

LA S'CHINTEIA



Talossa's Magazine of Everything

**Correspondence
Chess Tournament
Analysis**

**Getting to Know
Adam Grigoriu**



BALLOTS

**Interview with Former
Secretary of State**

Volume XV

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Ian Plätschisch, Editor in Chief

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Analysis of the 2020 Talossan Correspondence Chess Tournament 2nd Place Game

Glüc da Dhi

EDITOR'S NOTE: This match of the 2020 Talossan Correspondence Chess Tournament, played between late May and late June 2020, pitted Bitour Scurzniescu (playing white) against Ian Plätschisch (playing black). As both players had previously lost to Glüc da Dhi, this was essentially the match to decide second place. Plätschisch won the match after Scurzniescu, in a resignable position, allowed time to expire after twenty-seven moves.

This is not written by any sort of expert on chess. The analysis relies heavy on engine evaluation from Stockfish (generated at lichess.org). Diagrams generated using the Chess Diagram Maker at http://svg_experimenter.deds.nl/chessboard/chess_diagram_maker.html. The game itself can be found at <https://lichess.org/Zq4wUiWR#4>.

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 f6? White threatens the pawn on e5 and black defends with the f pawn. This is called the Damiano Defense (figure 1) and is generally considered dubious. (More common responses for black would be defending the pawn with Nc6 or d6. Alternatively, black could go for a counterattack on white's pawn by playing Nf6.) Moving the f pawn this early is usually discouraged as it could significantly weaken the kingside. Nxe5 is devastating, as black cannot recapture as white would then move its queen to h5 with check and then recapture the pawn on e5, again with check, also threatening the rook. Instead, Scurzniescu goes for another strong move with **3. Bc5** staring down the kingside and preventing black from castling soon.



3... Nh6 4. c3 c6 5. Qa4?? White gets its queen out early (see figure 2). This is often dangerous with a lot of pieces still on the board as it could easily provide the opponent with initiative by developing pieces that threaten the queen. In this case it creates an even bigger problem as it allows black to fork the bishop and queen. **5... b5!** Plätschisch finds the fork and after **6. Bxb5 cxb5 7. Qxb5** white is a bishop down in exchange for two pawns (see figure 3), which in this case is just not enough compensation. **7... Ba6** would be a very strong move here, developing the bishop with essentially a free move (as white is forced to move its queen) and preventing white from castling.

Plätschisch



Scurzniescu (figure 2)

Plätschisch



Scurzniescu (figure 3)

7... Nc6 8. Qc4 g6 9. b3 f5?? This hangs a pawn, as the pawn on e5 is no longer defended and can now be taken with **10. Nxe5**.

10... Qh4?? (See figure 4) The computer severely dislikes this move. I am not entirely sure why, but presumably it is because it does not do much and potentially gives white some opportunity for a future attack in the centre after castling. It does however threaten to take the pawn on e4 with check. If white does not defend the pawn or move the King away (preferably by castling) taking the pawn would also force a queen trade, which would ruin any chance white might have of attacking black's exposed king in the centre and be advantageous for the side which is up material, in this case black.

Plätschisch



Scurzniescu (figure 4)

Plätschisch



Scurzniescu (figure 5)

11. g3?? Qxe4+! (See figure 5) White loses a pawn and now must take the Queen as the only other legal move is to move away the King which loses the Knight on e5.

12. Qxe4 fxe4 13. Rf1? Whites main problem at this point (see figure 6) is that all its queenside pieces are still on their original squares, blocked by pawns and not playing any role in the game. Moving the rook does not do anything to solve that, in addition to permanently prevent kingside castling. A better solution would have been to move the d-pawn, allowing the bishop and knight to get out.

Plätschisch



Scurzniescu (figure 6)

Plätschisch



Scurzniescu (figure 7)

13... Nf5 14. g4 Nh4 15. a4 Nc5 16. Ra3 Ba6 17. Rg1 White is playing too many moves that lead nowhere. The queenside knight and bishop are still inactive on the squares they started on. **17... Nd3+!** This is a nice move as it forces white last active piece of the board. It also attacks the rook on a3 (figure 7). White should trade knights here, but instead moves the king with **18. Kd1?** Losing the knight after **18... Nxe5**.

19. d4 Bxa3 20. Nxa3 Nd3 21. Ke2 O-O Instead of trading the bishop black finally decides to castle. Remarkably this is the first time someone castles this tournament, on move 21! **22. f4** (figure 8) This move allows for a funny move, called *en passant*, whereby a pawn captures a pawn that has just directly passed it (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/En_passant). This is the only move whereby the capturing piece would not end on the same square as the piece that was just captured (22... exf3+). This is the second time this was possible, but the first time the computer recommends it.

22... Nxc1+ 23. Ke3 Rae8 24. Rxc1 Ng2+ This is a strong move that wins another pawn by putting the king in check. **25. Kf2 Nxf4 26. Re1 Nd3+** Another fork, this time winning the rook. **27. Ke3 Nxe1.**

Plätschisch



Scurzniescu (figure 8)

Plätschisch 1



Scurzniescu 0 (figure 9)

(Final position see figure 9). At this point Scurzniescu let time run out, but this does not affect the outcome as white was in a resignable position. A strong game from Plätschisch who made fewer big mistakes despite Scurzniescu coming out strong in the opening. As a result, Plätschisch comes in second in the tournament, while Scurzniescu takes third place. If there are lessons to be learned from this last game of the tournament it's probably to develop your minor pieces (knights and bishops) and get your king to safety early on.

Interview with Former Secretary of State

Ian Plätschisch

Glüc da Dhi was the Secretary of State of the Kingdom of Talossa from May 2018 to August 2020. Over that time, he conducted eighteen Clarks and four national elections.

***La S'chinteia (LS):* Overall, how did you like doing the job?**

Glüc da Dhi (GD): Overall, I enjoyed it. Conducting elections in particular is one of the most enjoyable things you can do in Talossa. At some point the frustrations became greater than the reward sadly, but that was due to a number of circumstances, rather than something that was always the case.

***LS:* What was it like taking over from Marti-Pair Fuxheir ["MPF"], who had such a long tenure [conducted thirty-five Clarks, the most of any Talossan Secretary of State, and six national elections]?**

GD: Well, obviously MPF had been massively influential and had revolutionised the way the Chancery worked by bringing back the database. I never expected or intended to be better than him. I was probably somewhat disappointed to find out how much could still only be done by MPF because of how the database works, which means Talossa still very much depends on one person. Thankfully he has been very reliable and helpful throughout my term as Secretary of State.

***LS:* Do you think anything should be done about our dependence on the database?**

GD: Well, I think the database has been great for Talossa. Ideally, we'd find a way to ensure its operation doesn't depend on one person anymore, but if that cannot be realised then yeah, we probably should think about alternatives long term.

***LS:* Any suggestions for what such an alternative should be?**

GD: Not really. Obviously, we've done elections and Clarks before the database existed and we currently allow for mail votes as well (although that means the Secretary of State will definitely see all the votes). But like I said, I'd prefer to keep the database but less dependent on one person.

Recommended Monthly Value of Memes

The Ministry of Original Content



Getting to Know: Adam Grigoriu

Ian Plätschisch

Adam Grigoriu regained his Talossan citizenship on September 11th, 2020, after having briefly been a citizen of Talossa in 2009. He was recommended for appointment as Permanent Secretary to the Minister of the Interior for Immigration on September 17th, 2020.

***La S'chinteia (LS):* What's one question that wasn't on the new citizens questionnaire that you would like to answer?**

Adam: "What is your opinion on pineapple on pizza?" I am strongly in favor of pineapple as a pizza topping; however, it should be restricted to combinations where it makes sense. Ham and/or bacon and pineapple is fantastic. Pineapple and basically anything else are, well, less fantastic.

***LS:* I saw in your application you enjoy playing video games. Which ones do you like?**

Adam: That's an easy one. I play a lot of Arma 3, which is fairly in-line with the Talossan past-time of wargaming (albeit with a twist). Barring that, plenty of Fallout and I'm anxiously awaiting the launch of Cyberpunk 2077.

***LS:* In your immigration thread, you said one reason you came back to Talossa was for the community. What do you think is special about the Talossan communities compared to other online communities?**

Adam: What makes Talossa different in my opinion is two things. One, it seems like a lot of people come here for something specific but stick around because they've made real friends, and that's pretty rare. Two, the sense of humor I've seen around here is unlike any I've seen anywhere else. Where else is there legislation called "The SQUIRRELS ... IN ... SPAAAAAAAACE Act"?

***LS:* Did you first come to Talossa for something specific?**

Adam: For something specific, not really. I did because of someone specific though. Josh Freeburg is a good friend of mine who was a Talossan back in the old days (1997-2001, I think), and he derailed the Sunday School lesson he was supposed to be teaching one day to go off on a tangent about Talossa. I didn't believe him, but it turned out he was serious. I can't find a ton about his involvement, but his brother still has a credit for helping write the 1997 Organic Law.

***LS:* How does it look like Talossa has changed since you were last a citizen?**

Adam: The single biggest change, obviously, is Reunision. That was a bit of a shock. Past that, honestly, there's a lot of small changes and restructuring, but the core of Talossa doesn't seem to have changed that much.

***LS:* What prompted you to take up the role of Immigration Secretary?**

Adam: I wanted to do something that was beneficial to the Kingdom, and it's a job that needed doing. It's not exactly what I was originally thinking of doing, I'll admit, but I like helping.

LS: What are you most looking forward to, now that you have rejoined Talossa?

Adam: Honestly, there's a lot, but I'm specifically looking forward to designing my coat of arms. I have something fairly specific in mind that I was reminded of from before that should be interesting.

End Matter

La S'chinteia received this nice note from Gödafrieu Válcadác'h:

“Thank you, Ian, for your continuing work on La S'chinteia. It does its job fulfilling a critical aspect of our Talossanity: a free and active press.”

La S'chinteia is always hiring! If you want to write it, La S'chinteia wants to publish it. Get in touch with Ian Plätschisch if you would like to become a contributor (no set schedule, publish as many or as few times as you want) or staff writer. No experience required.

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Thanks for reading!