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Two quick easy wins from Philip Casper and Bill Franklin set us on the road. Alan Potter however overlooked the possibility of an advantageous recapture by his opponent in the centre, giving Black the advantage of active piece play. George Fernie was on the right end of a blunder to give us a 3-1 lead. But in k.o.

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Played 12th December, 1979 at St. Bride's
W & W had white on the oddnumbered boards

Since we won our first two matches against strong opposition we've gone into our shells and now have lost three in a row. East Ham's side sports a number of additions by comparison with their Essex League team (one might almost call them Upminster!) We were struck by the misfortune of Alan Potter having to withdraw on the day of the match, but Roy Wagstaff was on hand to fill the breach.

Game No. 56 Board 1 P.T.R. Gasper v R. Watts English Opening. (Philip's notes to this game are written with a certain amount of tongue-in-cheek!) Since this was my first game on board 1 for Wanstead since September 1977 it deserves to be committed to posterity! 1 c4, e5; 2 Nc3 Nc6; 3 e3. The first significant moment - obviously White's plan is to push the d-pawn as far as possible. 3 ... g6; The second significant point - White now has a second strategy to follow: swap off the dark square bishops and infiltrate with the king to f6 or h6. 4 d4, exd4; 5 exd4, Bg7; 6 Nf3, d6; 7 d5, Ne5; 8 Nxe5, dxe5; 9 Be2, Ne7; 10 O-O, O-O; 11 f4, 11 ... Nf5; 12 Bg4, h5; 13 Bxf5, Bxf5; 14 fxe5, Bxe5; 15 Bf4, Bxf4; 16 Rxf4. An important part of the winning plan is accomplished. 16 ... Qd6; 17 Qd4, c6? Allowing White to accomplish the first-stated part of his strategy. The rest is technique. 18 c5, Qd8; 19 Re1, Re8; 20 Rxe8+ Qxe8; 21 Ne4, Bxe4; 22 Rxe4, Qd7; 23 d6, Re8; 24 h3, Rxe4; 25 Qxe4, f5; 26 Qe5, Kf7; 27 h4, b6; 28 b4, bxc5; 29 bxc5, Qd8; 30 g3, Qd7; 31 Kf2, Qb7; 32 Kf3, a5; 33 Qc3, Qa6; 34 Kf4, Qa6; 35 Qc4+ Kf6; 36 Qd4+ Kf7;

37 d7, Qb8+ 38 Qd6, Now after 38 ... Qb4+ 39 Kg5, Qg4+ 40 Kh6, the d-pawn reaches the eighth rank and White will have achieved both the plans begun at move 3. Therefore BLACK RESIGNED. (Argue with that if you can! - Ed.)

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Adjudications/Adjournments

Before we move on to some Essex League reports there are some oddments to clear up:

London League Div. 2 v. Willesden - 19.10.79: Kinder $\frac{1}{2}$ v Demming $\frac{1}{2}$ ($2\frac{1}{2}$ - $7\frac{1}{2}$)

Essex League Div. 1 v. Ilford - 15.11.79: Pritchard 0 v Novik 1
S. Lee 1 v Dorn 0 ($6\frac{1}{2}$ - $3\frac{1}{2}$)

v. Romford 26.11.79: Gasper $\frac{1}{2}$ v Elmes $\frac{1}{2}$
Pritchard $\frac{1}{2}$ v Corish $\frac{1}{2}$
Skelsey 0 v Eisenberg 1 ($3\frac{1}{2}$ - $6\frac{1}{2}$)

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ESSEX LEAGUE

DIVISION 1

Played 3rd January, 1980 Away

W & W had white on the odd numbered boards

Wanstead & Woodford			v	East Ham		
1	Alan J. Potter 158	adj v		J. Sargent -		adj
2	P.T.R. Gasper 187	1 v		H.I. Woolverton 177		0
3	G. Speed 191	adj v		N.L. Carr 151J		adj
4	A.T. Marshall 190	1 v		R. Hatch 144		0
5	I.D. Hunnable 178	adj v		S. Hunt 146		adj
6	T.D. Whitton 167	0 v		P. Smyth 145		1
7	W.T. Franklin 159	1 v		A. Compton 126		0
8	A.S. Kinder 164	1 v		A. Gascoyne -		0
9	G.W. Fernie 147	adj v		P. Symmington 113 J		adj
10	S. Skelsey -	1 v		R. Tarrant 132		0
				5 + 4 adj		1 + 4 adj

When East Ham's team was declared, missing several names, it was clear they had little chance of repeating last year's draw, but a good match developed, containing a number of interesting games.

Alan Marshall was first to finish having disposed of Ron Hatch inside an hour and a half. Philip Gasper continued his excellent form of late with another win against Harry Woolverton. Philip sacrificed a pawn for open lines and soon gave up another eventually infiltrating the king's position (game follows). Terry Whitton transposed moves in the opening allowing Smyth to sacrifice the exchange for two pawns and a powerful minor piece attack. Terry had to give back the exchange to stay alive but was still 2 pawns down and tied up in knots. Bill Franklin pushed up a pawn roller against Black's castled king but the outcome of the game revolved around Black's attempts to free himself by counterplay on the other wing. Andrew Kinder's game had a most unusual appearance: Andrew had constructed a pawn 'tent' on the king's side with most of his pieces inside it but but his king out in the cold on the queen's side. Somehow Andrew's king survived and when the 'tent' took off against the white monarch the issue was decided. Stuart Skelsey, a late substitute, was winning from the moment he took up occupation of the centre and was a piece up by adjournment.

From the adjourned games it looks as though we will collect another 2 or $2\frac{1}{2}$ points so the issue is not in doubt. Alan Potter, as always, pressed forward throughout and appeared to have chances in the adjourned K & P ending. On further study however it seems Sargent can hold it. Neil Carr accepted the Milner-Barry gambit, later gave up a piece for two more pawns and looked to be winning. But by adjournment the picture had changed And Speed now has two bishops in return for a rook and exposed black king. Ian Hunnable spoilt a promising position and now is

on the losing end of a Q & P ending. George Fernie landed a sucker punch and is justified in asking for a win.

When I stated in the November issue that we would have to wait until this match to see if we could complete a clean sweep over East Ham I had overlooked the London League match! But ignoring that, we have now completed a whitewash of East Ham in the Essex League.

I make no apology for presenting yet another Gasper game - he is currently head and shoulders above anybody else in the side (with the possible exception of Alan Marshall) and his games are consequently of a consistently high quality. You may be forgiven however for bemoaning yet another English opening, but this time Philip is black! There is an interesting background to this encounter in that Harry Woolverton (to whom I send the bulletin for press purposes) expressed interest on playing through Philip's game against G. Leyl n (game No. 49) and confessed he had learnt something concerning playing the English (considering Harry's vast experience this is indeed remarkable). Harry therefore took this first opportunity to put things to the test against his 'mentor' and this is what happened...

Game No. 57 Board 2 H.I. Woolverton v. R.T.R. Gasper English Opening. Notes by Philip Gasper. 1 c4, c5; The last time I didn't move my c-pawn two squares on move one (with either colour) was over two years ago. 2 Nf3, Nc6; 3 Nc3, g6; 4 g3, Bg7; 5 Bg2, e6; 6 d3, Nge7; 7 O-O, O-O; 8 Bf4, d5; 9 Qc1, Re8; This isn't given in Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings, so I presume it's a TN (theoretical novelty) - at any rate I think it's a good move. The main point is to avoid the exchange of dark squared bishops, but I also had an idea that the rook might prove well placed on the e-file later on. 10 Bh6, Bh8; 11 h4?! After the game my opponent told me that he thought this a good move, but I can't really believe that such a wing thrust is correct when Black's position is so well centralised. 11 ... b6; 12 h5, Bb7; 13 Nh4, Consistent, but White's forces are becoming somewhat decentralised... 13 ... Nd4; ...whereas the black pieces control the centre of the board. 14 e4! A very good move. Before things have gone too far, White seeks to clarify matters in the centre, takes f5 away from the black knights, and prevents a possible later plan of Black's to capture on c4 and swap off the white squared bishops. The move also has the concrete threat of advancing the f-pawn to put further pressure on g6. But e4 also has its drawbacks - most notably Black's knight on d4 is now firmly established. I was now unwilling to prevent the advance of White's f-pawn by playing ...f5, as this would weaken my K-side. I decided instead to try an interesting pawn sacrifice in an attempt to exploit my slightly better central position. 14 ... b5!? 15 cxb5, c4! 16 dxc4, Or 16 exd5, Nxd5! e.g. 17 Qd2, cxd3; 18 Qxd3, Nb4; 19 Qd2, Bxg2; 20 Kxg2, Qd7; 21 a4, Qb7+ 22 Kg1, Rad8 with fine compensation for the pawn. 16 ... dxe4; The point is that this pawn is immune due to forking threats on e2. Black now has excellent central control. 17 Rd1, Qc8; 18 b3, Nef5; 19 Nxf5, exf5; 20 Rd2, White should probably look for an improvement around here - Black is now able to swap off light squared bishops and create mating threats. 20 ... Nf3+ 21 Bxf3, exf3; 22 Nd5! f4! 23 Nxf4, Re4?! Too eager to justify my 9th move! Much better here would have been 23 ... Qg4 with very strong threats which I don't see how White can meet. 24 Qd1, Trying to exploit the slight weakness of my back rank, but possibly better would have been 24 Qf1. From now to the end of the game the play on both sides becomes rather inaccurate as the time control approaches. 24 ... Bc3; Although Black will now win the exchange the position remains complex as White's Q-side pawns will be strong compensation in an ending. 25 Kh2, Qe8; 26 Rc1, Bxd2; 27 Qxd2, Qe5; 28 Rd1, White should try 28 Qc3 here to exchange queens. 28 ... Re8; 29 Qd6, Qf5; Possibly not best since White should again force an ending with 30 Qd7. 30 hxg6, hxg6; 31 Nh3? Bc8; 32 Ng5, Qg4; 33 Qd5, Qh5+ 34 Resigns.

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INTERLUDE.....The following passage appears in "Principles of Chess" by James Mason, first published over eighty years ago, under the heading of General Principles: "In Chess many things fall out unforeseen, favouring design - or the reverse. The player should be incessantly awake to these, or he will be unable to make the most of them. Presence of mind often discovers the first appearance of surprise to be neither its best nor worst. Coolness and concentration go far."

Division 2

Played 18th December, 1979 at Wanstead

Wanstead & Woodford			v	Ilford		
1	G.W. Fernie 147	$\frac{1}{2}$	v	J. Manley 153	J	$\frac{1}{2}$
2	S.R. Lee 138	1	v	D. Goorvitch 140	J	0
3	E.S. Lee 138	1	v	C.F. Dorn 139		0
4	Peter J. Smith 152	0	v	J. Page 137		1
5	H. Anderson 134	0	v	W.J. Hawthorn 150		1
6	S. Skelsey -	0	v	M. Sames 145	J	1
7	G.T. Gooding 125	$\frac{1}{2}$	v	N. Twitchell 125		$\frac{1}{2}$
8	J. Franklin 113	1	v	R. Trodd 123		0