

Opening Preparation

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B. T. Batsford Ltd, *London*

First published 1994
© Mark Dvoretsky, Artur Yusupov 1994
Reprinted 1994, 1996
ISBN 0 7134 7509 9

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data.
A CIP catalogue record for this book is
available from the British Library.

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Typeset by John Nunn GM
and printed in Great Britain by
Redwood Books, Trowbridge, Wilts
for the publishers,
B. T. Batsford Ltd,
4 Fitzhardinge Street,
London W1H 0AH

A BATSFORD CHESS BOOK

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Preface

Mark Dvoretsky

When embarking on any serious project, you always try to draw up a good, precise plan of it. And if the 'blueprint' is sound, things usually proceed successfully.

Through detailed discussions, Grandmaster Yusupov and I evolved the policy and working guidelines of a school for gifted young chessplayers which we intended to organise. I can now state with gratification that our basic ideas have stood the test of time. The successes of the school's pupils bear witness to this. Already many of them are players of no mean strength, gaining victories and prizes in junior championships at national, European and world level. In 1992 alone, no fewer than four of our students – Ilakha Kadymova, Inna Gaponenko, Aleksei Aleksandrov and Vadim Zviagintsev – won European or World Championships.

Our chief principle was above reproach because we had earlier tested it by our own experience. We clearly understood that our task was not simply to equip our students with specific chess knowledge; in two ten-day sessions per year, little can be done in that respect, while in any case the main point of chess training

lies elsewhere. Far more important aims are:

a) to acquaint the students with general ideas, methods and precedents for conducting the chess struggle – for these are of universal significance;

b) to impart rational methods of studying chess – procedures both for appropriating overall ideas and for acquiring essential concrete information;

c) to analyse the defects in the students' play and help to eradicate them.

Another idea that has proved justified is that of conducting sessions on a particular topic or theme. Each of our lessons is devoted to some specific branch of chess study. The intensive treatment of the topic – through lectures, practical activity and supplementary material that we supply to the students – gives a powerful stimulus towards attaining mastery in the given field.

We should like to help any chess player who wishes to play more strongly and is ready to pursue that end by working seriously at self-improvement. But our school has a limited number of places. For that

reason, right from the start, we aimed to prepare teaching manuals incorporating the lessons given at the school, together with the most interesting published articles on the subject.

The first such book, based on material from the first session of the school, appeared at the end of 1991 (published as *Training for the Tournament Player* in 1993 by Batsford). It deals with the most general questions of chess learning – the detection and elimination of weak points in one's play, the technique of analysing one's own and other players' games and deriving instruction from them, the role of the classical chess heritage, and so on.

Our second book is the one you have before you. It is devoted to the opening in chess. What can we offer that is new in this field? It is worth dwelling a little on this question.

The truth is that a good half of all chess books are monographs analysing this or that concrete opening variation – or all of them together. These are essentially reference works, to be consulted from time to time; but it is extremely difficult to assimilate opening theory with their help alone. The sheer bulk of data in them is too large, and by far the greater part of it is quite unnecessary; there is too little explanation of the general ideas underlying the variations analysed. Furthermore, opening monographs very quickly become outdated.

For chess enthusiasts wishing to learn some particular opening quickly, there are suitable books which analyse no more than the necessary minimum of variations. Such books are very handy, of course. Yet by merely utilising ready-made recipes, you cannot attain true mastery in conducting the opening stage of the game. What is essential is to study the methods of opening preparation as a whole, to ponder typical problems that have confronted other players, and to devote independent analysis to opening systems that attract you.

Our book will assist you in that task. It is designed for players (especially young ones) who seriously wish to deepen their understanding of chess in general and the opening phase in particular, and who want to learn how to work on the openings independently.

Part One of the book discusses what kind of problems we encounter when playing an opening, and what is needed to solve them directly over-the-board. Lectures by the World Championship candidates Artur Yusupov and Sergei Dolmatov occupy the central place here. (Dolmatov, by the way, participates actively in our work at the school.) I find it exceptionally interesting to follow the train of thought of top grandmasters who candidly reveal what they think about during play, how they find the best moves and why they occasionally go wrong.

But acquaintance with 'theory' is not in itself sufficient to teach you to make the right decisions. Practical training is also required. At each session of the school we invariably organise a variety of tests and competitions. One such training session is described in the first part of the book.

Part Two is devoted to the processes of building an opening repertoire, of preparing for contests and individual opponents.

This theme is continued in Part Three, which deals with independent analysis of opening positions and the technique of devising innovations.

Part Four traces the link between the opening and other phases of the game, and demonstrates the continuity of chess ideas. It particularly stresses the central theme running through the whole book: the key to success lies not in mechanically memorizing opening data but in assimilating the riches of chess thought, in broadening your chess mind.

However, even though this was not our chief aim, the reader will actually find a good deal of useful specific information here: opening novelties (some of which have yet to be tried in practice), recommendations for handling the most varied positions, and surveys of a number of opening systems (King's Indian Attack, Closed Spanish, Queen's Gambit Accepted and others).

Finally, we have made it our policy to end the book with some samples of achievements by pupils of the school, equipped with notes by Grandmaster Yusupov. Here you will find some typical cases of a full-scale opening clash on a very high level, and examples of instructive opening errors.

In annotating the games by our students, Yusupov concentrates on those overall problems of opening play which are discussed in his lecture at the beginning of the book. When studying this lecture, you will probably do well to look up the final chapter at the same time, and examine the two chapters in parallel.

This book is the work of a team of authors. In addition to the writer of these lines and Grandmasters Yusupov and Dolmatov, contributions were made by Grandmaster Yuri Razuvaev and three other masters: Boris Zlotnik, Aleksei Kosikov and Vladimir Vulfson. I am greatly indebted to all of them. It will, I hope, be of interest to the reader to compare the attitudes of different specialists to the same problems; such (so to speak) is the polyphonic quality of the book.

If our work causes the reader to ponder the difficult but engaging problems of opening preparation and suggests to him some new ideas in this field, the authors will consider their task accomplished.

1 General Principles of Opening Play

Artur Yusupov

Let us ask what constitutes the strategy of the opening struggle in chess. If you examine the games of strong masters, you will see that both sides aim above all to mobilise their forces with the greatest speed. This is easily explained; the more pieces in play, the more attacking possibilities you have. *Fast development is the basis of opening play.*

Here is a second important factor: from the very first moves, a battle for the centre is fought. The centre may be called the commanding summit of chess strategy; whoever gains control of it will afterwards have the better prospects. It is natural for the central squares e4, e5, d4 and d5 to be the object of constant attention by both sides from the very outset. *As a rule, chessplayers endeavour either to seize the centre with pawns or to exert pressure on it with pieces.*

At the same time, both opponents are trying to frustrate each other's plans. It makes sense to play a move which hampers the opponent's development; if this 'loses a tempo', it is likely to be justified later. It is well worth spending a tempo to prevent the opponent (say) from castling – in this way you will increase your own lead in development. Thus, the third

principle of opening play is to counteract the opponent's intentions with a view to holding up his development and stopping him from gaining control of the centre.

You will ask which is more important: pursuing one's own development or hindering that of the opponent. Of course it is ideal if both can be combined. If the choice must be made, it will depend on the particular circumstances of each single case; there is no universal precept. That said, it is better not to forget about developing your own position.

What else matters to a chessplayer in the opening? Of course, he gives attention to his pawn structure. It may already be possible at an early stage to provoke a weakening of your opponent's pawn position – to wreck his pawns, as they say. *Remember that a great deal may depend on whether you obtain a good pawn structure or a bad one.*

And, finally: *from the very first moves, a struggle for the initiative is under way, and this perhaps is the very essence of opening play.* In our day, can we imagine a game in which the players spend some time simply bringing out their pieces and then look round to see where they stand

and what they should be doing next? Of course not. It is natural that White, as the 'first player', should generally try to keep ahead of his opponent in development, to seize the centre and to create the first threats.

Before passing to specific examples, I would draw your attention to one more important point: *Modern opening structures are firmly linked to a middlegame plan of action (and sometimes you even have to take the eventual endgame structure into account!)*. These days it is hard to draw a clear line between the opening and the middlegame, especially since all the principles of opening strategy that I have mentioned can be applied to the middlegame too, though in rather different ways.

Let us now look a little more closely at the first of the opening maxims (fast mobilisation of the forces). Some simple rules may be called to mind:

- 1) Don't move the same piece twice (without serious justification).
- 2) Don't waste time on prophylactic moves with the rook's pawns; developing the pieces faster is more important.
- 3) Don't bring the queen out too early; choosing the right place for it is a crucial task, since the nature of the subsequent struggle is in many ways dependent on where the queen is placed.
- 4) Don't be rushed into a premature, unprepared attack.

5) Don't go in for pawn-hunting, especially in open positions where a lead in development makes an immense difference. Remember that a tempo in the opening is sometimes more important than a pawn.

We will now examine a game of mine against Grandmaster Gulko. I think that the principles of mobilization and general opening play will be clarified by this example.

Yusupov-Gulko
Reykjavik 1990
King's Indian

1	d4	♘f6
2	c4	g6
3	♘f3	♙g7
4	g3	0-0
5	♙g2	d6
6	0-0	♘c6

We see how new forces are entering the game with each move. White seizes the centre with his pawns; Black prepares to exert pressure on it with his pieces.

7	♘c3	♙f5
---	-----	-----

A move that is rarely seen but perfectly playable. Black develops his bishop and establishes control over the central square e4, preparing to play 8...♘e4.

8	d5	
---	----	--

There are other continuations here, for example 8 ♖e1, 8 b3 or 8 ♘e1. The move played is also logical enough: with gain of tempo, White makes good his conquest of space in the centre.

8 ... ♘a5 (1)

Black moves the same piece twice in the opening, but here he is justified in doing so. For one thing a knight move is actually forced, but secondly the move 8...♘a5 creates a counter-threat against the pawn on c4.



What should White play here? In the game, I continued...

9 ♘d2?!

But this move has definite snags. The knight on d2 blocks the bishop on c1. I was hoping that the threat of 10 b4 would force my opponent to close the queenside with ...c7-c5. White would then gain a tempo by pushing his pawn to e4 and afterwards complete his development with ♖c2, b2-b3, ♙b2 etc. Unfortunately, events took a very different turn.

A more natural and logical move seems to be 9 ♘d4! The bishop on f5 is attacked, and the c-pawn is defended indirectly: 9...♘xc4? would be met by 10 ♘xf5 gf 11 ♖d3, whereupon White recovers his pawn while obtaining the better pawn

structure. After 9...♙d7 10 ♖d3, his position is highly promising.

9 ... c6!

Having gained a certain lead in development, my opponent resolutely opens the position up. I am now faced with a new problem – that of damping down Black's incipient initiative. I failed to solve this problem and landed in trouble.

The logical sequel to 9 ♘d2 would be the energetic 10 b4!?. The basic idea, which I overlooked during the game, is that after 10...♘xd5 11 cd ♙xc3 White has 12 e4! (I only considered 12 ♙a3? ♙xd2). White will probably manage to acquire two pieces for a rook, but Black will have some pawns as compensation. Assessing such a position is very difficult; quite possibly it is a case of dynamic equilibrium.

In the game, White played the stereotyped...

10 e4?!

To which the answer was:

10 ... ♙g4!

With this cunning move, a new weakness is provoked: either f2-f3, giving Black tactical possibilities based on ...♖b6+; or else ♖c2, when after the opening of the c-file the queen will be exposed to awkward pressure from a rook on c8.

11 ♖c2 cd

12 cd

Taking with the e-pawn would be even worse – Black's bishop would obtain the excellent square f5.

12 ... ♖c8

Observe the logic with which Gulko brings fresh forces into the game while gradually increasing the pressure. Taking advantage of White's conventional play and consequent backward development, Black has already seized the initiative. He now has to follow a very important rule formulated long ago by Steinitz: *when you have the advantage, you must attack, or risk losing it!*

13 ♖e1

White endeavours to co-ordinate his pieces somehow or other. He prepares to continue developing with 14 ♘f1, and at the same time prevents the black bishop from transferring itself via e2 to a6, from where it would exert dangerous pressure.

13 ... ♗b5

There were other possibilities here too, for example 13...♗b6. It was also worth considering 13...♙d7, freeing the g4 square for the knight on its way to e5, while planning to meet 14 ♘f1 with 14...♘c4.

14 a3 (2)



Again Black could continue 14...♙d7!? 15 ♘f1 ♘c4 16 ♗e3 ♘g4. But Gulko has found a much more interesting line based on the same overall assessment of the position as before: *Black is ahead in development, so opening up the game will benefit him.*

14 ... ♙e6!?

After a pawn exchange on d5, the bishop obtains the f5 square, which is extremely unpleasant for White. If instead 15 h3?!, there follows 15...ed 16 hg d4, and my pawn position will be hopelessly spoilt. In other words, Black will convert one type of advantage – his lead in development – into another: the better pawn structure.

White has to adopt a defensive approach which could be stated more or less like this: 'When everything is going badly, it's too late to be afraid!'

15 ♙d3

Well, what is White to do? Already I realize that completing my development is impossible by normal means, and so I am trying anything to complicate the struggle. Such tactics can sometimes give quite good practical results, though with correct play from the opponent they are likely to be punished. At any rate, the quiet 15 ♘f1 (15...ed 16 ed) was objectively the lesser evil.

15 ... ed

16 ♘xb5

Whereas for White the opening is not yet over, Black of course is well

into the middlegame. At this point he could have played 16...♗b6!?, enabling his bishop to retreat to d7. The exposed bishop on g4 is perhaps the only defect in Black's position – in some lines it can be cut off from the rest of his forces.

However, from the point of view of fighting for the initiative, Gulko played what is probably the most effective move:

16 ... ♗e8!?

One more black piece enters the game...

From this point onwards, balancing on the edge of a precipice, I managed time and again to unearth resources for prolonging the fight. Fortunately for me, the position proved sufficiently complex, so that at this stage it was too early to say how it would all end.

17 h3 ♙f5!

A tempting move. An alternative was 17...♙e6, when there would follow: 18 ed ♙f5 19 ♗xe8+ ♗xe8 20 ♗f1. White has an extra pawn, though of course Black has powerful counterplay.

18 g4

The only move. Albeit at the cost of a pawn, White succeeds in finishing his development.

18 ... ♙xe4

19 ♘xe4

At last this knight has left d2!

19 ... ♘xe4

With White's development still backward, winning the pawn back with 20 ♙xe4?! would be tantamount

to surrender: 20...de 21 ♗xd6 ♗h4!. Also 20 ♗xd5? would be bad in view of the very strong reply 20...♗e5!.

20 ♘xa7!?

In this game White breaks all the rules, and should have been punished by accurate play from his opponent. But I had come to the conclusion that the 'normal' course of events was a hopeless prospect.

20 ... ♗b8

If 21 ♗xd5?!, the tactical stroke 21...♘xf2!? looks tempting, for instance: 22 ♗xe8+ ♗xe8 23 ♘xf2 ♘b3 24 ♘c6 with unclear play. But the interposition of 21...♗e5! would set White problems that appear insuperable; his pieces are disunited, and the same fearsome blow against f2 is still threatened (22 ♗d3 ♘xf2 23 ♘xf2 ♗h4+!).

Naturally White must take the opportunity to mobilise his bishop which has remained idle so far:

21 ♙e3

There now followed:

21 ... ♙xb2

22 ♗ab1

On 22 ♗ad1, the reply 22...♘c3 is unpleasant, for example: 23 ♗d2 d4 24 ♗xb2 ♗xb2 25 ♗xd4 ♘e2+ 26 ♗xe2 ♗xe2, and if 27 ♙h6 then simply 27...♗8e5, blocking the dangerous diagonal and emerging with a big material plus.

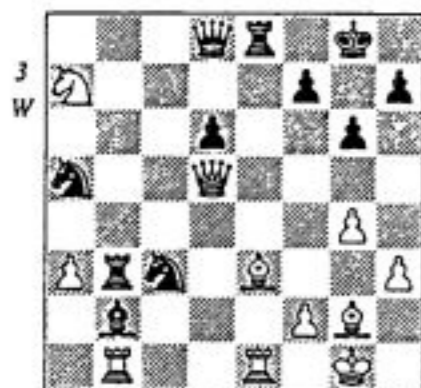
22 ... ♗b3

Gulko continues purposefully and finds a concrete method of increasing his advantage.

23 ♖xd5

White would lose quickly with 23 ♖c2 ♖b8 24 ♘c6 ♘xc6 25 ♖xc6 ♜c8.

23 ... ♘c3 (3)



We have here an interesting problem of calculation. Which continuation promises White the best practical chances? Basically there are three possibilities:

(a) 24 ♖xb3 ♘xb3 25 ♜xb2 ♘c5. I think Black has the advantage here (though surrendering material like this does sometimes help to repair the situation).

(b) 24 ♘c6 – objectively, this counter-stroke may be strongest. Yet after 24...♘d5 25 ♘d8 ♘xc3 Black of course has a clear plus (for example 26 ♜xe3 ♜bxc3 27 ♜e ♘xa3).

(c) The move actually played, on which my hopes rested, was:

24 ♘g5

Black now has to solve one more complicated problem, after which he should score his deserved point.

The correct response is 24...♖d7!. But Gulko didn't notice that after 25

♖xa5 ♘xb1 26 ♜xb1 Black has the deadly 26...♘c3!. White would have to carry on confusing the issue with 26 ♘c6 (26 ♜xe8+ ♖xe8 27 ♘c6 ♖b8 is no better), but this would not last long: 26...♜xe1+ 27 ♖xe1 ♖xa7 28 ♖e8+ ♗g7 29 ♘c7 ♜b8, and Black wins.

Fortunately for me, Gulko was tempted by a queen sacrifice:

24 ... ♘xb1?
25 ♘xd8 ♜xe1+
26 ♘f1

...which results in a wholly unclear position where the mutual threats appear balanced.

26 ... ♘c3
27 ♖d2!

It is important to take control of f4. Bad alternatives are 27 ♖a8? ♘e2+ 28 ♗g2 ♘f4+ and 27 ♖xa5? ♘e2+ 28 ♗g2 ♘f4+ 29 ♗g1 ♘hx3+ 30 ♗g2 ♘f4+ 31 ♗g1 ♘c3.

27 ... ♘e2+
28 ♗g2 ♘c3
29 ♖h6 ♘c4

Black could have drawn with 29...♘g7 30 ♖d2 ♘c3.

30 ♘c6 ♘g7
31 ♘e7+ ♗f8?

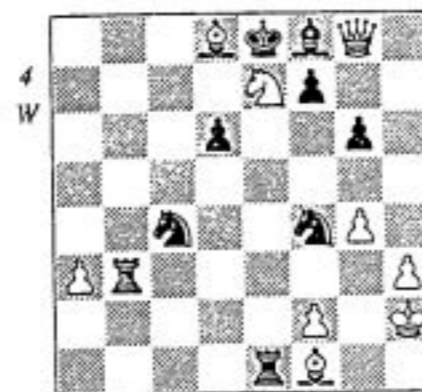
A mistake. The correct line was 31...♗h8! 32 ♘xg6+! ♜g 33 ♘f6! ♜b7 34 ♘xe2 ♜xe2 35 ♘xg7+ ♜xg7 36 ♖f4! with equal chances.

32 ♖xh7 ♘f4+
33 ♗h2 ♗e8
34 ♖g8+!

Not 34 ♖xg7? ♜xf1 followed by ...♜xh3 mate.

34 ... ♘f8 (4)

Nor can he save himself with 34...♗d7 35 ♖xf7 ♜xf1 36 ♘c6+! ♗xc6 37 ♖xc4+ ♗d7 38 ♖xb3.



35 ♘xg6!

The way from victory to defeat has proved very short. After this stroke, Black's position is already indefensible (35...♘xg6 is met by the simple 36 ♘xc4).

35 ... ♜g
36 ♖xc4 ♜xf1
37 ♖xf4!?

37 ♖xb3 ♗xd8 38 ♖c4 ♜xf2+ 39 ♗g3 ♘hx3! is also in White's favour.

37 ... ♜xa3
38 ♘h4?

38 ♘f6!, controlling a1, was more precise.

38 ... ♜aa1
39 ♖e4+

The consequences of 39 ♖f6 are unclear: 39...♜h1+ 40 ♗g2 ♜ag1+ (or 40...♜hg1+!?) 41 ♗f3 ♜hx3+ 42 ♗e2 (42 ♘g3?? ♜hxg3+) 42...♗d7.

39 ... ♗f7
40 ♖f3+ ♗g8
41 ♖d5+ ♗g7

42 ♖b7+ ♗g8
43 ♘g3

Intending h3-h4.

43 ... ♜h1+
44 ♖xh1 ♜xh1+
45 ♗xh1 ♗f7
46 ♗g2 ♗f6

Better is 46...♗e6.

47 ♜f4 d5
48 ♘f2 ♘d6
49 ♗f3 ♗e6
50 ♘d4 ♘e7!
51 ♗g3 ♘b4!
52 h4 ♘e1+
53 ♗h3 ♘d2
54 ♗g3 ♘e1+
55 ♘f2 ♘c3
56 ♗f3 ♘g7

A more stubborn defence was 56...♘f6!? 57 h5 gh 58 ♜f5+ ♗f7 59 gh, but even then the Black position could definitely not have been held. White would play ♘e3, ♗g4, ♘g5, and then ♗f3-e2-d3-c2-b3-a4, when the black pawn falls.

57 ♘e1!?

57 ♘b6!?, preparing ♗e3 and ♘d4, was also good.

57 ... ♘f8?!
58 ♘c3 ♘h6?!
59 ♜f5+ ♜g
60 g5 1-0

Black resigned in view of 60...♘f8 61 h5 ♗f7 62 ♗f4.

I would like to draw your attention once again to Gulko's highly consistent play in this game, right up to his fateful error on move 24. He began fighting for the initiative right

from the opening, and after gaining a lead in development he concentrated on increasing it, bringing more and more pieces into the fray and not shrinking from temporary sacrifices. The moves 14...e6! and 16...♞c8! may be singled out in this connection.

As regards White's play, after offending against one of the cardinal opening principles (mobilisation at maximum speed) and conceding the initiative, he ought to have lost. However, what makes this game notable is that it shows the importance of carrying on the fight whatever the circumstances. True, White had the worse position. Yet he never lost heart, he strove to work up counterplay and regain the initiative. Eventually he managed to set his opponent some quite difficult practical problems, and the latter lost his way.

The next example is perhaps simpler. In contrast to the game with Gulko, I had properly prepared myself to meet Spassky.

Spassky-Yusupov
Linares 1990
Ruy Lopez

1	e4	e5
2	♘f3	♘c6
3	♙b5	a6
4	♙a4	♘f6
5	♘c3	

Spassky often adopts this antiquated variation, which at one time

was virtually considered the main line of the Ruy Lopez but later almost disappeared from use.

From a common-sense point of view there is nothing wrong with White's last move. It brings a piece towards the centre. But anyone who has studied the Ruy Lopez knows that 5 0-0 is nonetheless better, aiming to set up a pawn centre with c2-c3 and d2-d4 (which the knight on c3 hinders).

5	...	b5
5...	♙c5!?	
6	♙b3	♙e7
7	d3	d6
8	♘d5	

Of course it looks attractive to strengthen White's control of the important diagonal and particularly the central square d5. However, 8 ♘d5 leads to simplification and a roughly equal game.

8	...	♙a5
9	♘xe7	♞xe7
10	0-0	0-0

This natural move is an innovation, strange though it may seem. Usually 10...c5 is played.

11	♙d2	
11	...	♘b3
12	ab (5)	

Let us have a think about the diagram position. How would you go about solving Black's opening problems?

With 12...c5 maybe? This move is perfectly playable, increasing



Black's central control. What other suggestions are there?

Perhaps 12...♘d7, preparing ...f7-f5? This is a good idea.

What about developing the bishop on b7? Yes, this move features in Black's plans. But I didn't want to play it at once because of the strong reply 13 ♘h4. The pieces need to be developed in the most accurate way, taking account of the opponent's resources.

To sum up: undermining the white e-pawn with ...f7-f5 does seem the obvious course. It simply follows from the structure of the position. If Black managed to play ...♙b7, ...♘d7 and ...f7-f5, the game would turn in his favour. But he needs to act in such a way as to prevent White's awkward knight sortie to h4. Therefore, in preparing for the game, I had decided to begin this manoeuvre by retreating my knight.

12	...	♘d7!
----	-----	------

Black has successfully solved his opening problems, without wasting time on ...c7-c5 – a move which is useful in a general sense but is not

the first priority. White should now have played cautiously and prepared for his opponent's operations in the centre. But Spassky didn't sense the danger in time; indeed, right now it is rather hard to imagine that the scene can abruptly change within literally just a few moves.

13	♞e1?!	
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As the ex-World Champion later pointed out, 13 ♙a5 c5 14 ♘d2 would result in equality.

13	...	♙b7
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Everything is ready for ...f7-f5. It is time for White to give some thought to defence, but to his cost he decided to fuel the fire of his own accord.

14	d4?	
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Better 14 ♙g5 f6 15 ♙h4, with the idea of 16 ♘d2; Black then has no more than a slight edge.

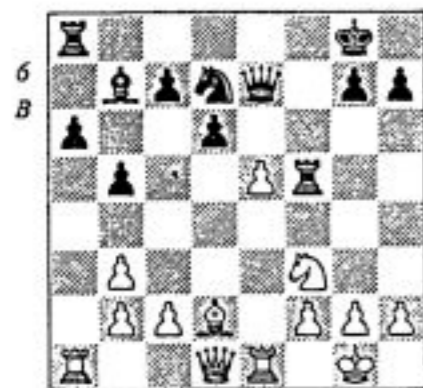
14	...	f5!
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White could now have taken on e5, but the variations work out in Black's favour, for instance: 15 de fe 16 ed ♞f7! 17 ♙c3 ♞ae8 18 ♘g5 ♞xf2+ 19 ♖h1 e3 20 ♞g4 h5 21 ♞g3 cd with advantage.

After much thought, Spassky played differently:

15	ef	♞xf5
16	de (6)	
16	...	♞xf3!

A thematic stroke. Of course the exchange is not too great a price to pay to activate the bishop on b7. The unsubtle 16...♙xf3 would have had unclear consequences: 17 gf ♞xe5 (not 17...♘xe5? 18 f4 ♞h4 19 fe



17 g f dxe5
 18 d f4
 18 f4 loses quickly to 18... w f7 .
 18 ... dxf3+?!

At this point I took rather a faint-hearted decision – to head for an ending a pawn up, which I was not certain to win. I should of course have carried on with the attack, but unfortunately I miscalculated. It seemed to me that the position after 18... f8 19 dxe5 de 20 w d4 was not entirely clear. But by looking just a little further I could have reached the opposite conclusion: 20... w g5+ 21 w g4 w f6 , and Black has a fearsome attack. I am afraid the game continuation was much more prosaic.

19 wxf3 wxe1+
 20 fxe1 dxf3
 21 fe7 fc8

By dint of immense exertions I succeeded in winning this endgame, but only thanks to a serious error on my opponent's part.

This game demonstrates that the pursuit of central control, together

with constant attention to the opponent's similar activities, helps to solve a good many opening problems. Another vital point is that the concrete plans of both players were determined by the pawn structure from quite an early stage.

In developing your pieces, try to envisage what you will be undertaking in a few moves' time and what direction the game is going to follow. This should not, of course, be understood over-literally to mean that in the very opening you should be excogitating a plan that will lead by a direct process to a win in the end-game stage. The kind of planning I have in mind involves fairly short operations, say three or four moves deep, aimed at improving your position and worsening that of your opponent. *In essence, the entire game is an aggregate of mini-operations united by a general strategic idea that has its basis in the opening you have chosen.*

The way such short operations are planned can be seen from the following game.

Yusupov-Ljubojević
 Tilburg 1987
 Queen's Gambit

- | | | |
|---|------|------|
| 1 | d4 | d f6 |
| 2 | c4 | e6 |
| 3 | d f3 | d5 |
| 4 | d c3 | d e7 |
| 5 | d f4 | 0-0 |
| 6 | e3 | |

A position well known to theory. Ljubojević chooses a continuation that has been studied less than the customary 6...c5.

6 ... b6

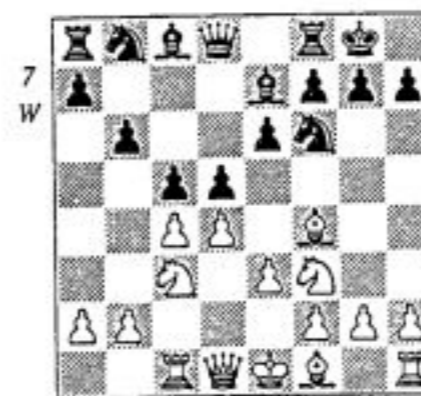
A natural move which facilitates development and conforms to the idea of fighting for the centre. The character of the coming struggle will largely depend on the decision White takes now.

What are the candidate moves? They are 7 cd, 7 d e2 and 7 f c1.

7 f c1

I didn't want to take on d5 as long as Black could recapture with his knight. *When you hold the initiative, it is best to avoid simplification – every exchange has to have a particular reason, it has to bring some positional or tactical dividends.* But now, after 7... d b7 8 cd, the recapture with the knight is dubious since the pawn on c7 would fall. This linking of 7 f c1 to the potential 8 cd is the first 'mini-operation' undertaken in this game by White.

7 ... c5 (7)



The tension in the pawn position which now results is characteristic of many modern openings. In such situations you have to come to a decision as to what pawn structure you are aiming for.

8 d c!

Of course this move is no great revelation to chess theory, even though *Informator* designates it as a novelty (the usual move is 8 cd). The result of the capture on c5 is that Black soon has hanging pawns on c5 and d5.

8 ... bc

If Black recaptures with his bishop, he will be left with an isolated pawn. White would have no objection to that position either. (The move ...b7-b6 would then lose much of its point.)

9 d e2 d b7
 10 0-0 d b7

Basically we can say that the opening is over. According to some ancient handbooks, it is here that the players should set about devising their plans. In actual fact I had made my choice much earlier, determining the course of the game with 7 f c1. It is clear that the struggle is going to revolve round attacking and defending the hanging pawns.

11 cd ed

It was certainly worth considering 11... dxd5! ?, leaving White with only a small plus.

Now how can White increase the pressure on his opponent's pawn centre? First, it would not be a bad

idea to attack the d-pawn by means of a short concrete operation: Qe5 and Qf3 .

12 Qe5

In this case White does not avoid a possible exchange, since his move has a specific idea behind it.

For one thing the knight has vacated f3, from where the bishop will bear down on the black d-pawn. Secondly, in the event of 12... Qxe5 13 Qxe5 , White's other bishop will be aiming at the knight on f6 – by which the d-pawn is guarded. This will in a sense be a gain of tempo. Black will have to withdraw his knight to d7 and then perhaps even bring it to b6, leaving the initiative in White's hands.

12 ... Qb6

What would you play for White now? 13 Nc2 , and then 14 Nd2 perhaps?

Well, that is quite a good manoeuvre. But what I actually meant was: 'What would you do as a specific reaction to Black's last move?' Remember a standard precept in this kind of position: *by pushing the a-pawn, you underline the insecure position of the knight on b6.*

13 a4!

Black is now faced with a complex dilemma: on the one hand he doesn't want his knight to be driven away, but on the other hand after ...a7-a5 White would obtain the b5 square. What should Black do?

Would 13...d4 be your suggestion? Let us see: 14 ed cd 15 Qb5

Qfd5 16 Qg3 , and the pawn on d4 is hard to defend. But the idea in itself is interesting. With this kind of pawn structure White always has to be alert to a possible break with ...d5-d4. On occasion this may prove quite troublesome.

13 ... a5

White's first major achievement. At this point he could immediately invade b5 with his knight, trying to utilise the bishop-and-knight configuration (Qb5 , Qf4) to operate against d6 and c7. But after considering it, I decided I would not yet deviate from my original plan but would exert more pressure on the d5 pawn.

14 Qf3 Ne8

If instead 14... Nc8 , I probably would have considered the manoeuvre 15 Nc2 and 16 Nd2 , to increase the pressure against d5. But after the move Black actually played, I could no longer resist utilising the b5 square.

15 Qb5 !

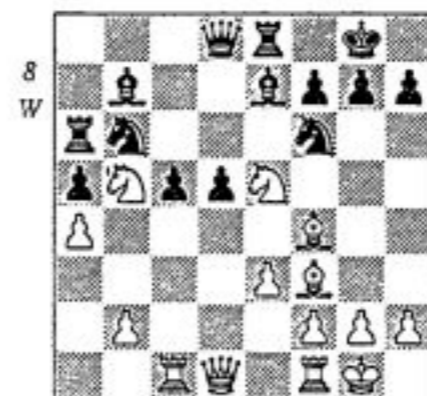
The play becomes tactical. White has created the unpleasant threat of 16 Qxf7 and 17 Qc7 , and to avert this Black has to put his rook in rather an awkward position.

At the same time, 15 Qb5 is a prophylactic move as well as an attacking one. Black was intending ... Qd6 , driving my pieces from the centre.

15 ... Na6 (8)

On 15... Nc8 , White has 16 Qa7 !, with the clear idea of exploiting the

weakness of c6. This, by the way, is quite a typical operation when a knight is on e5.



Have a think what you would play here. Is it worth going into action at once, or would you rather wait and improve your position first, depriving the opponent of counterplay? This is one of the most complicated problems when realising a positional advantage.

In this game I failed to solve it properly. I hastened to start concrete operations which proved futile. Instead, White had the fine move 16 b3! at his disposal, solidly fixing his opponent's pawn structure and making it possible to increase the pressure without hindrance.

16 Qd3 !

White's choice was based on a miscalculation in one of the variations. It is quite obvious that Black will reply by pushing his c-pawn, which is just what 16 b3! would have prevented.

16 ... c4

17 Qc7

After 17 Qc7 cd 18 Qxa6 Qxa6 19 Qc7 Wd7 20 Qxb6 Qb4 ! Black would obtain good compensation for the exchange.

17 ... Wd7 !

Unexpectedly, White's pieces – his knight on b5 and bishop on c7 – turn out to be precariously placed. For instance, 18 Qf4 is met by the tactical stroke 18... Qxa4 !

18 Qe5 Wc8

19 b3!?

An equal game would result from 19 Qxb6 Nxb6 20 Qg4 .

19 ... Qa8 !

20 bc Qxc7

Instead 20...d4?! is dubious on account of 21 Qd5 ! Nf8 22 Wf3 .

21 cd Qd6 !

22 Qc4 !

Black would have an obvious advantage after 22 Qc6 Wd7 ! (intending 23... Qcxd5) 23 e4 Qxe4 24 Qxe4 Nxc4 25 Qb8 Wc7 26 Qxa6 Qxa6 .

After 22 Qc4 !, Black has various possibilities. One is to try simplifying the position with the counter-sacrifice of a piece: 22... Qxh2+ ! 23 Qxh2 Qcxd5 . However, after 24 Qg1 , intending 25 Qcd6 or 25 Wd4 , the advantage is with White. Perhaps Black's best move is 22... Qb4 !, placing his bishop on a protected square. White could reply 23 d6! or 23 e4! (23... Qxe4 24 d6, with the threat of 25 d7).

In the game, Ljubojević made a tactical mistake which led to defeat.

22 ... Qc5 ?

23 ♖xa5! ♞xa5
24 ♞xc5

Now 24...♞b8 would not rescue Black: 25 ♞d2 ♖a6 26 ♞c4. Ljubovjević hoped to extricate himself with:

24 ... ♞d8 (9)



But he missed the simple retort...

25 ♖d6!! ♞xd6

If 25...♞xc5, then 26 ♖xb7.

26 ♞xa5 ♖xd5

27 ♞d4!

The decisive move. The struggle is now over.

27 ... ♞e6

27...♖c6? 28 ♞xd5.

28 ♖xd5 ♖cxd5

29 ♞d1 ♞c8

30 ♞c5! ♞xc5

31 ♞xc5 h5

32 a5 ♞e4

33 h3 g6

34 ♞c6 ♞b4

35 a6 ♞a5

36 ♞b7 ♞a4

37 ♞b1 1-0

Let us now define what interest this game holds for us. In the first

place we see that the struggle in the centre led to the formation of a specific pawn structure (hanging pawns) which significantly influenced the further plans of both players. Such pawn structures constitute an individual topic that calls for serious study. This aspect of chess possesses its own rules and its own exceptions to them; it includes some features that are common to all structures of a given type and others that are characteristic only of certain specific positions; and it embraces some standard plans of campaign, one of which White attempted to follow in the above game.

Here is the second thing which it is, I think, important to bring to your attention. When White exchanged his central pawns, it looked as if he was abandoning the centre in the very opening. In return, however, he organised powerful pressure with his pieces against his opponent's central pawns and made them into a real weakness. The game thus compels us to think about the problem of the transformation of a pawn centre. The pawn centre may be replaced by a piece centre, or on occasion it simply makes sense to abandon it. *In general, a pawn centre is a good thing not in itself but in its usefulness for concrete ends* – such as driving the enemy pieces back (remember we looked closely at Black's ...d5-d4), or holding up his development; or securing convenient posts for your own pieces under cover of the

pawns. If the centre does not fulfil these functions (as it did not in the game we have been examining), it can easily become vulnerable and turn into an object of attack.

Of course, the problems of the pawn centre are by no means exhausted by what has just been said. For example, a very important problem is that of the tension between pawns (between c4 and d5, d4 and c5, etc.). A whole range of questions arises here. When should the tension be maintained, and when not? What are the means for maintaining these dynamic tensions? What is the right moment to convert them into more static structures? Some of these questions are also in a measure answered by the above game.

The next example will certainly delight adherents of the Dutch Defence. It is a game I played against Grandmaster Beliavsky, in which the plans of both sides were dictated by the complex pawn structure that is so characteristic of this opening.

Beliavsky-Yusupov
USSR Championship (Top League),
Minsk 1987
Dutch Defence

1	d4	f5
2	c4	♖f6
3	g3	e6
4	♖g2	d5

Black heads for a 'Stonewall' formation. His goal is clear – to establish as much control as possible over

the e4 square; indeed, any firmer control is hard to imagine. The price of this achievement, however, is a major weakening of the entire dark-square complex. The e5 square is already deprived of pawn protection, and the outcome of the game largely depends on how Black can resist his opponent's plans to occupy this point.

5	♖f3	c6
6	0-0	♖d6

At one time the Stonewall was usually played with the bishop on e7. To me it seems that d6 is a more logical place for it. Seeing that the dark squares have been weakened, Black wants to guard them with his pieces as far as possible.

Why did players shy away from 6...♖d6 in the past? They thought that after 7 ♖f4 and a bishop exchange, White would strengthen his grip on e5 and acquire a noticeable plus. But it turned out that even then Black can put up plenty of fight. In answer to 7 ♖f4 I recommend exchanging bishops at once, slightly weakening the opponent's kingside. Otherwise White will play e2-e3, after which an exchange on f4 is extremely dangerous for Black – the reply is e3xf4, and White works up pressure in the e-file. It is useful to bear this stratagem in mind.

7 b3

Obviously pointing to the possibility of exchanging the dark-squared bishops from a3 – quite a favourable operation for White.

7 ... ♖e7

I don't mind the bishop exchange as long as White has to insert a2-a4. Why? Because in that case the disparity in value between the two moves preceding the exchange would make itself felt; the developing move of the queen would be more useful than the advance of the rook's pawn. While White was taking time to move his knight from a3 to a more active post, Black would succeed in preparing ...e6-e5.

8 ♖b2 0-0

9 ♘c3

A natural developing move, but it is not to my own liking. A much better set-up is the one introduced by Tigran Petrosian: White develops the knight on d2 and subsequently aims to control e5 with both knights (♘f3-e5-d3 and ♘d2-f3).

Incidentally, in the Dutch Defence White should be cautious about occupying e5. If an exchange of pieces results in a pawn arriving there, Black will no longer have a weakness on this square, and as a rule he will be rid of his opening difficulties.

I now have to solve the problem of developing my queenside. In particular, this means 'relocating' the light-squared bishop – which tends to be the chief cause of Black's headaches in the Dutch. Two radically different plans are feasible. The first is to fianchetto the bishop, hoping to carry out an eventual ...c6-c5. But with his knight on c3, White is well

prepared for that. I therefore selected the other plan of transferring the bishop to h5 from this square too it will participate in the fight.

9 ... ♔d7!?

10 ♘e5 ♔e8

11 ♘d3

Not having very much experience of the Dutch, Beliavsky fails to find an effective plan. The time lost in transferring the knight from f3 to d3 could certainly have been used to better purpose. Instead of the move played, White should have bolstered his central position with 11 e3 and perhaps even followed with f2-f4.

11 ... ♘bd7

12 e3 (10)

Not a very effective decision. White seems to be playing without a definite plan. He should have faced the fact that he has no advantage, and played 12 f4!?, guaranteeing an equal game.



What can be said about the position we have now reached? Black is very strongly established in the centre; his pawn structure is solid. He is

therefore already quite entitled to think about active operations.

12 ... g5!

If you don't have the central position under control, it is better to avoid this kind of undertaking; otherwise you risk suffering a counterblow in the centre and coming away empty-handed. But there is no danger of this in the present case, since Black firmly controls the entire complex of central squares. The fact that the kingside is now the object of his attention is easy to explain – nearly all his pieces are pointing in that direction. So Black's plan arises naturally out of his pawn structure and the arrangement of his pieces. I believe that my position is already slightly superior.

Beliavsky's assessment of the position was evidently similar, or he would not have started looking for simplification.

13 a4

White returns to the idea of exchanging the dark-squared bishops; by this means he hopes somehow to extinguish his opponent's initiative.

13 ... ♔g6

It was also worth considering 13...♔h5 14 ♖c1 ♘e4, with somewhat the better chances. The move played has the aim of hindering White's obvious plan – ♖c1 and ♔a3. For of course 14 ♖c1 would now be met by 14...f4.

14 f4

White insists on carrying out his plan.

14 ... ♔h5

There is no longer anything for the bishop to do on g6.

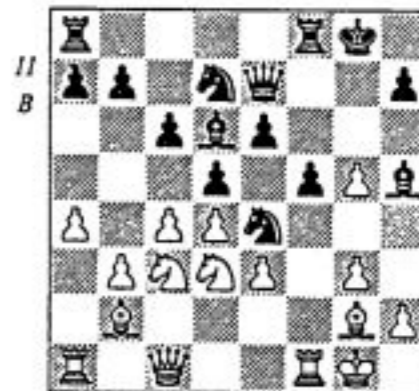
15 ♖c1

White should evidently have decided on 15 ♔f3!?. This may look a little strange, but then White already has to think about defending. In addition, it is quite possible that the bishop on g2 will soon prove inferior to its opposite number on h5; after all, it is only directed against the solidly defended pawn on d5.

15 ... ♘e4

16 fg (11)

Played in the hope of establishing his knight on f4 (after the natural 16...♖xg5); but ...



16 ... ♘xc3!

17 ♖xc3 ♔e2

On f4 the knight could indeed be a bulwark of the defence, so I willingly give up my bishop for it.

18 ♔fe1 ♔xd3

19 ♖xd3 ♖xg5

Black has acquired a noticeable plus, which resides above all in the structure of his position. He is

threatening a highly unpleasant advance of his h-pawn to attack the pawn-chain h2-g3 and thus create palpable weaknesses in the White camp.

To counter that plan, Beliavsky carries out the following exchanging operation:

20	♙a3	♙xa3
21	♖xa3	♘f6
22	♗f1	h5!
23	♗f4	♗xf4
24	gf	

Despite the simplification, the ensuing endgame is difficult for White. I was the first to seize the g-file, and in addition the white bishop proved weaker than my knight. This is quite a standard 'Stonewall' situation: the bishop comes up against a barrier of black pawns while there is nothing to stop the nimble knight from creating concrete threats.

Black subsequently managed to win in instructive fashion by going into a rook ending. In the process, a further structural advantage took shape: as a result of the exchange of minor pieces on e4, a black pawn appeared on that square, considerably cramping the enemy.

Among the instructive aspects of this game, I would point to Black's treatment of the centre. He accorded it his constant attention, and strove to cover the crucial e5 square with his pieces. *Only after achieving a solid position in the centre did he venture on active kingside operations.*

I shall now demonstrate two more games from the same event, the 54th USSR Championship in Minsk. The first, against Grandmaster Tseshkovsky, is interesting for the way in which White makes use of his pawn centre. Strictly speaking this is a middlegame operation, but studying the opening in isolation from the middlegame is scarcely appropriate. The standard pawn structure arising from the opening plays a large part in determining the further course of the game. The modern approach to the opening consists precisely in studying such typical structures, in probing deeply into their characteristic laws and the methods of combat which they demand.

Yusupov-Tseshkovsky
USSR Championship (Top League),
Minsk 1987
Grünfeld Defence

1	d4	♘f6
2	c4	g6
3	♘c3	d5
4	cd	♘xd5
5	e4	♘xc3
6	bc	

A fashionable Grünfeld variation. White has the pawn centre; Black tries to attack it with his pieces and undermine it.

6	...	♙g7
7	♙c4	0-0
8	♘e2	c5
9	0-0	♘c6
10	♙e3	

The plan my opponent now chose was not the most thematic:

10	...	♘a5
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The usual line is 10...♙g4. Instead, by taking the pressure off the d-pawn, Black is surely leaving me with more scope to manoeuvre.

11	♙d3	b6
12	♖c1	♗c7

The immediate capture on d4 was worth examining, since the possibility of d4-d5 is one of Black's problems in such positions. In many cases the advance of the d-pawn is beneficial to White in spite of Black's usual counterplay based on ...c5-c4 and the break with ...e7-e6.

I decided that for the moment I would simply strengthen my position.

13	♗d2	♙b7
----	-----	-----

In a strict sense, the opening is over – both sides have developed their pieces. However, for a better understanding of this kind of position, it is useful to observe how White utilises his central advantage to work up an initiative.

14	♙h6	
----	-----	--

An advantage of possessing the centre is that the play may more easily be transferred to the flanks. White considers that under cover of his powerful centre he is already entitled to go into action against the enemy king. The exchange of dark-squared bishops is part of his strategic plan, since the bishop on g7 is a very active piece and also, properly speaking, the king's sole defender.

14	...	♖ad8
15	h4!?	

A theoretical novelty. It was also worth considering 15 d5. After the moves 15...c4 16 ♙c2 e6 17 ♙xg7 ♗xg7, White plays 18 f4!, while if 18...ed, then 19 e5 with an attack. In the game, I managed to carry out this same idea in an even more advantageous form.

15	...	♗d6?!
----	-----	-------

A move lacking in concrete aims. He could have attacked the centre more effectively with 15...♘c6, and if 16 d5 then 16...♘e5, trying to utilise the central squares to hamper the co-ordination of White's pieces.

16	d5	
----	----	--

The start of a highly instructive operation, by which White strengthens his central position still further. Black's reply is forced, since 16...e6? fails to 17 c4.

16	...	c4
17	♙c2	e6?!

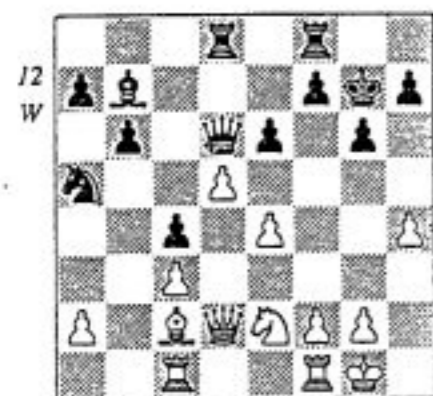
If Black had anticipated what now follows, he would have preferred 17...e5. But assessing the position wrongly, Tseshkovsky advanced his pawn only one square.

18	♙xg7	♗xg7 (12)
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At this point White finally consummates his plan, which involves a positional pawn sacrifice.

19	f4!	
----	-----	--

White's idea is easy to understand: after 19...ed 20 e5!, he will occupy the excellent central square d4 with his knight and follow with f4-f5 etc. In other words the pawn centre



will be replaced by a pawn-and-piece centre, under cover of which White will conduct a forceful attack on the king.

Tseshkovsky is an experienced player, and of course he perfectly sized up the danger of taking the white d-pawn. He set his hopes on undermining the centre with:

19 ... f5

But here too, the defects of Black's position are so to speak visible to the naked eye: his king is exposed, the knight on a5 is shut out of play, White has more pawns in the centre – these are all very significant factors. Not surprisingly, White finds a clear-cut solution.

20 d4!

The knight will help the pawns to advance further.

20 ... fe
21 de

Of course not 21 dxe6+?? because of 21...wxe6. Accomplishing his pawn breakthrough in the centre, White has created a mighty passed pawn on e6 which gives his opponent no end of trouble.

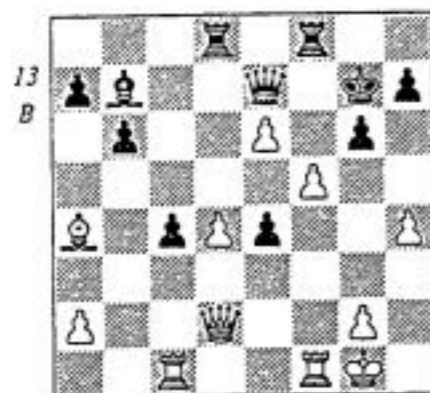
21 ... c6
22 f5!

A much weaker move would be 22 dxe4?! on account of 22...dxd4 23 wxd4+ wxd4+ 24 cd dxe4 25 e7 dx4 26 efw+ cxf8, and Black has enough compensation for the exchange.

22 ... dx4
23 cd

The queens must be kept on. At this point 23...wxd4+? would lose by force to 24 wxd4+ dx4 25 e7 de8 26 f6+ cf7 27 da4. It is easy to see that capturing on f5 is also hopeless, for example 23...dx5? 24 dx5 gf 25 wg5+.

23 ... we7
24 da4! (13)



The triumph of White's central strategy! In effect he has three connected passed pawns, the one on e6 being especially dangerous. What can Black offer in the way of resistance? If 24...gf, White simply goes into the ending with 25 wg5+, after which the e-pawn is simply not to be stopped. On the other hand if

24...dx5, White achieves his aim with 25 fg hg 26 dx8 wx8 27 dx1 dx5 28 dx5!, and again the pawn on e6 advances to queen. So Black has little choice.

24 ... dx5
25 dx5 gf
26 wf4!

The e-pawn is now defended indirectly (26...wxe6 27 wc7+). White intends 27 dx4 with the terrible threat of dx7.

26 ... dx5

26...dx8 would not save him either, in view of 27 dx4 wxe6 28 dx7+ dx7 29 db3 dx5 30 dx5 wxd5 31 wg5+, and White wins with a direct attack.

27 we5+ cg6

White wins after 27...cg8 28 dx3 or 27...wf6 28 e7.

28 dx3 f4
29 h5+ 1-0

The result was to be expected – the game had not gone Black's way. First he missed the right moment to join combat in the centre, then he dithered a little more – and White overcame him with vigorous attacking play. What else can be said? Observe how White combined the threat of a central breakthrough with threats against the king. This too is one of the advantages of a strong centre – under cover from it, you can start an attack on the king at any moment!

In the following game, a popular variation of the Benoni was played.

Yusupov-Dolmatov
USSR Championship (Top League),
Minsk 1987
Modern Benoni

1 d4 d6
2 c4 e6
3 d3 c5
4 d5 ed
5 cd d6
6 dc3 g6
7 df4 a6
8 e4 b5

In textbook terms, this kind of flank attack by Black ought to be refuted by White's action in the centre – and in general such pawn moves are supposed to be incorrect, premature, and so forth. In the Benoni, however, the pawn advance to b5 has a serious purpose, which lies not so much in direct queenside play as in the fight against the opponent's centre! As a rule Black proceeds to drive the knight away from the strong square c3, and in many cases – if he achieves ...c5-c4 – his own knight will head for c5 to threaten the white e-pawn. To outflank White's centre with a view to organising pressure against it – this, we may say, is the fundamental idea of the Modern Benoni.

White should of course keep to the usual rules, in other words prepare a break in the centre. This is the aim of his next move.

9 we2 dh5

Already Black has to defend against e4-e5.

10 ♖g5 ♗e7
11 ♖h6

A third move with one piece in the opening! This looks like a gross offence against the laws of development. But in the meantime Black has not been making useful moves either. He has spent a tempo removing his knight from the centre with ...♗h5. He has admittedly developed his bishop, but e7 is by no means the best square for it. And I have taken the opportunity to stop him doing something essential – castling.

11 ... ♗f8

Sure proof that White's moves ♖g5 and ♖h6 were not a waste of time.

12 ♗e3 ♗xh6
13 ♗xh6

Black should now have used the breathing space to develop his pieces. The theoretical line is 13...♗d7. But Dolmatov employed a new move:

13 ... ♖b4?!

This decision might seem well-founded; the knight is expelled from the centre. But at the same time the queenside pawn structure that Black obtains is none too favourable. The c4 square becomes a goal for a white knight. From there it will not only pressurise the pawn on d6 but also support the e4-e5 break.

14 ♗d1 ♗f6

Black plainly shows that he too is thinking of active play – for example, White has to reckon with a black piece invading on f4 (if, say, 15 ♖e2, then 15...♗f4).

What is White to do, then? There is no way of finishing his development quickly. He has to use a little cunning.

15 ♗d2!

Another move that seems to go against the rules, but in actual fact it serves the purposes of development by preparing g2-g3. In this way White solves several problems at once. He shuts the knight on h5 out of play; the bishop on g2 will support the centre; and in due course the knight will go from d2 to c4.

Black stands considerably worse. He should now have continued his development with 15...♗d7. It is true that even then, after 16 g3 ♗e5 17 ♖e2! (it is important to control d3!), I would have had a tangible plus. For instance if 17...♗g4, White would simply exchange on g4, after which either f2-f3 or ♗e3 could be played.

Instead, Dolmatov tries to solve the problem of the queenside and the c4 square at one stroke, but the move he plays is probably already the decisive error.

15 ... ♗d7? (14)



How should I proceed now? I could of course carry on with my original plan of 16 g3, but Black replies 16...♖b5, after which White's chief trump – the square c4 – will fall; if the bishops are exchanged, a black pawn appears on b5.

There is, however, another way. Realising what the opponent intends, White can try to stop him. For such a possibility exists.

16 a4!

The bishop cannot now reach b5. It becomes clear that with 15...♗d7 Black was merely depriving his queen's knight of its rightful square. It is hard to see how he will now complete his development.

Dolmatov found nothing better than:

16 ... ♗d8

But naturally, this led to no good.

17 g3 ♖g4
18 ♗e3 ♖f3

At this point White could simply have played 19 ♗xf3 ♗xf3 20 ♖g2 ♗f6 21 ♗c4 with a clear plus. But by now he is out for more, and acts more vigorously, bearing in mind that with a lead in development (even though it is none too obvious at present) you have to attack!

19 e5!

Decisively opening up the game.

19 ... de
20 ♗xf3 ♗xf3
21 ♖g2 ♗f6
22 d6 ♖a7

Black is still capable of resistance. For example, 23 ♗d5 would

be answered by 23...♗e6! followed by 24...♗d7, attacking the pawn on d6. Therefore White does not rush things.

23 0-0 ♗g7

Black loses quickly after the moves 23...♗d7 24 ♗d5!? ♗g7 25 ♗e3; with 26 ♗e7 coming, the rook on a7 proves to be totally misplaced and material losses are inevitable.

It is now essential for me to bring my heavy pieces into the game; otherwise the enemy fortifications cannot be breached. How to arrange the rooks is always a difficult question. In this case White appears to find the right answer.

24 ♖ac1! ♗d7
25 ♖fd1 ♗f5

If 25...♗e6, then after 26 ♗d5 ♗g5 27 ♗xg5 ♗xg5 the white knight once again penetrates to e7.

26 ♗xf5 ♗xf5
27 ♗e3!

This is why the rook went to c1! Black has no adequate defence against an exchange sacrifice on c5. The point is that he has not managed to finish his development and connect his rooks.

27 ... e4
28 ♖xe4 ♗e5
29 ♖d5 ♗e6

29...♗xb2 30 ♖dxc5.

30 ♖dxc5 ♗xc5
31 ♗xc5 1-0

In both these last two games (against Tseshkovsky and Dolmatov), my opponents – essentially –

never succeeded in emerging from the opening. For that reason it was useful to examine the games in full. Black seemed to make no obvious mistakes, and yet these examples proved that one or two inaccurate

decisions – misjudgment of the position, neglect of the pawn structure, failure to fight for the centre in good time, inexactitude in defence – are sometimes enough to bring about a quick defeat.

2 Logic in the Opening

Mark Dvoretsky

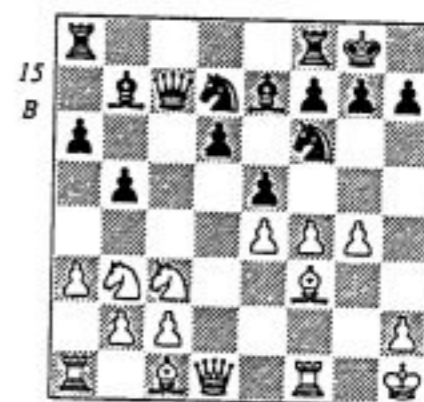
How does opening theory develop? What is it that helps a chessplayer to find the right answer to an opening problem which faces him, either over-the-board or in home analysis? Undoubtedly he needs the ability to improvise, to spot combinations, to calculate variations accurately. Yet there is one other component that is nearly always present in our opening investigations and plays quite a prominent role. That component is logic!

I wish to bring to your attention some examples of the logical solution of opening problems.

Clearly, logic does not function in a vacuum. It operates on our specific knowledge of chess openings and also on the typical precepts and judgements which we have acquired; it helps us to relate these factors to a particular chess position and hence to work out the correct decision. The more ideas we possess, the greater will be the scope for logic; and the deeper and more accurate our reasoning will become.

Let me remind you of a standard stratagem in the Sicilian Defence; it arises in positions of the Scheveningen type.

Dolmatov-Rashkovsky
USSR Championship (Top League)
Minsk 1979



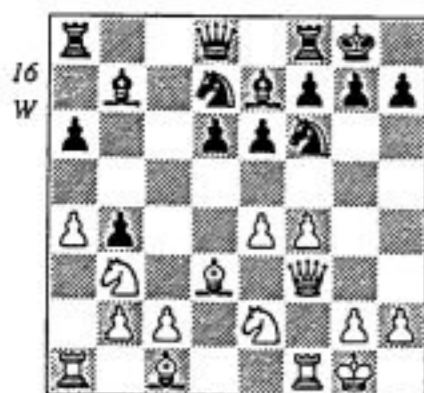
Obviously White's last move was 13 g4. How should Black continue? According to a general principle of strategy, it is desirable to meet a flank attack with a counter-stroke in the centre. Black played: 13...d5! and thereby obtained an excellent position.

Consider the situation which may have preceded the diagram. Let us put the black e-pawn back on e6. If Black *now* plays ...d6-d5, White replies e4-e5 and acquires a strong-point for his knight on d4. It is therefore usual for Black to play ...e6-e5 first, fixing the White pawn on e4, and only then to strike with

...d6-d5. Any Scheveningen or Najdorf player must be thoroughly familiar with the stratagem of ...e6-e5! followed by ...d6-d5!

In the following examples, we shall see how this same stratagem affects decisions taken by both White and Black.

Dolmatov-Lerner
USSR Championship (Top League)
Minsk 1979



What should White play? He obviously aims to complete his development with ♗d2 , ♝a1 and ♖h1 , thus achieving an active position. But these considerations are not enough to indicate the best move; White needs to apply the concept of 'prophylactic thinking' which we have frequently encountered.

Let us ask what *Black* wants here, what methods of play are available to him. The answer is clear by now: ...e6-e5 followed by ...d6-d5. Is that his only possibility? Hardly – White also, for example, has to reckon with 13...d5 14 e5 ♗e4 .

If Dolmatov had been thinking on these lines, he would surely have played the move he recommended himself in his notes to the game – 13 ♗g3 !. Then if 13...d5 14 e5, the black knight can no longer invade on e4; while if 13...e5, White has the excellent reply 14 ♗f5 .

In the game, unfortunately, Dolmatov was careless. He didn't give attention to his opponent's threats, and played:

13 ♖h1 ?

In itself, this move is quite useful in such positions, but here it is out of place and allows Black freedom of action.

13 ... e5!

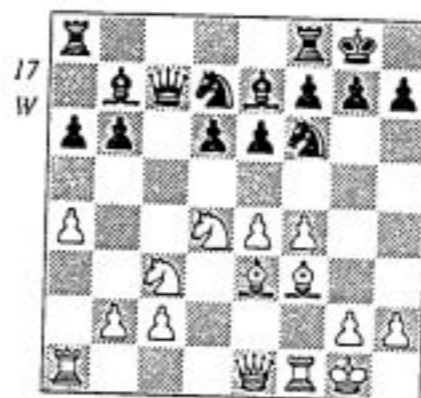
14 ♗g3 d5!

Black has succeeded in striking in the centre and seizing the initiative.

Smyslov-Hort
Petropolis IZ 1973
Sicilian Defence

1	e4	c5
2	♗f3	e6
3	d4	cd
4	♗xd4	♗f6
5	♗c3	d6
6	♗e2	♗e7
7	0-0	a6
8	f4	0-0
9	♗e3	♖c7
10	a4	b6
11	♗f3	♗b7
12	♖e1	♗bd7 (17)

What basic plan do you think White has for his next few moves?



To be sure: g2-g4-g5. (He achieves nothing with 13 ♖g3 ♗c5 14 e5 d6 15 f6 ♗e4 ! 16 ♗xe4 ♗xe4 .)

How will Black react to 13 g4 here? The value of 13...d5 14 e5 ♗c4 is questionable, but 13...e5 is altogether bad in view of 14 ♗f5 (with tempo) and then 15 g5 – Black has no time for the counter-stroke ...d6-d5.

However, Black can first attack the white e-pawn with 13... ♗c5 !, proceeding only after 14 ♗f2 with 14...d5 15 e5 ♗e4 or 14...e5 15 ♗f5 d5.

Vassily Smyslov is an experienced and careful player, and will not allow this.

13 ♗f2 !

Now, with the e-pawn (and the e4 square) securely guarded, White is threatening g2-g4. How should Black counter this threat?

13... ♗c5 prevents the immediate g2-g4, but Black has to reckon with 14 b4 ♗cd7 15 g4. White achieves his aim, albeit at the cost of weakening his queenside.

What other resources does Black have? In 1979, I analysed this position

with Platonov. He suggested the reply 13... ♗fe8 , quite a clever move typical of Sicilian positions; it is now recommended in opening manuals. If 14 g4, then 14...e5! follows with great effect, since on 15 ♗f5 Black has either 15...d5! (the bishop on e7 is defended) or 15...e6 16 g5 ♗c5 ! (Abramov-Akopov, corr. 1981).

However, Platonov's move also has a major snag: the square e8 may be needed for the knight. White secures the better chances with 14 e5!

Thinking on these lines, I arrived at a fairly original solution – 13...g6!?. Depriving the white knight of the f5 square, Black prepares 14...e5. If White plays 14 e5 himself, Black retreats to e8 either at once or after exchanging pawns. From e8 the knight will later go to g7. Opening the centre like this can hardly be good for White. Black seems to me to have a good position.

As you can see, logical analysis, taking some standard concepts as its starting-point, made it possible to probe deeper into the nature of the position and even to unearth some new ideas (which await confirmation in practice, of course).

Hort played superficially, and soon came under a strong attack.

13 ... ♗ac8 ?

14 g4!

Black's knight will now be driven away from f6. Hort frees the d7 square for it, but the result is merely a loss of time. He should have resigned himself to retreating to e8.

14 ... ♖c5?
15 g5 ♖fd7
16 ♖d1

Threatening 17 b4 ♖b3 (17...♖d3
18 ♖xd3) 18 ♖de2.

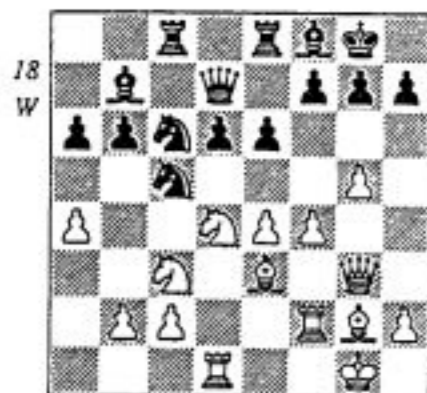
16 ... ♖b8

A moment ago, those were normal Sicilian knights – look where they are now! Relying on the sturdiness of his centre, Smyslov quietly improves his position and prepares his pieces for the attack.

17 ♗e3 ♖c6
18 ♖g3 ♖fe8
19 ♗g2 ♗f8
20 ♖f2

Another typical Sicilian move, fortifying c2.

20 ... ♖d7 (18)



21 ♖f3!

Black is in a cramped position, so Smyslov avoids exchanging. At the same time he has a specific design: h2-h4, followed by bringing the knight to g4 via h2. High-class play!

21 ... ♖b4

After this, White's knight reaches g4 straight away.

22 ♖e5 ♖c7
23 ♖g4 ♖d7
24 ♗d4

Threatening 25 ♖h6+.

24 ... e5
25 fe ♖xe5

If 25...de, then 26 ♗e3 with a clear plus.

26 ♖df1 ♖e7?

It was essential to exchange the dangerous knight on g4. White now finishes the game with a combination.

27 ♗xe5 de
28 ♖f6+ ♖h8
29 ♖xh7! ♖e6

On 29...♖xh7, White has the decisive 30 g6+.

30 ♖xf7 ♗c5+
31 ♖h1 ♖e7
32 ♖f8+ 1-0

An excellent win by Vassily Smyslov. Its foundation was laid in the opening, when Black didn't manage to counter White's flank attack (g2-g4) with the standard counter-blow in the centre.

In the examples we have seen so far, it was possible to come to the right decision merely by skilfully applying a well-known opening stratagem. But often you have to take into account some much more delicate and less obvious details of a position. New games played with the relevant system contribute their arguments to the unceasing theoretical debate, and it is hard to do without studying them.

The following quiet variation of the English Opening was at one time highly popular:

1 e4 e5
2 ♖c3 ♖f6
3 ♖f3 ♖c6
4 g3 ♗b4
5 ♗g2 0-0
6 0-0 e4
7 ♖e1

Until fairly recently it was thought that the sharper 7 ♖g5 promised White nothing. But this view changed when World Champion Kasparov played the move in his match with Karpov at Seville (1987) and then in the 1988 USSR Championship against Ivanchuk.

7 ... ♗xc3
8 de h6

Black usually prevents White from advantageously exchanging his queen's bishop for the knight, which would weaken the e4-pawn.

9 ♖c2 ♖e8
10 ♖e3 d6
11 ♖c2 a5 (19)



Black's last move, though not obligatory (theory recommends the cautious 11...b6), is quite popular. It was this move that Korchnoi selected in his 6th World Championship game against Karpov (Baguio, 1978). Karpov obtained nothing from the opening, and the game continued: 12 a4 ♖e7 13 ♖d5 ♖xd5 14 cd ♖b8 15 ♗e3 ♗f5 16 h3 ♖d7 17 c4 b6 18 ♖c3 ♖c5 19 b3 ♖d7 20 ♖h2 ♖e7 21 ♗d4 f6 22 ♖ac1 ♖e8 23 ♖e3 1/2-1/2.

World Championship games, even colourless ones like that, always stimulate further developments in opening theory. Grandmaster Wolfgang Uhlmann worked out a promising plan for White and employed it with success. Let us first try to judge for ourselves what White should be aiming for here.

White has the two bishops. But at the moment there is no 'advantage of the bishop pair', since their mobility is restricted. To open the game, to give the bishops freedom – this is White's chief task. If an exchange of knights takes place on d5, White can afterwards advance c3-c4 and place his queen's bishop on the long diagonal. But what about the king's bishop? The black e-pawn which is impeding it will have to be removed with the aid of White's f-pawn.

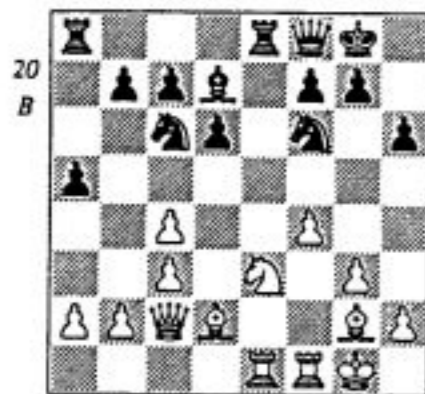
Karpov didn't even try to solve the problem of his light-squared bishop. Uhlmann played much more energetically.

Uhlmann-Osmanagić
Dečín 1979
(from Diagram 19)

12 ♖d2 ♔e7
13 f4! ef

In such positions it is dangerous to refrain from taking on f3; White would play f4-f5, restricting the black queen's bishop, and prepare a pawn advance on the kingside. Uhlmann gives this variation: 13...♗d7 14 ♕d5 ♕xd5 15 cd ♖b8, and now that the knight is far away from e5 White can continue with 16 f5!. If 16...f6, White has the strong 17 ♗e3 with ♜f4 to follow, while if Black plays 16...c3, the pawn is bound to fall after 17 ♗c1 and ♜f3. White has a clear advantage.

14 ef ♗d7
15 ♜ae1 ♔f8
16 f4 (20)



This is the formation that Uhlmann has been aiming for.

The bishop is now exerting strong pressure along the h1-a8 diagonal. The white knight will sooner or later

go to d5, and after the exchange on that square the other bishop will come into the game. Then the white kingside pawns will advance. Meanwhile Black will have no counterplay at all. His knights are deprived of central outposts. White is playing to win without taking the slightest risk.

16 ... ♜ab8
17 ♔d3 ♕e7
18 h3

In such cases Nimzowitsch said that White had a 'qualitative majority' on the kingside, meaning that the white pawns could march forward while the black ones could not.

18 ... ♗c6
19 ♕d5

Of course White refuses to exchange his light-squared bishop.

19 ... ♕exd5
20 cd ♜xe1
21 ♜xe1 ♗e8
22 b4!

A slight departure from the plan we have been discussing. White probes on the queenside for good measure, seeking to create chances for active play there. He aims to obtain a passed pawn after the exchange on b4, and to pressurise the backward pawn on c7.

22 ... ab
23 cb b5

White cannot create a passed pawn now, but chronic weaknesses have arisen in the c-file.

24 ♗c3 ♗d7
25 ♗d4 ♔d8

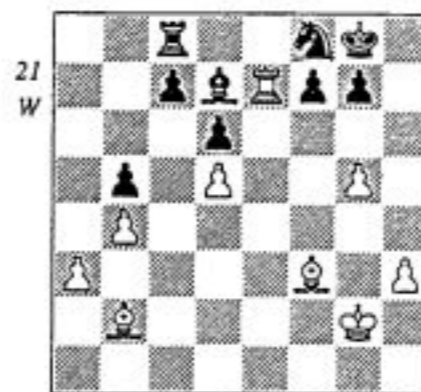
26 ♔c3 ♜a8
27 a3 ♜c8
28 ♖h2

Black can do nothing while Uhlmann consistently strengthens his position.

28 ... ♜a8
29 ♜e3 ♜c8
30 ♗f3 ♕c8
31 ♖g2 ♜a8
32 ♔e1

The battery along the e-file conforms to the textbook rule: queen behind rook.

32 ... ♕f6
33 g4 ♕h7
34 ♗b2 ♜c8
35 ♔c3 ♔f6
36 ♔xf6 ♕xf6
37 g5 hg
38 fg ♕h7
39 ♜e7 ♕f8 (21)



At this point White could simply have pushed his h-pawn. After 40 h4, the reply 40...♕g6 41 ♜xd7 ♕xh4+ 42 ♖g3 ♕xf3 43 ♖xf3 ♖f8 is unsound on account of 44 g6!. Therefore, Black would probably seek

counterchances with 40...c6 or possibly 40...c5.

Uhlmann finds an excellent combination which exploits his advantage in the quickest way possible.

40 g6! ♕xg6!
Or 40...f6 41 h4.
41 ♜xd7 ♕h4+
42 ♖g3 ♕xf3
43 ♖xf3 ♖f8

Has White perhaps miscalculated? His rook is trapped.

44 h4!!

No, he has not. This modest-looking move is the point of the combination; the h-pawn is going to queen.

44 ... ♖e8
45 ♗xg7 ♖xd7
46 h5 ♜a8

And Black resigned without waiting for the reply.

Now let us suppose you are thinking of playing this variation with Black. You already know about the Uhlmann game, and understand what a threat the white bishop pair can be. Naturally you have no intention of succumbing ignominiously like Osmanagić. So what should you do? Switch to a different variation? Well, if you take that attitude, you will not accumulate any openings at all – for some kind of problem will arise in all of them. No, let us think up something here – surely White doesn't simply obtain the advantage by force.

Once you have clearly recognised the danger, you can feel your way

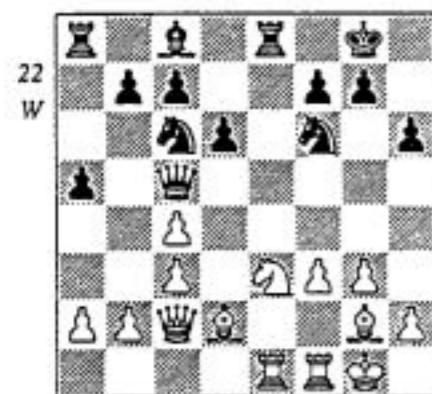
into the position, absorb its essential nature, and finally discover an idea that will help you in the fight.

Uhlmann-Popov
Berlin 1979
(from Diagram 19)

12 ♔d2 ♖e7
13 f4 ef
14 ef

It looks as if nothing can stop White from implementing his plan. It unfolds in a perfectly natural manner: ♖ae1, f4, and at some point ♔d5.

14 ... ♖e5!
15 ♖ae1 ♖c5 (22)



I don't know if Popov discovered this idea over the board or at home. Anyway, his unconventional manoeuvre solves the defensive problem; the active position of the queen guarantees Black counterplay. He gains time – to prepare a knight move, White needs to withdraw his king to h1 and play b2-b3. But an even more important point is that the

queen is actually controlling d5, so that it is not at all simple for White to get his knight there. If he plays f4, Black may be able to exchange knights with ...♔g4, when ♔d5 will fail to ...♔f2+.

16 ♖h1 ♔d7
17 b3 ♖e7
18 ♖d3 ♖ae8

To prepare ♔d5, White has had to place his queen on d3, where it is exposed to ...♔e5. Black has had time to double his rooks. 19 f4 can be met by either ...♔g4 or ...♔e4.

19 ♔d5 ♔xd5
20 cd ♔e5
21 ♖d4!

The only move. Not 21 ♖c2? ♖xd5 22 f4 ♖d3.

21 ... ♖xd4
22 cd ♔d3
23 ♖xe7 ♖xe7

Now White has to play accurately; an invasion on e2 is threatened. For example if 24 ♔xa5?, Black has 24...b6 25 ♔d2 ♖e2, with a very active game. How can this be prevented? White needs to meet ...♖e2 with ♖d1, but without falling for a check on f2.

24 ♔g1!

If now 24...♖e2?, White has 25 ♖d1, and the threat of ♔f1 is highly unpleasant, while the pawn on a5 is still *en prise*.

24 ... b6
25 ♖d1 ♔b4

Two pawns are attacked; White has to exchange.

26 ♔xb4 ab

27 ♖c1 ♔c8
A roughly equal endgame has been reached.

28 f4 ♔a6
29 ♔f3 ♖f8
30 ♖f2 ♖e8
31 a3 ba
32 ♖a1 ♖d8
33 ♖xa3 ♔b7
34 h4 f5
35 h5 ♖e8
36 ♔g2 ♖e7
37 b4 ♖e8
38 ♖a7 ♖c8
39 ♔f3 ♖e7
40 ♖a1 ♖d8

1/2-1/2

Now let us put ourselves in Uhlmann's shoes. 'I worked out such a good plan', he thinks, 'and I don't want to give it up now. I'll have to find a way to improve it.'

When you are familiar with the ideas, it is easier to think up an innovation. In this case, the novelty arises from purely logical considerations.

White's position (after 11 moves) has a pleasing appearance, but he would like to stop the black queen from reaching c5. How? If White pushes his pawn to f4, the queen is deprived of e5. It follows that at move twelve, instead of 12 ♔d2, White should consider 12 f4. He may be uneasy about playing this before completing his development and connecting his rooks. But it ought to be tried...

Uhlmann-Plachetka
Trenčianske Teplice 1979
(from Diagram 19)

12 f4 ef
13 ef ♖e7
14 f4!

Now if White can just get in ♔d2 and ♖ae1, he reaches the very position he is aiming for. Of course he has to reckon with ...♔e4, but then he always has ♔d5 in reply.

I will take this opportunity to re-emphasise a point that we have come across more than once already. *The most profound moves, the best positional decisions, are those which combine the implementation of our own plan with a prophylactic response to the opponent's intentions.* The move-order that Uhlmann has chosen is strong for this very reason. Without relinquishing his own basic design, the Grandmaster simultaneously forestalls Black's queen manoeuvre to c5.

14 ... ♔d7
15 ♔d2

If now 15...♖f8, the reply is 16 ♖ae1, reaching the same position as in Uhlmann-Osmanagić, where White succeeded in gaining a clear plus (see Diagram 20).

15 ... ♖d8

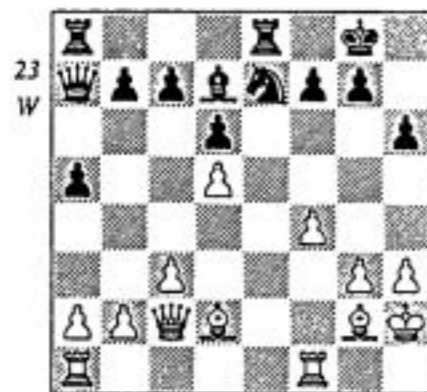
Black wants to bring his queen onto the g1-a7 diagonal all the same – via b8.

16 h3 ♖b8

Now 17 ♖ae1 is answered by 17...♖a7 18 ♖h2 ♖c5. White has a

pair of extra tempi in comparison with Uhlmann-Popov, but Black nonetheless retains counter-chances.

17 ♖d5! ♗xd5
18 cd ♖a7+
19 ♘h2 ♗e7 (23)



How would you advise White to continue here?

The move 20 f5! is very strong. It cramps the enemy pieces and gives White the advantage. Unfortunately, Uhlmann's play was a little stereotyped:

20 ♖ae1?! ♗f5

On 20...♗f5, White has the strong 21 ♗e4 g6 22 g4 ♗h4 23 ♘g3.

21 ♖a4 ♘f8
22 g4 ♗d3
23 ♗e3!

An important intermediate move. 23 ♖f3? would be a mistake: 23...b5 24 ♖d1 ♗c4, and two pawns (d5 and a2) are under attack.

23 ... ♖a6
24 ♖f2

Black should definitely play 24...♗g6 now, since White aims to constrict him with f4-f5, and that

way the knight could at least occupy e5.

24 ... ♖c4?
25 ♖d1! ♗g6

Otherwise 26 f5 is very strong. But now the black bishop is endangered.

26 ♖d2!

Preparing to drive the black pieces back with b3, c4 etc.

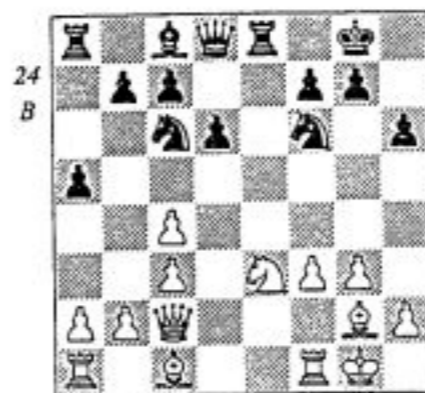
26 ... ♗h4
27 b3 ♖a6
28 c4! ♗xg2
29 ♖xg2 ♗e4
30 ♖ge2 f5

The threat was 31 f5. But now, utilising the dark squares, Uhlmann assaults the enemy kingside (where the g7 point is hopelessly weak). As usual in such cases, the presence of opposite-colour bishops adds impetus to the attack.

31 ♗d4 c6
32 gf cd
33 ♖c3! ♖e7
34 cd ♖ae8
35 f6 gf
36 ♗xf6 1-0

After this game the entire variation was assessed as favourable to White, and Black abandoned it. But he didn't have to! The fact is that a new improvement was there for the asking. Let us take another look at the position after 12 f4 ef 13 ef (24).

The Uhlmann-Popov game demonstrated a promising idea for Black – transferring his queen via e5 to the g1-a7 diagonal. In Uhlmann-



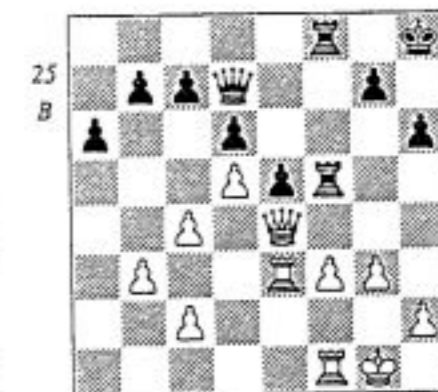
Plachetka, Black showed that the queen could go there by a different route, via b8. But at first, for some reason, he moved it in the opposite direction with 13...♖e7?. This was illogical! How about 13...♗d7, so as to meet 14 f4 (or 14 ♗d2) with 14...♖b8!, followed by .. ♖a7 and ...♖c5. Compared with the last game, Black saves two whole tempi. I see no advantage here for White.

Let us now suppose you have quickly looked through one or other of these games in *Informator*, with notes that concentrate on the middle-game. Perhaps you simply trusted the evaluation given in the book. If the game you happened to look at was Uhlmann-Popov, you would conclude that the variation gives White nothing, whereas if it was Uhlmann-Plachetka you would assess it in White's favour. Taking the book verdict at face value, you would fail to acquire a true understanding of the position. Unfortunately that is just how a good many players do study the openings. This is why 'novelties' like 13...♗d7

(followed by 14...♖b8) often pass unnoticed – novelties which could be arrived at almost automatically by someone looking closely into the position and tracing the development of ideas in the particular variation.

And can you name the remarkable classical game in which this queen manoeuvre was first seen?

Janowski-Rubinstein Karlsbad 1907



29 ... ♖d8!
Apparently intending 30...♖g5.
30 ♖g4 ♖b8!!
31 ♘g2 ♖a7
32 ♖fe1 ♖c5

and Black now has the option of queenside activity.

See how an idea from a completely different opening can sometimes come in useful! But what opening was this? The position contains 'King's Indian' features, but at that time the King's Indian was not yet in use. In fact the game opened with the Four Knights.

Enrich your chess 'culture', accumulate ideas – you will then be able to apply them in the most varied situations. We will now look at one more interesting illustration of this theme.

I once happened to play the following game in a team tournament.

Dvoretsky-A.Schmidt
Tbilisi 1979
Alekhine's Defence

1 e4 ♘f6
2 ♘c3 d5
3 e5 ♘e4

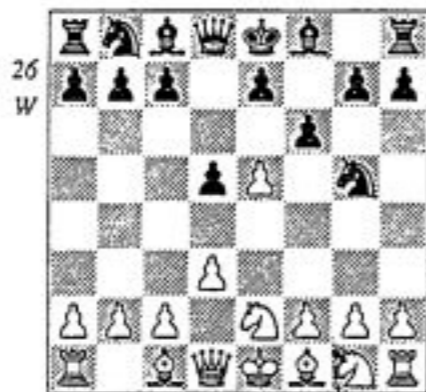
Other playable replies are 3...d4 and 3...♘f7.

4 ♘ce2!

The black knight is in danger. Nimzowitsch called such pieces tempo-eaters. The knight has moved twice already and will have to move again. White presently gains one tempo attacking it with d2-d3, and may gain another afterwards with d3-d4.

In the 1972 Moscow Championship, Baikov played 4...d4 against me. I am afraid that I overlooked the chance to win a pawn with 5 c3! (when 5...dc or 5...d3 would fail to 6 ♖a4+; Editor's note: after 5...dc? 6 ♖a4+? ♘d7 7 ♖xe4? Black in fact has 7...♘c5 with at least a draw; better is 6 bc with a large advantage). Admittedly, as was later shown, the reply 5...♘c6! promises Black distinct compensation.

4 ... f6
5 d3 ♘g5 (26)



Here is another curious little opening riddle. White has a way to secure a considerable plus. How?

Would 6 f4 be your suggestion? The knight retreats to f7, and from there attacks White's centre. An interesting idea is 6 ♘f4 (threatening 7 ♖h5+) 6...f6 7 ♘xd5. But Black replies 6...g6, and if 7 h4 then 7...♘e6.

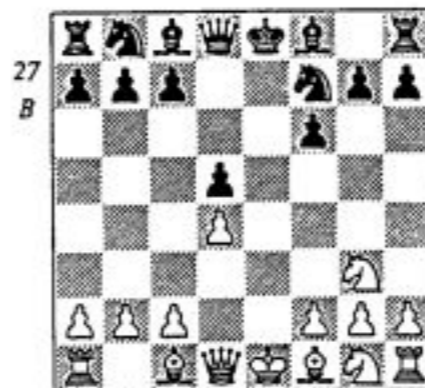
The correct line is 6 ♘xg5! fg 7 h4! gh 8 ♘f4 (again threatening 9 ♖h5+) 8...g6 9 ♖xh4 ♘g7 10 d4 and 11 ♘d3, with overwhelming pressure against Black's kingside. This occurred in a game Polovodin-Palatnik in the same year (1979), but unfortunately I played differently against Schmidt.

Two games with this variation, and in both of them I missed the strongest line. Such episodes should set a player thinking – they cannot be coincidences. The fact is that I have never personally had much taste for opening play. I was not endeavouring to gain the advantage but to reach my own type of position, to sidestep my opponent's opening preparation and then outplay him somehow or

other. With this approach, you often do overlook the strongest lines in the opening; you are simply not used to looking for them. Kasparov's approach, for example, is fundamentally different. Ever since childhood he has sought to gain the maximum from an opening. He has a superb feel for where the initiative lies, and is eager to seize it. For him, of course, it would be quite simple to find the strongest continuations such as 5 c3 or 6 ♘xg5. He is used to this; he is intent on searching for them. When a chessplayer lacks such a propensity, he neglects some important opportunities. So you see – a couple of examples from my own games, and already a diagnosis can be given. It is clear where there is scope for improving my play, at any rate in the opening.

In the present game, I played in my own style – I found a quiet scheme which in general terms is quite a sensible one.

6 ♘g3 ♘f7
7 ef ef
8 d4 (27)



We have now reached a position that I would like to discuss with you.

Is there an opening that this position reminds you of? The Exchange Variation of the French, of course. The pawn structure is almost exactly the same. The difference is to be found in the pawn on f6 and the placing of the pieces. The white knight has somehow found its way to g3, and the black one to f7.

Let us try to decide which player benefits from these deviations from the Exchange French. For this purpose let us recall, for example, the game Winter-Alekhine, Nottingham 1936: 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ed ed 4 ♘d3 ♘c6 5 ♘e2 ♘d6 6 c3 ♖h4!?. What purpose is served by the queen sortie? The answer is, it prevents ♘f4, an important move by which White wishes to exchange his passive bishop. For his own part, Black plans an analogous operation: ...♘ge7 and ...♘f5.

Indeed, control of f4 and f5 is very important in such situations. To return to my game with Schmidt, we should note that White can play ♘d3, ♘1e2 and ♘f4, whereas ...♘f5 is out of the question for Black.

What else can be said? Black's kingside has been weakened. White can direct pressure against h7 with ♘d3, c3 and ♖c2. Black will evidently have to reply with ...g7-g6. Then White will play h2-h4 and in due course h4-h5. Castling kingside will be dangerous for Black.

We may conclude that from White's point of view, this is the Exchange French in an improved form. If events proceed calmly, his position is preferable. The further course of the game was to confirm this.

8 ... ♖c6
9 c3

White has a perfectly clear-cut plan of action: ♔d3, ♖c2, ♔f4, h4, 0-0-0. A whole string of moves can be played easily, without thinking. The opponent must both think and struggle.

9 ... ♔e6

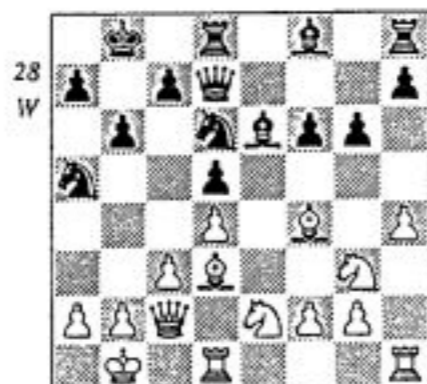
Black prepares to castle long, to escape a kingside attack.

10 ♔d3 ♖d7
11 ♖1e2

Now Black has another problem. Do you remember the article 'The Superfluous Piece', which you saw at our last session (i.e. in *Training for the Tournament Player*)? Well, here is one case of too many pieces. Black needs the d6 square for both his knight and his bishop, but they aren't allowed to occupy the same square at once. If the bishop goes to d6, the knight on f7 is left with nothing to do. If the knight goes there, how is the bishop to be developed?

11 ... ♖d6
12 ♖c2 g6
13 h4 0-0-0
14 ♔f4 ♖b8
15 0-0-0 ♖a5
16 ♖b1 b6 (28)

White's opening strategy has justified itself; he has a small but secure



plus. He can gradually constrict his opponent by means of 17 ♔c1 (vacating f4 for a knight) followed by b2-b3, depriving the black knights of the c4 square, etc. (Unfortunately, in a hurry to seize the f5 point, I played 17 h5?! g5 18 ♔xd6 ♔xd6 19 ♖f5, and achieved little.)

Let us go back to the position after White's 8th move, when the 'Exchange Variation' arose (see *Diagram 27*). Incidentally, at this point Schmidt had a serious think, but still failed to sense the strategic danger in store for him.

During the game I was worried about 8...c5!, transforming the pawn structure. After this, the game no longer resembles an Exchange French. What, then, *does* it resemble? More than anything else, the position with the isolated black pawn on d5 recalls the *Tarrasch* variation of the French Defence.

Which side benefits from the differences between this position and the normal *Tarrasch*? Anatoly Karpov, who in his time has won a large number of games with the latter

variation, has written: 'The main theme of White's play is control of the d4 point. This theme must be constantly pursued.' If White does not securely control this square, he cannot hope to achieve anything.

In the *Tarrasch Variation* the knights are usually placed on f3 and d2. Then, after the pawn exchange on c5, a knight goes to b3 with tempo, and from there it controls d4. In our analogous position a white knight has moved offside, and is not participating in the fight for the centre. This placing of this knight improves Black's chances in comparison with the normal *Tarrasch*.

Black's set-up with ...f6 and ...♖f7 is harder to evaluate. Doesn't it weaken his own position? There is no obvious answer. We can deal with the question more easily if we know about one of the strategic ideas that Black sometimes employs in the *Tarrasch Variation*. It was demonstrated in the following game.

Gipslis-Korchnoi
Amsterdam 1976
French Defence

1	e4	e6
2	d4	d5
3	♖d2	c5
4	♖gf3	♖c6
5	ed	ed
6	♔b5	♔d6
7	dc	♔xc5
8	0-0	♖e7
9	♖b3	♔d6

10 ♔g5 0-0
11 ♔e1 (29)



A standard opening position. Several moves have been tried here: ...♖c7, ...♔g4 and ...a6. The plan Korchnoi adopts is also noteworthy.

11 ... ♔f6!
12 ♔h4 ♖b6
13 ♔e2 ♔e6
14 ♔g3

It pays White to exchange the dark-squared bishops. But Black has prepared a suitable answer to this try.

14 ... ♖e5!

The defence is grounded on the strongpoint at e5.

15 ♖fd4 ♔d7

I would have preferred to retreat to f7, solidly fortifying the pawn on d5.

The game concluded: 16 a4 a6 17 a5 ♖c7 18 c3 ♔ad8 19 ♖c1 ♔c8 20 ♖d3 ♖7g6 21 ♖f4 ♖xf4 22 ♔xf4 ♔fe8 23 ♔g3 ♔c5! 24 ♔f1 ♖f7 25 ♖a4 ♖g6 26 ♔e3 ♖g4 27 ♔d3 ♖f7 28 ♔xe8+ ♔xe8 29 ♖c2 g6 30 b4 ♔a7 31 b5 ♖e5 32 ♔f1 ab 33 ♖xb5 ♔c5 34 ♔d1 ♔g4 35 ♔a1 ♔a8 1/2-1/2.

Now back to Alekhine's Defence. With our knowledge of the Korchnoi game, we can conclude that the knight on f7 and pawn on f6 are not so ineptly placed, and may be useful to Black's build-up. This only strengthens our impression that Black has a favourable version of the Tarrasch Variation.

A game of chess is not a composed study in which there is always just one solution. I have indicated one sound approach to the position, but a completely different logic is also feasible. When I invited Nana Aleksandria to think about the position (*Diagram 27*), she found a solution of her own which is just as valid – the interesting queen check 8...♖e7+!

How should White react? A queen exchange is not dangerous to Black. If 9 ♖e3, then 9...♗b4+ is embarrassing. The move 9 ♖1e2 holds up White's development. 9 ♖e2 looks natural, but then Black has 9...♗g4!. An exchange on e2 would suit Black, while after 10 f3 ♖d7 (followed by ...♖c6 and ...0-0-0), the knight is deprived of the f3 square and it is hard for White to complete his development.

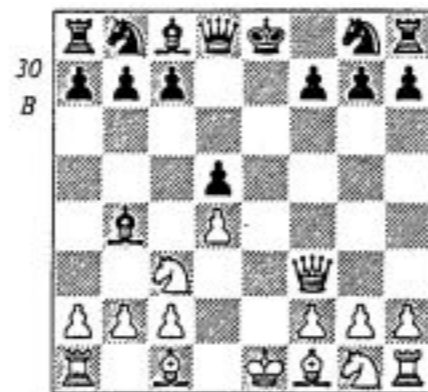
How do you arrive at a move like 8...♖e7+? It may perhaps seem eccentric to make a queen move when nothing except one knight is developed. But you may hit on this check merely from a certain feeling of unease, from realising that if the game proceeds on natural lines the result

will be in White's favour. Not wishing to allow that, you look for the most effective cure and sometimes find it.

But wholly original ideas in chess are seen extremely rarely. Everything has occurred before at some time or other – including such a queen check, which is much easier to find it if you know the following game, or rather Bent Larsen's annotations to a position that arose in the opening.

Larsen-Portisch
Amsterdam IZ 1964
French Defence

- | | | |
|---|------------|-----|
| 1 | e4 | e6 |
| 2 | d4 | d5 |
| 3 | ♖c3 | ♗b4 |
| 4 | ed | ed |
| 5 | ♗f3?! (30) | |



I hand you over to Larsen:
‘This set Portisch thinking! The exchange variation has had a reputation as a dull drawish line for many years; for instance, 5 ♖d3 ♖c6 6

♗e2 ♗ge7 followed by ...♗f5, and there are no problems for Black.

‘The text move, which I had played in some blitz games against my friend Palle Ravn (Danish champion, 1957), is directed against the very manoeuvre ...♗ge7 and ...♗f5; after 5...♗e7 6 ♖d3 ♖bc6 7 ♗e2 White's position has become quite attractive.

‘Because of this game 5 ♗f3 became almost popular for a short while, but it disappeared again because of the reply 5...♗e7+!, for instance 6 ♗e2 ♖c6 7 ♗xd5 ♖f6 with more than enough compensation for the pawn.

‘During the game I thought of the possibility 5...♗e7+ and toyed with the idea 6 ♖e3 ♖xc3+ 7 bc ♗a3 8 ♖d2, which may look strange but is very good for White. However, a Yugoslav game Mestrovic-Marić, Kraljevo 1967, seems to prove that 6 ♖e3 is of dubious value because of 6...♖f6 7 ♖d3 c5!. After this I tend to believe that 5...♗e7+ is Black's strongest move.

‘Immediately after the game O'Kelly stated that the easiest solution for Black was 5...♖e6, but I don't agree; after 6 ♖d3 ♗f6 White ought to play 7 ♖f4!.

‘Also 5...c5 has been recommended, but 6 dc d4 7 a3 ♗a5 8 ♖b1 looks very good for White.

‘Portisch had enough to think about!’

It remains to add that the game continued:

- 5...♖c6 6 ♖b5 ♗e7 7 ♖f4 0-0 8 0-0-0 ♖a5? (better 8...♖e6) 9 ♗ge2 c6 10 ♖d3 b5 11 h4! ♖c4 12 h5 f6 13 g4 ♗a5?! 14 ♖xc4 dc 15 a3! ♖xc3 (15...♖xa3 16 ba ♗xa3+ 17 ♖d2 b4 18 ♖a1! bc+ 19 ♖xc3 ♗b4 20 ♖hb1) 16 ♖xc3 ♗d8 17 ♖he1 (17 ♖xb5?! ♗d5!) 17...a5 18 ♗g3 ♖a7 (18...b4 19 ♖d6!) 19 h6! g6 20 ♖d6 ♖e8 21 ♗f4! ♖f7 22 ♖e5 f5 23 ♖b8 ♖b7 24 ♗e5! ♖g8 25 g5 b4 26 ♗f6+ ♖e8 27 ♗xc6+ ♖f7 28 ♗f6+ ♖e8 29 d5 ♖f8 30 ♗c6+ ♗d7 31 ♖d6 ♖f7 32 ♖xe7 bc 33 ♖b4+ 1-0

The conclusion from all we have said is clear. A high level of general knowledge about chess, a knowledge of typical positions, serves as a firm support for the logical approach to opening problems, and helps towards correct decision-making in the opening. And not only in the opening. The boundary between opening and middlegame is very much a matter of convention. Many positions we have discussed could very well come under the heading of the middlegame even though they are the subject of opening theory. I once wrote an article about the study of typical middlegame positions, in which I recommended roughly the same approach as here. The article may be consulted in Part 4 of the present book.

3 Unexpected Moves in the Opening

Artur Yusupov

What chessplayer has not fallen into crafty opening traps? Who has not been caught out in some variation that seemed to have been discarded by theory long ago but is actually quite viable? Who has not fallen victim to his own prepared line, which, when tested, turns out to have a 'hole' in it? It has happened to all of us. Time and again we have come up against unexpected moves in the opening, and of course we are perfectly familiar with the highly unpleasant feeling which results.

The search for unexpected ideas (that is, ideas new to the opponent!) is the fundamental source of developments in opening theory. And when you come to think of it, all our efforts in preparing for a game are directed precisely at finding something to puzzle, astonish and stun our opponent, something to force him off his normal course. Surprise him, and you will beat him! But then, our rivals are trying to do the same thing.

Of course, thorough opening preparation considerably reduces the probability that some opening move or variation will be a surprise to you. But it is impossible to prevent unpleasant shocks entirely, and you

need to be mentally prepared for them.

One surprise is unlike another. By this I mean that a new move by the opponent may be objectively strong, or else it may be designed just for you, with your probable reaction in mind – for any surprise is first and foremost a blow to your nerves. A great deal depends on how quickly you recover and adjust your frame of mind to the full-blooded struggle. Mental disarray can lead to a quick collapse.

Incidentally, an encounter with the unexpected and unfamiliar is by no means always demoralising; it may, on the contrary, stimulate your imagination and compel your brain to work at full capacity. It quite often happens that the winner is not the player who catches his opponent in a prepared line, but the one who is caught! Relying wholly on the strength of his prepared analysis, a player may be incapable of extracting top performance from himself. In this case, anything unexpected in his opponent's play, even something completely trivial, may be fatal to him – he simply cannot re-adjust to a tough, genuine contest.

I wish to elucidate this topic with examples from my own games. I shall begin with a game in the World Cup against the Hungarian Grandmaster Sax. Of course, players prepare very hard for such important encounters. I aimed to catch Sax out in a variation of the Queen's Indian which I had analysed fairly thoroughly.

Yusupov-Sax Rotterdam World Cup 1989 Queen's Indian Defence

1	d4	♘f6
2	c4	e6
3	♘f3	b6
4	g3	♗a6
5	b3	

Apart from this, perhaps the most popular line, I have played 5 ♖bd2 a few times.

5	...	♗b4+
6	♗d2	♗e7

What sense is there in Black's loss of tempo? The point is that after b2-b3, the natural square for White's bishop would have been b2. Later, perhaps, White will try to put his bishop on the long diagonal all the same, but on c3 it is less securely placed than on b2 and is also depriving the knight of its natural development square. On the other hand if White brings his knight out to c3, he will still have to remove his bishop from d2. So it turns out that Black's manoeuvre doesn't actually lose a tempo at all.

7	♗g2	c6
Preparing the advance ...d7-d5.		
8	0-0	d5
9	♗e5	

Exploiting the fact that a capture on c4 is unplayable for the moment (owing to the vulnerability of c6), White attempts to seize the centre. The knight on e5 is extremely troublesome for Black, and he has to exchange it.

9	...	♗fd7
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Another move that seems to break the rules (Black moves the same piece twice in the opening), but in closed positions this is sometimes permissible. In this case the struggle for the centre is more important than the quickest possible development of the pieces. And seeing that the knight on b8 is literally shackled by the knight on e5, Black's move *is* in a sense a developing one.

10	♗xd7	♗xd7
11	♗c3	

This is what I told you about – White has to spend a tempo bringing his bishop onto the long diagonal. Incidentally, taking on c4 is still very dangerous for Black, since after 11...dc 12 d5! cd 13 ♗xg7 White prevents him from castling and obtains a lasting initiative for the pawn.

11	...	0-0
12	♗d2	♞c8

At the time when the game was played, this move was almost considered obligatory, but present-day theorists are giving more and more thought to other lines. One of the

new and good continuations is 12...♔f6. This was first played by Portisch against Karpov (Rotterdam 1989), and afterwards Karpov used the same idea himself in his match against me. The position is quite intricate, despite its seeming simplicity, but we will not go into details now – that is what reference books are for.

13 e4

Playing for the centre! You may recall that in the Kasparov-Karpov matches of 1984/5 and 1986, Black tried answering with 13...b5, whereupon White played 14 ♖e1, but here Black employs a more popular plan.

13 ... c5
14 ed ed
15 dc

White is not able to win a pawn; 15 ♕xd5 is met by 15...♔f6.

15 ... dc

The present position has arisen more or less by force from 13...c5. If you are unfamiliar with it, fathoming its nuances over-the-board is not so simple. In principle, positions so critical for the opening variation ought to be studied in the most thorough fashion, and subjected to detailed analysis in home preparation.

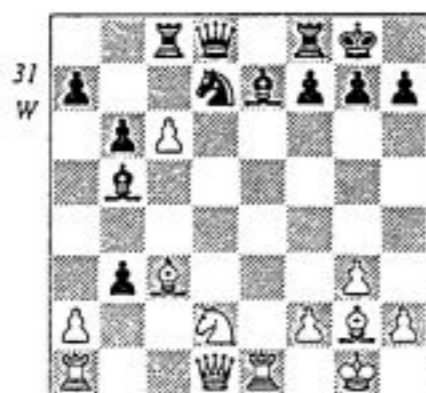
16 c6

Here White has to reckon in the first place with 16...cb, since capturing on d7 is no good – the bishop on c3 is *en prise*. A sharp tactical skirmish begins, which I thought was not unfavourable to White.

16 ... cb!

17 ♖e1 ♕b5 (31)

I dare say this is the most thematic. Sax attacks the pawn on c6; as before, he is unafraid of c6xd7. If White tries to sell his bishop more dearly with 18 ♕xg7 ♖xg7 19 cd, Black simply plays 19...♗xd7. He has the bishop pair, and it is not clear how to exploit the weakening of his position.



Now try to look ahead a little, to see how play may develop and what resources are at White's disposal.

What about 18 ♖c1? This new move is worth thinking about.

How about taking on b3 with the pawn? Yes, this is not a bad rejoinder and may be best. I advise you to take a close look at 18 ab for yourself. The variations arising from it are very interesting.

Anything else? As a matter of fact White can also capture on b3 with his knight, with an intriguing tactical idea in mind – ♕xg7!. It was this very possibility that I had been analysing before the game. A pity you did not spot it.

18 ♔xb3! ♕xc6

At this moment, I suddenly ceased to be happy about the way things stood. Sax was too willingly going into the complications, which – according to all my pre-game assessments – ought to turn out in my favour. He couldn't be so naive as to go in for this sort of play without having something specific in mind! It dawned on me that there might turn out to be a flaw in my calculations. Sax, I repeat, had replied too confidently and quickly.

In such a situation the main thing is not to lose your head, not to panic. You must try to probe the position more deeply and find out what exactly the opponent is thinking of. It is also psychologically important to brace yourself for something unexpected, some unpleasant surprise.

Grasping all this, I still didn't see how I could refrain from capturing on g7 as planned. But I admit I played the move without my former optimism.

19 ♕xg7 ♖xg7
20 ♔d4! (32)



Let us together try to figure out Sax's defensive idea. Black doesn't have a wide choice here. Thus, 20...♕f6 is no good – White simply gains the advantage with 21 ♔xc6 ♖xc6 22 ♕xc6 ♕xa1 23 ♗xa1+. The main line that I had examined in my home analysis was, of course, 20...♕xg2, to which White replies with 21 ♔f5+ (other moves hardly deserve serious attention). There is no reason to fear 21...♖f6, while after 21...♖h8 22 ♖xe7 White's attack gives the impression of being irresistible.

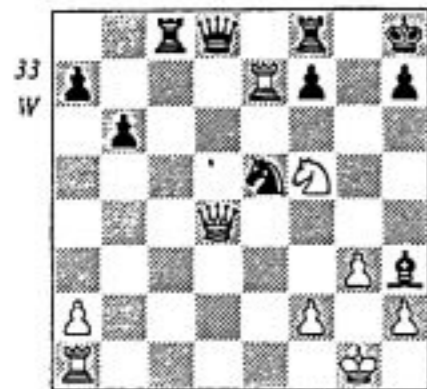
Indeed, how *is* Black to defend? 22...♕h3 looks logical (23 ♖xd7? ♗f6), but the king is on h8, so why not play 23 ♗d4+ first? After 23...f6 24 ♖xd7 ♗e8 25 ♖xh7+! ♖xh7 26 ♗h4+ and 27 ♗xh3, Black's position is not to be envied.

Then suddenly I saw 23...♔e5!. It turns out that this is what Sax was counting on! But nothing can be done about it; it is too late to back out.

20 ... ♕xg2
21 ♔f5+ ♖h8
22 ♖xe7 ♕h3
23 ♗d4+ ♔e5! (33)

Capturing on e5 with the queen looks unplayable, but White also has no wish to play an ending with equal material and the black bishop on h3.

At this point I had to think very hard before I succeeded in unearthing the saving idea. I was somewhat helped by the feeling that I had not



made any obvious mistake. Certainly I had played sharply and plunged into complications, but my previous play scarcely deserved such stern punishment as the inferior ending arising after 24 Exe5 Wxd4 25 Qxd4 .

24 Wxe5+ f6
25 We2!

When you discover such an idea you feel a sense of relief, you realise that you have not been playing all that badly. The move played is more precise than 25 We1 , when Black would have 25... xc7! (whereas now this can be met with 26 hd1). In addition, 25 We2 sets up the threat of 26 hxh7+ .

25 ... xf5
26 hd1

The black queen is unexpectedly trapped. All the same, I had not caught Sax unawares. He had seen in advance the only defence by which Black – in turn – can save himself.

26 ... g4!
 $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$

White has various ways of drawing. For instance, he can play the

pretty 27 hxh7+ hxh7 28 Wxg4 We8 29 hd7+ hf7 30 hxh7+ Wxf7 31 Wxc8 Wxa2 , and the queen ending is probably drawn. But there is no need for such elegance, and in the game I would have played more simply: 27 hxh7+ hxh7 28 hxh7+ hxh7 29 hxh7+ hxh7 , with full equality.

Imagine my astonishment when I learned that Sax had not thought up this whole idea himself but had taken it from a game Chernin-Browne, played in the tournament at Lugano a couple of weeks before the World Cup! Chernin, who had analysed this variation from White's side, followed the same path as I did, came up against the same unpleasant novelty (which Browne may have found over-the-board), but then – unlike me – played 24 Exe5 and drew the game after lengthy exertions. That is, he failed to find the right solution when confronted with an unexpected move. Perhaps he simply lost his nerve.

Clearly there are no recipes for all such occurrences. *The main thing is not to lose your self-control but to search coolly for a weak point in your opponent's conception. And of course you must always be psychologically prepared for unexpected moves such as 23... de5 .* I was greatly helped by sensing in good time that Sax had caught me out! When you realise what is in store, it is easier to find an antidote.

This game, of course, may give rise to some discouraging thoughts.

It demonstrates once again that with the abundance of information that saturates the modern chess world, it is sometimes quite impossible to keep abreast of all the latest developments in opening theory! Yet if you aim for distinguished results and at the same time have a liking for sharp, uncompromising variations, you cannot do without knowing the latest theoretical developments.

The next game we are going to examine is of a completely different character. In Yusupov-Sax, the players' opening knowledge reached as far as the transition to an endgame. This time, it peters out around move five!

Yusupov-Timman
Linares 1989
Slav Defence

1	d4	d5
2	c4	c6
3	cd	cd
4	Qc3	Qc6
5	ef4 (34)	

I play the Exchange Variation now and again. In this tournament, a game Gulko-Timman from a previous round had attracted my attention. It seemed to me that in that game White managed to secure a plus. Gulko continued 4 ef4 Qc6 5 e3 e6 6 Qc3 ed6 7 exd6 Wxd6 8 ed3 df6 9 f4!. It is now clear why White didn't hurry to develop his king's knight. He was waiting to see where the enemy dark-squared

bishop would go, so that on ... ef8-d6 he could secure firm control of the important e5 point.

I decided to try the same idea, but slightly altered the move-order.



5 ... e5!

A novelty! Having plenty of experience of playing Timman, I realised that he would fight for the initiative right from the first few moves, and that conceding it to him was extremely dangerous. The move he plays is indeed an obvious attempt to seize the initiative. White must of course capture on e5 now, but with what? Pawn or bishop?

6 exe5

I rated the knight on c6 as a more active piece than the bishop on f4. The situation after 6 de d4 seemed to me to be more promising for Black.

6 ... Qxe4
7 de d4

I had the impression that Timman's analyses ended here. He obviously liked this position.

Let us for a moment consider White's possibilities. Naturally, 8

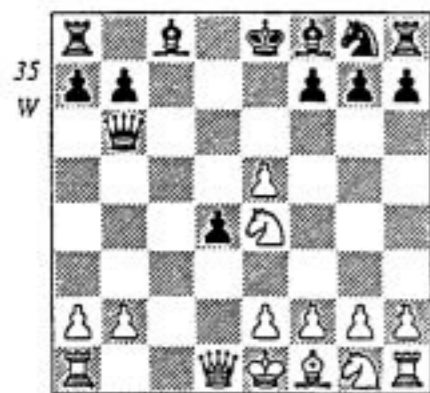
♖a4+ looks tempting. But doesn't its very obviousness put you on your guard? It would make *me* cautious. Well, is this check playable or not? Sure enough, it fails. Black answers with 8...b5!, and what is White to do? Taking with the queen is bad on account of 9...♙d7, and if White takes with the knight Black again replies 9...♙d7 threatening ...a7-a6. Undoubtedly Black wins.

So there is nothing for it but to move the knight into the centre.

8 ♖e4

Just now, the bishop check on b4 is not dangerous; White simply blocks it with his knight. Timman continues to force the pace.

8 ... ♗b6 (35)



Have a think what White should do now. What should be his policy, faced with such an unusual turn of events in the opening – when Black is perhaps over-straining to seize the initiative and win?

There is a great deal at stake with every move here. The pawn on b2 is *en prise*, but surely White isn't going

to defend it with his rook? The pusillanimous 9 ♖d6+, trying to reduce the opponent's attacking force somehow or other, is also unappealing; in my view, after 9...♙xd6 10 ed ♗xb2, Black remains with a minimal advantage.

9 ♖f3!

An uncompromising decision. Of course White cannot be entirely sure how the complications will end, but he obeys the laws of opening strategy, bringing new pieces into the battle without worrying about the defence of the b-pawn.

9 ... ♗xb2

10 ♚b1

Are there any other continuations? Should White take the pawn on d4 with his queen? Let us see: 10 ♗xd4 ♙b4+ 11 ♔d1 (not 11 ♖d2 ♙c3), and now Black is not forced to exchange queens but can play 11...♗a3. Need we go further? Frankly, with his king on d1, White's position inspires no confidence.

If you think White can extricate himself here, try 'mulling over' this position at home. Try to substantiate all your impressions by concrete analysis. But don't forget that in the practical game, you cannot work out everything in full. The main thing is to form a valid impression of where a particular variation will lead, and judge whether it is worth opting for this line or at least examining it seriously. I repeat that in the present case I considered 10 ♗xd4 very risky for White, even on psychological

grounds, since it hands the initiative over to the opponent. I had no wish to be the defender. I wanted to bid for the initiative myself with every move!

10 ... ♙b4+!

The strongest reply; Black wants to force the retreat of a piece White has already developed. Capturing on a2 would have been extremely risky, for it would have enabled White to start an attack either with 11 e3 or with the simple capture 11 ♖xd4.

11 ♖d2

A purely practical decision. By retreating this knight rather than the other, White reduces his opponent's options. In either case Black can capture on d2, but this way the exchange is forced, since after 11...♗a3 White can take on d4 without worry.

11 ... ♙xd2+

12 ♖xd2 ♗xa2

We can now draw up a provisional balance of the operation that started with 10 ♚b1. White has lost a pawn, but in return he has made it possible to complete his development quickly. Incidentally, which move serves that end best?

13 e3

Quite right! One point worth noting is that if I had not found this resource in advance, I might not have played 10 ♚b1 either; I would have looked for some other line. I now thought White was firmly grasping the initiative.

13 ... de

What should White do now?

There are two candidate moves – 14 ♙b5+ and 14 fe – and the question is which is the more precise. The latter, do you think? Can you explain why? Because the bishop retains the option of going to c4? Yes, this is the first thing that springs to mind. If White plays 14 ♙b5+ instead, Black will be able to take the c4 square under control with 14...♔f8 15 fe ♙e6. Yet this is not the only purpose of capturing the pawn.

14 fe

Black in turn faces a choice – either to develop his bishop with 14...♙c6, or to bring his knight out to e7. In the case of 14...♖e7 15 ♙c4, there was a sly trap in store for him. The natural reply 15...♗a5? would be prettily refuted by 16 ♙xf7+! ♔xf7 17 ♗h5+ g6 18 e6+! winning the queen, or 17...♔e6 18 0-0! with unanswerable threats against the king.

Of course Black doesn't have to fall into the trap. He can defend differently, but there is no point in calculating the variations any further. The simple judgement that White has a strong attack after 15 ♙c4 is sufficient. Timman evidently came to the same conclusion and steered clear of this line.

14 ... ♙e6!

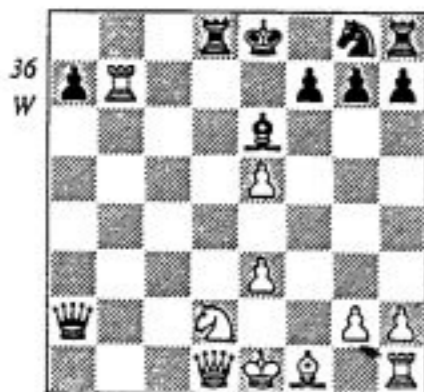
As you see, from the standpoint of the practical struggle, 14 fe was indeed more precise than 14 ♙b5+. White has retained the option of checking on b5, but also has a different and stronger line at his disposal.

15 ♖xb7

The rook joins in the attack.

15 ... ♗d8 (36)

An aggressive rejoinder. The alternative was 15...g6, preparing in advance a refuge for the king – which, as is clear already, will have to renounce castling. But then after 16 ♘e4, the knight breaks into the enemy position. White's initiative is also dangerous after a queen exchange: 16...♖a5+ 17 ♖d2 ♖xd2+ (17...♖xe5 18 ♖b4) 18 ♔xd2.



In such situations it is important not to become obsessed with one particular continuation but to see the whole varied range of possibilities. Here White has two courses. One is obvious: 16 ♔b5+. The other is less so: 16 ♖c1. I rejected the bishop check on the grounds that it only helps Black to realise his plan of evacuating the king: ...♔f8, ...g7-g6 and ...♔g7, followed by developing the knight.

16 ♖c1! g6!

A prophylactic move, preparing the king's escape route to g7. Here I

considered various possibilities, including 17 ♔c4. But after the simple 17...♔xc4 18 ♘xc4 ♖xg2, I somehow couldn't find an attacking continuation.

17 ♖c3!

Improving the position of his queen, White simultaneously forestalls the development of the enemy knight. 17...♘h6 is met by the unpleasant 18 ♖b4. Bringing the knight out to e7 is also bad, for there it would at once be pinned: 18 ♔b5+ and 19 ♖b4.

17 ... ♔f8

18 ♔d3

White continues the attack and completes his development at the same time. As you can see, even with such concrete tactical play, the actions of both opponents conform to the underlying principles of chess strategy. In fact, both sides (apart from the fact that one is conducting an attack and the other has to fend off immediate threats) are making moves which either develop pieces or prevent the opponent from doing so!

18 ... ♗c8!

A subtle move. With the white queen on the long diagonal, the black king will feel most uncomfortable on g7. After 18...♔g7? 19 0-0, there is already a nasty threat of ♗xf7+!

19 ♖b4+

If Timman had delayed ...♗c8 for an instant, the white queen could have occupied the central point d4,

whereas now it has to make do with the flank square b4.

19 ... ♔g7

20 0-0 ♘h6

Black has finally managed to develop his knight.

21 ♘e4

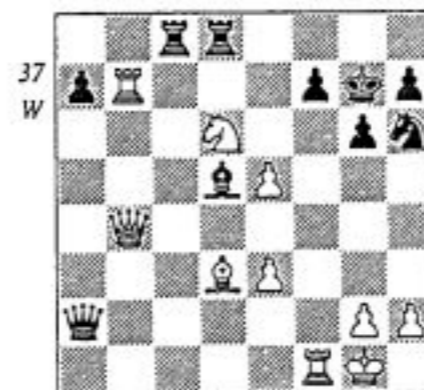
Threatening 22 ♘g5. But Timman brings his last piece into the fray in the nick of time!

21 ... ♗hd8!

22 ♘d6

White has to renounce his intended knight sortie to g5.

22 ... ♔d5! (37)



Both players were already getting short of time. Being dealt a blow like this in time-trouble is not very pleasant, but White succeeds in finding the correct solution to the problem.

23 ♔e4!

The exchange sacrifice is of course temporary.

23 ... ♔xb7

24 ♖xb7 ♗b8

25 ♖e7

In overall terms, the position is equal. Now 25...♗f8 is forced, since

25...♖c6? would fail to the obvious 26 ♗xf7+!

25 ... ♗f8

26 ♖f6+ ♔g8

27 ♖g5 ♔g7

28 ♖f6+

Forcing a draw by repetition.

28 ... ♔g8

29 ♖g5 ♔g7

30 ♖f6+ ½-½

Of course, given a little more time, the struggle could have been continued. For example, White could have set an attractive trap with 30 h3, hoping for 30...♖e6?. There would follow 31 ♗f6 ♖d7 32 ♔c6! ♖c7 33 ♖xh6+! ♔xh6 34 ♘f5+, and White gives mate. But I don't advise you to be tempted by such traps in serious play; they are not without dangers. After the correct 30...♘g8! (taking control of the f6 square) there would be some difficulties for White to overcome. As played, the duel ended in a draw at once.

The game we have just examined illustrates an important principle which I generally try to follow. *Faced with an unexpected move in the opening, try not to give the opponent a psychological advantage on any account; search for active possibilities, strive for the initiative by any means.* Only then can you count on solving your opening problems successfully.

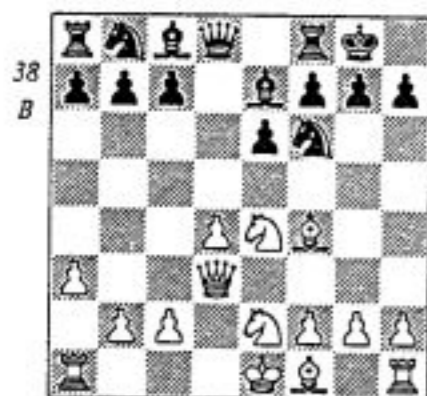
The next example shows how you can strive for victory with an opening set-up which the opponent knows better than you.

Shirazi-Yusupov
St John 1988
French Defence

- 1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♖c3 ♗b4
4 ♖e2

An unpleasant surprise in that this system has a strong drawing tendency – and I aimed to play for the win, despite having Black.

- 4 ... de
5 a3 ♗e7
6 ♖xe4 ♖f6
7 ♗d3 0-0
8 ♗f4 (38)



What candidate moves would you suggest here for Black? Let us take them in order. Number one: 7...♖c6. Number two: 7...b6. Number three: 7...♖bd7. Number four – well, are there no other ideas? Then look what happened in the game.

- 8 ... ♖d5!?

It is a well-known principle that the same piece should not be moved twice in the opening. But in this case

Black is pursuing a very specific aim. I won't insist that my decision here was best. But it was combative – it forced my opponent to solve some concrete and none-too-simple problems! Moreover, strictly speaking, this move doesn't lose all that much time. After all, White must now withdraw his bishop, otherwise Black simply exchanges it and acquires the advantage of the bishop-pair.

- 9 ♗d2

When playing 8...♖d5 Black had to have some particular plan in view, for White clearly intends to drive the knight back with c2-c4. Then there will be nothing to justify the loss of time. But what exactly can Black undertake? The pawn sacrifice 9...b5 looked dubious to me. Of course it contains a positional idea – the attempt to control the light squares – but just now it is rather premature. What else is there?

- 9 ... b6
10 c4 ♗a6

Essentially, Black is just mystifying his opponent. I don't think that with an operation like ...♖d5 and ...♗a6 you can achieve much. There are several normal reactions for White. One is 11 b4, another is 11 ♖2g3 followed by ♗c2. Black would soon probably have to withdraw his knight to f6, after which White would have a comfortable game. Still, in so far as Black has done nothing truly reprehensible, his handling of the opening is basically

just one possibility amongst many others.

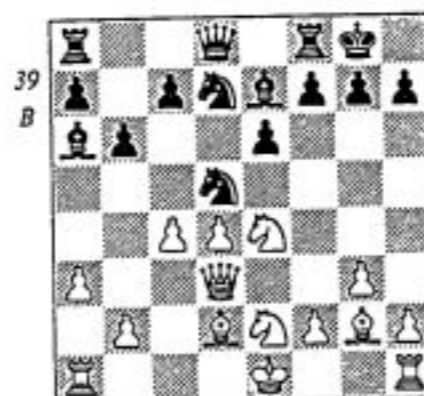
Shirazi approached the position differently. He felt that his knight on c2 was already developed and that it was time to bring out his light-squared bishop.

- 11 g3

A move provoked by the position of the bishop on a6.

- 11 ... ♖d7
12 ♗g2 (39)

Here again, I chose a combative solution. You may be asking what it was. It is not so simple to find.



Let us consider the resources for both sides. In the first place, a worrying thought arises: what if White withdraws his queen to c2 next move? The knight will have to leave d5, and if I'm not careful I will even lose the exchange on a8.... This looks dangerous. I had been intending to move the rook to b8, but then I thought: 'Suppose he *does* take my rook. After ...♗xa8 perhaps I'll find some counterplay on the long diagonal.'

Another feature of the position is that if Black didn't have a knight on d5, he could play ...♖d7-e5, for the white queen is undefended! Is there some way Black *can* carry out this attractive tactical stroke?

Objectively, the move I played may be questionable, but in the final analysis it was thanks to this move that I won the game.

- 12 ... ♖5f6!?

Have a try at explaining the point of Black's combination. After the seemingly forced line 13 ♖xf6+ ♗xf6 14 ♗xa8 ♗xa8 15 0-0, White is not threatened with anything – but the whole point is that this line is *not* forced! It is precisely in the intermediate blow 14...♖e5! that the idea of the combination lies.

- 13 ♖xf6+ ♗xf6
14 ♗xa8

Of course Shirazi is not compelled to play this, but as I was hoping, he couldn't resist the temptation to take the rook.

- 14 ... ♖e5!
15 ♗e4 ♗xa8
16 ♗xa8 ♖d3+

The decision to embark on this whole variation was extremely difficult. After all, the exchange is the exchange! But I studied it closely and concluded that Black does have compensation. The character of the game has abruptly changed and the initiative is on his side.

There are certain particular cases where such risky play is justified. Shirazi has an active style; he likes to

attack. Players of this type are prone to underrate the opponent's threats and defend without too much assurance.

17 ♖f1 ♜xa8
18 b3 ♙b7

The immediate 18...c5 was also worth considering.

19 ♞g1 c5! (40)



The light-square weakness in White's camp and his somewhat backward development offer definite compensation for the exchange. I believe this compensation is sufficient, though I cannot say more than that. Black's pieces are active, he has the bishop pair, and in addition he has chances of picking up a pawn. All this put me in good spirits!

All the same, the position is far from clear. How it should all turn out is hard to say. If, for instance, White were now to play 20 ♙c3, Black would hardly have anything better than 20...♞d8, allowing the following line: 21 d4 ♖xc5 22 ♙xf6 gf 23 ♖e1!? (but not 23 b4? ♖b3), and if 23...♖xb3, then 24 ♞d1.

20 ♙e3? ♞d8

It seems that Shirazi had intended 21 ♞d1, and only now saw the reply – that same 21...♖e5! again. Disconcerted by this turn of events, he lost his bearings and succumbed more or less without a fight.

21 ♖f4?! cd
22 ♖xd3 de
23 ♖e2 ef
24 ♖xf2 ♙xa1

The upshot is that Black simply has a sound extra pawn and the better position.

25 ♞xa1 f6
26 ♞c1 ♖f7
27 ♖e3 e5
28 a4 ♖e6
29 a5 f5
30 c5 bc
31 ♖d3 ♙d5

Realising the advantage is simple. Black simply pushes his kingside pawns.

32 ♖xc5+ ♖d6
33 b4 g5
34 ♖a6 f4+
35 ♖f2 e4
36 h4 h6

There is no need to work out any variations. Two connected passed pawns combined with the formidable bishop are quite enough to win the game.

37 ♖c7 ♖e5
38 hg hg
39 gf+ gf
40 ♞c5 e3+
41 ♖e2 ♖e4

0-1

Let us ask what it was that enabled Black to win so easily. He came up against a system of development that was unfamiliar to him, and usually this promises nothing good. In my view, the secret of Black's success is largely bound up with his psychologically correct reaction to the opponent's unexpected choice of opening. He didn't allow himself to be drawn into any prepared variations of a forcing nature, such as would arise (for instance) from 4 ♖e2 de 5 a3 ♙xc3+; he preferred an original scheme of development with a well-defined positional basis. *Such tactics – deflecting the opponent from his course, especially if he is in a lower category – frequently produce good results.*

The next example continues the theme of the French Defence. The following game against A.Sokolov was played in our Candidates Match, and I remember that it gave me much relative satisfaction.

A.Sokolov-Yusupov
Candidates Final (3), Riga 1986
French Defence

1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♖c3 ♙b4
4 e5 ♖e7
5 a3 ♙xc3+
6 bc c5
7 ♖f3 b6

Match chess has a quality of its own; the opening contest occupies a

special place in it. The aim of Black's last move is obvious: he wants to exchange his bad 'French bishop'. In the first game, Sokolov preferred to avoid this exchange by playing 8 ♙b5+ ♙d7 9 ♙d3. He obtained quite a good position, but subsequently lost in a complex struggle. It was clear that for game three he would think up something new. But what? To be honest, my second and I did not succeed in guessing it during our preparation, so the opening of this game was to a certain extent unexpected to me.

8 a4

A typical move in such positions.

8 ... ♙a6

9 ♙xa6

White more often plays 9 ♙b5+.

9 ... ♖xa6

10 0-0 ♖b8

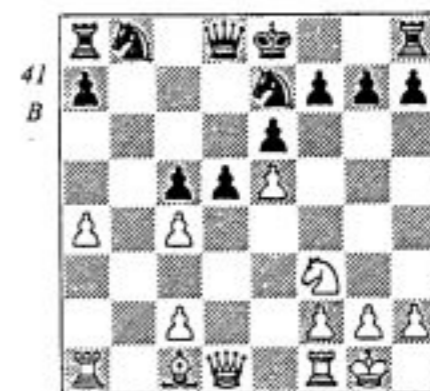
11 dc

In practice 11 ♖g5 and 11 ♙a3 have also been tried.

11 ... bc

12 c4! (41)

White plays to undermine the centre.



Now I had to have a serious think. I only had some vague recollections of the games in the Geller-Spassky Candidates quarter-final (Sukhumi 1968), where this variation had been seen a few times. In such situations you have to use your common sense, and if the position permits, steer away from well-trodden paths, selecting lines that are positionally well founded but not so well studied.

I sensed that the further course of the struggle would in many ways depend on which squares the black knights went to – in particular, where the queen's knight was developed.

12 ... 0-0

A move that arouses few doubts.

13 cd

But now it is time to deviate from the well-studied lines and not wait for Sokolov to spring some surprise on me. As far as I recall, Spassky took on d5 with his queen.

13 ... ♕xd5!?

Quite a good place for the knight. At the moment Black is scarcely afraid of c2-c4, since the knight can settle on b4.

14 ♖d3

What would you suggest for Black now?

To answer this question properly, you have to recognise the aim of White's last move. He intends, of course, to play 14 ♕g5, forcing ...g7-g6 which suddenly weakens the dark squares. This weakening is very significant when you consider that

White's dark-squared bishop has no opposite number.

14 ... h6

The position is very complicated. I was aiming to meet 15 ♖d1 with 15...♕c6, and if 16 ♖a3, then 16...♕cb4, leading to unclear play. Sokolov played more directly, but less soundly.

15 c4 (42)



What are the possibilities for Black now? With the white pawn on a4, the move 15...♕b6 is clearly uninviting. The knight would also be badly placed on c7. The choice is between 15...♕b4 and 15...♕e7.

I rejected 15...♕b4 on the basis that after 16 ♖e4 ♕8c6 17 ♖e3 my knights would be in an awkward position. The one on b4 superficially looks active, but that is all. In reply to 17...♖e7, White would strengthen his position with 18 ♖ad1! (the right rook) 18...♖fd8 19 ♖d6, and if 19...♖xd6 then 20 ♖xc5, emerging with an extra pawn.

On reflection I decided that the right place for the knight was e7.

Here it can be useful in defence of the kingside and generally has good prospects. In some lines it can move to f5 and then d4; or else it can go to g6 to attack the pawn on e5. Of course, in selecting this move, I also had to assess some concrete variations – for example the following, which seems fairly dangerous to Black: 15...♕e7 16 ♖d1 ♖xd3 17 ♖xd3 ♕bc6 18 ♖e3, and the pawn on c5 looks indefensible. But in fact it is not! I had prepared the reply 18...♖fc8!, and if 19 ♖xc5 then 19...♕xe5!. This may be called the tactical justification of 15...♕e7.

In this case we observe how a general appraisal of the situation is linked to concrete analysis. This is generally a prerequisite for taking the right decision. You can adduce all manner of general considerations in support of a move, but if it afterwards turns out that in one variation you simply lose a pawn, all your arguments will lose their point. It is vital to support your judgements with exact calculation!

15 ... ♕e7!

16 ♖e4

Now the important question is where to develop the queen's knight – on c6 or d7. After some thought, I opted for 16...♕d7, since after 16...♕bc6 the defence of the c5 pawn would be much more complicated. In general, when facing an unexpected system, it is essential to give increased attention to your opponent's threats.

16 ... ♕d7

17 ♖b1?

The best continuation was 17 ♖d1. But I saw that after 17...♖c7 there was no need to fear 18 ♖d6?! in view of 18...♕f5!, when 19 ♖c6? is bad: 19...♖b7 20 ♖b1 ♕b6, with the deadly threat of 21...♖ac8.

Sokolov's move was superficial. He understood that I would have met 17 ♖d1 with 17...♖c7, and decided to forestall that move by preparing the reply 18 ♖b7. Yet 17...♖c7 is by no means obligatory. Black can now achieve easy equality with 17...♖b8. But at this moment I sensed that my position was already superior and that I could very well play for the win.

17 ... ♖a5!

If you have the opportunity for an active move, take it! Black now seizes the initiative. The white pawn on a4 is *en prise*. White should definitely have admitted his mistake and returned his rook to a1.

18 ♖d1

Why didn't I simply take the pawn? At first sight Black is not threatened with anything.

In fact, though, 18...♖xa4? can be met by 19 ♖xh6! gh 20 ♖a1 ♖c6 21 ♖xc6 ♕xc6 22 ♖xd7, and White has everything in order. Black is counting on something better.

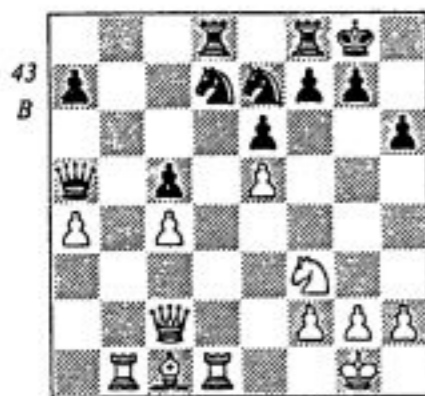
18 ... ♖ad8!

The alternative 18...♕b6 was not bad either, but 18...♖ad8 seemed to me the most energetic decision (not, however, 18...♖fd8? 19 ♖xd7!). As

long as White's bishop is still on the back rank, his king cannot feel secure. It has no 'loophole', and tactical threats are already in the air.

19 ♖c2 (43)

Sokolov decides to protect his a-pawn, and misses the striking rejoinder. It is amusing that just as in the previous game, a knight sortie from d7 to e5 seals White's fate!



19 ... ♗xe5!!
20 ♗xe5
20 ♖xd8 ♗xf3+.
20 ... ♖c3!

No doubt about it, such moves are pleasant to play.

21 ♖e2 ♖xe5
22 ♗e3 ♗f5

As a result of the combination Black has gained a pawn and clearly has a winning position. But he still has to overcome a few technical difficulties.

23 ♖f3 ♖xd1+

Perhaps the immediate 23...♗d4 was preferable, but I decided to play more simply.

24 ♖xd1 ♗d4

Sokolov now made a serious mistake. He should have played 25 ♖b7. Then Black would most likely have had nothing better than 25...♗c2 26 ♖f3 ♗xe3, with an ending in which White keeps some saving chances.

25 ♗xd4? cd
26 ♖d3 ♖d8
27 g3 ♖c5

The queen frees the path of the e-pawn.

28 f4?!

This merely leads to a weakening of White's king position. But he is in a bad way in any case, so this move should not be severely criticised. The rest is simple.

28 ... ♖b4
29 ♖a1 a5

This move appears rather obvious, wouldn't you say? It fixes an enemy pawn and brings Black's own pawn closer to its queening square. You should keep on strengthening your position as long as permitted, and then look for a concrete plan of exploitation. In the present case, with White deprived of any counterplay, Black has no reason to hurry.

30 h4 h5
31 ♖b1 ♖xa4
32 ♖b5 g6
33 ♗f2 ♖a2+
34 ♗f3 a4
35 ♖b6

With the idea of 36 ♖xe6. Black now repeats the position to gain time.

35 ... ♗g7
36 ♖b1 ♗g8

37 ♖b6 ♖a1!

Commencing decisive operations. On 38 ♖xe6, I intended 38...♖b8! 39 ♖xg6+ ♗f8, and Black carries on with his own attack.

38 ♗e2 a3
39 ♖a6 ♖b2+
40 ♖d2 d3+
0-1

Sokolov resigned on checking that I had made the time-control.

What is instructive in this game? It shows how important it is to give attention to the opponent's threats – both his obvious tactical ones and his more veiled positional ones. In this connection I dare say I should single out the move 15...♗e7, which in a way laid the foundation of Black's success. At any rate, it helped him solve his opening problems.

Don't forget one other very cunning weapon in the opening – transposition of moves! Sometimes the opponent only needs to switch two moves round, and all your pre-game analytical work comes to nothing. If this does unexpectedly happen, the main thing is not to spend time kicking yourself (it does nothing to help your cause!). Remember the old adage: grieving over a past mistake means making another one!

We will now examine my game with the English Grandmaster Miles. It was played at the start of the Tunis Interzonal, and was of great importance to me. At that time Miles was considered one of the strongest

grandmasters in the West, and had excellent tournament results. I had Black, and thus decided to play a fairly solid opening. Here is what came of it:

Miles-Yusupov
Tunis IZ 1985
Caro-Kann

1 c4 c6

The Slav Defence was part of my repertoire at the time, and that was what I intended to play against Miles. But to my horror, Miles replied in a wholly unexpected way.

2 e4!

Of course, the exclamation mark is not for the strength of the move but for the psychologically acute choice. The point is that I don't play the Caro-Kann in reply to 1 e4 – but now I am forced to. In preparing for the game I had carelessly overlooked this simple transposition.

2 ... d5
3 ed cd
4 d4 ♗f6
5 ♗c3 ♗c6

When up against an unfamiliar system, you naturally want to steer towards something you more or less know. I had some idea of the variations arising from 6 ♗f3 ♗g4, but alas, Miles played differently.

6 ♗g5

My opening knowledge came to an end here. What was I to do? The move 6...e6 would have led to theoretical structures that were well

known – but not to me. I therefore decided to look for some reasonable alternative course.

6 ... ♖e6!? (44)



After the game I discovered that 6... ♖e6 had been introduced into practice by Belavenets, and that Flohr had later incorporated it into his repertoire. The move may look eccentric at first sight, but is not without point. It doesn't greatly violate the principles of opening play – I develop a piece, asserting central control by fortifying the d5 point. I also create the threat of capturing on c4 if occasion arises. You can hardly demand more from one move!

7 ♕xf6

There was no need to hurry with this exchange; White could have played 7 ♖f3, for example. But it turned out that Miles was following a theoretical recommendation based on a game Botvinnik-Flohr, Moscow 1965. In that game, after 7 ♕xf6 e7 c5, White acquired a positional advantage thanks to his superior pawn structure.

7 ... ♗f!

This move too has definite drawbacks, but on the whole I consider it more logical than 7...e7. The pawn captures towards the centre and thereby increases Black's control of it. But the main thing is that it avoids a situation where White virtually obtains an extra pawn on the queenside and Black has no strategic prospects.

8 ♖d2

Miles doesn't hurry to bring his knight out to f3; he wants to retain the option of restraining the black e-pawn with f2-f4. Of course this decision has its minus side – neglecting the laws of development may have serious consequences.

8 ... ♖a5

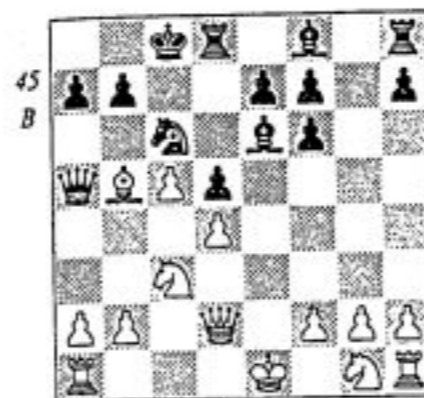
At the moment, bringing the dark-squared bishop into play is a somewhat complicated matter (since ...♗f8-h6 is unplayable). So Black completes his queenside development, aiming to castle long. The queen will be more actively placed on a5 than on d7. The tactical justification is 9 ♖xd5?! ♖xd2+ 10 ♖xd2 0-0-0, and Black wins his pawn back on d5.

9 c5 0-0-0

10 ♕b5 (45)

In my view it was better to finish his development with 10 ♖ge2 and then g2-g3.

What move would you recommend for Black after 10 ♕b5? Perhaps 10...h5, with ...♗h6 to follow? That is one idea. But I decided to play less directly.



10 ... ♗g8!

Black tries to induce a weakening of his opponent's position. On 11 g3 he could very well play 11...h5; but he might also consider 11...♗g4, which dissuades White from bringing his knight out to e2 and prepares the thematic ...e7-e5.

11 f4

Miles takes prophylactic measures against ...e7-e5. But after playing several pawn moves, he is behind in developing his pieces. I endeavour to exploit this.

11 ... ♗h6

Black's play is simple and natural. It somehow automatically comes about that all his moves further his chosen plan. The bishop on h6 helps towards carrying out ...e7-e5, but it may also quite possibly contribute to some tactical blow.

At this point it was imperative for Miles to attend to his development. Admittedly, 12 ♖f3 is met by the troublesome 12...♗g4 13 0-0 e5!. Nonetheless, as far as counterplay goes, White should have been seeking it somewhere in that area.

12 ♖f2

The same thing has cropped up more than once before in the games we have examined: one superficial decision leads to another, and the result is that pieces already developed have to move several times. White's difficulties are in a sense 'pre-programmed'; they result from 8 ♖d2 and perhaps even from 7 ♕xf6.

12 ... ♖b4!

Creating the dire threat of 13...♖xb5!.

13 ♗d1 ♗f5

Threatening 14...♖c2+. A mere thirteen moves have been played, and Black has already launched the decisive attack. Such is the punishment for White's neglect of development.

14 a3

At all events, 14 ♖ge2 was better. Yet after 14...♖c2+ 15 ♖f1 e5 16 ♖g3 ♗g4! the complications work out in Black's favour. (Would you have suggested 14...a6 instead? That is a strong move, but the line indicated is even simpler.)

14 ... ♖c2+

15 ♖d2 ♗e4!

After 15...e5 White could just about struggle on with 16 ♖e2, but now the game finishes quickly.

16 ♖e2 ♗xg2

17 ♖h4 ♖xd4

18 ♖h3+ f5

19 ♗d3 ♖xe2

20 ♗xe2 ♗xf4+

It is time to resign, but Miles plays a few more moves through inertia.

21	♔e1	d4
22	♕f3	dc
23	♖xd8+	♗xd8
24	♗xg2	cb+

Only now did White stop the clock.

0-1

Let us draw some conclusions. In this game the role of psychological attitudes stands out with particular

clarity. The truth is that if you are ready for a tough, uncompromising game, you can start fighting for the initiative almost from the very first moves. In such cases, even confronting an unexpected move is not so dangerous, since your inward composure, your intentness on the struggle, will at once help you to find your bearings in the situation and work out the correct decision.

4 Inventive Solutions to Intractable Opening Problems

Sergei Dolmatov

What does a chessplayer's opening preparation usually amount to? The answer is, studying particular variations which are given in monographs, in *Informator*, in articles devoted to this or that opening. You find the key positions there and think about them; you analyse, look for innovations, pick out useful games and so forth. This is the most widespread method of handling opening information, and without doubt a legitimate one for investigation within the field of some specific opening.

But another method is also possible – one of generalising, identifying common situations arising out of completely different openings. It is useful, for example, to study typical pawn structures; some are just as characteristic of one system as of another. Some intriguing conclusions can be drawn from watching how various players respond to innovations – well or badly, with or without spending large amounts of time; some endeavour to find a refutation on the spot, others just look for the most solid available continuation. There are numerous interesting factors here.

If you find any indications that you possess this faculty for generalising, you should not hesitate to make use of it. This approach to mastering the knowledge of openings may prove to be the most productive for you personally. Let me stress once again that it is possible to improve your chess by widely differing methods, according to your individual inclinations.

At present I am working on the middlegame. I have become interested in a topic which no one before has investigated seriously – the art of elastic manoeuvring. Karpov practises this art excellently, as did Psakhis in his best years; whereas in Kasparov's games (for example), there are only very rare instances of it. Kasparov has always been used to executing concrete plans, whereas positional manoeuvring serves no clear-cut purpose except, perhaps, one: it tests the opponent's understanding of absolutely all nuances of the position. If neither side has any positional advantage (or if it is insufficient to bring tangible results), it is often necessary to manoeuvre, to move to and fro in what looks like an aimless manner, taking care not to

worsen the position of your pieces. When the opponent is unable to stand up to this manoeuvring and commits inaccuracies, it is possible to alter the character of the struggle abruptly by tactical means and seize the initiative.

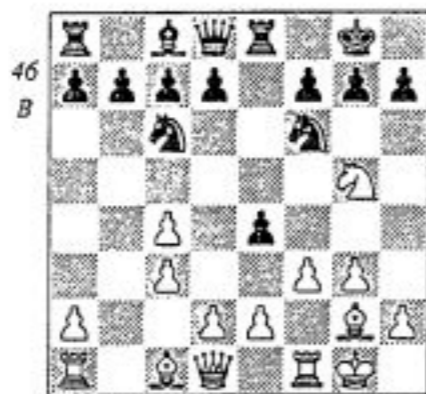
This is the theme I have been studying; each of you can choose your own. Having selected a theme, seek out examples of it in games by leading players, and analyse how they solve the problem that interests you. From the totality of examples, try to pick out those which are united by a common factor. Solving such imaginative tasks brings much benefit.

I now come to a problem which I shall discuss in rather more detail; generally speaking, no one has yet thought about it seriously – perhaps because it demands a high level of chess ability.

Sometimes top-ranking grandmasters play strong moves which they themselves find hard to explain. Furthermore it is virtually impossible to prove even in *post-mortem* analysis that these moves are objectively strongest. Despite this, they help to solve the problems in the particular context of the game. They leave their imprint on the whole of the subsequent struggle; they give it its essential character. By detecting such moments in games by top players, you can dramatically increase your understanding of chess.

One example is the second game

of the fourth Kasparov-Karpov World Championship match, Seville 1987.



After the well-known opening moves 1 e4 d6 2 d3 e5 3 f3 c6 4 g3 b4 5 g2 0-0 6 0-0 e4 7 d5 g5 x3 8 bc e8 9 f3 (46), Karpov employed a novelty: 9...e3!?. What is White's best response? The task that faces him is exceptionally complex. Kasparov found an outstandingly good solution, clearly the best solution to any opening problem in the entire match: 10 d3! d5 11 b3!.. Such moves are often conceived not in home analysis but over-the-board, under strong emotional pressure. Many commentators could not understand why Karpov never repeated his novelty after winning this game. The explanation is simple: Kasparov refuted the novelty over the board – his 11 b3 is very powerful. I was Kasparov's second in that match, and can definitely assure you of this. A fine example of an imaginative solution to an intractable, 'irrational' problem!

I shall now show you some examples of this same theme, taken from my own games. I shall not attempt a strict proof that the solutions discovered in the critical positions are the strongest. But these moves have significant thought behind them; they exert a decisive influence on the further course of the contest. Some of them, incidentally, are responses to unexpected opening moves. The opponent has played an innovation, and all the problems have to be resolved at the board rather than in leisurely home analysis. Let me repeat: if you devote some study to such situations – which tend to go unnoticed – then you can make appreciable progress.

In a tournament in Iceland I was playing Lev Polugaevsky. The opening was a Dutch Defence. I play the black side of this opening a great deal, and it was not hard to predict that Polugaevsky would be fully armed. He usually prepares his openings thoroughly. There was indeed a surprise in store for me. I felt it coming, by the way in which my opponent conducted the game. He made his moves very slowly, clearly aiming to put me off my guard; he didn't want me to deviate from the main line. But I had confidence in my opening scheme, and wanted to stand up for my convictions; hence I was not intending to deviate in any way.

Polugaevsky-Dolmatov
Reykjavik 1990
Dutch Defence

1	d4	f5
2	f3	f6
3	g3	g6
4	g2	g7
5	0-0	0-0
6	c4	d6
7	c3	c6

Black has played the so-called Leningrad System, choosing a variation of it which is not the most fashionable. I believe it was introduced into contemporary practice by Grandmaster Yusupov, but at present I seem to be playing it more often than anyone else. It had been known earlier, but had a bad reputation. The usual move in this position is 7...c8.

8 b3

This is what White played in the well-known game Karpov-Yusupov, Linares 1989, in which Artur came to grief and Karpov scored a good win. But to me this plan doesn't seem convincing.

8 ... a5

The idea of this move is simple. I attack the knight on c3 and at the same time prepare ...e7-e5. When I devised this innovation (Yusupov played 8...c7, followed by ...a5 and ...a6), I thought that by achieving ...e7-e5 Black would obtain a comfortable position. White's best

move seemed to be 9 Qd2 , but then I retreat with ... Wc7 , leaving the white bishop less well placed than in Karpov-Yusupov. I had played several games on these lines, drawing them all. But Polugaevsky played differently.

9 Qb2 e5 (47)



The first time I had reached this position was against H.Olafsson in the qualifying tournament for the World Cup (Moscow 1989). He continued with 10 de de 11 e4 . Misjudging the position, I played 11... $\text{fe}?!$ and came out worse. A stronger move is 11... $\text{f4}!$, which enabled me to win with Black in two tense struggles against D.Gurevich (Palma de Mallorca 1989) and Browne (in this same Reykjavik tournament).

10 Wd2

A novelty, undoubtedly prepared at home. Polugaevsky looked very pleased with it. It was indeed unexpected and unpleasant – I had missed it in my opening preparation. The idea is simple: White defends against his opponent's chief positional threat

of 10... e4 (which would fail to 11 Qxe4). You will understand that if Black *could* push his pawn to e4 , he would obtain a fine position. The problems would all be on White's side – his kingside would be sealed up, the f2-f3 break would be largely ineffective. For this reason I had treated 10 de de 11 e4 as the main line, overlooking that 10 Wd2 was playable.

With 10... e4 ruled out, finding another move for Black is very awkward. But I thought 'I must count my blessings. I've got in ... c7-e5 , and that's something!'

10 ... Wc7
11 de de
12 e4

Of course White doesn't allow ... c5-e4 . But what should I do now? In approximately similar positions, I had replied either ... fe or ... f4 . By analogy with my games against Gurevich and Browne, I would like to play 12... f4 . But unfortunately it won't do here, because after 13 gf , the usual reply ... Qh5 loses its force (13... Qh5 14 fe , and there is no real compensation for the pawn); while if instead 13... cf , White breaks through in the centre with 14 e5 .

In the event of 12... fe 13 Qg5 , the knight settles on e4 and secures White a positional plus. Incidentally, in the Dutch Defence the structure with an isolated black pawn on e5 and a white knight on e4 is sometimes not so simple to assess – on condition that Black's c-pawn is on

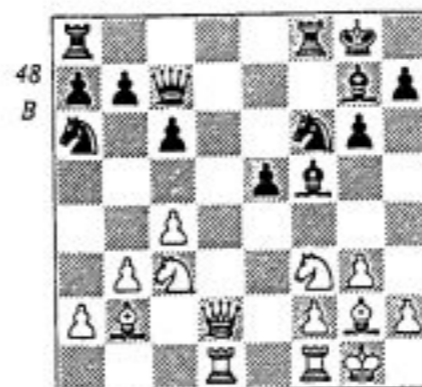
c7 and his knight can go to c6 and d4 . Then Black usually has adequate counterplay. But with the pawn on c6 , the position tends to be a good deal worse for him. Hence 12... fe is no good.

On reflection I realised that Polugaevsky couldn't have checked every variation thoroughly (his preparations were done during the tournament, just before each game), and I thought up a move which he must have missed. The move is fairly natural and probably best, but for some reason it had escaped his attention. It put us on an equal footing – from now on we both had to solve our problems independently over-the-board.

12 ... $\text{Qa6}!$

It now turns out that the natural 13 Mad1 is not good for White in view of 13... fe 14 Qg5 Qg4 , hitting the rook. Polugaevsky didn't like the immediate capture on f5 , because it helps develop Black's pieces, but he had to do it.

13 ef Qxf5
14 Mad1 (48)



I should like you to pay special attention to this position; it has a bearing on the basic theme of our discussion. Up to here, the play has proceeded logically. Polugaevsky introduced a novelty, and I reacted in what was probably the best way. But at this point I sensed that the position is still quite dangerous for Black. He has achieved a fair amount (bringing his bishop to f5 in one move and developing his knight), yet problems remain – fairly serious ones. The black pieces are not badly placed, but White may drive them back with tempo by means of h3 and g4 . The pawn on e5 is isolated, and neither knight can reach d4 . Exchanges will only make my defence more difficult, for the isolated pawn will remain, and there will be less and less opportunity for counterplay. It was in these conditions that I had to find a plan for further action.

The move I played was, I think, the strongest. If decisions of this kind interest you, look for them (for example) in Kasparov's games. True, this will not be simple. Outwardly, such moves are unobtrusive. Annotators usually fail to understand them and do not explain them, so it is best to study commentaries written by the players themselves.

14 ... $\text{Qfe8}!!$

Not an impressive-looking move, but I am proud of it. The rest of the contest will be wholly dominated by the ideas that went into this move. What, then, is its point?

The pawn on e5 is weak and it is useful to defend it. The rook was badly placed on f8, since if I had brought my knight out to c5 White could have played Qa3 . Those were among the reasons for my decision. But of course there is more to it than that; there is a deeper reason for placing the rook on e8. White clearly wants to play h2-h3, depriving the Black pieces of the g4 square and securing e3 for his queen. Then he will play g3-g4. It is against this plan that Black has prepared a tactical antidote, based on invading d3 with a knight.

15 h3 Qc5
16 We3 Qd3!

This is the whole point – the knight is invulnerable owing to a fork: 17 Exd3? Qxd3 18 Wxd3 e4.

If you are in good shape and able to find such solutions, you are not disconcerted by inferior positions; you are capable of saving a dubious game. If I hadn't discovered this idea – if instead of 14... Efe8 I had played some 'normal' move such as 14... Ead8 – I am convinced I would have imperceptibly sunk into a difficult position; I would have lost by a gradual process, without even understanding why. I might have blamed the opening for my bad position and concluded that the whole variation was no good. That is how many games end, when a player fails to find the unique imaginative solution to a particular position. Of course I didn't know for sure where it would

all lead, but I appreciated that after 14... Efe8 I could obtain counter-chances. Even if I lost, it would not be without a fight. When my opponent replied 15 h3, I was definitely convinced I had made the correct choice. This is complex prophylaxis, if you like; I had to understand that White intended h3, and find a way of combating his plan.

The game was to end in a draw after some notable excitement. I do not see where White could have improved his play and obtained an advantage.

17 Qa1

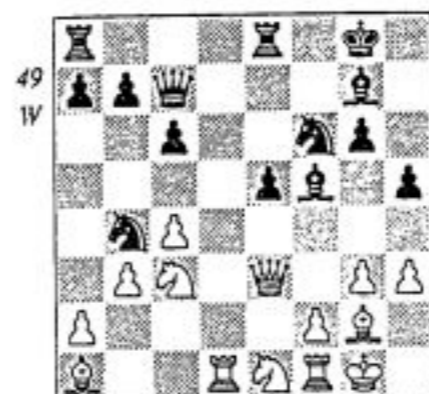
Threatening 18 g4. The knight on d3 is insecure, and I didn't want to put a pawn on e4.

17 ... Qb4

Continuing to harry the opponent with short-range threats – this time it is a fork on c2. On 18 g4, White has to reckon with 18... Qd3 . The bishop replaces the knight on this square, and Black follows with ...e4 and ... Qc2 . As you can see, it is not so simple to drive the black pieces back. Polugaevsky hopes to do so by first covering the weak squares c2 and d3.

18 Qe1 h5! (49)

Black stops g3-g4, and incidentally prepares ... Qh7 and ... Qh6 . Note that with a white knight on f3 I would not have played this way. Moves have defects as well as good points; my opponent has parried my threats, but in so doing he split his rooks and allowed ...h7-h5. White



now has no time to lose, since the plan of ... Qh7 and ... Qh6 is unpleasant for him.

19 a3 Qc2

The knight has done plenty of work, and can be sent away for a rest.

20 Qxc2 Qxc2

Here Polugaevsky was faced with an interesting problem, and he coped with it successfully. He has to choose between the two possibilities 21 Ed2 and 21 Ec1 . The latter looks safer, since 21... Qxb3? fails to 22 Qe4 . Black must retreat with 21... Qf5 . Still, after 22 Qe4 Qxe4 23 Qxe4 , he can choose between 23... Qxh3 and 23... Qh7 , and then he has everything in order – as we found when we looked at it after the game.

21 Ed2!

Polugaevsky takes a tougher decision. His rook is placed much more actively here than on c1, since it remains on the open file. True, this means sacrificing the b-pawn.

Withdrawing the bishop with 21... Qf5 would be a psychological concession which Black wants to

avoid. If you are offered a pawn and there is no forced refutation, my view is that you should accept the sacrifice.

21 ... Qxb3!

22 Qb5!

On 22 Qd3 Black has 22... Qf7 , defending the pawn on g6 and attacking c4, so White doesn't manage to attack the bishop on b3.

22 ... cb

23 Qxb3 bc

24 Qxb7 Eac8 (50)



Of course White has full compensation for the pawn. In this position I offered a draw, and it was accepted. Both players were already running short of time. Polugaevsky thought that playing on a pawn down was risky, while I felt that I would not succeed in exploiting the material advantage. Subsequent analysis vindicated the draw agreement.

Polugaevsky had 25 Wa6 in mind. I would have replied 25... Wb6 , with a view to 26...e4. White can prevent this with 26 Ed6 Wxa6 27 Exa6 . If Black defends the a-pawn with a

'regulation' move such as 27...♖e7, then after 28 ♖c1 his position is very difficult and may actually be lost, in spite of the extra pawn. So 27...c3 is essential. A forced line ensues: 28 ♖c1 c2 29 ♗c6 ♖ed8 30 ♖xc2 ♖d1+ 31 ♖g2 ♖xa1 32 ♗d5+ ♖xd5 33 ♖xc8+ ♖h7 34 ♖xa7 ♖a2. On the surface there is still some danger to Black, but objectively the position is drawn.

I think it should now be clearer to you what I had in mind when I spoke of moves which in an 'irrational' position exert a decisive influence on the further course of the struggle. Just such a move was 14...♖fe8. The issue is not whether it can be proved best by analysis. This move contains a particular set of ideas – the very ones which were later implemented in the game; that is the main thing.

Next, a more complex example of the same theme. Here again there is an element of prophylaxis, but it is not at all obvious. This game against Kiril Georgiev was played in a European Club Cup match.

Dolmatov-Kir.Georgiev
Moscow 1989
Sicilian Defence

1	e4	c5
2	♖f3	d6
3	d4	cd
4	♖xd4	♖f6
5	♖c3	g6
6	♗e3	♗g7
7	f3	0-0

8 ♗d2 ♖c6

The Dragon Variation. The attitude of the strongest players to this opening is virtually unanimous – it is fairly risky for Black. Yet in top-level games White tends to sidestep the sharpest and most uncompromising lines; he doesn't try to refute Black's set-up in a head-on clash. The point is that there is an immense amount of Dragon theory which constantly increases on the basis of games played by middle-ranking players – whereas among the top grandmasters, hardly anyone plays this opening with Black. For that reason, they have no wish to bother themselves constantly with highly complex investigations when there is no telling when they may be useful.

To me, the Dragon always presents the problem of how to obtain a comfortable game, let alone an advantage. I never play 9 ♗c4; there is too much theory on it, and too little scope for originality. I like to play chess, not to engage in a contest as to whose opening analysis is more exact. I am therefore interested in 9 0-0-0 and 9 g4, both of which are playable. At present the popularity of 9 0-0-0 has been increasing, because in reply to 9...d5 a new resource has been found: 10 ♗e1!?

9 g4

I had noted this move long ago. I once lost a game with 9 0-0-0, and decided to try out 9 g4, an idea that was not new but forgotten. But Karpov beat me to it, playing this move

in 1982 against Miles and Mestel. The line became popular, but eventually Black found a strong antidote, and today this continuation for White has no high standing. I know of several paths to equality. The soundest plan for Black is one which, according to theory, leads to an unclear ending: 9...♗c6 followed by ...♖xd4 and ...♗a5. On this topic, I recommend that you study the notes to my game with Shirov (Klaipeda 1988) in the third issue of *Shakhmaty v SSSR* for 1989. Incidentally, playing 9...♖xd4 first is much worse.

9 ... e6 (51)



I think that after the present game this move will disappear from use. It had been played against me – by Tseshkovsky – in one game seven years earlier (in the international tournament at Frunze in 1983). All I remembered was that although I had won that game, I had gained nothing much out of the opening. I now had to have a fresh think about the position.

Black's idea is easy to understand – he aims to play ...d6-d5. Before exchanging on d5, I shall want to drive his knight away with g4-g5. I weighed up the natural continuation 10 0-0-0 d5 11 g5 ♖h5, and noticed that if now 12 ed, Black exchanges twice on d4 and takes the g-pawn with check. Should I defend the pawn on g5 first? 10 h4 looks natural, but after 10...d5 11 g5 ♖h5 Black will have the opportunity for ...♖g3, exchanging his knight for my bishop. That, by the way, is what happened in my game with Tseshkovsky; after 10 0-0-0 d5 11 g5 ♖h5 12 h4, Black played 12...♖g3 13 ♖g1 ♖xf1 14 ♖gxf1 ♖e5, and an unclear position resulted.

Now the point of the move I played becomes clear.

10 ♖g1!

This may seem a perfectly logical decision, but it was not at all simple to take. The problem here is purely psychological: I had to break away from a well-known convention. It looks as if White should be conducting a traditional attack with h2-h4-h5, and the rook on g1 doesn't fit in with this plan at all. In actual fact, it is far more important to carry out the prophylactic idea which underlies the modest rook move. Once Black has played ...e7-e6, he can no longer refrain from advancing in the centre:

10 ... d5

11 g5

Now on 11...♖h5 White plays 12 ed, and the knight on the edge of the

board is very badly placed; it has no moves at all. In such positions White sometimes transfers his own knight to g3, forcing an exchange which opens the h-file for his attack.

Georgiev decided to withdraw his knight to a normal square.

11 ... ♖d7
12 ed ed

At this point I didn't bother to examine 13 ♖xd5, when White's backward development is bound to tell.

13 0-0-0

Positions like this sometimes arise from the Keres Attack in the Scheveningen Variation, but in that case the black king's bishop is on e7. Black plays ...♖b6, threatening an invasion on c4 which is not easy for White to stop. Here, with the bishop on g7 instead, the knight can be kept away by b2-b3. White can play this with no reservations, whereas with the bishop on e7 Black could reply with the dangerous pin ...♗b4.

13 ... ♖b6
14 f4

It is useful to deprive Black's knight of the e5 square.

14 ... ♗e8
15 ♗g3

Perhaps 15 ♗f2, not allowing an exchange sacrifice, was more precise.

15 ... ♗d7
16 ♗f2 ♗c8

The impression is that Black has serious problems with his d-pawn

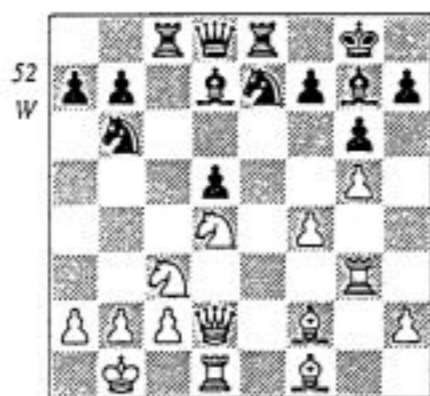
and will not succeed in creating counterplay. In reply to ...♖c6-a5, White always has b2-b3!

17 ♖b1

For the time being White simply improves his position. He can win the game without needing to hurry. First he has to fortify himself in the centre.

17 ... ♗e7 (52)

Perhaps Kiril could somewhere have played more ingeniously; perhaps there was a moment when he too could have found some inventive idea such as 10 ♗g1! or the 14...♗fe8! of the previous game. But his play has been conventional, and his position is now becoming strategically hopeless.



18 b3! ♗f5

Exchanges merely hasten the end for Black. If 18...♗xd4, then 19 ♗xd4 ♖f5 20 ♗f6.

19 ♖xf5 ♗xf5
20 ♗h3

I only need to exchange both pairs of bishops, and it will be obvious

how much weaker the black knight is than the white one. What remains is apparently not complicated – I can just exchange pieces and win the game.

20 ... ♗xh3
21 ♗xh3 ♖d7
22 ♗hd3

See how successfully my rook has joined in the fight! But then, this was a consequence of the modest 10 ♗g1!

22 ... ♖g4

In this position Black has run out of ideas. The only variation I needed to calculate was the queen sortie to g4 after a double exchange on c3. Let us see: 22...♗xc3 23 ♗xc3 ♗xc3 24 ♖xc3 ♖g4 25 ♗e1! ♗xe1+ 26 ♖xe1, and after 26...♖xf4 27 ♖e8+ ♗g7 28 ♗c5 there is no defence against mate.

23 ♗d4

White has fully implemented his idea. I didn't even need to advance my kingside pawns – the game ought to be decided by active operations in the centre. But from this moment, my opponent started defending ingeniously. Georgiev began to play unexpected moves, trying to alter the complexion of the game.

23 ... h5

I assumed Black would not have made this move if 24 gh did not suit him. I didn't bother to check it by calculating any variations. I kept firmly to my own course of action, especially since this was quite sufficient for victory.

24 ♗xg7 ♗xg7
25 a4

An entirely standard move when an enemy knight is on b6. White threatens 26 a5, and if Black answers 25...a5, my knight obtains the b5 outpost; also the black knight loses its support, and I can attack it with 26 ♖f2, for example.

25 ... ♗c5
26 ♖f2

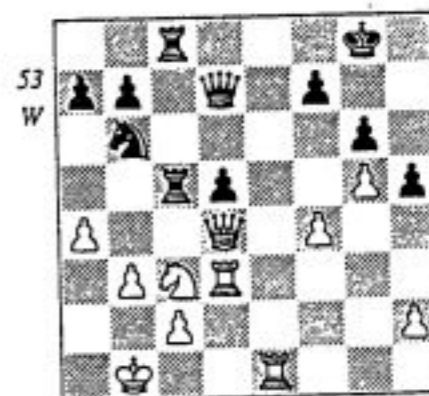
I saw that I could transfer my queen to the central square d4, and that suited me perfectly well. After the game, Kiril suggested the interesting possibility 26 ♗g3 ♖c8 27 ♖d4+ ♗g8 28 f5, with an attack. I was geared to playing in the centre, and didn't even think of removing the rook to the side.

Still, it is hard for me to fault the move I played, since it further improves my piece configuration and maintains a won position.

26 ... ♗ec8

Black is forced to concede the open e-file.

27 ♖d4+ ♗g8
28 ♗e1 ♖d7 (53)



I now made what was undoubtedly a serious mistake. White's pieces are fully mobilised, and it is now time to proceed to a clear-cut exploitation of the advantage. The move that needs to be calculated is 29 ♖b5!, but to be honest I didn't even consider it, since it leaves the c-pawn hanging. Yet it was not hard to see that on 29...♞xc2 White wins with the simple 30 ♖xa7. On the other hand if 29...a6, White plays 30 ♖a7! anyway; after 30...♞c7 31 ♞de3, there is no defence against the check on e8. That would have been a logical conclusion to the game. But it appears I was not destined to win it. I continued in the same leisurely manner as before.

Incidentally, this kind of dilemma – whether to continue positionally or switch to direct action – is one that chessplayers frequently have to resolve. Up to this point I think my play was entirely correct, although there may have been valid alternatives. But at this crucial moment I hesitated and broke Steinitz's famous rule: *when you have the advantage, you must attack, or risk losing it*. It is true that the move I played doesn't throw away the win, it only makes it more complicated. The trouble is, as Tarrasch used to say, 'mistakes never come singly' – one error quite often brings another in its wake.

29 ♖b2? ♞c6

What happened next is hard to explain. White of course has a totally

won position. The simplest course is 30 f5! g6 31 g6, when 31...fg fails to 32 ♞e7. At this moment the only danger to myself – as I clearly saw – was the tactical stroke ...♖c4+.

30 ♞de3??

I thought I was continuing to strengthen my position and (most importantly) defending against ...♖c4+. In fact, this blunder simply invites that move.

30 ... ♖c4+!

I had assumed that after 31 bc ♞xc4 32 ♞f6 d4 33 ♞xc6, White would come out a piece up; I forgot that the knight is taken with check. Having done irreparable damage, I fortunately didn't lose my head; I realised that it was now dangerous to play for the win.

31 bc ♞xc4
32 ♞xd5 ♞xc3
33 ♞xc6 ♞3xc6
34 ♞e8+ ♞xe8
35 ♞xe8+ ♖g7
36 ♖b3

and after a few more moves we agreed a draw.

So in this game, one move – 10 ♞g1 – exerted a very strong influence on the whole course of the struggle; it simply predetermined it. The opponent's possibilities were thereby restricted, and the rook was brought into the game effectively and without loss of tempo.

The next example is a game with Alexander Beliavsky, which ended in success for me.

Dolmatov-Beliavsky
USSR Championship (Top League),
Odessa 1989
Ruy Lopez

1	c4	e5
2	♖f3	♖c6
3	♙b5	a6
4	♙a4	♖f6
5	0-0	♙e7
6	♞e1	b5
7	♙b3	d6
8	c3	0-0
9	h3	♖b8
10	d4	♖bd7
11	♖bd2	♙b7
12	♙c2	♞e8

Black plays the Breyer System. I didn't know very much about it – you can't remember everything. Theory considers the main line to be 13 ♖f1 ♙f8 14 ♖g3 g6, and examines variations stretching to move 20 or 30. Some highly complex positions arise, in which it is easy to lose control. I don't like to play that way, especially with White.

There is, however, another system, less popular but containing a fair amount of poison. In my preparations I had come across the game A.Sokolov-Beliavsky from the previous USSR Championship. Sokolov had gained an advantage, and I decided to play in the same way.

13 a4 ♙f8
14 ♙d3

My impression of this position has changed from game to game. At first I thought that Beliavsky's

14...c6 was obligatory. But then in the Reykjavik tournament in 1990, H.Olafsson played 14...ed 15 cd c5 against me, and Geller explained after the game that all this had long been familiar – to a small circle. But even though the plan adopted by Olafsson was new to me, this did not stop me from gaining an opening advantage with 16 ab ab 17 ♞xa8 ♙xa8 18 dc! (this, as I found out later, is where I innovated) 18...♖xc5 19 ♙xb5.

14 ... c6
15 b3 g6

Against Sokolov, Beliavsky continued differently: 15...♞b8 16 ♙a3 ♖h5.

16 ♙a3 ♞c7
17 ♞c2 ♞ad8 (54)



Here I had a think, and realised that this time Beliavsky wasn't aiming to bring his knight to f4, as he had done against Sokolov; he was planning ...d6-d5. I quickly decided that if he achieved this central advance, several pieces would be exchanged and he would equalise. So I

went on deliberating, since I had plenty of time in hand. I had taken five minutes for all the foregoing moves, and now I took 40 or 50 over this one. Finding the correct move didn't take as long as that, but I couldn't make up my mind to play it. The reasons were psychological – I liked the idea but it went against the conventional pattern, and my hand wouldn't reach out to move the piece.

18 ♖ab1!!

Prophylaxis! Once when Nimzowitsch played a move like this, Tarasch called it 'mysterious'. In return, Nimzowitsch gave the heading 'Mysterious Rook Moves' to an entire section of his book *My System*. He wrote: 'What this amounts to is a certain kind of preventive measure. Essentially, it is only the outward appearance of the move that is "mysterious" (the rook occupies a file that is closed at present), but not at all its strategic aim. Preventing the opponent's freeing moves is far more important than asking whether the rook is currently active or is occupying a passive position.' But why does White's last move make it harder for Black to carry out his plan of ...d6-d5?

As a matter of fact, the immediate ...d6-d5 was not a threat. For example, after the natural 18 ♖ad1, Black's 18...d5? would be met by 19 ♙xf8 ♜xf8 20 b4! ed 21 cd, and Black is left with a bad light-squared bishop and an inferior pawn structure. The correct method would be

18...ba! 19 ba, and only then 19...d5 with equality.

But after 18 ♖ab1!! Beliavsky cannot reply 18...ba 19 ba d5, since the rook on the now open b-file is attacking the black bishop and tying the queen to its defence. The continuation would be 19 ♙xf8 ♜xf8 20 ed, after which White takes on e5, winning a pawn. And we already know how an immediate 18...d5 would be met.

You may well ask what happens if Black refrains from ...d6-d5 and plays, for instance, 18...♙g7. The d6 point is weakened, but is it all that serious? I shall not go into details but merely observe that if White carries out his intended move c3-c4, the b-file will again quite likely be opened by an exchange of pawns, so again the rook may be of use.

As a player, Beliavsky is a little lacking in flexibility. He usually copes excellently with tactical variations, but is significantly weaker when it comes to positional refinements. This is a case in point; he doesn't want to renounce his chosen plan. He sees that exchanging pawns on a4 is disadvantageous, whereas the immediate ...d6-d5 cannot be refuted outright. He overlooks that the resulting position is strategically difficult for him.

18 ... d5?
19 ♙xf8 ♜xf8
20 b4!

Of course Black's position is not yet lost, but White has acquired a

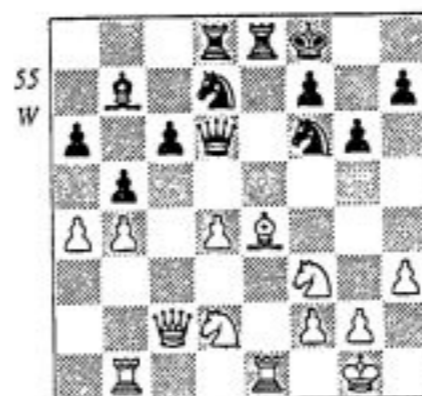
secure plus from the opening.

20 ... de
21 ♙xe4!

I didn't want to sharpen the play unnecessarily; after 21 ♙xe4 ♙xe4 22 ♙xe4 f5, I would already need to sacrifice my bishop on f5.

I think Black should now play the restrained 21...♞d6. Beliavsky opens lines to no avail.

21 ... ed?!
22 cd ♞d6 (55)



White's positional advantage is obvious, but at this point I am afraid I made a serious mistake. I should have played 23 a5! ♖e7 24 ♞b2, giving myself an extra tempo compared with the game. Oblivious of what Black intended here (namely to double rooks on the e-file), I played my next move more or less unreflectingly, hastily.

23 ♞b3?

Aiming to attack f7 with 24 ♙g5.

23 ... ♖e7!

Black hopes to seize the initiative, seeing that my pawns have suddenly become vulnerable. He threatens to

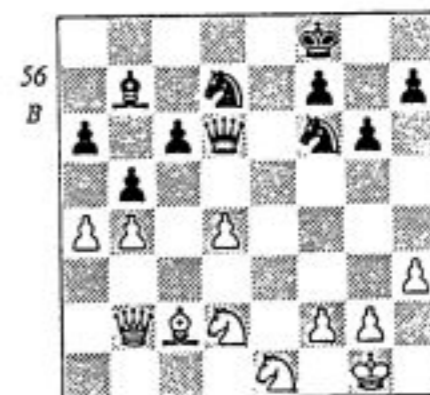
play 24...♞de8, followed (after a rook exchange) by ...♙d5.

I now had to collect my thoughts and find what is probably the only move to hold White's entire structure together.

24 ♙c2!

The correct retreat square, from which the bishop defends the a-pawn. In playing this move, it was essential to work out the variation 24...♖xe1+ 25 ♖xe1 ♙d5 26 ♖b1 ba 27 ♞xa4 ♙c3, and now 28 ♙e4!. White's position would be uncomfortable without this finesse, but fortunately it is available.

24 ... ♞de8
25 ♞b2! ♖xe1+
26 ♖xe1 ♖xe1+
27 ♙xe1 (56)



27 ... ♙b6?

A serious error. Black had the choice of allowing the queenside to be blocked with a4-a5, or exchanging on a4 himself. Beliavsky assessed the position wrongly. He should have played 27...ba! 28 ♙xa4 ♙b6, with an acceptable game.

Note that if 27...♖c7, the answer is not 28 ♘d3?! ♖c2, or 28 ♗f1?! ba 29 ♙xa4 a5, but 28 ♘df3! ♗e2 29 a5! ♘c4 30 ♘d3, followed by ♗c1.

28 a5 ♘bd5
29 ♘d3

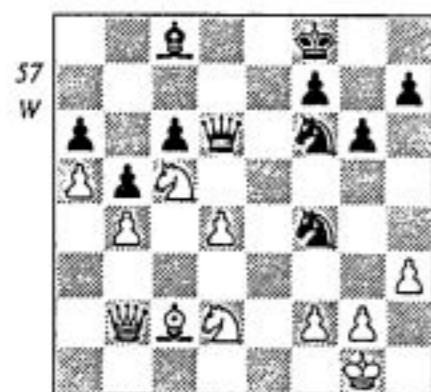
White has the advantage again, since his opponent is left with a bad bishop.

29 ... ♙c8

Attempting to bring the bishop to f5. I prevent this, of course.

30 ♘c5 ♘f4 (57)

Characteristic play by Beliavsky. If he has an opportunity he goes straight for the attack. He now threatens to check on e2 or play 31...♗d5.



31 ♙d1!

Perhaps my opponent overlooked this bishop manoeuvre. White has defended against everything, for example 31...♗d5 32 ♙f3. If 31...♗e7, then 32 ♘f3 is strong. At this point Black should probably continue 31...h5!?. But just as at move 18, Beliavsky is reluctant to abandon his plan; he persists with the same

manoeuvre, which only weakens his position.

31 ... ♗d5
32 ♙f3 ♗g5
33 ♗f1!

Black was hoping for 33 ♗h2? ♗h4. But now he has to sound the retreat. To add to his problems, Beliavsky was now short of time.

33 ... ♘6d5
34 ♘de4 ♗e7
35 ♘c3

A leisurely build-up is highly unpleasant for an opponent in time-trouble. I strengthen my position and exchange his active pieces, while he doesn't know when to expect the decisive events.

35 ... ♗d6

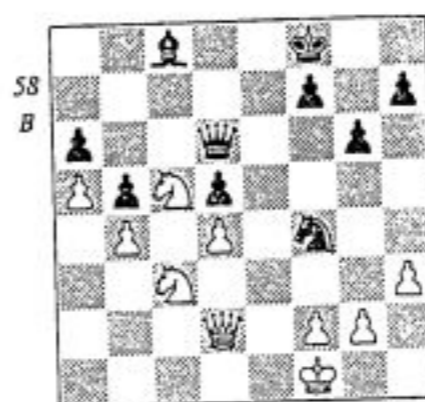
The correct reply. When he played it, I first thought that Black was aiming to recapture on d5 with a piece, and I prepared to continue with 36 ♘xd5. But suddenly it dawned on me that he might well take with the pawn. *When realising an advantage, you usually have better winning chances if the pieces on the board are of different types.* Bishop against knight is better than a bishop-versus-bishop ending. I felt that if Black took on d5 with his pawn, I would be better off keeping the knight on c3 than the bishop on f3.

36 ♙xd5! cd

I was pleased at having figured out my opponent's plans in time.

37 ♗d2 (58)

A little positional riddle: how do you think Black should conduct the



defence? In his time-trouble Beliavsky failed to find the right solution.

The weakness of the dark squares in Black's camp is palpable. There is nothing to be done about the queenside, but the gaps on the kingside could have been covered by placing pawns on the dark squares f6, g5 and h6 – as is fitting when you have a light-squared bishop. The correct move, retaining chances of successful defence, was 37...g5!

37 ... h5?

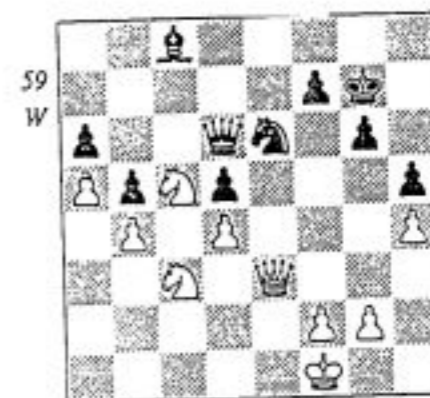
I now consider Black's position hopeless.

38 h4 ♙g7
39 ♗e3 ♘e6 (59)

Unfortunately it was now my turn to go wrong.

40 g3?

In principle I don't recommend taking a major decision on move 40. But in this case there was a clear win; two accurate moves, and my opponent could have resigned. I should have played 40 ♘xc6+! ♙xc6 41 ♗e5+! ♗xe5 42 de, when the white king is threatening to penetrate. On



42...f6, White has 43 f4. I saw that the immediate 40 ♗c5+ ♗xe5 41 de ♘xc5 was unclear, but simply missed the preliminary exchange on e6.

Such mistakes are usually costly. Black has a bad position but he hopes to construct a fortress somehow and maintain it. The process of breaking down the opponent's defence may prove long and difficult (in actual fact the struggle was to continue for more than 40 more moves). If an opportunity turns up for altering the scene at once to your own advantage, you need to see it and take it. You may not find such a convenient method afterwards.

40 ... f6

The game was adjourned here. In my analysis I unfortunately failed to find the strongest plan to exploit the advantage; it was shown to me afterwards by Beliavsky.

41 ♗e1

The sealed move. When making it, I had formed a reasonable plan. The black knight will soon withdraw to c7. White can bring a knight to f4,

but there seems to be no direct win. This being the case, I thought I would need to play f2-f3 and g3-g4 and then push the pawn to g5 to conquer the dark squares. But before advancing the pawns I would need to remove my king from the kingside.

Instead of 41 ♔e1, Beliavsky suggested 41 ♖e2 ♗c7 42 ♖f4 ♘f7 43 ♗c1!! I hadn't seen the retreat to c1 – I only looked at 43 ♗c3. The main threat is ♖cd3 and then ♗c5. With the queen on c3, Black would have the defence 43... ♗c6. (The point of having the king on f7 is not to allow ♖ce6+.) With the queen on c1 this defence doesn't help, since White has 44 ♖fd3 (threatening 45 ♗h6) 44... ♘g7 45 ♗f4. A splendid way to win! Beliavsky confessed that on account of this plan he was reluctant to play on at all.

41 ... ♖c7
42 ♘d2 ♗g4

I thought this only helped me to advance my pawns, but my opponent, as it turned out, was trying to prevent the manoeuvre ♖c3-e2-f4. It is amusing how differently we approached the position.

43 f3 ♗e6
44 ♖e2 ♗f7
45 g4 hg
46 fg ♗e6
47 g5 ♗f5
48 gf+ ♘xf6

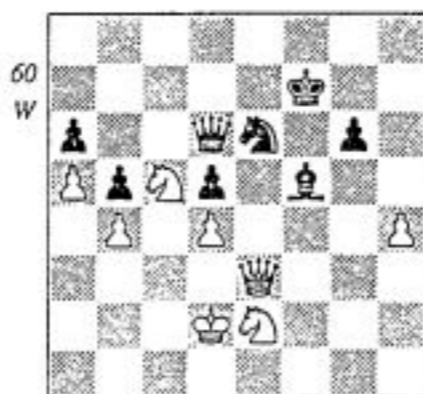
If 48... ♗xf6, then 49 ♗e5 is decisive, but after the move played, White can win easily with 49 ♗h6!

which has the same idea: ♗h8+ and ♗e5.

49 ♗g5+? ♘f7
50 ♗e5

By now I had noticed my mistake and was trying to put it right. I withdrew my queen in the hope that Beliavsky would return his king to f6 to prevent 51 ♗e5. But he was on the alert and found the only correct defence, despite mutual time-trouble.

50 ... ♖e6! (60)



It has suddenly become quite unclear how to make progress. White's hands are tied by the exposed position of his king. Time on the clock was very short. I realised that I was on the verge of having to say goodbye to my dreams of winning. And then I succeeded in finding the solution, perhaps one of the best in the whole game.

51 ♗g3!

A committal move, since several pawns are going to be exchanged. White will only be left with two. I saw I was obtaining the better knight endgame, but didn't know if it was a

win. Still, even this opportunity was one that might not recur.

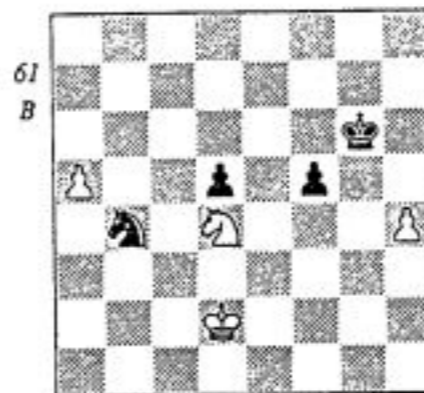
51 ... ♗xg3

If 51... ♖xc5, then 52 dc with a large positional plus, since 52... ♗f6 is met by 53 ♗f4, controlling the very important d4 point.

52 ♖xg3 ♖xd4
53 ♖xf5! gf

After 53... ♖xf5 54 ♖xa6, the continuation 54... ♖xh4 55 ♖c7 is bad for Black, while on 54... ♗e7 White has the decisive 55 ♖c5 ♖d4 56 a6 ♖c6 57 ♗e3, intending ♖d4 or ♗f4-g5.

54 ♖xa6 ♖c6
55 ♖c7 ♖xb4
56 ♖xb5 ♘g6
57 ♖d4 (61)



This is the position White has been aiming for, on the correct assumption that his passed pawns on the wings are stronger than his opponent's in the centre. Some interesting play now commences. I thought that Black had two moves: 57... ♗h5 and 57... f4. I planned to meet the latter with 58 ♗e2 ♗h5 59 ♗f3 ♗xh4 60

♗xf4. There is only one pawn left on each side, but Black cannot save himself. The white king goes to the queenside and drives the knight away. The pawn on d5 is merely a hindrance to Black.

The other variation goes 57... ♗h5 58 ♗c3 ♖a6 59 ♖xf5 ♘g4 60 ♖e3 ♗xh4 61 ♖xd5 ♘g5 62 ♗c4 ♗f5 63 ♗b5 ♖b8 64 ♖b4 ♗e6 65 ♖c6 ♖d7 66 a6, and wins.

Beliavsky found a third possibility; he played a cunning waiting move. But there is no longer a way to save the game.

57 ... ♖a6
58 ♗e3 ♖c5
59 ♗f4 ♖d3+
60 ♗e3 ♖b4
61 ♗f4 ♖d3+
62 ♗f3 ♖b4
63 ♖e2 ♗f6
64 ♖f4 d4

Something is achieved: the pawn has been forced to advance to a square where it is more easily attacked. But then, 62... ♗e5 loses at once to 63 ♖d3+!

65 ♗e2 ♗f7
66 ♗d1! ♗f6
67 ♗d2

Placing the opponent in zugzwang is always pleasant.

67 ... ♗f7

White can win in various ways. I decided to eat the pawn.

68 ♖e2 ♘g6
69 ♖xd4 f4
70 ♗e2 ♗h5
71 ♗f3 ♗xh4

72 ♖xf4

The win is very simple now, because a knight always has great difficulty coping with a rook's pawn.

The final moves were: 72...♖h5 73 ♗e5 ♗g6 74 ♗d6 ♗f7 75 ♗c5 ♖a6+ 76 ♗b6 ♖b4 77 ♖c6 ♖d5+ 78 ♗b7 ♗e6 79 a6 ♗d7 80 a7 ♖c7 81 ♖e5+ ♗d8 82 ♖c4 ♖a8 83 ♖b6 ♖c7 84 ♗c6 1-0

The game could have finished sooner if I had played more precisely. As it was, a curious and (I am afraid) fairly typical picture emerged. White solved the problems of the position and acquired a plus. Afterwards he weakened, committed inaccuracies and gave away all his advantage or a large part of it. Then he took control again, outplayed his opponent again, and began to be careless again. Certainly, it is hard to play faultlessly the whole time if the opponent is resisting for all he is worth; in such cases errors are only to be expected.

Now an example from a different opening – the Caro-Kann. The game was one of my few wins in the Hastings tournament. There were only three of them – yet they were enough for first place with a little to spare.

Dolmatov-Speelman
Hastings 1989/90
Caro-Kann

1 e4 c6
2 d4 d5
3 ed cd

4 c4 ♖f6
5 ♖c3 e6
6 ♖f3 ♗b4

I nearly always play the Panov Attack, which often leads to a line of the Nimzo-Indian – as it does here.

7 ♗d3 dc
8 ♗xc4 0-0
9 0-0 ♖bd7 (62)



A book position. There has been nothing new here for a long time. I know about 10 ♞e1 and 10 ♗d3. Black replies 10...♗xc3 11 bc b6 followed by 12...♗b7. White develops his bishop on g5, leading to a complex struggle. Theory considers that White has no particular advantage.

On the day of this game, I was in the mood for playing unconventionally – especially since my opponent was Jon Speelman, no ordinary player himself, who looks for complications and heads straight towards them. A very active player, he makes a congenial opponent – he produces interesting games. I decided to continue ambitiously and sacrifice a pawn on c3 with 10 ♗g5!?

I had made an analogous sacrifice before, in a game against Flesch (Bucharest 1981). But in that game, instead of 9...♖bd7, my opponent played the immediate 9...♗xc3?! 10 bc ♗c7. There followed 11 ♗d3!? ♖bd7 (11...♗xc3 is strongly answered by 12 ♗f4) 12 ♗a3! ♞c8 13 ♖d2! ♞d8 (not 13...♗xc3 14 ♖c4 and wins) 14 ♗f3 ♖f8 15 ♖e4, with an obvious advantage to White. As you see, the bishop didn't go to g5 in any variation; at that time, I thought there was nothing for it to do there. But now I decided to try it. The idea occurred to me at the board; I hadn't analysed it at home.

Speelman is a bold player, and of course he accepted the offer.

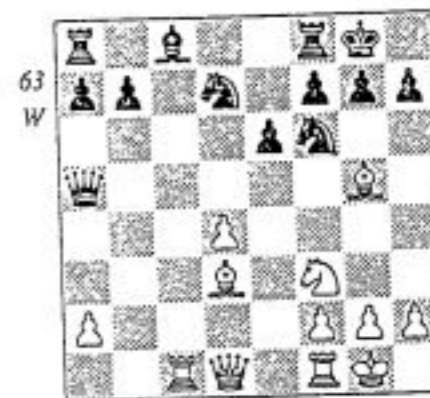
10 ♗g5!? ♗xc3
11 bc ♗c7
12 ♗d3!

I played this last move quickly, since the pawn sacrifice was the whole idea of 10 ♗g5. It was too late now to shy away from uncompromising lines; the cautious 12 ♗d3?! allows Black easy equality after 12...b6 13 ♗b3 ♗b7 14 ♞fe1 ♞ac8.

Essentially I was taking an imaginative, combative decision which involved a fair amount of risk. During the game I found encouragement in the following thought: 'I can't possibly have made any sort of mistake, since the only move I played independently was the perfectly reasonable ♗g5. What could be more natural than this move? Though my opponent wins a pawn, he is giving

me a few tempi which ought to balance his small material plus.

12 ... ♗xc3
-13 ♞c1 ♗a5 (63)



When I sacrificed the pawn it was imperative to foresee this position and find the move which now follows. If White plays a nondescript move, say 14 ♞e1 to prepare ♖e5, then after 14...b6 15 ♖e5 ♗b7 he is left without proper compensation. Black completes his development successfully, and in addition I have an isolated pawn in the centre. Even with material equality (putting a White pawn back on b2), Black would have a fine position. Therefore, I repeat, it was essential to foresee my next move.

14 ♖e5!

Now 14...b6 is met by 15 ♗f3 ♗d5 16 ♗h3, threatening 17 ♖xd7. and White works up a dangerous initiative. Such a turn of events is not to Speelman's liking.

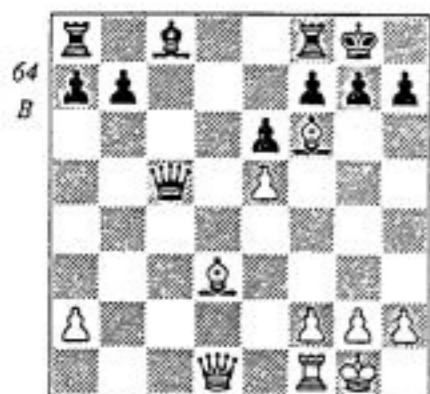
14 ... ♖xe5
15 ♞c5 ♗a3
16 de!

Taking on e5 with the rook is inferior on account of 16...♖d5 and then ...f5, when it is not clear how White develops his initiative further.

16 ... ♖xc5

After the game Speelman suggested 16...♖e4 – a wholly unexpected possibility which wouldn't occur to just anyone. In the event of 17 ♖xe4 ♖xc5, Black's ingenious move is justified. But after 17 ♖xc8, Black is left with a bad position: 17...♖xc5 18 ♖xa8 ♖xa8 19 h4, and now 19...♖d8 fails to 20 ♖xh7+, while the sly 19...g6 is met by the calm 20 ♖b1!, and the knight is lost all the same.

17 ♖xf6 (64)



During the game I thought this position was drawn. I still do. 'I've been playing well, my opponent has also played sensibly. So I must face it – the game ought to end in a draw.'

I expected Black to play 17...gf automatically. The obvious attacking try 18 ♖g4+ ♖h8 19 ef is refuted by 19...♖g8 20 ♖h4 h5, and White loses.

A draw results from 18 ♖xh7+ ♖xh7 19 ♖h5+ ♖g8 (of course not 19...♖g7?? 20 ef+ and wins) 20 ♖g4+ ♖h7 (but not 20...♖h8? 21 ef) 21 ♖h4+ (now 21 ef fails to 21...♖g8 22 ♖h4+ ♖g6). White can also give perpetual check with 18 ♖g4+ ♖h8 19 ♖h4 f5 20 ♖f6+ ♖g8 21 ♖g5+.

I sat there going over these variations in my opponent's thinking time, and suddenly Speelman played a different move. After the game I asked him, 'Were you playing for a win?' It turned out that he was not. He was afraid of playing 17...gf on account of 18 ♖g4+ ♖h8 19 ♖h4 f5 20 ♖f6+ ♖g8 21 ♖c1!? ♖d7 (there seems to be nothing better) 22 ♖e3. The only defence is 22...♖c1+ 23 ♖f1 ♖xe3. Fortunately for me, Speelman thought that White retains winning chances here. Analysing it afterwards, we found no win.

17 ... ♖e8?!

When he played this, the surprise was almost too much for me. My thoughts were fixed on drawing, but now I looked and couldn't see a perpetual check. I was the exchange and a pawn down. 'Oh well, it's just tough luck!' I thought. For five minutes I couldn't see anything that would do. I was sidetracked by all sorts of tries such as 18 ♖b5, and was astonished not to discover a draw. And then it dawned on me that it was pointless looking for a draw at all – I should be playing for mate. It is that sort of position!

18 ♖xh7+!! ♖xh7

18...♖f8 19 ♖g4 gf 20 ef wins.

19 ♖h5+ ♖g8

20 ♖g5 ♖f8

21 ♖d1!

I think Speelman had missed the sacrifice on h7 followed by the white rook switching to the attack (although the idea is much the same as in the line he calculated after 17...gf). Otherwise he would not have gone into this position. How is he to defend now, faced with the transfer of the rook to the g or h-file?

Again my opponent astonished me. He found a means of prolonging his resistance for another fifty moves.

21 ... b6

White has two moves: ♖d3 and ♖d4. An uneasy feeling came over me; I was afraid of getting it wrong.

22 ♖d4 ♖a6

23 ♖g4

If 23 ♖h4, then 23...♖e2 24 h3 (24 f3? ♖c5+) 24...♖ed8, and 25 f3 is met by 25...♖xf3! 26 gf ♖c5+, proceeding to counter-attack against the white king.

23 ... ♖e2 (65)



24 ♖xg7!

White gains nothing from 24 ♖xg7+ ♖xg7 25 ♖xg7+, in view of 25...♖h8! drawing (but not 25...♖f8? 26 ♖h7 mating). Afterwards, Grandmaster Smagin, who had been following the game, insisted that I could have won with 24 ♖g3. But I had calculated exactly this line: 24...♖ed8 25 h3 ♖d3 26 f3 ♖d1+ 27 ♖h2 ♖d3! 28 ♖xg7 ♖c5, and who wins now? After this you can understand why I preferred to go into a won ending – and also, incidentally, why I rejected 22 ♖d3 ♖a6 23 ♖g3.

24 ... ♖xg4

25 ♖xf8+

There was also the intermediate check 25 ♖h6+. It is always vital to pay attention to this kind of possibility (such 'trivial' points can have a decisive bearing on the result of a game), and decide if it is worthwhile. In the present case I think it was better to take on f8 at once. White is preparing the advance of his h-pawn, and doesn't want the black king to be on h7 to impede it.

25 ... ♖xf8

26 ♖xg4 ♖ac8

27 h4

A natural move, but nonetheless imprecise. 27 ♖g5!, restricting the black king's activity, was stronger. I was not worried about 27...♖e7, seeing that it led to the loss of another pawn, but that is just what my opponent played.

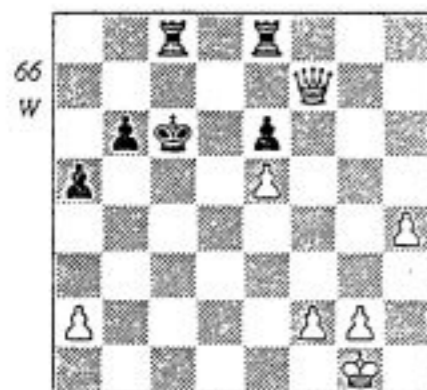
27 ... ♖e7

28 ♖g5+ ♖d7

29 ♖f4 a5!

I should point out that Speelman is an excellent defender. He plays well all round, but is especially strong in defence – I felt this during the game. He set me such problems that there was a moment when I doubted whether I could win at all.

30 ♖xf7+ ♔c6 (66)



The h-pawn cannot queen on its own; the g-pawn must be brought to its help. Meanwhile Black will try to obtain a passed pawn on the other wing. A race between the pawns is not an attractive prospect. I therefore decided to put a brake on my opponent's counterplay, at least temporarily, and only then advance my own pawns.

31 ♖f3+ ♔c5
 32 ♖e3+ ♔c6
 33 ♖f3+ ♔c5
 34 ♖a3+ ♔c4
 35 ♖b3+ ♔c5
 36 a4! ♚b8

The threat was 37 ♖b5+. Speelman defends his pawn and prepares to break with ...b6-b5.

37 ♖c3+ ♔d5
 38 f4 ♔e4
 39 ♖f3+

39 ♖c4+!? ♔e3 40 g3 with a won position.

39 ... ♔d4
 40 ♖c6 ♔e3
 41 ♖c1+

Here White should have preferred 41 g3!

41 ... ♔e2
 42 h5 ♚ec8
 43 ♖f1+ ♔d2
 44 ♖b5 ♔e3
 45 g3 ♔d4
 46 ♔g2

Everything seems to be in order; White has stopped ...b6-b5, improved his position, and started to push the h-pawn. I almost stopped paying attention to Speelman's moves.

46 ... ♔c3
 47 h6?!

A much more precise move was 47 g4!

47 ... ♚h8

Now there is no simple way to win. I decided to sharpen the fight, allowing Black to play ...b6-b5 at last.

48 ♖d7 b5
 49 ab a4
 50 b6 a3
 51 ♖a4 ♔b2
 52 ♖b4+ ♔a2
 53 h7!

Having stopped the black pawn by driving the king in front of it, White indirectly protects his own

h-pawn. It cannot be taken without loss of a rook. However, the position is still not simple; I have let Black advance his passed pawn too far. The win hangs by one tempo.

53 ... ♚bc8
 54 b7 ♚c2+
 55 ♔f3 ♚b2
 56 ♖c4+ ♚b3+
 57 ♔g4 ♔b2
 58 ♖c8 ♚xh7

After 58...a2 59 ♖xh8 a1♖ (59...♚xb7 60 ♖g8 a1♖ 61 h8♖) 60 b8♖ ♖d1+ 61 ♔g5. White escapes the checks since the rook on b3 is pinned.

59 b8♖ ♚g7+
 60 ♔h5 ♚xg3
 61 ♖d6 ♚h3+
 62 ♔g6 ♚bg3+
 63 ♔f7 ♚h7+
 64 ♔xe6 ♚h6+
 65 ♔f5 ♚xd6
 66 ed a2
 67 d7 a1♖
 68 ♖b7+ 1-0

White's next move will be d8♖ and Black hasn't a single check.

I have now acquainted you with my approach to one aspect of the study of chess. In each game that we examined, we encountered the problem of one key move – usually occurring just after the opening – which gave a particular direction to the game and exerted an immense influence on the further course of the struggle. To me this is very much a problem for the imagination, not only involving chess principles as such, but also the player's intuition, emotions, psychological condition. The inspired solutions I demonstrated could only be conceived directly at the board in the process of a tense contest. My advice therefore is to fortify yourself psychologically, cultivate your intuition and learn to control your emotions. Do not confine yourself to the acquisition of knowledge; aim at self-improvement in the most diverse areas.

5 Practical Exercises

Mark Dvoretsky

I suggest that you exercise your skill by trying to answer for yourselves the questions which confronted the players in the opening stage of a game played some time ago.

I found this game in the remarkable book *Het groot analyseboek* by Jan Timman, published in 1979. I studied Timman's analyses with immense interest and to my own great benefit. Certainly, I discovered several mistakes in them. If an annotator doesn't confine himself to general remarks but makes a genuine attempt to investigate a game deeply, then of course some mistakes are inevitable, owing to the sheer complexity of the problems facing the analyst. Many errors pointed out by readers of the book were corrected in the English edition entitled *The Art of Chess Analysis*. Then in 1989, Timman presented me with a new edition in French: *L'art de l'analyse*.

The commentaries to the games in Timman's book had been written at various times over a period of years and published in a Dutch chess magazine. The game you are going to see is one of the first in the collection, and appears to be annotated to a lower standard than the rest. It

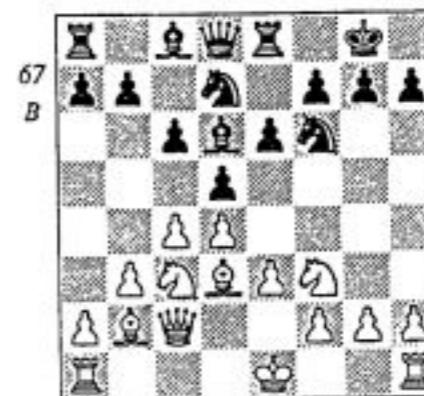
clearly illustrates the fact that Timman was an indifferent analyst in his youth. Later, with accumulated experience, he began to analyse much better.

You will be given a fairly short time – from 5 to 15 minutes – to find the solution to each of the exercises I set you (some of which defeated Timman himself). But don't worry – you will be helped by some 'leading questions' which define your task more precisely.

Usually the problems that are set in competitions have completely clear-cut solutions – such as a forcing combination or a precisely calculated endgame. The test I am about to give you is a little unorthodox. Many questions will be of an obscure nature. It will be sometimes be hard to prove that one line of play is better than another. You will have to trust your general impression of the position, your intuition. Calculation of variations will also be required, of course; but it will be even more important to survey all the resources for both yourself and your opponent, and to assess the resulting situations correctly.

The questions will be of an entirely practical nature, and should be

answered from the point of view of a player rather than an annotator. Your task will be to find – within the limits of the allotted time – the variations which are most important and most relevant to taking a practical decision. You will need to find the best possible trade-off between calculating variations and making positional judgements.



Polugaevsky-Mecking
Mar del Plata 1971
Semi-Slav Defence

1	c4	c6
2	♘f3	d5
3	e3	♘f6
4	♘c3	e6
5	b3	♘bd7
6	♙b2	♙d6
7	d4	0-0

At this point 8 ♜c2 would lead to a well-known position from the Meran Variation (1 d5 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 ♘c3 e6 5 e3 ♘bd7 6 ♜c2 ♙d6 7 b3 0-0 8 ♙b2) in which White's light-squared bishop is most often developed on e2. However Polugaevsky deviates slightly from the usual set-up.

8	♙d3	♞e8
9	♜c2 (67)	

Now for the first exercise.

Q1 Indicate the basic candidate moves or possibilities for Black (10 minutes).

Well, nearly all of you stated

Black's basic ideas correctly. There were even some suggestions that I didn't have in mind but are also worth examining. I considered that there were three basic possibilities here:

a) 9...dc 10 bc e5 – the standard plan in similar positions, provided that the bishop is on e2. With the bishop on d3, it looks weaker.

b) The immediate 9...e5 – in such cases you always have to decide whether it pays to allow an exchange on d5.

c) The preparatory move 9...♞e7, the idea of which will be discussed presently.

Vadim Zviagintsev suggested the totally different plan of completing Black's development with ...b6 and ...♙b7. I shall not discuss this suggestion at any length, as I have not analysed it, but it seems quite sensible, and Black does sometimes play that way in similar situations – so it scores a bonus point.

Let me now state my own preference. The move I like best is 9...♞e7. Of course I cannot prove anything

I can only offer an explanation. What is the idea of the move? Well, let us consider – why didn't White castle on move 9? Because of the reply 9...e5!. White would then be unable to take on d5 in view of the fork with 10...e4. He would have to exchange on e5 in circumstances favourable to Black.

The point of 9 ♖c2 was to keep control of the e4 square, so that after 9...e5 White would have the chance to exchange on d5. This explains Black's quite subtle reply 9...♗e7. It is a useful move in this kind of position anyway, but in addition Black renews the threat of the fork after ...e6-e5.

Vasya Emelin was the only one to choose this move – for this I award a bonus point to him too.

9...♗e7 was not played in the game or indicated in the notes. It is essentially an opening novelty, and quite a good one. This indeed is how novelties are devised; you just have to investigate the game or opening variation attentively and fathom its concealed ideas.

In his list of 'candidate moves', Yan Teplitsky gave almost every feasible move including 9...c5. This is rather overdoing things; it is like trying to fire a broadside. With such an abundance of possibilities, it is hard to reach any precise conclusions; too much time is needed. Try to use your judgement to set some limit to the list of candidate moves.

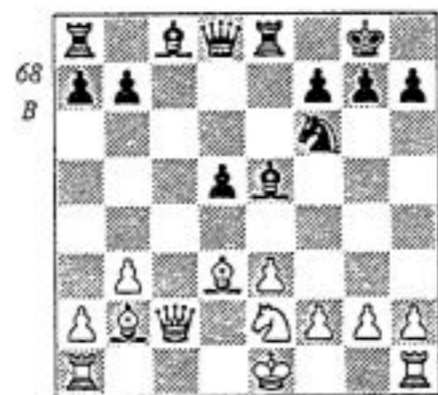
9 ... e5

10 cd cd

In such positions the typical move ♖b5 is sometimes played, but of course not here in view of the check on b4.

11 de ♖xe5
12 ♖xe5 ♗xe5
13 ♖e2 (68)

The last few moves by both sides were fairly logical. White is trying to simplify the position by exchanging the dark-squared bishops. Now Black has to take a crucial decision.



Q2 How should Black continue? (10 minutes).

Given quiet play, White will obtain a small but stable positional advantage. So above all you should look at moves which disrupt the 'normal' flow of the game.

The first attempt is 13...♗a5+ 14 ♗c3 ♗xc3+ 15 ♗xc3 ♗xc3+ 16 ♖xc3, and now 16...d4 – since otherwise White would have the more pleasant ending. After 17 ♖b5! Black must sacrifice the exchange with 17...de 18 ♖c7 ef+.

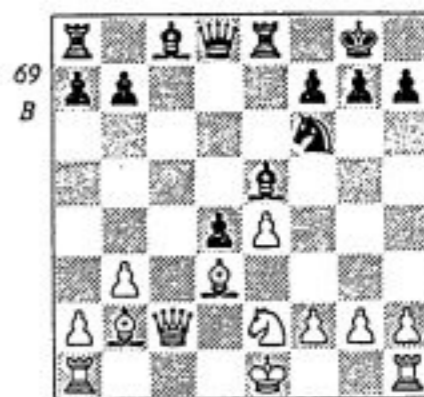
You nearly all reached this position in your analysis, but not everyone succeeded in following the variation through clearly to its end. However, in the first edition of his book, even Timman went wrong. He gave an exclamation mark to the bad move 19 ♖d2?, which is refuted by 19...♗d8 20 ♖xa8 ♗f5. The right continuation, of course, is 19 ♖xf2 ♖g4+ 20 ♖g1 ♗d8 21 ♖xa8 ♗xd3 22 h3. An almost identical position – imagine the black rook on d2! – might be unclear owing to the bad position of the white king. But as it is, White has everything in order, for example 22...♖f6 23 ♖h2, or 22...♖e3 23 ♖f2. Black doesn't have proper compensation for the exchange.

This whole variation occurred in a later game, Makarychev-Chekhov, Moscow 1981.

Seeing that the exchange sacrifice is unsound, the check on a5 has little point. Another active try is more interesting – 13...d4!?

If White replies 14 f4 or 14 ♗d1, then 14...♗a5+ is strong. In answer to 14 ed, one of you suggested 14...♗d6!?. After 15 0-0 Black has a bishop sacrifice on h2. After 15 h3, Black has 15...♗a5+ 16 ♗c3 ♗h5 or 16...♗g5, exerting pressure on the kingside. Very clever! The simple 14...♗xd4 is also quite sufficient for equality.

The thematic reply is 14 e4! (69). This is crucial for the evaluation of ...d5-d4.



Q3 What are the consequences of 14...♖xe4? (5 minutes).

You all without exception gave the correct verdict. After 15 ♗xe4 d3 16 ♗xd3 ♗xb2, White should not play the move given by Timman – 17 ♗d1? ♗a5+ – but simply 17 ♗xh7+! ♖h8 18 ♗xb2, and Black has no compensation for the pawn sacrificed.

What should Black do instead, then? White has the better pawn structure and is threatening to advance with f2-f4. The ending after 14...♗a5+ 15 ♗d2 is clearly in his favour. Black must act as energetically as he can, and I think the only serious possibility is 14...♖g4!. But after 15 h3, what is the reply? Black can deprive his opponent of castling rights, but after 15...♗a5+ 16 ♖f1 the advantage is still with White. A stronger move is 15...♗h4. Now after 16 0-0, Black can strike with 16...♖h2!, and all kinds of threats arise: ...♗xh3, or ...♖f3+. It is true that by playing 16 g3, White suddenly reminds his opponent that the

d-pawn has been *en prise* for some time. But Black is not disheartened, since after 16...♖h6 17 ♘xd4 ♗b6 or 17...♞d8, the situation on the board is as confused as ever. Can you by any chance give a verdict on the final position of this variation? I worked out this whole series of moves in my analysis, sifting and discarding the alternative lines. Black is clearly justified in playing this way. It is risky for him – he remains a pawn down – but White too is taking a risk with his weakened kingside and his king stuck in the centre.

So the conclusion is that Black has the queen check on a5 which is not very effective, and also the enticing 13...d4!? which attempts to stir up complications. But Mecking opted for a different move:

13 ... ♗d6

To assess this move objectively, you need to do the following exercise.

Q4 Annotate the next series of moves played in the game (15 minutes).

14 ♗xe5 ♗xe5
15 0-0 ♗d7
16 ♘d4 (70)

First let us evaluate the diagram position. It is evident that after the exchange of dark-squared bishops, White retained a slight positional plus due to his opponent's isolated d-pawn and passive light-squared



bishop. It is not certain that White will be able to win, but at any rate he will be pressing throughout the game. Could Black have avoided this prospect?

Some of you suggested taking on e5 with the rook instead of the queen. I shall not give any points for this, for I don't see any particular merit in it. White replies to 14...♞xe5 with 15 ♘d4, and is not worried about 15...♗b4+ 16 ♗d2 ♗xd4?? 17 ♗xh7+. He plans ♞c1, followed (if he has the chance) by ♗c7. It is also worth considering 15 ♞c1 d4 16 e4.

After 14...♗xe5 15 0-0, the recommendation of 15...♞e4 is unconvincing. White puts his knight on d4 and at a suitable moment can even exchange on e4, emerging with a strong knight against a passive bishop. Black's position has the same defects as in the actual game.

However, the move 15...♞g4! gives Black quite good counter-chances; it enables him to stir the position up. Naturally you could not work out the variations accurately in the short time, but your positional

judgement rightly told many of you that this was the move Black had to decide on. The logic that operates here is typical of such situations: before resigning yourself to defending passively for the whole game, you must first look for any active resources that may change the unfavourable course of events. And if a move such as 15...♞g4 has no direct refutation and leads to unclear situations, it should be played.

But White, for his part, could also have played more strongly and not allowed this unnecessary sharpening of the fight. In place of 15 0-0, a good method was 15 ♗c3!. Many of you pointed it out. It is important to drive the black queen off its excellent central square. The position after 15...♗xc3+ 16 ♘xc3 is one that we know already from the variation 13...♗a5+; our analysis of it was not superfluous. As you recall, 16...d4 17 ♘b5 gives White the advantage; while if the black queen retreats, White can castle or play 16 ♗d4.

Would you suggest answering 15 ♗c3 with 15...♗g5...? Well, White simply castles, and 16...♗h3 is harmless because of 17 ♘f4. White plans ♗d4 followed by ♗f4, or the even more active ♗c7. At any rate, in this line there is none of the counterplay which flares up after 15 0-0?! ♞g4!.

Volodya Baklan indicated the variation 15 ♗c3 ♗h5 16 0-0 ♞g4 17 h3 ♞e5. But after 18 ♘f4 White still stands a little better; the pawn on d5 is weak. White is not obliged to

castle but can play 16 ♗d4. Still, on the whole it is true that Black has to wriggle somehow. I award a bonus point for this attempt to work out the consequences of 15 ♗c3.

We are now in a position to assess 13...♗d6 objectively. It leads to a somewhat inferior, passive position. Black should have preferred the more dynamic 13...d4!?

I give the maximum score of ten to those who pointed out the counter-attacking idea 15...♞g4! for Black as well as the move 15 ♗c3! for White. In two cases, your answer was based on the correct assumption – White has to think up something in place of 15 0-0, in view of the strong retort 15...♞g4! – but the move you gave was not ♗c3. For this I awarded part-scores between five and ten. Yan Teplitsky scored the least points because he 'fired a broadside' just as in the first exercise. He had been warned! Once again he pointed to a mass of possibilities including the correct ones, but didn't give a clear preference to any of them. You shouldn't be afraid of expressing your opinion. Of course it may turn out to be mistaken, but you learn from your mistakes. After all, the true aim is not to score maximum points in this competition. We are trying to develop an approach to decision-making, which you can utilise in practical play. In practice, you are obliged in the end to make a clear-cut choice between a move you like less and one you like more.

Now let us take a thorough look at the variation 15 0-0 ♖g4!. How does White defend against the mate? The first attempt is 16 g3 ♗h5 17 h4 (71).



Q5 How should Black continue? (5 minutes).

Here Black has the powerful move 17...g5!, which gives him a splendid position and a strong attack. The threats are ...gh, and if appropriate ...♗e5. You analysed 18 ♖g2. The reply I had in mind was 18...gh 19 ♖h1 h3+. In one of the answers, someone wrote that 18...gh was a bad move because of 19 ♖f4. I don't think so – after 19...h3+ 20 ♖h1 ♗h6, Black stands well. But perhaps 18...♖xe3 is even stronger. The student who suggested this scores a bonus point.

The only difficulty about this exercise is the fact that Black has another tempting move, 17...♗e5, which is not so easy to reject. This was actually the move recommended by Timman, but if we continue the

variation with 18 ♖f4 ♖f3+ 19 ♖g2 ♗g4 (the piece sacrifice 19...♖xh4+ 20 gh ♗g4+ 21 ♖h2 ♗xh4+ 22 ♖g1 ♗g4+ 23 ♖g2 is also inadequate) 20 ♖h1, then it becomes clear that with White's very unpleasant threat of 21 ♖e2, the position must be assessed in his favour.

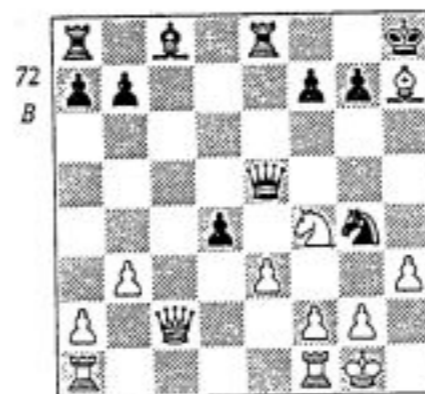
Let us continue our review of the defences to the mate threat which arises after 15 0-0 ♖g4. The second try is 16 ♖g3. In this case there are scarcely any questions to be asked; Black obviously replies 16...h5!. Play continues (let us say) with 17 ♖fe1 h4 18 ♖f1 h3 19 g3 ♗f6, followed by ...♗e5. An attack on the light squares commences; Black's position is clearly better.

Timman recommends 16 ♖f4, and comes to an amusing conclusion: after 16...♖f6 (with a view to 17...d4) 17 ♗e2 ♖g4 18 ♖f4, the game ends in a draw. But does Black need to bring his knight back? He has two active moves, 16...g5 and 16...d4. In the first edition of his book (in Dutch), Timman wrote that both these moves were bad. In the English edition he only rejected one of them. It was not until the French edition (which took into account an article of mine published in *New in Chess*, criticising the mistakes in his book) that he gave the correct verdict – both moves promise Black an excellent game.

I will demonstrate one of these variations now. I shall then ask you to work out the other.

16...g5 17 h3 gf! 18 ef ♗xf4 19 hg ♖xg4 gives Black the advantage. If White regains his pawn by taking on h7, Black will attack in the h-file. Where did Timman go wrong here? He was led astray by the attempt to win a pawn: 17...♖xe3? 18 fe ♗xc3+ 19 ♖h2 gf 20 ♖f3, and by now it is White who is mounting a formidable attack.

The second variation begins with 16...d4 17 ♖xh7+ ♖h8 18 h3 (72).



Q6 What position should Black be aiming for? (10 minutes).

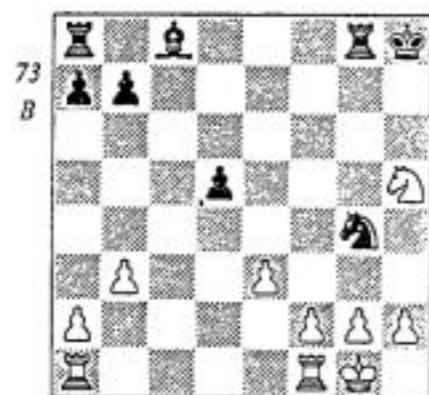
Black has quite a few tempting possibilities. There are some fairly sharp, complicated lines; you cannot of course analyse them fully in the space of ten minutes. The aim is not so much to calculate as to estimate, to acquire a feel for where your advantage lies and what kind of position will be soundest. Try it.

Timman examines three continuations. The first goes 18...♖xf2 19 ♗xf2 de 20 ♗h4 g5 21 ♗h6 ♗g7 22 ♗xg7+ ♖xg7 23 ♖h5+ ♖xh7 24

♖f6+, and White wins. The second goes 18...♖f6 19 ♖g6!! (the pawn on f7 is awkward to defend) 19...de 20 ♖xf7 ♗xf4 21 ♖xe8 ♖xe8. Black has gained two pieces for a rook, but his game is untenable owing to his weak king position; after 22 fe! ♗xe3+ 23 ♖h1, White's threats are irresistible. Finally, the third continuation goes 18...de 19 hg ef+ 20 ♗xf2! ♖xh7 21 ♖ae1. But why should Black commit hara-kiri, opening up lines for his opponent's rooks? In this last line he has the perfectly simple 19...♗xf4! (instead of 19...ef+?), giving him splendid prospects.

So we see that after 16 ♖f4 Black is by no means compelled to settle for a draw but can choose between two attractive possibilities. What is White to do, then? Did his imprecise move 15 0-0?! really give him the worse position? I do not think so. There is one more variation to examine: 16 ♖xh7+ ♖h8, and only now 17 ♖g3. Obviously Black ought to win the bishop for three pawns: 17...g6 18 ♖xg6 fg 19 ♗xg6, with the probable continuation 19...♖g8 20 ♗h5+ ♗xh5 21 ♖xh5 (73).

Solving endgame studies is one thing. Once you are lucky enough to hit on the right sequence of moves, it is generally no trouble to evaluate the end position – it is a straight win, draw or loss. Practical play is much more complicated. Here, forced variations very often culminate in wholly unclear situations. I do not



know what judgement to pass on the diagram position. If anyone does know, let them tell us! But in any event I maintain that this is White's best option in response to the knight sortie 15...♞g4!

If Black had played that move, imagine how hard White's task would have been! He would have had to examine 16 ♞g3, 16 ♞f4 and 16 g3 – and then select this piece sacrifice (16 ♜xh7+) by process of elimination. He would have needed to feel – since exhaustive calculation was impossible – that everything else was dangerous for him, whereas in this case an unclear ending would arise.

We have now finished with the opening stage of the game under discussion. The play settled down to a quiet middlegame. It would be wrong to assert that White had a large plus, let alone a won position. Experienced, cool defenders are usually capable of saving themselves in this kind of situation.

But subsequently the difference in class between the two opponents

made itself felt. Polugaevsky is a mature positional player. As for Mecking ... A year after this game, Tigran Petrosian wrote about him: 'Certainly, he is by no means a bad player. Perhaps he will improve, but I am convinced he will never be World Champion. This is mainly because of the narrowness of his chess thinking. For example, Mecking does not understand the significance of weak and strong squares. I have played him three times. In 1968 he lost to me owing to the weakness of his light squares. A year later he presented me with all the dark squares and again suffered defeat. And in the San Antonio tournament of 1972, Grandmaster Mecking again let me have dark-square control, and with it – victory. What distinguishes Mecking is lively piece play, but he has no genuine grasp of the underlying nature of a position; this is what makes me have doubts about his future as a player.'

A severe but instructive 'diagnosis'. I would point out that a weakness on squares of a particular colour usually results from placing pawns on the same colour of squares as your bishop. We shall see Mecking commit precisely this elementary positional error.

Here is how the game continued.

- 16 ... ♜ac8
 17 ♞e2 ♞d6
 18 ♞b2

Take note: if you have a light-squared bishop, it usually pays to

place your queen on a square of the opposite colour. White covers the vulnerable squares on the queenside, and prepares to advance his pawns there if the occasion arises.

- 18 ... a6?!

Petrosian is proved right – Mecking doesn't know which squares to keep his pawns on.

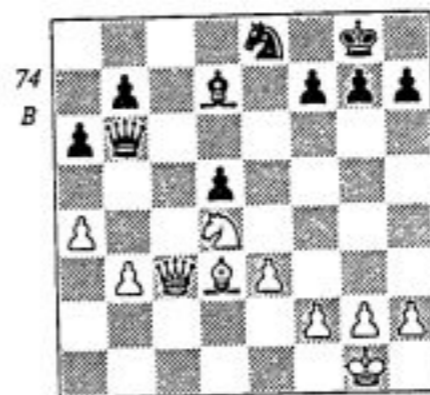
- 19 ♜ac1 ♞g4

Too late! This no longer has much point.

- 20 ♞f3 ♞b6
 21 ♜xc8 ♜xc8
 22 ♜c1

Polugaevsky follows the well-known rule: 'Take young players into the endgame!' It is easy to see that 22...♞xc3? fails to 23 ♜xc8+ ♜xc8 24 ♞c1 or 24 ♞e5.

- 22 ... ♞f6
 23 ♜xc8+ ♜xc8
 24 ♞c3 ♜d7
 25 ♞d4 ♞e8
 26 a4! (74)



There is an old saying: 'When two do the same thing, it is *not* the same.' Polugaevsky places a pawn on the

same colour square as his bishop, just as Mecking did before. But his aim is to advance it further, to fix his opponent's queenside. If Black plays 26...a5 to thwart this plan, there follows 27 ♜b5! ♜xb5 28 ♞xb5. This kind of device – which incidentally is quite difficult, and demands a subtle appraisal of the position – is called the transformation of advantages. White gives up one of his trumps – he exchanges his opponent's 'bad' bishop – but in return he procures another: a clear superiority in the placing of his pieces. Black will have great difficulty defending the entry points.

- 26 ... ♞c7
 27 ♞xc7 ♞xc7
 28 a5

Here it was essential for Black to work out 28...♞e6!?. If 29 ♞xe6, then 29...f6 30 f4 ♞f7, followed by ...h6, ...♞f6 and ...e5. This was his best chance, giving realistic hopes of a draw. But Black plays a superficial move instead.

- 28 ... ♞f8?!
 29 ♞f1

Now the idea no longer works – after 29...♞e6 30 ♞xe6 fe?, the pawn on h7 is *en prise*. But Black could have played 29...h6 and only then ...♞e6.

- 29 ... ♞e7
 30 ♞e2 g6

Funny to see a grandmaster play like this! He sees that 30...♞e6 is met by 31 ♞f5+, and without any hesitation places one more pawn

on the same colour squares as his bishop.

31 ♖d2 ♘e6
32 ♘xe6?!

I find this hard to understand. The obvious move was 32 ♖c3.

32 ... ♜f6
33 ♜f4 ♜e5
34 ♜g3 ♖d6

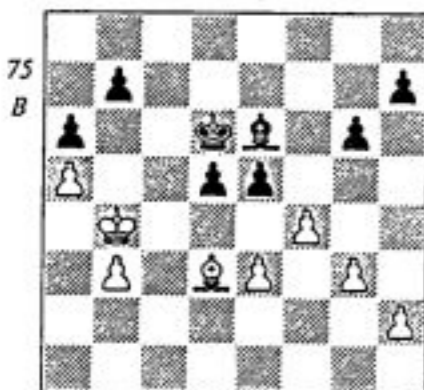
At this point Timman tries to show by detailed analysis that Black could have held out with 34...♘b5!. To me his variations don't seem sufficiently convincing, but there is no doubt that this was Black's best chance. At any rate, White could not have gone into a king and pawn endgame, since after 35 ♘xb5 ab 36 ♖c3 ♖e6!, Black can answer 37 ♖b4 with 37...d4!

35 ♖c3

Now 35...♘b5 is no longer playable; in the variation 36 ♘xb5 ab 37 ♖b4 d4, White captures on e5 with check.

35 ... ♘e6
36 ♖b4 (75)

We now come to our final exercise.



Q7 What would you play here?
(5 minutes).

Mecking has spoiled his position enough already, and I am not convinced it can be held. But in any situation you must fight.

White threatens to play 37 ♜f6+ ♖xe5 38 ♖c5, penetrating on the dark squares. If Black exchanges on f4, the white king will transfer itself to d4. It is unlikely that White would fail to exploit such a huge positional plus, with all Black's pawns on the same colour squares as his bishop.

The most natural move is 36...d4! (if only to put a pawn on a dark square). I only gave you five minutes because it is not necessary to calculate the move exactly. A cursory appraisal of each side's resources is sufficient. Perhaps this move loses all the same, but it is not such a simple matter. White would have to come to a decision – to take on d4 or e5, or perhaps play 37 e4. But who knows which of these is correct?

Timman, at any rate, does not know. At first, for some reason, he didn't examine this defence at all. After I had pointed it out in my article, he wrote in the French edition of his book that White wins with 37 e4, followed by 38 ♜f6+ ♖xe5 39 ♖c5 ♘xb3 40 ♖b6. Nonsense! Black has nothing to fear after 40...♘d1 41 ♖xb7 ♘f3. In any case, if he wishes, he can easily parry White's 'threat' with 37...♘d7.

36 ... ♜f7?

This further confirms Petrosian's remarks about Mecking's poor positional understanding. The remainder of the game is a lucid illustration of how to win such endings.

37 ♜f7 ♘g4
38 ♖c3 ♘f3
38...♖c5 39 b4+.
39 ♖d4 ♘g2

If White had the chance place his bishop on the h1-a8 diagonal, he could break with e3-e4 and attack the pawn on b7.

40 h4 ♘f3
41 b4

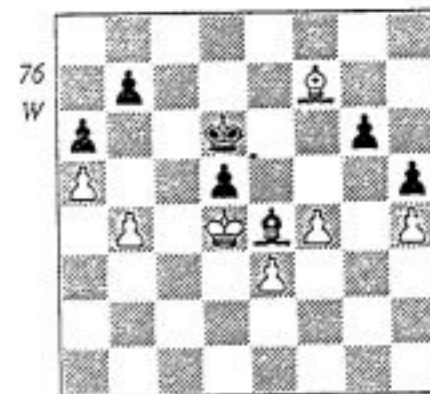
Before starting the decisive action, White makes all the useful moves to improve his position – following the well-known endgame rule, 'Do not hurry!'

Incidentally, this statement is not as obvious as you may think. Are these pawn moves really useful to White? After all, a zugzwang position might well arise, where a tempo move with a pawn (b3-b4 or h2-h4) would be very handy. It is likely that Polugaevsky already sees how he will break through; he knows he does not need to keep any tempi in hand for the purpose of giving his opponent the move.

41 ... ♘h1
42 ♘e2 ♘g2
43 ♘g4 ♘e4
44 ♘c8 ♖c7
45 ♘e6 ♖d6
46 ♘g8 h6
47 ♘f7 h5

Forced.

48 ♘e8 ♘c2
49 ♘f7 ♘e4 (76)



50 f5!

This break overthrows Black's defence. If 50...g6, then 51 ♘xh5 and the passed h-pawn is decisive.

The final moves were: 50...♘xf5 51 ♘xd5 ♘c8 52 e4 ♖e7 53 ♖e5 g5 54 hg h4 55 g6 h3 56 g7 h2 57 g8 ♖h1 58 ♖f7+ ♖d8 59 ♖f8+ 1-0

Let us think about the reasons for Black's defeat. As regards the middlegame and endgame, everything is clear. Enough has already been said about Mecking's failure to understand the simple positional question of which squares to place the pawns on.

But then, the seeds of defeat were already sown in the opening or in the transition from opening to middlegame, when Black was left with an unpromising position. Why did that happen?

Mecking played very passively, conceding the initiative to his opponent. He didn't utilise the attacking

opportunities that presented themselves in the opening – 13...d4! and 15...♟g4! (or for that matter in the endgame – 36...d4!). Perhaps this was because he didn't sense the strategic danger in the situation. Mecking may have imagined that defending against an experienced grandmaster is simplest in a quiet position. But this is a fundamental error. The very thing an experienced grandmaster wants is to play a position in which he is risking nothing and the only question is whether he is going to win or draw. A double-edged game with a risk of losing is far less congenial to him.

It cannot be said that White's opening play was ideal. By failing to find 15 ♖c3!, he gave Black the chance for 15...♟g4!, which would have abruptly altered the character of the fight. But afterwards Polugaevsky's conduct of the game was entirely rational.

Passive tactics in the opening stage are dubious. What is needed is the opposite – maximum energy as well as maximum precision. After all, the outcome of the opening skirmish frequently determines the whole complexion of the subsequent play. The basic theme of these exercises was nothing other than the

struggle for the initiative in the opening. You were training yourselves to find concrete solutions to opening problems.

Now for the results of our competition. The top scorers were bunched together. The single point difference between the winner and those who shared second to fourth places was of no great significance. The contest did nonetheless have an outright winner, and it was Maxim Boguslavsky with 38 points. I congratulate him:

The next three places were shared between Dragiev, Emelin and Georgiev with 37. Makariev and Zviagintsev scored 35 points each. Makariev fell down rather badly at the start, in his analysis of 13...♖a5+. Vadim Zviagintsev failed to cope with the series of moves that had to be annotated; he didn't indicate 15...♟g4! – a very serious omission. Apart from this major failure, he did well in all the exercises. Volodya Baklan gained 33 points. The lowest score on this occasion went to Yan Teplitsky. You see how hard it is when you join in competitions at the last moment. He had only just arrived and evidently didn't have time to acclimatise himself.

6 Building an Opening Repertoire

Mark Dvoretsky

There are many different approaches to working on your opening repertoire. It is an individual matter, and every chessplayer has his own guidelines. I hope that those I am going to describe will nonetheless also prove useful.

Which openings to include in your repertoire

Your choice of openings should depend first and foremost on your own taste and style of play. This rule may sound obvious, but all the same it is quite often broken, even by strong players.

When I was teaching at the Institute of Physical Culture, one of the students, a Candidate Master whose tournament results were rather poor, showed me some of his games. He was a quiet, sober-minded young man, and I was astonished that he played sharp openings like the Sicilian and King's Indian. Why was this? The answer turned out to be simple. In the Moscow Palace of Young Pioneers he had belonged to a group whose coach was keen on fashionable opening lines. In other words, the young player's choice of openings had depended not on his

own taste but on that of the coach. I advised him to change his repertoire – in particular, to switch to 1 d4 with White. Soon afterwards his results improved, since he started playing his own kind of chess.

That was an example from the experience of a Candidate Master. But it seems to me that an entirely similar mistake was made by Grandmaster Mikhail Tal in his preparation for the return match against Botvinnik. In their first match, Tal had had some problems on the White side of the Caro-Kann, even though he achieved a plus score from that opening. In the return match he resolved to 'stun' Botvinnik with the Advance Variation which at that time was rarely used. From a strictly technical viewpoint he may have prepared it quite well. He did, in fact, have some interesting ideas in this system, yet he registered a minus score with it: one win, several draws and two losses. The explanation is simple. Tal had an excellent understanding and feel for open positions with lively piece play, but e4-e5 leads to a closed position of the strategic type. In such a game Botvinnik had no trouble finding his bearings, whereas this was not at all Tal's forte. He went straight into

battle on Botvinnik's territory, just where the latter was more sure of himself. This being the case, opening preparation was rather beside the point. You may obtain a promising position, but if you have little flair for the type of game in question, you are quite likely to make mistakes. That is just what happened – Tal repeatedly failed to make the most of his position.

It may sound like a platitude, but openings do have to be studied in accordance with your own tastes. Another point is perhaps a little less obvious: *in constructing an opening repertoire, you need to take your powers of memory into account.* I know chessplayers with brilliant memories (Gavrikov, Balashov and many others). It is worth their while to make use of this asset and equip themselves with complicated modern opening systems where there is a great deal of theory – where you have to know an immense quantity of games and memorise various refinements, since if your opponent knows a little more, you may suffer a disaster in the opening. There are plenty of such variations – for example the very sharp Najdorf Variation of the Sicilian. In openings like the Grünfeld and King's Indian, White has an extremely wide choice; he is the one who determines the opening formation, and Black has to be prepared for everything. You can only play such lines with Black if you have a good memory.

Another thing that players with good memories can usefully do is to expand and diversify their repertoire. They can afford to play a variety of openings, since they are able to absorb and memorise them. This enables them to select whatever system is most unwelcome to a particular opponent.

For players with less good memories it is dangerous to follow the same path. I know from my own experience what an excruciating labour it is to memorise 'theory' before a game. You have it all written down in notebooks, you have gone through it ten times before starting play, and still you can't remember it. If this is so, it may well be better to concentrate on what I would call 'opening schemes' – logical systems with a smaller amount of theory, in which it is more important to understand the position and know about typical ideas and resources than to memorise specific details and precise move-orders.

In general, openings might be formally divided into 'opening variations' and 'opening schemes'. Of course this classification is relative, since the theory of any opening involves both a set of exact, concrete variations and elements of logic and planning – the question is only how these factors inter-relate. Thus, *with a good memory, go ahead and learn 'opening variations'; with an indifferent memory, concentrate on 'opening schemes'.*

Example of an 'opening scheme'

A long time ago, when I was still a 'first category' player, I was interested in the question of how to combat the Closed Variation of the Sicilian Defence. People are sometimes worried by strange problems! How to play a normal Sicilian with Black – I evidently knew that.

My coach at that time was A.Roshal, and I have to say that he was a good one. He is now a well-known journalist, though unfortunately somewhat lacking in principle. In one of his coaching sessions he demonstrated a system of play against the Closed Sicilian. I liked the system and it seemed logical. I saw that it was not only suited to that particular opening but would work against a number of analogous formations by White – for instance the King's Indian Attack. In other words, this scheme is fairly flexible and versatile. I recommend it to you too; you will not regret it.

Right away I started employing this new plan.

Gorodilov-Dvoretzky Leningrad 1964 French Defence

1 e4 e6
2 ♖e2 c5

Black's plan is suited to many contexts, including the Chigorin Variation of the French.

3 g3 ♘c6
4 ♘f3 g6
5 ♗g2 ♗g7
6 0-0 ♘ge7
7 d3 0-0

Immediately after the game I discovered that in such situations Black has to reckon with the positional threat of c4-e5, as played in the beautiful game Petrosian-Pachman, Bled 1961. (This game, as well as some others I shall mention, can be found in the Appendix to this lecture.) But when you are just starting to play a new system, there are many refinements you don't yet know about. Deep understanding comes with practice.

8 c3 d6
9 ♘e1?

I had played this way in similar situations myself. I would retreat the knight, push my pawns to f4 and g4, and expect to give mate shortly. I was particularly interested in how Black can resist this sort of attack.

9 ... ♞b8

The advance of the b-pawn is Black's basic plan. He creates counterplay on the queenside.

10 f4 b5
11 ♘f3 b4
12 ♗e3 bc
13 bc ♗a6 (77)

Strategically I believe Black virtually has a won game. A short while ago the bishop on g7 faced a solidly defended white pawn on c3, but now it is pressing against a weak, vulnerable one. The other bishop has also

occupied an excellent diagonal, attacking the pawn on d3. Black controls the open b-file and will increase the pressure with ...♖a5. His well thought-out scheme for deploying his forces has enabled him to work up a queenside initiative in a short time.

What is White to do? Look how flexibly the black knights are positioned. They defend each other and at the same time the knight on e7 is controlling f5. Black has to give close attention to White's possible thrust with his f-pawn. If this breakthrough is threatened (for example after g3-g4), Black will prevent it with ...f7-f5. In so doing he will retain control of all the central squares; his position will remain solid and supple.



14 ♖c2?

My opponent wants to develop his queen's knight, but comes up against a tactical stroke typical of this set-up.

14 ... ♘b4!
15 cb ♙xa1

There is no need to show any

more – Black is a sound exchange up, and won easily.

My first outing with this opening scheme had been a success. Things went equally well in the following game.

Turovsky-Dvoretsky
Moscow 1964
French Defence

1 e4 e6
2 ♖e2 c5
3 ♘f3 ♘c6
4 g3 g6
5 ♙g2 ♙g7
6 0-0 d6

By this time, as you can see, I understood the position better and didn't allow e4-e5. It was Cicero who said that anyone can make a mistake but only a madman persists in his errors.

7 ♘c3 ♘ge7
8 d3 0-0

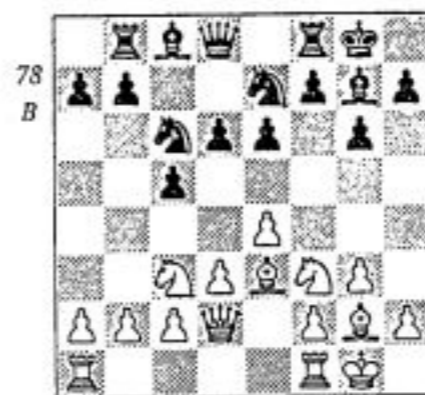
The position now resembles a Closed Sicilian (since the knight is on c3), but it is more comfortable for Black than that system normally is, since White doesn't usually block his f-pawn with his king's knight. In addition, it is hard to make sense of the move ♖e2 – it serves no purpose for White.

9 ♙e3 ♞b8

Black's plan is the same – to extend the diagonal of his king's bishop by advancing the b-pawn.

10 ♖d2 (78)

Here is an interesting problem



which is important for the whole variation. White probably wants to play ♙h6. Black can preserve his strong bishop from exchange by playing 10...♞e8 and meeting 11 ♙h6 with 11...♙h8, but a different reaction is also possible; Black may allow the exchange, then rearrange his pawns on dark squares (...e6-e5, ...f7-f6) and play to confine White's light-squared bishop which becomes 'bad'. Both strategies are feasible, and in each game Black needs to consider the specific reasons for adopting one or the other.

10 ... ♞e8?!

Why is this move dubious? At that time I didn't realise that Black must watch out for 11 d4 as well as 11 ♙h6. After the opening of the d-file, the pawn on d6 becomes vulnerable. *In such cases Black usually needs to prevent d3-d4 by playing ...♘d4.*

11 ♘d1?

White wants to seize the centre with c2-c3 and d3-d4. But this plan is too slow; it would only make sense if Black had no time to 'fasten onto' the pawn on c3 with his own b-pawn.

11 ... b5
12 c3 b4
13 d4 bc
14 bc ♙a6
15 ♞e1 cd
16 cd ♖a5!

Black's pieces are very harmoniously placed – much more so than White's. Just as in the previous game, the black bishops are sweeping the whole board, the rooks control the b- and c-files, and the white pawn on d4 is weak. After 17 ♖xa5 ♘xa5, the black knight would go to c4.

17 ♘c3 ♞ec8
18 ♞ec1 ♖a3

Threatening to invade on b2 with a rook.

19 ♞ab1 ♙a5

When you are sure of your plan you don't even need to think much – all your moves are natural. The game plays itself; Black could even have played this way in a blitz game.

20 ♞xb8 ♞xb8
21 ♞b1 ♞c8
22 ♘d1

Better is 22 ♘b5.

22 ... ♘c4

The harvest begins.

23 ♖b4 ♖xa2
24 ♘c3 ♖a3
25 ♙c1 ♖xb4
26 ♞xb4 ♘b6
27 ♙d2 ♘c6

0-1

White resigned since he is losing a second pawn.

In demonstrating this game I have not gone deeply into any variations. The first reason is that both opponents were only in the 'first category'. Concrete details and nuances are best studied in games by stronger players. But secondly, we are examining an 'opening scheme' rather than an 'opening variation'. In a case like this, the detailed analysis of variations is less important to us than the outline of the game, the plans of both players, the typical devices for conducting the fight.

This comparatively easy method of play brought results not only in junior contests. I later continued to employ the scheme successfully against some very strong opponents.

Bronstein-Dvoretsky
Moscow 1976
Sicilian Defence

1	e4	c5
2	♘c3	♘c6
3	g3	g6
4	♙g2	♙g7
5	d3	e6
6	♙e3	d6

Why not 6...♘d4 instead? That was what Denker played against Smyslov in the USSR-USA match in 1946. Take note, however: the black knight should occupy d4 only after the white king's knight has moved to f3 or e2. White answers 6...♘d4?! with 7 ♘ce2! followed by c2-c3 and d3-d4. The variation 7...♘xe2 8 ♘xe2 ♙xb2 9 ♚b1 favours White,

since 9...♙a5+ 10 ♙d2 ♙xa2 fails to 11 ♚xb2! ♙xb2 12 ♙c3.

7	f4	♘ge7
8	♘f3	

Now which move, 8...0-0 or 8...♘d4, do you think is more precise? We have already observed that Black has to take d3-d4 into account. It is not always dangerous, but it is better to prevent it all the same.

8	...	♘d4!
9	0-0	0-0

One of the basic positions of the Closed Sicilian has been reached. White has a number of continuations: 10 ♙d2, 10 ♙f2, 10 ♚b1; even the pawn sacrifice 10 e5! has been played. In this situation, general considerations are not enough; knowledge of the detailed theory is indispensable. You can easily find out about it for yourselves if you want, but at present we have other aims.

10	g4	
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What should Black play now? It would be very dangerous to allow a pawn sacrifice with f4-f5, breaking up the pawn cover in front of the black king. The standard response to such a threat, as we have said before, is the counterstroke ...f7-f5.

10	...	f5! (79)
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But how is Black going to take back on f5? In this kind of position there is a rule of thumb: recapture with the opposite pawn to the one your opponent captured with; in other words answer g4xf5 with ...e6xf5, and e4xf5 with ...g6xf5. I



don't know how to explain it logically, but my experience with the system tells me that this rule generally applies.

11	gf	ef
12	♙d2	

In this position the standard plan of ...♚b8, ...b5 and ...b4 is rather slow. Black needs to complete his development and go into action in the centre. What is the best square for his light-squared bishop? In such positions it often develops on e6 (after a preliminary ...♘h8, so that ♘g5 may be met by ...♙g8). But I decided to place it on c6 to oppose the white bishop on the long diagonal.

12	...	♙d7
13	♙f2	

White finally evicts the knight from d4.

13	...	♘xf3+
14	♙xf3	♙c6

Black wants to prepare ...d6-d5 (perhaps by playing ...b6 and bringing his queen to b7), after which he would win the battle for the centre.

15	♙g2	b6
16	♚ad1	♙c7

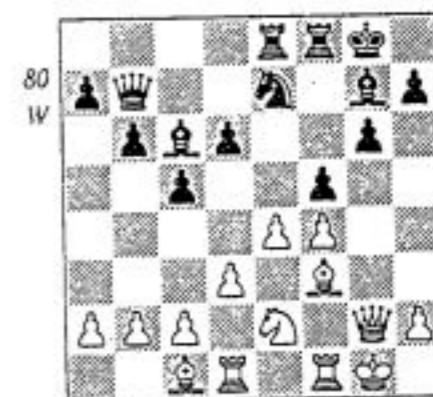
Black intends ...♙b7, ...♚ad8 and ...d5.

17	♘e2	
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Of course, taking the pawn on b2 is bad; White would answer c2-c3 and set about trapping the bishop. He now wants to play c2-c4 after first protecting the b-pawn. I guessed this plan and prepared an antidote.

17	...	♚ae8
18	♙c1	♙b7 (80)

Black's position is preferable; his pieces are exerting troublesome pressure on the opponent's centre.



19	c4?!	
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Positionally this move is justified; it prevents the advance ...d7-d5, and prepares to bring the knight to d5 via c3. However, in carrying out his plan, Bronstein has underestimated the flank diversion I have prepared. It seems he should have played 19 ♘g3, to which Black would reply 19...d5 20 e5 d4 with somewhat the better chances.

19	...	♙a6!
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I have a special name for this kind of move – 'the strategic dual attack'

The pawn on a2 is threatened, but in addition Black wishes to exchange pawns in the centre. If White takes on e4 with a piece, my knight will acquire the tremendous square f5. If he takes with his pawn, I shall capture on c4.

20 ♖c3 fe
21 de

Nevertheless 21 ♖xe4 was better. In my opponent's place I would not want to part with the pawn.

21 ... ♙d4+
22 ♖h1 ♗xc4
23 ♜fe1?! ♖h8
24 ♖e2 ♙g7
25 b3 ♗a6
26 ♖g3 ♗b7

Again Black has set up that battery on the long diagonal which he possessed a few moves earlier. Against the natural 27 ♜xd6, I had prepared the highly unpleasant counter-blow 27...♖f5! (28 ♜xc6 ♖h4!).

27 ♜g1?

He should have supported his bishop with 27 ♜f1. Now I start forcing events to my own advantage.

27 ... ♖f5!
28 ♖xf5 ♜xf5
28...gf 29 ♙b2 ♜f7 is also good.
29 ♜xd6 ♙xe4
30 ♙xe4 ♗xe4
31 ♗xe4 ♜xe4
32 ♜d8+ ♜f8
33 ♜xf8+ ♙xf8
34 f5 ♙g7!
35 fg ♙d4
36 g7+ ♖g8

37 ♜f1 ♖xg7

Black has a decisive advantage.

We shall come back to this 'opening scheme' later, but for the moment let us continue our discussion of how to construct an opening repertoire.

Some remarks on the technique for opening work

The most inefficient method – which I know that many of you use – is to write down opening information in a notebook. Nothing worse can be imagined! You fill up the pages with games and variations – then new games, fresh ideas, additional variations come to light, and you don't know where to put them. Some pages of information turn out to be unsound – they have to be revised or even discarded, and of course you can hardly insert clean pages into your book. A kind of aversion gradually develops – you feel how outdated your notes are, and how inconvenient it is to write down novelties.

All your information, especially on the openings, should be collected in a card index. The cards can either be miniature ones or large sheets. When necessary you can always write out a new card, affix it to any other one, throw away one that contains mistakes – in short, do what you like with them.

Another piece of advice is to leave wide margins; there will always be something to insert in them. Leave

gaps in places where you feel something new will crop up. Write on one side of the card only.

Artur Yusupov, Sergei Dolmatov and all other chessplayers who work with me possess large sets of files containing analyses of various openings or even individual variations. But today, of course, even this way of working is a little old-fashioned. Obviously it is much handier to manage your card index on a computer. In this form it is always just as good as new. You can easily amend it, add to it, correct it. You can use a system of codes whereby everything is neatly classified. Computerised handling of opening information is a topic demanding special discussion; we will not go into it just now.

'Your own theory'

Let us suppose you have made a good choice of openings and your card index is organised faultlessly. It contains the latest games and excerpts from specialised articles. You are thoroughly acquainted with it and have committed everything to memory. 'Now I'm bound to get a plus from the opening', you think to yourself. But you are wrong – because to achieve really good results, it is not enough to know the 'official' theory. What is essential (as Botvinnik once remarked) is to possess 'opening theory of your own'.

It is very important to include in your repertoire some systems and

variations on which your opinion differs, even if only slightly, from that of the theorists. This contribution 'of your own' may be a novelty which entails the reappraisal of a whole variation or rehabilitates a scheme considered bad. Or it may be an unconventional assessment of a familiar position. The position may be to your own liking although it is supposed to be none too favourable. You evolve a plan of action suited to it, and decide that you are willing to play it despite its dubious reputation.

In general you need to be keen on your own pet lines, systems that you have analysed and have a feel for. A player who only knows what has been played before can scarcely count on success. He will never gain the advantage against an experienced opponent, since the latter will know it all too. But with the aid of 'your own theory', you can be a step ahead of your opponent in the opening; you can put him in an uncomfortable position, take him into territory where he doesn't understand what is happening.

How an opening repertoire expands

It is not often that a player just gives his head a scratch, says to himself 'How about studying, er, the Nimzo-Indian?' – then turns to the *Encyclopaedia* and learns it up. Such things happen, but only rarely. Usually a new scheme or variation is taken into

your repertoire as a result of some particular stimulus. To many young players this stimulus is supplied by their coach. He will say 'I've got some good analysis on such-and-such an opening system. I'll show it to you – you'll beat everyone with it.' This often proves useful. But do not make a habit of working this way. Sooner or later the coach's stock of ideas will dry up, and anyway you will attain a standard where he can no longer help you; you will have to think for yourself. That said, the help of a coach may indeed give you some good ideas now and again.

When Valery Chekhov won the qualifying tournament for the World Junior Championship in 1975, it was clear that the openings he was playing would not do for the championship itself. He had no active systems with Black, and even with White he played all kinds of rubbish although he had been coached by an openings specialist at the Palace of Young Pioneers before he started working with me.

Recognising where his weak points were, and what problems needed to be solved, I invited Grandmaster Sveshnikov to one of our training sessions. The set of openings that he could show us was well known – he has been playing them all his life. With Black he plays the Lasker-Pelikan or Sveshnikov Variation; with White against the Sicilian he plays 2 c3. This was exactly what we needed – a system against

the Sicilian and an active way of combating 1 e4. At that time there wasn't a large mass of theory on the Sveshnikov Variation; the only other player who constantly used it was Timoshchenko. Sveshnikov helped us to assimilate these two openings, and Chekhov employed them successfully in the World Junior. They became part of his repertoire. What is more, the notes made during that training session were useful to me in widening my own stock of openings. I later showed the Sveshnikov Variation to Artur Yusupov and Sergei Dolmatov, and they too played it for a while. In other words, a few hours' consultation with Sveshnikov helped to shape the opening repertoire of a whole group of players for some time.

Another example is Dolmatov's preparation for the World Junior Championship in 1978. The situation was a similar one: Sergei didn't have a reliable system with White against the Sicilian. I couldn't help him myself, since I didn't play anything respectable against it either – I would just play Qb5 at the first convenient moment. Before the tournament we invited Grandmaster Tukmakov to a training session. Tukmakov is a connoisseur of the Sicilian for the Black side. For such a specialist to demonstrate the basic ideas of White's play is not too difficult. Our consultation with him proved exceptionally useful to Dolmatov. In the World Junior he played

normal Sicilian lines, confronting the Scheveningen Variation with confidence; ever since then he has constantly been successful with White in the main lines of the Sicilian.

It often happens that information is 'in the air' and reaches us by chance. Once, while still at university, I went to the Institute of Physical Culture to hear a lecture by Grandmaster Razuvaev on the Exchange Variation of the Spanish Game. He demonstrated some recent games by Fischer and explained their basic ideas. I enjoyed that one-and-a-half-hour lecture so much that after looking at the Exchange Variation for myself I went on to win some good games with it.

So a hint from a coach or specialist may come in very useful and stimulate you to include an opening in your repertoire. It is easy to see why. When you begin studying an opening, you have a huge pile of material in front of you – large numbers of games and some pages of small print in the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*. You don't know how much of this is actually needed, what the main lines are and which lines are of secondary importance. You look at variations without knowing what lies behind them. If your coach can explain the main ideas and help you to make your selection, this is of course a major step forward.

But then, it is not just from your coach that you can expect help.

Working jointly with one of your friends is especially productive. You both have your own ideas and collections of information, and it pays to exchange them and analyse them together. The drawbacks to this way of working are always outweighed by the advantages. Of course you cannot play an opening variation against the same friend who analysed it with you; and if he is the first to use one of your innovations, you can no longer rely on it for surprise effect. So much for the snags. On the plus side – first, you are acquiring fresh information, and secondly, the openings you already play will be more thoroughly worked out. Ultimately you are competing not against your friends but against the rest of the chess world. You are disarmed against your colleague but better armed against all other players – and that is more important. The co-operation between Yusupov and Dolmatov, extending over many years, is a very instructive example. Numerous variations were worked out by their joint analysis. Some ideas of Yusupov's were taken up by Dolmatov and *vice versa*; as a result they both improved their opening repertoire.

So the second stimulus to expand your repertoire is the exchange of information with a friend.

A third type of stimulus is the analysis of games. It is precisely in this way that strong players discover the ideas that are most important to them. At the previous session of our

school, in the course of demonstrating one of his games against Karpov, Yusupov explained how the Open Spanish came to figure in his repertoire. As you may recall, he had analysed a game Karpov-Savon dating from 1971, and found an improvement for Black. This novelty spurred him to study the Open Variation as a whole.

And here is one other means of improvement. Choose a player on whom to model yourself, one whose ideas and style of play appeal to you. You can copy the opening repertoire of this player and study the systems that your hero plays.

Working with chess literature

Chess publications are a very important source of new information. You should regularly look through the periodicals, books and *Informator*. You never know when you will come across an idea that will later come in handy. Even old publications can help.

Here is an example. Many years ago I was studying a collection of games by Rashid Nezhmetdinov. It is a remarkable book, with very attractive games and some superb combinative play. I took a close look at one combination which Nezhmetdinov played against an amateur in a simultaneous display. I liked it, and incorporated it into my stock of chess exercises.

A few years passed. Something in the Grünfeld Defence caught my interest, and I opened the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*. Suddenly I noticed that the opening variation of Nezhmetdinov's game, in which he found a forced win for White, appeared in *ECO* with the opposite assessment – better for Black. I realised at once that this was a mine that could be laid to catch some assiduous reader of opening books.

Nezhmetdinov-Amateur Kazan 1951 Grünfeld Defence

1	d4	♟f6
2	c4	g6
3	♟c3	d5
4	cd	♟xd5
5	e4	♟xc3
6	bc	c5
7	♙b5+	♟c6?!

This very move was recommended in the first edition of *ECO*. (In the second edition the mistake is corrected; 7...♙d7 is now given as the main line for Black.)

8	d5	♞a5
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In addition to this sortie, 8...a6 should be considered. A forced exchange of blows now ensues.

9	♞a4!
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What is Black to do? Nezhmetdinov has defended his bishop; after a queen exchange, Black loses a piece.

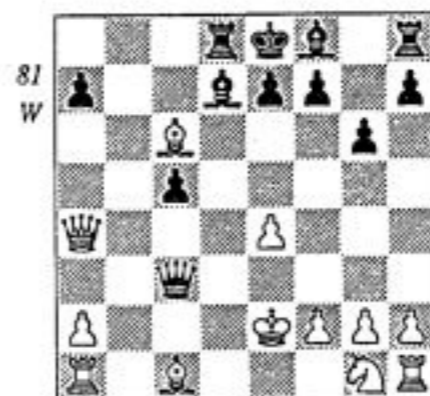
9	...	♞xc3+
10	♞e2	♙d7

10...♞xa1 is met by 11 dc.

11	dc	bc
12	♙xc6	

White has already won a piece, since capturing the rook on a1 is wholly bad for Black.

12	...	♞d8 (81)
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In *ECO* this position is assessed as better for Black. The white rook is *en prise*. Do you see how Black answers the natural move 13 ♞b1? Quite right – 13...♞d3+!! 14 ♞xd3 ♙xc6+, and Black emerges with an extra pawn. This occurred in a game Isakov-Nikitin (1947).

You may suggest 13 ♟f3. That is an interesting move. It is not considered in *ECO*, so let us take a look at it. What if Black captures the rook? White replies with 14 ♞d1, or the even more accurate 14 ♙xd7+ ♞xd7 15 ♞d1. Excellent – with 13 ♟f3 White has developed a piece and stopped the rook from being taken. What should Black play? Of course, 13...♞d3+! again, but this time White doesn't have to take the queen. After 14 ♞e1 ♞c3+ he can repeat moves – which is something – but is entitled

to play on for a win with 15 ♙d2 ♞xa1+ 16 ♞e2. Black cannot then take the other rook, on account of 17 ♟e5. He must play 16...♞b2, keeping e5 under control. Let us say White continues with 17 ♞d1 or 17 ♞c1. Is his attack enough for the exchange? It would be interesting to ponder this position.

But before immersing yourself in complex analysis, you must always ask: 'Have I missed something earlier, right at the start of my calculations?' It makes no sense to study lengthy variations which the opponent can simply sidestep. In fact, after 13...♞d3+ 14 ♞e1, Black has the excellent reply 14...♙g7!, which seems to refute 13 ♟f3 outright.

I suggest you study the diagram position for yourselves and try to solve the problem: *how did Nezhmetdinov win the game?* (solution p.138)

I showed the opening variation to Yusupov and Dolmatov. It was of more interest to Yusupov, who constantly opened with 1 d4, than to Dolmatov who did so only from time to time. Well, here was this opening trap. But could it be used? There were two questions that first had to be answered.

To begin with – what if Black chooses a different move-order and plays 6...♙g7 instead of 6...c5? In this case White must either prepare for the main lines of the Grünfeld or find some means of sidestepping them. We began analysing 7 ♙a3.

Theory does consider this move, and Dolmatov proceeded to win an excellent game against Bagirov with it. Still, the bishop on a3 somehow doesn't 'fit in' with the Grünfeld. We finally concluded that White can hardly lay claim to an opening advantage in this line. So it seems he cannot do without studying the 'normal' Grünfeld lines.

The second question arises after 6...c5 7 ♖b5+. What happens if Black avoids 7...♗c6? According to theory, 7...♗d7 8 ♗f3 gives White the better chances. After all, what is one of White's problems in the normal Exchange Grünfeld? Black attacks the white d-pawn with his own c-pawn, his bishop and the knight on c6. White defends it with his knight and bishop. In principle he would like to have his knight on f3, but he then has to reckon with the pinning move ...♗g4. Therefore White more usually develops the knight on e2. If it does go to f3, he usually plays ♜b1 first – not all that useful a move – so as to take the rook off the a1-h8 diagonal. But after 7 ♖b5+ ♗d7 8 ♗f3, White has no worries about his centre – his opponent can neither pin with ...♗g4 nor bring his knight out to c6.

The most natural move for Black is 7...♗d7. After 8 ♗xd7+ ♗xd7 9 ♗f3, White has achieved something – he doesn't have to fear a pin on his knight, and can solidly protect his centre. But are these substantial gains? On the basis of some game

played long ago, theory stated that Black had equality. We began studying the resulting positions and unearthed some ideas for White; we even concluded that he could count on an advantage. Then we came across an article in a foreign magazine, which demonstrated in detail that with precise play Black does equalise. We couldn't refute this analysis, and hence in the end we lost interest in the variation and its trap.

All the same, in the World Junior Team Championship at Graz in 1981, Yusupov lured Morenz into this very line and won exactly as Nezhmetdinov did. So studying that old book did bring some profit, albeit on a small scale.

More often, of course, new ideas come to you from more recent games and articles. Let me tell the story of another successful discovery.

In 1984 in Estonia, Aleksei Dreev and I were preparing for the World Junior Championship together with another participant in the tournament – Lembit Oll. International Master Nei, Oll's coach, brought to the training session a whole suitcase full of chess publications including many different foreign journals. I had not seen them before and started going through them at my leisure. In one Bulgarian magazine I found an article on the Exchange Variation of the Queen's Gambit Declined.

1	d4	d5
2	c4	e6

3	♗c3	♗f6
4	cd	ed
5	♗g5	♗e7
6	e3	0-0
7	♗d3	♞e8
8	♗f3	♗bd7
9	0-0	c6
10	♗c2	♗f8
11	♞ae1	

This is one of various possible continuations, and is quite old (at present 11 h3 is more popular). The move was first played by Marshall against Rubinstein in the Moscow international tournament of 1925. Theory considers that it leads to equality.

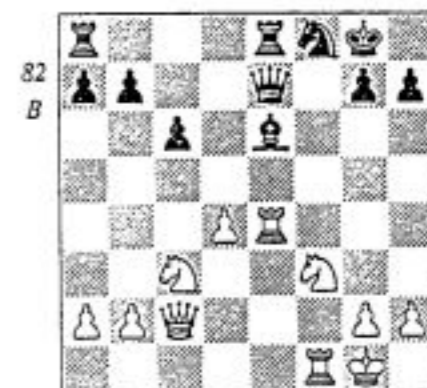
When consulting an article I usually look at the writer's conclusions first. In this case the author maintained that White can always acquire a plus in this line (rather an implausible conclusion, incidentally). I then turned to his main variation.

11	...	♗e4
12	♗xe7	♗xe7
13	♗xe4	de
14	♗d2	f5
15	f3	ef
16	♗xf3	♗e6
17	e4	fe
18	♞xe4 (82)	

This move is stronger than 18 ♗xe4 ♗f5.

18	...	♞ad8
19	♞fe1	

In the game already mentioned, Marshall scored a quick win with 19 ♞e5?! h6 20 ♗c4 ♗b4? 21 a3! ♗c4 22 ♗f2 ♗f7 23 b3! ♗xb3 24



♗fd2 ♗a2 25 ♗c3, but Black could have defended better with 20...♗c7!, threatening 21...♞xd4.

19	...	h6
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At this point the game Tal-Vaganian, Moscow 1975, continued 20 ♞e5 ♗f7 21 ♗e4 ♞d6? 22 ♗e3 ♗d7 23 ♞a5, and Black was unable to defend his pawn on a7 in view of the terrible threat of 24 ♗e5 ♗xe5 25 ♞xe5. However, not even this game proves that White has an opening advantage; by playing to simplify with 21...♗d7!, Black could have counted on equalising.

The author of the article suggested an interesting build-up for White:

20	♞1e3!?	♗f7
21	♗e2	

White masses his forces in the vicinity of the kingside. He can avoid exchanges in the e-file by occupying e5 with his knight when necessary, and then bringing his major pieces across to the adjacent kingside files.

The idea seemed to me to be promising from both the purely technical and the practical viewpoint. No

one can follow every periodical; the article in a Bulgarian journal would be known in Bulgaria but might not be noticed elsewhere. So we would have some ideas that our rivals would not be familiar with.

Actually this variation had little to offer Dreev, since at that time he opened with 1 e4. I simply copied out the analysis on the assumption that it would come in useful sooner or later.

When preparing with Yusupov for the Candidates Tournament in 1985, I suggested that he should investigate this system. I showed him the variations given in the article, and he liked them. First we analysed the resulting positions, then we played a training match to a time control of fifteen minutes for the game.

Incidentally, I strongly recommend playing speed games to consolidate the opening information you are studying. (Of course, analysis should precede the games, and supplementary analysis should follow them.) They don't take up much time, but they generally serve to bring new problems to light, even if the players have done some work on the opening already. In Yusupov's view you should take alternate colours, facilitating a more objective view of the position.

In our series of games we unearthed a large number of fresh nuances and acquired a much better feel for the opening than before. Yusupov incorporated the Exchange

Variation into his repertoire for White. In the Candidates tournament he won a hard-fought game against Spassky, crushed Nogueiras, and had further success with the system later.

Of course, Yusupov's successes did not at all result from any special strength of the variation in question. On the contrary, we came to the conclusion (which was not hard to predict) that Black can secure equality with precise play – just as in any other sound opening. The point was simply that we were a little ahead of the opposition – we had investigated the position more deeply and built up a stock of ideas that were generally unfamiliar.

Since Artur doesn't just play the White side of the Queen's Gambit, our analyses also helped him to strengthen his defences for Black. In particular, playing Black in the eighth game of his Candidates Match with Jan Timman, when it was imperative for Timman to win, Yusupov played a move we had prepared in our training session – 18...h6!? (instead of 18...♖ad8) – and easily equalised.

Both White and Black

We have briefly discussed the basic principles for constructing an opening repertoire. I shall now describe one particular precept in greater detail. It will find favour with players of the white pieces who don't go

all-out for the maximum – for an advantage by any possible means – but merely seek to play 'their own' game, their own type of position.

It sometimes makes sense to play with White a system that suits you with Black – that is, to approach the White side of an opening by playing Black with an extra tempo.

Shortly after taking up my effective plan for combating the Closed Sicilian – a plan which brought me wins in the majority of games – I naturally conceived the idea of using the same formation with White. What did this entail? Obviously I had to take up the English Opening. Of course, in that opening Black has a wide range of systems at his disposal, and White must be prepared for any of them. But if Black incautiously plays 1...e5, I have the chance to draw him into my favourite scheme.

Grandmaster Razuvaev once told me about a specific method he employs in his (highly productive) work on opening theory. He always selects and concentrates on certain key games which he treats as paradigms of the opening he is studying. They must be games in which both players (or at least one of them) played logically, constructively, and in which valuable ideas and typical resources were employed. Such games enable you to understand the opening formation more deeply and commit it to memory more easily.

You may regard the following game as a paradigm of its system.

Dvoretsky-Timoshchenko USSR Team Ch, Moscow 1966 English Opening

1	c4	e5
2	♘c3	♘c6
3	g3	g6
4	♗g2	♗g7

Black plays a Closed Sicilian with colours reversed.

5	e3	♞ge7
---	----	------

An interesting point – I consider Black's last move rather weak. In this variation, the knight is better placed on f6 or even h6. The reason is purely tactical and not at all obvious. It will come to light a few moves later.

6	♞ge2	0-0
7	0-0	d6
8	d3	♗e6

Remember how we answer this?

9	♞d5!
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Of course! We have to prevent ...d6-d5.

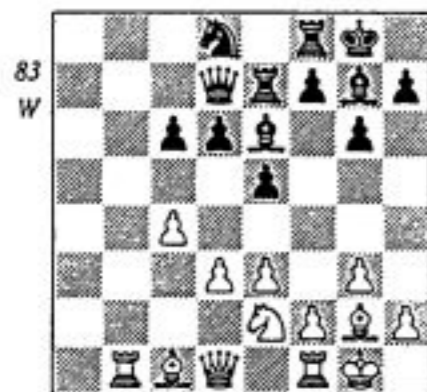
9	...	♞d7
10	♞b1	

I can now explain why the knight on e7 is worse placed than on f6 or h6. Black is at present unable to play ...♗h3, for after exchanging I take his pawn on c7. With the knight on f6 or h6, the move ...♗h3 *would* be possible, since after the exchange on h3 White couldn't take the pawn in view of ...♞g4 forcing mate. A small tactical detail with a great deal of

significance. If Black could exchange the light-squared bishops unhindered, he would stand quite well. Incidentally, the position with the knight on f6 ought to be familiar to you from my article *The 'Superfluous' Piece*, published in *Training for the Tournament Player*.

10 ... ♖d8

A game Dvoretsky-Veselovsky, Moscow 1967, went 10...a5 11 a3 ♖ae8? (Black should not just abandon the queenside to its fate) 12 b4 ab 13 ab ♖d8 14 b5 c6 15 bc bc 16 ♖xe7+ ♖xe7 (83).



A little exercise for you to work out for yourselves: *What is White's most accurate continuation from the diagram?* (solution p.138)

11 b4 ♖xd5

11...c6 is answered by 12 ♖xe7+ ♖xe7 13 b5. After a pawn exchange on c6, the bishop comes out to a3 and the queen to a4, etc. White has an easy, comfortable game.

Black's last move leads to a closed type of position.

12 cd ♖h3

What should White do in cases like this?

13 e4!

A standard plan – rearranging the pawns on light squares once the light-squared bishops are off.

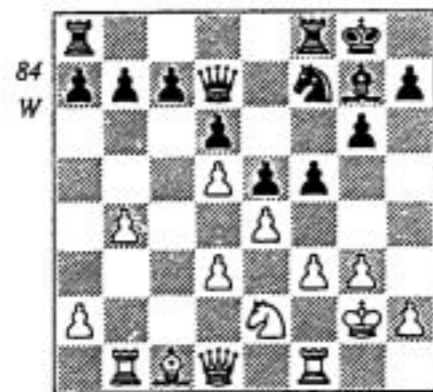
13 ... ♖xg2

14 ♖xg2 f5

15 f3

I think White's position deserves preference. He has more space, and the black bishop is confined by its own pawns. If Black undermines the centre with ...c7-c6, the reply is ♖c3; then at some future stage White will exchange on c6 and meet ...b7xc6 with b4-b5, securing the central outpost d5 for his knight. Black for his part can station his knight on d4, but the two outposts are unequal in value. A knight on d4 can be attacked by White's bishop, while the black bishop will *not* be able to exchange itself for the white knight. Here we see the advantage of the 'good' bishop over the 'bad' one.

15 ... ♖f7 (84)



Quite honestly I am proud of my

next move. I had only just gained my Master title at the time, but I rate it as a true Grandmaster move. I found it by a purely logical process, and we will now examine this logic.

What does the opponent want to do? It is always useful to ask yourself this question. Most likely, Black wants to exchange off his bad bishop with 16...♖h6.

Should I consent to the exchange? If I remove my bishop to b2 or g1, the black bishop will be controlling the c1 square and it will be hard to carry out my natural plan – pressure in the c-file with my major pieces against the backward pawn on c7. In addition, the black knight will acquire the excellent g5 square in the vicinity of my king.

It is very dangerous to 'stick to your principles' and make stereotyped judgements – such as 'if my opponent's bishop is "bad", that means I mustn't exchange it.' Any rule has numerous exceptions. I had a think, and decided 'There's nothing for it – I'll have to exchange.'

But where should the exchange take place? I can let Black take on c1, which enables me to occupy the c-file with tempo. Or I can capture on h6, when the black knight will be badly placed. The latter solution appeared sounder.

But how am I going to arrange my pieces on the c-file? The most natural build-up is: queen to c2, rook from f1 to c1, and the rook from b1 can be transferred to c3. That means

I have the choice between 16 ♖c2 and 16 ♖b3. The rook move is evidently more precise; after the exchange on h6, there may be the chance of a double attack with ♖c1 hitting c7 and h6 at once.

This last consideration was to be fully vindicated (albeit in a slightly different form) in a game I played two years later against Kremeniet-sky (USSR Championship, Kharkov 1968). He answered 16 ♖b3 not with 16...♖h6 but with 16...h6. I continued according to plan with 17 ♖c3, and after 17...♖g5? 18 ♖xg5 hg 19 ♖c1! two black pawns were indeed under attack: c7 and g5.

16 ♖b3!! ♖h6

17 ♖xh6 ♖xh6

18 ♖c3 ♖f7

What should I play now?

The natural plan is ♖c2 and ♖c1. Black will protect his pawn with ...♖c8. What then? Obviously a queenside pawn offensive, but a well-known positional maxim is relevant here: *before advancing, you must give yourself something to 'fasten' on – an object of attack.*

19 ♖c1! ♖g7

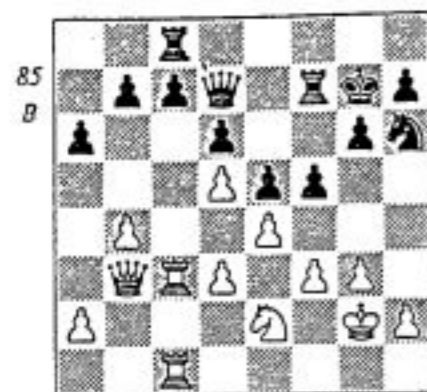
20 ♖a3 a6

Forced – Black has to free his rook. But now the pawn on a6 makes it easier for White to open lines on the queenside. He will play a2-a4 and b4-b5; after ...a6xb5 he will most likely recapture on b5 with the queen.

21 ♖fc1 ♖c8

22 ♖b3 (85)

The more active move 22 ♖a5 deserved attention.



What is Black to do now? He has a ghastly knight on h6. The natural strategy is to bring it to a better square with ...♞g8-f6. Then, if the c-pawn needs more protection, Black has ...♞e8.

Another tempting idea is 22...♗b5 followed by 23...♗b6, trying to confuse White with threats of penetrating on e3 or f2.

Given correct defence, I think Black's position would be tenable although inferior. But my opponent chose a faulty plan.

22 ... g5?

Timoshchenko is launching an attack on the white king – or rather he thinks he is. The standard reaction to the opponent's activity on the flank is a counter-stroke in the centre. But 23 d4? is met by 23...fe, then ...♞g4 or ...♗g4, ...♞cf8 – suddenly all the black pieces start attacking. So the stock recommendation will not do just now.

What does Black want? Is 23...g4

his intention? If so, White has the splendid rejoinder 24 f4!. The pawn on g4 is then depriving the queen or knight of that square.

Now let us think about 23...f4. White cannot reply 24 g4? on account of 24...♞xg4. What is the drawback to Black's move? It removes the pressure from the White e-pawn – so now I can strike at the enemy centre with 24 d4!, simultaneously switching the rook and queen to the defence of the kingside.

This means that at present I have nothing to fear; I have an answer to each of my opponent's attacking moves. It means I can coolly make a useful move on the queenside. Quite a good example of precise logical deduction based on 'prophylactic thinking'.

23 a4! f4

24 d4

All according to the rules. A central counter-stroke – and a timely one – against the opponent's flank attack. Bl ... has two attacking possibilities. He can play ...g5-g4 at once, or exchange on g3 first. But after 24...fg 25 hg g4, White has the very strong 26 f4!.

24 ... g4

25 de de

Now how should White continue? I saw a superb outpost for my knight on e6.

26 gf! ef

27 ♞d4 ♗h8

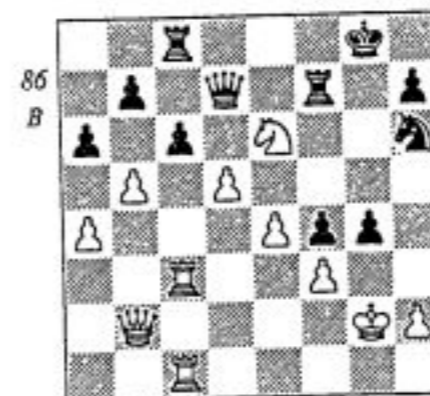
28 ♞e6 c6

29 ♗b2!

A technically precise move. Try to increase your attentiveness to such 'small' points. I make my opponent move to g8 with his king, after which I don't have to fear any counterplay on the g-file. I could undoubtedly have won without this, but it is always useful to limit the opponent's possibilities before anything else.

29 ... ♔g8

30 b5! (86)



White's opening plan – his queenside offensive – triumphs.

30 ... ab

31 ab gf+

32 ♗xf3 ♞f5

Such 'kamikaze' moves crop up quite often in desperate situations. You must take maximum care in attending to these final outbursts from your opponent; give him no counter-chances whatever. The knight can be taken of course, but why permit the slightest intensification of the fight?

33 ♞g1+ ♞g7

34 bc bc

35 ♞c2!

The game is won by quiet moves.

Black cannot take on d5, and 36 ♞cg2 is threatened.

35 ... ♞e8

Black's last hope is 36 ♞cg2? ♞xe6.

36 ♞xg7+

36 ♞xc6 is also strong.

36 ... ♞xg7

37 ♗xg7+ ♗xg7

38 ♞xg7 cd?

Of course, 38...♗xg7 is also completely hopeless.

39 ♞xe8 1-0

I had to use written notes to demonstrate some of the previous games to my audience, but I can recall the Timoshchenko game without any prompting – even though it was played a quarter of a century ago! Why? Because I once subjected it to thorough study, scrutinising the sense of every move; for me this is a game to refer back to, a standard game for the opening variation in question.

From the King's Indian Defence to the King's Indian Attack

Dyed-in-the-wool King's Indian players sometimes try to obtain their accustomed positions with colours reversed and a tempo more. It might appear fairly simple, if you know the ideas of this opening, to utilise the extra tempo advantageously. In actual fact there are no easy tasks in chess, and an extra tempo doesn't always bring gains. Why? One thing that remains firmly implanted in my

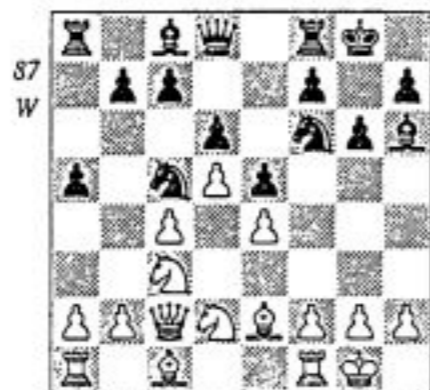
memory is a comment by Mikhail Tal on a wholly symmetrical position in the English Opening, which arose in the first game of his Candidates Match with Lajos Portisch in 1965:

'Of course it would be ridiculous to speak of any advantage for Black in this symmetrical position, but it is one hundred per cent true that playing the Black side is easier. The point is that as long as his opponent's moves seem to him to be the strongest, he can copy them with a clear conscience and wait for a convenient moment to "vary"; whereas White is compelled to act on his own initiative.'

Something similar applies to the exploitation of an extra tempo in positions with reversed colours – the need to act on your own initiative constitutes the whole difficulty. Let me show you an unfortunate instance from my own experience. To understand it better, I will first briefly acquaint you with a variation of the King's Indian Defence which I used to play with Black – and from which I took the ideas that I vainly tried to implement when reaching the same position with White.

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 ♘f3 0-0 6 ♗e2 e5 7 d5 ♘bd7 8 0-0 ♘c5 9 ♖c2 a5

The main line here is 10 ♗g5 h6 11 ♗e3. The move 10 ♘d2 went out of use on account of Geller's reply 10...♗h6! (87), which has the aim of exchanging Black's 'bad' bishop.



After 11 ♘b3 ♗xc1 12 ♗axc1 ♘fd7, or 12 ♘xc5 ♗h6 followed by ...♘d7 and ...f5, Black stands quite well. Mukhin once played 11 b3 against me; I replied 11...♗e8, carried out ...f5, and won in good style.

Now, equipped with this little piece of information on the King's Indian, consider the following game.

Dvoretzky-Alburt
Odessa 1974
King's Indian Attack

- | | | |
|----|------|-----|
| 1 | ♘f3 | ♘f6 |
| 2 | g3 | e5 |
| 3 | ♗g2 | ♘c6 |
| 4 | 0-0 | d5 |
| 5 | d3 | e5 |
| 6 | ♘bd2 | ♗e7 |
| 7 | e4 | d4 |
| 8 | ♘c4 | ♘d7 |
| 9 | a4 | 0-0 |
| 10 | ♗h3 | |

Naturally I am applying Geller's idea. When you play an opening with colours reversed, you have to know the ideas for playing it the usual way round.

10 ... ♖c7 (88)



As you see, the position is exactly as before, but I have an extra tempo. What should I use it for? I decided to prepare f2-f4 by means of 11 ♘e1. Yet, however paradoxical it may seem, this move did not improve my position – it worsened it. I must have been misled by the analogy with my game against Mukhin, but a more serious factor was my reluctance to think, to probe into the concrete details of the position. A good example of the harm that comes from playing by rote!

But what *should* I have done? 11 ♘fd2 looks tempting. If Black plays 11...♘b6, White's move is fully vindicated. An answer that must be taken into account is 11...♗g5 (with the same idea as White's 10 ♗h3 – to exchange off the 'bad' bishop). Can you see how White should continue after that? I think the only correct way is the gambit 12 f4! e4 13 ♘f3 ♗h6 14 ♘h4!. I would not advise Black to go into this position. See what interesting possibilities turn up

in a situation which a moment ago seemed to us wholly transparent and lacking in interest!

Black should most probably meet White's positional threat of f2-f4 with the typical blockading operation 11...g6!? 12 f4 e4 13 gf f5. The game acquires a new complexion, which in my view is not unfavourable to Black.

Apart from 11 ♘fd2 what else can White do? Nothing in particular – perhaps just the minimally useful moves 11 b3 and 11 ♗h1. So the extra tempo seems to bring no great benefit here. All the same, White does have a fairly good position, and we have agreed that when playing openings with colours reversed we are not counting on an advantage but on 'our own' type of game.

- | | | |
|----|------|-------|
| 11 | ♘e1? | ♘b6 |
| 12 | ♗xc8 | ♖xc8! |

With the white knight on f3, this possibility would not exist. When Black played this move, I started worrying. The positional threat of ...f7-f5 has arisen. For example, after 13 b3 ♘xc4 14 bc f5 15 ef ♖xf5 White's pieces are absurdly placed, his knight will never get from e1 to e4. Black will aim to play ...e5-e4 at some moment, perhaps after first bringing up his pieces and placing his knight on b4.

- | | | |
|----------------------|------|------|
| 13 | ♘xb6 | ab |
| Threatening 14...b5. | | |
| 14 | ♗d2 | f5 |
| 15 | ef | ♖xf5 |
| 16 | f3 | |

Black could now have gained the advantage with 16...♖h3!. Then 17 ♗e2 b5 would be bad for White, while 17 ♘g2 could be strongly met by 17...♙f5, intending 18...♙h5. White's position creaks on both sides of the board.

But I was lucky – my opponent quite unnecessarily went in for complications.

16 ... c4?!
 17 ♗e2 ♙c5
 18 ♖g2 c3!
 18...♙ac8 is met by 19 dc e4 20 fe ♙xe4 21 ♗d3.
 19 bc b5
 20 a5

At this point Albur offered a draw. With optimism unwarranted by the position, I refused. But after a tense struggle the game concluded peacefully all the same.

In the next example, White used his extra tempo more effectively.

Dvoretsky-Tataev
 Beltsy 1972
 King's Indian Attack

1 e4 c5
 2 ♘f3 g6
 3 d3 ♙g7
 4 g3 ♘c6
 5 ♙g2 ♘f6
 6 0-0 d5
 7 ♘c3 0-0 (90)

I had repeatedly reached this position with Black, after 1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘f3 ♙g7 4 g3 0-0 5 ♙g2 d6 6

0-0 ♘c6 7 ♘c3 (Black sometimes plays 7...♙f5 or 7...♙g4 here, but 7...a6 is the most popular of all) 7...e5 (89).



White has the choice between 8 de and 8 d5. The pawn exchange is not as innocuous as it looks. At first I replied to 8 de with 8...de. But in the variation 9 ♗xd8 ♙xd8 10 ♙g5 ♙e6 11 ♘d2 it is not so easy to achieve equality, for instance: 11...h6 12 ♙xf6 ♙xd2 13 ♙xg7 ♖xg7 14 ♙xc6 bc 15 b3, and White's chances are somewhat better thanks to his superior pawn structure (Koifman-Dvoretsky, Moscow Championship 1966).

The game Vaganian-Dvoretsky, USSR Championship (First League), Tbilisi 1973, went 8 de ♘xe5 9 ♘xe5 de 10 ♗xd8 ♙xd8 11 ♙g5 ♙d4! 12 e3?! ♙xc4 13 ♙ac1 c6! 14 ♙xf6 ♙xf6 15 ♘e4 ♙xc1 16 ♘xf6+ ♖g7 17 ♘e8+ ♖f8 18 ♙xc1 ♖xe8 19 ♙xc6 ♙e6! 20 ♙c5 ♙c8 1/2-1/2. White similarly gains nothing from 12 b3 c6, but he can maintain the pressure with 12 ♘d5! ♘xd5 13 cd

e4 14 ♙fd1; theoretical books give inaccurate information here.

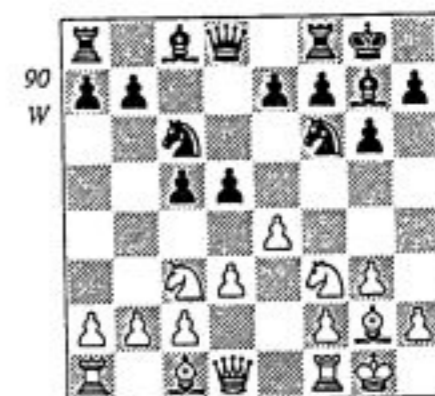
After 8 d5 ♘e7, Yurkov played 9 c5 against me in the 1966 Moscow Championship. At that time I had just gained the Master title. I didn't know much about the theory of this variation, and had never seen the move 9 c5. Since Nimzowitsch's *My System*, which I had formerly studied with great pleasure, was still in my memory, I succeeded over-the-board in finding an idea on the Nimzowitsch pattern, involving a blockading knight: 9...♘e8 10 cd ♘xd6. There followed 11 e4 c5?! 12 a4?! ♙d7 13 ♙e1 h6 14 b3 f5, with a good game for Black. White could have seized the initiative with 12 dc ♘xc6 13 ♙g5! f6 14 ♙e3, with 15 ♙c5 to follow (Ivkov-Uitumen, Palma de Mallorca 1970). Therefore Black does better not to hurry with 11...c5 but to play 11...h6! first, and then, according to circumstances, 12...c5, 12...c6 or 12...f5.

The main line is 9 e4 ♘d7. In Doda-Dvoretsky, Polanica Zdroj 1973, there followed 10 ♘e1 f5 11 ♘d3 ♘f6 12 f3?! (better 12 f4, as Etruk had played against me a year earlier) 12...h6! 13 ♙d2 g5 (threatening 14...f4) 14 ef ♘xf5. The initiative is on Black's side; his further plan is ...♗e8-g6, ...♘d4, ...♙f5, ...♙f7, ...♙af8, ...h5, ...g4.

Bringing the knight to d3 is slow. White should choose between 10 ♙e3, 10 ♙d2 and 10 b4. The unconventional 10 ♘g5!? h6 11 ♘h3 is

also worth considering, followed by 12 f4.

After this digression into the realms of King's Indian theory, let us return to Dvoretsky-Tataev.



I have an extra tempo, then. Which moves are useful to White, and which are not? What do you think of 8 ♙e1, for example? Well, that would be a move in the style of my game with Albur – it worsens White's position instead of improving it. Black replies 8...d4 9 ♘e2 e5. Now White needs to bring about f2-f4, and with this in view his rook is clearly better on f1 than on e1.

8 h3!

In any circumstances it will be useful to cover the g4 square – either in the ending resulting from 8...de, or in the closed position after 8...d4. Since I knew the ideas of the corresponding variation of the King's Indian Defence, which we have just been discussing, it was not at all difficult to find the correct solution here.

My opponent didn't want to play a theoretical position with a tempo

less, and he tried to think up something a little new.

8 ... h6
9 Qd2!

If now 9...d4, it would be obvious that my last move was useful. But I had to take the capture on e4 into account. I didn't much like the position after 9...de 10 de, since Black controls the d-file and the point d4. I intended 10 Qcxe4 (with this knight, so as to answer 10...Qd7 with 11 Qb3) 10...Qxe4 11 Qxe4. How is Black to defend his pawn? 11...b6 will not do. If 11...Wa5, then 12 Qd2. There remains 11...Wb6, but then there follows 12 Qe3 Wxb2 (12...Qd4 13 c3 Qc6 14 b4) 13 Bb1 Wxa2 14 Qxc5. Those who play the Benko Gambit should like this position. In that opening, working up overwhelming pressure on the opponent's queenside is not always as easy as it is here.

So either 9...d4 or 9...de will be in White's favour. But Black's pawn on d5 is under attack. It follows that Black must choose between 9...Qe6 and 9...e6. In either case the advance f2-f4 which White is planning will gain in strength.

9 ... e6
10 f4

This time 10...de will be met by 11 de followed by 12 e5. A White knight will go to c4, and two very unpleasant 'holes', on d6 and f6, will appear in the Black position. It is therefore bad for Black to open the centre.

10 ... b6
11 Qh2 Qa6
12 e5 (91)



An interesting positional exercise: should the knight retreat to d7 or e8? (We won't even consider h7, where the knight is out of play.)

What is Black planning to do subsequently? Of course he is not going to weaken his pawn chain with ...f7-f6. He intends to gain space on the queenside with ...b6-b5-b4. How will White react? He will probably hinder this plan by playing a2-a4. At the same time a knight excursion to b5 will become feasible. After 12...Qe8 Black can bring his bishop to b7, then play ...a6, ...Qc7 and ...b5. White's Qb5 will not be dangerous, since from e8 the knight controls d6. With the knight on d7, by contrast, none of this play will be available. White will achieve a clear plus, since his opponent will not have a normal plan.

12 ... Qd7?
13 a4! Bc8
14 Qf3 Wc7

15 Qb5 Qxb5
16 ab Qd4
17 c4!

A good positional move; the diagonal of the king's bishop is extended, and the mobility of Black's pieces is reduced.

17 ... dc
18 dc Wb8

The threat was 19 Wa4.

19 Qe3

19 Qxd4!? cd 20 b3.

19 ... Qxf3+?!

After this Black is left without any counterplay. He should have sacrificed a pawn with 19...Bfd8.

20 Wxf3 Bfd8

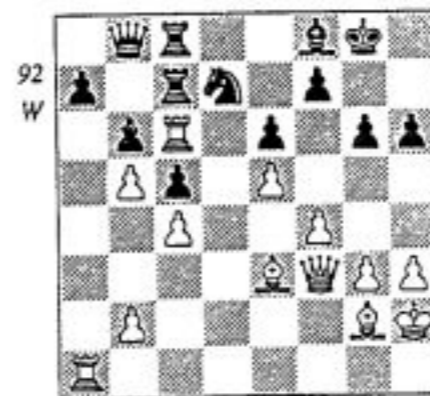
21 Bfd1

With the annoying threat of 22 Wb7, winning a pawn.

21 ... Bc7

22 Bd6! Qf8

23 Bc6 Bdc8 (92)



Now how should White continue? Black's pieces have nowhere to go – they are hemmed in by their own pawn on c5. At this point it will be helpful to recall the 'two-weakness

principle'. It usually applies in the endgame, but also occasionally in the middlegame when the opponent is completely tied up and deprived of counterplay. Up to now White has been attacking on the queenside. Black has parried the immediate threats, but nearly all his pieces are stuck on that side of the board. In such cases a transfer of the attack to the other wing is very effective.

24 h4!

Threatening 25 h5.

24 ... h5

25 g4 hg

26 Wxg4 Qg7

27 h5 Qf8

White needs to play Qe4 and Bg1, but which move should come first? When realising an advantage, close attention must be paid to the opponent's counter-chances. The natural-looking 28 Qe4? is tactically refuted by 28...Bxc6 29 bc Qxe5! 30 fe Wxe5+, with threats of 31...Wxb2+ and 31...f5.

28 Bg1!

White has a decisive advantage, which he conducted to victory.

When playing a system that suits you with Black with colours reversed, you can hardly ever borrow any concrete variations directly from the normal form of the opening. On the other hand, as I hope to have shown, you can in a broad sense utilise your knowledge of the typical plans, devices and assessments. Indeed it is generally true that to

acquire a deep understanding of any opening, the study of overall ideas is at least as important as the memorising of specific variations.

It sometimes happens that to solve the problems of one opening, you make use of precepts characteristic of an entirely different system. It follows that a practical player should not confine himself to studying games played with 'his own' openings. You should select any well annotated games for study, even if the openings are wholly foreign to your repertoire. In this way you will not be extending your repertoire directly, but perhaps some game will serve as a pointer towards doing so. The main thing is that you will increase your stock of positional ideas, resources and judgements, which, as I have said, can be applied in the most varied contexts when appropriate. Ideas that appeal to you should be recorded in the form of 'positional images', which we discussed during the previous session of the school.

Answer to Exercises

Nezhmetdinov-Amateur (1951)

13 ♖b3!! ♖xa1 (13... ♖xb3 14 ♕xd7+ and 15 ab, with an extra piece for White) 14 ♕b2 ♖b1 15 ♕f3! ♖xh1 16 ♕e5 (threatening mate in one) 16...e6 17 ♕xd7+ ♖xd7 18 ♖b8+ ♖d8 (18... ♖e7 19 ♕c6 mate) 19 ♖b5+ with a decisive attack.

The game concluded: 19... ♖e7 20 ♖b7+ ♖f6 21 ♖xf7+ ♖g5 22 ♕f3+ ♖h5 23 g4+! ♖xg4 24 ♖xe6+ ♖f4 25 ♕e5+ ♖xe4 26 ♕g5 mate.

Dvoretsky-Veselovsky (1967)

White's plan is clear: play on the queenside. In a suitable order, he intends ♖a4, ♕a3, ♖b6/b8 etc.

In carrying out a plan, it is essential to take account of the opponent's intentions. What does Black want here? Obviously it would pay him to relieve the pressure on his queenside by playing 17... ♕h3 to exchange off the light-squared bishops. For this reason, the natural-looking 17 ♖a4? would be a serious inaccuracy.

The bishop exchange can easily be avoided by 17 ♖e1. But otherwise this move is no use to White – it doesn't fit into his plan.

The strongest continuation is 17 ♕a3!. Increasing the pressure on the queenside, White simultaneously preserves his light-squared bishop from exchange. It is precisely moves like this – combining furtherance of your own plan with prophylaxis against that of the opponent – that in Nimzowitsch's view constitute the essence of true positional play.

Black only lasted a few more moves: 17... ♖fe8 18 ♖a4 ♖c7 19 ♖a8 f5? (19... ♖d7, with a view to 20...d5, was more logical; I would probably have replied 20 ♖b8 d5 21 ♖fb1 dc 22 ♖1b7) 20 ♖b8 ♕f8 21 ♕b4 ♖a7 22 ♖a1 ♖d7 23 ♖a6 ♕f7 24 ♕a5 1-0. In the final position, the

queenside domination by White's pieces is truly picturesque.

Appendix to 'Building an Opening Repertoire'

(The following games were mentioned in the lecture; they will give you a fuller idea of the opening variations discussed.)

Petrosian-Pachman Bled 1961 King's Indian Attack

1	♕f3	c5
2	g3	♕c6
3	♕g2	g6
4	0-0	♕g7
5	d3	e6
6	e4	♕ge7
7	♖e1	0-0?!

As we have already seen, 7...d6 should be played here.

8	e5!	d6
9	ed	♖xd6
10	♕bd2	♖c7
11	♕b3!	♕d4?

Better is 11...b6 12 ♕f4 ♖b7.

12	♕f4	♖b6
13	♕e5	♕xb3
14	♕c4!	

More precise than 14 ab ♕d5 15 ♕c4 ♖c6.

14	...	♖b5
----	-----	-----

14... ♖d8 15 ab, with threats of 16 ♕d6 and 16 ♖a5.

15	ab	a5
----	----	----

The threat was 16 ♖a5.

16	♕d6	♕f6
----	-----	-----

17	♖f3	♖g7
18	♖e4?!	

White could already have played the combination he plays next move.

18	...	♖d8 (93)
----	-----	----------



19	♖xf6+!	♖xf6
20	♕e5+	♖g5
21	♕g7!	1-0

Smyslov-Denker Match USSR-USA, Moscow 1946 Sicilian

1	e4	c5
2	♕c3	♕c6
3	g3	g6
4	♕g2	♕g7
5	d3	e6
6	♕e3	♕d4?!
7	♕ce2!	d6
8	c3	♕c6

8... ♕xe2 looks more natural.

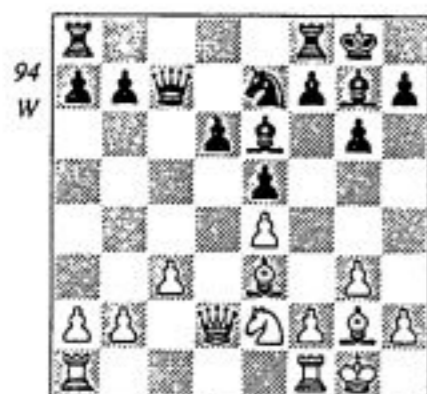
9	d4	cd
---	----	----

10	♕xd4!	
----	-------	--

White needs to recapture with piece so that he can later exploit the weak d-pawn.

10	...	♕xd4
----	-----	------

11 ♖xd4 e5
 Better is 11...♟f6.
 12 ♖e3 ♟e7
 13 ♟e2 0-0
 14 0-0 ♖e6
 15 ♜d2 ♜c7 (94)
 15...d5 fails to 16 ♖c5.



16 ♜fc1!
 To consolidate his hold on d5, White has to prepare c3-c4. 16 b3, with the same objective, would be weaker in view of 16...b5 (17 a4 ba 18 ♜xa4 ♖xb3). Now, however, 16...b5 can be met by 17 a4! a6 (17...ba 18 ♜xa4 a5 19 ♜ca1, threatening 20 b4) 18 ♜d1, e.g: 18...♜ad8 19 ab ab 20 ♜a7!, or 18...♜fd8 19 ab ab 20 ♜xa8 ♜xa8 21 ♜xd6; or 18...♖b3 19 ♜xd6 ♜xd6 20 ♜xd6 ♖xa4 21 ♟c1, preparing 22 b3.

16 ... f5
 17 c4 fe
 18 ♟c3 ♟f5

18...♖xc4 19 ♟xe4 d5 20 ♟g5! is dangerous for Black.

19 ♟xe4 ♟xe3
 19...♟d4 is met by 20 c5! d5 21 ♟g5 ♖f7 22 f4 with an attack.

20 ♜xe3 h6
 21 ♜d1 ♜fd8
 21...♖xc4 22 ♜ac1.
 22 ♜ac1 ♜ac8
 23 b3 b6
 24 ♟c3!

White is aiming for an advantageous exchange of light-squared bishops. 24...♟h7 can be answered by 25 ♖e4! (with the idea of 26 h4), or by 25 ♟b5 and 26 ♜d3.

24 ... ♜e7
 25 ♖d5 ♟h7
 26 ♖xe6 ♜xe6
 27 ♜d3 ♜c7
 28 ♜cd1 ♜f7
 29 ♟e4 ♖f8
 30 ♜d5 ♜g4
 31 ♜1d3

31 ♟xd6?! walks into 31...♖xd6 32 ♜xd6 ♜xd1+!

After the text the game continued 31...♖e7 32 ♟xd6 ♖xd6 33 ♜xd6 ♜df8 34 ♜xe5 ♜xf2 35 ♜d7+ ♜2f7 36 ♜xf7+ ♜xf7 37 ♜d8! ♜g7 38 ♜e8 g5 39 ♜h8+ ♟g6 40 ♜d6+ ♟f7 41 ♜xh6 ♜f5 42 ♜d1! ♜c5+ 43 ♟g2 ♜e7 44 ♜f1+ ♟g8 45 ♜f6 ♜e8 46 ♜f5 g4 47 ♜f2 ♜e7 48 ♜d3 ♜g5 49 ♜e2 ♜f8 50 ♜e4 ♜g7 51 ♜d5+ ♜f7 52 ♜e6! 1-0.

Dolmatov-Bagirov
 Frunze 1983
 Grünfeld Defence

1 c4 ♟f6
 2 ♟c3 d5
 3 cd ♟xd5
 4 d4 g6

5 e4 ♟xc3
 6 bc ♖g7
 7 ♖a3 ♟d7
 8 ♟f3 c5
 9 ♜b3 0-0
 10 ♖d3

Obviously stronger than 10 ♖e2 cd 11 cd ♟f6. On 10 ♜d1, ECO recommends 10...cd 11 cd ♟f6 12 ♖d3 ♖g4 13 ♜xb7 ♖xf3 14 gf ♜xd4 15 0-0 (15 ♜xe7?! ♜c3+ 16 ♟e2 ♟d5!) 15...♜e5 16 ♖xe7 ♜fb8 17 ♖xf6 ♜xf6 18 ♜c7 ♜xf3 with equality.

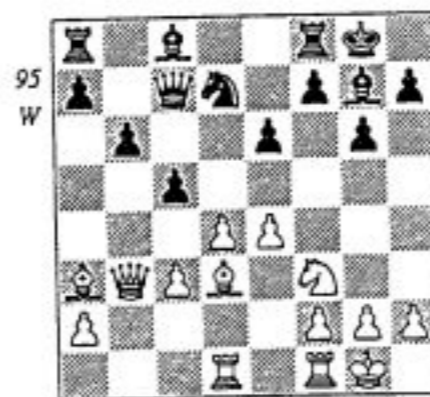
10 ... b6?!

In Evans-Korchnoi, Buenos Aires 1960, Black played more actively with 10...♜c7 11 0-0 ♜b8 (intending to continue ...b7-b5); after 12 ♖b5 b6 13 ♜ad1 a6 14 ♖d3 b5 15 ♖b1 ♖b7, he obtained an excellent position.

11 ♜d1

11 0-0?! allows 11...♟e5! with equality.

11 ... e6
 12 0-0 ♜c7 (95)



13 e5!

The start of a sharp plan for a kingside attack, typical of such positions.

13 ... ♖b7
 14 ♟g5 ♜fc8
 14...h6? 15 ♟xe6! ♜c6 16 d5.
 15 ♜b1 ♜ab8
 16 h4 b5

Black's queenside pawn advance comes too late. A better move was 16...♜c6!, threatening mate and intending ...♜a4.

17 h5 b4
 18 hg! ba

18...hg is answered by 19 ♖xg6 fg 20 ♟xe6 ♜c6 21 d5.

19 gf+ ♟h8
 20 ♖xh7

Threatening ♜b1-g6-h5.

20 ... ♟f8
 21 ♜d3 ♖h6

21...cd 22 ♜h3 ♖xe5 23 ♖g8+ ♟g7 24 cd.

22 ♜h3! ♖xg5
 23 ♖g8+ ♟g7

24 ♜d3
 24 f4!? ♖h6 25 ♜d3.

24 ... ♖e4

He could have made things more complicated for White by 24...♖f4!, but Dolmatov's analysis shows that White would still keep a decisive plus: 25 ♜h4! ♟g6 26 ♜f6+ ♟f8 27 ♜xg6 cd 28 cd ♖a6 29 ♜g3! (29 ♜f3? ♜c1!) 29...♖xg3 30 ♜h6+ ♟e7 31 f8♜+! (31 ♜xe6+? is much weaker) 31...♜xf8 32 ♜g7+ ♟d8 33 ♜xf8+ ♟d7 34 ♖xe6+! ♟xe6 35 ♜f6+ ♟d7 (35...♟d5 36 ♜f3+ ♟e6 37 d5+) 36 ♜xa6 ♖h4 37 ♜xa3,

and White has four pawns for a bishop.

- | | | |
|----|-------|------|
| 25 | ♖g3 | ♔d8 |
| 26 | f4 | ♙f5 |
| 27 | ♗h2 | ♘g6 |
| 28 | fg | ♚f8 |
| 29 | ♗h6+ | ♚e7 |
| 30 | ♖xf5! | ef |
| 31 | ♗xg6 | ♖b1+ |
| 32 | ♚h2 | ♖b6 |
| 33 | e6 | ♚d6 |
| 34 | ♗xf5 | cd |
| 35 | cd | ♚c7 |

1-0

Timman-Yusupov
Tilburg Ct (8) 1986
Queen's Gambit

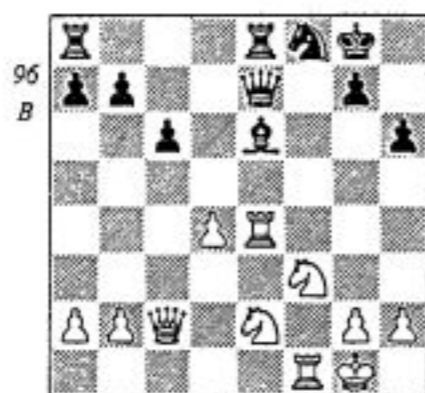
- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 1 | d4 | d5 |
| 2 | c4 | e6 |
| 3 | ♘c3 | ♘f6 |
| 4 | cd | ed |
| 5 | ♙g5 | ♙e7 |
| 6 | e3 | ♘bd7 |
| 7 | ♗c2 | 0-0 |
| 8 | ♙d3 | ♖e8 |
| 9 | ♘f3 | ♘f8 |
| 10 | 0-0 | c6 |
| 11 | ♖ae1 | ♘e4 |
| 12 | ♙xe7 | ♗xe7 |
| 13 | ♙xe4 | de |
| 14 | ♘d2 | f5 |

Against Ribli at the Lucerne World Team Ch (1985), Yusupov chose the more risky plan of 14...b6!? 15 ♗a4 b5!, and obtained a quick draw. (Incidentally, in the same event, he played the White side of this very system against Li

Zunian, and won.) Timman evidently counted on the same variation being repeated; he must have found an improvement on Ribli's play. But Yusupov has studied the system deeply; he has given himself the option of varying his plans where necessary and thereby sidestepping his opponent's pre-game preparations.

- | | | |
|----|------------|------|
| 15 | f3 | ef |
| 16 | ♘xf3 | ♙e6 |
| 17 | e4 | fe |
| 18 | ♖xe4 | h6!? |
| 19 | ♘e2?! (96) | |

An ineffective response to Black's novelty. White should have preferred 19 ♘e5, as played against me a year earlier by Yusupov himself, in a training game with a 15-minute time control.



19 ... ♗b4!
Forcing simplifications that favour Black.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-------|
| 20 | a3 | |
| 20 | ♘e5 | ♙xa2. |
| 20 | ... | ♗b3 |
| 20 | ... | ♗c4 |
| 21 | ♗d2 | ♙d5 |

Better than 20...♗c4 21 ♘c3.

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 22 | ♖xe8 | ♖xe8 |
| 23 | ♘e5 | ♘e6 |
| 24 | ♘c3 | ♗b6 |
| 25 | ♘xd5 | cd |
| 26 | ♘f3 | ♘f8 |

Black wants to tie his opponent down with 27...♖e4 and 28...♘e6. However, 26...♘d8, with the same purpose, was more exact.

- | | | |
|-----------|------|----------------|
| 27 | ♗f2! | ♘g6 |
| Intending | ... | ♖e4 or ...♘f4. |
| 28 | ♘h4! | ♘xh4 |

In view of the match situation, Yusupov sacrifices the exchange to force a draw. A perfectly playable alternative was 28...♖f8 29 ♘f5 ♗e6 or 29...♚h7.

- | | | |
|----|------|-------|
| 29 | ♗f7+ | ♚h7 |
| 30 | ♗xe8 | ♗xb2! |
| 31 | ♖f2 | ♗a1+ |
| 32 | ♖f1 | ♗a2 |

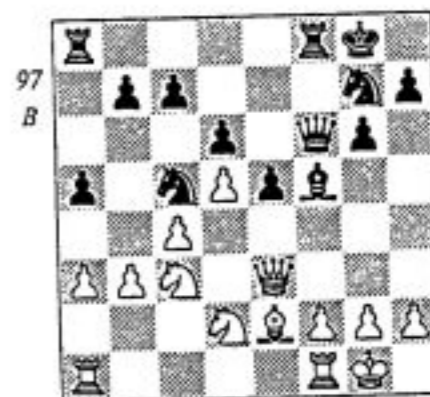
A natural ploy in such cases – without changing the position you prolong the game to the adjournment, then at home you check whether there are any winning chances.

- | | | |
|----|-----|------|
| 33 | ♖f2 | ♗a1+ |
| 34 | ♖f1 | ♗a2 |
| 35 | ♖f2 | ♗b1+ |
| 36 | ♖f1 | ♗b2 |
| 37 | ♖f2 | ♗b1+ |
| 38 | ♖f1 | ♗c2 |
| 39 | ♖f2 | ♗c1+ |
| 40 | ♖f1 | ♗d2 |
| 41 | ♖f2 | ♗d1+ |

1/2-1/2

Mukhin-Dvoretsky
Moscow 1969
King's Indian

- | | | |
|-----------|----------|------|
| 1 | c4 | ♘f6 |
| 2 | ♘f3 | g6 |
| 3 | ♘c3 | ♙g7 |
| 4 | e4 | d6 |
| 5 | d4 | 0-0 |
| 6 | ♙e2 | e5 |
| 7 | d5 | ♘a6 |
| 8 | 0-0 | ♘c5 |
| 9 | ♘d2?! | a5 |
| 10 | b3 | ♙h6! |
| 11 | ♗c2 | ♘e8 |
| 12 | ♘f3 | ♙xc1 |
| 13 | ♗xc1 | f5 |
| 14 | ef | ♙xf5 |
| 15 | ♗e3 | ♗f6 |
| 15...b6!? | | |
| 16 | ♘d2 | ♘g7 |
| 17 | a3? (97) | |



The right move is 17 f3, with roughly equal chances. Now Black gains the initiative.

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 17 | ... | ♙c2! |
| 18 | b4 | |
| 18 | ♘b5 | c6. |
| 18 | ... | ab |
| 19 | ab | ♖xa1 |
| 20 | ♖xa1 | ♘f5 |
| 21 | ♗h3 | |

21 ♖f3 e4, or 21 ♖de4 ♗xe4 22 ♖xe4 ♖h4, is bad for White.

- 21 ... ♖d4
- 22 ♖e3 ♖a6
- 23 ♖a2

23 b5 is hardly better; the reply I had in mind was 23...♖c5 24 ♗f1 e4 25 ♖a2 ♖f5 26 ♖h3 e3 27 ♖xc2 ♖d4 28 ♖de4 ♖xe4 29 ♖xc4 ♖f4 30 ♖a2 e2!.

- 23 ... e4!
- 24 ♖c1

24 ♖e1 ♖xe2+ 25 ♖xc2 ♗d3, or at once 25...♖b2.

- 24 ... ♖xe2+
- 25 ♖xe2 ♗d3

25...♖b2? 26 ♖xe4.

- 26 ♖e1 ♖b2
- 27 ♖c3 ♖xb4
- 28 ♖dxe4 ♗xe4
- 29 ♖xe4 ♖d3
- 30 ♖b1 ♖e5!?

I had been preparing this move, which wins a pawn. Black gains nothing from 30...♖c2 31 ♖d1 ♖xf2 32 ♖xf2 ♖xf2+ 33 ♖h1 ♖e3 34 ♖f1. During the game we both thought that 30...♖d4!? was refuted by 31 ♖e2 ♖xc4 32 ♖g5 ♖xd5 32 ♖e7, but instead of 31...♖xc4?, Black can win with 31...♖f4! 32 ♖g5 ♖xf2.

- 31 ♖e2 ♖xf2
- 32 ♖e1 ♖xe4
- 33 ♖xe4 ♖e8!
- 34 ♖xe5 ♖xe5
- 35 ♖xe5

The rook ending is probably lost too.

- 35 ... de

- 36 ♖f2 ♖f7
 - 37 ♖e3 ♖e7!
- 0-1

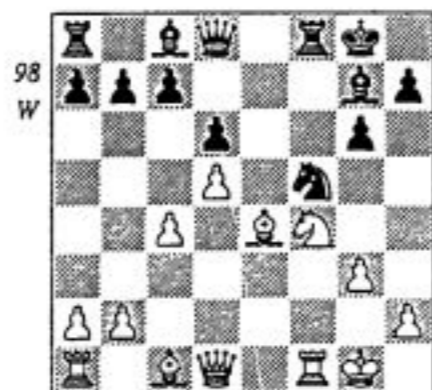
White resigned because after 38 c5 b6 39 ♖e4 bc 40 ♖xe5 he will soon be in zugzwang.

Etruk-Dvoretzky
Viljandi 1972
King's Indian

- 1 c4 ♖f6
- 2 g3 g6
- 3 ♗g2 ♗g7
- 4 ♖c3 0-0
- 5 ♖f3 d6
- 6 d4 ♖c6
- 7 0-0 e5
- 8 d5 ♖e7
- 9 e4 ♖d7
- 10 ♖e1?! f5
- 11 ♖d3 ♖f6
- 12 f4! fe
- 13 ♖xe4 ♖xe4
- 14 ♗xe4 ef

14...♗h3 is weaker; after 15 ♖e1 White intends to continue 16 fe de 17 ♖f2.

- 15 ♖xf4 ♖f5 (98)



An important position for the assessment of the variation. Black answers 16 ♖d3 with 16...♖f6, followed by ...♗d7 and ...♖ae8, achieving an excellent game. White should play 16 ♖c6 ♗xe6 17 de. Then his position appears preferable, though a draw would be the most likely result.

- 16 g4?

A nervous move, handing the initiative to the opponent.

- 16 ... ♖d4

- 17 h3

17 ♗e3 ♖e7 18 ♖d3 ♖e8, with an endgame advantage to Black.

- 17 ... ♖h4

- 18 ♖e1

Relatively best. 18 ♖d3 fails to 18...♗xg4! 19 hg ♖xg4+ 20 ♖h1 ♗e5 21 ♗d2 ♗xf4 22 ♗xf4 ♖xf4 23 ♖xf4 ♖xf4 24 ♖xd4 ♖e8 25 ♖e1 ♖h4+. On 18 ♗c3, Black has 18...♖g3+ 19 ♖g2 ♖xf1+ 20 ♖xf1 ♗e5, or even 20...♗xg4.

- 18 ... ♖xe1

- 19 ♖xe1 ♗d7?

Irresolution! I wrongly abandon the line which I had been planning: 19...♗e5 20 ♖e2 ♖f3+ 21 ♗xf3 ♖xf3 22 ♖g2 ♖f7 (22...♗d3!?), and if 23 ♗h6 Black can take the pawn on b2; otherwise ...h7-h5, opening the game for the player with the

bishop pair, is highly unpleasant.

- 20 ♖g2! ♖ae8
- 21 ♗d2 ♗e5
- 22 ♖e2 ♖xe2
- 23 ♖xe2 ♗xb2
- 24 ♖b1 ♗d4
- 25 ♖xb7 ♗b6

25...♖xe4? 26 ♖xe4 ♖f2+ 27 ♖g3 ♖xd2 28 ♖xc7, and the advantage is with White.

- 26 ♖g3! ♖a8

26...♗c8 27 ♖b8 ♗xg4 28 ♖xe8 ♗xe2 29 ♖e7, with equality.

- 27 c5! ♗c8
- 28 cb ♗xb7
- 29 bc ♖ac8
- 30 ♗b4??

The decisive mistake! After 30 ♗a5 White should be able to draw, even though 30...♖fe8 would still set him a few problems.

- 30 ... ♖xc7
- 31 ♗xd6 ♖c3+
- 32 ♖h4 ♖e8
- 33 ♖b2 ♖xe4
- 34 ♖xb7 h6!
- 35 ♗b4 ♖d3
- 36 ♗c5 ♖f4
- 37 ♖xa7 ♖ff3
- 38 ♖a8+ ♖g7
- 39 ♖a7+ ♖f6
- 40 ♖a6+ ♖e5

0-1

7 The King's Indian Attack

(from White's viewpoint)

Mark Dvoretsky

A chessplayer who opens with 1 e4 may, if he wishes, include in his repertoire the system 1 e4 e6 2 d3!? or 1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 e6 3 d3!?. Avoiding the French or Sicilian, White develops his pieces on the same lines as Black in the King's Indian Defence. In so doing, he hopes to gain not only from the extra tempo that results from switching the colours, but also from the fact that Black's ...e7-e6 is not of great value here. (In the King's Indian Defence, White very rarely plays e2-e3.)

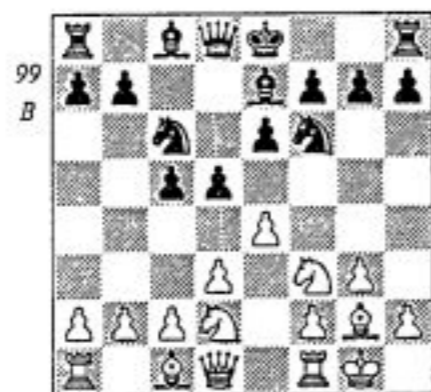
The same type of position results from Réti's Opening – 1 ♘f3 d5 2 g3 c5 3 ♗g2 ♘c6 4 0-0 – if Black plays ...e7-e6 now or next move. (Incidentally, there are other formations for Black which also come under the heading of 'King's Indian Attack' provided that White develops his pieces on the King's Indian pattern.) But the present survey is based on my personal experience of this opening and takes most of its material from my own games – and I usually play 1 e4. So this move-order will receive most attention.

Some of the games given below are without theoretical significance since at least one of the players makes inferior moves in the opening.

Nevertheless, these games can still prove useful in acquainting you with the structure characteristic of this opening and the typical strategic and tactical ideas and precepts which are applied in it.

A) Black develops his bishop on e7

1	e4	e6
2	d3	d5
3	♘d2	c5
4	♘gf3	♘c6
5	g3	♘f6
6	♗g2	♗e7
7	0-0 (99)	



The material in this section is divided into three parts. The 'Main Line' is discussed on page 149 and 'Black refrains from castling' on page 150.

(1) Basic ideas for White (examples of inferior play by Black)

Knight sacrifice on g5

Dvoretsky-Damsky
Moscow 1969

7	...	0-0
8	♗e1	b6?!
9	e5	♘d7
10	♘f1	♗b7
11	h4	♗c7?
12	♗f4	b5

Compared with the normal treatment of the variation (8...b5 etc.), Black has lost several tempi.

13 ♘1h2 d4?

This move makes it easier for White to conduct the decisive attack.

14	♘g5!	h6
15	♗h5!	hg
16	hg	♗fb8

After 16...♗fd8 17 ♘g4 ♘f8, White has the strong move 18 ♗e4, with ♘g2 and ♗h1 to follow.

17	♘g4	♘f8
18	♘f6+!	

Even stronger than 18 ♗e4 ♘g6.
18 ... ♗xf6
Or 18...gf 19 ef e5 20 ♗d5 ♗d6 21 ♗h6 ♘e6 22 g6 and mates.

19	ef	e5
20	♗d5!	♗e8

Or 20...ef 21 ♗c7; or 20...♗d8 21 ♘g2; or 20...♗d7 21 fg ♘g6 22 ♗xg6 ♗xd5 23 ♗h6.

21	g6	♘d8
22	gf+	1-0

Black resigned in view of 22...♘xf7 23 ♗g5 g6 24 ♗h6.

Knight sacrifice on d5

Dvoretsky-Yusupov
Blitz game, Moscow 1987

7	...	♗c7
8	♗e1	0-0
9	e5	♘d7
10	♗e2	b5
11	h4	a5
12	♘f1	a4
13	a3	b4
14	♗f4	ba
15	ba	♗a6
16	♘e3	

With the black queen on c7, the white knight's best route to g4 is via e3, creating the strong threat of ♘xd5!.

16	...	♗fe8?
17	♘xd5!	ed
18	e6	♗c8
19	ef+!	♘xf7
20	♗e6+	♘f8
21	♘g5	♗xg5
22	♗d6+	♗e7
23	♗xd5	1-0

The undermining move c2-c4

Dvoretsky-Gorchakov
Moscow 1973

7	...	0-0
8	♗e1	b5
9	e5	♘d7
10	♘f1	f5?!

11 e4 ♖xf6
If 11...♖xf6, then 12 ♖f4, attempting to seize the e5 point.

12 h4!
12 ♖xe6? ♗de5.
12 ... ♗b6
12...h6!? 13 ♗e3 or 13 ♗h2.
13 ♗g5! ♗d6

On 13...e5, Black's position is undermined by the powerful 14 c4!.

However after 13...♗d6, it was also worth considering 14 c4!? bc 15 dc ♖xg5 (15...♗xc4 16 ♗xe6!) 16 ♖xg5 (or 16 hg) 16...♗xc4 17 ♖f4. If now 17...♖xf4 18 gf ♗xf4, White has 19 ♖xd5!, while if 17...♗d8, then 18 ♗c1 with the threat of 19 b3.

Another good possibility is 14 ♗h5!? h6 15 ♗e3 (the same device as in Dvoretzky-Damsky) 15...♗e5 (if 15...♗d4 or 15...♖d7, White has 16 ♗g4 threatening 17 ♗xh6+) 16 f4! hg 17 hg g6 18 fe gh 19 ed ♖g7 (19...♖xg5 20 ♗xd5!) 20 ♖h3, followed by ♗e3-g2-f4.

Dolmatov-Meyer
Philadelphia 1991

7	...	0-0
8	♖e1	b5
9	e5	♗e8
10	♗f1	f6?!
11	e4	♖xf6
12	♗e3	♗d6

Dolmatov planned to answer 12...e5 with 13 c4! bc 14 dc e4 15 ♗d2 with advantage.

13	c4!	♗c7
14	♗g4	e5

15 ♗xf6+ gf
In the event of 15...♗xf6, White has the pleasant choice between 16 ♖g5 and 16 cd ♗xd5 17 ♗xe5!.

16	cd	♗xd5
17	♗d2!	♖e6
17...f5	18 ♗c4!	
18	♗e4	♗e7
19	♖h6	♖fd8
20	♖c1	c4
21	♗h5	♖ac8
22	dc	bc
23	f4!	

and White has an undoubted advantage.

An exchange of knights on d4, as a rule, is not dangerous to White

Fischer-U.Geller
Netanya 1968

7	...	0-0
8	♖e1	♗c7
8...b5.		
9	e5	♗d7
10	♗e2	b5
11	h4	a5
12	♗f1	♗d4?!
13	♗xd4	cd
14	♖f4	♖a6!?
15	♗h2!?	

A line deserving serious attention was 15 ♗g4!? ♗h8 16 ♖e2, intending ♗h2-f3 with advantage to White.

On the other hand, here the standard blow 15 ♖xd5?! would be premature, in view of the counter-blow 15...♖b4!. The following variations are possible:

(a) 16 ♗d2?! ed 17 c6 ♗xf4!? 18 gf ♖xc6 19 ♗d1 ♖g6+ and 20...♗f6, when Black has a strong attack.

(b) 16 ♖ecl? ed 17 e6 ♖xe6! 18 ♗xe6 ♗xf4! 19 ♗xd7 ♗xc1!.

(c) 16 ♖cd1? ed 17 e6 ♖xe6! 18 ♗xe6 ♗xf4! 19 ♗xd7 ♗f3! 20 ♗h2 ♗xd1+!.

(d) 16 ♖eb1!!. The only move, which may be found by process of elimination. This time, after 16...ed 17 e6, Black's 17...♖xe6?! does not work: 18 ♗xe6 ♗xf4 19 ♗xd7 ♗f3 20 ♗h2!.

15	...	♖c6
16	♖ac1	♖a6?

But now White's thematic strike against d5 secures him the advantage. Black should have chosen between 16...♗b6 and 16...♖b4.

17	♖xd5!	ed
18	e6	♗d8
19	ed	♖e6
20	♗g4!	f5

If 20...♗xd7, then 21 ♖e5 is decisive.

21	♗h5	♗xd7
22	♗f3	g6
23	♗h6	♖f6
24	♖xe6	♗xe6

At this point the obvious-looking 25 ♖e1? would unexpectedly lead to a draw after 25...♗xe1+!! 26 ♗xe1 ♖g7 27 ♗g5 ♖f6.

25 ♖e5!!

An elegant coup, after which White's positional plus becomes decisive.

25	...	♖xe5
26	♖e1	f4!?

27	♖xe5	♗d7
28	h5!	fg
29	hg!	gf+

On 29...♖xf3, White has 30 ♖c8+! ♗xe8 31 ♗xh7+ ♗f8 32 g7+.

30	♗xf2	hg
31	♗xg6+	♗h8
31...♗g7	32 ♖g5!	
32	♖h5+	1-0

(2) The Main Line

Fischer-Miagmasuren
Sousse 1967

7	...	0-0
8	e5	♗d7
9	♖e1	b5
10	♗f1	b4
11	h4	a5
12	♖f4	a4
13	a3!	

White should not allow 13...a3 14 b3 ♗a7, when the knight comes round to c3.

13	...	ba
14	ba	

Now Black constantly has to reckon with the central thrust c2-c4.

14	...	♗a5?!
14...♗d4!?		
15	♗e3	♖a6
16	♖h3	

Clearly Fischer is preparing ♗g5. Another stock plan is 16 h5, intending 17 h6 g6 18 ♗g4 followed by play on the weakened dark squares on the kingside (♗d2, ♖g5 etc.).

16	...	d4
17	♗f1	♗b6

18 ♖g5 ♘d5
 19 ♙d2 ♙xg5
 20 ♙xg5 ♖d7
 21 ♗h5 ♗fc8
 22 ♘d2 ♘c3
 23 ♙f6! ♗e8
 23...gf 24 ef ♗h8 25 ♘f3 ♗g8 26 ♘e5, and White wins.
 24 ♘e4 g6
 25 ♗g5! ♘xe4
 26 ♗xe4 c4
 27 h5! cd
 28 ♗h4 ♗a7
 28...dc 29 hg fg 30 ♗xh7 is also bad for Black.
 29 ♙g2!! dc?
 29...♗f8.
 30 ♗h6 ♗f8
 31 ♗xh7+! 1-0

*Dvoretsky-Tseshkovsky
 USSR Ch (First League),
 Odessa 1974*

7 ... 0-0
 8 ♗e1 b5
 9 e5 ♘d7
 10 ♘f1 b4
 11 h4 a5
 12 ♙f4 ♗e8!?

An interesting prophylactic move.
 13 ♘e3 ♙a6
 14 a4?!

The start of an unsuccessful plan. 14 h5, aiming for ♘g4 and h6, was stronger.
 14 ... ba
 15 ba
 White is playing for c2-c4.

15 ... ♗c8
 16 ♗a2?!

In reply to the immediate 16 c4, I didn't like 16...dc 17 dc ♘b6 18 ♘d2 ♗d4. The move played is an attempt to strengthen this plan – for example, 16...a4?! 17 c4 ♘b6 18 ♗d2!. On the other hand after 16...♘b6, I imagined that the attack with 17 ♘g5 would gain in strength.

However, White's idea is incorrect. Preferable moves were 16 ♗h2 and 16 ♙h3.

16 ... ♘b6
 17 ♘g5?

Played without due consideration. But then, Black was already threatening 17...d4.

17 ... h6

Only now did I discover that all White's combinative tries are easily refuted: 18 ♗h5 (18 ♘xf7 ♗xf7 19 ♗h5+ g6!) 18...hg 19 hg g6 20 ♗h4 (20 ♗h3 ♙xg5) 20...♘d4 21 ♗h2 ♘f5 22 ♘xf5 ef 23 ♗h1 ♙f8 24 ♗g1 ♙g7, or 21 ♘g4 ♘f5 22 ♗h3 ♙xg5.

18 ♘h3 ♙f8

White's play has come to a dead end. With possibilities of ...d5-d4 or ...♘d4 at his disposal, Black is clearly better.

(3) Black refrains from castling

*Dvoretsky-Cook
 St John 1988*

7 ... b6
 8 ♗e1 ♙b7
 9 c3 ♗c7

9...0-0.
 10 ♗e2

The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* recommends 10 e5 ♘d7 11 d4 and 12 ♘f1.

10 ... 0-0-0
 11 a3 ♙a6

It was worth considering 11...h6!?, and if 12 b4, then 12...♘e5.

12 e5 ♘d7
 13 h4 h6
 14 h5 ♘f8

On 14...g5, White was intending 15 hg fg 16 ♙h3 ♘f8 17 ♘f1 or 17 b4!?

15 b4 g6
 15...f6 16 ef ♙xf6 17 ♗b1.
 16 ♗b1 ♙b7
 17 bc bc
 18 ♘b3!?

Better is 18...gh 19 ♙e3 ♘d7 20 c4 d4 21 ♙f4 ♗dg8.

19 ♙e3! ♘xe5
 19...c4 20 ♘c5 ♙xc5 21 ♙xc5 with an attack.

20 ♘xe5 ♗xe5
 21 ♗c2 ♗c7
 22 c4 d4?!

White has a decisive advantage.

23 ... ♘d7
 24 hg e5
 25 ♘a5 ♘b6
 26 ♘c6 fg
 27 ♗xe5 ♙d6
 28 ♗e6 ♗d7
 29 ♙a5 ♗b7
 30 ♘xa7+ ♗xa7
 31 ♙xb6+ ♗xb6

32 ♗xb6 ♗xb6
 33 ♗a4 ♗hd8
 34 ♗c6+ ♗a7
 35 ♗xd6 1-0

When the black king stays in the centre, the plan of exchanging on d5 is also feasible.

*Dvoretsky-Bogomolov
 Moscow 1967*

7 ... b5
 8 ♗e1

The immediate 8 ed! ed 9 c4! is also good.

8 ... ♙b7
 9 ed ed
 10 c4!

The typical thrust in the centre.

10 ... bc
 11 dc 0-0
 12 cd ♘xd5
 13 ♘c4

White's position is somewhat preferable. He subsequently succeeds in outplaying his opponent: 13...♙f6 14 ♙g5! ♙xg5 15 ♘g5 ♘d4 16 ♗d2 h6 17 ♘e4 ♘b4 18 ♗ad1 ♘bc2 19 ♗f1 f5 20 ♘f6+ ♗xf6 21 ♙xb7 ♗ad8 22 ♗h1 ♗f7 23 ♘a5 ♗b8 24 ♙g2 ♗xb2 25 ♗c3 ♗b5 26 a4 ♗bb8 27 ♗xc5 ♗bc8 28 ♘c6 ♗xc6 29 ♙xc6 ♗c8 30 ♗xc2! ♗xc6 31 ♗d3 ♗d6 32 f3 ♗d5 33 ♗c1 ♗h7 34 g4 ♗f7 35 ♗c4 1-0 (Black lost on time)

If White plays e4-e5, Black should try to get in ...g7-g5; the

verdict on the position depends on this thrust.

Chekhov-A.Ivanov
Sochi 1975

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 1 | g3 | Qf6 |
| 2 | Qg2 | d5 |
| 3 | Qf3 | e6 |
| 4 | 0-0 | Qe7 |
| 5 | d3 | b6 |
| 6 | Qbd2 | Qb7 |
| 7 | e4 | c5 |
| 8 | e5 | Qfd7 |
| 9 | Ne1 | Qc6 |
| 10 | Qf1 | Wc7 |

Already 10...g5!? was worth considering.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 11 | Qf4 | h6 |
| 12 | h4 | d4? |

Better is 12...0-0-0 13 Qe3 Qf8.

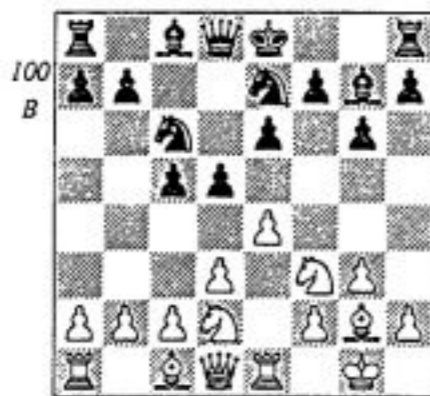
After the text White won the game as follows: 13 c3! dc 14 bc 0-0-0 15 d4 Qf8 16 Qd1d2 Qg6 17 Qe3 cd 18 cd Qb4 19 Wa4 Qge7 20 a3 Qxd2 21 Qxd2 Qb8 22 Mac1 Qd5 23 Qe4 Qd7 24 Mc2 Mc8 25 Qec1 Qdd8 26 Qf1 We7 27 Qd2 Wf8 28 Qxc6 Qxc6 29 Qxc6 We8 30 Qb5 a6 31 Qc8+ 1-0.

B) Black develops his bishop on g7

- | | | |
|---|------|------|
| 1 | e4 | e6 |
| 2 | d3 | d5 |
| 3 | Qd2 | c5 |
| 4 | Qgf3 | Qc6 |
| 5 | g3 | g6 |
| 6 | Qg2 | Qg7 |
| 7 | 0-0 | Qge7 |

Clearly 7...Qf6 is weaker in view of 8 ed Qxd5 (8...ed 9 Qe1+) 9 Qb3 b6 10 c4 Qc7 11 d4.

8 Ne1 (100)



(1) Castling is bad for Black – White's attack is very dangerous

Dvoretzky-Ubilava
Tbilisi 1979

- | | | |
|-------------------|-----|-----|
| 8 | ... | 0-0 |
| Better is 8...b6. | | |
| 9 | e5! | |

White proceeds with a standard plan of attack: Qf1, h4, Qf4, Qh2-g4 etc. Black's defence is more difficult here than in the system with the bishop on e7, since his kingside dark squares have been weakened by ...g7-g6.

- | | | |
|--|-----|-----|
| 9 | ... | Wc7 |
| 10 | We2 | a5 |
| 11 | h4 | h6 |
| 12 | Qf1 | |
| White could try 12 a4!?, with c2-c3 and Qf1 to follow. | | |
| 12 | ... | a4 |
| 13 | a3 | b5 |

- | | | |
|------------|-----|-----------|
| 13...Qd4!? | | |
| 14 | Qh2 | b4 |
| 15 | Qf4 | Qh7 |
| 16 | Qg4 | Qg8 (101) |



17 c4!
After 17 h5 g5, the sacrifice on g5 does not work. To obtain an improved version, White wishes to conquer the e4 square by attacking the black d-pawn with his own c-pawn.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 17 | ... | bc |
| 18 | bc | Qa6 |
| 19 | c4! | dc |
| 20 | dc | |

Now 21 h5 (intending to meet 21...g5 with 22 Qxg5) cannot be parried.

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|------|------|
| 20 | ... | Qab8 |
| 21 | h5! | |
| Not 21 Qf6+? Qh8 22 h5 g5. | | |
| 21 | ... | Qh8 |
| 21...g5 is met by 22 Qxg5!. | | |
| 22 | hg | fg |
| 23 | Qf6! | Qge7 |
| 23...Qd4!? | | |
| 24 | Qad1 | |
| 24 Qh4!? | | |
| 24 | ... | Qbd8 |

- | | | |
|--|-------|------|
| 25 | Qd6! | Qb7 |
| 26 | Qxe6 | Qd4 |
| 26...Qf5 27 Qd5 Wf7 28 Qxc6 Qxc6 29 e6 and wins. | | |
| 27 | Qxd4 | cd |
| 28 | Wd3 | Qxg2 |
| 29 | Qxg2 | Qf7 |
| 30 | Qh1! | Qf5 |
| 31 | g4 | Wb7+ |
| 32 | Qg1 | Qc3 |
| 33 | Qxe3 | Wf3 |
| 34 | Wxg6 | Qxf6 |
| 35 | Qxh6+ | 1-0 |

Dvoretzky-Khalifman
Sverdlovsk 1987

- | | | |
|----|-----|-------|
| 8 | ... | 0-0?! |
| 9 | e5! | Wc7 |
| 10 | We2 | b6 |
| 11 | h4 | Qa6 |
| 12 | Qf1 | |

Another quite good line seems to be 12 c3!?, but then White has to reckon with 12...f6 13 cf Qxf6 14 Qf1 e5.

- | | | |
|----|------|-------|
| 12 | ... | Qd4 |
| 13 | Qxd4 | cd |
| 14 | Qf4 | Qc6?! |

A better idea was 14...Qac8 15 Qac1 Wc5, aiming to attack the queenside pawns with his queen. All the same, 16 Qh2 followed by Qg4 or h4-h5 would give White a dangerous attack.

- | | | |
|----|----|-----|
| 15 | a3 | Wd7 |
|----|----|-----|

I would have met 15...Qac8! by the simple 16 Qac1!, since 16 Qh2?! allows Black to confuse the issue with 16...Qxe5! 17 Qxe5 Qxe5 18

♖xe5 ♖xe5 19 ♜xe5 ♜xc2.

16 ♘h2 ♜ae8
17 ♘g4 f6

After 17...h5 18 ♘f6+ ♙xf6 19 ef (threatening 20 ♙h6) 19...♗h7 20 ♙e5 and 21 f4, White would obtain an overwhelming advantage.

18 ef ♙xf6
19 ♘xf6+ ♜xf6
20 ♙h3 ♜xf4

20...♙c8 21 ♙e5 is also hopeless.

21 gf ♙c8
22 ♖f3

22 f5 e5.

22 ... ♖f7
23 ♖g3 ♗h8

23...♜f8 24 f5.

24 ♜e2 ♜f8
25 ♜ae1 ♘d8
26 f5! gf
27 ♖e5+ ♖g7+
28 ♖xg7+ ♗xg7
29 f4

and White won the ending.

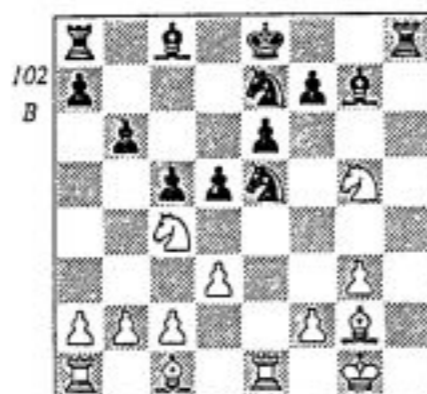
(2) White should not push his pawn to e5 before Black has castled short, because of counterplay with ...h7-h6 and ...g6-g5

Dvoretzky-Anikaev
USSR Ch 1/2 Odessa 1972

8 ... b6
9 e5?! ♖c7
10 ♖e2 h6!
11 h4 g5!
12 hg hg
13 ♘g5 ♖xe5!
14 ♖xe5 ♘xe5?!

After 14...♙xe5! Black would have the better game.

15 ♘c4! (102)



15 ... ♘xc4?!

He should have decided on a positional exchange sacrifice: 15...dc! 16 ♙xa8 cd.

16 dc ♙b7
17 c3
17 a4!?
17 ... 0-0
18 cd?!

A stronger move was 18 a4!, with somewhat the better chances for White. The reply 18...♙c6? fails to 19 ♘xe6! fe 20 ♜xe6.

18 ... ♙xd5
19 ♙xd5 ♘xd5
20 ♘e4 ♜fd8
21 ♙g5 f6
22 ♙d2 ♜d7
23 ♜e2 1/2-1/2

(3) Maintaining the central tension

Dvoretzky-Averkin
USSR Ch (First League),
Odessa 1974

8 ... b6
9 c3 ♙b7

On 9...♙a6?! White has 10 ed ♘xd5 11 ♖a4.

10 ♘f1 h6
11 h4 d4?!

The ending after 11...de 12 de ♖xd1 13 ♜xd1 is clearly more pleasant for White.

12 c4 e5
13 h5

13 ♘3h2!? followed by f2-f4.

13 ... ♙c8

13...♖d7!?

14 ♘h4

14 ♘3h2.

14 ... ♙f6

15 hg fg

16 f4 h5!

Not 16...ef? because of 17 ♘xg6! ♘xg6 18 e5.

17 f5?!

17 ♘h2.

17 ... g5

Black now has the better position, since White has no active possibilities.

Dolmatov-A.Sokolov
Manila IZ 1990

8 ... b6
9 c3

In Dolmatov's view, 9 ♘f1 is more accurate; White intends to play 10 e5, for example in answer to 9...d4. On the other hand, 9...de 10 de ♖xd1 11 ♜xd1 gives White a favourable ending similar to that which arose in the game.

9 ... a5!?

10 ♘f1
White is aiming for e4-e5. In Ljubojević-Kasparov, Nikšić 1983, where the moves 9 h4 h6 had been inserted, White played instead 11 a4, to which Kasparov replied 11...♜a7!?. Dolmatov refrained from 10 a4 because he was worried about 10...d4.

10 ... de
It was worth considering 10...d4 or 10...a4.

11 de ♖xd1
12 ♜xd1 a4
13 ♜b1! 0-0

If 13...a3, then 14 ba, attacking the pawn on b6.

14 ♙f4 e5

After 14...a3 15 ♜dc1! ab 16 ♜xb2, the pawn on b6 is vulnerable. 16...♘b4? fails against 17 ♜d2! ♘xa2 18 ♜a1.

15 ♙e3 ♙e6
16 b3 ab
17 ab

White's position is clearly preferable.

17 ... ♜fd8
18 ♘1d2 f6
18...♜d3 19 ♜dc1 and 20 ♙f1.

19 ♙f1 ♙f8
20 b4!

20 ♙c4 is premature in view of 20...♗f7.

20 ... ♜a3?

It was essential to exchange on b4, so as to open the diagonal for his dark-squared bishop and utilise the d4 point when appropriate.

21 bc bc

22 ♖dc1 ♘c8
 23 ♙c4 ♙xc4
 At this point 23...♙f7? fails to 24 ♖b7+.
 24 ♘xc4 ♖a4
 25 ♗fd2 ♗d6?!
 26 ♗b6 ♖a2
 27 ♖a1 ♖xa1
 28 ♖xa1 f5
 29 ♗d5 fe?
 29...♙f7.
 30 ♗f6+ ♙f7
 31 ♗fxe4

White now has a decisive positional advantage, which Dolmatov accurately conducts to victory: 31...♗f5 32 ♖a6 ♗xe3 33 fe ♗b8 34 ♖f6+ ♙e7 35 ♖b6 ♗d7 36 ♖c6 ♖a8 37 ♙f2 ♖a2 38 ♙e2 ♙d8 39 ♙d3 ♙e7 40 h4 ♗b8 41 ♖e6 ♗d7 (41...♙d7 42 ♖xe5 ♗c6 43 ♗xc5+) 42 ♗c4 ♖g2 43 ♗a5 ♙f8 44 ♗c6+ ♙c7 45 ♗xe5 ♗xe5+ 46 ♖xe5 ♙d8 47 h5 ♙e7 48 hg hg 49 ♖e6 g5 50 ♖e5 ♙d7 51 ♙c4 ♖g1 52 ♗xg5 ♖xg3 53 ♗e4 ♖h3 54 ♗xc5+ ♙d8 55 ♗e6+ ♙d7 56 ♗d4 ♙f6 57 ♖f5 ♙e7 58 ♙d3 ♖h1 59 c4 ♖a1 60 ♖b5 ♖a3+ 61 ♙e4 ♙d7 62 ♖b7+ ♙c8 63 ♖b3 ♖a1 64 ♙d5 ♖d1 65 c5 1-0

(4) Exchange of pawns on d5

Yurtaev-Dvoretsky
Frunze 1983

8 ... b6
 9 c3 ♙c7?
 9...♙b7.
 10 ed! ed

Two strong replies to 10...♗xd5 are 11 ♗e4 and 11 d4 cd 12 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 13 ♙xd5.

11 ♗f1 0-0
 12 ♙f4 ♙d7
 13 d4
 White could try 13 h4!?.
 13 ... cd
 14 cd ♙b7?

Better is 14...♗f5, not worrying about 15 ♗e5 ♗xe5 16 de ♙b7 followed by 17...d4.

After 14...♙b7 15 ♖c1 (as actually played) or 15 h4, White has a significant plus.

Kaisauri-Tukmakov
Vilnius 1978

8 ... b6
 9 ed!? ed
 10 d4 0-0
 If 10...♗xd4, then 11 ♗xd4 ♙xd4 12 ♗b3 with advantage to White.
 11 dc bc
 12 ♗b3 c4
 13 ♗bd4 ♙g4
 14 ♙e3 ♙d7
 15 ♙d2

White has acquired slightly the better position from the opening.

Dvoretsky-Vulfson
Moscow 1986

8 ed!?
 Instead of 8 ♖c1.
 8 ... ed
 8...♗xd5 9 ♗b3 b6 10 c4, with 11 d4 to follow.

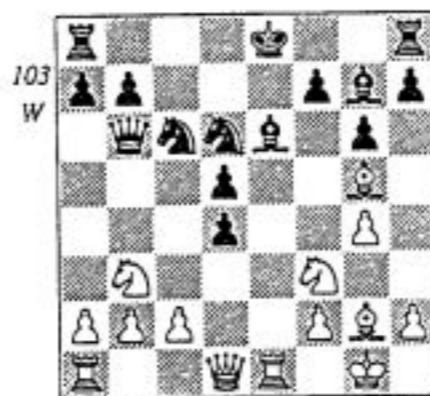
9 d4 cd
 9...♗xd4?! 10 ♗xd4 ♙xd4 11 ♗b3 is dubious for Black, but 9...c4!? deserves attention.

10 ♗b3 ♙b6
 Black should prefer 10...♙g4!?, even though after 11 h3 ♙xf3 12 ♙xf3 0-0 13 ♙f4, intending ♖fe1 and ♖ad1, White retains positional compensation for the sacrificed pawn.

11 ♙g5
 A stronger line was 11 ♙f4! 0-0 12 ♙d6 and 13 ♙c5, with the better chances for White.

11 ... ♗f5
 He could have equalised with 11...0-0!? 12 ♗fxd4 ♗f5!. On the other hand 12...♗xd4? is inferior: 13 ♙xe7 ♗xb3 14 ♙xf8 ♗xa1 15 ♙xg7 ♙xg7 16 ♙xa1 with advantage to White.

12 ♖e1+ ♙e6
 13 g4! ♗d6 (103)



14 ♗fxd4!!
 But not 14 c3 on account of 14...♗e4! (14...dc? 15 ♙xd5).
 14 ... ♙xd4

14...♗xd4 15 ♙e3 ♗b5? 16 a4.
 15 ♗xd4 ♙xd4
 15...♗xd4? 16 ♙f6.
 16 ♙xd5!
 16 ♙xd4? would be a mistake: 16...♗xd4 17 ♙f6 ♗xc2.
 16 ... 0-0!

Avoiding the dangerous 16...♙xd1 17 ♖axd1 ♗b5 (17...♙d7? 18 ♙f4), when White can choose between 18 ♙xe6 fe 19 ♖xe6+ ♙f7 20 ♖f6+ ♙e8 21 ♖e1+ ♙d7 22 ♖f7+ and 18 ♙f6!? 0-0 (18...♖f8 19 ♖e3, threatening 20 ♙xc6+ bc 21 ♖ed3) 19 ♖xe6 fe 20 ♙xe6+ ♖f7 21 ♖d7.

17 ♙xc6 ♙c5!
 Weaker alternatives are 17...♙xd1 18 ♖axd1 bc 19 ♖xd6 ♙xg4 20 ♖xc6 and 17...♙xg4+ 18 ♙xg4 ♙xg4 19 ♙g2; in either case White has a clear plus.

18 ♙f3!
 A draw would result from either 18 ♙e7 ♙xc6 19 ♙xd6 ♙xd6 20 ♙xd6 ♖fd8 or 18 ♙d5 ♙xd5! (18...♙xd5? 19 ♖e5 ♗e4 20 ♙e3) 19 ♙xd5 ♙xd5 20 ♖ad1 ♙f3 21 ♖xd6 ♙xg4.

18 ... ♙xg5
 19 ♙xd6 ♖ac8
 20 c3 ♙b5!

Of course 20...♙xg4? fails to 21 ♙g3 h5 22 h3. White also has the advantage after either 20...♖fd8?! 21 ♙e5 ♙xe5 22 ♖xe5 or 20...h5?! 21 h3 hg 22 hg ♙xg4 23 ♙g3 ♖c4 (23...f5 24 ♖e6/c5) 24 ♙xb7.

21 ♖ad1!?
 There is little promise in 21 ♙b4 ♙g5 (threatening 22...♖c4) or 21

♞e2 ♞fd8 22 ♖e5 ♞c5.

21 ... ♔xa2

21... ♖xb2? 23 ♞xe6! ♜e23 ♖xe6+.

22 ♞d2

22 ♞e7 ♖xb2.

22 ... ♞fd8!

Better than 22... ♔e6 23 ♞e5! or 22... ♞fe8 23 ♞e7 ♞xe7 24 ♖xe7 ♞e8 25 ♖xb7 ♞e1+ 26 ♔g2 ♖f1+ 27 ♔g3.

23 ♖xd8+ ♞xd8

24 ♞xd8+ ♔g7

White is better, but only slightly. The game, which ended in a draw, is notable for Black's cool and accurate defence.

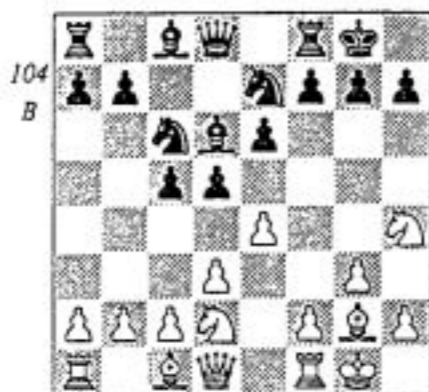
C) Black plays ... ♔d6 and ... ♔ge7

1	e4	e6
2	d3	d5
3	♔d2	c5
4	♔gf3	♔c6
5	g3	♔d6
6	♔g2	♔ge7
7	0-0	0-0
8	♔h4?! (104)	

(1) Black plays ...f7-f5 to counter his opponent's pawn advance

Ciocaltea-Liberzon
Netanya 1983

8	...	f5
9	f4	♔c7
10	c3	♔h8
11	ef	ef
12	♔df3	



This arrangement of White's knights is typical of the variation.

12 ... ♔e6

13 ♞e1

A different scheme of development is 13 ♔e3!? followed by ♔f2, ♖d2, ♞ae1 and if appropriate d3-d4.

13 ... ♔g8

14 ♔d2 ♖d7

15 a3 a5

16 a4 ♞ab8

Black is aiming for 17...b5 18 ab ♞xb5, with pressure against b2.

17 ♞c1!!

A fine prophylactic move. White answers 17...b5 with 18 ab ♞xb5 19 ♞c2, followed by ♔c1 and ♞ce2, deploying his pieces harmoniously and fully neutralising Black's pressure in the b-file.

17 ... ♔c8

This knight retreat allows White to carry out a typical kingside diversion.

18 ♔g5

Threatening 19 ♖h5.

18 ... g6?!

Better is 18... ♞f6.

19 c4! d4

Not 19...dc? 20 ♔xc6, with 21 ♔c3+ to follow. With the queenside closed, White has a free hand for action on the other wing, where he is stronger.

20 ♖e2 ♔b6

21 b3 ♞be8

22 ♖f2 ♔c8

23 ♔f3 ♞xe1+

24 ♞xe1 ♞e8

25 ♞xe8 ♖xe8

26 g4! ♔d6

After 26...f7 27 ♔xg4, White would achieve f4-f5.

27 gf ♔xf5

27...gf 28 ♖g2.

28 ♔e4 ♔e3?

Better is 28... ♔ce7.

29 ♔xc6! bc

29... ♖xc6 30 ♖xe3 de 31 ♔c3+; or 30 ♔xe3 de 31 ♖b2+.

30 ♔e4 ♔g4

31 ♖g2 ♔h6

32 ♖g5 ♖f8

33 ♖xc5 ♖xc5

34 ♔xc5 1-0

Dvoretsky-Chekhov
Sverdlovsk 1987

8 ... b6

9 f4 f5

10 ef ef

11 ♔df3 ♖c7?!

12 c3

White can also place his bishop on e3 at once, and after 12...d4 13 ♔f2 undermine Black's centre with c2-c3.

12 ... ♔a6

13 ♞e1 ♞ae8

14 ♔e3!

14 ♔g5 was tempting, but after 14... ♖d7! there is no favourable combination.

14 ... h6

15 d4 ♞d8

16 ♔f2 cd?!

17 ♔xd4 ♔xd4

18 ♔xd4

White has an overwhelming positional advantage.

(2) Black refrains from ...f7-f5

Dvoretsky-Dieks
Wijk aan Zee 1975

8 ... b6

9 f4 ♔c7

10 f5 ef

10...de?! 11 f6! gf 12 ♔xe4.

11 ef f6

12 c3 ♔a6

12... ♔e5!? 13 d4 cd 14 cd ♔5c6 looks inviting, but White has the strong manoeuvre 15 ♔b1! and 16 ♔c3.

13 ♔df3 ♖d7

14 g4

14 ♔h3!?

14 ... ♖d6?!

15 ♞f2 ♞ae8

16 ♔h3!

Now Black has to reckon with g4-g5, but White's main idea is to establish control of the f4 point after ♔g2.

16 ... h6

17 ♔g2 d4

18 c4 ♔b7

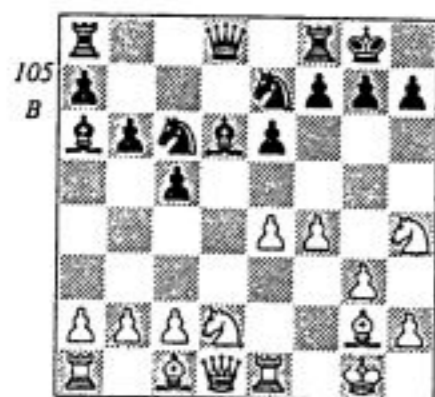
19 $\text{d}f4$

White's position deserves preference.

Fischer-Ivkov
Santa Monica 1966

8 ... $b6$
9 $f4$ de
10 de $\text{a}a6$
11 $\text{H}e1$ (105)

11 $e5$ can be met by 11... $\text{c}c7$ 12 $\text{H}e1$ $\text{W}d4+$ 13 $\text{c}h1$ $\text{H}ad8$ 14 $c3$ $\text{W}f2$.



11 ... $c4$

Practice has also seen 11... $\text{c}c7$ 12 $c3$ $\text{d}d3$ (12... $\text{W}d7?$! 13 $\text{W}h5$ $\text{H}ad8$ 14 $e5$ $f5?$ 15 ef $\text{H}xf6$ 16 $\text{d}e4$ $\text{H}h6$ 17 $\text{W}xh6!$, and White won; Lerner-Dolmatov, Kharkov 1975) 13 $e5$. The game Dolmatov-Lautier, Polanica Zdroj 1991, continued 13... $\text{W}d7?$! (13... $b5$, followed by ... $c4$, ... $\text{a}b6+$ and ... $\text{d}d5$, was stronger) 14 $\text{d}e4$ $\text{H}ad8$ 15 $\text{W}g4$ $\text{c}c4?$! 16 $\text{c}c4$ $\text{d}g6$ 17 $\text{d}f3$ $\text{d}ce7$ 18 $\text{c}c2!$ with advantage to White.

11... $e5$ is also worth considering.

12 $c3$ $\text{d}a5?$!

White also stands better after 12... $\text{c}c5+$ 13 $\text{c}h1$ $e5$ 14 $f5$ $\text{d}c8$ (Dvoretzky-Mikhailchishin, Tbilisi 1980). Perhaps he should continue 15 $\text{W}h5$, with a view to $g3$ - $g4$ - $g5$.

13 $e5$ $\text{c}c5+$
14 $\text{c}h1$ $\text{d}d5$

14... $\text{H}c8$ 15 $b4$.

15 $\text{d}e4$ $\text{c}c7$
16 $\text{W}h5$ $\text{d}e7$
17 $g4!$ $\text{c}xe4?$!

18 $\text{c}xe4$ $g6$
19 $\text{W}h6$ $\text{d}d5$

19... $\text{c}h8$ 20 $\text{d}f3$.

20 $f5$ $\text{H}e8$
21 fg fg

22 $\text{d}xg6!$ $\text{W}d7$

22... hg 23 $\text{W}xg6+$ $\text{c}f8$ 24 $\text{c}h6+$ $\text{c}e7$ 25 $\text{W}g7$ mate.

23 $\text{d}f4$ $\text{H}ad8$
24 $\text{d}h5$ $\text{c}h8$

25 $\text{d}f6$ $\text{d}xf6$

26 ef $\text{H}g8$

27 $\text{c}f4$ $\text{H}xg4$

28 $\text{H}ad1$ $\text{H}dg8$

29 $f7!$ 1-0

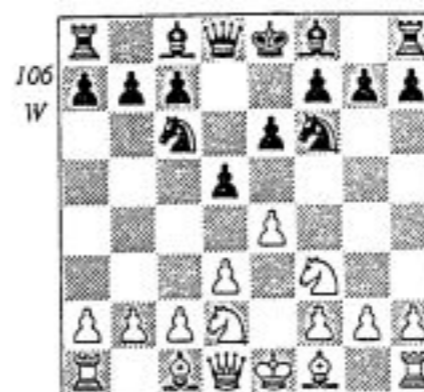
D) Black leaves his pawn on $c7$

1 $e4$ $e6$
2 $d3$ $d5$
3 $\text{d}d2$ $\text{d}f6$
4 $\text{d}gf3$ $\text{d}c6$ (106)

Dvoretzky-Ek
Wijk aan Zee 1975

5 $c3$

Black intends to play ... $e6$ - $e5$, and at some point he will most likely



exchange pawns on $e4$. In that case White's bishop will not be very well placed on $g2$. It therefore makes sense to develop it on the $f1$ - $a6$ diagonal. Essentially a Philidor Defence arises, with colours reversed and two extra tempi for White.

5 ... $e5$

Black could try 5... $a5?$!

6 $\text{c}e2$

$b2$ - $b4$, a useful move in such positions, was worth playing here.

6 ... $a5$

7 $0-0$ $\text{c}c7$

8 $\text{H}e1$ $0-0$

9 $\text{W}c2$ $h6$

10 $\text{c}f1$ $\text{H}e8$ (107)



11 $b3$

One of the typical plans in this kind of position is $b2$ - $b3$, $a2$ - $a3$, $\text{c}b2$ and $b3$ - $b4$, as a result of which White gains space on the queenside and may create threats against the pawn on $e5$.

In reply, Black was unable to find an effective arrangement of his forces.

11 ... $\text{c}g4$
12 $h3$ $\text{c}h5$
13 $a3$ $\text{c}d6?$!
14 $\text{c}b2$ $\text{d}b8?$
15 ed $\text{d}xd5$
16 $c4$ $\text{d}f4$
17 $g3$ $\text{d}e6$
18 $\text{d}xe5$ $\text{c}xe5$
19 $\text{H}xe5$

And White won.

Dvoretzky-Orlov
30-minute game, Moscow 1984

5 $c3$ de
6 de $\text{c}c5$
7 $\text{c}b5!$ $\text{c}d7$
8 $0-0$ $0-0$
9 $\text{W}e2$

9 $b4$ $\text{c}b6$ 10 $\text{W}e2$.

9 ... $a6$
10 $\text{c}d3$ $e5$
11 $b4$ $\text{c}a7$
12 $\text{d}c4$ $\text{H}e8$
13 $\text{c}g5$ $h6$
14 $\text{c}h4$ $\text{c}g4$
15 $\text{H}ad1$ $\text{W}e7$
16 $h3$ $\text{c}h5$
17 $a4$ $\text{W}e6$
18 $\text{d}e3$ $g5$

19 ♖g3 g4
 It was essential to play 19...♗xe3.
 20 hg ♖xg4
 21 ♖d5 ♜ac8
 22 ♗c4 ♜g6
 23 ♜d3
 23 ♖h4 ♖xf2.
 23 ... ♖e7
 24 ♖h4 ♖xf2
 25 ♖xe7+ ♜xe7
 26 ♗xf2 ♗xe2
 27 ♖xg6 1-0

E) Exploitation of light-squared weaknesses

Dvoretsky-Rogozhnikov
 Moscow 1965

1 g3 ♖f6
 2 ♗g2 d5
 3 ♖f3 c5
 4 0-0 ♖c6
 5 d3 e5
 6 ♖bd2 ♗e7
 7 e4 0-0
 8 c3 de?

Not a good exchange. White now has a clear plan for playing on the weakness of c4, d5 and f5.

9 de ♜c7
 10 ♜c2 ♜e8
 11 ♜e1

White avoids 11 ♖c4, which would give his opponent a hint as to the right set-up: 11...♗e6 12 ♖e3 h6.

11 ... ♗f8
 12 ♖f1 g6?
 12...h6.

13 ♗g5! ♗g7
 14 ♗xf6 ♗xf6
 White wants to seize the d5 point, and therefore exchanges one of its defenders – the knight on f6.
 15 ♖e3 ♗e6 (108)



16 ♗f1!
 And now he exchanges the other guardian of d5 – the light-squared bishop.
 16 ... a6
 17 ♗c4 ♜ad8
 18 ♜ad1 b5
 19 ♗d5! ♖e7
 20 ♗xe6!

Transformation of the advantage – renouncing his central outpost, White spoils his opponent's pawn structure. With the intermediate move 19 ♗d5! he deflected the enemy knight onto the inferior square e7, from which it will need to return to c6 with loss of time.

A weaker line was 20 c4?! ♗xd5 21 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 22 ed ♗g7, followed by ...f7-f5 and ...e5-e4; or 22 cd c4, intending ...♗f6-e7-c5/d6.

20 ... fe

21 ♜xd8 ♜xd8
 22 ♜d1

The rook exchange makes the doubled pawns harder to defend, and increases the scope of the white queen.

22 ... ♖c6
 23 a4!

Now the queenside pawns become vulnerable too.

23 ... ♜xd1+
 24 ♜xd1 ♖f7
 25 ♖g4 h5
 26 ♖xf6!

Another transformation of the advantage. White exchanges his opponent's bad bishop to secure an even greater weakening of the central pawns – and also of the dark squares on the kingside, where he will threaten to penetrate.

26 ... ♖xf6
 27 ab ab
 28 ♜d2 ♖g7
 29 h4 ♜e7
 30 ♜d3! b4
 30...c4 is met by 31 ♜c3 and 32 ♜b6.

31 ♖g5 bc
 32 bc ♖d8?
 33 ♜b5?

Intent on his plan of ♜b5 and ♜xc5!, White misses 33 ♜xd8!

33 ... ♖f7
 34 ♜xc5! ♜d7
 35 ♜c7!

And Black soon resigned.

Dvoretsky-Kupreichik
 Odessa 1974

1 e4 c5
 2 ♖f3 e6
 3 d3 d5
 4 ♖bd2 ♖c6
 5 g3 de?!
 6 de b6 (109)



Now on 7 ♗g2, Black has the embarrassing 7...♗a6; therefore White develops his bishop on the f1-a6 diagonal.

7 ♗b5! ♗d7
 7...♗b7 8 ♖e5!?.
 8 ♜e2!

It is important to prevent ...a7-a6. White can now meet 8...a6? with 9 ♗xa6 ♖b4 10 ♗d3 ♖xa2 11 ♖e5! with advantage – but not 11 0-0? on account of 11...♖c3!.

8 ... ♖f6
 9 c3 ♗e7
 10 0-0 0-0
 11 a4 ♜c7
 12 ♜e1

Stronger than 12 ♖c4?! a6 13 ♗f4 ♜b7. However, 12 e5!? ♖d5 13 ♗d3 was worth considering.

12 ... e5
 Black is afraid of White's e4-e5,

and therefore plays this move which weakens the d5 point. From now on, White's plan is roughly the same as in the preceding game.

13 ♖f1 a6!?

14 ♔d3

14 ♔xa6 ♜xe4 is unclear.

14 ... ♜a5

If 14...h6, then 15 ♜c3 with 16 ♜f5 to follow.

15 ♔g5 ♜b3?

16 ♔xf6! ♔xf6

17 ♞a3 ♔e6

After 17...♜a5 18 ♜c3 ♔e6 19 ♔xa6 c4 20 ♔b5, Black has no compensation for losing a pawn.

18 ♜c3

Clearer than 18 ♔xa6?! c4 19 ♔b5 ♔e7.

18 ... ♔e7

19 ♜c4!

Stronger than 19 ♔c4 ♜a5.

19 ... ♔xc4

20 ♔xc4 ♜a5

21 ♞aa1 b5?

An unsuccessful attempt to confuse matters. He should have defended patiently with 21...♜xc4 22 ♞xc4 ♞fd8 23 ♞ed1 ♔f6, aiming for ...♞c6.

22 ab ab

23 ♔xb5 c4?!

24 ♞a4!

Black loses material without any compensation.

24 ... ♞fb8

25 ♔xc4 ♜xc4

26 ♞xc4 ♞b6?!

27 ♜xe5 ♞b7

27...♞xb2 28 ♞c8+!

28 b4 ♔f8

29 ♞c6 ♞d8

30 ♞c4 ♞d2

31 ♜f3 ♞c2

32 e5 ♞a2

33 ♞f1 ♞b2

34 ♞c8 1-0

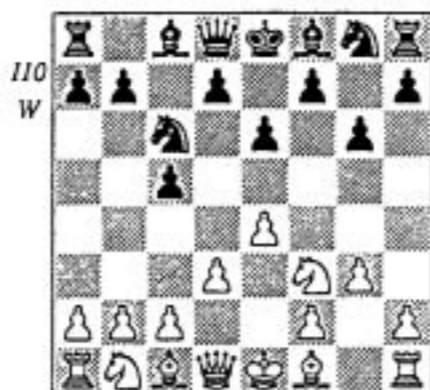
F) Black chooses a Sicilian formation without ...d7-d5

1 e4 c5

2 ♜f3 e6

3 d3 ♜c6

4 g3 g6 (110)



Black intends ...♔g7, ...♜ge7, ...0-0, ...d7-d6, ...♞b8 and ...b7-b5. In my view, this is one of Black's best plans. If White develops his knight on c3, the game may transpose into the Closed Sicilian. We shall here examine some other plans for White.

(1) The 5 d4 system

Dvoretsky-Filipović
Varna 1980

5 d4!? cd

6 ♜xd4

White's loss of tempo is not as senseless as it may seem. Black now has to reckon with the sortie ♜b5; when the bishop is developed on g7, the d6 square can prove weak. In this connection it should be noted that there is no bishop on d3 to obstruct the d-file for White, as there is in the analogous variation of the Paulsen System (1 e4 c5 2 ♜f3 e6 3 d4 cd 4 ♜xd4 a6 5 ♔d3 g6!?).

6 ... a6

7 ♔g2

It is also worth considering 7 c4!? ♔g7 8 ♔e3.

7 ... ♔g7

8 ♜xc6 bc

The ending after 8...dc 9 ♞xd8+ ♜xd8 10 ♜d2 is clearly in White's favour, thanks to Black's weak dark squares on the queenside.

9 0-0 ♜e7

If 9...d5, then 10 ed cd 11 c4 and 12 ♜c3.

10 ♞d6! ♞a5

On 10...0-0, White consolidates his advantage with 11 ♜c3!. This is better than 11 c4?! a5, with ...♔a6 to follow.

11 ♔d2!?

White gains nothing from 11 ♜d2?! ♔e5 12 ♞d3 d5 13 ♜b3 ♞b5; but he could have played 11 ♜a3!? ♔e5 12 ♞d1! (12 ♞d3?! d5 13 ♔d2 ♞c7 is weaker, but 12 ♔d2!? ♔xd6 13 ♔xa5 deserves attention) 12...d5 13 ed cd 14 ♜c4! with advantage.

11 ... ♞e5

12 ♞xe5 ♔xe5

13 ♔c3 ♔xc3

13...f6 14 f4.

14 ♜xc3 d5

15 ♜a4 ♞b8

16 b3 0-0

17 f4

An even stronger move seems to be 17 ♞fd1, intending 18 ♞ac1 and 19 c4 with advantage.

17 ... ♞d8?

This makes c2-c4 easier for White.

18 ♞fd1 h6

19 c4 g5

Bad alternatives are 19...d4 20 ♞d3 f6 21 e5, and 20...g5 21 ♞ad1 gf 22 gf ♜g6 23 ♞xd4 ♞xd4 24 ♞xd4 ♜xf4 25 ♞d8+.

20 ♞d4! gf

21 gf ♜g6

22 ed ed

23 cd cd

24 ♜c3! ♔e6

25 ♞ad1 ♜g7

26 ♜xd5 ♔xd5

27 ♔xd5

and White has a sound extra pawn.

Dvoretsky-Chubinsky
Philadelphia 1990

5 d4 cd

6 ♜xd4 a6

7 ♔g2 ♞c7!?

8 0-0 ♔g7

This time Black would answer 9 ♜xc6 with 9...dc!. So White must set

about constructing a strong centre with pawns and pieces.

- 9 ♖e3 ♜g7
- 10 c4 0-0
- 11 ♜c3 d6

In the event of 11...♜xd4 12 ♜xd4 ♜xc4 13 ♜xg7 ♜xg7 14 ♜c1, White has more than enough compensation for the sacrificed pawn.

- 12 ♜c1 ♜xd4?!
- 13 ♜xd4 e5?!

An improvement was 13...♜xd4 14 ♜xd4 e5.

- 14 ♜e3 ♜e6
- 15 ♜d5 ♜xd5
- 16 cd

White has acquired a large positional plus. He intends to meet 16...♜a5 with 17 ♜d2! ♜xa2 18 ♜b4, or 17...♜xd2 18 ♜xd2 followed by 19 ♜b4.

- 16 ... ♜d7
- 17 ♜b3 f5?!
- 18 ♜b6 ♜ac8
- 19 ♜h3 ♜xc1
- 20 ♜xc1 ♜c8
- 21 b3! ♜xc1+
- 22 ♜xc1

Black's position is strategically hopeless.

- 22 ... ♜c8
- 23 ♜e3 ♜e7
- 24 ♜c3 ♜f7
- 25 a4 ♜d8?
- 25...♜f6 was more stubborn.
- 26 ♜f3 ♜d7
- 27 g4! ♜c7
- 28 ♜a3 f4
- 29 g5 h5
- 30 gh ♜xh6

- 31 ♜g4 ♜e8
- 32 ♜e6 ♜c2
- 33 ♜xd6 1-0

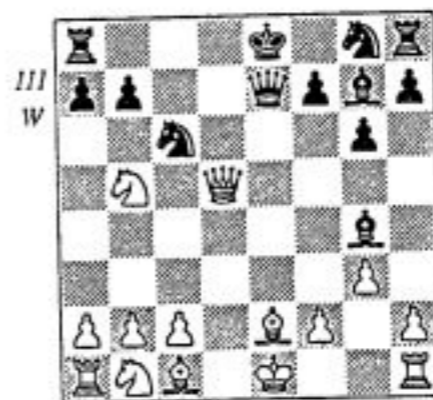
Dvoretsky-Filipowicz
Polanica Zdroj 1973

- 5 d4 ♜g7?!
- 6 dc b6!?
- 6...♜a5+ 7 ♜d2 ♜xc5 8 ♜c3.
- 7 cb ♜xb6
- 8 ♜bd2 d5
- 9 ♜d3 ♜ge7
- 10 c3 0-0
- 11 0-0 a5
- 12 a4 ♜b8
- 12...e5!?
- 13 ♜a3! ♜b7
- 14 ♜b3 ♜a7
- 15 ♜e2 ♜fd8
- 15...♜fe8!?, preparing ...c6-e5, was interesting.
- 16 ♜e1 ♜a8
- 17 h4! d4?!
- 18 ♜c4! ♜a6
- 19 ♜xb8 ♜xb8
- 20 ♜c2 ♜b7
- 21 ♜f1! dc
- 22 bc ♜xc4
- 22...♜b3 23 ♜xb3 ♜xb3 can be answered by either 24 ♜cd2 or 24 ♜xa5.
- 23 ♜xc4 ♜c8
- 24 ♜d2 ♜e5!
- 25 ♜xe5 ♜xe5
- 26 ♜b5 ♜c7!?
- 27 ♜e3
- 27 ♜g2!?
- 27 ... ♜c6
- 28 ♜a2

Black has not managed to obtain adequate compensation for the pawn he sacrificed in the opening.

I believe that Black can only cast doubt on 5 d4 by a positional pawn sacrifice:

- 5 ... cd
- 6 ♜xd4 ♜g7!
- 7 ♜b5 d5
- 8 ed ed
- 9 ♜xd5 ♜e7+!
- 10 ♜e2 ♜g4! (III)



(2) The bishop sortie to g5

Veselovsky-Dvoretsky
Moscow 1973

- 5 ♜g5!?
- 6 ♜g2 ♜g7
- 7 ♜c3 ♜ge7
- 8 ♜d2 h6
- 8...0-0 9 ♜h6.
- 9 ♜e3 ♜d4
- 10 0-0 d6
- 11 ♜e1 ♜d7

1/2-1/2

The final position is hard to assess.

(3) The plan of c2-c3 and d3-d4

Fischer-Panno
Buenos Aires 1970

- 5 ♜g2 ♜g7
- 6 0-0 ♜ge7
- 7 ♜e1 d6
- If 7...0-0, then 8 e5 is unpleasant.
- 8 c3 0-0
- 8...e5!?
- 9 d4 cd
- 9...b6!?
- 10 cd d5?!
- 10...♜b6 deserves serious consideration.
- 11 e5

White's chances are now preferable. Attacks against his centre are unsuccessful: 11...♜f5 12 ♜c3 ♜b6 13 ♜a4, or 11...f6 12 ef ♜xf6 13 ♜h6.

- 11 ... ♜d7
- 12 ♜c3 ♜c8
- 13 ♜f4 ♜a5
- 14 ♜c1 b5
- 15 b3! b4
- 16 ♜e2 ♜b5
- 16...♜xc1 is more precise.
- 17 ♜d2 ♜ac6
- 18 g4 a5?

In a cramped position you have to seek exchanges; 18...♜xe2! was essential, but White would still stand better after 19 ♜xe2 ♜b6 20 ♜e3 ♜b8 21 ♜f1.

- 19 ♜g3 ♜b6
- 20 h4! ♜b8
- 21 ♜h6 ♜d7
- 22 ♜g5!

Threatening both 23 ♖xe7 and 22 ♙xg7 ♗xg7 23 ♖h5+.

- 22 ... ♠xc1
- 23 ♠xc1 ♙xh6
- 24 ♖xh6 ♠c8
- 25 ♠xc8+ ♖xc8
- 26 h5! ♖d8?

Black had to play 26...♖f8 27 ♖f4 (27 ♖c1!?) 27...♖c7 (White threatened 28 h6 or 28 ♖g5), although after the further moves 28 ♙f1! ♙xf1 29 ♗xf1 the advantage is with White.

- 27 ♖g5 ♖f8 (112)



- 28 ♙e4!! ♖c7
- 28...de 29 ♖3xe4.
- 29 ♖xh7! ♖xh7
- 30 hg fg
- 30...♖f8 31 g7.
- 31 ♙xg6 ♖g5

The continuation 31...♖g7 32 ♙xh7+ ♖xh7 33 ♖xe6+ is also hopeless.

- 32 ♖h5 ♖f3+
- 33 ♗g2 ♖h4+
- 34 ♗g3 ♖xg6
- 35 ♖f6+! ♗f7
- 36 ♖h7+ 1-0

Fischer-Durão
Havana OL 1966

- 5 ♙g2 ♙g7
- 6 0-0 ♖ge7
- 7 c3 0-0
- 8 d4 d6
- 9 dc! dc
- 10 ♖e2 b6
- 11 e5
- Not 11 ♠d1? ♙a6.
- 11 ... a5
- 12 ♠e1 ♙a6
- 13 ♖e4 ♠a7
- 14 ♖bd2 ♙d3
- 15 ♖h4 ♖d5
- 16 ♖xd8 ♠xd8
- 17 a4! ♠ad7
- 18 ♙f1! ♙xf1
- 19 ♗xf1

Fischer has achieved a large positional plus – there are both light-square and dark-square weaknesses in his opponent's camp.

- 19 ... ♖de7
- 20 ♖c4 ♖c8
- 21 ♙g5 ♖6e7
- 22 ♖fd2 h6
- 23 ♙xe7 ♠xe7
- 24 ♠a3! ♠c7
- 25 ♠b3 ♠c6
- 26 ♖e4 ♙f8
- 27 ♗e2 ♙e7
- 28 f4 ♗f8
- 29 g4 ♗e8
- 30 ♠f1 ♠d5
- 31 ♠f3 ♠d8
- 32 ♠h3 ♙f8
- 33 ♖xa5!

The decisive blow! Black cannot

play 33...ba on account of 34 ♖f6+ ♗c7 35 ♠b7+.

- 33 ... ♠c7
- 34 ♖c4 ♠a7
- 35 ♖xb6 ♖xb6
- 36 ♠xb6 ♠da8
- 37 ♖f6+ ♗d8
- 38 ♠c6 ♠c7
- 39 ♠d3+ ♗c8
- 40 ♠xc7+ ♗xc7
- 41 ♠d7+ ♗c6
- 42 ♠xf7 1-0

Bukhtin-Dvoretsky
Moscow 1972

- 5 ♙g2 ♙g7
- 6 c3!?! ♖ge7
- 7 ♙e3
- 7 d4!?! is premature: 7...cd 8 cd ♖b6.
- 7 ... d6
- 7...b6!?.
- 8 0-0
- 8 d4 cd 9 ♖xd4! is promising for White, though Black may consider 8...b6!?.
- 8 ... 0-0
- 9 ♖bd2 b6

The b-pawn has no time to advance to b4: 9...b5?! 10 d4 b4 11 dc bc 12 bc, with the better chances for White.

- 10 d4 a5!?
- 11 a4?! ♙a6
- 12 ♠e1 cd
- If 12...♠c8, then 13 dc dc 14 ♖b3, followed by ♙f1 or ♖c4.
- 13 ♖xd4 ♖xd4
- 13...♖e5 14 ♖b5.
- 14 cd ♖c6?

An improvement is 14...♠c8 15 ♖b3 d5 (but not 15...♖c6 16 d5 ♖d4 17 ♙xd4 ♙xd4 18 dc fe 19 ♖xe6+ ♗h8 20 ♖b3 ♙xb2 21 ♠ad1).

- 15 ♖b1! ♖b4
- 16 ♙f1 ♙xf1
- 17 ♠xf1 d5
- 18 e5 ♠c8
- 19 ♖a3

A more natural line seems to be 19 ♖c3! and 20 h4, starting active operations on the kingside.

- 19 ... ♖d7
- 20 ♖b3 f6

White's chances are still slightly preferable.

8 Preparing for a Game

Artur Yusupov

'The harder the training, the easier the battle' – as Suvorov liked to say when sending his generals into mock assaults. This immortal maxim from the great commander is applicable to chess too. The more laborious and painstaking your preparatory work, the more effortless the game itself will be!

Preparing for a game is a highly individual process. Much of it depends on what sort of opening arsenal you possess. Some players solve this problem quite simply; they don't prepare for each particular opponent but make straightforward preparations for the tournament as a whole, deciding in advance which set of openings to use. They hope that when faced with an unexpected move in the opening, they will be able to cope with the situation over the board. Usually these are players with a narrow but well constructed repertoire.

An example is Grandmaster Andrei Sokolov. When playing him, it is not hard to predict the opening. With White he always opens 1 e4. With Black (when appropriate) it is a Queen's Indian. Nothing else! Andrei keeps meticulously to his own opening repertoire, but of course he

knows it thoroughly and has vast experience of playing his systems. Sokolov reckons that if an opponent succeeds in casting doubt on one of his variations, he can repair it on the spot; the next opponent will have a much harder time finding a flaw in the same line, and ultimately he (Sokolov) will possess a completely 'fireproof' repertoire – which is particularly important when playing Black. This kind of logic, this approach to solving the problems of the opening, is, generally speaking, a viable option.

As a rule, however, players do not stick too rigidly to this approach; they prefer to vary their opening systems now and again. For otherwise their opponents have too easy a task in preparing for them.

By way of an example let me tell you how I prepared, together with Mark Dvoretsky, for my game with the Cuban Jesus Nogueiras in the Candidates Tournament at Montpellier. At that time Nogueiras' repertoire was not broad enough, and we noticed that in the Queen's Gambit he kept on playing one system which in my view was very risky. Immersing ourselves in the position, we discovered a new plan which I put

into operation in the game. The innovation proved exceptionally effective! I need hardly say how much our task was facilitated by the narrowness of my opponent's opening repertoire.

Yusupov-Nogueiras
Montpellier Ct 1985
Queen's Gambit

1	d4	d5
2	c4	e6
3	♘c3	c6
4	♗f3	♗f6
5	♙g5	♗bd7
6	cd	ed
7	e3	♙d6

This is what Nogueiras kept playing.

8	♙d3	♗f8 (113)
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Black wants to play ...♗g6 and ...h7-h6, forcing an exchange on f6. The obvious drawback to his plan is that he has moved the same piece twice in the opening and aims to move it a third time, thus clearly breaking the rules of mobilisation.

Furthermore the move 8...♗f8 means a delay in castling. All this spurs White to energetic measures.

9 ♗e5

An obvious-looking thrust. Black has relinquished control of e5, and the white knight immediately goes there. In answer to 9...♗g6, White will play 10 f4. This plan for seizing the central square e5 was introduced into tournament practice as long ago as the last century, by the great American player Harry Nelson Pillsbury. Here is a more recent example: the game Chernin-Cvetković, Belgrade 1988, continued 10...0-0 11 ♗c2 ♗e8 12 0-0 ♙b4 13 ♗h1 ♙xc3 14 bc h6 15 f5!, and White went ahead with the decisive assault.

9 ... ♗b6

Black wishes to exchange the menacing knight on e5 before it is supported by the f-pawn. To this end he violates yet another principle of opening play – he brings his queen out too early. If he intends to take on b2 for good measure, the pawn will cost him dearly; after 10 0-0 ♗xb2 11 ♙c1, White has a decisive lead in development.

10 0-0 ♙xe5

11 de

In our pre-game analysis we had considered 11...♗d7, and intended to meet it with 12 ♙f4. If then 12...♗xb2?! 13 ♙c1 ♗g6, White has 14 ♙xg6 hg 15 e4!, opening up lines in the centre. Instead of taking the pawn Black should continue his development with 12...♗c5. That

was in fact played in Gulko-Smagin, Moscow Ch 1984.

11 ... ♖g4?!

Not a good reply. This attempt to go into action with inadequate development cannot be recommended. We had nonetheless looked at this move in our preparation, though of course our analysis of it was fairly cursory. We thought White could gain a plus with 12 ♔f4 ♘g6 13 ♔xg6 hg 14 h3 ♘h6 15 e4, but at the board I worked out that Black could defend with 15...♗xb2 16 ♖c1 0-0, returning the extra pawn.

Looking deeper into the position, I perceived a stronger continuation. Can you see what it was? No? Then let me give you a hint. White must indirectly utilise the position of the black knight on g4.

12 ♗a4!

This sets up the highly unpleasant threat of 13 ♘d5. On 12...♔d7, White can choose between 13 ♗a3!? f6 14 ef gf 15 ♔h4, and the less obvious 13 e6!? ♔xe6 14 ♘d5 ♔xd5 15 ♗xg4. In either case, with his lead in development and his bishop pair, White has a strategically won position.

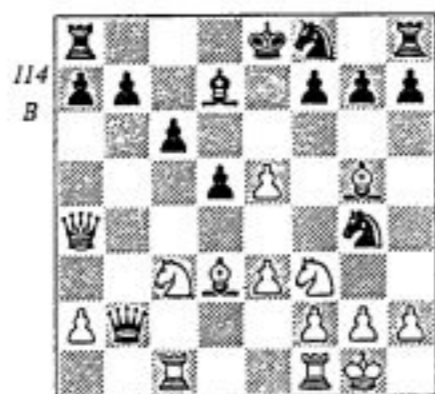
12 ... ♗xb2?!

Throwing caution to the winds, as they say.

13 ♖ac1

Of course not 13 ♘d5? ♗xe5. Now Black cannot take on e5 with his knight, if only because of 14 ♖c2 ♗b6 15 ♘d5 (14 ♘d5 ♘d3 15 ♖xc6! is also strong).

13 ... ♔d7 (114)



I had a long think here, feeling that in a position like this there was bound to be a forced win. 14 ♖c2 ♗b6 15 ♖b1 ♗c7 16 ♘d5 might seem tempting, but after 16...♗xe5 there is nothing definite; while if 16 ♔f4, Black can continue the fight with 16...♘e6.

Then I saw it!

14 ♗d4!!

A move of murderous power. By simply centralising his queen, White creates five (!) threats at once: 15 ♘d5, 15 ♘b5, 15 ♘e4, 15 ♖b1 and 15 e6 (15...♔xe6 16 ♗xg7). There is no defence against all of them. For example, 14...♗b6 parries four threats but loses to the fifth – 15 e6!.

14 ... f6

15 ef gf

16 ♔xf6 ♖g8

If Nogueiras had played 16...♘f6 17 ♗xf6 ♖g8, I could have exploited the opposition of the queens with 18 ♘d5.

17 ♘b5 ♗xb5

17...♗xd4 18 ♘d6 mate.

18 ♔xb5 ♘c6

19 ♗b2 cb

20 ♔h4 1-0

Certainly harsh punishment for offending against opening principles!

I felt I had convincingly refuted the 'Nogueiras Variation'. Imagine my surprise when a few years later I suddenly saw a match game Timman-Ljubojević (Hilversum 1987), in which this very line was played. Black lasted only a little longer than before. Instead of 10...♔xc5, the game went:

10 ... ♗xb2

Ljubojević is very fond of extra pawns.

11 ♖c1 ♘g6

12 f4

12 ♔xf6!? gf 13 ♘g4.

12 ... 0-0

13 ♖c2 ♗b6?

Better is 13...♗a3.

14 ♔xf6 gf

15 ♘g4 ♔xg4

16 ♗xg4 ♘h8

17 ♖b1 ♗c7

18 ♘d5 ♗d8

19 ♘c3 ♔xf4

20 ♖e2! ♖e8

21 ♘e4

Timman has obtained a substantial advantage. His opponent now hastens the end with an unsound combination.

21 ... ♔xe3+?!

22 ♖xe3 ♗xd4

23 ♖e1 ♘e5

24 ♗f5 1-0

Black resigned in view of 24...♘d3 25 ♘xf6.

Let us return once again to my game with Nogueiras. One question will perhaps be asked: if I had prepared the whole variation in advance, why did I need to look for a stronger continuation during the game? The question is legitimate, and it is worth dwelling on it a little.

The key factor here is the amount of time taken for preparations. It is one thing to study a variation in complete comfort at home. Preparation during the course of a tournament is quite another thing. When preparing immediately before the game (you normally have just a couple of hours for this), you clearly cannot go into all the refinements. So it was in the present case. We didn't work out in detail how to reply to 11...♘g4; our task was simply to ascertain that in this line too, the position is comfortable for White and fairly dangerous for Black. The move we had in mind, 12 ♔f4, is sufficient to uphold that verdict. But it by no means follows that the move is strongest.

Blind faith in your pre-game analysis is generally to be avoided, and not just because a mistake may have crept into it. The point is that the pressure of the contest, the tense competitive environment, enhances your intuition, stimulates your imagination and sharpens your powers of calculation. This is why, however meticulous your analysis, you should double-check your prepared

variations during the game and look for ways to strengthen them. The playing session is just the time when some new unexpected idea may occur to you! Of course it is not worth spending time on moves like 9 Qe5 or 10 f4 (in answer to 9... Qg6), but when you reach a position that you didn't analyse but just assessed perfunctorily, careful checking is simply essential.

Success in the opening, then, largely depends on your ability to predict the variation your opponent will choose, and prepare for it effectively. This is especially important (but difficult!) when playing opponents like Timman, whose opening repertoire is very wide.

But of course there is no guarantee that in the couple of hours spent preparing for a particular opponent in the tournament, you will find the very best way to combat his chosen set-up. For this reason, the second major ingredient of success is the quality of your preparation before the tournament, the general level of your opening knowledge, the breadth of your own repertoire.

No doubt any experienced chess-player can easily recall occasions when he made use of lines prepared a long time before. An example of this is my game with the Hungarian Grandmaster Zoltan Ribli which we are now going to examine.

Preparing for Ribli is difficult, because he is one of those players who vary their openings. He has a fairly

wide range of systems and a thorough knowledge of the variations he plays. But in that same Montpellier tournament I somehow succeeded in predicting what he would do; furthermore, in the line in question, I had an important improvement stored up. Essentially, therefore, my entire preparation merely amounted to leafing through my notes and refreshing my memory of the variations!

Yusupov-Ribli
Montpellier Ct 1985
Semi-Tarrasch

1	d4	Qf6
2	c4	e6
3	Qf3	d5
4	Qc3	c5
5	cd	Qxd5
6	e4	Qxc3
7	bc	cd
8	cd	Qc6
9	Qc4	b5

All this is very well known to theory.

10	Qe2	Qb4+
11	Qd2	Wa5
12	d5	ed
13	ed	Qe7

Why did Ribli choose this variation? After all, it is not one of his chief opening weapons. Presumably he wanted to catch me unawares. I had never played the White side of this line; the present position had never occurred before in my games. But Ribli was unlucky. How was he

to know that I had thoroughly studied the Semi-Tarrasch three or four years earlier, and had found an improvement for White?

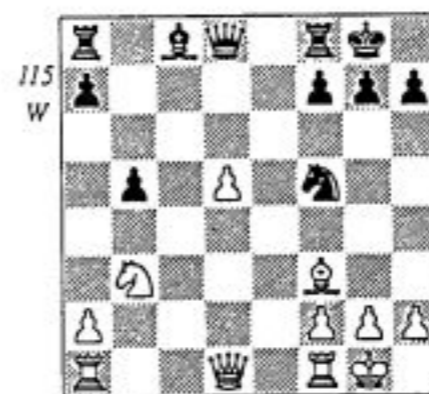
14	0-0	Qxd2
15	Qxd2	0-0
16	Qb3	Wd8

A very interesting pawn formation has arisen. White has a strong passed pawn in the centre; Black aims to blockade it and if possible attack it.

17 Qf3

17 Qxb5 has also been tried. In Kir.Georgiev-Ribli, Sarajevo 1985, the continuation was 17... Qb7 18 Qc5 (after 18 d6 Qf5 Black has counter-threats) 18... Wb6 ! 19 Qxb7 Wxb5 20 Bb1 Wxd5 21 Be1 Wxd1 22 Bxd1 Qc6 23 Ed7 Qb8 ! 24 Edc7 Qc6 , and here a draw was agreed.

17 ... Qf5 (115)



Theoretical books have considered 18 Wd3 here, but after 18... Wd6 ! Black appears to equalise. However, it had seemed to me from the very outset that the diagram position is a

little more comfortable for White. My labour of analysis merely confirmed me in this opinion.

18 Bc1 !

The fruit of my previous exertions. White develops his rook and at the same time discourages 18... Wd6 (in view of 19 Bc6).

18 ... Qd6

It is well known that a knight is a good blockader, so Ribli's decision is positionally justified. Perhaps he reckoned that after the obvious 19 Qd4 Qd7 20 Qc6 his queen would emerge on f6 and the position would level out. True enough, his knight on d6 would be excellently placed and his rook could occupy the e-file.

However, it turns out that White can keep the queen away from f6.

19 Wd4 !

An unpleasant move for Black to meet. Now 19... Wf6 would mean spoiling his pawn structure. Still, that would evidently have been the least of the evils. What Ribli played was worse.

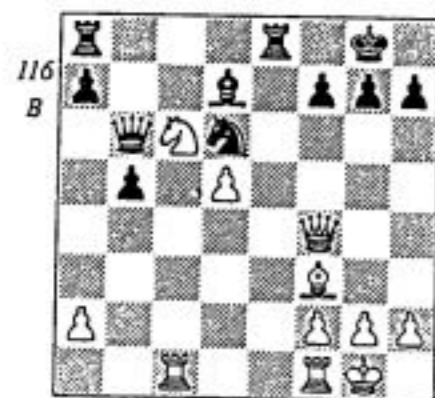
19 ... Wb6 ?!

The queen is worse placed here than on f6. It is a long way from the kingside, where White can work up an initiative unhindered. In the present case, clearly, White should not exchange queens.

20 Wf4 ! Qd7
21 Qd4 Bfe8 !

A major inaccuracy. Black should have kept his rook on f8 for the defence of the kingside.

22 Qc6 (116)



White has a tangible plus. This is largely a result of his successful opening preparation. We have arrived at a position that was not only perfectly familiar to me but suited my style as well. What more can be expected of an opening? You could only, perhaps, be closer to the 'ideal' if you knew all the moves right to the end – as Lev Polugaevsky sometimes does in his games. But in my view that approach is not rational. It requires an enormous expenditure of energy, and for what? For winning (as a rule) just one solitary game.

Of course the present case is not like that. And yet, for a 'rational' chessplayer, this *is* the ideal outcome of his preparation. In general, if you find a move such as 18 Hc1 and see that the resulting position is just a little better for you as well as suiting your temperament – then play it without hesitation!

Ribli, I recall, was dismayed by this turn of events. Perhaps that was why his subsequent defence was not the most tenacious.

22 ... Qc4

23 Hfe1
Putting his finger on the weak point e7.

23 ... Qb2

24 Qe4

The threat of a knight fork on d3 is parried, and all Ribli can do is move the knight back where it came from.

24 ... Qc4

25 h3 h6

26 Qd3!

White has strengthened his position to the maximum, and it is now time for concrete operations. I take advantage of the fact that a double capture on c6 costs Black material: 26... Qxc6 27 dc Hxe1+ 28 Hxe1 Wxc6 29 Qe4 We8 30 Qh7+ .

26 ... Qb2

What else?

27 Qb1

The bishop has no intention of abandoning the active diagonal. Black's position is practically hopeless.

27 ... Qxc6

28 dc Hxe1+

29 Hxe1 Wxc6 (117)



By this time, many roads lead (as they say) to Rome. In particular, 30 Wb4! is very strong – attacking the knight on b2 and defending the rook on e1. But I was attracted by a different idea.

30 Qe4!

At this point Black's most tenacious move is 30... Wc4 , but after 31 Wd2 Hc8 32 Qh7+ Qxh7 33 Hxe8 White is the exchange up and has a won position. Ribli played differently, however, and fell into a trap.

30 ... Wc3

31 Hc1 Qd3

Ribli was banking on this intermediate stroke. Now 32 Hxc3? would be a mistake: 32... Qxf4 33 Hf3 Qe2+ (the same check would be the answer to 33 Qxa8) 34 Qf1 Hc8 35 Hc3 Qd4 36 Qh7+ Qf8 , and Black emerges with an extra pawn.

32 Wxf7+!! 1-0

Material losses are unavoidable for Black.

The next example is on much the same theme – with just the one major difference that I couldn't for all the world have guessed my opponent's choice of opening. This was the first time in his life that Kevin Spraggett had played the Tarrasch Defence! The Canadian Grandmaster had prepared for our Candidates Match very thoroughly, and the Tarrasch was one of his opening surprises. But it did not work! There were two reasons. First, I had already carefully studied the variation he prepared.

Secondly, the variation was more in keeping with my style than with his.

After suffering this fiasco, Spraggett did not persist – he gave up the Tarrasch for the rest of the match.

Yusupov-Spraggett

Quebec Ct (3) 1989

Queen's Gambit, Tarrasch

1 d4 d5

2 Qf3 c5

3 c4 e6

4 cd ed

5 Qc3 Qc6

6 g3 Qf6

7 Qg2 Qe7

8 0-0 0-0

9 Qg5 Qe6

The usual 9... cd 10 Qxd4 h6 leads to a more complex struggle.

10 dc Qxc5

11 Qxf6 Wxf6

12 Qxd5 Wxb2

13 Qc7 Hd8

14 Wc1 Wxc1

15 Haxc1

This variation occurred in the sixteenth game of the Petrosian-Spassky World Championship Match in 1969. After that it was unpopular for many years. However in 1988, in the Linares tournament, the Spanish International Master (now Grandmaster) Miguel Illescas used it against Alexander Beliavsky and secured equality. Spraggett must have based his analysis on that game.

You may ask what mistake he was making in choosing to play this

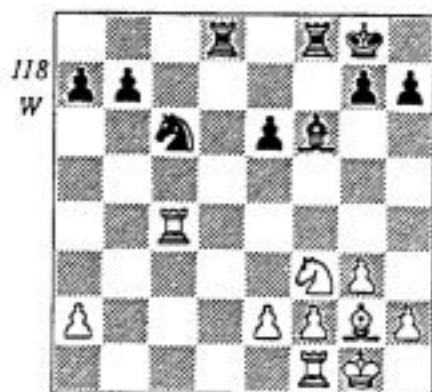
opening against me. Spraggett didn't take into account that I was playing at Linares myself – and that I naturally paid attention to Beliavsky-Illescas, since I was due to play White against Illescas a couple of rounds later. Such are the fine points that you sometimes have to consider in your preparations! The question is not just whether this or that variation has occurred in your opponent's games, but whether he was present when the variation was played!

Basically Spraggett fell victim to my preparation for the game against Illescas (in that game, incidentally, a different form of the Tarrasch Defence occurred). But then, it happens that I had already analysed the present position long before the Linares tournament.

15 ... ♔e7

Against Petrosian, Spassky preferred 15...b6. After 16 ♖xe6 fe 17 ♔h3 or 17 e3 he should have run into difficulties. (In the game Petrosian played the less exact 17 ♖c4.)

16 ♖xe6 fe
17 ♖c4 ♔f6 (118)



At this point White used to play 18 ♖b1. Here are some examples to show that Spraggett's plan for securing a clear-cut draw was not without serious foundation:

a) 18...♖d7 19 h4 ♔d4!?, and Black simplifies the position to his own benefit; Ftačnik-Minev, Bucharest 1978.

b) 18...♖d6 (the b-pawn is defended indirectly) 19 h4 h6 20 ♖e4 b6 21 ♔h3 ♖f7 22 ♖c1 (equality also results from the line 22 e3 ♖c8 23 g4 g5!, as occurred in the Beliavsky-Illescas game already mentioned) 22...♖e8 23 e3 ♖e7 24 ♔f1 ♔a5! and there are no worries for Black; Ornstein-Schneider, Copenhagen 1981.

Incidentally, in *ECO*, Kasparov himself assessed this opening variation as sufficient for equality.

18 e3!

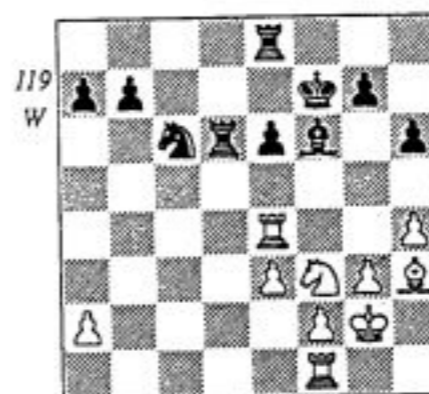
Realising the disadvantages of exchanging rooks, White doesn't hurry to play ♖b1. In fact, it is not yet clear whether this move is needed at all (the rook may turn out to be more useful on c1). The move played, which I had prepared to use against Illescas, proved to be a theoretical novelty, although hardly anything could be more logical – White takes control of the d4 square, on which unwelcome exchanges could otherwise take place.

18 ... ♖d6
19 h4 h6
20 ♖e4 ♖fd8
21 ♔h3

I prevent the exchange of a pair of rooks. If Black persists with 21...e5, the consequences are severe: 22 ♖g2 ♖d1 23 ♖xd1 ♖xd1, and the white bishop has the opportunity to attack the b-pawn from c8 (after that the knight on c6 will be attacked too), while the black bishop on f6 is bad. Naturally Spraggett is not attracted by such a prospect; he prefers to conduct the defence without weakening himself unnecessarily.

21 ... ♖f7
22 ♖g2 ♖e8 (119)

Here again White derives benefit from not hurrying with ♖b1. Probing deeply into the position, I realised that on b1 there is generally nothing for the rook to do. In addition I came to the conclusion that White's main task now lies in activating his knight, and I formed a specific plan for doing so. What was that plan? Let us think.



There is clearly only one route by which the knight can be brought into play without fear of exchange. That route is via d2. How does White gain

control of this square? By covering it with a rook. So the first part of his plan is obvious – a rook must be brought to c2. When the knight comes across to c4 it will not only create specific threats, but a kingside pawn advance will become possible – for example, f2-f4 will considerably strengthen White's position.

I think we can now sum up the results of Spraggett's preparation for his game against me and my preparation for my game against Illescas. Black is deprived of prospects while White has achieved the sort of position he wanted; he has a small but persistent advantage, and a plan for strengthening his position further.

I confess that there were parts of my former analysis that had slipped my memory. But this unexpectedly turned out for the best; it made me take a serious think about the position over-the-board, appraise it so to speak with fresh eyes, calculate variations anew. In other words, even the factor of surprise in my opponent's choice of opening was of some benefit to me.

23 ♖c1 ♖e7
24 ♖c2

Here again Spraggett committed an unobtrusive but significant error. He weakened the position of his knight with:

24 ... b6?

White at once took advantage of this with:

25 ♖f4!

This creates the tactical threat of

26 ♖xc6 ♖xc6 27 ♕e5+. After 25...♗g8, White has the very strong 26 ♕d2! followed by ♕e4.

25 ... ♗g6
26 g4!

It now becomes clear that on 26...♕e5, the reply 27 g5 is highly unpleasant, for example: 27...hg 28 hg ♕d3 29 gf ♕xf4+ 30 ef, and if 30...gf, then 31 f5+! with an overwhelming advantage.

26 ... ♔a1

The only move.

27 ♖c1 ♔b2
28 ♖c2 ♔a1

By repeating moves White saves up some thinking time. For the moment I couldn't see a way to make decisive progress; on 29 h5+ ♗h7 30 g5, Black has 30...g6, while 29 ♖fc4?! is simply met by 29...♕e5. I therefore decided to make a non-committal move (which at the same time slightly improves my position), and left my opponent to guess my true intentions.

29 a4!

It is now very hard for Black to defend, especially when short of time as Spraggett was.

29 ... ♕e5?!

30 ♕xe5+ ♔xe5

31 ♖f8!

This particular opposite bishop position suited me very well. The mating attack in store for the black king is plain to see.

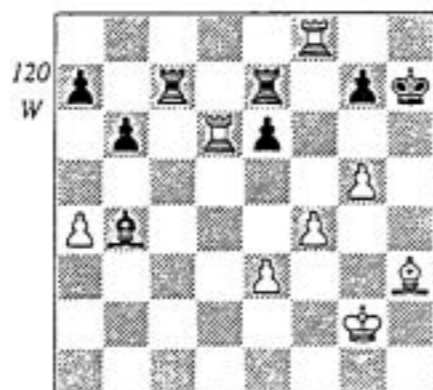
31 ... ♖dd7

31...♗h7 is more stubborn.

32 f4

A powerful rejoinder. Now 32...♔c7? is met by the decisive breakthrough 33 f5+ ef 34 gf+ ♗h7 35 f6!.

32 ... ♖c7
33 ♖d2 ♔c3
34 ♖d6 ♗h7
35 g5 hg
36 hg ♔b4 (120)



37 ♖dd8?!

Unfortunately I missed an attractive stroke which would have ended the struggle at once: 37 g6+! ♗h6 (37...♗xg6 38 ♔f5+) 38 ♔f5!.

37 ... ♗g6

37...g6 was more stubborn.

38 ♗f3 ♖f7

39 ♖h8 e5

40 ♔g4

Obviously 40 ♔e6 would have won the exchange, but White is intent on constructing a mating net. And he succeeds.

40 ... ef

41 ♖d5! fe+

42 ♗g3 1-0

So I managed to win this important encounter by rather strange

means – thanks to my preparation for a completely different game! This reminds us once again that serious analytical work is not done in vain – provided, of course, that the results are recorded, fully understood and committed to memory. In chess, most work held in store is sooner or later turned to account – though it may be years afterwards.

I would again emphasise my view that a player's chief preparatory work must be done in advance – not during tournaments, but in between them! I remember a conversation I had with Korchnoi at the Tilburg tournament in 1987. Complaining of his rather poor play, Viktor said that unfortunately he had not had time to prepare for the tournament properly; so he had arrived for it without any fresh ideas. This vexed him. True enough, before an important contest it is vital to evolve a healthy stock of new ideas and have something up your sleeve. You can hardly count on success without it.

It sometimes happens that young players without too much experience try to base their preparations on the study of out-of-the-way variations, lines that have been insufficiently investigated. In principle this is normal for a player who has not yet equipped himself with a wide opening repertoire – who, because of his youth, simply has not absorbed that mass of theory with which today's professional player is snowed under. But there is no sense in making the

avoidance of theoretical variations into an end in itself by choosing lines that are known to be inferior and relying on all sorts of eccentric, trappy moves. Such a strategy is ill-conceived.

What method is most effective, then? My position is simple: in the opening you must endeavour to play the objectively best moves, even if this means a much greater amount of preparatory work and more detailed analysis. In any event, what you play must be thoroughly studied, you must have all its nuances at your fingertips.

Summing up what has been said, we can lay down two main principles for choosing an opening when preparing for a particular opponent.

1) First: *you should take your own capabilities as your starting point – that is, you should try to reach a position which you know well and which corresponds to your opening tastes, your style of play.* For if your penchant is for strategic manoeuvring and your prepared line culminates in a position of the gambit type with wild complications, you risk coming away empty-handed no matter how conscientious your pre-game analysis was. For this reason, experienced grandmasters sometimes reject even promising continuations if they do not suit their style. You will agree that we hardly expect Garry Kasparov to go into a passive position even with Black. It

simply is not in character! Look how he played in his matches with Anatoly Karpov. He deliberately avoided passive positions, preferring to give up a pawn and achieve a draw in a complex struggle rather than refrain from sacrificing and achieve the same half point through accurate but non-aggressive play. Conversely, see how Karpov prepared himself for the matches. He constantly avoided superfluous complications in the opening, going in for them only in cases where he was firmly convinced – on the basis of deep analysis – that he had prepared a really strong and promising line.

So the primary aim of your preparations must be to obtain the kind of game where you feel comfortable.

2) The second task perhaps involves more subtlety. *Try to take your opponent into positions that are least congenial to his style and do not correspond to his tastes as a player.* In this case the likelihood of errors on his part will greatly increase. Among recent examples, I will only recall Gata Kamsky's failure in the Linares tournament of 1991. To a large extent the explanation was precisely that his opponents were quick to detect the shortcomings of his opening repertoire and easily took him into positions with which he was unfamiliar (simply on account of his youth and lack of experience). He suffered terribly throughout the tournament, especially when he had the black

pieces – with which he lost all his games!

By way of a 'positive' example, let me tell you of my game against the English grandmaster Jonathan Speelman in the same tournament. I shall not demonstrate the game but merely explain what I had to do to prepare for it.

The game was played in the first round; a player's fortunes in the entire event can depend on how he starts off! I had White, and my opponent's opening repertoire was no secret to me. I didn't much bother about the Queens Gambit Declined, although of course I did have a specific variation ready just in case. Looking through Speelman's most recent games, I came to the conclusion that the likelihood of a Slav was also slim. Therefore I didn't do any special preparation for that defence either, especially since I had a few things stored up for it anyway.

What I expected was that Speelman, a player with a combative and original style, would quite likely answer 1 d4 with 1...d6. I should add that he has a good feel for positions of the Pirc type and plays them fairly often. Yet at first I was frankly tempted to go into just that kind of position. But then I decided against it, as I didn't have anything special up my sleeve in the normal Pirc. I decided not to get involved in a major theoretical dispute, preferring to reduce the amount of effort needed for preparation.

Then I suddenly had an idea for drawing Speelman into 'my own' sort of position even after 1 d4 d6. What I had to do was reply 2 g3!. You may ask what advantage that move-order has, in comparison (say) with 2 ♘f3. The point is that against 2 ♘f3 the English grandmaster often chooses the system with 2...♘f6 3 c4 ♙g4. By playing 2 g3 I greatly diminish the power of this sortie, since I can support the knight from g2 with my bishop – which should hardly be to Speelman's liking. Of course, this order of moves might lead to a normal King's Indian with g2-g3, but that didn't worry me since the variation is part of my repertoire.

Note that I was given extra room for manoeuvre by the fact that I had a choice of systems against the King's Indian. If (for instance) I had only ever played the Sämisch against it, I would have had much more trouble steering clear of Speelman's prepared lines. For example, after 1 d4 d6 2 c4 he might have played 2...g6, avoiding ...♘f6. I should have had to analyse that too. As it was, with the single move 2 g3 my preparation was practically concluded!

In the game, after 1 d4 d6 2 g3, we transposed into a King's Indian, the position was one that I knew well, and in consequence I managed to obtain the more comfortable game. I was completely satisfied with the outcome of the opening.

That kind of preparation is certainly very economical. But then in

my view, preparation in the course of a tournament should always be as economical and expedient as possible. As I have said, too great an expenditure of effort on the eve of a game can boomerang during actual play. For this very reason you need to be able to vary your openings. In the first place this will increase your chances of luring your opponent into a position where he is uncomfortable, and secondly he will have more difficulty in preparing to play you.

My game with Kasparov in that same Linares tournament can serve as another example of successful preparation. In this case the element of surprise was particularly effective. Kasparov was not expecting me to play the Dutch Defence (Leningrad System). When I replied to 1 d4 with 1...f5, he was nonplussed for a moment. I noticed how unpleasant this reply was for him; he had clearly failed to take it into account in his preparations. As a result Kasparov used up more time over the opening than I did, but even that was not the main thing. In tennis language, his first serve had gone into the net; he had to rely on his second and less powerful one. I quickly managed to seize the initiative. And in this last-round game a win was ever so important to him!

To spring a surprise in the opening is of course no bad thing, but I would not recommend playing a variation for the first time in your life just for the sake of one particular

novelty. Bluffing like this is extremely dangerous, especially against a seasoned opponent.

Essentially, all kinds of advice can be given on the subject of preparation. There are as many opinions as individuals! Every strong player has his own recipes and sometimes an entire system. I would remind you, for example, of the so-called 'Capablanca principle'. It is very sensible and useful. Capablanca said that for each tournament he normally prepared one opening for White and one for Black. (In the latter case he evidently meant one against 1 d4 and one against 1 e4.) How did he justify this approach? He claimed that even if his prepared variations contained defects, his opponents would hardly be able to detect them, given the small amount of time at their disposal within the tournament schedule. Sure enough – if you have been poring over a variation (let's say) for a week and have not found a refutation, you may well ask why your opponent should unearth one in a couple of hours just before the game.

Preparation for a tournament, then, begins long before the first round. This enables you to save your energy during the contest and facilitates your choice of opening against a particular opponent. As I said before, the ideal variation would be one that didn't demand any analysis at all but merely required you to refresh your memory of your homework. Of course, like any ideal it is

unattainable, but you must strive after it!

If you do have to put in some work immediately before the game, you should go about it rationally. Don't attempt to refute the opponent's set-up outright – it sometimes makes sense to avoid it altogether. Don't involve yourself in a theoretical duel on territory where you sense that your opponent is well prepared. Only when you feel that his variation contains some serious flaw (remember the 'Nogueiras Variation') should you bend your efforts to finding a concrete refutation.

It is very important to be able to foresee your opponent's procedure – how he will prepare, what he will select, what he is expecting you to do. Otherwise it is hardly possible to direct your own preparation correctly.

Try to understand what sort of player you are up against – combinative or positional, bold or cautious, a calculator or an experimenter. If you know, for example, that your opponent copes badly with endgames, is it worth inventing something new in the opening? Is it not simpler to find a variation which leads straight into an ending?

However, if your own arsenal of openings is limited, even the most exact appraisal of your opponent's chess personality will not enable you to exploit his weak points. In that case you have practically no choice. Play what you know well and understand – play, so to speak, not against

a specific opponent but against his pieces. (Remember the title of the collection of best games by the Yugoslav Grandmaster Svetozar Gligoric – *I Play Against the Pieces*?) The most outstanding representative of this tendency – which, by the way, overlaps in some respects with the 'Capablanca principle' I mentioned before – was, as is well known, the great Akiba Rubinstein.

This approach is not flexible, but on the other hand it is economical. Of course, it requires you to know your own openings exceptionally well! Otherwise your opponent, who has no trouble deducing your opening, will throw you off balance with some surprise he has stored up in advance. To assemble a brilliantly organised, practically impeccable opening repertoire is of course only within the power of a very experienced player. But even young players can set out on that path; you can expand your arsenal gradually, perfecting one variation after another, rather than attempt to master all openings at once.

There is one other 'opening weapon' I should like to mention, although it more properly comes under the heading of chess psychology. This weapon is the masking of your intentions. Suppose your choice of opening has worked perfectly and your opponent has risen to the bait. In spite of this you don't give the appearance of having caught him in a prepared line. On the contrary, you

do all you can to conceal it, to stop him from sensing the danger too soon.

Incidentally, both Kasparov and Karpov do this. Sometimes when they are perfectly familiar with the position in front of them and all the subsequent play, they still keep on pondering their moves.

I should like to warn you against enthusiasm for such methods. In principle they are usable, but only within strict limits – in medically prescribed doses, so to speak. In other words: conceal your intentions by all means, but don't spend too much time doing it – that has its dangers. For one thing, unforeseen problems may arise in the course of the game, and secondly the time may be needed for realising your advantage. I would therefore advise a different approach. If you know how to play the position and have analysed it inside out before the game, make your moves quickly! By this very means you will increase the psychological pressure on your opponent. He knows he has been caught out, so he is not too sure of himself anyway – and playing fast gives you a clear psychological initiative. After all, seizing the initiative – in both the purely technical and the psychological sense – is just what we should aim for when playing an opening.

At first sight, some of my advice might seem a little contradictory. For instance, you will recall that in my game with Nogueiras I didn't do

what I have just recommended – play my prepared variation quickly. In actual fact there is no contradiction. Chess is not a matter of arithmetic, it is not at all monolithic; the application of this or that rule may depend on the most minute nuances of a particular situation. Don't try to

work out a rigid code of instructions to be followed in all cases; what is more important is simply to know the various approaches to solving the problems that face you. The choice of approach is sometimes purely subjective and determined by the player's style and taste.

9 You Are Right, Monsieur La Bourdonnais!

Yuri Razuvaev

All things return into their own circles.

Only these circles revolve.

Andrei Voznesensky

Say what you will, our own generation (never mind anybody a little older) had a happy chess childhood. The era of *Informator* and *ECO* (the full title *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* sounds so frightful) was yet to come. We hardly knew about opening classification schemes, we didn't spend hours copying out games; we didn't apply scissors to innumerable bulletins from a crowded programme of tournaments, and our fingers didn't get wrinkled with paste. The so-called information boom had yet to rear its head; the vocabulary of necessary terms was pleasantly sparse and comprehensible to anyone. Today, on opening *Informator*, even an experienced professional needs to start by feverishly scanning a page of new Esperanto that is incomplete (as yet!) but growing apace. In former days, chess books could simply be read (opening manuals were hardly ever produced). Admittedly the

number of books published was much smaller, but I agree with those who say that in childhood it is more important to have one really good book that you really love. Thus it was fairly easy to satisfy our needs. And then, all you had to do to obtain a book was go to the shop and buy it.

But everything changes, including chess. The avalanche of information that overwhelms us today goes hand in hand with a dedicated, all-embracing study of chess openings. Over the past twenty years, the investigative passion has acquired the features of an epidemic. We have done splendid work mining the raw materials of chess. The starting position, so formidable a century ago, has lost its primeval mystery, and in all openings (the classical ones as well as those formerly considered unsound) reliable roads have been more or less cleared if not yet paved. What is opening theory? Methods of play from the starting position, you might think. But how everything has changed! Today, we select some position occurring after, say, the odd eighteen moves; and we start from there!



To the uninitiated, I should mention how this standard position is reached:

1 e4 c5 2 d3 d6 3 d4 cd 4 Qxd4 Qf6 5 Qc3 a6 6 Rg5 e6 7 f4 Wb6 8 Wd2 Wxb2 9 Bb1 Wa3 10 f5 Qc6 11 fe fe 12 Qxc6 bc 13 e5 de 14 Rxf6 gf 15 Qe4 Re7 16 Re2 h5 17 Bb3 Wa4 18 Qxf6+ Rxf6 19 c4 (121)

'But surely that isn't all forced?' the reader will exclaim, trying to control his mixed feeling of bewilderment and mild panic.

Don't worry – of course it is not. Let me try to explain it. In the first place, there is such a thing as fashion in chess. Secondly, a position like this is easier to analyse than the starting position. And there is a further point. Let us admit that now and again we get obsessed with something to the point of forgetting our original aims and directives. Yet one thing we do recall is that 'no quest is more natural than the quest for knowledge.'

Sergei Makarychev once told me of a trip he made to Tunis. The day

before setting off, he went to a chess club. In one room, he came across a little group of young players devotedly analysing the baffling ramifications of the Sveshnikov Variation (this was the blossoming time of that paradoxical system). Walking into a Tunis chess club a day later, Sergei was rather surprised to see the same engaging spectacle, in which – who would have thought it? – the position on the board coincided uncannily with the previous one. And when, in the not-too-distant future, the really powerful computers get to work, we shall witness (and participate in) some far more striking events than those so brilliantly portrayed by Ostap Bender's prophetic speech in the novel *Twelve Chairs*.

In all this, it has to be said that the further we go in among the trees, the less we see of the wood. Of course, chess ideas (just like any others) possess a strong magical power of attraction, but at times it pays us to stop and take our bearings. Long experience has taught the human race that 'a thousand paths lead to error – one path leads to truth.' The history of chess ideas reveals itself as a 'dialectical' process. In chess books, an accepted outline of this process has long been established:

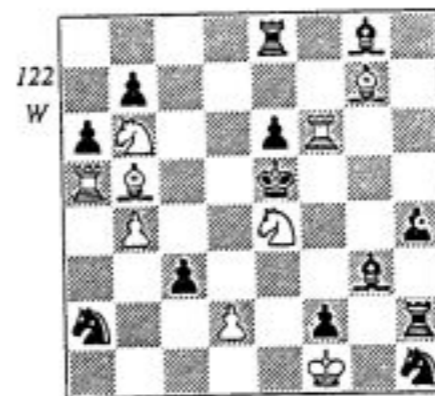
(1) the old Italian school (a great time – you wouldn't think pawns were a scrap of use, the way they sacrificed them);

(2) Philidor (laying the foundations of the positional school, the

first attempt at a balanced view of chess);

... and so on.

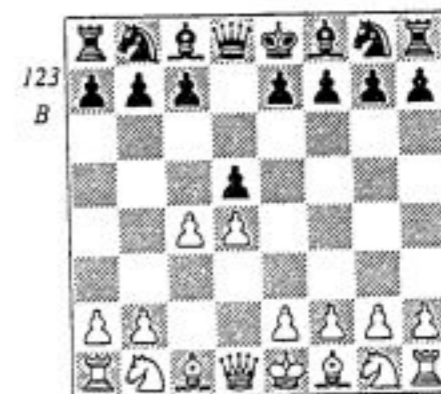
I dare say those books are competently written, but cold print, as a rule, has converted everything into rigid formulae that turn us away permanently from first-hand inquiry. A thing that sticks in my own mind is the way the Steinitz Gambit was invented. It goes 1 e4 e5 2 Qc3 Qc6 3 f4 ef 4 d4. I am amazed to read in some books that the originator of this idea, so strikingly bold and imaginative, is ranked among the dogmatists. But if in our own day we are taken aback by Steinitz's experiments, how they must have shocked the first World Champion's contemporaries. Sam Loyd, that Homer of chess, reacted to the birth of the new gambit in a fitting manner. Here is the problem (White to play and mate in three) he composed for the occasion.



The solution is of astonishing beauty: 1 Qe2!! (if I could, I would add some more exclamation marks on my own account) 1...f1W+ 2 Qe3.

Or take the invention of Alekhine's Defence. How could the great maestro – who placed so much value on time in chess, who could sacrifice anything for a couple of tempi – believe in the paradoxical 1 e4 Qf6?

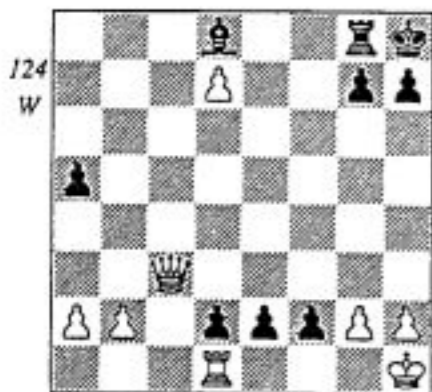
In general, the evolution of ideas in chess resembles the growth of a wild vine rather than (say) a pine tree. Openings are born, disappear into an undergrowth of oblivion, and then re-emerge before our very eyes.



The position after 1 d4 d5 2 c4 (123) is as old as the game of chess as we know it. At any rate, it appears in the Göttingen Manuscript (end of the 15th century) and in Damiano's work of 1512. The earliest books give the line 2...dc 3 e4 b5 4 a4 c6 5 ab cb 6 b3. In his treatise of 1561 entitled *Book of the Ingenious Art of Chess*, Ruy Lopez (traditionally the first major opening theoretician) refined the order of moves by playing 5 b3 and answering 5...cb with 6 ab, which gives White the advantage. Over forty years later – in an essay entitled *Puttino or the Knight Errant*,

in praise of the Italian player Leonardo da Cutri – Salvio pointed out the neat trap that we all know about: 2...dc 3 e3 b5 4 a4 c6 5 ab cb 6 ♖f3.

The gambit, in fact, turned out to be a gambit only in name, and Black began to seek satisfaction in counterplay. In the second edition of his famous tract *The Noble Game of Chess* (1745), the Syrian player Philipp Stamma pointed out that 3...e5!? was playable. A very important landmark in the history of the variation 1 d4 d5 2 c4 dc 3 e3 e5 was the series of matches between La Bourdonnais and McDonnell. It is a pity that the only thing most of us can recall from that remarkable encounter is the final position of the 16th game in the fourth match. (124)



The variation in question occurred frequently in these matches; La Bourdonnais was always on the White side. Unfortunately, no published works by the participants are available to me, but it was with much interest that I read the annotations by

Chigorin, who called the La Bourdonnais-McDonnell games 'a brilliant inspiration from the past'. Let us pick out the most interesting of them.

La Bourdonnais-McDonnell
6th game of the second match
Queen's Gambit

- | | | |
|---|------|-----|
| 1 | d4 | d5 |
| 2 | c4 | dc |
| 3 | e3 | e5 |
| 4 | ♙xc4 | ed |
| 5 | ed | ♗f6 |
| 6 | ♗c3 | ♙e7 |

At this point Chigorin makes an interesting comment: 'La Bourdonnais recognises 6...♙d6 as better than the move played.' Seeing that the theory of the 3...e5 line is in a poor state, La Bourdonnais's opinion is (to use a hackneyed phrase) worthy of attention.

- | | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| 7 | ♗f3 | 0-0 |
| 8 | 0-0 | |

In the first match 8 ♙e3 had been played, but 8 0-0 looks more natural.

- | | | |
|---|-----|----|
| 8 | ... | c6 |
|---|-----|----|

Again Chigorin's note is interesting: 'This method was indicated by Philidor, but La Bourdonnais considers it bad.' What does modern theory say? Unfortunately, 150 years on, it has not succeeded in giving a precise answer. I can only point out that until recently, players believed Philidor. Now they are having some doubts.

- | | | |
|---|----|------|
| 9 | h3 | ♗bd7 |
|---|----|------|

- | | | |
|----|-----|------|
| 10 | ♙e3 | ♗b6 |
| 11 | ♙b3 | ♗fd5 |

Today 11...♗bd5, à la Steinitz, is more often played.

- | | | |
|----|-----|--|
| 12 | ♗e2 | |
|----|-----|--|

The 17th game of the first match went 12 a4 a5 13 ♗e5 ♙e6 14 ♙c2 f5? 15 ♗e2 f4 16 ♙d2 ♗e8 17 ♗ae1 ♙f7 18 ♗e4 g6 19 ♙xf4! ♗xf4 20 ♗xf4 ♙c4 21 ♗h6 ♙xf1 22 ♙xg6! hg 23 ♗xg6 ♗c8 24 ♗h8+ ♗f7 25 ♗h7+ ♗f6 26 ♗f4 ♙d3 27 ♗e6+ ♗g5 28 ♗h6+ ♗f5 29 g4 mate.

- | | | |
|----|------|-----|
| 12 | ... | ♗h8 |
| 13 | ♗ae1 | ♙d6 |
| 14 | ♙c2 | f5? |

Persistence in error is commonly called pig-headedness.

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 15 | ♗e5 | f4 |
| 16 | ♗h5 | ♗f6 |
| 17 | ♗g6+ | ♗g8 |
| 18 | ♙b3+ | ♗bd5 |
| 19 | ♗xd5 | |

19...♗xh5 20 ♗de7 mate is pretty.

- | | | |
|----|-----------|------|
| 19 | ... | cd |
| 20 | ♙xd5+ | ♗xd5 |
| 21 | ♗xd5+ | ♗f7 |
| 22 | ♗e5 | ♙e6 |
| 23 | ♗xe6 | ♙xe5 |
| 24 | de | fe |
| 25 | ♗xe3 etc. | |

The next game provides food for thought. It is modern in character, and of inimitable beauty.

La Bourdonnais-McDonnell
15th game of the first match
Queen's Gambit

- | | | |
|---|------|----------|
| 1 | d4 | d5 |
| 2 | c4 | dc |
| 3 | e3 | e5 |
| 4 | ♙xc4 | ed |
| 5 | ed | ♗f6 |
| 6 | ♗c3 | ♙e7 |
| 7 | ♗f3 | 0-0 |
| 8 | h3 | c6 (125) |



- | | | |
|----|------|-----|
| 9 | ♙e3 | ♙f5 |
| 10 | g4!? | |

Playing like this requires not only precision but also inspiration. The centre is open, Black is assured of counterplay. So the outcome will be decided in a pitched battle.

- | | | |
|----|--------|------|
| 10 | ... | ♙g6 |
| 11 | ♗e5! | ♗bd7 |
| 12 | ♗xg6 | hg |
| 13 | h4! | ♗b6 |
| 14 | ♙b3 | ♗fd5 |
| 15 | h5 | ♗xe3 |
| 16 | fe | ♙h4+ |
| 17 | ♗d2 | gh |
| 18 | ♗f3 | ♙g5 |
| 19 | ♗af1!! | |

Any reader who would like to see more detailed annotations to this game should look in the splendid

book *Uncrowned Champions* by Neishtadt. I would add that nearly every move by La Bourdonnais radiates energy and power.

- 19 ... ♖xd4+
- 20 ♔c2 ♖f6
- 21 ♜xh5 ♖g6+

The queen exchange would not save Black either: 21...♖xf3 22 ♜xf3 ♔e7 23 ♜hf5 ♔f6 24 g5 ♔xc3 25 bc ♔d5 26 e4 etc. In reply to 21...g6, Chigorin gives 22 ♖h3 gh (if 22...♖e5, then 23 ♜f5) 23 ♜xf6 ♔xf6 24 ♖xh5, and Black has no defence against the battering ram g5-g6.

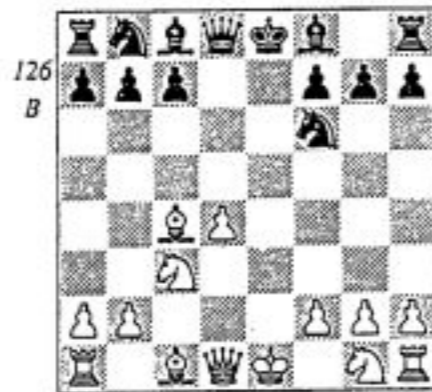
- 22 e4 ♔d5
- 23 ♜fh1 ♔h6
- 24 g5! f5
- 25 ♔xd5 cd
- 26 ♔xd5+ ♖h7
- 27 ♜xh6+ ♖xh6
- 28 gh 1-0

La Bourdonnais-McDonnell
7th game of the third match
Queen's Gambit

- 1 d4 d5
- 2 c4 dc
- 3 e3 e5
- 4 ♔xc4 ed
- 5 ed ♔f6
- 6 ♔c3 (126) ♔d6

As mentioned above, this is the move La Bourdonnais considered strongest.

- 7 ♔f3 0-0
- 8 h3 ♜e8+
- 9 ♔e3 ♔f4



A rash move. 'Don't crop everything that grows' is Kuzma Prutkov's stern warning.

- 10 ♖d2 ♖e7
- 11 0-0! ♔xe3
- 12 fe ♖xe3+
- 13 ♖xe3 ♜xe3
- 14 ♔e5!

This is the retribution. We see that catching the opponent in a prepared variation was something they could do 150 years ago.

- 14 ... ♔e6
- 15 ♔xe6 fe
- 16 ♖f2 ♜xe5
- 17 de etc.

The La Bourdonnais-McDonnell matches demonstrated White's attacking possibilities after 1 d4 d5 2 c4 dc 3 e3 e5. The position arising out of the opening was characterised by Chigorin in these terms: 'At this stage Black's set-up is similar to a position that arose in Zukertort's games against Steinitz and also in Lasker's games with the latter. The only difference is that here Black has a pawn on c6, not e6. The plan of

defence was just the same for McDonnell as for Steinitz.'

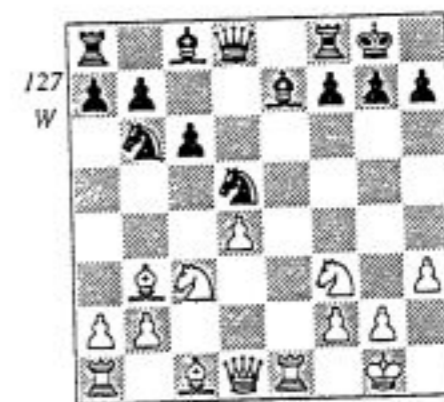
After the series of La Bourdonnais-McDonnell matches the variation sank into oblivion and was hardly ever employed in practice. Sometime in the first quarter of the twentieth century, the conclusion was drawn that White is better off playing against a pawn on c6 than one on c5. What was the reason? I must frankly confess that I have never fathomed it. Indeed, it seems to me that the conclusion lacked any reason. Subsequently (the case is a typical one), 3 ♔f3 was virtually the only move to be played – apart from an occasional 3 e4 – and in notes for the uninitiated it was explained that 3 e3 is weaker because of the counter-stroke 3...c5. Of course there did remain a few doubters, but no one paid attention to them. In 1965, Neishtadt's book *The Queen's Gambit* appeared. This respected theoretician wrote: 'Authors of opening manuals unanimously hold the correct move to be 3 ♔f3, so as not to allow ...e7-e5, but the strength of that counter-stroke should not be overestimated.'

As often happens, help came from another quarter. In the middle of the 1970s, the Petroff Defence experienced a wave of popularity. The following variation was extensively tested: 1 e4 e5 2 ♔f3 ♔f6 3 ♔xe5 d6 4 ♔f3 ♔xe4 5 d4 d5 6 ♔d3 ♔e7 7 0-0 ♔c6 8 ♜e1 ♔g4 9 c4 ♔f6 10 cd ♔xd5 11 ♔c3 0-0 12 ♔e4 ♔e6.

A few years of experience, and the needle on the scale moved from 'equal game' to 'clear plus for White'. It turned out that conducting Black's defence with the e-file open was not at all easy. This revised assessment was echoed in games with the Queen's Gambit Accepted.

Timman-Panno
Mar del Plata 1982
Queen's Gambit

- 1 d4 d5
- 2 c4 dc
- 3 ♔c3 e5
- 4 e3 ed
- 5 ed ♔f6
- 6 ♔xc4 ♔e7
- 7 ♔f3 0-0
- 8 h3 ♔bd7
- 9 0-0 ♔b6
- 10 ♔b3 c6
- 11 ♜e1 ♔fd5 (127)



A well-known position. Pay attention to Timman's next move. Black has removed his knight from the kingside; White at once brings

his own second knight closer to the black monarch.

- 12 ♖e4 ♙e8
- 13 ♗d2 ♗f5
- 14 ♘g3 ♗e6
- 15 ♗c2 ♘d7
- 16 a3 ♘f8
- 17 ♗d3 g6?!

In Timman's view, a better line was 17...f6 followed by ♗...f7, but the initiative would still be with White.

- 18 ♗h6 ♘f6
- 19 ♗d2 ♗d5
- 20 ♘e5 ♘e6
- 21 ♗c2 ♘d7
- 22 ♘g4 ♗g5
- 23 ♗xg5 ♗xg5
- 24 ♗b4 ♘f6!
- 25 ♙e5 ♗h4
- 26 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6
- 27 ♘e4 ♗d8

It is characteristic of this type of position that although Black defends well, he is unable to extinguish White's initiative entirely. With his last move Panno wrongly neglected the chance to simplify the position with 27...♗xe4 28 ♙xe4 ♙e7.

- 28 ♗b3! a5
- 29 ♗c3 ♗xb3
- 30 ♗xb3 ♗xd4
- 31 ♘f6+ ♗h8
- 32 ♙ae1 ♙eb8?!
- 33 ♙ie4 ♗d8
- 34 ♙xe6! fe
- 35 ♗c3 ♗e7

On 35...♗f8, Timman gives the striking finish 36 ♘h7+! ♗xh7 37 ♙h4+ ♗h6 38 ♗f6!.

- 36 ♘h5+ ♗g8
- 37 ♙xe6 ♗f7
- 38 ♘f6+ ♗f8
- 39 ♗c5+ ♗g7
- 40 ♙e7 ♗xf6
- 41 ♗e5 mate

The finale of this fine game was conducted in nineteenth-century style.

In the next example White failed to exploit his positional assets, but his method of play in the opening is undoubtedly of interest.

Browne-Petrosian
Las Palmas 1982
Queen's Gambit

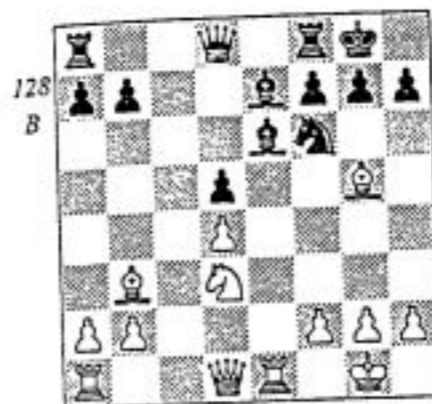
- 1 d4 d5
- 2 c4 dc
- 3 ♘c3 e5
- 4 e3 ed
- 5 ed ♘f6
- 6 ♗xc4 ♗e7
- 7 ♘f3 0-0
- 8 0-0 ♘bd7

A point worth noting. The American Grandmaster doesn't spend any time on prophylaxis (8 h3), and Petrosian refrains from 8...♗g4. Evidently both are right.

- 9 ♗b3 ♘b6
- 10 ♙e1 c6
- 11 ♗g5

Petrosian assesses this position as favourable to White.

- 11 ... ♘bd5
- 12 ♘xd5 cd
- 13 ♘e5 ♗e6
- 14 ♘d3! (128)



A subtle manoeuvre. White at once increases his own scope, and Black will be left with a choice of technically difficult endings.

- 14 ... ♘e4
- 15 ♗xe7 ♗xe7
- 16 f3 ♘f6
- 17 ♘c5 ♙ac8
- 18 ♙e3 ♙c6
- 19 ♗d2 b6
- 20 ♘xe6 ♙xe6
- 21 ♙ae1 ♙xe3
- 22 ♗xe3 ♗b4
- 23 ♗c3! ♗d6
- 24 ♙e5 h6
- 25 ♗f2?!

At this point Browne's habitual time-scramble started, and the game ended in a draw on move 41. At move 25, as Petrosian pointed out, a very strong continuation would have been 25 g4 followed by ♗g2, h2-h4 and g4-g5, with advantage to White.

Have you ever seen a chess article without a brilliant example of the author's own play? 'Silly question', you will say. Quite.

Razuvaev-Bagirov
Yaroslavl 1982
Queen's Gambit

- 1 d4 d5
- 2 c4 dc
- 3 e3 e5
- 4 ♗xc4 ed
- 5 ed ♘f6
- 6 ♘f3 ♗e7
- 7 0-0 0-0
- 8 h3 ♘bd7
- 9 ♘c3 ♘b6
- 10 ♗b3 ♘bd5

Following Philidor and Steinitz.

- 11 ♙e1 c6
- 12 ♗g5 ♗e6
- 13 ♘e5 ♘c7

The unstable position of the black pieces on the e-file is beginning to tell. For example, 13...♗a5 is met by 14 ♘xf7! ♗xf7 15 ♘d5 ♘d5 16 ♗xe7, or 14...♗xf7 15 ♗e2! (as pointed out by Lev Psakhis; but 15 ♗xf6 is also good), and Black badly needs a bright idea – or to put it in conventional chess sign-language:

- + 14 ♗c2 ♙e8
- 15 ♗d3 g6
- 16 ♗f3 ♘fd5
- 17 ♗xe7 ♗xe7
- 18 ♗g3 ♙ad8
- 19 ♙ad1 ♘f6
- 20 f4! ♘h5
- 21 ♗f2 f5

There is no other defence against f4-f5.

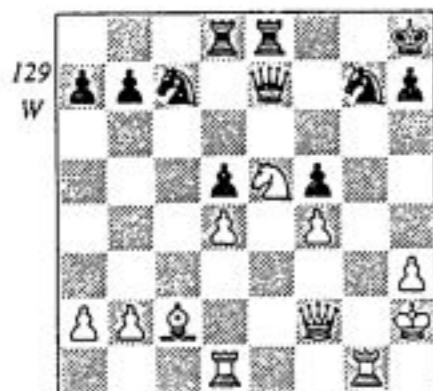
- 22 g4 ♘g7
- 23 gf gf

Quite a good reply to 23... ♖xf5 is
 24 ♖xf5 g7 25 ♖h2 ♖h8 26 d5
 ♗xd5 27 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 28 ♗xd5 cd 29
 ♗d4 ♗g7 30 ♗g1+-

24 ♖h2 ♖h8
 25 ♗g1 ♖d5

The threat was 26 ♗g5 and ♗h4.

26 ♗xd5 cd (129)



27 ♗g6 ♗ce6

After 27... ♖g8 White has a number of good lines, for instance: 28 ♗xg7+ ♖xg7 29 ♗g1+ ♖h8 30 ♗h4 (30... ♗xh4 31 ♗f7 mate).

28 ♗dg1 ♗f8
 29 ♗h6! ♖g8
 30 ♖b3 ♗d6

If 30... ♗f6, then 31 ♗h4 is decisive.

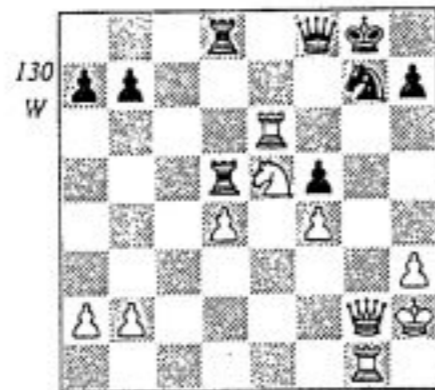
31 ♗g2 ♗fd8
 32 ♖xd5 ♗xd5
 33 ♗xe6 ♗f8 (130)

If 33... ♗c7, an amusing mate follows: 34 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 35 ♗e8.

34 ♗e8!

Such moves are easy to find and fun to play.

34 ... ♗xe8
 35 ♗xd5+ 1-0



Our excursion has reached its end. The awkward moment of summing up the results has arrived. We often argue about the best move in various positions, but thank God we all still play according to different styles. It would seem that in the opening you can use your imagination a little and try to find your own way (or what suits you best among positions deriving from other players). On this question I am in favour of subjectivity.

So - you are right, Monsieur La Bourdonnais!

In place of a Postscript

It is some years since the above article was first published. The author has re-read it at Mark Dvoretsky's request, but has decided to refrain from correcting it. The article not only contains reference material but also the thoughts and feelings that preoccupied me seven years ago. It seems to me that when set down on paper, our thoughts so to speak detach themselves and cease to belong

solely to their originator. Therefore I didn't want to touch material that is already in some measure estranged from me.

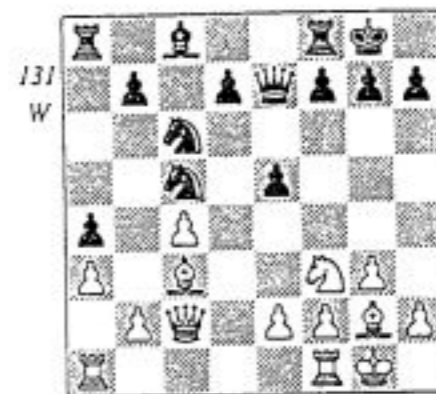
I frankly confess that I read through the article with a feeling of trepidation. Let me explain why.

One of my favourite chess books since childhood has been the chess manual of the legendary Capablanca. The exceptional clarity which imparts an almost mathematical sense to the words; the innate, more exactly pristine, feeling for harmony; the all-pervading, truly Mozart-like charm. A book like this is one that you don't want to part with for long, and I come back to it frequently.

But one day, a Grandmaster by then, I came across some lines which took me aback.

1	d4	♗f6
2	c4	e6
3	♗c3	♖b4
4	♗b3	c5
5	dc	♗c6
6	♗f3	♗e4
7	♖d2	♗xc5
8	♗c2	0-0
9	a3	♖xc3
10	♖xc3	a5
11	g3	♗e7
12	♖g2	e5
13	0-0	a4 (131)

Under the diagram I read: 'In this position from a game Stahlberg-Nimzowitsch, White has the two bishops and a solid formation. In



return, Black has a well-placed knight on c5. In general the position should no doubt be assessed as better for White, but although he did win this game, his advantage at this point is scarcely a winning one. Seeing that Nimzowitsch specialized in this variation, a substantial improvement of Black's defence should hardly prove possible....'

How unfortunate! For Capablanca is speaking of an opening which in our day is counted among the most correct - the Nimzo-Indian. The fact has to be faced that even geniuses can be wrong in their appraisal of opening ideas. Hence, ever since I have been writing books and articles on chess openings, the feeling of being doomed by the passage of time has never left me. In this instance, however, I was in luck; the judgements expressed in the article have remained valid over the past seven years. In conclusion, I have pleasure in showing the reader one further example.

The effortless, graceful style of Rafael Vaganian, who has a liking

and a capacity for subtle piece play, is ideally suited to the type of position we have discussed.

Vaganian-Hübner
Tilburg 1983
Queen's Gambit

- | | | |
|---|------|------|
| 1 | d4 | d5 |
| 2 | c4 | dc |
| 3 | ♟c3 | e5 |
| 4 | e3 | ed |
| 5 | ed | ♞f6 |
| 6 | ♙xc4 | ♙e7 |
| 7 | ♞f3 | 0-0 |
| 8 | 0-0 | ♞bd7 |

In a game Zaichik-Karpeshov, Volgodosk 1983, the attempt to simplify with 8...♙g4 gave White the advantage after 9 h3 ♙xf3 10 ♖xf3 ♞c6 11 ♙e3 ♞xd4 12 ♖xb7 c5 13 ♙xd4 cd 14 ♞ad1 ♞c8 15 b3 ♞c7 16 ♖f3 ♞d7 17 ♞e2.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 9 | ♞e1 | ♞b6 |
| 10 | ♙b3 | c6 |
| 11 | ♙g5 | ♙g4 |

Nonchalance bordering on frivolity. Without his own light-squared bishop it will be very hard for Black to 'pacify' the bishop on b3.

- | | | |
|----|-----|------|
| 12 | ♖d3 | ♙xf3 |
|----|-----|------|

If 12...♙h5, as recommended by some commentators, then 13 ♞e5 is highly unpleasant.

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 13 | ♖xf3 | ♞fd5 |
| 14 | ♙xe7 | |

The position is full of temptations and mirages; for example, at this point 14 ♞xe7 ♞xe7 15 ♞e1 looks very inviting, but Vaganian gives a

brilliant refutation: 15...♞bc8 16 ♖e2 ♞e8 17 ♙xf7+ ♟xf7 18 ♖e6+ ♟f8 19 ♞c3 ♞d6 20 ♞f3+ ♞df5 21 ♞xf5+ ♞xf5 22 ♖xf5+ ♖f6!! and White perishes for lack of a loophole for his king.

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 14 | ... | ♞xe7 |
| 15 | ♞e5! | |

A subtle technical device: White keeps the black knights from d5, and in this way greatly enhances the pressure from the bishop on b3.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 15 | ... | ♞g6 |
| 16 | ♞e4 | ♞d7 |
| 17 | ♞d1 | ♖a5 |

Black stops half way. His knight belongs on f6. But even then White would carry out d4-d5 after a preparatory 18 ♞c3, and the advantage of bishop against knight would make itself felt.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-------------|
| 18 | ♞e3 | ♞ad8? (132) |
|----|-----|-------------|



Black misses his last chance to play ...♞f6. Now White manages to bring his knight into the attack, after which Black will no longer be able to hold the position.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 19 | ♞e4 | ♖c7 |
|----|-----|-----|

The threat was 20 ♞d6. From this point on, Black's play is dictated by his opponent.

20 h4! h6
As Vaganian points out, the h-pawn was immune: 20...♞xh4 21 ♖h5 ♞g6 22 ♞h3 h6 23 ♖xg6!.

21 ♖g4 ♟h8
22 h5 ♞f4
22...♖f4 23 ♖xf4 ♞xf4 24 ♞d6!
is no better for Black.

- | | | |
|----|-----|----|
| 23 | ♞g3 | g5 |
|----|-----|----|

- | | | |
|----|-----|----|
| 24 | hg | fg |
| 25 | ♞e1 | |

White's pieces are moving with rare co-ordination and ease. In such cases you just need a 'feel' for the position, and the the rest of your moves play themselves.

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 25 | ... | ♞de8 |
| 26 | ♞ge3 | ♞b6 |
| 27 | ♞c5 | ♖c8 |

An oversight hastening the end.

- | | | |
|----|-------|-----|
| 28 | ♖xf4! | 1-0 |
|----|-------|-----|

10 How Opening Novelties are Born

Boris Zlotnik

The quest for what is new is the prime demand of the human imagination.

Stendhal

Defining in aphoristic form the essence of the three phases of a chess game, Rudolf Spielmann wrote: 'In the opening, a chessplayer is a book; in the middlegame, an artist; in the endgame, a machine.'

In chess as in life, the ordinary and prosaic undoubtedly bulks larger than the extraordinary and the artistic. However, even in the opening – and still more in the endgame – there is of course a place for creativity. One of the most appealing aspects of chess, in which analysis and imagination overlap, is precisely the search for opening novelties in the course of a player's habitual efforts to learn new systems and variations or perfect those he already uses.

Seeing that the discovery of opening innovations depends to some extent on individual ways of working, most of my examples will be taken from my own games in the interests of clear presentation.

It is usual to divide opening innovations into two categories. The first comprises those which are invented

at the board in the course of a tournament game; the second consists of those devised in the peace and quiet of home study.

We will start with some novelties belonging to the first category. They are not so rare even now, in our present age of the proliferation of information.

Zlotnik-Gik Dubna 1968 Sicilian Defence

1	e4	c5
2	♘f3	d6
3	d4	cd
4	♗xd4	♗f6
5	♗c3	g6
6	♕c3	♗g7
7	♗c4	

Lapsus manus (a finger-slip), as Alekhine liked to write in such cases. There was a banal reason why I didn't play the natural 7 f3. Before the game, the young, newly qualified master had been swimming in the Volga and sunbathing to his heart's content; sitting down at the board in a blissfully enervated state, he automatically brought his bishop out to c4 on the assumption that 7 f3 0-0 had already been played.

7	...	♗g4
8	♕b5+	♖f8
9	0-0!?	(133)

In a game Scheldt-Botvinnik, Stockholm 1962, White played 9 ♖d2, avoiding damage to his pawn structure after the exchange on e3. The further course of the game showed, however, that Black's bishop pair was a more significant factor than his loss of the right to castle.

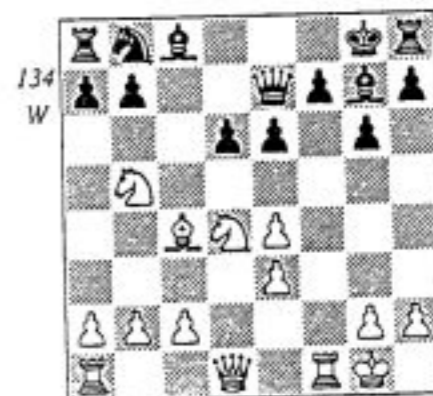
Annoyed at my absent-mindedness and badly needing something to cheer myself up, I took the *purely emotional* decision (my emphasis – B.Z.) to force the game out of its normal channel. After the move I played, and the subsequent exchange on e3, White is left with doubled isolated pawns on the e-file. On the other hand the f-file is opened, and White's lead in development becomes formidable.

For twenty years I never gave another thought to the diagram position. I assumed that my novelty, concocted by chance, was fit to be used only once – to dumbfound an opponent in a single game. Hence, on seeing my game with Gik quoted in Eduard Gufeld's book on the Dragon Variation (1982), I was genuinely astonished at the question mark appended to 7...♗g4. In his book *Analytical and Critical Writings, 1957-70* (1986), Botvinnik considers 7 ♗c4 a careless lapse, but makes no mention of 9 0-0. Nor is the idea employed in present-day



tournaments. Usually such a conspiracy of silence is not merely due to ignorance. The explanation came only in 1987 at the USSR Junior Championships, when one of the competitors, Sergei Tiviakov – today one of the most promising young players in the country – showed me a counter-innovation for Black. Since I believe that in chess there is such a thing as copyright, albeit only in a moral sense, I will not reveal Black's idea here but will leave my readers to find it for themselves.

9	...	♗xe3
10	fe	e6
11	♗c4	♗e7
12	♗cb5!	♖g8? (134)



12...♔c5 was essential. Now a cascade of sacrifices descends on the Black position. Curiously enough, the following moves made such a strong impression on my opponent that afterwards he not only congratulated me on my win but thanked me for a fine game. A rare case of gentlemanly manners in the harsh world of chess.

13 ♖xd6!! ♜xd6
14 ♖xe6! ♜xe6

Hoping to pick up three pieces for the queen. Black is mated after 14...♜xd6 15 ♜axd1 ♖c6 16 ♖c7 ♜b8 17 ♔xf7+ ♜f8 18 ♔b3+ ♜e7 19 ♜f7.

15 ♜d8+ ♔f8
16 ♜xf7! ♜xf7
Or 16...♜xf7 17 ♜f1!
17 ♜xc8 ♜xc4
18 ♜xc4+ ♜g7
19 ♜d4+ 1-0

Improvised novelties, i.e. those which are not prepared in advance, rarely arise from an emotional impulse as in the foregoing example. Much more often they result from studying the position in a state of maximum concentration and unearthing its secrets, to the ticking of the clocks in the tournament hall.

Kuzovkin-Zlotnik
Moscow 1981
Queen's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♖f6
2 c4 e6

3 ♖f3 b6
4 g3 ♔b7
5 ♔g2 ♔e7
6 0-0 0-0
7 d5!? ed
8 ♖h4 c6
9 cd ♖xd5
10 ♖f5 ♖c7
11 ♖c3 d5
12 e4 ♔f6
13 ed cd
14 ♔f4 ♖ba6
15 ♜e1 (135)



At the time when this game was played, the chess world had been impressed by Kasparov's brilliant win against Marjanović (Malta OL 1980), which continued 15...♜d7? 16 ♔h3 ♜h8? (16...♜d8!) 17 ♖e4! ♔xb2 18 ♖g5! with a decisive attack.

When thinking about my move, I rather vaguely recollected that Kasparov had gained a striking victory, but I didn't have any ideas of my own about the position. Immersing myself in analysis, I came to the conclusion that the piece causing Black

the most annoyance was the knight on f5. I therefore began studying the moves 15...♜d7 and 15...♔c8. In answer to the first of them, I didn't like 16 ♔h3. My reason for choosing the second lay in the variation 15...♔c8 16 ♖d6 ♔xc3! 17 bc ♔e6 18 c4 dc 19 ♔xa8 ♜xa8, with excellent prospects for Black.

15 ... ♔c8

At the end of the game I looked up Kasparov's notes to his encounter with Marjanović. In answer to 15...♔c8 he gave the following variation, claiming it was promising for White: 16 ♖d6 ♔e6 17 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 18 ♔xd5 ♔xd5 19 ♜xd5 ♔xb2 20 ♜ad1.

After the present game (*Informator* 31/618), Kasparov evidently changed his mind about 15...♔c8. In his book *The Test of Time*, he noted that it was playable. More than that, it would appear to be the strongest. At any rate, the same idea was used against Kasparov by Karpov in the second game of their first match, though the sequence of moves was a little different: 13 ♔f4 ♔c8, after which the game went 14 g4 ♖ba6 15 ♜c1 ♔d7 16 ♜d2 ♖c5. Black's position proved to be very solid. After this, the whole gambit line with 7 d5 went out of fashion.

Returning to our original game, I should point out that 16 ♖d6 was relatively White's best move.

16 ♖d4?! ♜d7
17 ♜c1 ♔b7
18 ♔e5 ♔xe5

19 ♜xe5 ♜fe8
Black has succeeded in consolidating his position while keeping the extra pawn.

20 ♜h5 g6
21 ♜d2 f6
22 ♜h4 ♖c5
23 ♖b3 ♜ad8?

23...♖5e6 was better. Now White could have minimised Black's advantage with 24 ♖xc5 bc 25 ♖a4 ♖e6 26 ♖xc5 ♖xc5 27 ♜xc5, although after 27...d4 the defence is still not easy.

24 ♜d1? ♜e5
25 ♖xc5 bc
26 ♜a4

26 ♖a4 was no better in view of 26...♖a6 27 ♜a5 d4.

26 ... a6
27 ♜a5 ♜e7
28 f4 ♜e3
29 b4 cb
30 ♖xd5 ♔xd5
31 ♔xd5+ ♜g7
32 ♜f2 ♜a3

0-1

The chief category of opening novelties, of course, comprises those which are prepared in home analysis. Perhaps this category can be subdivided into three groups. Some novelties arise by chance; some proceed by way of analogy; some serve to create original situations. I shall give examples of all three types.

One of the most striking novelties of 1988 arose in the following position.

1	e4	e6
2	d4	d5
3	♘c3	♙b4
4	e5	c5
5	a3	♙xc3+
6	bc	♗e7
7	♖g4	0-0
8	♗f3	♗bc6
9	♙d3	f5
10	ef	♙xf6
11	♙g5	e5! (136)



Black's last move has been known for a long time, and the verdict of theorists was unanimous: this way of playing is no good in view of 12 ♙xh7+ ♗xh7 13 ♖h5+ ♗g8 14 ♙xf6 gf 15 de.

Approved by conventional opinion, this last line is reproduced in my own book on the French Defence which appeared in 1982. Yet it was in the course of working on that book that I discovered just how many acknowledged verdicts are based on old games, some of which – in addition – were not by players of an adequate standard. These two factors – the date of the verdict and the

unconvincing credentials of the players – are bound to arouse suspicions about the conclusions of theory in these cases.

The history of 11...e5! (the novelty here consists in the change from question mark to exclamation mark) is as follows.

In the summer of 1988, Grandmaster Dokhoian (at that time only a Master) and his coach Kishnev approached me with the question of how to alleviate Black's difficulties in the variation 11 ♙g5 ♗f7 12 ♙xe7 ♗xe7 13 ♖h4. I knew very well from my own practical experience what a thankless defensive task Black faces in that line. So, speaking as the author of a book in which some of the judgements were questionable (for reasons just explained), I voiced the suggestion – or rather the conviction – that 11...e5 was perfectly playable.

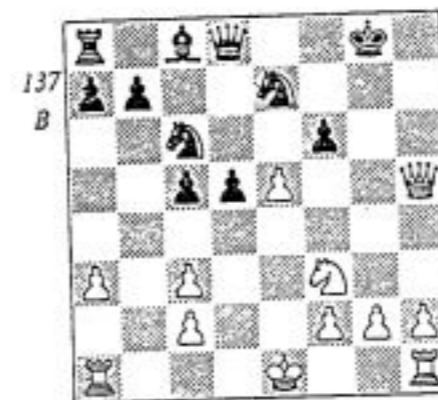
We briefly analysed it together, and to our surprise (including my own) we confirmed that 11...e5 is a promising move. It became clear that a new shoot had appeared on the tree of opening knowledge. Dokhoian soon had a chance to try the move out in practice and reap the reward of the novelty. Here is the first game with this line to be published in *Informator* (46/383).

Psakhis-Dokhoian
USSR Championship (First League),
Klaipeda 1988
French Defence

(from diagram 136):

12 ♖h4

According to Dokhoian, 11...e5 left Psakhis in a state of shock. He thought for 40 minutes over his reply; in the end he didn't risk going into the standard line which is quoted in all the French Defence monographs: 12 ♙xh7+ ♗xh7 13 ♖h5+ ♗g8 14 ♙xf6 gf 15 de (137).



Despite the messy nature of the position, characterised above all by Black's exposed king, there is not only approximate material equality but positional equality as well. The secret of the position is that Black should try to exchange queens by means of 15...♖f8 and 16...♖f7. As our analysis showed, it is not so simple for White to advance his three (!) connected passed pawns on the kingside.

A game Abramović-Dokhoian, Belgrade 1988, saw instead 12 ♖g3 ♗xf3 13 gf c4! 14 ♙xe7? (better 14 ♙e2) 14...♖xe7 15 ♙e2 ed 16 ♗f1 ♙f5, with a clear plus for Black.

12 ... e4

13 ♙xf6 gf
14 ♖xf6 ed

14...ef is weaker on account of 15 gf ♗g6 16 ♖xd8+ ♗xd8 17 dc! ♗e6 18 ♙xg6! hg 19 0-0-0 ♗xc5 20 ♗xd5 with advantage to White (analysis by Dokhoian).

15 cd cd
16 ♗xd4 ♗xd4
17 ♖xd4 ♙f5
18 0-0 ♗c6
19 ♖e3 d4
20 cd ♖xd4
21 ♗fd1 ♗d8
22 ♗ab1 ♗d7
23 ♖g5+ ½-½

Let us now look at an example of an opening novelty devised on the basis of an analogy. This type is the most frequent of all. Of course, the degree of resemblance to a familiar precedent varies from one case to another. The analogy may be obvious or covert; in this example it falls roughly in the middle of the scale.

Makarychev-Zlotnik
Moscow 1978
Sicilian Defence

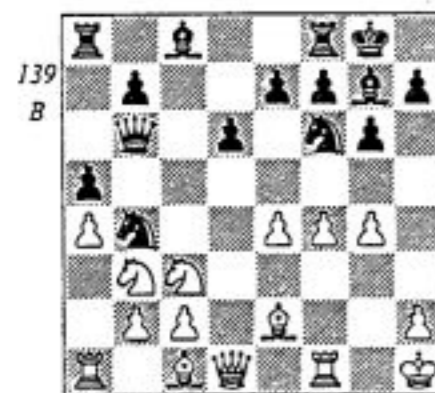
1	e4	c5
2	♗f3	♗c6
3	♗c3	g6
4	d4	cd
5	♗xd4	♙g7
6	♙e3	♗f6
7	♙c4	♖a5
8	0-0	0-0
9	♗b3	♖c7

- 10 ♖e2 d6
- 11 f4 a5
- 12 a4 ♖b4
- 13 ♖f3 ♖g4! (138)



A highly unusual type of move, especially in the opening stage – a piece simply places itself under attack. How did the idea of this move arise?

Its prototype is to be found in a game Fischer-Korchnoi (Curaçao Ct 1962), in which, after 1 e4 d6 2 d4 ♖f6 3 ♖c3 g6 4 f4 ♖g7 5 ♖f3 0-0 6 ♖e2 c5 7 dc ♖a5 8 0-0 ♖xc5+ 9 ♖h1 ♖c6 10 ♖d2 a5 11 ♖b3 ♖b6 12 a4 ♖b4 13 g4?, the following position arose (139):



There followed 13...♖xg4! (an idea of Vasiukov's) 14 ♖xg4 ♖xg4 15 ♖xg4 ♖xc2 16 ♖b5 ♖xa1 17 ♖xa1 ♖c6, with a clear plus for Black.

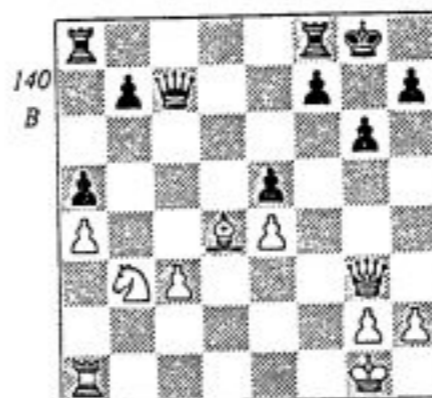
Comparing the two diagrams, we can easily identify their thematic similarity. The next stage in the development of the idea was my own dismal experience in a game against the Kharkov Master Vaisman (Moscow 1964). Playing White in the position preceding diagram 138, I played 13 g4? instead of 13 ♖f3. The reply, of course, was again 13...♖xg4!. Pondering this game and Fischer-Korchnoi, I was led to the following thought. Since Black gains the advantage when his bishop takes a pawn on g4, it is reasonable to assume that in an analogous position without the white g-pawn *en prise*, the bishop sortie to g4 is sufficient for equality.

Now back to my game with Grandmaster Makarychev, in which my opponent very quickly grasped the point of the innovation. After a few minutes' thought he offered a draw, but to me it seemed a shame to end the game here.

- 14 ♖xg4 ♖xg4
- 15 ♖xg4 ♖xc3!
- 16 bc ♖xc2
- 17 ♖d4 ♖xa1
- 18 ♖xa1 e5

It was also worth considering 18...b5 19 ab ♖c4 20 ♖d2 ♖xb5, creating a passed pawn on the a-file.
19 fe de

- 20 ♖g3 (140)



- 29 ♖f1 f3
- 30 gf ♖d3
- 31 ♖a5 ♖xf3+
- 32 ♖g1 ♖f7
- 33 ♖c4

and White won.

We will now examine two games by famous grandmasters. In the first, the innovation seems to have been devised with the aid of a classic example. In the second, a truly novel situation is created.

The critical position, which arises more or less by force after the acceptance of the sacrifice. At this point it was essential to play 20...♖fe8, when Black's chances even appear preferable in view of the threatened 21...♖c4.

However, I was so pleased at having finally employed my novelty to good effect that I found it impossible to exert myself to the maximum, and played a series of second-rate moves.

- 20 ... f6?
- 21 ♖c5 ♖f7
- 22 ♖e3! ♖c6?!

Better 22...♖a6, followed by ...♖a6-c6 and ...b7-b6.

- 23 ♖b6 ♖d7?

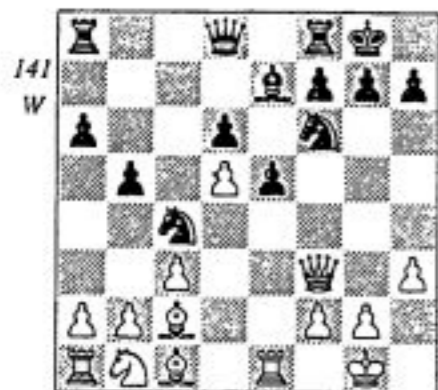
Throwing a pawn away. It was not too late to maintain equality with 23...♖a6! 24 ♖xa5 b6 25 ♖b4 ♖xa4.

- 24 ♖xa5 ♖e6
- 25 c4! f5
- 26 c5 f4
- 27 ♖b3 ♖xb3
- 28 ♖xb3 g5

Romanishin-Geller
USSR Ch (Top League),
Erevan 1975
Spanish

- 1 e4 e5
- 2 ♖f3 ♖c6
- 3 ♖b5 a6
- 4 ♖a4 ♖f6
- 5 0-0 ♖e7
- 6 ♖e1 b5
- 7 ♖b3 0-0
- 8 d4 d6
- 9 c3 ♖g4
- 10 d5 ♖a5
- 11 ♖c2 c6
- 12 h3 ♖xf3
- 13 ♖xf3 cd
- 14 ed ♖c4 (141)

This position had occurred many times in various tournaments before the present game. There had been repeated attempts to demonstrate an advantage for White due to his bishop pair, but these efforts were frustrated by the weakness of the



pawn on d5. For example, a game Bronstein-Geller, Teesside 1975, continued 15 a4, and after 15...Qb6 16 Bxd1 Wc7 17 ab ab 18 Qa3 b4!? 19 cb Bxa3 Black obtained a good game.

15 Qd2 Qb6
16 Qf1!

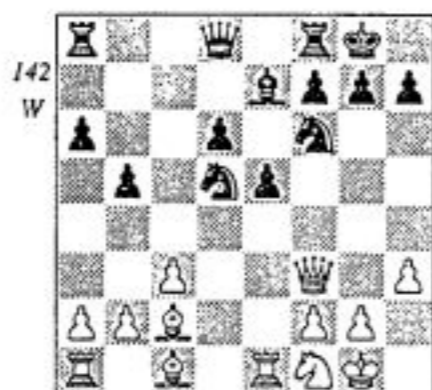
An interesting gambit. It is worth noting that a number of players in the same tournament (the 42nd USSR Championship, 1975) greeted White's last move with positive envy, testifying to the failure of their own search for a new idea in the position.

Now 16...Qfxd5 is no good in view of 17 Qc4, but at first sight it is not clear where White's compensation lies if Black captures with the other knight.

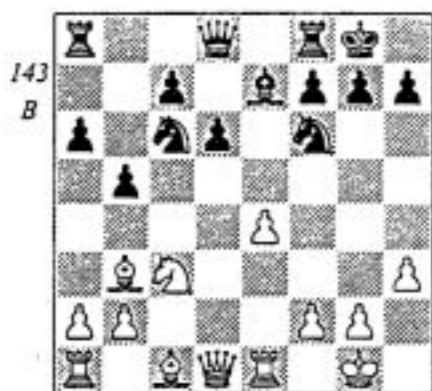
16 ... Qbxd5 (142)

This, then, is the position that Oleg Romanishin had in mind when playing 15 Qd2. What has White gained for the sacrificed pawn? And how did Romanishin devise this idea?

I will take the risk of suggesting that a famous game Bronstein-Keres



(Budapest Ct 1950) served as a precedent. The game went 1 e4 e5 2 Qf3 Qc6 3 Qb5 a6 4 Qa4 Qf6 5 0-0 Qe7 6 Bc1 b5 7 Qb3 d6 8 c3 0-0 9 d4 Qg4 10 h3(!) Qxf3 11 Wxf3(!) ed 12 Wd1 dc 13 Qxc3 (143)



Despite the formal difference between these last two diagrams, their is a certain similarity in their content. In both cases White has the bishop pair and prospects of an attack against the king.

17 Qg3 Qc7

After 17...Bc8 18 Qf5 Qf8 19 Qb3 Qb6 20 Qg5!, threatening 21 Qh6+, White has an obvious plus.

18 a4 ba

It was worth considering 18...b4. After 19 Qf5 bc (not 19...Qe6? 20 Wb7) 20 Qh6 Qe6! (20...cb? 21 Qxg7 ba W 22 Bxa1 Qfe8 23 Wh5, or 22...Qce8 23 Wg3, winning for White in either case) 21 Wg3 Qh5 22 Wg4, Black has the pleasant choice between repeating moves with 22...Qf6 and playing the tempting 22...cb. White's best course at move 19 seems to be 19 cb, regaining the pawn; but after 19...Qc6 20 Qf5 g6 21 Qxe7+ Wxe7, or 19...g6 20 Qh6 Bc8 21 Qf5 Qf8, Black has a good game.

19 Qxa4 Bb8
20 b4 Qfe8
21 Qe3 Qb5
22 Qc2 Bc8
23 Bxa6 Bxc3
24 Ba8 Wc7
25 Wd5 Qf6?

This allows White to regain his pawn while keeping the initiative. The variation 25...Bxc2 26 Wxb5 Qf6 27 Bc1! is also in White's favour.

The best move was 25...Qd4!, for example: 26 Qxd4 Qf6 27 Bxf8+ Qxf8 28 Qxh7+ Qxh7 29 Wa8 Wc8 30 Wxc8 Bxc8, and Black's chances are not at all worse.

26 Bxf8+ Qxf8

26...Qxf8 is dangerous on account of 27 Wxb5 Bxc2 28 Ba1.

27 Qxh7+ Qxh7
28 Wxb5

Thus material equality has been restored, and White's position has to be preferred in view of his passed b-pawn and the chance of forcefully

activating his rook. Undoubtedly White also held the psychological initiative, having demonstrated the (practical!) validity of his scheme. An important point is that Geller had used up a large amount of time searching for a refutation.

It is therefore no surprise that Black lost quite quickly from this position where White's advantage is not actually very great.

28 ... Qg8
29 Ba1 d5
30 Ba7 Wc4
31 Wb8 d4

A more accurate move was 31...Wxb4; then after 32 Wxe5 Bc8, Black would have more chances of successful defence.

32 Qg5 Qh7
33 Qe7 d3

33...Wc8 was no better, for example: 34 Wxe5 Bc1+ 35 Qh2 d3 36 Qxf8 Wxf8 (or 36...Qxf8 37 Qf5) 37 We3 Bc8 38 Wxd3 Wxb4 39 Bxf7.

34 Qxf8 Qxf8
35 Ba8 d2
36 Wxf8+ Qh7
37 Wh8+ Qg6
38 Wh5+ Qf6
39 Wf5+ 1-0

Let us now look at an example where an original situation is brought about by a pawn sacrifice that does not rely on an analogy. Incidentally the game was played in the same tournament as the previous one, and against the same opponent.

Gulko-Geller
USSR Ch (Top League),
Erevan 1975
Grünfeld Defence

1 d4 d5
2 ♘f3 ♘f6
3 e3!?

A very rare move in games at grandmaster-level, but it commences White's intended build-up.

3 ... g6
4 c4 ♗g7
5 cd ♘xd5
6 ♗e2

Another unorthodox move. Instead, 6 ♘c3 would lead to familiar Grünfeld lines. White's outwardly tame play naturally spurs his opponent to activity.

6 ... c5
7 e4 ♘b6
8 d5 0-0 (144)



An unusual position has arisen, with only superficial similarity to well-known ones. White's problem is that he has lost a tempo in advancing his e-pawn and is therefore be-

hind in development; furthermore his pawn centre is vulnerable to breaks with ...f7-f5 and ...e7-e6. Playing this position demands imagination and a willingness to accept risk.

9 a4!

The prelude to an interesting pawn sacrifice. The natural-seeming 9 0-0 is inferior because of 9...e6 10 d6 (after 10 de ♗xe6 Black has an excellent game) 10...♘c6 intending ...♘c6-d4, and the white queen's pawn is hard to defend.

Black's next move is necessary in view of the threatened 10 a5.

9 ... f5

10 ♘bd2

10 a5 fails to 10...fe 11 ab ef 12 ♗xa7 fe 13 ♗a4 ♗d7 followed by 14...♘a6.

10 ... fe

11 ♘xe4 ♘xd5

12 0-0 b6

13 ♗c4 e6

14 a5! (145)



This is the position White was aiming for when he sacrificed his pawn. 14 ♗e1 was inferior in view of

14...h6!, when it is not easy for White to develop an initiative.

14 ... ♘a6

Evidently the strongest reply. For instance, 14...♘c6 was weaker on account of 15 ab ♘xb6 16 ♗b5 ♘d4 17 ♘xd4 ♗xd4 18 ♗c6 ♗b8 19 ♗e3! with the better game for White.

15 ab ab?

This natural move turns out badly. What is 'natural' is by no means always best, especially in such an unconventional position. 15...♗xb6 was stronger. Then 16 ♗xd5 gives White nothing in view of 16...ed 17 ♗xd5+ ♗e6, while after 16 ♗e1 ♘ac7 Black would retain adequate defensive resources.

16 ♗eg5 ♘dc7

17 ♗e2?!

A stronger move was 17 ♗b3. Then 17...b5 is inadequate because of the simple 18 ♗xe6+, while 17...♗d6 is well answered by 18 ♗e1.

17 ... ♗e8

18 ♗e1 b5

19 ♗d3

With 19 ♗xe6+ and multiple exchanges on that square, White would recover his pawn but emerge with the worse position.

19 ... ♗b7

20 ♘e5 ♗d8?

Again the natural move proves to

be a mistake, and this time it looks like the decisive one. After 20...♘b4! 21 ♗xa8 ♗xa8 (not 21...♗xa8? 22 ♗h5!) 22 ♗b1 ♘c6, there would be plenty of fight left.

21 ♗b1 ♗d4

21...♗d5 was relatively better; White would reply 22 f4.

22 ♘ef3

White could have decided the game more quickly with 22 ♘h7!. After 22...♗xe5 23 ♘xf8 ♗c6 24 f3 Black loses the exchange.

22 ... ♗d7

23 ♘e5 ♗d4

24 ♗a3

All White's pieces have joined in the attack, and the threat of a sacrifice on h7 cannot be parried. After the move Black now plays, White switches to a 'prosaic' solution and contents himself with winning the exchange.

24 ... ♘d5

25 ♘ef3 ♘f4

26 ♗xf4 ♗dxf4

27 ♘xe6 ♗b4

28 ♗d1! ♗xf3

29 gf ♗c6

30 ♘xf8 ♗xf8

31 ♗e4 ♗f6

32 ♗d5+ ♘h8

33 ♗xa6!

Black lost on time here, but of course his position is hopeless.

11 The Move ...g7-g5 in the French Defence

Aleksei Kosikov

Chess has been in existence for one-and-a-half thousand years, but notwithstanding its venerable age, it is now experiencing a second youth. Its popularity is growing, the number of tournaments is on the increase. Views on chess strategy in general and opening theory in particular are rapidly changing.

In recent years, systems formerly considered unpromising have come into fashion – for example the Dutch Defence and the Giuoco Piano. New directions in opening theory have been pioneered. Fifty years ago, the Sveshnikov Variation would simply have been rejected as an anathema – Black doesn't have a position, he just has a conglomeration of weaknesses. And what about the Benko Gambit? Black sacrifices a pawn in the opening, then dreams about the endgame. Yet both systems are at present highly popular. At times, in fact, White looks for ways to avoid them.

Major changes are also taking place within particular opening systems; players are approaching them differently, altering the methods of playing them and assessing them.

The French Defence is an old favourite of mine; I have played it for more than a quarter of a century. By the example of this opening, I wish to demonstrate how the treatment of numerous variations is currently being transformed.

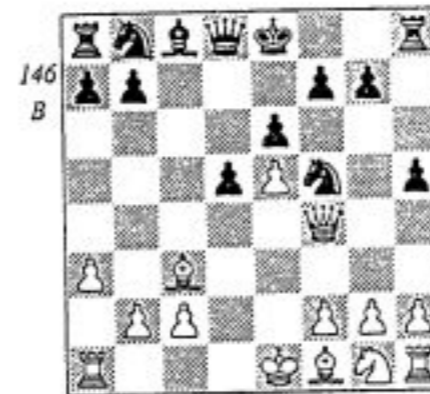
What are the classic presuppositions about the standard 'French' positions which arise after White's pawn has advanced to e5? Black's plans have always been associated with pressurising the pawn on d4 and working up a queenside initiative. Sometimes Black also plays ...f7-f6, after which a struggle develops round the e5 point. White, meanwhile, fortifies his centre and tries to organise an attack (with pawns or pieces) on the kingside.

However, modern chess has become a matter of 'total war' – the battle is fought with all the pieces on any part of the board. And so in the French Defence, a kingside counter-attack is just as normal a weapon for Black as a counter-attack on the queenside.

I first came across the move ...g7-g5 about thirty years ago, when I examined the following game:

Sakharov-Petrosian
USSR Ch semi-final
Kiev 1957

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------|------|
| 1 | e4 | e6 |
| 2 | d4 | d5 |
| 3 | ♘c3 | ♙b4 |
| 4 | e5 | c5 |
| 5 | ♙d2 | ♘e7 |
| 6 | a3 | ♙xc3 |
| 7 | ♙xc3 | cd |
| 8 | ♗xd4 | ♘f5 |
| 9 | ♗g4?! | |
| 9 | ♗f4 is more accurate. | |
| 9 | ... | h5 |
| 10 | ♗f4 (146) | |



- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 10 | ... | g5! |
| 11 | ♙b5+ | ♘c6 |
| 12 | ♗d2 | d4! |
| 13 | ♙b4 | ♗d5! |
| 14 | ♗e2 | ♗xg2 |
| 15 | ♗f3 | ♗xf3 |
| 16 | ♘xf3 | ♙d7 |
| 17 | ♘xg5 | ♘xe5 |

Black has obtained the advantage, and went on to win.

At that time, the move ...g7-g5 looked like an eccentricity, a mere

exception which didn't at all disprove the rule.

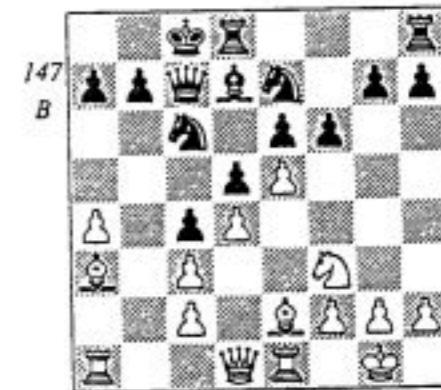
But for my own part I remembered this device, and started using it – not without success.

Tumenok-Kosikov
Kiev 1977
French Defence

- | | | |
|---|-----|-------|
| 1 | e4 | e6 |
| 2 | d4 | d5 |
| 3 | ♘c3 | ♙b4 |
| 4 | e5 | ♘e7 |
| 5 | a3 | ♙xc3+ |
| 6 | bc | c5 |
| 7 | a4 | ♘bc6 |

I now prefer 7...♗c7 in this position.

- | | | |
|----|-----------|-------|
| 8 | ♘f3 | ♙d7 |
| 9 | ♙d3 | ♗c7 |
| 10 | 0-0 | c4! |
| 11 | ♙e2 | f6 |
| 12 | ♙e1 | 0-0-0 |
| 13 | ♙a3 (147) | |



What can Black's plan be? In the event of a pawn exchange on f6, he will try to achieve ...e6-e5. If the

tension of the central pawns is maintained, it will make sense to play ...f6-f5 at some moment, and then attack on the kingside.

I had in mind the following deployment of my pieces: bring the rook from d8 across to f7, where it will not only contribute to the attack but also help to defend along Black's second rank; place a knight on f5 and make it secure with ...h7-h5; withdraw the king to a8 and the bishop to c8, fortifying the b7 point and freeing the rank for the rook's action. In some circumstances the manoeuvre ...d7-e8-g6/h5 will also be possible.

Where should I start? The right move is:

13 ... Bd8!

Now 14 Qd6?! Wd8 gives White nothing; after ... Bf7 and ... Qf5 , the bishop will be under attack. White's best line would appear to be 14 Qf1 Bf7 15 g3! , aiming to bring the bishop out to h3 after an exchange of pawns on f6 (Dueball-Fichtl, Bamberg 1972).

14 a5 Bf7

15 a6?

A serious strategic error – sealing the queenside is good for Black. Furthermore the pawn on a6 may later become weak.

15 ... b6

16 Qd6 Wd8

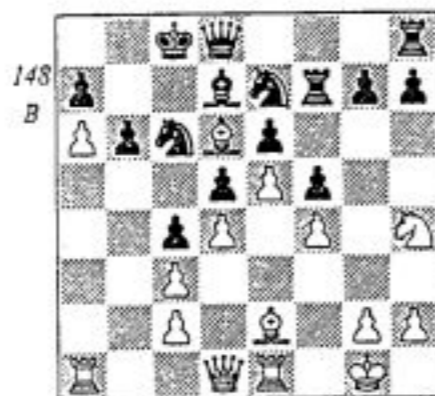
17 Qh4

Preventing 17... Qf5 and preparing f2-f4.

17 ... f5!

Black's attack on the wing can only succeed if the centre is stable. The hasty 17...g5? is bad because of 18 cf.

18 f4 (148)



18 ... g5!

A typical pawn sacrifice to open lines – something like a 'Benko Gambit' in the French Defence.

19 fg Wg8

20 Wd2 Bg7

21 Qf3 h6

22 gh Bg6!

It would be a gross mistake to play 22... Bxg2+ ; after 23 Qh1 followed by 24 Bg1 , it is White who seizes the initiative on the kingside – he simply has more pieces there.

23 Qf1 Bhxh6

24 Beb1

Now Black has to watch for a rook sacrifice on b6, for example after 24... Qc8? .

24 ... Qd8!

Before commencing the decisive assault, it pays to secure the king's position. Now 25 Bxb6? no longer works: 25...ab 26 a7 Qxa7 27 Bxa7

Qc8 . Undoubtedly White should be constructing a defensive rampart with Wf2 , Be1 , Bd1 , Bd2 .

25 Wc1?

White's chances of mounting an attack are practically nil, yet still he attempts to do it. This is what distinguishes pig-headedness from persistence!

Let us formulate Black's plan of action. It is important for him to advance his f-pawn to f4 (after a preparatory ... Bg4). In this way the pressure against g2 will be intensified, the knight will obtain the f5 square, and the diagonal b1-h7 will be freed for the bishop and queen. But first, Black must put paid to White's hopes of a rook sacrifice on b6.

Once the plan is clear, the following moves are easy to play.

25 ... Qc8!

26 Qa3 Qe8

27 We3 Bh8

28 Qc1 Q6e7

29 Wf2 Bg4

30 Qe2 Qh5

30...f4 31 Qe1 is premature.

31 Qd2

The usual advice to the defender is to exchange pieces, but here the exchange of light-squared bishops brings White no relief.

31 ... Bg7

32 Qxh5 Bxh5

33 Qf3 Bg4!

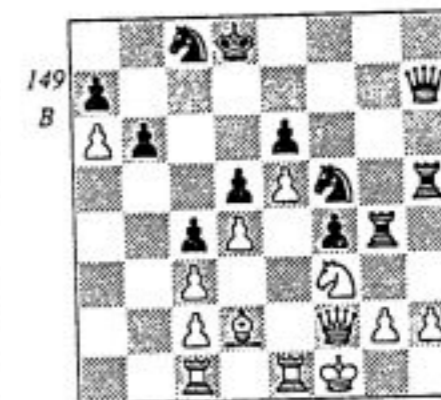
34 Qd2 f4

35 Be1 Wh7

Threatening 36... Wxc2 .

36 Bac1 Qf5

37 Qf1 (149)



See how immensely active the black pieces are. The accumulation of positional advantages usually creates the conditions for a decisive combinative breakthrough. And the right moment has now arrived!

37 ... Bxh2!

38 Qxh2 Qg3+

39 Wxg3

Forced, since 39 Qg1 Wxh2+! leads to mate.

39 ... Bxg3

40 Qg1 Wg6

41 Qxf4 Bxg2+

42 Qf1 Bg1+

43 Qf2 Wg2+

0-1

After 44 Qe3 , the final blow is delivered by the knight which has been lying in wait throughout the game: 44... Qe7! 45 Bxg1 Qf5 mate.

Today in the French Defence Black pushes his pawn to g5 in the most varied circumstances. Here is another example.

Smagin-Vaiser
Barnaul 1984
French Defence

- | | | |
|----|-----|------|
| 1 | e4 | e6 |
| 2 | d4 | d5 |
| 3 | ♖d2 | ♗f6 |
| 4 | e5 | ♗fd7 |
| 5 | ♔d3 | c5 |
| 6 | c3 | ♗c6 |
| 7 | ♗e2 | cd |
| 8 | cd | f6 |
| 9 | ef | ♗xf6 |
| 10 | ♗f3 | ♔d6 |
| 11 | 0-0 | ♚c7 |
| 12 | ♗c3 | a6 |
| 13 | ♔g5 | 0-0 |
| 14 | ♔h4 | ♗h5! |

A fight for the central squares d4 and e5 is in progress. White wishes to exchange dark-squared bishops; Black will benefit from exchanging the white bishop for his own knight.

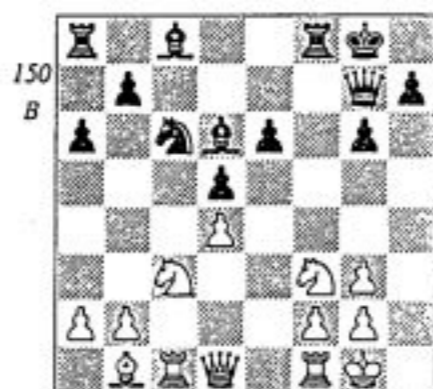
15 ♔g3?

White should not have fallen in with his opponent's plans. 15 ♔e1 is stronger, and could even be followed at some point by ♔h4-g5-e3, supporting the weak pawn on d4.

- | | | |
|----|-----|------|
| 15 | ... | ♗xg3 |
| 16 | hg | g6! |

The g7 square has to be freed for the queen, which from there will bear down on the key squares already mentioned: d4 and e5. By now, Black's position deserves preference.

- | | | |
|----|-----------|-----|
| 17 | ♔c1 | ♚g7 |
| 18 | ♔b1 (150) | |



18 ... g5!

This is not an attack against the king. By threatening the knight on f3, Black will further increase the pressure on White's centre.

19 ♔e1 ♔d7

There is no reason to hurry. The complications arising from 19...g4? 20 ♗e5 ♔xe5 21 de ♗xc5 22 ♗xd5! ed 23 ♚xd5+ ♗f7 24 ♔c7 are in White's favour.

20 ♚d2?!

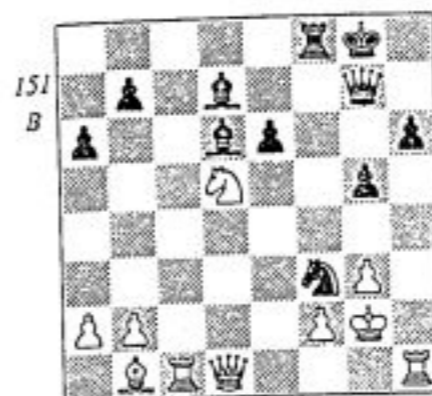
20 ♚d3 was better. Now comes an exchange sacrifice typical of this kind of position.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-------|
| 20 | ... | ♔xf3! |
| 21 | gf | ♗xd4 |
| 22 | ♗g2 | |

22 ♔e3 is strongly answered by 22...♔f4!.

- | | | |
|----|--------|-------|
| 22 | ... | ♔f8 |
| 23 | ♔h1 | h6 |
| 24 | ♚d1 | ♗xf3 |
| 25 | ♗xd5!? | (151) |

Who has outwitted whom? 25...ed? 26 ♚xd5+ ♚f7 is a mistake in view of 27 ♔e4! ♗e5 28 ♔xh6 ♔c6 29 ♚xf7+ ♔xf7 30 ♔xc6 ♔f8 31 ♔d5, with advantage to White.



On the other hand if 25...♔c6?, White simply has 26 ♔xc6! bc 27 ♗e3.

25 ... ♗h4+!!

So ...g6-g5 serves an attacking purpose after all.

26 gh

On 26 ♗g1, Black has the strong move 26...♚f7!, attacking f2 and intending 27...♗f3+ and 28...ed.

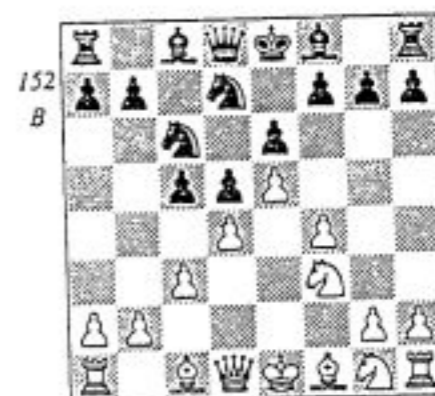
- | | | |
|----|-----|------|
| 26 | ... | gh+ |
| 27 | ♗f1 | ♔b5+ |
| 28 | ♗e1 | |

At this point 28...♚g2! would have won at once. Black played less precisely (28...♔b4+), but soon won all the same.

I should now like to tell you the story of a new opening idea which I worked out and which became very popular in the mid-1980s. The process which results in an opening novelty will be revealed to you from the inside.

One day, while studying the Tarasch Variation of the French, I had a think about what Black ought to play after

- | | | |
|---|------------|------|
| 1 | e4 | e6 |
| 2 | d4 | d5 |
| 3 | ♗d2 | ♗f6 |
| 4 | e5 | ♗fd7 |
| 5 | f4 | c5 |
| 6 | c3 | ♗c6 |
| 7 | ♗df3 (152) | |



I received a 'hint' from a game which had made a very powerful impression on me:

Reshevsky-Vaganian
Skopje 1976

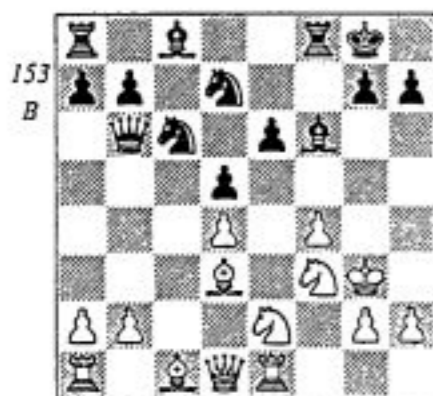
- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 7 | ... | ♚a5 |
| 8 | ♗f2 | ♔e7 |
| 9 | ♔d3 | ♚b6 |
| 10 | ♗e2 | f6 |
| 11 | ef | |

In an earlier game Adorjan-Vaganian, Teesside 1974, White played 11 ♗g3 (intending h2-h3 and ♗h2), but a quiet life was denied him. Vaganian replied 11...g5!? 12 ♔e1 cd 13 ♗exd4 (13 cd gf+ 14 ♗xf4 fe 15 de ♗c5) 13...gf+ 14 ♔xf4 fe 15 ♗xe5 ♗dxe5 16 ♔xe5 (Black also has an excellent position after 16

♙xe5 ♚xe5 17 ♜xe5 ♙d7 18 ♜h5+ ♚d8) 16... ♚xe5 17 ♙xe5 ♜g8+ 18 ♚h3 ♜g5, and from the sharp fight Black eventually emerged victorious.

11 ... ♙xf6
12 ♚g3 cd
13 cd 0-0
14 ♜e1? (153)

The decisive mistake. It was essential to play 14 h3 followed by ♚h2.



14 ... e5!!

To accentuate the white king's vulnerability, Vaganian breaches the central fortifications without shrinking from material sacrifices.

15 fe ♚dx5!
16 de ♙h4+!!
17 ♚xh4 ♜xf3!!

Now 18 gf ♜f2+ quickly leads to mate. The concluding moves were:

18 ♜f1 ♜b4+
19 ♙f4 ♜e7+
20 ♙g5 ♜e6!
21 ♙f5 ♜xf5
22 ♚f4 ♜xe5
23 ♜g4 ♜f7

24 ♜h5 ♚e7
25 g4 ♚g6+
26 ♚g3 ♙d7
27 ♜ae1 ♜d6
28 ♙h6 ♜af8
0-1

This brilliant and crushing win suggested to me the basic principle by which Black can exploit his lead in development. It is essential to fix the enemy king in the centre and then break the centre open at any price.

However, in Panchenko-Kosikov, Dnepropetrovsk 1978, my opponent answered 7... ♜a5 with 8 dc! ♜xc5 (of course 8... ♙xc5? fails to 9 b4) 9 ♚h3, followed by ♚f2-d3. White acquired a plus, and went on to win.

There is another excellent formation for White: 8 ♙e3! cd (8... b5 9 dc! b4 is no good because of 10 ♚d4 ♙b7 11 a3! bc 12 b4; Tseshkovsky-Vaganian, Vilnius 1975) 9 ♚xd4 ♚xd4 10 ♙xd4.

In my search for an improvement on Black's play, a logical thought arose: why place the queen on a5 if it retreats to b6 anyway shortly afterwards? So I started studying the move:

7 ... ♜b6

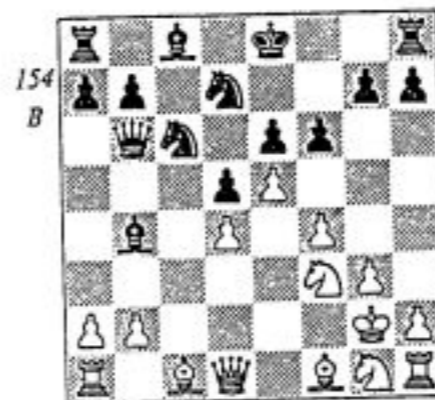
I scanned the reference books. At that time, theory continued as follows:

8 g3 cd
9 cd

In the case of 9 ♚xd4 ♚c5, followed by ... ♚e4 and ... f7-f6, Black obtains counterplay.

9 ... ♙b4+
10 ♚f2 f6
11 ♚g2 (154)

with the claim that White has the advantage: 11...0-0 12 ♙d3, with ♚e2 and h2-h4 to follow.



This position engaged my attention for a long time. Black has rather an ungainly cluster of pieces on the queenside (♜b6, ♚d7, ♙c8, ♜a8); they severely hamper each other's movement. Black could of course play 11... ♜c7, aiming for ... ♚b6, ... ♙d7 and ...0-0-0, but meanwhile White would complete his own development, and his spatial advantage would strongly influence the further course of the struggle.

But let us approach the situation from a different angle. Black has developed four pieces – however awkwardly – while White has only developed one knight, which in any case is depriving the other knight of its best square. Moreover, it is Black's move, so his lead in development is quite substantial. It is well known that in closed positions this

is not such a significant factor. It follows that Black must open the game up – clear away the pawn barriers.

Hence I conceived an idea which at first sight looked insane: 11...g5!?. Nearly all Black's forces are grouped on the queenside, yet he begins tactical operations on the kingside where his opponent's pieces are more numerous. Anti-positional? Not entirely – for we have noted that Black does have the better development, and it is very important for him to open lines. Furthermore it is on the kingside that the white king is hiding.

In February 1980 the Top League of the USSR Championship was staged in Vilnius. I spent a few days there, and one evening I showed my idea to Gennady Kuzmin, a grandmaster with a highly unconventional cast of mind. His verdict, however, was categorical: 'It's just impossible, it'll never work.' But he couldn't give any variations as proof.

In the summer of 1981, again at Vilnius, the USSR Junior Team Championship took place. My thirteen-year-old pupil Lena Sedina was in the Ukrainian team.

In the crucial match against the combined Moscow team, with the assent of the trainers, my innovation was launched for the first time. The experiment was successful. Without going into details, I will show you the opening stage.

Saburova-Sedina
Vilnius 1981

11 ... g5!?
12 e4 g4
13 f7+! ♖f8!
14 ♖e5

The idea was to answer 14 ♖g5 with 14...♖f6, threatening 15...h6.

14 ... ♖xd4
15 ♖xd4 ♖xd4
16 ♖xg4 ♖xf7
17 ♖f3 ♖xf3
18 ♖xf3 b6!
19 ♖b5 ♖b7
20 ♖d1 ♖e7
21 ♖xd7 ♖xd7
22 ♖d2 ♖d6

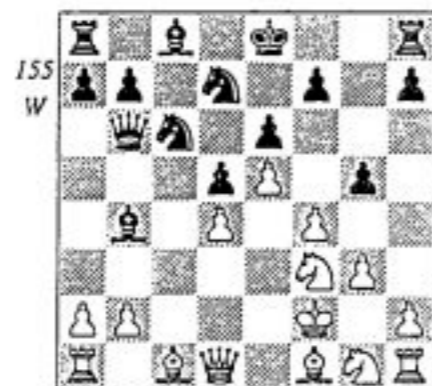
Black has achieved a good position and eventually won.

Of course you don't need to be a grandmaster to realise that at some point the position was fairly dangerous for Black. Thus at move 14 for example, instead of 14 ♖e5, it was worth considering 14 ♖g5 ♖f6, and now 15 h3!

It wasn't desirable to expose the black king too much, so a new search began for an improvement. As a result, I managed to find a new way to carry out the same idea. It turns out that the thrust with the g-pawn is playable a move earlier:

10 ... g5! (155)

I showed this new idea to my old friend Leonid Kaplun, a master from Tarnopol, and with my agreement he tried it out in the autumn of 1983. This was the result:



Poliantsev-Kaplun
Ukrainian Team Ch 1983

11 fg ♖dx5
12 ♖xe5 ♖xe5
13 ♖g2 ♖c6
14 ♖f3 ♖f8!
15 b3 ♖g7
16 ♖b2 ♖d7
17 ♖c1 h6!
18 gh ♖xh6
19 ♖e2?

Better is 19 ♖e5.

19 ... 0-0-0
20 ♖e5 ♖e8
21 ♖d2 ♖b8
22 ♖f3 f6
23 ♖xc6+ ♖xc6

Black has acquired a positional advantage which he subsequently conducted to victory.

That, however, was not the first game in which my innovation was tested. Lena Sedina had played it a few months earlier.

Voronova-Sedina
USSR Women's Ch
semi-final 1983

11 ♖e3 f6

With the present order of moves this break gains in strength, but 11...g4 was also worth considering.

12 ♖h3 h5!
13 ♖xe6 gf
14 ♖xd7+ ♖xd7
15 gf fe
16 de ♖c5
17 ♖b3 d4!
18 ♖d2 ♖b4

A very sharp position has arisen, in which Black has more than enough for the sacrificed pawn. She duly won.

Since then a large number of games have been played with my variation; improvements have been found for both sides, but to my knowledge no refutation has come to light. This is not surprising. The move 10...g5 is positionally well founded and wholly in keeping with the modern attitude of 'total war'.

As long as the variation was still in its experimental stage and not well known, I naturally followed its fortunes with keen interest. But when it finally found approval in tournaments at the most varied levels, my interest in it gradually faded. Working through a pile of the latest games and tracing theoretical refinements almost as far as move forty can be rather a boring job.

The search for new paths was on again. In general, the key to success in the opening rests to a large extent on your ability to keep ahead of fashion, if only by half a step. But

new ideas don't result from mechanically going over variations; you must try to grasp the essence of the events taking place on the board.

Let us recall that in the game Poliantsev-Kaplun, Black had occasion to re-route his bishop from b4 to a more suitable place. And then in Voronova-Sedina White was able to develop with ♖e3, when the black queen couldn't eat the pawn on b2 because of the bishop on b4. Of course it was tempting to force ♖f2, but can't Black actually do without the bishop check?

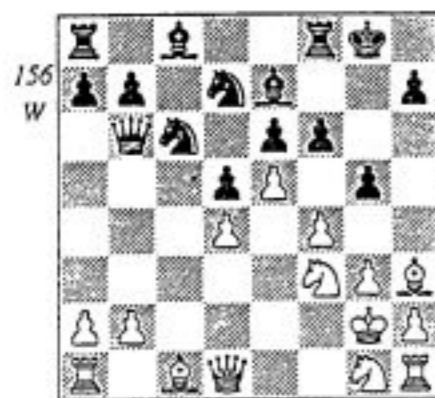
Serebro-Kosikov
Kiev 1984

9 ... ♖e7!?
10 ♖h3
Of course not 10 ♖d3 ♖xd4.
10 ... f6!?
11 ♖f1

The alternative 11 ♖e2 0-0! 12 ♖xe6+ (12 0-0 fe 13 fe ♖dx5) 12...♖h8 13 ♖xd7?! ♖xd7 14 0-0 ♖g4 leads to an extremely complicated position rather in Black's favour, but the game continuation also suited me perfectly well; White has been induced to move his king even without the check on b4.

11 ... 0-0
12 ♖g2 g5!? (156)
13 ♖b3?

Afraid of the attack, White tries to exchange queens, but the result is that his own queen strays further from the kingside where the main



action is going to occur. The viability of Black's idea depends on the assessment of the sharper moves 13 ef!? and 13 fg!?

13	...	♖a6
14	♗xe6+	♜h8
15	♗xd5	g4
16	♗e3!?	♜b6!
17	♗e4!	gf+
18	♗xf3	♜c4
19	♜e2	fe
20	de	

The position may still look unclear, but in fact Black can win by force. How?

A sacrifice on e5 seems indicated, but after 20...♜4xe5 21 fe ♗xf3 22 ♜xf3 ♗g4+ 23 ♜xg4 ♖xe2+ 24 ♜h3 the white king escapes from pursuit. So the sacrifice needs to be based on a different idea.

20	...	♜4xe5
21	fe	♗xf3!
22	♜xf3	♗e6!!

The third sacrifice in a row! The important thing is to bring the rook into the attack with tempo.

23	♖xe6	♗f8+
----	------	------

But not 23...♜d4+?? 24 ♜xd4, and the queen is defended.

24	♗f4	
----	-----	--

On 24 ♜f4 ♜d4+, White loses his queen.

24	...	♖d3+
25	♜f2	♗c5+
26	♜e1	♖e4!
27	♗g5	

White also loses after 27 ♗f1 ♜d4 28 ♖g4 ♜c2+ 29 ♜d2 ♗d8+.

27	...	♗b4+
28	♜d1	♖xh1+
29	♜c2	♖e4+
30	♜b3	♖d3+
31	♜a4	b5 mate

0-1

So in the French Defence, together with the classical methods of play, Black can and should employ sharp plans for seizing the initiative. And the start of hostilities in the opponent's territory is frequently signalled by the counter-stroke ...g7-g5!

12 Opening Investigations

Vladimir Vulfson

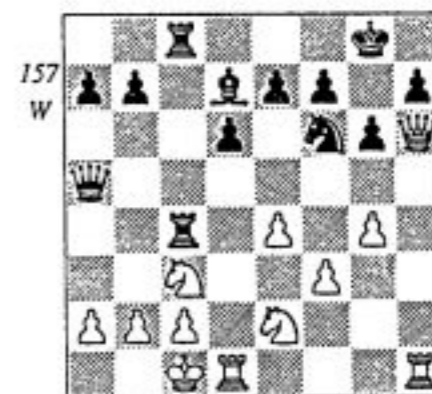
How does a chessplayer study forcing variations in the opening? Let me tell you about my own experience of working on the Dragon Variation of the Sicilian.

Bobby Fischer once said that in this system 'weak players even beat Grandmasters', since White's strategy is very simple and logical. There are indeed serious difficulties that Black has to watch for, but Dragon players try to make up for this by knowing the theory and the standard devices better than their opponents. When playing this variation you cannot blindly copy other players' games. The many ideas that find their application at the board are first subjected to thorough scrutiny at home. Success goes not to the player with the most book knowledge but to the one who has done most in the way of private investigation. I shall now recount some episodes from clashes with the Dragon.

In 1974, Karpov's win against Korchnoi in the second game of the Candidates Final made a powerful impression on everyone.

Karpov-Korchnoi
Moscow 1974
Sicilian Defence

1	e4	c5	2	♜f3	d6	3	d4	cd	4	♜xd4
♜f6	5	♜c3	g6	6	♗e3	♗g7	7	f3	♜c6	
8	♖d2	0-0	9	♗c4	♗d7	10	h4	♗c8	11	
♗b3	♜e5	12	0-0-0	♜c4	13	♗xc4	14	h5	♜xh5	
15	g4	♜f6	16	♜de2	♖a5	17	♗h6	♗xh6	18	♖xh6
19	♗fc8	(157)								



At this point the move 19 ♗d3 came as a great surprise to Korchnoi. He thought for a long time but failed to find a reasonable plan of defence. After 19...♗4c5? 20 g5 ♗xg5 21 ♗d5 ♗xd5 22 ♜xd5 ♗e8 23 ♜ef4 ♗c6 24 e5 ♗xd5 25 ef ef 26 ♖xh7+ ♜f8 27 ♖h8+, he suffered a crushing defeat.

Immediately after the game, Botvinnik stated his opinion that Black should have defended with 19...♖d8, so as to bring the queen across to the defence of the kingside.

It was by analysing that continuation that I began my own campaign to restore the reputation of the Dragon Variation.

To begin with, I ascertained that the straightforward attempt to win a piece with 20 e5 gives White nothing. Black defends with 20...de 21 Hhd1 H8c7 22 Wd2 e6 23 g5 Qd5 . Or if White continues to play for mate, the continuation can be 21 Qg3 Hd4 22 g5 Qh5 23 Qxh5 gh 24 Wxh5 Qf5 .

But can Black equalise in the ending after 20 g5 Qh5 21 Qg3 Wf8 ? I couldn't see any advantage for White in the variation 22 Wxf8 + Qxf8 (but not 22... Hxf8 23 Qxh5 gh 24 Qd5) 23 Qxh5 gh 24 Hxh5 H8c5 , since after 25 f4 b5 the weakness of the pawn on e4 makes itself felt. However, if a white pawn appears on h6, Black is not in the best of shape: 22 Qxh5 Wxh6 (22...gh 23 Wxh5) 23 gh gh 24 Hd2 , and Black cannot claim full equality. Is he really forced to defend this inferior ending?

The next step in my research was to look at

19 ... Qe6

The idea was to bring the queen to the defence of the kingside via the central square e5. It looked as if White could win with

20 g5 Qh5
21 Qg3 We5
22 Hxh5 gh
23 Qxh5

With the seemingly unanswerable threat of f3-f4 followed by Qh5 -f6+,

but Black still has a drawing opportunity. He sacrifices first the exchange:

23 ... Hxc3

24 bc Hxc3

– and then after

25 f4 (158)



a whole rook:

25 ... Hxc2+ !

26 Qxc2 We5+

and it is not hard to see that the white king cannot escape perpetual check. Incidentally this idea was found by Leonid Yurtaev, who was still very young at the time.

Black's task is more complicated if White takes on h5 with his knight:

22 Qxh5 gh
23 Wxh5 Wg7
24 f4

Now there is clearly no time for 24...b5? 25 f5 b4, because of 26 Hdh3 with a mating attack. However, Black has a counter-stroke in the centre:

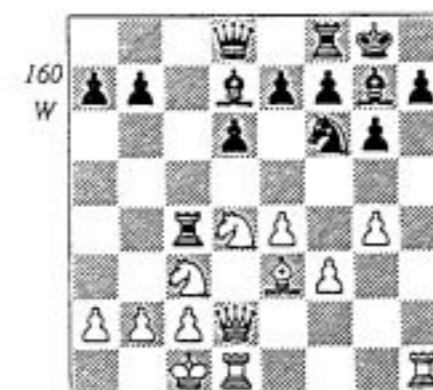
24 ... d5! (159)

In this way Black manages to nullify White's main threat of f4-f5

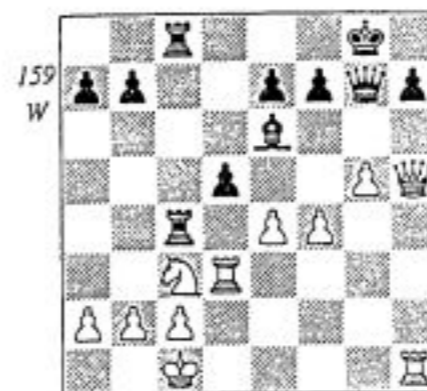
plan on the blocking move ...h7-h5. Unfortunately, therefore, the analysis I have just shown you lost its relevance to current trends.

For many years I waited for an opportunity to use an interesting prepared variation in another branch of the Dragon. Let us return to the 'standard' position arising after

1	e4	c5
2	Qf3	d6
3	d4	cd
4	Qxd4	Qf6
5	Qc3	g6
6	Qe3	Qg7
7	f3	0-0
8	Wd2	Qc6
9	Qc4	Qd7
10	h4	Qe5
11	Qb3	Hc8
12	0-0-0	Qc4
13	Qxc4	Hxc4
14	h5	Qxh5
15	g4	Qf6 (160)



In addition to Karpov's move 16 Qde2 , White has 16 Qh6 , 16 e5 and 16 Qb3 at his disposal. I shall not



followed by Hd3 -h3, and secures the ideal square f5 for his bishop. It is no trouble to verify that lines such as 25 f5 de are in Black's favour.

All that remains is to examine

25 Hhd1

At first sight this move retains all White's trumps, because of the weakness of Black's back rank.

Can the whole variation really be bad for Black? Does Karpov's 19 Hd3 pose insoluble problems? I almost despaired of finding anything, when suddenly the paradoxical

25 ... Wf8 !

occurred to me. If White doesn't agree to repeat moves with 26 Hh1 Wg7 , he is forced to concede the f5 square. Of course he emerges with an extra pawn, but the pressure against c2 ties his pieces down.

All I had to do now was wait for an opponent to go in for 19 Hd3 . But time passed, and new thoroughfares were opened up in Dragon Variation theory. It was established that after 16 Qde2 Black obtains a good game with 16... Hc8 . Later there was a tendency for Black to base his whole

go into all these continuations but merely tell you about one particular theoretical duel.

As long ago as 1976, when Yurtaev and I were examining 16 e5, we came to the conclusion that apart from the book move 16...dxc4 it was worth considering 16...de. Having worked out all the details, I began waiting for someone to play 16 e5 against me. This finally happened ten years later.

Arkhipkin-Vulfson
Moscow 1986

16 e5 de
17 d3 Wc7
18 g5 Qf5
19 gf ef
20 Qh6

This natural move is a mistake. White gets nowhere by playing for mate.

20 ... g5!

Now the light-squared bishop assumes the chief defensive functions.

21 Qe4 Hxe4!

The only way! After 21...Qxe4 22 fe Hxe4, White would obtain an overwhelming attack by 23 Wh2! Hh4 24 Wxh4.

22 fe Qxe4
23 Qxg7 Qxg7
24 Hh3 Qg6

Black wants to mobilise his king-side pawn mass as soon as he can. Now White must not on any account exchange queens; he has to base his play on tactical threats against the

black king. Perhaps I should have preferred 24...b6, to restrict the knight and forestall White's following rook manoeuvre.

25 Hc3 We7
26 Hc5

White is only reckoning on 26...f5, which is bad in view of 27 Wc3. He should have thought about activating his knight by means of 26 Qc5.

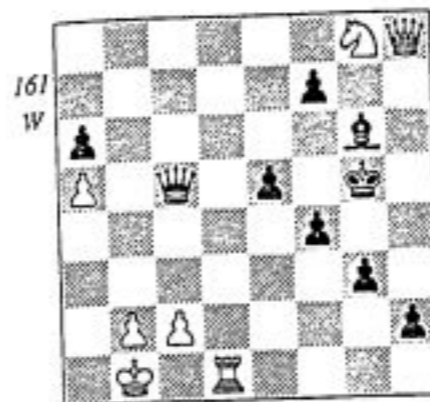
26 ... h5
27 a4 h4
28 a5 a6
29 Wd5

On the seemingly logical 29 Hd5, Black's pieces would unexpectedly come to life with 29...Hc8 30 c3 Wb4!. After the move played, I aimed to advance my f-pawn.

29 ... He8
30 Hc3 g4
31 Qc5 f5
32 Qxb7 g3
33 Qd6 Wg5+
34 Qb1 He7
35 Hc7 f4
36 Hxe7 Wxe7
37 Wc6 h3
38 Qe8+

Since White cannot afford to capture on a6, he tries to create some sort of threats against the king.

38 ... Qh6
39 Qf6 Qg5
40 Qc4+ Qh4
41 Wa8 h2
42 Wh8+ Qg4
43 Qf6+ Qg5
44 Qg8 Wc5 (161)



White resigned because my king easily hides from the checks in enemy territory.

After the game Arkhipin said he thought White's position was hopeless after 21...Hxe4. Nonetheless I reached the same position again, exactly a year later.

Maliutin-Vulfson
Moscow 1987

24 Hh2
(Instead of 24 Hh3.)

This innovation gives Black no trouble at all.

24 ... Hc8
25 Qa1 Qg6
26 c3 Wc4
27 a3 h5
28 Qc2 g4
29 Qb1 g3
30 Hg2 h4
31 Qa1 f5
32 Wg5 Wg4
33 Wxg4 fg

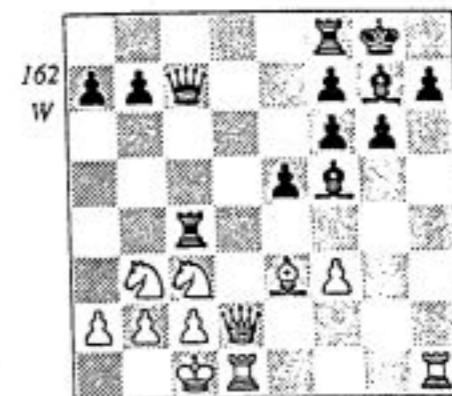
and it proved impossible for White to stop Black's armada of pawns.

Two years later, Black's idea of 16...de was once again put to the test. This time the examiner was I.Koifman.

Koifman-Vulfson
Moscow Corr. Ch 1989-90

17 Qb3 Wc7
18 g5 Qf5
19 gf ef (162)

This time White actually discovered the key to the position. It is very important for him to activate his knight on c3, and for this he has to place his king in the corner.



20 Qb1! Hc8
21 Qa1!

Now I had to sacrifice the exchange again, but in less favourable circumstances than before.

21 ... Hxc3
22 Wxc3

After 22 bc Qf8, Black could count on queenside counterplay.

22 ... Wxc3
23 bc b6
24 Qb2

In contrast to positions examined previously, the white pawn on f3 is seriously hindering Black's kingside pawn advance. At this stage I thought Black's position was very difficult.

24 ... h5
25 ♖h4?

But this is unnecessarily involved. The advance of the a-pawn looks far more natural and stronger, and would eventually have given White a passed pawn on the queenside.

25 ... ♕h7
26 ♖a4 ♖c7
27 ♖d8 ♗d7
28 ♖b4 f5

This is the outcome of White's planless play! The pawns set off on their march, and already it is very hard to defend against them.

29 ♖d2 ♗f6
30 ♖b8 g5
31 ♖c4 ♖xc4
32 ♖xc4 f4
33 ♗g1 ♗c6
34 ♖d2 g4

The whole trouble for White is that his rook cannot get back to its own camp.

35 fg hg
36 ♖c8 ♗d5
37 c4 ♗e6
38 ♖c7 e4+
39 ♕c1 e3

Here the game was adjudicated a win for Black, since after 40 ♖e4 ♗h4 his pawns cannot be stopped.

So the last round in the opening bout was won by White, but I think it

is too early to write off the entire variation. It is up to Black to find something.

Another aspect of opening research is to look for new continuations in old and forgotten systems. After all, many systems are neglected not at all because theory has discredited them but because the attention has switched to other, more fashionable lines.

Until recently, one such forgotten system was 4 f2-f3 against the Nimzo-Indian. Back in the 1960s it was frequently played by Grandmasters Portisch and Gheorghiu. It is worth recalling Gheorghiu's win in the 1966 Olympiad against none other than Fischer.

Gheorghiu-Fischer
Havana OL 1966
Nimzo-Indian Defence

1 d4 ♖f6
2 c4 e6
3 ♖c3 ♗b4
4 f3 d5
5 a3 ♗xc3+
6 bc 0-0?!

6...c5 is preferable, giving one of the key positions of the Sämisch Variation. But then, not all Nimzo-Indian players like to meet the Sämisch in that particular way.

7 cd ed
8 e3 ♖h5

This early activity fails to give Black full equality. Fischer rejected

8...c5 so as to avoid the well-known lines in which, after completing his development, White carries out the central advance e3-e4. I would remind you that the classic example of this plan was the famous game Botvinnik-Capablanca, AVRO 1938. 8...♗f5 is also seen.

9 ♖c2 ♖c8
10 g4! ♖f4
11 h4 c5
12 ♕f2 ♖g6
13 ♗d3 ♖c6
14 ♖e2 ♗c6
15 g5

At this point – curiously enough – wary of his redoubtable opponent, Gheorghiu offered a draw. True to his uncompromising style, Fischer declined, though his position is already highly dubious.

15 ... ♖c8
16 h5 ♖f8
17 g6 fg
18 hg h6
19 ♖b1 ♖a5
20 ♖f4 c4

Exchanging on d4 looked more logical, so as to use the c4 square for the knight.

21 ♗c2 ♖c6
22 ♖a2 ♖d7
23 a4 ♖f6
24 ♗a3 ♖d7
25 ♖b2 b6
26 ♖b5 ♖b7
27 c4 de
28 ♗xe4

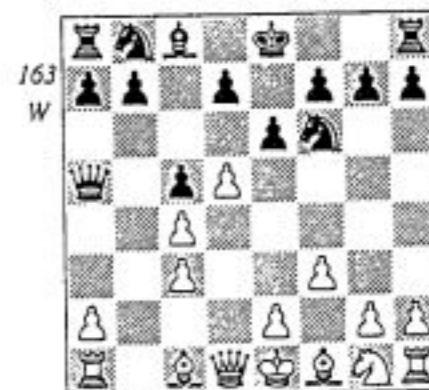
Gheorghiu avoids taking unnecessary risks with 28 fe; Black might

then find some chances against the white king.

28 ... ♖cc8
29 ♖e5 ♗g4
30 ♖d5 ♖xe5
31 ♖xf6+ gf
32 de ♖c5
33 ♗xc5 ♖d2+
34 ♕g3 ♗xf3
35 ♗xf3 ♖xc5
36 ♖c1!

White proceeded to convert his material plus into a win.

The gilt-edged Rubinstein Variation with 4 e3 gradually supplanted all other systems against the Nimzo-Indian for a considerable time. However, the following episode prompted me to look for new ideas in the 4 f3 system. In 1978, the Moscow player Sergei Kishnev showed me an interesting idea in the variation 1 d4 ♖f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♖c3 ♗b4 4 f3 c5 5 d5 ♗xc3+ 6 bc ♖a5 (163).



Sergei was due to play a crucial game which would give him the

master title if he won. His opponent was Boris Zlotnik, an experienced master and a great connoisseur of the Nimzo-Indian. To start such a game without having a special weapon was downright dangerous. So in place of the book move 7 Qd2 , Sergei suggested the pawn sacrifice 7 e4 . We convinced ourselves that acceptance of the sacrifice gave Black nothing but trouble. In the game, however, Black avoided 4...c5 and chose 4...d5. The game was full of vicissitudes but eventually White won.

It was two weeks later that 7 e4 was first tested in practice.

Vulfson-Veselovsky
Moscow 1978
Nimzo-Indian Defence

1	d4	Qf6
2	c4	e6
3	Qc3	Qb4
4	f3	c5
5	d5	Qxc3+
6	bc	Wa5
7	e4	d6

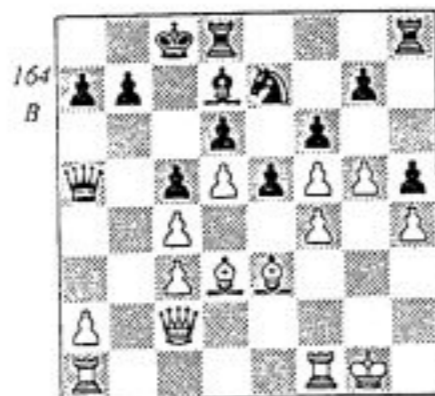
Faced with a new move, Black sensibly decides to refuse the gift.

8	Qe2	e5
9	Qe3	Qbd7
10	Wd2	Qf8
11	g4?	

At that time I still had only a hazy understanding of the positional nuances in this type of closed game. No wonder my more experienced opponent completely outplayed me in the ensuing phase of the struggle.

This game was an excellent lesson to me.

11	...	Qg6
12	h4	h5
13	g5	Qg8
14	Qg3	Q8e7
15	Qd3	Qd7
16	Qf5	Qxf5
17	ef	Qe7
18	Wc2	0-0-0
19	0-0	f6
20	f4 (164)	



Now try to find the strongest continuation for Black.

If your positional flair is good, you ought to find the pawn sacrifice:

20	...	e4!
----	-----	-----

White's bishops now have very little scope.

21	Qxe4	Wa4
22	Wd3 (165)	

Now another little exercise – what is the best way for Black to exploit his big positional advantage?

This time, those advocating the cautious approach with 22... Qb8 were right. The queen will be brought to c8 (or to d7 after ... Qc8),

good game either by 4...c5 5 d5 Qh5 , or by 4...d5 5 a3 Qe7 6 e4 de 7 fe e5 8 d5 Qc5 . The third method which I encountered in my game with Veselovsky was also considered sound.

If he wants, Black can transpose into the Sämisch Variation with 4...d5 5 a3 Qxc3+ 6 bc c5 7 cd Qxd5 . In this line too, theory relied on games played in the 1950s and 1960s.

I took particular care to study characteristic positions with a completely blocked centre, which above all demand an understanding of the play rather than knowledge of specific variations. The following game shows that I made some progress in this area.

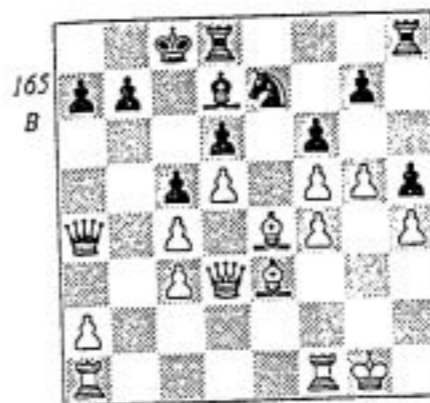
Vulfson-Loktev
Moscow 1985
Nimzo-Indian Defence

1	d4	Qf6
2	c4	e6
3	Qc3	Qb4
4	f3	c5
5	d5	d6
6	e4	Qxc3+
7	bc	e5
8	Qd3	Qbd7 (166)

In my pre-game analysis I had discovered an idea for stopping the manoeuvre ... Qd7-f8-g6 .

9	$\text{Wa4!?$	0-0
10	g4	Qe8
11	h4	

Once Black has castled, the pawn storm seems to have more



and at a suitable moment Black will win his pawn back on f5. Those who suggested the energetic 22...b5 were falling into the same trap as my opponent in the actual game.

22	...	b5?
23	Qxc5!	

Now the complexion of the game abruptly changes, and Black loses virtually without a fight.

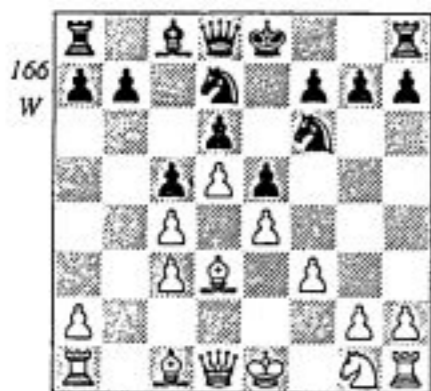
23	...	dc
24	d6	Wxc4?

The decisive mistake! I shall not give all the complicated variations but just say that the best defensive chances were offered by the counter-sacrifice 24... Qc6 25 cb He8 26 bc Qxc6 27 Qxc6 Wxc6 28 Hfd1 Hc4 .

25	Wf3	Qxf5?
26	Qd3	

and White quickly exploited his material plus.

Pursuing my study of the 4 f3 system, I discovered that many of the positions arising in it had hardly been investigated at all. Practical material was very scarce. It was thought that Black could obtain a



point than in my game with Veselovsky.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 11 | ... | ♘c7 |
| 12 | ♗c2 | a6 |
| 13 | a4 | ♞b8 |
| 14 | ♘e2 | b5 |
| 15 | a5 | |

After this pawn advance, Black's chronic lack of space will make itself felt.

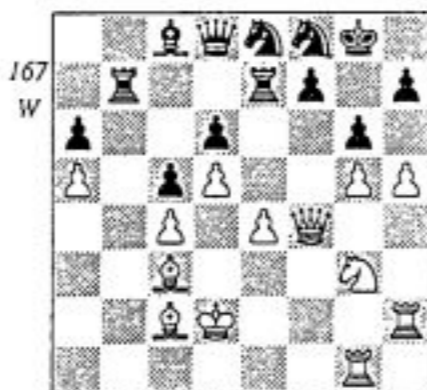
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|----|------|-----|
| 15 | ... | ♞e8 |
| 16 | g5 | ♘f8 |
| 17 | h5 | ♙d7 |
| 18 | ♘g3 | g6 |
| 19 | ♙e3 | bc |
| 20 | ♙xc4 | ♞b7 |
| 21 | ♙e2 | ♗b8 |
| 22 | ♙c1 | |

Control of the b-file brings Black no tangible advantages, but may distract White temporarily from his kingside activity. The bishop manoeuvre which Black now undertakes is clearly unsuccessful. To obtain any counterplay at all, he had to resolve upon ...c5-c4.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 22 | ... | ♙b5 |
| 23 | c4 | ♙d7 |
| 24 | ♙d1 | |

With a little regrouping of his bishops White neutralises the pressure along the b-file once and for all. There is nothing left for Black to do but defend passively.

- | | | |
|----|------|-----------|
| 24 | ... | ♞e7 |
| 25 | ♗d3 | ♘e8 |
| 26 | ♙c2 | ♗d8 |
| 27 | ♙d2 | ♙c8 |
| 28 | ♙c3 | ♞b8 |
| 29 | ♚d2 | ♞eb7 |
| 30 | ♗e3 | ♞e7 |
| 31 | ♞h2 | ♞bb7 |
| 32 | ♞g1 | ♘g7 |
| 33 | f4 | ef |
| 34 | ♗xf4 | ♘e8 (167) |



- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 35 | ♘f5! | gf |
| 36 | ef | ♘d7 |
| 37 | f6 | ♞e5 |
| 38 | g6 | hg |
| 39 | hg | ♗xf6 |
| 40 | gf+ | ♚xf7 |
| 41 | ♞h7+ | ♚f8 |
| 42 | ♗g3 | 1-0 |

In this way, work devoted to research raises your level of mastery in practical play.

13 Middlegame Problems

Mark Dvoretsky

The middlegame is the most complex and the least investigated phase of chess. One way of working on this subject is to study typical positions.

Unfortunately a classification of such positions is not at present available. It would not be simple to compile. There are various criteria by which the typical categories might be defined. The most important criterion is the pawn structure (for example positions with an isolated pawn or with a blocked centre, etc.). The material situation might also be taken into account (clash of major pieces, 'good' knight against 'bad' bishop ...); so might the arrangement of the pieces on the board, especially the kings (castling on opposite sides, king in the centre, etc.). The provision of such a classification could greatly ease the task of collecting and absorbing information on the middlegame.

The aim of the present article is to offer some thoughts on the methods of studying typical middlegame positions. It is intended for advanced players, to whom it is not enough to be acquainted with generalities – to know, for instance, that an isolated pawn in the centre may be a weakness as well as a strength; that a

player with such a pawn should try to attack, while his opponent should aim to simplify and exploit the weak square in front of the pawn; and so on.

These propositions are all true, but more refined methods of appraisal need to be mastered to achieve success. To anyone studying these methods, it is not irrelevant whether (for example) an isolated pawn arises out of the Tarrasch Defence to the Queen's Gambit or the Tarrasch Variation of the French Defence. Given the numerous differences in the arrangement of the other pawns and pieces, the techniques applied in these systems will somewhat differ in the two cases.

A conclusion suggests itself: *as a rule, typical middlegame positions are closely associated with a specific opening variation, so that to study them is to study the opening at the same time.* It is sometimes very hard to define just where the opening ends and the middlegame begins. In our day, the very concept of the 'opening' covers meanings that are quite different from former usage.

One day I was present at a lecture given to chess students by Yuri Razuvaev, on the Exchange Variation of

the Spanish. In the course of the lecture Razuvaev hardly demonstrated any 'book' variations. Instead he showed us games which provided models of how to play this or that typical position arising out of the opening in question.

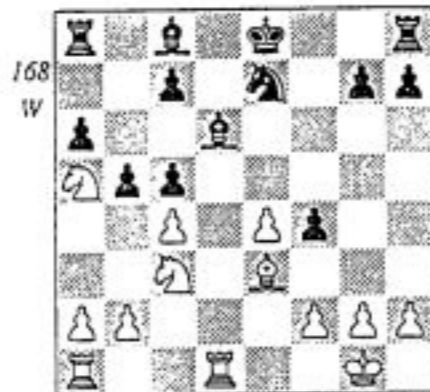
In particular, he demonstrated the following game.

Fischer-Portisch
Havana OL 1966
Spanish

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 1 | e4 | e5 |
| 2 | Qf3 | Qc6 |
| 3 | Qb5 | a6 |
| 4 | Qxc6 | dc |
| 5 | 0-0 | f6 |
| 6 | d4 | ed |
| 7 | Qxd4 | c5 |
| 8 | Qb3 | Wxd1 |
| 9 | Wxd1 | Qd6? |
| 10 | Qa5! | |

White is threatening 11 Qc4. The attempt to solve Black's development problem tactically by 10...Qg4 11 f3 0-0-0 is refuted by 12 e5! and Black loses a piece (Hort-Zheliandinov, Havana 1967). The natural move played by Portisch leads to a weakening of the pawn on c5, which Fischer superbly exploits.

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----|----------|
| 10 | ... | b5 |
| 11 | c4! | |
| Fixing the c5 pawn. | | |
| 11 | ... | Qe7 |
| 12 | Qe3 | f5 |
| 13 | Qc3 | f4 (168) |



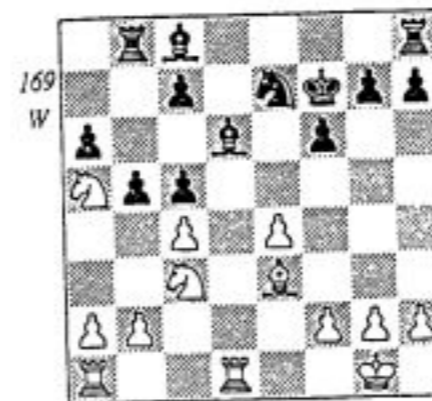
White now won the game as follows: 14 e5! Qxe5 15 Qxc5 Qxc3 16 bc Qg6 17 Qc6 Qe6 18 cb ab 19 Qa7! Wb8 20 Wdb1 Qf7 21 Qxb5 Wbd8 22 Wb4 Qxa2 23 Qxc7 Wbc8 24 h4! Wd2 25 Qb6 f3 26 Qe3! We2 27 Qb5 Wa8 28 h5 Qe5 29 Wf4+ Qe7 30 Wd1 Wc8 31 We4 Qf6 32 Wd6+ Qf5 33 Wf4+ Qg5 34 Wxf3+ 1-0

After that lecture I felt like playing the Exchange Variation myself. A little later I had an opportunity.

Dvoretsky-Ivanov
Moscow 1972
Spanish

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 1 | e4 | e5 |
| 2 | Qf3 | Qc6 |
| 3 | Qb5 | a6 |
| 4 | Qxc6 | dc |
| 5 | 0-0 | f6 |
| 6 | d4 | ed |
| 7 | Qxd4 | c5 |
| 8 | Qb3 | Wxd1 |
| 9 | Wxd1 | Qd6? |
| 10 | Qa5! | b5 |

- | | | |
|--|-----|-----------|
| 11 | c4 | Qe7 |
| 12 | Qe3 | Qf7 |
| Only now does the game diverge slightly from the foregoing one. Quite a good move at this point is 13 Qd2, but I decided to play à la Fischer. | | |
| 13 | Qc3 | Wb8 (169) |



Now there followed: 14 e5! Qxe5 (or 14...fe 15 Qe4 with advantage) 15 Qxc5 Qxc3 16 bc Qg6 17 Qc6 Wa8 18 cb ab 19 Qa7 Qe6 20 Qxb5 Wa5 21 a4 Wc8 22 Wd4 Qe5 23 f4 Qc6 24 Wd2 Wca8? 25 Qxc7 Wxa4 26 Wxa4 Wxa4 27 Qxe6 1-0

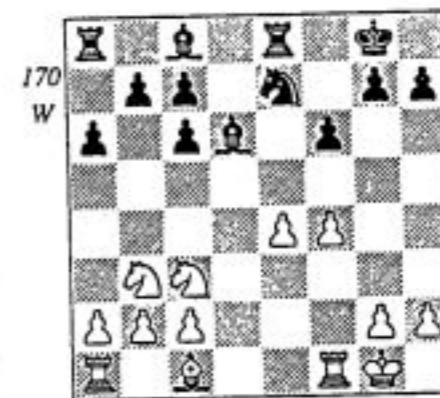
In this game White 'copied' not only Fischer's powerful opening play but also the devices with which he conducted the fight in the middlegame – the same break with e4-e5!, the manoeuvre Qc6-a7! in order to win a pawn.

Such a complete transfer of all the ideas from one game to another is quite a rare occurrence, but we constantly have occasion to apply an overall plan and individual stratagems

taken from a model we have studied. It is worth recalling, for example, that in a game against Unzicker (Siegen OL 1970), Fischer himself applied a strategic concept (f4-f5!!) devised by Emanuel Lasker in a famous game against Capablanca.

Lasker-Capablanca
St. Petersburg 1914
Spanish

- | | | |
|----|------|----------|
| 1 | e4 | e5 |
| 2 | Qf3 | Qc6 |
| 3 | Qb5 | a6 |
| 4 | Qxc6 | dc |
| 5 | d4 | ed |
| 6 | Wxd4 | Wxd4 |
| 7 | Qxd4 | Qd6 |
| 8 | Qc3 | Qe7 |
| 9 | 0-0 | 0-0 |
| 10 | f4 | We8 |
| 11 | Qb3 | f6 (170) |



- | | | |
|----|-----|--|
| 12 | f5! | |
|----|-----|--|

Lasker confines the enemy light-squared bishop, ensures the exchange of dark-squared bishops and fixes the pawn on f6 which he intends to

attack with g2-g4-g5 and (if appropriate) e4-e5.

12 ... b6
13 ♖f4 ♗b7?

The correct reaction was to play 13...♗xf4! 14 ♜xf4 c5, with chances for both sides.

Now there followed: 14 ♗xd6 cd 15 ♘d4 ♜ad8 16 ♘c6 ♜d7 17 ♜ad1 ♘c8 18 ♜f2 b5 19 ♜fd2 ♜dc7 20 b4 ♘f7 21 a3 ♗a8 (21...♜xe6! is better) 22 ♘f2 ♜a7 23 g4 h6 24 ♜d3 a5 25 h4 ab 26 ab ♜ae7 27 ♘f3 ♜g8 28 ♘f4 g6 29 ♜g3 g5+ 30 ♘f3 ♘b6 31 hg hg 32 ♜h3 ♜d7 33 ♘g3 ♘e8 34 ♜dh1 ♗b7 35 e5! de 36 ♘e4 ♘d5 37 ♘b6c5 ♗c8 38 ♘xd7 ♗xd7 39 ♜h7 ♜f8 40 ♜a1 ♘d8 41 ♜a8+ ♗c8 42 ♘c5 1-0

Fischer-Unzicker
Siegen OL 1970
Spanish

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗xc6 dc 5 0-0 f6 6 d4 ed 7 ♘xd4 ♘c7 8 ♗e3 ♘g6 9 ♘d2 ♗d6 10 ♘c4 0-0 11 ♗d3 ♘e5 12 ♘xe5 ♗xe5 13 f4 ♗d6 (171)

14 f5! ♗e7 15 ♗f4 ♗xf4 16 ♜xf4 ♗d7 17 ♜e1 ♗c5 18 c3 ♜ae8 19 g4 ♗d6 20 ♗g3 ♜e7 21 ♘f3 c5 22 e5! fe 23 ♜fe4 ♗c6 24 ♜xe5 ♜fe8 25 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 26 ♘e5! h6 27 h4 ♗d7 28 ♗f4 ♗f6 29 ♜c2! ♗c8 30 ♗c4+ ♘h7 31 ♘g6 ♜xc2 32 ♗xe2 ♗d7 33 ♗c7 ♗xc7 34 ♘xc7 g5 35 hg hg 36 ♘d5 ♗c6 37 ♘xc7 ♗f3 38 ♘e8 ♘h6 39 ♘f6 ♘g7 40 ♘f2 ♗d1 41 ♘d7 c4 42 ♘g3 1-0



We can thus draw a further conclusion: *the best method of studying typical middlegame positions is to select appropriate games and analyse the plans – the tactical and strategic precepts and ideas – employed in them.*

Clearly the games to select are those conducted in exemplary fashion by both – or at least one – of the players.

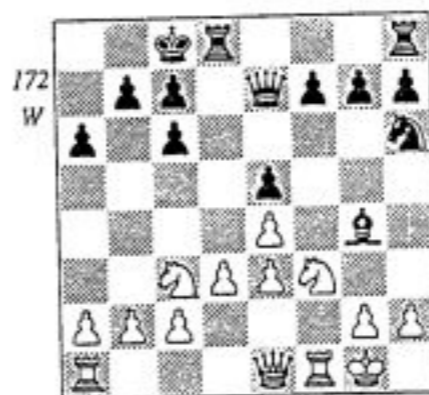
I recommend collecting complete games rather than fragments, since it is normally useful to furnish yourself with an overall picture of the contest – starting with the opening refinements and finishing with the endgame, which may itself contain typical features characteristic of the system you are studying.

As a rule, you will select games by players who constantly reach positions of the type in question. Thus, when studying the middlegame arising from the Exchange Variation of the Spanish, you should give attention first and foremost to the games of Lasker and Fischer. But other games too can of course be valuable.

For example, the genius Capablanca, playing the Exchange Variation with White for virtually the only time in his life, created a classic model of how to attack in this opening when the players castle on opposite wings.

Capablanca-Janowski
St Petersburg 1914
Spanish

1 e4 e5
2 ♘f3 ♘c6
3 ♗b5 a6
4 ♗xc6 dc
5 ♘c3 ♗c5
6 d3 ♗g4
7 ♗e3 ♗xe3
8 fe ♗e7
9 0-0 0-0-0?
10 ♗e1 ♘h6 (172)



11 ♜b1!

The pawns on a6 and c6 are useful targets for a queenside pawn storm.

11 ... f6
12 b4 ♘f7
13 a4 ♗xf3
14 ♜xf3 b6

15 b5! cb
16 ab a5
17 ♘d5 ♗c5
18 c4

So far Black has managed to prevent the opening of lines on the queenside, but the price is high – the white knight is entrenched on d5. All White needs to do now is prepare the advance d3-d4 and c4-c5. Black is defenceless.

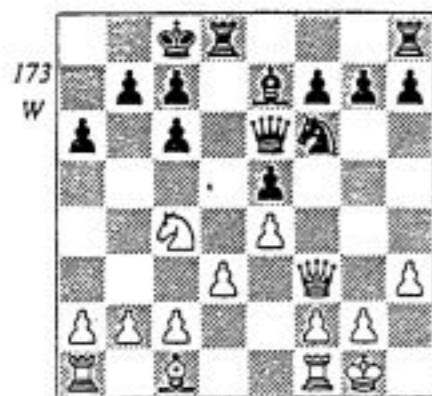
The game concluded: 18...♘g5 19 ♜f2 ♘e6 20 ♗c3 ♜d7 21 ♜d1 ♘b7 22 d4 ♗d6 23 ♜c2 ed 24 ed ♘f4 25 c5 ♘xd5 26 ed ♗xd5 27 c6+ ♘b8 28 cd ♗xd7 29 d5 ♜e8 30 d6 cd 31 ♗c6 1-0

In the next game, White followed the plan that Capablanca had demonstrated.

Dvoretsky-Koriakin
Moscow 1971
Spanish

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♘f6 5 0-0 ♗e7 6 ♗xc6 dc 7 d3 ♗g4 8 h3 ♗xf3 9 ♗xf3 ♗d6 (it was evidently better to try for equality with 9...0-0 10 ♘d2 ♘d7 11 ♘c4 ♗g5) 10 ♘d2 ♗e6 11 ♘c4 0-0-0 (173)

In opening books you will find Keres' recommendation 12 ♗g3 (intending f2-f4), but this allows Black to equalise at once with 12...♘xe4! 13 ♗xc5 ♗xe5 14 ♘xe5 ♘d6. A better option is the plan demonstrated by Capablanca in the foregoing example.

173
W
12 ♔d2!

Classical models should be utilised but not copied. In this case, it would be less accurate to follow precedent with 12 ♖b1; when lines are opened on the queenside, the rook is just as likely to be needed on the a-file. In the Capablanca game, ♖b1! was the only way to prepare b2-b4 – whereas here White has another method, which at the same time connects his rooks and completes his development.

12 ... ♗d7

The sharper 12...♗d8 was preferable.

13 b4

Another echo of the previous game – the advance must begin with the b-pawn. 13 a4? would be a mistake on account of 13...c5!. With the pawn on a2, White was not worried about ...c6-c5 since he could have answered it with a2-a3 and then b2-b4, bringing about an opening of lines.

13 ... h5
14 a4 g5
15 ♖g3!

Forestalling 15...g4, which can now be met by 16 h4!

15 ... b6

16 ♗e3 ♗f8?

16...♗b7 first is better.

17 b5! cb

18 ab a5

If 18...ab, then 19 ♖a7! is strong, for example: 19...f6 20 ♖b1 (not 20 ♗d5? ♖xd5!) or 19...♗g6 20 ♗d5 ♖xd5 21 ♖a8+! ♗b7 22 ed ♖xd5 23 ♖xh8 ♗xh8 24 ♔xg5.

19 ♗d5 f6

19...♖xd5 20 ed ♖xd5 is very strongly answered by 21 c4!

20 c4 ♔c5?

21 ♔e3! ♔xe3

Or 21...♗d7 22 d4 h4 23 ♖h2 ♔d6 24 c5.

22 fe ♗d7

The structure of the position is the same as in Capablanca-Janowski. Thanks to the weakness of the pawn on f6, White has no need to prepare the c4-c5 break – he can play it at once.

23 c5! h4

24 ♖e1 ♗xc5

25 ♖xf6 ♖e8

26 ♖c6 ♗b8

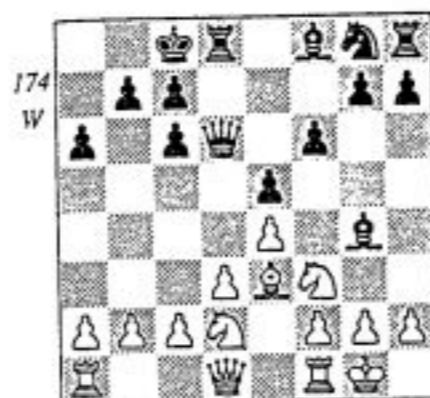
27 ♖xc5 1-0

The viability of Capablanca's plan is shown once more in the following game.

Mecking-Korchnoi
Candidates Match 1974
Spanish

1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 ♔b5 a6 4

♔xc6 dc 5 0-0 ♖d6 6 d3 f6 7 ♔e3
♔g4 8 ♗bd2 0-0-0 (174)



9 ♖b1 ♗e7 10 b4 g5 11 a4 ♗g6
12 b5 (in this case White's pawn advance does lead to the opening of lines) 12...cb 13 ab ab 14 ♖xb5 ♖c6
15 ♖b2 ♔c5 16 ♗b3 ♔b4 17 ♗fd4!
ed 18 ♖xg4+ ♖d7 19 ♖xd7+ ♖xd7
20 ♗xd4! ♔c3 21 ♖a2 ♖xd4 22 ♖a3!

Mecking's elegant combination has given him a won position.

22...♖b4 23 ♖xc3 ♖e8 24 f3 ♗d7
25 ♖a1 ♖b5 26 ♗f2 ♗d6 27 ♖aa3
h5 28 ♖a4 c6 29 ♖ca3 g4 30 ♖a5
♖ee5 31 ♖xb5 ♖xb5 32 fg hg 33
♗g3 ♖b1 34 ♔d4 ♖c1 35 ♖c3 b5 36
♔xf6 b4 37 ♖b3 ♖f1 38 ♔g5 c5 39
c3 bc 40 ♖xc3 ♖d1 41 ♔e3 c4 1-0

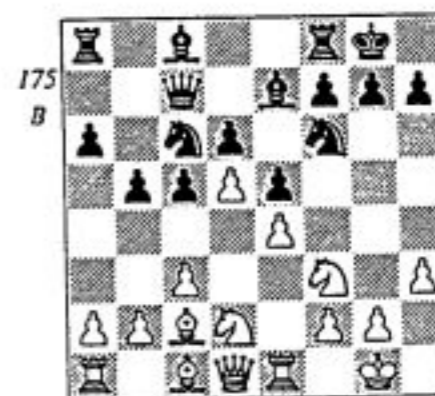
Now let us see what is involved in a systematic attempt to study a typical middlegame position. By way of example, I propose that we examine the old plan of d4-d5 in the Chigorin Variation of the Spanish.

We shall do this by selecting and analysing games. But first, a word

about another working principle. The methods of playing typical positions can usefully be studied in a historical perspective, by tracing their evolution. This makes for a deeper understanding of the ideas in the position.

The move d4-d5 in the Chigorin Variation was very popular in the 1920s. After that it was almost forgotten; it was only many years later that it attracted attention once again.

1 e4 e5
2 ♗f3 ♗c6
3 ♔b5 a6
4 ♔a4 ♗f6
5 0-0 ♔e7
6 ♖e1 b5
7 ♔b3 d6
8 c3 0-0
9 h3 ♗a5
10 ♔c2 c5
11 d4 ♖c7
12 ♗bd2 ♗c6
13 d5 (175)

175
B
13 ... ♗d8

Two games by Geller illustrate

White's plans against other knight moves.

Geller-Mecking, *Palma de Mallorca 1970*: 13...d5 14 b3! d7 15 f1 b7 16 g3 c4 17 b4 f8 18 f5 f8 19 h2! a5 20 e3! ab 21 cb xxf5 22 ef c3 23 g4! e7 24 fxf6+ xxf6 25 e4! d7 26 f3 c7 27 h4 e7 28 g3 d8 29 a3 e8 30 b1 c7 31 e2 b8 32 b3 d7 33 f3 e7 34 e3 f6 35 e4 e7 36 g4! f6 37 e3 f7 38 bxc3 b8 39 e4 d8 40 d2 c4 41 xc4 xc4 42 c3 b6 43 xc4 bc 44 g5 fg 45 hg d8 46 h5 c3 47 e3 h6 48 f6 1-0.

Geller-Hernandez, *Las Palmas 1980*: 13...d7 14 f1 d7 15 a4! (hindering the manoeuvre ...d7-c8-b6) 15...f8 16 g3 c8 17 a5! c4 18 d2 f8 19 h2 e7 20 g5! e8 21 d2 b7 22 b4! cb 23 xb3 c8 24 e1 h6 25 e3 f5 26 ef f5 27 f5 xxf5 28 f1 f6 29 g3 g6 30 c4! bc 31 xc4 e7 32 a2 xc1 33 xc1 b5 34 c6 d3 35 e4 xd2 36 xd2 f7 37 f5 d8 38 xd6 xd5 39 xa6 xa6 40 xa6 1-0.

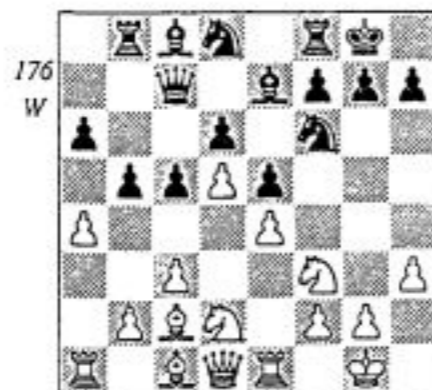
14 a4 b8 (176)

Weakening the queenside with 14...b4 (or 14...d7 15 ab xb5) is dangerous, as shown by this example:

Capablanca-Vidmar, *New York 1924*: 14...b4 15 c4 a5 (otherwise 16 a5!) 16 fxe5! e6 17 b3! de 18 d6 xd6 19 xd6 xd6 20 xd6 b7 21 xb7 xb7 22 cb! cb 23 f3 fd8 24 e3 h6 25 ed1 c6

26 a1 e8 27 f2 xd1 28 xd1 c8 29 g4 d7 30 b6 e6 31 xe6 fe 32 d8+! xd8 33 xd8 d7 34 xa5 c5 35 b3! xb3 36 xb4 d4 37 a5 1-0.

Incidentally, in annotating this game, Tartakower mentioned Teichmann's recommendation 14...a7!? – a move that has hardly ever occurred in practice. This just shows that by reading old books and studying old games and the notes to them, you can unexpectedly come across interesting 'novelties' and 'improvements'.



The classic model for playing the Black side is considered to be the following game.

Thomas-Rubinstein
Baden-Baden 1925

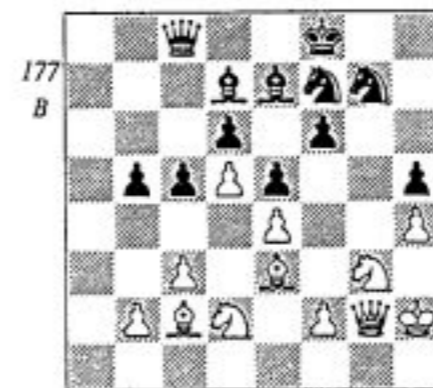
15 ab ab
16 f1 de8!
17 g4 g6
18 g3 dg7
19 h1 f6
20 g1 f7

White has set up a typical attacking formation on the kingside; Black has demonstrated how best to re-group his forces for defending and if possible counterattacking on that wing. His task is now to exchange rooks so as to nullify the threats to his king.

21 f1 d7
22 e3 e8
23 g2 e8!
24 xa1 b7
25 h2 e8
26 f1 e6
27 d2 a8
28 xa6 xa6

Black's position deserves preference, mainly because White is deprived of active possibilities whereas Black can prepare to break with ...h7-h5 and ...f6-f5.

29 b3 dg5
30 g2 h5!
31 h4 f7
32 gh gh
33 h2 c8
34 g2 f8
35 d2 (177)



Black won as follows: 35...f5! 36 ef xh4 37 f6 xf6 38 f3 h4 39 g6 xg3+ 40 fg f5! 41 xf7 xf7 42 e4 d7 43 h6 g6 44 xg7 xg7 45 b4 c4 46 d2 f7 47 c3 xd5 48 g5+ g6 49 e7+ g8 50 d8+ f7 51 d7+ f6 52 d8+ f5 53 d7+ f6 54 d8+ g7 55 e7+ f7 56 xd6 f2+ 57 h3 h6! (zugzwang) 58 b1 f5+ 59 g2 xb1 60 f8+ g5 61 d8+ g4 62 d7+ f5 63 d1+ g5 0-1

Tartakower wrote that 'the value of this game lies not merely in any specific variations but rather in the overall construction of that solid defensive base from which Black's counterattack developed.'

In the game Thomas-Grünfeld three rounds later, Black employed the same plan of defence as Rubinstein, but manoeuvred less accurately. The game lasted a long time; on move 78, the following position was reached (178):



Black now finally carries out the familiar undermining move:

78...f5! 79 ♖h2 fg 80 fg ♗f6 81
 ♜f1 ♗f4! 82 ♗g2 ♜g7 83 ♜de3
 ♜e7 84 ♗f3 g5! 85 h5 ♜h6 86 ♜g3
 ♜eg8 87 ♜h1 ♗h2 88 ♜d2 ♜f6 89
 ♜f2 ♗xf2! 90 ♗xf2 ♜xe4+ 91 ♜e1
 ♜xf2 92 ♜xf2 e4! 93 ♜xc4 bc 94
 ♜xc4 ♜xg4+ 95 ♜e1 ♜f6 96 ♜xd6
 ♜e5 97 ♜f7+ ♜xd5 98 ♜xg5 h6 99
 ♜f7 ♜b5 100 ♜d8 e3 0-1

The Rubinstein game greatly helps towards understanding Black's methods of play, but in that game White manoeuvred unconvincingly. Having formed the plan of a kingside attack, why did he open the a-file, where Black at once set about exchanging the rooks? It was more logical for White to free his hands by closing the queenside – or else not to touch his queenside pawns at all, when Black would not have found it so simple to obtain counterplay in that sector. Let us look at some examples.

Bogoljubow-Rubinstein
Baden-Baden 1925

15 c4!?

(Instead of 15 ab).

Now after an exchange of pawns, White would organise pressure on the queenside, so Rubinstein coolly played:

15 ... b4

There followed:

16 b3 ♜e8
 17 g4 g6
 18 ♜h1 ♜g7

19 ♜g1 h5!

20 ♜f1 hg

21 hg f6

Black has a fully defensible position.

22 ♜e3 ♜f7
 23 ♜h4 ♜h8 (179)



Bogoljubow now demonstrates two typical devices for conducting the attack; opening lines with f2-f4 and sacrificing a knight on f5: 24 f4! ef 25 ♜ef5! ♜xf5 26 gf g5 27 ♜xf4 ♜f7 28 ♜h2 ♜h7 29 ♜g2 ♜f7 30 ♜e3 ♜d7 31 ♜g2 ♜g7 32 ♜h1 ♜bh8 33 ♗e2 ♗c8 34 ♜g3 ♗g8 35 ♜g4 ♜xh1 36 ♜xh1 ♜xh1 37 ♜xh1 ♗h7+ 38 ♜g2 ♗h5 39 ♜d1 ♜h6 40 ♗e1 ♜xg4 41 ♜f3 a5 42 ♗e2 ♜e8 43 ♜xg4 ♗h6 44 ♜g1 ♜f7 1/2-1/2

However, White's attack is not as harmless as may appear from the games examined so far. Here is a characteristic example.

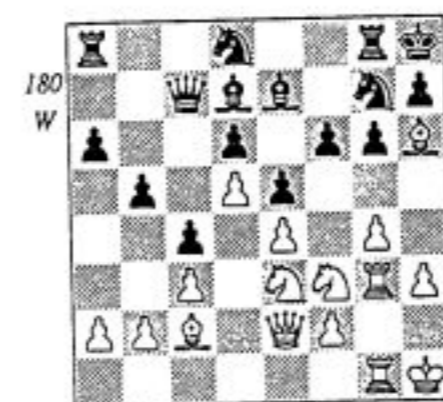
Dubinín-Suetin
RSFSR Team Ch 1950
 Spanish

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♜b5 a6 4
 ♜a4 ♜f6 5 0-0 ♜e7 6 ♗e2 b5 7
 ♜b3 d6 8 c3 0-0 9 h3 ♜a5 10 ♜c2
 c5 11 d4 ♗c7 12 d5 ♜d7 13 ♜h1 c4
 14 ♜g1 ♜e8 15 g4 ♜b7 16 ♜bd2 g6
 17 ♜f1 ♜g7 18 ♜h6 f6 19 ♜e3
 ♜h8?

Another bad move is 19...♜d8?, in view of 20 ♜f5! gf 21 ♜xg7 ♜xg7 22 gf+ ♜h8 23 ♜h4!. Black should have played 19...♜f7.

20 ♜g3 ♜g8
 21 ♜ag1 ♜d8 (180)

On 21...♜f8, Dubinín suggests 22 ♗f1 ♜d8 23 ♗g2 ♜f7 24 ♜xg7+ ♜xg7 25 h4!.



22 ♜f5!

Again the typical knight sacrifice. It is important to note that White has such a preponderance of forces on the kingside that even after the sacrifice the attack can develop gradually, with quiet moves. On 22...gf, Dubinín aimed to continue 23 gf ♜f8 24 ♜h4! ♜c8! (24...♜f7? 25 ♗h5!) 25 ♜d2 ♜f7 26 ♗f3! ♜a7 27 ♜g4!, threatening 28 ♜g6+! hg 29 fg and White wins.

The game concluded:

22...♜f8 23 ♜xg7+ ♜xg7 24 g5
 ♜f8 25 h4! gf 26 gf ♜xf6 27 ef ♗c8
 28 ♜g5! ♜xg5 29 ♜xg5 ♜f7 30 ♜h5
 ♜g8 31 ♜xh7+! ♜xh7 32 ♗h5+
 ♜h6 33 ♜g6 ♗f8 34 ♜xh6+! ♗xh6
 35 f6+ e4 36 ♜xe4+ 1-0

So the plan of attack we are examining was useful to White in another opening variation – 6 ♗e2, instead of 6 ♜e1. Of course if White chooses this system, he has to be prepared to face a gambit; after 6...b5 7 ♜b3 0-0 8 c3, Black has 8...d5!?, and if 9 ed then 9...♜g4!. But in the above game Black avoided this line.

Black also played passively later (it was worth considering 13...♜c4, or a move earlier 12...c4 followed by ...♜a5-b7-c5); he didn't create counterplay on the queenside but only set up Rubinstein's defensive formation on the kingside. White was essentially playing with an extra tempo, which he acquired by dispensing with 6 ♜e1 (the rook went to g1 in one move). Black's error 19...♜h8 allowed Dubinín to carry out his brilliant combinative attack.

But even this brilliant game did not cast doubt on Rubinstein's plan of defence which had undergone many tests successfully. In fact the system with d4-d5 disappeared from tournament practice for a long time, although attempts to resurrect it were made more than once. Eventually, however, the adherents of the White side discovered some ideas which breathed new life into this old

system. Let us return to the basic position of the variation, after 14 a4 ♖b8 (see diagram 176).

Karpov-Unzicker
Nice 1974

15 ab ab
16 b4! ♖b7

Black can also go over to Rubinstein's defensive formation at once with 16...c4 17 ♖f1 ♖e8. The plan employed by Rubinstein's opponents – g4, ♖g3, ♗h2, ♖g1 – doesn't seem too effective here. But in our own day White has found a different plan: 18 ♖3h2! f6 19 f4 ♖f7 20 ♖f3 g6 21 f5 ♖g7 22 g4, with unpleasant pressure on the kingside, as in Karpov-Spassky, Moscow 1973 – although that game ended in a draw.

17 ♖f1 ♖d7
18 ♖e3

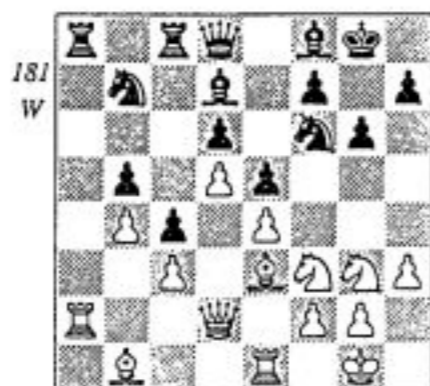
In Spassky-Korchnoi, Candidates Match 1968, White developed his bishop on d2, but achieved nothing in particular: 18 ♖d2 ♖a8 19 ♖e3 ♖fc8 20 ♗h2 ♖xa1 21 ♗xa1 ♗d8 22 ♗a7 ♖a8! 23 ♗xb7 ♖b8, and a draw was agreed.

18 ... ♖a8
19 ♗d2 ♖fc8

Better would be 19...♖fb8 followed by 20...♗c8.

20 ♖d3 g6
21 ♖g3 ♖f8
22 ♖a2 c4
23 ♖b1 ♗d8?! (181)
24 ♖a7!

The bishop on a7 paralyses all



Black's queenside counterplay. Consequently White may quietly prepare an assault on the opposite wing.

The conclusion was: 24...♖e8 25 ♖c2 ♖c7 26 ♖ea1 ♗e7 27 ♖b1 ♖e8 28 ♖e2 ♖d8 29 ♖h2 ♖g7 30 f4 f6 31 f5 g5?! (31...gf 32 ef ♖f7) 32 ♖c2! ♖f7 33 ♖g3 ♖b7 34 ♖d1 h6?! 35 ♖h5 ♗e8 36 ♗d1 ♖d8 37 ♖a3 ♗f8 38 ♖1a2 ♗g8 39 ♖g4! ♗f8 40 ♖e3 ♗g8 41 ♖xf7+ ♖xf7 42 ♗h5 ♖d8 43 ♗g6! ♗f8 44 ♖h5 1-0

However, what I believe to be White's most accurate plan was demonstrated in the following little-known game which was judged to be the best in its tournament. This time White refrained from exchanging pawns on b5.

Zuckerman-Kostro
Polanica Zdroj 1972

15 b4! ♖b7
16 ♖f1 ♖d7
17 ♖d2 ♖fc8
18 ♖d3

White appears to be preparing queenside play, but in fact his intention is quite different. By putting pressure on the b5 pawn, he will compel his opponent to play ...c5-c4. After that, White will block the queenside with a4-a5 and start an attack on the kingside. But how does this differ from the Bogoljubow-Rubinstein game, in which White at once forced the closure of the queenside by playing 15 c4? Let us see how events proceeded.

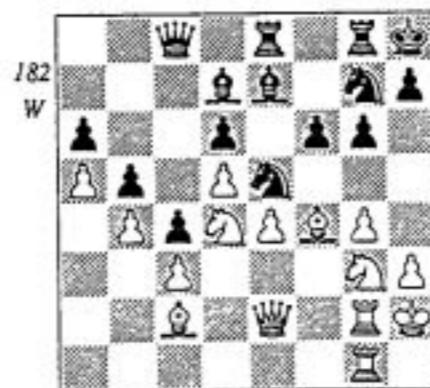
18...♖a8 19 ♗e2 c4 20 ♖c2 ♖e8 21 a5 ♖d8 22 g4 g6 23 ♖g3 f6 24 ♗h2 ♖f7 25 ♖g1 ♖g7 26 ♖g2 ♗h8 27 ♖ag1 ♖g8

How is the pressure to be increased further? We know the answer from previous games: White must play f2-f4.

28 ♖e1 ♖af8 29 f4 ef 30 ♖xf4 ♖e5 31 ♖f3 ♗c8

In the event of 31...♖xf3+ 32 ♗xf3, Black would be forfeiting his sole trump – the knight established in the centre.

32 ♖d4 ♖e8 (182)

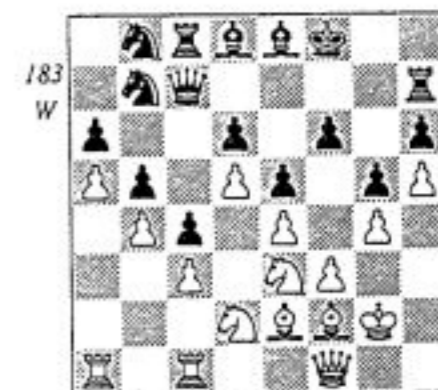


We can now judge White's plan properly. The queenside pawn formation is ideal for him; he has gained control of the key square d4. Observe that even if Black managed to evacuate his king to the queenside, White could still unsettle it with raids along the g1-a7 diagonal.

33 ♖gf5! gf 34 gf ♖f7 35 ♖g4 ♖e5 36 ♖h4 ♖ef8 37 ♖g6 ♖f7 38 ♖xh7+! ♗xh7 39 ♗g4 1-0

By way of commending the queenside pawn configuration chosen by Zuckerman, I should like to add one further point – the idea of a positional piece sacrifice on c4.

Bronstein-Winiwarter
Krems 1967



36 ♖dxc4! bc 37 ♖xc4 ♖b5 38 ♖b6 ♖xe2 39 ♗xe2 ♖e7 40 ♖xc8 ♗xc8 41 ♖a7 ♖d7 42 ♗xa6 1-0

So the scales have tipped in White's favour in this interesting variation. It is now up to Black to have a say....

14 The Link between Opening and Endgame

Aleksei Kosikov

Do you remember that splendid novel of fantasy by the Strugatsky brothers, *Monday Begins on Saturday*? Its title contains a valid thought: our preoccupations of tomorrow originate today (if not yesterday!). Thus it is in chess: the endgame sometimes begins in the very opening!

When studying an opening, it is not enough to 'swot up' on variations. You need a deep understanding of the events taking place on the board; for this, you have to master the ideas of the coming middlegame and sometimes even the endgame. I should add that with the ceaseless stream of information by which chessplayers today are engulfed, it is sometimes not until well into the endgame that an opening variation terminates. I remember a game between Igor Novikov and Vladimir Tukmakov in the Top League of the USSR Championship in 1984. White introduced an improvement on move thirty-six, after an ending with bishop against pawns had arisen; by winning the game, he revised the assessment of a Grünfeld variation that was popular at the time.

I would like to share with you some of my impressions of the way the opening conflict is conducted. I shall demonstrate some games in which the eventual ending had to be taken into account from the very outset. In the course of the discussion you will be given some exercises to solve independently.

Palatnik-Kosikov
Odessa 1979
Slav Defence

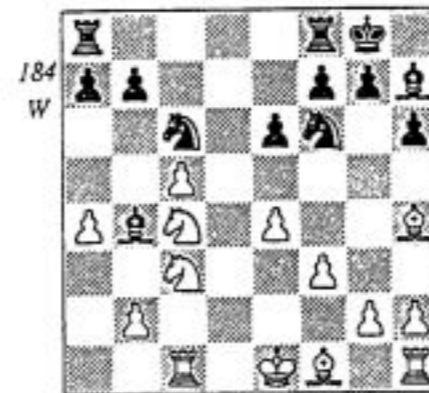
1	d4	d5
2	c4	c6
3	♗f3	♗f6
4	♖c3	dc
5	a4	♕f5
6	♗e5	

Alekhine's continuation, which remains topical to this day. The alternative, which also has a long history, is 6 c3.

6	...	e6
7	f3	♕b4
8	♗xc4	0-0
9	♕g5	h6
10	♕h4	c5
11	dc	♜xd1+
12	♞xd1	♕c2
13	♞c1	♕h7?!

Black chooses an unpromising line. To those interested in the variation, I recommend a study of 13...♕xa4!, as played by Ehlvest against Bareev in the First League of the 1986 USSR Championship (see *Informator 41*, Game 435).

14 e4 ♖c6 (184)



Let us weigh up the pros and cons of the present position and give a verdict on it.

(1) White is a little behind in development. He also has a weak square complex on the queenside.

(2) Black's bishop on h7 is very badly placed. To bring it into the game, he must either play ...f7-f5 or else free the a2-g8 diagonal (for example: ...♗d7, ...f7-f6, ...c6-c5, ...♕g6-f7). In the first case, the e6 point is weakened; the second solution requires a great deal of time.

Whose assets count for more? As practice has shown, the chances are on White's side.

15	♕f2	♗d7
16	♕e2	♗xc5
17	0-0	♗b3

Black naturally tries to exploit the weakness of d4.

18 ♞cd1 ♞fd8

19 ♞xd8+!

Rook exchanges should extinguish Black's initiative, after which the basic strategic defect of his position – the confinement of his bishop on h7 – will make itself felt.

19 ... ♞xd8

20 ♞d1 ♗bd4

21 ♖f1

Of course, not 21 ♕f1?? ♕xc3 22 bc ♗xf3+.

21 ... ♗xe2

22 ♞xd8+ ♗xd8

23 ♖xe2

Black has 'the advantage of the bishop pair', but that is a purely formal assessment. What 'advantage' is there with that bishop on h7?

23 ... ♕xc3

This exchange appears forced. I didn't at all like 23...♗c6 24 ♗b5 a6 25 ♗bd6, when White breaks into my queenside, exploiting the absence of my king and light-squared bishop.

24 bc ♗c6

25 ♗d6 b6 (185)

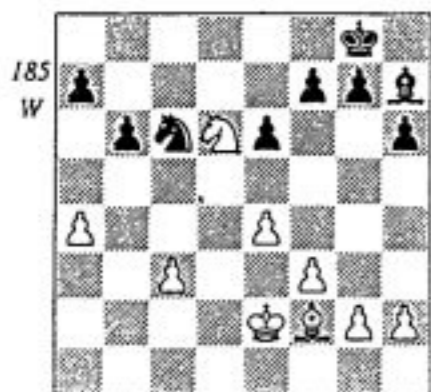
26 ♖d3

A natural centralisation of the king. Now how is Black to prevent it from breaking into his camp?

26...♗e5+? 27 ♖d4 f6 is useless on account of 28 ♗c8. The black king must quickly be brought to the defence.

26 ... ♖f8

27 ♖c4 ♖e7



28 ♔g3

What now? Yes, indeed –

28 ... e5!

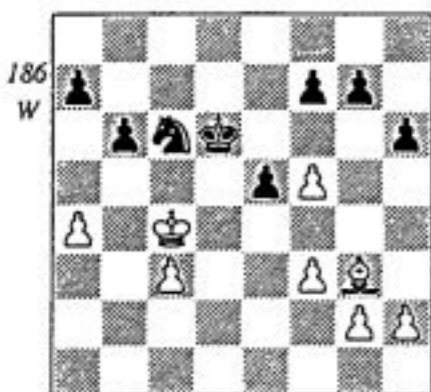
After 29 ♔d5 ♔d7! the pawn cannot be taken: 30 ♔xe5? f6 (or 30...♔g8), and the white king will be mated in the middle of the board!

29 ♖f5+

29 ♖b5 achieves nothing; after 29...f6 followed by ...♔g8+, the ending is at least no worse for Black. Nor is 29 ♖c8+? any good: 29...♔d7 30 ♔b5 ♔c7!, and there is no defence against 31...a6+, winning the knight.

29 ... ♔xf5

30 ef ♔d6 (186)



The position has been transformed. Have a try at assessing it. Who holds the advantage, and how great is it?

Some of you preferred White, and thought his advantage was a big one. Why? Because of the 'good' bishop in an open position, and White's more active king.

However, this verdict is dogmatic and superficial, and I completely disagree with it. In actual fact, the advantage – quite a substantial one – is already with Black.

Let me state my view of the relation of bishop to knight in the endgame. In an open position where both sides have weaknesses, the knight may prove stronger than the bishop. I will give a somewhat abstract example. Imagine an endgame without kings; White has a knight, and pawns on a2, c2, e2 and g2; Black has a dark-squared bishop, and pawns on b7, d7, f7 and h7. By attacking the enemy pawns, the knight will most probably drive them onto the same colour of squares as the bishop, which will thus become a 'bad' one.

Let us return to the diagram. The bishop is not all that strong, and the White camp contains more pawn weaknesses. White's only active possibility is 31 ♔b5; let us examine it. Black replies 31...♖e7!, and is not afraid of 32 f6 g6 33 ♔a6 ♖d5, when he keeps the extra pawn. Instead, 32 ♔f2 ♖d5 transposes into the game continuation (see below). The only

other line to consider is 32 ♔a6 ♖xf5. Now 33 ♔xa7 is hopeless: 33...♖xg3 34 hg (34 ♔xb6 ♖e2 35 c4 ♖d4) 34...♔c6 35 g4 g6, followed by ...f7-f5 and ...e5-e4. White would have to play 33 ♔f2, but the answer is 33...♔c6 34 ♔xa7 ♖d6 35 g4 (35 ♔xb6 ♖c8+) 35...g6, and it is hard for White to defend against his opponent's obvious plan of ...♖c4, ...f7-f5 and ...e5-e4-c3.

31 ♔f2 ♖e7

32 ♔b5 ♖d5

If 32...♖xf5, Black would have to reckon with 33 a5.

33 e4 ♖c7+

34 ♔b4 ♔c6

35 a5?!

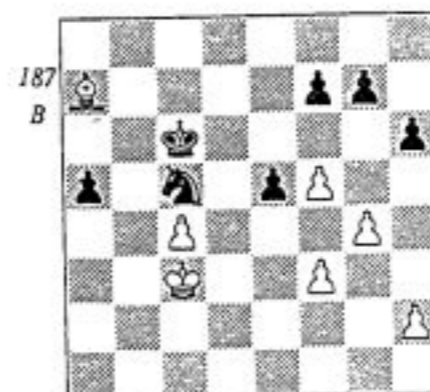
Hardly any of you would want to defend this position for White. The move played loses by force, but the alternative 35 g4 ♔a6+ 36 ♔c3 ♖c5 37 ♔b4 a5+ 38 ♔a3 also looks absolutely dismal.

35 ... ♔a6+

36 ♔c3 ba

37 ♔xa7 ♖c5

38 g4 (187)



Black not only has an outside passed pawn (which means that any pawn endgame is won for him); another key factor is that White's bishop is shut out of play. Can you see how to exploit this?

Yes – it is time to start hunting the bishop already:

38 ... ♔a4+!

39 ♔b3 ♖b6

Threatening 40...♔b7.

40 ♔b8 f6

41 h4 ♖c8!!

Complete domination of the bishop by the knight. The rest is elementary.

42 ♔a4 ♔b7 43 ♔xe5 fe 44 ♔xa5 ♔c6 45 ♔b4 ♖d6 46 ♔c3 ♔c5 47 ♔d3 ♖xc4 48 ♔e4 ♔d6 49 g5 h5 50 f4 ef 51 ♔xf4 ♖b6 52 ♔e4 ♖d7 53 ♔d4 ♖f6! 0-1

An elegant finale.

Now for exercise number 1:

White clearly gained a plus from the opening. At what point did he lose it, and how can his play be improved?

The Slav Defence is my long-standing, tried and trusted weapon. I associate it with good and bad memories, successful ideas and severe defeats. I will now tell you the story of one of my good ideas.

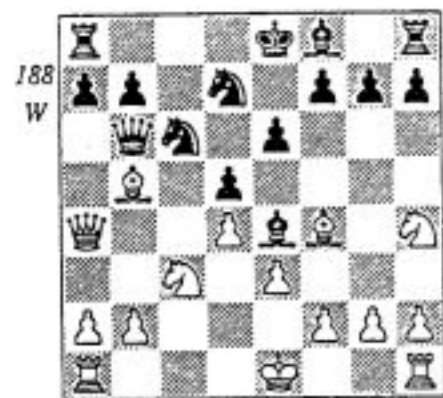
Magerramov-Kosikov
Daugavpils 1978
Slav Defence

- 1 ♖f3 d5
- 2 c4 c6
- 3 cd cd
- 4 d4 ♗f6
- 5 ♗e3 ♗c6
- 6 ♗f4 ♗f5
- 7 e3 e6
- 8 ♗b5 ♗d7
- 9 ♗a4 ♗b6

9...♗c8 is also played.
10 ♗h4

There was a time when this was virtually considered the refutation of 9...♗b6. The point is that the unobtrusive 10...♗g6 allows White to gain a substantial plus by breaking in the centre: 11 ♗xg6 hg 12 e4! de? 13 d5!.

10 ... ♗e4! (188)



When I began studying the position after 10 ♗h4, I felt that the only drawback to White's plan was the awkward position of his knight on the edge of the board. Thus it was that I devised 10...♗e4!

I had first played it against Buturin in the 1978 Ukrainian Championship, two months before the

present game. The continuation was 11 0-0 ♗e7 (11...a6 or 11...♗c8 deserved attention) 12 ♗xe4!? de 13 d5! ♗c5! 14 dc 0-0! 15 ♗c4 bc! 16 ♗a4 ♗xa4 (better than 16...♗xh4 17 ♗d6 ♗xa4 18 ♗xf8 ♗xb2 19 ♗xe4) 17 ♗xa4 ♗xh4 18 ♗xe4 ♗f6 (18...♗xb2 is extremely dangerous) 19 ♗e5 ♗xe5 20 ♗xe5 ♗ad8 21 ♗fd1 ♗b5! 22 ♗xb5 (22 ♗c3 ♗d5 23 e4 ♗c5, with counterplay) 22...cb 23 ♗f1 ♗xd1 24 ♗xd1 ♗c8, and a draw was agreed.

That game had some bad consequences for me. Playing against Rashkovsky in the Daugavpils qualifying tournament (a few rounds before my game with Magerramov), I underestimated a similar break in the centre and ended up in a difficult position:

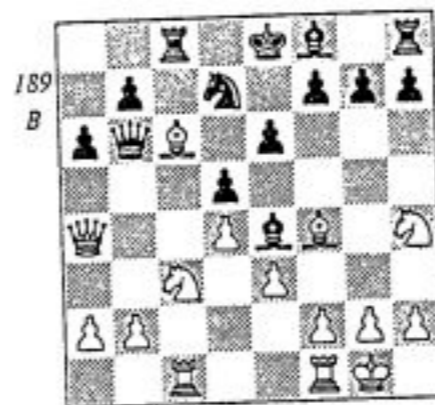
11 ♗c1!? ♗c8

[For information: 11...♗e7 is perfectly playable. After 12 ♗xe4 de 13 d5, Black has these choices:

(a) 13...♗c5 14 dc 0-0 15 ♗xc5 ♗xc5 16 0-0 bc 17 ♗xc6 ♗ad8! 18 ♗g3 g5 19 ♗xe4 (19 ♗xe4 gh 20 ♗f4 ♗d2!) 19...gh, with equality; Azmaiparashvili-Dvoretzky, Tbilisi 1980.

(b) 13...ed!? 14 ♗f5 ♗c5 15 ♗xc6+ bc 16 ♗xc5 ♗xc5 17 0-0 0-0 (17...g6) 18 ♗e5 ♗f6 19 ♗xf6 gf 20 ♗d1 ♗h8 21 ♗h5 d4! (a game Ehlvest-Sergeev, Leningrad 1979, went 21...♗g8? 22 ♗xf7 ♗f8 23 ♗c6, with chances for both sides) 22 ed ♗d5, and Black gains the advantage. — Mark Dvoretzky]

- 12 0-0 a6
- 13 ♗xc6 (189)



How should Black recapture on c6?

13...♗xc6? (hoping for 14 ♗xe4? ♗xc1) is clearly bad because of 14 ♗d1!. How does Black then defend against the threats of 15 ♗xe4 and 15 ♗e2? If 14...♗b6, then 15 ♗xe4 ♗xc1 16 ♗xc1 ♗xc1 17 ♗f6+! gf 18 ♗xc1.

The game continuation was 13...♗xc6? 14 ♗xe4 de 15 d5! ed 16 ♗f5. With White's big lead in development, the result is a foregone conclusion. There followed 16...g6 17 ♗d4 ♗xc1 18 ♗xc1 ♗xb2 19 ♗c8+ ♗e7 20 ♗b3! (the simplest way) 20...g5 21 ♗xg5+ f6 22 ♗b4+ ♗f7 23 ♗xb7 ♗e7 24 ♗xd5+ ♗g7 25 ♗xd7 ♗xc8 26 ♗xe7+ and Black resigned in view of 26...♗g6 27 ♗xe4+ ♗xg5 28 ♗f4+ ♗g6 29 ♗g4+ and 30 ♗xc8.

Now here is *exercise number 2*: Assess the consequences of 13...bc.

Let us now return to my game with Magerramov. In answer to 10...♗e4! he played the natural but inferior move (from diagram 188):

11 f3?! ♗d3!!

This is the tactical justification of Black's idea. He could have done the same thing a move earlier, but then White could have gained the advantage by 11 ♗xd5! ed 12 ♗xd3. It was important to provoke f2-f3 first, so as to deprive the white knight of the f3 square.

12 ♗xd5!

Practically forced. After 12 ♗xd3 ♗xb2 13 0-0 ♗xc3 14 ♗b5 ♗b6, Black is close to having a won position.

12 ... ♗xb5

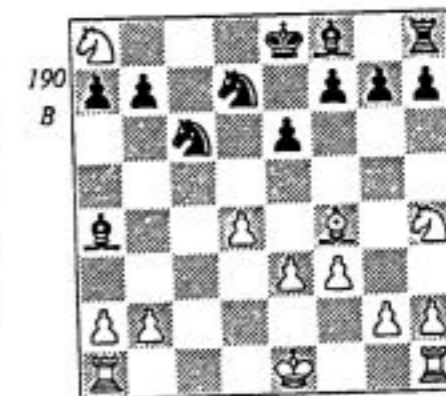
13 ♗xb6

Of course not 13 ♗xb5? ed, and Black has an extra piece.

13 ... ♗xa4

14 ♗xa8 (190)

14 ♗xa4 fails to 14...♗e7 15 ♗g3 g5 (White pays the price of f2-f3).



At first I had planned 14...♗e7, which leads to extremely unclear

positions, for example after 15 b3!? ♙xh4+ 16 ♚d2 0-0 17 ♜c7 .

A much stronger move is the one I found literally a few hours before the game:

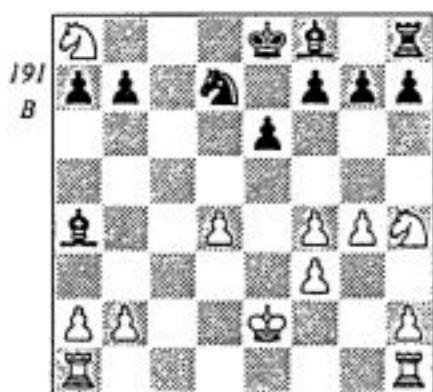
14 ... ♜b4!

This not only threatens to win the exchange but vacates the c6 square for the 'errant' bishop. An amusing situation has now arisen: White is the exchange and a pawn up, but both his knights are trapped.

15 ♜d2

I planned to answer 15 ♞c1 with 15... ♙c6 .

[For information: Glianets-Dvoretzky, Tbilisi 1979 went 15 g4 (freeing g2 for the knight) 15... ♜d3+! 16 ♜e2 ♜xf4+ 17 cf (191)



17... ♙e7! !! (an important intermediate move. 17... ♙d6 at once is weaker: 18 ♞ac1 0-0 19 ♜c7 ♙c6 20 ♞xc6 bc 21 ♜a6 ♙xf4 , and the endgame is drawish. In this line, if 18... ♜e7? then 19 ♜c7 ♙c6 20 d5; if 18... ♙c6 , then 19 d5 ed 20 ♜f5 with a certain amount of complication) 18 ♜g2 (18 ♞ac1 0-0 is bad for White.

18 g5 is met by 18... ♙d6 19 ♞ac1 0-0 20 ♜c7 ♙c6 21 ♞xc6 bc 22 ♜a6 ♙xf4 , and White loses a pawn) 18... ♙d6 19 ♞ac1 ♙c6! 20 ♜e3 0-0. Black has acquired a material plus and proceeded to exploit it. – Mark Dvoretzky]

15 ... ♙e7
16 ♜c7+ ♜d8
17 ♞hc1 g5!

The sharp tactical skirmish in the opening has resulted in a clear plus for Black.

18 ♜g6
18 ♙g3 gh 19 ♙f4 ♜b6 is no better for White.

18 ... hg
19 ♙g3 ♜d5
20 ♜xd5 ed
21 ♙c7+ ♜e8
22 e4

The rooks need scope, so White endeavours to open some files.

22 ... ♙c6
23 ed ♙xd5
24 ♙d6 ♜b6
25 ♙xe7 ♜xe7
26 h3 ♜c4+
27 ♜c3

Not 27 ♜c2 ♜e3+ and 28... ♜xg2 .

27 ... ♜d6
28 ♞e1 ♞c8
29 ♞e2 ♜a3+
30 ♜d2 ♞c2+
31 ♜e1 ♞xe2+
32 ♜xe2 ♜c2
33 ♞c1

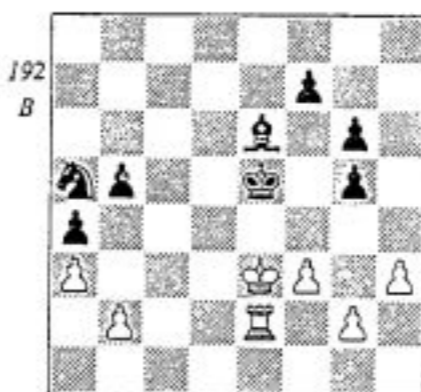
After 33 ♞d1 ♙xa2 Black is certain of victory.

33 ... ♜xd4+

34 ♜f2 a5
35 a3 a4
36 ♜e3 ♜e6
37 ♞c2 b5

White's position is hopeless; Black only needs to play with elementary accuracy. But, as is well known, winning a won position is a very difficult thing.

38 ♞d2 ♜e5
39 ♜f2 ♜d4
40 ♜e3 ♜b3
41 ♞d1 ♜a5
42 ♞e1 ♙e6
43 ♞e2 (192)



The obvious move here is 43... ♜c4+ ; after the white king retreats, the black king breaks in on the opposite flank. Instead I commit an error which all at once complicates Black's task.

43 ... ♙f5?
44 f4+ g4+
45 ♜f3+ ♜d4
46 ♜xf4

White has managed to reduce the number of pawns, which increases his chances of escaping.

46 ... ♜c4
47 g4 ♙d3
48 ♞h2 f5

Forced: White's threat to create a passed h-pawn was too serious.

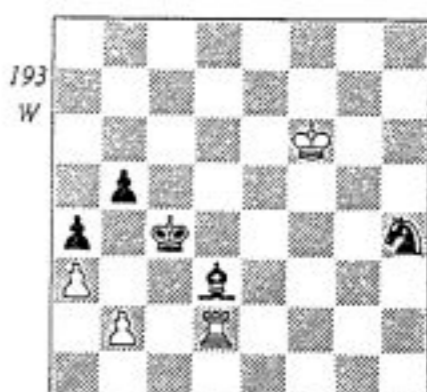
49 gf ♙xf5
50 h4 ♜e3
51 ♞d2+ ♙d3
52 ♜g5 ♜f5

On 52... ♜c4 , Black would have to reckon with 53 ♞xd3+ ♜xd3 54 ♜xg6 .

53 ♜xg6!

A weaker line is 53 ♞h2 ♜e3 54 ♜f6 ♜d4 55 ♞h3+ ♜f3 56 ♞h1 ♜d2 , and Black wins.

53 ... ♜xh4+
54 ♜f6 ♜c4 (193)



The game was adjourned here. Analysis showed that it is hard for Black to realise his advantage, but even harder for White to draw.

55 ♞f2
The sealed move.
55 ... ♜f5!
56 ♜e5 ♜e3
57 ♞d2

White would lose with either 57

♖d6 ♜b3 58 ♜c6 (58 ♜f3 ♖c4+ and 59...♖xb2) 58...♖d1, or 57 ♜f4+ ♜c5 58 ♜f2 ♖c4+ 59 ♜e6 b4 60 ab+ ♜xb4 61 ♖d5 ♜b3 62 ♜f3 ♖xb2.

57 ... ♖g6!
58 ♜f4

A more stubborn defence was probably 58 ♖d6!? ♜b3 59 ♜c5 ♖c4 60 ♜d4 ♖xb2 61 ♜b4+ ♜xa3 62 ♜xb5.

58 ... ♖c2
59 ♜g2 ♖d3
60 ♜d2 ♖d4!!

Before commencing the decisive operation, the black king must help to drive the white king further away.

61 ♜h2 ♖e3
62 ♜f3 ♖c4
63 ♜h4+ ♜e5!
64 ♜h5+ ♖f5
65 ♜h2 ♖e4+
66 ♜g3 ♖d4
67 ♜f4 ♖e5
68 ♜e2 ♖d3+
69 ♜g4

Mission accomplished – now it is time to attack the white pawns.

69 ... ♖d5
70 ♜g3

70 ♜f5 is met by the decisive 70...♖f3! 71 ♜c2 ♜e3 72 ♜e6 ♖d1 73 ♜h2 ♖e2!. The precise co-ordination of the black pieces is astonishing!

70 ... ♖b3!
71 ♜h2 ♜e3!

Threatening ...♖b3-d1-e2, and if 72 ♜h5, then 72...♖c4 73 ♜h2 ♖e1! followed by 74...♖e2 and 75...♖d3. Therefore White resigned.

After this game, naturally, a search began for new lines for White. Against Beliavsky in the 1979 USSR Championship, Yusupov played:

11 0-0-0 (194)



Now 11...♖e7 is no good because of 12 f3!

11 ... ♜c8
12 f3 ♖g6
13 ♖xg6 hg
14 ♜b1 a6
15 ♖d3

Of course, after an exchange on c6 White cannot claim any opening advantage.

15 ... ♖b4
16 ♜c1 0-0
17 a3 ♖xc3
18 ♜xc3 e5!
19 de ♖cxe5
20 ♜c2 ♜xc3
21 ♜xc3 ♖xd3
22 ♜xd3 ♖c5
23 ♜d4

Naturally not 23 ♜xd5? on account of 23...♜d8 and 24...♜d2.

23 ... g5!

24 ♖e5 ♜d8

Black has succeeded in equalising the chances, and the game ended in a draw.

A new attempt to strengthen White's play was made in Mordasov-Vekshenkov, Alma-Ata 1980. Instead of 15 ♖d3, White played 15 ♖e2. The further course of events was similar to the previous game: 15...♖b4 16 ♜c1 0-0 17 a3 ♖xc3 18 ♜xc3 e5 19 de ♖cxe5, but after 20 ♜hc1 ♜xc3 21 ♜xc3 White acquired an advantage.

Now here is exercise number 3:

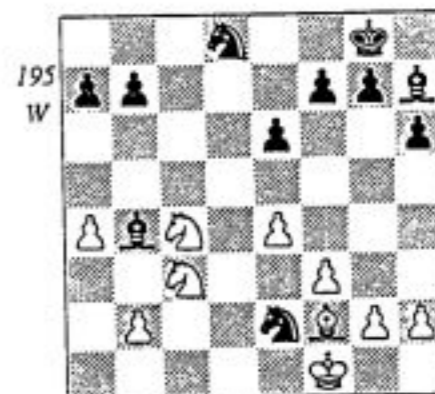
In answer to 15 ♖e2, find the best plan of defence for Black that does not involve weakening his pawn structure.

Solutions to Exercises

I have to say that none of the students succeeded in answering all three questions accurately. Of course they were fairly difficult, and in any case the solutions – just as in most opening positions – may be disputable or may not be the sole correct ones. Nevertheless this kind of training is very important and useful. If you want to handle an opening with confidence, you must learn to cope independently with the problems that face you, without relying on the opinion of a coach or the recognised authorities.

Exercise 1 (Palatnik-Kosikov)

Up to move 23, neither the students nor I had any reservations about White's play. The first controversial position was the following (195):



One group of students (Zviagintsev, Boguslavsky, Kiriakov, Makariiev) evidently wished to avoid the weakening of White's queenside pawns, and suggested the variation 23 ♖a2 ♖e7 24 ♜xe2 ♖c6 25 ♖c3 a6 (25...f5!?) 26 a5. In the resulting position they preferred White. But why? After the thematic break 26...f5! (which I am afraid no one even examined) 27 e5 (27 ef ♖xf5) 27...f4! the problem of Black's light-squared bishop is solved. The continuation might be 28 ♖a4 ♖c2 29 ♖c5 ♖xc5 30 ♖xc5 ♖b3 with equality.

No – that recommendation is unconvincing. I think that the moves 23 ♜xe2 ♖xc3 24 bc ♖c6, as actually played, were correct.

We noticed that Black's chief problems are his light-squared bishop which is shut out of play, and his king which is further from the centre than the white one. White's chances of success largely depend on whether he can come to grips with his opponent quickly, force a tactical fight on him before he can bring up his main forces.

To this end, I liked the idea suggested by Svidler, Baklan and Emelin: 25 a5!, followed by 26 d6 Qxa5 27 Qxa7 and then 28 Qb6 with a clear plus for White.

But the move 25 d6!, which occurred in the game, is no worse. The point is that in answer to 25...b6, when White played the mechanical 26 Qd3?, he should have preferred the more constructive 26 c4!. For example 26...f5 27 c5 bc 28 Qxc5 fe 29 fe, and only now 30 Qd3 with excellent winning chances.

It was after 26 Qd3? Qf8 27 Qc4 Qe7 28 Qg3 e5 that White made the decisive mistake: 29 Qf5+?.

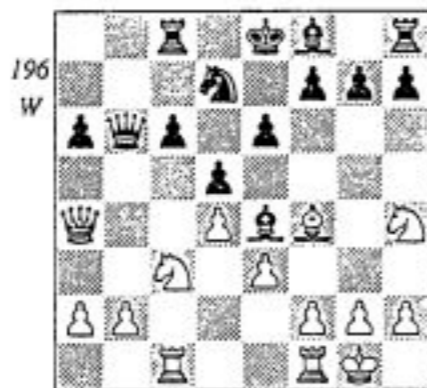
Exercise 2 (Rashkovsky-Kosikov)

Most of you stated a view that I agree with: by playing

13 ... bc! (196)

Black would have obtained a perfectly satisfactory position.

Emelin and Baklan found the interesting variation 14 Qfd1 Qe7 15 f3 g5 16 fe gf 17 Qf3 de 18 Qxe4 fe with unclear play. I have no doubt



they are right, but first and foremost we should examine a sharp attempt by White to break through immediately in the centre.

14 Qxe4 de
15 d5 ed
16 Qfd1

After 16 Qf5 g6 17 Qd6+ Qxd6 18 Qxd6 c5! 19 Qe5 f6 followed by 20...Qc6, White has insufficient compensation for the pawn.

16 ... Qc5!?

Another line was suggested: 16...Qc5 17 Qd4 Qd8 18 Qf5 Qc6. This too seems perfectly playable.

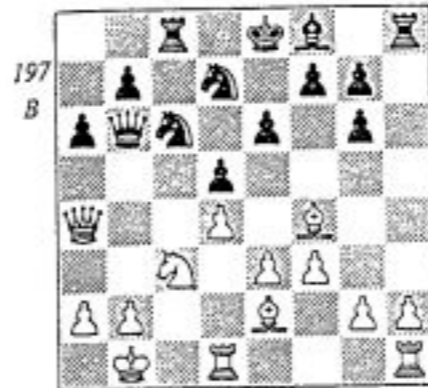
17 b4!? Qxb4
18 Qxb4 Qxb4
19 Qxd5 g6!

with chances for both sides.

Exercise 3 (Mordasov-Vekshenkov)

(see diagram 197 overleaf)

Makariev, Zviagintsev and Kirikov recommend 15...Qa7 followed by 16...b5. The plan is interesting, but not without its dangers – as Yusupov points out. There can follow 16



Qc1 b5?! 17 Qxb5! ab 18 Qxb5 Qxa4 19 Qxa4 Qa7 20 Qxc8+ Qxc8 21 Qc1 Qb6 22 Qb5, and the threat of a2-a4-a5 is fairly serious.

The rest of the students opted for 15...Qa5 16 Qc1 Qc4, when the position is not entirely clear; all the same, after 17 b3 I would prefer to play White.

My suggestion is 15...Qe7 16 e4 (otherwise Black has no problems at all) 16...Qd8!! With this unassuming move, freeing the b6 square for the knight, Black is able to hold the position in the centre. For example: 17 ed Qb6 18 Qb3? (better 18 Qc2 Qb4 19 Qb3) 18...Qa5! 19 Qc2 Qxd5, and the advantage is with Black.

15 In the Footsteps of One Game (Non-theoretical reflections)

Mark Dvoretsky

All theory is grey, my friend,
And green the golden tree of life.

Goethe

A game of chess only begins with an opening, it doesn't by any means end with it. It may indeed happen that the opening formation determines the final result, but the outcome of the fight depends much more often on the skill of the players in later stages of the game. Despite this, many young chess players spend all their spare time strengthening their opening repertoire, skimming through immense numbers of the latest games published in magazines, bulletins and *Informator*, or recorded on computer disks. Eventually, without realising it, they become nothing but narrow specialists, the sort about whom the unforgettable Kozma Prutkov once said: 'A specialist is like a man with toothache – he has a lop-sided swelling.' Without constructive work on the middlegame and endgame, your knowledge of these departments remains fragmentary and your overall understanding of chess suffers. I am convinced that a player with a broad, well-rounded

chess education is bound to have better prospects than a 'theoretician'.

From a cursory glance through a game it is very hard to discern the problems confronting the players, the ideas behind the moves, and the attractive variations that remained behind the scenes. I prefer to study strong players' games with detailed annotations, preferably written by one of the participants. Such annotations not only give the reader an insight into a grandmaster's productive laboratory, they often make him want to argue with some of the views expressed – they stimulate the reader's own analytical inquiries.

Chess games hardly ever repeat themselves, but situations that arise in them, ideas, typical resources – these things often *are* repeated. Sometimes one insignificant episode will give rise to a long chain of associations; similar cases in your own or someone else's games will come to mind. These associations are very useful – they help you to remember and consolidate the material you are studying.

Many of the tales in the *Arabian Nights* have characters in common,

or arise from the same initial situation. Without aspiring to the laurels of the celebrated Sheherezade (a name I can't help associating with chess), I intend to acquaint my readers with some chess episodes that are called to my mind by one game (more precisely the first half of it) which happens to be not too interesting in itself. I hope these stories will provide quite a good illustration of the thoughts I have voiced in this preamble.

Prelude

Gavrikov-Dolmatov
Tallinn 1985
Queen's Gambit

1	♖f3	♘f6
2	c4	e6
3	♗c3	d5
4	d4	♙e7
5	♙g5	0-0
6	e3	h6
7	♙h4	b6
8	♙d3	♙b7
9	0-0	♗bd7
10	♗e2	c5
11	♞fd1	♗e4
12	♙g3	

What can be said about the system of development White has adopted? It seems to me that its strategic idea lies in embarrassing the opponent by placing the white rook opposite the black queen – which cannot move aside to any convenient square as the white queen moved to e2. A similar

motif arises in other openings (such as the Tarrasch Defence), but we will not pursue this theme at the moment – we have less than a thousand and one nights at our disposal.

12 ... ♗xg3
13 hg dc?

It would have been better to play ...cd, either here or last move. We shall come back to this point, though only after some time.

14 ♙xc4 ♙xf3

What else? Black has to reckon with either 15 dc or 15 d5, and it is no good playing 14...cd 15 ♗xd4, with the terrible threat of 16 ♗xe6.

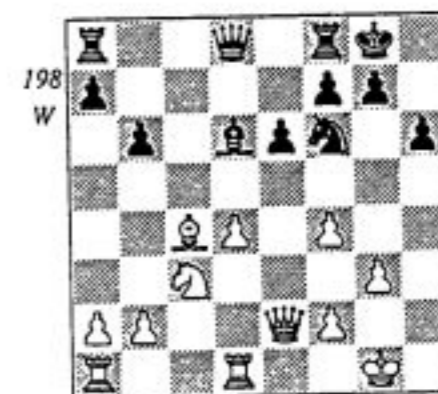
15 gf! cd
16 ed!

After 16 ♗xd4 ♙f6, with 17...♗e7 to follow, Black could have removed his queen from the white rook's line of fire. But now it is hard for him to defend against the standard central breakthrough d4-d5!

16 ... ♙d6
17 f4

Not the premature 17 d5 e5 18 ♗e4 ♗e7.

17 ... ♗f6 (198)



It is only now that the game deviates from a precedent established thirty-five (!) years earlier. The game Gligorić-Unzicker, Dubrovnik OL 1950, went 17...♖e8 18 ♗b5! ♜c8 (18...♗e7 19 ♘c4 and 20 d5!) 19 ♘c4 ♗e7 20 d5! e5 21 ♗g4 ♜ed8 22 ♗xd7 ♜xd7 23 ♘xd6 ♗xd6 24 fe ♗c7 25 d6, and White won.

18	♜ac1	♜c8
19	♗a6	♜c7
20	♗f3	♗d7
21	a3	♜d8
22	♗d3	g6
23	♗e2	♗f8

Dolmatov has deployed his forces effectively and achieved complete equality. The game lasted much longer (and was by no means free of errors), but was eventually drawn.

Don't you have the impression that White stood better but didn't make the best of his chances? Somewhere he missed an opportunity. But where?

Story Number One: Bishop or Knight?

White never carried out his basic positional threat of d4-d5. Let us return to the situation after Black's 17th move. Why didn't White break through in the centre at that moment?

The answer is simple. Both opponents saw the variation 18 d5 ed 19 ♘xd5 ♘xd5 20 ♗xd5 (20 ♜xd5 ♗f6) 20...♜c8. The black queen goes to f6 next move, and White's pressure along the d-file evaporates.

That may be so, but how about taking on d5 with the bishop instead of the knight? After 18 d5! ed 19 ♗xd5!!, Black's 19...♘xd5 can be strongly answered by either 20 ♘xd5 (there is no longer a convenient square for the black queen to withdraw to) or 20 ♜xd5. Black's best move is probably 19...♜c8, but even then White has the pleasant choice between 20 ♘b5, 20 ♗b7 (intending 21 ♘b5) and a simple bishop retreat. He obviously retains the initiative.

Grandmaster Dorfman once stated a half-facetious, half-serious maxim: 'The worst bishop is always better than the best knight.' It would seem that somewhere in our subconscious we are in agreement with him, with the result that moves like 19 ♗xd5!! frequently fall outside our field of vision; we grudge offering our bishop for exchange. To overcome this psychological barrier, it helps to be acquainted with situations where an analogous unconventional decision was taken. ('Analogous' and 'unconventional' – how incompatible these words seem at first sight! And yet, as Lipnitsky wrote in his remarkable book *Problems of Modern Chess Theory: 'Specific individual decisions do not at all entail a rejection of general chess principles, since some laws and norms which may well be obvious are rejected in favour of others which may be more deeply concealed.'*)

I shall now illustrate this theme with two examples from my own practice.

Dvoretsky-Romanov Moscow 1963 Nimzo-Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e3 c5 5 ♘f3 d5 6 ♗d3 0-0 7 0-0 cd 8 ed dc 9 ♗xc4 b6 10 ♗g5 ♗b7 11 ♗e2 ♗e7 12 ♜fd1 ♗c7? 13 ♗b3 ♘c6 14 ♜ac1 ♜ac8 (199)



Don't judge the foregoing moves too severely – at that time both players were only in the second category! – but even today I can find no fault with my subsequent conduct of the game. At a young age, incidentally, unconventional solutions are sometimes found more quickly than in mature years. The player's very lack of experience and knowledge means that conventional notions have not yet settled in his mind.

15	d5!	ed
16	♗xd5!	♜fe8?!
17	♗c4!	♘xd5

18	♘xd5	♗b8
19	♗f4	♘a5
20	♘xe7+	♜xe7
21	♗xc8+!	1-0

The next example was played in a contest at a much higher level, and we will look at it in rather more detail.

Gulko-Dvoretsky USSR Ch (Top League), Erevan 1975 Ragozin System

1	d4	♘f6
2	c4	e6
3	♘c3	♗b4
4	♘f3	d5
5	e3	0-0
6	♗d3	♘c6
7	0-0	a6

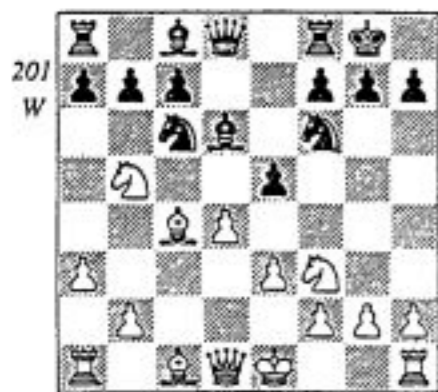
A purely prophylactic move. Its explanation is that if Black proceeds at once with his basic plan of 7...dc 8 ♗xc4 ♗d6 (with the intention of 9...e5), he has to reckon with 9 ♘b5 or 9 ♗b5!?

Actually, theory considers the first of these moves to be harmless. Lipnitsky's book that I mentioned quotes an interesting game Bannik-Cherepkov (1952), which has a direct bearing on our theme. It went 9 ♘b5 ♗e7! 10 ♗d2 (10 ♘xd6 cd, with 11...e5 coming, gives White nothing either) 10...♘c4 11 ♗e1 e5 12 dc (200) and now Black played, not 12...♘xe5? (when 13 ♘xd6 gives White the better chances),



but 12...♙xe5!. A tense sequence of moves ensued: 13 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 14 ♙e2 ♜d8 15 ♚a4 ♘d2 16 ♖xc7 ♙d7 17 ♚a5 ♖xf1 18 ♖xa8 ♖xc3 19 ♜fe ♜xa8 20 ♚b4 ♚xb4 21 ♙xb4, and the game ended in a draw.

The White side of this line in the Ragozin System was handled a little differently by Mikhail Botvinnik. The first game of his return World Championship Match against Mikhail Tal in 1961 went 4 e3 0-0 5 ♙d3 d5 6 a3 dc 7 ♙xc4 ♙d6 8 ♖f3 ♖c6 9 ♖b5?! e5 (201) (9...♙e7!?) 10 ♖xd6 ♚xd6! 11 de ♚xd1+ 12 ♖xd1 ♖g4 13 ♖e2 ♖cxe5, with an active position for Black.



Why didn't Botvinnik play 10 de ♖xe5 11 ♖xd6 with advantage? We know the answer already – because of 10...♙xe5!.

Botvinnik later strengthened White's play with 9 b4! e5 10 ♙b2 ♙g4 11 de (202).



(An obscure struggle results from 11 d5 ♖e7, as in the third game of the return match.)

By this time your hand should be reaching out automatically to play 11...♙xe5! (Konstantinopolsky then gives 12 ♚xd8 ♜axd8 13 b5 ♙xf3 14 gf ♖a5 with equality). It will astonish you to learn that Tal chose 11...♖xe5?!. After 12 ♙e2 ♚e7 13 ♖b5 ♜fd8 14 ♚c2 a6 15 ♖xd6 cd, he was at a noticeable disadvantage.

8 h3!

An important prophylactic move, the point of which becomes clear if we consider the variation 8 a3 dc 9 ♙xc4 (9 ♙xh7+!?) 9...♙d6 10 e4 e5. Now White would like to maintain the tension in the centre, but 11 ♙e3 is strongly met by either 11...♖g4 or 11...♙g4.

Now Black too can 'mark time' if he wants, with 8...h6!? (depriving the white pieces of g5 is useful), but he decides to clear the position up.

8 ... dc
9 ♙xc4 ♙d6
10 e4 e5
11 ♙e3 (203)

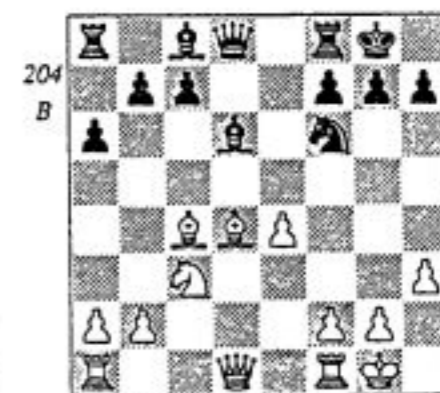


At the time when this game was played, I believed Lipnitsky's verdict that Black obtains fully adequate counterplay by going into action on the queenside: 11...h6 12 ♜e1 b5 13 ♙b3 ♙b7. (Present-day theory takes a different view; the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* assesses the variation as better for White.) Despite this, I played a different move: 11...ed?!. Why? The answer is quite an interesting story.

In those years I was helping Mikhail Botvinnik in some of his activities with the talented young players at the chess school he was conducting. A short while before the national championship, I had acquainted the students with the game Taimanov-Fischer from Buenos Aires 1960.

The game was full of fascinating action in all its phases. In his youth Bobby Fischer used to play the Ragozin System. On reaching the position in the last diagram, he chose 11...ed?! 12 ♖xd4 ♙d7 13 ♜e1 ♚e7? (13...♖e5 14 ♙f1 ♖g6 deserved preference, but the plan of g3, ♙g2 and f4 guarantees White a lasting initiative – as demonstrated by the game Keres-Lipnitsky, USSR Ch 1951) 14 ♙g5! ♖xd4 15 ♖d5! ♚e5 16 f4, and Taimanov obtained a considerable advantage.

One of the students asked why Fischer didn't simplify the position with 12...♖xd4 13 ♙xd4 (204), followed by 13...c5 or 13...b5. (In this line 13 ♚xd4 c5 14 ♚d2 b5 15 ♜fd1 ♙e7! is unclear.)



I was ready for this question (since I had analysed the game in advance) and explained that White answers 15...c5 not with 14 ♙e3?! b5, but with 14 ♙xf6! ♚xf6 15 f4 followed by e5, gaining the advantage. A stronger line for Black is 13...b5! 14 ♙b3?! c5 15 ♙xf6 ♚xf6 16 f4 (or

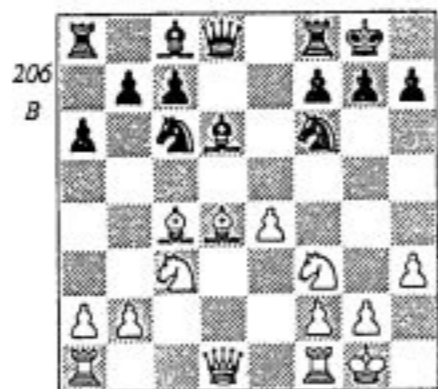
16 ♖d5 ♗d8) 16...c4 17 e5 ♙c5+, solving all his problems. But instead of 14 ♙b3?!, the move 14 e5! (205) has to be taken into account (although it is not actually clear whether White achieves anything to speak of after 14...♙xe5).



At this point the twelve-year-old Garry Kasparov suggested the brilliant counter-stroke 14...c5!?. The main line was quickly established: 15 e4 cd 16 fg ♙e8 17 ♙d5 (or 17 ♖xb5 axb5 18 ♙xf7+ ♖xf7 19 ♗f3+ ♙f5 20 ♗xf5+ ♖xg7 21 ♗xb5 and the piece is worth more than the three pawns) dc 18 ♙xa8 cb 19 ♙b1 ♗f6 (or even 19...♙e5), and Black has excellent compensation for the exchange sacrifice.

The innovation arising from our analysis together at the school was what I intended to play against Gulko. Alas, my opponent was one step ahead of me. He didn't take on d4 with his knight like Taimanov, but with his bishop:

11 ... ed
12 ♙xd4!! (206)



After thinking about the position, I realised I had no effective way to counter the threat of e4-e5!. There followed:

12 ... ♖xd4
13 ♗xd4 b5

And now, luckily for me, Boris continued hastily with:

14 e5? bc

which led to equality. (So as not to stray too far from the main subject, I must pass over the tough struggle that ensued and the highly ingenious trap in which Gulko eventually caught me. However, this game and also Taimanov-Fischer are given in full in the supplement to the lecture.)

Instead of 14 e5?, White could have kept the advantage by playing 14 ♙b3! c5 15 ♗e3 c4 16 ♙c2, and only answering 16...b4 with 17 e5! bc 18 ♙ad1.

A comment on my opponent's error is supplied by that well-known maxim of chess psychology, 'The threat (in this case e4-e5) is stronger than the execution.' But that too could be the topic of an entirely separate discussion...

Story Number Two: Study the Grandmasters' Annotations!

Let us return to our starting-point – the point where the games Gligorić-Unzicker and Gavrikov-Dolmatov diverged. If we open Svetozar Gligorić's book *I Play against the Pieces* (Moscow 1983), we find that in his note to move 17 of his game with Unzicker he gives the following variation: 17...♖f6 18 d5 ed 19 ♙xd5! ♙c8 20 ♖b5. Why didn't Gavrikov make use of this advice?

Was he unaware of the Gligorić game? Hardly – Gavrikov had played this line of the Queen's Gambit several times before, and he puts a great deal of work into studying opening theory. Had he forgotten it? That is most unlikely – Viktor has a phenomenal memory; he seems to remember absolutely everything. The explanation, I think, is that players who are keen on opening theory go all out to digest as much raw information as quickly as they can, and are sometimes reluctant to spend time on thoroughly studying the games they look at, or on examining the annotations. It would seem that either Gavrikov didn't pay any attention to Gligorić's notes, or else he didn't read the book at all but merely learnt about Gligorić-Unzicker (or rather, the opening stage of the game) from a reference work.

Over twenty years ago something similar happened to Yuri Balashov, a player with as powerful a memory as

Gavrikov and the same approach to opening study.

Balashov-Dvoretsky Spartakiad, Moscow 1967 King's Indian

1	d4	♖f6
2	c4	g6
3	♖c3	♙g7
4	e4	d6
5	f4	

A clever choice of variation, and one that was exceedingly unpleasant from my viewpoint.

At a coaching session before the Spartakiad, Yuri and I had shared the same room. The idea was that he would play on the junior board for the Moscow team, and I was his reserve. However, the managers of the RSFSR team succeeded in acquiring Balashov to play for *them*, and took him away from the Moscow team. The short time we had spent together was enough for Yuri to conclude – rightly – that opening theory was not my strong point. In the Four Pawns Attack it is impossible to act on general considerations – in the sharp positions you have to keep finding the sole correct continuations. Conducting such a fight without precise knowledge of a vast amount of theory is very far from easy.

Balashov is a past master at preparing his openings for a particular opponent. I remember him winning with Black against Yuri Razuvaev in the First League of the 1974 USSR

Championship. The opening was a main-line Grünfeld variation in which Razuvaev was a leading specialist. After the game Balashov revealed that the plan he chose had been used by Smyslov a short while before. 'How could I have missed that game?' Razuvaev exclaimed in dismay. 'I mean, I go out of my way to keep up with the theory of that line.' In reply, Balashov smiled craftily and said: 'Well you see, it was only published in the English magazine *The Chess Player*, which you don't take.'

5	...	0-0
6	♖f3	c5
7	d5	e6
8	♗e2	ed
9	cd	♞e8
10	♖d2	

I didn't know anything about this move (nor, for that matter, could I remember the sharp variations arising from 10 e5). I started looking for a way to deviate from theory with an unexpected move.

10	...	c4!?
----	-----	------

I was delighted at finding this move, but I am afraid it was a little late. The move had been played a year earlier, in the Havana Olympiad, by Bobby Fischer. His opponent Pomar reacted ineffectively with 11 ♗f3 ♖bd7 12 0-0? b5! 13 ♖h1 a6 14 a4 ♞b8, and Black gained the advantage.

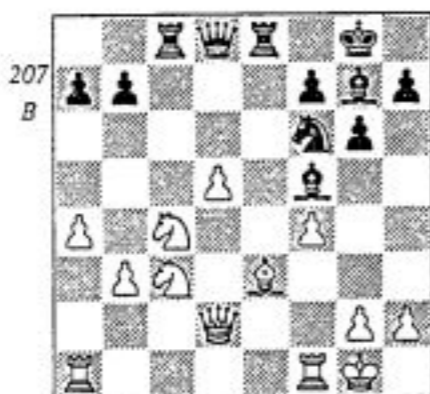
11	a4	♖a6
12	0-0	♖c5
13	e5!?	

Perhaps the quiet 13 ♗f3 deserved preference. Already, incidentally, a considerable body of theory on this position had accumulated.

13	...	de
14	♖xc4	e4!?

After 14...cf 15 ♗xf4, the white pieces are too active. Afraid of coming under attack, I resolved on a positional pawn sacrifice.

15	♗e3	♖d3
16	♗xd3	ed
17	♞xd3	♗f5
18	♞d2	♞c8
19	b3 (207)	



When sacrificing his pawn Black had calculated as far as here, and hoped that in the resulting position sufficient tactical resources would turn up.

19	...	♖e4
----	-----	-----

Now I worked out a variation which almost leads by force to an endgame that is acceptable to Black.

20	♖xe4	♗xa1
21	♖ed6	♗c3!
22	♞xc3	

I heaved a sigh of relief, since I

had not seen a convincing answer to 22 ♞c1 – though I was hoping to find one if the need arose. After the game I asked Balashov why he chose not to play that way. 'It was risky', he said with a shrug.

22	...	♞xd6
23	♖xd6	♞xc3
24	♗d4	♞d3
25	♖xe8	♞xd4
26	♞e1	♖f8
27	♖d6	♞xd5
28	♞e8+	♖g7
29	♖xb7	♗e6

Clearly the game should end in a draw. And so it did, though only after many adventures. One of the instructive episodes in the rook ending which shortly arose is examined in my book *Secrets of Chess Training* (see the chapter 'Rook against Pawns').

At the end of the game Balashov astounded me by saying 'It's all been seen before.' He suggested I should look at Mikhail Tal's article on the international tournament at Palma de Mallorca (1966), published in the fifth issue of *Shakhmaty* for 1967. Naturally I looked up the magazine and found the game Pomar-Toran, which up to move 19 was identical with my game against Balashov.

But what struck me most of all was Tal's note to Black's nineteenth move, which was 19...♖g4. Tal wrote: 'During the game I thought that 19...♖e4 20 ♖xe4 ♗xa1 21 ♖ed6 ♗c3 was stronger. But analysis revealed that with 22 ♞c1! White

could have maintained both a material and a positional plus.'

I was right to be afraid of that move. But how was it that Balashov – who remembered the game, the issue of the magazine where it was printed, and no doubt the page-number too – did not make use of the resource indicated by Tal? We already know the answer: Balashov probably just acquainted himself with the game but didn't study it and took no interest in the notes.

When it comes to assessing the position after White's 19th move, we can conclude that 19...♖e4 is inadequate for equality. Black must rely on the brilliant combination which Toran found after one and a half hours' thought in the above-mentioned game.

19	...	♖g4!
20	♗d4	♗xd4+
21	♞xd4	♞xc4!!

Black's intention is illustrated by the variation 21...♞h4 22 h3 ♞xc4 23 bc ♞e3 24 hg ♞h3 25 gh ♞g3+, with perpetual check. However, discovering an idea is not enough – you must put it into operation in the most precise way. With 24 ♞d2! (instead of 24 hg?) 24...♞d3 25 ♞e1, White could beat off the attack. Toran therefore alters the move-order.

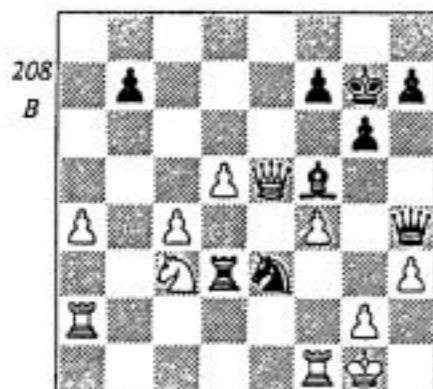
22	bc	♞e3!
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Threatening both 22...♞h4 and 22...♞d3.

23	h3	♞d3!
24	♞xa7	♞h4
25	♞a2!	

The only way to continue playing for a win. We already know that 25 hg ♖h3! leads to perpetual check, whilst 25 ♖e2? is met by 25...♗xh3! 26 gh ♗xh3 27 ♖f2 ♖e4.

25 ... ♖e3
26 ♗b8+ ♖g7
27 ♗e5+ (208)



27 ... ♖f6?

The losing move (Black was probably in severe time-trouble). 27...♖g8? would also be wrong, if only because of 28 ♖b2! ♖xf1 29 ♖xb7, but after 27...♖h6 the game would presumably have ended in a draw: 28 ♖e4 ♖xf1 29 ♖f6 ♖e3 30 ♖g8+ ♖h5 31 ♖f6+.

28 ♗e7+ ♖h6
29 ♖e4!

From now on White does all the attacking. The threat is 30 ♗f8+ ♖h5 31 ♖xf6+.

29 ... ♖xe4

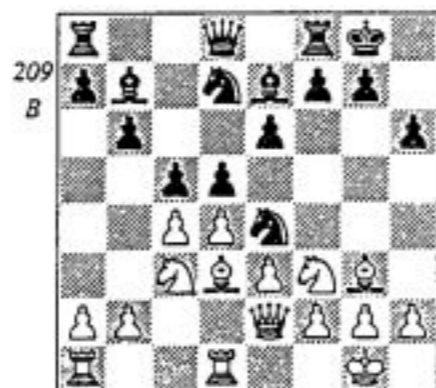
The game concluded: 30 ♗xe4 ♖b3 31 ♖b2! ♖5 32 ♖xb3! ♖e 33 ♖xe3 ♗e7 34 ♖h2 g5 35 ♖g+ ♖xg5 36 ♖fe1 ♗c7+ 37 ♖h1 ♗xc4 38 ♖xe4 ♗c3 39 ♖d1 ♗c2 40 ♖ee1 1-0

Story Number Three: What did my Opponent Intend?

Let us return once again to our starting-point. We recall that Dolmatov didn't manage to secure equality against Gavrikov. A sound plan of action for Black was demonstrated in the game we are now going to examine.

Gavrikov-Yusupov Tunis IZ 1985 Queen's Gambit

1 d4 ♖f6
2 ♖f3 d5
3 c4 e6
4 ♖c3 ♖e7
5 ♖g5 0-0
6 e3 h6
7 ♖h4 b6
8 ♖d3 ♖b7
9 0-0 ♖bd7
10 ♗e2 c5
11 ♖g3 ♖e4
12 ♖fd1 (209)



12 ... cd!

13 ed

Against 13 ♖xd4 Yusupov intended 13...♖xc3, to lessen the opponent's pressure against d5 and obtain shelter for his own queen on the c-file. 13...♖xg3 14 hg ♖f6 also appears playable, for example: 15 ♖ac1 ♖b4! 16 cd ♖xc3 17 ♖xc3 ♖xd5 18 ♖cc1 ♖c8 19 ♖a6, and at this point a draw was agreed in Novikov-Lputian, USSR Ch 1984.

13 ... ♖xg3
14 hg ♖f6

In contrast to Gligoric-Unzicker and Gavrikov-Dolmatov, Black is now firmly in control of the important d5 point.

Shortly before the Interzonal Tournament, Yusupov had captained the Moscow Young Pioneers team in the *Komsomolskaya Pravda* contest (in which the grandmaster captains give simultaneous displays with clocks against the young players of the other teams). Artur later told me that in one of his games against Baku he had played this line with White but failed to gain a plus – his young opponent conducted the opening with extreme accuracy. It turned out that the Baku players had been helped in their preparations by their captain Garry Kasparov. When facing Gavrikov, Artur tried to remember that game...

15 ♖e5 ♖c8
16 ♖ac1

16 ♖b5 is clearly premature: 16...dc (Black can also play the immediate 16...a6 17 ♖a7 ♖c7) 17

♖xc4 a6 18 ♖a7 ♖c7, threatening 19...b5 or 19...♗a8. Now, however, Black needs to take care of ♖b5.

16 ... dc
17 ♖xc4 ♖d5
18 ♖b3 ♖xc3
19 bc (210)

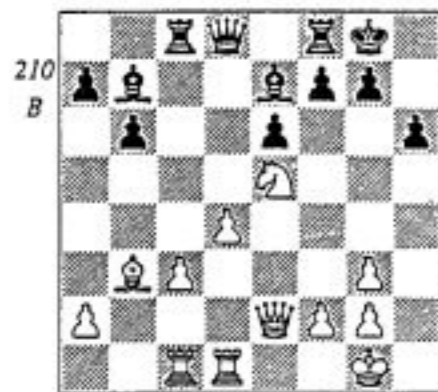
Among all the deep conceptions expounded in Aron Nimzowitsch's *My System*, one of the most important seems to me to be the idea of prophylaxis. Nimzowitsch writes: 'Neither attack nor defence is, in my opinion, a matter properly pertaining to positional play, which is rather an energetic and systematic application of prophylactic measures.' This thought may appear paradoxical or incomprehensible, but I hope our analysis of the present game will help us to grasp it.

This is Nimzowitsch's explanation of prophylaxis: 'What it is concerned with above all else is to blunt the edge of certain possibilities which in a positional sense would be undesirable.' He goes on to examine two forms of prophylaxis: over-protection of strategically important points, and prevention of freeing pawn moves. However, prophylaxis can be understood in a broader sense, as preventing not only pawn moves but other ideas of the opponent.

To neutralise the opponent's designs, you must first detect them and judge how dangerous they are. Sometimes this is not so simple, and in any case from our earliest years

we have been accustomed to think first and foremost about our own plans, not the ideas and plans of others. Hence from the point of view of a practical player it is actually more useful to speak not of prophylaxis but of 'prophylactic thinking' – an inward disposition for deciphering the opponent's intentions. Let me reveal one of my professional 'secrets' which is supported by all my experience as a coach. A chessplayer who has acquired the capacity for prophylactic thinking will significantly raise his class – he will dramatically improve in positional play, in the technique of exploiting an advantage, and in other areas.

Of course, Grandmaster Yusupov trained himself in prophylactic thinking a long time ago, before he even was a grandmaster. Let us now watch this skill in operation.



Artur asked himself: 'What does my opponent want? What would he play if it were his move?' Is White perhaps thinking of sacrificing his knight on f7? (Actually it is unclear

whether the sacrifice is sound.) Action in the centre with c3-c4 and d4-d5 must definitely be taken into account. Is that all? No, there is one other threat – ♖d3 followed by ♙c2. Then ...f7-f5 would weaken the Black position too much, while ...g7-g6 would be met by a knight sacrifice on that square.

Now that we know the opponent's ideas, it is easier to select a move. For example, 19...♙a3 may be considered; after 20 ♖c2, White can no longer construct a battery on the b1-h7 diagonal. But does this sortie help against c3-c4 and d4-d5? And what plan of our own is furthered by it? (Nimzowitsch, remember, advocated 'an energetic and systematic application of prophylactic measures.')

19 ... ♖c7!!

A grandmaster's move! Black improves his position and prepares ...♗c8 (or ...♗a8), which is an effective antidote to his opponent's central offensive. Now the knight sacrifice on f7 is definitely unsound.

20 ♖d3 ♙f6

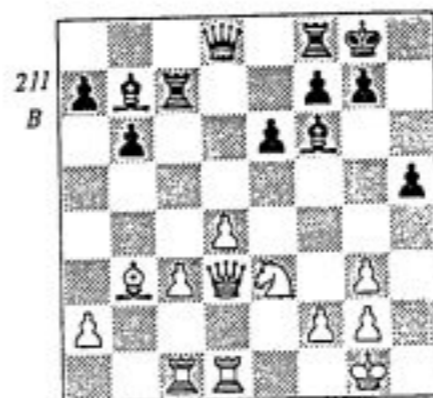
It turns out that after 21 ♙c2 g6 White cannot play 22 ♖xg6? fg, when the rook on Black's second rank joins in the defence.

21 ♖g4 h5!

Parrying the obvious threat of 22 ♙c2 g6 23 ♖xh6+.

22 ♖e3 (211)

22 ♖xf6+ ♗xf6 would have led to equality, but Gavrikov is trying for more.



What does White want to do now? Either c3-c4 and d4-d5 as before, or else 23 d5 at once and the supporting move c3-c4 afterwards.

22 ... ♖d7!

Now 23 c4? fails to 23...♖xd4, while in answer to 23 d5 Yusupov intended 23...♙g5! 24 f4 ♙e7, followed by ...♙c5.

23 g4 hg

24 ♖xg4

Now what is the threat? Probably there no longer is one. Having fortified his position with a series of prophylactic moves, Black can start thinking about active possibilities of his own.

24 ... g6 (212)



25 ♖e1?!

White has decided to improve the position of his rooks by playing ♖e1 and ♖cd1. Is this a sensible operation? Undoubtedly. Yet it is completely untimely. At this point it was White's turn to apply some 'prophylactic thinking' directed against Black's transparent plan for activating his forces with ...♗g7 and ...♖h8. The simplest way to solve the problem was 25 ♗e3! (but not 25 ♗h3? ♙g5! and 26...♗g7), for example: 25...♙g7 (25...♗g7? 26 ♗h6+, or 25...♙g5 26 f4) 26 ♖e5, with approximately equal chances.

25 ... ♗g7

26 ♖cd1?

Consistent but bad! It was essential to forestall the threatened attack against the white king by means of a series of exchanges: 26 ♗e3 (or 26 ♖xf6 at once) 26...♖h8 27 ♖xf6 ♗xf6 28 ♗e5, although even here Black has somewhat the better ending.

26 ... ♖h8

27 ♗g3

What is White aiming for? Obviously he wants to simplify with 28 ♖xf6 ♗xf6 29 ♗e5, but this threat is easily met by a move which fits in with Black's plan of attack.

27 ... ♖h5!

How quickly White has landed in trouble!

28 ♗f4?

It was better to play 28 ♖xf6 anyway.

28 ... ♙e7!

The bishop is transferred to a formidable attacking post on d6. A possible continuation is 29 ♖e5 ♙d6 30 ♜e3 ♜h4 31 f3 ♜xe5! 32 de ♙c5 33 ♜xd7 ♜xc1+.

29 ♜c1 ♙d6
30 ♖e5 ♜h4
31 f3 ♜g3
32 ♜xd7 ♜h1+!
32 ... ♜d8!

Black's last piece joins in the attack, threatening 33...♜dh8. Therefore White resigned.

White lost quickly without making any obvious positional mistakes. The reason was simply that Gavrikov had not mastered the art of prophylactic thinking, as Yusupov had. Thus the game was rather like a fight between boxers in different weight classes.

The theme of prophylaxis is one of my favourites. I could go on about it for much longer, but it is now time to stop. In conclusion, I would like to dispel any impression you may have gained that I am generally against the serious study of opening theory. Just recall some of the examples we have looked at – think of the difficulties that a player was often up against, as a result of not being adequately prepared in the opening – and you will realise that I am not at all urging you to give up opening study. Generally speaking, any chessplayer undoubtedly does right to occupy himself with whatever

aspect of the game attracts him most. All I wanted to do was warn you against concentrating on opening theory at the expense of everything else. I wanted to show how many fascinating and extremely useful discoveries you can make by immersing yourself in the wonderful world of a chess game.

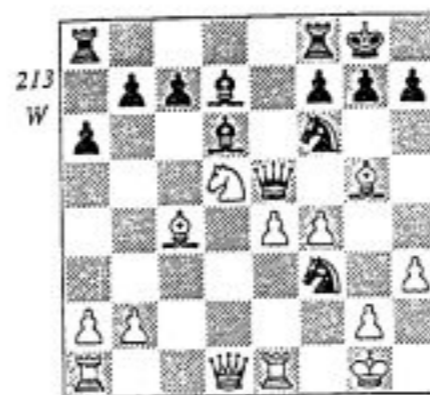
'At this moment Sheherazade saw the morning appearing and, discreet, was silent.'

Supplement to 'In the Footsteps of One Game'

In the games Taimanov-Fischer and Gulko-Dvoretsky, the opening phase of which we have already examined, there were many more interesting and instructive events. I now present them in full.

Taimanov-Fischer Buenos Aires 1960 Ragozin System

1 e4 ♖f6 2 ♖c3 e6 3 d4 ♙b4 4 e3 0-0 5 ♙d3 d5 6 ♖f3 ♖c6 7 0-0 dc 8 ♙xc4 ♙d6 9 ♖b5?! ♙e7?! (9...e5!?!; 9...♜e7!?) 10 h3 (10 ♜c2!?, preparing ♜d1) 10...a6 11 ♖c3 ♙d6 12 e4 e5 13 ♙e3 ed?! 14 ♖xd4? (14 ♙xd4!!) 14...♙d7?! (14...♖xd4 15 ♙xd4 b5! 16 e5 c5!!) 15 ♜e1 ♜e7? 16 ♙g5! ♖xd4 17 ♖d5! (The only way! The crude 17 ♜xd4? would allow Black to simplify with 17...♜e5) 17...♜e5 18 f4 ♖f3+ (213)



This was Black's only move.

19 ♜xf3

Taimanov makes the natural move, which preserves his advantage (in view of 19...♜d4+ 20 ♖h1 ♜xc4 21 ♙xf6, with an overwhelming position), but the capture with the pawn also deserved serious attention; it avoids giving the black queen the d4 square.

In a good position like this, you don't usually want to take unnecessary risks or calculate sharp variations – especially since there is no easy win to be seen after 19 gf ♜xb2. For example 20 ♜b1 ♜a3 21 ♙xf6 ♜c5+, or 20 ♜e2 ♜a3 21 ♙xf6 gf 22 ♖xf6+ ♖h8 23 ♖xd7 ♜g8+.

However, when realising an advantage, there generally *does* come a moment when it is essential to exert yourself, work out precise variations and find a clear-cut way to attain your goal. White could have won with 19 gf! ♜xb2 20 ♜e2 ♜a3 21 ♖xf6+ gf 22 ♙xf6. On 22...♙xh3 (the move Taimanov was worried about), White has 23 ♜d5! h6 (23...♙c5+ 24 ♖h2; 23...♙xf4 24

♜h5) 24 ♜h5 ♜c5+ 25 ♜xc5 ♙xc5+ 26 ♖h2 ♙e6 27 ♜g2+ ♖h7 28 ♜g7+ ♖h8 29 ♜g5+, or 29 ♜xf7+ ♖g8 30 ♜xf8+.

Excessive laziness or caution may in fact result in new obstacles on the road to victory.

19 ... ♜d4+
20 ♖h1 ♖g4!

20...♖xd5 21 ♙xd5 is not promising for Black.

21 hg ♜xc4
22 b3 ♜b5

The queen lacks a secure post; 22...♜d4 is strongly met by 23 ♜ad1, while if 22...♜c5 White has the decisive 23 e5.

23 a4 ♜a5
24 ♜ed1!

Threatening 25 b4!

24 ... ♙c6
25 e5

White achieves nothing with 25 ♖e7+ ♙xe7 26 ♙xe7 ♜fe8 27 b4 ♜b6 28 ♙c5, in view of the reply 28...♙xe4.

25 ... ♙b4 (214)



26 ♜e4

White could have won a pawn with 26 Qe7 Qxe7 27 Qxe7+ Ch8 28 Qxc6 bc 29 Wxc6 , but exploiting it with queens on the board would not have been simple, given the exposed position of his own king (we now see the effect of 20... Qg4!).

Taimanov wisely avoids the temptation. When you have a solid positional plus, it is important not to sell it too cheaply.

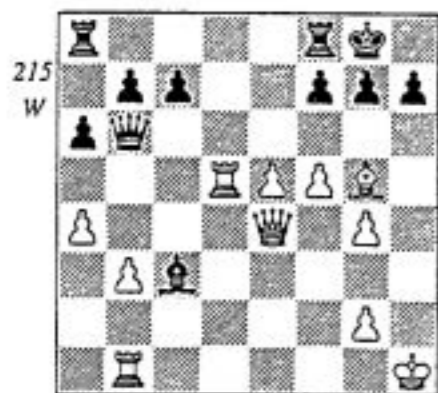
26 ... Qxd5
27 Qxd5 Wb6
28 f5!

The accurate order of moves. Advancing on the kingside, White creates a queenside threat at the same time: 29 a5 Wc6 30 Qc1 . The immediate 28 a5 is weaker, as after 28... Wc6 29 f5 Black has 29...b5! 30 Qc1 Wb7 .

28 ... Qc3
29 Qc1 Qb2

By attacking the pawn on b3, Fischer tries to distract his opponent from his attack.

30 Qb1 Qc3 (215)



31 Qc1!

White could have won with 31 b4!, for example: 31... Qae8 32 Qc5! f6 33 Qxf6 gf 34 Wc4+ and 35 Wxc3 .

31 ... Qb2
32 Qc4?

With 32 Qc2! White could have forced 32... Wxb3 , whereupon he would have had the pleasant choice between 33 e6, 33 f6 and 33 Qxc7 . The move played gives Black an important tempo for bringing up his reserves.

32 ... Qae8!

A tactical skirmish begins, in which the bishop on b2 plays an important role by attacking the pawn on e5. Black threatens both 33...c6 and 33...f6.

33 f6 c6
34 fg cd
35 gf W+ Qxf8

35... Qxf8 is inferior because of 36 Wxd5 . Now Black can answer that move with 36... Qxe5 .

36 Wxh7! Qxe5
37 Qf4! We6
38 Qf1 b5? (216)



Black has conducted a difficult defence to good effect, and was on the point of neutralising his opponent's initiative completely. He had to play 38... Qg7! 39 Qc1 (39 Qd2? Wxg4) 39... We7 40 g5 Wb4! , setting up the threat of 41... Qe1 .

Evidently worn out by the ordeal he has had to go through, Fischer makes a mistake that could have been fatal.

39 ab?

Strangely enough, this exchange which looks natural (especially in time-trouble – it brings move forty nearer!) deprives White of the chance to force through his attack.

The winning move was 39 Qe1! , with the unanswerable threat of 40 Qh6+ Qe7 41 Qg7 (or Qf4).

39 ... ab
40 Qd2

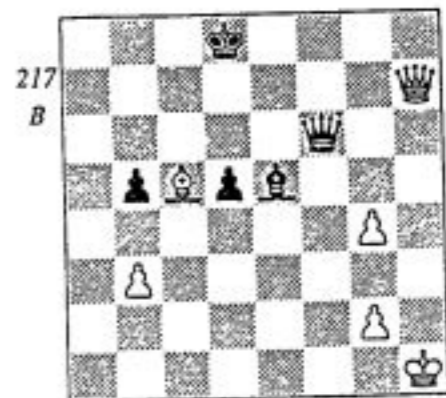
Now 40 Qe1 is suitably answered by 40... Qa8! , and White's rook is disarmed by the threat of 41... Qa1 and exchanges.

40 ... Qe7
41 Qb4+ Qd8
42 Qxf7 Qh8
43 Qf8+ Qxf8
44 Qxf8 Wf6!

White's extra pawn plays no significant role; the game should be drawn.

45 Qc5 (217)
45 ... d4?

The obvious line was 45... Wf1+ 46 Qg1 Qd4 , forcing 47 Wb2 with roughly equal chances. Fischer had probably decided to try for more,



and overlooked his opponent's simple reply.

46 Qg1! Wf4

Black has to allow a queen exchange and go into an unfavourable bishop ending. However, the draw is still within reach.

47 We7+ Qc8
48 Wf8+ Wxf8
49 Qxf8 Qg3!
50 Qf1 d3!
51 Qb4 Qd7
52 Qe1 Qf4
53 Qc3 Qg3
54 g5 $\text{Qe6?!$

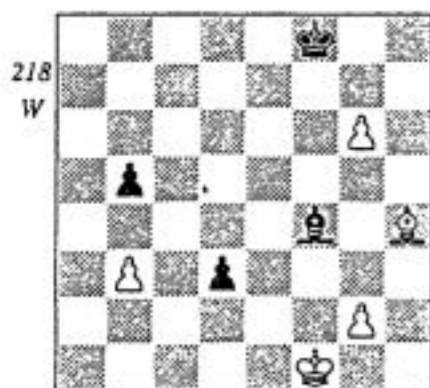
An inaccuracy. 54... Qe7! 55 g6 Qf8 was simpler.

55 g6 Qe7

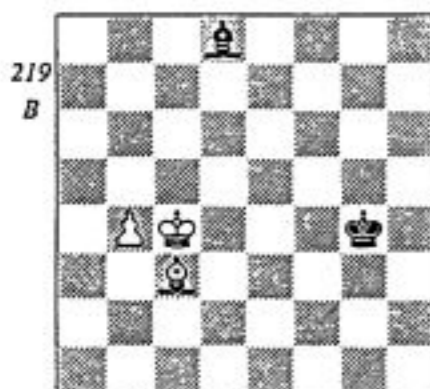
Black could try 55... $\text{Qh4!?$, because the position of the black king on e7 gives White the necessary tempo to bring his own king out of captivity.

56 Qe1 Qf4
57 Qh4+ Qf8 (218)
58 g3! Qd6!

The natural-looking 58... Qe3? would have lost to 59 Qf6 followed by Qe1 and Qf6-e5-f4 .



59 ♖f2 ♗c5+ 60 ♖f3 ♗g7 61 ♗g5 ♖xg6 62 ♗f4 ♖h5! 63 ♖e4 (63 g4+ ♖h4) 63...♗g4 64 ♖xd3 ♖f3 65 ♗c7 ♗f2 66 ♗d6 ♗e1 67 ♖d4 ♖g4 68 ♖c5 b4 69 ♖b5 ♖f5 70 ♖c4 ♖e6 71 ♗c7 ♖f5 72 ♖d3 ♖g4 73 ♗d6 ♗c3 74 ♖c4 ♗e1 75 ♗xb4 ♗xg3 76 ♗c3 ♗d6 77 ♖d5 ♗e7 78 ♗d4 ♗b4 79 ♖c4 ♗a5 80 ♗c3 ♗d8 81 b4 (219)

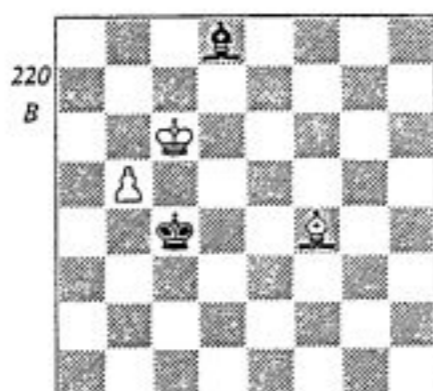


If we now make the moves 81...♖f5 82 ♖d5, we reach the famous position where Janowski resigned against Capablanca in the New York tournament of 1916.

The black bishop is controlling a square that the pawn must cross.

White will try to drive the enemy bishop away by opposing it with his own bishop – a very important resource in such situations. Black can prevent this only by using his king actively.

This type of endgame was analysed as long ago as the middle of the last century by the Italian player Centurini. He established the chief rule for the defence – *the black king must position itself behind the white king*. Here is one of his positions which demonstrates how Black should defend (220).



1 ♗c7 is unplayable, while after 1 ♗e3 ♗a5 2 ♗b6 ♗d2 3 ♗c7 ♗e3 Black's bishop cannot be shut off, since his king controls the c5 square.

Yuri Averbakh has shown that in Capablanca-Janowski Black had no need to resign. He could have reached the Centurini formation with 1...♖f4!! 2 ♗d4 (2 ♗e5+ ♖c3 3 b5 ♖d3 4 ♖c6 ♖c4) 2...♖f3! 3 b5 ♖e2 4 ♖c6 ♖d3 5 ♗b6 ♗g5 6 ♗c7 (on 6 ♖b7 ♖c4 7 ♖a6, Black again stations his king in the rear of the

white one: 7...♖b3! 8 ♗f2 ♗d8 9 ♗c1 ♖a4! with a draw) 6...♗c3 7 ♖d5! (7 ♗d6 ♖c4) 7...♗d2!! (not 7...♖c3 8 ♗d6 ♗b6 9 ♖c6, or 8...♖b3 9 ♗c5 ♖a4 10 ♖c6) 8 ♗d8 (8 b6 ♗a5) 8...♗e3 9 ♗e7 ♗b6! 10 ♖c6 ♗a5 11 ♗d6 ♖c4.

Even in his youth (he was only seventeen), Fischer had made a serious study of chess as a whole, not just opening theory. He was familiar with Averbakh's analysis and therefore achieved the draw without difficulty.

81	...	♖f4!
82	b5	♖e4
83	♗d4	♗c7
84	♖c5	♖d3!
85	♖c6	♖c4
86	♗b6	♗g3
87	♗a7	♗c7

1/2-1/2

Gulko-Dvoretsky
USSR Ch (Top League),
Erevan 1975
Ragozin System

1 d4 ♖f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♖c3 ♗b4 4 ♖f3 d5 5 e3 0-0 6 ♗d3 ♖c6 7 0-0 a6 8 h3 dc 9 ♗xc4 ♗d6 10 e4 e5 11 ♗e3 ed?! 12 ♗xd4!! ♖xd4 13 ♖xd4 b5 14 e5? (14 ♗b3 c5 15 ♖e3 c4 16 ♗c2 b4 17 e5! bc 18 ♗ad1) 14...bc 15 ed (221)

What should Black play now?

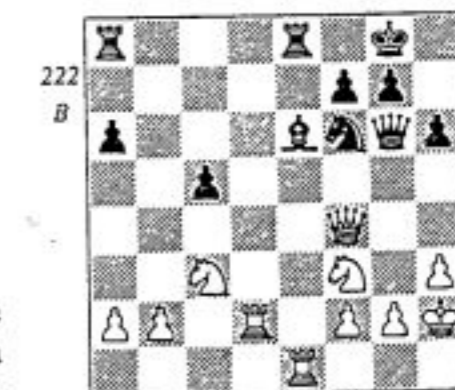
Delighted to have come out of the opening with nothing worse than a slight scare, I immediately committed a serious inaccuracy. Since my



queenside pawns remain disunited anyway, I ought at least to have preserved the more aggressive one on c4 which fixes a weakness on b2. After 15...♗e6! the chances are about equal.

I am afraid I conducted the next phase of the game rather superficially, and my opponent gradually outplayed me.

15...♖xd6? 16 ♖xc4 ♗e6 17 ♖e2 ♗fe8 (17...♖d5 deserved attention) 18 ♗fd1 ♖c5 (18...♖b6 19 ♖c2 is somewhat better for White) 19 ♖d2 ♖h5 20 ♖f4 c5 21 ♗d2 h6 22 ♗e1 (intending 23 ♗e5) 22...♖g6 23 ♖h2 (222)



Black's position is clearly worse. The white pieces are more active (the attacking tries $\text{N}e5$ and $\text{W}d6$ have to be watched for), and the black queen-side pawns are weak. In such cases it is very important to find an idea which can set the opponent some kind of problems and throw him off the natural course by which he aims to strengthen his position still further.

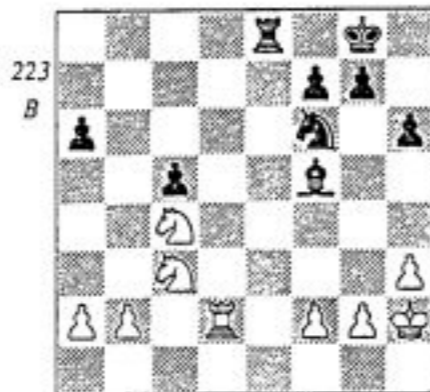
23 ... $\text{W}f5!$

I reckoned that in an ending with the rooks on, the black bishop might prove stronger than a white knight, thus compensating in some measure for the weak pawns. In the middle-game, on the other hand, it is knights that usually co-operate better with queens.

In addition, Black sets his opponent a positional trap. Will he be lured into 24 $\text{W}d6$?! (threatening 25 $\text{N}e5$)? In reply, I had prepared 24... $\text{N}ad8!$ 25 $\text{W}xd8$ $\text{N}xd8$ 26 $\text{N}xd8+$ $\text{W}h7$. The resulting position gives me real counter-chances based on ... $\text{W}h5$ and ... $g7-g5-g4$. Incidentally Black had this very plan in mind last move, when he induced the white king to go to h2.

24 $\text{W}xf5!$ $\text{N}xf5$
25 $\text{N}e5!$ $\text{N}xe5$
26 $\text{Q}xe5$ $\text{N}e8$
27 $\text{Q}c4$ (223)

Now I had to have a long think. The defence is very difficult. For instance, 27... $\text{N}e6$ is strongly answered by the simple 28 $\text{Q}e3$ followed by 29 $\text{N}d6$.



Another bad line is 27... $\text{N}e1$ 28 $\text{N}d6$ $\text{N}e6$ (28... $\text{Q}e4?$ 29 $\text{Q}xe4$ $\text{N}xe4$ 30 $\text{N}d8+$ $\text{W}h7$ 31 $\text{N}e8$ and wins) 29 $\text{Q}e3$.

A better move appears to be 27... $\text{Q}c4$, when White has two alternatives:

(a) 28 $\text{Q}xe4$ $\text{N}xe4$ (28... $\text{N}xe4?$ 29 $\text{Q}d6$), and now White's tries are all unconvincing: 29 $\text{Q}d6$ $\text{N}e6$, or 29 $\text{N}e2$ $\text{N}c6$ (aiming for ... $\text{N}d5$), or finally 29 $\text{N}d6$ $\text{N}b1!$.

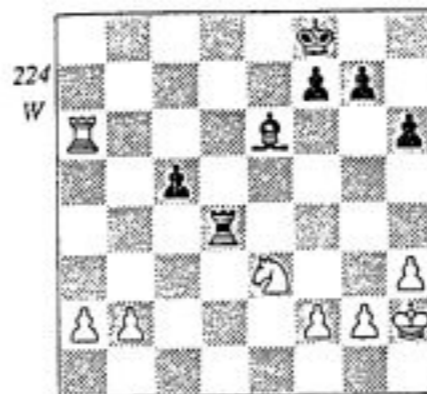
(b) 28 $\text{N}e2!$ $\text{W}f8$ (28... $\text{Q}f6$ is evidently weaker: 29 $\text{N}xe8+$ $\text{Q}xe8$ 30 $\text{Q}a4$ $\text{N}e6$ 31 b3 $\text{N}xc4$ 32 bc $\text{Q}d6$ 33 $\text{Q}xc5$ a5 34 $\text{W}g3$ $\text{Q}xc4$ 35 $\text{W}f4$) 29 $\text{Q}a4$ $\text{N}d7!$ 30 $\text{Q}ab6$, or 30 $\text{Q}cb6!$? $\text{N}b5$ 31 $\text{N}c2$ $\text{N}d3$ 32 $\text{N}c1$ $\text{Q}xf2$ 33 $\text{Q}xc5$, and Black has a hard defensive task ahead of him.

I decided to use a favourite defensive ploy – tempting my opponent into winning a pawn in return for maximising the activity of my pieces.

27 ... $\text{W}f8!?$
28 $\text{N}d6$

The cool 28 $\text{Q}e3$ would have been more troublesome to meet.

28 ... $\text{Q}e4!$
29 $\text{Q}xe4$ $\text{N}xe4$
30 $\text{Q}e3$ $\text{N}e6$
31 $\text{N}xa6$ $\text{N}d4$ (224)



This is the position Black was aiming for. His rook is now active (he threatens 32... $\text{N}d2$, winning the pawn back); the bishop is stronger than the knight and hampers its activity (I was hoping for just this kind of situation when I exchanged queens). The drawing chances are quite substantial.

At this point I expected the natural 32 b3 , parrying the threat of 32... $\text{N}d2$. After 32... $\text{W}e7$, White would have to reckon with ... $f7-f5-f4$ (especially if his king went to g3). On 33 $\text{N}c6$, Black has 33... $\text{N}d2$ (the pawns on a2 and b3 are vulnerable), while 33 $\text{N}a5$ can be adequately met by 33... $\text{W}d6$.

In such cases there is also a certain psychological factor which tends to favour the inferior side. The opponent doesn't realise that the pawn was sacrificed for definite positional compensation; he thinks he has

simply won it. Imagining that he is close to his goal and that the rest is a matter of technique, he tends to weaken and play carelessly – and this can usually be exploited.

But my luck was out; Gulko didn't make this psychological mistake. He thought for a long time (leaving himself with only ten minutes for eight moves), and discovered an excellent practical chance.

32 $\text{N}b6!$

White doesn't want to place his pawns on light squares. He plans a2-a3 , preserving the possibility of advancing the pawn further when the case arises. In addition his move involves an extremely cunning trap, which unfortunately I didn't detect.

Of course Black cannot play 32... $\text{N}xa2??$ 33 $\text{N}b8+$ $\text{W}e7$ 34 $\text{Q}f5+$, but why shouldn't he play 32... $\text{N}d2$, when two pawns are *en prise* at once? Obviously White will reply 33 a4 . Glancing over the variations, I decided that this was not dangerous.

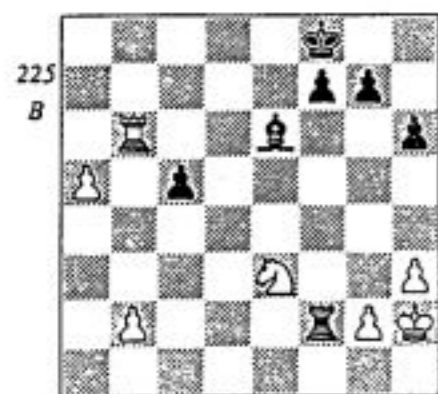
32 ... $\text{N}d2?!$

Continuing according to plan with 32... $\text{W}e7$ was sounder. White would probably have replied 33 g4 ! (better than 33 $\text{W}g3$ f5 34 f4 g5), but after 33... h5 (33... $\text{N}d2?$ 34 $\text{W}g3$ $\text{N}xa2$ 35 $\text{Q}f5+$) 34 $\text{W}g3$ hg 35 hg g6 or 35... $\text{W}d7$, Black's drawing chances are very considerable.

33 a4 $\text{N}xf2$
34 a5 (225)

Now what should Black play?

Again I glanced at the variation I had been preparing – 34... $\text{N}e2$ 35 a6



33 Hxe3 36 a7 Qd5 – and made the losing move without hesitation.

- | | | |
|----|----------------|---------------|
| 34 | ... | He2? |
| 35 | a6 | Hxe3 |
| 36 | Hb8+! | Qe7 |
| 37 | Hb7+! | |

Now White's idea becomes clear. The rook blocks off the a8-h1 diagonal, and there is no stopping the pawn. Therefore Black resigned.

And yet at move 34 it was not too late to back out. It appears that with 34... Hf4! Black could have saved the game.

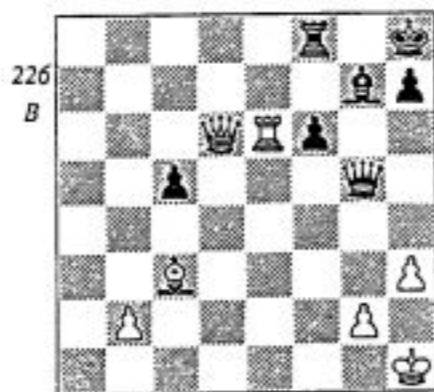
Neither 35 b3 Hf2 nor 35 b4 Hxb4! is dangerous. White must play 35 Hb5! . If now 35... $\text{He4?!$, then 36 Qd1! He1 37 Qc3 c4 38 Hb4! Ha1 39 Ha4 Hxa4 40 Qxa4 Qe7 41 a6 (or 41 Qb6 Qf5 42 a6) 41... Qd6 42 a7 Qd5 43 Qb6 Qb7 44 a8Q (44 $\text{Qxc4+!?$) 44... Qxa8 45 Qxa8 Qc6 46 Qg3 Qb7 47 Qf4 Qxa8 48 Qe5 Qb7 49 Qd5 , and White's outside passed pawn would seem to guarantee him victory in the king and pawn endgame.

However, the defence can be strengthened with 35... Qe7! 36 Hxc5

Hb4 37 Qd1 Qd6 38 Hc3 Ha4 39 Ha3 Hxa3 40 ba Qc5 41 Qc3 f5 . Black continues with ... g5 , ... Qc8 and ... Qc4 , and is certain to draw. In this line the basic idea of Black's defence emerges once again – his hopes rest on the superiority of bishop over knight in the endgame, and also on his more active king position.

Curiously enough, half a year before this game, a very similar situation had arisen in an encounter between the same opponents (226). On that occasion too, Gulko was equal to the task.

Gulko-Dvoretzky
Vilnius Z 1975



The position is strategically hopeless for Black. If 50... Qg8 , then 51 He4 is strong.

I decided to provoke my opponent into winning a pawn by a combination, since I saw that the resulting bishop endgame might not prove too simple.

- | | | |
|----|-----------------|--------------------|
| 50 | ... | $\text{Qf5!?$ |
| 51 | Qxf8+! | Qxf8 |
| 52 | Hxf6 | Qxf6 |
| 53 | Qxf6+ | Qg8 (227) |



What moves for White spring immediately to mind? Undoubtedly 54 b3 , fixing Black's pawn on the same colour of square as his bishop, and 54 g4 , clearing a straight road for the king into the centre. Those were the very moves I was counting on!

After 54 b3? , the black king becomes too active: 54... Qf7 55 Qc3 Qe6 56 Qg1 Qd5 57 Qf2 c4! (57... Qe4 58 Qe2 h5 would probably not lose either) 58 b4 Qc6 , followed by ... Qb5 and ... Qxb4 .

In the event of 54 g4? , Black can bring about an advantageous exchange of pawns on the kingside: 54... Qf7 55 Qc3 c4! 56 Qg2 Qg6 57

Qf3 h5 . Then the worst that can happen is the loss of the c-pawn, which merely leads to the drawn ending familiar to us from Taimanov-Fischer, but it is not clear how White can even achieve that, for example: 58 gh+ Qxh5 59 Qe4 Qh6! 60 Qd4 Qc1 61 Qxc4 Qxb2 62 Qxb2 Qh4 .

Gulko's understanding of the position was excellent, and he played the winning move.

- | | | |
|----|---------------|--------------|
| 54 | Qg1! | Qf7 |
| 55 | Qc3 | Qe6 |
| 56 | Qf2 | Qf5 |

If 56... c4 , then 57 Qe3 Qd5 58 Qf4 is decisive.

57 Qe3!

Again White is careful; 57 Qf3? would be met by 57... c4! 58 g4+ Qg6 (or 59... Qg5), with ... h7-h5 to follow.

57 ... h5

57... c4 58 Qd4 Qf4 59 Qxc4 also wins for White.

58 b3

Only now has the time come to fix the black pawn.

- | | | |
|----|---------------|--------------|
| 58 | ... | Qe7 |
| 59 | Qd3 | h4 |
| 60 | Qe1! | Qe5 |
| 61 | Qc4 | Qd6 |
| 62 | b4! | |

1-0

16 Samples of Play by Our Students

Artur Yusupov

In this chapter we return to the problems a player faces when preparing for a game and conducting its opening phase. We shall be examining typical mistakes that we detected when analysing games by our students, whose ages are given in brackets.

Sitnik(8)-Stepanavichus
Tallinn 1989



How should White continue? He has a very active position, but the development of his pieces is not yet complete. He should, of course, bring his queen's knight into the game with 13 Qc3! . This knight will then go to d5 or e4.

Instead of this, the young player decided to go straight for the enemy king.

- 13 Qxe7+ Kxe7
- 14 f5?

It was still not too late for 14 Qc3! .

- 14 ... Qc5?

Now White achieves his aim. Unprepared flank attacks should be met by energetic measures in the centre. The fitting retribution for White's offence against the principles of development was pointed out by Mark Dvoretzky: 14... Qxe5! 15 We4 Qc5! 16 Wxa8 Qb7 . The queen is trapped, and the advantage passes to Black.

- 15 fg Qxe5
- 16 gf+ Qh8
- 17 Wg8+! Kxg8
- 18 fg Wmate

Gaponenko(14)-Repkova
European Girls' Ch 1991
French Defence

- 1 e4 e6
- 2 d4 d5
- 3 Qc3 Qf6
- 4 Qg5 Qe7
- 5 e5 Qfd7
- 6 h4

The Chatard-Alekhine Attack. White sacrifices a pawn to gain time and open the h-file. Black usually declines the gambit and tries to carry

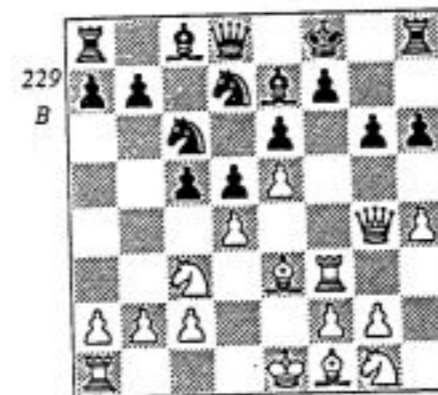
out the standard central counter-stroke ... c7-c5 . However, after the immediate 6... c5 he has to reckon with a knight sortie to b5 after the exchange of dark-squared bishops. Therefore the simplest method is to play 6... a6 first.

- 6 ... h6?!
- 7 Qe3 c5
- 8 Wg4 Qf8
- 9 Kh3?

The same mistake as in the previous game – *you should not throw yourself into an attack before completing your development*. The correct line was 9 Qf3 Qc6 10 0-0-0 with the better chances for White.

- 9 ... Qc6
- 10 Kg3 g6
- 11 Kh3? (229)

Better is 11 Qf3 .



- 11 ... Qdx5?

Black feels that a counterblow in the centre must be the way to refute her opponent's unprepared attack, but the particular move she chooses is unsound. In her own notes to the game, Inna Gaponenko demonstrates

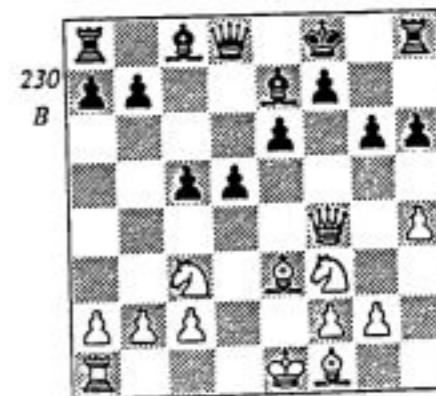
the right method: 11... cd! 12 Wxg6 Qdx5 13 Qxh6+ Qe8 14 Wg7 Qxf3+ 15 Qxf3 Qf6 , and Black wins.

- 12 de Qxe5
- 13 Wf4 Qxf3+?!

As is well known, 'mistakes never come singly'. Black had to play 13... Qd6! . If then 14 Wa4 , the simplest line is 14... Qd7 15 Wa3 Qxf3+ 16 Qxf3 We7 , with advantage to Black.

A much stronger reply is 14 0-0-0!. (Development above all!) White need not fear 14... Qd3+? 15 Qxd3 Qxf4 16 Qxf4 , when the minor pieces are clearly better than the enemy queen. Instead Black must play 14... Qxf3 . White is forced to recapture with her queen, temporarily blocking the development of her king's knight. All the same, after 15 Wxf3 Wxh4 16 $\text{Qxd5!?$ ed 17 Wxd5 , followed by Qc4 and Qf3 , the position looks worrying for Black (Dvoretzky).

- 14 Qxf3 (230)



It is astonishing how quickly the

situation has been transformed. Both black knights, which were already developed, have been exchanged, and now the superior placing of White's pieces is manifest.

14 ... d4?!

14...♔g7 is better. After the move played, Gaponenko organises a decisive attack on the king.

15 ♖e5 ♗f6
16 ♖e4! de
17 ♜d1 ef+
18 ♔e2!

After 18 ♔xf2 ♖xd1 19 ♖xf6 ♖d4+ 20 ♔g3 ♜h7 21 ♖xg6+ ♔g8 22 ♖e7+ ♔f8, the game is drawn by perpetual check.

18 ... ♖e7
19 ♖xf6 ♔g7
20 ♖e4 f6
21 ♖g3! g5

On 21...f6 22 ♖xe5+ ♔g8, White intended 23 ♜d3! followed by 24 ♖f6+ ♔f7 25 ♜f3.

22 ♖g4 ♜f8
23 hg f5
24 gh+ ♔h7
25 ♖gf6+ ♜xf6
26 ♖xf6+ ♖xf6
27 ♜d8! ♖xb2

If 27...f4 (counting on 28 ♖g8+ ♔xh6 29 ♜xc8 ♖c5+), White's simplest course is 28 ♖d3+ ♖f5 (28...♔xh6 29 ♖h3+) 29 ♖xf5+ ef 30 ♔xf2 b6 31 ♗e2 ♔xh6 (31...♗b7 32 ♜d7+) 32 ♗f3 ♜b8 33 ♗c6 (Gaponenko).

28 ♖c7+! ♔xh6
29 ♖h2+ ♔g5
30 ♜g8+ 1-0

Mugerman-Makariev(14)
Moscow 1989
Queen's Pawn Game

1 d4 ♖f6
2 ♗g5 e6
3 ♖d2 c5
4 ♖e4?!

The fundamental tasks at the start of a game are the quickest possible development of the pieces and the fight for the centre. Therefore you should avoid moving the same piece repeatedly (unless of course the manoeuvre brings some concrete rewards, or is forced). The danger of breaking this rule is illustrated by the following short variation: 4 dc?! ♗xc5 5 ♖e4?? ♖xc4 6 ♗xd8 ♗xf2 mate.

It was better to strengthen the centre with 4 e3.

4 ... d5

White benefits from 4...cd?! 5 ♖xd4 ♗e7 6 ♖d6+, since this makes Black's development more difficult.

5 ♖xc5 ♗xc5

As a result of his dubious operation, White has spent two tempi exchanging the bishop on f8 and has also exchanged off his own centralised d-pawn. In consequence, the initiative passes to Black.

6 dc ♖a5+

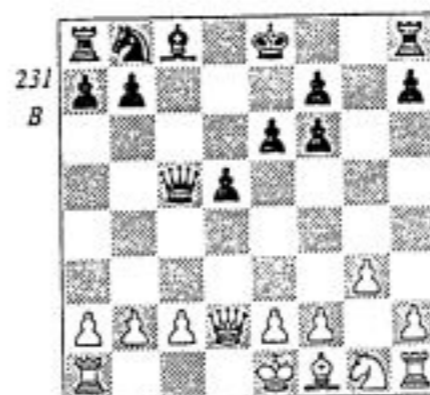
6...♖a6?! is weaker in view of 7 ♖d4, while on 6...♖bd7 White has 7 b4.

7 ♖d2 ♖xc5

Threatening 8...♖c4.

8 ♗xf6 gf

9 g3 (231)



9 ... ♖c6

A normal developing move. Its sole defect is that after the natural reply 10 ♗g2, Black's intended advance with ...e6-e5 is hindered. Black should have contended for the centre more actively. Concrete analysis demonstrates that the immediate 9...e5! 10 ♗g2 ♗e6 was playable:

(a) 11 c4? ♖xc4 12 ♜c1 ♖xa2 13 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 14 ♜c8+ ♔d7 15 ♜xh8 ♖b1+, and White comes out a piece down.

(b) 11 0-0-0 ♖c6 12 ♗xd5 0-0-0 13 ♗xc6+ (13 e4 ♖b4) 13...fe 14 ♖e1 ♜xd1+ 15 ♖xd1 ♜d8 (15...♖xf2 is also good) 16 ♖e1 ♖d5 17 ♖f3 ♖xa2 18 ♖d2 (18 c3 ♖a5!) 18...a5! with a dangerous queenside initiative (the threat is ...a5-a4-a3).

(c) 11 ♜d1 ♖c6 12 ♗xd5 ♗xd5! (12...0-0-0 13 c4 ♖b4 14 e4 ♖xa2 is unconvincing) 13 ♖xd5 ♖b4+ 14 c3 (Black also has the advantage after 14 ♖d2 ♖xb2) 14...♖xb2 15 ♖d7+ ♔f8 16 ♖d2 ♖xd2+ 17 ♜xd2 ♔e7.

Black's superior development secures him the upper hand even in the endgame.

10 ♗g2 ♗d7
11 ♖f3

11 e3!? followed by ♖e2 was worth considering.

11 ... ♖e5?

Ilya Makariev repeats his opponent's mistake: he wastes time in the opening. He should have continued his development with 11...e5! 12 ♜d1 ♗e6 13 0-0 0-0-0, achieving central control and a promising position.

12 0-0 ♖xf3+

The upshot is that Black has wasted two tempi on a knight exchange that was no use to him. However, on 12...♖c4 White has the unpleasant 13 ♖h6!?, as pointed out by Dvoretzky.

13 ef!?

Makariev planned to answer 13 ♗xf3 with 13...♔e7!?. The obvious 13...0-0-0 is worse on account of 14 c3, followed by b2-b4, a2-a4 etc.

13 ... 0-0-0

13...e5?! is met by 14 f4! ♗c6 15 ♜fe1.

14 f4 ♗c6?! (232)

Another mistake similar to 9...♖c6. Black misses a chance of playing actively in the centre with 14...d4! at once, and only afterwards ...♗c6.

15 ♜fe1?!

Returning the favour. White takes measures against ...e6-e5, but allows a more dangerous continuation. The



Gasymov-Zviagintsev(13)
Leningrad 1990
Queen's Pawn Game

- | | | |
|---|-----|-------|
| 1 | d4 | d5 |
| 2 | Qf3 | Qf6 |
| 3 | g3 | Qf5!? |
| 4 | c4 | e6 |
| 5 | Wb3 | |

The queen is a very important piece, and its position strongly influences the character of the contest. *The queen's position should not be determined too early.* Very often – just as in the present game – the opponent gains time for developing his pieces by subjecting the queen to attack.

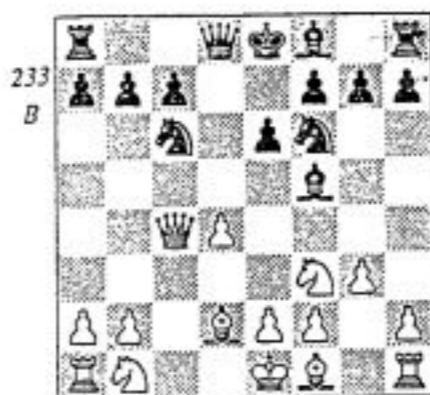
In chess there are no rules that hold good in all cases. The truth of 'absolute' principles is always subject to verification in the circumstances of individual positions. Thus, in the Queen's Gambit, an early queen excursion to b3 is a fairly standard reaction to the development of Black's light-squared bishop. Despite this, it is better if young players first absorb the general principles – and only afterwards seek exceptions to them and acquaint themselves with rules of a more specific type.

- | | | |
|---|-------|------|
| 5 | ... | Qc6! |
| 6 | Qd2?! | |

6 c5 was to be preferred. Now Black has the opportunity to exploit the forward position of White's queen.

- | | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| 6 | ... | dc! |
|---|-----|-----|

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------|--|
| 7 | Wxc4 (233) | |
| If 7 Wxb7, then 7...Qc4! 8 Wb5 | | |
| Bb8. | | |



- | | | |
|---|-----|-------|
| 7 | ... | Qd7?! |
|---|-----|-------|

By attacking the queen, Vadim Zviagintsev hopes to disrupt the co-ordination of his opponent's forces. But the cost of achieving this is a loss of time. Black is manoeuvring in the opening with pieces already brought out, committing the same fundamental mistake as in the foregoing example. His lead in development (White has lost time moving his queen, and his bishop on d2 is not too effectively placed) ought to have been converted into a more stable advantage – the better pawn structure. The correct line was found by Petya Svidler: 7...Qc4! (in this case the second move with the bishop is justified, because White in turn has to spend time defending his d-pawn) 8 Qc3 Qxf3. There could follow 9 ef Wd5 10 Wxd5 Qxd5 11 Qb5 Qd7 12 Qd2 a6 13 Qxc6+ Qxc6 14 Qc4 Qd6, with the better ending for Black.

- | | | |
|---|-------|-----|
| 8 | Qg2 | Qb6 |
| 9 | Wc3?! | |

Here the queen is depriving the minor pieces of a useful square. It was better to play 9 Wb3, without worrying about 9...Qe4 10 0-0! Qxf3?! 11 Wxf3 Wxd4 12 Qc3 – when White has excellent compensation for the pawn.

- | | | |
|---|-----|-------|
| 9 | ... | Qe4?! |
|---|-----|-------|

I would have preferred to complete Black's development with 9...Qb4 10 Wb3 a5, or 9...Qe7 10 0-0 0-0 followed by ...Qf6.

- | | | |
|----|------|-----|
| 10 | 0-0! | Qe7 |
|----|------|-----|

10...Qxf3?! 11 Wxf3 Wxd4 12 Qc3.

- | | | |
|----|------|----|
| 11 | Wc3! | f5 |
|----|------|----|

11...Qg6!?

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 12 | Qc3 | 0-0 |
|----|-----|-----|

- | | | |
|----|-----|--|
| 13 | Wc1 | |
|----|-----|--|

Intending 14 Qbd2.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 13 | ... | Qc4 |
|----|-----|-----|

By constantly regrouping pieces that are already developed, Black gradually loses the initiative. It was also worth considering 13...a5 or 13...Qf6.

- | | | |
|----|----|-----|
| 14 | b3 | Qd6 |
|----|----|-----|

- | | | |
|----|-----|--|
| 15 | Qb2 | |
|----|-----|--|

Preparing to develop the knight on c3.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 15 | ... | Qf6 |
|----|-----|-----|

- | | | |
|----|-----|-------|
| 16 | Qd1 | Qe7?! |
|----|-----|-------|

Instead, 16...We8 17 Qc3 Wh5 is interesting.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-------|
| 17 | Qc3 | Qc6?! |
|----|-----|-------|

In his notes to the game, Zviagintsev recommends 17...Qd5!?, and if 18 Qxe4 (18 Qa4!?) 18...fe 19 Qe5,

right move was 15 c3!, hindering the thematic ...d5-d4.

The reply 15...c5? 16 Qfe1 Qhe8 (16...Wd6? 17 fe fe 18 We3, or 16...d4 17 Qxc6 bc 18 fe fe 19 We2! with advantage to White) 17 fe fe 18 Wg5 f6 (18...Wd6 or 18...We7 would be met by 19 Wf5+) 19 Wxf6 Qf8 is dangerous for Black in view of 20 Wxe5! (but not 20 We6+? Qd7 21 Wxe5?? Wxf2+ 22 Qh1 Qde8) 20...Wxf2+ 21 Qh1, and Black's scope is drastically reduced by the constant threat of a bishop check from h3.

If Black still plays 15...d4?!, White has the advantage after 16 Qxc6 bc 17 cd; though 16...dc 17 Qxb7+ Qxb7 is more stubborn and gives good drawing chances.

Black should definitely prefer the prophylactic 15...Qb8!?, preparing either ...d5-d4 or ...e6-e5.

- | | | |
|----|------|-------|
| 15 | ... | d4! |
| 16 | Qxc6 | Wxc6 |
| 17 | Qad1 | Qd5 |
| 18 | Wd3 | Qb8!? |
| 19 | Qe4 | Qhd8 |

And Black obtained a good game.

then 19...♔g5! with chances for both sides.

- 18 ♖e3 ♜c8
19 ♔h3!? ♕e4

Black also 'stands worse after 19...♕d5 20 ♕xd5 ♔xd5 21 ♞ac1.

- 20 ♕xe4 ♔xe4
21 ♕g5

The advantage is now on White's side – a just penalty for Black's slow, purposeless manoeuvring.

Nikonovich-Baklan(12)
Alushta 1990
Queen's Pawn Game

- 1 d4 ♕f6
2 ♕f3 c5
3 dc?!

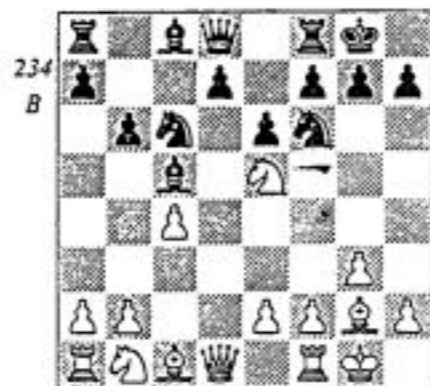
As a rule, exchanging the central d-pawn for the c-pawn is unfavourable. White made an analogous mistake in the game Mugerma-Makariev which we have already examined. Better moves are 3 d5 and 3 e3.

- 3 ... e6
4 g3 ♔xc5
5 ♔g2 ♕c6
6 0-0
6 c4?! ♜a5+!
6 ... 0-0
7 c4 b6
8 ♕e5? (234)

A serious mistake, of the kind we saw in previous games. Wasting tempi in the opening, White quickly ends up in a difficult position.

- 8 ... ♕xe5!!

The restrained 8...♔b7? is much



weaker; after 9 ♔f4 the game is level. By sacrificing the exchange, Volodya Baklan starts an attack against the enemy king. White's light-squared bishop will be cut off from the kingside and from his main forces.

- 9 ♔xa8 d5!

Of course not 9...♔a6 10 ♔g2 ♕xc4 11 ♕c3. Black's aim is not to regain material but to develop his attack quickly.

- 10 cd?

Often the best defence against a gambit – and sometimes the only one – is to return the extra material at a suitable moment, so as to consolidate your forces or bring about simplification. In this case White should have returned a couple of pawns with 10 ♔f4 ♕xc4 11 ♔c6 ♕xb2 12 ♜b3, though the advantage would still have been with Black.

- 10 ... ♔a6!?

The simple 10...ed!?, bringing the bishop into the attack on the c8-h3 diagonal, is not bad either. For example: 11 ♔f4 ♕g6 (11...♔h3? is not in keeping with the position; after 12

♔xe5 ♔xf1 13 ♜xf1 ♜xa8 14 ♔xf6 gf 15 ♕d2, the chances are all on White's side) 12 ♔g5 ♔h3 13 ♔c6 ♔xf1 14 ♜xf1 ♜d6 15 ♔b5 (15 ♔xf6 ♜xf6 16 ♔xd5 ♜xb2 is no better) 15...♕c4 and wins. Or 12 ♔c6 ♕xf4 13 gf ♜d6, and White's fate is not to be envied.

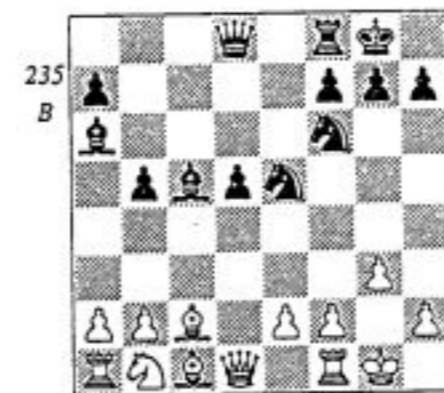
The only way to put the defence in some kind of order would be 11 ♕c3! ♔h3 12 ♔xd5 ♔xf1 13 ♜xf1.

- 11 ♔c6
11 ♔f4 ♕g6!? 12 ♔c6 ♕xf4 13 gf ♜d6 with an attack.

- 11 ... ed
12 ♔a4 b5!?

An ingenious move, but objectively not the strongest. He should probably have preferred 12...♜c8! 13 ♜g2 (if 13 ♔f4, then 13...♜h3! is decisive) 13...♜f5.

- 13 ♔c2? (235)



White has not figured out his opponent's cunning plan. As Baklan points out, the only defence was 13 ♔f4! ♞e8 (13...♕g6 14 ♔c2 ♕xf4 15 gf ♜d7 16 f5!) 14 ♔c2 b4 15 ♕d2 ♕eg4 16 ♔d3 ♜b6 with unclear play.

- 13 ... ♜d7!

The queen penetrates to h3, where it will create irresistible threats.

- 14 ♜g2

14 ♕d2 ♜h3 15 ♕f3 ♕fg4 with unavoidable mate.

- 14 ... ♔c8!

The point of Black's plan.

- 15 ♞h1 ♜h3+
16 ♜g1 ♕fg4
17 e3 d4!

0-1

Severe punishment for neglecting to develop the pieces.

Zviagintsev(15)-Feigin
CIS Junior Ch, Jurmala 1992
Benoni

- 1 d4 e6
2 c4 c5
3 d5 ed
4 cd d6
5 ♕c3 g6
6 e4 ♔g7
7 ♕ge2 ♕e7

A rare continuation, the point of which is to undermine the centre with an early ...f7-f5. The insertion of 7...a6?! 8 a4 impairs this idea; after 8...♕e7 9 ♕g3! 0-0 10 ♔e2 f5 11 ef ♕xf5 12 ♕xf5 ♔xf5 13 0-0, Black has problems developing his knight, since 13...♕d7? fails to 14 g4! ♔xc3 15 bc ♔e4 16 f3 (analysis by Zviagintsev).

But now, after 8 ♕g3 0-0 9 ♔e2 f5 10 ef ♕xf5 11 ♕xf5 ♔xf5 12 0-0, Black can play 12...♕a6!.

8 ♖g5!?

White provokes a weakening of the black kingside pawns.

8 ... h6
9 ♖e3 f5!? (236)

On 9...0-0?!, White would play 10 ♖d2 with tempo. Black plans to exchange on e4 and then play ...♗f5 to unsettle the bishop on e3.



10 g4!!

A splendid decision! In the King's Indian Defence White sometimes advances his g-pawn to gain control of f5 and restrict the mobility of Black's knight on e7; but this does not usually involve a pawn sacrifice.

If the offer is accepted, White will obtain compensation in the form of a strong mobile pawn-centre.

10 ... fg

10...fe?! 11 ♖g3 with advantage.

11 h3

In offering to exchange the g-pawn, Zviagintsev also wishes to exchange the light-squared bishops. After that, his knight will try to intrude on the weakened e6 square.

11 ... ♗d7!?

He would be playing into his opponent's hands with 11...gh 12 ♖xh3, or 11...a6 12 hg ♖xg4 13 ♖h3 when White has excellent compensation for the pawn.

12 ♗f4

12 hg!? ♗e5 13 ♗f4 is not bad either.

12 ... ♖b6?

The start of a faulty manoeuvre. In answer to 12...♗e5, Black was probably worried about 13 ♖b5+!, yet after 13...♗f7!? things are not so clear. 13...♗f8 is weaker on account of 14 hg ♗xg4 15 ♗e6+!, or 14...♖xg4 15 ♖e2 with a dangerous initiative for White.

It was also worth considering 12...♖a5!? 13 ♖b3!? (or 13 ♖c2 ♖xc3+! 14 bc ♗e5) 13...♖xc3+! (13...♗e5 14 ♖b5+ with an attack) 14 bc ♗e5 15 ♖b5+ ♗d8! with double-edged play (Zviagintsev). If 13 ♗e6!?, then 13...♖xc3+ 14 bc ♗e5.

13 ♗e6 ♖xb2?

Zviagintsev planned to meet 13...♖e5? with 14 ♗b5 ♗f7 15 a4!.

However, Black should have played 13...♖xc3+ 14 bc ♗e5 15 ♖b1 ♖a5. This position resembles the line with 12...♖a5, though here White has an extra tempo.

The move actually played is clearly unsound. Black is breaking one of the simplest rules: *Don't go 'pawn hunting' in the opening.* White now wins by force, exploiting the unfortunate position of the enemy queen.

14 ♗xg7+ ♗f7

15 ♖d2! ♗xg7

16 ♖b1 ♖a3

17 ♖b3 ♖a5

18 ♗b5 ♖d8

19 ♖c3+ ♗e5 (237)

White has brought his pieces into the attack with tempo and prepared the final combinative stroke in the centre.



20 ♗xd6! ♖xd6

21 ♖a1 ♗f6

22 hg g5

23 f4! gf

24 ♖xe5+! ♖xe5

25 ♖xh6+! ♖xh6

26 g5+ 1-0

Kramnik-Zviagintsev(14)

Leningrad 1990

Philidor's Defence

1 e4 d6

2 d4 ♗f6

3 ♗c3 e5

4 ♗f3

The queen exchange is worth considering: 4 de de 5 ♖xd8+ ♗xd8 6 ♗f3 ♖d6 7 ♖c4, with the better

game for White. The move played transposes into a variation of Philidor's Defence.

4 ... ♗bd7

5 ♖c4 ♖e7

6 0-0 0-0

7 ♖e1

7 ♖e2.

7 ... c6

8 a4 ♖c7

The standard retort 8...a5!?, recommended by present-day theory, limits the opponent's possibilities on the queenside. The game Ivkov-Planinc, Amsterdam 1974, continued 9 h3 ed 10 ♗xd4 (or 10 ♖xd4 ♗c5 11 ♖g5 ♗e6 12 ♖xe6 ♖xe6 13 ♖ad1 ♖e8 14 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 15 ♖xd6 ♖b6! with unclear play; Timoshchenko-Planinc, Polanica Zdroj 1979) 10...♗c5 11 ♖f4 ♖b6 12 ♗b3 ♖e6 13 ♖xe6 ♗xe6 14 ♖e3 ♖c7 15 ♗d4 ♗xd4 16 ♖xd4 ♖ad8, with equal chances.

9 h3

Preparing to develop his bishop on e3. Another possibility is 9 a5!?

9 ... h6

In the event of 9...b6?!, Zviagintsev was afraid of 10 d5 ♖b7 11 dc ♖xc6 12 ♖g5! with advantage to White.

In a game Kuchukhidze-Zviagintsev, played earlier in the same tournament, White answered 9...h6 with 10 a5!?. After 10...♖b8, White gains nothing from 11 d5 b5 12 ab ♗xb6, but the prophylactic 11 ♖a2! deserves serious attention. If then 11...b5, White has 12 ab ab 13 d5.

Instead of this, White played 11 $\text{e}3$, and Black solved the problem of his queenside by means of 11...b5! 12 ab ab 13 d5 b5 14 $\text{a}7$?! $\text{b}7$ 15 $\text{xb}7$ $\text{xb}7$ 16 $\text{b}3$ b4!? 17 $\text{a}2$ cd 18 ed $\text{a}5$.

Volodya Kramnik naturally attempted to improve on White's play when preparing himself for the present game.

10 $\text{e}3$?! (238)



10 ... $\text{e}8$?!

A stock move, freeing f8 for the knight or bishop. But now White is able to put pressure on the queenside. Confronted with an unexpected move in the opening, Zviagintsev plays rather passively and concedes the initiative to his more experienced opponent.

10... $\text{d}e4$ 11 $\text{d}e4$ d5 doesn't work in view of 12 $\text{xd}5$ cd 13 $\text{c}3$. Black needs to offer resistance to his opponent's plans. He can do this either by 10...b6!? (aiming for gradual queenside expansion by ...a7-a6, ... $\text{b}7$ and ...b6-b5) 11 d5 (11 $\text{h}4$ $\text{d}e4$ 12 $\text{f}5$ $\text{d}f6$) 11... $\text{b}7$ 12 dc

$\text{xc}6$ 13 $\text{d}2$ a6!? 14 $\text{e}2$ $\text{b}7$, with chances for both sides – or else by the simple 10...a5?!

11 a5!

White is planning 12 d5.

11 ... $\text{f}8$?!

A more natural line is 11... $\text{f}8$ 12 d5 $\text{g}6$.

12 d5! $\text{c}5$

12...cd 13 $\text{xd}5$ $\text{c}5$ is hardly attractive either.

13 $\text{d}2$

13 $\text{xc}5$ dc 14 dc bc is quite good; the resulting pawn structure favours White.

13 ... $\text{d}7$

14 b4! cd

The only defence.

15 $\text{xd}5$ $\text{xd}5$

16 $\text{xd}5$ $\text{e}6$

Neither 16... $\text{a}4$? 17 $\text{f}3$! nor 16... $\text{a}6$? 17 $\text{b}1$! is any good for Black.

17 c4!? $\text{f}4$!?

18 $\text{xf}4$ ef

19 a6

White's initiative on the queenside and in the centre has created weaknesses in Black's pawn structure. If instead 19 h4 (threatening 20 $\text{f}3$), Black has 19... $\text{e}7$, activating his 'bad' bishop.

19 ... $\text{c}6$

20 ab $\text{xb}7$

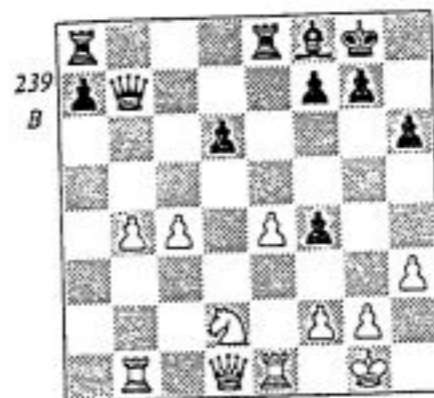
21 $\text{xb}7$

If 21 $\text{a}4$, Black again has 21... $\text{e}7$!.

21 ... $\text{xb}7$

22 $\text{b}1$ (239)

22 ... g5?



eliminated the more dangerous d-pawn.

29 d7! $\text{d}6$

29... $\text{xd}2$ 30 $\text{d}1$.

30 $\text{e}4$! 1-0

In view of 30... $\text{xd}7$ 31 $\text{xc}6$ +! fg 32 $\text{f}6$ +.

Romanishin-Aleksandrov(17)

Pula 1990

Catalan

Tarrasch rightly observed that one badly placed piece means a bad game. The principles of development don't just apply in the opening. Black has to activate his bishop, but without weakening his castled position. The most logical move is thus 22... $\text{e}7$.

A line given by Zviagintsev is also interesting: 22...a5!? 23 ba $\text{c}7$ 24 $\text{g}4$ $\text{xa}5$ 25 $\text{xf}4$ $\text{a}2$.

23 h4!

In this way White acquires a clear plus.

23 ... $\text{e}6$

24 $\text{h}5$

Stronger than 24 hg hg 25 $\text{f}3$ $\text{xe}4$ 26 $\text{g}5$ $\text{xe}1$ + 27 $\text{xe}1$ $\text{e}7$ with counterchances (Zviagintsev).

24 ... $\text{g}6$

25 hg hg

26 e5!

After 26 $\text{f}3$, Black obtains counterplay with 26... $\text{e}8$! 27 $\text{g}5$ $\text{h}6$.

26 ... $\text{e}8$

27 ed $\text{xe}1$ +

28 $\text{xe}1$ $\text{xb}4$??

This loses. Black should have

Playing against a grandmaster, especially one of such calibre, is not only a serious test but also an excellent opportunity to learn about top-quality chess.

1 d4 $\text{f}6$

2 c4 e6

3 $\text{f}3$ d5

4 g3 dc

5 $\text{g}2$ $\text{c}6$

6 $\text{a}4$

Another try is 6 0-0.

6 ... $\text{b}4$ +

7 $\text{d}2$ $\text{d}5$

8 $\text{xb}4$

Another line seen in practice is 8 $\text{b}5$ $\text{xd}2$ + 9 $\text{bxd}2$ c3 10 bc $\text{xc}3$ 11 $\text{d}3$, with compensation for the pawn.

8 ... $\text{xb}4$

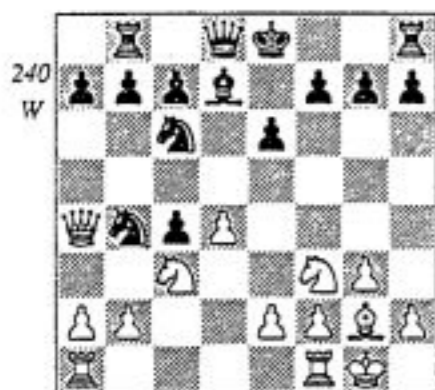
9 0-0

The alternative 9 a3 is undergoing a crisis due to the game Ivanchuk-Korchnoi, Tilburg 1989. Play went 9...b5 10 $\text{xb}5$ $\text{c}2$ + 11 $\text{d}2$ $\text{xa}1$ 12 $\text{xc}6$ + $\text{d}7$ 13 $\text{xc}4$. At this point Viktor Korchnoi innovated

with 13...c5! and won a striking victory: 14 ♖a2 ♖a5+ 15 b4 cb 16 ♖xa1 ♜c8 17 ♜e5 ♙b5 18 ♜e3? ♜c2 (Black has an obvious plus) 19 ♙f3 0-0 20 a4 f6 21 ♜d3 ♙c4 22 ♜d2? ♖g5+?! (22...♙xd3!) 23 ♜f4 e5 24 ♜xc4 ef+ 25 gf ♖f5 26 ♜d6 ♖e6+ 0-1.

In a game Polovodin-S.Ivanov, St Petersburg 1992, White's attempt to improve with 18 ♜d3 led to the same discouraging result: 18...♙xd3 19 ♜xd3 0-0 20 ♖b2 ba 21 ♖xa3 ♖b5+ 22 ♜d2 ♜fd8 23 e3? ♖f5 24 ♜e2 ♜c2+ 25 ♜d2 ♜xd2+ 26 ♜xd2 ♖xf2+ 27 ♜d3 ♖xg2 28 ♜b1 e5 29 ♜b2 ♜xd4+ 0-1.

9 ... ♜b8
10 ♜c3 ♙d7! (240)



For the moment Black has an extra pawn, but he is behind in development and his pieces are not coordinated. Earlier games had seen 10...a6 11 ♜e5 0-0 (11...♖xd4 12 ♜xc6 favours White) 12 ♜xc6 ♜xc6 13 ♙xc6 bc 14 ♖xc4 ♜xb2, but after 15 ♜ab1 ♜b6 16 ♖c5 White retains some initiative. In the game

Krasenkov-Mednis, Palma de Mallorca 1987, there followed 16...f6 17 a4 ♜c8 18 a5 ♜xb1 19 ♜xb1 ♖d6 20 ♖xd6 cd 21 ♜b6, and now it was essential for Black to play 21...♜f7! 22 ♜xc6 ♜e7 with chances of equalising. In Romanishin-Bönsch, Berlin 1990, Black succeeded in neutralising White's initiative with 16...h6 17 a4 a5 18 ♜fd1 ♙a6 19 e3 ♖g5 20 ♜xb6 ♖xc5 21 dc cb 22 cb ♜b8 23 ♜b1 ♙d3 24 ♜b2 ♜f8.

Aleksandrov's move is an interesting novelty. Black prepares to return the pawn so as to create highly promising counterplay.

11 a3 b5!
12 ♜xb5 ♜d5!

As Romanishin pointed out, 12...a6 13 ♜c3 ♜xd4 is weaker on account of 14 ♖a5! ♜b3 15 ♖e5 f6 16 ♖e4 (16 ♖h5+!? g6 17 ♖h6) 16...♜xa1 17 ab ♜b3 18 ♖xc4, and White has a won position.

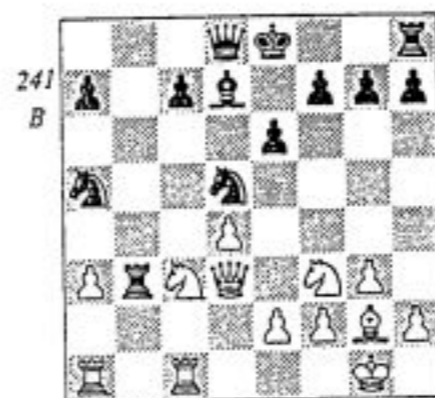
13 ♜c3!

After 13 e4?! ♜ce7?! 14 ed ♙xb5 15 ♖xa7 ed, White's position is preferable. Aleksandrov had prepared 13...a6! 14 ed (14 ♜c3? ♜xc3 15 bc ♜xd4 16 ♖xc4 ♜xf3+ 17 ♙xf3 ♙b5, or 14 ♖xa6? ♜a8 15 ♖b7 ♜a5) 14...ab 15 ♖d1 ed, with mutual chances.

13 ... ♜xb2

This time 13...♜xc3 14 bc ♜xd4 leads to advantage for White after 15 ♖xc4 ♜xf3+ 16 ♙xf3 ♙b5 17 ♖c5.

14 ♖xc4 ♜a5
15 ♖d3 ♜b3
16 ♜fc1 (241)



16 ... c5!

Usually castling ought not to be delayed so long. But there are situations where other factors prove more important than straightforward development. Black's position has a serious defect in the backward c-pawn, which may prove extremely weak. At present the activity of his pieces makes up for this fault, but if White manages to extricate himself he will acquire a clear plus. Aleksandrov therefore loses no time in working up counterplay in the centre and on the queenside.

Let us see what would happen after the stereotyped 16...0-0?!. The reply 17 ♜d2?! would be a mistake owing to 17...♙b5 18 ♖f3 ♙xe2! 19 ♖xe2 ♜xc3 20 ♜xc3 ♜xc3 21 ♖a6 c5! 22 ♖xa7 ♜e2+ 23 ♜h1 ♜xd4 (Aleksandrov).

17 ♜e5! is much more dangerous. Quiet continuations leave Black with clearly the worse position: 17...c6 18 e4 ♜f6 19 ♖d1 ♜b8 20 ♜ab1, or 17...f6 18 ♜xd7 ♖xd7 19 ♙xd5 ed 20 ♖a6 ♜c6 21 e3 (Romanishin).

Nor is Black rescued by 17...♙b5?! 18 ♖d2 ♜xc3 19 ♜xc3 f6. According to analysis by Dvoretzky and Aleksandrov, White can play either 20 ♜f3 ♙xe2 21 ♜xb3 ♜xb3 22 ♖xe2 ♜xa1 23 ♖xe6+! ♜h8 24 ♖a2, or 20 ♜c6 ♙xc6 21 ♙xc6 ♜xc3 22 ♖xc3 ♜xc6 23 ♖xc6 ♖xd4 24 ♖xe6+ ♜h8 25 ♜c1 c5 26 ♖c6!. Both lines are dismal for Black.

17 ♖d2!

Of course not 17 dc?? ♙b5 18 ♖d4 ♜xc3 19 ♖xg7 ♜xe2+ 20 ♜h1 ♜f8, and Black comes out a piece up. On the other hand if 17 ♜e5? ♜xc3 18 ♜xc3 ♙b5, the white d-pawn is under attack.

17 ... c4
18 ♜e5 ♜xc3
19 ♜xc3 ♙b5??

A gross blunder due to lack of time. What a pity! Up to here, both sides had played excellently and the young player was standing up to his experienced opponent.

19...♜b8? is also a mistake: 20 ♜xc4 ♜b3 21 ♜d6+ ♜e7 (21...♜f8 22 ♖f4) 22 ♜xb3 ♜xb3 23 ♖g5+ f6 24 ♖c5 ♜f8 25 ♖xa7 with a plus for White (Romanishin).

An exception should not be made into a rule! It was now time to castle. After 19...0-0!, Dvoretzky shows that 20 ♜xc4? ♖c7 21 ♜ac1 fails to 21...♜xc3! 22 ♖xc3 ♜c8.

20 a4! f6

Both players saw that after 20...♙a6 21 ♜xb3 White would have a fierce attack:

(a) 21...cb 22 ♖c6 ♖xc6 23 ♕xc6+ ♜e7 (23...♜f8 24 ♖b4+) 24 ♖g5+ f6 25 ♖c5+.

(b) 21...♖xb3 22 ♕c6+! (stronger than 22 ♖b4+ ♖xd4) 22...♜f8 23 ♖b4+ ♜g8 24 ♔d1 h5 (24...♖f8 25 ♖c3) 25 d5! (threatening 26 ♖xf7!) 25...♖f6 26 ♖d7!.

21 ab fe
22 ♕c6+!

A subtle decision. If 22 ♔xb3 ♖xb3 23 ♕c6+, Black obtains counterplay in the ending: 23...♜f8 24 ♖b4+ ♖e7 25 ♖xe7+ ♜xe7 26 ♔xa7+ ♜f6 27 de+ ♜xe5 28 ♔xg7 c3! (Dvoretsky).

22 ... ♖xc6

Forced.

23 bc ♔xc3

The endgame after 23...♖xd4 24 ♖xd4 ed 25 ♔xc4 is completely hopeless for Black.

24 ♖xc3 ♖xd4

25 ♖a3! ♜f7

25...♔f8 26 c7 ♖xf2+ 27 ♜h1 ♜d7 28 ♔d1+ (Romanishin) would not have helped Black either. An interesting line is 25...c3 26 c7! (better than 26 ♔c1 c2 27 ♖b3 0-0 28 e3 ♖d2 29 ♖xc2 ♖xc2 30 ♔xc2 ♔c8, and Black keeps some saving chances) 26...♖c4 (26...♜f7 27 ♔c1 ♔c8 28 ♔xc3) 27 ♔c1 ♖xc7 (27...c2? 28 ♖a4+!) 28 ♔xc3 ♖d7 29 ♔d3 ♖c7 30 ♖a4+ ♜e7 31 ♖b4+ ♜f7 32 ♔f3+ ♜e8 33 ♔c3 and wins.

26 e3 ♖d3

On 26...♖e4, the simple 27 c7 is good. If 26...♖b6 (hoping for 27 ♖d6? ♜f6!), White wins the ending,

as demonstrated by Romanishin: 27 ♖xa7+ ♖xa7 28 ♔xa7+ ♜f6 29 ♔a4 e4 30 ♔xc4 ♔c8 (30...♜e5 31 ♔d4 and 32 ♔d7) 31 ♜g2 ♜e5 32 ♜h3 (or 32 c7) 32...♜d5 33 ♔d4+.

27 ♖xa7+ ♜f6
28 ♖b7 c3
29 ♔a7 ♔g8
30 ♖f7+ ♜g5
31 h4+ ♜g4
32 ♜g2 ♖e2
33 ♔a4+ 1-0

Boguslavsky(15)-Bazhin
USSR Junior Team Ch 1990
Modern Benoni

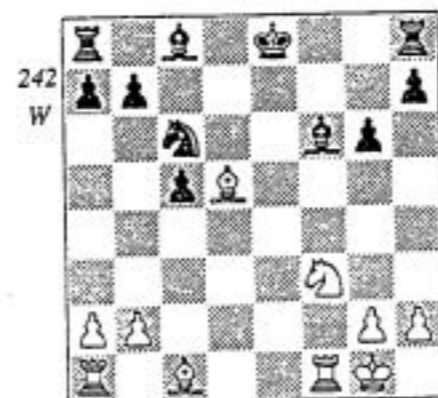
1 d4 ♖f6
2 c4 e6
3 ♖c3 c5
4 d5 ed
5 cd d6
6 e4 g6
7 f4 ♕g7
8 e5 de
8...♖fd7!?
9 fe ♖fd7
10 e6 fe
11 de ♖e7
12 ♖d5! ♖xe6+
13 ♖e2 ♖xe2+
14 ♕xe2 ♕e5?!

Extremely sharp opening lines such as this demand precise knowledge of theory. Playing them purely on the basis of common sense is exceedingly difficult, for the first inaccuracy can be fatal.

To avoid conceding the initiative to his opponent, Black should have

sacrificed a whole rook with 14...0-0!! 15 ♖c7 ♖c6 16 ♖xa8 ♖b4. But can such a decision conceivably be taken over-the-board, with no help from pre-game analysis?

15 ♖f3 ♖f6
15...♕d6? 16 ♕h6!
16 ♕c4 ♖xd5
17 ♕xd5 ♕f6
18 0-0 ♖c6 (242)



19 ♕g5!

Maxim Boguslavsky's strategy is typical of such positions and quite instructive. *Exchange your opponent's developed pieces – then your lead in development will be particularly effective.*

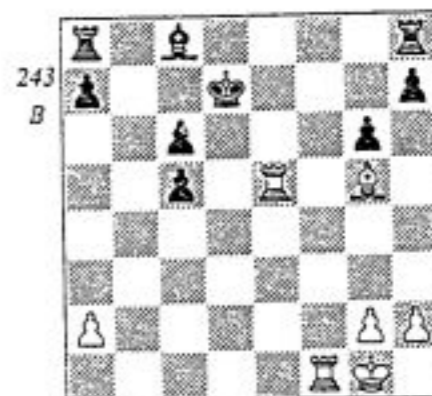
19 ... ♕xb2?

This 'pawn-hunting' with backward development will be severely punished. Black had to play 19...♕xg5 20 ♖xg5 ♕f5.

20 ♕xc6+! bc
21 ♔ae1+ ♜d7
22 ♖e5+!

Still the same strategy! A less convincing line is 22 ♔c7+ ♜d6 23 ♔d1+ ♕d4+.

22 ... ♕xe5
23 ♔xe5 (243)



Black has two extra pawns in the ending. But with opposite-coloured bishops, the material plus is not so significant. It is much more important to have the attack. Black's king is in mortal danger. Boguslavsky planned to meet 23...c4 with 24 ♔f7+ ♜d6 25 ♕f4 ♕a6 (25...♕g4 26 h3 g5 27 ♔xg5+ ♜e6 28 ♔c7 ♕f5 29 ♔xc6+ ♜d5 30 ♔f6) 26 ♔a5+ ♜e6 27 ♔c7 ♕c8 (27...♕b5 28 a4) 28 ♔e5+ ♜f6 29 ♔xc6+ ♜f7 30 ♕g5 ♕f5 31 ♔c7+ ♜g8 32 ♕h6, and White wins.

23 ... ♜c7
24 ♔e7+ ♕d7

Black is mated after 24...♜b6 25 ♔b1+ ♜a5 26 ♕d2+ ♜a4 27 ♔c4+ ♜a3 28 ♕c1+ ♜xa2 29 ♔b2+.

25 ♔d1 ♔ad8
25...♔hd8 26 ♔xh7.
26 ♕f4+ ♜b6
26...♜c8 27 ♔b1.
27 ♔b1+ ♜a5
28 ♕d2+ ♜a4
29 ♔c4+ c4

- 30 ♠xc4+ ♔a3
- 31 ♚c1+ ♔xa2
- 32 ♠b2+ ♔a3
- 33 ♠b7+ 1-0

Svidler(15)-Arkhipov
Gausdal 1991
French Defence

- 1 e4 e6
- 2 d4 d5
- 3 ♘d2 ♘f6
- 4 e5 ♘fd7
- 5 c3 e5
- 6 ♙d3 ♘c6
- 7 ♘e2 cd
- 8 cd ♗b6
- 9 0-0

A problematic pawn sacrifice. As compensation White obtains a lasting initiative based on his lead in development.

- 9 ... ♘xd4
- 10 ♘xd4 ♗xd4
- 11 ♘f3 ♗b6
- 12 ♗a4 ♗b4

The white queen has to be prevented from reaching g4.

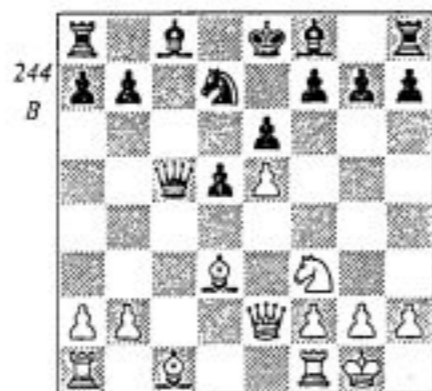
- 13 ♗c2 ♗c5
- 14 ♗e2 (244)

The theoretical line 14 ♙xh7 b6 leads to equality.

- 14 ... h6?!

It was more logical to continue developing with 14...♙e7 15 ♙e3 ♗a5, though with 16 ♗c2!? White would retain quite good compensation for the pawn.

- 15 ♙e3 ♗a5
- 16 ♘d4!



A direct consequence of Black's loss of time in moving his rook's pawn. White is preparing f2-f4, and 16...♘xe5? fails to 17 ♙d2! ♗c7 18 ♘b5 ♗b8 19 ♙f4 f6 20 ♠ac1! ♙d6 21 ♠xc8+!

- 16 ... ♙e7
- 17 ♗g4 g6!
- 18 f4!
- 18 ♙xg6? ♘xe5.
- 18 ... ♘c5?!

In Svidler's opinion it was worth considering 18...h5!? 19 ♗g3 ♙c5, but not 19...♘c5?! 20 ♙xg6! fg (20...♠g8 21 ♙xf7+! ♔xf7 22 ♗h3) 21 ♗xg6+ ♔d8 22 f5! ef 23 ♙g5! ♠e8 24 ♠ac1! ♗b6 25 ♙xe7+ ♠xe7 26 ♗g8+ ♠e8 27 ♗xd5+ ♘d7 28 e6 ♠xe6 29 ♗xe6 ♗xd4+ 30 ♔h1, and White has a winning attack.

- 19 ♙xg6!
- Demolishing the protective pawn wall, White launches an attack on the king in complete accordance with the demands of the position.

- 19 ... fg
- 19...♠g8 20 ♙xf7+ ♔xf7 21 ♗h5+.
- 20 ♗xg6+ ♔d8

- 21 f5 ef
- 21...♗c7 22 ♘b5!
- 22 e6 ♗a6
- 23 ♠ad1

An alternative that deserved serious attention was 23 ♠ac1!? ♘xe6 24 ♘xf5 (but not 24 ♠xc8+? ♠xc8 25 ♘xe6+ ♔d7, and it is Black who wins) 24...♠e8 25 ♘xh6!? with a strong attack.

- 23 ... ♙xe6
- 23...♘xe6 24 ♘xf5.
- 24 ♘xf5! ♠g8!

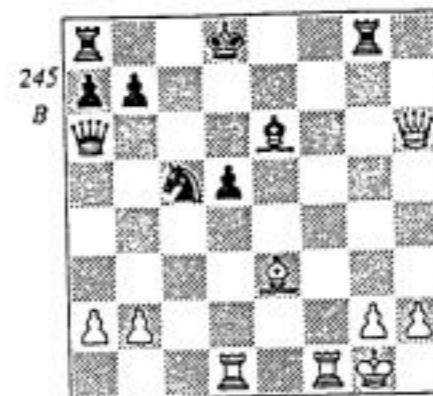
According to Svidler's analysis, other moves lose:

- (a) 24...♠c8 25 ♘xe7 ♔xe7 26 ♙xc5+ ♠xc5 27 ♗g7+.
- (b) 24...♘c4 25 ♘xe7 ♔xe7 26 ♗g7+ ♔d6 27 ♙f4+.
- (c) 24...♙xf5 25 ♗xf5! ♗e6 26 ♠xd5+.
- 25 ♗h7 ♙f8!

The only defence. A bad line is 25...♠e8 26 ♘xe7 ♠xe7 27 ♗h8+ ♠c8 28 ♗f6+ ♔d7 29 ♙xc5, and on 25...♠xg2+ White continues decisively with 26 ♔xg2 ♗e2+ 27 ♔h1 ♙xf5 28 ♗xf5 ♗xe3 29 ♗xd5+ ♔c7 30 ♠del ♗g5 31 ♠xe7+ ♗xe7 32 ♠f7 (Svidler).

- 26 ♘xh6 ♙xh6
- 27 ♗xh6 (245)
- 27 ... ♘e4?

We are in the middlegame, yet Black has still not completed his development. He would like to bring his queen's rook into play, so 27...♠c8 appears logical. The continuation, however, would be 28 ♙xc5! ♠xc5 29 ♠f8+, for example:



29...♔c7 30 ♠xg8 ♙xg8 31 ♗g7+ ♔b6 32 ♗xg8 ♗e2 (counting on 33 ♠f1 ♗e3+ 34 ♔h1 ♠c1) 33 ♗g6+ followed by 34 ♗d3, and White retains sufficient advantage to win.

Svidler suggests 27...♗e2!? 28 g3 ♘e4 29 ♗:te6 ♗xe3+ 30 ♔g2 ♗e2+ 31 ♔g1 ♗e3+ with perpetual check. If White doesn't want a draw, he can try 29 ♙f4!?

After Black's error, the attack becomes irresistible.

28 ♠f8+ ♔e7
28...♠xf8? 29 ♗xf8+ ♔d7 30 ♗xa8 ♗e2 fails to 31 ♗xb7+ ♔e8 32 ♗a8+ ♔d7 33 ♗xa7+, with 34 ♠f1 to follow; while if 28...♔d7, White has the decisive 29 ♗h7+ ♔c6 30 ♠c1+ ♔b5 31 ♠xa8 ♠xa8 32 a4+!

29 ♠xa8 ♠xa8
29...♠xg2+? 30 ♔h1! is no use to Black.

White is set more problems by 29...♗e2!?. Evidently no more than a draw results from 30 ♗h7+ ♙f7 31 ♗h4+ ♔d7 32 ♗h3+ ♔e7 33 ♠c1!? (33 ♠f1 ♠xa8 34 ♗h4+ ♔e6) 33...♠xa8! (33...♠xg2+? 34 ♔h1!)

34 ♠c7+ ♖f6 35 ♗h6+ ♙g6 36 ♗g7+ ♖f5 37 ♗d7+ ♜e5 38 ♗e7+ (Svidler).

However, White has a stronger line: 30 ♗h4+! ♜d7 (30...♜d7 31 ♗h7+) 31 ♙c5+ ♖f7 (31...♜d7 32 ♗a4+ ♖c7 33 ♗f4+ ♖c6 34 ♗d6+ ♖b5 35 a4+ ♖c4 36 ♠c1+ ♖b3 37 ♠xg8) 32 ♠f8+!! ♠xf8 33 ♠f1, and wins.

30 ♗h4+! ♜d7
30...♜d6 31 ♗xc4!
31 ♗h7+! ♖c6
32 ♠c1+ ♖b5
33 a4+! ♖a5
34 ♗c7+ b6
35 b4+ ♖xb4
36 ♠b1+ ♖a5
37 ♙d2+! 1-0

Makariev(15)-Rasulov
CIS Junior Ch, Jurmala 1992
King's Indian

This game may be singled out as a curiosity – White loses without playing a single move of his own!

Alas, in his preparation Makariev made a very common mistake. He decided to repeat a long theoretical variation without carefully checking it for correctness. Look where it led:

1 d4 ♜f6
2 c4 g6
3 ♜c3 ♙g7
4 e4 0-0
5 ♜f3 d6
6 ♙e2 ♜c6
7 0-0 e5
8 d5 ♜e7

9 ♜e1 ♜d7
10 ♜d3 f5
11 ♙d2 ♜f6
12 f3 f4
13 c5 g5
14 cd cd
15 ♜f2 ♜g6
16 ♗c2 ♠f7
17 ♠fc1 h5

So far everything has followed the familiar patterns.

18 h3 a6!?

It is worth examining the thematic 18...g4!? 19 fg hg 20 hg ♜e8 (or 20...♜h7 21 ♜b5 ♜g5 22 a4 with unclear play; Sosonko-Kavalek, Tilburg 1980) 21 a4 ♙f6 22 ♠a3 ♙h4 23 ♜cd1 ♙g3 24 ♜h3 ♗h4 25 ♜df2 ♜f6 26 ♗d1 ♙d7 27 a5 ♠af8 28 ♙e1 ½-½ Sosonko-Hellers, Wijk aan Zee 1986.

19 a4 ♙f8
20 a5 g4!

Better than 20...b5?! 21 ab ♗xb6 22 ♜a4 ♗a7 23 ♙a5.

21 fg hg
22 hg b5
23 ab ♗xb6
24 ♜a4 ♗a7
25 ♙a5 ♠b8

If 25...♠b7, then 26 ♠a3 with the better chances for White.

26 g5!

The game is following Rogers-Sznepik, Thessaloniki OL 1988, which continued: 26...♜h7 27 ♜b6 f3!? (27...♙d7 28 ♜xd7 ♠xd7 29 ♙g4, or 27...♠xb6 28 ♙xb6 ♗xb6 29 ♗xc8 ♜xg5 30 ♗g4 and White gains the upper hand – Spasov) 28

♙xf3 ♠xb6! 29 ♙xb6 ♗xb6 30 ♗xc8 ♜g5 31 ♠xa6 ♗e3? (31...♗xb2 was essential, with a view to 32 ♠xd6?! ♜f4 with counterplay; however, according to Rogers, White still keeps the better chances with 32 ♗c2! ♗d4 33 ♠a3) 32 ♠a3 ♗b6 (32...♗f4 33 ♠c7!) 33 ♗g4 ♙h6 34 ♠c2 ♖h7 35 g3!, and White won. Rogers annotated this game in Volume 46 of *Informator*.

26 ... ♜g4!?
27 ♙xg4 ♙xg4 (246)



28 ♗c6?

Rogers gave this move an exclamation mark. In reply, he only considered the lines 28...♙d7 29 ♙b6! and 28...♠fb7 29 ♜c5!. Makariev knew Rogers' analysis and took an uncritical view of it, for which he was punished.

In the light of Makariev-Rasulov, it is worth examining Spasov's recommendation 28 ♠a3!?

28 ... ♙e2!

This unexpected resource gives Black a very strong attack. For example, 29 ♜b6 is met by 29...♙b5

30 ♜c8 (if the queen retreats, Black simply has 30...♠xb6) 30...♗e3 31 ♗c3 ♠xc8 32 ♗xc8 f3. Or if 29 ♙b6, then 29...♗e7 30 ♗c7 (30 ♜h3 ♙b5 31 ♗c7 ♗e8, attacking the knight on a4) 30...♗xg5 31 ♗xb8 ♜h4.

29 ♗c2 f3
30 g3

Otherwise Black plays 30...♜f4.

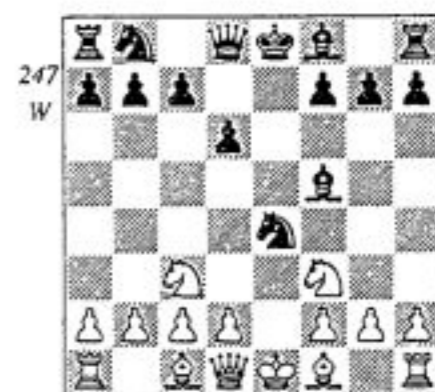
30 ... ♠h7!

Threatening 31...♠h1+! 32 ♖xh1 ♗xf2.

31 ♙e1 ♠h3
0-1

Even very strong players are sometimes victims of credulity. A game Miles-Christiansen from the San Francisco tournament of 1987 was published in Volume 44 of *Informator*:

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜f6 3 ♜xe5 d6 4 ♜f3 ♜xe4 5 ♜c3 ♙f5 (247)



6 ♜xe4 ♙xe4 7 d3 ♙g6 8 ♙g5 ♙e7 9 ♙xe7 ♗xe7+ 10 ♙e2 ♜c6 11 0-0 0-0 12 ♠e1 ♠ae8 13 ♗d2 ♜e5

14 d4 ♖xf3+ 15 ♗xf3 ♜d7 16 c3 b6
17 ♜xe8 ♜xe8 18 ♜e1 ♜xe1+ 19
♜xe1 ♜f8 20 g3, and the players
agreed a draw.

The young Indian player Viswan-
athan Anand decided to make use of

such a simple path to equality. But in
the Biel tournament in 1988, his op-
ponent Zapata answered 5...♗f5??
with 6 ♜e2!. Black had to resign,
since he could not avoid losing a
piece (6...♜e7 7 ♖d5).

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