the bishop on g6. But it is White's move...

33.Bf7+! 1-0

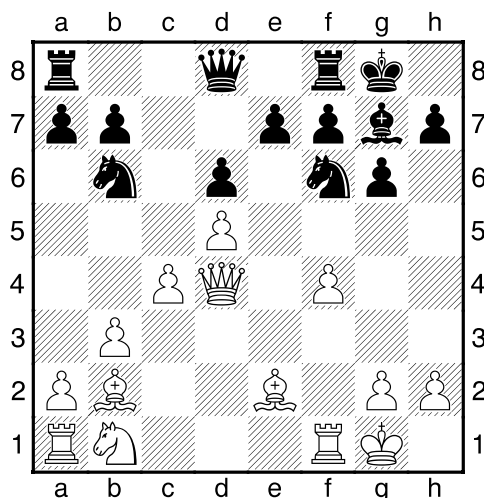
Payne,Roland - Cafferty,Bernard [B05]

Southend Premier, 1960

1.e4 Nf6

Alekhine's Defence, for many years Bernard's favourite response to 1.e4 and an opening with which he scored many successes.

2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6 4.Nf3 Bg4 5.Be2 Nc6!? 6.c4 Nb6 7.exd6
 7...e6! is a strong retort here.
 7...cxd6 8.d5 Bxf3 9.Bxf3 Ne5 10.Be2 g6 11.f4 Ned7
 But not 11...Nexc4?? which loses a piece after 12.Bxc4 Nxc4 13.Qa4+.
 12.Qd4 Nf6 13.b3 Bg7 14.Bb2 0-0 15.0-0??



This innocent and natural-looking move is in fact a losing mistake, thanks to the following tactical blow. White should play 15.Qd3.

15...Na4!!

"Grom sredi yasново neba!", as they say in Moscow - lightning from a clear sky! A striking blow, putting the knight on the edge and en prise!

16.Bc3

There is nothing to be done. The main point is that 16.bxa4 loses material after 16...Nh5 17.Qd2 Qb6+ and 18...Qxb2, picking up the exchange on a1, whilst declining the Trojan horse with 16.Qd2 is no better because of 16...Nxb2 17.Qxb2 Ne4.

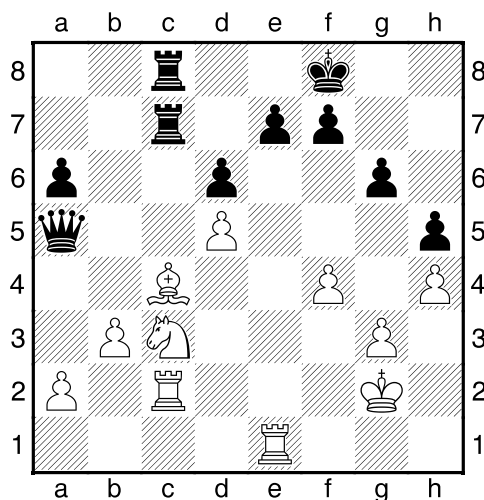
16...Nxc3 17.Nxc3

White looks to have found a way out of his trouble, but a fresh blow awaits him on the g1-a7 diagonal.

17...Ng4!

Unfortunately, moving the queen loses an exchange after 18...Qb6+. White could already resign with a clear conscience, but, probably shell-shocked by the sudden turn of events, he elects to surrender the queen for two pieces and struggle on.

18.Qxg7+ Kxg7 19.Bxg4 a6 20.Kh1 Qa5 21.Rac1 b5 22.Be2 bxc4 23.Bxc4 Rac8 24.Rfe1 Rc7 25.g3 Rfc8 26.Kg2 h5 27.Rc2 Kf8 28.h4



28...Rxc4!

Returning a small amount of material is the best way to break the white structure.

29.bxc4 Rxc4 30.Rec1 Qa3

White really should resign now, but with nothing else to do on a dull Easter weekend in Southend, he fights on with his false teeth.

31.Ne2 Rxc2 32.Rxc2 Qd3 33.Re8+ Kg7 34.Nc3 Kf6 35.Rc6 Kf5 36.Kf2 a5 37.Rc7 f6 38.a4 Kg4 39.Ne2 Qf3+ 40.Ke1 Qe4 41.Kf2 g5 42.hxg5 fxg5 43.fxg5 Kxg5 44.Ra7 Qxa4 45.Rxe7 Qa2 46.Rh7 Qc2 47.Rh8 Qb2 48.Rf8 Qd2 49.Rh8 a4 50.Ra8 Qb4 51.Ke3 a3 52.Nd4 Qe1+ 53.Ne2 Qb4 54.Nd4 Qc3+ 55.Ke4 Qe1+ 56.Kf3 Qh1+ 57.Ke3 Qxd5 0-1

Nunn,John DM - Cafferty,Bernard [B03]

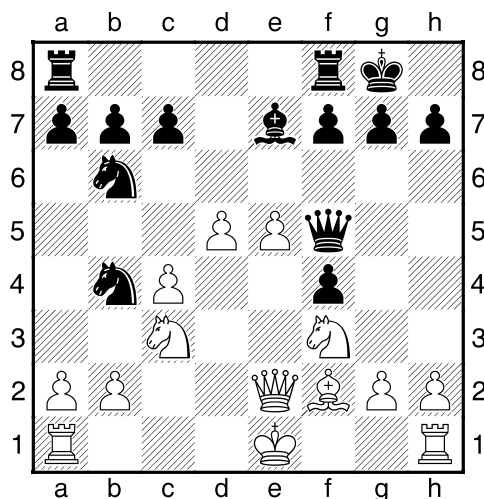
Birmingham International 1974

Another of Bernard's Alekhine Defences and probably the strongest opponent he ever beat with it. The game is a classic Alekhine, as White's monster pawn centre fails to yield a decisive attack and gradually turns into a liability.

1.e4 Nf6 2.e5 Nd5 3.c4 Nb6 4.d4 d6 5.f4

The Four Pawns, much the most dangerous line against the Alekhine.

5...dxe5 6.fxe5 Bf5 7.Nc3 e6 8.Nf3 Be7 9.Be3 0-0 10.Bd3 Nc6 11.Bxf5 exf5 12.Qd3 Qd7 13.d5 Nb4 14.Qe2 f4 15.Bf2 Qf5



16.0-0?

Thus far, things have gone very well for White and 16.0-0-0 would have left him in control. Nunn's choice is his first error.

16...Qd3 17.a3?

This further departure from the path of righteousness soon leads White to perdition. Correct was 17.Rad1, relying on the tactical point that 17...Qxe2 18.Nxe2 Nxc4 can be met by 19.Rd4, when White remains on top in the complications.

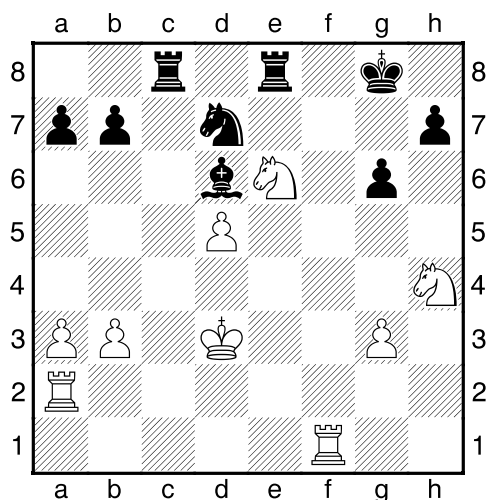
17...Qxe2 18.Nxe2 Nd3 19.b3 Nxf2 20.Kxf2 Bc5+ 21.Ke1 Be3

The exchanges have extinguished White's initiative and granted Black enough counterplay to hold the balance.

22.g3? fxg3 23.hxg3 Rfe8 24.Nf4 Nd7 25.Ke2 Bc5 26.e6 fxe6 27.Nxe6 Bd6 28.Kd3 c6

Bit by bit, the once-proud white pawn centre disintegrates, although for now, he still has equal chances.

29.Nh4?! cxd5 30.cxd5 g6 31.Ra2? Rac8



32.g4?

White's last few moves have left his pieces scattered around, in a desperate bid to hang on to his exposed pawns. Now he lost.

32...Nc5+ 33.Nxc5 Rxc5 34.b4

34.Kd4 Re5.

34...Rxd5+ 35.Kc4 Rg5 36.Rd2 Rxg4+ 37.Kb5 Bf4

Two pawns have dropped off. One suspects time-trouble has influenced White's play over the last ten moves.

38.Rd4 Rxh4 39.Rdxf4 Re5+ 0-1

Cafferty,Bernard - Wood,Baruch Harold [A30]

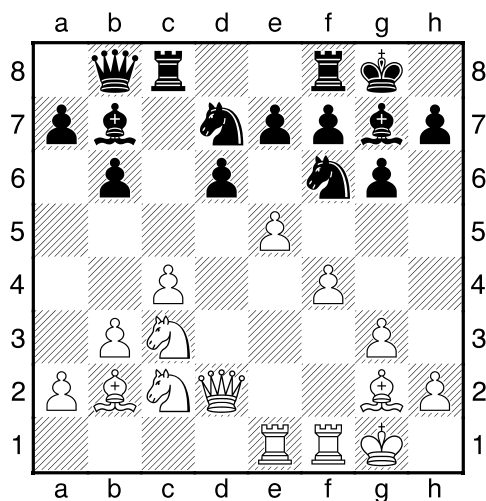
Birmingham Post Cup Rd 1, 1975

B H Wood was a major figure in British chess for over 40 years, as founder and editor of the magazine *Chess*. He was also a very strong player, who represented England at the 1939 Olympiad and remained strong enough to win the Jersey Open in 1975, when already 64 years old. As a long-time resident of Birmingham, he and Bernard were friends and rivals for many years.

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.g3 g6 3.b3 b6 4.Bg2 Bb7 5.Bb2 Bg7 6.0-0 0-0 7.c4 c5 8.Nc3 Nc6 9.d4 cxd4 10.Nxd4 Rc8 11.Nc2 Qc7 12.e4 d6 13.Qd2 Qb8 14.Rae1 Ne5?

Black is somewhat worse after the opening, but this time-wasting knight manoeuvre causes his game to go downhill rapidly.

15.f4 Ned7 16.e5!



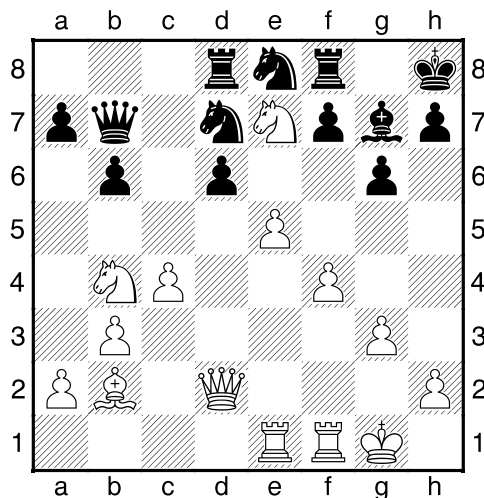
16...Ne8

Both 16...dxe5 17.fxe5 Nxe5 18.Bxb7 and 16...Bxg2 17.exf6 Bxf1 18.fxg7 lose material.

17.Bxb7 Qxb7 18.Nd5 Kh8

Simple and decisive. Black has no good way to defend the e7-square, eg. 18...Nb8 19.exd6.

19.Nxe7 Rd8 20.Nb4



For Black, this is good(k)night. He could already resign, but Wood was nothing if not a fighter.

20...dxe5 21.Nbc6 Ra8 22.fxe5 Nc5 23.e6 f6 24.Bd4 Qc7 25.Bxc5 bxc5 26.Qd7 f5 27.Nd5 Qd6 28.Qxd6 Nxd6 29.e7 Rfc8 30.Nd8 Ne8 31.Re6 Rxd8. 1-0

Cafferty, Bernard - Short, Nigel D [A35]

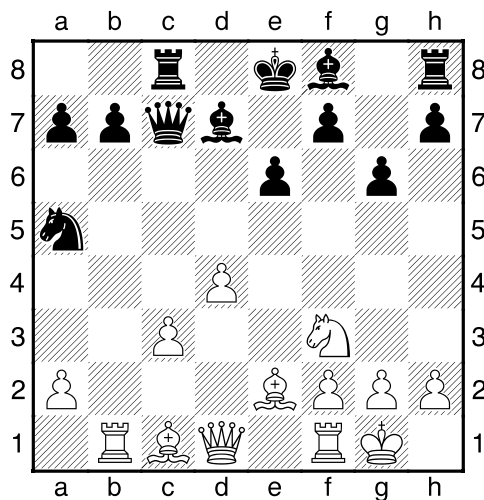
British Championship, 1977

Here Bernard faces the 12-year old Nigel Short, who was making his debut in the British Championship that year. Despite his tender years, he was already a force to be reckoned with, as he had shown in round 2 by trouncing the 10-time British Champion, Jonathan Penrose.

1.c4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 g6 4.e3 Nf6 5.d4 cxd4 6.exd4 d5 7.cxd5 Nxd5 8.Qb3 Nxc3 9.Bc4 e6 10.bxc3 Bd7!

Having stumbled into a variation which had had a poor reputation ever since the Botvinnik-Petrosian match on 1963, Short finds an improvement over the board. Now the threat of 11...Na5 forces White back.

11.Be2 Qc7 12.0-0 Rc8 13.Rb1 Na5 14.Qd1



14...Qxc3?

Evidently nobody had told young Nigel not to accept presents from strangers. Correct was 14...Bg7 15.Ne5 0-0 with balanced chances.

15.d5! Ba3

This was evidently Short's idea - he meets the threat of Bb2 and keeps his ill-gotten gains, but the longer-term cost is much too high.

16.dxe6 fxe6

16...Bxe6? 17.Qa4+ wins a piece.

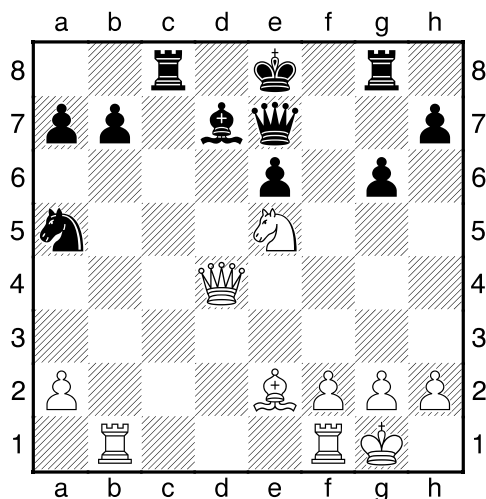
17.Bxa3 Qxa3 18.Qd4!

Maybe Short had missed this move. Now he cannot castle and his king is caught in the centre, whilst the dark squares are like so many open wounds in Black's position.

18...Rg8

18...Qc3 19.Qf4 Rf8 was a better try, but still bad.

19.Ne5 Qe7



20.Nxd7

Objectively, 20.Rfd1 was probably even stronger, but there is no reason not to cash in at once.

20...Qxd7 21.Qxa7 Nc6 22.Qxb7 Rc7 23.Qb2 Kf7 24.Rbd1 Qe7 25.Rfe1 Re8 26.Bc4 Qb4 27.Bb3 Qh4 28.Rd3 Qb4 29.Rf3+ Ke7 30.Rd1 Nd4 31.Qxd4 1-0

Cafferty, Bernard - McNab, Colin Anderson [A49]

Hastings Challengers 1997/98

The BCM noted that one of the talking points of the first week at that year's Hastings Congress was the 63-year old Bernard's splendid form. This win against the Scottish GM was the highlight.

1.Nf3 g6 2.d4 d6 3.g3 Bg7 4.Bg2 Nf6 5.0-0 0-0 6.b3 Nc6 7.Bb2 e5 8.dxe5 Nd7 9.Na3 Nxe5 10.Kh1 Re8 11.Nxe5 dxe5 12.Qd2 Qe7 13.Rad1 Nc5 14.Nc4

This solid double fianchetto set-up against the King's Indian is a shrewd choice against a higher-rated opponent. If Black wishes to generate winning chances, he will have to take risks.

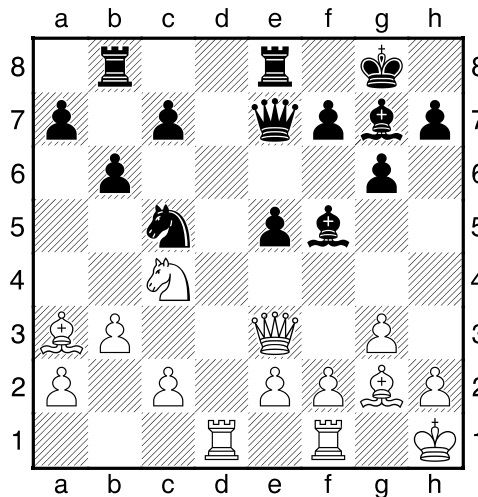
14...Bf5?!

The start of Black's troubles. 14...e4 holds the balance.

15.Ba3 Rab8

15...Rad8 16.Qa5 is awkward for Black.

16.Qe3 b6



17.Na5!

Exploiting the freshly-weakened c6-square.

17...Qf8 18.Nc6 Ra8 19.Rd5!

Piling on the pressure and Black's position is suddenly creaking.

19...e4 20.Rfd1 Re6 21.Nd4

21.Bxc5 bxc5 22.Qxc5 was also very strong, but Bernard prefers to maintain the pressure.

21...Bxd4

A horrible concession, but forced.

22.R5xd4 Rd6 23.Bb2 Rad8 24.h3 h5 25.Kh2 Ne6 26.Rxd6 Rxd6 27.Rxd6 cxd6 28.Bxe4 Bxe4 29.Qxe4 Qc8

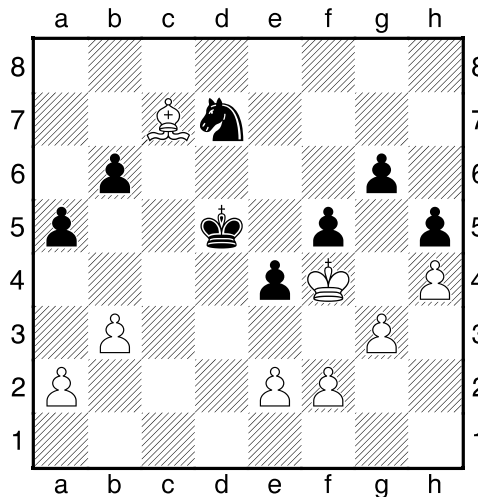
The upshot of White's pressure is an extra pawn and possible mating threats on the dark squares around the black king.

Despite strenuous GM resistance, Bernard brings home the bacon.

30.h4 Qc5 31.Kg2 a5 32.Bf6 d5 33.Qe5 Qxc2 34.Qb8+ Nf8 35.Qe8 Qe4+

The only defence to 36.Be7.

36.Qxe4 dxe4 37.Bd8 Nd7 38.Kf1 f5 39.Ke1 Kf7 40.Kd2 Ke6 41.Ke3 Ke5 42.Bc7+ Kd5 43.Kf4



Classic two-front strategy in the endgame. The bishop ties Black down to the queenside weaknesses, whilst the white king hunts for prey on the other wing.

43...Kc6 44.Bd8 Nc5 45.Ke5

Avoiding the trap 45.Kg5?? Ne6+.

45...e3 46.fxe3 Ne4 47.Ke6 Nxe2 48.Kf7 Nxe2 49.Bg5 b5 50.Kxg6 Nc3 51.Kxh5 Nxa2 52.Kg6 b4 53.h5 Nc3 54.h6

a4 55.bxa4 b3 56.h7 b2 57.h8Q b1Q 58.Qxc3+ 1-0



Amsterdam 1971, the IBM tournament. Former world champion Vassily Smyslov explains his round two win against Hartoch to roving reporter Bernard.



Wielding his Alekhine Defence again, this time at the 4NCL, 2007 (Photo credit: Steve Connor)

