

White Knights Chess Club 4-2 St Benildus

Our 4th round opponents were the Irish team St Benildus from Dublin. This was a must win game with both teams knowing that a loss today would result in the bye coming their way tomorrow.

It was Peter Bevan's turn to sit this match out. Things started well with me finally winning a game although it was quite a stressful match with my opponent moving very quickly. He played an aggressive line in the Grand Prix attack and sacked a knight on f7 for an attack on my king. Thankfully he didn't follow it up with the critical line which I was somewhat relieved about. I managed to swap all major pieces off knowing I would be a knight up in a knight and bishop v knight endgame. The guys were kind enough to point out afterwards I had missed a mate in 2 at one point and overlooked taking a rook but I explained I wanted to demonstrate my endgame technique to the crowd.

Bill was next to finish when his opponent who did nothing to demonstrate he was trying to win with the white pieces found a perpetual check and a draw was agreed. Things improved further when Pete Heaven continued his unbeaten run with a convincing win against his opponent in a Scandinavian opening.

At this stage even being 2.5 points to half point up I was not confident of a win in the match as both Adam and David Buttell were losing their games.

After a number of games this week where we had not converted a winning position it was nice to finally get a bit of luck. David Buttell was the recipient of this good fortune where his opponent with a pawn 1 square from queening in a double rook and queen endgame was kind enough to blunder a rook and then lose the pawn. With David having won I could breathe a sigh of relief to get our first win of this event and our extended battle to avoid the bye continues.

Adam eventually resigned when a piece and pawns down in an endgame. After his misfortune earlier in the week after some excellent play of missing out on a win and draw this was not one of his best performances.

The last game to finish was Allan Pleasants. Allan got into a nice position where his opponent sacked the exchange for a pawn as his beat attempt to hold the position. Allan missed some chances to get his rooks into the game and allowed his opponent to get an excellent bishop in the centre of the board. This was more than enough to hold the position and Allan had no option but to give his rook up for the bishop and pawn to get himself into a rook and two pawns endgame. He ended up giving away his final pawn to reach a drawn rook and pawn v rook endgame. This took the final score to 4-2 and this raised us up to 51st place overall which is good considered our starting rank was 58th.

Tomorrow we have Viking chess club from Iceland so this will be a tougher test. We need to get at least one more win or maybe draw to ensure we avoid the dreaded bye in either round 6 or 7.

