



C O L U M N I S T S

From the Archives

Hosted by
Mark Donlan



From the Archives...

Since it came online many years ago, **ChessCafe.com** has presented literally thousands of articles, reviews, columns and the like for the enjoyment of its worldwide readership. The good news is that almost all of this high quality material remains available in the [Archives](#). The bad news is that this great collection of chess literature is now so large and extensive – and growing each week – that it is becoming increasingly difficult to navigate it effectively. We decided that the occasional selection from the archives posted publicly online might be a welcomed addition to the regular fare.

Watch for an item to be posted online periodically throughout each month. We will update the **ChessCafe** home page whenever there has been a “new” item posted here. We hope you enjoy **From the Archives...**

CHESS

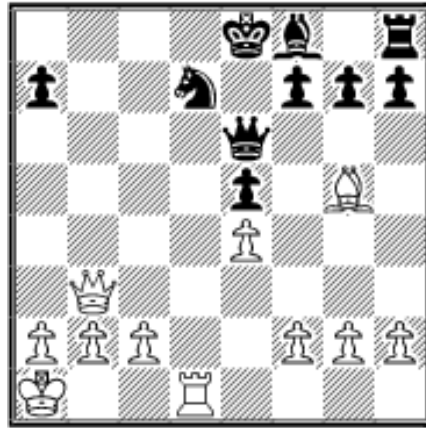
by Raymondo

I have been totally and utterly besieged, inundated, deluged, submerged, flooded, swamped, overwhelmed and snowed under by amazingly fascinating readers’ comments on the fascinatingly amazing game I presented as a tribute in *The Times* of 25 February, in which I paid homage to the brilliantly exciting New York star Paul Morphy (1836 1883), a contemporary of England’s amazing Howard Staunton, our very own world champion whose trailblazing *Handbook* is available as a collector’s item as a tribute from Batsford in a deluxe reprint. And yet, absolutely amazingly, there is still whingeing in some quarters about British chess literature!

This remarkably superbly brilliant duel of the mind, one of the most gloriously fabulous ever conceived by the human brain on Planet Earth, spectacularly shows Morphy playing utterly blindfold with the white pieces, which experts say is equivalent to having the advantage of the serve in tennis. His utterly humiliated and humbled opponents were GM Count Brandenburg and IM Duke of Isolde, and amazingly this wonderfully imaginative mind duel sensationally blasted its way in tremendous style onto the chess scene during a glittering performance in Berlin in 1857 of Wagner’s *Tristan and Isolde*. Phenomenally, this shattering triumph was unearthed for presentation as a collector’s item in *The Times* only after dazzlingly exhaustive ransacking of the

stupendously sumptuous Batsford chess library to which I paid homage in *The Times* last week.

Here is the possible crucial position, one of the most amazing I have ever seen.



The board is literally in flames and the octopus-like tentacles of White's pieces send staggering shockwaves around black's vitals and form a breathtaking crab-pincer movement absolutely reminiscent of a boa constrictor bloodthirstily lashing out on its possibly final onslaught with the marvellously spider-like weaving of an astoundingly magnificent mating net that many experienced experts say may have foreshadowed the Steinitzian trench warfare of the First World War, as subsequently

echoed absolutely fascinatingly by our own Nigel Short, heroic challenger in the colossally memorable Times World Championship Match, to which the official book, still available from Batsford, pays homage.

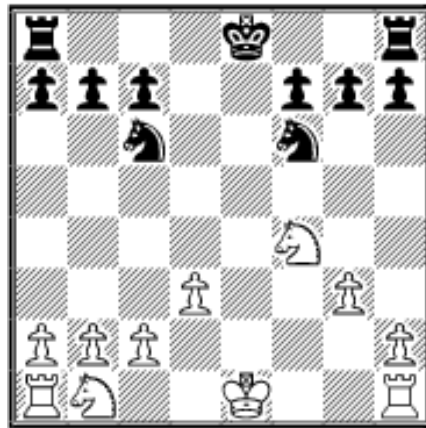
The totally mind-boggling convolutions of Morphy's utterly brilliantly sparkling play irresistibly remind me of the absolutely amazing illegal dénouement to the utterly shameful 1985 world championship match, which controversial FIDE President Campomanes (a self-confessed avid devotee of President Marcos's political speeches, as noted in the authoritative Batsford match book) arbitrarily halted just as our own towering genius of chessboard art and science Garry Kasparov, unquestionably in my mind the Shakespeare and Leonardo da Vinci of chess, began to win game after game after game. To my mind it was undoubtedly the most utterly shameful act the chess world had witnessed since 1485. Morphy, in a position fascinatingly similar to the one which arose in a scintillating simultaneous display and banquet that I recently gave at the fashionable Hackney Social Club to help make chess as popular as snooker and to raise funds for an English Chess Association tombstone, an absolutely wonderfully glittering and star-studded occasion that was also attended by celebrated *Times* artist Barry Martin and leading statesman Jeremy Handley M.P. and was brilliantly refereed by highly respected Batsford author Eric Schiller, played the totally amazing

1 Qb8+ Nxb8 2 Rd8 and checkmate next move cannot be avoided.

From my absolutely groaning mailbag on this fascinatingly fantastic position, Bob Stooze of Totnes and Cyril Foyle of Penge suggest the exciting 1 Rxd7 as a possibly more decisive continuation. However, Morphy's line seems more immediately winning. Jimmy Butt of Tower Hamlets suggests 1 Qb6, threatening 2 Qd8 mate. Although this wonderfully spectacular try gains full marks for imagination, black can defend by capturing the queen. Another alternative, suggested by Craig Green (aged 8) of Clapham Common, is 1 h3, but the actual game has a possibly more energetic finish. Finally, Tom Noddy of Winchelsea suggests 1 Nc7 checkmate. This would work in all variations

but unfortunately the move is not legal under the Rules of Chess because there is no white knight on the board. A six-month subscription to the prestigious *British Chess Magazine*, which experts say is vastly proud of its association with this column, goes to all these eagle-eyed *Times* readers. Well done!

As a tribute and homage, all next week I shall be publishing in full in *The Times* the exciting qualifying problem for Britain's own Lloyds Bank Problem-Solving Competition. Excitingly, experts have noted with stunned amazement that for no less than the past successive ten years in a row *Times* readers have totally overwhelmed the organizers with far and away the most replies, setting a possibly unique record, so keep up the good work! It is an extraordinarily amazing checkmate-in-two puzzle by Britain's own T.G. Dawson, with White to move, which experts say is like having the advantage of the serve in tennis.



Winning Move

This highly-charged position is from Andersson v Keene, Nice Olympiad, 1974. What did the players come up with? A copy of *Irregular Openings* will be awarded to the winner.

ChessCafe would like to extend its thanks to *Kingpin* for permission to reprint the above article. *Kingpin* is a humorous chess magazine which contains entertaining and instructive articles by masters on all aspects of the game. "The joy of chess is nowhere celebrated to such climactic excesses as in *Kingpin*..." IM William Hartston, *The Independent*.

 [TOP OF PAGE](#)

 [HOME](#)

 [COLUMNS](#)

 [LINKS](#)

 [ARCHIVES](#)

 [ABOUT THE CHESS CAFE](#)

[\[ChessCafe Home Page\]](#) [\[Book Review\]](#) [\[Columnists\]](#)
[\[Endgame Study\]](#) [\[Skittles Room\]](#) [\[Archives\]](#)
[\[Links\]](#) [\[Online Bookstore\]](#) [\[About ChessCafe\]](#) [\[Contact Us\]](#)

Copyright 2007 CyberCafes, LLC. All Rights Reserved.

"**ChessCafe**®" is a registered trademark of Russell Enterprises, Inc.