1 Middlesex

Middlesex was not the first English county that Bob represented: he had stayed for a while in St. Albans with Norman Lavers after the British Championship in 1946 and, temporarily resident there, played top board for Hertfordshire on November 2nd, in a match against Essex, drawing on adjudication with Ilford's TH George.

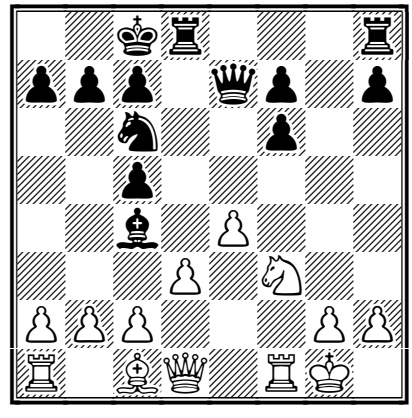
Bob played for Middlesex for the first time on December 18th, 1948. Whilst Bob was playing in his first match for the county, Edward G Sergeant, playing on board 3, had played for the county in 1908, its very first year in the counties championship!

RGW – HC Lewis
Amboyna Shield Match
Middlesex – Hertfordshire
Board 2
18 December 1948
St. Bride's Institute, London
King's Gambit Declined (C30)

1. e4 e5 2. ♗c4 ♗c5 3. ♘c3 ♘f6 4. d3 d6 5. f4!? Once again this gambit that was a favourite of Bob in those days. Besides his game against Gabriel Wood from Barcelona 1946, he also played it against Lothar Schmid in their 7th match game, 1949–50 and against FS Woolcock at the Stevenson Memorial, 1950. **5… ♗g4** The gullible 5... ♘g4, as we have already seen, is easily refuted. Gabriel Wood played 5… ♘c6; other safe alternatives include (a) 5… ♗e6 6. ♗xe6 7. fxe6 8. ♘f3 exf4 9. ♗xf4 0–0 and (b) 5… exf4 6. ♗xf4 ♘c6 7. ♘f3 ♗g4, in both cases with an approximately equal game. **6. ♘f3 ♘c6 7. ♘a4** Bob's opponent now diverged from theory with 7. **♕e7?!** This is poor as it gives the centre and the two bishops without sensible compensation. 7… 0–0 is recommended instead, giving White a useful small advantage. Wood chose 7… ♗xf3 8. ♕xf3 ♘d4, to which Bob replied 9. ♕g3!? 9. ♕d1 is also possible, both with interesting complications to follow. **8. ♘xc5 dxc5 9. 0–0** 9. ♗b5, pinning and removing Black's defence of e5, would have been better, when White would be able to dominate the centre. **9… 0–0–0?!** It was necessary, instead, to play 9… ♘d4, exploiting the pin on the ♘f3. Black now got rather the worse of things.

10.	**h3**	**♗e6**
11.	**fxe5**	**♗xc4**
12.	**exf6**	**gxf6** ***(D)***

W



Black now had a ragtag bunch of weak pawns; Bob's next move prevented Black from eliminating the most serious of these weaknesses, the doubled, isolated f-pawns on an open file.

13. ♘h4 ♗e6

14. ♗e3 ♖hg8

Black missed an opportunity here to straighten out his queenside with 14… c4, as then 15. d4 allows the riposte 15… f5.

15. ♘f5 ♗xf5

16. ♖xf5

Blockading the doubled f-pawns, against which White could now triple up; Black is able to defend them, but the resulting loss of mobility allows White to attack other targets, such as the isolated h-pawn.

16. … ♘d4

17. ♗xd4

An interesting decision – although it straightened out Black's doubled c-pawns, White's rook on f5 gained in scope on the queenside and Black's only active piece was removed.

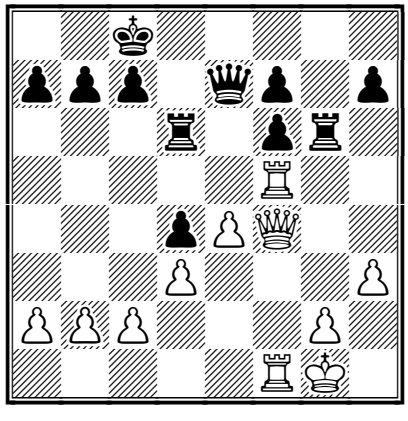
17. … cxd4

18. ♕d2 ♖g6

19. ♖af1 ♖d6

20. ♕f4 ***(D)***

B



White has a large advantage – compare the pawn structures and piece activity.

20. … ♖e6

21. a3 c5?

Perhaps Black reckoned on a further push of the c-pawn to provide counterplay. The move is nevertheless wrong as it exposes Black's king and gives White new targets.

22. ♕h4

White could have simply have won a pawn with 22. ♖h5, but no real harm was done, as Black's fundamental problems remain.

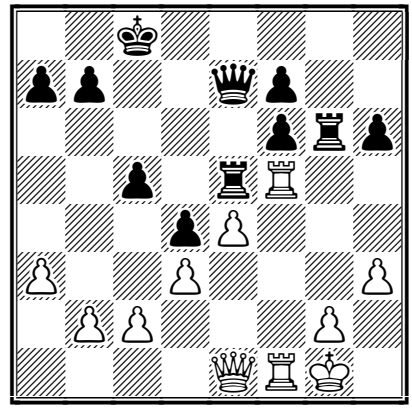
22. … h6

23. ♕e1

Bob simply continued to probe, without making any committal decisions, a modus of play which taxes the defender heavily.

23. … ♖e5

W



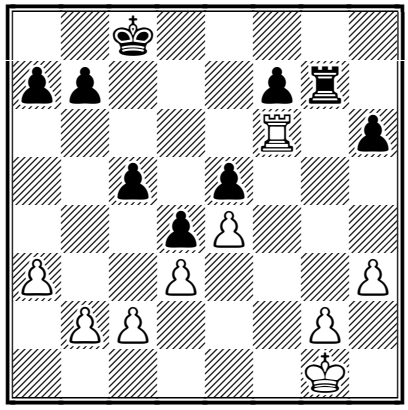
24. ♖xe5!?

At first sight this seems a crazy decision – undoubling the f-pawns, dissolving Black's main weakness. Particularly after 24… fxe5 25. ♕f2 ♕g5, but closer inspection reveals that 26. h4 ♕g4 27. ♕f5+ ♕xf5 28. ♖xf5 f6 29. h5 ♖g5 30. ♖xf6 ♖xh5 31. g3! ♔d7 32. ♖f7+ ♔c6 33. ♔g2 gives White a very good rook endgame – Black's rook

and king are effectively immobilised. Was this an inspired insight?

24.	**…**	**fxe5**
25.	**♕f2**	**♖g7**
26.	**♕f6**	**♕xf6**
27.	**♖xf6**	***(D)***

B



This position is very difficult for Black to defend – if it is possible at all. Bob proceeded to win with the simple technique that was to become his trademark: **27… ♔d7 28. ♖xh6 ♔e7 29. ♖h8 ♔d6 30. g4 f6 31. ♖f8 ♔e6 32. ♖b8 b6 33. ♔f2 ♔d6 34. ♔g3 ♔e6 35. a4 ♖c7 36. b3 ♔f7 37. h4 ♔g6 38. ♖d8 ♖b7 39. ♖d6 ♔g7 40. h5 ♖f7 41. ♔h4 ♔h7 42. ♖c6 ♔g7 43. a5 ♖b7 44. a6 ♖f7 45. ♖c8**. Black resigned as White will play ♖c8–b8–b7. **1–0.**



1. David B Pritchard (1919 – 2005) watching his wife, Elaine Saunders, play at Bognor Regis 1953

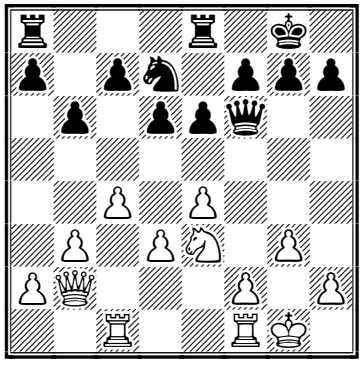
In this match played over 50 boards in the competition for the Amboyna Shield, Middlesex outclassed Hertfordshire, 36½–13½. Although Bob was to take no further part in the competition, the 1948–49 season was a successful one for the county, under the match captaincy of David Brine Pritchard, en passant to the BCF Counties Championship. Pritchard had fought with the RAF in the Second World War, a navigator in Dakotas, who dropped supplies to Allied forces fighting the Japanese. Demobbed, he took up the Middlesex match captaincy for the 1946–47 season, continuing for the following four seasons, until 1949–50. During this time Middlesex won every single match, with one terrible exception, losing to Essex for the first time ever in February 1948! He gave up the captaincy in 1950, having rejoined the RAF to carry out secret work in photographic reconnaissance. He wrote The Right Way to Play Chess[1], a lucid primer for novices, which was first published in 1950, sold three hundred thousand copies and went through 10 editions. A later work, The Encyclopaedia of Chess Variants[2], became the definitive work in its field. Pritchard would play a role in helping Bob to his second British championship title, in 1970, by defeating ten times champion, Jonathan Penrose.

It wasn't until the1951–52 season that Bob next played for Middlesex, when he turned out against Sussex at Eastbourne's Town Hall. Bob won a long, dull game on board 4 against George Marshall Norman, a veteran player who had represented Sussex against Middlesex in a correspondence match as early as 1907 and had played 8 times in the Hastings Premier between 1921–22 and 1934–35, his best results being 4th with 5/9 in 1922–23 and again in 1926–27.

RGW – GM Norman
SCCU Counties Championship
Sussex – Middlesex
Board 4
19 January 1952
Town Hall, Eastbourne
Irregular Opening (A05)

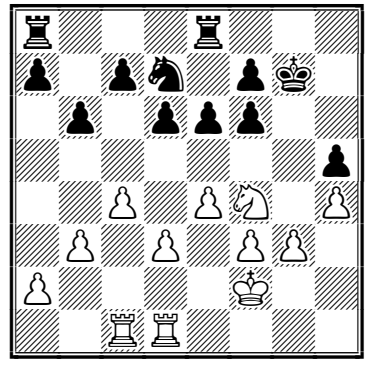
1. ♘f3 ♘f6 2. g3 b6 3. ♗g2 ♗b7 4. 0–0 e6 5. c4 ♗e7 6. b3 0–0 7. ♗b2 d6 8. ♘c3 ♘e4 9. ♘xe4 ♗xe4 10. d3 ♗b7 11. ♕d2 ♘d7 12. ♖ac1 ♖e8 13. ♘e1 ♗xg2 14. ♘xg2 a5 15. e4 ♗f6 16. ♘e3 ♗xb2 17. ♕xb2 ♕f6 ***(D)***

W



18. ♕xf6 gxf6? A very strange decision – a draw would surely have resulted if Black had recaptured with his knight, without weakening his pawn structure. **19. f3 ♔g7** Black tries to attack on the kingside, but with little hope of success. It would have been better to have played something like c5 and then a4, to activate Black's rooks on the a-file and weaken White's b-pawn as a target for counter-attack. **20. ♔f2 h5** This pawn gets no further and becomes a defensive burden for Black. **21. d4 ♖h8 22. ♘g2 ♘b8 23. ♖fd1 ♘d7 24. h4** ***(D)*** It was by now apparent that Black had committed positional suicide.

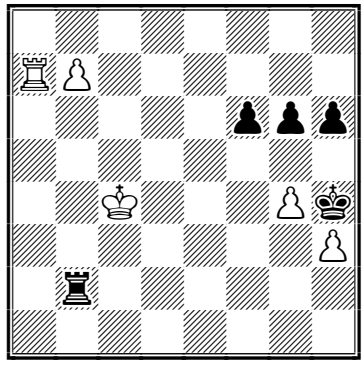
B



24… ♖he8 25. ♘f4 ♔h6 26. ♘d3 ♖ec8 27. ♖c2 e5 28. ♘e1 ♘f8 29. d5 ♘d7 30. ♘g2 ♖h8 31. ♘e3 ♖ae8 32. ♖g1 ♖hg8 33. ♘f5+ ♔h7 34. g4 hxg4 35. fxg4 ♘f8 36. h5 ♔h8 37. ♔e3 ♘h7 38. ♔d3 ♘g5 39. ♖h1 ♔h7 40. ♘e3 ♔h8 41. ♖f2 ♘h7 42. a3 ♖g5 43. ♖a1 ♖a8 44. ♖ff1 ♔g8 45. b4 ♘f8 46. c5 bxc5 47. bxc5 ♘d7 48. cxd6 cxd6 49. ♔e2 ♔f8 50. ♖ab1 ♘c5 51. ♔f3 ♔e7 52. ♖b6 ♘d7 53. ♖b7 ♖c8 54. ♖fb1 ♖c3 55. ♖1b3 ♖xb3 56. ♖xb3 ♘c5 57. ♖b6 ♔d7 58. ♘f5 ♘xe4 59. ♔xe4 ♖xg4+ 60. ♔e3 ♖g5 61. ♖xd6+ ♔c7 62. ♖xf6 ♖xh5 63. ♖xf7+ ♔d8 64. ♔e4 All hope was gone, therefore **1–0.**

Bob was unable to play further for the county in the 1951–52 season, but found himself nevertheless involved in the farcical resolution of Middlesex's national final with Oxfordshire, held back (as was then normal) until November 1952 to allow university players to represent the county during term time. The twelve board match was tied at 4 – 4, when he was asked to adjudicate the four unfinished games. Two were easy enough, a win for Oxfordshire with a useful extra pawn on one board and a draw on another, where Sir Robert Robinson, an expert correspondence player, was able to wipe away the apparent Middlesex advantage with the demonstration of a clear cut drawing line. The remaining two adjudications, on boards 9 and 10, however, involved difficult endgames. Bob initially awarded draws on both, thereby giving Oxfordshire the championship, but two days later, he overturned his own verdict and awarded a win on board 10 to Oxfordshire. Both counties appealed these decisions and so an appeals committee was set up, consisting of Bob, Golombek and Penrose. The final verdict was announced in late January 1953, a win for Middlesex on board 9, but Bob's award of an Oxfordshire win on board 10 was upheld, supported by a convincing analysis which that county's stellar top boards had laboured for days over, Barden recalling that it was *Tylor who found the decisive trick, I think a zugzwang move, and I recall his excited tone as he told me about it*[3]. BH Wood's Chess was bombarded with correspondence regarding the matter for several further months; writing of the affair, his sarcastic headline was **Next Appeal: To the House of Lords?** He wrote of the play over the board *which some might think the main part of the play, but which seems to have had a purely incidental connection with the final result*[4]. Barden was explicit though, in his well-known book for improving players, How to Play the End Game in Chess[5]: *When I was match captain of Oxfordshire in the 1951 County Championship final against Middlesex, it was clear ten minutes before adjudication time that the match might well depend on a difficult endgame in progress on a lower board where the Oxfordshire player, a rather nervous Swedish student, I. Galvenius, was opposed by the experienced former international player J. Stone. The Oxfordshire top boards had finished their games and our number one player, Canadian champion, D. A. Yanofsky, pointed out to me that our Swedish player had his hand hovering over a piece and that this could well be a decisive error… What I did as match captain was to announce in a loud voice, just by Galvenius ear, 'It is five minutes to go to adjudication time.' Galvenius's hand jumped in the air and he did not make any move between then and adjudication time. The position went for adjudication, and after three days of analysis by the Oxfordshire top boards (Yanofsky, Tylor, Barden and Persitz) a clever winning line was found, depending on a single tempo in an ending of rook against three pawns. The position was given a win for the Oxfordshire player, and on that game the County Championship was decided.*

W



Adjudicator's Nightmare:
Board 10 Galvenius (Ox) – Stone (Mx)
BCF Counties Final, Nov. 1952

The main line of the analysis provided by Yanofsky, Tylor, Barden and Persitz runs: 1. g5!! fxg5 2. ♔c3 ♖b6 3. ♖a4+ ♔xh3 4. ♖b4 ♖xb7 5. ♖xb7 g4 6. ♔d3 g3 7. ♔e2 h5! 8. ♔f3! h4 9. ♖g7 ♔h2 10. ♖xg6 ♔g1 11. ♖g4 ♔f1 12. ♖b4! ♔g1 13. ♖xh4 g2 14. ♖g4 ♔h1 15. ♔f2! and wins. The matter rested there … until 1981 when Dr. John Nunn included the position on board 10 in his acclaimed book, Tactical Chess Endings.[6] Nunn, over 3 pages, essentially agreed with the Oxfordshire players' analysis, albeit with some refinements.

Bob was unable to play for Middlesex during the next (1952–53) season, but 1953–54 finally became Bob's first full season for the county, during which he beat CH Stacey (Sussex) and drew with WEB Pryer (Hertfordshire) and Jonathan Penrose (Essex), all alas to no effect as Surrey made a clean sweep, taking the Shannon, Amboyna and Ebony Trophies, on the way to claiming the Counties Championship too.

The match captain, John Poole, made amends, however, in 1954–55, his second year in the captaincy, as Middlesex took the Southern Counties Shannon and Amboyna trophies. Poole was a highly effective organiser, holding various posts over the years in the administration of Middlesex, the SCCU, finally holding the post of BCF President from 1989 to 1993.



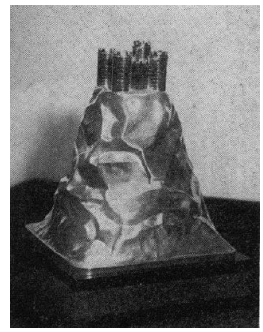
2. John Poole

Bob's contribution to that season's campaign was to beat Penrose and Stacey and draw with Broadbent (Surrey) and ARB Thomas (Devon), with only the one loss, to JB Howson (Kent). Bob participated in his first BCF Counties Championship final on 16th June 1955, when Middlesex travelled to Sheffield, to beat Yorkshire, the 19th time that Middlesex had won the BCF Counties Championship in its 35th contest. Bob drew with Derrick Paffley on board 2. Paffley, by the time of his tragic death in 1958 when he drowned himself in the River Calder due to a nervous breakdown, had arguably established himself as Yorkshire's best player at the time since the war, having won the Yorkshire championship twice, helped his beloved Wakefield to the Woodhouse Cup. He played with distinction several times in the British championship and scored numerous tournament successes. His name is still spoken of with affection in Yorkshire.

16 June 1955
BCF Counties Championship (final)
Middlesex — Yorkshire

Bd.	Middlesex	Grade	Col.	Score	Yorkshire	Grade	Opening
1	JA Fuller	2b	B	1–0	MJ Haygarth	3b	Sicilian Defence
2	RG Wade	2a	W	½–½	D Paffley	3a	Nimzo Indian Def.
3	H Israel	3a	B	1–0	JE Povey	4a	Sicilian Defence
4	E Brown	3a	W	½–½	DM Andrew	3b	Ruy Lopez
5	NA Perkins	3b	B	1–0	JH Beaty	4a	Slav Defence
6	N Honan		W	½–½	JE Littlewood		Nimzo Indian Def.
7	JM Bee	4a	B	1–0	HM Ewans		Reti Opening
8	R Speirs		W	½–½	DG Tranter	4b	English Opening
9	J Poole	5a	B	0–1	EG Berg	4a	French Defence
10	DJ Collins	5b	W	½–½	GW Moses		Nimzo Indian Def.
11	JE Redon		B	½–½	D Smith	5a	King's Indian Def.
12	FE Tinworth		W	1–0	A Rivlin	4b	Nimzo Indian Def.
13	M Sobkowski		B	½–½	I Goldberg	3b	King's Indian Def.
14	AF Stammwitz		W	½–½	B Petkevich		Colle System
				8½–5½			

Middlesex match captain was John Poole. Source: Middlesex County Chess Association Match Book.[7] Grades courtesy of BCM, based on three years play to end of August 1954, were those available at the time of the match.[8]



3. Shannon Trophy

Middlesex competes annually for the Shannon Trophy awarded to the winner of the Southern Counties Chess Union's County Championship. The Shannon Trophy was presented to the SCCU in the season of 1934–35 by Mrs. AMS Shannon FRGS. She was a noted mountain climber, which the trophy itself paid tribute to, fashioned from silver as it was in the form of a mountain topped by a castle. It led a sadly chequered history, severely damaged by fire in the German bombing raid in 1940 which destroyed the National Chess Centre, it was repaired after the war, but was finally lost in the early 1970's by a negligent Cambridgeshire match captain. A silver-plated rose bowl was bought in 1980 as a replacement. The more populous metropolitan counties played matches—until 1970—of fifty or one hundred boards amongst themselves, in which the first twenty boards counted towards the Shannon Trophy, whilst the competition over fifty boards was played for the Amboyna Shield, and over one hundred boards (sometimes eighty) for the Ebony Shield. By winning the SCCU counties championship, Middlesex could proceed further to the BCF's national Counties Championship, which is played for the magnificent Löwenthal Cup. When Löwenthal died in 1876, the money from a benevolent fund, that had been set up to provide for his needs, was redistributed for the benefit of chess. Of this, 100 guineas was given to the St George's Chess Club, the larger part thereof being used to commission a trophy for the club championship – the Löwenthal Cup. St George's was wound down during the Great



4. Löwenthal Cup — front right — amongst other BCF trophies

War and the cup was subsequently forgotten about until it became the property of the BCF in 1922, when it was instituted it as the trophy for the BCF County Championship.

From his first game for Middlesex in the 1948–49 season to his last in the 2000–01 season, Bob played 147 times for the county's first team, scoring +64 =55 –28. In one season, 1999–2000, he played eight times (+1 =5 –2) for the county, whilst in three seasons he turned out seven times, 1962–63 (+5 =1 –1), 1968–69 (+4 =1 –2) and 1978–79 (+3 =2 –2). In all, he played under 16 match captains for his county: David Brine Pritchard, Norman A MacLeod, John Poole, RG Duce, unknown, Eileen Tranmer, unknown, Daniel Wright, Martin Blaine, Frank Batchelor, David Foley-Comer, Ray Jennings, John CH Nyman, Colin Mackenzie, Robin Pearce and Paul McKeown; they were all immensely grateful for his contribution.

In those 147 games, he played Penrose six times (+1 =3 –2), and five times each against Howson (+3 =1 –1) and Franklin (+1 =2 –2). Besides Penrose, he played a number of other British champions: Keene for two draws and a loss; Fazekas, two wins; Broadbent, two draws; Lee, a win; Fairhurst, Haygarth, Eley and Botterill, one draw apiece; and Klein and Phillips, a loss each. Other notable opponents included John Littlewood (+1 =1 –1) and Eales (=3 –1) whilst he played and beat Clarke, Milner-Barry, Frank Parr and AH Williams on the one occasion on which he played each of them.

Bob played also on one occasion for the county's second team, against Lancashire II, at Birmingham on 14 June 1975, in the Final of the Minor Counties Championship. He was awarded a win on top board against PJ Romilly after adjudication. The reason that Bob should have participated in a second team match is now lost in the mists of time, but one can surmise that it was in order to avoid an irritating default. In any case, the records show that Lancashire won the match, with the match score recorded as 5½ – 12½, despite Middlesex having scored 7½ points over the board: Middlesex were docked two points for fielding unregistered players. The unfortunate Middlesex II match captain was David Foley-Comer, in his first year in the role.

Bob turned out for his county in eight BCF finals, during this span of 62 years, Middlesex winning six of them and twice losing tied matches on board count. Having lead Middlesex to victory over Yorkshire in the 1954–55 final, John Poole repeated the feat in the 1955–56 season, with Middlesex winning the Shannon and Amboyna trophies for the second year running and taking the Löwenthal trophy with a victory over Warwickshire. Bob had played in the semi-final match against East Glamorgan, but, playing in the major international tournament at Marianske Lazne, was unavailable for the final. John Poole's next two years as Middlesex captain were less successful, winning the Ebony in 1956–57 (for the first time since the war) and the Amboyna in 1957–58, before handing over the captaincy.

After a few seasons in the doldrums, the team captaincy was handed over to Miss Eileen

Tranmer in 1962–63. A model of efficiency, she managed to enlist several reserve players, who even travelled to away matches. Only one board was defaulted from 392 that season by Middlesex on its way to a clean sweep, taking the Shannon, Amboyna, Ebony and Löwenthal trophies. Bob's score that season was +5 =1 –1, including wins over PH Clarke and the Lancastrian, CG Hilton, in the national final.

Portrait of a Successful Season

SCCU Championship Northern Division 1962 – 63

		Mx	E	C	H	B	N	S	MP	GP
1	Middx.	x	12½	11	12	18½	15½	15½	6	85
2	Essex	7½	x	14	15	15½	18	18½	5	88½
3	Cambs.	9	6	x	11½	10½	9½	17½	3	64
4	Herts.	8	5	8½	x	13	12½	12	3	59
5	Beds.	1½	4½	9½	7	x	14	14	2	50½
6	Norfolk	4½	2	10½	7½	6	x	6½	1	37
7	Suffolk	4½	1½	2½	8	6	13½	x	1	36

Middlesex beat Sussex, the winners of the Southern Division, by 10½ – 9½ in the SCCU final. In the national stages, Middlesex beat East Glamorgan by 11½ – ½, Yorkshire by 13½ – 6½ and Lancashire by 13 – 7.

Middlesex match captain was Eileen Tranmer.

Source: BCF Year Book[9]

Amboyna Shield – Northern Division

		M	E	H	MP	GP
1	Middx.	x	31	34½	2	65½
2	Essex	19	x	37	1	56
3	Herts.	15½	13	x	0	28½

Middlesex then beat Surrey, by 27 – 20, the winners of the Southern Division, in the Amboyna final. Middlesex match captain was Eileen Tranmer. Source: BCF Year Book.

Ebony Shield

		M	S	E	K	MP	GP
1	Middx.	X	43	52½	55½	3	151
2	Surrey	37	X	51	55½	2	143½
3	Essex	27½	29	x	41	1	97½
4	Kent	23½	24½	30	x	0	78

Middlesex match captain was Eileen Tranmer. Source: BCF Year Book.



5. Eileen Tranmer (1910 – 1983)

In her second season as captain, 1963–64, Middlesex won the Ebony, but came second to Surrey in the Shannon and Amboyna contests. The rules for the national contest had changed, so despite not having won in the Southern Counties, Middlesex was still able to participate, ultimately beating Lancashire again in the final, Bob losing to Gerald Abrahams. In 1964–65, her third and final season as county match captain, Tranmer lead Middlesex to another clean sweep, Shannon, Amboyna, Ebony and Löwenthal trophies. Bob drew with Gloucestershire's Denis Mardle in the final. Although born in Scarborough, Tranmer adopted Hampstead chess club and Middlesex when her profession as a clarinettist took her to the metropolis. A county strength player, with a highest grade of 4a, she won the British Ladies Championship four times, 1947, 1949 with a perfect score, 1953 and 1961. Her greatest achievements as a chess player were her respectable placing in two Women's World Championship tournaments, Moscow 1949–50, scoring 9½–5½ for 5th equal and Moscow 1952, scoring 9–6, beating Bykova, the eventual world champion along the way, for 7th.

After Tranmer handed over the reins, Middlesex spent thirteen years in the wilderness. Although able to win the Shannon Trophy four times, the county reached the national

final but once, 1968–69, during John Poole's second period as match captain. Middlesex, having tied the match 10–10, lost the championship to Lancashire on board count. Bob lost on that occasion to John Littlewood.

Middlesex's fortune changed dramatically in 1978–79, when David Foley-Comer, fresh from leading the Middlesex second team to victory in the Minor Counties Championship, shook new life into the county's first team. After a narrow loss to Kent in the first match, Middlesex beat the remaining SCCU teams and took the Shannon Trophy from Kent on board-points. Beating Gloucestershire and Yorkshire in the quarter and semi-finals set up a showdown against Lancashire, which had cruelly denied Middlesex on tie-break 14 years previously. Strangely, Bob Wade was the only Middlesex player from that match who played in the 1978–79 final. Enormously outgunned, Lancashire did well to limit the damage to 11½–8½.



6. Victorious Middlesex team from 1978–79 holding the Löwenthal Cup

Front row: Clive Hill, Graham Lee, Julian Hodgson, John M Quinn, John Benjamin; middle row: Tim Parkes, Bob Wade, Andrew Whiteley, David Foley-Comer, Jimmy Adams, Nick Benjamin, Peter Large; back row: Dave Lynch, George Dickson, Tony Peterson, Jonathan Speelman, Alan Perkins, Andrew Law, Peter Sowray. Photograph taken by Mrs. Foley-Comer.

BH Wood portrayed the contest in The Daily Telegraph:

Lancashire (champions the past two years) trailed by 10–7 at call of time but the positions in three unfinished games favoured Middlesex so clearly that the Lancastrians graciously resigned the match and handed over the trophy without awaiting the adjudications. One of these has come through since, Large winning to make it 11–7.

The result seemed foreshadowed when it was found that every Middlesex player had a higher grade than its opponent. Lancashire has been weakened by the splitting off of

Greater Manchester as a separate association. An even more potent factor may have been the fierce efficiency of David Foley-Comer, the new Middlesex secretary who mobilised an exceptionally strong and representative team.

Champagne was drunk on the return journey. "Bought in advance?", I asked Mr Foley-Comer. He wouldn't say.[10]

7 July 1979
BCF Counties Championship (final)
Middlesex — Lancashire

Bd.	Middlesex		Grade	Col.	Score	Lancashire		Grade
1	JS Speelman	IM	232		1–0	JE Littlewood	BM	215
2	RG Wade	IM	220+		0–1	J Horner	BM	217
3	AP Law	BM	220		½–½	B Cafferty	CM	210
4	AJ Whiteley	BM	220		½–½	MJ Conroy		203
5	D Rumens	BM	214		0–1	D Lees		186+
6	GD Lee		210		½–½	JE Horner		190+
7	AH Perkins		205		1–0	M Pein		191
8	JM Hodgson		202J		1–0	D Shuttleworth		200
9	SH Berry		200		0–1	PF Timson		
10	PG Large		210		1–0	NW Ivell		196
11	JB Adams		202+		1–0	RA Doney		186+
12	PJ Sowray		199		½–½	KL Harris		181–
13	NR Benjamin		201J		½–½	DG Ellison		190
14	JC Benjamin		195		1–0	G McCurdy		
15	TT Peterson		186J		½–½	RJ McMichael		183–
16	DP Lynch		191		0–1	MR Price		188
17	JM Quinn		194		½–½	P Joyce		177–
18	GA Dickson		199		0–1	WS Cottam		185
19	TJ Parkes		194*		1–0	SF Coles		168–
20	CE Hill		181J–		1–0	DR Cowley		168–
					11½–8½			

Play took place at Aston University in Birmingham. Middlesex captain was David Foley-Comer; Lancashire captain was P Furlong.

Key
Grades are for 1978–79.
* indicates that the player played 20 or more games in the previous season, but less than 30
+ indicates that the player played more than 10 games in the previous season, but fewer than 20 games
J indicates that the player was marked as a junior in the Middlesex records
– indicates that the grade was found in the "previous year" detail for the player in the next year's list

Source: Middlesex County Chess Association Match Book[17], grades and titles from the BCF Yearbook for 1978–79[11] and 1979–80.[12]

Jimmy Adams analysed the match in terms of the differences in chess culture between north and south, which is abridged here:

Enthusiasm for county chess in the north of England has always been at a high level and good organisation has shown itself time and time again with the appearance of habitually strong teams. However, in the south-east, the attraction of a great number of chess congresses has often led to disinterest in the true British amateur pride of representing one's county and a preference for bounty-hunting at weekend Swisses.

Middlesex, formerly recognised as the strongest county by virtue of its geographical location in the densely populated London metropolis, has on the other hand suffered to a large extent and after years in the doldrums has not done itself justice in fielding truly representative sides. It therefore came as a breath of fresh air — or should we say a hurricane — when the energetic David Foley-Comer took over the Middlesex first team captaincy at the beginning of the 1978-79 season and rapidly restored the County to its

former respected status.

The potential of any team from the London area is clearly enormous, but nevertheless, as has been proved by the disappointing results of past seasons, it needs a great deal of enthusiasm, diligence, tact and management skill to assemble a bunch of strong individual players from various clubs and forge them into a new identifiable team with a united aim. It is precisely this which David Foley-Comer has achieved and in dashing style. During his past successful captaincies at club level he was dubbed 'Little Napoleon', but we would consider a contemporary comparison with Brian Clough to be more appropriate![13]

He rounded off by giving a nod to the stars who had turned out: *confidence was inspired by the presence of Jon Speelman, British Champion on Board 1, and of Dave Rumens and Andrew Whiteley who despite their fierce contention for the Cutty Sark Grand Prix, both generously gave the important Charlton weekend congress a miss in order to play in the final.*

The local paper praised where praise was due: *Much of the credit for the victory must go to David Foley-Comer, who in his first season as captain has achieved the results which most captains strive many years to attain, and he hopes that this result is the base upon which Middlesex can build to dominate county chess in the future.*[14]

The Islington Gazette's wish came true, for a while, as the Middlesex first team won every match it played in the next season, 1979–80. In his column in the Guardian, Leonard Barden attributed the county's success to Foley-Comer's captaincy:

A STRONGLY contested inter-county final earlier this month gave Middlesex another narrow victory over Lancashire. The margin, after adjudications, was predicted to be 11½–8½, exactly the same as last year. Success in county fixtures in a period of high inflation is very much a question of persuading strong players to turn out away from home, and here the charm and energy of the Middlesex captain, David Foley-Comer, has been a key factor.

Middlesex arrived sporting county rosettes, were fed throughout the afternoon by the captain's wife and son, and had champagne stored ready for a victory celebration. Relying, like many successful sides heavily on youth, they fielded nine players from the BCF junior squad in a team of twenty. [15]

BH Wood remarked on the loyalty of the Middlesex players to Foley-Comer: *William Watson flew back specially from Poland, defying jetlag and fatigue, arriving at Heathrow at 9.15 on the morning of the match. Such keenness is a tribute to the enthusiasm engendered by the Middlesex captain David Foley-Comer.*[16]

5 July 1980
BCF Counties Championship (final)
Middlesex — Lancashire

Bd.	Middlesex		Grade	Col.	Score	Lancashire		Grade
1	JS Speelman	IM	236	W	1–0	ND Short	BX	215J
2	RG Wade	IM	211*	B	1–0	JE Littlewood	BM	223
3	GD Lee	BX	216	W	1–0	J Horner	BM	219
4	AP Law	BM	209	B	½–½	PE Littlewood	BM	243
5	AJ Whiteley	BM	218	W	½–½	B Cafferty	CM	207
6	PG Large	BX	207	B	0–1	M Pein		202
7	AH Perkins	BX	206	W	½–½	MJ Conroy		187
8	JM Hodgson	BX	208J	B	0–1	MJ O'Hara		195
9	WN Watson		208J	W	½–½	D Lees		195
10	PJ Sowray		205	B	1–0	JE Horner		
11	RF Holmes		207J	W	½–½	NW Ivell		198J+
12	C Leach			B	0–1	RA Doney		193
13	RJ Pearce		200	W	1–0	DG Ellison		195
14	S Quigley		190	B	1–0	RJ McMichael		185
15	TT Peterson		190	W	0–1	MR Price		195
16	TJ Parkes		190	B	0–1	P Brooks		
17	JC Benjamin		195	W	1–0	PC Hoad		185
18	CE Hill		187	B	½–½	P Joyce		183
19	JP Levitt		175J	W	1–0	B Lund		160J
20	GA Dickson		196	B	½–½	D Rutter		165J
					11½–8½			

Play took place at Aston University in Birmingham. Middlesex captain was David Foley-Comer; Lancashire captain was P Furlong.

Key
Grades are as given by the Middlesex match book.
* indicates that the player played 20 or more games in the previous season, but less than 30
+ indicates that the player played more than 10 games in the previous season, but fewer than 20 games
J indicates that the player was a junior
Note: The 1979–80 grading list in the Year Book differs slightly: TJ Parkes 187, JC Benjamin (u), D Lees 192, RA Doney 187, MR Price 193+, PC Hoad 184 and P Joyce 184.

Source: Middlesex County Chess Association Match Book,[17] BCF Year Book.[12]



7. Victorious Middlesex team from 1979–80 wearing county rosettes.

Front row, l to r: Colin Leach, Andrew Whiteley, Tony Peterson, Robin Pearce, Julian Hodgson, Clive Hill, William Watson, Richard Holmes; middle row: Peter Large, Alan Perkins, John Benjamin, David Foley-Comer, Tim Parkes, Bob Wade; back row: Jonathan Speelman, Peter Sowray, Andrew Law, Graham Lee, George Dickson, Jonathan Levitt.

Barden reported the Middlesex propaganda that the *county has now won 22 matches in a row and their record of 26 consecutive wins set in 1912–14 is in danger.* This hubris was dealt with by the fates as it is always is: the county promptly drew its very next

match – on 28 February 1981 against Surrey. The unbeaten run continued to 30 matches, before finally losing to Kent on 14 March.

A careful examination, though, of the Middlesex match records shows that the team of 1979–80 had already broken the record! Counting only matches in the counties championship—excluding friendly and correspondence matches and the like—Middlesex achieved a run of 15 won matches from 7 December 1912 to 20 September 1919, before being held to a tie against Sussex on 1 December 1919, after which it stretched its unbeaten streak to 22 matches before losing to Sussex on 28 May 1921.

Bob took part in ten of the record 22 matches, scoring +5 =3 –2.

Middlesex were knocked out of the national stages with a shock defeat in the 1980–81 quarter-final to Lancashire, Kent deservedly won both the SCCU and BCF titles and Foley-Comer departed as first team captain. Middlesex again suffered from several years in the wilderness, before another inspirational match captain, Ray Jennings took over for the 1984–85 season. Jennings was able to lead Middlesex to its first hat trick of victories in the national championship since Eileen Tranmer's reign. Age had finally caught up with Bob, his haul was one win and six draws from eleven games, against opposition which, for the most part, he would have disposed off with ease in his pomp.

4 July 1987
BCF Counties Championship (final)
Middlesex — Lancashire

Bd.	Middlesex	Grade	Col.	Score	Greater Manchester	Grade
1	AJ Whiteley	195	B	1–0	J Horner	228
2	RG Wade	(199)	W	½–½	P Macklin	191
3	GD Lee	214	B	½–½	OA Jackson	189
4	K Shovel	204	W	1–0	BA Jones	196
5	RF Holmes	210	B	½–½	J Naujokas	191
6	G Wall	198J	W	½–½	VW Knox	207
7	K Vlahos	210	B	1–0	J Smith	
8	SH Berry	208	W	1–0	NI Fox	187?
9	RF Willmoth	194	B	1–0	JL Powell	
10	JP Sharp	197J	W	½–½	H Lamb	177
11	BD Beake	193J	B	1–0	J Sharp	176
12	Darren L Lee	206	W	0–1	P Siddall	189
13	SJ Rodericks	197	B	1–0	R English	185
14	CE Hill	194	W	½–½	JT Farrand	181
15	KI Norman	191	B	0–1	DA Knox	167J
16	P de la Mothe	194	W	1–0	M Vidler	
17	RJ McMichael	189	B	0–1	GP Burton	188
18	JM Quinn	199	W	½–½	P Adams	185
19	JS Walton	199	B	1–0	EN Hawkins	178
20	TJ Kett	191	W	½–½	D James	168J
				12–8		

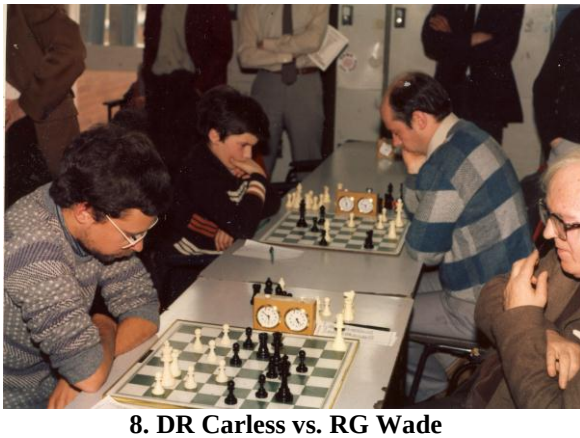
Play took place at Walsall. Middlesex match captain was Ray Jennings. This was Middlesex's 27th victory in the BCF Counties Championship.

Source: Middlesex County Chess Association Match Book[17].

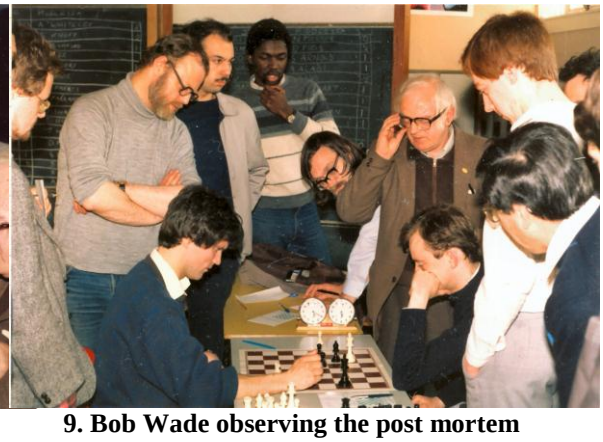
Ray Jennings wrote: *This was a thrilling match with Greater Manchester leading 5–1 in*

the early stages and all set for a column in the Manchester Evening News. Their players were understandably anticipating victory and clenched fists were the order of the day. Fortunately from the Middx point of view they did not win another game and were submerged in a torrent of Middx victories which carried the day[18]

Ray Jennings passed the match captaincy on to John Nyman, but Middlesex failed to qualify the national stages in 1987–88 – Middlesex have never managed Lancashire's feat of four sequential national titles. 1988–89, however, saw Nyman lead Middlesex to victory against Yorkshire in the final, the county's 28th title. After Nyman, Middlesex entered a period of ruinous decline, from which it is only now recovering. 1993–94 saw Robin Pearce's Middlesex team win the Minor Counties Championship, to jeers from independent observers. The following season, 1994–95 to lead the county to the national final, only to see the title lost on board count in a tied match with Cambridgeshire. Bob drew with Paul Garner in this, his last, BCF Counties Championship Final.



8. DR Carless vs. RG Wade
Middlesex – Staffordshire, BCF Counties QF, 26 April 1986. In the background T Parkes with White vs. GN Buckley



9. Bob Wade observing the post mortem
Middx. III – Warks. III, won by Middx. under John Nyman, BCF Counties IIIrd Team Final (unofficial), 26 April 1986

Bob Wade's Playing Record for Middlesex

	Date	Venue	Rd.	Middx. vs.	Opponent	Grade	Bd.	Col.	Result	Champ. Result	Amboyna Result	Ebony Result
1948 – 49 season. Match Captain: David Brine Pritchard. Middlesex took the Shannon and Amboyna trophies and won the BCF Counties Championship.												
1	18/10/48	St. Bride's Institute	Amboyna	Herts.	HC Lewis	—	2	W	W	—	36½–13½	—
1951 – 52 season. Match Captain: Norman A MacLeod.												
2	19/01/52	Eastbourne	SCCU Metropolitan	Sussex	GM Norman	—	4	W	W	11½–8½	31–19	—
1953 – 54 season. Match Captain: John Poole. Surrey clean sweep. RGW's grade: 2a.												
3	07/11/53	National Chess Centre	Amboyna	Herts.	WEB Pryer	—	2	B	D	—	39–11	—
4	05/12/53	National Chess Centre	SCCU Metropolitan	Essex	J Penrose	1b	2	W	D	8½–11½	24–26	45–55
5	16/01/54	Brighton, Technical Coll.	SCCU Metropolitan	Sussex	CH Stacey	—	2	B	W	14–6	25–25	—
1954 – 55 season. Match Captain: John Poole. Middlesex took the Shannon and Amboyna trophies and won the BCF Counties Championship. RGW's grade: 2a.												
6	04/12/54	National Chess Centre	SCCU Metropolitan	Essex	J Penrose	1b	2	W	W	10–10	26–24	47½–52½
7	15/01/55	National Chess Centre	SCCU Metropolitan	Sussex	CH Stacey	—	1	B	W	12–8	33–17	—
8	12//0255	National Chess Centre	SCCU Metropolitan	Kent	JB Howson	3b	2	W	L	11–9	32½–17½	59½–40½
9	19/03/55	National Chess Centre	SCCU Metropolitan	Surrey	RJ Broadbent	2a	2	W	D	12½–7½	31–19	52–48
10	30/04/55	Salisbury	SCCU Final	Devon	ARB Thomas	2b	2	B	D	9½–6½	—	—
11	18/06/55	Sheffield	BCF Final	Yorks.	D Paffley	3a	2	W	D	8½–5½	—	—
1955 – 56 season. Match Captain: John Poole. Middlesex took the Shannon and Amboyna trophies and won the BCF Counties Championship. RGW's grade: 2a.												
12	14/01/56	Bognor Regis	SCCU Metropolitan	Sussex	GM Norman	—	2	B	W	15½–4½	31–19	—
13	11/02/56	National Chess Centre	SCCU Metropolitan	Kent	JB Howson	3a	2	B	W	15–5	37½–12½	68½–31½
14	24/03/56	National Chess Centre	SCCU Metropolitan	Surrey	RJ Broadbent BM	2a	3	W	D	13–7	26½–23½	48–52
15	26/05/56	Swindon	BCF Semi-final	E. Glam.	AM Harper	—	2	W	W	15–1	—	—

	Date	Venue	Rd.	Middx. vs.	Opponent	Grade	Bd.	Col.	Result	Champ. Result	Amboyna Result	Ebony Result
1956 – 57 season. Match Captain: John Poole. Middlesex took the Ebony Trophy for the first time since the war and placed 2nd (of 6) in the Metropolitan region of the championship of the SCCU and 2nd (of 7) in the Amboyna competition. The Shannon Trophy went to Essex, the Amboyna to Sussex, whilst Warwickshire won the BCF Counties Championship for the very first time. RGW's grade: 2a.												
16	20/10/56	National Chess Centre	SCCU Metropolitan	Cambs.	RF Holmes	—	2	W	W	11½–8½	31–19	—
17	01/12/'56	National Chess Centre	SCCU Metropolitan	Essex	J Penrose BM	1b	2	B	L	8½–11½	31–19	59–41
18	09/02/57	National Chess Centre	SCCU Metropolitan	Kent	JB Howson	3b	2	B	W	14–6	35½–14½	68–32
19	16/03/57	National Chess Centre	SCCU Metropolitan	Surrey	F Parr	2b	1	W	W	9½–10½	25–25	49–51
20	30/03/57	Eastbourne, Town Hall	SCCU Metropolitan	Sussex	WA Winser	—	2	W	D	11½–8½	24–26	—
1957 – 58 season. Match Captain: John Poole. Middlesex took the Amboyna Trophy (which was now split into two preliminary divisions and a final). The Shannon Trophy (now also structured into Northern and Southern divisions) and the BCF Counties Championship went to Essex – for the very first time. The Ebony was not contested. The changes came about partly due to the breakaway off WECU from the SCCU. RGW's grade: 2a.												
21	05/1057	Norwich, Gladstone Club	SCCU Northern	Norfolk	W Hartwell	—	1	W	W	15½–4½	—	—
22	26/10/57	Bognor Regis, Rex Ballroom	Friendly [27 – 23]	Sussex	RT Buckland	—	1	W	W	—	—	—
23	07/12/57	St. Bride's Institute	SCCU Northern	Herts.	D Gilbertson	4a	2	W	L	12–8	34–16	—
24	14/06/58	St. Bride's Institute	Amboyna Final	Sussex	A Mortlock	—	2	B	W	—	30½–19½	—
1958 – 59 season. Match Captain: RG Druce. Middlesex took the Shannon and Amboyna trophies, but lost the BCF semi-final match. RGW's grade: 2a.												
25	24/01/59	St. Bride's Institute	SCCU Northern	Essex	S Fazekas IM	3a	2	W	W	12–8	32–18	—
26	14/02/59	Compton School	SCCU Northern	Cambs.	default	N/A	2	W	W	13½–6½	40½–9½	—
27	25/04/59	Salisbury, Red Lion	BCF Quarter-final	Devon	ARB Thomas	3b	1	W	L	8½–7½	—	—
28	09/05/59	St. Bride's Institute	SCCU Final	Kent	A Phillips	—	1	W	L	10½–9½	—	—
29	30/05/59	Manchester, Regal Cinema	BCF Semi-final	Lancs.	WA Fairhurst IM	—	1	W	D	4–8	—	—
1959 – 60 season. Match Captain: RG Druce. Middlesex took the Amboyna trophy, but came second to Essex in the SCCU Northern division. RGW's grade: 2b.												
30	03/1059	John Lewis Building	SCCU Northern	Herts.	WEB Pryer	—	1		W	13½–6½	35–15	—

	Date	Venue	Rd.	Middx. vs.	Opponent	Grade	Bd.	Col.	Result	Champ. Result	Amboyna Result	Ebony Result
31	05/12/59	St. Bride's Institute	SCCU Northern	Norfolk	JH Swan	—	2		W	14–3	—	—
32	12/12/59	Luton	SCCU Northern	Beds.	G Walley	—	1	B	W	17–3	—	—
33	20/02/60	John Lewis Building	SCCU Northern	Essex	R Payne	2b	2	W	D	10–10	26–24	—
1960 – 61 season. Match Captain: RG Druce. Middlesex took the Amboyna trophy, but came second to Essex in the SCCU Northern division. RGW's grade: 2a.												
34	26/11/60	St. Bride's Institute	SCCU Northern	Cambs.	M Davis	3a	1	W	L	10½–9½	—	—
35	10/12/60	Stowmarket	SCCU Northern	Suffolk	SD Ward	—	1	B	W	16–4	—	—
36	04/02/61	John Lewis Building	SCCU Northern	Essex	J Penrose BM	1a	1	W	D	9½–10½	27–23	44–36
37	06/05/61	John Lewis Building	Ebony Final	Surrey	J Glanville	5b	1	W	L	—	28–22	39½–40½
1961 – 62 season. Match Captain: unknown. Middlesex took the Ebony Trophy, but otherwise lost to both Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire for the first time ever in a very mediocre season. RGW's grade: 2b.												
38	25/11/61	Cambridge	SCCU Northern	Cambs.	RF Holmes	—	1		D	8½–11½	—	—
39	24/02/62	John Lewis Building	SCCU Northern	Essex	S Fazekas IM	3b	2		W	8–12	22½–27½	41½–38½
40	14/04/62	John Lewis Building	Ebony Final	Surrey	L Alexander	4a	2		D	—	—	46–34
1962 – 63 season. Match Captain: Miss Eileen Tranmer. Middlesex clean sweep – Shannon, Amboyna, Ebony and the national championship too. Middlesex juniors also won the union and national championships and the national correspondence championship, too! RGW's grade: 2b.												
41	01/12/62	Norwich	SCCU Northern	Norfolk	WJ Hartwell	—	2	B	W	15½–4½	—	—
42	05/01/63	John Lewis Building	SCCU Northern	Herts.	TK Hemingway	—	2	B	L	12–8	34½–15½	—
43	16/02/63		SCCU Northern	Essex	PH Clarke BM	1b	2	B	W	12½–7½	31–19	52½–27½
44	04/05/63	Swindon	BCF Quarter-final	E. Glam.	JD Mills	—	2	B	W†	11½–½	—	—
45	25/05/63	Leicester	BCF Semi-finals	Yorks.	JH Beaty	4a	3	W	W	13½–6½	—	—
46	22/06/63	Brighton	SCCU Final + friendly [16½–23½]	Sussex	DG Springgay	—	1	W	D	10½–9½	—	—
47	06/07/63	London	BCF Final	Lancs.	CG Hilton	3a	3	W	W	12–8	—	—
1963 – 64 season. Match Captain: Miss Eileen Tranmer, John Poole (acting), W Dunstan (assistant). Middlesex won the Ebony, but Surrey the Shannon and Amboyna												

	Date	Venue	Rd.	Middx. vs.	Opponent	Grade	Bd.	Col.	Result	Champ. Result	Amboyna Result	Ebony Result
Trophies. Despite finishing 2nd in the SCCU Ch., Middlesex proceeded to win the BCF Counties championship for the second successive year. RGW's grade: 2b.												
48	16/04/64	Swindon	BCF Quarter-final	E. Glam.	A Sepaphour	—	1	W	W	15–1	—	—
49	02/05/64	John Lewis Building	SCCU + Amboyna Final	Surrey	MJ Franklin	2a	2	B	W	9½–10½	24½–25½	41½–38½
50	26/06/64	Manchester	BCF Final	Lancs.	G Abrahams	3b	3	B	L	11½–8½	—	—
1964 – 65 season. Match Captain: Miss Eileen Tranmer. Another Middlesex clean sweep – Shannon, Amboyna, Ebony and Löwenthal trophies. RGW's grade: 2b/223.												
51	21/11/64	Athenaeum Chess Club	SCCU Northern	Cambs.	GA Winbow	—	2	B	W	13–7	—	—
52	13/03/65		SCCU Northern	Essex	J Penrose IM	1a/244	2	W	D	11½–8½	32–18	54½–25½
53	08/05/65	London	BCF Quarter-final	Leics.	MH Miller	5a	2	W	W	12–8	—	—
54	29/05/65	John Lewis Building	SCCU Final	Surrey	MJ Franklin	2a/225	1	W	D	13–7	29–21	—
55	12/06/65	Leicester	BCF Semi-final	Cheshire	VW Knox	4b	1	W	W	11½–8½	—	—
56	10/07/65	Cowley Community Centre	BCF Final	Glos.	DV Mardle	2b/217	1	B	D	13½–6½	—	—
1965 – 66 season. Match Captain: unknown. Middlesex won the Amboyna Trophy. RGW's grade: 2a/225.												
57	11/12/65	John Lewis Building	Amboyna & Ebony	Kent	KB Harman		2	W	D			42½–37½
58	26/03/66	John Lewis Building	SCCU Northern	Essex	JB Howson	4a/207	2	B	D	13½–6½	32½–17½	54–26
1966 – 67 season. Match Captain: Daniel Wright. Middlesex won the Shannon, Amboyna and Ebony Trophies, but were eliminated by Warwickshire in the national quarter-final; Lancashire won the county championship. RGW's grade: 2b/223.												
59	14/01/67	John Lewis Building	SCCU Northern	Norfolk	JF Dunn		1	W	W	15–5	—	—
60	29/04/67	St. Bride's Institute	BCF Quarter-final	Warks.	PC Gibbs		2	W	W	10–10‡	—	—
61	10/06/67		SCCU Final	Sussex	JR Phillips		1	W	W	13–7	—	—
1967 – 68 season. Match Captain: John Poole. RGW's grade: 2b/218.												
62	09/12/67		Amboyna & Ebony	Kent	M Macdonald-Ross	3b/207	1	W	W	—	24½–25½	40½–39½
63	13/01/68	John Lewis Building	SCCU Northern	Herts.	J Mitchell	4b/185	1	W	W	9–11	27–23	—

	Date	Venue	Rd.	Middx. vs.	Opponent	Grade	Bd.	Col.	Result	Champ. Result	Amboyna Result	Ebony Result
64	15/06/68	St. Bride's Institute	SCCU Final	Kent	M Macdonald-Ross	3b/207	1	W†	D	9–11	—	—
1968 – 69 season. Match Captain: John Poole. Middlesex took the Shannon and Ebony trophies, but lost the national championship on board count to Lancashire. RGW's grade: 3a/215.												
65	02/11/68	Royal Festival Hall	Amboyna & Ebony	Kent	PS Milner-Barry BM	2b/217	1	W	W	—	26½–22½	40–34
66	30/11/68	St. Bride's Institute	SCCU Northern	Cambs.	NJ Patterson	3a/212	1	W	W	13–7	—	—
67	18/01/69	Royal Festival Hall	Amboyna & Ebony	Surrey	MJ Franklin	2b/224	1	B	L	—	28½–21½	38–37
68	01/03/69	Royal Festival Hall	Amboyna	Sussex	GJ Nicholas		1	W	D	—	34–16	—
69	28/04/69	Leicester	BCF Quarter-final	Yorks.	PN Lee CM	2a/227	1	W	W	11½–8½	—	—
70	07/06/69	Bedford	BCF Semi-final	Leics.	PN Wallis	3b/202	1	W	W	13–7	—	—
71	12/07/69	Birmingham	BCF Final	Lancs.	JE Littlewood BM	2b/219	2	B	L	10–10(3)	—	—
1969 – 70 season. Match Captain: John Poole. Middlesex took only the Ebony trophy; Cambridgeshire took the Shannon and Hampshire the Amboyna; a powerful Cambridgeshire team with many strong students took the national championship for the first time. RGW's grade: 2b/222.												
72	01/11/69	Royal Scottish Corporation	Amboyna	Oxon.	R Persitz		1	B	D†	—	25–25	—
73	15/11/69	Crawley, Coll. Further Ed.	Amboyna	Sussex	GJ Nicholas		1	B	W	—	27–23	—
74	17/01/70	St. Bride's Institute	SCCU Northern	Essex	Dr. J Penrose IM	1a/248	1	W	L	8–12	22–28	40½–34½
75	31/01/70	Cambridge	SCCU Northern	Cambs.	RD Keene CM	1b/237	1	W	D†	7½–12½	—	—
76	28/02/70	Royal Scottish Corporation	Amboyna & Ebony	Kent	M Fuller	3a/216	1	W	W	—	25½–24½	38½–36½
1970 – 71 season. Match Captain: Martin Blaine. The fixtures for the SCCU counties championships were thoroughly updated. The Shannon Trophy, for the SCCU championship, was now contested without division along geographical lines by the stronger southern counties teams. The Montague-Jones became, in effect, a trophy for a second division, with some of the weaker county teams competing alongside the second teams of some the stronger counties. The Amboyna and Ebony trophies were similarly reinstituted to laud the winners of the third and fourth divisions. One result of this structural change was that the onerous organisation of matches of 50 or 100 boards was no longer needed. Cambridgeshire won the SCCU and BCF championships for the 2nd year. RGW's grade: 3a/216.												
77	16/01/71	Harvey Court	SCCU	Cambs.	RG Eales	—	1	W	D	9–11	—	—
78	06/02/71		SCCU	Hants.	GH Bennett		1	W	W	13–7	—	—
79	01/05/71	Bicester	BCF Quarter-final	Staffs.	RA Beach		1	B	W†	11½–4½	—	—

	Date	Venue	Rd.	Middx. vs.	Opponent	Grade	Bd.	Col.	Result	Champ. Result	Amboyna Result	Ebony Result
80	05/06/71	St. Bride's Institute	BCF Semi-final	Cambs.	RD Keene BM	1b/234	1		D	5½–10½	—	—
1971 – 72 season. Match Captain: Martin Blaine. Middlesex took the Shannon Trophy, but lost in the national quarter-finals match to Cambridgeshire, who won the national championship for the third time in a row. RGW's grade: 2a/225.												
81	06/11/71	St. Bride's Institute	SCCU	Oxon.	GS Botterill CM	2a/226	1	B	D	15–5	—	—
82	04/12/71	Hurlingham School	SCCU	Surrey	MJ Franklin BM	2b/218	1	B	L	11–9	—	—
83	15/01/72	St. Bride's Institute	SCCU	Cambs.	AH Williams	2b/219	1	B	W	10½–9½	—	—
84	05/02/72	Brighton	SCCU	Sussex	GJ Nicholas		1	B	W	11–9	—	—
85	26/02/72	Wanstead	SCCU	Essex	MW Wills		1	W	D	10–10	—	—
86	16/03/72	London	SCCU	Kent	M Macdonald-Ross	3a/210	1	W	W	11–9	—	—
1972 – 73 season. Match Captain: Martin Blaine. RGW's grade: 228.												
87	02/12/72		SCCU	Cambs.	RD Keene IM	231	1		L†	5½–14½	—	—
88	03/02/73		SCCU	Surrey	MJ Franklin BM	215	1		D	11½–8½	—	—
89	17/02/73		SCCU	Essex	E Klein (4)	—	1		L	10–10	—	—
1973 – 74 season. Match Captain: Martin Blaine. Middlesex won the Shannon Trophy but was eliminated in the BCF quarter-final by Lancashire. RGW's grade: 216.												
90	28/04/74	Birmingham	BCF Quarter-final	Lancs.	PR Markland BM	222	1		D	9½–10½	—	—
1974 – 75 season. Match Captain: Frank J Batchelor. RGW's grade: 210.												
91	11/01/75	Brighton	SCCU	Sussex	GH James	208	1		L	13–7	—	—
92	14/06/75	Birmingham, Aston Univ.	Minor Counties Final§	Lancs. II	PJ Romilly		1	B	W†	5½–12½	—	—
1978 – 79 season. Match Captain: David Foley-Comer, in his first season, having previously run the Middlesex II team. Middlesex took the Shannon Trophy and won the national championship for the first time since 1964–65. RGW's grade: 220 (fewer than 20 games).												
93	25/11/78	Highbury	SCCU	Herts.	PV Byway	194	1	B	W	16–4	—	—
94	10/02/79	Brentwood	SCCU	Essex	JB Howson		1	W	W	11½–8½	—	—
95	03/03/79	Maidenhead	SCCU	Berks.	R Moss	190	3	W	D	11½–8½	—	—

	Date	Venue	Rd.	Middx. vs.	Opponent		Grade	Bd.	Col.	Result	Champ. Result	Amboyna Result	Ebony Result
96	31/03/79	Highbury Grove	SCCU	Surrey	NE Povah	CM	208	1	W	W	11–9	—	—
97	28/04/79	Kidlington	BCF Quarter-final	Glos.	ME Binks		193	2		L	12–8	—	—
98	02/06/79	Leicester	BCF Semi-final	Yorks.	BR Eley	BM	210	1		D	13½–6½	—	—
99	07/07/79	Birmingham, Aston Univ.	BCF Final	Lancs.	J Horner	BM	217	2	B	L	11½–8½	—	—
1979 – 80 season. Match Captain: David Foley-Comer. RGW's grade: 211.													
100	08/03/80	Highbury Grove	SCCU	Kent	D Friedgood		210	2		W	10½–9½	—	—
101	29/03/80	Highbury Grove	SCCU	Oxon.	Default		N/A	2		W	16½–3½	—	—
102	26/04/80	Coventry	BCF Quarter-final	Yorks.	MJ Haygarth	BM	204	2		D	14½–5½	—	—
103	05/07/80	Birmingham, Aston Univ.	BCF Final	Lancs.	JE Littlewood	BM	223	2	B	W(5)	11½–8½	—	—
1980 – 81 season. Match Captain: David Foley-Comer. Middlesex placed 2nd in the SCCU and were eliminated in the national quarter-final; Kent won both.													
104	24/04/81	Birmingham, Aston Univ.	BCF Quarter-final	Lancs.	JE Littlewood	BM	220	4	W	D	8–12	—	—
1983 – 84 season. Match Captain: David Foley-Comer, after leaving Middlesex in the hands of DJ Stewardson the previous two seasons.													
105	08/10/83	Sutton	SCCU	Surrey	RA Harris		+194	2	W	D	14½–5½	—	—
106	14/01/84	Highbury	SCCU	Cambs.	ACL Dyson	BX	201	2	W	L‡	9½–10½	—	—
1984 – 85 season. Match Captain: Ray Jennings. Middlesex won the BCF Counties Championship on the 6th of July, beating Kent with a team averaging 215 over 16 boards; Kent could only manage an average of 208. Middlesex also won the national second team championship, the first county to win both.													
107	06/10/84	Highbury Fields	SCCU	Surrey	S Gillam		185	5	B	L	15½–4½	—	—
108	27/10/84	Bourne End	SCCU	Bucks.	N Davey	BX	+205	2	W	D	15–5	—	—
109	09/02/85	Hassocks	SCCU	Sussex	G Kenworthy	CX	203	2	W	L	10–10	—	—
110	09/03/85	Highbury Fields	SCCU	Berks.	JA Freeman		185	3	B	D	14½–5½	—	—
111	16/03/85	Charlton House	SCCU	Kent	AG Trangmar		*208	7	W	L	8–12	—	—
1985 – 86 season. Match Captain: Ray Jennings. Middlesex won the BCF Counties Championship on the 5th of July, beating Kent with a team averaging 216 over 16 boards; Kent could only manage an average of 204. RGW's grade: *201.													

	Date	Venue	Rd.	Middx. vs.	Opponent	Grade	Bd.	Col.	Result	Champ. Result	Amboyna Result	Ebony Result
112	25/01/86	Welwyn Garden City	SCCU	Herts.	PG Maguire	188	6	B	D	10–10	—	—
113	25/04/86	Walsall	BCF Quarter-final	Staffs.	DR Carless	188	6	B	D	10–6	—	—
114	07/06/86	Walsall	BCF Semi-final	Lancs.	J Hall		3	B	L	10½–5½	—	—
1986 – 87 season. Match Captain: Ray Jennings. RGW's grade: 199 (provisional). Middlesex won the BCF Counties Championship for the third successive season, bringing their total to 27.												
115	07/03/87	Charlton	SCCU	Kent	RG Eales		2	W	D†	10–10	—	—
116	06/06/87	Walsall	BCF Semi-final	Staffs.	GB Stanway		6	B	W	13½–2½	—	—
117	04/07/87	Walsall	BCF Final	Gt. Man.	P Macklin	191	2	W	D	12–8	—	—
1987 – 88 season. Match Captain: John CH Nyman. Middlesex placed 3rd from 9 in the SCCU championship, thus failing to qualify for the national stages.												
118	17/10/87	Highbury Fields	SCCU	Bucks.	A Robbings		1	W	W	11–9	—	—
119	21/11/87	Welwyn Garden City	SCCU	Herts.	NH Bradbury		2	B	D	8–12	—	—
120	05/12/87	Highbury Fields	SCCU	Cambs.	U Ekenberg		2	B	D	11½–8½	—	—
121	09/01/88	Wanstead	SCCU	Essex	GF Yates		1	B	D	12½–7½	—	—
122	12/03/88	Highbury Fields	SCCU	Kent	RG Eales		2	B	L	8½–11½	—	—
1988 – 89 season. Match Captain: John CH Nyman. Middlesex won the BCF Counties championship for the 28th and, so far, last time.												
123	01/10/88	Hendon	SCCU	Oxon.	AJ Toll		3	B	W	18–2	—	—
124	28/01/89	Brighton	SCCU	Sussex	FJ Kwiatkowski		3	W	W	6½–13½	—	—
125	13/05/89	Leicester	BCF Quarter-final	Leics.	PR Davies		5	B	D	11½–4½	—	—
126	03/06/89	Walsall	BCF Semi-final	Yorks.	PM Gayson		4	W	D	9–7	—	—
1989 – 90 season. Match Captain: Colin Mackenzie.												
127	04/11/89	Wanstead	SCCU	Essex	G Kenworthy		3	W	W	12–8	—	—
128	18/11/89	Hendon	SCCU	Kent	RG Eales		3	W	D	9½–10½	—	—
1993 – 94 season. Match Captain: Robin Pearce. Middlesex entered and won the BCF Minor Counties championship for the first time. The BCM reported: *Minor*												

	Date	Venue	Rd.	Middx. vs.	Opponent	Grade	Bd.	Col.	Result	Champ. Result	Amboyna Result	Ebony Result
Counties: Middlesex 10½ - Surrey 5½, something of a surprise to see such 'heavyweights' in the second section.												
129	04/12/93	Haverstock School	SCCU	Surrey	Kevin Hurst	172	12	W	D	15–5	—	—
130	12/02/94	Chess & Bridge	SCCU	Berks.	MC Bowhay	160	11	W	W	14½–5½	—	—
1994 – 95 season. Match Captain: Robin Pearce. Middlesex lost the BCF final to Cambridgeshire on board count, after achieving an 8–8 tie.												
131	15/10/94	Chess & Bridge	SCCU	Herts.	Kevin S Ellis	176	9	W	D	13½–6½	—	—
132	12/11/94	Chess & Bridge	SCCU	Kent	Ian M Pountney	182	10	B	W	11½–8½	—	—
133	03/12/94	Bracknell	SCCU	Berks.	Paul S Janota	174	7	W	W	14–6	—	—
134	11/02/95	Cambridge, Trinity Coll.	SCCU	Cambs.	D Cristinacce	189	11	B	D	8–12	—	—
135	11/03/95	Wanstead	SCCU	Essex	Russell P White	179	15	B	W	14½–5½	—	—
136	01/07/95	Birmingham	BCF Final	Cambs.	Paul Garner	177	12	W	D	8–8(6)	—	—
1995 – 96 season. Match Captain: Robin Pearce.												
137	21/10/95	Chess & Bridge	SCCU	Berks.	Mark V Taylor	171	8		D	11–9	—	—
138	10/02/96	Chess & Bridge	SCCU	Essex	Michael Roberts	183	12	B	W	13½–6½	—	—
139	18/05/96	Wanstead	BCF Quarter-final	Essex	Jon P Manley	205	6	B	L	5½–10½	—	—
1999 – 2000 season. Match Captain: Paul McKeown. RGW's grade: 203.												
140	23/10/99	Paddington	SCCU	Oxon.	Stephen Willetts	(u)	5	B	L	9½–6½	—	—
141	13/11/99	Wanstead House	SCCU	Essex	Jon P Manley	190	3	B	D	7–9	—	—
142	15/01/00	Bourne End	SCCU	Bucks.	Alex E Tucker	192	2	W	D	6½–9½	—	—
143	29/01/00	Exmouth Arms, nr. Euston	SCCU	Kent	John N Sugden	199	4	W	D	8–8	—	—
144	12/02/00	Wokingham	SCCU	Berks.	John T Munday	179	4	W	D	10–5	—	—
145	19/02/00	Exmouth Arms, nr. Euston	SCCU	Herts.	Geoff A Hollis	184	4	B	D	8–8	—	—
146	26/02/00	Exmouth Arms, nr. Euston	SCCU	Surrey	Peter D Kemp	185	5	W	W	13–3	—	—

	Date	Venue	Rd.	Middx. vs.	Opponent	Grade	Bd.	Col.	Result	Champ. Result	Amboyna Result	Ebony Result
147	11/03/00	Cambridge	SCCU	Cambs.	Harriet V Hunt	229	2	B	L	4–12	—	—
2000 – 2001 season. Match Captain: Paul McKeown. RGW's grade: 198.												
148	20/01/01	Essex	SCCU	Essex	Neil L Carr	(u)	1	B	L	7–9	—	—

Notes

† indicates that the result was determined by adjudication

‡ indicates that the result was determined after appealed adjudication

§ RG Wade played for the first and only time for Middlesex 2nd team in this match; Middlesex II were docked two points from their 7½ points scored for fielding two unregistered players.

(2) The tie was broken in favour of Warwickshire by virtue of lower board count

(3) The tie was broken in favour of Lancashire by virtue of lower board count

(4) Earnest (originally Ernst) Klein was awarded the title of British Master, but, uniquely refused to accept it.

(5) The result of JE Littlewood – RG Wade is given as a win for RGW in the Middlesex match book, Vol. III, confirmed further by an analysis of the individual Middlesex representatives score for the season, with RGW given P4 W3 D1. However, BH Wood gives the win to Littlewood. [Chess, Vol. 45 Nos. 839-40 July 1980, p. 199 and The Daily Telegraph, Chess column, Saturday August 2, 1980] Interestingly, Chess gives the match score as *probably by 11½–8½*, which would tend to indicate that the results of adjudicated games were awaited. This theory appears to be strengthened on close examination of the Middlesex match book, in which the results of boards 2 and 13 are typed over correction fluid. The BCM does not seem to carry a report. However, the SCCU Bulletin for late July 1980 indicates that Middlesex claimed a win for RGW, whilst Lancashire claimed a draw on behalf of John Littlewood. The BCF Yearbook for 1980–81 gives RGW a win.

(6) The tie was broken in favour of Cambridgeshire by virtue of lower board count

Appendix — BCF / ECF Counties Champions

1908	Middlesex
1909	Middlesex
1910	Middlesex
1911	Surrey
1912	Kent
1913	Middlesex
1914	Middlesex
1915–1919	not contested
1920	Surrey
1921	Yorkshire
1922	Lancashire
1923	Lancashire
1924	Surrey
1925	Middlesex
1926	Lancashire
1927	Middlesex
1928	Middlesex
1929	Surrey
1930	Lancashire
1931	Middlesex
1932	Middlesex
1933	Lancashire
1934	Middlesex
1935	Lancashire
1936	Middlesex
1937	Middlesex
1938	Lancashire
1939–1945	not contested
1946	Lancashire
1947	Middlesex
1948	Lancashire
1949	Middlesex
1950	Middlesex

1951	Oxfordshire
1952	Oxfordshire
1953	Middlesex
1954	Surrey
1955	Middlesex
1956	Middlesex
1957	Warwickshire
1958	Essex
1959	Lancashire
1960	Lancashire
1961	Warwickshire
1962	Warwickshire
1963	Middlesex
1964	Middlesex
1965	Middlesex
1966	Lancashire
1967	Lancashire
1968	Lancashire
1969	Lancashire
1970	Cambridgeshire
1971	Cambridgeshire
1972	Cambridgeshire
1973	Essex
1974	Yorkshire
1975	Kent
1976	Kent
1977	Lancashire
1978	Lancashire
1979	Middlesex
1980	Middlesex
1981	Kent
1982	Yorkshire
1983	Kent

1984	Kent
1985	Middlesex
1986	Middlesex
1987	Middlesex
1988	Kent
1989	Middlesex
1990	Greater Manchester
1991	Kent
1992	Staffordshire
1993	Kent
1994	Leicestershire
1995	Cambridgeshire
1996	Kent
1997	Kent
1998	Kent
1999	Cambridgeshire
2000	Yorkshire
2001	Cambridgeshire
2002	Essex
2003	Kent
2004	Greater Manchester
2005	Greater Manchester
2006	Essex
2007	Lancashire
2008	Lancashire
2009	Yorkshire
2010	Lancashire
2011	Surrey
2012	Middlesex

[1] The Right Way to Play Chess, D Brine Pritchard, Right Way Books, 1950
[2] Encyclopaedia of Chess Variants, D Brine Pritchard, self published, 1994
[3] Contribution by Leonard Barden to a thread on the English Chess Forum internet discussion board, http://www.ecforum.org.uk/viewtopic.php?f=27&t=555&start=75. last viewed 22 January 2009.
[4] Chess, Vol. 18, No. 209, February 1953, p. 85
[5] How to Play the End Game in Chess, Leonard Barden, MacMillan Press, 1975
[6] Tactical Chess Endings, John Nunn, BT Batsford, 1981
[7] Middlesex County Chess Association Match Book, Vol. 2, 1954–1969
[8] BCM Vol. LXXIV, No. 12, December 1954, pp. 383–385
[9] British Chess Federation Year Book 1963 – 64, British Chess Federation, p. 166
[10] BH Wood, in his chess column, The Daily Telegraph, July 21, 1979, piece titled Middlesex After-life
[11] The Year Book of Chess 1978–9, British Chess Federation, pp. 70–71
[12] The Year Book of Chess 1979–80, British Chess Federation, pp. 80–83
[13] Jimmy Adams, THE RETURN OF MIDDLESEX, BCM, Vol. 99 No. 10 October 1979, pp. 461 – 462
[14] Islington Gazette, Friday July 13 1979
[15] Leonard Barden, in his chess column, The Guardian, Saturday July 19 1980
[16] BH Wood, in his chess column, The Daily Telegraph, Saturday, August 2, 1980
[17] Middlesex County Chess Association Match Book, Vol. 3, 1970–1989
[18] Ray Jennings, writing in the SCCU Bulletin, date unknown