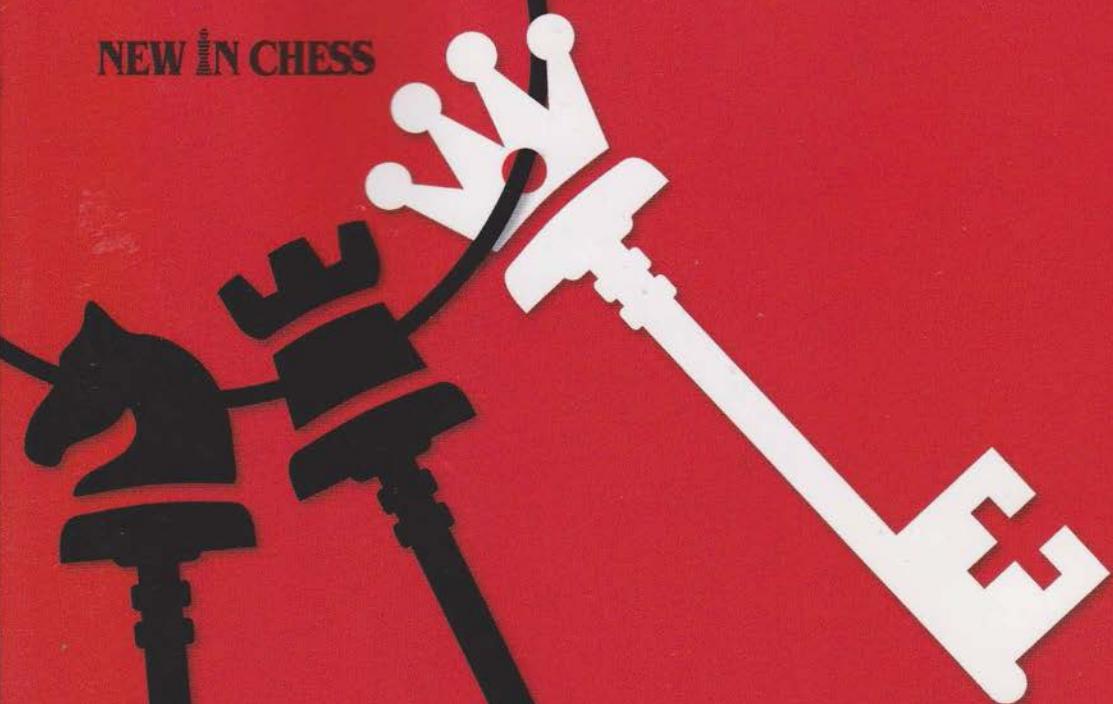


NEW IN CHESS



# Improve Your Chess Pattern Recognition

Key Moves and Motifs  
in the Middlegame

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ARTHUR VAN DE OUDEWEETERING

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**Arthur van de Oudeweetering**

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## **Key Moves and Motifs in the Middlegame**

To Ferrie and Joke, who initiated and always supported my chess career.  
To Edith, Julie and Ilja, whose enthusiasm, patience and help have been invaluable.

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Additional games referred to in the text: [www.newinchess.com/avdo/pattern.zip](http://www.newinchess.com/avdo/pattern.zip)

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# Foreword by Ian Rogers

Most players begin to recognize standard combinational themes through puzzle books. But acquiring a knowledge of positional concepts which set up those combinations is harder to do.

Players constantly ask ‘The opening is over; what do I do now?’ But apart from stop-gap principles like ‘Improve your worst placed piece’, the task of finding a suitable plan is a mystery to many.

The 1980s volume *Chess Middlegames*, ghosted by Laszlo Hazai, covered multiple themes in 4,000 examples and was the finest reference book of its type. However the book is languageless, so a player needed to be dedicated to begin to understand the connections and differences between, say, the 100+ examples of both strong and weak isolated queen’s pawn positions.

Into the breach steps Arthur van de Oudeweetering, who has not only collected hundreds of examples, mostly recent, to illustrate many important middlegame themes, but has also provided new terminology to assist in the recognition of each pattern.

This book is not just a worthy new middlegame treatise but one which is fun to read. As a new chapter begins you think ‘Whatever does he mean by “Inside the Chain”, or “Fishing for the Hook”?’ But enlightenment follows soon.

After reading *Improve Your Chess Pattern Recognition*, a player will no longer miss opportunities to become a Bishop Snatcher or use the Second Option for their rook. You will also become more aware of obstacles preventing you from winning without opposition; if you have a Bulldozer you will look out for your opponent’s Runner.

Van de Oudeweetering’s coverage of the Killer Knight would probably find favour with Kasparov who, before the age of computers, was rumoured to have developed a sophisticated piece valuation system based in part on how close to the opposing king a knight could be posted.

In fact after I’d absorbed *IYCP* it was easy to speculate that Caruana’s loss to Carlsen at the 2014 Tromsø Chess Olympiad could have been caused by the Italian overvaluing his Octopus. (This is not a phrase I ever thought I would find myself writing.)

Once the reader has started applying the patterns in *IYCP* in their own games, they will find that the post-opening phase of the game becomes easier and they will more often build up a strong position. Then comes the difficult part – converting that strong position into a win, as happens in most of the examples in *IYCP*. For that, you need tactics training as well, though fortunately there are dozens of books which cover that territory. *IYCP*, however, is one of a kind.

Ian Rogers  
September 2014

# Preface

Plenty of scientific books have been written about pattern recognition; this will not be one of them. Sure enough, this book is about patterns, but it's mainly about chess.

Another thing that should be clear from the start is that you will not encounter tactical patterns here, like for instance all kinds of mate images. In this book you will find predominantly positional patterns.

Finally, it must be said that this book is about the middlegame. Sometimes a pattern will be more easily explained in the endgame, because there are less disturbing factors in the form of other pieces there. These may well spoil the point you are trying to make. Take for instance the rule that opposite-coloured bishops favour the attacker when the major pieces are still on the board. In the manuals and articles dealing with this subject you are not likely to see many positions where the knights are still on the board. After all, in many cases this would diminish the influence of the opponent's bishop, which otherwise would have a monopoly on the squares of one particular colour.

Still, in this book, now and then you will find an example of a certain pattern in the endgame. After all, the boundaries of the middlegame are not always crystal-clear – at least not to me. Romanovsky, for instance, has pointed out that major-piece endings also bear a middlegame character, due to the vulnerability of the kings. Also, sometimes a reference is made to a theoretical opening line which features the pattern under discussion; for example the 'Lost Bishop' in the Russian Defence ( $9 \dots \mathbb{A}xa2!?$ ). The 'No-Nonsense Bishop' even features primarily in all kinds of openings, where this way of developing it has become remarkably popular.

Of the patterns I have selected for this book, many consist simply of one and the same piece placement, like a white bishop on d6, splitting the enemy camp in two ('The Beastly Bishop'). Another pattern is where one and the same move counter-intuitively creates a weak square, but at a closer look turns out to bring a lot of benefits as well (for instance, in 'Never Mind the Holes', where ...a7-a5 leaves behind a backward pawn on b6 and a weak square on b5). The plain image of these 'one-movers' may easily help you during the game to hit on the idea. Only in the final part, some more complicated patterns are discussed: manoeuvres (for example ... $\mathbb{Q}h8/ \dots \mathbb{B}g8/ \dots g7-g5$  – the Nievergelt Manoeuvre) or a more general concept like offside pieces (which I've indeed called 'Offside Pieces') or a characteristic battle evolving in a specific pawn structure.

This book is not what your ordinary positional chess or middlegame strategy book would look like. Usually, such works start off with broader concepts like attack and defence, bishop against knight, open lines etcetera. And then along the way they go into more detail. These books will (hopefully) supply you with valuable knowledge and understanding. At the same time it is well known that during a real game

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your decision-making is influenced by the knowledge of patterns you have acquired. So why not study the middlegame in that way?

I remember vividly that I suddenly started to see possibilities for exchange sacrifices in my own games after I had collected and studied material on this theme for a training session. Of course, before that I had been aware of the concept of the exchange sacrifice, but somehow the actual moves had become more concrete in my awareness. So I hope that after you have played through the seven (repetition is the mother of learning!) ‘Bishop Snatchers’, you won’t miss any ‘Rook takes bishop e6’ in your own games any more. Moreover, you will have gained a good impression of the ideas and patterns in the starting positions and the resulting ones. A pattern is no road to immediate success, but it is a good start to get a good idea. After that, the other factors of the position have to be assessed and calculations have to be made.

Much more can be said about chess pattern recognition in general, but I will only touch on one practical aspect here. In order to find examples from my database I used the option of mirroring positions vertically or horizontally. With this method I was able to discover the same pattern albeit in different pawn structures from other openings. Somehow this does change your perception slightly. Also, even a simple change of colour can do weird things with your mind.

Jonathan Tisdall gives a typical example in his very enjoyable book *Improve Your Chess Now*. After 1.c3 e5 2.c4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  we would automatically condemn 3.d3 as passive, he says, and I agree. But with reversed colours it is the start of the Najdorf Sicilian. How to deal with that? Another thing he mentions on this subject is that GM Julian Hodgson regularly tried to gain new insights into certain positions by setting them up with colours reversed. A very interesting method! Indeed, when Jobava plays the Philidor with white (1.e4 e5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ ), how will both players approach and value the position? Also Ljubojevic-Larsen, Tilburg 1981, springs to mind: 1.e4 c6 2.d3 g6 3.d4. But enough of this, I am losing my way inside another kind of pattern.

Of course, if you start with such a broad concept, you can pick from a wide range of subjects. Although a couple of the subjects in this book will be more ‘regular’ or in any case more familiar to the experienced player, I have focussed on the patterns which carry an element of surprise or are preferably ‘against’ the basic positional rules you have learned. This means that in order to really appreciate these patterns you should have some basic knowledge about the rules of development, pawn structure and strong/weak squares. On the other hand, with these subjects I have often also included an example where the general rules did prevail. Just like there are no rules without exceptions (= some of the patterns in this book), there are certainly no patterns without exceptions. Which means that there are no universal solutions. Either the basic rules of chess still interfere or the circumstances differ. Take also the simple fact that two patterns from this book can occur in one and the same position, for instance a ‘Killer Knight’ versus a ‘Beastly Bishop’.

Furthermore, writing on a subject in the first place was often induced by a topical game that attracted my attention. Some pattern caught my eye and made me think of a famous game from the past, or a game of my own. Pattern recognition, you could say. Generally, a search in the books and databases soon yielded other examples. I have tried to avoid using too-well-known examples from the past which have been used in (too?) many text books. Occasionally you will find one though, for example when there is an apt comparison with a topical game. However it would be silly not to refer to them in the text, as the pattern will ring a bell for many of you. (To aid your memory and make it easy for you, you can find these games in a separate online gamefile on the New In Chess website under [www.newinches.com/avdo/pattern.zip](http://www.newinches.com/avdo/pattern.zip).) Thus, the majority of games will be from recent years. I did however include some lesser-known older games, simply because I like to put things in a historic perspective.

Originally all these chapters were written for the online magazine *ChessVibesTraining* in 2012 and 2013. I would especially like to thank Merijn van Delft for persuading me to start writing for the magazine in the first place, and Peter Doggers for his support all along. For this book the articles have been thoroughly revised and updated. I doubt whether it will help you in practical play, but to give this book more structure, the patterns have been divided into four Parts:

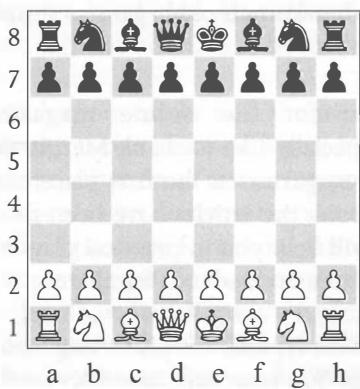
- The first one, ‘Typical Piece Positions’, focusses on typical, mostly strong, spots for pieces. One is more common than the other. You may have heard about the power of a knight on f5 versus a castled king (‘The Killer Knight’), but the Octopus (a white knight on d6) will be less well known. (In fact, I doubt whether it has obtained any special attention in any book thus far.)
- The second part contains several counter-intuitive moves: recaptures, exchanges, sacrifices, etcetera.
- Some of these could also fit into the third part, which I have called ‘Typical Strategic Means: Sacrifices’. Indeed this part deals with a wide variety of long-term positional sacrifices. However, I decided to differentiate between sacrificing by capturing something and more surprising silent sacrifices.
- In the fourth and final part I discuss a number of broader concepts: not certain typical squares for pieces or typical moves, but characteristic manoeuvres or little plans which consist of more moves. The last chapter (40) deals with the pawn structure from the practically decisive 9th World Championship match game in Chennai 2013, which saw a characteristic race between pawns on the king- and the queenside. I’m sure you can think of lots of other pawn structures and plans to be dealt with in the same manner, but that would be another book.

Have fun with this one and I hope you also enjoy the exercises!

Arthur van de Oudeweetering  
Amsterdam, June 2014

# Explanation of Symbols

## The chess board with its coordinates:



- White to move
- Black to move
- ♔ King
- ♕ Queen
- ♖ Rook
- ♗ Bishop
- ♘ Knight

- ± White stands slightly better
- ∓ Black stands slightly better
- ± White stands better
- ∓ Black stands better
- +- White has a decisive advantage
- + Black has a decisive advantage
- = balanced position
- ∞ unclear position
- ⊗ compensation for the material
- > strong (sufficient)
- < weak (insufficient)
- ≥ better is
- ≤ weaker is
- ! good move
- !! excellent move
- ? bad move
- ?? blunder
- !?
- ?! dubious move
- only move
- △ with the idea
- attack
- ↑ initiative
- ↑↑ lead in development
- ⇄ counterplay
- # mate
- corr. correspondence

# Part I

## Typical Piece Positions

1. The Octopus



15.♘d6!

2. The Killer Knight



15.♘f5!

3. Nimzo's Strong Centre-Back



15....♞e8 and ♜d6

4. Dominating from the Edge



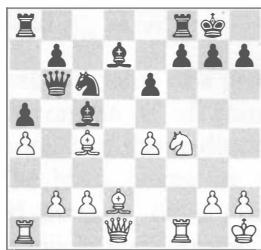
17...♞a4!?

5. Sur Place en Prise



13...♞b4

6. The Not So Innocent Bystander



16.♞h5!

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### 7. The Lost Bishop



13.  $\mathbb{Q}xh7+!?$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$

14.  $gxf3$   $g6$

### 8. Anand's Murderous Twin Guns



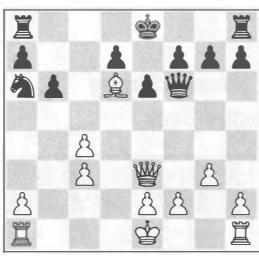
12... $c5!$

### 9. The Deceptive Bishop from c8

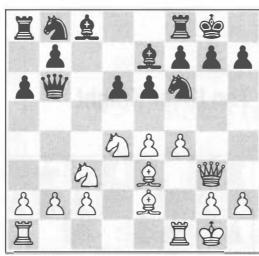


10.... $\mathbb{Q}a6?$  is a mistake here!

### 10. The Beastly Bishop



### 11. Edible or Forbidden Fruit?



11... $\mathbb{W}xb2!?$

## Chapter 1

# A Very Powerful Piece: The Octopus

A knight in the heart of the enemy's position, aiming at both the kingside and the queenside, paralysing the opponent's pieces. Sounds good, doesn't it? Such a knight is sometimes referred to as an octopus, comparing its eight legs to the eight squares that the mighty knight controls.

Chess history has seen some famous examples of superb knights on d3 or d6. Think for instance of Robert Byrne-Fischer, USA-ch 1963, or Kasparov's impressive victory over Karpov in the 16th game of the World Championship match in 1985. These games can be found annotated in several sources; here we will look into some more recent examples, and consider a few different aspects of the theme.

### Exchanging the Relevant Bishop

First of all let us see how White may create a home for the octopus:

**Hrant Melkumyan**

**Evgeny Postny**

Sarajevo 2012

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$   
4.e3 e6 5. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  a6 6. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  b5  
7.a4 b4 8.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  9. $\mathbb{Q}bd2$  c5  
10.e4  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  11.e5  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  12.dxc5  
 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  13. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$



**14. $\mathbb{Q}g5!$**

Exchanging the natural protector of the square d6. Now the knight can proceed

to d6, without fear of being traded off right away.

**14...0-0 15. $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$**   
15... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   
 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  just loses a pawn.

**16. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$**



Talk about the relative value of a piece: here the knight on d6 is of course worth much more than the traditional three points. The black pieces are severely restricted in their activity and White controls much more space, all largely because of this one eight-footed animal.

**18. $\mathbb{Q}d3$**

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White goes for the kingside. An alternative is 18.♗d4 ♜c8 19.♗xb7! ♜xb7 20.a5. This may surprise you: White just gives up the octopus for the bad bishop. But what really matters is the material that remains on the board. White has only transformed the character of his advantage. The most famous similar example of this phenomenon is probably Fischer's 22.♗xd7 in Fischer-Petrosian, 7th match game, 1971.

**18...♛d7 19.♗g5**

19.♗d4 was still possible.

**19...♝g6 20.f4?!**

A better idea to fortify the outpost on d6 is 20.♗g3 and if 20...f6 then 21.e6; thus also avoiding the complications after 20.♗dx7 ♛g4.

**20...f6**

Now Black is trying to undermine the support of the strong knight.



**21.♗xb7?**

Where White seemed to have a solid positional advantage it now seems that he had no choice but to continue in a sharp and concrete manner: 21.♗xh7 ♜xh7 22.♗f3, when Black has to resort to 22...♜h8 (22...f5 23.♗h3+ ♛g8 24.♗f3 ♜f6 25.♗xb7 ♛e6).

**21...fxg5 22.♗c5 ♜c6 23.♗xa6**

White has gone terribly wrong: remember the once proud position of this knight on d6!

**23...♞a8**

Winning a piece and eventually the game.

**24.♗xb4 ♜c5+ 25.♔h1 ♜xb4**

**26.♗xd5+ ♔h8 27.fxg5 ♜xa4**

and Black subsequently won.

**Johnny Hector**

**Jens-Ove Fries Nielsen**

Ballerup 2012

Here is another recent example where White exchanges the dark-squared bishops to enable the knight to become an octopus. This time the game proceeds smoothly afterwards.

**1.e4 d5 2.exd5 ♜xd5 3.♘f3 ♜f6**

**4.d4 ♜g4 5.♗e2 e6 6.0-0 ♜e7**

**7.h3 ♜h5 8.c4 ♜d8 9.♗b3 ♜c8**

**10.♗c3 0-0 11.♗f4 ♜bd7**

**12.♗fe1 ♜d6 13.♗e5 ♜xe2**

**14.♗xe2 ♜h5 15.♗d2 c6**

Ah! It's logical that Black wants to make room for his queen. But now White can try to establish a stronghold on d6.

**16.♗e4 ♜e7**



**17.♗b4!**

Here we go!

**17...♜xb4 18.♗xb4 ♜hf6**

**19.♗d6**

And here it is: our octopus! White is clearly better.

**19...♛c7 20.♗d1 a5 21.♗a3 ♜b6**

**22.♗d3**

The difficult 22. $\mathbb{H}de1$  was probably better, intending to take on f7 after 22... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ .

**22... $\mathbb{Q}c8$**

Logical play against this awesome outpost.

**23.c5  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  24. $\mathbb{H}b3$   $\mathbb{H}a7$  25. $\mathbb{H}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}ce7$**

Eliminating the knight by taking at d6 (though at the cost of a potentially dangerous passed d-pawn) here or on a previous move would have been more consistent. Now Black goes down due to a chronic lack of space. Look at the difference in activity between the white and black rooks.

**26. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  27.h4!  $\mathbb{Haa8}$**

27... $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  28. $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $hxg6$  30. $\mathbb{H}h3$ .

**28.h5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  29. $\mathbb{H}xe5$   $\mathbb{W}e7$   
30. $\mathbb{H}eg5$  g6 31. $hxg6$   $fxg6$   
32. $\mathbb{H}xg6+$   $hxg6$  33. $\mathbb{H}xg6+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$   
34. $\mathbb{W}h5+$**

1-0

**Nafisa Muminova**

**Pham Bich Ngoc**

Ho Chi Minh City 2012



Yet another example where White plays c4-c5, leaving the strong square d5 to her opponent's knight, but conquering the even stronger outpost on d6 for her own knight.

**18.c5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$**

18... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg3$  (19... $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  20. $\mathbb{W}xe6+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  (20... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  21. $\mathbb{H}e4$  h6 22. $\mathbb{W}f5+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}h5$  with moves like d4-d5 and  $\mathbb{H}e4-g4$  coming up) 21. $\mathbb{W}e7+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  23.d5) 20. $hxg3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  21. $\mathbb{W}xe6+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  (21... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  22.g4) 22. $\mathbb{W}d6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}e7$  threatening d4-d5.

**19.dxe5  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  20. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{H}f8$   
21. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  22. $\mathbb{Q}d6$**

Our beloved octopus, strongly supported by pawns on both c5 and e5. White still has to break through somewhere in this closed position (there are no other open lines besides the d-file) but Black is clearly lacking space. White won after some further adventures.

### Transposing into an Endgame

**Andjelija Stojanovic**

**Dusan Colovic**

Kragujevac 2012

1.c4 d6 2. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  e5 3.g3 f5 4. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5.d3  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  6. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  0-0 7.0-0  $\mathbb{W}e8$  8.c5  $\mathbb{Q}h8$  9.cxd6  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  10. $\mathbb{W}a4$  c6 11. $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  12.e4  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  13.exf5  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  14.d4 exd4 15. $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  16. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$



**17. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$**

17... $\mathbb{Q}g4$  18. $\mathbb{W}e2$  (or 18. $\mathbb{W}xe8$   $\mathbb{H}dxe8$ ) 18... $\mathbb{W}xe2$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xe2$   $\mathbb{H}de8$  seems a better try.

### 18. $\mathbb{Q}xe8 \mathbb{H}dx e8$

Here we see an octopus in an end-game (or rather, a queenless middle-game). Pawn b2 is attacked, f2 is under fire, the open d-file is blocked, the octopus is supported by the  $\mathbb{Q}f5$ , the e-file is inaccessible for the white rooks. Yet the opponent no longer has to deal with a passive queen like in the previous example. Another important difference is that White does not suffer so greatly from a spatial disadvantage.

### 19. $\mathbb{Q}a4$



### 19... $\mathbb{Q}xf2+$

Black is going to give up his pride and joy for a higher good, but he could also have tried to maintain the tension, and also his octopus, with 19... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ . Still, I guess many of us would also be attracted to the 'more active' text move.

### 20. $\mathbb{Q}xf2 \mathbb{Q}xf2$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}xf2 \mathbb{Q}e4+$

### 22. $\mathbb{Q}g1 \mathbb{Q}g4?$

This is too much. The straightforward 22... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}xg5 \mathbb{H}e2$ , although materially unbalanced, leads to an about equal position.

### 23. $\mathbb{Q}f4 \mathbb{Q}xf3$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ $g5$

### 25. $\mathbb{Q}xe4 \mathbb{H}xe4?$

25... $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  would simply save the pawn.

### 26. $\mathbb{Q}c3 \mathbb{H}e6$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$

Now White must be better, though he still went on to lose.

## A Regular Stronghold

Nicolai Pedersen

Hans Tikkannen

Ballerup 2012



In a practical endgame with less pieces, our octopus becomes more of a regular stronghold, simply because it can no longer limit the activity of so many pieces. Still, of course it can be a very strong outpost.

### 23... $\mathbb{H}xd1+$ !

Effectively gaining the open b-file, as the d-file will soon be blocked.

### 24. $\mathbb{H}xd1$ $e5$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $e4!$

Regaining control of square d3, the home of our octopus.

### 26. $\mathbb{Q}c2$

Understandably White does not want to wait passively and decides to activate his knight.

### 26... $\mathbb{Q}d3$

And of course Black jumps at the opportunity. Here our octopus is blocking the d-file.

### 27. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$

The direct 27... $\mathbb{Q}b2$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf2$  is also plausible, for instance 29.  $\mathbb{Q}d8+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}xa7$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  and Black has a winning position.

### 28. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{H}b4$ 29. $c5$ $\mathbb{H}a4$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}c1$

Now Black is clearly better and eventually he went on to win.

## The Octopus Arising from the Opening

Harmen Jonkman  
Francisco Palacios Llera

Internet 2002 (rapid)

**1.e4 c5**

Several opening lines are likely to produce an octopus, for instance these two:  
**1...e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♜b4 4.e5 c5**  
**5.♕d2 ♜e7 6.♘b5 ♜xd2+ 7.♗xd2**  
**0-0 8.f4 a6 9.♘d6; or...**  
**1...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 ♜b7 10.d4 ♜e8 11.♘bd2**  
**♗f8 12.a4 h6 13.♕c2 exd4 14.cxd4**  
**♗b4 15.♗b1 c5 16.d5 ♜d7 17.♗a3 c4.**  
The following Alapin Sicilian branch presents a third example.

**2.c3 d5 3.exd5 ♜xd5 4.d4 ♜f6**  
**5.♘f3 ♜g4 6.dxc5 ♜xd1+**  
**7.♗xd1 e5 8.b4 e4 9.h3 ♜h5**  
**10.g4 ♜xg4 11.hxg4 ♜xg4**  
**12.♘d2 ♜c6 13.♗h3 ♜xh3**  
**14.♗xh3 exf3 15.♗xf3**



Here too the outlines are clear: a strong square on d6, while the supporting pawn on c5 is already there (the Botvinnik Slav features a similar structure with colours reversed; it will not surprise you that sometimes a knight pops up on d3 there). The simplified plan for White is: exchange the dark-

squared bishops (familiar idea, isn't it?) and then just direct the knight to d6.

**15.♗e7 16.♗c2 ♜f6 17.a3 0-0**  
**18.♗e3 ♜ad8 19.♗ah1 h6**  
**20.♗g1 ♜h7 21.♗g5! ♜xg5**  
**22.♗xg5+ ♜g8 23.♗e4 ♜h7**  
**24.♗d6**



Mission accomplished: b7 is under attack, the black rooks are dominated.

**24...♗d7 25.f4 f5 26.♗d3 g6**  
**27.♗e1 ♜g7 28.♗e6 a6 29.♗xb7**  
**♗xb4+ 30.axb4 ♜xb7 31.♗dd6**  
**♗g7 32.♗xa6 h5 33.b5 ♜c8**  
**34.c6 h4 35.b6 h3 36.c7 h2**  
**37.♗a1 ♜a8 38.♗h1 ♜f8**  
**39.♗xh2+ ♜g8 40.♗c6 ♜h7**  
**41.♗xh7** 1-0

**Sopio Gvetadze  
Nino Batsiashvili**

Anaklia 2012

Let us conclude with a quick success for the octopus in a recent Georgian women's championship.

**1.e4 g6 2.d4 ♜g7 3.♘c3 d6**  
**4.♗e3 c6 5.♗d2 ♜d7 6.♘f3 b5**  
**7.a4 b4 8.♗d1 ♜b8 9.♗d3 ♜c7**  
**10.0-0 ♜gf6 11.♗h6 0-0**  
**12.♗xg7 ♜xg7**

This exchange doesn't make you think of a future octopus yet.

**13.c3 c5 14.♗e3 e6**

## Improve Your Chess Pattern Recognition

But now you should get some idea. With this move Black loses control of square d6.

**15.♗fe1 ♜b7**



**16.e5!? dxe5 17.dxe5 ♜g8**

The surprising 17...♝h5 seems stronger. If White continues in the same fashion as in the game, Black is OK after 18.♝c4 ♜xf3 19.gxf3 f6!?, opening up the f-file and undermining the support for a possible octopus on d6.

**18.♝c4 ♜xf3 19.gxf3 ♜b6  
20.♝d6 bxc3 21.bxc3 ♜bd8**

Trying to exchange the octopus with 21...♝c8 runs into 22.♝b5, after which 22...♝xd6 23.exd6 will yield White a passed pawn (just like in Hector-Fries Nielsen).

**22.♜ab1 ♜e7 23.a5 ♜c8 24.♜b7  
♜d7 25.♜xd7 ♜xd7**



**26.♝xg6**

A cunning move, but his may be a miscalculation. 26.♝b5 seems to be the natural move, and stronger.

**26...♝xd6**

26...♝xg6 seems scary but possible, as after 27.♛d3+ (or 27.♛h1 h6 28.♜g1+ ♚h7 29.♜g7+ ♚xg7 30.♝f5+ exf5 31.♜xd7 ♜ge7) 27...f5 28.exf6+ ♜xf6 29.♝e4+ Black just saves herself with 29...♚e7.

**27.♞c2**

Now everything is back to normal and White is winning.

**27...♛c6 28.exd6 ♜d8?  
29.♛g5+** 1-0

### Summary

So now you know an octopus when you see one! There are various typical means to create an octopus: exchanging the opponent's bishop which covers the octopus's entrance square, or taking care of the necessary pawn support. When the octopus has been put in position and it is dominating the opponent's pieces – especially the rooks –, it will be of magnificent value. With less pieces on the board, the octopus is still a strong piece, but its influence is likely to be much less.

## Chapter 2

### A Killer Knight

A knight on f5 (or f4) versus a castled king often exerts tremendous pressure. Generally such a knight must be challenged right away, before it will create strong threats with the support of other pieces. Let's investigate the power of yet another fearsome knight.

#### En Route to the Stronghold

Robert Kempinski  
Dimitar Dochev

Achaea 2012

1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 g6 3.g3  $\mathbb{Q}g7$   
4. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  0-0 5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d6 6. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$   
7.0-0 a6 8. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{B}b8$  9. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$   
10. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  h6 11. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  f5 12. $\mathbb{W}d2$  g5  
13.d5 f4 14.dxc6 fxe3 15.fxe3  
e5 16.cxb7  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$  17. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$   
18. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$   
20. $\mathbb{Q}xf8+$   $\mathbb{W}xf8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{W}e8$   
22.h3  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  23. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}c6+$



**24.e4!**

Of course 24. $\mathbb{Q}ce4$  would be a good alternative – the knight looks supreme on e4. But now White is heading with a knight for the even stronger square f5.

24...g4 25.h4  $\mathbb{B}b6$  26.b3

White solidly prepares  $\mathbb{W}d3$  and  $\mathbb{Q}f1-e3$ .

**26...c6**

Black would like to liven up his bad bishop with 26...h5, intending ... $\mathbb{Q}h6$ , and trying to prevent  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  as well. But after 27. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  28.exd5 White's extra doubled pawn has sprung to life. The text move of course prevents  $\mathbb{Q}d5$ , but creates a new target on d6.

27. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{W}d4$  28. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  h5 29. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   
 $\mathbb{Q}d7$  30. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{W}c5$  31. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{W}a7$



**32. $\mathbb{W}d3$**

32. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  is also winning, but White consistently goes about bringing his knight to f5, after which the black king is likely to succumb very quickly. In the meantime, the pawn on d6 will not run away.

32... $\mathbb{W}f8$  33. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  34. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   
 $\mathbb{W}d8$  35. $\mathbb{Q}f5$

## Improve Your Chess Pattern Recognition

Truly, a square with a view!

**35...♝c5 36.♛d2**

After this creepy backward move the queen will join the knight and thus decide the game.

**36...♞f8 37.♝g5+ ♔f7 38.♜f1**

**♚e6 39.♝g7+**

1-0

**Alexandre Dgebuadze**

**Ludwig Stahnecker**

Schwäbisch Gmünd 2012

**1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♜c6 3.♗c4 ♜f6**

**4.d3 ♔e7 5.0-0 0-0 6.♖e1 d6**

**7.c3 ♜a5 8.♗b5 a6 9.♗a4 b5**

**10.♗c2 c5 11.♘bd2 ♜c6 12.♗f1**

**♝e8 13.a4 ♜b7?!**

A seemingly normal developing move. However, the loss of control over square f5 is a big drawback.

**14.♘g3**

Also a normal developing move, heading for...f5!

**14...♝c7 15.♘f5**



The knight has reached its superior position. Now White is going to call in the rest of his troops.

**15...♞f8 16.♗g5 ♜d7 17.♘d2 h6**

**18.♔e3 ♜h7**

Black really cannot afford to leave the knight on f5 unchallenged for so long. 18...♞e7 was called for.

**19.♗f3 ♜e7?**

Too late. Now this is plainly bad.

**20.♗b3!**

In this kind of Ruy Lopez position this can be a very strong diagonal for the bishop, certainly together with the knight on f5. Here this move even goes with tempo as the f7-pawn is attacked due to Black's unlucky 18th move.

**20...♜g6 21.♘xh6!**

Crushing.

**21...♜xh6 22.♗xf7+ ♔g7**



**23.♗h6**

Very nice!

**23...♔xh6 24.♖e3 ♜f6 25.♖h3+ ♜h5 26.g4**

Threatening 27.♖xh5 gxh5 28.♗xh5 mate.

**26...♜h8 27.♘f3**

0-1

White threatens 28.g5 mate. Only the rook on a1 did not participate in the attack!

**Rout Padmini**

**Alonso Zapata**

Philadelphia 2012

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4**

**4.♗xd4 a6 5.♗d3 ♜f6 6.0-0**

**♗c7 7.♗e2 d6 8.♗h1 g6 9.c4**

**♗g7 10.♘c3 0-0 11.♗e3 ♜bd7**

**12.f4 ♖e8 13.♖ac1 b6 14.b4**

**♗b7 15.♘b3 ♖ac8 16.a3 ♗b8**

**17.♘d4 e5 18.♗xe5 ♜xe5 19.♘b1**

**♗fd7 20.♘d5 ♜xc4 21.♗xg7**

**♗xd5 22.♗h6 f6 23.♘d4 ♗b7**

24.  $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$  b5 26.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$  d5 27. exd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}f5$



Here the knight has no support from a pawn on e4, but the square itself remains strong enough. White is a pawn down but he exerts unpleasant pressure against Black's weakened kingside.

28...  $\mathbb{Q}e5$

It is difficult to find a concrete plan for Black. His queen is a bit exposed in the centre and can now find a shelter behind the rook on the e-file.

29.  $\mathbb{Q}cd1$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$

A temporary retreat to prepare  $\mathbb{Q}f4$ .

30...  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}ee8$

31...  $\mathbb{Q}d5$ ! 32.  $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  and the exchange of one rook seems an improvement on the game.

32.  $\mathbb{Q}f5$

Now Black has a difficult time to keep his pieces together, with the d7-knight hanging and moves like  $\mathbb{Q}h6+$  in the air.

32...  $\mathbb{Q}de5$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ ?

Black falters. Necessary was 33...  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ , but 34.  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  was understandably not to Black's liking: he is only fighting for a draw.

34.  $\mathbb{Q}h6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ?

Missing his chance. Concrete chess ('forcing moves') was called for: 35.  $\mathbb{Q}xf7!$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}d7+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}h3$  and White is winning.

35...  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}f5+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}d8+$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  38.  $\mathbb{Q}xe8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xe8$  39.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  40.  $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$

And White no longer has sufficient compensation for the pawn. He lost quickly.

## The Half Open File

Marek Hawelko

Artur Jussupow

Dubai 1986

1.e4 e5 2.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$   
4.c3  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5.d3 d6 6.0-0 0-0  
7.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$  a6 8.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}a7$  9.h3 h6  
10.  $\mathbb{Q}bd2$



10...  $\mathbb{Q}h5$ !

A well-known temporary leap to the edge, aimed straight at the goal: square f4. Several other openings, for instance some lines of the King's Indian, are also likely to give rise to this mirrored version of the white knight's leap to f5.

11.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$

Earlier that year Jussupow had tried the immediate 12...  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  against Karpov. That game continued 13.  $\mathbb{Q}xa7$   $\mathbb{Q}xa7$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$ .

13.  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}xa7$   $\mathbb{Q}xa7$

15.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}aa8$  16. a4  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}ad8$

Now almost the same position has arisen as in the game against Karpov,

## Improve Your Chess Pattern Recognition

the only difference being  $\mathbb{N}ad8$  instead of  $\mathbb{N}e7$ . As a result Black is one move quicker to act in the centre and thus support the knight on f4.

**18.  $\mathbb{N}f1$**

Karpov's plan to drive the knight away from the outpost on the half-open file with 18... $\mathbb{N}g1$  d5 19.g3 can now be met with 19... $\mathbb{N}g6$ , threatening both e4 and f2.

**18...d5 19.exd5 exd5**



Black is better: he has created a strong pawn centre, while annoyingly for White his knight is still on f4. Although the final result is still far from clear, Jussupow managed to win this game.

### Sacrificing on h3

**Benjamin Coraretti**

**Larry Kaufman**

Philadelphia 2012

In the previous game we saw the defensive side's plan for driving the knight away: with h2-h3 played, White can try to accomplish g2-g3, driving the knight back without being bothered by ... $\mathbb{N}h3+$ . He prepared this with  $\mathbb{B}h2$ , while in similar situations  $\mathbb{B}f1$  is also seen; for instance, the mirrored version with ... $\mathbb{B}f8$  regularly occurs in the Ruy Lopez. Nevertheless this plan has a drawback: sometimes it

allows a promising piece sacrifice on h3.

**1.e4 e5 2.  $\mathbb{N}f3$   $\mathbb{N}c6$  3.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$   
4.c3  $\mathbb{N}f6$  5.d3 0-0 6.0-0 d6  
7.  $\mathbb{Q}bd2$  a6 8.h3  $\mathbb{Q}a7$  9.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{N}e7$   
10.  $\mathbb{N}e1$   $\mathbb{N}g6$  11.  $\mathbb{N}f1$**



**11...  $\mathbb{N}h5$**

The same opening and a familiar idea; going straight for the goal.

**12.d4**

Compared to the previous game White is quicker to act in the centre. But Black continues his plan undisturbed.

**12...  $\mathbb{N}hf4$  13.  $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{N}xf4$  14. dxе5  
 $\mathbb{Q}xh3!$**

Consistent, of course. It may not surprise you that this had all been seen before.

**15.gxh3  $\mathbb{N}xh3+$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{N}xf2$**



**17.  $\mathbb{N}d2$**

17.  $\mathbb{N}d5!?$  was played in Waitzkin-Acs, Budapest 1996. After 17...  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  18.e6

$\mathbb{Q}h8$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  White went on to win. Perhaps Kaufman had something up his sleeve?

17...  $\mathbb{W}c8$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}d4?!$

White is not up to the complications and loses his way.

18..  $\mathbb{W}g4+$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}xf2$   $dxe5$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}h4+$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $exd4$  22.  $cxd4$   $\mathbb{W}xe4$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}c2?!$

The exchange of queens wasn't worth shedding another pawn.

23..  $\mathbb{W}xd4$  24.  $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   
 25.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{W}ad8$  26.  $\mathbb{W}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$   
 27.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $g6$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}xc7$   $\mathbb{W}xd1$   
 29.  $\mathbb{W}xd1$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  30.  $\mathbb{W}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$   
 31.  $\mathbb{W}xb7$   $\mathbb{W}xc7$  32.  $\mathbb{W}b8+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$   
 33.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{W}c2+$  34.  $\mathbb{W}xc2$   $\mathbb{Q}xb8$  0-1

## A Standard Dutch Sacrifice

Jeroen Piket

Mikhail Gurevich

Lucerne 1989

1.d4 f5 2.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  3.c4 g6 4.g3  
 $\mathbb{Q}g7$  5.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$  0-0 6.0-0 d6 7.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   
 $\mathbb{Q}c6$  8.d5  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  9.  $\mathbb{W}c2$  c5 10.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   
 e5 11.  $dxe6$   $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  12.  $\mathbb{W}d1$   $\mathbb{W}e7$   
 13.b3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  15.  $\mathbb{W}d3$



15..f4!

Pretty unsuspected. The knight usually appears on f4 when the e-pawn has disappeared or has advanced at least two squares. In both cases it is no longer

able to control square f4 (f5). Here the e-pawn is still on e2, but this will change after the next two moves!

16.  $\mathbb{Q}xf4$

Taking up the challenge.

16...  $\mathbb{Q}f5!$  17. e4

The only alternative seems to be 17..  $\mathbb{W}e3$ , but probably 17..  $\mathbb{W}xe3$  18.  $fxe3$   $\mathbb{Q}c2$  did not appeal to White; if 17.  $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  18.  $\mathbb{W}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  19.  $\mathbb{W}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2+$ .

17..  $\mathbb{Q}e6$



Now, with the white g-pawn gone, f4 has become an extremely strong square for the knight. The fact that there is an extra white pawn there for the moment is absolutely irrelevant. You can find many similar pawn sacrifices in the Leningrad Dutch, where after ...f5-f4, g3xf4 is answered with ...Qf6-h5!. Look for instance at Malaniuk's games.

18.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$

18. f5  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  19.  $\mathbb{W}xf5$  and Black has won back his pawn and is clearly on top. All other reasonable moves are answered with 18..  $\mathbb{Q}h5$ .

18...  $\mathbb{Q}xe2+$  19.  $\mathbb{W}xe2$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$

$\mathbb{Q}xf4$  21.  $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  22.  $\mathbb{W}xb2$

With material back to equal and a weakened white kingside, the tremendous black knight on f4 renders White's position hopeless.

22..  $\mathbb{Q}h3$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf1$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}xf1$

$\mathbb{W}h4$

0-1

## Capturing towards the Kingside

When the killer knight is taken by the bishop you will regularly find that the bishop is somewhat surprisingly taken back with the e-pawn. A half-open file against the enemy kingside (after a capture by the g-pawn) would seem like a fine achievement, wouldn't it? Sometimes, however, it may be more beneficial to vacate the central square e4 (e5) for the minor pieces and create a threatening advancing pawn phalanx on the kingside.

**Rustam Kasimdzhanov**

**Dmitry Bocharov**

Internet 2006

1.e4 d6 2.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  3.f3 e5 4.d5  $\mathbb{Q}e7$   
 5.c4  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  6. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  7. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   
 $\mathbb{W}xg5$  8. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  9.0-0-0 0-0  
 10. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  11. $\mathbb{Q}ge2$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  12.g4  
 $\mathbb{Q}f6$  13. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  14. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{W}fb8$   
 15. $\mathbb{W}hg1$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  16. $\mathbb{Q}f5$



**16... $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}exf5$**

Of course 17.gxf5 is also possible here, but after the text White's follow-up is much easier. He will simply advance his kingside pawns, starting with g4-g5, and open up the black king's position.

**17... $\mathbb{W}h4$  18.g5**

Nevertheless! White doesn't bother about the pawn on c4.

**18... $\mathbb{W}xc4$  19. $\mathbb{Q}g4$  e4 20. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   
 $\mathbb{W}a6$  21.f6 b5**



**22. $\mathbb{Q}xh7+$ !  $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}h4+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$   
 24. $\mathbb{W}g2$**

24.fxg7!  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  25. $\mathbb{W}c2$ +--.  
 24... $\mathbb{W}c8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}f5?$  26. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   
 $\mathbb{W}g6$  27. $\mathbb{W}h3$  gxf6 28. $\mathbb{Q}h8+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$   
 29. $\mathbb{Q}f5+$

Truly a fitting move to end this little treatise!

**29... $\mathbb{W}xf5$  30. $\mathbb{W}h6$**

Mate.

## Summary

On a stronghold or not, in a Ruy Lopez or Dutch opening a knight on f5 facing a castled king appears to be a dangerous weapon. I think Kasparov has even said that a knight on f5 nearly always justifies a pawn sacrifice. Be sure to remember the typical sacrifices, as well as the surprising recapture from the last example when the knight is eliminated.

## Chapter 3

# (How to Get past) Nimzo's Strong Centre-Back

Nimzowitsch's blockading knight on d6 is legendary. But which factors determine its strength in modern-day chess? Let's dig a little deeper here and study its fight against the central passed pawn.

## Supporting Pawn Advances

Baskaran Adhiban  
Alojzije Jankovic

Moscow 2012

1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 g6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  4.e4 d6 5.f3 0-0 6. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  7. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  a6 8. $\mathbb{Q}ge2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  9. $\mathbb{Q}c1$  e6 10. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  11. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  b6 12. $\mathbb{Q}h6$  e5 13. $\mathbb{Q}d1$  c5 14.dxe5 dxe5 15. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  17. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  19.exd5  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  20.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}de1$  f5 22. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$



Here the knight not only attacks the c4-pawn that defends the passed pawn, but also supports advances like ...b6-b5 and ...e5-e4. Similarly, in other situations such a knight on d6 may support a ...c5-c4 advance or help to enable ...f7-f5. Compare Leonhardt-Nimzowitsch, San Sebastian 1912, where a knight on e6 supported both ...c6-c5 and ...g6-g5.

## 23.g4?

A very optimistic move, weakening f3. It's doubtful whether the g-file will bring White anything.

## 23... $\mathbb{Q}ae8$

23...b5! 24.b3 bxc4 25.bxc4  $\mathbb{Q}f7$ ! 26. $\mathbb{Q}c1$  e4 27.fxe4  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  28. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  f4! (also a move that would have been to Nimzowitsch's liking!) and Black has a fine blockade position which provides excellent compensation for the pawn.

24.gxf5 gxf5 25. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  26. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  27. $\mathbb{Q}g3$



## 27...e4! 28. $\mathbb{Q}f4$

28.fxe4  $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  fxe4 30. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}f3$  31. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}f1+$  33. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}xg1+$  34. $\mathbb{Q}xg1$   $\mathbb{Q}d4+35.\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  and Black is in great shape again.

## 28... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$

The obvious move, but concrete calculation could have led to the practically winning 28...exd3! 29. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  (29. $\mathbb{Q}xd3$

## Improve Your Chess Pattern Recognition

$\mathbb{Q}xc4$  30.b3  $\mathbb{W}xe1+$  31. $\mathbb{W}xe1$   $\mathbb{H}e8$ ) 29... $\mathbb{Q}xe1+$  30. $\mathbb{W}xe1$   $\mathbb{H}e8$  31. $\mathbb{W}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  32. $\mathbb{W}xg7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  and White is helpless.

29. $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  30. $\mathbb{W}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$   
31. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{exf3}$   
33. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  34. $\mathbb{W}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$

34... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  had to be ventured. After the supposedly safe text move Black didn't get another chance and the game ended in a draw.

## Against a Bad Bishop

Vladimir Malakhov

Kamil Miton

Warsaw 2012 (rapid)

1.c4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  g6 3.e4 d6 4.d4  
 $\mathbb{Q}g7$  5. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  0-0 6. $\mathbb{Q}ge2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  7.0-0  
 $\mathbb{Q}d7$  8. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  e5 9.d5  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  10. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   
 $\mathbb{Q}xc2$  11. $\mathbb{W}xc2$  f5 12. $\mathbb{exf5}$  gxf5  
13.f4 a5 14. $\mathbb{Q}g3$  e4 15. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$



A few moves ago White tempted Black to play ...e5-e4 (with the f2-f4 advance) and now he begins a first regrouping to put his knight on e3.

16. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  b6 17. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}e3$

That's that. And again the blockading knight is attacking the supporting pawn on f5. Notice also the bad bishop on c8.

18... $\mathbb{W}g6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  20.b3 h5  
21. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4?$ !

Exchanging the blockading knight, but a new centre-back will appear on e3.

The dark-squared bishops will now also disappear, after which Black's only minor piece will be his bad bishop!

22. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{W}xg7$  23.h3?  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$

23... $\mathbb{Q}f2+$ ! 24. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  would have created a fine octopus. Note that this was a rapid game.

24. $\mathbb{W}xe3$  h4 25. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  26. $\mathbb{W}c3$   
 $\mathbb{W}xc3$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{H}g8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$   
29. $\mathbb{Q}ac1$   $\mathbb{H}g7$  30. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{H}ag8$   
31.g3 hxg3+ 32. $\mathbb{W}xg3$   $\mathbb{H}xg3$   
33. $\mathbb{Q}xg3$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  34. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  e3

Panicking. After the activation of the bad bishop with 34... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  35. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f3$  Black is still very much in the game. For instance, 36. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{H}h8$  37. $\mathbb{Q}g5?$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  38. $\mathbb{Q}xg4+$  fxg4 39. $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  e3.

35. $\mathbb{Q}e1$

The simplest solution.

35... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  36. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$

And White was just a pawn up and won many moves later.

## Inviting the Passed Pawn

Igor Bondarevsky

Vasily Smyslov

Moscow 1946

1.e4 e5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3. $\mathbb{Q}b5$  a6  
4. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  6. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   
 $\mathbb{dx}c6$  7. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  8.d4  $\mathbb{exd4}$   
9. $\mathbb{W}xd4$  0-0 10. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$   
11. $\mathbb{W}xd8$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  12. $\mathbb{Q}c3$



A knight blockading a central passed pawn and at the same time supporting activity around that pawn can be so strong that Black actually almost forces White to advance his e-pawn here. Of course it's not only the centre-back on e6 who determines the play. Black's bishop pair also comes to life.

**12...f5 13.e5 ♜e6 14.♗d2 g5**

Made possible by 13...♜e6 and even threatening to win the knight on f3 with ...g5-g4.

**15.♘e2 c5**

Again threatening ...g5-g4.

**16.♗c3**

Now Black can again develop with gain of tempo. It seems slightly better to play 16.h4.

**16...b5 17.b3 ♜b7 18.♗g3 g4  
19.♘d2 ♜e7**

19...♞f4 seems attractive, but would immediately allow some counterplay after 20.e6.

**20.♘h5 ♜f7! 21.♘f1 ♜g6 22.♘f6  
♝ad8 23.♞ad1 ♜xd1 24.♞xd1  
♝d8 25.♞xd8 ♜xd8**



Despite the exchanges, White still has big problems coordinating his pieces and protecting his pawns (g2, c2). Black may advance his h-pawn or play a move like ...♞d4.

**26.♘e3 f4 27.♘d1 ♜xf6 28.exf6  
♝e4 29.♗b2 b4**

Funnily enough the knight is again in trouble, with 30...♞xc2 threatened this time.

**30.f3 ♜xc2 31.♘f2 gxf3 32.gxf3  
♝b1 33.♘e4 ♜xa2 34.♘d2 a5  
35.♘f2 ♜d4 36.♗xd4 cxd4  
37.♕e2 ♜xf6 38.♕d3 ♜e5  
39.♕c2 a4 40.bxa4 c5 41.a5 c4  
42.a6 d3+ 0-1**

## Vacating the Square

**Dawid Janowski**

**Aaron Nimzowitsch**

St Petersburg 1914

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♜b4  
4.e3 b6 5.♘d3 ♜b7 6.♘f3  
♞xc3+ 7.bxc3 d6 8.♗c2 ♜bd7  
9.e4 e5 10.0-0 0-0 11.♘g5 h6  
12.♘d2 ♜e8 13.♗ae1 ♜h7  
14.h3 ♜hf8 15.♘h2 ♜e6  
16.♘e3 c5 17.d5 ♜f4 18.♘e2  
♞f8 19.♘g4 ♜c8 20.♗d2 ♜a6  
21.g3 ♜g6 22.♗e2 ♜h7 23.h4  
♞f6 24.♘d3 ♜b8 25.♗e2 ♜b7  
26.♘c1 ♜be7 27.♘h1 ♜c8  
28.♘g1 ♜f8 29.h5 ♜h8 30.g4  
♞h7 31.♘c2 ♜b7 32.f4 f6  
33.fxe5 dxe5**



Not capturing towards the centre, in order to vacate a square for a piece. It is the knight from h8 that gains a future here.

33...dxe5 34.Qf3 Qf7 35.Qef1  
 ♖g8 36.Qh4 ♖d6 37.Qf5 ♖xf5  
 38.gxf5 ♖g5 39.Qxg5 hxg5  
 40.Qa4

Janowski decides against waiting passively (here too White is left with a bad bishop) and uses his space advantage to set up a queenside attack, thus effectively giving up the h5-pawn.

40...Qf8 41.Qc6 ♖b8 42.a4 ♖f7  
 43.Qg2 ♖h8 44.Qh1 ♖h6  
 45.Qa1 ♖c7 46.Qf2 ♖bh8  
 47.Qe3 ♖g8 48.Qd3 ♖f7 49.a5  
 ♖xh5 50.Qxh5 ♖xh5 51.axb6  
 ♖h3+ 52.Qc2 axb6 53.Qa8+  
 ♖h7 54.Qd8 ♖a7 55.Qa8 ♖f7  
 56.Qb3

56.Qd8 is better, after which Black could try 56...Qc7 57.Qa8 ♖h4, though after 58.Qb3 he would have to work hard to prove anything.

56...Qh5 57.Qxh5+ ♖xh5  
 58.Qe8



**58...Qxe8?**

Nimzowitsch gives up his proud knight, but after 58...Qh6!! 59.Qg6+ (59.Qd8 g4!) 59...Qxg6 60.fxg6+ ♖xg6 61.Qc2 ♖xe4 62.Qd3 ♖f5 Black is better. In *Die Praxis Meines Systems* Nimzowitsch stated that he had overlooked the last move in this variation. After the text move the game ended in a draw.

## Space Advantage

Babu Lalith

R.R. Laxman

Chennai 2012

1.Qf3 d5 2.d4 Qf6 3.c4 e6 4.Qc3  
 ♖b4 5.e3 0-0 6.Qd3 c5 7.0-0 ♖c6  
 8.a3 ♖xc3 9.bxc3 ♖c7 10.Qe2  
 dxc4 11.Qxc4 e5 12.d5 ♖a5 13.e4  
 ♖xc4 14.Qxc4 ♖g4 15.Qe1 ♖e8  
 16.Qe3 b6 17.f4 ♖d6



Of course there are positions where the opponent can find ways of withstanding the strong knight. In the first place a central passed pawn on the 5th rank will signify a small spatial advantage, which will leave its mark on the activity of the pieces of both players.

18.Qd3 f6 19.Qf3 Qae8 20.Qae1  
 ♖xf3 21.gxf3

After 21.Qxf3 the prosaic 21...c4 22.Qc2 exf4 puts White in trouble. After the text move White's centre has been substantially reinforced, so Black might have been better advised to refrain from taking on f3 at all.

21...Qd7 22.Qc1 Qh3 23.Qe2  
 ♖h4 24.fxe5 fxe5 25.Qh1 ♖f6  
 26.Qg1 ♖h5 27.Qg3 ♖g6  
 28.Qg2 ♖f8 29.Qf1 ♖ff6 30.Qd2  
 c4 31.a4 ♖h4 32.Qe1 ♖f4  
 33.Qxg6 ♖xg6+ 34.Qg3 ♖h4  
 35.Qe3

Here White obviously has a good bishop and he can try to break with either a4-a5 or f3-f4.

**35... $\mathbb{W}e7$  36.f4 h5 37.fxe5  $\mathbb{W}xe5$**   
**38. $\mathbb{Q}f3!$ ?  $\mathbb{W}e8$  39. $\mathbb{M}e1?$**

39. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{M}xd6$  40. $\mathbb{W}d4$  is a much better try.

**39... $\mathbb{Q}b7$  40. $\mathbb{W}d4$  h4 41. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}d7$**

Now the white king is very vulnerable.

**42. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$**

42... $\mathbb{W}h3+$  43. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  and Black has a very dangerous attack.

**43. $\mathbb{M}f1$**

Making up for the mistake on move 39.

**43... $\mathbb{M}g2$  44.d6**

Taking advantage of the fact that the knight has been moved. White is now clearly better.

## Undermining the Blockader

Artur Jussupow

Zoltan Ribli

Montpellier 1985

**1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d5 4. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  c5 5.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  6.e4  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  7.bxc3 cxd4 8.cxd4  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  9. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  b5 10. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}b4+$  11. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  12.d5 exd5 13.exd5  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  14.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  0-0 16. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  18. $\mathbb{M}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$**



**19. $\mathbb{W}d4$**

Here the position is open and the central passed pawn is also an isolated pawn. As a result White has, besides a space advantage, some good squares for his pieces. White now wants to follow up with  $\mathbb{W}f4$  and  $\mathbb{M}c6$ , driving away the blockading knight.

**19... $\mathbb{W}b6$  20. $\mathbb{W}f4$**

The endgame after 20. $\mathbb{M}c6$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{M}d8$  22. $\mathbb{M}c7$  would only yield White a minimal edge.

**20... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  21. $\mathbb{Q}d4$**

The knight is coming to c6, after which the knight on d6 will no longer be protected by the queen.

**21... $\mathbb{M}fe8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  23. $\mathbb{M}fe1$**

White is clearly better now and  $\mathbb{Q}e7+$  is already a nuisance.

**23... $\mathbb{Q}b2$  24. $\mathbb{Q}e4$**

24. $\mathbb{M}xe8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xe8$  (24... $\mathbb{M}xe8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ ) 25. $\mathbb{Q}e7+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}c8$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  27. $\mathbb{M}c7$  would have won at once.

**24... $\mathbb{Q}c4$  25.h3 h6 26. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}b2$**

26... $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  is a better try, though after 27.dxc6  $\mathbb{M}xe1+$  28. $\mathbb{M}xe1$  Black cannot take on c6: 28... $\mathbb{W}xc6$  29. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  30. $\mathbb{Q}h7+$ .

**27. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  28.dxc6  $\mathbb{M}xe1+$**

**29. $\mathbb{M}xe1$   $\mathbb{W}xc6$  30. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}c3$  31. $\mathbb{M}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$**

Black seems to be saving himself with sharp play, but...



**32. $\mathbb{W}xf7+$**

Very nice. Black loses a piece. 32.  $\mathbb{B}xc3$   $\mathbb{B}xf4$  33.  $\mathbb{B}f3$  (33.  $\mathbb{Q}xa8$   $\mathbb{Q}e2+$ ) 33...  $\mathbb{Q}e2+$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{B}e8$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  (35.  $\mathbb{B}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}h7+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$ ) 35...  $\mathbb{B}e7$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}xf7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  does not do the trick.

1-0

## Exchanging the Blockading Knight

Bartłomiej Macieja

Bartosz Socko

Warsaw 2012

1.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2. c4 g6 3.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$   
 4. e4 d6 5. d4 0-0 6.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  e5  
 7.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  c6 8. d5  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  9.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  f6  
 10.  $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  12. f3  
 f5 13. b4  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$   
 15.  $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  16. a3 c5 17. bxc5  
 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  dxc5 19. a4  $\mathbb{Q}d6$



Again, White has a nice space advantage, although here he is still stuck with a bad bishop.

20. a5  $\mathbb{W}c7$  21. 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}d7$

A sensible developing move, but it allows the slightly surprising...

22.  $\mathbb{Q}e7!$ ?

A simple but effective resource: the knight on d6 is exchanged and consequently a much less suitable blockading piece appears on d6. Black was probably expecting a move like 22.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$  or 22.  $\mathbb{B}ab1$ .

22...  $\mathbb{B}f7$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  24.  $\mathbb{B}fb1$   
 $\mathbb{B}b8$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}d1$

With the clear intention of exchanging his bad bishop on a4.

25...  $\mathbb{W}f6$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}c8?$

Black understandably avoids the exchange, but this is just too passive. Black should have become active on the kingside with 26...  $\mathbb{W}g5$ . Now White reaches a pleasant endgame after 27.  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{W}e3+$  28.  $\mathbb{W}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3+$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{B}xd7$ , but at least Black's dark-squared bishop has become part of the game.

27. d6

The blockader's gone, so it's time to advance!

27...  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  28. d7  $\mathbb{B}d8$  29.  $\mathbb{B}xb7$

White must be winning here.

29...  $\mathbb{W}h4$  30. g3  $\mathbb{W}h5$  31.  $\mathbb{B}f1$

31.  $\mathbb{Q}c6!$  is a more clear-cut win.

31...  $\mathbb{W}h3$  32.  $\mathbb{B}xa7$  f4 33. g4  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$

34. a6  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  35.  $\mathbb{B}b7$   $\mathbb{Q}h4$  36. a7

$\mathbb{B}ff8$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}g3$  38.  $\mathbb{B}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}h4$

39.  $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  40.  $\mathbb{Q}c6$

1-0

## Summary

Apart from blockading a central passed pawn, a knight on d6 may support advances by the nearby pawns to b5 or f5. Also it may attack the opponent's supporting pawn chain. The opponent should try to make something of his spatial advantage and watch out for being stuck with a bad bishop facing this ideal blockader.

## Chapter 4

# Dominating from the Edge: A Powerful Knight on a5

Tarrasch's adage 'a knight on the rim...' has often been adapted by other people. But did you realize that, for example, a knight on a5 can be a formidable piece in many cases? Indeed, there seem to be more exceptions to this rule than you would think.

**Wang Hao  
Magnus Carlsen**

Wijk aan Zee 2013

The Tata Steel tournament in 2013 supplied a striking example: 'The Chinese Grandmaster traded his active knight for the passive black bishop, missing a clever defence...' When you read this in the round 11 report on the tournament's website, a position like the following one is hardly the first you would think of.

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♗c6 3.♗b5 e6  
4.0-0 ♗ge7 5.♕e1 ♗g6 6.c3 d5  
7.♗a4 ♗e7 8.d4 0-0 9.exd5  
♗xd5 10.dxc5 ♗xc5 11.♘bd2  
♗e7 12.♘c4 ♗d8 13.♗xc6 bxc6  
14.♘d4 c5 15.♘c6 ♗c7  
16.♘xe7+ ♗xe7 17.♗a5 ♗xa5  
18.♗xa5 ♗a6 19.♗g5 ♗fe8  
20.♗ad1 h6 21.♗xe7 ♗xe7



Here White's knight is on the edge, while the black bishop, though it's not on the best possible diagonal, just seems normal. Even so, this was one of the rare moments during Tata 2013 when Carlsen was in some trouble. Black has an unpleasant endgame. First of all, White controls the d-file and also has the better pawn structure. A less noticeable but important fact is that the knight on a5 is better than the bishop on a6. The latter's scope is limited thanks to the white knight, which by contrast has access to some useful squares.

**22.c4**

Boxing in the bishop still further, although the immediate 22.♗d6 was also plausible: 22...♗b5 and now 23.c4.

**22...♗f8 23.♗d6 ♗b7 24.♗ed1  
♗e8**

Here we have the moment mentioned in the tournament report.

**25.♘c6?**

Not appreciating the strength of the knight on the edge, which was still superior to the bishop! With this transposition into a rook ending White throws away his advantage. Much better attempts were 25.f3, again limiting the scope of Black's bishop, or 25.a3 ♗c7 26.b4, setting in motion the queenside majority.

25... $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  26. $\mathbb{B}xc6$   $\mathbb{B}b7$  27.b3  
a5! 28. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  a4 29.h4  $\mathbb{A}xb3$   
30. $\mathbb{A}xb3$   $\mathbb{B}ab8!$

30... $\mathbb{B}xb3$  31. $\mathbb{B}c7$ .

31. $\mathbb{B}d3$

1/2-1/2

## Dominating the Bishop

Himal Gusain  
Michailo Oleksienko

New Delhi 2012

1.e4 c5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  e6 3.d4  $\mathbb{C}xd4$   
4. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  a6 5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  b5 6. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{W}b6$   
7. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  8.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  9.a3  $\mathbb{Q}f6$   
10. $\mathbb{W}e2$  d6 11.f4  $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  12. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   
 $\mathbb{Q}e7$  13. $\mathbb{M}ae1$  h5 14. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{B}c8$   
15. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  e5



16. $\mathbb{Q}a5!$

Here we see the knight taking on a different pawn structure (a6, b5). On b3 it has few prospects, but here on a5 it is equal to the bishop on b7 and prepares the immediate c2-c4.

16... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  17.b4!

White is perfectly happy not to exchange his knight for the  $\mathbb{Q}b7$ .

17... $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  18. $\mathbb{C}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$

Black retains his bishop, which nevertheless can only go to squares which are within reach of the  $\mathbb{Q}a5$ !

19. $\mathbb{B}c1$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  20. $\mathbb{B}c3$

A good alternative is 20. $\mathbb{B}xc8+$   $\mathbb{W}xc8$   
21. $\mathbb{B}c1$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  22.fxe5  $dxe5$  23. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ , keeping a solid pawn centre.

20... $\mathbb{exf4}$  21. $\mathbb{Q}h3$  0-0 22. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{h}4$   
23. $\mathbb{Q}h5?$



23... $\mathbb{Q}xh5$  24. $\mathbb{W}xh5$   $\mathbb{W}e6?$

Apparently Black could have opened up the long diagonal with tactical means:  
24...f5 25.exf5  $\mathbb{W}a7+$  26. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{W}e3$   
27. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{W}g5!!$  28. $\mathbb{W}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   
29. $\mathbb{B}xc8$   $\mathbb{B}xc8$  30. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{B}c2$  31. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  h3.

25. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{W}g6$

25... $\mathbb{W}xb3$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  27. $\mathbb{W}g4+$   
 $\mathbb{Q}h6$  28. $\mathbb{B}xc8$ .

26. $\mathbb{W}xg6$   $\mathbb{fxg6}$  27. $\mathbb{B}xf8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$

28. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{B}xc1+$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xc1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$

30. $\mathbb{Q}a5$

Again!

30... $\mathbb{Q}f6$

30...d5 31.e5.

31. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  d5 32. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{dx e 4+}$   
33. $\mathbb{dxe4}$

Now that the pawn on e4 is protected, the knight on a5 is still dominating the  $\mathbb{Q}a8$ . True, now there is not much else to do on a5 (the power of the knight should not be overestimated either!). The game eventually ended in a draw.

## Attacking the Queenside Pawns

Vadim Faibisovich  
Alexey Gavrilov

Basel 2013

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  c5  
4. $\mathbb{exd5}$   $\mathbb{exd5}$  5. $\mathbb{Q}gf3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$

6.♗b5+ ♗d7 7.♗xd7+ ♘bx<sub>d</sub>7  
 8.0-0 ♗e7 9.dxc5 ♘xc5 10.♘b3  
 ♗ce4 11.♘bd4 ♕c8 12.♗e3 0-0  
 13.♗d3 ♗e8 14.♗ad1 a6 15.♘e2  
 ♘c5 16.♗xc5 ♘xc5 17.♗d2



17...♘a4!

Here we have a different pawn structure again. Now the knight is not controlling squares from the side, but rather attacking the pawn on b2, thus tying a white piece to its defence. Chasing the knight away with b2-b3 would allow it to occupy c3. A b2/c3 pawn structure may face a similar problem, even to the extent of losing a pawn on c3.

18.c3 b5 19.♘ed4 ♕d7 20.♗fe1

20.b3 is still not possible, because of 20...♘e4.

20...♘e4 21.♗c2 ♕ac8 22.♗b3  
 g6 23.♗c2 ♘ec5 24.♗xe8+  
 ♜xe8 25.♗xd5?! ♘xb2

Black has won the strategic battle: now his pawn structure is clearly better, and the knight is coming into play as well.

26.♗e1 ♕d8 27.♘b4 ♕xd5  
 28.♗xd5 ♕d8 29.♘b4 ♘ba4

Again! Black won.

**Alexey Goganov**

**Davit Benidze**

Yerevan 2013

1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.c4 c6 3.♘c3 d5  
 4.d4 g6 5.♗f4 ♗g7 6.e3 0-0 7.h3

♗b6 8.♗b3 ♘xb3 9.axb3 ♘f5  
 10.♘d2 ♘bd7 11.g4 ♗e6  
 12.♗g2 h6 13.♗e2 a6 14.♗g3  
 ♘b6 15.c5 ♘bd7



16.b4!

Clearing the route to a5 for the knight.

16...♗h7 17.♘b3 f5

Black is desperately seeking counterplay on the kingside.

18.gxf5 gxf5 19.♘a5

Here the knight cooperates perfectly with the bishop on g3. The pawn on b7 cannot be protected in a normal way. Had the light-squared bishop been on c8 (and, let's say, the queen's rook on e8), then the knight would have been much less strong on a5. For an example where Black's light-squared bishop has already been exchanged, see Thiede-Guliyev, Germany Bundesliga 2011/12. There White preserved some slight initiative thanks to the pressure from the knight on a5 against a similar queenside pawn chain.

19...♗a7?

Black probably did not see the next move coming, or he would have opted for a move such as 19...♗f7 and if 20.♘xb7 then 20...e5.

20.b5! f4

20...axb5 21.♘xc6 ♕xa1 22.♘xe7+  
 ♔f7 23.♔xa1 ♔xe7 24.♗d6+ ♔f7  
 25.♗xf8 ♘hxf8 26.♔a7, winning.

### 21.♘h4

21.♘xf4 was fully possible as well.

### 21...cx b5 22.♘xd5 f3+ 23.♘xf3

♘xf3 24.♘xe7+ ♔f7 25.♘xf3  
♘df6 26.d5

It is all over.

26...♘xd5 27.♘xd5 ♘xd5+

28.e4 ♘e6 29.♖ab1 ♘g5+  
30.♔e3 1-0

## Supporting a King Attack

Tigran L Petrosian

Hrant Melkumyan

Yerevan 2013

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6  
4.♗a4 ♘f6 5.0-0 ♘e7 6.♗xc6  
dxc6 7.d3 ♘g4 8.♗bd2 ♘d7  
9.h3 ♘h5 10.♗e1 ♘c5 11.♗h2  
♗e7 12.♗b3 ♘b4 13.c3 ♘d6



### 14.♘a5

Here is another example of the typically annoying attack on the b7-pawn. The pawn cannot advance as its colleague on c6 would fall. Black decides to castle queenside, protecting b7 in a natural way. However, this makes the knight on a5 a dangerous footing for an attack on the black king.

14...0-0-0 15.b4 ♘b6 16.a4 ♗e6

17.c4 ♘e7 18.♔a3 c5

Black wants to avoid being pushed further back after a possible c4-c5.

### 19.b5

Now Black faces a difficult choice: opening up the a-file by taking on b5 or granting the knight possible access to the c6-square by allowing bxa6.

### 19...♖d7

True, the knight won't reach c6 in the near future, and with an open a-file, maybe a knight sac on b7 would be more likely.

20.bxa6 bxa6 21.♔e3 ♘hd8

22.g4 ♘g6 23.♗e2 h5 24.f3  
hxg4 25.hxg4 f6 26.♗b1 ♘f7



Exercise: improve your worst placed piece (ideal square?)! The answer is given on move 29.

27.♘f1 ♘h8 28.♔g2 ♘dd8

29.♗g1!

Now White is threatening ♗e3-d5.

29...f5?!

After this desperate try for counterplay White had no problems rounding off the game.

**Anna Zatonskikh**

**Piotr Dukaczewski**

Gibraltar 2013

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.♘f3 ♘f6

4.e3 e6 5.♗xc4 c5 6.0-0 a6

7.dxc5 ♘xc5 8.♗xd8+ ♘xd8

9.♘e5 ♘e7 10.♗e2 ♘bd7

11.♘d3 ♘d6 12.♘d2 b5 13.♘b3

♘b7 14.♘a5



Another example with the a6/b5 pawn structure. This time the bishop on b7 has more squares on the diagonal (for the moment!).

We've seen that a knight on the edge is not a bad thing as long as it is temporary and it is en route to a better square (this should not take too long, of course, though in closed positions like in the former example this may be less important). Here the best square turns out to be c6, and this square is reached by the knight in spectacular fashion. For another entertaining example from the same tournament, see Huschenbeth-Valhondo.

**14...♝d5 15.♝d2**

The immediate 15.f3 also seems logical.

**15...♞e4?!**

Only superficially active. This knight is bound to be driven back by f2-f3.

**16.♞e1 f5 17.♝b4 ♜hc8**

This is certainly a tense queenless middlegame.

**18.♜d1**

18.♝xd5+ or 18.a4 were also worth considering.

**18...♝b6 19.♝d3 ♜e5?**

19...♝c5 or 19...♝f6 were clearly preferable. The text move in combination with the next one enables a deadly tactical blow.

**20.f3 ♜f6?**

**21.e4! fxe4 22.fxe4 ♜xe4  
23.♝xe4 ♜xe4 24.♝bc6+ ♜xc6  
25.♝b4+**

That's it!

**25...♝d6 26.♝xd6**

1-0

### Striking Back on the Other Side

**Vlastimil Jansa**

**Vasily Smyslov**

Sochi 1974

**1.e4 e5 2.♝f3 ♜c6 3.♝b5 a6  
4.♝a4 ♜f6 5.0-0 ♜e7 6.♜e1 b5  
7.♝b3 0-0 8.c3 d6 9.h3 ♜d7  
10.d4 ♜e8 11.♝bd2 ♜f8 12.a3  
g6 13.♝c2 ♜g7 14.b4 ♜h5  
15.♝b3 ♜d8 16.a4 ♜e6 17.axb5  
♝ef4 18.♝h2 ♜xb5 19.d5 ♜f8**



I would not want you to overestimate the powers of a knight on a5, so we finish with a suitable example where Black manages to generate play on the kingside. Still, I think the first six exam-

ples have proved the potential strength of such a knight. In the end it is up to you to decide in which instances you would like to put your knight on the rim, though I'm sure that the examples will have been of help.

**20.♘a5**

Aiming for the c6-square and enabling moves like ♜a4.

**20...♝e8!**

On its way to support the killer knight in the attack on the other wing.

**21.h4?!**

Moving on the wrong side of the board. Better was 21.♘a4 ♜e7 22.♗f3!?, although this also seems rather risky after 22...f5.

**21...f5 22.exf5 ♜xf5 23.♘xf5 gxf5 24.g3 ♜g6**

Black has already taken over the initiative.

**25.♕f1 ♜h3 26.♕g2?**



I guess White was in time trouble as this obviously loses on the spot. More stubborn continuations were 26.♖a2 or 26.♗c2.

**26...♘xf2 27.♗f3 ♜g4 28.♘xg4 fxe4 29.♗e4 ♜f7 30.♖e3 ♜f6 31.♗f5 ♜xd5+ 32.♔h2 ♜f3 33.♗xf3 gxf3 34.♔h3 h5 35.♘c6**

Finally, but definitely too late.  
**35...♘g4 36.♔a7 f2 37.♗f1 ♜xa7 38.♘xa7 ♜e3 39.♘c6 e4 0-1**

### Summary

At times a knight on the rim may be equally strong as a bishop on the long diagonal! Also, from a5 it can be particularly effective by attacking the b7-pawn in Black's structure. However, in both cases the knight should not be missed in other parts of the board, where the opponent will look for chances.

## Chapter 5

### Sur Place en Prise

Or, to put it differently: attacking with a knight on g5 which is under a continuous threat of being taken. Jumping with your knight to g5 may not be the obvious thing to do when it can immediately be chased away by ...h7-h6. However, a pawn on h4 may work wonders when you are attacking a castled king.

Vladislav Vorotnikov

Nicolas Grandadam

Basel 2013

1.d4 d5 2.♘c3 ♘f6 3.♘f3 e6  
4.♗g5 ♖e7 5.♗xf6 ♖xf6 6.e4  
dxe4 7.♗xe4 ♖e7 8.♗d3 ♘d7  
9.♕d2 0-0 10.0-0-0 b6 11.h4  
♗b7 12.♗f4 ♖b8 13.♗eg5



White has just answered Black's 12...♗b8 with 13.♗eg5. It seems logical enough to attack on the kingside, as Black has just tucked away his queen on the other wing to prepare ...c7-c5 and gain some space (perhaps at first sight this move may seem a bit odd, but it has been successfully tried by Dreev). But now, what is White's intention after

**13...h6**

? 13...♗f6 was a suitable alternative, though 14.♗e5 c5 15.♗h3 cxd4 16.♗g3 seems quite dangerous.

**14.♗e5!**

Of course, White has absolutely no intention of moving his knight from g5.

**14...♗xe5**

Or 14...♗f6 15.♗h3 – the well-known rook lift, bringing yet another piece to the attack – 15...c5 (15...♗d6) 16.♗g3 cxd4 (16...♗d6 and now the surprising 17.♗h7! wins immediately: 17...♗xh7 (17...♗h5 18.♗xh6 ♗xg3 19.♗f6+) 18.♗xh6 g6 19.♗xg6) 17.♗h7+! ♗xh7 18.♗gxf7 and, among other things, White threatens 19.♗xg7+.

**15.dxe5**

Now White's pawn on e5 reduces Black's defensive chances.

**15...a5**

Black would like to exchange the light-squared bishops to eliminate an important attacking piece, but this is just too slow as the game shows.

Taking the piece with 15...hxg5 16.hxg5 was not worth considering as the h-file is opened up and mate is almost inevitable (the immediate threat being 17.♗h8+).

**16.♗h3 ♖a6 17.♗h7+ ♖h8  
18.♗e4**

With a double attack: a8 and f7 are both hanging.

**18...♗b7 19.♗xf7+ ♖g8  
20.♗xh6+ 1-0**

## Ongoing Tension

**Ljubomir Ljubojevic**

**Viktor Kortchnoi**

Wijk aan Zee 2008

- 1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$
4. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  5.e3 d5 6.a3  $\mathbb{Q}d6$
- 7.f4 a5 8. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  9. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  0-0
10. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  11. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  12.h4

In this example, the attack is less straightforward and the tension is maintained for quite some time.

**12...h6**



**13.0-0-0!**

Of course, with the queen on c2, taking on g5 is hardly an option. Still, White has to keep an eye open in case altered circumstances make it possible for Black to take on g5.

**13... $\mathbb{Q}b4$**

A nice mirror image! 13...hgx5 14.hxg5  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  (14...g6 15. $\mathbb{Q}h6$ !) 15. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  dxe4 16. $\mathbb{W}xe4$  g6 and now one winning move is 17. $\mathbb{W}f3$ .

**14. $\mathbb{W}b1$**

Maintaining the tension. After 14.axb4 axb4 15. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}a2$  Black takes over the initiative. White's extra piece is hanging on g5, but it is impossible to give a clear assessment at this stage.

**14...c5 15.e4!?**

White tries everything he can to justify his  $\mathbb{W}b1$ / $\mathbb{Q}g5$  set-up, and he wants to get rid of Black's knight on f6.

**15... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  16.e5  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}hxg5$**

Finally the tension dissipates and the course of the game becomes more concrete. An interesting try would have been 17...g6 18.exf6  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  19.axb4  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  20.bxc3  $\mathbb{W}f6$  and again Black seems to be on top.

**18.exf6  $\mathbb{Q}a2+$**

Black decides to release the tension on the queenside as well. The position is incredibly difficult and full of plausible possibilities: 18... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  and 18... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  also came into consideration.

**19. $\mathbb{W}xa2$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  20.hxg5  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  21.bxc3**



The position has become slightly simplified, and both sides are doing their utmost to harass the enemy king.

**21... $\mathbb{W}c7$  22.g3  $\mathbb{Q}a4$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}fd8$  24. $\mathbb{Q}c2$**

24. $\mathbb{W}h2$  first seems a good alternative. The position remains very complex and still requires a fair bit of calculation. Eventually the battle ended in a draw.

## Disposing of the $\mathbb{Q}f6$

**Dragan Damjanovic**

**Nikola Nestorovic**

Belgrade 2008

- 1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$
4. $\mathbb{W}c2$  c5 5. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  6.a3  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$
- 7.b4  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  8. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  9. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d6

**10.♗b2 a6 11.♗bd4 ♕c7 12.e3  
0-0 13.♗d3 ♗bd7**



**14.♗g5**

Here we go again.

**14...h6 15.h4 ♖e5 16.♗h7+ ♔h8**

A typical scenario where White has to get both the ♖f6 and his own ♗h7 out of the way to deliver mate.

**17.f4**

White has some difficulty trying to prove his point and now goes all the way.

**17...♗xc4?!**

The less greedy 17...♗eg4 would have been solid and good. Then it would have been virtually impossible for White to eliminate the ♖f6.

**18.♗d3 b5 19.♗df3!**

Suddenly White has created real threats (xf6 followed by xc4) which justify his knight leap to g5.

**19...♔d8?**

Seemingly clever, but 19...♗a7 was the better way to unpin the knight on c4.

**20.♗xf6**

Not 20.♗xc4 ♕xc4!.

**20...♗xf6 21.♗c1 g6 22.h5 hxg5**

Practically forced now.

**23.hxg6+ ♔g8 24.g7?**

24.♗xc4 ♕xc4 25.gxf7+ ♔xf7

26.♗h7+ would have won.

**24...♗d8!**

And not 24...♔xg7 25.fxg5 ♔e5 26.♗xc4 ♕h8 27.♗xh8 ♔xh8 28.♗xe5

dxe5 29.♗h7+!; or 24...♔xg7 25.♗h7+ ♔h8 26.♗g8+ (remember that trick, if you weren't yet familiar with this typical means to get the bishop out of the way) 26...♔xg8 27.♗h7+.

**25.♗xc4 ♕xg7**

Black has survived and is on top. He went on to win this game.

## ♕h5: Another Straightforward Attack

**Murray Chandler**

**Nigel Short**

Brighton 1981

**1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♗d2 ♔e7  
4.♗gf3 ♖f6 5.e5 ♖e4 6.♗d3  
♗xd2 7.♗xd2 0-0 8.h4 h6 9.c3  
♗d7**



**10.♗g5**

No surprise, I guess.

**10...c5 11.♗h5**

Introducing another set-up, rendering ...hxg5 definitely impossible and eyeing f7. Unlike in positions with the queen on c2, White has no knight to target on f6, but Black has to watch out for moves like ♗h7. Now he takes the opportunity to initiate play on the other side.

**11...cxsd4 12.cxd4 ♕b6 13.♗c3**

**♗b4 14.♔f1 ♗xc3**

At least Black has eliminated one of White's attacking pieces.

### 15.bxc3 ♜b2 16.♖d1

Now Black is in big trouble; obviously his queen cannot do the job on the queenside alone.

### 16...♜xa2 17.♗h3

Following the general piece of advice: always bring more pieces into the attack. Here White does this by lifting his king's rook to the third rank.

### 17...b6 18.♗h7+

Accurate. White avoids the exchange of his remaining bishop after ...♝a6.

### 18...♚h8 19.♗g3 ♜a6+ 20.♗g1 ♛e2



### 21.♘xf7+!

I guess White had calculated this blow before making his 18th move.

### 21...♜xf7 22.♗xf7 ♜xd1+

### 23.♗h2 g5 24.♗g6 ♜f8 25.♗f6+ ♜g8 26.♗f7+ ♚h7 27.hxg5 1-0

For yet another quick victory involving ♜h5 see Mrva-Hlinka, Slovakia 2012.

## No Light-Squared Bishop

**Vahé Baghdasaryan**  
**Vitaly Kunin**

Moscow 2012

1.e4 d6 2.f4 ♘f6 3.♘c3 ♘bd7  
4.♘f3 e5 5.♗c4 ♜e7 6.d4 exd4  
7.♗xd4 0-0 8.♗e3 c6 9.0-0 b5  
10.♗e2 c5 11.♗d3 b4 12.♘d5  
♘xd5 13.exd5 a5 14.♗de1 ♘f6



### 15.♘g5 h6

Of course, something can be said for omitting this move altogether and not weakening the pawn structure on the kingside. Still, the inclusion of the moves h2-h4 and ...h7-h6 will always force White to consider the capture on g5 at any moment in his calculations.

### 16.h4 ♜a6

Naturally Black is eager to exchange one more pair of minor pieces, diminishing White's attacking potential. The absence of the light-squared bishops makes White's set-up with ♘g5 rather harmless.

### 17.♗d1 ♜xe2 18.♗xe2 ♜d7

It is too early to take on g5: 18...hxg5 19.hxg5 ♘e4 20.♗ee1 g6 21.♗f3.

### 19.♗d3 ♜fc8 20.♗f2

It was too late to reconsider the set-up with 20.♗e4 as after 20...c4 21.♗d4 a4 Black's attack is much quicker.

### 20...a4 21.♗h3

Practically acknowledging defeat.

### 21...♜a7

21...♜xh3 22.♘xh3 ♜f8 23.♗d1 ♜e8 is also plausible, but the text move causes White even more concerns about his d-pawn.

### 22.♗d3

This reply says it all, but alternatives are not really any better and will most probably lose the pawn on d5: 22.♗xd7 ♜xd7 23.♗e4 ♘xd5 24.g3 ♘b6.

22... $\mathbb{W}g4$  23. $\mathbb{H}he1$   $\mathbb{W}xf4+$   
24. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{H}xg5$

You'd almost forget that sometimes it's simply possible to capture it!

25.g3  $\mathbb{W}g4$  26. $\mathbb{H}xe7$   $\mathbb{H}xe7$   
27. $\mathbb{H}xe7$   $\mathbb{G}xh4$  28. $\mathbb{G}xh4$  a3  
29. $\mathbb{H}e1$   $\mathbb{A}xb2$  30. $\mathbb{H}g1$   $\mathbb{W}e4$   
31. $\mathbb{W}g3$  g6 32.h5  $\mathbb{Q}xh5$  33. $\mathbb{W}xd6$   
c4 34. $\mathbb{H}e1$   $\mathbb{W}f5$  35. $\mathbb{W}xb4$   $\mathbb{W}xf2$   
36.d6  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  37. $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{H}d8$  0-1

## A Theoretical Position

**Shakhriyar Mamedyarov**  
**Anna Zatonskikh**

Gibraltar 2012

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{E}e7$   
4. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5.e3 0-0 6. $\mathbb{W}c2$  c5  
7.dxc5  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  8. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  9.a3  
 $\mathbb{W}a5$  10.0-0-0 dxc4 11. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  a6



A theoretical position from the Queen's Gambit where White has tried several moves.

12. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ ?

The most important alternative is 12. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ , while 12. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  can be met with 12... $\mathbb{E}e7$ .

12... $\mathbb{E}e7$

12...b5? 13. $\mathbb{Q}ce4$  loses at once; 12...h6 13.h4 (13. $\mathbb{Q}ge4$ ?) 13... $\mathbb{E}e7$  transposes.

13.h4 h6

Again, something can be said in favour of omitting this move as it does not

pose a real threat. But the immediate 13...b5 runs into 14. $\mathbb{Q}ce4$  g6 15. $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xh7$ !  $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  17.h5 with a forceful attack, while 13...e5 enables 14. $\mathbb{Q}d5$  g6 15. $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xh7$ . Once again the elimination of the  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  is of vital importance. 13... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  seems possible though.

14. $\mathbb{Q}b1$  b5?

This is still impossible. Black had to be satisfied with a move like 14... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  or 14... $\mathbb{H}d8$ .

15. $\mathbb{Q}ce4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  16. $\mathbb{W}xe4$



16... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$

Had Black pinned her hopes on this move? 16...h5 can be met with the nice intermediate move 17. $\mathbb{Q}c7$ ! (although the straightforward 17.h5 g6 18. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  19. $\mathbb{W}h4$  also wins) 17... $\mathbb{W}xc7$  18.h5.

17. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  f5 18. $\mathbb{W}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   
19. $\mathbb{W}xa8$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  20. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$   
21. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  22.f3

Black is simply an exchange down without sufficient compensation. She lost without a chance.

## A Special Case

**Judit Polgar**  
**Ferenc Berkes**

Budapest 2003

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$   
4. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  dxe4 5. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  6. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$

**8... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  9.0-0-0  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  10. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  b6 11. $\mathbb{Q}eg5$  h6**



**12. $\mathbb{Q}h7+$**

Considering all the former examples you would expect 12.h4, which has actually been seen before and was answered with 12... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ . However, Polgar decides to preserve this move for later and to prevent the bishop's development first.

**12... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  13. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$**

Black decides to sacrifice the exchange, as now 13... $\mathbb{Q}b8$  can be met with 14.h4 after all. 13... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  was later played in Volokitin-Nielsen, Germany Bundesliga 2004/05, and is a safe option. Berczes must have been surprised by Judit's next move.

**14.g4!**

After 14. $\mathbb{Q}xa8$  g4 White faces immediate problems because the knight cannot move in view of 15... $\mathbb{Q}g5$ .

**14... $\mathbb{Q}b8$  15.h4**

Only now, but with the same devastating effect due to the inevitable opening of the h-file.

**15...g6**

15... $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  16.g5  $\mathbb{Q}g8$  (16...f6 17. $\mathbb{Q}xh4$ !) 17. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  f5 18. $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  and White's attack is too strong: 18... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  19. $\mathbb{Q}h7+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}h5+$  g6 21. $\mathbb{Q}h7+$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xg6+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}h7$ . Or 15... $\mathbb{Q}g8$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{Q}xb7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}h3$ ! and again White's attack will prove too powerful.

**16. $\mathbb{Q}xg5+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}f4$**



**17... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ ?**

This loses right away, but the stronger 17... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  would also not have saved the game: 18. $\mathbb{Q}xh8$   $\mathbb{Q}xh8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ , for example 19... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  (19... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ ) 20. $\mathbb{Q}xe5+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xc7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5+$  22. $\mathbb{Q}b1$  and White wins.

**18. $\mathbb{Q}h7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}h2+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5+$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5+$  22.f4  $\mathbb{Q}xf4+$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$**

1-0

### Summary

Surely these examples will help you to appreciate the  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  possibility, even if the supporting h-pawn is still on h2. In view of the opening of the h-file the capture of the knight is not likely to be possible right away and a tense situation will arise.

## Chapter 6

### A Not So Innocent Bystander

In an attack on the black king, the power of the light-squared bishop aimed at f7 or h7 is well-known. But please do pay sufficient attention as well to an inconspicuous knight modestly placed on the edge at h5!

#### In Tandem with the Queen

Arkady Naiditsch  
Hrvoje Stevic

Bol 2013

1.e4 d5 2.exd5  $\mathbb{W}xd5$  3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   
 $\mathbb{W}a5$  4.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  6.f3  
 $\mathbb{Q}d7$  7. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  8. $\mathbb{Q}ge2$  e6  
9.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  10.a4 a5 11. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  c5  
12.dxc5  $\mathbb{Q}xc5+$  13. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   
14.fxe4 0-0 15. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$



#### 16. $\mathbb{Q}h5!?$

Black's kingside obviously lacks defenders, so White starts bringing over his forces. The text move also opens the way for the white queen to join in on g4. The solid and logical 16. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  can be met with 16... $\mathbb{Q}d4$  (16... $\mathbb{Q}ad8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  18. $\mathbb{W}g4$  gives White a pull) 17. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  18. $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  19. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$  and now 19... $\mathbb{Q}xa4!$  20.b3?! (20. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  e5 21. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ ) 20... $\mathbb{Q}xc2$  21.bxa4  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  and Black is doing well.

#### 16... $\mathbb{Q}d4$

Defending the pawn on g7, which White has set his mind on. After the reckless 16... $\mathbb{W}xb2?$  17.c3 Black's queen will be too far from the scene of the action, besides being in some danger of being trapped if White can play  $\mathbb{Q}b3$ . 16... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  can be answered with 17. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  because 17... $\mathbb{Q}xc4?$  fails to 18. $\mathbb{Q}f6+$ . A knight sacrifice on f6 is not uncommon when this knight is attacking from h5! Check out Sokolov-Rezan, played in the same Croatian team championships.

#### 17. $\mathbb{W}g4$ $\mathbb{W}c5?$

An inventive way to prevent  $\mathbb{Q}h6$ , but it backfires. Correct was 17... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ .

#### 18. $\mathbb{Q}e3!$

Not 18. $\mathbb{Q}h6$  g6 19. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$   $\mathbb{W}xf8$  with two pieces hanging, though the situation remains complicated after 20. $\mathbb{Q}ad1!$ .

#### 18... $\mathbb{W}xc4$



### 19.e5!

With this elegant move, the black pieces are cut off from the kingside, especially from the defence of g7. Black resorted to...

19... $\mathbb{W}xf1+$  20. $\mathbb{B}xf1$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

...but in the end could not avoid defeat.

## Putting Pressure on g7

**Constantin Lupulescu  
Francisco Vallejo Pons**

Legnica 2013

1.d4 e6 2.c4 d5 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$   
4. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  dxc4 6.e4 h6  
7. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{W}xf6$  8. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  c5 9.0-0  
0-0 10.e5  $\mathbb{W}d8$  11. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  cxd4  
12. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  13. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$   
14. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  15.h4  $\mathbb{Q}a6$



### 16. $\mathbb{Q}h5$

White has sacrificed a pawn in the opening and now sets up the familiar queen and knight tandem, targeting g7. This time the pawn on e5 makes sure the black pieces will have trouble reaching the kingside and protecting their king. Setting up a battery with 16... $\mathbb{Q}d3$  seems less effective after 16... $\mathbb{Q}b4$  17. $\mathbb{Q}b1$  d3.

### 16... $\mathbb{Q}c5$

Giving back the pawn to complete development.

17. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  18. $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$

White enjoys a nice spatial advantage, but there is no easy way to profit from it.

### 19.b4!?

19... $\mathbb{Q}a4$  20. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ .

### 20. $\mathbb{Q}f5$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$

20...exf5 21. $\mathbb{Q}xf7+$  reveals the idea behind White's 19th.



### 21. $\mathbb{Q}fxg7!?$

Another typical square to sac the knight on. A killer knight on f5 could perform the same task. See Ibragimov-Faizrakhmanov, Kazan 2013, for another sac on g7.

21... $\mathbb{B}b5$  22. $\mathbb{W}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$

$\mathbb{Q}xg7$  24. $\mathbb{W}f6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$

24... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  25. $\mathbb{W}xh6+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  26. $\mathbb{W}f6+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  bxc4 28.h5.

25. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{W}xc4$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  bxc4

27. $\mathbb{W}xh6$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$

Materially Black is OK but his king's position and White's passed h-pawn cause him some worries. Many moves later the game was drawn.

## The Knights Go First

**Krzysztof Pytel  
Jacek Bednarski**

Piotrkow Trybunalski 1970

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4.e5  
 $\mathbb{Q}fd7$  5. $\mathbb{Q}ce2$  c5 6.c3 b6 7. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   
 $\mathbb{Q}a6$  8. $\mathbb{Q}xa6$   $\mathbb{Q}xa6$  9.h4  $\mathbb{W}c8$

10.♘f3 cxd4 11.cxd4 ♕c4 12.b3 ♜b4+ 13.♗d2 ♜d3 14.a3 ♜xd2+ 15.♕xd2 ♜xb3 16.0-0 0-0



A similar situation: White has sacrificed a pawn, and the black pieces are a long way away from the kingside. White's pawn on e5 provides a space advantage, though here Black may quickly conjure up play along the c-file.

**17.♘h5**

Here obviously threatening 18.♕g5.

**17...h6**

17...f6 18.exf6 ♘xf6 19.♘xf6+ ♜xf6 20.♖ab1 ♜a4 21.♖fc1 and with Black's knight cut off, White has good compensation for the pawn.

**18.♖fb1 ♜a4 19.♘h2**

Planning the straightforward ♘h2-g4-h6.

**19...♜ac8 20.♜c1 ♜xc1+**

Overlooking the surprising 20...♘ac5!?, 21.dxc5 ♜xh4 22.♘f4 bxc5, with three pawns for a piece which had previously only been hanging around on a6.

**21.♜xc1 ♜xa3?**

Black had to try the piece sac 21...♘xe5 22.dxe5 ♜xh4, quite similar to the one in the previous note.

**22.♘g4 ♜e7 23.♘gf6+ ♜h8**

**24.♕f4**

In this game too the white queen finally makes her way to the g-file. Black's problems are insurmountable.

**24...♝d8 25.♕g3 g6 26.♕e3 g5 27.♕d3 ♜f8 28.♕xa6**

and White soon won.

## A French Manoeuvre

Fabian Libiszewski

Virgilio Vuelban

Grosseto 2013

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.♗b5+ ♜d7 4.♘xd7+ ♜xd7 5.0-0 ♜f6 6.♗e1 ♘c6 7.c3 e6 8.d4 cxd4 9.cxd4 d5 10.e5 ♘e4 11.♘bd2 ♘xd2 12.♘xd2 ♜e7 13.♗c1 0-0 14.♗c3 ♜fc8 15.a3 ♜c7 16.♗d3 ♜d8**



Not a position which you would connect with an attacking knight on h5, but in fact White's next move is the first step en route.

**17.♘g5 h6**

17...♘xg5 18.♘xg5 ♘e7 seems a feasible alternative as it is not clear how White can break through, for example: 19.♖h5 ♜ac8 20.♖h3 h6 21.♖xh6 gxh6 22.♖xh6 ♘g6 23.♗g3 ♜e7 24.h4 ♜f8 25.♕e3 ♜h8.

**18.♘h3!**

You can find an analogous knight route in French Winawer positions. Take, for instance, the game De Firmian-Harmon, Philadelphia Open 2011. The knight may go to f4 and then to h5,

while here the third rank is kept open for  $\mathbb{B}c3$ .

**18... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{B}ac8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}h5$   $\mathbb{B}b5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{B}c6$  22.f4**

Here White finds it difficult to put immediate pressure on g7 as Black can defend with his knight on g6 or f5. Therefore he starts pushing his pawns to try to increase the pressure.

**22... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  23. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  24.g4**

24. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$   $\mathbb{B}c2$  25. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{W}xa5$  and White, having conceded the c-file and the second rank, is already in big trouble, among other things because ... $\mathbb{Q}h4$  (yes!) is coming.

**24... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  25.bxc3  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  26. $\mathbb{B}f3$**

$\mathbb{W}b3$  27. $\mathbb{B}c1$



White has managed to keep the queen-side closed and is ready for f4-f5 on the other wing.

**27... $\mathbb{Q}a6?$**

27... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  was called for, to meet 28.f5  $\mathbb{exf}5$  29.gxf5 with 29... $\mathbb{Q}h4$  (yes!).

**28.f5  $\mathbb{B}xa3$  29.fxe6  $\mathbb{B}a2$  30. $\mathbb{W}f4$**

Though he did not manage to win here, White came close.

30...f5 31. $\mathbb{B}cf1$   $\mathbb{B}xc3$  32. $\mathbb{Q}f6+$   $\mathbb{gxf6}$  33.exf6  $\mathbb{B}xf3$  34. $\mathbb{B}xf3$   $\mathbb{W}d1+$  35. $\mathbb{B}f1$   $\mathbb{W}e2$  36. $\mathbb{W}g3$  f4 37.fxe7  $\mathbb{W}xe6$  38. $\mathbb{W}xf4$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  39. $\mathbb{B}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  40. $\mathbb{B}c7$   $\mathbb{B}a1+$  41. $\mathbb{Q}g2$

And a draw was agreed.

## A Strong Square on the Edge

Radoslaw Wojtaszek

Alexander Donchenko

Legnica 2013

**1.d4 d5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  3.c4  $\mathbb{dx}c4$  4.e3 e6 5. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  c5 6.0-0 a6 7. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  8. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{B}c7$  9. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  10. $\mathbb{dx}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  11. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  12. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  0-0 13. $\mathbb{B}fd1$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  14. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{gxf6}$  17. $\mathbb{B}d4$  f5 18. $\mathbb{B}h4$   $\mathbb{B}ac8$  19. $\mathbb{B}c4$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  20. $\mathbb{B}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  21. $\mathbb{B}c3$   $\mathbb{B}xd1+$  22. $\mathbb{W}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  23. $\mathbb{W}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  25.h3  $\mathbb{W}e5$**



Here we have a different situation. Black has sufficient space and defenders on the kingside, but the pawn structure has been weakened. The fact that there is no black g-pawn makes h5 an unassailable square from which the knight controls g7 and f6.

**26. $\mathbb{Q}e2$**

Off goes the knight, straight to h5. Now Black needs time to disentangle his minor pieces.

**26... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  27. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  28. $\mathbb{Q}h5$**

The knight has landed. If White's queen can now team up on the dark squares, things will become scary for Black.

**28... $\mathbb{Q}g6$**

28... $\mathbb{W}d6$ , taking control of the d-file, seems much safer.

**29.♖c5 ♜h8 30.♗c4 ♜e5?**



Guarding against 31.♕xa6 but falling for a trick.

**31.e4!**

White's dream comes true: the queen joins the knight in the attack on the dark squares around the black king.

**31...♝f8 32.exf5 ♜g8**

A little counter-threat, but it is too late. Somewhat better was 32...♞xc4 33.♜xc4 (33.fxe6 also seems possible, for instance 33...♞d6 34.♝g5 and the passive position of the black queen causes problems) 33...♝e5 but after 34.♝h6+ ♛e8 35.♜c1 exf5 36.♝xh7 White is in charge. After the text move White won easily with:

**33.♝h6+ ♛e7 34.♝f6+ ♛d7  
35.fxe6+ etc.**

## In Tandem with the Bishop

**Nigel Short  
Gata Kamsky**

Linares 1994

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♜c6 3.♗b5 a6  
4.♗a4 ♜f6 5.0-0 b5 6.♗b3 ♜b7  
7.♗e1 ♛c5 8.c3 d6 9.d4 ♗b6  
10.♗e3 0-0 11.♗bd2 h6 12.h3  
♗d7 13.a3 ♜e7 14.♗a2 ♛h8  
15.b4 a5 16.♗c2 axb4 17.♗xb4  
f5 18.dxe5 ♛xe3 19.♗xe3 ♜xe5  
20.♗xe5 dxe5 21.♗ae1



Of course, from h5 (or, as in this example from Black's point of view, h4) the knight can also press on g7/g2 in conjunction with a fianchettoed bishop.

**21...♞a6!?**

A lift of the queen's rook, also enabling Réti's Rifle – the lining-up of the queen behind the bishop. Now Short took the pawn, apparently underestimating the black forces combining against g2 after ...♝h4.

**22.exf5?!**

22.♗b1 was preferable, maintaining the status quo in the centre and keeping the a8-h1 diagonal closed.

**22...♝xf5 23.♜xe5?**

23.♗b1 was still much better, though Black has 23...e4!, for example 24.♜xe4 (24.♗xe4 ♜xe3 25.♜xe3 ♛xe4!) 26.♛xe4 g6) 24...♝xe4 25.♗xe4 ♜e6.

**23...♝h4**

Here this square is the obvious choice. The knight was under attack and from h4 it immediately attacks the pawn on g2.

**24.♗e4**

24.f3 is also met by 24...♜g6 and again Black just has too many threats. For example, 25.♜e5e2 ♜xf3 26.♝xg6 ♜xg6 27.♝xf3 ♜f4.

**24...♜g6 25.♝g3 ♜xg2 26.♜1e3  
♝d6**

and Black won. A swift disaster for Short.

## Typical Middlegames

**Artashes Minasian  
Hrant Melkumyan**

Yerevan 2012

**1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♜c6 3.♗b5 a6  
4.♗a4 ♜f6 5.d3 d6 6.c3 g6 7.d4  
♗d7 8.0-0 ♜g7 9.♗e1 0-0  
10.♗bd2 ♜e8 11.d5 ♘e7  
12.♗xd7 ♜xd7 13.♘c4 h6 14.b4  
♗f8 15.a4 f5 16.♗fd2 ♜f6 17.f3  
h5 18.♗f1 f4 19.♗a5 b6 20.♗b3  
g5 21.c4 ♜d7 22.♗d3**



Actually, the ‘edgy’ knight is a regular feature of certain middlegames arising from particular openings. Take, for instance, the main line King’s Indian, where you will frequently find a black knight on h4 putting pressure on White’s kingside. Our last example sees a similar middlegame, albeit with the light-squared bishops exchanged

(more about this in the chapter ‘The Deceptive Bishop from c8’). A recent purely theoretical outing of the knight to h5 you can find in the French Steinitz game Caruana-Meier, Dortmund 2013.

**22...♗g6 23.a5 bxa5 24.♗xa5  
♗h4**

Black simply wants to follow up with ...g5-g4, putting pressure on f3 this time.

**25.c5 g4 26.c6 ♜f7 27.♗bd2**

Rather passive. Black now starts to occupy the g-file with major pieces.

**27...♜g6 28.♗e2 ♜h6 29.♗h1  
♗h8 30.♗xa6?**

A seemingly logical follow-up, but after the natural moves...

**30...♗xa6 31.♗xa6 gxf3 32.♗xf3  
♗xf3 33.gxf3 ♜g8**



... White is dead lost.

**34.♗a7 ♘xe4! 35.fxe4 f3  
36.♗c2 f2 0-1**

### Summary

A knight on the edge can be a fearsome attacker against a castled king in – perhaps surprisingly – many cases. Logically, square g7 is often the target. The queen and/or the fianchettoed bishop may team up in this attack. Finally, don’t forget to take a look back at the chapter on the counterpart of ♘h5: ‘Dominating from the Edge: A Powerful Knight on a5’, or play through the classic game Tal-Vasiukov.

## Chapter 7

### The Lost Bishop

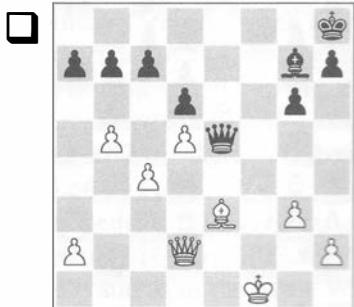
When Fischer played 29... $\mathbb{Q}xh2$  in his first World Championship game against Spassky the chess world was confused and in disbelief. However, in our computer days even more can be said in favour of the concrete deliberations Fischer must have gone through before arriving at his decision.

#### The Plain Capture

There are several versions of and aspects to the capture of this poisoned rook's pawn. Besides judgement, all of these require concrete calculation. So I suggest you use all the diagram positions as exercises and first determine whether you would decide on the capture yourself before playing through the fragments. Now let's first look at a position similar to the Spassky-Fischer case, only here the queens are still on the board.

Suat Atalik  
Ivan Martic

Paracin 2012



Black's position is a tiny bit preferable as his queen is more active than its counterpart. Moreover, White's king position and pawn structure require

some accuracy from him. Atalik decided to put his trust in concrete calculation.

**27.  $\mathbb{Q}xa7$  b6**

Of course. The engines however point out that after 27...h5 the position would also be equal: 28.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$ .

**28.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}f5+$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$  h5 30. a4**

The standard advance to free the bishop.

**30...  $\mathbb{Q}h7$  31. h4**

The immediate 31.a5 would just give Black a strong passed pawn after 31...bxa5.

**31...  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}e7!$**



**32...  $\mathbb{Q}g4$**

White's imaginative idea was as follows: 32...  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  33. a5  $\mathbb{Q}xa7$  34. a6  $\mathbb{Q}b8$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  and the logical result would be a draw. White tries to promote his a-pawn, which results in a

perpetual check by the black queen on the other side of the board.

Rather than taking the bishop first, Black decides to leave it out of play and activate his queen immediately along the light squares.

**33.a5**

33... $\mathbb{W}xc7$ .

**33... $\mathbb{W}xc4$**

33... $bxa5!?$ .

**34.axb6 cxb6 35. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$   $\mathbb{W}a2+$**

**36. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  37. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{W}a2+$**

**38. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{W}b1+$  39. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{W}xb5$**

**40. $\mathbb{W}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}e2+$  41. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  ½-½**

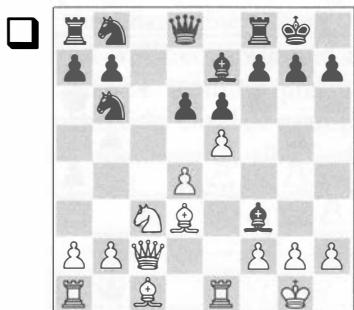
## An Intermediate Check

Aleksander Stamnov

Karen Grigoryan

Albena 2012

Sometimes instead of simply recapturing a piece it's possible to take the rook's pawn, say on h7, with check. Eventually the result will be the loss of the bishop on h7 after Black's ...g7-g6. That's not the end, of course – for us it's the starting point!



Black has just taken on f3. Would you now first take on h7? (Or, if you prefer Black, would you have allowed White to do so by playing 12... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ ?)

**13. $\mathbb{Q}xh7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  14.gxf3 g6?**

The standard reply, especially as White can't take twice on g6 due to the pin af-

ter 16... $\mathbb{Q}g8$ . But Grigoryan had probably missed White's next move. Black had alternatives here: 14...dxe5 15. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  (15.dxe5 g6 and White's next move from the game is impossible) 15...f5 is a strong suggestion from my engines, while 14... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  also looks natural to me, developing and attacking the d4-pawn and leaving the bishop where it is.

**15. $\mathbb{W}d2!$**

A very nice and surprising move. You can find a similar example in the additional games – Velimirovic-Honfi, Majdanpek 1976.

**15... $\mathbb{g}5$**

15... $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  16. $\mathbb{W}h6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  dxe5 18. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  f6 20. $\mathbb{W}xg6+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  21. $\mathbb{W}h5+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}h1$  wins.

**16. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  dxe5 17. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$**

17... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  18. $\mathbb{W}d3$  f5 19. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ .

**18.d5!**

18. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$ .

**18... $\mathbb{Q}8d7$**

18...exd5 19. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  20. $\mathbb{W}c3$  leaves Black in big trouble.

**19. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$**

**21. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$**



**22. $\mathbb{Q}e5+$**

This exchange unnecessarily gives Black some breathing space. A move like 22. $\mathbb{W}e4$  would have preserved a much bigger advantage.

22... $\mathbb{W}xe5$  23. $\mathbb{B}xe5$   $\mathbb{A}f6$  24. $\mathbb{B}e2$   
 $\mathbb{A}xc3$  25. $bxc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   
 $exd5$  27. $\mathbb{B}e7$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  28. $\mathbb{B}xb7$   $\mathbb{B}c6$   
29. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  30. $\mathbb{B}d7$   $\mathbb{B}d8$

And eventually Black escaped with a draw.

### Three Pawns for a Lost Bishop

Evgeny Romanov

Dean Ippolito

Philadelphia 2012

1.c4 e6 2.g3  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  3. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  d5  
4. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  5.d4 0-0 6. $\mathbb{W}c2$  c5  
7. $dxc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  8. $cxd5$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  9. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   
 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  10.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  11. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$   
12. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}7f6$  13. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$



Again, would you take in between on h7? Romanov had probably made up his mind beforehand when he came up with the idea of the slightly unnatural 13. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ , which by covering the  $\mathbb{W}c2$  also threatened  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ .

14. $\mathbb{Q}xh7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  15. $bxc3$  g6  
16.c4

The immediate 16. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  was certainly an option: 16...fxg6 17. $\mathbb{W}xg6$   $\mathbb{W}g7$  18. $\mathbb{W}d3$ , and as in the game White has three pawns for a piece. That's quite a common material balance as a result of the intermediate move  $\mathbb{Q}xh7$ .

16... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  e5 18. $\mathbb{Q}xf7+$   
 $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}h3$

Black develops quickly and takes over the initiative – a bad sign for White. The alternative on move 16 would probably have been a better choice.

21. $\mathbb{Q}fd1$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  22.e4  $\mathbb{Q}g4$



23. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ ?

Now Black easily directs all his pieces to the kingside. 23. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  was preferable.

23... $\mathbb{Q}xf1$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xf1$   $\mathbb{W}h6$  25.h4  
 $\mathbb{Q}ag8$  26. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{W}h5$  27. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$

The white pieces have failed to become active, while Black is now ready for the decisive blow.

28.f3  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  29. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  30. $\mathbb{W}h2$   
 $\mathbb{W}xg3$  31. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}g1+$  0-1

### An Ongoing Attack

Jan Plachetka

Andrej Kovac

Banska Stiavnica 2012



Here of course the question is: would you win back your pawn with  $\mathbb{Q}xh7$ ?

### 15.♗xh7

Yes, this is a feasible move. Another option would have been 15.♖ac1, keeping up the pressure, with compensation for the pawn.

### 15...g6?

Dubious judgement by Black. White's next move is forced, and although he'll only obtain two pawns for the piece, Black's king – in contrast to the previous example – very much comes under fire. As Black isn't a pawn down, he had an alternative in 15...♗c5, leaving the ♘h7 where it is. However, White would be somewhat better there as well.

### 16.♘xg6 fxg6 17.♗xg6+ ♕d8

### 18.♖ac1

The immediate 18.♗g7 ♜e8 19.♗g5 was better, because after 19...♗xg5 20.♗xg5+ ♔c7 21.♗e7 the black king doesn't escape anyway.

### 18...♜e8

18...♝f8!.

### 19.♗g7

19.♗e3! ♜a6 20.♗fd1 and Black can hardly move.

### 19...♝b8! 20.♗g5 ♜c6

With the c-file closed things are less clear, though it's still by no means easy for Black.

### 21.♗f7+ ♔d7 22.♗d6 ♜f8

22...♜d4.

### 23.♗g5 ♜d8



### 24.♗xe7

Here 24.♗e4 would have been strong. After the text move the position is less clear, but Plachetka still managed to slowly force his opponent back and win the game:

24...♜xe7 25.♗g3 ♔c7 26.b4 a6  
27.a4 ♜b8 28.♗c3 ♜g7 29.f4  
♗d8 30.♗c5 ♜d7 31.♗f2 ♜e7  
32.♗fc2 ♜a7 33.♗b6 ♜g8 34.a5  
♗c6 35.♗xc6

1-0

## Mainly Calculation

**Enrique Tejedor Fuentes**

**Alexander Graf**

Melilla 2011

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♜c6  
4.♗f3 ♜f6 5.♗d3 ♜b4 6.e5 ♜e4  
7.♗d2 ♜xd2 8.♗xd2 ♜e7 9.a3  
a5 10.h4 ♜d7 11.g4 a4 12.g5  
♗a5 13.♗f4 c5 14.dxc5 ♜xc5  
15.♗xa4 ♜xa4 16.♗xa4+ ♜c6  
17.♗b5 ♜e7 18.♗b3 0-0 19.c3  
♜c7 20.♗c2 ♜xe5



Black has just won back a pawn on e5, and White should now decide whether to take on h7 with check. His bishop will again be lost afterwards, and possibly for nothing. Here it's mainly a question of whether your calculating ability is up to the task.

21.♗xh7+

Objectively losing, but as the alternative wasn't attractive either White decided to give it a try. And indeed, he got away with it against his very strong opponent!

21... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{W}xe5+$  22. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  (22. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}f4$ ) 22...g6 and Black is just better due to his strong pawn centre and safer king position.

**21... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}d4$**

22. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{W}xe5+$  23. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  g6 loses the bishop, but still generates a surprisingly tricky line: 24.h5  $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  25.hxg6+  $\mathbb{Q}g8$  (25... $\mathbb{Q}g7??$  26. $\mathbb{M}h7+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  27.g7) 26. $\mathbb{M}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  (26... $\mathbb{W}f5$ ) 27. $\mathbb{M}h6$  fxg6! 28. $\mathbb{M}xe6$   $\mathbb{M}xf2+$  29. $\mathbb{W}xf2$   $\mathbb{M}f8$  30. $\mathbb{W}f6$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  31. $\mathbb{M}xg6$   $\mathbb{M}xf6+$  32. $\mathbb{M}exf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  33. $\mathbb{M}xg7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  and Black still has to prove he can win!

**22...g6**

The natural reaction, but as we have seen other moves can also be taken into account: 22... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  23.cxd4  $\mathbb{Q}f3+$  24. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{W}f4$ , for example, is a very healthy alternative for Black.

**23.h5**



**23... $\mathbb{Q}xh7?$**

Now Graf misses a win and ends up in difficulties. 23... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  was the correct move: 24.hxg6 (24.0-0-0  $\mathbb{M}xc3$ ) 24... $\mathbb{Q}xf2+$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xf2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4+$ , winning.

**24.hxg6+  $\mathbb{Q}g8$**

24... $\mathbb{Q}g7?$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xe6+$ !  $\mathbb{fxe6}$  26. $\mathbb{M}h7+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  27. $\mathbb{M}xc7$  is an X-ray trick worth remembering.

**25.g7  $\mathbb{Q}d3+$**

The only move.

**26. $\mathbb{W}xd3$   $\mathbb{W}e5+$  27. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}xg7$**

Now White is a pawn up and Black still has to watch out for his king. Eventually, however, Graf proved to be stronger in the ensuing complications.

## Profiting on the Other Wing

**Asaf Givon**

**Jiri Jirka**

Tel Aviv 2012

1.e4 e5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$   
4. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  exd4 5. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  6.0-0  
d5 7.exd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  8. $\mathbb{W}h5$  c6  
9. $\mathbb{W}e5+$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  10. $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$   
11. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  0-0 12. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  cxd5 13.d3  
 $\mathbb{M}c8$  14. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  15. $\mathbb{W}e5$   $\mathbb{M}e8$   
16. $\mathbb{M}ae1$  d4 17. $\mathbb{Q}e4$



Black has compensation for the pawn. In the game he opted for...

**17... $\mathbb{Q}xa2$**

... but a move like 17... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  also comes into consideration.

**18. $\mathbb{W}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  19.b3**

Threatening 20. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ .

**19...h6 20. $\mathbb{M}e2$   $\mathbb{M}e6$  21. $\mathbb{M}a1$   $\mathbb{M}a6$**

Now White has no direct way of winning the 'lost bishop'. In general, how-

ever, there's another way of profiting from such an out-of-play piece: divert your attention to the other wing, where the opponent is effectively playing a piece down!

**22.h3  $\mathbb{E}cc6$  23. $\mathbb{W}g4$**

23... $\mathbb{Q}g3$ .

**23... $\mathbb{B}a5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4?$**

Black tries to free his bishop on a2 with an exchange sacrifice, but this is too optimistic. Still, after the better 24... $\mathbb{E}g6$  25. $\mathbb{W}f3$  Black's position isn't enviable either. White has a lot of logical moves like  $\mathbb{E}ae1$  and  $\mathbb{Q}e5$ , while  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  may also become possible. Moreover, the pawn on d4 is a target. The bishop on a2 is alive but not kicking. Compare this to a typical KI exchange sacrifice on a7, for example in Maris-Senders, Borne 2012.

**25. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{E}xe5$  26. $\mathbb{E}xe5$   $\mathbb{E}xc2$**

**27. $\mathbb{Q}f5$**

27... $\mathbb{W}e4$  also wins, for example 27... $\mathbb{E}c7$  28. $\mathbb{E}e8+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  29. $\mathbb{Q}f5$  g6 30. $\mathbb{Q}xh6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  31. $\mathbb{E}xd4+$  f6 32. $\mathbb{E}xf8$ .

**27... $\mathbb{W}f6$  28. $\mathbb{W}xd4$**

28... $\mathbb{W}e4$  is still winning, for instance 28...g6 29. $\mathbb{Q}xh6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  30. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  31. $\mathbb{E}d5$   $\mathbb{E}c1+$  32. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}d6+$  33.f4  $\mathbb{E}xa1$  34. $\mathbb{W}xd4+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  35. $\mathbb{E}xd6$ .

**28... $\mathbb{Q}c3$  29. $\mathbb{E}e8+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  30. $\mathbb{W}xf6$   
 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$**



Now, with the 'lost bishop' definitely coming to life, the win has become a

much more difficult technical matter, which proved too difficult in the game. White even lost in the end.

## Lost in the Opening

**Benjamin Bok**

**David Burnier**

Biel 2012

**1.e4 e5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  3. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  d6  
4. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  6.dxc3  
 $\mathbb{Q}c6$  7. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  8. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$   
9.0-0-0**



This is a brutal and baffling example of the concrete and cold-blooded computer influence on the development of opening theory. Formerly we would only consider taking if b2-b3 could be answered with ... $\mathbb{Q}a3+$ . Although... take a look at Mason-Chigorin, Paris 1900! You can find another opening theory example of our theme in the French Tarrasch, where Black struggles with a bishop that takes with check on h2 (see Petrik-Melas, Istanbul (ol) 2012).

**9... $\mathbb{Q}xa2$  10.b3 a5 11. $\mathbb{Q}b2$  a4**

You can also find theoretical battles in positions with White's dark-squared bishop on f4.

**12. $\mathbb{Q}xa2$  axb3+ 13. $\mathbb{Q}xb3$   $\mathbb{E}a5$   
14. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{W}a8$  15. $\mathbb{W}d3$**

A novelty, making room for the king. Logical previous tries were 15. $\mathbb{W}b1$ , for

example, 15...0-0 16. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  (16. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  d5 17. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{B}a1$  18. $\mathbb{W}e1!$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}d4!$  Van Delft) 16...d5 17. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{B}a1$  18. $\mathbb{W}e1$  d4 19. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xd4?$   $\mathbb{Q}g5+$  21. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3+$  22.fxe3  $\mathbb{B}d8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  24.cxd3  $\mathbb{W}a3+$  0-1 Philippe-Koch, Mulhouse 2011; 15. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  d5 16. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}a3+$  17. $\mathbb{Q}b1$  0-0 18. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  20. $\mathbb{B}a1$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  and Black won in Lanzani-Humeau, Grosseto 2010.

### 15...d5

15...0-0!?

### 16. $\mathbb{Q}c1$



### 16...d4?

16...0-0 would have been a better try. In the game White managed to bring his king over to the other side as planned, after which he was just a piece up.

17. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  0-0 18. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{B}xc6$   
19. $\mathbb{W}e4$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  21. $\mathbb{W}f4$   
 $\mathbb{Q}e5$  22. $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  23. $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}d5+$   
24. $\mathbb{Q}d3$



24... $\mathbb{Q}xc3+$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  g6 26. $\mathbb{W}f3$   
 $\mathbb{W}a2$  27. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  c5 28.g3  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   
29. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  30. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}ed8$   
31. $\mathbb{B}a1$   $\mathbb{W}b2$  32. $\mathbb{B}hb1$   $\mathbb{W}c3$  33. $\mathbb{B}a7$   
 $\mathbb{B}4d7$  34. $\mathbb{B}bb7$  c4 35. $\mathbb{B}xc7$  1-0

### Summary

An enclosed bishop does not need to be the end. On the contrary, it is here where the calculation could start. The real capture takes time, and sometimes the loss will be at the cost of too many pawns. In other cases, after the bishop been closed in the battle may be fought on the other wing, which is a typical way to deal with offside pieces.

Where formerly a capture was easily dismissed (perhaps to some extent the two question marks often attached to Fischer's 29... $\mathbb{Q}xh2$  have supported this notion), nowadays the computer engines induce us to seriously calculate improbable moves like 9... $\mathbb{Q}xa2$ .

## Chapter 8

# Anand's Murderous Twin Guns

Maybe you've always been impressed by the positioning of the bishops in the famous game Lasker-Bauer. After the Aronian-Anand game from the Tata Steel tournament in Wijk aan Zee 2012 you knew you hadn't seen nothing yet. Anand aimed some truly deadly bishops at his opponent's king and won in smashing style.

**Levon Aronian  
Viswanathan Anand**

Wijk aan Zee 2012 (4)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3. $\mathbb{Q}$ f3  $\mathbb{Q}$ f6  
4. $\mathbb{Q}$ c3 e6 5.e3  $\mathbb{Q}$ bd7 6. $\mathbb{Q}$ d3  
 $\text{dxc4}$  7. $\mathbb{Q}$ xc4 b5 8. $\mathbb{Q}$ d3  $\mathbb{Q}$ d6  
9.0-0 0-0 10. $\mathbb{Q}$ c2  $\mathbb{Q}$ b7 11.a3  
 $\mathbb{Q}$ c8 12. $\mathbb{Q}$ g5



12...c5! 13.Qxh7 Qg4 14.f4 cxd4  
15.exd4 Qc5 16.Qe2 Qde5  
17.Qxg4 Qxd4+ 18.Qh1 Qxg4  
19.Qxf8 f5 20.Qg6 Qf6 21.h3  
 $\mathbb{Q}$ xg6 22. $\mathbb{Q}$ e2  $\mathbb{Q}$ h5 23. $\mathbb{Q}$ d3  
 $\mathbb{Q}$ e3

0-1

As spectacular as the game was, this was not the first instance which proved the power of the bishops standing side-to-side on the a7-g1 and a8-h1 diagonals.

**Richard Rapport  
Wei Yi**

Athens 2012

1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}$ f6 2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}$ c3  $\mathbb{Q}$ b4  
4.e3 0-0 5. $\mathbb{Q}$ e2 c6 6.a3  $\mathbb{Q}$ a5  
7.b4  $\mathbb{Q}$ c7 8. $\mathbb{Q}$ b2 d5 9. $\mathbb{Q}$ g3  $\mathbb{Q}$ e8  
10.f4 b6 11. $\mathbb{Q}$ e2 dxc4 12. $\mathbb{Q}$ xc4  
 $\mathbb{Q}$ d5 13. $\mathbb{Q}$ d2  $\mathbb{Q}$ d7 14.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}$ f6  
15. $\mathbb{Q}$ ge2  $\mathbb{Q}$ b7 16.e4  $\mathbb{Q}$ xc3  
17. $\mathbb{Q}$ xc3



17...c5

Here comes bishop no. 1.

18.e5

The logical follow-up, but now the b7-bishop's path is no longer blocked by any enemy pawns, recalling Aronian-Anand.

18...cxd4 19. $\mathbb{Q}$ b5  $\mathbb{Q}$ e4 20. $\mathbb{Q}$ e1?

The natural 20. $\mathbb{Q}$ c2 and 20. $\mathbb{Q}$ xd4 are both preferable.

**20...a6! 21.♗xd4**

This is the catch: after 21.♗xc7 ♜xc7 the bishop on c4 is under attack and Black keeps his extra pawn. After the text move Black's dark-squared bishop comes to life too.

**21...b5 22.♗b3 ♜b6**

Now the position resembles the famous Rotlewi-Rubinstein game, which Anand also referred to immediately after his game against Aronian.

**23.♗d1 ♜e7 24.♗h1 ♜d7**

**25.♕e3 ♜h8?!**

25...g6! 26.♗c2 ♜c8 27.♗xe4 ♜xe4 28.♕xe4 ♜c4.

**26.f5 exf5 27.♗xf5 ♜c8 28.e6**

**fxe6 29.♗xe6**

Now White also has two fearsome bishops – difficult calculation lies ahead.

**29...♜c2 30.♗xd7 ♜xb2 31.♕f4?**

Obvious, but wrong. White unpins his knight and is threatening mate, but after the cool reply Black is on top. 31.♕e1 was the best move, leaving White in charge (31...♗f6 32.♗c6!).



**31...♗f6!**

Defending against mate and attacking both g2 and d7. Suddenly White's pieces are uncoordinated while Black's bishops – well, not only the bishops – can do their thing.

**32.♗f3 ♜xd7 33.♕b8+ ♜g8**

**34.♗f1 ♜xf5 35.♗xb7 ♜b1 0-1**

## Free Range for the Bishops

**Jesse Kraai**

**Darwin Yang**

Lubbock 2010

Here we have another example where both sides' bishops have free range. Note, however, one small difference: while we can regard the bishops on the long diagonals as equals, Black's ♜c5 seems somewhat superior to White's ♜d3. Apart from that Black still has a central pawn on e6. That being said, the position still requires some errors to disturb the balance.

**1.♘f3 d5 2.d4 ♘f6 3.c4 c6 4.e3 e6 5.♗bd2 ♘bd7 6.♗d3 ♘e7 7.0-0 0-0 8.e4 dxe4 9.♗xe4 c5 10.♗xc5 ♘xc5 11.dxc5 ♘xc5 12.♕e2 h6 13.b3 b6 14.♗b2 ♘b7 15.♗ad1 ♘e7 16.♗e5 ♘ad8 17.h4 ♘d6**



**18.♗g4? ♘xg4 19.♕xg4 f5!**

Gaining a tempo, and winning the battle for the open d-file.

**20.♕g3 ♜fd8 21.♗c2?**

Better is 21.♗e5 ♜d7 22.♗c2 ♜d2 23.♗xd2 ♜xd2 24.♗b1 and Black is only slightly better.

**21...♗e4! 22.♗c1 ♜d2 23.♗xe4**

**fxe4 24.♗c3 ♜d3 25.♗g4 e3**

**26.fxe3 ♘xe3+ 27.♗h1 ♜d4**

**28.♗xd4 ♜xd4 0-1**

## No Defenders

Tamaz Gelashvili

Rasul Ibrahimov

Dubai 2010

- 1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$
2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  e6
- 3.e3 b6
4. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$
- 5.0-0 c5
- 6.c4  $\mathbb{Q}e7$
7. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  cxd4
- 8.exd4 d5
- 9.cxd5
- $\mathbb{Q}xd5$
10. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  0-0
11. $\mathbb{Q}h5$  g6
12. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$
13. $\mathbb{Q}h6$



- 13... $\mathbb{Q}xd4!$

13... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  seemed to be forced, but Black grabs his chance to direct as many pieces as possible towards the badly protected white king. Of course the bishops will be on their most menacing diagonals.

14. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$
15. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  f5
16. $\mathbb{Q}e1$
- $\mathbb{Q}f4$

White's material gain is nothing compared to everything that is now pointing to his badly defended kingside: next the queen will be joining the minor pieces. In fact, in the following Black could well have opted for other equally strong solutions on several occasions.

17. $\mathbb{Q}e4$

Now 17. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  fails to 17... $\mathbb{Q}g5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}f3+$ ; or 17. $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  18. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}fe1$   $\mathbb{Q}xe1$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xe1$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$ .

- 17...fxe4

17... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$ .

18. $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}h4$

18... $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  was also possible.

19. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$
20. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$
- 20...b5! 21. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$ .

21. $\mathbb{Q}e2$



- 21... $\mathbb{Q}g4?$

A pity. Still good enough was 21... $\mathbb{Q}xe2+$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  e3 and Black wins. After the text move the game petered out to a draw.

## Vacating the Diagonal

Michael Adams

Alexander Onischuk

Wijk aan Zee 1995

- 1.e4 e5
2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$
3. $\mathbb{Q}b5$  a6
4. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$
- 5.0-0 b5
6. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$
- 7.c3 d6
- 8.d4  $\mathbb{Q}b6$
- 9.h3  $\mathbb{Q}b7$
10. $\mathbb{Q}e1$  0-0
- 11.a4 h6
- 12.d5  $\mathbb{Q}e7$
- 13.axb5 axb5
14. $\mathbb{Q}xa8$   $\mathbb{Q}xa8$



15. $\mathbb{Q}a3$

15.♗e3, to exchange one of the active bishops, is a familiar resource, but here it also achieved little after 15...♗xe3 16.♗xe3 c6 17.dxc6 ♗xc6 18.♗bd2 ♗g6 19.♗c2 ♖a8 20.♗b1 ♕e8 21.♗f1 d5 in Parligas-Balogh, Rijeka 2010.

**15...c6! 16.dxc6 ♗xc6 17.♗c2 ♗g6 18.♗d3 ♖d7 19.b4?!**

19.♗e2 ♖b8 is also fine for Black. The text is the start of a flawed plan, which falters on the very next move.

**19...♖a8 20.c4? ♖xa3! 21.♗xa3 ♖xc4 22.♗xc4**

22.♗c2 ♖a7 23.♗e2 ♗f4 and White is in trouble; 22.b5 ♗xb5 23.♗c2 doesn't help either in view of 23...♖a7.

**22...♗xe4**



The threats against f2 and a3 (...♖a7) force White to give back the exchange immediately, which leaves him with a hopeless position a pawn down while the fearsome black bishops are still alive... With the pawns on d5 and e4 gone Black's light-squared bishop is again aimed menacingly at White's kingside.

**23.♗xe4 ♗xe4 24.♗b2 ♖c6**

**25.♗b3 d5 26.♗f1 ♖f6 27.♗c1**

**♗h4 28.♗e2 ♗xf3 29.♗xf3 e4**

**30.♗b2 ♗xf3+ 31.gxf3 ♖g5+ 0-1**

31...♖g5+ 32.♔h1 ♗xf2 and 32.♔f1 ♖d2 both lead to mate.

## Right from the Opening

**Ljubomir Ljubojevic**

**Albin Planinc**

Vrsac 1971

There are several openings which typically see this active arrangement of the two bishops. Think of several Meran lines (not only Aronian-Anand), the Queen's Gambit Accepted, the Taimanov Sicilian or, as in the previous example, the Old Arkhangelsk. Here is yet another spectacular example from a spectacular player in the latter variation, which involves a queen sacrifice. Another characteristic and beautiful example is Kamsky-Svidler from the 2011 World Cup in Khanty-Mansiysk (featuring 26...♗e2!! if you recall?).

**1.e4 e5 2.♗f3 ♗c6 3.♗b5 a6  
4.♗a4 ♗f6 5.0-0 b5 6.♗b3 ♗b7  
7.d4 ♗xd4 8.♗xd4 exd4 9.e5  
♗e4 10.c3 d3 11.♗xd3 ♗c5  
12.♗g3 ♗xb3 13.axb3 ♖e7  
14.♗g5 ♖e6**



**15.f4**

As in the first example, after this move both black bishops have free range. Planinc now decides to seize the initiative as quickly as possible.

**15...f6!?** 16.♗xf6 ♗c5+ 17.♔h1  
gxsf6 18.♗e1 0-0-0 19.♗xe6 dxe6  
20.♗e1 fxg5

## Improve Your Chess Pattern Recognition

So Black has sacrificed his queen for a rook and a minor piece. The black bishops are a powerful force here, though, and when the black rooks are able to join in the attack White's kingside will be in trouble.

**21.♗d2 gxsf4 22.♕xe6+ ♖b8**

**23.♗f3 ♜hg8 24.c4 b4**

24...♜e3 followed by doubling on the g-file seems a strong alternative.

**25.♗f1 ♜g6 26.♗f5 ♜e3 27.h3**

**♝g3 28.♗xh7? ♜xf3 29.♗xf3**

**♝d1+ 30.♔h2 ♜g1+ 31.♔h1**

**♝g7 32.♗h8+ ♜b7 33.♗d3 ♜e1**

**34.g3 ♜d4+ 35.♔h2 ♜ge7 0-1**

## Left with Two Knights

**Yaroslav Bulygin**

**Kirill Bryzgalin**

Armavir 2010

**1.e4 c5 2.♗f3 ♜c6 3.d4 cxd4**

**4.♗xd4 ♜c7 5.♗c3 e6 6.♗db5**

**♝b8 7.♗e3 a6 8.♗d4 ♜c7**

**9.♗d2 ♜f6 10.f3 ♜e5 11.a3 b5**

**12.♗e2 ♜b7 13.0-0 ♜c8 14.f4**

**♝c4 15.♗xc4 ♜xc4 16.e5 ♜g4**

**17.♗ad1 ♜c7 18.h3 ♜xe3**

**19.♗xe3 ♜c5 20.♗ce2 0-0 21.c3**



When you're fighting against two bishops and the minor pieces you are left with are two knights, it will generally be difficult to challenge the bishop pair

as you can no longer oppose one of them with a bishop on the same diagonal.

**21...f6**

Activating the rook and trying to create a target on e5.

**22.♔h1 ♜f7?**

Black patiently prepares to double on the f-file before taking on e5. He is clearly better now, as it's hard for White to come up with a useful plan.

**23.♗c1 fxe5 24.fxe5 ♜cf8**

**25.♗xf7 ♜xf7 26.♗d3 ♜b6**

**27.♗d2 ♜c4 28.♔h2 ♜c7**



**29.♗f2?**

This loses a pawn by force. It may not be appealing, but it was better to remain passive with 29.♗e2.

**29...♜xf2 30.♗xf2 ♜f1 31.♗f3**

**♝xf3 32.♗xf3 ♜xe5+ 33.g3 ♜c7**

... and Black won by slowly advancing his passed e-pawn. For another example, see Levushkina-Leon Hoyos, Neckar 2010, where White was in complete zugzwang in the final position.

## Transposing to the Endgame

**Christoph Berberich**

**Viktor Erdös**

Deizisau 2010

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.♗f3 d5 3.c4 e6**

**4.♗c3 dxc4 5.e3 a6 6.a4 b6**

- 7.♗xc4 ♗b7 8.0-0 c5 9.♗e2  
 ♗c7 10.♗d2 ♗d6 11.dxc5  
 ♗xc5 12.♗ac1 ♗c6 13.h3 0-0  
 14.e4 ♗d4 15.♗xd4 ♗xd4  
 16.♗d3 ♗e5 17.♗h1 ♗fd8  
 18.♗b1



In the endgame the power of the bishop pair generally won't be diminished. Quite the contrary, there will be fewer units on the board to oppose their long-range activity. Here Black is pressing against the e4-pawn, which (again) tempts White to advance his f- and e-pawns.

**18...♗d7 19.f4 ♗h5! 20.♗xh5**

**♗xh5 21.♗h2**

As you can see, White still has trouble keeping his position together.

- 21...♗ad8 22.♗ce1 g5 23.g3  
 gxf4 24.gxf4 ♗h8 25.♗e2**

Black can meet 25.♗c1 with 25...♗c6, increasing the pressure against the e4-pawn with the ...b6-b5-b4 advance.

**25...♗g1+**

Black decides to force some exchanges. He could also have opted for slow pressure with 25...♗c6 or 25...e5 26.f5 ♗f4, both of which give him a good game.

**26.♗xg1 ♗xd2 27.♗gg2 ♗xe2**



**28.♗xe2**

This just sheds a pawn, but 28.♗xe2 ♗d2 is not much better. Black now went on to win quickly.

**28...♗xf4 29.♗f2 e5 30.♗a2 ♗g7**

**31.♗e2 ♗d2 32.♗c4 ♗xe4**

**33.♗xa6 ♗xb2**

**0-1**

### Summary

In general the pair of bishops may be strong, but this twin gun is simply devastating, and well worth the sacrifices that serve to open the diagonals.

## Chapter 9

# The Deceptive Bishop from c8

Sometimes a bishop can seem undeveloped or just plain bad. Appearances can be deceptive, though, and the bishop may turn out to fulfil a valuable function or play a quietly important role.

## Solving Only Part of the Problem

**Victor Bologan**

**Evgeny Levin**

Loo 2013

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.c3  
 ♜c6 5.♘f3 ♜d7 6.♗e2 ♜c8  
 7.0-0 ♜ge7 8.♘a3 cxd4 9.cxd4  
 ♘f5 10.♘c2 ♜b6 11.b3 ♘b4  
 12.♘ce1



Bologan has opted for a continuation which hadn't previously been thought to offer White many prospects. Black now exchanges his infamously bad French bishop.

**12...♝b5 13.♝xb5+ ♜xb5**

At first glance Black can be satisfied, having achieved an important goal. But he is still lacking some space.

**14.♗g4 ♜e7 15.♘h4 ♜g6  
 16.♘hg2!**

Having more space, White avoids further exchanges. Both Black's remaining bishop and the ♜g6 would like to use the e7-square – a well-known problem in this kind of position.

**16...♜e7 17.♕e3 0-0 18.h4!?** f5  
 18...♝xh4 19.♝xh4 ♜xh4 20.g5 or  
 18...♝xh4 19.g5 look scary for Black.  
**19.exf6 ♜xf6 20.h5 ♜f8 21.g5  
 ♜f7 22.♕g4**

Here the bishop would clearly have had a defensive function on d7.

**22.♗d6 23.g6 hxg6 24.hxg6  
 ♜fc7**

Taking away yet another piece from the kingside. An alternative was 24...♜f6.



**25.♗f4**

White takes the opportunity to offer the exchange of his own bad bishop, after which he will gain control of several important dark squares.

25... $\mathbb{W}a6$  26. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   
 $\mathbb{W}xd6$  28. $\mathbb{M}ad1$   $\mathbb{M}c3$

Black wants to keep control of e5 and f4, preventing the white knights from occupying active posts.

29. $\mathbb{M}d2$   $e5$  30. $\mathbb{M}xd3!$

Grabs the chance to activate his knights at the cost of the exchange for a pawn.

30... $\mathbb{M}xd3$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{M}dc3$  32. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   
 $\mathbb{M}c1$  33. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{W}a6$  34. $\mathbb{M}xc1$   $\mathbb{M}xc1$   
35. $\mathbb{Q}ed3$   $\mathbb{M}c7$  36. $\mathbb{W}h5$   $\mathbb{W}d6$   
37. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{M}e7$  38. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{M}c7$  39. $\mathbb{Q}f7$   
 $\mathbb{M}c3+$  40.f3

1-0

A seemingly smooth victory, where the exchange of light-squared bishops proved insufficient and allowed White too much space and time on the kingside.

## Allowing a Piece Sac on a Light Square

Ljubomir Ljubojevic

Yasser Seirawan

Tilburg 1983

This recent game by Bologan reminded me of the following fantastic game played by Ljubojevic: one of many examples where, having exchanged his bad bishop, Black is faced with a dangerous piece sacrifice, destroying the pawn chain which was built on the light squares.

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  4.e5  
 $\mathbb{W}d7$  5. $\mathbb{W}g4$  f5 6. $\mathbb{W}g3$  b6 7. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   
a5 8. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  9.a3  $\mathbb{Q}xc3+$   
10. $\mathbb{W}xc3$



10... $\mathbb{Q}a6?$

This could be called a blunder (certainly considering the level of the players).

11. $\mathbb{Q}xa6$   $\mathbb{W}xa6$  12. $\mathbb{Q}xe6!$

A familiar tactic; see also, for example, Psakhis-Krayz, Rishon Le Zion 1997.

12... $\mathbb{W}xe6$  13. $\mathbb{W}xc7$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$   
14. $\mathbb{W}xg7$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  15. $\mathbb{W}xh8$

Black is lucky to have ways to try and fight.

15... $\mathbb{Q}d8$

15... $\mathbb{W}xg2$  loses to 16. $\mathbb{Q}g5!$  (16. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}xh1+$  17. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  and now 17... $\mathbb{W}g2!$ ; 16. $\mathbb{M}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  is much less clear. After the text move the acceptance of the double rook sacrifice will leave the black king helpless, while after 16... $\mathbb{W}xg5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  is strong enough.

At the time 15...h5 was suggested as an attempt to make things hard for White, threatening ... $\mathbb{M}a7-h7$ , but nowadays the engines are not impressed at all, coming up instantly with lines like 16.g4 fxg4 17. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{M}a7$  18.f4.

16. $\mathbb{Q}h6$  b5

Perhaps a better try was 16... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  17. $\mathbb{W}g7$   $\mathbb{Q}gxh6$  18. $\mathbb{W}xg6$  hxg6 19.h4, but White must be winning. He simply has too many pawns.

17. $\mathbb{Q}g7$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}f6$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  19.h4



Active play, not only harassing the queen but also enabling a rook lift. Af-

## Improve Your Chess Pattern Recognition

ter  $\mathbb{R}h3$  the rook will threaten to go to either g3 or c3.

**19... $\mathbb{R}c6$  20. $h5$   $\mathbb{W}h6$  21.c3  $\mathbb{R}c8$  22.f4**

Ljubojevic finishes the game in attractive style, though all (well, not literally all!) roads lead to Rome.

**22... $\mathbb{Q}xf4$**

22... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ .

**23.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}e2+$  24. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  25.g4!**

$fxg4$  26. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{W}xg5$  27. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$

**28. $\mathbb{W}xf6+$   $\mathbb{W}xf6$  29.exf6  $\mathbb{Q}xh5+$**

**30. $\mathbb{Q}xg4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$  31. $\mathbb{Q}f5$**

... and White won easily.

Even without the rook on h1 the threat of h4-h5 would be very strong, intending sacs on e6 or g6. Now that White has rightly delayed castling, the threat comes with extra force.

**12...c4 13.h5 g5**



## Demolishing the Pawn Chain

**Maxim Sorokin**

**Valery Neverov**

Minsk 1990

Here is yet another illustration of Suba's dictum that 'a bad bishop defends good pawns'.

**1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4.e5  
 $\mathbb{Q}fd7$  5.c3 c5 6. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  b6 7. $\mathbb{Q}e2$**



**7... $\mathbb{Q}a6$  8. $\mathbb{Q}xa6$   $\mathbb{Q}xa6$  9. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$   
10. $\mathbb{W}g4$**

Again White takes immediate action on the other side. Of course this is made possible by his space advantage on the kingside due to the central pawn on e5.

**10...g6 11. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  b5 12.h4!**

**14. $\mathbb{Q}xe6!$   $fxe6$  15. $\mathbb{W}xe6$   $\mathbb{W}b6$   
16. $\mathbb{W}xd5$**

Three pawns for a piece. White has a compact pawn centre. In the game he gradually managed to move his pawns forward. At move 40 he had three connected central passed pawns and shortly after he won the game.

## Through the Centre

**Sergey Karjakin**

**Hou Yifan**

Wijk aan Zee 2013

**1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4.e5  
 $\mathbb{Q}fd7$  5.f4 c5 6. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  7. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   
b6 8. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  9.0-0**



**9... $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  10. $\mathbb{Q}xe2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  11.c4!**

A novelty in an almost non-theoretical position, but, much more importantly, a very strong move.

**11...dxc4**

11... $cxd4$  12. $cxd5$   $dxe3$  (12... $exd5$  13. $\mathbb{Q}exd4$ ) 13. $dxc6$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  14. $\mathbb{Q}fd4$  and White is clearly on top.

**12.d5!**

A characteristic breakthrough on the light squares, after which not much is left of Black's pawn centre. After the game Karjakin, celebrating his birthday, said that his opponent 'actually made a blunder' and that his move c2-c4 was very strong. Indeed, it seems that from this point forward White had a big advantage; Hou Yifan did not recover.

**12...exd5 13. $\mathbb{W}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$**

13... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  14. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  15.e6.

**14. $\mathbb{W}xc4$  b5 15. $\mathbb{W}e4$**

Centralization!

**15... $\mathbb{W}c8$  16. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  17. $\mathbb{W}xc6$**

$\mathbb{Q}xc6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{B}b8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}c7+$

$\mathbb{Q}d8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{B}xb2$  21. $\mathbb{B}fd1$



The black king is caught in the middle of the board and, despite the fact that we are already in the endgame, clearly experiences many difficulties.

**21... $\mathbb{B}e8$  22. $\mathbb{B}ac1$**

22.a3 was a solid way to proceed. Karjakin continued to play in straightforward manner, and although Hou

Yifan defended resourcefully, he brought home the full point.

## Fighting from the Back Row

**K. Raghunandan**

**Ziaur Rahman**

Chennai 2013

In the main line of the King's Indian Defence, where White's queenside initiative generally competes with Black's attack on the kingside, Black's light-squared bishop usually takes part in the battle from its initial square c8, where it plays an active role (much more than the supposedly 'real' King's Indian bishop on g7); for instance, it supports the ...g6-g5-g4 advance, or waits for the opportunity to sacrifice itself on h3 (see for instance Bhat-Ootes, Collado Villalba 2010).

Here is yet another example of the active role of the bishop on c8.

**1.d4 d6 2.c4 e5 3.d5 g6 4. $\mathbb{Q}c3$**

$\mathbb{Q}d7$  5. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  6.e4  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  7. $\mathbb{Q}e2$

0-0 8.0-0 a5 9.a3  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  10.b3 f5

11. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  f4 12. $\mathbb{B}b1$  h5 13.b4 axb4

14.axb4  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  15. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  16.c5



**16...g5**

A typical position has arisen, albeit via an unusual move order.

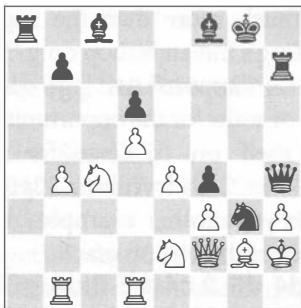
**17.f3 g4**

No need to 'develop' the bishop to d7 first.

18.  $\mathbb{W}e1$   $\mathbb{B}g6$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{B}f7$   
 20.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{B}f8$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{B}g7$   
 22.  $cxd6$   $cxd6$  23.  $\mathbb{W}f2$

Quite familiar manoeuvring, except that White's queen is usually not played to f2 (more often the bishop goes there at an earlier stage). Black now starts his attack first, also with the help of the  $\mathbb{B}c8$ .

- 23...  $g3$  24.  $hxg3$   $fxg3$  25.  $\mathbb{W}xg3$   
 h4 26.  $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{B}gf4$   
 28.  $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $exf4$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $h3$  30.  $gxh3$   
 $\mathbb{B}g3+$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{W}h4$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{B}h7$   
 33.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$



### 33... $\mathbb{B}xh3$

The first move this bishop makes in the game.

34.  $\mathbb{Q}xg3$   $\mathbb{B}xg2+$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}xg2$   $fxg3$

0-1

## A Remarkable Elimination

**Alexey Alexandrov**  
**R. Ramnath Bhuvanesh**

Bhubaneswar 2011

Of course, the true strength of the  $\mathbb{B}c8$  should be common knowledge to the genuine King's Indian player. However, players with the white pieces will also appreciate the true force of this undeveloped piece and, given the chance, will eliminate this attacking bishop. Sometimes this is achieved by means of an unexpected manoeuvre.

1. d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2. c4 g6 3.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$   
 4. e4 d6 5.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  0-0 6.  $\mathbb{Q}ge2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$   
 7. 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  8.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  e5 9. d5  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   
 10.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2+$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}xe2$



### 11... a6

A logical move as the pawn was under attack.

### 12. $\mathbb{Q}a7!$

The knight has made four jumps to eliminate an undeveloped piece. Hmm, that's not how we learnt to play chess. Still, what matters is the material remaining on the board: White has a spatial advantage and is not lacking in development. In the meantime the  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  will not be taking part in the upcoming battle on the two wings.

### 12... $\mathbb{Q}c5$

After 12...  $\mathbb{Q}xa7$  White had to reckon with 13.  $\mathbb{Q}xa7$  b6 – the lost bishop! – but the complications after 14. b4  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$  seem fine for White.

### 13. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ 14. $\mathbb{Q}g4$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$

Black's remaining minor pieces are not well placed for a kingside attack. White will be much more effective on the queenside. 14... f5 15. exf5 gxf5 16.  $\mathbb{Q}h3$  also looks pleasant for White.

### 15. f3 a5 16. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 18. b3 $\mathbb{Q}fb8$

Black put up a tough defence, but after some manoeuvring White eventually broke through on the kingside and won.

## Analogous Opening Theory

Alexey Moksharov

Anatoly Ozgibtsev

Loo 2013

**1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 g6  
4.0-0 ♗g7 5.c3 a6 6.♗a4 d6  
7.d4 ♗d7**



In this position from the Ruy Lopez, White now has the opportunity to obtain a King's Indian-like position and, what's more, with the light-squared bishops exchanged. This means that Black's potentially dangerous bishop disappears from the board, as well as White's own bad bishop. Quite a good deal, you would think. Also, I have always been impressed by an early Kasparov game against Giorgadze, where White obtained a kind of Czech Benoni position with the light-squared bishops off – also from an 1.e4 e5 opening. However, in that game he had

had to use a lot of tempi, playing c3-c4, ♘d2-b1-c3 and ♘c2-a4 to achieve this. So how come this Ruy Lopez is not considered hugely advantageous for White? I guess things are not so simple. By exchanging a piece Black will be less bothered by his space disadvantage, White's kingside might be more vulnerable, while at the same time the game can still develop in different directions. Like this one...

**8.d5 ♘b8 9.c4 ♘xa4 10.♗xa4+  
♔d7 11.♗e3  
11.♗c3 ♘f6 12.♗e1 0-0 13.♗d3 ♘h5  
14.♗e3 f5 has been played and is also comparable to the King's Indian.  
11...♗f6 12.♗c3 ♘g4 13.♗g5 f6  
14.♗d2 0-0 15.♗c2 ♘h6 16.b4  
♗f7 17.♗a4**



... and now Black ventured

**17...f5**

... and, after many adventures, the game ended in a draw. Food for thought!

### Summary

A so-called bad bishop on c8 may be a useful defender. In other cases it may also prove to be an important attacker, even when it is still on its initial square.

## Chapter 10

# The Beastly Bishop

A knight on a central outpost on the sixth (or third) rank – a.k.a. the octopus – is almost invariably a terrific force. A bishop on the same spot may very well paralyse the opponent's forces in a similar way.

### Undermining the Beast

Before we come to some true beastliness, let's have a look at a recent top game which featured a tense battle around a white bishop on d6.

Morozevich sacrificed a pawn early in the proceedings and managed to put his bishop on this strong square. Topalov, however, came very well prepared and found ways to undermine the position of the bishop and to play around it.

**Alexander Morozevich**

**Veselin Topalov**

Zug 2013

1.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  c5 2. c4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  3.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$   
4. d4 cxd4 5.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  e6 6. g3  $\mathbb{W}b6$   
7.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  8. e4  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  9. c5  $\mathbb{W}c6$   
10. f3 b6 11.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}d6$   
 $\mathbb{B}xc5$



**13.a3**

According to Topalov, absolutely the only move, avoiding the positional trick ... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ , threatening the bishop on d6.

**13... $\mathbb{Q}xc3+$  14.  $\mathbb{B}xc3$**

Now White intends to strengthen the position of the  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  further with  $\mathbb{Q}a5-c4$ . But Topalov acknowledged the threat and prevented this manoeuvre:

**14...a5! 15.e5**

Protecting the bishop but voluntarily conceding the d5-square to the knight. Topalov considers this a mistake and calls 15.  $\mathbb{W}d2$  an interesting option. 15.  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  is adequately met by 15... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ .



**15... $\mathbb{Q}d5$**

In New In Chess 2013/4 Topalov admitted that his database file on this line had shown him afterwards that 15... $\mathbb{Q}g4!$  would have been the best move. 15... $\mathbb{Q}e4$  (attacking  $\mathbb{Q}d6$ ) seems logical,

but runs into 16.♗b5 ♜xb5 17.fxe4, though Black should still be better.

**16.♗d3**

16.♗d2?!, with the idea of meeting 16...f6 with 17.f4, for instance 17...♝dxf4 18.gxf4 ♜xh1 19.0-0-0 (Topalov).

**16...f6! 17.♗xg6+ hxg6 18.♗d3 ♜f7 19.♗d2 c4! 20.♗d4**

Or 20.♗xc4 ♜xc4 21.♗xc4 ♔a6 22.♗xa5 ♜xc3 23.♔f2 ♜ac8 and Black is doing excellently. The black king is no longer bothered by the ♔d6, while the other black pieces also easily play around it.

**20...♛b6 21.♗xb6 ♜xb6**

In this endgame Black is no longer troubled by the ♔d6; Topalov went on to win a good game.

## Holding the King

**Evgeny Postny  
Alexander Delchev**

Haguenau 2013

Here we have a game where the white bishop on e6 proves to be absolutely deadly against an uncastled king on f8.

**1.d4 d6 2.♗f3 g6 3.c4 ♔g7  
4.♗c3 e5 5.e4 ♜c6 6.d5 ♜ce7  
7.♗e2 f5 8.exf5 gxf5 9.♗g5 ♜f6**



**10.♗h5+ ♔f8 11.♗f7! h6  
12.♗e6+ ♔xe6 13.♔xe6**

The bishop on e6 ties up a lot of black pieces. The rook on h8 cannot reasonably move, while the ♔e7 is tied to the defence of the f5-pawn. I do not know whether one should call this opening theory, but all the moves up to here had been played before. Strangely enough, as strong a player as Delchev ended up in this position. Here the only way for Black to get rid of the beastly bishop is:

**13...♝d7**

... but this allows...

**14.♗h5**

... when after...

**14...♛e8 15.♗h3 ♜c5 16.♗xf5**

... Black was simply lost.

**Reinier Vazquez Igarza  
Julio Granda Zuniga**

Benasque 2013

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗c3 ♔b4  
4.♗f3 c5 5.g3 ♜e4 6.♗d3 cxd4  
7.♗xd4 ♔xc3+ 8.bxc3 ♜c5  
9.♗e3 b6 10.♗g2 ♔b7 11.♗xb7  
♗xb7 12.♗a3 ♜a6 13.♗f5 ♛f6  
14.♗d6+ ♜xd6 15.♗xd6**



Here the bishop again has a tight grip on the black king, this time in the middle of the board, compensating for White's bad pawn structure. For the time being Black has little choice.

**15...♜c8**

## Improve Your Chess Pattern Recognition

15...0-0-0 is much too dangerous after the simple 16.0-0; and the immediate 15... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  would give White the extra option of 16. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  bxc5 17.0-0 0-0 18. $\mathbb{B}ab1$ .

### 16. $\mathbb{B}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$

A straightforward reaction. 16... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ , to drive away the bishop from d6, is the other logical response, which has been tried in practice as well: 17.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  19. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  20. $\mathbb{Q}d6$  (20. $\mathbb{B}d4$ ?) 20... $\mathbb{Q}e4$  21. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{B}c6$  22. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  23. $\mathbb{W}d2$  0-0 and after Black had managed to castle he was OK in Karason-Kveinys, Reykjavik 2011.

### 17.0-0 $\mathbb{Q}xc3$

17... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  is refuted by the neat 18. $\mathbb{W}g5$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  19. $\mathbb{W}b5$ ; while 17... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  runs into 18. $\mathbb{B}d4$ !, for example 18... $\mathbb{B}xd4$  19.cxd4  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  21. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  22. $\mathbb{W}a8$  0-0 23. $\mathbb{Q}d6$  (here we go again!) 23... $\mathbb{B}e8$  24. $\mathbb{B}c1$ , winning.

17...h5 might be an interesting move, ignoring the bishop on d6 and trying to develop the rook along the h-file.

### 18. $\mathbb{W}d2$



### 18... $\mathbb{Q}c4$

After the inventive 18... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ , White does best to refuse the sacrifice: 19. $\mathbb{W}d3$ !  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  20. $\mathbb{W}a3$  and White's bishop remains master of the board, providing ample compensation for the pawns.

19. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  20. $\mathbb{W}d3$  d5  
21. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  22. $\mathbb{W}xh7$

White has regained his two pawns, and Black is still struggling with his unsafe king.

### 22... $\mathbb{Q}e7$

22... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}b2$ .

23.f4  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  24.f5  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  25.fxe6 fxe6 26. $\mathbb{Q}f6$

White must be winning here, with 26. $\mathbb{Q}f7$  looking very strong. In the game, however, White let his advantage slip and could only manage half a point.

## Exploiting the Open File

Dmitry Andreikin

Leinier Dominguez Perez

Havana 2013

1.e4 c5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d6 3.d4 cxd4 4. $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  5. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  6. $\mathbb{W}d3$  g6 7.c4  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  8.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  9. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  0-0 10. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  11. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{B}c8$  12.b3  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  13. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  d5 14. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{B}xc6$  15. $\mathbb{B}b1$  dxe4 16. $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  17. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  18. $\mathbb{B}bd1$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  20.h3 h5 21. $\mathbb{Q}d5$  a6 22. $\mathbb{Q}fd1$  e6 23. $\mathbb{Q}5d3$   $\mathbb{B}e8$



### 24. $\mathbb{Q}d6$ ?

Rather than allowing a possible exchange of rooks, White tries to increase his advantage by setting up an outpost

on d6, which dominates the black rooks, thus hoping to use his own rooks behind it. Compare this to 22... $\mathbb{Q}a7$  in Calzetta Ruiz-Lematschko. True, here the obvious 24... $\mathbb{B}d7$  is not a bad move either, after which 24... $\mathbb{B}d8$  (24... $e5$  25. $\mathbb{W}d5$   $\mathbb{B}ce6$  26. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ ) 25. $\mathbb{B}xd8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  27. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  leaves White better as well.

**24...e5 25.c5**

This inexorably leads to an exchange of bishops. Increasing the pressure with 25. $\mathbb{B}d5$  was a less committal continuation, keeping all options open.

**25... $\mathbb{W}e6$  26. $\mathbb{W}b4$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  27. $\mathbb{W}e4$**

**$\mathbb{W}e6$  28.a4  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  29.b4  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$**

**30. $\mathbb{B}xd6$**

30.cxd6  $\mathbb{B}d8$  31.d7 should of course be better for White, but the text move is even stronger, leaving White with the only open file, which is a big asset in a major-piece ending.

**30... $\mathbb{W}c8$**



**31.a5**

White tries to squeeze his opponent to death, keeping control of the entire board and not allowing the ...a6-a5 break with his last move. Other plans that maintained chances of creating a passed pawn on the queenside were also valid, of course.

**31... $\mathbb{B}c7$  32.g4**

Continuing with the same strategy.

**32... $\mathbb{h}xg4$  33. $\mathbb{h}xg4$   $\mathbb{B}ce7$  34. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   
 $\mathbb{Q}g7$  35. $\mathbb{W}f3$**

This does not achieve much and only leads to the inevitable exchange of a pair of rooks after 35... $\mathbb{B}e6$ . The straightforward 35. $\mathbb{B}h1$   $\mathbb{B}h8$  36. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{B}xh1$  37. $\mathbb{W}xh1$  would have given him more chances. Later in the game White's open king position prevented him from trying for more, and the game was drawn.

## Attack Against a Castled King

**Siegbert Tarrasch**

**Emanuel Lasker**

Germany 1908

**1.e4 e5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$   
4.0-0 d6 5.d4  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  6. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$   
7. $\mathbb{Q}e1$  exd4 8. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  0-0 9. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   
 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  10. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  bxc6 11. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   
 $\mathbb{Q}d7$  12. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}fe8$  13.b3  $\mathbb{Q}ad8$   
14. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xf2$   
16. $\mathbb{Q}xf2$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}f5+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$   
18. $\mathbb{W}d4+$  f6 19. $\mathbb{W}xa7$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$   
20. $\mathbb{W}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}de8$   
22. $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$   
24. $\mathbb{W}f3$  d5 25.exd5  $\mathbb{Q}e3+$   
26. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  cxd5**



**27. $\mathbb{Q}d3$**

Here Black's bishop is dominating the white rooks, as in the previous example, keeping his own rooks behind.

With the rooks off the board, the strength of the ♜e3 would obviously decrease considerably. Here Tarrasch passes up the option to eliminate the bishop right away with 27.♘f5 d4 28.♘xe3 dxe3 29.♗e2, when Lasker would still have to prove his compensation for the pawn.

**27...♝e6**

Preventing White's ♜g3-f5 and preparing Black's next.

**28.♗e2 f5 29.♗d1 f4 30.♗h1 d4**

Now the beast is fully supported and alive, allowing the major pieces to manoeuvre freely behind it.

**31.♘f2 ♜a6**



**32.♗d3**

A natural move, blocking the pin and activating the knight. However, now the kingside is left insufficiently protected. The clever 32.♔g1! was called for.

**32...♜g5 33.♗a1**

Not the most stubborn defence, but at the same time clearly illustrating the passivity of the white rooks.

**33...♝h6 34.♗e1**

34.h3 is impossible due to 34...♝g3 35.♗d5 f3.

**34...♝xh2 35.♗d1 ♜g1+**

**36.♗e1**

36.♗e1 does not save the game: 36...♜xg2 37.♗xg2 ♜xg2 38.♗xf4 ♜d2+ 39.♔c1 ♜e2+.

**36...♜ge5 37.♗c6 ♜5e6**

Not the most accurate. 37...♔g8! was a good preparatory move, and if 38.♗xc7 then 38...d3 39.cxd3 ♜d4, winning. In the game White succumbed anyway after a bad 40th move.

**38.♗xc7 ♜8e7 39.♗d8+ ♔g7  
40.a4? f3! 41.gxf3 ♜g5 0-1**

Nimzo's Centre-Back, or...

Evgeny Alexeev

Artur Gabrielian

Yekaterinburg 2013

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4  
4.♗xd4 ♜c6 5.♗b5 ♜d7 6.♗d3  
♗f6 7.c4 ♜b4 8.♗e2 ♜c8 9.♗c3  
e6 10.0-0 a6 11.♗xd7+ ♜xd7  
12.♗f4 ♜e7 13.♗ac1 ♜a5 14.a3  
♗c6 15.♗fd1 ♜de5 16.♗xe5  
dxe5 17.♗e3 ♜f6 18.♗c2 ♜d4  
19.♗xd4 exd4 20.♗e2 e5 21.b4  
♗c7 22.♗b3 0-0 23.♗c2 ♜fd8  
24.♗c1 ♜c6 25.f3 ♜g5 26.♗d3  
♗e3+ 27.♗h1 ♜e6 28.♗b1 ♜c6  
29.c5**



Here White's advantages are clear: a strong blockading knight and a queen-side majority. So this leaves Black's chances where?

**29...♝e7!**

Correct! Thanks to the beastly bishop Black's chances reside in an attack on

the white king, just as in the previous game from a century ago. See also Chapter 39, 'The Big Decision', on when (not) to exchange queens.

### 30.b5

Speeding things up. 30.a4  $\mathbb{H}h6$  31.h3  $\mathbb{W}g5$  will yield Black at least a perpetual check. 32.b5  $\mathbb{W}g3$  33.bxa6  $\mathbb{H}xh3+$  (33...bxa6) 34.gxh3  $\mathbb{W}xh3+$  35. $\mathbb{H}h2$   $\mathbb{W}xf3+$  36. $\mathbb{H}g2$ .

30...axb5 31. $\mathbb{W}xb5$   $\mathbb{H}d7$  32.a4  $\mathbb{H}dc7$  33.a5  $\mathbb{H}h6$  34.g3  $\mathbb{H}hc6$  35. $\mathbb{W}c4$  h5 36. $\mathbb{W}d5$  h4 37.gxh4  $\mathbb{H}e6$  38.h5  $\mathbb{W}f6$  39. $\mathbb{H}f1$   $\mathbb{W}g5$  40. $\mathbb{H}g2$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  41. $\mathbb{H}b2$   $\mathbb{H}d7$  42. $\mathbb{W}a2$   $\mathbb{H}h6$  43. $\mathbb{H}b6$   $\mathbb{H}xh5$  44.c6  $\mathbb{W}xc6$  45. $\mathbb{H}xc6$

I won't go into detail about the past few moves: White has created a passed pawn, while Black has opened up lines on the kingside.

45... $\mathbb{H}a7$  46.a6  $\mathbb{W}d7$  47. $\mathbb{H}b6$   $\mathbb{H}g5$

48. $\mathbb{H}a1$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  49. $\mathbb{H}ab1$



### 49... $\mathbb{W}c3$

Remarkably, White's far advanced passed pawn does not outweigh Black's kingside attack, which proves as effective as in the last example. Here the preparatory 49... $\mathbb{H}h7!$  would have been very strong, for example 50. $\mathbb{W}e2$  (50. $\mathbb{H}f1$   $\mathbb{H}c7$  51.a7  $\mathbb{H}xa7$  52. $\mathbb{W}xa7$   $\mathbb{W}h3) 50... \mathbb{H}c7.$

50. $\mathbb{Q}xe5?$   $\mathbb{H}xe5?$

The clever interference 50... $\mathbb{H}c1!$  would have decided the game. Now the battle was eventually fought out to a draw.

### An Innocent Bystander?

**Konstantin Landa**

**Alexander Morozevich**

Eilat 2012

1. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d5 2.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  3.c4 e6 4. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  c6 6. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  7.c5  $\mathbb{W}c7$  8. $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  9.e3  $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  10. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  11. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  12.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}d8$  13. $\mathbb{W}d1$  0-0 14. $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $\mathbb{H}xg6$  16.f4



### 16... $\mathbb{Q}a5!?$

We conclude with yet another of Morozevich's games, but this time he is the one fighting against the beastly bishop. 16... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  would be the move to expect, exchanging the intruder. Instead Morozevich tries to ignore the bishop.

17. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  b6 18. $\mathbb{W}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  19. $\mathbb{W}xc3$  b5 20. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$

For the time being Black's rooks are inactive; first he tries to gain the e4-square for his knight in order to get some extra space. This knight may also go to f7 and harass the bishop from there.

21. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  22.a4 a6 23.g4 f5 24.gxf5

## Improve Your Chess Pattern Recognition

It was better to prepare this move and retain the tension with 24... $\mathbb{Q}h1!$ ? and if 24... $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  then the calm 25. $\mathbb{B}g1$ .

**24...exf5!**

Now the activity of the rook on e8 will no longer be challenged by the bishop on d6.

**25. $\mathbb{B}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  26. $\mathbb{B}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  27. $\mathbb{B}g2$**

**$\mathbb{W}e6$  28. $\mathbb{W}a2$**

Taking control of the a-file. The alternative was 28. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ , but after 28... $\mathbb{Q}e4$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  fxe4 Black seems OK.

**28... $\mathbb{B}ad8$  29.axb5 axb5**

**30. $\mathbb{W}a6$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  31. $\mathbb{W}a7$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$**

**32. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  fxe4**



Now the other knight gets the beautiful square f5, eyeing the weak pawn on e3, as well as the bishop on d6, of course,

which has almost become a bad bishop, being outside the pawn chain.

**33. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  34. $\mathbb{B}gg1?$   $\mathbb{B}h8!$**

Black no longer cares about the bishop on d6. He is more focussed on White's weak pawns and king. By now the rooks have enough space and Morozevich's strategy has prevailed wonderfully.

**35. $\mathbb{B}g2$   $\mathbb{B}h3$  36. $\mathbb{W}b6$   $\mathbb{B}f3+$**

**37. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{B}xe3+$  38. $\mathbb{B}e2$   $\mathbb{B}xe2+$**

**39. $\mathbb{Q}xe2$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  40. $\mathbb{B}a7$   $\mathbb{W}e8$**

**41. $\mathbb{W}b7g5!$**

and Black's attack proved decisive:

**42.fxg5  $\mathbb{W}h5+$  43. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{W}xg5$**

**44. $\mathbb{W}f7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  45. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{W}c1+$**

**46. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{W}d2+$  47. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{W}d1+$**

**48. $\mathbb{Q}g2$**



**48... $\mathbb{B}f8$  49. $\mathbb{W}xf8$   $\mathbb{Q}e3+$  50. $\mathbb{Q}f2$**

**$\mathbb{W}d2+$  51. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{W}g2+$  0-1**

### Summary

A bishop firmly placed on a central square on the sixth rank will often secure a big space advantage. It may either create difficulties for the opponent's king or generate time to build up pressure on the open file. Its relative value will be more than the traditional three points, unless the opponent manages to play around it, opening up files for his rooks.

## Chapter 11

# Edible or Forbidden Fruit?

Never take on b2 with your queen, even when it is correct. Well, a lot of old and new opening theory tells a different story. And modern engines could not care less. Let's have a look at some daring queens.

### Good Old Development

First a recent 'classic', showing how it can go wrong.

Anish Giri

Mateusz Bartel

Rhodes 2013

1.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d5 2. d4 a6 3.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  c6 4. e3  
 $\mathbb{Q}b6$  5.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$



Giri: 'I have to be frank, penny pincher as I am, I was seriously considering not giving up the pawn, but I was convinced when I started to calculate how many pieces we would both have developed. It was 4-0 to me.' This huge lead in development, as a result of the time that the black queen needs to snatch the b2-pawn, is the classic reason why a capture on b2 is generally condemned. In his inspiring book *Sacrifice and Initiative*, Ivan Sokolov more than once uses

the way of evaluating the position Giri uses here, referring to it as 'the attackers versus defenders ratio'.

5...  $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  6.  $\mathbb{Q}bd2$   $\mathbb{Q}a3$ ?

I guess Bartel did not want to play ...e7-e6 before moving his light-squared bishop outside the pawn chain, and now also wanted to avoid 6...  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  7.  $\mathbb{B}b1$ . However, this takes far too much time and turns out to be overambitious, enabling Giri to add another chapter to the text-book of examples.

7.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  8.  $\mathbb{Q}b1$  b5 9. c4!

With his development almost completed, White opens up the position.

9...  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  10.  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  dx $c$ 4 11.  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   
e6 12. e4  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  13.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$   
13. d5?  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  with a messy position.

13...  $\mathbb{Q}a5$



14. d5

## Improve Your Chess Pattern Recognition

Giri gives 14.a4! as the best move, though in practice the text move turned out to be sufficient for victory in a mere 23 moves.

**14...exd5 15.exd5 ♜f6 16.d6 ♜xd6  
17.♕e1+ ♔f8 18.♗f5 ♜bd7  
19.♗xf7 ♜e5 20.♗xe5 ♜xe5  
21.♗b3 ♜e8 22.♗e3 b4 23.♗f4 1-0**

See Bosiosic-Mazi, Trieste 2013, for a similar (and even quicker) punishment.

## The Great Defender

**Leonid Stein  
Viktor Kortchnoi**

Moscow 1964

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4  
4.♘xd4 ♜f6 5.♘c3 a6 6.♘e2 e6  
7.0-0 ♜e7 8.f4 ♜c7 9.♗e1 0-0  
10.♗g3**



Kortchnoi is well-known for his resourceful defensive skills after having grabbed a pawn. So this game sprung to mind when I worked on the subject of this chapter. Here he audaciously spends a further tempo – ♜d8-c7-b6 – en route to the destination on b2. As Kortchnoi commented, he was not prepared to transpose to a regular Scheveningen.

**10...♜b6 11.♗e3 ♜xb2 12.♗f2  
♗b4**

Black is forced to retreat in view of the threat 13.♗ab1, after which White will

have a discovered attack with the c3-knight.

**13.e5 dxe5 14.fxe5 ♜e8**

14...♝fd7 15.♘d5 exd5 16.♗f5 g6 17.a3 ♜h4 18.axb4 ♜xg3 19.♘e7+ ♜g7 20.♗xg3 is a nice forcing line which leaves Black still in a lot of trouble owing to his poor development.

After the text move White has an important choice which is typical of positions after a queen capture on b2. He can either direct his attention to the other side of the board, or try to trap the queen. Evidently the Master of Attack went for the king.

**15.♘d3**

After 15.♘b3?! (threatening a2-a3!) 15...♜a3, White has definite compensation. A lot of accurate calculation is required from both sides to explore the many possibilities.

**15...♜a5 16.♘e4 ♜d7 17.♘f3**



**17...g6**

White's position looks very strong, yet here, according to Kortchnoi, Kasparov and a later game Sigurjonsson-Sax (Amsterdam 1976), 17...f5 would have been a satisfactory defence. Stein eventually won after a tense fight, which did not stop Kortchnoi from annotating the game in Shakhmaty v SSSR.

**18.♘d4 ♜g7 19.♘f6+ ♜xf6  
20.exf6 ♜h5 21.♗h4 ♜d8**

22.♕ae1 ♜dxf6 23.♗g5 e5  
 24.♔xe5 h6 25.♔xf6 hxg5  
 26.♗xg5 ♜xf6 27.♗xf6 ♜d4+  
 28.♔h1 ♜g4 29.♔h6 ♜f5 30.h3  
 ♜d4 31.♗xf5 gxf5 32.♗e3 ♜g7  
 33.♗h4 ♜a1+ 34.♔h2 ♜fe8  
 35.♗g3+ ♜f8 36.♗h6+ ♜e7  
 37.♗e3+ ♔d7 38.♗xf5+

... and Black was mated.

7...♜xa1 8.♗f3 ♜d7?!

Black defends against the threat of ♜d4-c2. It appears, however, that the natural 8...♜f6 would also have been possible because after 9.♗d4 Black has 9...a5! 10.♗c2 a4. Even the preparatory 8...a6 seems possible: 9.♗d4 ♜c6! 10.♗c2 ♜a5. The position after 8...♜c6 9.♔b5 has also occurred in practice: 9...a5 seems the strongest reply.

9.♔b5 ♜f6 10.0-0 ♔e7 11.♗e1

Now the queen is indeed trapped, but after...

11...0-0 12.♗c2 ♜xc5 13.♗xc5

♜xb1 14.♗xb1 ♜xc5



7.♛b3!?

An idea of the late Dutch IM Johan van Mil, whose infectious enthusiasm for the game was extinguished much too soon. I remember using his idea myself in a simul which took place in several shops, as a side event during the Dutch Junior Championships in 2005. As it happened, a young Magnus Carlsen was present in the local bookshop where this game was played. When my opponent asked for his verdict on the position, it was clear from the expression on Magnus's face that he was not convinced that the black queen could be successfully caught.

... Black had a solid position and almost enough material for the queen. Ten moves later the game ended with a repetition, although this wasn't by any means forced, of course.

## Material Imbalances

**Maxim Matlakov**

**Jan Smeets**

Tromsø 2013

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♗c3 dxc4 4.e4  
 b5 5.a4 b4 6.♗ce2 e6 7.♗f3  
 ♜a6 8.♗g3 c5 9.d5 ♜f6 10.♗g5  
 h6 11.♗xf6 ♜xf6 12.♗c1 ♜d7  
 13.♗xc4 ♜xc4 14.♗xc4



Material imbalances of the sort that arose in the previous example are not uncommon. Take, for instance, the somewhat obscure theoretical line of the Pirc in Gaponenko-Reich, Stuttgart 2004. Here is another more recent example.

**14...♝xb2!?**

À la Kortchnoi! Black was probably not entirely satisfied with further slow development – for example, 14...g6 or 14...♝d8.

**15.0-0 ♜e7?!**

Of course, Black would now like to complete his development, but again the preparatory 15...♝d8 came into consideration.

**16.♝c2**

Now that f6 has been vacated, 16.d6 can be met with 16...♝f6.

**16...♝b3!?**

16...♝a3 17.dxe6 fxe6 18.♞h5 gives White dangerous play.

**17.♞d4**

17.dxe6 ♜xe6.

**17...cx d4**

Forced.

**18.♝c8+ ♜xc8 19.♝xb3 ♜c3**

A counter-productive in-between move. The immediate 19...e5 20.♞f5 ♜f8, followed by ...g7-g6, would have been better, though even here 21.d6 g6 22.♞xd4 exd4 23.e5 has to be reckoned with.

**20.♛d1 e5 21.♞f5 ♜f8 22.d6 ♜c5**

Unfortunately, the apparently logical 22...g6 now runs into 23.♞xd4 exd4 24.♛xd4.



**23.♞xd4**

Here too!

**23...exd4 24.♛xd4**

It is clear that Black's bad development is causing him a lot of problems. The bishop and h8-rook are still undeveloped and the black king is exposed. That White is already winning becomes pretty obvious after a couple of moves.

**24...a5 25.♛d5 f6 26.f4 ♜d7  
27.e5 ♜c5 28.♛a8+ ♔f7 29.♛b7  
♝xd6 30.♛xd7+ ♜e7 31.e6+  
♝f8 32.♛b7 g6 33.♝d1** 1-0

### An Open b-File for the Rook

Besides the danger of the queen being trapped after capturing on b2, the (half-)open b-file may also become a liability. Take, for instance, Arakhamia-Grant-Gligoric, Moscow 1994, where a rook on the 7th rank soon proved fatal. In that dubious line of the Modern Defence, White does not even sacrifice a pawn.

Let's take a look at a subtler example.

## Jonathan Penrose Kjell Krantz

CC Olympiad 1977

- 1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♜c6 3.d4 cxd4
- 4.♗xd4 ♜f6 5.♘c3 e5 6.♘db5
- d6 7.♕g5 a6 8.♗a3 ♜e6 9.♘c4
- ♝c8 10.♗xf6 gxsf6 11.♗d3 ♜e7
- 12.♗e3 ♜b6 13.0-0



- 13...♛xb2 14.♘cd5 ♜xd5
- 15.exd5 ♜d4

Departing the b-file.

### 16.♗b1

Occupying the half-open b-file anyway – a novelty at the time.

### 16...♝c7

16...b5 can be answered with 17.a4!, opening up the queenside for the white pieces. Compare Giri's c2-c4 in the first game.

### 17.♗f3 ♛f4 18.♔e2



### 18...e4?!

18...♚h6 is no solution either: 19.♘c4 ♜c8 20.♗b4 gave White a clear advan-

tage in Ghinda-M.S. Tseitlin, Pernik 1978. Note that the black queen is still not out of trouble. A move like 18...h5 might be best, but White still has clear compensation for the pawn.

### 19.♗xa6!

Further opening the queenside and making Black suffer for not developing his kingside.

- 19...bxsa6 20.♗b8+ ♜c8
  - 20...♜c8 21.♗xc8+ ♜xc8 22.♗xa6
  - ♝d8 23.♗b1 is also hopeless.
  - 21.♗xa6 ♜d8 22.♗fb1 ♜e5
  - 23.♗xc8+ ♜xc8 24.♗a5+ ♜e8
  - 25.♗a4+ ♜d8 26.♗b7
- 1-0

## Looking the Other Way

Another example from the World Cup 2013: here the pawn grab should really have been punished by a king attack on the other wing, but this was concluded unsuccessfully.

## Essam El Gindy Leinier Dominguez Perez

Tromsø 2013

- 1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 d5
- 4.cxd5 ♘xd5 5.e3 ♜g7 6.♘xd5
- ♝xd5 7.♘e2 0-0 8.♘c3 ♜d8
- 9.♘e2 c5 10.d5 e6 11.e4 exd5
- 12.exd5 ♜b6 13.0-0 ♜f5
- 14.♗g4 ♜xg4 15.♗xg4 ♜a6
- 16.♗d1 ♜fe8 17.h3 ♜d4 18.♘e2
- ♞e5 19.♗g5



Black is fully developed, so you might ask what is the risk of taking on b2. One problem is that the ♜a6 is still far removed from the action. And Black needs to keep an eye on the d-pawn.

**19...♛xb2 20.♝ab1 ♚c2 21.♝g3 ♜d6**

After 21...♝b4 the central passed pawn may advance: 22.d6.

**22.♞f6!**

Now that Black's dark-squared bishop has left the long diagonal, White begins to take aim at the black king. 22.♝xb7 fails to the nasty 22...♜xg3 23.fxg3 ♜e2.

**22...b5 23.♛g5 ♜c7**



**24.♝bc1!**

The queen is driven further away from the kingside, where White is about to strike.

**24...♛a4**

24...♛xa2 25.♝f5 ♛a6 26.♝h6+ ♛f8 27.♝g4 ♛g8 28.♛c3 is also curtains.

**25.♝h5 ♛e4 26.♛a1 ♛f8**

**27.♝g7+ ♛g8 28.♛c3 ♛f8**

**29.♝f6**

29.♝f6 was stronger: 29...♝e8 (29...gxh5 30.♛xd6+) 30.♛h8+ ♛e7 31.♝f6.

**29...♝f4 30.♝xh7+ ♛e8 31.♝f6+**

31.♝f6 ♛xc1 32.♝xc1 and the black king has no real defenders, for instance 32...♛a6 33.♝d1!.

**31...♝d8 32.♛g4**

Suddenly the white queen is in trouble. With 32.♝xe4+ ♛xg5 33.♝xg5 White could have stayed on top, but after the text move things quickly went downhill with 32...♜h2+ 33.♛xh2 ♛xg4, and White even managed to lose.

## Should She Stay or Go?

**Mateusz Bartel**

**Surya Ganguly**

Biel 2013

**1.e4 c5 2.♞f3 d6 3.♝b5+ ♜d7 4.0-0 a6 5.♗xd7+ ♛xd7 6.♗e1 e6 7.c3 ♜e7 8.d4 ♜c8 9.♗g5 h6 10.♗h4 ♛b6 11.♗g3**



Here we see Bartel, three months before the first game (against Giri), on the other side of the board, this time allowing his opponent to take on b2.

**11...♛xb2 12.♝bd2 cxd4**

**13.cxd4 ♛b6**

John Emms made an interesting observation on such retreats: 'I have noticed that in many examples the player's instinct tells him, with the goods intact, to retreat the queen back to "safety" as soon as possible. A thoroughly understandable decision, but often it is not the best solution. (...) More often than not it seems better for the queen to hang around the crime scene.'

**14.♗b1 ♜c7 15.♗b3 ♜g6 16.h4!**

Bartel is not satisfied simply to win back the pawn with 16.♗xb7 and starts to force the black pieces back.

**16...♝e7 17.h5 ♜f8 18.♕a3 ♜d8**

**19.♗ec1 ♜b8**



When we look at this, let's say, humble position of Black's queen, we understand Emms's point better. Wouldn't the queen have been better off around b2 or c3, harassing the white pieces?

**20.♕a5 ♜h7 21.♗c7 ♜b5**

**22.♗c4**

22.♗c3?! b6 23.d5 e5 24.♗xe5 dxе5  
25.♗xe5.

**22...b6 23.♗xe7+! ♜xe7**

**24.♗xb6 ♜b7**

24...♜c7 25.♗d5+.

**25.a4**

and Bartel wrapped up neatly:

**25...♛xe4 26.♗d2 ♜xd4 27.axb5**

**AXB5 28.♕a7+ ♜e8 29.♗b3**

**♛d3 30.♗c1 ♛xb3 31.♗xd6 1-0**

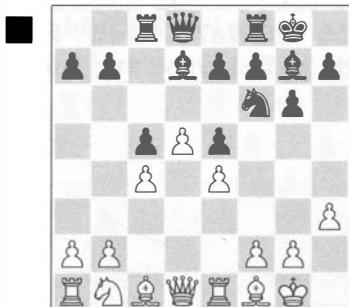
### Summary

There are more risks to a capture by the queen on b2 than just backward development. The resulting opening of the b-file or lack of presence on the other wing may be just as hazardous. Still, having captured on b2, at times it may be worthwhile to keep hanging on there with the queen.

## Exercises

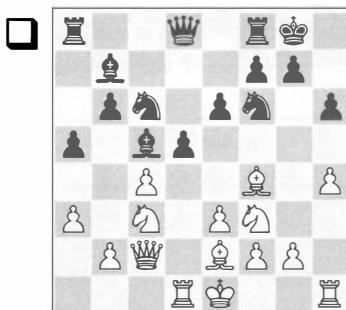
At the end of each part you will find exercises. Every pattern that has been discussed will recur once in these exercises. In all four parts you will most likely have to work harder on the later positions than on the first one. Yet, in most cases discovering the right pattern will be the first step towards finding the correct decision. If you just manage that, this book will already have achieved its humble goal.

### Exercise 1



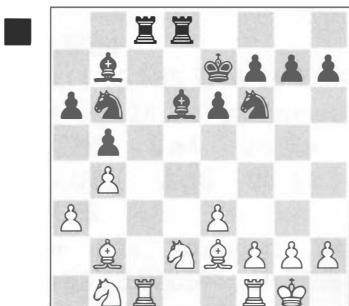
(solution on page 276)

### Exercise 2



(solution on page 276)

### Exercise 3



In this symmetrical position Black is slightly more active for the moment. He now tried to gain some space.

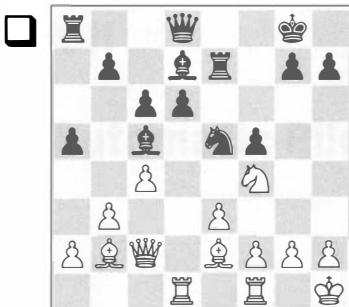
(solution on page 277)

### Exercise 4

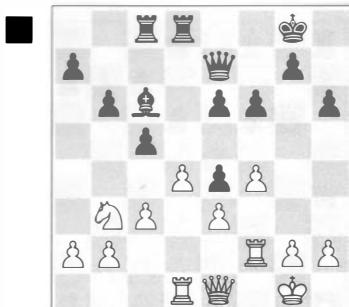


Black tried to block the b2-bishop with 10...e5?!. How should White react?

(solution on page 277)

**Exercise 5**

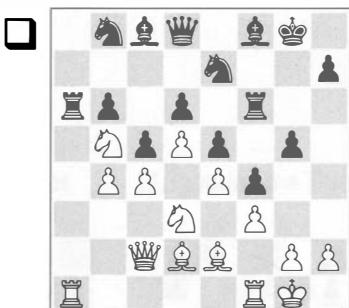
(solution on page 277)

**Exercise 6**

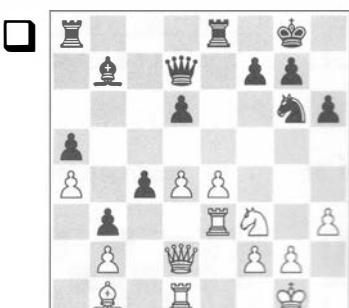
(solution on page 278)

**Exercise 7**

(solution on page 278)

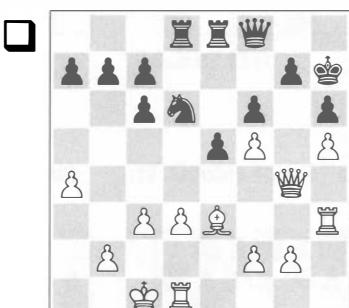
**Exercise 8**

(solution on page 278)

**Exercise 9**

With his last move Black has targeted the a4-pawn. Well, it seems that Kasparov has said that in general a knight on f5 is worth a pawn. So...

(solution on page 279)

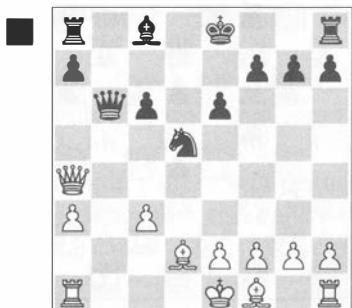
**Exercise 10**

White decided to take on a7. Was he right to do so?

(solution on page 279)

## Improve Your Chess Pattern Recognition

### Exercise 11



Assess 12... ♜b2.

(solution on page 280)

## Part II

### No Automatic Pilot

12. Out of the Box, into the Future



16. ♜d6 ♜e8 17. ♜xc8!

13. Never Mind the Holes



15...a5!?

14. Ignoring the Threat



20. ♜e7 f5!?

15. Silent Sacrifices



20...♜f4!

16. Back inside the Chain



16. ♜d2! ♜d8 17. e3

17. Double Your f-Pawn!



15....♞f6!?

## Improve Your Chess Pattern Recognition

### 18.Towards the Edge



11.fxg3!

### 19. The Double A Status



13.Qa3 bxa3 14.bxa3

### 20.Long Live the Queen!



18.Qe5!

## Chapter 12

# Out of the Box, into the Future

Sometimes it requires imaginative prophylactic thinking or concrete calculations to arrive at a counter-intuitive decision. Let's clear our heads and learn from some impressive examples.

### Eliminating the Bishop Pair

We have had a look at White's elimination of the King's Indian bishop on c8 by transferring a knight to a7 (see Chapter 9 'The Deceptive Bishop from c8'). There are other, less standard occasions which require out-of-the-box thinking. Here is a recent example where an astonishing defensive resource eluded such a strong player as Anish Giri.

**Anish Giri**  
**Levon Aronian**

Istanbul 2012

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$   
4. $\mathbb{W}b3$  e6 5.g3  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  6. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  0-0  
7.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  8. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  a5 9. $\mathbb{K}c1$  h6  
10.a4  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  11. $\mathbb{Q}fd2$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$   
12. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  13.e4  $dxe4$   
14. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  15.c5  $\mathbb{Q}f6$



16. $\mathbb{W}c4?$

Aronian's comments in New In Chess 2012/7 are revealing:

'A mistake. When immediately after the game Anish asked me where he had gone wrong, I pointed out to him that after 16. $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$  followed by the defence of the d-pawn White would have gained equality. Despite the fact that at the present moment the c8-bishop is not a very attractive piece, after Black plays e5 together with the b4-bishop it will become a powerful force.'

That may sound simple, but I think for most of us it would be incredibly hard to decide on giving up our strong knight for the undeveloped bishop even if we had recognized its powerful hidden force.

16... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}g2$



18...e5! 19.d5

19.dxe5 ♜e7 20.f4 ♜f5 and White already has big development problems.

**19..f5 20.dxc6 e4 21.cxb7 ♜xb7  
22.c6 ♜a6 23.♗b3**

23.c7 ♜xc4 24.cxd8♛ ♜axd8 25.♗xc4 ♜d1+ 26.♗f1 f4 and White's pieces are tied up, though maybe not as much as Black's pieces in Vachier-Lagrave-Ding Liren earlier the same year:



Eventually Giri could not hold on after the text move, either.

### Eliminating a Defender

Aronian's comments immediately reminded me of this game.

Vladimir Kramnik

Alexey Dreev

Linares 1997

1.♘f3 d5 2.d4 ♘f6 3.c4 c6  
4.♘c3 e6 5.e3 ♘bd7 6.♗c2 ♘d6  
7.♗d3 0-0 8.0-0 ♜e7 9.c5 ♘c7  
10.e4 dxe4 11.♗xe4 ♘d5  
12.♗d2 ♜d8 13.♗ae1 f6



Here Kramnik starts the same remarkable exchange: his centralized knight for Black's bad bishop. But, given the chance, this bishop would be transferred via d7 and e8 to g6 and become the strongest defender on the board. Impressive prophylactic action by Kramnik!

**14.♗d6 ♘f8 15.♗xc8! ♜axc8  
16.♗e4**

Also, now that the bishop has gone, the pawn on e6 has been deprived of its natural defender, just as in the French positions from 'The deceptive bishop from c8' where Black had exchanged his bad bishop. Over and above that, White's pair of bishops will become a force when the position opens up. With hindsight this may all sound very logical, but who would have been so clear-headed as to decide on ♗d6xc8 so early? Kramnik slowly improved his pieces, secured his space advantage...

16..♜f7 17.♗fe1 ♜e8 18.b4 a6  
19.a4 ♜a8 20.g3 ♜d7 21.♗c4  
♜eb8 22.♗b1 ♜d8 23.♗ee1 ♘g6  
24.♗d3 ♘f8 25.♗f1 ♘g6 26.b5

... and went on to win the game.

### Concrete Calculation

Ana Ivezkovic

Mladen Palac

Zagreb 2013

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5  
4.♘c3 ♜b4 5.e3 0-0 6.♗c2 c5  
7.a3 ♘xc3+ 8.bxc3 ♜c7 9.♗b2  
♗c6 10.♗d3 ♘a5 11.♗e5 b6  
12.cxd5 c4 13.♗e2 exd5 14.0-0  
♗e4 15.♗g4 ♘b3 16.♗ad1 f6  
17.♗xc8 ♜axc8 18.♗f3 ♜fe8  
19.♗c1 ♜d6 20.♗b2 b5 21.♗d2  
♗exd2 22.♗xd2 ♜c6 23.♗fe1 f5  
24.♗c1 ♜f6 25.♗c2 ♜ce6 26.f3



Things become more understandable when you don't have to consider various future strategic possibilities, but can rely on concrete variations. Yet here too you have to start with the counter-intuitive capture of a bad bishop. Perhaps Hertan's method of 'forcing moves' may be of help here.

Although other moves are also possible, the grandmaster now decided on...

26... $\text{Nxc1}$  27. $\text{Kxc1}$

As I have written on other occasions, what counts is not what's taken from the board, but what's left behind (just as a computer, unlike us humans, will never bother about previous moves!). Blacks will win the e3-pawn by force.

27... $\mathbb{W}e7$  28. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{W}h4+$  29. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   
 f4 30. $\mathbb{W}b1$   $\mathbb{M}xe3$  31. $\mathbb{M}xe3$   $fxe3$   
 32. $\mathbb{W}xb5$

So White wins back his pawn, but the passed e-pawn will prove to be too much for her.

32...  $\mathbb{W}f2+$  33.  $\mathbb{W}h1$   $\mathbb{M}d8$  34.  $\mathbb{W}c6$   
 e2 35.  $\mathbb{W}e6+$   $\mathbb{W}h8$  36.  $\mathbb{M}g1$  h6  
 37.  $\mathbb{W}e5$   $\mathbb{M}f8$  38. a4  $\mathbb{M}f6$  39.  $\mathbb{W}e8+$   
 $\mathbb{W}h7$  40.  $\mathbb{W}e5$   $\mathbb{M}g6$  0-1

Of course, you should try to make sure your calculations are correct. Take a look at Alburt-Geller, Reykjavik 1984, where Alburt presumably overlooked a tactical counterblow when swapping his strong knight for an undeveloped bishop!

# Bishop Versus Knight

# **Robert Fischer Tigran Petrosian**

Buenos Aires 1971

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4  
 4.♗xd4 a6 5.♗d3 ♘c6 6.♗xc6  
 bxc6 7.0-0 d5 8.c4 ♘f6 9.cxd5  
 cxd5 10.exd5 exd5 11.♗c3 ♔e7  
 12.♗a4+ ♔d7 13.♗e1 ♗xa4  
 14.♗xa4 ♔e6 15.♗e3 0-0  
 16.♗c5 ♗fe8 17.♗xe7 ♗xe7  
 18.b4 ♘f8 19.♗c5 ♔c8 20.f3  
 ♗ea7 21.♗e5 ♘d7



This is a very well known example, which illustrates the subject of this chapter excellently. White has created a strong outpost on c5, which is also aiming at the weak pawn on a6. Yet on the next move...

22. ♔xd7+

... White exchanges it for the passive bishop! However, Black was intending to play 22... ♜b5. And Fischer was a protagonist of clear strategies: what remains is a strong white bishop against an inactive knight on f6, while the white rooks control the c-file. The black pawns on a6 and d5 are still vulnerable and White will always have the option of creating an outside passed pawn on the queen-side. You could also see this as converting one type of advantage into another.

## 22... $\mathbb{B}xd7$ 23. $\mathbb{B}c1$ $\mathbb{B}d6$

23...d4 seems to be a better continuation. Not because 'passed pawns must be pushed forward' (yes, Fischer!), but to give the f6-knight a future on d5. For example, 24. $\mathbb{B}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  25.a3  $\mathbb{Q}f4$ .

## 24. $\mathbb{B}c7$

With White's rook on the seventh rank Black's position looks pretty hopeless.

## 24... $\mathbb{Q}d7$

Now 24...d4 fails to 25. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ .

25. $\mathbb{B}e2$  g6 26. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  h5 27.f4 h4

28. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  f5 29. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  d4+ 30. $\mathbb{Q}d2$

$\mathbb{Q}b6$  31. $\mathbb{Q}ee7$

Definitely the end for Black.

31... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  32. $\mathbb{B}f7+$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  33. $\mathbb{B}b7$

$\mathbb{Q}xb4?$  34. $\mathbb{Q}c4$

1-0

## Paving the Way

Fedor Duz Khotimirsky

Emanuel Lasker

St Petersburg 1909

1.d4 d5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  3.c4 e6  
 4. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  5. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  0-0 6.e3  $\mathbb{Q}bd7$   
 7. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  c6 8. $\mathbb{W}c2$  dx $c4$  9. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   
 $\mathbb{W}a5$  10.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  11. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   
 12.bxc3  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  13. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  h6 14. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   
 $\mathbb{W}d8$  15.f4  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  16. $\mathbb{B}f3$  c5 17.e4  
 $\mathbb{Q}f6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  cxd4 19.cxd4  $\mathbb{Q}d7$



When annotating the previous game in *My Great Predecessors Part IV*, Kasparov speaks admiringly of Fischer's play in

that game and adds: 'It should be borne in mind that at that time such exchanges of a powerful knight for a passive bishop were most unusual'. However that may be, here is yet another example from a much earlier period.

## 20. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$

Again, this is certainly not the only move, but it does mobilize the pawn centre and also the pair of bishops behind it.

20... $\mathbb{W}xd7$  21.h3  $\mathbb{B}ac8$  22. $\mathbb{W}e2$

$\mathbb{Q}c7$  23.f5!

Now Black has to do something against the threat of the central advance e4-e5.

23... $\mathbb{Q}h7$  24.e5

Anyway!

24...exf5

24... $\mathbb{Q}g5$  runs into 25.f6  $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$  26. $\mathbb{W}xf3$  and Black is without defence.

25. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  26. $\mathbb{B}d1$  g6 27. $\mathbb{Q}c2$

$\mathbb{W}c8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}b3$



Now it will only be a matter of time before the white d-pawn moves forward.

28... $\mathbb{B}c1$  29. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  30. $\mathbb{B}fd3$

$\mathbb{B}xd1$  31. $\mathbb{B}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  32.h4  $\mathbb{Q}e6$

33.d5

Here it is.

33... $\mathbb{Q}f4$  34. $\mathbb{W}e4$   $\mathbb{W}g4$  35.g3!

White is not afraid of ghosts.

35... $\mathbb{Q}xh4$

35... $\mathbb{W}h3+$  36. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  and now for instance 37. $\mathbb{B}d3$  also looks hopeless.

36.gxh4  $\mathbb{H}c8$  37. $\mathbb{H}d3$   $\mathbb{H}c1$   
 38. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{W}f5$  39. $\mathbb{H}d4$  g5 40.e6  
 $\mathbb{W}e5$  41. $\mathbb{H}e4$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  42.e7 1-0

## No Prejudice

Here is a recent example, where an objective judgement is combined with concrete calculation.

Peter Michalik

Kamil Banas

Slovakia 2012/13

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  c6 4.e3 f5  
 5.b3  $\mathbb{Q}b4+$  6. $\mathbb{Q}bd2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  7. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   
 $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  8.0-0 0-0 9. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$   
 10.a3  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  11.b4  $\mathbb{Q}df6$  12.cxd5  
 $cxd5$  13. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  14. $\mathbb{Q}c5$  b6  
 15. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  a5 17.f3  
 $\mathbb{Q}g5$  18.b5  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  19. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{H}ac8$   
 20. $\mathbb{H}ac1$   $\mathbb{H}xc1$  21. $\mathbb{H}xc1$   $\mathbb{H}c8$



22. $\mathbb{Q}xd7!$

The unassailable Stonewall knight on e5 is exchanged for the bad Stonewall bishop. But as usual, what remains on the board is all that matters.

22... $\mathbb{Q}xd7$

22... $\mathbb{H}xc1+$  23. $\mathbb{H}xc1$   $\mathbb{W}xd7$  seems a better try, as the game continuation utterly fails: 24.h4  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  25.e4 fxe4 26.fxe4 dxе4 27. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xa3$ .

The immediate 22... $\mathbb{W}xd7$  yields White a dangerous passed pawn after 23. $\mathbb{H}xc8+$   $\mathbb{W}xc8$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$   $\mathbb{W}b8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}xh2+$  26. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ .

23. $\mathbb{H}xc8+$   $\mathbb{W}xc8$  24.h4  $\mathbb{Q}f7$



25.e4

The position will be opened up for White's bishops, and the black central pawns are vulnerable now that the light-squared bishop has disappeared. May I once more remind you of Suba's dictum: 'A bad bishop defends good pawns'?

25...fxe4 26.fxe4  $\mathbb{W}c7$  27.exd5 exd5 28. $\mathbb{Q}c3?$

28. $\mathbb{W}e8+$  first was called for, and only after 28... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  (28... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xh7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  30. $\mathbb{W}xf7$ ) 29. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ .

28... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  29. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{W}d8$

Returning the favour; the immediate 29... $\mathbb{W}e7$  would have been stronger.

30. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   
 32. $\mathbb{W}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}g3$

32... $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xa3$   $\mathbb{W}xa3$  is impossible due to 34. $\mathbb{W}a8+$   $\mathbb{W}f8$  35. $\mathbb{Q}xh7+$ ; while after 32... $\mathbb{W}xh4$  33. $\mathbb{W}a8+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  34. $\mathbb{W}f3$  White is also better. After the text move White went on to win with the help of his passed d-pawn and pair of bishops.

## Back to Basics

Jan Timman

Simen Agdestein

Taxco 1985

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  4.e5  
 $c5$  5. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  6. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2+$

**7.♗xd2 0-0 8.c3 ♜bc6 9.f4 a6  
10.♘d6 cxd4 11.cxd4 f6 12.♘f3  
♗g6**



Mind you, on many occasions the right decision will be ‘inside the box’: that is, the bad bishop should be left alone and the strong knight retained. This game is from the Interzonal in Taxco 1985, which Timman won very convincingly with 12 out of 15. This and the earlier examples might lead you to believe that his next move was a fine decision.

**13.♗xc8**

True, there is nothing wrong with this move; strictly speaking, it is forced. The desirable option, leaving the octopus where it is and protecting f4 with 13.g3, fails to the tactical trick 13...fxe5 14.dxe5 ♜gxe5.

**13...fxe5 14.dxe5**

14.fxe5 ♜xc8 15.♗d3 ♜h4 is good for Black.

**14...♜xc8 15.g3 ♜b6 16.♗h3**



Attacking the pawn, which is no longer defended by the light-squared bishop, but here the white king is, not uncharacteristically for this kind of French position, very unsafe, rendering White’s intentions harmless.

**16...♚h8! 17.a3**

Now 17.♗xe6 can be met with 17...♜cxe5.

**17...♝a5?**

Black could have justified his earlier 12...♝g6 move with 17...♝cxe5 18.♗xe5 ♜xe5 19.fxe5 ♜c4, for example: 20.♗g2 ♜f5 21.♗c1 ♜xe5+ 22.♗f1 ♜f5+ 23.♗e1 ♜f2+!.

**18.♗d4**

Now White is OK and he went on to win.

### Summary

After these examples I hope you will keep a more open mind for less obvious exchanges.

Don’t generalize! When calculating exchanges, remember to also look what remains at the board.

## Chapter 13

### Never Mind the Holes

Sometimes you have to give something to gain something. Makes sense, you might say, but in practice it is still a big step before you will seriously consider an ugly pawn move. Here we will consider a few typical pawn moves which create a backward pawn and consequently provide the opponent with a strong square. Ugly and counterintuitive at first sight, but let's find out what the gains may be.

Anatoly Vaisser

Jean-Pierre Le Roux

Nancy 2013

1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 g6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5  
4.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  5.e4  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  6.bxc3  
c5 7. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  8. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  9. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   
0-0 10. $\mathbb{Q}c1$  cxd4 11.cxd4  $\mathbb{Q}xd2+$   
12. $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  e6 13. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  14. $\mathbb{Q}b3$



A position which has occurred in practice before, though it is not at the epicentre of theoretical discussions. Usually Black would like to meet White's  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  with ...b7-b6 to limit the knight's activity, but as this is impossible in this specific position, Black has mostly opted for 14... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  or 14... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ . Le Roux, however, came up with a different solution.

**14...a5!?**

Of course, this move poses the direct threat of ...a5-a4, after which the

d4-pawn would fall, but it also leaves big holes on b6 and b5. I don't know whether Black thought up this move at the board, but either way it required some imagination! In the game it worked out quite well, though White certainly had his share of the chances.

**15.a4**

A natural retort, although 15. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  also came into consideration. After 15...bxc6 White can play 16.0-0, with c5 now becoming a fine square for the knight (of course not 16. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$ ).

**15... $\mathbb{Q}a7$**

This follow-up is equally original. Black focuses all his forces on a new target: the pawn on a4.

**16. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$**



Not an attractive position, considering the knight on a7, but Black does threaten 18...b6 now.

### 18.d5

The immediate 18... $\mathbb{B}b1$  would create some problems with the pawn on d4 after 18... $\mathbb{B}fd8$ .

**18...exd5 19.exd5  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  20. $\mathbb{B}b1$ ?**

And now this move seems to be a loss of time. Capturing right away with 20... $\mathbb{Q}xb7$  looks better: 20... $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  21.0-0! (21... $\mathbb{Q}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}b2$ ).

**20... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$**

A complicated endgame has arisen, with the battle focussing on the two passed pawns.

**22. $\mathbb{Q}d2$**

22.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  24.d6.

**22... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  24. $\mathbb{Q}he1$**

**$\mathbb{Q}xe1$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xe1$  a4**

...and Black eventually won.

### Conceptual Novelty

**Alexander Beliavsky**

**Jordi Magem Badals**

Linares 2002

1.c4 c5 2. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d5  
 4.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  5.d4 e6 6.e4  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   
 7.bxc3 cxd4 8.cxd4  $\mathbb{Q}b4+$   
 9. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2+$  10. $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  0-0  
 11. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  12.0-0 b6 13.a4  
 $\mathbb{Q}b7$  14. $\mathbb{Q}fe1$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  15. $\mathbb{Q}d3$



When I spotted the previous game from the recent French championship, I was immediately reminded of this one.

### 15...a5!?

Apparently this move is an idea of Comas Fabrego, who described extensively how it came about in his book *True Lies in Chess*. He called the text move a ‘conceptual novelty’. About this specific position he pointed out that ‘it is not clear whether the b6-pawn is weaker than the a4-pawn’ and that ‘in some variations the b4-square could become an excellent outpost for the black queen’. In a similar position he also noticed that White can no longer avail himself of the standard plan a4-a5. Black, on the other hand, can still go for a central attack with ...e6-e5.

Thus there are a number of concrete considerations which may justify Black’s permanent weakening of the queenside pawn structure.

**16.h3  $\mathbb{Q}e7$**

Comas Fabrego expected later games to prove the viability of the idea, but few games have since featured 15...a5!? (for example, the recent game Leko-Wang Yue, Beijing 2013, saw 15...h6 16.a5). Here the game Baramidze-Bacrot, Bundesliga 2013, continued 16...h6 and soon came to a peaceful conclusion: 17. $\mathbb{Q}ab1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  (a typical reaction – see also the main game) 19. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$ .

**17. $\mathbb{Q}ab1$   $\mathbb{Q}fd8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$**

Otherwise White will exchange the knight, further weakening b6.

**19. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  h6**

Instead Comas Fabrego gives 20... $\mathbb{Q}f4$  as the strongest continuation, putting more pressure on the white pawn centre, for instance 21.g3  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  22. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}c1$ . After the text move, the game was eventually drawn as Beliavsky was unable to pose any problems to Black.

I must say, I myself found Comas Fabregó's idea baffling. Yet it is doubtful whether we can speak of a conceptual novelty. For example, the following game will not have eluded attentive followers of chess history.

### Boris Spassky Robert Fischer

Reykjavík 1972

- 1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$
4. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  c5 5.e3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  6. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   
 $\mathbb{Q}xc3+$  7.bxc3 d6 8.e4 e5 9.d5
- $\mathbb{Q}e7$  10. $\mathbb{Q}h4$  h6 11.f4  $\mathbb{Q}g6$
12. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  fxg6 13.fxe5 dxe5
14. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  b6 15.0-0 0-0 16.a4



#### 16...a5!

Spassky has just played a2-a4. Fischer immediately stops a4-a5, permanently weakening the pawn on b6. But since it is his only weakness, which can easily be defended, Black can now act freely on the kingside. Spassky lost seemingly without a fight.

17. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$
19. $\mathbb{Q}bf2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  g5 21. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   
 $\mathbb{Q}e8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$
24. $\mathbb{Q}xf8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xf8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$
26. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  27. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  0-1

Compare this to Timman's victory over Pinter at the Las Palmas Interzonal in 1982. (It is worth adding that Timman extensively analysed the Spassky-Fischer match.)

And what about this fragment, which you may well know? Many sources have referred to the place in history of this game. Anyway, just as in the first game, we see a baffling move, not a winning move, but one that leads to an interesting positional battle. And again, the opponent seems to be thrown off balance.

### Emanuel Lasker

#### José Raul Capablanca

St Petersburg final 1914

- 1.e4 e5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3. $\mathbb{Q}b5$  a6
4. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  dxc6 5.d4 exd4 6. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   
 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  7. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  8. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$
- 9.0-0 0-0 10.f4  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  11. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  f6



#### 12.f5!?

As Vainshtein (Lasker's biographer) wrote, this move goes against three Steinitz principles: now he has a backward pawn on e4, a weak square on e5 and a pawn majority which can no longer be easily mobilized.

#### 12...b6

12... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ , followed by ... $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ , was recommended by Réti and Tarrasch.

#### 13. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ ??

Capablanca himself said that he had strangely overlooked White's 15th, otherwise he would have opted for 13... $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  14. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  c5 15. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}ad8$  (16... $\mathbb{Q}ac8$  with the idea of ... $\mathbb{Q}c6-e5-c4$  – Nimzowitsch)

17.  $\mathbb{H}xd8$   $\mathbb{H}xd8$  18.  $\mathbb{H}d2$   $\mathbb{H}xd2$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   
 $\mathbb{Q}c6$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$ .

#### 14. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ $cxd6$ 15. $\mathbb{Q}d4$

Here we have a new aspect to White's strategy (or you would have to compare this to the possibility of  $\mathbb{W}b4$  after ...a7-a5 in the second game): a strong square in the enemy camp. The white knight is about to promote to an octopus. Should we blame Capa's recklessness on the hubris of youth?

#### 15... $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}e6$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 17. $\mathbb{H}ad1$

Lasker won the game after a couple of indecisive moments by Capablanca.

### A Spatial Issue

Sabino Brunello

Sergey Erenburg

Helsingør 2013

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $dxe4$   
4.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  5.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  6.  $\mathbb{Q}h3$   
 $e6$  7.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}h4$  8.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$   
9.  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  10.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}gf6$   
11.  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $hxg6$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{W}h7$   
13. 0-0-0  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  0-0-0  
15. h4  $\mathbb{Q}b8$  16.  $\mathbb{H}he1$   $\mathbb{H}c8$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}b1$   
 $\mathbb{H}he8$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}g8$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{W}f8$   
20.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}hf6$   
22.  $\mathbb{W}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$   
24.  $\mathbb{Q}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   
26.  $\mathbb{W}xd2$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}a5$   $\mathbb{H}ed8$   
28.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{H}c7$



#### 29. $\mathbb{C}5!$

A contemporary example, but a lot of the same things apply here: backward pawn, allowing the opponent a strong square (almost forcing the knight to go there). No real pawn majority here, but White again prepares to create an octopus.

With ...c6-c5 prevented for good, Black really suffers from a lack of space.

#### 29... $\mathbb{Q}bd5$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$

As one of the black knights is superfluous, it might as well stop the invasion by its white counterpart.

#### 31. $\mathbb{W}a5$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ 32. $\mathbb{G}3$

White takes his time, not contemplating any wild plans but simply covering the h4-pawn.

#### 32... $\mathbb{W}f6$ 33. $\mathbb{H}d3$ $\mathbb{W}f5$

Black has activated his queen, but with some of his other pieces still passive, this is bound to backfire.

#### 34. $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$

With this move Black cuts off the retreat for his own queen.



#### 35. $\mathbb{G}4!$

Here we go!

See also the recent game Van Kampen-Heedt, Copenhagen 2013, where Black's queen was also in dire straits soon after c4-c5 (although White had more ways to win there):



17.c5 d5 18.Wc2

**35...Wf6 36.g5 Wf5 37.Qe4 Wg4  
38.Qe5 Wxh4 39.Qxf7 Qd7  
40.Qe5 Qd8 41.f4**

White is winning, Black lost after another 10 moves.

**Meelis Kanep**

**Sergey Ivanov**

Finland 2009/10

**1.d4 e6 2.Qf3 Qf6 3.c4 b6 4.g3  
Qa6 5.b3 c6 6.Qg2 d5 7.0-0  
Qbd7 8.Qbd2 Qe7 9.Qb2 0-0  
10.Wc2 Qc8 11.e4 Qxe4  
12.Qxe4 dxe4 13.Wxe4 b5**



**14.c5**

Again this move, though in this case it will not be easy for White to install an octopus on d6. Also, his bishop on b2 seems to become 'bad' as moving the d-pawn will not be easy. Still, the lack of space seems to be the most important thing here. After other moves Black

would be able to deal with the problem, for instance: 14.Qac1 bxc4 15.bxc4 Wa5 or 14.Qfc1 bxc4 15.bxc4 c5.

**14...b4**

Activating the light-squared bishop.

**15.Qfe1 Qf6 16.Wc2 Qb5  
17.Qe5 Qd5 18.Qe4 Qf6 19.Qf3  
Qd5**

The knight may have a beautiful central spot, but it does not look too effective. It has no useful objects of attack, or good squares to advance to. Had Black been able to transfer his bishop to d5, c4-c5 would have been an entirely different story. So you see, there is no clear recipe to determine whether an advance will be successful, despite allowing a hole.

**20.Qad1 a5 21.h4 Qc7 22.Qg2  
Qf6 23.Qg4 h5 24.Qe5 Qxe5  
25.dxe5 We7 26.Qc1 Qa8  
27.Qg5 Wf8**



Black has exchanged another minor piece, yet all his major pieces are still passive. Now White successfully breaks through by force. It simply took the black pieces too long to create counterplay.

**28.g4 hxg4 29.Qd4 g3 30.fxg3  
a4 31.Qg4 axb3 32.axb3 Qc3  
33.Qf6 Qa2 34.Qc1 Wxc5+  
35.Qh1 Wf2 36.Qxg7+ Qf8  
37.Qg8+**

## Capa's Wish

**Baskaran Adhiban**

**Hikaru Nakamura**

Tromsø 2013

Let's finish with a recent example in which a similarly reckless 'anti-positional' advance was punished in the way you would always expect, but are now beginning to doubt. Just to get everything back into perspective...

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6  
 4.♗xc6 dxc6 5.♘c3 f6 6.d4  
 exd4 7.♗xd4 ♗xd4 8.♗xd4 ♘d7  
 9.♗e3 0-0-0 10.0-0-0 ♘e7  
 11.♘b3 b6 12.f4 ♘g6 13.a3 c5  
 14.♗hf1 ♘d6 15.♗d2 ♗he8  
 16.♗c4 ♗f8



Clearly Black is pressing the white pawn majority in the centre, using his pair of bishops, amongst others. A very characteristic picture in this Ruy Lopez Exchange line. As a result White's next is

more an attempt to save his position from further weakening than a sign of strength.

**17.f5 ♘h8!?**

Nakamura is going after the backward pawn on e4. 17...♘e5 seems to run into 18.♗xe5 ♜xe5 19.♗f4 ♜ee8 20.♗d5, but Black can still play 20...♗b5 21.♗fe1 ♜d7.

**18.a4**

I don't like this move, as it doesn't stop anything. The immediate 18.♗f4 seems more logical. 18.e5 is an interesting attempt to take advantage of the knight being temporarily stranded on h8, but 18...♗b5! refutes it, as Nakamura pointed out after the game.

**18...♗f7 19.♗f4 b5 20.axb5  
 axb5 21.♗d2 ♘c6 22.♗de1  
 ♘d6**

Black has completed his plan and is already clearly better. He has achieved the pressure which Capablanca originally had in mind. The threat is ...b5-b4, winning the pawn on e4.

**23.♗xd6 ♗xd6 24.g3 ♘e5  
 25.♗d1 ♘b7 26.♗f3 ♘d6 27.♗f2  
 ♘a8 28.♗d2 ♘a2**

28...♗ed8 29.♗e3 ♘a2 doesn't seem bad either.

**29.♗a1 ♘xa1 30.♗xa1 ♗xe4  
 31.♗xe4 ♘xe4 32.♔d3 ♘b4**

And Naka smoothly converted his advantage into a win in a mere 10 moves.

### Summary

We have seen some typical examples where the mutilation of the pawn structure proved entirely justified. Compensating factors like space or a strong square proved to give more than sufficient counterweight. Be sure to remember these examples, it will help you to keep an open mind when dealing with your pawn structure!

## Chapter 14

# Ignoring the Threat

Sacrifices may occur at unexpected moments. One surprise factor is when a threat to gain material does not produce the logical response, but is answered by a counter-reaction which had not been anticipated at all.

## Countering in the Centre

Let's illustrate this with some examples of exchange sacrifices. Of course, other types of sacrifice could serve as suitable illustrative material as well, but this seems like a good opportunity to have a look at the rich world of the exchange sac. After all, categorizing these sacrifices according to the type of compensation gained always seemed to me a tough job as specific examples often show a complex combination of material and positional factors.

Anastasia Bykova  
Yakov Geller

Taganrog 2013

1.d4 d5 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.c4 e6 4.g3  
dxc4 5.♗g2 c6 6.0-0 b5 7.♘e5  
♗b7 8.a4 ♖c8 9.♘c3 a6 10.e3  
♗bd7 11.f4 ♖b8 12.e4 ♗e7  
13.♗e3 0-0 14.♗c1 ♖c7 15.♗e2  
♗xe5 16.fxe5 ♗d7 17.♗g4



By moving his queen to g4 White has just posed the threat of ♗h6, which would win the exchange.

**17...c5!**

Ignoring the threat, and using the time and extra pawn to seize the centre. The expected reply was probably 17...♔h8. Funnily enough, Black could try a similar sacrifice with 17...g6 18.♗h6 ♖b6!, which also threatens to take on e5 and could even be stronger than the text.

**18.♗h6 g6 19.♗xf8 ♖xf8**

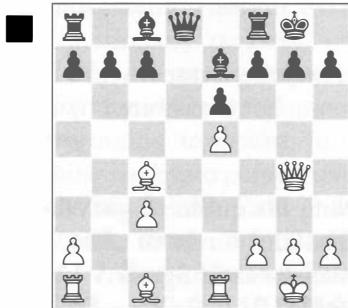
White's attack has come to a stop and her pawn centre starts to crumble.

**20.d5 ♗xe5**



Black has gained a second pawn for the exchange and went on to convert his advantage: a queenside majority, a strong pair of bishops and a terrific knight versus a white rook which is unable to invade the enemy camp, and two unimpressive white minor pieces (all hampered by the pawn on e4!).

Remarkably, six days later in the same tournament Geller ventured the same sort of exchange sac against Lugovskoy, probably inspired by how easy it had been to win this game.



**12....♘d7?!**

However, things were slightly different this time and he duly lost. These sacrifices don't come with a guarantee!

## Controlling the Dark Squares

**Gideon Stahlberg**

**Leonid Stein**

Yerevan 1965

1.c4 ♘f6 2.♘c3 g6 3.d4 ♘g7  
4.e4 0-0 5.♘e2 d6 6.f4 c5 7.♘f3  
cx<sub>d</sub>4 8.♘xd4 ♘a6 9.♘e3 ♘c5  
10.♘f3 ♘h6 11.♘b3 e5 12.♘xc5  
ex<sub>f</sub>4 13.♘f2 dx<sub>c</sub>5 14.♘xc5



Here is a lesser known game of one of my favourite players from the past, Leonid Stein, who in this position also ignored

White's threat of capturing on f8. A better known game of his on the same theme is Khasin-Stein, Tallinn 1965.

**14...♗d7!**

In all probability Stahlberg had been calculating 14...♗xd1+ 15.♗xd1 ♗e8 16.0-0, which would leave White with the better position.

**15.♗xf8 ♗h4+ 16.♔d2**

Stahlberg chooses to transfer his king to the queenside at the risk of leaving it exposed for quite some time. The alternative was 16.♔f1, shutting out the ♗h1 for the time being. Even so, after 16...♗xf8 17.♗e1 ♗d8?!, Black has good compensation due to his excellent control of the dark squares.

**16...♗xf8 17.♗e1 ♗e7 18.♔c2**

**♗e5 19.♗c1? ♗g7**

19...♗xc4 regains a pawn but feels slow as Black's further development remains backward, but the follow-up is not all that clear: 20.♗d5 ♗e5 21.♗c3 ♗e3+ 22.♗b1 (22.♗xe3 ♗xc3+ 23.♗xc3 fxe3 24.♗d3 ♗e6) 22...♗xc3 23.♗xc3 ♗xd5 24.exd5 ♗f5+ 25.♔a1 ♗d6 and Black is just slightly worse.

**20.♗d5 ♗c5 21.♗g1! ♗xc4+**

**22.♗b1 ♗d3+ 23.♗c2**

23.♔a1 ♗c4.

**23...♗e6**



**24.♗e2?**

A strange slip-up as until now Stahlberg had played very well. What could be

more logical than bringing the queen back into play? For example, 24.  $\mathbb{W}f2$  or 24.  $\mathbb{W}d1$ .

**24...  $\mathbb{W}xe4$**

Grabbing a second pawn and, equally importantly, undermining the support of White's strongest piece, the knight on d5. Suddenly Black is clearly better. He went on to win convincingly.

## An Unsafe King

**Jesus Martinez Villar**

**Vadim Malakhatko**

Roquetas de Mar 2012

**1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  e6 3.c4 b6 4.a3  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  5.  $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  6.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  c5 7.dxc5 bxc5 8.e4  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  9.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{W}b8$  10.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}ge5$  13.  $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  15.  $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  16.b4  $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$  17.gxf3 cxb4 18.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  19.axb4 0-0**



**20.  $\mathbb{Q}e7f5!?$**

This must have come as a shock to White. Apparently Black wasn't satisfied with variations such as 20...  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  22.  $\mathbb{W}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  23.  $\mathbb{W}xb8$   $\mathbb{M}xb8$  24. cxb5 d5 25. exd5 exd5+ 26.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{M}xb5$ .

**21.  $\mathbb{Q}xf8$   $\mathbb{W}xf8$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}d6?$**

This is no good, but due to White's king position it is hard to give any good

advice. 22. exf5  $\mathbb{W}xb4+$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{M}f8$  looks very unpleasant for White.

**22...  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  24.  $\mathbb{W}xd6$   $\mathbb{M}f3$  25.  $\mathbb{M}g1$   $\mathbb{W}xe4+$**

... and Black had sufficient compensation and went on to win (though the remaining moves were not always too straightforward).

## Eliminating the Pawn Centre

**Arkady Naiditsch**

**Viswanathan Anand**

Baden-Baden 2013

**1.e4 c5 2.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d6 3.  $\mathbb{Q}b5+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  4.  $\mathbb{Q}xd7+$   $\mathbb{W}xd7$  5. c4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  6.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  g6 7.d4 cxd4 8.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  9. 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  10.  $\mathbb{Q}de2$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$**



**11...  $\mathbb{W}xe4!$**

Again ignoring the threat! This concept had been tried for the first time in the game Kasparov vs The World 1999. The only time Black had played 11...  $\mathbb{M}c8$  was in a simul game where the white pieces had been handled by... Kasparov!

**12.  $\mathbb{Q}c7+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  13.  $\mathbb{Q}xa8$   $\mathbb{W}xc4!$**

This is it: Black has time to grab a second pawn. How are we to evaluate the position? Unfortunately this time Anand rather leaves us guessing: '(...) I briefly looked at it, and it seemed to me, and it still does, that I'd rather have the two pawns than the exchange' (New In Chess 2013/2). Of course, Black has a

nice potential pawn centre, but his king is still unsafe in the middle of the board.

**14.♗c3**

14.♗b6+ was Kasparov's choice and was later also repeated a couple of times by Rublevsky. It seems logical to damage Black's pawn structure, but Anand was not impressed. But then he was 'not impressed by White's position anyway'. As played, Black made use of the half-open a file and b-pawn: 14...axb6 15.♗c3 b5 16.♕e3 ♜a8 17.♗c1 ♜e8.

**14...♜xa8 15.♗g5 e6 16.♗e1**



And now Anand made a move which most of us would have found difficult:

**16...♝d5**

In order to exchange queens and safeguard his king, Black is prepared to spoil his pawn structure. Indeed, the white rooks have difficulty in becoming active and the bishop is just loose. Black, on the other hand, has a strong bishop on g7, a centralized king and a central passed pawn to boot. Eventually Anand proved his point in this game.

## Eliminating the Pawn Centre Again

**Baris Esen  
Evgeny Postny**

Legnica 2013

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.♗f3 ♜f6  
4.e3 e6 5.♗xc4 a6 6.0-0 b5  
7.♗d3 ♜b7 8.♗e2 ♜bd7 9.a4 b4**

**10.e4 ♜e7 11.♗bd2 0-0 12.e5  
♝d5 13.♗e4 ♜e8 14.a5 g6  
15.h4 c5 16.♗g5**



White is threatening to win material with 17.♗d6. The best way to deal with this is... to go your own way:

**16...cxtd4!**

Black doesn't want to play 16...♜xg5 17.♗fxg5 as an octopus will soon arrive at d6 anyway; while 16...♝f8 17.♗d6 ♜c7 18.♗xe7 ♜xe7 19.♗e4 (or 19.♗fc1) would also leave White on top.

**17.♗d6 ♜xe5!**

This was the idea behind the previous move. Remarkably, a more complex continuation was also worth considering: 17...♝c3?! 18.bxc3 ♜xf3 19.gxf3 (19.♗xf3 ♜xe5 20.♗e4 ♜xd6 21.♗xe7 ♜xe7 22.♗xe5 dxc3 with three pawns for a piece) 19...♜xg5 20.♗xe8 dxc3 and, despite being a rook down, Black may well be OK!

**18.♗xe8**

18.♗xb7 ♜xf3+ 19.gxf3 (19.♗xf3 ♜c7) 19...♜c7 and now 20.♗xa6 fails to 20...♜xg5 21.hxg5 ♜f4.

**18...♝xf3+ 19.♗xf3 ♜xe8**

Now we're down to the usual exchange sacrifice. Once again Black has two extra central pawns, though the d-pawn is further advanced, which leaves it vulnerable and also creates some weak squares.

**20.♗fe1**

20.  $\mathbb{W}e4$  can be countered, for instance, with 20...  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  21.  $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  22.  $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ .

**20...  $\mathbb{W}d8$  21.  $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  22.  $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6?$**

A strange decision, where 23.  $\mathbb{W}e2$  and 23.  $\mathbb{W}h3$  would be regular moves to maintain the tension. Later White missed some more critical points and quickly lost the game.

Jozsef Horvath

Markus Ragger

Vienna 2012

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4.e3  
 $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  5.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  c6 6.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  dx $c4$   
7.  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  b5 8.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  a6 9. e4 c5  
10. e5 cxd4 11.  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  ax $b5$   
12.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  13. fxg7  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   
14. 0-0 0-0 15.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$  e5 16.  $\mathbb{Q}f5$   
 $\mathbb{Q}d6$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$



**19.a3**

Threatening 20.  $\mathbb{Q}b4$ .

**19...  $\mathbb{Q}f5!$ ?**

It could be a beginner's mistake, but Black only pays attention to his own plan: advancing his central pawns (see also the chapter on central avalanches).

**20.  $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xf8$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$**

This massive central pawn majority is characteristic of this Meran line. Against Ivan Sokolov I once had a similar majority, but while I certainly had

my chances I just did not manage to make the most of them and lost. By the way, this game also witnessed an exchange sac from both sides, albeit of different types.

**22.  $\mathbb{Q}d3!$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$**

23...  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  would be countered by 24.  $\mathbb{Q}e8+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xf3!$  and White will just continue with  $\mathbb{Q}ae1$  while the black pieces are tied up.

**24.a4  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$**



Naturally this is an incredibly hard position to assess. Black has a formidable centre and ditto piece activity. Yet he has sacrificed a full exchange plus a pawn. If his activity doesn't pay off soon he will simply be lost.

**26.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{W}h6$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$**

27...  $\mathbb{Q}d5!?$

**28.  $\mathbb{Q}a3?$**

Allowing a surprising exchange.

**28...  $\mathbb{Q}xc4!$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  d3**

Suddenly the white king can no longer be defended by the  $\mathbb{Q}a3$  or the bishop.

**30.  $\mathbb{Q}g3?$   $\mathbb{Q}h3+$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}xf2$**

... and Black quickly won.

## Quick Development

Elshan Moradiabadi

Enrico Sevillano

Los Angeles 2012

**1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  c5 3. d5 e6 4. c4 exd5 5. cxd5 d6 6.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  g6 7.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$**

**8.♗g7 9.♗b3 ♜c7  
10.e4 0-0 11.♗e2 b5 12.♗xb5  
♘xe4 13.♗xe4 ♜a5+ 14.♗c3  
♗xb5 15.0-0-0 ♜d7 16.♗xd6**



White had tried a new plan in the opening and now a position had arisen with kings on opposite sides. The most important thing in such positions is to be the quickest one to attack. This rule of thumb might have prompted Black not to care about his rook being under attack and to continue development as quickly as possible.

**16...♜a6 17.♗xf8 ♜xf8**

Again Black has not only sacrificed an exchange but also a pawn. Yet in practice the joint impact of an unexpected(?) sacrifice and Black's initiative very soon proved too much for White. In fact, White's next move is already a mistake.

**18.♗he1**

This was certainly not the time nor the place for a standard development move. 18.♗d2 puts up a tougher defence, though after 18...♗f5 (18...♗b4 19.♗c4 ♜a6 20.♗e3 ♗d3+ 21.♗xd3 ♜xd3 22.♗c4 ♜h6+ 20.♗e3 ♗b4 Black keeps a powerful initiative.

**18...♝b8 19.♗c4 ♜b4**



Now White is in big trouble. All Black's pieces are aiming at his king.

**20.♗d3 c4 21.♗e3**

21.♗c2 ♜xb2 22.♗xb2 ♗b4  
(22...♜b4+).

**21...♜xb2 22.♗d2 ♜xc3 23.♗xb2**

**♞a3 0-1**

In the next chapter we'll take it one stage further and look at exchange sacs where the rook is deliberately put en prise without capturing something in the process. Which, of course, may also come as a bit of a shock.

### Summary

Do not always parry your opponent's threats automatically, but also keep an eye out for dynamic solutions. You may try to create your own initiative elsewhere; for instance, some of the exchange sacrifices above generated a strong pawn centre. In addition to ignoring the threat, the change of events will doubtlessly influence your opponent's state of mind.

## Chapter 15

# Silent Sacrifices

You can of course derive great pleasure from executing a forceful sacrifice by capturing something with a bang. Yet nothing beats the screaming silence of putting your rook en prise by slowly pushing it one little square forward.

### King Attack Along the Dark Squares

Borislav Ivkov

Bent Larsen

Beverwijk 1964

1.e4 c5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3.d4 cxd4  
4. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  g6 5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  6. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   
 $\mathbb{Q}f6$  7. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  d6 8.f3  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  9. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   
 $\mathbb{Q}b6$  10. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  11. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  0-0  
12.0-0-0  $\mathbb{Q}xb3+$  13.axb3 a5  
14. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  15.bxa4  $\mathbb{Q}d7$   
16. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  17.h4  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   
18. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  19.c4  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  20.b3



Here you may put aside your book for a while and take out your chess set. Set up the position before Black's 20th and sit yourself down behind the black pieces. Then execute the move: carefully yet firmly push the rook one little square forward, without lifting it from the board, and screw it gently into c5. The pleasure! You might want to repeat this action a couple of times.

20... $\mathbb{Q}c5!$

An extremely forceful move, the silence only slightly disturbed by the fact that the white queen is attacked and White has to accept the sacrifice. The surprising 20... $\mathbb{Q}h6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xh6$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  24. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  is not as strong.

21. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  dx $c5$

Now the black bishop rules the board while the white king is in dire straits. First of all Black threatens 22... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ .

22. $\mathbb{Q}d5$  e6

A razor-sharp move which gets an exclamation mark from Larsen, who refrained from 22...b6 because of 23.e5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}d7$  and Black can't get an attack going. Unfortunately Larsen does not comment on 22... $\mathbb{Q}g3$ , which leaves the  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  centralized but seems strong enough.

23. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$

23. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  runs into 23... $\mathbb{Q}g3$  again.

23... $\mathbb{Q}g3$  24. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}f4+$  25. $\mathbb{Q}c2$

f5! 26.exf5 exf5



Black has now sacrificed a pawn as well as the exchange, but the white rook on g5 is no longer playing a part in the defence. It is pretty obvious that the white king is in for a tough time. Though objectively Black still has something to prove, in practice Ivkov, hampered by time pressure, soon succumbed.

## Preserving a Strong Bishop

Vincent Blom  
Christov Kleijn

Venlo 2009

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♜g7 4.e4 d6 5.f3 0-0 6.♗e3 a6 7.♗d2 c6 8.♗ge2 b5 9.♗g3 ♜bd7 10.0-0-0 ♜a5 11.♗b1 b4 12.♗ce2 c5 13.d5 ♜b6 14.♗c1 ♜a4 15.♗b3 ♜c7 16.♗h6**



**16...♗h8?**

Preferring to keep the bishop rather than the rook – understandably, from the defensive point of view, as the absence of the bishop would leave the dark squares severely weakened. The bishop also seems to carry much more offensive power than the ♜f8 – just look at the open long diagonal. It is not impossible that the young Dutch player's decision was influenced by a classic game of Simagin's which featured the same little bishop retreat leaving the rook en prise.



Panov-Simagine 1943: **12...♗h8**

On Chesscafe.com Dvoretsky wrote a very interesting article on Simagin's exchange sacrifices, digging up an even earlier game of Simagin's (1939!) featuring exactly the same idea.

Apart from the text move, the direct assault 16...♗xb2 came into consideration. After 17.♗xg7 ♜xd1 18.♗xf6 exf6 19.♗xd1 a5 Black's attack seems to arrive first. But why give up such a wonderful bishop on the long diagonal?

**17.♗xf8 ♜xf8 18.e5! ♜e8!**

Of course Black does not stoop to materialism and he maintains the tension.

**19.♗c1**

19.♗e1 was an interesting alternative. After 19...♗xe5 White continues with 20.♗xe5? dx5 21.h4, which returns the exchange, eliminating the bishop, and starts a counter-initiative.

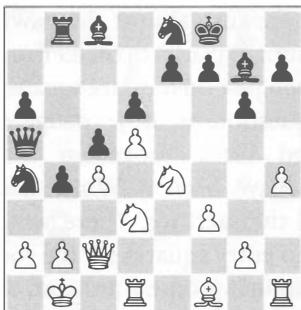
**19...♗xe5 20.♗d3 ♜g7 21.h4**

With the bishop on g7, this counterattack leads nowhere. In fact, the h-pawn remains here until the end of the game.

**21...♗b8**

The immediate 21...♗c3+ also seems to be possible: 22.bxc3 bxc3 23.♗c2 ♜d7 24.♗c1 ♜b8+ 25.♗b3 a5 and Black will regain material (he has sacrificed a whole rook but is still attacking). Still, there's nothing wrong with a slice of materialism. The text move is simple and strong.

**22.♗c2 ♕a5 23.♘e4**



**23...♗c3+**

And Black's attacking forces on the queenside quickly forced the decision. 23...♗xb2 was a violent alternative here – 24.♗xb2 ♗c3+ 25.♔c1 ♗xa2+ 26.♔b1 ♗c3+ 27.♔c1 ♗f5 investing a whole rook – but again Black is consistent in preserving the bishop.

## Gaining the Fianchettoed Bishop

**Miso Cebalo**

**Evgeny Vasiukov**

Arvier 2006

1.d4 f5 2.g3 ♗f6 3.♗f3 g6 4.♗g2 ♗g7 5.c4 0-0 6.♗c3 d6 7.0-0 ♘e8 8.d5 a5 9.♗d4 ♗a6 10.e4 fxe4 11.♗xe4 ♗xe4 12.♗xe4 ♘d7 13.♗e3 c6 14.♗d2 ♗c7 15.dxc6 bxc6 16.♗ac1



**16...c5!**

Of course, 16...♗b8 was also possible, but the text allows White to win the exchange and is much more likely to throw him off balance.

**17.♗b5?!**

Going for it.

**17...♗xb5 18.cxb5 ♘xb5!**

**19.♗xa8 ♕xa8**

Now that there is no longer a fianchettoed bishop on g2, the light squares around White's king are considerably weakened, as soon became clear:

**20.♗fe1 ♘f7 21.f4 ♘c6 22.b3 ♘c8 23.♗c4 ♘b7**

A nice little move, threatening 24...♕c6.

**24.h4 ♘h3 25.♗h2 ♘g4 26.♗f2 ♘d5 27.♗c2 h6**

Black gradually increased the pressure against White's weakened kingside and eventually won.

A bit off-topic but worthwhile: Cebalo had a very sweet revenge in the same opening 8 years later:

1.d4 f5 2.♗g5 g6 3.e3 ♘h6 4.h4 ♘f7 5.♗f4 d6 6.♗f3 ♘d7 7.♗c4 ♘g7 8.♗xf7+ ♘xf7 9.♗g5+ ♘f6 10.♗c3 c6 11.♗f3 e5 12.♗d5!! (ain't that sweet!) 12...♗e7 13.♗xh7+ 1-0.

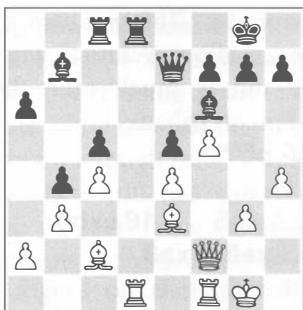
## Threatening to Double

**Jordi Fluvia Poyatos**

**Josep Lopez Martinez**

Barcelona 2013

1.e4 c5 2.♗f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♗xd4 a6 5.♗c3 ♘c7 6.f4 b5 7.♗d3 ♘b7 8.♗e2 b4 9.♗a4 ♘f6 10.♗d2 ♘c6 11.♗f3 ♘e7 12.c4 d6 13.♗c1 ♘d7 14.♗e3 0-0 15.0-0 ♘ab8 16.b3 e5 17.f5 ♘c5 18.♗xc5 dxc5 19.♗f2 ♘bd8 20.♗cd1 ♘d4 21.♗g3 ♘xf3+ 22.♗xf3 ♘f6 23.♗f2 ♘c8 24.h4 ♘e7 25.g3 ♘fd8 26.♗c2



**26...Rd4!**

Here is a really silent one: a rook move which does not attack anything but is 'just' put en prise.

A classic and much quoted example is:



**25...Rd4!** Liublinsky-Botvinnik 1943

And right on time too, before White tries 27.Rd5!, similar to Anand-Kasparov, PCA World Championship 1995:



**27.Rd5! Rxd5? 28.exd5**

**27.Rxd4**

Accepting the challenge. Black now gets a free-flowing game: a protected passed pawn, pressure against the pawn on e4 and a superb platform on e5 from which to launch play on the dark squares.

The question is how dangerous the doubled black rooks on the d-file would have been if White hadn't accepted the sacrifice. There would have been no entry squares for the rooks, nor was capturing on e4 a threat, say, after 27.Qh2, because of 27...Qxe4 28.Qxd4 Qxc2 29.Qxc5!. Still, from a materialistic point of view the game continuation is entirely logical and there seems to be no black plan which presents immediate danger to White. The position is about equal.

**27...exd4 28.Qd3 Re5 29.Qg2**

**Re8 30.Qh3 Rd6 31.a3**

Logically, White tries to open some lines for his rooks.

**31...bxa3 32.Ba1 Bb8 33.Bxa3**

**Bc8 34.Bf3 f6 35.g4 Bb6**

Black seems fine. A great bishop on e5, while White's rooks are not really active, and the Qd3 looks like a big pawn. In the game Black was helped by his opponent, whose ambitions turned against him after he had advanced his kingside pawns.

## A Defensive Sac

**Emanuel Berg  
Anton Korobov**

Rogaska Slatina 2011

**1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Qc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 Qxc3+ 6.bxc3 Qc6 7.Qf3 Qge7 8.a4 Bc7 9.Qd3 cxd4 10.0-0 dxc3 11.Be1 Qg6 12.Qxg6 fxg6 13.Qa3 Ba5 14.Qd6 Qf7 15.Qa3 Be8 16.Be3 Qg8 17.Qb1 b6 18.Bf4 Qd7 19.Qg5**



With his last couple of moves White has directed his pieces to the kingside, hoping to set up a strong attack and to profit from the offside position of Black's queen.

**19...♜f8!**

Naturally Black could have tried to keep everything together with the passive 19...♝d8, but he found a much more active, and perhaps stronger, move. When studying the position you may have noticed that Black is two pawns up. This of course gives him the option of returning material at some point. By putting his rook en prise on f8 he invites White to give up his strongest piece, the bishop on d6.

A similar sacrifice, though ultimately less successful than the text, was seen in the game Topalov-Jussupow, Dortmund 1997:



**19...♜xc3 – ignoring the threat**

**20.♝xf8**

Despite the fact that not capturing would leave Black with extra material and White with no attack, I would be inclined to keep the beastly bishop on d6, at least for a couple more moves. It seems to be a good match for the black rooks, it also defends the e5-pawn and deprives the black queen of b4 and c5.

**20...♜xf8 21.♛h4?!**

The immediate 21.♛g3 is better.

**21...h6 22.♝f3 g5**

Now Black is virtually winning. White's rooks have little scope for activity.

**23.♜h5 ♜c5 24.♝aa1 ♜c4**

**25.h3 ♜e8 26.♜g4 ♜xg4**

**27.hxg4 ♜g6**

Black has improved his bad bishop and White now just has too many problems defending his weak pawns. Black won convincingly.

## Spotting It in Advance

**Alvar Alonso Rosell**

**Rainer Buhmann**

Plovdiv 2012

**1.♝f3 d5 2.c4 c6 3.g3 ♜f6**

**4.♗g2 dxc4 5.0-0 ♜bd7 6.♜c2**

**♗b6 7.♗a3 ♜d5 8.b3 cxb3**

**9.axb3 ♜e6 10.♗b1 g6 11.d3**

**♗g7 12.♗c4 ♜d8 13.♗a5 ♜c8**

**14.e4 0-0 15.♗d2 ♜e8 16.♗fd1**

**♗d6 17.♗b4 ♜b8 18.h3 ♜b5**



White has obtained some typical compensation from a well-known type of sac in the Réti (including a powerful knight on a5, see Chapter 4, 'Dominating from the Edge'). He now decided to advance his central majority.

**19.d4**

I wonder whether he had considered Black's next move as a plausible possibility.

**19...♝xd4!**

Black grabs a second pawn and the chance to free his position.

**20.♛xd4 ♛xd4 21.♝c5 e5!**

By now this is forced, but it had to be calculated in advance. It is often hard to come up with an idea of moving a piece that seems to be pinned, or to make use of a square which seems to be controlled by your opponent, the more so if the possibility lies further ahead in your calculations. So this seems much easier than it probably was!

It is worth pointing out that Black had yet another surprising try, albeit unsatisfactory: 21...♝d7 22.♜xd4 ♜xa5 23.♝xe7 ♜e8 24.♝d6 ♜a8 25.f4, with a beastly bishop and a terrible bind.

**22.♜xf8 ♜xf8 23.b4 ♜e6**



Black has managed to complete his development. Apart from the two extra pawns he has obtained a great bishop

on d4. Again the white rooks do not have much activity.

**24.♝b3 ♜xb3 25.♜xb3 ♜c8**

**26.♚f1 ♜d6 27.♝g2 ♜c8**

**28.♝d3 c5**

Black could also have stayed passive, as this move runs the risk of activating the white rooks. Still, in the game he comfortably managed to steer the game towards a draw.

## A Standard Move?

**Jordan Ivanov**

**Manuel Leon Hoyos**

Balaguer 2010

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.♝f3 g6 3.c4 ♜g7 4.♝c3 0-0 5.e4 d6 6.h3 e5 7.d5 a5 8.g4 ♜a6 9.♝e3 ♜d7 10.h4 ♜f6 11.♝h2 ♜c5 12.f3 h5 13.g5 ♜h7 14.♝d2 f6 15.0-0-0 fxe5 16.hxg5 ♜d7 17.♝e2 a4 18.♝c2 b6 19.♝f1 ♜e7 20.♝g3**



Now Black would like to activate his knight on h7, but how?

**20...♞f4!**

Somehow I feel this has become a generally accepted possibility, despite the presence of White's dark-squared bishop, perhaps in the wake of the much-published game Tal-Petrosian, USSR Championship, Riga 1958.



**31...Bf4** – same move, different context

As with the sacrifice in Fluvia Poyatos-Lopez Martinez, accepting it would open up the diagonal for the dark-squared bishop and give Black a strong square on e5. Another general characteristic of silent sacrifices is that the opponent is not always obliged to accept (unlike the 'King's Rook Grabs Knight' and the 'Bishop Snatcher', which are dealt with in the 'Strategic Means' part). For example, there was a similar sacrifice on b4 by a young Kasparov against Zaid (Leningrad 1977), which was duly rejected.

**21.Bxf4**

Here, capturing seems like the right move because the pawn on g5 was under attack. Even so, other moves such as 21.Bdg1 are also possible.

**21...exf4 22.Qxf4 a3**

Opening the long diagonal, followed by...  
**23.b3**



**23...Qxc3!**

Concrete chess! Another none too obvious move to start your calculations, giving up this great bishop.

**24.Qxc3 Bf8**

White is in big trouble.

**25.Qh4 Be5+ 26.Qd4**

26.Qb4 Bb2 leads to mate with ...Qa6! and after 26.Qd2 Qxg5 27.Bhf1 Bf4 28.Qh2 Bxf3 the white position falls apart.

**26...Bf4 27.Qh2 h4**

27...Qxg5.

**28.Qf1 Qxg5**

and Black won.

So, familiarize yourself with all these examples and lose your materialistic mindset!

### Summary

Hopefully these exchange sacs will help you to break down the psychological barrier (that is, if you had this one) to put pieces en prise deliberately. You just have to notice the possibility and appreciate the resulting compensation. Your pieces may gain activity, obtain strong squares, the opponent's king may become a target, etc. Just remember the pattern, in this case for instance the typical rook moves!

## Chapter 16

# Back inside the Chain

Developing your bishops outside the pawn chain is the natural thing to do. And often the right thing to do. But sometimes one has to retrace one's steps.

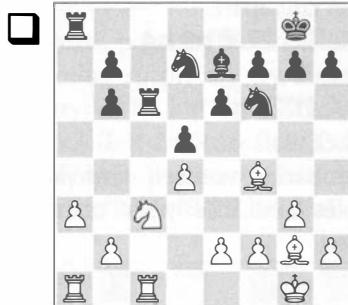
### Smyslov's Lesson

Recently I came across this game in *Lehrbuch der Schachstrategie* by Alexander Koblents (Tal's trainer) and I was quite impressed. Just before the diagram position Smyslov had exchanged his ♜e5 for the bishop on d7. A fragment which would have fitted perfectly in the earlier chapter 'Out-of-the-Box, into the Future'.

**Vasily Smyslov**

**Klaus Darga**

Amsterdam 1964



**16.♗d2!**

Not an obvious move, this deactivation of the bishop! The attempt to open up the position for the bishop pair with 16.e4 dxe4 17.♗xe4 can be met by 17...♝d5, so Smyslov decided to develop his light-squared bishop via square f1 after e2-e3. The immediate 16.e3, however, would leave the ♔f4 exposed after 16...h6 (or 16...♝h5).

**16...♝d8 17.e3 ♜e8?!**

Intending to meet 18.♔f1 with ♜d6. Now that the knight has relinquished control over the d5-square, Smyslov immediately changes tack.

**18.e4!**

Probably lulled asleep by the modest move of the e-pawn, Darga forgot that it could make a further step forward.

**18...dxe4**

Koblents gives 18...♝df6 19.e5 ♜d7 20.♔f1 (threatening ♜b5 and ♜a4) and if 20...♝c7 then 21.♝b5.

**19.♗xe4**

White is clearly better and won quickly. He later won the tournament, together with Larsen and Spassky, with 17 out of 23(!) and undefeated.

### Following the Example

**Ryszard Grossmann**

**Pawel Jaracz**

Wroclaw 2012

To encourage you and show you that such logical positional reasoning is possible not only on the highest level, I give you this rapid game:

1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗f3 b6 4.g3  
♝b4+ 5.♔d2 ♜e7 6.♗g2 c6  
7.♗c3 d5 8.cxd5 cxd5 9.♖c1 a6  
10.0-0 0-0 11.♗f4 ♜b7 12.♗d3  
♝c6 13.♗e5 ♜xe5 14.♗xe5 b5  
15.a3 ♜c8 16.♗c2 ♜d7 17.♗f4  
♝b6 18.♗fc1 ♜d7 19.♗b1 ♜xc2

20.♗xc2 ♖c6 21.♗d2 ♗c4  
22.♗b3 ♖d8



**23.♗d2!**

The much lower-rated Grossman comes up with a similar idea. He decides that on f4 the bishop is just controlling air.

**23...♝c7**

23...♗xd2?! 24.♗xd2 ♖c8 is yet another example of giving up a strong knight, which was certainly feasible here. In this way Black keeps control of the dark squares on the queenside.

**24.♘b4**

This was the idea: after the exchange of the dark-squared bishops, White's knight will have a stronghold on the open file on c5.

**24...♝f6 25.♗c3 ♜b6 26.e3 ♜e8**

Starting a dubious plan, but the grandmaster was seeking a way to win.

**27.♘a5 e5?!** 28.♗xc6 ♜xc6 29.b3

Or 29.dxe5 ♜xe5 30.♗d3 ♜xb2 (30...♗xb2 31.♗xh7+) 31.♗xd5.

**29...exd4 30.exd4 a5**



**31.bxc4?**

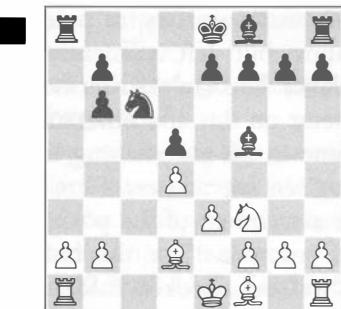
The simple 31.♗xa5! would have led to a safe edge after 31...♗xa5 32.♗xc6 ♖xc6 33.♗xc6 ♜xd4 34.♗xd5. The text move throws away any advantage White had, and allowed Black to overpower his opponent after...

**31...axb4 32.♗xb4 bxc4 33.♗a5**

## A Famous Predecessor

**Dawid Janowski**  
**José Raul Capablanca**

New York 1916



This position features in several text books. Keeping the light-squared bishop outside the pawn chain after ...e7-e6 seems to leave the queenside understaffed (although an immediate refutation is not at hand). So Capa also decided it was necessary to lose a tempo to relocate the bishop.

**10...♝d7!**

Capablanca himself described his general plan here: advance his b-pawn to b5 and transfer the knight to c4. Anyway, he managed to avoid problems like those suffered by Darga in the first game.

**11.♗e2 e6 12.0-0 ♘d6 13.♗fc1**

**♝e7 14.♗c3 ♜hc8 15.a3?**

Now Black's next move has added strength as it threatens a fork on b3. Panov gives 15.♗e5 as a better move.

**15...♝a5 16.♗d2 f5 17.g3 b5 18.f3  
♞c4 19.♕xc4 bxc4 20.e4 ♕f7**



**21.e5?**

21.exd5 exd5 22.f4, followed by ♘f3-e5, was necessary, as pointed out by Panov but left unmentioned by Capablanca. You can read Yermolinsky's comments on this and other aspects of the game in his entertaining book *The Road to Chess Improvement*. Here he gives a clear assessment of the position, saying of Janowski: 'For the rest of the game we see a broken man trying to stop a tsunami wave with his bare hands'.

**21...♝e7 22.f4 b5 23.♔f2 ♜a4  
24.♔e3 ♜ca8 25.♘ab1 h6  
26.♘f3 g5 27.♘e1 ♜g8 28.♘f3  
gx f4 29.gxf4 ♜aa8 30.♘g2 ♜g4  
31.♘g1 ♜ag8 32.♘e1 b4  
33.axb4 ♜a4 34.♘a1 ♜c2  
35.♘g3 ♜e4+ 36.♘f2 h5 37.♘a7  
♜xg2 38.♜xg2 h4**

... and Black won.

### Back and Forth to the Kingside

I myself have managed to play a successful bishop retreat, locking it inside the pawn chain before reactivating it. In the position below, Black's light-squared bishop is hampered in its mobility due to the pawn on g6, just as in the first two examples.

**Zhaoqin Peng  
Arthur van de Oudeweetering  
Netherlands 2008/09**



**13...♝d7!?**

Of course, here I was helped by the fact that the bishop could be captured by the ♘d4, but other moves were possible too: 13...♝fe4 or 13...♜ac8; while my analysis engine even comes up with 13...♝g4 14.f3 ♘fe4. Still, the black position does not require such complications.

**14.f3 ♜ac8 15.♘c2 ♜fd8 16.g4  
e6**

Locking in the ♜d7, but of course establishing a solid pawn centre.

**17.♘e2 ♜e8**

Making way for the knight from f6, which now can proceed via d7 and b6 to a4 with considerable pressure against White's queenside.

**18.♗b1 ♘fd7 19.♘g5**

It is hard to think of a decent plan for White. Now the a1-h8 diagonal will be closed temporarily, but the ♜e8 will soon re-enter the game.

**19...f6 20.♘h4 g5 21.♘e1 ♜g6**

The bishop shines brightly again, from the kingside.

**22.♘d2 ♘b6**

The pressure is building up with every move and in time trouble Peng quickly went under:



23.♗f2 f5 24.gxf5 ♗xf5 25.e4  
♗g6 26.♗xc5? ♜xc5 27.♗d4?  
dxe4

Winning the house. White resigned.

## In the Opening

Ivan Morovic Fernandez  
Alexey Dreev

Moscow 2010

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.cxd5 cxd5  
4.♗f3 ♗f6 5.♗c3 ♗c6 6.♗f4



I guess my bishop retreat in the previous game was also inspired by a system in the Slav Exchange, which became well-known thanks to several games played by Botvinnik, notably his training game against Petrosian in 1952. Much later the black player in this game popularized it further.

6...e6!?

This is it. Where 6...♗f5 is the normal developing move, Black voluntarily

leaves his bishop inside the pawn chain. No bishop retreat here; related subjects can be found in Chapter 9 on 'The Deceptive Bishop on c8'. Funnily enough, another variation which has recently become popular, 6...♗h5, more often than not does feature a white bishop retreat inside the pawn chain. In this way White preserves the bishop pair; a theme which recurs in the main game.

7.e3 ♗h5

Now the bishop can no longer retreat and will eventually be captured by the knight on the kingside.

8.♗g5 ♜b6 9.a3

The most important alternatives are 9.♗b5 and 9.♗b1.

9...h6 10.♗h4 g5 11.♗g3 ♗xg3  
12.hxg3 ♗g7

Albeit by weakening his pawn structure, Black has achieved his goal and obtained the bishop pair. The one on c8 is still undeveloped, however.

13.♗d3 ♜d8 14.♗c1 ♗d7 15.♗d2



15...e5!?

Just as in Botvinnik's game mentioned above, Black finally activates his bishop by allowing an isolated queen's pawn. Piece activity compensates for the pawn structure. Dreev went on to win a rather spectacular game.

16.dxe5 ♗xe5 17.♗e2 ♗e6  
18.♗f3 ♗c6 19.♗b5 0-0

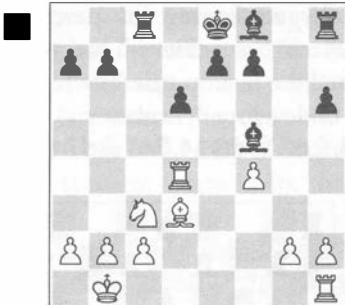
20.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{B}xc6$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  c5  
 22.  $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$   
 24.  $\mathbb{Q}de7$   $\mathbb{W}xd1+$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  c4  
 26.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{E}fb8$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}xb8$   $\mathbb{E}xb8$   
 28.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{E}xb2+$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{E}a2$   
 30.  $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  32. g4  
 $\mathbb{Q}f8$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{E}e2+$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{E}xf2$   
 35.  $\mathbb{Q}xa7$   $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  36.  $\mathbb{E}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$   
 37.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  0-1

## Exchange of Bishops? No, Thanks

Here is yet another example connected with the bishop pair.

**K. Abhishek  
Baskaran Adhiban**

Chennai 2012



16...  $\mathbb{Q}d7!$ ?

Black wants to preserve the bishop pair and is prepared to hide the light-squared one within the pawn chain for the time being.

After 16...  $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  17.  $\mathbb{R}xd3$  White can try to put pressure on the e-file with his knight going to d5, though in this case Black seems perfectly OK, for instance after 17...  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$ .

17.  $\mathbb{R}e1$

The exchange of the light-squared bishops is a typical achievement in this line, see for example the game Grischuk-Malakhov, Candidates' Match

2007. The resulting knight versus bishops battle ended in White's favour, but the presence of queens made a huge difference there, rendering Black's king position much more vulnerable.

Therefore White's attempt to be persistent with 17.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  would still make sense, but runs into 17...  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}xd7+$  (18.  $\mathbb{R}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  19.  $\mathbb{R}bc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  20.  $\mathbb{R}xb5$  b6) 18...  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  19.  $\mathbb{R}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  20.  $\mathbb{R}bc3$  a6.

17...  $\mathbb{Q}d8$  18.  $\mathbb{R}b4$

Now 18.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  comes into consideration, but again Black remains just fine after, for instance, 18...  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  20.  $\mathbb{R}de4$  e6 21.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{R}c5$ .

18...  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$



19...  $\mathbb{Q}d5!$

Black would still rather keep his bishop inside the pawn chain, thus holding his position together while building a strong pawn centre.

20.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$

20.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  fails to 20... e6.

20...  $\mathbb{E}e6$  21.  $\mathbb{R}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$

23.  $\mathbb{R}d3$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  24. f5  $\mathbb{R}c5$  25.  $\mathbb{R}f1$

$\mathbb{Q}e7$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$

26.  $\mathbb{R}df3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  27.  $\mathbb{R}bc3$  (27.  $\mathbb{R}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$

28.  $\mathbb{R}xf7+$   $\mathbb{R}xf7$  29.  $\mathbb{R}xf7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xe6$

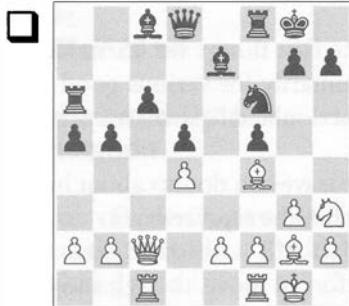
30.  $\mathbb{R}bc3$  d4) 27... e5.

26...  $\mathbb{E}5$

And Black was clearly on top.

## A Complex Case

Davorin Kuljasevic  
Sergiu-Henric Grünberg  
Krk Malinska 2013



Here White clearly wants to improve his worst placed piece, namely his knight on h3. It would like to go to f4, but first the bishop, seemingly on a perfect post, has to vacate the square.

**15.♗d2!?**

After the previous examples, this won't come as a surprise, perhaps, but it is certainly not the only move. After 15.♗e5 White has to reckon with 15...♗g4 but, though things may become messy, White seems to keep an edge after 16.♘f4 ♗xe5 17.dxe5 g5 18.♘d3.

Another plan for White is to bring the knight to e5 via g5 and f3. Thus 15.♗g5, when 15...♗h5 16.♘f3 ♗xf4 17.gxf4 leads to a solid position, but I would still rather be White. Black seems

to have few active possibilities. The text move gives White more influence on the queenside.

**15...♗b6 16.e3 ♗e4 17.♘f4 a4**

Or 17...♘xd2 18.♗xd2 and White's knight will reach the ideal square d3, from where it controls both c5 and e5, giving White a pleasant edge.

**18.a3 b4?**

18...♘xd2 19.♗xd2 b4? fails to 20.♖xc6, but the text move completely justifies White's set-up.

**19.♗xb4 ♗xb4 20.axb4 ♕xb4**

**21.♘d3**

By exchanging his own dark-squared bishop, Black has rendered his dark squares even more vulnerable. In the meantime his pawn structure on the queenside has also deteriorated. Soon his position collapses.



**21...♗b6 22.♖a1 ♕f6 23.♖fc1 ♕b3**

**24.♖a3 ♕xc2 25.♖xc2 g5 26.♘b6**

**27.♖xa4 ♔b7 28.♘d3**

1-0

### Summary

Retreating may not be your first impulse; moving your bishop back within the chain certainly is against conventional wisdom. The examples will help you to remember that this still may be a very valuable tool when you want to fight for the pair of bishops, keep your bishop out of trouble and direct its attention to the other wing.

## Chapter 17

# Play Actively, Double Your f-Pawn!

Doubled pawns are a weakness – that's one of the first things we learn. Nevertheless, players have long been doubling pawns voluntarily for various good reasons. Here we will specifically look at the advantages that doubled f-pawns may bring.

### Attack – the Open g-File

Let's start off with a straightforward attack along the half-open g-file, the first and most obvious advantage of gxf3.

Ivan Sokolov

Tom Wiley

Maastricht 2012

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e3 e5 4.♗xc4 exd4 5.exd4 ♗f6 6.♘f3 ♗d6**  
**6...♗e7 7.0-0 0-0 8.h3 ♘bd7 9.♘c3 ♘b6 10.♘b3 c6 11.♘e5** was the start of another nice game by Sokolov (against Hübner, Wijk aan Zee 1996).

**7.0-0 0-0 8.♗g5 h6 9.♗h4 ♘c6**

**10.♗d3**

More regular are 10.h3 and 10.♘c3.

**10...♘b4! 11.♗b3 ♘c6 12.♗d3 ♘b4 13.♗d2**

Not the most natural square for the queen in such an isolated pawn position, but Sokolov won't settle for a draw.

**13...c6 14.♘c3 ♗g4 15.♔h1!**



White leaves no doubts about his intentions after the capture on f3.

**15...♕xf3**

Not a forced move, though a logical follow-up.

**16.gxf3 ♗e7?**

Natural, but already too slow. 16...♗d7 was a better and trickier attempt to get out of the pin. In that case 17.♗xf6 can be met with 17...♗h3!.

**17.♗g1 ♗h8 18.a3!!**

I like this little attacking move very much. White prepares the decisive sacrifice by gaining the d3-square for his bishop.

**18...♘bd5**



**19.♗xg7 ♗xg7 20.♗g1+ ♗g4**

Note that 20...♗h7 will now be met with 21.♗d3+.

**21.♗xg4+ ♗h7 22.♘xd5 ♗xh4**

It would have been more stubborn, but also insufficient, to play 22...cxsd5

23.  $\mathbb{Q}d3+$  f5 24.  $\mathbb{W}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xf5+$   
 $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  26.  $\mathbb{W}xf5+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  27.  $\mathbb{W}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$   
28. h4.

23.  $\mathbb{W}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  24.  $\mathbb{W}f5+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$   
25.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$

All White's pieces are now attacking:  
game over.

25...  $\mathbb{W}e7$  26. h4 1-0

## Bishop Pair and Time as Compensation

Arthur van de Oudeweetering  
Anastasia Sorokina

St Petersburg 2005

I have fond memories of this game, where I managed to exploit a tiny advantage in development.

1.e4 c5 2.c3 d5 3.exd5  $\mathbb{W}xd5$   
4.d4  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  5. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  6.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   
 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  7.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  e6 8.h3  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  9.0-0  
 $\mathbb{Q}f6$  10.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  11.  $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{W}b4$   
12.  $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  13. d5  $\mathbb{W}xb3$   
14.  $\mathbb{Q}xb3$  exd5 15.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   
16.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}b5!$ ?

Apparently a new move at the time, deliberately allowing doubled f-pawns.

17...  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  19. gxf3



White's pawn structure is terrible, of course, but his bishops can manoeuvre freely and, most importantly, Black will find it hard to find a good place for her king.

19... f6 20.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}c4+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$   
22.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  g5 23.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  f5 24.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$



24... f4

Black could finally connect her rooks with 24...  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  but after 25.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  bxc6 26.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  the many threats include  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  and  $\mathbb{Q}d4$ , while the pawn on a7 is also about to fall. Black's try in the game won't save her either.

25.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$   
27.  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{Q}d3?$

27...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$ .

28.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}a5$

White's pawn structure is still terrible, but his pieces have gained enormous activity. Black is completely lost and it was over on move 36.

## Intending the Quick Advance f3-f4 (...f6-f5)

David Arutinian  
Davit Lomsadze

Tbilisi 2012

Another means of doubling the f-pawn is to take with exf3 or ...exf6 (contravening another rule: 'always capture towards the centre'). This opens up the e-file and makes swift development an option, as in the Caro-Kann after ...  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  exf6. But the intention may also be to follow up with a quick f3-f4 (or ...f6-f5), as in this game.

The most baffling example of the latter strategy that I've encountered is the Rauzer-Dragon hybrid: 1.e4 c5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3.d4 cxd4 4. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d6 6. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  g6!?, which has been greatly popularized by Oleg Chernikov, and has drawn the attention of several very strong players, including Magnus Carlsen.

**1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  g6 3.c4  $\mathbb{Q}g7$**   
**4.g3 0-0 5. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  d6 6.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}c6$**   
**7. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  a6 8. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  9. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$**   
**10.b3 h6 11.d5  $\mathbb{Q}ce5$  12. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  g5**  
**13. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$**



#### 14.exf3!

Intending to set up an attack by first weakening Black's kingside structure with f3-f4.

#### 14...e5

Black's position is already difficult. With this move he tries to include the queen in the defence, but the position will now open up while Black is severely behind in development.

**15.dxe6 fxe6 16.f4 gxf4 17. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$**   
 **$\mathbb{Q}f6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}fe1$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}e4$**

Now the attractive 19.c5! would have been the most powerful continuation: 19... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  (19...dxc5 20. $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ ) 20.b4  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  21. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ .

#### 19... $\mathbb{Q}g6$

After the game continuation White is still clearly better...

**20. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  cxd6 21. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$**   
**22. $\mathbb{Q}xb8$   $\mathbb{Q}xb8$**

... but later he unfortunately lost both his way and the game.

## Lose the Automatism!

**Yury Balashov**

**Alexey Dreev**

Samara 1998

**1.c4 c6 2.e4 d5 3.exd5  $\mathbb{Q}f6$**   
**4. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  cxd5 5.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  6. $\mathbb{Q}f3$**   
 **$\mathbb{Q}xc3$  7.bxc3 g6 8.d4  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  9. $\mathbb{Q}d3$**   
 **$\mathbb{Q}c6$  10.0-0 0-0 11. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$**   
**12. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  13. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$**



#### 14. $\mathbb{Q}c1$

Here Lukacs comments for *ChessBase*: '14.d5 ruins his own position after 14... $\mathbb{Q}a5$  15.d6 f6 16.dxe7  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}d5+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  b6.' However, Dreev himself analysed this game for *New In Chess* 1998/7 and commented: '14.d5  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  15.d6 looked the most logical, when I was intending to reply 15... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  (16.dxe7  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ ) exf6. To me this position also seems better for Black.'

Actually it's not clear which 15th move is better for Black, but I think that even considering ... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  – allowing White a passed pawn and mutilating your own pawn structure in the process – deserves praise. Black went on to win a

fine game. Two recent examples are Gundavaa-Sasikiran, Zaozhuang 2012: 1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  4. $\mathbb{W}c2$  d5 5.a3  $\mathbb{Q}xc3+$  6. $\mathbb{W}xc3$  0-0 7. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  dxc4 8. $\mathbb{W}xc4$  b6 9. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  10. $\mathbb{W}a4$  h6 11. $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  12. $\mathbb{W}xd7$   $\mathbb{Q}bx d7$  13. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  gxf6! (instead of the natural 13... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ ) and also Anand-Gelfand, Moscow 2012: 1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 g6 3.f3 c5 4.d5 d6 5.e4  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  6. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  0-0 7. $\mathbb{Q}ec3$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  8. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  9. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  exf6!?, although as you may know the latter game ended quickly and dramatically for Gelfand.

## Central Control in the Endgame

**Artur Jussupow**

**Georg Siegel**

Switzerland 2000

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4.e3 e6 5.b3  $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  6. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  7. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  0-0 8. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  e5 9.cxd5 cxd5 10.dxe5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  11. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$  12. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  13.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  14. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xb2$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  16. $\mathbb{W}d4$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$



19. $\mathbb{W}fd1!$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  20.gxf3

Here too there's no direct danger to the white king. The black queen, for instance, is tucked far away on the other side of the board. The pawn on f3 destroys any hope of Black advancing his knight to e4. Just

as in the Sokolov game White now starts by exploiting the g-file.

20... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{W}fc8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}c2?$ !

Jussupow gives 23... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  24. $\mathbb{W}xb6$   $\mathbb{Q}xb6$  as a better defence.

24. $\mathbb{W}xb6$  axb6 25. $\mathbb{Q}gd1$

Now that the queens have been exchanged White diverts his attention away from the g-file to the weak black pawns. Note how the f3-pawn still dominates the black knight.



25... $\mathbb{Q}f8$

Jussupow suggests 25... $\mathbb{Q}a8$  to force White to move the a-pawn: 26.a4, though White should still be slightly better.

However, it seems Black did miss a better opportunity here: 25...d4!. After 26.exd4  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  Black's active rook and central knight are more than enough compensation for the pawn.

26. $\mathbb{Q}g1!$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}b4!$

Now that the pawn on f2 is protected, White has a better alternative.

27... $\mathbb{Q}b2$  28. $\mathbb{Q}ac1$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  29. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  h6 30. $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  31. $\mathbb{Q}c8+$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  32. $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  33. $\mathbb{Q}c8+$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  34. $\mathbb{Q}cc1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  35. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  36. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  37. $\mathbb{Q}xd2$

Things haven't gone Black's way. His active rook has been exchanged and White also controls the c-file.

37...g5 38.h3 ♔e7 39.♔d3 ♔e6  
 40.♗c8 ♔e5 41.♘c2 h5 42.♘d4  
 g4 43.fxg4 hxg4 44.h4 ♔e4  
 45.♔e2 ♕d6 46.♕e8+ ♔f6  
 47.♕g8 ♔e5 48.♕xg4 ♘c3+  
 49.♔d2 ♘xa2 50.♔f3+

Winning the knight with ♕a4. Black resigned.

## History and Openings

You shouldn't think that voluntarily doubling the f-pawn was first seen in modern chess. A lot of popular openings of course feature a doubled f-pawn. Think, for instance, of the Vienna Variation of the Queen's Gambit, as well as the Najdorf and Rauzer Sicilians. There are also old variations like the Chigorin Defence, which produced a classic battle between the bishop pair (with doubled f-pawns) and a pair of knights in Lasker-Chigorin, also from Hastings 1895.

**Georg Marco**

**Amos Burn**

Hastings 1895

The diagram position arose after

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♘f6  
 4.♗g5 dxе4

Yes, the Burn Variation!

5.♗xe4 ♔e7 6.♗xf6



6...gxе6!

Preserving the bishop pair and exerting central control.

7.c3 f5

Driving the knight offside to g3, but giving up control over the e5-square.

8.♗g3 c5 9.♘f3 ♘c6 10.♗b5  
 ♕b6 11.♕xc6+ bxc6



Again doubling pawns, and again very dynamic. The light-squared bishop immediately gains in scope, while the doubled c-pawns may later attack the centre with ...cxd4 and ...c6-c5.

12.0-0 h5 13.♗d2 h4 14.♗e2

Black is fine and in the end managed to pull off a decisive attack.

14...♔a6 15.♗fe1 0-0-0 16.a3  
 ♕h7 17.b4 c4?! 18.a4 ♕g7  
 19.♗eb1

19.♗f4.

19...♗dg8 20.♗e1 ♔b7 21.f3  
 ♕d8 22.b5 c5 23.♗e3 ♕c7  
 24.a5 ♔g5 25.f4 ♔e7 26.g3 ♕d7  
 27.dxc5 hxg3 28.hxg3 ♕d5  
 29.c6 ♔c5 30.cxb7+ ♕xb7  
 31.♗d4 ♕xg3+ 0-1

**John Nunn**

**Lawrence Cooper**

Walsall 1992

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♘c3 ♘f6  
 4.♗b5 ♘d4 5.♗a4 ♘xf3+

This is of course a known position from the Four Knights...



... where 6.  $\mathbb{W}xf3$  is the usual move, but here also, at this early stage the compromising...

### 6.gxf3

... has been tried now and then. It recalls Tal's stunning recapture against Botvinnik, 3rd World Championship match game 1960: 1.e4 c6 2. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5 3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  4.h3  $\mathbb{W}xf3$  5.gxf3, which at that moment was an absolute novelty!

### 6...c6

6...g6 was seen in Nikolenko-Solozhenkin, Podolsk 1992: 7.d4 exd4 8. $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  9. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  h6 10. $\mathbb{Q}h4$  g5 11. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  and here White unleashed the nice 12. $\mathbb{W}c5!$   $\mathbb{Q}xg3$  13. $\mathbb{Q}b5!$  and won a good victory after 13...c6 14. $\mathbb{Q}d6+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xc8+$  d6 16. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  17. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  18. $\mathbb{W}c4$   $\mathbb{W}a5+$  19. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  20.hxg3  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  b5 22. $\mathbb{W}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  23. $\mathbb{W}xa8+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  24. $\mathbb{Q}f5+$ .

### 7.d4 exd4 8. $\mathbb{W}xd4$

White can develop quickly while Black's potential kingside castling is already facing a half-open g-file.

### 8...d6 9. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ b5

Normal developing moves seem to be insufficient: 9... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  10. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ ; 9...g6 10. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ .

### 10.a4 c5 11. $\mathbb{W}d1$ b4 12. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 13. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 14. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 15.f4

Making room for the queen and increasing central control.

### 15...g6?!

This clearly helps White.



### 16.f5! $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

16...gxf5 17.exf5  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  18. $\mathbb{W}e2+$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  leaves Black's pieces tied up.

### 17. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 19.h4 $\mathbb{W}e7$ 20.0-0-0 $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 21.e5 $\mathbb{Q}xg5+$ 22.hxg5 dxе5 23. $\mathbb{W}c6+$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 24.f6

1-0

### Summary

May these examples be an inspiration for you to play the game actively and dynamically! Your doubled f-pawns may become a static weakness, but sure enough there may be some dynamic advantage, such as a half-open g-file. Often the doubled pawns will help you to control a central square and sometimes the most forward pawn may advance and undermine the opponent's pawn structure (see the last two examples).

## Chapter 18

# Towards the Edge

On many occasions there are good reasons to take not towards the centre with a pawn, but towards the edge. This isn't exceptional – it's quite common practice. However, when there is a choice the general rule remains to capture towards the centre.

### Opening the f-File

In this article we'll mainly look at the f-pawn, although of course other pawns also come into consideration. For example, a regular capture towards the edge that springs to mind is ...d7xc6 in various variations of the Ruy Lopez. In that case Black considers his pawn structure and piece development to be more important than having a central pawn.

**David Navara**

**Tomas Polak**

Czech Republic 2011/12

**1.d4** ♜f6 **2.c4** e6 **3.♘f3** ♜b4+  
**4.♗d2** a5 **5.♘c3** b6 **6.♗g5** ♜b7  
**7.e3** h6 **8.♗h4** d6 **9.♘d3** ♘bd7  
**10.0-0** ♜xc3 **11.bxc3** g5 **12.♗g3**  
♘e4 **13.♗c2** ♜xg3



**14.fxg3!**

Immediately increasing the scope of the f1-rook. As we've seen before, an im-

portant benefit of doubled pawns can be a new open file. Here, taking towards the edge is all the more attractive as Black has weakened his kingside with ...g7-g5. For a classical example where Black makes use of the f-file see Alekhine-Rubinstein, Vilnius 1912.

**14...♛e7 15.♕f2 0-0?**

15...0-0-0 seems to provide the black king with a shelter, though after 16.♖af1 h5 17.♗e4 White has a pleasant space advantage.

**16.g4!**

Now both Black's f-pawn and his h-pawn are held back.

**16...♞f6 17.h3 ♜e8**

A strange manoeuvre to g7. More to the point is 17...e5, though after 18.♗d2 White still has an edge.

**18.♖af1**

Pretty straightforward, isn't it?

**18...♝g7 19.♗h7+ ♛h8 20.♗e4 ♜xe4 21.♗xe4 ♜ae8?**



Now White finishes with a nice combination.

**22.♘e5! ♘f5**

22...dxe5 23.♗f6 ♘f5 24.♗xe5.

**23.gxf5 exf5**

23...dxe5 24.fxe6!.

**24.♗c6**

1-0

## Blocking the h-File

Diego Flores

Alexander Shabalov

Mar del Plata 2012

**1.c4 c5 2.g3 g6 3.♗g2 ♗g7 4.♘c3**

**e5 5.♘f3 ♘e7 6.0-0 d6 7.♘e1 h5**

**8.♘c2 ♘bc6 9.a3 h4 10.b4 hxg3**



**11.fxg3!**

There are no doubled pawns here, but this capture creates more pawn islands. On the other hand, it not only opens the f-file, but also renders Black's open h-file less significant.

Black's plan could be to exchange the light-squared bishops and direct his queen to the h-file. With a pawn on h2, which can easily be protected from f2, this plan will likely be less successful than with the pawn on f2 instead. This is common knowledge in the Dragon. For a quite similar recent example in the English Opening see Radjabov-Jobava. For one in the Grünfeld, check out Jones-Anand, London 2012:



**12...fxg6**

**11...♘f5 12.d3 ♘cd4**

This jumping around with the knights, neglecting development, looks suspect.

**13.♗b1 cxb4 14.♗xb4!?**

14.♗xb4 also looks good, leaving Black with a superfluous knight.

**14...0-0**

14...♗b8 15.♘xd4 exd4 (15...♘xd4

16.♗a4+ ♖d7 17.♗xa7 ♘c6 18.♗f2)

16.♘d5 with tremendously active pieces.

**15.♗xb7 ♗xb7 16.♗xb7 ♘e6 17.♘d5**

Black didn't have enough for the pawn.

## Preventing ♘g5

Hendrik Hoffmann

Eduardas Rozentalis

Bad Wiessee 2012

**1.e4 ♘f6 2.e5 ♘d5 3.♘c3 ♘xc3**

**4.bxc3 d6 5.f4 dxe5 6.fxe5 c5**

**7.♘c4 e6 8.♘f3 ♗e7 9.0-0 0-0**

**10.♗e1 ♗d7 11.d4 ♗c6 12.♗g3**

**♗e4 13.♘d3 ♗g6 14.♘xg6**



### 14...fxg6!

Of course 14...hxg6 is met by 15.♗g5 followed by ♘h4. With the pawn on h7 Black can counter with a timely ...h7-h6. This concept can also be seen in the Classical Slav or the Winawer French. However, this isn't just a recent discovery – take, for instance, Boleslavsky-Smyslov from (of course) Zurich 1953.

**15.♗g5 ♗c6 16.♗xe7 ♗xe7  
17.♗ad1 ♗ad8 18.♗g4 ♗f5  
19.♗e4 g5 20.g3 ♗df8 21.♗d2  
cxd4 22.cxd4 ♗b4**

Black exerts strong pressure against White's pawns.

**23.♗xf5 ♗xf5 24.c4 ♗c3 25.♗b3  
♗xc4**



Black is much better, not so much because of his extra pawn, but because of his active pieces and White's weak pawns. Now White finishes himself off quickly.

**26.♗c5 ♗xd4 27.♗g2 ♗xa2+  
28.♗h3 h5 29.♗h1 g4+ 0-1**

### Concrete Judgement

**Evgeny Naer  
Filip Goldstern**

Eilat 2012

**1.e4 d5 2.exd5 ♗xd5 3.♗c3  
♗a5 4.d4 c6 5.♗f3 ♗f6 6.♗c4  
♗f5 7.♗d2 e6 8.♗d5 ♗d8**

**9.♗xf6+ ♗xf6 10.0-0 ♗d7 11.♗f4  
♗b6 12.♗b3 ♗d6 13.♗g3 ♗xg3**



### 14.fxg3

A novelty. 14.hxg3 would be the natural move here, you might think. But Naer finds a nice set-up for his pieces, and here he uses the f-file to put pressure on the doubled f-pawns.

**14...a5 15.a4 ♗g6 16.♗d2 ♗d5  
17.♗f2!**

Making way for the upcoming knight manoeuvre and taking full advantage of fxg3 by occupying the vacated square!

**17...♗b6 18.♗d2 0-0-0 19.♗c4  
♗b4 20.♗a2 b6**

After 20...♗xa4 the bishop returns: 21.♗b3 ♗b4 22.♗xa5 and White is almost winning.

**21.c3 ♗e7 22.♗e3**

White of course wants to exchange the active central knight.

**22...♗xe3 23.♗xe3 ♗b7 24.♗f2  
♗he8 25.♗af1**



The familiar doubling, and consistent with the decision taken on move 14.

**25...f5 26.♗e1 c5 27.d5 e5  
28.♗c4 f6 29.♗b5 ♖xd5**

Black decides to sacrifice the exchange, probably because he doesn't want to sit and wait any longer: 29...♝g8 30.♗c6+ ♜a7 31.♗f4 and b2-b4 is coming.

**30.♗xe8 ♜xe8 31.♗d2 ♖xd2  
32.♗xd2 ♜xa4**

Black has won a second pawn for the exchange, but his king is just too unsafe. White won on move 45.

Blocking the h-file and here effectively stopping White's attack.

**27.♔g4 ♜c5**



With very nice play for the exchange.

**28.♘hh3 ♜f8 29.♘hf3 ♜a4  
30.♘d3 ♜h8**

Preparing to move the knight, after which White can no longer take with check on e6. Still, 30...b4, immediately exposing the white king, seems even stronger.

**31.♗h4 ♜e4+**

Black has several choices and White's position is always hard to defend due to his insecure king position. 31...♝c8!?.

**32.♕e3 ♜xc2 33.♗e7 ♜c1+**

33...♝c8 without the check was simplest, using this trick: 34.♗xe6? ♜xd3+! 35.♔xd3 ♜c5+.

**34.♗e2 ♜g8 35.♗xe6 ♜c2+  
36.♔e1 ♜c5 37.♗xd5 ♜xd3+  
38.♗xd3**

Now it's suddenly no longer so clear due to White's strong e-pawn and Black's passive rook. Eventually the game ended in a draw.



White seems to be quick on the kingside, but Black has a typical manoeuvre which features in many Sicilian (or French) games with opposite-side castling:

**25...fxg6! 26.hxg6 h6!**

**Lela Javakhishvili**

**Oleg Korneev**

Linares 2005

**1.d4 d5 2.♗f3 ♜f6 3.c4 e6  
4.♗c3 c6 5.cxd5 exd5 6.♗g5**

**8.e7 7.♘c2 g6 8.e3 ♘f5 9.♕d3 ♘xd3 10.♘xd3 0-0 11.♘xf6 ♘xf6 12.0-0 ♘e7 13.♖ab1 ♘d7 14.b4 a6 15.a4 ♘b6 16.♘d2 ♘e8 17.♖fc1 ♘d6 18.b5**



Finally an example with another pawn, the c-pawn, but one very reminiscent of the previous example.

You will also be able to find positions where White plays c2xb3, for instance in Sicilians with opposite-side castling (White on the queenside). The idea is the same as with ...fxg6, i.e. keeping the a-file closed for the opponent, and sometimes using the c-file for the rooks.

**18...cxb5! 19.axb5 a5**

This is the idea. Black has prevented the creation of a backward pawn and produces a passed pawn on the a-file.

**20.♗b3 ♘e7 21.♗c5**

White tries to bail out with some exchanges.

**21...♗xc5**

21...a4!? was also worth a try.

**22.dxc5 ♘xc5 23.♗a4 ♘d6 24.♗xb6 ♘xb6 25.♘xd5**

Black has an outside passed pawn thanks to his 18th move, but White can try to create some play against the black king. This is a very important resource in major-piece endings.

**25...♗ed8**

25...a4 immediately wasn't bad either, as the white queen is very useful for the attack on e5.

**26.♗e5 a4 27.h4 a3 28.h5**

28.♗a1!, to keep an eye on the dangerous pawn, is much better.

**28...♗e6 29.♗xe6 fxe6 30.hxg6 a2! 31.gxh7+ ♘xh7 32.♗a1 ♘d2**



At the cost of just one pawn Black has two active rooks and a far advanced outside passed pawn. It must be winning for him!

**33.b6 ♘g6 34.g4 ♘a6 35.♗g2 ♘xb6 36.♗g3 ♘db2 37.♗c8 ♘a6 38.♗cc1 b5 39.f4 ♘b4 40.f5+ exf5 41.gxf5+ ♘f6 42.♗c5 ♘b1**

**0-1**

## In the Endgame

**Yasser Seirawan**

**Mikhail Tal**

Montpellier 1985

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♗f3 ♘f6 4.♗c3 c6 5.e3 ♘bd7 6.♗d3 ♘b4 7.0-0 0-0 8.♗d2 ♘e7 9.♗b3 dxc4 10.♗xc4 ♘d6 11.♗e4 ♘xe4 12.♗xe4 e5 13.♗c2 g6 14.♗c3 ♘e8 15.♗fe1 f5 16.dxe5 ♘xe5 17.♗xe5 fxe4 18.♗c4 ♘c7 19.♗d2 ♘f5 20.♗f1 ♘ad8 21.♗g3 ♘d5 22.♗ad1 ♘ed8 23.♗xd5 ♘xd5 24.♗d1 ♘xg3**



Even in the endgame you must be able to turn off the automatic pilot. I was playing in the open tournament in Montpellier, which was held alongside the Candidates' Tournament. I remember being quite baffled by White's next move at the time. I didn't figure out the idea until much later.

**25.fxg3! ♕xd1+ 26.♕xd1 ♔d7  
27.♔e1!**

Of course White isn't going to exchange queens. He will try to arrange his pieces on the long and open a1-h8 diagonal and set up an attack against the black king. Black's bishop, in contrast, doesn't inspire awe on the light squares, merely looking at its own pawn on e4. In the meantime White's king will hide

from a perpetual on h2 after h2-h3 – this was the idea of capturing towards the edge!

**27...♗e6 28.b3 c5 29.h3 b5  
30.♕f1 b4 31.♗e5 ♕d8**

Black still manages to prevent the white queen from entering on the long diagonal.



**32.♕b5!**

But now the weakened pawns on the queenside start to fall.

**32...♕c8 33.♔h2 ♔d5 34.♔d6 a6  
35.♕a5 ♔f7 36.♕xc5 ♕c6  
37.♕xb4 ♔e6 38.♔d4 h5 39.♕b8  
♔e7 40.♕e5 ♕d5 41.♕f6+**

And as he was also losing the g6-pawn, Tal resigned.

### Summary

Always consider not **only** the pawn structure, but also piece activity! Most often the **rooks** will benefit from a half-open file that is created by an **unexpected** capture to the edge. Sometimes the new structure is favourable for defensive purposes. Remember the typical examples!

## Chapter 19

# Double A Status – Not a Bad Thing?

We have discussed the possible advantages of doubled f-pawns. Can we draw the same conclusions about doubled rook pawns?

### A Half-Open File

An important difference is that the doubled rook pawns obviously don't increase control of the centre. They do, however, create a half-open file. In our first example the half-open g-file (yes, the same file that can be opened by doubling the f-pawns!) facilitates an attack on the king.

**Alexander Ivanov**

**Igor Glek**

Borzhomi 1984

- 1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗c4 ♘c5
- 4.c3 ♘f6 5.d3 d6 6.0-0 0-0
- 7.♗bd2 a6 8.♗b3 ♘a7 9.♗e1
- ♗g4 10.♗e2 ♘h8 11.h3 ♗h6
- 12.♗f1 f5 13.♗xh6 gxh6



This was the first game where Black introduced the set up with ...♗g4-h6, deliberately allowing ♘xh6. Many players have followed this example with success.

Black is sure to exert strong pressure on the kingside, as besides the half-open g-file both black bishops are already aimed at White's kingside pawns.

**14.♗xf5 ♘xf5 15.♗d5 ♖d7**

The alternative 15...♖f6 is also good, for instance: 16.♗d2 ♘e7 17.♗xb7 ♕ab8 18.♗e4 ♘xh3 19.gxh3 ♕g8+ 20.♔h1 d5, Vocaturo-Haslinger, Hoogeveen 2010; while the direct 15...♗e7 has become the most popular response.

**16.♔h2 ♘e7**

On its way to the beautiful f4-square.

**17.♗xb7 ♕ab8 18.♗e4 ♘g6  
19.♗d2 ♘f4 20.♗xf5 ♕xf5  
21.♗g3 ♕g8**



With all the black pieces now pressing, White had a hard time at the board. Gradually he went down.

**22.♗g1 ♕fg5 23.d4 e4 24.♗e2  
♗f7 25.♗xf4 ♕xf4 26.♗e2 d5  
27.♗c1 ♕d6 28.♗e3 c5**

Reactivating the bishop. Black is clearly better.

### Robert Fischer Arthur Bisguier

Poughkeepsie 1963

**1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗c4 ♗f6 4.♗g5 d5 5.exd5 ♘a5 6.♗b5+ c6 7.dxc6 bxc6 8.♗e2 h6**



**9.♗h3**

Again White (mind you, he is a pawn up here!) purposefully allows the doubling of the h-pawn, to avoid having his knight chased away after 9.♘f3 e4. The importance of the weakened pawn structure is bound to be less when it's deliberately been allowed rather than inflicted by the opponent (for instance, by means of ...h7-h5-h4-h3, with White responding gxh3). No two doubled rook pawns are the same!

In this case Fischer's move also had surprise value, since he reintroduced Steinitz's idea after a very long time. (Steinitz likewise also experimented in the Evans Gambit: 1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗c4 ♘c5 4.b4 ♗xb4 5.c3 ♗e7 6.d4 exd4 7.0-0 ♗h6 – no followers so far). I think most of us also run the risk of losing some of our composure or objectivity when the opponent allows a doubled rook pawn.

**9...♗c5**

Perhaps remarkably, 9...♗xh3 has never become a main line. Those playing Black prefer to leave the knight stranded on h3 for a while.

**10.0-0 0-0 11.d3 ♗xh3 12.gxh3 ♘d7 13.♗f3 ♗xh3**

'So Black regains the pawn but I have faith in my two bishops' – Fischer in the highly recommended *My 60 Memorable Games*.

**14.♗d2 ♗ad8 15.♗g2 ♖f5 16.♗e1 ♗fe8 17.♗e4 ♖b6 18.♗xf6+ ♗xf6 19.♗h1 c5?**



**20.♗c3!**

Preventing ...c5-c4, while White's f2-f4 is unstoppable.

**20...♗c6 21.f4 ♗d4 22.♗c4 ♗g6 23.c3 ♗f5 24.fxe5 ♗xe5 25.♗f4 ♗e2 26.♗e4 ♗xb2?**

26...♗e8.

**27.♗e5 ♗e8 28.♗xf5 ♗xe5 29.♗xe5**

1-0

### Alexander Raetsky Alexander Cherniaev

Biel 2004

The Catalan often features doubled white a-pawns.

**1.d4 ♘f6**

**1...e6 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.g3 c5 4.♗g2 ♘c6 5.0-0 d5 6.c4 dxc4 7.♗a4 ♗d7 8.dxc5 ♗a5 9.♗xc4 ♗xc5 10.♗a3 ♗c8 11.♗g5 ♗e5 12.♗xc5 ♗xc5 13.♗e3**

## Improve Your Chess Pattern Recognition

$\mathbb{Q}xf3+$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{B}c7$  15.  $\mathbb{B}fc1$   $\mathbb{B}xc1+$  16.  $\mathbb{B}xc1$   $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  17.  $bxa3\pm$  0-0?! 18.  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{B}b5$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}xa7$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  20.  $a4$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  21.  $a5$   $h6$  22.  $a3$   $f5$  23.  $a6$  1-0 (Freitag-Broekman, Oberwart 2001) is a very obvious example of the devastation doubled rook pawns can cause.

**2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5 4.Qf3 dxc4  
5.Qg2 Qb4+ 6.Qd2 c5 7.0-0**

Not too long ago Giri introduced 7.  $dxc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  8.  $\mathbb{Q}a3!$ ? here, scoring a neat win in a queenless middlegame where the doubled a-pawns of course added to the queenside pressure.

**7...Qc6 8.dxc5 Qxc5 9.Qa3  
Qxa3 10.bxa3**



**10...Qe4**

Or 10...  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $c3$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$  0-0 13.  $e4$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  15.  $e5$   $h6$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ , Jianu-Andonovski, Skopje 2011.

**11.Qc2 Qxd2 12.Qxd2 0-0  
13.Qxc4 Qe7 14.Bfd1 e5 15.Qb2**

White is slightly better. Perhaps he should have tried 15.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $bxc6$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ .

**15...f6 16.Bac1 Qe6 17.Qd6**

Now the game peters out into a draw.

**17...Bab8 18.Qe4 Bfd8  
19.Bxd8+ Bxd8 20.Qc5 Qc8  
21.Qxb7 Bxb7 22.Bxb7 Qxb7  
23.Qxc6 Bc8 24.Qd5+ Qf8  
25.Bxc8+**

1/2-1/2

Here we see two useless doubled rook pawns. Fortunately by now they'd helped White to gain a pawn, so: draw agreed.

In the following game we see the young Nigel Short fighting the 'Double A' against a renowned opponent with almost 50 years more experience.

**Laszlo Szabo**

**Nigel Short**

Hastings 1981/82

**1.Qf3 d5 2.g3 Qf6 3.Qg2 c6  
4.c4 dxc4 5.Qa3 Bd5**

5...b5 is more common.

**6.0-0 e5**

Going for it, with young fervour.

**7.Qg5 e4**

7...  $\mathbb{Q}d4?$  8.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  9.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  10.  $bxa3$   $e4$ .

**8.d3! Qxa3 9.bxa3**



**9...cxd3?**

This is too careless, holding onto the pawn but opening up the e-file, while Black still has to worry about his development. The white pieces, on the other hand, develop easily.

Note that the capture on a3 has also contributed to this: it allows White to quickly develop the bishop to b2 and press on the b-file with  $\mathbb{B}b1$ .

**10.exd3 Bxd3**

Consistent, but the resulting position looks very difficult for Black.

**11.♘xe4 ♖xd1 12.♘xf6+ ♗xf6  
13.♖xd1**

White has amassed almost every possible advantage in exchange for the doubled rook pawn (and the pawn sac!): queenside pressure, a lead in development, the bishop pair.

**13...♗e6 14.♗b1 b6 15.♗b2 ♗e7**

Leaving the king in the middle may seem the right thing to do here, considering it's an endgame, but soon the king will get into trouble.

**16.♗bc1 ♖c8 17.a4!**



Creating the option of a4-a5 – advancing the doubled pawns can be a means of getting rid of them in an advantageous way. At the same time the a3-square is vacated for the bishop.

**17...♗xa2 18.♗a3+ ♔e8  
19.♗e1+ ♗e6 20.f4**

Black is two pawns up, but he can't complete his development and his king is in trouble.

**20..♗d8 21.♗d6 a6 22.g4 ♗xg4  
23.♗e7 ♗e6 24.f5 ♗b3 25.♗ce1**

25.♗c3.

**25...a5 26.♗e3 ♗c4 27.♗g3 1-0**

## Attack! Quick Development Again

Here's a personal favourite from my own experience.

**Arthur van de Oudeweetering  
Liafborn Riemersma**

Netherlands 1998

**1.e4 c5 2.c3 d5 3.exd5 ♖xd5  
4.d4 ♘f6 5.♘f3 ♗g4 6.♗e2 e6  
7.h3 ♗h5 8.0-0 ♘c6 9.♗e3 cxd4  
10.♗xd4 ♗xe2 11.♗xe2 ♗c5  
12.♗d1 0-0-0**



**13.♗a3!**

A novelty at the time, with which White immediately tries to make use of Black's last move. A more solid alternative was 13.♗d2, for example 13...♗xd4 (13...♗xd4 14.cxd4!?) 14.♗b3 ♖h5 15.♗xh5 ♗xh5 16.♗xd4 ♗xd4 17.♗xd4 b6 with perhaps a minimal edge for White, thanks to the queenside majority.

**13...♗xa3**

Perhaps here as well it would have been wiser not to accept the challenge, but considering the traditional values we grew up with, what could make more sense?

**14.bxa3**

Straightforward again. It wouldn't be in the same spirit to play 14.♗b5 ♖e5 (14...♗e4) 15.♗xa3, though White is still a bit better.

**14...a6 15.♗ab1 ♗a5? 16.♗b5  
♗e5?!**

The only try was 16...♗f5. After 17.g4 ♗xd1+ 18.♗xd1 ♖d5 Black is worse,

but still alive, for example 19.  $\mathbb{Q}d6+$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  20. c4  $\mathbb{W}xd1+$  21.  $\mathbb{W}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$ .



**17.  $\mathbb{Q}a7+$ !  $\mathbb{Q}b8$**

17...  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}b6+$ , winning the queen.

**18.  $\mathbb{W}xb7+$ !**

Of course Black had missed this.

**18...  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}b1+$   $\mathbb{Q}b3$**

Playing a last trick. If 19...  $\mathbb{Q}a8$  then 20.  $\mathbb{W}xa6$  wins.

**20.  $\mathbb{W}xb3+$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}c6$**

Now of course 21.  $\mathbb{W}xa6??$  fails to 21...  $\mathbb{Q}d1+$ , but Black resigned here. I spent a pleasant afternoon pondering the wonders of the Double A.

**Boris Savchenko  
Alexander Galkin**

Konya 2012

**1.e4**

It's no coincidence that numerous openings feature the possibility of doubling a rook pawn. As you know by now, in the ensuing middlegame the dynamic features are likely to be a (more) important factor, while in the endgame the doubled rook pawn is more liable to just become a static weakness.

I'll give you another exception right away: 1. d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2. c4 g6 3.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5 4.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  5. e3 0-0 6. cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  7.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  8.  $\mathbb{Q}xc7$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  9.  $\mathbb{Q}xa6$   $\mathbb{W}xg2$  10.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{W}xf3$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  bxa6

12.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$  f6 13.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  and an end-game has arisen where the bishop pair gives Black full equality.

**1...  $c6$  2.  $d4$   $d5$  3.  $e5$   $f5$  4.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $e6$   
5.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  6. 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}g6$  7.  $c3$**



**7...  $\mathbb{Q}h6$**

As in the French, this knight and Black's dark-squared bishop argue over the e7-square. The text has become a natural solution to the problem. In the French Advance Variation, instead of lingering, Black has tried simply 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.c3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  5.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$ !?. I wonder, though, whether club players are generally more inclined to avoid this stuff, whereas professional players simply follow the concrete assessments.

**8.  $\mathbb{Q}xh6$   $gxh6$  9.  $\mathbb{Q}bd2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$   
10.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  0-0**

Just castling into it – no danger here.

**11.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$**

11.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  is the more usual move.

**11...  $c5$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $cxsd4$  13.  $cxsd4$   
 $\mathbb{W}b6$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$**

Black now had to protect the pawn on h6. 14... h5 would have lessened the control of the g5- and h6-squares.

**15.  $\mathbb{Q}ac1$   $\mathbb{Q}fc8$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}b4!$**

Black is pressing on the queenside; both his bishops can help from the kingside.

**17.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $hxg6$**

Black has a more comfortable position and managed to win a long endgame.

## Ruslan Ponomariov Holger Grund

Rimavska Sobota 1996

- 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 dxe4
- 4.♗xe4 ♜f5 5.♘g3 ♜g6 6.h4 h6
- 7.♘f3 ♘d7 8.h5 ♜h7 9.♘d3 ♜xd3 10.♗xd3 ♜c7 11.♗h4 e6
- 12.♗f4 ♜d6 13.♗xd6 ♜xd6
- 14.♗e4 ♜e7



### 15.♗a3!?

Yet another way to ‘reach the goal’.

#### 15...♜xa3 16.bxa3

The half-open b-file is a familiar achievement, but there’s no bishop pair here by way of further compensation. White has some initiative, though, and the d6-square is waiting for the knight.

#### 16...♘gf6!?

A logical try and an important defensive method. Black reasons that he won’t have any problems if he completes his development. Losing the b7-pawn on the way isn’t important, as you can virtually count the doubled a-pawns as

one. That’s also because the most advanced pawn can no longer be exchanged for Black’s b-pawn.

The main line goes 16...♝e7, and now you can either try 17.♗b1 b6 or 17.♘c5 ♜xc5 18.dxc5 a5. A successful defender after both continuations in the early days was Arturo Pomar, a long-time leader of Spanish chess.

- 17.♘d6+ ♜e7 18.♗xb7 ♜ab8
- 19.♘a5 ♜hc8 20.♘e5 ♜xe5
- 21.dxe5 ♘d7



### 22.♗b4

Again, a resource to remember. White uses the unfortunate pawn structure to try and conquer the open b-file. If Black takes, then of course the a3-pawn will spring to life. Here White won’t have an extra pawn, though, as the e5-pawn is hanging.

#### 22...♜xb4 23.axb4 ♜xe5

Black seems to have done OK, but he didn’t manage to become active and was gradually ground down by Pono.

### Summary

Doubled a-pawns (or h-pawns) can generate a lot of activity along the b-file (respectively the g-file), but also enable a quick fianchetto. By nature the doubled pawns are isolated on the a-file, which should make them a true weakness, but I guess in many cases they are not an easy target until the endgame.

## Chapter 20

# Long Live the Queen

A centralized queen in the middlegame is often harassed by the opponent's pieces. That's why the general advice is against an early queen sortie. But if you manage to keep Her Majesty safe in the centre, she will reign supreme.

### Space Advantage

Let's begin with a rather obvious one, where White uses his space advantage.

**Ding Liren**

**Alexander Moiseenko**

Biel 2013

1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d5  
4. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  5. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  0-0 6.e3  $\mathbb{Q}bd7$   
7.c5  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  8. $\mathbb{M}c1$  f5 9.h3 c6  
10. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  11.0-0  $\mathbb{W}e8$  12. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   
b6 13. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  fxe4 14. $\mathbb{Q}e5$



**14... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$**

14... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  was Ding Liren's recommendation after the game. Compare this to the game continuation and you will notice that it won't be so easy for White's queen to occupy the central outpost on d4. Meanwhile Black is threatening to take on e5, which can now be followed by ... $\mathbb{W}b8$  (and ... $\mathbb{M}f5$ ).

**15. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  16.dxe5  $\mathbb{Q}d7$**

**17. $\mathbb{W}d4!$**

Here this move comes naturally. It is easy to see that the queen will not be driven away – both knights, as well as the dark-squared bishop, have already been exchanged.

**17...b5**

Now after 17... $\mathbb{W}b8$  White has time to advance his f-pawn or play  $\mathbb{Q}g4$ . So Black decides to close the queenside to prevent White from using his space advantage to play on two wings.

**18.f4 exf3 19.gxf3**



**19... $\mathbb{W}h5?!$**

This queen move, by contrast, turns out to be only superficially active. After the game Liren suggested 19... $\mathbb{W}e7$ , in order to keep the queen centralized and transfer the bad bishop first to g6, in accordance with

the principle that you should improve your worst piece first.

**20.♘h2 ♜e8 21.♗g1 ♜g6  
22.♗g3 ♜f5 23.♗cg1 ♜f7  
24.♗1g2 ♜h6 25.♗g1 a5 26.h4**

... and White scored a fine strategic victory after pushing his opponent back still further.

## In Front of a Backward Pawn

**Predrag Nikolic**

**J. Martinez**

Oviedo 1993 (rapid)

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 c6 4.e3 f5  
5.♗d3 ♜f6 6.♗ge2 ♜e7 7.0-0  
0-0 8.f3 ♜h8 9.♗h1 b6 10.♗d2  
a5 11.♗e1 ♜a6 12.a3 ♜d6  
13.♗c1 ♜d7 14.♗h4 ♜e8  
15.♗e1 ♜h5 16.♗g3 ♜xg3  
17.♗xg3 ♜h6**



Here, more minor pieces are left on the board in a Stonewall position, where you would expect a white knight to go to e5. At the moment, while the e3-pawn is under attack, this is not easy to achieve.

**18.♗e5!**

Nikolic shows no prejudice and puts his queen in the middle of the board, where he has correctly calculated that she will not be an easy target. From here the queen also defends the e3-

pawn and is targeting the backward pawn on e6. The queen more frequently ends up in a central position in front of a backward pawn on a half-open file after an exchange. See for example Gulyiev-Botta, Lugano 2008.

**18...♝e8?**

A weak, passive move, though of course Black's position is far from enviable. Both the knight on a6 on one side and the black queen on the other are lone-some cowboys. After White's next Black is lost.

**19.♘a4!**

The knight moves to the edge of the board, but of course with the straightforward threat of taking on b6.

**19...dxc4 20.♗xc4 b5 21.♗b6  
♝a7 22.♗xd7 ♜xd7 23.♗xe6**

and Nikolic went on to score an easy win.

## Supporting the Attack

**Gary Lane**

**Arthur van de Oudeweetering**

Wijk aan Zee 1995

**1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♜c6 3.♗b5 a6  
4.♗a4 ♜f6 5.0-0 b5 6.♗b3 ♜b7  
7.d3 ♜e7 8.c3 0-0 9.♗e1 h6  
10.♗bd2 ♜e8 11.d4 ♜f8 12.♗c2**



Here I was happy to unleash...

**12...d5!**

## Improve Your Chess Pattern Recognition

... with the obvious idea of replying to...

**13.exd5**

... with...

**13... $\mathbb{W}xd5!$**

Here, together with the  $\mathbb{Q}b7$ , the queen now forms a battery aimed at g2. As a result White's central pawn on d4 is also under pressure.

**14. $\mathbb{Q}e4$**

Lane had pinned his hopes on this move, but after the unexpected...

**14...exd4! 15. $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$  gxf6**



... he had to admit that the weakening of Black's pawn structure hardly gave sufficient compensation for the pawn. The black queen has proudly remained on d5 and is keeping up the pressure on White's position.

Recent tournament practice (2013) has seen two Kramnik games where he also centralized his queen, allowing an 'ugly' pawn structure. Against Adams in the Alekhine Memorial he left his doubled c-pawn isolated, while against Aronian in the London Candidates' tournament, he allowed a backward pawn on e6 (thus giving his opponent a strong square on e5) in a must-win game. On both occasions his strategy prevailed!

**16. $\mathbb{W}d3f5$**

First 16... $\mathbb{M}xe1+$  was called for, not allowing White his big opportunity later on.

**17. $\mathbb{Q}f4 \mathbb{Q}g7$**

17... $\mathbb{M}ad8.$

**18. $\mathbb{Q}xc7?$**

We both missed 18. $\mathbb{Q}h4!$ , for example: 18... $\mathbb{M}e4$  (18... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  19. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  20. $\mathbb{M}xe7$   $\mathbb{M}xe7$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ ) 19. $\mathbb{W}g3$  d3 20. $\mathbb{Q}b3!$  and now White's pieces are activated and working together in an attack on the king.

**18... $\mathbb{M}e4$  19. $\mathbb{W}d2$**

The last chance to drive the queen from her dominant position and to dismantle the battery was 19. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ .

**19... $\mathbb{M}g4$  20. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$**

... after which White failed to keep the fight going by giving up the exchange on e5, and soon succumbed to the pressure.

**Enamul Hossain**

**Baadur Jobava**

Abu Dhabi 2007

**1.e4 c5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d6 3.d4 cxd4 4. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  6. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  e6 7. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  8.0-0-0 0-0 9.f4  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  10. $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  11.e5 dxe5 12. $\mathbb{W}xe5$**



Yet another queen in the centre, but this time there is no battery or backward pawn in the opponent's pawn structure. Usually in this theoretical position the queens disappear from the board after an exchange on e5. But Jobava decided

to allow the queen to stay on e5, from where she can support both attack and defence. Remarkably enough, the queen remains on e5 until the very end of the game.

**12...b5 13.Qxb5 Qb7**

13...h6?! has been seen in practice, but after 14.Qc6 Qb6 15.Qxa8 hxg5 16.fxg5 Qg4 the move 17.Qf4 seems strong enough. The text is a simple developing move, and interesting.

**14.Qe2 Qb6 15.Qa4 Qc6**

**16.Qb5 Qc8 17.Qd3 Qb8**

**18.Qc3 h6 19.Qh4 Qc6**

19...Qg4, driving the queen away after all, was preferable.

**20.Qg3 Qh8 21.Qd3 Qb4 22.a3**

**Qb6 23.Qe1 Qb8**



Black finally decides to challenge White's centralized queen, while also attacking the b2-pawn. However, White comes up with a strong reply:

**24.Qe4!**

Defending the b2-pawn and putting pressure on f6.

**24...Qxe4 25.Qxe4!**

25.Qxe4 would allow the surprising 25...Qxb2 26.Qxb2 Qxf4+ 27.Qb1 Qxh4 and Black is probably even better.

**25...Qb7**

25...Qxe5 26.Qxe5 Qd6 27.Qf6 gxf6 28.Qe4 f5 was probably best but here White remains a pawn up.

**26.Qc4 Qb8**

26...Qd6 27.Qxf6.

**27.Qh3 Qd8**

Allowing an immediate win.

**28.Qd4 Qd6**

28...Qb8 29.Qxf6 Qxf6 30.Qxh6+ gxh6 31.Qxf6+ (31.Qe4? Qxf4+! 32.Qxf4 Qg5) 31...Qg8 32.Qxh6 f5 33.Qd7.

**29.Qxf6 Qxf6 30.Qxh6+ Qg8**

**31.Qh8+**

1-0

## A Dynamic Solution

**Laszlo Szabo**

**Istvan Csom**

Hungary 1973

**1.c4 e6 2.d4 Qf6 3.Qc3 Qb4  
4.f3 c5 5.d5 Qxc3+ 6.bxc3  
Qh5 7.g3 f5 8.e4 f4 9.Qxf4  
Qxf4 10.gxf4 Qh4+ 11.Qe2  
Qxf4 12.Qh3 Qf6 13.Qg1 d6  
14.Qg3 Qd7 15.Qd2 Qf8 16.f4  
exd5**



**17.Qh5+**

Here 17.cxd5 seems to be plausible, as after 17...Qxh3 18.Qxh3 Qxf4+ 19.Qd3 b5 (the immediate 19...Qg6 of course fails to 20.Qa4+ Qf7 21.Qf1) 20.Qe2!, White is fine. However, 17...Qg6 at once does somewhat spoil the fun, though the position remains unclear. Instead Szabo chose not

to repair his pawn structure and opted for a dynamic solution to activate his queen.

**17...g6**

Not 17... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  18.f5  $\mathbb{W}h4$  19. $\mathbb{Q}e2!$ .

**18. $\mathbb{W}xd5 \mathbb{Q}d7?$**

Certainly not the best move. Now 18... $\mathbb{Q}xh3$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xh3$   $\mathbb{W}xf4+$  20. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  would leave White much too active, for example 20... $\mathbb{W}f7$  21. $\mathbb{M}f1$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  22.exd5  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xd7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  24. $\mathbb{M}f7+$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  25. $\mathbb{M}e3$ , dominating the seventh rank in a double-rook ending. After 18... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  White should preserve the tension with 19. $\mathbb{M}e1$  (avoiding the tactic 19. $\mathbb{W}xd6 \mathbb{Q}g5!)$ .

The best chance was 18... $\mathbb{W}e7$  19. $\mathbb{M}d3$  and only now 19... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ , when after 20. $\mathbb{W}xd6 \mathbb{Q}b6$  21. $\mathbb{W}xe7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  Black regains his pawn, while White's centralized queen has been exchanged.

**19.e5!  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  20. $\mathbb{M}e1!$**



Now Black has problems with his development as his king is stuck in a dangerous position in the middle.

**20... $\mathbb{M}f8$  21. $\mathbb{M}ge3$  a5 22. $\mathbb{Q}g5$**

Bringing all his pieces into the action. White has a winning position.

**22... $\mathbb{M}a6$**

22... $\mathbb{W}xf4$  23. $\mathbb{Q}e6$   $\mathbb{W}xh2+$  24. $\mathbb{M}e2$ .

**23. $\mathbb{M}xe5+$**

23. $\mathbb{Q}xh7$   $\mathbb{W}xf4$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$   $\mathbb{W}xf8$  25. $\mathbb{M}xe5+$  is even stronger.

**23... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  24. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{W}xf4$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  26. $\mathbb{M}xe6$   $\mathbb{W}xh2+$  27. $\mathbb{M}1e2$   $\mathbb{M}f2$  28. $\mathbb{Q}g2$**

White is clearly better and was winning after the time control.

## A Bad Blockader?

**Boris Grachev**

**Nikolay Chadaev**

Loo 2013

**1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d5 4. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  c5 5.e3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  6.cxd5 exd5 7. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  8.dxc5  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  9.0-0 0-0 10.b3  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  11. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{M}c8$  12. $\mathbb{M}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  13.h3  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  14. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  a6 15. $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xe2$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$**



**18. $\mathbb{W}d4!$ ?**

White decides to centralize his queen, knowing that she will probably not be able to stay there. Besides, we have all learnt that the knight is the ideal blockader in such isolated queen's pawn positions. However, once the advance of this pawn has been safely stopped it makes sense to keep on attacking it. Moreover, the natural 18. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  brings White no advantage after 18... $\mathbb{M}xc1$  19. $\mathbb{W}xc1$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  20. $\mathbb{Q}hf3$  (20. $\mathbb{Q}hf5$   $\mathbb{Q}g6) 20... \mathbb{Q}xf3+ 21. \mathbb{Q}xf3 \mathbb{Q}a5.$

18.  $\mathbb{Q}xc8$   $\mathbb{Q}xc8$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  is an alternative, but White decides to connect his rooks immediately, vacating the d1-square for one of them. A similar queen sortie in front of an IQP can be found in Alexandrov-Kryakvin, Russian Team Championship, Loo 2013.

**18... $\mathbb{Q}e8$**

This gives White time to bring his h4-knight back into the game. Driving away the queen at once with 18... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  seems a safer approach. White will keep a slight edge after 19.  $\mathbb{Q}b2$ .

**19.  $\mathbb{Q}f5 \mathbb{Q}xc1$**

Now 19... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  can be met with 20.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$ , and the killer knight and queen are co-operating excellently.

**20.  $\mathbb{Q}xc1 \mathbb{Q}d7$**

20...g6 followed by ... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  and ... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  seems rather solid, but Black prefers to avoid the weakening ...g7-g6.

**21.  $\mathbb{Q}fg3$  h6 22.  $\mathbb{Q}d1 \mathbb{Q}c6$**

Finally the queen is driven from her central spot. This reminds of an opening like the Alapin Sicilian (1.e4 c5 2.c3) where, after 2...d5 3.exd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ , the c3-square is just not available for the knight, which has made 2...d5 a sensible line in the first place. Or 1.c4 e5 2.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  c6 3.d4, for that matter.

**23.  $\mathbb{Q}b2$**



White has an edge, he kept on pressing and won the game.

## Catching the Queen

Let us conclude with an example where the centralized queen gets into trouble, just in case the earlier successful queen sorties would make us forget just how dangerous it can be to put the queen in the centre.

**Vadim Malakhatkko**

**German Pankov**

St Petersburg 2009

**1.c4 c5 2.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  g6  
4.e3  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5.d4 cxd4 6.exd4 d5  
7.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  8.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  9.bxc3  
 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  10.c4**



**10... $\mathbb{Q}e4+$**

Here we go. 10... $\mathbb{Q}a5+$  and 10... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  have also been played, but not with great success. I guess the idea behind the text move is to create early pressure against White's centre with ... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  and ... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ .

**11.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$**

Protecting the d4-pawn, while the other bishop wants to go to d3 to make trouble for the black queen.

**11... $\mathbb{Q}f5?$**

A defensive move which does prevent White's  $\mathbb{Q}d3$ , but is also dangerous as it cuts off another retreat square for the queen. 11... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  has been played more frequently. After, for instance, 12.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  13.0-0 0-0 14.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  White only has a small advantage.

### 12.♕e2 ♕g7

After 12...♛c2 13.♝xc2 ♕xc2 14.d5 the black pieces are in trouble because 14...♝g7 fails to 15.dxc6!, for example 15...♚c3+ (15...♝xa1 16.cxb7 ♜b8 17.♚d2) 16.♝d2 ♜xa1 17.cxb7 ♜b8 18.0-0 ♜g7 19.♚f3.

### 13.0-0 ♜d8

13...0-0 14.♜c1 and White is threatening ♜g5, but Black might hang on.

### 14.d5 ♜e5 15.♜c1 ♜g4

Black is already in big trouble, for instance 15...♝xf3+ 16.♚xf3 ♜h4 17.♝d2.

16.♝xa7 ♜a8 17.♝d4 ♜xd4

18.♝xd4 h5 19.♜d2



Depriving the black queen of more squares and putting it in an insoluble predicament.

19...h4 20.h3 ♜f6 21.♜fe1 0-0

22.♚f1 ♜xa2 23.♝xa2 ♜xd4

24.♝xe7 ♜e4 25.♝e1 b6 26.♝e2

1-0

### Summary

Keep an open mind when it comes to centralized queens. Sometimes, indeed certainly not always, the ultimate activity will prove to be more real than the expected vulnerability of a centralized queen. Try to avoid dogma's like 'queen is a bad blockader' when making concrete calculations – the examples shown should help!

# Exercises

## Exercise 12



(solution on page 281)

## Exercise 13



(solution on page 281)

## Exercise 14



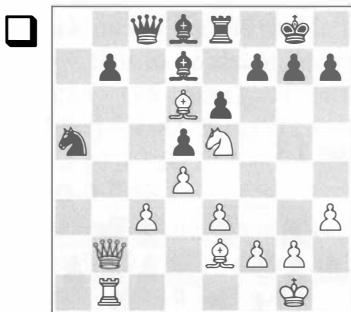
(solution on page 281)

## Exercise 15



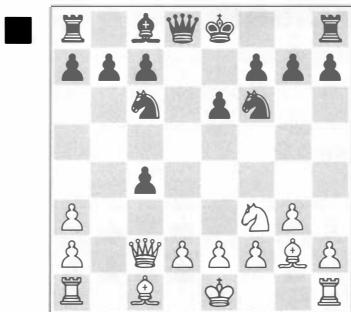
(solution on page 282)

**Exercise 16**



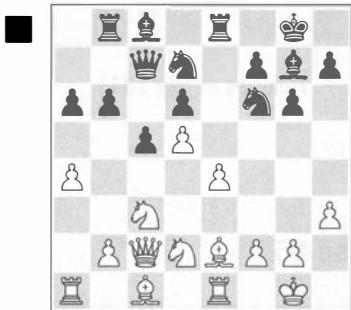
(solution on page 282)

**Exercise 17**



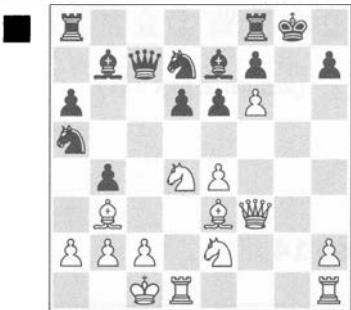
(solution on page 283)

**Exercise 18**



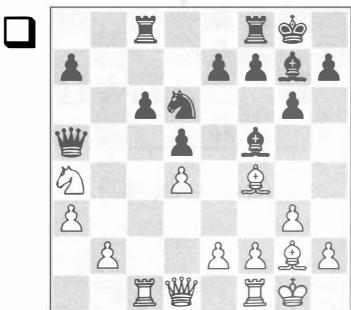
(solution on page 283)

**Exercise 19**



(solution on page 284)

**Exercise 20**



How to judge 15.♗d2, moving the bishop back inside the pawn chain?

(solution on page 284)

## Part III

### Typical Strategic Means: Sacrifices

21. 'Passer pour Mieux Centraliser'



12.f4! exd4 13.e4

22. Playing the Impossible



11.h4!?

23. A Dynamic Pawn Sac



13...b6!

24. Cutting through the Middle



10.♘xc4 ♗xc4 11.e6

25. The Bishop Snatcher



17.♗xe6

26. King's Rook Grabs Knight



18.♖xf6!

## Improve Your Chess Pattern Recognition

### 27. Central Avalanches



18.♘d4!

### 28. Fishing for the Hook



15...♗xh3 16.gxh3 ♜c8

### 29. The Colossal Knight



17.♘d5!

### 30. A Practical Piece Sac



10.♘xg5 hxg5 11.♗xg5

## Chapter 21

# ‘Passer Pour Mieux Centraliser’

Don’t always automatically recapture a central pawn. There may well be good reasons to let the opportunity pass you by! Clearly (re-)capturing is the natural thing to do. Let’s look at some examples to open your eyes for the exceptions.

### A Surprising Pass

The first example features a typical break with immediate tactical gains.

Oleg Romanishin  
Lucas Brunner  
Altensteig 1992



**17... ♕c6**

The alternative is 17... ♕d7 and in the game Ulibin-Batsiashvili, Jermuk 2011, the same breakthrough came later: 18.♕e2 ♘f8 19.♖a2 h6 20.♘f4 ♕c6 21.d5 exd5 22.e5 ♘d7 23.♘xd5 ♕b5 with about equal play.

**18.d5! exd5? 19.e5!**

Oops! It’s so easy to forget about this, as recapturing with 19.exd5 is the natural thing to do or expect. Of course, when you set up the position after Black’s 18th move without knowing the previous moves you can take an unbiased look – just as the engines do! So read

this chapter, familiarize yourself with it and sit on your hands during the game!

**19... ♘e8**

Black is already dead lost. After 19... ♘d7 the simplest approach is 20.♕xd5 ♕xd5 21.♘xd5, winning a lot of material.

**20.♘xd5**



**20... ♘f8**

Black also had to watch out for the 21.♘f6 discovered check, winning the queen.

**21.♕h5 ♘4b5 22.♕xh7 f6  
23.♕g8+**

A nice finishing touch. Black resigned.

### Firm Central Control

Evgeny Postny  
Arkady Naiditsch

Belfort 2012

**1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5 4.g3  
dxc4 5.♗g2 ♘d7 6.♗bd2 ♘b4**

**7.0-0 c3 8.bxc3 ♜xc3 9.♗b1 ♜xd2  
10.♘xd2 ♜c6 11.♕xc6+ ♜xc6  
12.♗xb7 0-0 13.♗a3 ♜c8 14.♗b3  
♗d8 15.e3 e5 16.♗c2 ♜a6 17.♗c1  
♗a5 18.♗d3 ♜e6 19.♗b5**



**19...exd4 20.e4!?**

Establishing greater control of the centre (the d5-square – compare this to the game Botvinnik-Keres, The Hague 1948) and preserving the pawn structure. Black's ♜d8 and ♜f6 are now less active than after the normal 20.exd4; White counts on winning back one of Black's weak pawns in the long run. 20.exd4 ♜c6 21.♗f3 also leaves White a bit better, as the natural 21...♗d5? runs into 22.♗g5 ♜h6 23.♗f5 (23.♗xf7 ♜xf7 24.♗xd5 ♜xd5 25.♗f3+).

**20...♗c6 21.♗c4 ♜xc4!?**

Now White can prove his point. Black should instead have chosen the immediate 21...a6, though White is still better after 22.♗xe6 fxe6 23.♗b7.

**22.♗xc4 a6 23.♗g5!**

Black probably missed this tactical stroke. Of course not 23.♗b7? ♜a5.

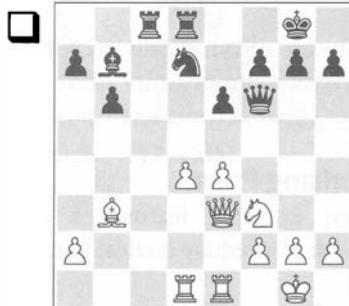
**23...h6 24.♗f5 ♜a7 25.♗e7 ♜d7**

**26.♗xf6 gxf6 27.♗xf6**

White has won back a pawn, while Black's pawn structure has been shattered. Moreover, another pawn is about to be lost because both a6 and h6 are hanging. White eventually converted his material advantage.

## A Real Sacrifice – Attack!

**Rustam Kasimdzhanov  
Henrik Teske**  
Germany Bundesliga 2011/12



**17.d5!?**

This is a familiar breakthrough in this type of position, though in this particular case it was a novelty (17.h3 had been played before).

**17...exd5 18.e5!?**

Again, 18.exd5 would be the normal move, creating a passed pawn (although one that's safely blocked). The text move creates the possibility of an attack by cutting off the black pieces from the kingside. A famous example, which has been analysed extensively in other sources, is Polugaevsky-Tal, URS-ch Moscow 1969.

**18...♜h6!?**

Black chickens out, afraid that his lone queen will come under too much fire on the kingside. After 18...♜g6 19.♗d4 ♜c5 20.♗c2 ♜h5 White can start advancing his f-pawn, but Black can counter with ...♗e4.

**19.♗xh6 gxh6 20.♗d4!**

But not 20.♗xd5 ♜xd5 21.♗xd5 ♜c5 and Black has no problems. Another example that shows that capturing need not always be the best option.

**20...♝c3**

The better 20... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  would also give White the advantage after 21. $\mathbb{Q}f5$ .

**21. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{E}c5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{E}c6$  23.f4 a5 24. $\mathbb{Q}d3$**



In contrast to the black pieces, the white ones are coordinating excellently.

**24...b5 25. $\mathbb{Q}f5$  a4 26. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{E}c4$**

**27. $\mathbb{Q}d4$**

27. $\mathbb{E}g3+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  was a strong alternative. Then 28... $\mathbb{E}xf4$  can be met with 29.e6 fxe6 30. $\mathbb{E}xe6$ .

**27... $\mathbb{Q}b8$  28.f5  $\mathbb{E}e8$  29.e6 fxe6**

**30. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{E}dc8$  31. $\mathbb{E}xd5$   $\mathbb{E}c1$**

**32. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  33. $\mathbb{Q}d8$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$**

**34. $\mathbb{Q}e6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  35. $\mathbb{Q}d8$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$**

**36.f6  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  37. $\mathbb{E}d2$   $\mathbb{E}b8?$  38.f7**

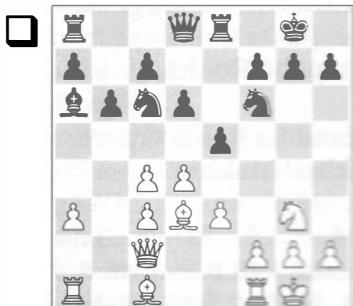
**$\mathbb{Q}c6$  39. $\mathbb{E}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  40. $\mathbb{E}xd5$  1-0**

## Provoking the Capture

Vladimir Georgiev

Evgeny Romanov

Anzere 2011



**12.f4!?**

Not a very theoretical position, but one where 12. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  had been seen once before. With the text move White increases the tension in the centre and tries to open up the f-file. You can find a similar manoeuvre in Gelfand-Mamedyarov, Astrakhan 2010, or Kasparov-Smyslov, Vilnius 1984 m-11.

**12...exd4**

Of course Black is inclined to release the tension and to capture. Funnily enough, after the other capture White might also decline to take back: 12... $\mathbb{E}xf4$  13. $\mathbb{Q}e4!?$  (naturally the straightforward 13. $\mathbb{E}xf4$  would also allow White to obtain his strategical goal: the opening of the f-file).

**13.e4**

What else would you expect?

**13... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  14. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$**

Black consistently refuses to accept the sacrifice and thus allow White a battery on the long diagonal.

**15.cxd4  $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  16. $\mathbb{E}xd3$  d5**



**17. $\mathbb{E}c3!?$**

17.exd5  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  18. $\mathbb{E}fc1$  (18. $\mathbb{E}ac1$   $\mathbb{E}xd5$ ) 18... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  19. $\mathbb{E}xc4$   $\mathbb{E}xd5$  20. $\mathbb{E}ac1$  is about equal.

**17... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  18. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  f5!?**

Not waiting for White's e4-e5 and f4-f5.

**19. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{E}xe4$  20. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  21.f5**

White is still a pawn down, but in the game his kingside initiative turned out to be more important – although Black certainly had his chances.

## A Target on e4

**Sergey Karjakin**

**Daniel Fridman**

Istanbul 2012

**1.e4 e5 2.♘c4 ♘f6 3.d3 c6  
4.♗f3 d5 5.♗b3 ♗b4+ 6.♗d2  
♗xd2+ 7.♕xd2 0-0**

7...♗d6 8.♗g5 0-0 (8...♗bd7)  
9.♗xe5 ♗xe5 10.♗xe5 dxe4 and now again: 11.d4!, avoiding the complete disappearance of the pawn centre and making the e4-pawn a clear target:  
11...c5?! 12.dxc5 ♘bd7 13.♗xd7 ♘xd7 14.♗c3 ♘xc5 15.♗d5 ♗e6 16.♗xe6 ♗xe6 17.♗xe4 and White was just a pawn up and gradually won, Leko-Gelfand, Yerevan (rapid) 2008.

**8.♗xe5 ♗e7 9.f4**



**9...dxe4 10.d4!**

Avoiding the drawish tendencies of a pawnless centre, which was quite important in this must-win last-round Olympiad game. Black is also left with a rather isolated outpost on e4, the vulnerability of which White will try to prove. He will follow up with ♘c3, 0-0 and ♕ae1, or possibly ♗e2, ♘d2 and 0-0.

**10...♗d5**

An ambitious move, with which Black aims to get rid of the strong ♘e5 and perhaps support the e4-pawn later.

**11.0-0 f6 12.♗c4 ♔h8 13.♗c3  
♗xc3 14.♗xc3 f5**



**15.♗e5**

Active play! White immediately seizes the opportunity to return to e5 and dismisses the standard blockade with 15.♗e3.

**15...♗e6**

Don't forget that the concrete threat was 16.♗g6+.

**16.♗h3 ♔g8 17.g4 fxg4**

It was impossible to maintain the protection of the e4-pawn: 17...g6 18.gxf5 gxf5 19.♔xe6+ ♗xe6 20.♗h1 ♔h8 21.♗g1 ♘f6 22.♗g3.

**18.♗xg4 ♘xb3 19.axb3 ♘a6**

**20.♗ae1 ♘c7 21.♗xe4**

And White was a pawn up. Sometimes chess seems simple, and Karjakin went on to win this important game.

## Blocking the Rooks

**Alexander Beliavsky**

**Mikhail Mukhin**

Riga 1975

**1.e4 c5 2.♗f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4  
4.♗xd4 ♘f6 5.♗c3 a6 6.♗g5 e6  
7.f4 ♗b6 8.♗d2 ♗xb2 9.♗b3**

**10.♗xf6 gxf6 11.♗e2 ♜c6  
12.0-0 ♜d7 13.♗h5 ♜g7 14.f5  
0-0 15.♗f3 ♜e7 16.♗d1 ♜ad8  
17.♗d3 ♜c8**



**18.♗d4**

In case of 18.♗xd6 ♜xd6 (even the immediate 18...♝h6 seems possible: 19.♗xh6 ♜xd6 20.♗xf6 ♜xd1+ 21.♗xd1 exf5) 19.♗xd6 ♜xd6 20.♗xd6 ♜h6 (with the idea of ♜f4-e5) 21.g3 ♜e3+ 22.♔g2 ♜a7 Black is doing just fine with his pair of bishops. The text move of course threatens to win the queen with 19.♗a4.

**18...d5!**

18...b5 was the more obvious retort and is reasonable, but the move played is much stronger.

**19.exd5**

As White is about to lose his pawn on f5 something can be said in favour of 19.fxe6 fxe6 20.exd5, but Black is still fine after 20...e5.

**19...e5!**

One little pawn move displaces all White's major pieces.

**20.♗c4 ♜d6**

A solid move, provoking White's next. 20...♝xf5 seemed plausible and strong.

**21.g4?! b5 22.♗c5 ♜b7**

White's pieces are poorly coordinated, while the bishop on h5 makes a miserable impression.

With his next move White tries to change that, but now his king position becomes even more vulnerable. The talented black player (who passed away much too young) finishes off nicely.



**23.g5 fxg5 24.♗xg5 f6 25.♗g4  
♗b6 26.♔f1 ♜h8 27.♗h3 ♜g8  
28.♗f3 ♜f7! 29.a4 ♜f8 30.a5  
♗a7 31.d6 ♜xd6 32.♗d5 ♜fd7  
33.♗d3 ♜g7 34.♗e2 ♜dd7  
35.♗cc3 ♜g1 36.♗d1 ♜g5  
37.♗c5 ♜xc5 38.♗xc5 0-1**

White is not only a pawn down, but after 38...♝e7 his king is in big trouble. For instance, 39.♗xe7 ♜xd1 40.♔xd1 ♜e3.

## Blocking the Bishop Pair

**Lajos Portisch**

**Boris Spassky**

Amsterdam 1964



### 17.d5

A standard means of opening up lines for the bishops.

**17... $\mathbb{W}xb3$  18. $\mathbb{A}xb3$   $\mathbb{C}xd5$  19. $\mathbb{E}xd5$  e5!**

Spassky doesn't mind giving up a pawn in order to block White's light-squared bishop and build up his own pawn centre.

**20. $\mathbb{E}xa7$   $\mathbb{E}xa7$  21. $\mathbb{E}xa7f5$**

21...b6 22. $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{E}a8$  23. $\mathbb{E}a1$  f5 doesn't seem too bad (23... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  can be met with 24. $\mathbb{E}g4!$ ).

**22. $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  23. $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  24. $\mathbb{E}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xd6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  26. $\mathbb{E}a1$**



White still seems slightly better as his rook now occupies the open a-file and Black's b-pawn is in a bit of trouble.

**26... $\mathbb{Q}g6$**

Naturally 26... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  was impossible because of 27. $\mathbb{E}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  28. $\mathbb{E}a5$ ; 26... $\mathbb{E}c2$  27. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{E}c7!$ , threatening to take on d5, was a serious alternative. You might also think that 26... $\mathbb{Q}e7$

would be the right king move, maintaining a central position and keeping an eye on the passed d-pawn, but Spassky manages to activate his king wonderfully on the kingside.

**27. $\mathbb{E}c4$  h5 28. $\mathbb{E}a7$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  29. $\mathbb{E}a5$  h4 30. $\mathbb{E}b5$   $\mathbb{H}xg3$  31. $\mathbb{F}xg3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  32. $\mathbb{E}a5$**

32. $\mathbb{E}a7$   $\mathbb{E}a8$  33. $\mathbb{E}xb7?$   $\mathbb{E}xa7$  34. $\mathbb{E}xa7$   $\mathbb{Q}c5+$ ; 32. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  b6.

**32... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  33.h4 f4 34.gxf4 exf4 35. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  g5 36.hxg5+  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  37. $\mathbb{Q}g2?!$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$**



**38. $\mathbb{E}c5?$**

Portisch, maybe confused by Black's sudden activity, exchanges the wrong pieces, is left with his bad bishop and now even loses.

**38... $f3+$  39. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5+$  40. $\mathbb{E}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  41. $\mathbb{E}c7$   $\mathbb{E}a8$  42. $\mathbb{E}xb7$   $\mathbb{E}a2$  43. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$  44. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  45. $\mathbb{B}xc4$   $\mathbb{E}a1+$  46. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  f2**

and Spassky won:

**47. $\mathbb{E}f7$  f1 $\mathbb{W}$  48. $\mathbb{E}xf1$   $\mathbb{E}xf1$  49. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  50. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  51. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  0-1**

### Summary

Typical pawn breaks can sometimes be followed by an advance of the neighbouring pawn, instead of a (re-)capture. This may achieve various goals: the opening of a line, or preserving an enemy pawn which stands in the way of his own pieces. Not a general rule, but a pattern that is useful to remember!

## Chapter 22

# Playing the Impossible

Imagine you'd like to continue your attack with the logical h2-h4, but the square is controlled by your opponent. What should you do? Right, carry on all the same!

**Floris van Assendelft**

**Roeland Pruijssers**

Amsterdam 2012

1.e4 e5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3. $\mathbb{Q}b5$  f5  
4.d3 fxe4 5.dxe4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  6.0-0 d6  
7. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  8. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  9. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   
 $\mathbb{Q}e6$  10. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  11.f4 c6  
12. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  13. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$   
14. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  15.cxd3  $\mathbb{Q}c7$   
16. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  h6 17. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}h4$   
0-0 19. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  20.g4  $\mathbb{Q}h7$   
21. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xh6+$  gxh6  
23.f5  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xh6$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$



In this unbalanced position – only a pawn for a piece but with a pawn steamroller on the kingside – White used his imagination with...

**25.h4!?**

He was probably afraid that Black would consolidate his position by taking control of the dark squares after the normal 25. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ . Instead White tries to

continue the attack by opening up the h-file at the cost of a pawn.

**25... $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  26. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$**

Withdrawing the bishop is no good: 26... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  can be met by 27.f6  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ ; while 26... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  runs into 27.g5  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xg7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  29. $\mathbb{Q}h6+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  30. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ .

**27. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  29. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$**



White's attack has run into a dead-end, or so it seems. However, there's still one piece that's not involved in the attack.

**30. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ !**

Remember this manoeuvre and compare it to the following example! White aims to control the g5-square so he can set his kingside pawns in motion again.

**30...d5?**

This move achieves little. Black should coordinate his pieces for the defence. A clever manoeuvre would be 30... $\mathbb{Q}d8$



24.g5  $\mathbb{W}xc2+$  25. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  26. $\mathbb{M}4xh5$   
also leaves White on top.

### 23. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{W}c1$ 24.g5

Now if the f6-knight moves f5-f6+ wins the bishop.

24... $\mathbb{W}xb2$  25.gxf6+  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   
26. $\mathbb{M}xh7$   $\mathbb{W}xc2+$  27. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{M}xh7$   
28. $\mathbb{M}xh7$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$

Here 28... $\mathbb{W}xa2$  fails to 29. $\mathbb{W}h4+$  g5  
30. $\mathbb{W}h6+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  31. $\mathbb{W}xg5+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$   
32. $\mathbb{M}h8\#.$

29. $\mathbb{W}h4+$

...and White won.

## A Weakened Kingside

**Jon Arnason**

**Allan Savage**

Reykjavik 1982

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4.e5  
 $\mathbb{Q}fd7$  5.f4 c5 6. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  7. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   
 $\mathbb{W}b6$  8. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{W}a5+$  9.c3 cxd4  
10.b4  $\mathbb{W}d8$  11. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   
12. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  13. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  0-0  
14. $\mathbb{W}c2$  g6

Here Black has just weakened his kingside with ...g7-g6 (14...h6 was the better move), probably without considering h2-h4, as the pawn can be taken with check.

15.h4!?



15... $\mathbb{Q}xh4+$  16. $\mathbb{Q}e2$

Again White has the simple plan of doubling rooks on the h-file.

### 16... $\mathbb{Q}g3$ !?

Black already seems desperate, and is intending to give up his bishop. A better defence was 16... $\mathbb{M}e8$  17. $\mathbb{M}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  18. $\mathbb{M}ah1$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$ , finding a typically strong defensive position for the knight, protecting the pawns on h7 and g6.

### 17. $\mathbb{M}af1$ $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ ?

There was no reason to play this right away.

18. $\mathbb{M}xf4$   $\mathbb{W}g5$  19. $\mathbb{M}fh4$  h5

19... $\mathbb{W}xg2+$  20. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{W}xc2+$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xc2$  is similar to the game.

20. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{W}xg2+$  21. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{W}xd2+$   
22. $\mathbb{Q}xd2$

Because of White's big space advantage and lead in development, the three pawns for the piece are insufficient compensation. White went on to win.

## Against ...h7-h6 As Well!

**Ding Liren**

**Sophie Milliet**

Villandry 2009

1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5 4. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   
e6 5. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  exd5 6.cxd5 d6 7.e3  
a6 8.a4 b4 9. $\mathbb{Q}bd2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  10. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   
 $\mathbb{Q}b7$  11. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  12.a5  $\mathbb{W}e7$   
13.g4 h6 14. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  15. $\mathbb{W}d3$   
 $\mathbb{Q}e5$  16. $\mathbb{Q}fxe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  17.0-0-0  
 $\mathbb{Q}f6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{M}d8$  19.f4 0-0



**20.h4!?**

In contrast to the situation with Black's weakened kingside in the previous example, here it's slightly less obvious how the white rooks will make use of the h-file, but after the g4-g5 follow-up the strength of the white attack will soon become clear. As you will know, speed is of the utmost importance in a position with opposite-side castling.

**20... $\mathbb{Q}xh4$** 

Logical, in view of the threatened g4-g5 advance, but not forced. 20...g6 21.g5  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  was the alternative and after the consistent 22.gxh6  $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  23.h5 and then 23...g5!?, keeping the h-file closed, the black king may find a safe haven on h8.

**21. $\mathbb{H}h3$** 

Doubling doesn't seem to be the best plan here, as Black can often respond with ...g7-g5, blocking the h-file. 21.g5 is simple and strong: 21... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  (21...hxg5 22.fxg5  $\mathbb{W}xg5$  23. $\mathbb{W}e4$ ) 22.fxg5  $\mathbb{W}xg5$  23. $\mathbb{H}dg1$  and here as well Black's pieces are too passive to make three pawns enough for the piece.

**21...c4!?**

Looking for active counterplay on the other side.

**22. $\mathbb{Q}xc4 \mathbb{H}c8$** 

22... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ !?, preventing g4-g5, is an interesting alternative.

**23.b3  $\mathbb{H}c5$** **24.g5**

Finally!

**24... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  25.fxg5  $\mathbb{W}xg5$  26. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  27. $\mathbb{H}h5$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  28.e4**

The fearless 28. $\mathbb{H}f1$  was also possible: 28... $\mathbb{W}a1+$  29. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}a2+$  30. $\mathbb{W}c2$ .

**28... $\mathbb{W}f4+$  29. $\mathbb{Q}b2$  f5 30. $\mathbb{H}hh1$   $\mathbb{fxe}4$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$** 

Black doesn't have enough for the piece and subsequently lost the game.

**Discouraging Castling****David Howell****Frank Erwich**

Leiden 2012

**1.e4 e5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}ge7$  4. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  5.d4 exd4 6. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  7. $\mathbb{W}xd4$  c6 8. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  9. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$** **10.h4!?**

Remarkable, you might think, as Black has yet to castle, but after capturing the pawn on h4 Black is unlikely to be inclined to castle kingside because of the h-file. Black's problems give White some long-term compensation.

**10... $\mathbb{Q}xh4$** 

If 10... $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  then 11. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  12.f4 seems strong, but Black can respond in kind with 12...h5!. Now 13. $\mathbb{Q}xh5$  fails to 13... $\mathbb{Q}h4$  14. $\mathbb{H}xh4$   $\mathbb{W}g1+$ . White should instead play something like

13.a4 (now 13.f5 could be answered with 13...h4 14.♗g4 d6).

**11.g3 ♘e7 12.f4 d6**

From here on, Black consistently rejects the possibility of castling kingside. Since in the game he didn't manage to castle on the other wing either, he probably made the wrong choice. He could have played 12...0-0 here, perhaps followed by a quick ...d7-d5, giving back a pawn but quickly (remember: speed!) opening up the game.

**13.a3 ♘d7 14.♗e3 ♗c7**

Of course not 14...♗xb2 15.♔a2!.

**15.0-0-0 b6**

After 15...0-0-0 16.♔xa7 the lost bishop isn't lost: 16...b6 17.♗a6+ ♜b7 18.♗xb6.

**16.♗c4**

Eyeing the f7-pawn and thus preventing ...0-0-0.

**16...♗b7 17.♗h5 ♜f8**

Leaving the king in the middle. However, 17...0-0 wasn't appealing: 18.♗xg6 hxg6 19.♗e2 f6 20.g4! and after a further f4-f5 the black king will have few supporters.

**18.♗d4 b5 19.♗d3**



**19...b4?!**

Black refuses to remain passive any longer, but his pieces aren't active enough for such counterplay. After...

**20.axb4 ♗xb4 21.♗xg7**

... White had won back his pawn, and quickly converted his superior position into a win.

## Gaining Time

We conclude with two examples where there's no longer (or not yet!) a rook on the h-file, but where White still has no qualms about sacrificing his rook's pawn.

**Asyl Abdyjapar**

**Li Ruofan**

Istanbul 2012

**1.c4 e6 2.♘c3 d5 3.d4 ♘f6 4.♘f3 ♘e7 5.♘f4 0-0 6.e3 b6 7.cxd5 ♘xd5 8.♘xd5 exd5 9.♘d3 c5 10.dxc5 bxc5 11.0-0 ♘d7 12.e4 d4 13.♖c1 ♘b7 14.♖e1 a5 15.♘d2 a4 16.e5 ♘d5 17.a3 ♘b6 18.♖h5 g6 19.♖h6 ♘c8**



**20.h4!?**

After the logical 20.♘e4 ♘e8 21.♘f3 ♘f8 22.♗h3 ♘g7 23.♘g5 h6, Black is perfectly fine. White decides to give up a pawn in order to gain some time for his attack. Objectively the sacrifice isn't correct.

**20...♗xh4**

Accepting the challenge, though here too 20...♗e8 was plausible.

**21.♘e4 ♘e7**

Missing the strong 21...f5!, which leaves White without any time to carry

## Improve Your Chess Pattern Recognition

out his plan ( $\mathbb{Q}d2-f3-g5$ ). The bishop would like to stay on e4, but after 22.exf6  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  White has no compensation for the pawn.

**22.♘f3 ♘xe4**

Here 22...f5 is less clear: 23.exf6 (23.♘g5  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  24.♘xg5  $\mathbb{W}d7$ ) 23... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  24.♘xg6 hxg6 25.♗xg6+  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  (25... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  26.♖e5!) 26.♕e5, but still this was better than the text.

**23.♘g5 ♘xg5 24.♘xg5 f6 25.♘xf6**



Expecting White to retake the piece with ♘xe4, Black now carelessly played...

**25...♗c7??**

25... $\mathbb{W}d7$  was the move, and now for instance 26.♖xe4  $\mathbb{W}f7$  27.♖h3 ♜fe8 28.f4 would have led to an interesting battle.

**26.♖xc5**

Oops.

**26...♗f7 27.♖xc8 ♘xc8 28.♖xe4 ♗e7 29.♖xe7! ♘xe7 30.♖d2**

And White had no difficulties winning the d4-pawn and the ending.

## A Theoretical Rook Transfer In the Opening

Igor Khenkin

Amin Nasri

Baku 2012

**1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 c5 4.e3 cxd4 5.exd4 d5 6.♘c3 ♗e7**

**7.cxd5 ♘xd5 8.♗c4 ♘xc3 9.bxc3 0-0 10.0-0 ♘c6 11.♗e1 b6 12.♗d3 ♘b7**



**13.h4!**

White has also castled here, so for the moment there's no rook on the h-file. This is, in fact, a very well-known theoretical position. I think the celebrated Russian trainer GM Yury Razuvayev (who passed away in March 2012) was the originator of the idea.

**13...♗xh4**

Probably not the best continuation.

**14.♖xh4 ♘xh4 15.♗e3!**



The rook threatens to immediately return to the h-file. Now the h7-pawn has to be taken care of. Meanwhile, the black minor pieces aren't yet participating in the defence.

**15...g6**

15...h6 16.♗h3  $\mathbb{W}f6$  17.♗g4 and here 17... $\mathbb{Q}h8?$  runs into 18.♗g5.

**16.♗h3**

16... $\mathbb{Q}g3$  is the more popular choice.

16... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  f5 18. $\mathbb{Q}h6$   
 $\mathbb{Q}fe8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}h4$

Even 20. $\mathbb{Q}xg7+!?$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  21. $\mathbb{Q}b5$  gives compensation, as the e6-pawn is an easy target for the white rooks, but keeping the queens on still seems the natural thing to do. Black's king is vulnerable and the black queen isn't very mobile.

20... $\mathbb{Q}a5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}ac8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   
 $\mathbb{Q}c6$  23. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  24. $\mathbb{Q}f6$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$   
25. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$

Relocating the knight, but after the natural 25... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  the c4-square would have become available.

26. $\mathbb{Q}a6!$ ?

26. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ ; 26.c4.

26... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  27. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   
 $\mathbb{Q}xb7$  29. $\mathbb{Q}ee3$



White is still a pawn down, but a position with opposite-coloured bishops and major pieces like this one favours the attacking side. Black's queen is still not active, and neither are his rooks.

29... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  30. $\mathbb{Q}eg3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  31. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   
 $\mathbb{Q}e8$  32. $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  33. $\mathbb{Q}gh3$   
 $\mathbb{Q}d5$



34. $\mathbb{Q}h2!$

A very nice tripling ('Alekhine's Gun' again!) on the h-file with this (hard to foresee?) backward queen move.

34... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  35. $\mathbb{Q}xh7$   $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  36. $\mathbb{Q}xh7$   
 $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  37. $\mathbb{Q}h4$

Black resigned, avoiding 37. $\mathbb{Q}h8??$   
 $\mathbb{Q}c1\#$ .

## Summary

Giving up the h-pawn by advancing it with a rook behind it seems an understandable pattern when the opponent has castled kingside, even when the pawn can be taken with check. The h-file is likely to become dangerous anyway. Remember though, in other cases – when White has already castled or Black hasn't yet – the sacrifice may be **forceful** as well.

## Chapter 23

# A Dynamic Pawn Sac

Will it take too much time to regain your temporarily sacrificed pawn on c5, where an annoying white pawn has now appeared? Don't forget that a real sacrifice with ...b7-b6?! is also possible.

## Opposite-Side Castling

Ian Nepomniachtchi

Dmitry Andreikin

Moscow 2012

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 dxe4  
4.♘xe4 ♘d7 5.♘f3 ♘gf6 6.♗d3  
c5 7.♗xf6+ ♘xf6 8.♗e3 ♖c7  
9.♖e2 ♔e7 10.0-0 0-0  
11.dxc5



White has just taken on c5. According to reports Andreikin took half an hour to decide on his following move.

11..b6?!

Active play, trying to quickly open up lines against White's king. This is in fact a well-known position, and the text move had earlier been tried by Van Wely (albeit in a rapid game).

11...♗xc5 is the obvious retort, but after 12.♗g5 White has firm control of

the centre and nice piece play after ♗e5 (the straightforward 12.♗xc5 ♖xc5 13.♗e5 followed by g2-g4-g5 also yields a nice plus).

11...♗d5 12.♗d4 ♘f4 13.♗e4 ♘xd3+ 14.♗xd3 f6 is an interesting idea from Roiz, though clearly more time-consuming. 11...♗d7 really looks too slow, for instance 12.♗d4! ♖xc5 13.♗e5! and Black is in trouble.

12.cxb6

Van Wely's worthy opponent Anand preferred 12.♗d4.

12...axb6

Now Black is first to pose a concrete threat (against the a2-pawn). His next few moves are also directed towards that goal.

13.♗c4

Bringing over a defender, but the bold 13.♗b1 was probably the better move, for example 13...♗b7 14.♗d4. Now Black is quick to initiate play on the queenside.

13...♗b7 14.♗d4 b5 15.♗b3 ♗d5

Putting some more pressure on the a2-pawn and the a-file.

16.c3 ♗fc8 17.♗xd5?! ♘xd5

18.♗e5

White tries to beat off Black's attack by returning the pawn and transposing into an endgame.

**18... $\mathbb{W}xe5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$**



**19... $\mathbb{B}xa2$**

Black's initiative persists in the endgame. The immediate 19...b4 was also worth considering.

**20. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  f6 21. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{B}a4$  22. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  23. $\mathbb{B}he1$   $\mathbb{B}d8$  24.g3 h5 25. $\mathbb{B}a1e5$**

And here Nepomniachtchi forced matters with...

**26. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$**

... but consequently lost the only decisive game of the match.

**Javier Avila Jimenez  
Lazaro Lorenzo de la Riva**

Sabadell 2012

**1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  3. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  d5  
4.f3  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  e6 6.e4  $\mathbb{B}b4$   
7. $\mathbb{W}d3$  0-0 8.e5  $\mathbb{Q}fd7$  9. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$   
10.0-0-0 c5 11.dxc5  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  12. $\mathbb{B}e1$**



**12...b6!**

The idea is similar: speeding up the attack in a position with opposite-side castling. Here, however, Black has the luxury of several moves at his disposal that would give him a comfortable position. At the same time, this is what makes Black's ambitious approach all the more surprising.

**13.cxb6  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  14. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}xb6$**

Unlike in the first game, Black is able to open the b-file, which is of course a big asset in the attack against the white king.

**15. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{B}b8$  16. $\mathbb{Q}d1$**

16.b3  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  h6 18. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  threatening ...d5-d4, while 19. $\mathbb{Q}b1$  fails to 19... $\mathbb{Q}a4$ .

**16... $\mathbb{Q}a4$**

The prosaic 16... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  h6 18. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{W}c7$ , aiming for the e5-pawn, was best and would have left Black well on top.

**17. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$**



**17... $\mathbb{Q}xe7$**

17... $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  was the move to consider, but after 18. $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  (or 18... $\mathbb{Q}d4$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  20.f4) 19. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  White seems to hold (not 19. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{W}b1+$  21. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}xc2+$  22. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f5+$  23. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}xc4+$ ).

**18. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$**

Things are no longer so clear, but Black still has sufficient compensation – just look at White's clumsy knights. In the

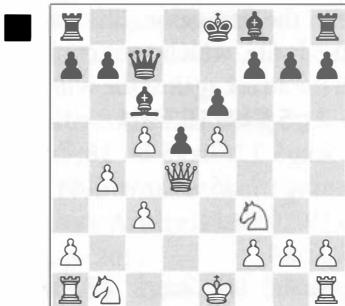
game White soon failed to find the right way to defend his king.

## Backward Pawns

**Daniel Forcen Esteban**

**Quinten Ducarmon**

Utebo 2012



**12...b6**

Here we see yet another variation. White has just played b2-b4, making sure Black won't gain back the pawn on c5. However, White's last move also gives Black the opportunity to successfully break up White's impressive queenside formation. You might compare this to a line like 1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.g3 ♜f6 4.♕g2 dxс4 5.♘f3 b5 6.0-0 e6 7.a4 ♜b7 8.b3 cxсb3 9.♗xb3, where White also makes a real sacrifice after Black has weakened his structure with ...b7-b5.

**13.cxb6 axb6 14.0-0 ♜e7**

An interesting position has arisen in which White's now ugly queenside structure (two backward pawns) is part of Black's compensation for the pawn.

**15.♗e3**

Practice has seen several other moves, including the inventive 15.a3 to develop the ♜a1 via a2.

**15...0-0 16.♘d4 ♜d7 17.f4 ♜fc8  
18.a3**

This is now almost the only way for White to continue development.

**18...♝c4!?**

Preventing ♜a2.

**19.♖f3 ♜a4 20.♘d2 ♜a6 21.♘b1  
♝c4**

The position seems to be in dynamic equilibrium. White wasn't satisfied with a draw against his lower-rated opponent and avoided a repetition of moves, but he was later taken by surprise, and lost.

## Backward Doubled Pawns

**Daniel Rensch**

**Davorin Kuljasevic**

Lubbock 2010



Here White has just played ♜d1-d4 to hold on to his c5-pawn. If he had seriously considered Black's next move he would have chosen to dissolve his dou-

bled c-pawn to create more space for his bishop pair.

**13...b6! 14.cxb6 axb6**

Not an unusual development in French Winawer set-ups. White's extra pawn hardly counts for anything in view of the doubled pawns on the c-file. White now tries to get rid of them anyway.

**15.c4 ♜a4 16.♗b2 dxc4  
17.♗b5?! ♜a5 18.♗xc4 ♜c5**



White has kept his extra pawn and dealt with his doubled c-pawns, but at the cost of his development. Black has ample compensation and White has a difficult defensive task ahead.

**19.♕c3 ♜d8 20.♗d1 ♜xd1+  
21.♔xd1 ♜a7 22.♗c1 ♜a8**

22...♜a6 was also quite strong, leaving White with only his bad bishop.

**23.♗e2 ♜b7 24.♗f3 ♜a4**

Another strong continuation was 24...♝a4 25.♗b3 ♜xf3+ 26.♗xf3 ♜c3+! 27.♔e1 (27.♗xc3 ♜xg2 28.♗e1 ♜c5!) 27...♝e4 and White has lost the right to castle while his c-pawn will shortly fall.

24...♝e4 is yet another strong alternative, not fearing the opposite-coloured bishops, which only add to Black's attacking power: 25.♗xe4 (25.♗e3 ♜d5+ 26.♔e2 ♜c5) 25...♝xe4 and ♜c5 is coming. The vulnerable white king ensures Black a big advantage.

**25.♗e1 ♜xf3+ 26.gxf3 ♜d5+  
27.♔e2 ♜c4 28.♗d2 ♜d4 29.♗c3  
♜c4 30.♗d2 ♜c6 31.c3 ♜a4**

and Black went on to win.

## King in the Middle

**Evgeny Sveshnikov**

**Vitaly Tseshkovsky**

Frunze 1981



**10...b6!**

Here we have an unusual position. Former top grandmaster Tseshkovsky adopts a very energetic approach. By sacrificing the pawn he activates both his bishops, speeding up development to launch an attack against White's king, which is still in the centre. A move like 10...e5 would be much less powerful.

**11.cxb6 axb6 12.♗d1**

White has to lose more time, as the natural 12.♗e2 would run into 12...♝e5; and if 12.♗g3 ♜d6 13.f4 ♜a6.

**12...♝c5 13.♗e2?**

Much better is 13.♗xc5 bxc5 14.♗e2, but here too Black has sufficient compensation due to his strong pawn centre and active pieces after, for example, 14...h5 (or 14...♝f7).

**13...♝xe3 14.fxe3 ♜h4+ 15.♗g3**

15.g3 ♜e4 16.0-0 ♜a6 isn't attractive either.

**15...♜a6**



White is in trouble. Sooner or later Black will threaten to create a devastating octopus on d3 with ... ♡e5. Tseshkovsky finishes off in great style.

16. a3 h5

Not rushing with 16... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ , which could be met with 17. $\mathbb{W}d4$ , although Black would still, of course, be better.

17. ♔b3 ♔q4 18. ♔xb6 ♕e5

19. d4 h4

19... $\mathbb{Q}d3+$  20. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}g6$ , with a lot of threats, would have been logical here.

20.  xe5

20. ♜xg4 ♖xg4 21. ♔e2 would have put up more resistance.

20...hxg3 21.c4 dxc4 22.h3?! c3!

23. ♕b5 cxb2 24. ♔xb2 ♔g5

25 a4 xb5

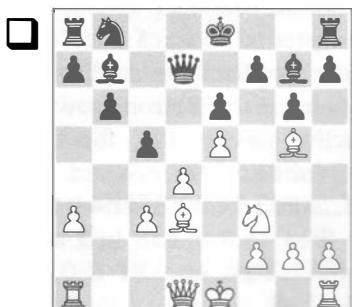
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### More Weak Pawns

Garry Kasparov

**Gari, Kasparov  
Viktor Kortchnoi**

London 1983



Here we have a funny high-level example featuring a kind of move order reversal of the pawn sac. The black pawn is already on b6 before White has taken on c5. That's probably one of the reasons why none other than Kasparov forgot about the possible sacrifice: '(...) I underestimated the dynamic features of the position.'

14.dxc5 0-0

There you have it. Taking back isn't obligatory, and would have given White the clear plus he was striving for: 14...bxc5 15.Qb5 Qc6 16.a4.

15.cxb6 axb6 16.0-0 ♜c7



Black again has ample compensation due to White's weak pawns. As Kortchnoi remarks, White shouldn't try to hold on to them but should instead try to prevent Black from developing harmoniously.

17. b5

17.  $\mathbb{H}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7!$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}e7$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  19.  $gxf3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}xf8$   $\mathbb{Q}xh2+$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  is given by Kasparov as very unpleasant for White. The text move prevents 17... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ , but allows Black's next.

17...xe5

Now Black has regained his pawn and obtained a better pawn structure.

18.  h6  g7

18... $\blacksquare d8$  19. $\blacksquare e2$  (19. $\blacksquare xe5 \blacksquare xd1$  20. $\blacksquare fxd1 \blacksquare c6$ ) 19... $\blacksquare g7$  was a logical alternative.

**19.♕xg7 ♕xg7 20.♗d4+ ♕g8  
21.♘g5**

The centralizing 21.♘e5 was better.

**21...h6 22.♘e4 ♘xe4 23.♗xe4  
♘a6 24.♗e3 ♜c5 25.♗xc5 ♘xc5**

And Kortchnoi went on to win the endgame.

**Alexander Grischuk  
Ian Nepomniachtchi**

Moscow 2011



We finish with an earlier example from the victim of the first game. This time, however, Ian Nepomniachtchi himself makes use of the typical sacrifice!

**17...b6!**

Here attempts to win back the pawn on c5 prove too slow: 17...♘d7 is met by 18.♘f3! while 17...♗d7 18.f4 is plain bad.

**18.cxb6 ♘a6**

Reminiscent of the Tsekhovsky game – Black controls the d3-square. Of course here not the immediate 18...axb6 because of 19.f4 followed by ♘c6.

**19.c4**

19.f4 ♘xf1 20.fxe5 ♘a6 just loses the exchange.

**19...♗b7 20.♗e2**

The greedy 20.bxa7 fails to 20...♘c6. Tactically, it all seems to come together nicely for Black.

**20...axb6**

20...♗xe4 seems a valid alternative, and has actually been seen before in practice. 21.♘b5 axb6 22.♘c7 ♜d3! (22...♗a7 23.♘xa6 ♜xa6 24.c5 Tallaksen-Elsness, Moss 2006) 23.♘xa8 ♘b7 24.f3 ♜xe3.

**21.♘b5 ♘c6 22.f3**



**22...♗xb5**

Releasing the tension and transposing into an endgame where White's extra pawn is redundant.

**23.cxb5 ♘d4 24.♗f2 ♘xb3  
25.axb3 ♜d3 26.♗xb6 ♜d7  
27.♔h1 ♜xb5 28.♗e2 ♜xb3  
29.♗xb5 ♜xb5**

And the game ended in a draw. Clearly Ian could and should have foreseen 11...b6 in the first game!

### Summary

If you spot a pawn on c5, remember this typical pawn sacrifice to speed up your game and development. Although your opponent may be a pawn up, he can also be left with a severely damaged pawn structure.

## Chapter 24

# Cutting through the Middle: e5-e6!

Here is a positional pawn sac which is also a common resource in many openings. At the cost of a pawn White gains considerable time, saddling his opponent with a central weakness.

## Imprisoning the Light-Squared Bishop

Nicolas Pert

Andrew Mack

England 2011/12

1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.g3 g6 3.♗g2 ♗g7  
4.0-0 0-0 5.d4 d6 6.♘c3 c6 7.e4  
♘bd7 8.e5 dxe5 9.dxe5 ♘d5



10.e6

Before Black gets the chance to move his knight from d7, White hemms in the bishop on c8, at least for some time. This sacrifice is mostly seen in positions where (as in this case) Black has fianchettoed his king's bishop, and thus refrained from moving his e-pawn. It's an easy sacrifice to decide on, as for the time being you can hardly speak of a material deficit. Black's doubled e-pawns – especially as they are isolated

– can be counted as one. Moreover, White gets a strong square on e5 (or also e4) and often has the chance to generate an attack on the kingside, where his opponent's pawn formation has been compromised.

10...fxe6

11...♘xc3 11.exf7+ ♔xf7 12.bxc3 ♕a5 may be a better alternative (12...♗xc3 13.♗b1 and Black loses a lot of time, as ♘g5 is also an annoying threat), for example 13.♗g5 ♔f5 14.♗h3 ♘e5!?.

11.♘e4 ♘f6

11...e5, blocking the diagonal of the ♗g7, isn't the most appealing move, but Black's other bishop needs some space in any case.

12.♔e2 ♘xe4 13.♔xe4 ♔d6  
14.c4 ♘f6 15.♔e2



15...♗h5

Preventing  $\mathbb{Q}f4$ , but giving back a pawn with 15...e5 was worth giving some thought as well.

**16.♗g5 e5 17.♘ad1 ♕c7 18.♘fe1**

Now White wins back his pawn anyway, while Black has lost valuable time which he could have used for development.

**18...♗e6**

18...♗g4 also doesn't help: 19.h3 ♗xf3 20.♕xf3 ♗f6 21.♗d2 ♗g7 22.♗c3 and as in the game Black ends up with an isolated backward e-pawn.

**19.♗xe5 ♕xe5**

This loses without a chance, but already Black's position wasn't enviable.

**20.♘xe5 ♗xe5 21.♘xe5 ♗xc4**

**22.b3**

The bishop pair and the active white rooks are just too much in this endgame.

**22...♗a6 23.♗xe7 ♕ae8 24.♗h3**

**♗f7 25.♗de1 ♔g7 26.♗g4 ♕a8**

**27.♗xh5 gxh5 28.♗g5+ ♔h8**

**29.♗e6 1-0**

## Light-Squared Bishops Exchanged

Alexander Morozhevich

Artyom Timofeev

Moscow 2011

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e4 ♗f6 4.e5**

**♗d5 5.♗xc4 ♗b6 6.♗d3 ♗c6**

**7.♗e2 ♗g4 8.f3 ♗e6 9.♗bc3**

**♗c4**



**10.♗xc4 ♗xc4 11.e6**

Here White seizes his chance immediately after the light-squared bishops have been exchanged. This also leaves the e6-pawn more vulnerable than in the first example. Black will now have to develop the other bishop by fianchetto.

**11...fxe6 12.0-0 ♗b6**

Instead, 12...g6 right away seems more logical, though after 13.♗b3 ♗b6 14.♗d1! Black has a difficult time.

**13.♗e4 g6 14.♗c5 ♕d6**

If 14...♕d5 15.♗e3, and ♗f4 is coming, but after the text move Black's structure is horrible.



**15.♗xb7 ♕d5 16.♗e3 ♗g7**

**17.♗f4 ♕f5 18.♗c1 ♗xd4**

**19.♗xd4 ♕xd4+ 20.♗xd4 e5**

**21.♗b4 ♕xf4**

The alternative 21...exf4 22.♗xc7 0-0 23.♗xe7 also ultimately leaves White a pawn up.

**22.♗b5+ c6 23.♗xc6+ ♔f7**

**24.♗c5 ♕d4+ 25.♔h1 ♕d5**

**26.♗xd5+ ♗xd5**

Black has managed to exchange queens and has thus averted any immediate danger, but if we count Black's doubled e-pawns as one, as explained above, White is just a pawn up. He did indeed go on to win.

## Delaying your Opponent's Development

Niclas Huschenbeth

Gao Rui

Athens 2012

1.e4 c5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d6 3. $\mathbb{Q}b5+$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$   
 4.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  5. $\mathbb{K}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  6.c3 a6  
 7. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  8.h3  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  9.g4  $\mathbb{Q}g6$   
 10.d4 cxd4 11.cxd4 d5 12.e5  $\mathbb{Q}e4$



If Black could just play ...e7-e6 he would have a perfectly fine position. However, it's White to move and he was just in time to squeeze in...

**13.e6 fxe6**

Now Black really has problems developing his kingside. Here the light-squared bishop is still on the board, but on g6 it hinders the fianchetto of its colleague.

**14. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  e5**

This is a typical move which often has to be taken into account, especially if the black bishop is on c8.

**15. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  16. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  exd4?!**

Suddenly getting overly optimistic. Continuing development was the only way: 16...e6 17. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  and Black is still in the game.

**17. $\mathbb{K}xe4!$  dxe4 18. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}e5?$**

After this further case of neglected development Black is lost. He had to find the imaginative 18... $\mathbb{W}d6$ , intending to meet 19. $\mathbb{Q}f7$  with 19... $\mathbb{W}b4$ , although

White remains better. Besides, 19. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  (also developing!) looks strong.

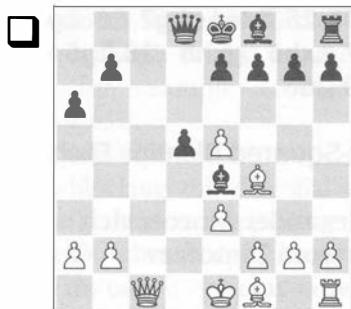


**19. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  h6 20. $\mathbb{Q}e6$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  21. $\mathbb{K}c1$   $\mathbb{W}b8$  22. $\mathbb{K}c5$**

Terrible. Black resigned.

Alexander Shimanov  
 Robert Hovhannisyan

St Petersburg 2012



Here's a similar, topical position from the Exchange Variation of the Slav. Black would again be fine if he could get in ...e7-e6. But...

**13.e6**

Naturally White doesn't allow this, instead activating the  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  and as usual hemming in its counterpart on f8.

**13... $\mathbb{W}a5+$  14. $\mathbb{K}e2$  fxe4 15.f3  $\mathbb{Q}f5$**

15... $\mathbb{W}b5+$  16. $\mathbb{K}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  only helps White to develop: 17. $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $\mathbb{W}xd3$  18. $\mathbb{K}d1$   $\mathbb{W}c4$  19. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  and Black is walking a thin line.

**16...e5**

16.g4 ♜g6 would help Black, who would then continue with ...h7-h5, activating his rook and contesting the squares on the b1-h7 diagonal.

16.♘f2 makes sense, of course, but would allow 16...g5, after which Black's kingside pieces come to life.

**16...h5**

Now after 16...h8 it's more tempting to play 17.g4.

**17.h4 ♜f7 18.♗f2 ♜xa2 19.♗e2**

**♗h7 20.g4 ♜g6 21.♗c7 ♜b3**

**22.♗c1**

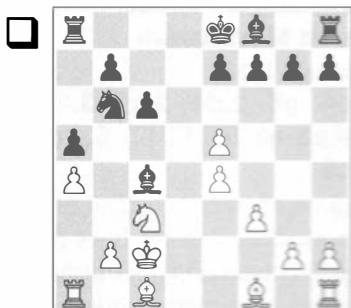
White slowly gets all his pieces involved, while Black's bishop on f8 is still suffering. Eventually Black was helpless, and effectively just a piece down.

**In the Endgame**

Sipke Ernst

Milos Perunovic

Novi Sad 2009



Here's yet another similar example, but now the queens have already been exchanged. However, the same rules of development still apply.

**14.♕e3! ♜xf1 15.♖hx f1 ♔d7**

**16.e6**

Very familiar. There's no question of allowing Black to play ...e7-e6, after which he could catch up in development and take control of the important b4-square (see the game).

**16...fxe6 17.♖ab1**

White has to act quickly and now tries to open lines on the queenside with b2-b4.

**17...e5**

Of course 17...c5 would cause more weaknesses, but it has the virtue of slowing down the game.

**18.b4 e6 19.bxa5 ♜c5**

19...0-0-0 20.♖b3 and White has a dangerous initiative, for example: 20...♝c5 21.♜xc5 ♜xc5 22.♜fb1 ♜d7 23.a6 b6 24.a5 b5 25.♞a4 ♜d4 26.♞b6+.

**20.♞d1**

In a later game Giri preferred 20.♞d2 0-0-0 21.♞d1 ♜d4 22.♞e3 ♜c5 23.♞c4. He also seemed slightly better against Sibenik, Rijeka 2010.

**20...0-0-0 21.♗g5 ♜de8 22.♗b2**



Black has completed his development but White is somewhat better due to his

spatial advantage and the weakness of the e5-pawn. White later won this end-game in an attractive manner.

## Weakened Kingside

**Magnus Carlsen**  
**Viswanathan Anand**

Sao Paulo/Bilbao 2012

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.♗b5+ ♖d7  
4.♖xd7+ ♕xd7 5.c4 ♘f6 6.♗c3  
g6 7.d4 cxd4 8.♗xd4 ♗g7 9.f3  
♘c7 10.b3 ♘a5 11.♗b2 ♘c6  
12.0-0 0-0 13.♗ce2 ♜fd8  
14.♗c3 ♜b6 15.♔h1 d5  
16.♗xc6 bxc6 17.♗e1 ♜dc8



Anand carried out ...d6-d5 three moves ago, but it backfires due to our central push:

**18.e5 ♘e8 19.e6!**

Here the dark-squared bishops will also be exchanged, leaving the black king with few defenders. All Black's major pieces are bystanders on the queenside, while Carlsen directs the play to the other wing.

**19...fxe6**

Perhaps here it would have been better to refrain from this capture and instead advance the f-pawn, to prevent the weakening of the kingside.

**20.♗f4 ♘xc3 21.♗xc3 d4  
22.♗d2**

Of course 22.♗e1 was also possible, but Carlsen leaves the pawn on e6 as it is – probably more a burden than a pleasure for Black (compare 14.♗d1 in the comments to the 12th move of the Morozevich game).

**22...c5 23.♗ae1 ♘g7**

Here the knight gets stranded, but after 23...♗c6 White also has many targets (c5, e6 and the kingside) and beautiful piece play.



**24.g4! ♜c6 25.♗h3 ♘e8 26.♗h6  
♗f6 27.♗g5 d3 28.♗e5**

Threatening 29.♗xh7.

**28...♔h8 29.♗d1 ♜a6 30.a4**

Black is unable to defend the d-pawn and after that he will also lose the pawn on e6. Anand decided not to wait for the inevitable and resigned.

## Long-Term Compensation

**Jordi Magem Badals**  
**Karen Movsziszian**

Catalunya 2012

**1.e4 g6 2.d4 ♗g7 3.♗c3 d6  
4.♗e3 a6 5.♗f3 b5 6.♗d3 ♗b7  
7.e5**

This e5-e6 advance is typical of various Pirc or Modern Defence lines (remember the fianchettoed king's bishop), but also occurs in numerous other opening

lines, for example some lines of the Alapin Sicilian, the Alekhine Defence, the King's Indian, etc.

**7...♝d7**



**8.e6 fxe6 9.♝g5 ♜f8**

There's no other way of protecting the pawn, or, more importantly, of preventing White from putting an octopus on e6. But after this Black struggles due to the limited space of his pieces.

**10.0-0 ♜f6 11.♜e1 ♜d7 12.♝d2 h6 13.♝f3 g5 14.h3 ♜g8**

Black tries to gain some space on the kingside, but it doesn't get him anywhere. On the other hand, playing on the queenside will be dangerous in view of the fact that the black king is stuck in the middle.

**15.a4 b4 16.♝e4 ♜xe4 17.♜xe4 ♜xe4 18.♜xe4 ♜c6 19.♚e2 a5**

Inconsistent. It seems to me that the idea behind Black's last move was 19...♜xc2 20.♜c1 ♜xa4, though despite his two extra pawns Black's posi-

tion doesn't seem fun to play after 21.♜xc7 (21.♝xg5 hxg5 22.♛h5+ ♔d7 23.♛f7 ♔xd4? 24.♛xg8 ♔xb2 25.♜xb4 ♛a2 is very unclear).

**20.c3 bxc3 21.bxc3**

Now White has managed to open the queenside free of charge.

**21...♜f6 22.c4 h5**



**23.d5 exd5 24.cxd5 ♜xd5**

**25.♝c3 ♜xc3 26.♜xe7+ ♔d8**

**27.♜e8+ ♔d7 28.♛e7+ ♔c6**

**29.♜xa8**

29.♜c1! ♜d7 30.♜xc3+ ♜c5 31.♛e2 ♔d7 32.♜e7+ ♔c8 33.♜c1! and Black is in trouble.

**29...♜xa1**

29...♝g6 was a better attempt: 30.♛e2

(30.♜a6+ ♔b7 31.♜a7+ ♔xa7

32.♜xc7+ ♔a8 33.♜xc3 g4)

30...♜xa8 31.♜c1 ♔d7 32.♜xc3 g4

33.hxg4 hxg4 and Black seems to hold.

**30.♛e8+ ♔b6? 31.♜b8+ ♔a7**

**32.♜b5 ♜g6 33.♛e1 ♜c6**

**34.♛xa5+ 1-0**

### Summary

A black pawn still on e7 and Black's light-squared bishop traded off (or not in control of square e6) may be an invitation for White to sacrifice a pawn with e5-e6. The compensation offered will vary, but most of the time the black pieces will have a hard time before they can coordinate.

## Chapter 25

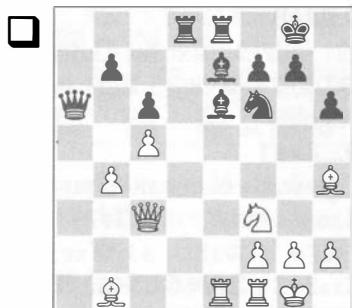
# The Bishop Snatcher

Sometimes a black bishop on e6 is surprisingly snatched away from the board by a white rook. We will only consider the long-term positional sacrifices, not the (short-term) tactical operation. This pattern – rook takes bishop on e6 – remains the same, of course, and this is what will help you to see the possibility in your own games. The exchange sacrifice on e6 is in fact quite common. Let's study some typical characteristics and see where the compensation comes from.

### An Outpost on e5 and the Diagonal b1-h7

Kubra Öztürk  
Catarina Leite

Istanbul 2012



How should White proceed here? Black intends to play 23... $\mathbb{Q}c4$ , after which she would be fine.

**23. $\mathbb{R}xe6!$   $\mathbb{Q}xe6$**

What has White achieved? Quite a lot: Black's queen remains out of play for a little longer and White's knight can jump to the central outpost on e5 without having to worry about being chased away by Black's f-pawn. White can set up a nice battery on the b1-h7 diagonal, where, also due to the move

...h7-h6, the light squares have been considerably weakened. Having said that, let's now play chess:

**24. $\mathbb{R}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}a3?$**

The most sensible move seems to be 24... $\mathbb{R}d5$ , preventing White from moving the knight to e5 and bringing another piece into the attack. Still, after 25. $\mathbb{R}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}a3$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  27. $\mathbb{R}h7+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  28. $\mathbb{R}g6$  White is slightly better.

**25. $\mathbb{N}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}a1$**

Now 25... $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  would run into 26. $\mathbb{R}g6!$ , leaving Black helpless.



**26. $\mathbb{R}e1?$**

There was a much stronger way to activate the rook and protect the knight at the same time: 26.f4!. Now Black can activate the queen while gaining a

tempo: 26... $\mathbb{W}d4+$  27. $\mathbb{Q}h1$  but again White threatens the quiet 28. $\mathbb{W}g6$ ; Black is rather helpless.

**26... $\mathbb{W}d4$  27. $\mathbb{Q}f3?$**

27. $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  28. $\mathbb{Q}b1$  would have been equal.

**27... $\mathbb{W}xb4$  28. $\mathbb{W}g6$**

28.h3  $\mathbb{W}xc5$  29. $\mathbb{W}g6$  is no improvement because of 29... $\mathbb{W}h5$ .

**28... $\mathbb{W}g4$  29. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  30. $\mathbb{W}g6$**

$\mathbb{W}xc5$

Now Black is better as 31. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  simply fails to 31... $\mathbb{W}xe5$ . Miraculously enough, White still eventually managed to draw the game.

**31.g4  $\mathbb{W}b4$  32.h3  $\mathbb{W}c3$  33. $\mathbb{W}g2$**

$\mathbb{Q}c5??$  34. $\mathbb{Q}e5$

34. $\mathbb{B}c1!$ .

**34... $\mathbb{W}xe1$  35. $\mathbb{W}f7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$**

**36. $\mathbb{Q}g6+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  37. $\mathbb{Q}f8+$**

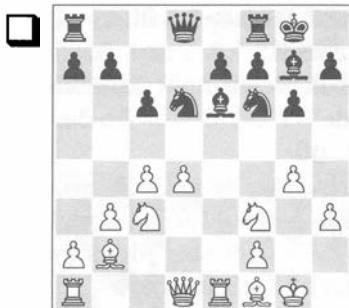
With a draw.

## Space & Splitting the Board in Two

**Kevin Spraggett**

**Ralf Appel**

Matosinhos 2012



All the pieces are still on the board, which makes White's space advantage more valuable. Still, after a normal move like 17. $\mathbb{W}c2$  Black could also continue developing with ... $\mathbb{W}c7$  and ... $\mathbb{B}ad8$ .

**17. $\mathbb{W}xe6$   $\mathbb{W}xe6$**

Here again White has a strong outpost for his knight on e5, but this time Black's king is well protected (no weak light squares). In this case, though, the isolated doubled e-pawns almost split Black's camp in two, and White's space advantage causes the black rooks to remain quite passive. Make sure you compare this to the resulting positions of the e5-e6 pawn sac (see Chapter 24: 'Cutting through the Middle').

**18. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  19. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$**

**20. $\mathbb{W}xe6$**



Winning back a pawn. For the dominating effect of this 'octopus' see Chapter 1.

**20... $\mathbb{W}fe8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  22.d5**

White is virtually winning as the black rooks are no match for the octopus. White did indeed go on to win without too many problems.

## Long-Term Positional Compensation

Of course you also have the possibility of this sacrifice while playing Black, although it seems to occur less often.

**Deysi Estella Cori**

**Jiri Stocek**

Benasque 2012

**1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  g6 3.c4  $\mathbb{Q}g7$**

**4.g3 c5 5.d5 d6 6. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  0-0 7.0-0**

**e6 8. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  exd5 9.cxd5  $\mathbb{W}e8$**

**10. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  11. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$**

**12. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  13.a4 b6 14. $\mathbb{Q}e1$**



**14...fxe3**

The white pieces have a hard time finding better squares, while his pawn structure also leaves little room for a sensible plan. Perhaps the pawn on d5 is even something of a burden: without it White would have much better piece play.

**15.fxe3 ♜f6**

Immediately striving for the beautiful e5-square.

**16.♘c4 ♛a6 17.♗b3 ♛xc4**

**18.♕xc4 a5!**

A fine concept, depriving White of the possibility of creating room for his rooks with a4-a5 – similar to the 5th game of the 1972 Spassky-Fischer match – see Chapter 13: ‘Never Mind the Holes’.

**19.♗f4 ♛e7 20.♗a3?!**

20.♗ad1.

**20...h5 21.♗b3 ♛b8 22.h3 ♜d7**

**23.♗d1 ♛e5 24.♗f3**

White hasn’t managed to improve his position. In fact, h2-h3 and the rook manoeuvre to b3 seem to have worsened his game.

**24...♜e8 25.♗h1 ♛g7 26.♗e4**

And this just loses material.

**26...c4 27.♗c3 b5**

Black should instead have played 27...f5 28.♗d2 ♛xc3 29.bxc3 ♜c5, with a very comfortable position. Still, in the game as well White couldn’t handle Black’s active pieces and lost his way.

## With an Isolated d-Pawn

In this kind of position the exchange sacrifice also isn’t uncommon. Look, for instance, at the game Topalov-Anand, Wijk aan Zee 2003. There Topalov had some long-term compensation (but eventually lost). In this game, on the other hand, the sacrifice can almost be regarded as a lengthy winning combination.

**Michał Krasenkow**

**Eduardas Rozentalis**

Krynica 1997



**12...♝e6**

A very natural developing move, but as you know by now it’s right within the reach of the Bishop Snatcher.

**13.♕d3!**

First of all provoking weaknesses on the kingside.

**13...g6**

The obvious 13...♝bd7 runs into 14.♗xf6 ♜xf6 15.♗g5, simply winning a pawn with a big advantage.

**14.♗h6 ♜e8 15.♗e6**

Snatch and grab!

**15...fxe6 16.♗g5**

Very direct play, threatening to take on...h7! After the ‘standard’ 16.♗e5, occupying the usual outpost, White would also be much better and would threaten to take on g6.



**16...Wa5 17.b4!**

Very cool. After the immediate 17.Qxh7 Black can still play 17...Wh5.

**17...Wf5**

17...Qxb4 18.Qxh7 and now the Qf6 is unprotected.

**18.We3**

1-0

### The Preparatory e5-e6

**Betty Arosemena**

**Emilia Horn**

Istanbul 2012

Here we have yet another recent example from the Women's Olympiad. Initially the low-rated white player skilfully sets up an attack.

**1.e4 e5 2.Qf3 Qc6 3.d4 exd4**

**4.Qc4 Qf6 5.0-0 d6 6.Qxd4 Qe7**

**7.Qxc6 bxc6 8.Qc3 0-0 9.Qe1**

**Qd7 10.Qf4 Qb6 11.Qd3 Qe8**

**12.e5 d5**



**13.e6!**

As a result of this sacrifice the light squares on the kingside will be more vulnerable and White will follow up with the forceful Wh5. Topalov-Kamsky, Sofia 2006, is a high-level example with the preparatory e5-e6, where Kamsky's king also remained very vulnerable afterwards. There Topalov proved to be more successful.

**13...Qxe6 14.Qxe6 fxe6 15.Wh5**

The black king has almost no defenders.

**15...Qf6**

15...g6 16.Qxg6 loses right away, but 15...h6 16.Qxh6 Qf6 was a better try. White is still better after 17.Qf4 e5 18.Qg6 exf4 19.Qh7+ Qf8 20.Qh8+ Qe7 21.Qe1+.

**16.Qxh7+ Qf8 17.Qg6! e5**

**18.Qe1 Qd7 19.Qg3 Qe7?!**



**20.Qxe5**

Much stronger was 20.f4, undermining Black's pawn protection, as 20...e4 runs into the simple 21.Qxe4.

**20...Qxe5 21.f4 Qd6?**

21...Wh8.

**22.Qxe8 Wxe8 23.Qxe8?**

A fundamental mistake. With Black's king in the open the queens should of course remain on the board: 23.fxe5+ Qxe5 24.Qd1! and White is still better.

**23...Qxe8 24.fxe5+ Qxe5**

**25.Qa4?? Qxh2+ 26.Qxh2?**

**Qxe1**

0-1

## Opening Theory

Balazs Bakos

Julia Horvath

Budapest 2011/12

Because of the resulting structures, some openings are more likely to lead to a bishop snatch. Here's one that's purely theoretical.

- 1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 g6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5
- 4.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  5.e4  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  6.bxc3
- $\mathbb{Q}g7$  7. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  c5 8. $\mathbb{B}b1$  0-0 9. $\mathbb{Q}e2$
- cx d4 10.cxd4  $\mathbb{W}a5+$  11. $\mathbb{Q}d2$
- $\mathbb{W}xa2$  12.0-0 b6 13. $\mathbb{W}c1$   $\mathbb{W}e6$
14. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{W}xe4$  15. $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{W}b7$
16. $\mathbb{Q}b4$



- 16... $\mathbb{Q}e6$

Somewhat strange, you might think, if this is the first time you're seeing this position. However, it's by far the most popular move for releasing the pressure against e7.

17. $\mathbb{Q}xe6!$ ?

17. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  fxe6 18. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{W}d5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xg7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xf8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  is another matter of theoretical debate.

- 17...fxe6 18. $\mathbb{Q}g5$

Now Black has to reckon with both  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  and  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ . He has a tough choice, because he seems to have several reasonable moves. He may at some favourable point return the exchange, while White in turn will try to win back the

exchange at a suitable moment, without losing his initiative along the way.

- 18... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$

A difficult position. White has very active pieces, two strong bishops and an octopus. Here too, the black king may come under attack. White should now create some concrete threats as otherwise Black will complete his development.

20. $\mathbb{W}e3$

The immediate 20.d5 is also plausible.

- 20... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$
- $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  23.d5  $\mathbb{Q}a5$



So now White will get back the exchange, but he'll need to retain an initiative for the lost pawn.

24. $\mathbb{Q}b5!$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  25. $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$

26. $\mathbb{Q}e5!$   $\mathbb{W}c5$

26... $\mathbb{W}xd5?$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  exf6 28. $\mathbb{W}h6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  29. $\mathbb{Q}e7$   $\mathbb{W}d1+$  30. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  wins for White.

26... $\mathbb{W}d8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  exf6 28. $\mathbb{W}a3+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  29.d6 is also horrible for Black.

27. $\mathbb{W}xc5$  bxc5 28. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  exf6

- 29.d6

White is much better. The far advanced d-pawn and the resulting immobility of the black pieces of course easily outweigh Black's extra pawn.

- 29... $\mathbb{W}d8$  30.d7  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  31. $\mathbb{Q}e8$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$

32. $\mathbb{Q}c6$  h5 33. $\mathbb{Q}f1$

and White won.

## More Weak Pawns And Strong Squares

Vadim Zviagintsev  
Ivan Rozum

St Petersburg 2012

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 e6  
4.0-0 ♔ge7 5.♗e1 a6 6.♗f1 d5  
7.d3 h6 8.a4 g6 9.♗bd2 ♗g7  
10.♗b3 b6 11.a5 0-0 12.axb6  
♗xb6 13.exd5 exd5 14.♗e3 d4  
15.♗f4 ♜d8 16.♗fd2 ♗e6



**17.♗xe6!**

'Obviously!' you'll now say.

**17...fxe6**

White's compensation is clear. Almost all the black pawns are weak or at least vulnerable. White has strong squares on the e-file and also on c4.

**18.♗c4 ♕a7 19.♗d6 ♗d5 20.♗g4**

The white pieces are coming out to beautiful squares with such ease. Just as in the Stocek game, here the black pieces are also more or less hampered by the pawn on d4.

**20...♔f7 21.♗xc5**

It was also possible to delay this capture and bring the light-squared bishop into the game as well with 21.g3.

**21...♗f8 22.♗e4 ♗f6 23.♗xf6+ ♕xf6 24.♗c7 ♜d7 25.♗g3 ♜aa7 26.♗e4 ♜d5 27.♗e2**

Finally activating his last piece. Black can only hang on to his weaknesses.

**27...h5 28.♗f3 ♜c5 29.h4 e5**



**30.♗e2**

30.b4! was even stronger: 30...♗xb4 31.♗xe5 ♔f7 32.♗xd4 is completely winning, but after the text move White also eventually won.

### Summary

Now this sacrifice will be part of your 'chess education' alongside the better known exchange sacrifice on c3 – the 'Knight Chopper'. It does occur in all kinds of positions. The opponent will end up with a backward pawn, sometimes doubled and sometimes even isolated. Often the sac also creates access to the kingside, paving the way for an attack on the king.

## Chapter 26

# King's Rook Grabs Knight

$\blacksquare x \square f6$  is a familiar positional exchange sac which often also targets the enemy king. Let's have a look at this mirrored version of the regular Sicilian exchange sac on c3. Of course, a chapter could have been devoted to the latter as well. However useful that would be, that sac is more likely to be common knowledge. At the highest level Kasparov even suggested that Movsesian, after allowing ... $\blacksquare x \square c3$  in his game against Kasparov in Sarajevo 2000, did not understand the position well.

### Going for the Attack

Let's start with another high level fragment, which is not that clear-cut.

Vladimir Kramnik

Vasiliy Ivanchuk

London 2013

1.d4  $\square f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\square f3$  d5 4.g3  
 $\square b4+$  5. $\square d2$   $\square d6$  6. $\square g2$   $\square bd7$   
 7.0-0 0-0 8. $\square c2$  c6 9. $\square c3$  dxc4  
 10. $\square fd1$   $\square c7$  11. $\square g5$   $\square e7$  12.a4  
 e5 13.a5 exd4 14. $\square f4$   $\square d6$   
 15. $\square xd4$   $\square xf4$  16. $\square xf4$  h6  
 17. $\square f3$  b5 18.axb6  $\square xb6$



Here Kramnik confidently played

19. $\square xf6!?$  gxf6

White doesn't even have a pawn for the exchange (strictly speaking, he is one

pawn down), but Black's pawn structure is completely shattered. You could compare this to Andersson-Zwirs, which featured the related  $\blacksquare x \square c6$ :



17. $\square xc6$  bxc6 18. $\square e5$   $\square d5$  19. $\square xg6$

Also, the black rooks are still inactive, which is always a good incentive for an exchange sacrifice.

20. $\square d4$   $\square d7$  21. $\square d2$

Kramnik thought about 21. $\square a5$  (a queen's rook lift to a5!) but refrained from it because of 21... $\square d6$  (21... $\square d5$  22. $\square xd5$  cxd5 23. $\square xd5$  yields White nice play for the exchange; 21... $\square ae8!?$ ). Still, after 22.e3 White seems to have decent positional compensation. 21. $\square e4$  also seems a sensible move to consider.

**21... $\mathbb{Q}g7$** 

Black could have exchanged queens with 21... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  22. $\mathbb{W}xh6$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  23. $\mathbb{W}xg5+$   $f\text{x}g5$  24. $\mathbb{H}a5$ , but Kramnik also thought it was White who would be playing for a win in this endgame. At first this may be difficult to grasp – no more attacking chances, so where is my compensation? – but White will gain a pawn and has active pieces. On the other hand, Black's queenside pawns remain weak and his pieces still have to find their way into the game. All in all, it seems to be an equal fight between material and positional advantages.

**22. $\mathbb{Q}xc6?$** 

Very imaginative: White forces his knight to the strong square f5 at the cost of an entire rook. 22. $\mathbb{H}a5$  would have been a more solid and steady attempt to build up the position. In the game Kramnik couldn't prove more than equality.

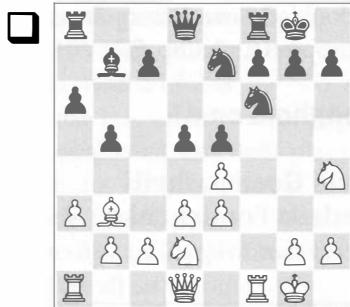
22. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  23. $\mathbb{Q}f5+$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  24. $\mathbb{H}a5$   
 $\mathbb{H}h8$  25. $\mathbb{W}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}ag8$  26. $\mathbb{H}c5$   $\mathbb{W}d7$   
27. $\mathbb{W}f4$   $h5$  28. $\mathbb{Q}h4+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  29. $\mathbb{Q}f5+$   
 $\mathbb{Q}g6$  30. $\mathbb{Q}h4+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  31. $\mathbb{Q}f5+$   $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$

**A Stronghold on f5**

In the following example White establishes control of the weak square in front of the doubled pawns much more easily and manages to put a knight on f5.

**Evgeny Naer****Petr Zvara**

Czech Republic 2011/12



**13. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $gxf6$  14. $exd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$**   
**15. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$**

It would have been more natural to keep the knight on e7 to cover the important f5-square. 15... $\mathbb{W}xd5$  might seem scary because White will play  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  some day, but Black can defend. However, eventually it all boils down to approximately the same after 16. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  (16... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ ) 17. $\mathbb{W}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  18. $\mathbb{H}f1$ , when Black will have to play 18... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  anyway.

**16. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{H}b8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{H}b6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}f5$**

White has beautiful squares for his knights. Black's rooks are (passively) defending – no open files. So what's an exchange actually worth here?

18... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  19. $\mathbb{H}f1$   $\mathbb{H}c6$  20. $\mathbb{H}f2$   $\mathbb{W}d7$   
21. $\mathbb{W}h5$   $\mathbb{H}g8$  22.c3  $\mathbb{W}e6$  23. $\mathbb{W}f3$   
 $\mathbb{H}g6$  24.h4  $\mathbb{H}g8$  25.h5  $\mathbb{W}d7$   
26. $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{H}g7$  27. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{H}g8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}h6$   
 $\mathbb{H}g7$  29. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  30. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{H}g8$   
31. $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{H}g7$  32.b3 f5 33. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   
 $\mathbb{H}g8$  34.c4 bxc4 35.bxc4  $\mathbb{Q}f6?$

After a stubborn defence Black collapses. 35... $\mathbb{Q}f4!$  would still have undermined the position of the  $\mathbb{Q}f5$ .

**36. $\mathbb{Q}h6$**

36. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{W}xf6$  37. $\mathbb{Q}e7!$ . After the text move Black escaped into a rook ending

with 36... $\mathbb{Q}g4+$  37. $\mathbb{Q}xg4$   $\mathbb{W}xg4$  38. $\mathbb{W}xg4$   $\mathbb{B}xg4$ , but lost anyway.

Another example where Black immediately succeeds in getting a knight in front of the doubled pawn is Burg-Sammalvuo, 28th European Club Cup, Eilat 2012.

## A Stronghold on d5

**David Gochelashvili  
Svetlana Fomichenko**

Novomikhailovsky 2011



Black has just retreated his knight from b4 and White now seized his chance:

19. $\mathbb{Q}xc6!$   $\mathbb{W}xc6$  20. $\mathbb{B}xf6!$   $gx6$

21. $\mathbb{Q}cd5$

In three moves, including the exchange sac, White has established a superb knight on d5: a perfect post from which to target Black's weakened kingside. White has ample compensation and is clearly better, even close to winning.

21... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

Vacating the e6-square for the rook. Other moves are hopeless: 21... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  23. $\mathbb{W}xf6$  and now 23...d5 fails to 24. $\mathbb{Q}f5$ .

22. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}e6$

24. $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  25. $\mathbb{W}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$

26. $\mathbb{B}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  27. $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$

28. $\mathbb{W}g7$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  29. $\mathbb{W}xh7$

White has regained his material with simple moves. The bishop on f6 is not

in any way worse than any of the black rooks and it will clearly support the advance of the passed h-pawn. White won shortly.

## The Ideal Square for the Knight?

**Luis Marcos Bronstein**

**Artur Jussupow**

Lucerne 1982



White has just retreated his knight from h4, tempting Black to execute an exchange sac. The black knight already seems ideally placed: from e6 it can choose between either f4 or d4. But bear in mind that the position is fairly open, which helps the pair of rooks and presents some danger for the black king.

23... $\mathbb{B}xf3$

The simple and centralizing 23... $\mathbb{W}d6$  would have been better still.

24. $\mathbb{gxf3}$   $\mathbb{B}c8$

Protecting the pawn on c5, so Black's knight will be free to move.

25. $\mathbb{We3}$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  26. $\mathbb{Mad1}$   $\mathbb{Me8}$

27. $\mathbb{W}f4$   $\mathbb{W}f7!$

White has centralized his rooks. Fortunately for Black, his centralized knight also provides sufficient compensation for the exchange in the endgame.

28. $\mathbb{W}xf7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  29. $\mathbb{B}xe8$   $\mathbb{Q}xe8$

**30.♘xd4**

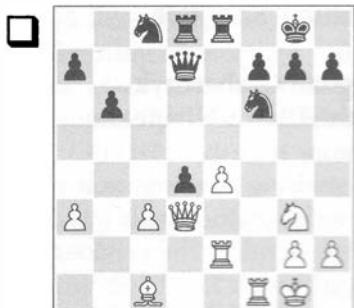
White decides to return material to simplify the position. True, after 30.♔g2 ♜b5 White can activate his rook with 31.♖e1, but after 31...♝xb3 32.♗e7+ ♔c6 33.♗xg7 ♛xa5 34.♗xh7 ♛c4 Black's queenside pawns look threatening. In the game, however, White messed up the endgame and lost.

30...cx d4 31.♘f5 d3 32.♔f1 ♜h5  
33.♘d4 g5 34.♔e1 h6 35.♔d2  
♜g6 36.f4 gxf4 37.♘e6 f3  
38.♘d4 ♜e4 39.♔e3 ♔c7  
40.♘xf3 ♜xf3 41.♘xf3

0-1

**A Typical Nimzo-Indian Blow**

**Sipke Ernst**  
**Migchiel de Jong**  
Hoogeveen 2012



Black has just taken on d4, trying to exploit his opponent's set-up in a Nimzo-Indian, but is faced with...

**20.♗xf6!?**

A characteristic sacrifice in this opening. Compare for instance Donner-Kupper, Clare Benedict 1967 and the similar Alexandrov-Stupak, Belarus Championship, Minsk 2010.

**20...gx f6 21.♘h5**

Of course this square on the edge of the board is also an excellent place for the knight to attack Black's weakened kingside (see Chapter 6: 'A Not So Innocent Bystander'!). The other white pieces are all set to join in.

After the seemingly logical 21.♘f5 the strong knight can be challenged with 21...♔h8 22.cxd4 ♘d6!.

**21...♔d6**

The complications after the alternative 21...♗e6 22.♗g3+ ♔f8 23.♔h6+ ♔e7 24.♘g7 seem good for White, but the text move brings Black no relief either.

**22.♘f4 ♜c6**

22...♗c5 23.♘xf6+ ♔h8 (23...♔f8 24.♔h6+ ♔e7 25.♘d5+) 24.♗h3 and White wins.

**23.♗g3+ ♔f8 24.♗g7+ ♔e7**

**25.e5!**

Of course, 25.♘xf6 ♜xf6 26.♔g5 was also possible. Ernst goes for the initiative and hunts down the black king.

25...♔e6 26.exf6+ ♔d5 27.c4+ ♜xc4 28.♗xf7+ ♔c5 29.♗c7+ ♔d5 30.♗f7+ ♔c5 31.♗c7+

**32.♗e5+ ♜xe5 33.♘xe5+ ♜c6 34.♕c7+ ♔b5 35.♕xd8 d3 36.♘d7+ ♔a6 37.f7 ♕c5+ 38.♔f1**

1-0

## In the Endgame

Nazar Yaremko

Nazar Firman

Lvov 2006



In Kramnik-Ivanchuk and in L.Bronstein-Jussupow we have already seen how positional compensation can persist into the endgame. In this example the queens are already off when Black decides to grab the knight on f3 with his rook.

**16...♜xf3!?**

When I first saw this move in this theoretical position I was rather taken aback. Black sacrifices a full exchange in broad daylight.

**17.gxsf3 ♖h4**

As in the previous game, the knight attacks from the edge. Remember also Chapter 4, 'Dominating from the Edge'. Of course, the variety of possibilities for the knight can be a real nuisance for the defender.

**18.♗e3 exd4 19.♗d3 c5**

Black has gained a pawn by force, and White has to make preparatory moves before developing any further since he

is a bit troubled by a possible ...c5-c4 and a knight fork on f3.

**20.♔f1**

20.f4 seems a better move, making room for the rook on the third rank and preventing a black blockade on the dark squares (e5 and f4).

**20...♝g6**



**21.f4?**

White panics and sheds yet another pawn to complete his development. He had to open the position for his rooks with 21.c3! ♜e5 22.♗d1 ♜xf3 23.♔e2 ♜e5 24.cxd4 cxd4 25.♗xd4 and Black's compensation is inadequate.

**21...♜xf4 22.♗xf4 ♜xf4**

Now Black already has the better of it, with his two pawns and a killer knight on f4. He won just before the time control.

## Theoretical Sacrifices

Bogdan Grabarczyk

Liviu-Dieter Nisipeanu

Germany Bundesliga 2012/13

When studying openings you may get some useful practice with this kind of exchange sacrifice. The previous example began with a Ruy Lopez (Exchange Variation) and we have already mentioned the Nimzo-Indian as well. In French (Winawer) positions you are also likely to encounter the sac (take

Petkevic-Vitolinsh, USSR 1976), certainly in the French Tarrasch (early examples from Tal against Rovner, Riga 1955, and Bronstein against Keres in the Alekhine Memorial 1956) or in the Grünfeld with  $\mathbb{W}b3$  (see, for instance, Kuljasevic-Jankovich, Croatian Championship 2013). Here is one from the theoretical lines of the Giuoco Piano.

**1.e4 e5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3. $\mathbb{A}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$**   
**4.d3  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  5.0-0 0-0 6. $\mathbb{M}e1$  d6**  
**7.a4  $\mathbb{Q}h8$  8.a5 a6 9.c3  $\mathbb{Q}g8$**   
**10.d4 f5 11.dxe5 fxe4 12. $\mathbb{M}xe4$**



### 12... $\mathbb{M}xf3$

Somewhat surprising as the knight is still covered by the queen.

### 13.gxf3

Because 13. $\mathbb{M}xf3$  fails to 13...d5.

### 13... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 14. $\mathbb{M}f1$

A bit passive. An earlier game saw 14. $\mathbb{M}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  15. $\mathbb{M}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$ , while Fedorchuk-Giri, Germany Bundesliga 2011/12 (without a4-a5 and ...a7-a6), saw the simplifying 14. $\mathbb{M}xe5$  dxe5 15. $\mathbb{M}xd8$ .

### 14... $\mathbb{Q}g6$

Black brings his knight into the game, also aiming for control of the square in front of the doubled pawn.

**15. $\mathbb{M}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  16. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$**



In no time Black has taken firm control of the dark squares on the kingside.

**17. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}h4$  18. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$**   
**19. $\mathbb{M}e4$**

This leads nowhere. Better was 19. $\mathbb{M}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  (19... $\mathbb{W}xf4$  20. $\mathbb{M}d4$ ) 20. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ , fighting for f4.

**19... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  20. $\mathbb{M}b4$   $\mathbb{M}f8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}g2$**

Continuing the passive plan.

**21... $\mathbb{W}g5$  22. $\mathbb{M}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}8e7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}e2$**   
 **$\mathbb{Q}d5$  24. $\mathbb{M}e4$   $\mathbb{W}h5$  25. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{W}g5$**   
**26. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc1$  27. $\mathbb{M}g4$   $\mathbb{W}f6$**   
**28. $\mathbb{Q}xc1$   $\mathbb{Q}df4$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$**

It is clear that Black has manoeuvred much better than his opponent. All of the black pieces are geared up.

**30. $\mathbb{M}g3$  h5 31. $\mathbb{M}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  32.c4**  
 **$\mathbb{Q}d7$  33. $\mathbb{M}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}xh3$  34. $\mathbb{M}xh3$  h4!**  
**0-1**

### Summary

Having seen all these examples you are more likely to look beyond material considerations in your own games, when an occasion for a similar sac arises. The positional compensation comes from the shattered pawn structure. Important squares (from a white perspective after  $\mathbb{M}xf6$ ) are d5 (strong square or weak pawn) and f5 (strong square in front of the doubled pawn).

## Chapter 27

# Central Avalanches

There are numerous ways to sacrifice a piece in order to obtain a massive pawn centre which can subsequently slowly start to roll. We will look at some typical ... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  sacrifices, but also at the remarkable silent piece sac  $\mathbb{Q}d4$ . Let's start them rolling. Rawhide!

### Asking for It

**Josef Mudrak**

**Vladimir Malaniuk**

Nachod 2012

1.e4 d6 2.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  e5 4. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   
 $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  5. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  6.h3 0-0 7. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   
a6 8.a3 b5 9.d5  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  10.g4 c6



### 11.g5

Of course this is calling for the obvious, though White's real mistake was his insipid opening followed by the over-ambitious g2-g4. After 11.dxc6  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  White has to defend the e4-pawn, and then Black can continue with ...h7-h6 and prepare a further opening of the centre.

11... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  12. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  cxd5 13. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   
d4 14. $\mathbb{Q}c1$

The alternative was 14. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ , but here the pieces get in each other's way even more, which is one of the strong points

of such an impressive pawn centre. Sethuraman-Klein, Cultural Village 2011, followed a similar scenario; here Black actually achieves the same with a pawn less.

### 14...f5!

Keep 'em rolling, gradually improving.

### 15.gxf6 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}g5$

Trying to gain some space by exchanging a piece, but perhaps it was best to look for complications and move the piece which was the most troublesome for White (also a logical follow-up to the previous move): 17. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  h6 18.b4!?, fighting for the centre!

### 17... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7$

Now White's pieces are still tied down: the queen can't yet move while the  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  no longer has an obvious square.

### 19.b4?!

Making it easy for Black. 19. $\mathbb{Q}h2$  could, for instance, be met with 19... $\mathbb{Q}h4$ . Perhaps best was the counter-sacrifice 19. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  exd4 20. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  though after 20... $\mathbb{Q}f3$  White's position isn't enviable.

### 19... $\mathbb{Q}a4$

Good enough, but 19... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ , striving for f4, was even stronger. After...

### 20. $\mathbb{Q}h2$

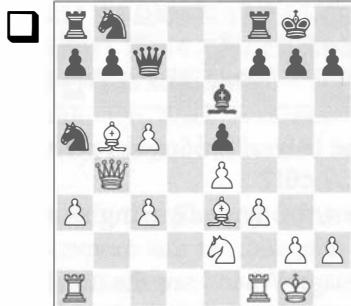
... Black also had several possibilities to decide the game, which he did in a mere seven moves.

## More of a Surprise

**Joseph Gallagher**

**Zhao Xue**

Gibraltar 2013



Here White's piece sac may come out of the blue for you:

**20.♘d4!**

However, for those familiar with either this Nimzo line or the famous Grünfeld game Sakaev-Belov, the move won't come as a surprise. Also check out Miedema-Swinkels, which saw the inverted version, when Black tried to drive the knight on d4 away with ...e6-e5, which was naturally ignored (f4-f5!).

But there's even more to the game position: by bravely avoiding a move repetition Black has reached the exact position of the famous game Anand-Wang Hao, Wijk aan Zee 2011 (though strangely enough my ChessBase search options won't do the trick!?).

This game revived interest in the knight sac, of which Timman says in an interesting article devoted to the subject in New In Chess 2011/2: 'As a rule you can say this knight sacrifice is only successful if Black's position leaves something to be desired.' This is of course a rather general statement, which resembles what Willy Hendriks ridicules as

'free advice' in his book *Move First, Think Later*. Of course it is hard to provide general guidelines about when to execute this sac. So just remember the pattern and assess the possibility when it comes along!

**20...exd4**

Anand also considers 20...♝c8 21.♞f5 ♜bc6 22.♗a4 ♜xf5 23.exf5 ♜e7, when White may choose between 24.♖ad1 and 24.f6.

**21.cxd4**

Here Anand has more concrete comments in the same New In Chess magazine:

'White has got very strong pawns in the centre, but in addition the pawn on c5 is a very powerful wedge, restraining Black's queenside, and White has the bishop pair while Black's knight is sidelined on a4. All this together should give White more than enough compensation.'

**21...♜bc6 22.♗c3 ♜e7 23.♗f2**

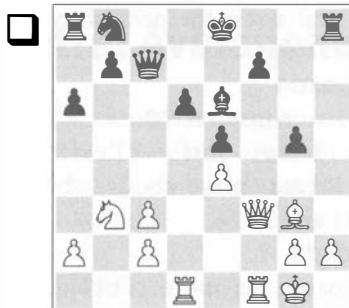
Actually the first new move. Anand played 23.♖fd1.

After the text-move Gallagher also kept the better position until he lost track just before the 40th move, when Zhao Xue was eventually rewarded for her bravery.

## Another Unexpected Turn

In the same year I saw Merijn, my teammate in the Dutch League for Accres Apeldoorn, fall victim to the same knight sac, but this time in a middlegame from a completely different opening. That may be some sort of an excuse, but especially after he himself introduced the 'pawn steamroller' terminology in the ChessVibes magazines he should have been more on his guard...

**David van Kerkhof  
Merijn van Delft  
Netherlands 2011/12**



**18.♘d4! exd4 19.cxd4**

White's pawn centre may not look too impressive, but Black immediately faces problems with development as his two (no more!) minor pieces are short of squares. As a result his king won't be safe for long. Merijn soon succumbed, though David's 23rd move almost spoiled an otherwise good game.

19...♝c4?! 20.♗f6! ♜g8 21.♕xd6 ♜d8 22.♗e5+ ♜d7 23.♗f6? ♜c6 24.♗f5+ ♜e8 25.d5 ♘e7 26.♗e5 ♜g6 27.♗xg6 fxg6 28.♝c5 b6 29.♝e3 ♜d7 30.♗h8+ ♔f7 31.♗xa8 ♜g4 32.♗e1 ♜xe4 33.♗f2 ♜xd5 34.♗a7 ♜d6 35.♗xb6 ♜e2 36.♝c5

1-0



Here the 19-year old Spassky played:  
**16...♞c6!?**

Taimanov, the third player in this play-off for the title, said: 'At this moment I was on the stage. When I saw the move being played on the demonstration board I couldn't believe my eyes. I rushed to the table and convinced myself that not only had Spassky put his knight en prise, but he also had an undisturbed look. I have to admit that never before or since has a move made such an impression on me. The knight just gives itself up for a pawn and the possibility of the ♘c7-e6-d4 manoeuvre.' Spassky's trainer Tolush admitted: 'Spassky, acknowledging that his position was strategically lost, decided on the piece sacrifice hoping to obtain chances to create counterplay.' Objectively the sacrifice is insufficient, but I couldn't resist including this example before returning to the more trivial examples. In the game it had the desired effect anyway – it was also pure (psychological) chess! Let me add that this move came first on the list that chess curiosity collector Tim Krabbé made of 'the 110 most fantastic moves ever played'.

**A Complete Shocker**

**Yury Averbakh**

**Boris Spassky**

Leningrad 1956

1.c4 ♘f6 2.♘c3 g6 3.e4 d6 4.d4 ♗g7 5.♗e2 0-0 6.♗g5 c5 7.d5 ♛a5 8.♗d2 a6 9.a4 e5 10.g4 ♘e8 11.h4 f5 12.h5 f4 13.g5 ♛d8 14.♗g4 ♘c7 15.♗xc8 ♛xc8 16.♗f3

17.♗xc6	bx <sup>c</sup> 6	18.♗h4	♗e8
19.♗xg6	hx <sup>g</sup> 6	20.♗g4	♗b8
21.♗d1	♗e6	22.♗a3	♗d4
23.♗ah3	♗f7	24.♗c3	♗fe8
25.♗h2	♗xc4	26.♗xg6	♗e6
27.♗xd4	hx <sup>g</sup> 6	28.♗f5	♗e6

**29.♗xe6+ ♜xe6 30.♘c3 d5  
31.f3 ♜b3 32.♕h3 c4 33.♘d2  
♗g6 34.♗g1 d4 35.♘a5 ♜f8  
36.♗g4 ♜d6 37.♘c2 ♜d7 38.g6  
♗db7 39.♘e1 c5 40.♗gh4 ♜g7  
41.♘a5 c3 42.bxc3 ♜a3 43.cxd4  
exd4 44.♗xf4 ♜a2+ 45.♘d3 ♜b1  
46.♗h1 ♜xa4 47.♘c2 ♜b5 48.e5  
d3+ 49.♘xd3 ♜xf4**

And although Black was now an exchange up, the game still ended in a draw.

## Capturing the Enemy Centre

**Efim Geller**

**Vereslav Eingorn**

Riga 1985

**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 ♜b7  
10.d4 ♜e8 11.♗bd2 ♜f8 12.♗c2  
g6 13.d5 ♜e7 14.♗f1 ♜g7 15.b3**



Here's a classic Ruy Lopez kind of sac, which was also used (unsuccessfully) by Spassky, albeit when he was at a much more advanced age than in the former example – the 1st game of the 1992 Sveti Stefan match against Fischer. Another high-level example is Polgar-Sokolov, Hoogeveen 2003, which could have turned out better for Black.

**15...♗xe4!?** 16.♗xe4 f5 17.♗c2 e4

Strangely enough this impressive game never made Black's 13th move as popu-

lar as 13...♗b8. Apart from one other game only Navara seems to have reached this position. He tried 17...♗xd5 and eventually lost after the weird-looking 18.b4 – but hey, who would have done better against Magnus? Maybe you could try anyway, starting with 18...c5, preparing ...e5-e4 after depriving the white knight of the d4-square.

**18.♗d4 ♜xd5 19.♗e2?**

Giving up another pawn. Tukmakov is among those who have explained that Geller was a brilliant attacker, but also disliked passive defence. Apart from that, he had trouble handling theoretical novelties at the board, being himself a thorough researcher. Eingorn gives 19.♗d2 and then analyses three moves – all complicated stuff with no clear conclusions. After 19...b4 (or 19...c5; or 19...♗f6) play may continue, for example, 20.c4 ♜xd4 21.cxd5 ♜h4 (if 21...♗xa1 22.♗xa1 ♜xd5 23.♗xb4 White is at least not worse – Tukmakov) 22.♗e3 ♜xa1 23.♗xa1 unclear (Eingorn).

**19...♗xc3 20.♗xc3 ♜xc3 21.♗b1 c5!**

Watch them roll! Black won, of course.

## Counter Sacs

**Alexander Morozevich**

**Oleg Korneev**

Pamplona 2006



**16...h6**

Just as in the first example this seems to be asking for it. Still, although the pawns are far advanced, things aren't so clear. The pawns won't easily advance any further, the black pieces have reasonable squares and there is the possibility of counter sacrificing on d5.

In general, a counter-sacrifice can often be a valid antidote to a sacrifice. In this regard Eingorn mentions his game against Hodgson as an example. Even so, Black may consider other moves, like 16...exd5 17.Qf4 and now, for example, 17...Qd7 (although 17...Qd6 18.Qxd6 Qxd6 19.e5 Qdd8 20.exf6 gxf6 21.Qf3 d4 would be more in keeping with our theme) 18.e5 d4.

**17.Qxf7 Qxf7 18.fxe6 Qc7**

**19.Qf4 Qd6 20.Qxd6 Qxd6**

**21.Qf5 Qc7**

Black could have contemplated countering with 21...Qfxd5 22.exd5 Qxd5, after which, somewhat unexpectedly, there doesn't seem to be a move that yields White a clear advantage.

**22.a4 b4 23.a5 bxc3 24.axb6**

**Qxb6 25.Qh1 Qhe8 26.Qf1 Qb8**

**27.Qd1 Qa7 28.h3 Qb4 29.Qa1**

**29...Qxe4**

This amounts to another counter-sac, though this decision was perhaps based on an oversight. 29...Qd4 was a safer

choice and could have led to a repetition of moves after 30.Qa4 Qd2 31.Qf2 Qe3 32.Qf3.

**30.Qxe4 Qxe4 31.Qf7 Qxd5??**

31...Qxe6 32.dxe6 Qxe6 was called for, when Black is hanging on: 33.Qxb3 Qxb3 34.Qxb7+ Qxb7 35.Qxd6 Qxb3

**36.Qf7+ 1-0**

**From the Opening**

**Ricardo Leyva  
Alejandro Moreno**

Las Tunas 1996

**1.e4 e5 2.Qf3 Qc6 3.Qb5 a6  
4.Qa4 Qf6 5.0-0 b5 6.Qb3 Qb7  
7.Qe1 h6 8.d4 d6 9.c3 g6 10.a4  
Qg7 11.axb5 axb5 12.Qxa8  
Qxa8 13.Qa3 b4 14.Qc4 0-0  
15.d5 Qa5 16.cxb4 Qxb3  
17.Qxb3 Qb8 18.Qfd2**



The main strategic idea can be found in many openings. Another 1.d4 line is 1.d4 d5 2.Qf3 Qf6 3.c4 dxc4 4.Qc3 c5 5.e4 e6 6.d5 Qxe4 7.Qxe4 exd5, which enjoyed a short-lived popularity. Some 1.e4 e5 openings feature the same idea as well: some lines in the King's Gambit, Cochrane's 4.Qxf7 in the Russian Game, or 4.Qxe5 in the Four Knights (don't ask me what it's called), or the mirrored ver-

sion in the Vienna Four Knights: 4.g3  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ . In the two latter cases a counter-sac can be a simple solution for avoiding the complications of facing a strong pawn centre. My favourite Old Arkhangelsk often features strong pawn centres at a later stage – witness, for instance, Mortensen-Shirov. Here's another one, though the broad outlines suggest the position might also be reached from another Ruy Lopez.

**18... $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$**

19... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  and White loses g2, as Black also threatens to take on c4 followed by ...d6-d5.

**19... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  20. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}g3$**

**d5 22. $\mathbb{Q}a5$  c5 23. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  cxb4**

**24. $\mathbb{Q}db3$**



White is trying to develop, but his pieces remain awkwardly-placed.

**24... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  26.h4 h5  
27. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  d4 28. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}c2$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$   
 $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  30. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}a2$  31. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$   
32. $\mathbb{Q}e7$**



A lot could be said about every single move, but by this stage Black has outmanoeuvred his opponent.

**32... $\mathbb{Q}xa5$**

Regaining material, but leaving the knights as they were – in each other's way – would have been much more productive. 32...d3 and 32...e4 would both have been thematic and terribly strong moves. Shortly after the text Black even lost the game. He should have kept 'em rolling!

**33. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  34. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$   
35. $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  36. $\mathbb{Q}b8$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$   
37. $\mathbb{Q}a8$  f5 38. $\mathbb{Q}f6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  39. $\mathbb{Q}a7+$   
 $\mathbb{Q}g7$  40. $\mathbb{Q}f8$**

1-0

### Summary

Remember the characteristic patterns like ... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  or the silent sac  $\mathbb{Q}d4$ . The resulting positions will often be complex, but the avalanche of central pawns is bound to give a strong practical initiative. As always after sacrifices, counter-sacrifices are a possibility that has to be taken into account.

## Chapter 28

# Fishing for the Hook

With a kingside pawn structure characterized by the move h2-h3 (...h7-h6), you should beware of a quick opening of lines (for example, after opposite-side casting, by an advance of the opponent's g-pawn) or certain straightforward tactical motifs. For now we will look into another pattern: a long-term sac on h3/h6!

**Maxime Vachier-Lagrave  
Richard Rapport**

Biel 2013



In this position Vachier-Lagrave was taken by surprise:

**15...♝xh3 16.gxh3 ♜c8!**

You would expect such a bishop sac to be followed up with a rook check on the g-file or at least the queen sortie to h4. Neither is possible here, yet after this quiet queen move White is unable to defend h3 as 17.♗g2 is met by 17...♝f4+, while 17.♔h2 is illegal.

**17.♝xd4**

White wants his queen to join the defence. Other options leave him worse. As the players pointed out after the game, 17.♔f1 runs into 17...♜xh3+ 18.♔e2 ♜f4!, after which 19.♝xd4 ♜ae8+ 20.♜xe8 ♜xe8+ 21.♚e3 ♜xe3+ 22.fxe3 ♜g2+ leads to mate.

On 17.♝xd4, 17...♜xh3 is also sufficiently dangerous: the threat of 18...♝f4 forces White to take a draw with 18.♔e5 (18.♔e3 d4 19.♝d2 ♜h4; 18.♝e5 ♜xe5 19.♝xe5 ♜h4) 18...♜g4+ 19.♔h1 ♜h3+ as 20.♔h2 fails to 20...♝h4 again.

17.♝h2 ♜xh3 18.f4 ♜xf4 wins for Black.

**17...♜xh3 18.♝f3**

... and a draw was agreed after some bishop checks by Black.

After the game Vachier-Lagrave declared that he had seen the possibility of 15...♜xh3, but simply felt it could not be correct as White had so many options. So he underestimated his opponent's possibilities: but surely he was familiar with this kind of sacrifice?!

## The Classic Example

When I saw the previous game, it did not immediately dawn upon me that Rapport's sacrifice had a very famous predecessor in the shape of a spectacular victory by Bronstein over Keres.

**David Bronstein**

**Paul Keres**

Gothenburg 1955

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6 3.♝c3 ♜b4  
4.e3 c5 5.♔d3 b6 6.♝e2 ♜b7**

**7.0-0 cxd4 8.exd4 0-0 9.d5 h6 10.♗c2 ♜a6 11.♗b5 exd5 12.a3 ♜e7 13.♗g3 dxc4**



This game can be found in many sources, but the introductions differ considerably. Romanovsky talks about the obscurity, the difficulty and the riskiness of the sacrifice, and Kasparov calls it an uncommonly bold and pretty sacrifice. Valery Beim, on the other hand, says this about the next move: 'striking, although this sacrifice is a quite routine idea, but here its correctness is questionable at first, second and third glance!'

So where lies the truth? The idea is not unknown – it appears in Anderssen-Morphy, 1858, for one! Calling it a routine idea in 1955 with such a tense follow-up as in the game seems a bit strong. This is what Bronstein himself said: 'the unexpected sacrifice of a bishop promises a very strong attack. After 15.♗d2 the white attack unfolds by itself.' (*The Sorcerer's Apprentice*)

**14.♕xh6 gxh6 15.♗d2 ♗h7**

Here Black's queen cannot join the defence that quickly. Much of the debate over the years has been about 15...♗c5. As regards the correctness of the resulting variations, Kasparov's thoughtful comment seems most to the point: 'I do not rule out that White's play can be improved somewhere, but it is probable

that Black has sufficient defensive resources. It is another matter whether anyone would be capable of finding them at the board' (*My Great Predecessors, Volume II*).

**16.♗xh6 f5 17.♗xf5 ♕xf5**

Vachier-Lagrave did not have this possibility (but of course he had a safe way to draw earlier on).

**18.♗xf5 ♔f8 19.♗ad1 ♔g5  
20.♗h5 ♕f6 21.♗d6 ♔c6  
22.♗g4 ♔h8**



**23.♗e4!**

And Bronstein went on to win a great game.

Both Bronstein and Kasparov suggest that Keres forgot about ♗c1 and had focussed on 14.♗f5. This may very well be possible, though Keres himself had had the opportunity to play the same sac before, against Giffer at the Olympiad in 1936, yielding him an easy win (admittedly in a less complicated situation)!



**15.♗xh6!**

## A Modern Classic

Sergey Karjakin  
Shakhriyar Mamedyarov

Zug 2013

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 dxe4  
4.♘xe4 ♜f5 5.♘g3 ♜g6 6.h4 h6  
7.♘f3 ♘d7 8.h5 ♜h7 9.♗d3  
♗xd3 10.♗xd3 e6 11.♗d2 ♘gf6  
12.0-0-0 ♜e7 13.♗b1 ♜b6  
14.♗he1 0-0 15.♘f5 ♜b4



Let's not be too dogmatic and compare this: a long-term knight sac on the same square.

**16.♘xh6+!**

A novelty, where formerly 16.♗xb4 and 16.♘e3 were played. Karjakin's comments in New In Chess 2013/4 are revealing: 'of course it is not so difficult to find this move in preparation. Modern engines are so strong that whereas previously this would have been regarded as an intuitive sacrifice, now this is a position which can be analysed, if not to a result, then at least to a clear assessment. However, at the board (...). And indeed, in *The Enigma of Chess Intuition* Beim also wrote about Bronstein-Keres: 'it is in this type of position that intuition is king!' The fact that Karjakin had computer assistance beforehand does not make the concept less fascinating, and, although perhaps extremely

difficult to grasp, it can broaden your understanding of the dynamics of the game.

16...gxh6 17.c3 ♜a3 18.♗c1  
♗fe8 19.g4

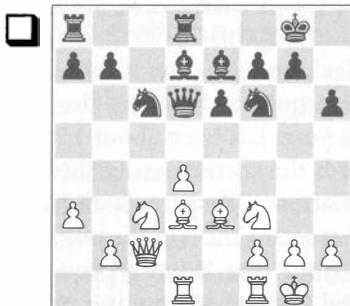


And Karjakin went on to win. I recommend a thorough analysis of this game and its concept! At the first attempt without computer help, that is!

19...♘h7 20.c4 ♜f8 21.g5 hxg5  
22.♘xg5 ♜xg5 23.♗xg5 ♔h8  
24.♗g1 ♜c7 25.♗f3 f6 26.♗f4  
♗d6 27.♗g3 ♘c5 28.♗xd6  
♗h7+ 29.♔a1 ♘e4 30.♗h4 ♜g8  
31.f3 ♘g5 32.♗f4 ♜f5 33.♗xf5  
exf5 34.♗e7 ♜xf3 35.♗gf1 ♜g3  
36.d5 cxd5 37.cxd5 ♔g7 38.♗d3  
♗f7 39.♗d6 ♔h2 40.♗xg3 1-0

## Back to Basics

Eduardas Rozentalis  
Philipp Schlosser  
Germany Bundesliga 1999/00



Let's now have a look at a less spectacular execution of the same idea.

**14.♕c1**

Here White first aims his queen at h6 before sacrificing his bishop. 15.♗f4 is also a threat.

**14...♝d5**

14...♝f8 15.♗f4 ♕e7 16.♖fe1 is no picnic in view of the upcoming d4-d5.

**15.♝b5**

First the black queen is driven even further away from the action, but unfortunately in this case this does not appear to be the right approach. Compare also the last two examples from Chapter 10, 'The Beastly Bishop', where an offside queen was also the reason to sac on the opposite wing. Here it is more important for the knight to remain active on c3. The immediate 15.♗xh6 gxh6 (a move like 15...♜ac8 would be better) 16.♗xh6 f5 (16...♝f6 17.♝g5) 17.♗c4 would have yielded White a strong attack.

**15...♛b8      16.♝xh6      gxh6**

**17.♛xh6 f5**

17...♝f6 18.♝g5 ♛e8 19.♖fe1 wins for White.

**18.♛g6+ ♜h8 19.♝c4**

Now it takes longer to build up pressure against the central knight, though of course White could have taken a draw by perpetual.

**19.♛f4 20.♝xd5 exd5 21.♜d3**

**♛g4**



**22.♝g5**

22.♛h6+ ♜g8 23.♝c7.

**22...♜xg5 23.♜h3+**

23.♜d6 ♛e8.

**23...♛xh3 24.gxh3 ♜g8**

At this point Black was fine, though he later lost the coordination of his pieces and the game.

## Theoretical Discussion

**Dennis de Vreugt**

**John Markus**

Hoogeveen 2004



I played in the same tournament and witnessed Markus winning against his much higher rated opponent with the bishop sac on h3. I seem to remember De Vreugt being surprised by Black's next, but my database today shows yet another Markus game with this position from one year earlier.

**15...♜xh3 16.gxh3 ♜d7**

A slight difference: here White's king is able to defend the pawn on h3, but Black now also attacks the ♜b5.

**17.c4**

Now the rook can come to a3 to defend the kingside from the side.

**17...♛xh3 18.♝g5 ♜g3+ 19.♚h1**

**♛h4+ 20.♚g2**

This is a key position (a 'tabiya', as the Russians say).



**20...h6**

20... $\mathbb{Q}f4+$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{exf}4$  is the continuation which has been seen most frequently. After 22. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  (or 22. $\mathbb{Q}h3$  g5) 22... $\mathbb{W}g4+$  23. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{B}fe8$  gives Black reasonable play.

**21. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  22. $\mathbb{B}a3$**

A logical move, following up on the idea of move 17. 22. $\mathbb{W}e2$  f5 23. $\mathbb{B}a3$   $\mathbb{B}f6$  24. $\mathbb{B}h1$  was given by Khalifman/Soloviov and tried in the rapid game Karjakin-Radjabov, but after 24... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  the position remains unclear. So you either decide to play it intuitively like Bronstein or start your analysis here like Karjakin.

**22...f5 23. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{B}f6$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xe4?$**

24... $\mathbb{B}h1$  leads to the variation in the notes to move 22.

**24...fxe4 25. $\mathbb{B}g3$   $\mathbb{B}f3!$**

and Black was already clearly better as 26. $\mathbb{B}xf3$  fails to 26... $\mathbb{W}g4+$ .



Black's queen has just moved to b6 to create some space and seek counterplay over there. White, of course, now strikes on the other side.

**16. $\mathbb{Q}xh6$   $\mathbb{gxh}6$  17. $\mathbb{W}d2$**

Compared to our first example (by the way, Vachier-Lagrave was playing in this team-tournament as well – it is just possible he noticed this game), Black is much worse off. His queen cannot come to the rescue and his knight on f6 has no useful squares.

**17... $\mathbb{B}e5$**

Running away with 17... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  leads nowhere after 18. $\mathbb{W}xh6+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  19. $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ ; 17... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  18. $\mathbb{W}xh6$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}h7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}f5+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  21. $\mathbb{B}ae1$  also wins for White.

**18. $\mathbb{W}xh6$   $\mathbb{Bxc}4$**

18... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  is now met by 19.f4 and if the rook moves along the file, 20. $\mathbb{Q}f5$  wins.

**19. $\mathbb{B}xc4$   $\mathbb{W}b2$**

And here 19... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  also fails to 20. $\mathbb{B}ab1$ . As a result Black's light-squared bishop remains out of play.

**20. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  21.f4  $\mathbb{B}xd5$**

**22. $\mathbb{B}ad1$   $\mathbb{W}c3$  23. $\mathbb{Q}e4$**

23.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  24. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  seems the simplest continuation. Amongst other things White threatens to play  $\mathbb{Q}f5$ .

**23... $\mathbb{W}d4$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$**

Again 24.cxd5 seems strong: 24... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  (24... $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ ) 25. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}xe4$  26. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ .

## Another Offside Queen

Grzegorz Gajewski

Sergey Fedorchuk

Hagenau 2013

1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$   
4. $\mathbb{W}c2$  d6 5.e3  $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  6. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   
 $\mathbb{Q}xc3+$  7. $\mathbb{W}xc3$  b6 8. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$   
9.f3 c5 10.e4 0-0 11.0-0 h6  
12.b3  $\mathbb{B}e8$  13.d5  $\mathbb{exd}5$  14. $\mathbb{exd}5$   
b5 15. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{W}b6$

**24...♝xf6 25.♞f3 ♝e4 26.♝df1?**

Again passing up the possibility of 26.cxd5 ♞xd3 27.f5, after which White is still much better. The text enables Black to return material, after which Gajewski had to make a draw by perpetual.

**26...♛xd3 27.♞xd3 ♜xd3 28.f5 f6 29.♛g6+ ♔f8 30.♛h6+ ♔g8 31.♛g6+**

1½-½

We conclude with an earlier bishop sacrifice by Vachier-Lagrave himself, which perhaps influenced his reasoning in the first game.

### Maxime Vachier-Lagrave

Martyn Kravtsiv

Legnica 2013

**1.c4 e6 2.♝c3 d5 3.d4 ♜b4 4.♞f3 ♝f6 5.♝g5 ♜bd7 6.e3 c5 7.♝e2 dxc4 8.♜xc4 0-0 9.0-0 cxd4 10.♜xd4 ♜b6 11.♜h4 ♜xc3 12.♞fd1 ♜e7**



**13.♞d3**

He refrains from the obvious 13.bxc3 ♜xc4 14.♛xc4 and deliberately opts for the sacrifice and its ensuing complications.

**13...♝h6 14.♝xh6 gxh6 15.♛xh6**

No quiet follow-up here, as the queen is already on h4 and ready to capture a second time. This makes it a bit easier to contemplate the sacrifice beforehand.

**15...♝e4!?**

After 15...♝xb2 White may naturally resort to a perpetual check. He may also try to continue the battle with 16.♛g5+ ♔h8 17.♜ab1, though it seems he will obtain no more than equality.

**16.bxc3 f5 17.♝xe4 fxe4 18.♝g5**

**♛g7 19.♛xg7+**

The exchange of queens does not promise White much. 19.♛h5 ♜d7 20.♜xd7 also seems possible, but apparently White thought it safer with the queens off the board. All in all, the sacrifice does not seem to offer many chances here, which might have contributed to Vachier-Lagrave's underestimation of Rapport's sac in the first game. Who knows? But he was certainly familiar with the general ideas.

**19...♛xg7 20.♝xe4 e5 21.♝d6**

**♛e6 22.♝xb7 ♜ac8**

Black is very active and the game ended in a draw.

### Summary

The h6 hook in the kingside structure may trigger you to think about a long-term piece sac, the most obvious indication being a battery of queen and bishop on the c1-h6 diagonal. However, the queen may also join in later and, as in the Karjakin game, a knight sac should not be ruled out either. When assessing the resulting positions you should look at the remaining attacking material or watch out for an offside queen.

## Chapter 29

# The Colossal Knight

Sometimes a knight is bluntly planted in the middle of the board, on the protected square d5 – an offer Black can't refuse. This is a familiar sight in several openings, notably the Sicilian. Let's investigate how it works. Mind you, despite its powerful impression the sacrifice does not always guarantee immediate success.

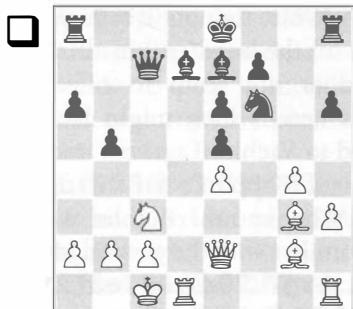
### Open e-File: the King in Danger

We start off with a quick success by one of my teammates in the Dutch competition, GM Roeland Pruijssers.

**Roeland Pruijssers**

**Hugo ten Hertog**

Amsterdam 2012



**17.♘d5!**

Sometimes this knight leap is just a pseudo-sacrifice, winning back a piece immediately, for instance a knight or bishop on c6. Here it serves to open up the e-file, after which the black king has no safe refuge. Still, the sacrifice may come as a surprise to you since for the moment Black has safeguarded the e-file with a doubled pawn. However, as you will see, soon Black's king will be in trouble and a lot of black pieces will be hanging. My all-time favourite ex-

ample of opening up the e-file with long-term compensation is Stein-Furman, Moscow 1969. Recently another team-mate of mine fell victim to this idea in similar fashion (Thesing-Zwirs, Vlissingen 2012).

**17...exd5 18.exd5 ♘d6**

Castling offers no solution: 18...0-0 19.d6 ♘xd6 20.♖hf1 already wins back material, for example 20...♔g7 (relatively best is 20...♗ae8 21.♗xf6 ♗e6) 21.♕xa8 ♗xa8 22.♗f3.



**19.♗xe5!**

Now a nice combination follows, which Roeland had to foresee earlier on.

**19...♘xe5 20.d6 ♖c5 21.♗d5!**

Winning. White will get back all his investments.

**21...♘xd5 22.♗xe5+ ♔d8**

**23.♖xh8+ ♔e8 24.♗e1 ♔d7**

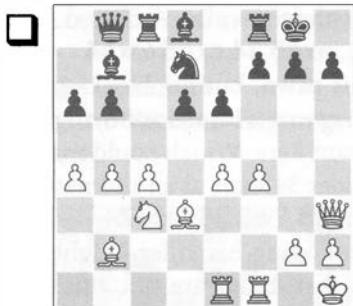
**25.♘xd5 ♖xd5 26.♗e7+ ♔c6**

**27.♗c3+ ♔xd6 28.♗c7#**

**A Castled King – the Diagonal b1-h7****Dmitry Kryakvin****Suri Vaibhav**

New Delhi 2010

Different opening, different king's position, different motif, same colossal move.

**21.♘d5!**

Here the knight is not attacking anything, but all white pieces are now set for the attack.

**21...exd5**

21...♝e8 22.e5 ♘f8 23.♗f6+.

**22.exd5**

With an obvious threat. Of course not 22.♕xd7 dxс4.

**22...f5**

The only move to stop both 23.♕xd7 and 23.♕xh7#.

**23.♘xf5 ♘xf5****24.♝e8+! ♘f8**

24...♔f7 25.♕xf5+ ♔xe8 26.♗e1+ ♔e7 27.♗e6; 24...♝f8 25.♗e6- ♔h8

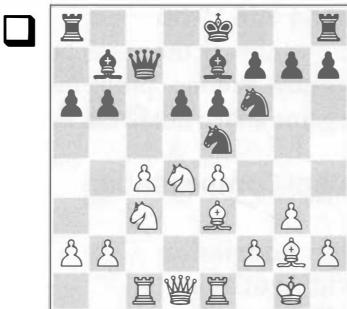
26.♗xg7+! (26.♕xd7) 26...♔xg7 27.♗xd7+ ♔g8 28.♗f3.

**25.♗xf5 ♔f6 26.♗e6+ ♔h8****27.♗xc8****27.♗e1!.****27...♗xc8 28.♗xc8 ♕xc8****29.♗xf6 gxsf6 30.♗e1**

White is winning. His rook can invade Black's position and he may create a passed pawn on the queenside.

**Opening the c-file****Arkady Naiditsch****Georg Meier**

Dortmund 2012

**13.♘d5!?**

Here the sacrifice results in an open c-file. Not uncommon in Hedgehog positions, just like the rook on c1 facing the queen on c7 is. Still, the text move is actually a novelty, implying a long-term sacrifice, where you could say the former two examples were more of a combinational nature.

**13...exd5 14.cxd5 ♕d7 15.♘f5 0-0**

15...g6 16.♗xe7 ♕xe7 17.f4 ♘eg4 (17...♗ed7 18.e5) 18.e5.

**16.f4**

For the moment White has just one pawn for the piece. Black's position is quite cramped though – many of his pieces have very limited mobility.

### 16... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 17. $\mathbb{h}4!$ ?

17. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ , taking another pawn and preserving the spatial pressure, was the alternative.



### 17... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

Effectively returning the piece.

### 18. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 19. $\mathbb{h}5$

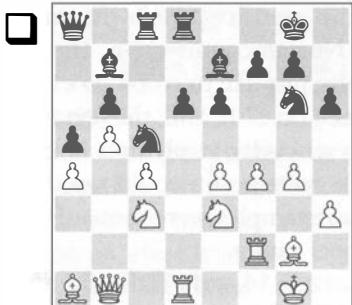
So White wins back the piece, but Black subsequently had no problems at all and the game ended in a draw.

## Positional Compensation

Zaven Andriasian

David Arutinian

Dubai 2012



### 33. $\mathbb{Q}cd5!$ ?

This one seems to render more obvious positional compensation than the previous example. Where a moment ago the black queen seemed to be actively participating in the pressure against the

e4-pawn, now it seems hopelessly out of place, far away from the real activity. Also the long diagonal a1-h8 combined with a white knight on f5 seems very forceful. Still, Black's position is not easily blown apart, and the correctness of the sacrifice remains doubtful. However, otherwise Black could have easily reinforced his position with moves like ... $\mathbb{Q}h4$  and ... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ .

### 33... $\mathbb{exd}5$ 34. $\mathbb{cx}d5$ $\mathbb{Qxa}4$

Not this pawn, but the blocking of the long diagonal with the annoying ... $\mathbb{Q}c3$  is relevant here. Which could make you reconsider 34. $\mathbb{exd}5$  as an alternative.

### 35. $\mathbb{Q}f5$ $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 36. $\mathbb{Q}xe7+$

By abandoning his killer knight White admits that things are not entirely going his way.

### 36... $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 37. $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $f6$ 38. $\mathbb{Q}d3$

### $\mathbb{Q}a4$ 39. $\mathbb{Q}a3$

More consistent seems 39. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}c1+$  40. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  41. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ , but Black can eliminate the danger along the long diagonal with 41... $\mathbb{Q}xa1!$ .

### 39... $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 40. $g5$ $f5$

Here 40... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  41. $gxf6$   $\mathbb{Q}a4!$  was a very strong retort.

### 41. $gxf6$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 42. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 43. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$

43. $\mathbb{Q}xg7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  44. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$

45. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  seems to equalize: 45... $\mathbb{Q}e8$

(the threat was  $\mathbb{Q}g6$ ) 46. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$

47. $\mathbb{Q}f5+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  48. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ .

### 43... $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 44. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$



Now White's attack has run into a dead end, but in the game it was Black who made the last mistake.

45.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{B}b4?$  46.  $\mathbb{W}a1$   $\mathbb{B}f8$   
 47.  $\mathbb{Q}xf8$   $\mathbb{W}xf8$  48.  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{W}xh6$   
 49.  $\mathbb{M}f7+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  50.  $\mathbb{M}xb7$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$   
 51.  $\mathbb{M}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  52.  $\mathbb{M}bg7$

1-0

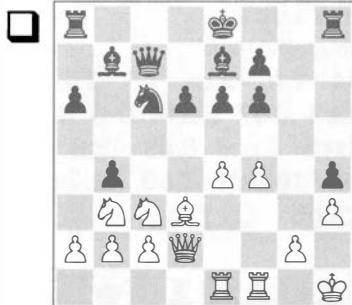
on the e-file is still imminent; Black has a hard time finding a safe spot for his king and coordinating his pieces.

- 20...  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  21.  $\mathbb{M}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  22.  $\mathbb{M}fe1$   
 $\mathbb{Q}e8$  23.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{M}h7$

23...  $d5$  24.  $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{M}h7$  (24...  $\mathbb{M}g8$   
 25.  $\mathbb{W}xh4$ ) 25.  $\mathbb{M}4e2$  transposes.

24.  $\mathbb{W}g4$   $d5$  25.  $\mathbb{M}4e2$   $\mathbb{W}b6$

Black's is still a piece up, but he can hardly move. Here a better option was 25...  $\mathbb{W}d7$ , to bail out after 26.  $g3$  with 26.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}xg4$  28.  $hxg4$   $hxg3+$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{M}h2+$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}xg3$   $\mathbb{M}xe2$  31.  $\mathbb{M}xe2$  with only a minimal advantage for White; 25...  $\mathbb{M}d8$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  (26.  $g3!$ ) 26...  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  27.  $\mathbb{M}xe7$   $\mathbb{W}xc2$ , intending 28...  $\mathbb{M}g7$ , is also not clear.



### 16. $\mathbb{Q}d5!?$ $exd5$ 17. $exd5$

Again the situation is not clear. Black can choose from several knight moves.

#### 17... $\mathbb{Q}a7$

After 17...  $\mathbb{Q}b8$  18.  $\mathbb{M}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  19.  $\mathbb{M}fe1$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  White wins back material: 20...  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  (20...  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  can be met with the patient 21.  $\mathbb{Q}f5$ ) 21.  $\mathbb{M}xe7+$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  22.  $\mathbb{M}xe7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$ .  
 17...  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  would transpose to the game.

#### 18. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}f5$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}e4$

20.  $\mathbb{M}e3$  seems the logical try. After 20...  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  21.  $\mathbb{M}fe1$   $\mathbb{M}g8$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  23.  $\mathbb{M}xe4$   $\mathbb{M}e8$  24.  $\mathbb{W}e2$  the position is similar to the game continuation: Black is in trouble. An alternative method to exchange the light-squared bishops is 20.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $axb5$  21.  $\mathbb{W}xd5$ . Here too White has fair chances. The doubling of rooks



### 26. $g3!$

The g-file will be opened. Suddenly Black is dead meat.

26.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  28.  $\mathbb{W}g8+$   
 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  29.  $\mathbb{M}xe2+$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  30.  $\mathbb{M}xe8$   
 $hxg3$  31.  $\mathbb{W}f8+$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  32.  $\mathbb{M}c8+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$   
 33.  $\mathbb{W}e8+$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  34.  $\mathbb{M}d8+$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$   
 35.  $\mathbb{W}e3+$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  36.  $\mathbb{M}d6+$

1-0

### Sicilian Specialty

Levan Aroshidze  
 Joan Fluvia Poyatos

Barcelona 2012

- 1.e4 c5 2.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d6 3. d4 cxd4  
 4.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  a6 6. h3 b5  
 7.  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  8.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$  e6 9. 0-0 b4



**10...d5!**

Of course, you will think now, the position calls for this characteristic sacrifice, which so often occurs in open Sicilians. Yet, remarkably, it was only in 2008 that this move came to the fore. Before that White had prevented Black's 9....b4 with moves like 8.a3 or 8.g5.

**10...exd5 11.exd5 e7 12.c6**

Not the most popular move. 12.g5 is more frequently played, for example: 12...fd7 13.c6 c7 14.xe7 xe7 15.d4 f8 16.f4 a5 17.fe1 b6 18.e8+, Nakamura-Ninov, France ChT 2008, and White was better. In both cases, naturally the open e-file, but also the weakness of square c6 play an important role. In fact, the position strongly reminds of the abovementioned Stein-Furman game.

**12...xc6 13.dxc6 d5?!**

The wrong way to conquer the pawn on c6. 13...c7 is better. After 14.g5 Black can return the piece with 14...0-0.



**14.g5 e4?**

Consistent but mistaken.

**15.c7!**

The refutation.

**15...d7 16.xd5 xd5  
17.c8+ d8 18.e1 d7  
19.xe4 xc8 20.xd5+ f8  
21.f4 e7 22.e2**

White is completely winning, which he did in the end.

## A Colossal Black Knight

**Rafael Leitao**

**Darcy Lima**

Porto Alegre 2008

**1.d4 f6 2.c4 e6 3.f3 d5  
4.c3 e7 5.f4 0-0 6.e3 c5  
7.dxc5 xc5 8.a3 c6 9.c2  
a5 10.d1 e8 11.d2 e5  
12.g5**



**12...d4!**

For a change, here we see Black planting a colossal knight in the centre. This is by far less common. Funnily enough this example also features another structure than a Hedgehog or a Sicilian. The basis remains the same though: the e-file is opened while the white king is still in the middle. It was Karpov who introduced this concept (starting with 10...e8) against Kortchnoi in the famous Baguio match.

**13.exd4**

Apparently Leitao didn't know his classics. In a later game against Mecking, Leitao (just like Karpov) decided to refuse the sacrifice with 13.  $\mathbb{W}b1$ .

**13...exd4+ 14.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$** 

A nice illustrative line is 14.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}h4$  d3 16.  $\mathbb{W}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  17.  $\mathbb{W}xd5$  (17.  $\mathbb{W}c2$  dx $c4$ ) 17...  $\mathbb{Q}f5$ .

**14...dxc3 15.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{W}a4$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  dxc4 17.  $\mathbb{W}xc3$** **17...cxb3**

17...  $\mathbb{W}xb3$  18.  $\mathbb{W}xb3$  cxb3 was a safe alternative, where Black just keeps his extra b-pawn.

**18.  $\mathbb{W}xc5$  gxf6 19.  $\mathbb{M}d4$   $\mathbb{W}a6$  20.  $\mathbb{W}h5$** 

Now Black's weakened kingside gives White counterchances.

**20...f5 21.  $\mathbb{M}d8$   $\mathbb{W}a5+$  22.  $\mathbb{M}d2$   $\mathbb{W}e5$  23.0-0**

Finally,

**23...  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  24.  $\mathbb{W}g5+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  25.  $\mathbb{M}fd1$   $\mathbb{W}g8$** **26.  $\mathbb{W}e3?$ !**

A questionable decision. Now Black's king becomes a strong piece instead of a vulnerable one, and eventually Lima managed to convert his extra pawn:

**26...  $\mathbb{W}xe3$  27. fxe3  $\mathbb{M}ac8$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  29.  $\mathbb{M}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  etc.****Summary**

$\mathbb{Q}d5$  (or ...  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  !) can be a powerful trust, which may sometimes quickly lead to a decisive advantage. However, often a complex battle will arise, where spatial advantage and the vulnerability of the opponent's king are important factors of compensation. Keep an eye on the opening of different files or diagonals; strong squares for the white knight on c6 and f5 are also typical.

## Chapter 30

# A Practical Piece Sac

g2-g4 ♜f6xg4 h3xg4 ♜xg4. This sacrifice seems so natural: for a piece you capture two pawns in front of the enemy king with a strong initiative or a bind as a result. Still in many cases, as you might expect, the outcome is not clear at all. Let's see in which ways play may develop.

### A Different Start

Most often the pattern will come about when White removes the pin on the f3-knight by advancing the g-pawn. Occasionally other move sequences may lead to the same result, like in this game.

**Tanguy Ringoir  
Dimitri Reinderman**

Amsterdam 2013

1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♜g7  
4.e4 0-0 5.h3 d6 6.♗g5 ♜a6  
7.♘f3 e5 8.d5 ♜e8 9.♘e2 ♜h5  
10.g3 f5 11.exf5 gxf5 12.♘h4  
♘f6 13.♗c2 c6 14.g4 cxd5  
15.cxd5 f4 16.♘xa6 bxa6 17.0-0  
f3 18.♘e4



Here Black decided to punish White for his set-up with g2-g4, or possibly he was just not satisfied with his position after regular moves. Anyway, after...

**18...♜xg4 19.hxg4 ♜xg4**

... according to the tournament website, both players thought they had a very good game. This is a clear indication that the position is hard to judge. The value of the long-term compensation has to be assessed. It is a sheer impossibility just to rely on calculation. Black has a nasty pawn on f3, which makes the ♜h4 a feeble piece. Still, White has many pieces around his king, which make it hard for Black to gain ground on the kingside.

**20.♘g3**

A logical move, preventing Black from putting his queen on h5, though on the other hand the chances of moving the knight from h4 to f5 in the near future don't seem very realistic. Keeping the knight on its central square is also possible.

20.♗c7 is an aggressive (computer?) move, hoping to seize the initiative by force. After 20...♝h5 21.♘e7 ♜f7 22.♗xd6 ♜f8! 23.♘f6+ (23.♘xf8? ♜xf8) leads to a draw: 23...♜xf6 24.♗xf6 ♜xe7 25.♗xe7 ♜e8 26.♗f6 ♜f8 27.♗e7; 20.♘h1 is an interesting try suggested by the tournament website: 20...♝h5 21.♗g1 h6 (21...♔h8 22.♗c7; 21...♜ac8 22.♗a4) can be met with 22.♘f6 ♜xf6 23.♗xg4+.

**20... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  21. $\mathbb{W}e4$**

After 21. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{B}xf6$  Black will follow up with ... $\mathbb{N}f4$  and the knight on h4 remains a big problem for White.

**21... $\mathbb{W}d7$  22. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$**

22... $\mathbb{W}e7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  24. $\mathbb{W}xg5+$   $\mathbb{W}xg5$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   $\mathbb{N}f4$ .

**23. $\mathbb{Q}xf6+?$**

23. $\mathbb{B}fc1!$ .

**23... $\mathbb{N}xf6$**

Again Black is threatening ... $\mathbb{N}f4$ , when the knight on h4 will be in big trouble.

**24. $\mathbb{W}g5$**

Coming to the rescue of the knight, but it is only a temporary solution to the problem.

**24... $\mathbb{N}f4$  25. $\mathbb{B}fe1$   $\mathbb{B}g8$  26. $\mathbb{W}h6$   $\mathbb{W}d8$**



Now the knight is still in trouble. Black won after...

**27. $\mathbb{B}e4$   $\mathbb{B}xe4$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}h5+$**

**29. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{W}xh4$  etc.**

### A Typical 1.e4 e5 Scenario

**Petr Velicka  
Mads Andersen**

Krakow 2012

Though the piece sac is universal, the most familiar type is probably the one seen in open games after 1.e4 e5, in a Ruy Lopez style position. Here is an example, actually resulting from a Giuoco Piano.

**1.e4 e5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$   
4.c3  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5.d3 a6 6. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}a7$   
7.h3 0-0 8. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  h6 9. $\mathbb{Q}h4$  g5**



**10. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$**

Natural enough, you might say. But sitting at the board in a real game you would have to judge the ensuing positions first. Is it really so self-evident? For one thing, in his game against Pruijssers, Wijk aan Zee C 2009, Howell opted for 10. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ , so think a bit longer and try to make your mind up again!

**10... $\mathbb{h}xg5$  11. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  12. $\mathbb{W}f3$**

Setting up a characteristic pin, which will require a lot of effort from Black to escape. Meanwhile White will also need time to bring his remaining pieces to bear on the position. So, again, the compensation is long-term.

**12... $\mathbb{d}6$  13. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{B}h8$  14. $\mathbb{Q}f1$**

14.h4, with the idea h4-h5-h6, is possibly better. Then 14... $\mathbb{B}h6$  is a standard way to break the pin by giving back some material, but this will often cost another pawn on f7 as well. Funnily enough, after 14... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  the computer comes up with the mirroring 15. $\mathbb{B}h3$ !.

**14... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  15. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$**

A sensible manoeuvre. Black is sitting on his money and tries to protect the  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  without shedding material.

**16. $\mathbb{Q}f5+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  17. $\mathbb{W}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$   
18.h4  $\mathbb{W}e7$**

## Improve Your Chess Pattern Recognition

The pin cannot be broken as 18... $\mathbb{W}g8$  of course fails to 19. $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  20. $\mathbb{W}g5+$ .



19. $\mathbb{H}h3$

A lift of the king's rook.

19... $\mathbb{H}ag8$  20. $\mathbb{H}f3$

Just in time to stop 20... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ . Anyway:

20. $\mathbb{H}h6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xh6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  22.g3 c6  
23.0-0-0 d5 24.exd5 cxd5 25.g4  
 $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}df6$  27. $\mathbb{Q}b3$

White is clearly better now. Materially he is fine and Black is still suffering with a vulnerable king. In the end Black miraculously escaped in a lost endgame.

Here is yet another example, the difference being that White has already castled. Not that this dissuades both players from offering their rooks in a similar way.

**Andres Rodriguez Vila  
German Della Morte**

Santos 2012



11... $\mathbb{g}5$

Elianov preferred 11... $\mathbb{Q}h7$  against Yury Vovk, Ukrainian Championship 2012.

12. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   $\mathbb{h}xg5$  13. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$   
14. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{H}h8$

14... $\mathbb{Q}b8$  would allow 15.d4 exd4 (15... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  16. $\mathbb{W}g3$ ) 16.e5 dxe5 17. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}fe1$ .

15. $\mathbb{Q}ae1$   $\mathbb{W}e7$

15... $\mathbb{Q}g6!?$

16. $\mathbb{H}e3!$

White brings his rook to f3, not minding 16... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  17.fxe3, of course.

16... $\mathbb{H}h6$

16... $\mathbb{Q}e6!?$  17. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{W}d7$ .

17. $\mathbb{Q}xh6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  18.d4  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   
19. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{H}g8$  20. $\mathbb{W}h4+$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$   
21. $\mathbb{W}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$

Again White is materially fine and went on to win, though here Black still has a harmonious position.

## Theoretical Developments

**Robert Hübner  
Alexander Beliavsky**

Munich 1990

1.e4 e5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3. $\mathbb{Q}b5$  a6  
4. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5.0-0 b5 6. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$   
7. $\mathbb{H}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  8.c3 0-0 9.d4  $\mathbb{Q}b6$   
10. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  d6



In this Arkhangelsk line the advance ...g7-g5 plays a prominent role, with

Beliavsky being the principal pioneer. Instead of 10...0-0 in the diagram position he has popularized the immediate 10...h6 11.♕h4 g5 12.♗g3 0-0!?, thus avoiding the knight sac on g5 with a castled king.

**11.♗d3**

And after 11.a4 h6 12.♕h4 Beliavsky has tried 12...g5, not fearing 13.♘xg5 hxg5 14.♗xg5 exd4.

**11..h6 12.♕h4 ♘a5 13.♗c2 c5**

**14.d5 c4 15.♗e2 g5 16.♗xg5**

A novelty at the time. Previously White had not dared to invest a piece for an enduring initiative.

**16..hxg5 17.♗xg5 ♘g7 18.♗f3**

**♗h8 19.♗d2 ♘c8 20.♗f1**

Black's knight on a5 is a bit of a problem and White could have focussed on that with 20.b4 cxb3 21.axb3 ♘b7 22.b4.

Another move was 20.♗d1 to prevent the alternative on Black's next move.

**20..♗b7**

Black could give back material and get rid of the pin: 20..♗h5 21.♗xh5 (21.♕xf6+ ♗xf6 22.♗xh5 ♗xf2+ 23.♔h1 ♗g1#) 21..♗xh5 22.♗xd8 ♗xd8 and Black is in the game.

**21.a4 ♗b8 22.axb5 axb5**

**23.♗g3?**



23.♗e3 was the correct knight move, after which White may gradually im-

prove his position. The text move runs into a surprising retort.

**23..♗g6!**

Now the pin disappears, and with it White's initiative.

**24.♗f5**

The point is that 24.h4 is met with 24..♗g4 25.♗xf6 ♗d7, a tactical resource I personally cherish (Hebden-Van de Oudeweetering, Hoogeveen 2003).

**24..♗xg5 25.♗g3+ ♗g4**

**26.h4+ ♗f6 27.♗xg4 ♗g8**

White no longer has any compensation and resigned some moves later.

## With h4-h5 vs the Fianchetto

**Peter Schreiner**

**Thomas Hebesberger**

St Veit 2012

**1.♗f3 g6 2.c4 ♘g7 3.g3 c5**

**4.♗g2 ♘c6 5.♗c3 e6 6.d3 ♘ge7**

**7.h4 h6 8.h5 g5**



**9.♗xg5 hxg5 10.♗xg5**

Here we have the same sacrifice, with long-term compensation, but in a completely different setting. It will not surprise you that it was the unorthodox mind of Romanishin who came up with this idea, although he was unsuccessful with it against Ribli, Amsterdam 1978. A recent example can be found in

the blitz game Mamedyarov-Carlsen, World Blitz Final 2012.

**10...f6 11.Qf4**

11.Qe3 was played by Romanishin.

**11...Qf5 12.Qe4**

White certainly has compensation. Besides the two pawns, Black's unsafe king position is an important factor. It will be a long time before the king can hide on the queenside, which still has to be developed.

**12...Qce7 13.g4 e5?!**

Black was probably afraid of moves like Qb5, but now White gets the d5-square for free. 13...Qh6 14.Qb5 e5 15.Qd6+ Qf8 16.Qe3 Qb6.

**14.Qd2 Qh6 15.g5 fxg5**

**16.Qxg5 Wa5 17.Qxe7**

17.Qg1! Qc6 18.Qd2 Qf8 19.Qd5 Qd8 20.e3.

**17...Qxe7 18.Qd2 Qf8 19.0-0-0**



White has completed his development, whereas Black clearly still has some work to do. Moreover, the black pieces lack any coordination.

**19...d6 20.Qdg1 Qe6?**

Losing on the spot. Black should have tried something like 20...Qd8, getting his pieces together, though it is probably already too late.

**21.Qxg7 Qxg7 22.Qg5+ Qf8**

**23.Qf6+ Qf7 24.Qxe6**

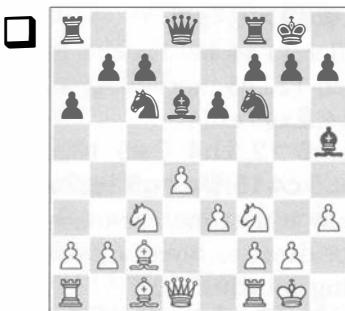
White has ample compensation for the exchange and won easily.

## Pressing Along the f-File

Emanuel Schiendorfer

Tamas Fodor jr

Plovdiv 2012



**11.g4 Qxg4 12.hxg4 Qxg4**

Yet another type of position, still featuring the same sacrifice. Here the knight sac is somewhat reminiscent of the amusing game De Labourdonnais -McDonnell, the 11th game of their 3rd London match in 1834.

**13.Qg2 f5!**

Black is going to try to open the f-file. Here the pawn is not hindered by a pin on the a2-g8 diagonal.

**14.Qh1 Qf6 15.Qd3 h6 16.Qe2 f4**

Here we go!

**17.Qh4?!**

This seems reckless and allows a nice stroke. Keeping the f-file closed with 17.e4 runs into 17...Qxf3+ 18.Qxf3 Qxd4 and Black gains another pawn, retaining a dangerous initiative. The best move seems to be the surprising 17.d5 Qe7 (17...fxe3 leads to great complications, for example: 18.dxc6 Qg6 19.Qf1 Qxf3 20.Qxf3 Qf5) and only now 18.e4 with a tense game.

**17...f3+**

Activating the rook on f8!

**18.Qxf3 Qf7**

Now there's nothing White can do to stop Black doubling rooks on the f-file, and he still has no time to develop his queenside.

**19.♘e4 ♖g6**



**20.♘g3?**

20.♘fg5!, returning the piece but limiting the damage, was White's last chance. Now he succumbed after...

**20...♜af8 21.♘h4 ♜xf2+ 22.♗g1 ♖g5 23.♕xg4 ♕xg3 24.e4 ♖f6 25.♘f3 ♖g6 26.♘g5 ♜f1+ 27.♖xf1 ♜xf1+ 28.♔xf1 hxg5 etc.**

## Total Annihilation

**Alexander Onischuk  
Andres Rodriguez Vila**

Campinas 2013

Naturally, you can also find examples where there is no question of a tense battle, but where the knight sacrifice is absolutely winning. Here the winner of our third example quickly goes down after a novelty from Onischuk.

**1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 c5 4.d5 exd5 5.cxd5 ♘d6 6.♗g2 0-0 7.♘c3 ♘c7 8.d6 ♘a5 9.♘h3 ♘c6 10.0-0 b6 11.♗g5 ♘xc3 12.bxc3 h6 13.♗h4**



White has launched a new idea in the Snake Benoni, pinning the knight on f6. After the preparatory ...h7-h6, Black now takes up the gauntlet.

**13...g5?**

This is just too much in this position. The black pieces are unable to join the defence as the pawn on d6 is splitting the board in two.

**14.♘xg5 hxg5 15.♗xg5**

White intends e2-e4-e5 and ♖a4-h4.

**15...♗g7 16.e4 ♖e8 17.♗xf6+!**

Probably other moves win as well, but I like this plain exchange.

**17...♕xf6 18.f4**

Now the black king is buried under an avalanche of pawns.

**18...♜g8 19.♗h5 ♗g7 20.e5 ♗f8 21.♖ae1 ♗a6 22.f5 ♗c8 23.e6 1-0**

## Summary

In itself this sacrifice is not a difficult pattern, though it may appear in different forms. The follow-up is often more difficult to assess, but may contain some characteristic patterns worth remembering. Take for example the rook manoeuvres in the Ruy Lopez positions, or the preliminary h2-h4-h5 as in the fifth example.

## Exercises

### Exercise 21



Can Black permit himself the retreat  
11... $\mathbb{W}d7$ ?

(solution on page 285)

### Exercise 22



(solution on page 285)

### Exercise 23



(solution on page 285)

### Exercise 24



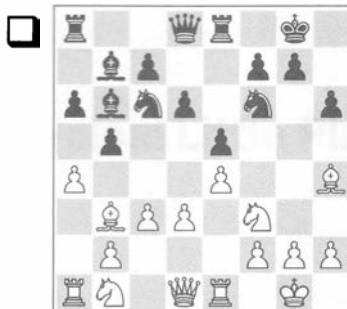
What rook move should Black play?  
(solution on page 286)

**Exercise 25**



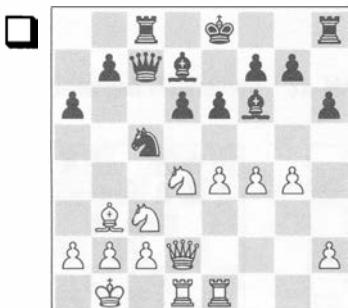
(solution on page 286)

**Exercise 26**



Would you decide on 13.♘d5 ?  
(solution on page 287)

**Exercise 27**



(solution on page 287)

**Exercise 28**



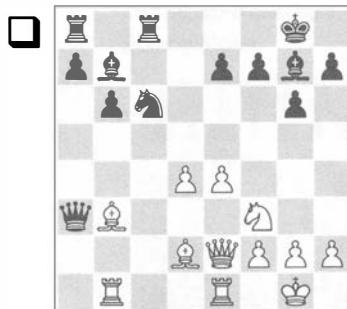
(solution on page 288)

**Exercise 29**



(solution on page 288)

**Exercise 30**



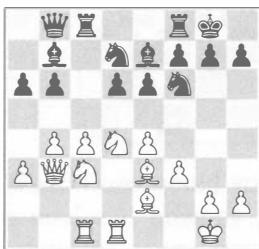
(solution on page 288)



## Part IV

### Typical Strategic Means: Typical Little Plans

31. The Nievergelt Manoeuvre



16...Qh8?! 17...Bg8 18...g5

32. Majestic Manoeuvres



23...Qd8! and 24...Qc7

33. Creeping Queens



19...Bb8! and 20...Ba7

34. The Second Option



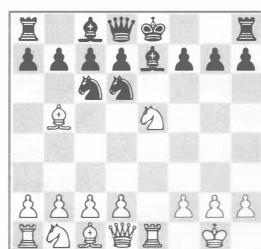
18...Bh2!

35. Dances with Knights



15...Nb1!?

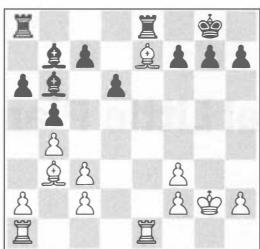
36 The No-Nonsense  
Bishop Move



7...Qd3!?

## Improve Your Chess Pattern Recognition

### 37. Offside Pieces



19...d5! 20...c6

### 38. A Double-Edged Exchange



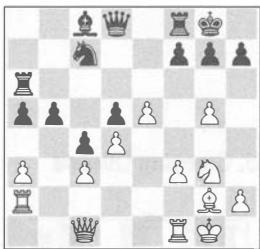
13.Qxc6 bxc6

### 39. The Big Decision



18.Qc1! (on queen exchanges)

### 40. The Runner and the Bulldozer



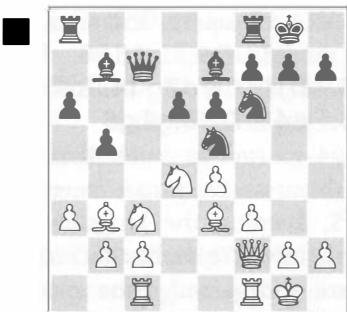
19.f4 b4

## Chapter 31

### The Nievergelt Manoeuvre

No less a player than Bobby Fischer didn't shy away from using it unexpectedly. Where did it originate and how should you adopt it? You may well have encountered this manoeuvre or perhaps even be familiar with it (though probably not yet with the name). Try to answer the question below and the manoeuvre we are about to investigate will soon be revealed.

**Julio Garcia Soruco  
Robert Fischer**  
Havana 1966



What move would you play here? The natural and obvious 14... $\mathbb{Q}c4$ ? What candidate moves did you choose between? You probably also considered several rook moves. Fischer, however, opted for...

**14... $\mathbb{Q}h8!$ ?**

Indeed, hardly the first move you would think of. Prophylaxis against a possible knight sacrifice on e6, perhaps?

**15. $\mathbb{Q}ce2 \mathbb{R}g8$**

Ah, so this was the intended follow-up!

**16. $\mathbb{Q}h1 g5$**

And now the entire concept has become clear. The idea is remarkable, both because the pawn structure in the centre isn't yet fixed and White could still

launch a dangerous counterstrike there, and because the manoeuvre is also rather slow, taking three moves and with no direct attacking goal.

In this particular case White is unable to come up with anything in the centre. In fact, here and on his last move Black could well have opted for ...d6-d5. After completing his manoeuvre Black wants to follow up with ...g5-g4, undermining White's pawn centre, opening the g-file and improving the scope of the  $\mathbb{Q}b7$ .

So how did Fischer arrive at this idea in the first place? We can only guess, of course, but it's at least perfectly possible that he'd seen the idea before, not in this particular position but maybe in a slightly different situation in a completely different opening. After all, it was known that he avidly studied all published games.

**17.h3  $\mathbb{R}g6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}g3 \mathbb{R}ag8$   
19. $\mathbb{Q}xe6?$**

So this game sees no real test of the idea ... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ , ... $\mathbb{R}g8$  and ...g7-g5. White misses a simple counterstrike and resigns three moves later.

**19...fxe6 20. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$   
21. $\mathbb{Q}xe4 \mathbb{R}xe6$**

And White called it a day.

## For General Use

**Robert Fischer**  
**Ulf Andersson**

Siegen exhibition 1970

The manoeuvre itself isn't restricted to one specific opening or to the side with the black pieces. Fischer himself showed this by using the same concept in this exhibition game (though you might argue this game also ends up as a Sicilian, with colours reversed):

**1.b3**

One of the earliest examples with the concept I remember seeing myself features yet another opening: 1.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2. g3 d5 3.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  4. 0-0 e6 5. d3 h6 6.  $\mathbb{Q}bd2$  c6 7. e3  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  8.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  a5 9. e4  $\mathbb{Q}h7$



10.  $\mathbb{Q}h1!$ ? 0-0 11.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}h3$  a4 13. a3 c5 14. e5  $\mathbb{Q}fd7$  15. g4  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  16. g5 hxg5 17.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$ ?! 18.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  cxd4 19.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  f5?! 20. exf6 gxf6 21.  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  22. f4!  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  23. f5  $\mathbb{Q}g7$ ? 24.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}xg5+$  1-0 Hofmann-Utasi, Groningen 1982/83. The situation is slightly different: the  $\mathbb{Q}g2$  has yet to move out of the way and here the black pawn on h6 (and not f6) will perhaps help White to open up the g-file. So let us praise the white player for some originality!

1...e5 2.  $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3. c4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4. e3  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  5. a3 0-0 6.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  7. d3  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  8.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  a5 9.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  d5 10. cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}bd2$  f6 12. 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}e6$



Again, it will be very helpful if you are familiar with the idea, as otherwise you'd probably opt for a standard developing move like 13.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  here.

**13.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$ ?**  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  **14.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}ad8$**   
**15.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  16. g4 g6**

Now g4-g5 isn't so much of an immediate threat as Black can meet it with ...f6-f5, keeping the kingside closed. Nevertheless, White has increased the pressure and gained some space with his kingside regrouping.

**17.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$**

17. g5 f5 18.  $\mathbb{Q}ed2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$ .

**17...  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}ag1$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$**

A dubious regrouping. Of course Ulf Andersson was just starting his career at the time of this game.

**21.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}f5$ !**

Another familiar concept which can regularly be seen in positions arising from certain Ruy Lopez main lines. The knight occupies the important f5-square, while capturing it would allow a devastating opening of the g-file.

**22...  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$ ?**  
**24.  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ !  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  25. g5!**



Dramatically improving the scope of the bishop on the long diagonal. White is now winning.

25... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  26. $\mathbb{H}f3$  b6 27. $\mathbb{G}xf6+$   
 $\mathbb{Q}h8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{H}xe6$  29.d4 exd4  
30. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  d3 31. $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $\mathbb{H}xd3$   
32. $\mathbb{W}xd3$   $\mathbb{H}d6$  33. $\mathbb{W}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$   
34. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{H}d8$  35.h4  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  36. $\mathbb{W}g4$   
 $\mathbb{Q}f8$  37.h5  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  38.e4  $\mathbb{H}d2$   
39. $\mathbb{H}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  40.hxg6  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   
41.f4  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  42. $\mathbb{W}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$   
43. $\mathbb{Q}xd6+$

1-0

... and the exhibition was over.

### Popularity in the Hedgehog

I think it was this game which made the regrouping more widely known. Certainly in Hedgehog positions it has become a well-known means of gaining space on the kingside, though by now dangerous counter-reactions have been found for White. For two recent examples see our next game.

**Mark Taimanov**

**Artur Jussupow**

Soviet Union 1982

1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 c5 3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  cxd4  
4. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  b6 5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  6.f3 e6  
7.e4 d6 8. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  a6 9. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$   
10.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  11. $\mathbb{W}d2$  0-0 12. $\mathbb{Z}fd1$   
 $\mathbb{H}c8$  13. $\mathbb{H}ac1$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  14. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Z}fe8$   
15. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{W}b8$  16. $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$   
17. $\mathbb{Q}b3$

For the time being refraining from the advance b2-b4. This seems rather more harmless, allowing Black the time for...

17... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  18. $\mathbb{W}g1$



18... $\mathbb{Q}h8!$ ?

Here we go again!

19. $\mathbb{H}c2$   $\mathbb{H}g8$  20. $\mathbb{H}cd2$  g5 21. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   
 $\mathbb{H}g6$

The direct 21...g4 also seemed possible, meeting 22.f4 with 22...g3.

22. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{H}cg8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{W}f8$   
24. $\mathbb{Q}e1$

This was a good opportunity to block the g-file with 24.g4.

24...g4 25.fxg4

25.f4 g3 26.h3 e5 27. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ .

25...e5 26. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  27. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   
 $\mathbb{Q}d8$



Now Black is clearly better and his pieces cooperate wonderfully well.

28. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}h4$  29. $\mathbb{H}ee2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   
30. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf2$  31. $\mathbb{W}xf2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$

Game over. Black won after some mutual inaccuracies, presumably in time trouble:

**32.♘f5 ♘c5 33.♘g3 ♘a8**

33...♗d3!.

**34.♗d1 ♘e6**

34...f5!.

**35.♗xb6 ♘f4 36.♗f2 ♗h6**

**37.♗g1 ♗h4 38.♗b3**

38.♗xd6 ♗xg3 39.hxg3 ♘h3+ 40.gxh3  
♗xg3+ 41.♗g2 ♗xg2 42.♗f2.

**38...♗h6 39.♗xf4 exf4 40.♗c3+**

**f6 41.♗f5 ♗xg2+ 42.♗xg2**

**♗xh2+ 0-1**

## Some Recent Hedgehogs

Twan Burg

Emilio Cordova

Barcelona 2011

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 a6 3.c4 e6 4.d4**

**cxd4 5.♗xd4 ♘f6 6.♗c3 ♘b4**

**7.♗d2 ♗c7 8.a3 ♘e7 9.♗e3 d6**

**10.♗e2 b6 11.♗c1 0-0 12.0-0 ♘b7**

**13.f3 ♘bd7 14.b4 ♗ac8 15.♗b3**

15.♗d2 ♗b8 16.♗c2 (16.♗fd1 ♘d8

17.♗h1 ♘c7 18.♗g1 ♘h8 19.♗e1

♗g8 20.♗a4 g5 21.c5 Grischuk-Savchenko, Moscow 2010) 16...♗d8  
17.♗h1 ♘c7 18.♗g1 ♘h8 19.♗b1  
♗g8 20.♗a4 g5 21.c5 Hungaski-

Padurariu, Amsterdam 2012, are two examples where White adopted a timely counter-action on the queenside.

**15...♗b8 16.♗fd1**



**16...♗h8!?**

16...♗d8 or 16...♗fe8 are the regular moves here.

**17.♗f1 ♗g8 18.♗a2 g5 19.h3 h5**

An ambitious and unusual follow-up.

**20.♗d2 g4 21.hxg4 hxg4**

**22.♗g5 gxf3 23.♗xf3 ♗g6**

**24.♗f4 ♗cg8**



**25.♗h4+**

A dubious manoeuvre, as Black will now take over the h-file.

**25...♗g7 26.♗d3 ♗h8 27.♗f4**

**♗h5 28.♗e3 ♗xg5 29.♗xg5 ♗e5**

29...♗d8 30.♗f3 ♗g3 would already have given Black a decisive initiative.

**30.♗e2 ♗d8 31.♗h3 ♗g3**

Black has a terrifying and winning attack. Since 16...♗h8 White has only been on the defensive, unable to generate any play himself.

## Gaining Space

Liu Qingnan

Nigel Short

Bangkok 2012

Here's a recent game by a top-level grandmaster where Black adopts the kingside regrouping even without any prospects of quickly opening the g-file.

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4**

**4.♗xd4 ♗b6 5.♗b3 ♘f6 6.♗d3**

**e6 7.0-0 ♘e7 8.♗e3 ♗c7 9.f4 d6**

**10.c4 ♘b4 11.♗c3 ♘xd3**

12.♗xd3 0-0 13.♗ac1 b6  
14.♘d4 ♘b7 15.f5 ♘ad8 16.♗g3



16...♔h8 17.♘d2

After 17.fxe6 fxe6 18.c5 bxc5 19.♘xc5 ♜c8 20.♘xb7 ♜xb7 Black is OK.

17...♗d7 18.♗cd1 ♘g8 19.♗h3 e5 20.♘e3 g5

Here the manoeuvre is also born out of defensive necessity. Black stops White's plans of g2-g4-g5 or ♘d2-f3-g5.

21.g4 ♜e8 22.a4 ♜c8 23.b3  
♗g7 24.♘b5! a6 25.♘c3 h5



Now a sharp, complicated battle ensues.

26.♘xb6 ♜h7 27.♘d5 ♜xd5  
28.exd5 hxg4 29.♗g2 ♘d8

The immediate 29...♗h3 looks better, and only after 30.c5 – 30...♗d8. The text drives White's bishop to a more active position, while Black gains nothing from the inclusion of ...♗d8.

30.♗e3 ♜g8 31.c5 ♘h3 32.♘c4  
dxc5 33.♗fe1

33.d6 also looks strong, following Fischer's adage 'passed pawns must be pushed'.

33...e4 34.♘e5 ♜b8 35.♗b2

Perhaps a tempting move, but the immediate 35.♘xg4, also attacking the ♘h3, was better. Now Black takes over.

35...g3 36.♗e2 ♜h7 37.♘c6  
gxh2+ 38.♔h1 ♜h5! 39.♗de1  
♗xb3 40.♗xb3 ♜f3+ 41.♗g2  
♗h5 42.♘d4+ cxd4 43.♗xf3 exf3  
44.♘xd8 fxg2+ 45.♔xg2 h1♗+

Everything comes together nicely for Black. He won after...

46.♗xh1 ♘f4+ 47.♔f2 ♜xh1

... since White can't take back the rook.

## Fischer's Inspiration?

**Erwin Nievergelt**

**Paul Keres**

Zurich 1959

Here again is an old example, arising from a completely different opening. Of course it's very useful to become acquainted with the typical middlegame features of a specific opening, but as you can see here, it's no less important to remember to adopt the same ideas in different settings.

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6  
4.♘a4 ♘f6 5.0-0 ♘e7 6.♗xc6  
dxc6 7.d3 ♘d7 8.♗bd2 0-0  
9.♘c4 f6



**10.♕h1**

10.♕h4 is far and away the most popular move here.

**10...♝c5 11.♝e3**

And here 11.♝g1 has been a more common follow-up to 10.♕h1 (intending f2-f4). Another little plan to remember, and one also adopted by Black in positions arising from the Italian Game.

**11...♝e8 12.♜g1 ♜e6 13.g3**

A cautious start, for the time being!

**13...♝c5 14.♝h4 g6 15.♞f1 ♜g7  
16.♞d2 ♜e6 17.a3 ♜f7 18.♞e1  
♛d7 19.♛e2 ♜e8**



**20.g4!**

Only now! Here it will take Black some time to get his knight to f4.

**20...♝d8 21.♜g3 ♜c8 22.♝eg1 ♜f8**

22...♝e6 23.♝ef5 and now 23...♝f8 would lead to the game.

**23.♝ef5**

Remember Fischer-Andersson? It appears that in this case Fischer didn't have to play through obscure tournament bulletins in order to become familiar with the idea. He was participating in the same tournament as a sixteen-year-old. He finished in shared 3rd/4th place with Keres, behind Tal (1st) and Gligoric.

**23...♝e6**

23...gxsf5 24.gxf5 and with ♜h5 coming up Black will hardly be able to bear the pressure.

**24.g5 ♜f4 25.♝f3 ♜g7 26.♝h6+  
♚xh6 27.gxh6**

Black is in trouble.

**27...g5 28.♝xf4 exf4 29.♝xf4**



**29...♛d6**

29...♛f8 30.♝f5 ♜e5 was given as an improvement by the tournament bulletin (those were the days), but after 31.♜xg5 fxg5 32.♝xe5 ♜xf5 33.exf5 ♜f6 34.♝xf6 ♜xf6 35.♜xg5 ♜xh6 36.♝g2 ♜f7 37.♝g3 ♜f6 38.h4 White is winning.

**30.♝xd6 cxd6 31.f4 d5 32.fxg5  
dxe4 33.gxf6+ ♜h8 34.dxe4  
♜xf6 35.♝g7 ♜xh6 36.♝f3 ♜f6  
37.♝e5 ♜e6 38.♝xb7 ♜g8  
39.♝g4 ♜g6 40.♝f2 ♜f6**

Of course White should be winning, but in the game Keres managed to avoid a surprise defeat and escaped with a draw.

**Alexander Morozevich**

**Luke McShane**

Moscow 2012

The basic ingredients of the Nievergelt Manoeuvre are already familiar, for instance from Stonewall-like structures. In that case, however, ...g7-g5 immediately hits the doubled pawn on f4 and threatens to open the g-file. With the true Nievergelt Manoeuvre you may hope to just create a half-open file in the long run. To refresh your memory –

repetition is an important pillar of learning – we'll finish with a recent top-level example where Black successfully adopted the basic sequence.

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.♘c3 a6 5.e3 b5 6.b3 ♘g4 7.h3 ♘xf3 8.gxf3 ♘bd7 9.♗g2 e6 10.♗d2 ♘e7 11.f4 0-0 12.0-0 bxc4 13.bxc4 ♘b6 14.c5 ♘c4 15.♗e1**



**15...♗h8**

You won't have any problems at least considering the possibility of this move any more, I hope.

**16.♘e2 ♘g8 17.♘g3 g5**

You see the difference. There's immediate concrete tension: Black threatens to take on f4.

**18.♗f3**

White allows the f-file to be opened without undoubling his f-pawns.

**18...g4 19.hxg4 ♘xg4 20.♗c1**

Preparing a possible exchange sacrifice on c4. White's main problem, how-

ever, seems to be his badly-placed bishop on e1.

**20...♕f8 21.♗h3 ♘f6 22.♗h2 ♘b8 23.e4**



If White got in e4-e5 and f4-f5 he'd be in great shape. Now, however, it's Black who has the chance to sacrifice the exchange.

**23...♗xg3! 24.fxg3 dxе4 25.♕c3 ♘b2**

**25...♗h6.**

**26.♗b1 ♘d5 27.♗d2 ♘c4 28.♗xb8 ♘xb8 29.♗e2 ♘ce3 30.♗h1 ♘f6**

Black's position is easier to play, but Morozevich's subsequent mistake on move 32 effectively brought an end to the game.

**31.♗g2 ♘xd4 32.♗xe4? ♘xf4 33.gxf4 ♘xf4+ 34.♗g3 ♘xe4 35.♗e1 ♘f5 36.♗d6 ♘g4+ 37.♗g2 ♘e3+ 38.♗h2 e5 39.♗g1 ♘f4+ 40.♗h3 ♘h6+ 0-1**

### Summary

The Nievergelt Manoeuvre is an imaginative space-gaining tool in positions that allow some time. It's typical of Sicilian or Hedgehog positions, but certainly not restricted to these openings. The g-pawn may support a killer knight (on f5/f4) and when it advances further the g-file or the long diagonal may be opened. Fischer for one surely remembered Nievergelt's example.

## Chapter 32

# Majestic Manoeuvres

Taking your king for a walk in the heat of a complex middlegame – in some positions it is the logical thing to do, in other cases it may be a quite surprising action.

### Old Logic

We start with a classic example in a French game which has found many followers since.

**Emanuel Lasker  
Andor Lilienthal**

Moscow 1936



**23... $\mathbb{Q}d8!$**

Let's just hear what Lilenthal had to say about his decision: 'Black has to bring his rook from h8 into the game. But castling is dangerous: White is all geared up for an attack on the kingside. Because of this I decided to send my king in the other direction.'

Sounds sensible enough, does it not? Besides, you can observe that the position is closed and as a result the king will be safe on c7. When Black opens up the b-file with ...b5-b4, the king will even be able to assist here, con-

trolling some important entry squares.

**24. $\mathbb{Q}d1$**

Anticipating ...b5-b4.

**24... $\mathbb{Q}c7$**

Lasker intended to meet 24...b4 with 25.axb4 axb4 26. $\mathbb{Q}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xa8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xa8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}a4$  after which Black can win a pawn with 28... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  or 28... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ , but in both cases White gets a superb central knight as compensation.

**25. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{B}b7$**

Lilenthal later considered this too cautious, suggesting 25...b4 26.axb4 axb4, noticing that after 27. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  followed by  $\mathbb{Q}f3-g5$ , Black had to reckon with b2-b3. This is of course a logical countermeasure against an early king walk: trying to open up the position to expose the enemy king. In fact, the immediate 27.b3 would be a serious try.

**26. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  28.b3**

Lasker decides it is time to open up 'his opponent's wing'.

**28... $\mathbb{W}xa3$**

'After his indecisive 25th Black suddenly becomes extremely bold' (Lilenthal on his own choice of moves!). Lilenthal went on to win a complicated game against the former World Champ, but here considered 28... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ , planning ... $\mathbb{Q}a7$  and ... $\mathbb{B}hb8$ , to be a better continuation.

## Battle on Two Wings

**Joseph Sanchez  
Sabino Brunello**

Milan 2012



Here is a modern-day example. The same pawn structure as in the first example, but this time the white king is on d2. Perhaps this makes it easier for White to advance his kingside pawns, though at the same time his own king will be more vulnerable when Black succeeds in breaking through on the queenside.

**17... $\mathbb{Q}e8!$**

Following in the footsteps of Lilenthal! The king moves towards a safer place, aiming to connect the rooks before the action starts on the queenside.

**18.g4  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}hg1$  b4 20.axb4  
axb4 21. $\mathbb{Q}gb1$**

21.g5 hxg5 22. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  bxc3+ 23. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  24. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}a8!$  and Black grabs the initiative.

**21... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  22.cxb4  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  23. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   
 $\mathbb{Q}xb1$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xb1$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$**

Mission completed. Black is ready to bring his king's rook into the game, while his king is safe on c7.

**25. $\mathbb{Q}b5?$ !  $\mathbb{Q}a8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}c5$**

A rather unfortunate manoeuvre, misplacing the rook, which cannot cause much danger on its own.

**26... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$   
28. $\mathbb{Q}xb8+$**

Or 28. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}a7$  threatening 29... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  30.dxe5  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$ .

**28... $\mathbb{Q}xb8$**

With the queens off, the black rook has free play with its counterpart still being locked in on c5. Black won easily.

## Battle on One Wing

**Darwin Yang  
Gata Kamsky**

Philadelphia 2011



Here it is very probable that the battle will be fought on the kingside. Therefore Kamsky takes appropriate measures.

**26... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  28. $\mathbb{Q}ac1$   
 $\mathbb{Q}af8$**

Thus Black has completed his artificial castling. In the meantime White is trying to create play on the queenside.

**29. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  30.a4  $\mathbb{Q}b8$**

Just in time.

**31.a5  $\mathbb{Q}d8!$**

This allows Black to keep the queenside closed whichever pawn, a or b, White advances. This very much resembles the outcome of Petrosian's 18...a6! in his 7th match game against Spassky in 1966. Now Black still has a long way to go on the kingside, but at least his king, unlike the white one, is out of the way,

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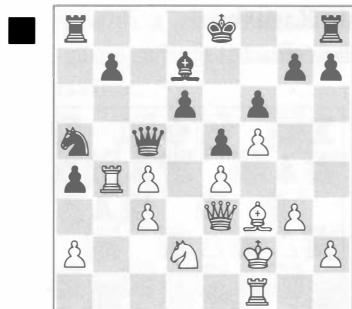
and he later managed to outwit his opponent.

Another nice example of a king walking away from the battle scene is Zubarev-Shyam, Chennai Open 2010.

### Preparing for the Endgame

**Daniel Fridman  
Viswanathan Anand**

Baden-Baden 2013



Heading for an endgame can also be a valid reason for taking your king for a stroll. In the diagram position the queens are very likely to disappear from the board and because of that, Black would prefer to keep his king in the centre, for instance on e7. Apparently Anand was not satisfied with that and sent his king towards c7, where it also defends the pawn on b7.

**22... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d1$**

23. $\mathbb{M}fb1$ , vacating f1 for the knight, was an alternative.

**23... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xa4$**

It's not much of a pawn that White wins, considering his doubled c-pawns. Although he disposes of his bad bishop, it is Black who obtains the active pieces.

**24... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$**

**26. $\mathbb{M}xc5$**

26. $\mathbb{M}b2$   $\mathbb{M}a3$  27. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{M}a4$  28. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{M}ha8$  and Black is also on top.

**26... $dxc5$  27. $\mathbb{M}b2$   $\mathbb{M}a3$  28. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   
 $\mathbb{M}a4$  29. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{M}d8$**

After 29... $\mathbb{M}ha8$  30.g4  $\mathbb{M}xa2$  31. $\mathbb{M}xa2$  32. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  Black is still better, but White has at least achieved some coordination.

**30. $\mathbb{M}e1$   $\mathbb{M}d6$  31.g4  $\mathbb{Q}e8$**



Here the advantage of already having the king on c7 is obvious. Thus the king walk has yielded Black a slightly improved version of the endgame that was to come. Later Anand had a real winning chance before the game ended in a draw.

### A Futile Check?

**Luc Winants  
Stefan Beukema**

Netherlands 2012/13

**1.d4 f5 2. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  3. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  d5  
4. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  exf6 5.e3  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  6. $\mathbb{Q}h3$  g5  
7. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  8. $\mathbb{Q}h5+$**



Black has embarked upon an ambitious set-up (...g7-g5) and moving the king is the consistent follow-up. The question remains whether the check is really useful or is only superficially strong. The only other game where this position arose had continued with 8.f4 (instead of White's last ♜e2-h5). Similar examples where the bishop got stuck on h5 are Nasri-Reinderman, Jakarta 2011 and, to a lesser degree, Schwierskott-Shirov, Main Ordix rapid 2010.

**8...♞d8**

After 8...♞f7 Black would lose a vital defender, for example 9.♗xf7+ ♕xf7 10.♘f3 ♛b4 11.0-0 ♜xc3 12.♗xf5.

**9.♘g1**

This knight serves no purpose on h3, so Winants regroups his pieces. Black uses the time to find a good spot for his king on the other side of the board.

**9...♝c6 10.♗ge2 ♝e7 11.f3 c6**

**12.♕d3 ♞c7 13.0-0-0 ♜c8**



**14.g4**

Here 14.e4 seems to be the logical move, trying to profit from Black's vulnerable king and open up the game. Still, Black seems solid enough and it does not seem as if White will achieve much with the central advance (although, when the position opens up, the bishop on h5 will perhaps return to life). In the game White luckily escaped with a draw.

## With Major Pieces

**Tania Sachdev**

**Robert Hübner**

Prague 2011



As you may know, the location of the king is crucial in positions with only major pieces. Having the initiative against a vulnerable king is a big advantage in such positions. No wonder here we see the occasional stroll to the opposite side. Here Black has the upper hand, but he still has to break through on the kingside. In order to do so, he first brings his own king into safety. This strongly resembles Petrosian-Unzicker, Hamburg 1960, where the future World Champion, in a superior position, first brought his king from g1 to b1 before starting an offensive on the kingside.

**34...♚f8! 35.♔e3 ♜g7 36.♕e4**

**♕e8 37.♔d2 ♜d8 38.♕e3**

Perhaps the more active 38.f4 was worth a try, while 38.a6 seems useful to include, to obtain some entry squares (c6 at least) for the queen.

**38...♜gf7 39.♕g5 ♞c7 40.♜gf1 ?!**

**♛d7!**

The queen threatens to enter the queenside, exposing the white king.

**41.♜a1 ♜e8 42.♕e3 ♜f5**

**43.♞c2 ♜d8 44.♜af1 ♔b8**

**45.♜a1 a6 46.♞d2 ♞a7 47.♕e2**



**47...g5**

Finally, but also decisively!

**48.hxg5** **hxg5** **49.Qg2** **Qg5f5**  
**50.Qh2** **Qg8** **51.Qf2** **Qxg3**

And Black won.

### Stay or Go?

**Viswanathan Anand**  
**Magnus Carlsen**

Monaco 2011 (rapid)



A typical King's Indian fight on both wings, here arising from a Ruy Lopez. Considering the previous six fragments, it would be natural to opt for Anand's move (note that this was a rapid game):

**23.Qf1**

Yet Carlsen considers this the wrong plan. It is too late for 23.Qd1, he says, because of 23...g4 24.hxg4 hxg4 25.Qxg4 Qxg4 26.fxg4 Qh4 followed by ...Qf6. 23.Qh1 had to be played: 23...g4 24.Qg1 White seems solidly placed, but it will not be easy to retain his initiative on the queenside.

**23...Qf7 24.Qe1**

Here the white plan is just too slow, the point being that Black can act quickly and open up the g-file and invade.

**24.g4 25.Qd1 gxh3 26.gxh3**  
**Qg8 27.Qc2 Qg2**

Black is already threatening to win a piece (...Qxe2 and ...Qg2), while the white kingside pawns are an easy target. White's initiative on the queenside has come to a standstill as a result of the king march.

**28.Qh1** **Qxe2** **29.Qxe2** **Qg2**  
**30.Qd3** **Qb6** **31.Qbg1** **Qbg8**  
**32.Qxg2** **Qxg2** **33.a5** **Qxc4**  
**34.Qc1 b5**

and Carlsen converted his material advantage. So here the king transfer did not work; it simply took too long, allowing Black to expand his initiative. Of course, there are further examples where majestic manoeuvring did not produce the desired effect (check for instance Lupulescu-Bologan, Greece 2010, where White managed to open up the position of the enemy king). Still, it remains a typical strategic means which should not be lightly discarded!

### Summary

Be sure to remember the king can also be a mobile piece in the middlegame! In (semi-)closed positions the king can be brought to safety to the other wing before the action starts. If you have castled first anyway, that shouldn't stop you manoeuvring His Majesty when required – though as always there's no guarantee for success.

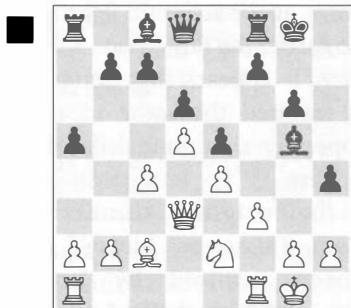
## Chapter 33

# Creeping Queens

Sometimes, especially in closed positions, the queen just can't find a decent central position. She then has to sneak her way to an active placement.

### Instant Success

**Michael Tscharotschkin  
Vladislav Nevednichy**  
Albena 2013



**18...♝d7**

Why this move? Is the bishop not just as effective on c8? In fact, it retreated there only three moves before in order to avoid being exchanged. See also Chapter 9: 'The Deceptive Bishop from c8'.

**19.♞f2?**

A clumsy move, completely missing Black's reply. As a result Black's concept is an immediate success. 19.♚h1 or 19.♝c3 are better alternatives.

**19...♛b8!**

The queen is heading for the a7-g1 diagonal where she can exercise her long-distance power. Just as it helps when the third rank is available for a developing rook, here the diagonal is open and available. This manoeuvre is quite familiar in the King's Indian.

**20.♝c3**

Thanks to White's 19th move, Black can now develop his queen with a concrete threat: ...♛a7, followed by ...♝e3. Other white moves don't pose any problems either: 20.♞ff1 allows Black the choice between 20...b5 (or 20...♛a7+ anyway); 20.♞af1 ♛a7 21.f4 exf4 22.♚h1 ♜e3 23.♝xf4 ♜xd3 24.♝xd3 ♜ae8 and Black is more than fine; 20.♚h1 ♛a7 21.♞ff1 (21.♞af1 ♜e3) leaves Black comfortable after, for instance, 21...♜e3.

**20...♛a7 21.♞e1**

Preventing 21...♝e3 but losing after...

**21...♝f4**

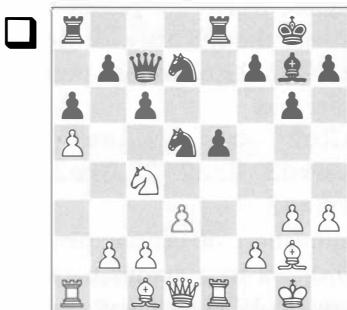
Threatening both ...♝g3 and ...♝xh2. White decided to call it a day right away.

### The Pirc Variety

**Vladislav Tkachiev**

**Boris Grachev**

Legnica 2013



### 16.♗d2

With the previous example in mind, the intentions behind this little move should be obvious now. Of course, White could have developed his queen in another way – 16.♕e2 – but despite the fact that there is no immediate concrete refutation, this would always leave the queen slightly exposed in the centre.

### 16...♝e7 17.♗b1

This manoeuvre is typical of the sort of Pirc position which arose in Brynell-McShane, Malmö 2003. In that case the (almost forced) queen transfer from the d-file was less successful.

### 17...♜ae8 18.♕a2 ♜7f6 19.♗b3



Here White was not so much aiming for the a2-g8 diagonal, but for a more active location for the queen in general.

### 19...h6

My choice would rather be 19...♝d7, to disturb the white queen on her new spot, and give more effective scope to the knights, which are getting in each other's way, though after 20.♕e2 ♜c5 21.♗a3 ♜e6 22.c3 White position is still preferable.

### 20.♕e2 e4 21.♜ae1 exd3 22.♗xd3 ♜xe2 23.♗xe2 ♜xe2 24.♗xe2

The liquidation of central pawns and rooks has led to a symmetrical pawn structure, but White still has some pres-

sure with his pair of bishops. He managed to turn his advantage into a win.

Anatoly Machulsky

David Bronstein

Tbilisi 1974

The French Defence features a similar manoeuvre, introduced by a very pleasing king move. This may be familiar from the first game of the 1986 Candidates' match between Andrey Sokolov and Artur Jussupow. As a result the idea has been attributed to Jussupow, but in fact the idea had occurred in a white game of his training partner Sergey Dolmatov against Gerald Hertneck in Lugano earlier the same year.

However, it appears that some earlier games featured the same idea in the same opening, though in different positions. Here is an entertaining effort from the original thinker David Bronstein. (Jussupow himself said he had been inspired by Janowski-Rubinstein, Karlsbad 1907 as well as Bondarevsky-Botvinnik, USSR Ch 1941).

### 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♜b4 4.e5 b6 5.a3 ♜f8 6.f4 c5 7.♘f3 ♜h6 8.♘e3 ♜f5 9.♘f2 ♜c6 10.♘b5 ♘d7 11.♘xc6 ♜xc6 12.♘e2 h5 13.g3 a5 14.♗d2 c4 15.h3 b5 16.♘f1 b4 17.axb4 ♜xb4 18.c3 爵e7 19.♔g2



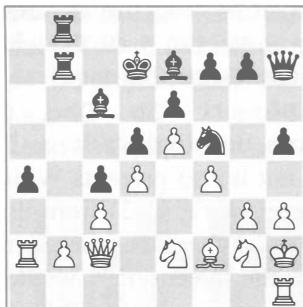
**19... $\mathbb{Q}d7!$** 

This move, paving the way for the queen to go to h7, is usually preceded by the closure of the centre by ...c5-c4.

**20. $\mathbb{Q}h2$  a4 21. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{B}b8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{W}g8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}e3?$   $\mathbb{W}h7$**

This move shouldn't have come as a surprise for White considering Black's last. He now retreats his knight to limit the activity of Black's queen.

**24. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{B}b7$  25. $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{B}hb8$  26. $\mathbb{W}c2?$**



Allowing a cheap trick and thus making Black's positional dreams come true.

**26... $\mathbb{Q}h4$  27. $\mathbb{B}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}f3+$  28. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{W}xc2$  29. $\mathbb{B}xc2$  a3 30.bxa3  $\mathbb{Q}a4$**

And Bronstein was in complete control and won the game.

**An Unsuccessful Hybrid**

**Lawrence Trent  
Marc Narciso Dublan  
Andorra 2013**

**17... $\mathbb{Q}d7$** 

The same introductory move as in the Bronstein game, though obviously not with the same intention of transferring the queen to h7. The fact is that castling kingside is not an option anyway in view of White's retort  $\mathbb{W}d1-d3$ . But Black could have manoeuvred more carefully with, for example, first 17... $\mathbb{Q}b5$ .

**18. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{W}b8$**

The same manoeuvre as in the King's Indian, but here Black has no goal other than to claw back some space. White has more control of the centre and Black is still saddled with all his minor pieces. There is no king or pawn target at the other end of the a7-g1 diagonal, as was the case in the first and third examples.

**19. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}a7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}c5+$**

White could also try to profit from Black's manoeuvring by focussing his attention on the deserted kingside with 20. $\mathbb{W}g4$ , but for now he tries to improve his position on the queenside.

**20... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  21. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xd2$**

**$\mathbb{Q}d7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$**

23.b4! axb3 24. $\mathbb{Q}xb3$  and Black is in dire straits.

**23... $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  24. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  h5 25.f4 g6 26. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}bd1$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$**



Black has done relatively well: two minor pieces have been exchanged, White

## Improve Your Chess Pattern Recognition

has not achieved a kingside breakthrough yet and Black has even created some pressure against the d4-pawn. But his king and bad bishop still cause him some worries.

**28.♗b1 ♜ac8 29.♗d3 ♜a6  
30.♗f3 ♜b5**

Moving the bad bishop outside the pawn chain, and as a result allowing...

**31.f5! gxf5 32.♗xf5 ♜c7**

32...exf5 33.♗xd5+ ♔e8 34.e6 clearly loses. After the move in the game Black eventually managed to scrape a draw.

## A King's Indian Predecessor

**Gyula Kluger**  
**Laszlo Szabo**

Budapest 1937

Now that we have looked at the origins of the creeping French manoeuvre, let us look at an old example of the King's Indian manoeuvre as well. This is a salutary reminder that there is still much to be learned from (very) old games.

**1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 g6 3.c4 ♘g7  
4.♘c3 d6 5.e4 0-0 6.h3 e5 7.d5  
♘bd7 8.♗d3 ♘c5 9.♗c2 a5  
10.g4 ♘d7 11.♗e3 ♘e8 12.♗g1**



Here the 20-year-old Laszlo Szabo (who had already made a name in the chess arena) initiated the same ma-

noeuvre as Nevednichy did more than 75 years later.

**12...♗b8**

A more natural (?) way to activate the queen was 12...c6, but after 13.♗d2 ♜b6 (13...cxd5 14.♗xd5) Black has to reckon with 14.♗a4.

An interesting possibility, though, is the pawn sacrifice 12...a4!?. After, for example, 13.♗xc5 dxc5 14.♗xa4 ♜xa4 15.♗xa4 ♘d6! 16.♗xc5 b6 17.♗b3 ♘xe4, the position has suddenly become more open, showing that an early queenside expansion can make the white king more vulnerable in the centre.

**13.a4**

Of course, this stops Black's ...a5-a4 advance, but it also prevents White's minor pieces (♗c2, ♘c3) from using the a4-square and weakens the pawn structure on the queenside. I would prefer 13.♗e2.

**13...♗a7**

Creeping towards activity.

**14.♗d2 c6 15.h4 ♜b6**



The goal has been achieved: Black has activated his queen in a safe manner.

**16.b3?!**

The start of a passive strategy which allows Black to take up an active position without any problems.

**16...♗b4 17.♗b1 ♘f6 18.♗h2  
cxd5 19.exd5 ♜ae8**

Black has a comfortable position and Szabo became sure of victory when White forgot to reactivate his h2-knight.

## The a2-g8 Diagonal

Alexander Alekhine

Henry Grob

Bern 1932

Let's continue with another classic – a game of Alekhine's featuring the  $\mathbb{W}b1-a2$  manoeuvre.

1.e4 e5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3. $\mathbb{Q}b5$  a6  
 4. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5.0-0 d6 6.c3  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   
 7.d4 b5 8. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  9. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  0-0  
 10. $\mathbb{Q}bd2$  d5 11.exd5 exd4  
 12.cxd4  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$



Alekhine wrote: 'White has to solve two problems: to relieve the knight on f3 from the unpleasant pin and at the same time to find an effective antidote to the threatening advance of Black's f-pawn.'

13. $\mathbb{W}b1!$  f5

This also defends against White's threatened  $\mathbb{W}e4$ , as Alekhine remarked.

14.a3

Vacating the a2-square – and not only for the bishop...

14... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  15. $\mathbb{W}a2$

Compared to the Tkachiev game, here the presence of the bishop on b3 makes the a2-g8 diagonal much more relevant; White undermines the blockading

knight on d5. And of course it is reminiscent of Réti's Rifle, manoeuvring the queen to a1 and backing up the fianchettoed bishop on b2.

15... $\mathbb{Q}db4$

15... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  16.fxe3  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  would have maintained the balance.

16.axb4  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  17. $\mathbb{W}b1$  f4

18. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  19. $\mathbb{W}d1$

The surprising 19. $\mathbb{Q}e4!$  fxe3 20.fxe3 would have been even stronger as 20... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  fails to 21. $\mathbb{Q}c6$ .

19...fxe3 20.fxe3  $\mathbb{Q}d5?$

This loses right away. Much more interesting was 20...c5! with the idea of 21. $\mathbb{Q}f7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$ .



21. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xd8?$

22. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  (22... $\mathbb{Q}xf1$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ ) 23. $\mathbb{W}xe3$   $\mathbb{W}xc6$  24. $\mathbb{W}xe7$  would have won simply. Alekhine/Kotov do not mention this possibility. After the text move White had to win the game all over again – which he did.

Eduardas Rozentalis

Ralf Appel

Germany Bundesliga 1993/94

I considered finishing this chapter with Morozovich-McShane, Dortmund 2004, in order to underline the drawbacks of a queen tucked away on one side of the board. However, the dangers that Black survived in Trent-Narciso Dublan should

have been sufficient warning for you. Instead, I don't want you to miss out on a related and truly amazing example that Jonathan Rowson used in his book *The Seven Deadly Chess Sins*.



'Surely the white queen doesn't lack space here?' you'll probably say. Yet Rozentalis decided that he could not break through on the kingside and that he had to open the position up somehow. He managed to come up with a really fantastic concept.

**25.a4 ♕d7 26.♕d1!**

The queen is looking for activity on the queenside to create a second front!

**26...♜c8 27.a5 ♜cf8 28.♛a1!**

A familiar sort of creeping move.

**28...♝e7 29.♛a3! ♜xa3 30.bxa3**

Of course, it is possible for a simple exchange of queens, solving a space problem, to be the goal of a creeping queen manoeuvre. Take, for instance, Polgar-Kramnik, Hoogeveen 2011.



Here there is more to it, as the b-file is now opened up for the white rooks. For further examples of doubled rook pawns bringing success, have a look at Chapter 19, called 'The Double A Status'.

In the current case Rozentalis even considered the exchange on a3 to be the decisive mistake. He won the endgame in equally great fashion. I recommend you to have another look at Rowson's extensive thoughts and comments on this game. One day, wouldn't we all want to come up with a similarly well-founded plan with such an original execution? That would be something!

**30...♜d8 31.♜b2 ♜c7 32.♜b5  
♜dd7 33.♚f2 g6 34.♚e3 ♜g7  
35.♜fb1 ♜f7 36.♜c5 ♜e7  
37.♜bb5 ♜xc5 38.dxc5 ♜d8  
39.a6 ♜c8 40.♜b6 ♜g8 41.♜f6  
♜d8 42.♚d4 bxa6 43.♜d6**

Black resigned.

### Summary

When your queen is ineffective or even in dire straits in a crowded middle section of the board, don't forget to look for a more modest place on the side. Make sure that from there the queen controls an open, useful diagonal. Also remember the pretty preparatory king moves.

## Chapter 34

# The Second Option

At the start of the middlegame the rook may often be a bit slow to enter the play. Pawns or pieces may still be in the way. This can be one of the reasons to advance a rook's pawn. But then sometimes there is another solution: the second rank.

### Looking Ahead

Alexander Riazantsev  
Ernesto Inarkiev  
Sochi 2004 (rapid)



**20...♜a7!**

How many of us would, certainly in a rapid game (and this was a rapid game), automatically reply with the 'standard' 20...♜b8? After White's reply we would try and develop the ♜d7 and the ♜c8, connecting the rooks, as we say. We could have been helped by considering White's obvious reply 21.♘xd6, which immediately creates the annoying possibility of 22.♘f7+. Of course, Black can parry this with 21...♞e5 (21...♞f6 22.♗b3), but after 22.0-0 White is better, the knight on d6 limiting Black's active possibilities. Here the rook on b8 would like to be on an open file; compare this to the text move.

**21.♘xd6 ♞f6**

No worrying now over ♘f7+, anyway, as the rook on a7 is also covering that one!

**22.♗b3 ♜e7**

Here's the point: by using the 7th rank, the rook has sidestepped the knight on d6 and reached an active position on the open e-file, even gaining a tempo by attacking the bishop on e3. Life can be so (deceptively) simple. After...

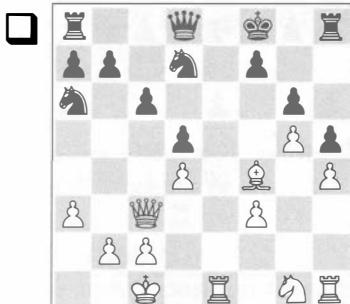
**23.♗e2 ♜d7 24.♗f2 ♜xe2+**

**25.♔xe2**

... Black had equalized and the game ended in a draw many moves later.

### Speeding up the Attack

Boris Gulko  
Sergey Kudrin  
Modesto 1995



**18.♗h2!**

Of course, White has an overwhelming position, which could easily tempt you to underestimate Black's counterchances. Straightforward, simple development seems to be the obvious thing to do, so 18.  $\mathbb{Q}h3$  or 18.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  suggest themselves, connecting the rooks as we are supposed to do. However, this would allow Black the one tempo he needs to contest the e-file with 18...  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  followed by ...  $\mathbb{K}e8$ . Because of this, Gulko played the more precise text move, using the second rank to nip any counterplay in the bud.

**18...  $\mathbb{Q}g8$**

It is not clear to me why Black chose this move instead of the natural 18...  $\mathbb{Q}g7$ . He was probably already in despair.

**19.  $\mathbb{K}he2$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  20.  $\mathbb{W}d3$**

So that Black can't block the e-file with his knight, thus: 20...  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  21.  $\mathbb{K}xe6$   $fxe6$  22.  $\mathbb{W}xg6+$ , etc.

**20...  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}h3$  a5**

Now 21...  $\mathbb{K}e8$  would run into 22.  $\mathbb{Q}xc7$   $\mathbb{K}xe2$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}xd8$   $\mathbb{K}xe1+$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$ . Also, after 21...  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  22.  $\mathbb{K}xe6$   $fxe6$  23.  $\mathbb{K}xe6$ , White has a number of tactical possibilities, attacking the black king: 23...  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}e5+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  (24...  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  25.  $\mathbb{K}xg6!$ ) 25.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$ . The text move offers Black little comfort and he receives the expected knock-out in a couple of moves.



**22.  $\mathbb{K}e7$  a4 23.  $\mathbb{Q}xc7$   $\mathbb{W}xc7$   
24.  $\mathbb{K}1e6$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  25.  $\mathbb{K}xf7$**

1-0

## Assisting the Defence

**Stuart Conquest**

**Jonathan Rowson**

Hastings 2003/04



As a result of the backward pawn on e6, the black rooks are likely to remain rather passive on the back rank. Also, the pawn on c5 is a liability, though you can see that c2-c4 would always leave behind some weak squares and a backward d-pawn as compensation. But Black decided not to delay and proceeded with the following active defence:

**23...  $\mathbb{g}5$  24.  $\mathbb{K}fe1$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{K}h7!$**

Now it is clear that the advance of the g-pawn has also cleared the 7th rank. The rook is now able to defend the pawn on b7 from a distance. This is, of course, one of the reasons why a rook (just like a bishop or queen) becomes stronger in open positions. Furthermore, on a more philosophical note, you could say that by disconnecting the rooks Black has rid himself of one superfluous rook. Apart from these rook issues Black has exchanged his problem child on c5 for White's f4-pawn.

**26.  $\mathbb{W}f2$**

26.  $\mathbb{Q}xe6?$   $\mathbb{K}e8$  is the tactical justification: White loses the knight to the pin.

**26...  $\mathbb{K}e7$  27.  $b4$   $\mathbb{K}de8$  28.  $h3$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$**

The immediate 28... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  was also possible.

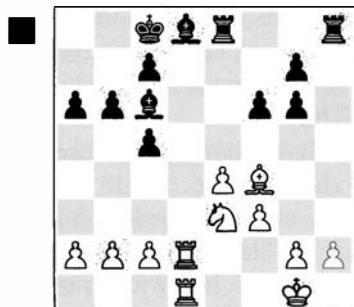
### 29.d4 $\mathbb{Q}g6$

Black's rooks are still passive but as he has gained control of the e5-square, a future ...e6-e5 advance becomes a possibility. Also, Black has now created his own chances on the kingside. Eventually the battle ended in a draw.

## Neutralizing the Open File

**Csaba Balogh  
Jan Gustafsson**

Austria 2005/06



### 19...g5!?

Gaining space on the kingside and... preparing the transfer of the  $\mathbb{R}h8$  to d7!

Yes, believe it or not, along the 7th rank. In fact, Black also has other promising possibilities here: 19...f5!? 20.exf5 gxf5 21. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  and Black's bishops have sprung to life. This, together with the active rooks, yields him good compensation in the shape of some nice tactical lines. For example: 22.c3 (22.b3  $\mathbb{R}h5$  23. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{R}h4$ ) 22... $\mathbb{R}hf8$ .

Avoiding tactical complications by means of the preparatory 19... $\mathbb{R}hf8$  is perhaps even stronger. Both continuations are in accordance with the principle of improving your worst-placed

piece; in this case obviously the  $\mathbb{R}d8$ , which is going to f6.

Even 19... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  seems a viable possibility, for instance 20. $\mathbb{R}xd8+$   $\mathbb{R}xd8$  21.fxe4  $\mathbb{R}xd1+$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xd1$   $\mathbb{R}e8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  b5 – there is never a dull moment in the Exchange Ruy Lopez!

### 20. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ g6

Regaining control of the f5-square and again, of course...

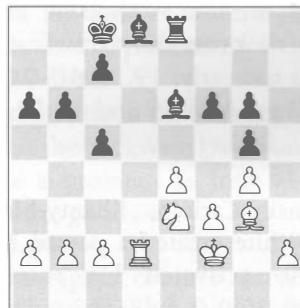
### 21. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{R}h7$

... the seventh rank is now available, so off goes the rook to neutralize White's control of the d-file.

### 22.g4 $\mathbb{R}d7$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}g3$

23.h4  $\mathbb{R}g7$ !?

24.hxg5 f5. 23... $\mathbb{R}xd2$  24. $\mathbb{R}xd2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  25. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$



### 26.c4

On an earlier occasion (Corsica 2004), Balogh had played 26.a4 against Bacrot in a rapid game. This improvement did not bring him any more than equality.

26... $\mathbb{R}h8$  27.b3  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  28. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$

29. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$

Here he tried...

### 30.f4

... but a draw was still the result after another 27 moves.

## In the Sveshnikov

Here we have a position from another opening which features the second rank manoeuvre more than once.

## Artyom Timofeev Yury Yakovich

Moscow 2007



**19.♖a2!?**

Obviously covering the pawn, but by now you'll probably guess that the rook becomes more active on the second rank. In fact, this motif has become quite common in the Sveshnikov. In some lines the rook may also retreat from a4.

19.b4 is too early: 19...♕xd5 20.♕xd5 axb4 21.cxb4 ♕b6 and 22.♖b1 runs into 22...♕d2+!.

**19..f5**

In Kamsky-Carlsen, Khanty-Mansiysk 2005, White created a passed b-pawn and also activated his rook after 19...♕c8 20.0-0 ♕d8 21.b4. The rook ended up on d2.

**20.h4 ♕f6 21.exf5 ♕xf5 22.♕c4 ♘h8 23.b4 axb4 24.cxb4**

Clearly Black has more counterplay here than in Kamsky-Carlsen.

**24..e4 25.g3 ♕e6 26.0-0 e3 27.b5**

27.fxe3 was also possible. After 27...♕e5 (27...♕xd5 28.♕xd5 (28.♕xd5 ♕xb4) 28...♕b6 29.♕f3 ♕xb4) 28.♕xf8+ ♕xf8 the rook from a2 joins in on the second rank: 29.♕f2.

**27..exf2+ 28.♕xf2**

The second-rank rook smoothly enters the game. White should have a practical edge here because of his space advantage. In the end he pulled off a win.

## Into the Centre

### Hicham Hamdouchi Sergey Krivoshey

Tarragona 2006



Here we have a similar idea: White wants to advance his g-pawn. Where to put the rook to prepare for this?

**16.♖h2!**

After 16.♖g1 White has to reckon with 16...♕xh4 or 16...♗ad8 17.♗d3 ♕xh4, no matter how dangerous this may look for Black. With the text move White keeps the h-pawn covered and prepares a central strategy, planning to move the rook to the open d-file.

**16...♗fd8 17.♗d3**

Blocking the d-file, thus gaining time for doubling the rooks.

**17...♗b4 18.g4 ♕b5 19.a3 ♕a4**

**20.♗hd2**

Mission accomplished.

**20...♕xd3 21.♗xd3 ♕xd3 22.♗xd3**

White has now taken control of the only open file, which is quite an important asset in a major-piece ending. White can now combine the advance of his kingside pawns with play on the d-file.

**22..♕c6 23.♕g3 ♘f8**

Illustrating Black's passive position, though it is not easy to break through.

**24.b3?! a5 25.♗b2 a4 26.b4**

**♗e4 27.h5 c5!**

Helped somewhat by White's b2-b3-b4, Black is trying to open up the queenside to expose the white king.

**28.bxc5 ♜c8 29.g5 hxg5  
30.fxg5 g6?!**

Exposing his own king's position. Of course 30...♜xc5 fails to 31.♝d8+ ♔h7 32.g6+ fxg6 33.hxg6+ ♜xg6 34.♝h8+; but 30...♜e2 or even 30...♜c4 31.g6 ♜xc5 32.gxf7+ ♔f8 both look acceptable.

**31.hxg6 fxg6?**

And this is already losing.

**32.♗h2 ♜c6 33.♗h6 ♜e8  
34.♗d1?**

34.c6! would have been a nice winning move. White continues with ♜h3 and Black no longer has a queen check on b5. In the end he did win, on move 65.

## Disconnect Your Rooks!?

**Kiril Georgiev  
Sergey Smagin**

Tivat 1995



### 23...♜a7!?

Once again, opting for long-term development along the 7th rank despite both the pawn on b7 and the knight on d7 being still in the way.

When we make a comparison to the more common rook lift along the third rank, one difference may be that the second-rank development often involves slow positional strategy behind the pawns. Along the third rank the rook is likely to create more instant activity in front of its own pawns.

In general, rooks seem to cooperate more harmoniously when they are not on the same rank. When they are doubled on the same (open) file, their cooperation, as you will know, can be very fruitful, for instance when trying to invade the enemy position.

### 24.0-0 b5

Not unfamiliar in the Exchange Queen's Gambit: the backward pawn on c6 need not be a problem as long as a black knight can go to c4.

### 25.e4

Another typical counter-reaction in the centre, putting pressure on Black's pawn chain.

**25...♝db6 26.♗bc1 ♜e7 27.g5  
♜ad7**

In just five moves from the diagram position, Black has managed to relocate all his pieces to suitable squares. The game ended in a draw.

### Summary

In the early middlegame the development of the rooks is an essential factor. Don't forget to include the second rank in your options to mobilize them. Sometimes a pawn or piece may still be in the way, but this may be temporary and should not interfere with your imaginative planning!

## Chapter 35

# Dances with Knights

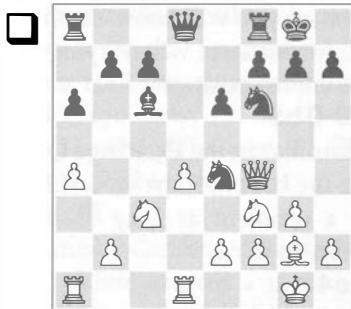
Knights protecting each other generally lack mobility. How can you render one of your opponent's knights ineffective? How can you avoid being stuck with one yourself and keep your knights flexible? Let's ride!

### Retirer

**Peter Heine Nielsen**

**Mikkel Antonsen**

Koge 2013



**15.♘b1!?**

Undeveloping the knight back to its initial square! When considering the position that has arisen now, you will soon note that the knight on e4 is in a precarious position. White threatens to follow up with ♘e5. He will also try to build a strong pawn centre with e2-e4, after which the mobility of Black's minor pieces will be considerably restricted. Besides these concrete ideas, Dvoretsky's concept of superfluous pieces may have crossed Nielsen's mind. After all, three black pieces are aiming for the same square (e4). By avoiding exchanges White renders at least one of these redundant.

It must be said that the straightforward 15.♘xe4 ♕xe4 16.♘e5 ♔xg2 17.♔xg2 or the immediate 15.♘e5 ♘xc3 16.bxc3 ♔xg2 17.♔xg2 also would have brought about a small spatial advantage for White.

**15...♗d6 16.♗bd2 ♖e7**

Now 16...♗fe4 would run into 17.♘e5.

**17.♖dc1 ♖d5 18.♗f1**

Consistent strategy: White still intends to play ♘e5 followed by f2-f3 and e2-e4, but again does not want to allow an exchange of one minor piece.

**18...h6 19.♕e3**

Odd: you might have expected 19.♘e5 ♜ac8 20.f3, but after 20...♗f5 the white queen is in trouble.

**19...♗fd8 20.♘e5 ♘de4 21.f3**

Trying to repeat the same trick with 21.♘b1 would allow Black some more time to regroup after, say, 21...♗d6.

**21...♗xd2 22.♕xd2**



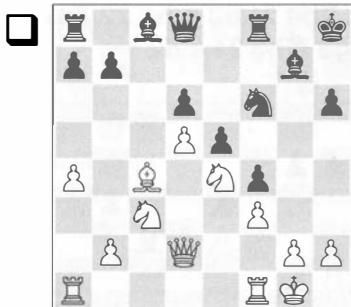
Black has managed to exchange one pair of knights, but in the meantime White has regrouped and played f2-f3, which results in the immediate threat of e2-e4. Black now went wrong with...

**22...♝d7 23.♜xc7**

... and Nielsen had no trouble converting his advantage.

### Spassky's Concept?

**Jan Timman**  
**Yury Balashov**  
Sochi 1973



Ever since Dvoretsky wrote on the subject of superfluous pieces in 1981, respected authors who have touched on the subject have made reference to his article. Suba's seems to have been the most quoted example, also by Dvoretsky himself on chesscafe.com. Yet as far as I know Emms (in *More Simple Chess*) is the only writer who referred to an analysis by Timman in 1975. Timman recounts when he was a guest at Spassky's place one night after the tournament, together with Ulf Andersson, enjoying vodka and caviar and playing through some games. And then he writes: 'Spassky uttered the opinion that it might have been advisable for White to exchange one of the knights because after the text move...

**20.♞d3**

Black can continue with 20...♝e8, leaving White with two knights protecting each other.'

Touché! Though Timman proceeds by pointing out the drawback of 20.♞xf6, as it activates the dark-squared bishop, it is a fine example of what Dvoretsky was later to call superfluous pieces.

**20...a6 21.g4 fxg3 22.hxg3 ♜xe4**

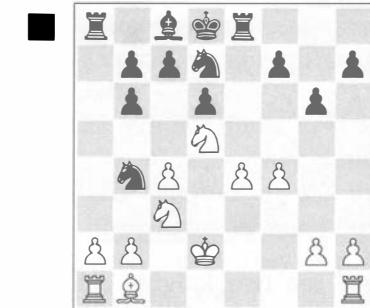
Now it is too late for 22...♝e8 as after 23.g4 Black's light-squared bishop can no longer reach f5 (Timman).

**23.♞xe4**

and Timman won this game, which he selected for the book *Learn from the Grandmasters*.

### No Stronghold

**Wang Hao**  
**Levon Aronian**  
Stavanger 2013 (blitz)



Just as in the first example, the central knight is a strong one, but the square is not as the knight may be chased away by ...c7-c6. Though this was a blitz game, where you would be inclined to play actively, after reading the first two examples, instead of...

**18...♞xd5**

... you might be inclined to consider 18...♝a6!?, rendering the c3-knight su-

perfunctory. Black can follow up with ... $c7$ - $c6$  and ... $\mathbb{Q}c7$ , while the  $a6\mathbb{Q}$  may perfectly well go to  $c5$ . Then 19. $\mathbb{Q}b5!$ ?  $\mathbb{E}e6$  (19... $c6$ ? 20. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $cx d5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xe8$   $\mathbb{Q}xe8$  22. $cx d5$  clearly favours White) 20. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  could lead to a quick draw.

### 19. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

19. $exd5$ ! would give White an edge as the black rook on  $a8$  will have a tough time getting into the game, while White could now line up the other rook on the  $e$ -file, with a view to making rapid headway on the kingside.

### 19... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $f5$ 21. $exf5$ $\mathbb{Q}xf5$

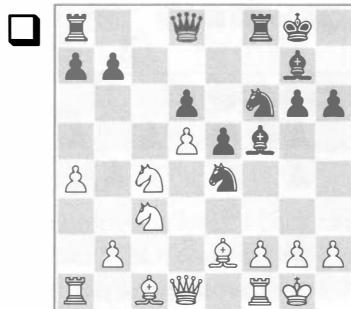
and Black held on to a draw.

## A Spatial Issue

**Alexander Zubarev**

**Anton Shtarkov**

Kharkov 2005



Again we see two knights defending each other, tempting White to go for the ambitious and audacious...

### 17. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ ?

Keeping all the minor pieces on the board. If White succeeds in driving the black pieces back from  $e4$ , his opponent will struggle with his pieces in a passive position.

### 17... $\mathbb{E}c8$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ ?

Trying to immediately rid himself of his superfluous knight by force. How-

ever, it is difficult to suggest a good alternative, for example: 18... $a6$  19. $f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  20. $b4$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  21. $\mathbb{E}xa4$   $b5$  22. $\mathbb{E}xa6$   $bxc4$  23. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  and White has a clear initiative on the queenside.

### 19. $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ $\mathbb{E}xc4$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}e2$

20. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ !  $gxf5$  21. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xa7$  would be a consistent continuation, and Black has a hard time proving sufficient compensation for the pawn. The knight on  $b1$  is likely to get back into play soon. After the text move Black's idea – getting rid of one knight – seems to have succeeded, although now his queen's rook ends up on  $b4$ .

### 20... $\mathbb{E}b4$ 21. $b3$ $\mathbb{W}h4$ 22. $\mathbb{E}a2$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$

### 23. $g3$ $\mathbb{W}h3$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}d2$



The unusually-placed rook on  $b4$  still makes it difficult for Black to coordinate his pieces. He now went astray:

### 24... $\mathbb{E}c8$ ?! 25. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ ! $\mathbb{Q}e4$ ?! 26. $\mathbb{Q}d2$

### $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ 27. $\mathbb{W}xd2$ $\mathbb{E}xb3$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$

Now White was definitely better, though Black scraped a draw in the end.

## Redeployment

Here we have another example of how to redeploy a superfluous knight when its inactivity becomes apparent. Of course, there are also cases where knights may be useful when linked together in this way. When the foremost knight is on an outpost and has to be

exchanged, the second one can immediately follow in its footsteps. Take, for instance, Vaisser-Golod, Maccabiah Jerusalem 2012.

**Kevin Spraggett**

**Emilio Cordova**

Barcelona 2012



**14...h7!**

Vacating the g8-square for the knight.

**15.Qae1 Qg8**

White immediately follows suit by transferring his own superfluous knight to e2. And where are the knights headed?

**16.Qe2?**

A logical alternative would be 16.a3, to make use of the time Black needs to transfer his knight. After 16...Qh6 17.b4 Qg4 18.Qc2 White is still somewhat better.

**16...Qh6**

Of course, not to the active square f6, when, after 16...Qf6 17.Qxf6+ Qxf6, White has tightened his grip on the d5-square as planned.

**17.Qh1 Qg4**

This was the intended destination. Not a surprise, as this is a regular pattern in such structures where both sides have advanced the rook pawn two squares. White follows suit.

**18.Qg1 Qh8 19.Qh3 b5 20.Qa1 Qg8 21.Qg5**

Here too White remains better due to his strong knight and spatial edge, though the game ended peacefully after Black got rid of the strong Qd5.

## Hopping Around

**Tamir Nabaty**

**Vladislav Nevednichy**

Albena 2013



**14...Qbd5**

Black voluntarily links his knights, but not without good reason. The knight on b6 is activated and centralized, challenging its active counterpart on c3.

**15.Qb5**

Naturally White refuses to disentangle the knights. Tisdall's lively comment on the subject has been quoted in several places: 'the knights are never happy protecting each other. They step on each other's hooves, and reduce their own range' (from *Improve Your Chess Now*).

Here I would like to add: also in chess, never say never, as we saw in the previous example! Tisdall ends with: 'they are best employed side by side, when they can influence a virtual barrier of squares'. This may be true, but as my fellow club member William van Zanten wrote a long time ago, two knights separated horizontally by two squares can also provide perfect control.

### 15... $\mathbb{N}e4$

Activating both this knight and the  $\mathbb{N}d8$ .

### 16. $\mathbb{N}f3$ c6 17. $\mathbb{N}bd4$ $\mathbb{N}xg3$ 18.hxg3

Now the white knights protect each other, though again temporarily!

### 18... $\mathbb{H}e8$ 19. $\mathbb{H}he1$ $\mathbb{N}b6$ 20. $\mathbb{N}e5$

Occupying the square in front of the isolated pawn, which is often just as weak as the pawn itself, or is perhaps the real weakness!?

### 20.a4 21.a3 $\mathbb{H}e7$ 22. $\mathbb{H}e2$ $\mathbb{N}c5$

### 23. $\mathbb{N}df3$ $\mathbb{N}c8$ 24. $\mathbb{N}de1$ $\mathbb{N}a7$ 25. $\mathbb{N}d3$

White had a pleasant edge, kept on hopping around with his knights and managed to exploit the weaknesses in his opponent's position.

## Theoretical Lines

**Krasimir Rusev**

**Stoyan Stoyanov**

Plovdiv 2010

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{N}f3$   $\mathbb{N}e7$

4. $\mathbb{N}c3$  f5 5. $\mathbb{N}f4$  c6 6.e3  $\mathbb{N}f6$

7. $\mathbb{W}c2$  0-0 8. $\mathbb{N}d3$   $\mathbb{N}e4$  9.h3  $\mathbb{N}d7$

10.g4  $\mathbb{N}df6$  11.0-0-0  $\mathbb{W}a5$



As Emms noted, there are several theoretical lines which feature the avoidance of an exchange of a superfluous knight, such as the Closed Sicilian or the Chigorin Ruy Lopez. See the online database file for the respective variations.

Jussupow also pointed out the frequent occurrence of the phenomenon in positions resulting from specific openings. He mentioned the Dutch Stonewall. Here we have an example of that structure featuring some familiar elements.

### 12. $\mathbb{N}b1?$

Of course, here too Black was intending to exchange the foremost knight, before occupying e4 with the other one. Again, with all four minor pieces on the board Black suffers some spatial problems; as seen previously, White may follow up with  $\mathbb{N}e5$  and f2-f3. The drawback is that the knight on b1 will be temporarily inactive (and in other cases this drawback may just turn out to be too serious!), but here it may even assist the defence.

There is also a very similar game in this line, Kharnak-Novkovic, Cappelle 2000, which featured a quick finish.

### 12... $\mathbb{W}xa2$ 13. $\mathbb{N}e5$ $\mathbb{N}d7$

Black redeploys his superfluous knight.

### 14. $\mathbb{H}hg1$ $\mathbb{N}xe5$ 15. $\mathbb{N}xe5$ g6 16.f3

### $\mathbb{N}d6$ 17. $\mathbb{N}xd6$ ! $\mathbb{N}xd6$ 18.c5 $\mathbb{N}c7$

Having eliminated Black's central knight, White has a huge space advantage and an initiative on the kingside, which proved sufficient compensation for the pawn. White won.

## Summary

Two knights controlling the same square is often one too many. When you play against them, simply try to avoid the exchange of either one of them. Just leave them standing in each other's way.

## Chapter 36

# The No-Nonsense Bishop Move

Putting the bishop in front of your undeveloped central pawn goes against general wisdom. Yet it is a practical approach which seems to be becoming more and more common. Clearly this pattern is connected to the opening phase of the game. Let us broaden the horizon of our general development rules and look into some typical openings and the straightforward ideas behind this move.

**Manuel Bosboom  
Sofia Polgar**

Münster 1993

**1.e4 c5 2.♗f3 d6 3.♗b5+ ♜d7  
4.0-0 a6**



**5.♗d3**

A retreat to a square where the bishop blocks a central pawn and, as a result, inhibits White's further development. What is more, the bishop's diagonal is blocked by the e4-pawn. Despite these drawbacks, such moves are becoming common practice these days and therefore less of a surprise. In my database the text is about seven times less popular than 5.♗xd7+, yet, in the last two years, it has gained a staggering amount of ground, with players such as Carlsen, Caruana, Nepomniachtchi, Svidler and Wang Yue resorting to it. So Bosboom,

known for his supposedly unconventional ideas, may have been hitting the nail on the head here twenty years ago!

White's general idea is to build a strong pawn centre with c2-c3 and d2-d4. If we compare the text move with 5.♗e2, then the natural 5...♝gf6 would attack the e4-pawn, rendering White's idea impossible. Of course, White's retreat preserves his pair of bishops. The loss of time is not problematic due to the fact that, for now, the position is closed.

**5...♝gf6 6.c3**

6.♗e1 seems less logical and is less popular, but may transpose. Noteworthy is the recent game Degraeve-Sebag, Nancy ch-FRA 2013, which saw a Ruy Lopez Breyer arise but without the move h2-h3, after 6...b5 7.c3 ♗b7 8.♗c2 e5 9.d4 ♗e7 10.♗bd2 0-0 11.♗f1 ♗e8.

**6...b5 7.♗c2 ♗b7 8.♗e1 c4**



The ambitious way to stop White building his centre with d2-d4. 8...e5, as in the above note, is the more solid solution.

**9.b3  $\mathbb{B}c8$  10.a4 cxb3 11. $\mathbb{Q}xb3$**   
 **$\mathbb{Q}xe4$  12.axb5 axb5? 13. $\mathbb{Q}a7$**   
 **$\mathbb{Q}c6$**

13... $\mathbb{W}b6$  runs into 14. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{W}xb7$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  when 15... $\mathbb{W}xe4$  fails to 16. $\mathbb{Q}xf7+$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ .

**14. $\mathbb{Q}d4!$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$**   
**16. $\mathbb{W}h5$  d5**

Better, though clearly good for White, is 16... $\mathbb{Q}xa7$  17. $\mathbb{W}xf7+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}e6+$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$   $\mathbb{W}xc8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ .

**17. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}a8!$**

... and Bosboom quickly won.

## Defending e5

**Tigran L Petrosian**

**Andrey Volokitin**

Budva 2009

A lot of 1.e4 e5 openings feature the no-nonsense bishop move. One serious consideration is to protect the pawn on e5 to speed up development. Take for instance 7... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  in the Old Arkhangelsk 7.d3 line, getting ready to play ...d7-d5 in one go after castling followed by ... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  and ... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ . Adams-Malaniuk is a model game for Black's strategy. Very similar, and perhaps theoretically more successful (let's leave the verdict to the various publications on opening theory) is 4... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  in the Four Knights with 4. $\mathbb{Q}b5$ . An even fresher recent try is Beinoras's ... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  in the 4.d3 Jaenisch Ruy Lopez, again aiming to castle quickly without having to bother about defending the e5-pawn. Finally, the no-nonsense strategy also enjoyed a modest revival in the Evans Gambit.

**1.e4 e5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$**   
**4.b4  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  5.c3**



**5... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  6.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$**

Lately, Hess has preferred the even more provocative 6... $\mathbb{W}e7$ . However, as the text move meets no objections, it must obviously be the natural choice.

**7.0-0**

7. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  0-0 8.f4 was Anderssen's choice when Kieseritzky ventured 5... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  against him back in 1851, while Pillsbury faced Bird's 8. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  against him in the famous tournament of Hastings 1895. It would be interesting to know more about how 5... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  was regarded in those days!

**7...0-0 8.Qe1 h6 9.Qbd2**

9. $\mathbb{Q}h4$  is another direct attempt to take advantage of the temporarily awkward bishop on d6, but after 9...exd4 10. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  11.cxd4 d5! this seems to be premature.

**9... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  10. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7!?$**

This seems to be asking for it as Black's pieces are very clumsily placed right now. However, Black survives White's coming onslaught.

**11. $\mathbb{Q}h4$**

Perhaps White should look for more patient solutions such as 11. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ , though Harikrishna was successful against that with 11...b5!?.

**11...exd4 12. $\mathbb{Q}f5$  dxc3 13. $\mathbb{Q}xe7+$**   
 **$\mathbb{W}xe7$**

Black has more than enough pawns for the exchange.

## Die Moderne Schachpartie

Ivan Popov

Markus Ragger

Tromsø 2013

**1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗c4 ♘f6  
4.♗g5 d5 5.exd5 ♘a5 6.♗b5+  
c6 7.dxc6 bxc6**



**8.♗d3**

Also an old move which has recently become the rage, probably thanks to extensive help from strong analysis engines.

**8...♗d5**

White's intention is to meet the normal and expected 8...h6 with 9.♗e4.

**9.♗f3 ♘d6 10.0-0 ♘f4 11.♗e1  
♗xd3 12.cxd3 0-0 13.♗c3 ♘e8  
14.♗e4 c5**



You will understand straightaway that traditional basic principles are of little help in this theoretical line. All the

more reason for me to encourage you to take a closer look (without an engine!) at this concrete playing style.

**15.b3 ♘f8 16.♗a3 ♘c6 17.♗xc5  
f5 18.♗eg5 ♘xc5 19.♗c2 ♗d5  
20.♗ac1 ♘xf2+ 21.♗xf2 ♘b4  
22.♗xe5 ♘xe5 23.♗xc8+ ♗e8  
24.♗c4 ♘xd3+ 25.♗g3 f4+  
26.♔g4 ♗ad8 27.♗xd5+ ♗xd5**

... and after many more adventures Black in fact won this game.

## Another Twin Gun

Petar Arnaudov

Pavel Elianov

Struga 2013

**1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗c3 ♘b4  
4.e3 0-0 5.♗d3 c5 6.♗f3 b6  
7.0-0 ♘b7 8.♗a4 cxd4 9.a3**



**9...♗d6**

Again blocking the d-pawn, though here at least the bishop from c8 has already been developed. Both bishops are now directed against White's kingside. It only remains for the ♘b8 to find a harmonious place.

**9...♗e7** is the more natural and more popular move (though, of course, not necessarily the best!). The text move has only been tried occasionally in the past two decades. A similar configuration of bishops can be found in many open-

ings. For another recent Nimzo-Indian, see Panelo-Vocaturo, Badalona 2013, where Black didn't manage his queen-side development successfully.

#### **10.exd4 ♜c6!?**

Previously the problem of Black's lack of space here was solved by exchanging a minor piece: 10...♝xf3 11.♝xf3 and now Black takes control of part of the centre with 11...♜c6 12.♝e3 e5, as (among others) Adams has tried against the white player.

#### **11.♝c3 h6 12.h3 ♜c8 13.♝e3 ♜e7**

Redeploying the knight, making way for the ♜b7.

#### **14.♝c1 ♜b8**

Finally the bishop moves away to enable Black to advance his d-pawn into the centre.

#### **15.b4**



#### **15...♝f5!**

Very clever, as after...

#### **16.♝xf5**

(something like 16.♛e2 is probably best)

#### **16...exf5**

... White has problems defending his c-pawn.

#### **17.c5**

17.♝e2 can be met with, for example, 17...♝xf3 18.gxf3 ♜h5.

#### **17...♜d5 18.♝xd5 ♜xd5 19.♝e5 bx5 20.bxc5 d6 21.cxd6 ♜xd6**

and in view of the threats of ...f7-f6 and ...♜xa3, Black was clearly on top and eventually won the game.

#### **Rashid Nezhmetdinov**

#### **Yury Kotkov**

Krasnodar 1967

#### **1.e4 e5 2.♞f3 ♜c6 3.♝b5 ♜f6 4.0-0 ♜xe4 5.♜e1 ♜d6 6.♝xe5 ♜e7**



#### **7.♝d3**

Here we go again. Of course, 7.♝f1 is much more popular. Even so, the text move doesn't score badly in the database. This may seem similar to 5.♝d3 in the Petroff main line (3.♝xe5), but that is more likely to feature a regrouping with c2-c3, ♜d3-c2 and d2-d4: see for example Tiviakov in another one of his squeezing games, against Howell at Leiden 2012.

Here the bishop aims at Black's king-side, where the black knight is missing. Again, the other white bishop is likely to team up with it on b2.

#### **7...0-0 8.♝c3 ♜xe5**

Nezhmetdinov recommended 8...♝e8 from Janowski-Lasker, Nuremberg 1896!

#### **9.♜xe5 ♜f6 10.♝e3 g6 11.♝f3**

11.b3 at once is more popular and was played in Steinitz-Zukertort, 6th World Championship match game 1886.

**11...♝g7?**

Nezhmetdinov gives 11...♝d4! or 11...♜e8 as better alternatives.

**12.b3 ♜e8 13.♗a3 d6 14.♗ae1**

White has already built up a significant advantage in development and intends to follow up with ♜c4.

**14...♝f6 15.h3 ♜d7 16.♗d5**

White is clearly better. Remarkably, the same position arose in the 2013 US Championship, with the game going as follows: 16...♝h8 17.♗e7 c6 18.♗xd6 cxd5 19.♗xf7 ♜e8 20.♗e7 ♜a5 21.♗e6 ♜xa2 22.♗f6 ♜xf6 23.♗xf6 1-0, Sammour Hasbun-Ivanov, Saint Louis 2013.

**16...f5****17.♗xc7!! ♜xc7 18.♗d5+ ♜h8****19.♗e8! ♜f6 20.♗xf8+ ♜xf8****21.♗b2**

White is winning.

**21...♝g7**

21...♝g7 22.♗e8 ♜e6 23.♗xf6 ♜xf6  
24.♗xe6; 21...♝g7 22.♗c4.

**22.♗c4 ♜d7 23.♗xf6**

23.♗f7 ♜f8 24.♗e8.

**23...♝xf6 24.♗f7 ♜d8 25.♗e8+**

Again this move – Black resigned.

**Peter Michalik**

**Joseph Gallagher**

Meissen 2013

**1.e4 c5 2.♗f3 ♜c6 3.♗b5 e5  
4.0-0**

**4...♝d6**

Again, the no-nonsense bishop move is adopted in preference to the classical move: 4...♝ge7. Jobava, who often likes to experiment in the opening these days, has also used it on several occasions. The Snake Benoni is another example, where Black heads for quick development, and the subsequent manoeuvre ....♝c7-a5 is specifically typical of the Snake. Not too long ago Aronian adopted the Snake to try and even up his World Cup match with Tomashevsky.

**5.c3**

A valid strategy, quickly opening up the position to try and exploit the loose position of the ♜d6.

**5...♝ge7 6.d4 cxd4 7.cxd4 exd4****8.♗xd4 a6 9.♗e2 0-0 10.♗c3****♝e5 11.♗e3 d5**

Black has almost equalized, but White keeps a nagging lead in development.

**12.exd5 ♜xd5 13.♗xd5 ♜xd4****14.♗c4!**

Improving on Bartel-Jobava, European Championship 2013, which saw 14.♗xd4 ♜xd5 15.♗c3 ♜xd1 16.♗fxd1 ♜xc3 17.bxc3 ♜e6 and the game petered out to a draw.

**14...♝f5 15.♗b6!**

White sacrifices a pawn to maintain his lead in development.

**15...♝xh2+ 16.♔xh2 ♜h4+****17.♔g1 ♜xc4**



**18.♗c1**

18.♗c7 ♜b8 19.♗c1 ♜xa2 20.♗a7 is even stronger.

**18...♜xa2 19.♗c7 ♜e6 20.♗xa8 ♜xa8**

White is better, but Black managed to exchange queens and scrape a draw.

### Oleg Romanishin Tigran Petrosian

Yerevan 1975

You will be able to find more examples of the no-nonsense bishop move in other openings, but by now you should have a good feel for the general idea of quick development, and also of the manoeuvres which can follow.

Let's finish this article with a splendid game by Oleg Romanishin, who – even before Bosboom – was not afraid to take a no-nonsense approach which yielded him some fine victories.

**1.c4 ♘f6 2.♗c3 e6 3.♗f3 b6  
4.e4 ♜b7**



**5.♗d3**

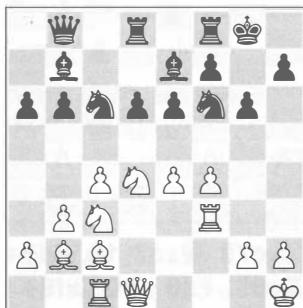
Protecting the e4-pawn, directing attention to the kingside, planning to move the d-pawn to d4 in one go, building a strong pawn centre. All of this will be familiar to you now. For yet another great Romanishin effort, see Adorjan-Romanishin, Riga Interzonal 1979.

**5...d6 6.♗c2 c5 7.d4 cxd4  
8.♘xd4 ♜e7 9.0-0 0-0 10.b3 ♜c6**

Also after 10...♝bd7, White can easily follow this attacking scheme: ♜b2, f2-f4 and, if needed, ♜e2 and ♜ae1.

**11.♗b2 a6 12.♗h1 ♜c7 13.f4  
♝ad8 14.♗c1 ♜b8 15.♗f3 g6?**

This turns out to be a weakening of the kingside. The former World Champion should perhaps have resorted to 15...♝fe8.



**16.♗d5!**

The Colossal Knight. Of course, Black's offside queen makes success more likely.

**16...exd5 17.exd5**

According to Romanishin, 17.♗f5! would have been even stronger. And indeed, after 17...gxf5 18.exd5 ♜fe8 19.♗g3+, followed by ♜xf5, White's attack seems unstoppable.

**17...♝xd4 18.♗xd4 ♜de8 19.f5**

Opening the f-file, but Petrosian demonstrates his famous defensive capabilities.

**19...♝d8 20.♗h4 ♜e5 21.♗h6**

**21...Bc7?**

But now he falters. He should have taken the draw with 21...Qg4 22.Qf4 Qf6.

**22.Qg3 Qc8 23.Qxe5 dxe5  
24.fxg6 fxg6 25.Qxg6 Qg4  
26.Qh5 Qf6 27.Qd2 Qf4 28.d6  
Qg7 29.d7 Qb7 30.Qxf4**

Black resigned.

**Summary**

The trend to prefer quick development or the slow building of a strong pawn centre has gained ground. Most certainly this is an interesting pattern, probably partly induced by the modern engines. Of course the manoeuvre takes time, but as long as the position cannot be opened up, this will not be a problem. Some time after I had originally written this chapter I was pleasantly surprised by my team mate GM Roeland Pruijssers when he ventured 1.e4 c5 2.Qf3 a6 3.Qd3! – virtually uncharted territory!

## Chapter 37

### Offside Pieces

Knights can easily wander off, and pieces with a longer range may also suddenly end up out of the action. If you want to take advantage of this, just leave them be and concentrate on the other wing where you are a piece up.

#### King Attack on the Other Side

Zhao Xue

Dronavalli Harika

Khanty-Mansiysk 2012

**1.d4 d6 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.c4 g6 4.♗c3 ♗g7 5.e4 0-0 6.♗e2 e5 7.♗e3 exd4 8.♗xd4 ♕e8 9.f3 c6 10.♗f2 d5 11.exd5 cxd5 12.0-0 ♗c6 13.c5 ♘f8 14.♗b3 ♘h6 15.♗e1 a6**



The theoretical battle has just ended. Black's last move ...a7-a6 tempts Zhao to transfer the knight to the strong b6-square.

**16.♘a4 ♘e6 17.♘b6 ♜b8 18.♗f1 ♘h5**

Harika decides to let the knight on b6 be and focusses her attention on the kingside.

**19.♗d4 ♘xd4 20.♗xd4 ♘g7 21.♗d2 ♜f6 22.♗ab1**

22.♗xd5, to centralize the knight, seems a logical option, but Zhao probably wanted to get more from the position than after 22...♜xb2 23.♗xb2 ♜xb2 24.♗ad1 when White at least isn't worse.

**22...d4**

Forward!

**23.b4 ♜bd8**



After this move the b6-knight is left a bit offside, no longer dominating any black pieces. It would only be useful there if it supported a potential passed c-pawn, but White doesn't come anywhere near in the game.

**24.♗e4 g5 25.♗d1 d3 26.♗e3**

26.♗xd3 ♘f4 27.♗e3 (27.♗c2 ♘xd3 28.♗xd3 ♘f5) 27...♜h6 is annoying for White, but 26.g3, to keep the knight from its threatening position on f4, was possible: 26...♜xf3 27.♗e3 followed by ♘xd3.

The attempt to relocate the knight also leaves Black on top: 26.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  27.  $\mathbb{B}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$ .

**26... $\mathbb{Q}f4$  27.a4**

The immediate 27.g3 seems better: 27...  $\mathbb{Q}e2+$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}xe2$   $dxe2$  29.  $\mathbb{W}xe2$   $\mathbb{B}xd1+$  30.  $\mathbb{W}xd1$   $\mathbb{B}d8$  31.  $\mathbb{W}e2$ .

**27... $\mathbb{B}f8$**

Preparing to play ...  $\mathbb{Q}h3+$  after g2-g3, but 27...  $\mathbb{W}c3$  or 27...  $\mathbb{W}b2$  would have been a strong alternative, intending to meet 28.g3 with 28...f5.

**28.g3  $\mathbb{Q}h3+$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}xh3$   $\mathbb{Q}xh3$  30.g4**

30.  $\mathbb{B}xd3$   $\mathbb{B}xd3$  31.  $\mathbb{W}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$ .

**30... $\mathbb{W}c3$  31.  $\mathbb{W}xg5$  d2**

31...  $\mathbb{W}c2$ .

**32.  $\mathbb{Q}e3?$**

32.  $\mathbb{W}e3$  was much better, though after 32...  $\mathbb{W}c2$  White clearly has the upper hand.

**32... $\mathbb{W}b3$  33.  $\mathbb{B}xd2$   $\mathbb{B}xd2$  0-1**

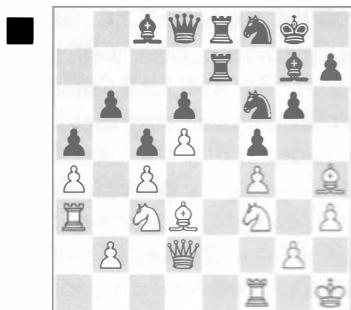
As you can see the knight still has no prospects on b6, which has effectively given Black an extra piece for the final attack.

## A Tempting Stronghold

**Jan Hein Donner**

**Robert Hartoch**

Leeuwarden 1981



When I saw the knight stranded on b6 in Zhao Xue-Harika I was immediately

reminded of this game, above all due to Donner's sharp comments in *Schaakbulletin* (the Dutch predecessor to New In Chess magazine) no. 160. I've translated Donner's comments on the next couple of moves. Enjoy:

**22... $\mathbb{Q}8d7$**

'Just a waiting move, I thought.

**23.  $\mathbb{B}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$**

Ah, that's it, he wants to put it on b4! Let's make way to receive him properly.

**24.  $\mathbb{B}aa1$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  25.  $\mathbb{B}af1$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$**

**26.  $\mathbb{Q}b1$**

Black has reached his goal and the knight is now on the strong b4-square. Of course he might as well have moved it to h9 or back to the hotel, where it would in no way have been any less off-side. With an extra piece the kingside attack is now likely to succeed.' (that was all Donner)

**26... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{B}e3$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$**

**$\mathbb{B}e3$  e7 29. g4  $\mathbb{B}f7$  30. gxf5**

Donner thought this was a mistake, suggesting further preparation with  $\mathbb{Q}h4$  and  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ .

**30... $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  gxf5 32.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$**

**h6 33.  $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{B}d7$**



Draw agreed, as Donner thought he had spoiled his advantage, though 34.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ ! would have been a good follow-up. In any case, his strong opinion and the lesson about the seemingly strong

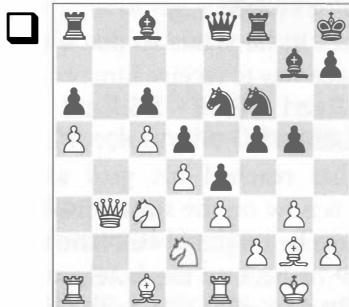
b4-square left a big impression on many Dutch readers, myself included.

## Attack On Different Wings

**Laurens Snuverink**

**Friso Nijboer**

Netherlands 2011/12



**19.♘a4**

Just like Zhao Xue White goes for the strong square on b6. But what's going to happen on the other side of the board? To be fair, it has to be said that 19.♘e2 wouldn't have stopped ...f5-f4 either.

**19...f4 20.♘b6 ♜b8 21.♗a4 ♘g4**

When commenting on this game, Richard Vedder (in his account of the team match) also quoted Donner. In contrast to the previous examples, here the knight can still be exchanged for the c8-bishop. However, while in the King's Indian that is often a way of removing an important attacker, here Black's attack has already advanced too far.

**22.♘b3**

22.♘xc8 ♜xc8 23.♘f1 fxe3 24.fxe3 ♘f2.

**22...♝h5 23.h3 ♘xf2 24.♕xf2 fxe3+ 25.♔g1**

25.♔xg3 ♘xd4 26.exd4 ♘xh3.

**25...g4 26.♗xc6 gxh3 27.♗xd5**

**♗g5 28.♗xe4 ♘e6 29.♗c6**

**♗xb3 30.♗a3 ♘xe4 31.♗xe4**

**♗xb6 32.cxb6 h2+**

0-1

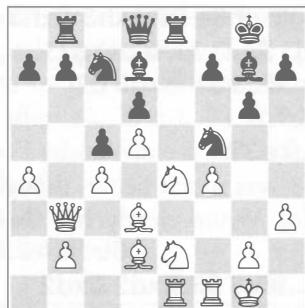
## b4 Revisited

**Ivan Sokolov**

**Teimour Radjabov**

Sarajevo 2003

**1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♘g7 4.e4 d6 5.♘d3 0-0 6.♘ge2 c5 7.d5 e6 8.0-0 exd5 9.exd5 ♘g4 10.f4 ♘e8 11.h3 ♘h6 12.♘d2 ♘f5 13.♗b3 ♘a6 14.♗ae1 ♘b8 15.a3 ♘c7 16.a4 ♘d7 17.♘e4**



**17...♘a6**

And here we have a mirror image of the Donner game. Black is struggling to find space for his pieces and directs his knight to the strong b4-square. It might not come as a surprise for you to learn that it will find itself sidelined there later on in the game.

**18.♘h2 ♘b4 19.♘b1**

Not 19.♘xb4? ♜b6!.

**19...♝h4 20.♘c3**

Ultimately this turned out well, because Black later erred. Good alternatives were 20.♗f3, transferring the queen to the kingside, and if 20...♘xb2? then 21.♘c3; or going for d6 with 20.♘g3 ♘d4 21.♘d1.

**20...♘e3 21.♘xg7 ♘xf1+**

**22.♗xf1 ♘xe4**

Black is forced to return the exchange, because if 22...♔xg7 then after 23.♗c3+ f6 24.♘g3 all White's

pieces are on the attack, while Black's knight on b4 is just a distant bystander.

**23.♘xe4 ♜xg7 24.♗c3+ ♜f6**

Radjabov misses his chance. 24...♜g8! would have prevented f4-f5, while after, for example, 25.♘g3 f5 the mobility of White's pieces is also severely restricted.



**25.f5!**

Now the knight on b4 continues to be dominated into the endgame, where Black also has to keep an eye on the d6-pawn.

**25...♝xc3**

25...♞xa4 26.fxg6 ♜xc3 27.♗xf7+.

**26.♘xc3 ♜e8 27.f6+ ♜f8**

**28.♘b1 b6 29.a5! bxa5 30.♘e4**

... and Sokolov converted his clear advantage:

**30..a4 31.♘xd6 ♜e2 32.♘e4**

**♞a6 33.♗f2 ♜e1 34.♘c2 ♜e3**

**35.♗d2 a3 36.bxa3 ♜xa3**

**37.♗e2 ♜a2 38.♘d6 1-0**

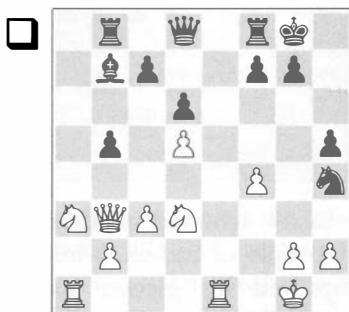
39.♗e7 is unstoppable and devastating.

### No Stronghold

In the previous examples the knight was lured to a strong square. That isn't, of course, a necessary condition for a knight to be offside, as I was once happy to be able to prove against the winner of the third fragment.

**Friso Nijboer**

**Arthur van de Oudeweetering**  
Netherlands 2000



**21.♘xb5**

21.♘xb5, to activate the knight, runs into 21...♜d7, when Black's queen is also aiming for g4.

**21...♜f6 22.♗e3**

Now that White has the chance he should have relocated his knight with 22.♘c2, though 22...♜g6 gives Black sufficient compensation.

**22..♝f5 23.♘b4**

Off goes the other knight to the queen-side. 23.c4 ♜g6 24.♗g3 ♜f6 yields Black enough play for the pawn.

**23..♝xf4 24.♗ae1**

It was time to shore up the defences with 24.♗e2.

**24..♜g5 25.♗e2 f5!**

Activating the rook and setting up an attack, which Nijboer must have underestimated. He didn't pay enough attention to his helpless knights on the other side.

**26.♗g3 ♜h6 27.♗h3 ♜be8**

**28.♗f2**

28.♗xe8 ♜xe8 29.♗xe8+ ♜f7 30.♗e2 (30.♗he3 ♜g5 31.g3 f4) 30...♜c1+ 31.♔f2 ♜f4+ 32.♔g1 ♜xg2 33.♗xg2 ♜c1+ 34.♔f2 ♜xb2+ 35.♔bc2 ♜xd5.

**28...♞g6 29.♗he3 ♜e5**



White hasn't achieved anything with his last couple of moves, while Black has improved his pieces; now he's clearly on top.

30.h3 f4 31.♗e4 f3 32.g3 ♜g6  
33.♘b5 ♘d3 34.♘xd3 ♜xe4  
35.♘xc7 ♜e2 36.♗xe2 fxe2  
37.♗e3 ♜xd3 0-1

White lost both on time and on position.

## The Offside Bishop

**Nigel Short**  
**Vladimir Kramnik**

London 2011



The knight is of course the ideal offside piece because of its inability to quickly return to the action, but long-distance pieces can definitely be offside as well! Here you might be thinking of the bishop on e7, but after Kramnik's simple and brilliant...

19...d5! 20.♗e5 c6

... it's now the bishop on b3 that strongly recalls the famous Winter-Capablanca ending. There are some other classic offside bishops, for example Blackburne-Van Vliet, London 1890, and Spielmann-Tarrasch, San Sebastian 1912. For a fresh and complicated battle around this theme I'm very happy to point you to Carlsen-Grischuk, Tal Memorial, Moscow 2012.

21.♗ae1 ♜c7 22.♗e2 ♜c8  
23.a4 ♜d7 24.♗h4 ♜xe2  
25.♗xe2 ♜e8 26.♗xe8+ ♜xe8



With the rooks off the board Black can easily set up an offensive on the kingside, where he is effectively a piece up.

27.♗g3 ♜d8!

There's no reason to improve White's pawn structure as he is completely helpless in any case. Black now won without trouble.

## The Salov Rook

**Jan Timman**  
**Valery Salov**

Saint John 1988

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 ♘b4+  
4.♘bd2 d5 5.♗a4+ ♘c6 6.a3  
♗xd2+ 7.♔xd2 ♘e4 8.♗c2 a5 9.e3  
0-0 10.♗d3 f5 11.0-0 a4 12.♗b4  
♗f6 13.♘e5 ♘d7 14.f3 ♘g5  
15.♗ac1 ♘f7 16.f4 ♘e8 17.♗e1



An offside rook is a less frequent guest, but such a thing can definitely occur, as this game proves.

**17...♜h6**

As no attack appears to be looming it's not clear what the rook is doing here, but things will get even worse.

**18.cxd5 ♜xd5 19.♔e2 ♜fxe5  
20.dxe5**

Now the rook no longer has any way to return and is a pitiful sight.

**20...♜h5**

20...g5 21.♕c4 ♜d7 22.fxg5 ♜g6  
23.♖xf5.

**21.♖d1 ♜a2 22.♖xh5 ♜xh5  
23.♖d7 ♜c8 24.♖f2 ♜b3  
25.♖xb3 axb3**

The more pieces fall off the board, the more noticeable the remaining bad ones become. The weak pieces also make themselves felt more as there are fewer pieces to cover for them.

**26.♖fd2 ♔f8**

The rook on h5 is indeed offside and can't enter the game. The only attempt to change that would be the time-consuming ...g7-g5 and ...♜h6-g6, but by then White has already completed the harvest on the queenside.

**27.♖d3 ♔e7 28.♗b4 c5  
29.♖d8+ ♜xd8 30.♖xd8+ ♔f7  
31.♖xc5 ♔d5 32.♖d7+ ♔e8  
33.♖xb7 g5 34.g3 gxf4 35.exf4  
♔d8 36.♗f8! ♔e8 37.♗g7 1-0**

### Summary

Pieces should work together. That is easier said than done, of course. It is a complex matter that is not easily explained. The offside pieces in the above examples will help you to avoid some pitfalls or – on the bright side – to take profit from your opponent's offside piece by directing your attention to the other side of the board. And remember: strong squares are only truly strong when they can be occupied purposefully. Just like the activity of a sole piece will not likely carry the day in a kingside attack.

## Chapter 38

# A Double-Edged Exchange: ♜x♝c6

In general such a radical choice between activity and a structural weakness is a difficult one to make. When will the dynamic factor – here the pair of bishops – outweigh the static weakness – doubled isolated pawns on the c-file? A complicated struggle often lies ahead, with chances for both sides.

### Establishing an Outpost

**Mikhail Mozharov**

**Kamil Dragun**

Krakow 2012

1.c4 ♜f6 2.♝c3 d5 3.cxd5 ♜xd5  
 4.g3 e5 5.♗g2 ♜b6 6.d3 ♜e3  
 7.♗e3 0-0 8.♗c1 ♜e8 9.♗f3 ♜c6  
 10.0-0 ♜g4 11.♗d2 ♜d7 12.♗e1  
 ♜ab8 13.a4 ♜b4



**14.♜xc6 bxc6**

14...♜xc6 15.♗a2 ♜d6 16.♗xb6  
 ♜xd2 17.♗xc7 ♜h6 18.♗xb8 ♜xb8  
 19.♗c7 ♜h3 20.♗f1 leaves White  
 better.

**15.♗ce4**

Logically aiming for control of the strong square in front of the doubled pawns.

**15...a5**

Blocking White's queenside pawns as well as preparing ...♝d5.

**16.♝c5 ♜c8 17.f3 ♜h3 18.♗f2 h5**

Black has to search for dynamic counterplay. He can't afford to just remain passive, because in the long run his static weakness on c6 is likely to become a serious problem.

**19.♗c2 h4 20.♗ed1 ♜d5**

Provoking White's next move, but Black's desire to bring some more pieces to the kingside is understandable.

**21.e4 ♜f6**



**22.♗db3**

The immediate 22.d4 was the logical follow-up to the last move and seemed to have no drawbacks, so it was clearly preferable.

**22... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  23.d4  $\mathbb{W}d8$  24. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}g5$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$**

Now Black instead seems to have managed to create some timely counterplay as compensation for his damaged pawn structure.

**26. $\mathbb{W}f2$**

26. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  exf4 27.g4 f5 seems OK for Black: 28. $\mathbb{W}c4+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  29. $\mathbb{Q}e6$   $\mathbb{W}xe6$  30. $\mathbb{W}xe6$  fxg4 31. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{W}e8$ .

**26...hxg3 27.hxg3  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$**

A concrete continuation, going for the b2-pawn, but also helping White to get rid of a superfluous knight. 27... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ ?! is a solid alternative.

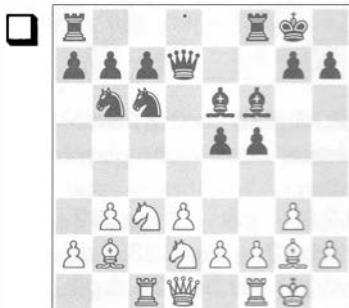
**28. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{W}xb2$  29. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{W}xd2$**

**30. $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  31. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}e2+?$**

The prosaic 31... $\mathbb{W}xd4$  was possible: 32. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  (32. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  exf4 33. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  c5) 32...exf4 33. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  and Black is doing alright in both cases. The text move is more dubious, but in the end Black managed to save the game.

**Alfonso Romero Holmes  
Adam Horvath**

Melaka 2012



Here's a similar position. Again White gives up his fianchetto bishop to severely damage Black's pawn structure. He can't easily put a knight on c5, though, as the e4-square is unavailable.

**13. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{B}xc6$**

13... $\mathbb{W}xc6$  14. $\mathbb{Q}ce4$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  15. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{W}c8$   
16. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  is very unpleasant for Black.

**14. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  15. $\mathbb{Q}a4!$ ?**

White doesn't mind damaging his own pawn structure to start putting some quick pressure on the c-file. Still, a backwards move like 15. $\mathbb{Q}d1$  was also worth considering.

**15... $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  16.bxa4  $\mathbb{Q}xa2$**

Taking what isn't the most important pawn on the board. An alternative would be 16... $\mathbb{B}ab8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  18.e4 fxe4 19.dxe4  $\mathbb{Q}e6$ .

**17. $\mathbb{W}xc6$**

17.f4!, making use of a tactical opportunity: 17...exf4 18. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ .

**17... $\mathbb{B}ab8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}a1$   $\mathbb{W}h5$**

Here the black queen is a lone attacker. It seems more sensible to play a move like 18... $\mathbb{Q}g5$ .

**19. $\mathbb{B}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  20.f3**



Now White is really pressing on pawn c7 while the black bishops are unable to apply pressure.

**20... $\mathbb{W}h6$**

20... $\mathbb{B}fe8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{B}e7$  22. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ .

**21. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{B}bc8$  22.e4  $\mathbb{W}g6$**

**23. $\mathbb{W}c5$  fxe4 24.dxe4  $\mathbb{W}g5$**

**25. $\mathbb{W}e3$**

The normal 25. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  was perfectly possible. After taking this central pawn White would clearly be on top.

**25... $\mathbb{W}g6$**

## Improve Your Chess Pattern Recognition

25... $\mathbb{W}xe3+$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  c5.

26. $\mathbb{W}xa7$   $\mathbb{E}a8$  27. $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{E}xa4$   
28. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

Now White is just a pawn up.

28... $\mathbb{W}h5$  29.g4  $\mathbb{W}h3$  30. $\mathbb{Q}b2$

$\mathbb{Q}xe5$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  h5 32.g5

32.gxh5!  $\mathbb{Q}xh5$  33. $\mathbb{E}xc7$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$ .

32... $\mathbb{Q}c4$  33. $\mathbb{E}fc1$

33. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{W}xf1+$  (33... $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ )

34. $\mathbb{W}d4+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  35. $\mathbb{E}xc4$ ) 34. $\mathbb{W}xf1$

$\mathbb{Q}xf1$  35. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$   $\mathbb{E}a1$  36. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$

37. $\mathbb{E}xc7$  is still better for White.

33... $\mathbb{E}xf3$  34. $\mathbb{W}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$

34... $\mathbb{Q}e6!$  35. $\mathbb{W}xh3$   $\mathbb{Q}xh3$  36. $\mathbb{E}xc7?$

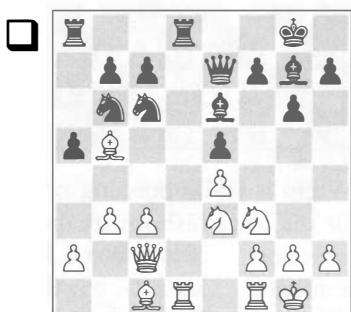
$\mathbb{E}xe4$ .

35. $\mathbb{W}xh3$   $\mathbb{E}xh3$  36. $\mathbb{E}xc7$  1-0

### No c-File

Here's an example which underlines the importance of the semi-open c-file in the previous two examples.

**Baard Fjellengen  
Tiger Hillarp Persson  
Helsingør 2012**



17. $\mathbb{Q}xc6?$ !  $\mathbb{W}bc6$

As you can see, the c-file plays no role here, which clearly leaves the doubled pawns less vulnerable. Moreover, the c6-pawn exerts fine control on the d5-square.

18. $\mathbb{E}xd8+$   $\mathbb{E}xd8$  19. $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{E}a8!$

19... $\mathbb{E}xd1+$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  would help White to manoeuvre his knight to b2, whereas after the text move White's minor pieces get in each other's way (and of course Black wants to put further pressure on the queenside with ...a5-a4).

20.c4?!

This relinquishes control of the d4-square and thus gives Black a clear plan for the next couple of moves. It isn't easy to find a plan for White here, but perhaps 20.a4 had to be preferred.

20..f6 21. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  22. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$

23.a3  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  24.b4 axb4 25.axb4

$\mathbb{Q}e6$

The knight has completed its straightforward journey to d4.

26.f3 h5 27. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  28. $\mathbb{E}a1$

$\mathbb{E}xa1+$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xa1$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$



Black is slightly better here, and the much lower rated white player quickly went astray.

30. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  c5 31.bxc5?  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$

32. $\mathbb{Q}b4?$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  33. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{W}c5+$

34. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}f2+$  35. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}h3+$

36. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{W}g1\#$

### Towards the Endgame

With queens exchanged, the initiative gained for the damaged structure is likely to diminish, and the versatile knight can come in handy to lay siege

to the doubled pawns. A well-known example is Smyslov-Tal, USSR Ch 1969, or you might take a look at Petrosian-Nezhmetdinov, USSR Ch sf Tbilisi 1949 (both ended in a knight vs bishop battle, see the additional games).

Here, however, we have an example where the two bishops do manage to prevail, putting constant pressure on the black position (and, true, the extra c-pawn proves to be of value here).

### Nadezhda Kosintseva Lilit Mkrtchian

Khanty-Mansiysk 2012



**10... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  11. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$**

11...a6 12. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  can be met with the strong and thematic 13.c4, for example 13...dxc4 14. $\mathbb{Q}a5+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  15. $\mathbb{Q}c7$ .

**12.f4 a6 13. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  14. $\mathbb{Q}e3$**

Here, too, opening up the position with 14.c4 was worthy of consideration. With the text move White aims at another strategy: strangling Black.

**14... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  15. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  h6 16. $\mathbb{B}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$**

**17.c4 dxc4 18. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$**

**19. $\mathbb{Q}xc4?$ !**

White has a clear advantage after 19. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4?$  20.g3  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  21.0-0.

**19... $\mathbb{Q}c3$**

19... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  is a much better defence.



**20. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}a7$**

20... $\mathbb{Q}xb1$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xa8+$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  22.0-0 leaves White clearly better.

**21. $\mathbb{B}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xa4$**

22.c6+—.

**22... $\mathbb{Q}d7$**

22... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  23.0-0 and Black is all tied up.

**23.c6  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xa7$   $\mathbb{Q}xa7$**

**25. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  26. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}d3$**

and White won easily.

### Opposite-Side Castling

There's a Sicilian variation (the English Attack in the Taimanov) where White castles queenside, but then very surprisingly allows his c-pawns to be doubled.

### Yuniesky Quesada Perez

#### Levan Aroshidze

Barcelona 2012

**1.e4 c5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  e6 3.d4 cxd4**

**4. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  6. $\mathbb{Q}e3$**

**a6 7. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  8.0-0-0  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  9.f3**

**$\mathbb{Q}e5$  10. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  b5**



**11.♗f2**

11.♗e1 is the more popular move.

**11...♝xc3 12.bxc3**

Here, not only does Black have a semi-open c-file, but the queens are also still on with opposite-side castling. So the white king now has to hide behind a damaged pawn structure. Still, White's control of the dark squares goes a long way towards compensation.

**12...d6 13.♝b6 ♜b8**

13...♜xc3 14.♝xd6 ♔ed7 15.♔a5 ♜e5 16.♝d2 yields White a big advantage.

**14.♔a5 ♜c6 15.♗g3**

Here we see another important point in this Sicilian structure: the d6-pawn is vulnerable.

**15...♕e7 16.♔b4 ♜xb4 17.cxb4**



White has given up his pair of bishops but improved his pawn structure. Now he can increase the pressure against d6 and prepare c2-c4.

**17...♝g8**

In the magazine *ChessVibes Openings*, Van Delft & Ris suggested the more dynamic 17...♝b7!.

**18.♔e2 ♜c7 19.♝d3 ♜b8**

**20.♝hd1 ♜b6 21.♔a5 ♜d7**

**22.♔b2?**

Black has played passively but now White allows him to evacuate his king. 22.♝1d2!.

**22..♝c8 23.c3 ♜f8 24.♝c1**

24.♝xd6 ♜xc3+.

**24..e5 25.♔d1 ♔e6 26.♔b3 ♜xb3 27.axb3 ♜d8 28.♝f2 ♜bb8 29.♝d2 ♜b6 30.♝d1 ♔e8 31.h4**

... and White gradually ground his opponent down.

## Constraining The Bishop Pair

**Tigran Petrosian**

**Yury Balashov**

Moscow 1978

**1.c4 e5 2.b3 ♜c6 3.♗b2 ♜f6 4.e3 d5 5.cxd5 ♜xd5 6.a3 ♜d6 7.♗c2 0-0 8.♗f3 ♜e7 9.♔d3 ♜h8 10.♔e4 ♜b6**



**11.♝xc6**

Here is yet another Petrosian game. Apparently he had a fondness for this idea. Modern chess has also adopted it; take for instance the game Gawain Jones-Alsina Leal, Hastings 2012/13, which featured an Anti-Grünfeld line with an early 11.♝xc6. In 1972 Petrosian was one of the first to try the idea in that particular line, against Schmidt at the Skopje Olympiad.

**11...bxcc6 12.d3**

12.♝xc6 would allow Black to grab the initiative with 12...e4, for example 13.♗d4 ♜d7 14.♗c2 c5 15.♗e2 ♜b5.

**12... $\mathbb{Q}d7$** 

Not very ambitious. Alternatives are 12...a5 13. $\mathbb{W}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  14. $\mathbb{W}c2$  f6 15. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  (15. $\mathbb{Q}bd2$  a4 16.b4 c5 17.bxc5  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ ) 15... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ; and 12...f6 13. $\mathbb{W}xc6$  a5.

**13. $\mathbb{Q}bd2$  f5? 14.e4!**

White fixes the pawn structure, which renders Black's bishop on d6 ineffective.

**14...fxe4 15.dxe4  $\mathbb{M}f4$  16. $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  17.0-0 c5**

**18. $\mathbb{Q}h1!$ ?**

White wants to play  $\mathbb{Q}g1$  and f2-f3, reinforcing e4 – an aesthetically pleasing concept!

**18... $\mathbb{Q}c6$** 

Black could have tried the active 18...c4 19. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  20.bxc4 (20. $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  21. $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$ ) 20... $\mathbb{M}xe4$ , though White remains somewhat better after 21. $\mathbb{M}fe1$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  22. $\mathbb{M}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  23. $\mathbb{M}e1$ .

**19. $\mathbb{M}ae1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  21.f3**

This also leaves Black's other bishop inactive. White is clearly better and Balashov, perhaps disillusioned, immediately made the final mistake.

**21... $\mathbb{Q}h5?$** 

Probably only considering the natural  $\mathbb{Q}e2$ .

**22.g4**

After 22.g4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  White has 23. $\mathbb{F}h3$ .

**Open Position****Misa Pap**

Oleg Romanishin

Di Roseto 2010

**1.e4 e5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3. $\mathbb{Q}c4$** 

Here we see another dynamic player trying his chances with the pair of bishops in an open position with a pawnless centre.

Romanishin also has a pet line against the Four Knights where he prefers to fight against the doubled pawn: 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  4. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  5.d4  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  6.dxe5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  7.f4  $\mathbb{Q}xc3+8.bxc3$ .

**3... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4.d4 exd4 5.e5  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  6.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  7. $\mathbb{M}e1$  d5 8.exd6  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  9. $\mathbb{Q}d5$  0-0 10. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  bxc6**

**11. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}d7!$** 

A flexible move – the bishop on c8 may choose another diagonal.

**12. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  13. $\mathbb{Q}e3$** 

13. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{W}f5$ .

**13... $\mathbb{Q}c4$  14. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  15.c3  $\mathbb{W}d5$** **16. $\mathbb{W}b3$** 

The only earlier game with this position, Moles-B.Jacobsen, Groningen 1967/68(!), saw 16. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  17. $\mathbb{M}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  18. $\mathbb{M}e1$   $\mathbb{M}b8$  and Black was in fine shape.

**16... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  18. $\mathbb{M}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  19. $\mathbb{M}e2$   $\mathbb{W}h5$  20. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  c5**



Black has a pleasant position and his bishops are going to enjoy the open space, aiming at White's kingside.

**21...♝e4**

21.♝f3 is better.

**21...♜d6 22.♝f3 ♜ab8 23.♛a3**

Giving up a pawn with 23.♛d1 (as the queen is hopelessly out of place on a3) also leaves Black clearly on top when the rook joins in on the second rank: 23...♜xb2.

**23...♝c6 24.♜h4 ♛g6**

Black is already winning.

**25.c4**

25.♝g3 ♜fe8 and White's pieces lack any coordination.

**25...♚f6 26.♚d3 g6 27.♝d2 ♜fd8 28.♚e3 ♜xb2 29.♚e1 ♜e8 30.♝e4**



**30...♛xh4!**

Finishing off nicely.

**31.♛c3**

31.♝xh4 ♜xe4 32.♛c1 ♜c2 33.♛d1 ♜xe1+ 34.♛xe1 ♜f4.

**31...♜xe4 32.♝xh4 ♜c2 33.♛a1 ♜xe1+ 34.♛xe1 ♜f4** 0-1

### Summary

In a typical battle with the pair of bishops trying to compensate for the damaged pawn structure after ♜x♝c6, a half-open c-file is clearly an asset for the other side. With the queens on the board, a counterattack on the kingside can be a possibility. The pair of bishops should be activated as much as possible; also without the queens they can be a terrific force (see the Kosintseva game).

## Chapter 39

# The Big Decision

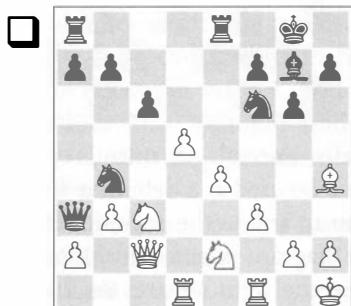
On what grounds should you decide on (or refrain from) an exchange of queens? Let's look into some recent examples and discover the various reasons. You will find that the reasons for deciding on an exchange of queens are often the same as for the exchange of any other piece. However, the exchange of queens is bound to have a big influence on the further course of the game. For one thing, the position will be steered towards an endgame.

### Converting a Material Advantage

Davorin Kuljasevic

Zdenko Kozul

Plitvicka Jezera 2013



Black has sacrificed a pawn and set up an initiative on the queenside. How would you react?

**18.♕c1!**

The simplest! In the endgame the extra pawn is more important. In general it is useful to exchange pieces when you are material up. It would also be logical to let the queen on a3 stay where it is and centralize with 18.♕d2. In this case Black would obtain some activity after 18...cxd5 19.♖xf6 ♕xf6 20.exd5 ♖ad8, but, true, it would hardly be sufficient after 21.d6.

**18...♛xc1 19.♝xc1 cxd5 20.a3!**

The tactical justification.

**20...♝d3 21.♞cd1 dxe4?!**

21...♝c5 22.♜xf6 ♛xf6 23.♝xd5 would simply leave White a pawn up, but with a technical phase still ahead.

The text move loses immediately.

**22.♜xf6 ♛xf6 23.♝xe4**

And now two pieces are hanging – the game is over. Black resigned after three more moves.

### Keep the Attack Going

Tigran Kotanjian

Tigran L Petrosian

Yerevan 2013



The second logical thing that springs to mind is preserving your queen for an

attack. When your only plan is going for the enemy king, you should logically avoid the exchange of the most dangerous attacker.

### 29... $\mathbb{W}b2+$

29...fxe5 30. $\mathbb{M}c2$  followed by  $\mathbb{W}g1$  gives White dangerous play. 29...dxe5 30. $\mathbb{W}d7+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  31. $\mathbb{M}xc4$  is completely out of the question, of course. But what would you play after the intermediate text move?

### 30. $\mathbb{W}d2?$

A strange decision, as now White will be two pawns down with the queens off. It is well known that opposite-coloured bishops with the major pieces on the board favour the attacker. So White should have fearlessly gone for 30. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{W}xe5+$  31. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  32. $\mathbb{Q}f2!?$ , again followed by  $\mathbb{W}g1$  (although here 32. $\mathbb{W}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  also seems to generate sufficient activity).

30. $\mathbb{M}c2$   $\mathbb{W}xe5$  31. $\mathbb{W}g1$  was another serious alternative. Naturally, in all these lines the  $\mathbb{M}g7$  is an essential strong attacker on the 7th rank.

### 30... $\mathbb{W}xd2+$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ fxe5 32. $\mathbb{Q}g5$

White still has compensation due to the passive black pieces, but he loses track further on.

### 32... $\mathbb{M}g8$ 33. $\mathbb{M}h7$ a5 34. $\mathbb{M}d1$ $\mathbb{M}g6$

### 35. $\mathbb{M}d2$ a4



### 36.f4?!

36. $\mathbb{M}h8+$   $\mathbb{M}g8$  (36... $\mathbb{Q}g8$  37. $\mathbb{M}xd6$ )  
37. $\mathbb{M}xh5.$

### 36... $\mathbb{exf4}$ 37. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{M}d8$ 38. $\mathbb{M}c7?$ d5!

Now Black gets rid of his weaknesses, while activating his rooks and preserving the h5-pawn. He won on move 49.

## Stopping the Attack

**Alexander Shimanov**

**Pia Cramling**

Stockholm 2012/13



Logically enough, a queen exchange can also be used as a defensive resource, putting an end to the opponent's attack. In the diagram position Black has some play on the light squares on the king-side, but:

### 31. $\mathbb{W}d1!$ $\mathbb{W}xd1+$ 32. $\mathbb{M}xd1$

White has found a safe way to increase his advantage.

### 32... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}g2!$

Not the hasty 34.f3  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  35. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$ .

### 34...h6 35.f3

### 35. $\mathbb{M}c4!$

### 35... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 36. $\mathbb{M}xc5$ e4! 37.f4!?

Ambitious, but it soon pays off.

### 37...e3 38. $\mathbb{M}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}d5?$ 39. $\mathbb{M}xd5$

### e2 40. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ e1 $\mathbb{W}$ 41. $\mathbb{Q}xe1$ $\mathbb{M}xe1$

### 42. $\mathbb{M}a2$

And White won.

## Gaining Entrance on an Open File

Anish Giri  
Viswanathan Anand  
Wijk aan Zee 2013



White is a pawn up, but with his queen on the other side of the board his king-side attack has come to a dead end.

**32... ♕b6!**

With the queens off, the pawns on a4 and c3 will be easy targets for Black's rook, for example via b3. You could also include this example under the heading 'eliminating the defender'.

**33.♕c4!**

Justifiably declining. Being a pawn up is of no significance here.

**33... ♔e8**

Protecting d6. The immediate 33... ♕b3 34.♕xb3 ♕xb3 runs into 35.♔xf8 ♕xf8 36.♔xd6.

**34.♕g3 ♕b3! 35.♕xb3 ♕xb3  
36.♔d2 ♕a3 37.d4**



White is trying very hard to bring back his rook to the scene of the action.

**37... ♕xa4?!**

This lets White off the hook. More challenging was 37... ♔f6 or 37... ♕a2.

**38.dxe5 dxe5 39.♔h6+ ♕g7**

**40.♔d3 ♔f6 41.♔g4!**

A lucky escape. Black does not manage to make anything of his extra pawn.

**41... ♔xg4 42.hxg4 ♕xe4 43.g5**

**♕a4 44.♔f1 ♕a6 45.c4 ♕d6**

**46.♔e2 ♕xd3**

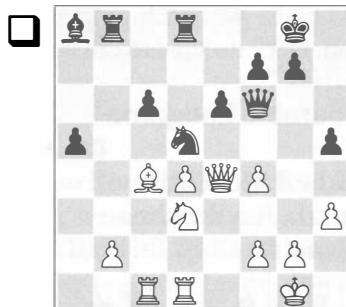
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## Improving the Pawn Structure

A queen exchange, like other exchanges, can also be used for positional gains, for instance, if it allows you to reunite pawns or undouble a pawn when recapturing. 'The Double A Status' already featured an example with an exchange of rooks in Ponomariov-Grund.

**Le Quang Liem  
Ivan Salgado Lopez**

Gibraltar 2013



**30.♕e5! ♕xe5**

30... ♕g6 31.♔xd5 cxd5 32.♕c7 or 30...g6 31.b3 also leave White clearly on top.

**31.fxe5!**

A nice concept. White gives up his backward pawn on d4 in order to enclose the bishop on a8.

### 31... $\mathbb{Q}c7$

After 31...a4, preventing b2-b3, White has time to protect the pawn on b2 with 32. $\mathbb{R}d2$ .

- 32.b3  $\mathbb{R}xd4$  33. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{R}xd1+$   
34. $\mathbb{R}xd1$



Now the picture is clear. Black cannot even prevent White from winning back a pawn on a5.

- 34... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  35. $\mathbb{R}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  36. $\mathbb{R}xa5$   
 $\mathbb{Q}d8$  37. $\mathbb{Q}d3$

Black has ended up in a terrible position: he can hardly move.

- 37...h4 38. $\mathbb{R}a4$  g6 39. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$   
40. $\mathbb{R}a7$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  41. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  42. $\mathbb{Q}f3$

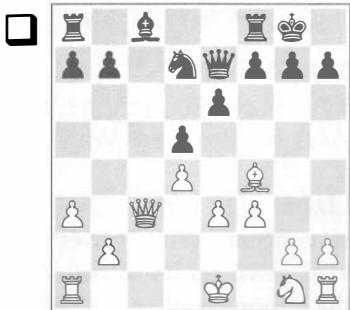
And with the white king entering his position, Black decided to call it a day.

## A Favourable Endgame

Mikheil Mchedlishvili

Pentala Harikrishna

Germany Bundesliga 2012/13



In reality, exchanging is not about what is taken from the board, but more about what is left on the board. After an exchange of queens the strength of the remaining pieces may come to the fore, yielding a pleasant endgame.

### 14. $\mathbb{W}b4$ $\mathbb{W}xb4+$ 15.axb4

White is hoping to use the a- and c-files for his rooks. The doubling of pawns on the way can make it harder for you to detect this possibility, though there are some famous precedents, for example Smyslov-Tal, Bled 1959. Here a whole fight is still ahead. For a more forcing example of a transposition into the endgame, see Baryshpolets-Moranda, Krakow 2013.

### 15... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 16.b3 $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$

A natural move would be 17... $\mathbb{R}fc8$ , but after 18. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  Black has no clear plan, while White can contemplate  $\mathbb{Q}d6-c5$ , or moving his h1 rook to the c-file.

17...a6 (Van Delft) seems like the most logical and best move.

### 18. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ a6



### 19.b5

Otherwise Black would play ... $\mathbb{Q}a7-b5$ .

- 19...a5 20. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  b6 21.b4 a4  
22. $\mathbb{Q}xa4$   $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  23. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{R}xa1$   
24. $\mathbb{R}xa1$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  25. $\mathbb{Q}c7$  f6 26. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   
 $\mathbb{Q}f7$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$

And eventually White managed to squeeze out a win.

## Removing a Defender

**Robert Hovhannisyan  
Avetik Grigoryan**

Yerevan 2013

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♘f6  
4.♗g5 ♘b4 5.e5 h6 6.♗c1 ♘fd7  
7.a3 ♘e7 8.♗g4 g6 9.♘f3 c5  
10.dxc5 ♘c6 11.♗b5 ♘xc5  
12.0-0 a6 13.♗e2 ♖c7 14.♗e1  
b6 15.♗f1 ♘b7 16.h4 0-0-0  
17.b4 ♘d7 18.♗g3 d4 19.♗e4  
♘dxe5 20.♘xe5 ♖xe5 21.♗f4  
♘h5 22.♘d6+ ♘xd6 23.♘xd6  
g5 24.♘c7 gxh4 25.♗h2 ♘d7  
26.♗xb6 ♖g8 27.b5 axb5 28.a4  
f6 29.♗h3 ♘e5 30.♗h1



When exchanging a piece you can try to eliminate an active piece of your opponent, but when attacking you can also try and remove one of your opponent's strongest defensive pieces. So what would you play in the diagram position?

**30...♗f5!**

The difficulty here is maybe that, when conducting an attack on the king, you are disinclined to opt for an exchange of queens. Yet in this case Black's attack continues with great force. The pawn on g2 is deprived of a defender and ...h4-h3 is a nasty threat. 30...♕g4 was also possible, but it would be a slightly less forceful execution of the idea in view of 31.♗xg4 ♘xg4 32.f3.

**31.♗xf5 exf5 32.♖a3 ♘c4**

Simple enough, though engines also indicate 32...d3 33.cxd3 b4 34.♗b3 h3 for example 35.f3 hxg2+ 36.♗xg2 ♘dg7.

**33.♘xc4 bxc4**

33...♗xg2+ 34.♔h2 bxc4 35.♗g1 is less strong than keeping the threat of ...h4-h3.

**34.♗e6**



**34...c3**

But now 34...♗xg2+ 35.♔h2 ♘e4 was a pretty serious alternative.

**35.♗xf6 h3 36.♗h6 hxg2+**

36...♗xg2 seems more forcing, but Black won easily anyway.

### Summary

Hopefully, these examples have made you more aware of the possible consequences of a queen exchange, and will help you to know how to use it as a (defensive) weapon and when to avoid it.

## Chapter 40

# The Runner and the Bulldozer

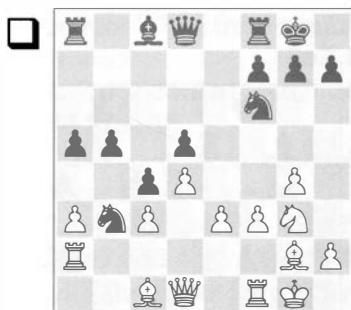
### Running for Your Life

Let me finish with an exciting middlegame which effectively ended the 2013 World Championship's match in Chennai. The pawn structure brought about a typical fight between Black's advanced pawn on the queenside versus White's pawn avalanche on the kingside.

**Viswanathan Anand**

**Magnus Carlsen**

Chennai 2013



Clearly a battle is in progress on opposite sides of the board. Here White will try to use his space advantage on the kingside and his central pawn majority to set up a kingside attack. Black will try to create a passed pawn out of his queenside majority.

The latter plan seems obvious: preparing and then executing ...b5-b4 will do the trick (in fact, Carlsen had just played ...a7-a5). For White's attack we need more moves and imagination. Yet GM Erwin l'Ami tweeted: 'Think today we see one of those few positions where the computer doesn't have a clue. I'd blindly take White.' And indeed it is al-

ways attractive to mount a mating attack which could immediately decide the game. On the other hand, whenever a passed pawn is created, promotion may still be far off.

By the way, Erwin's remark about the computer is also interesting, suggesting that engines are not capable of making correct long-term assessments (or at least need considerably more time to do so). So never rely solely on your engines – feed them with your own ideas, and find out the hard way!

**15.g5 ♜e8 16.e4 ♜xc1**

Anand had just created space for his bishop to develop and Carlsen decided to swap it off, not wanting to be stuck with an out-of-play knight on b3. In this regard you might want to look back at Zhao Xue-Harika Dronavalli, 2012, the first example in Chapter 37 on offside pieces.

A move such as 16...♜c7 could still be considered as the queenside is likely to be opened up, after which the knight on b3 may be not that bad at all. After 17.♗e3 ♜a6 18.e5 b4 the situation is similar to the game, except White is one tempo slower, but his dark-squared bishop is still on the board. Again he

will have to proceed with f3-f4-f5, now or after exchanges on b4 and a6.

**17.♗xc1 ♕a6**



**18.e5**

It is all about speed: who will be the first to have serious threats? One of the most difficult questions is deciding when to follow your own plan and when to hinder the opponent's plans. In this respect it is worth mentioning that Kasparov let the world know (via Twitter, of course) that he would prefer 18.♗b2.

**18...♝c7**

And here, on the same topic, Carlsen was considering 18...g6 19.f4 ♝g7 and now an exchange sacrifice after f4-f5 doesn't seem convincing, but Carlsen feared ♜b1. In general, up to now, Black had avoided pawn moves on the kingside, which could speed up White's attack. If Black could really achieve a blockade on f5, it would be a different matter!

**19.f4 b4 20.axb4**

A lot will be written about the alternatives 20.f5 ♜b5 and 20.a4, but Anand's idea of exchanging a defender (the ♜a6) will strike you as logical.

**20...axb4 21.♗xa6 ♜xa6 22.f5  
b3**

Perhaps the climax of the strategic battle: the problem for White is that his

only remaining rook has to stay on the defensive to stop Black's passed b-pawn. Anand's aberration a couple of moves further on has already been discussed extensively in the media.

**23.♕f4 ♜c7 24.f6 g6 25.♕h4  
♜e8 26.♕h6 b2 27.♕f4 b1♛+  
28.♕f1? ♜e1**

0-1

## Hidden Dangers of a Passed Pawn

**Alexander Alekhine**

**Tomas Sika**

Zurich simul 1921

**1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♜c6 3.♗b5 a6  
4.♗a4 ♜f6 5.0-0 ♜xe4 6.d4 b5  
7.♗b3 d5 8.dxe5 ♜e6 9.♗c3  
♜xc3 10.bxc3 ♜e7 11.♗d4  
♜xd4 12.cxd4 c5 13.c3 c4  
14.♗c2 ♜d7 15.f4 ♜g4 16.♕e1  
♜f5 17.♕e2 0-0 18.♕xf5 ♜xf5**



Here we see the same strategic battle, albeit from a different opening (Open Ruy Lopez), featuring a former World Champion. True, this was a simul, but the finish of the game will also remind you of the sudden change of affairs in Anand-Carlsen.

**19.g4 ♜d7 20.f5 ♜fe8**

Even the immediate 20...b4 21.f6 gxf6 22.exf6 ♜d6 23.♕h6 ♜fe8 seems to be feasible.

**21.♗d2 a5 22.e6 ♜f8?**

Too passive. 22...fxe6 23.fxe6  $\mathbb{W}d6$  had to be played, with a tense position.

**23.  $\mathbb{H}ae1$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  24.  $\mathbb{W}f3$  f6 25. g5 b4 26. gxf6 gxf6 27.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$  b3 28.  $\mathbb{H}g1+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  29.  $\mathbb{W}g4$**

29.e7 would have won: 29... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  (29... $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  30.  $\mathbb{W}h5$   $\mathbb{H}f8$  31.  $\mathbb{W}xh7+!$ ; 29... $\mathbb{H}xe7$  30.  $\mathbb{H}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  31.  $\mathbb{W}g3$ ) 30.  $\mathbb{W}e3$ ! threatening 31.  $\mathbb{H}xg7$ .

**29...  $\mathbb{A}d6$  30.  $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  31.  $\mathbb{H}g6$  bxa2**



Now such a dangerous passed pawn means that things are not so clear.

**32.  $\mathbb{H}xf6$   $\mathbb{H}ab8$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}g5?$**

Logical, but the right way to unpin the rook was 33.  $\mathbb{W}h6$  and after 33... $\mathbb{W}g7$  34.  $\mathbb{W}xg7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  35.  $\mathbb{H}f7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{H}b1$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}f6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  38.  $\mathbb{Q}g7+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  39.  $\mathbb{Q}f7+$  it is a draw. Now White's attack is too slow, just like Anand's was at the end of the previous game.

**33...  $\mathbb{H}b1!$  34.  $\mathbb{H}f8+$   $\mathbb{H}xf8$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  36.  $\mathbb{W}xe7$   $\mathbb{H}xe1+$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}g1+$  38.  $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{H}xf5$  0-1**

Here is yet another race which involves Alekhine. This time he is the one who has to create a passed pawn, while facing a much tougher opponent, Bogoljubow, in their second World Championship match in 1934. Again, Alekhine was not successful.

## Efim Bogoljubow Alexander Alekhine

Germany 1934

1. d4 d5 2.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  3. c4 dxc4 4.  $\mathbb{W}a4+$  c6 5.  $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  6.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  e6 7. g3  $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  8.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}c2$  9. e3  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  10. 0-0 0-0 11. a3 a5 12.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  13. e4  $\mathbb{W}b6$  14. h3  $\mathbb{W}a6$  15.  $\mathbb{W}e3$  c5 16. e5  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  exd5 18.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  c4 20.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xg2$



The race starts:

**21...  $\mathbb{B}b5$  22.  $\mathbb{F}4$   $\mathbb{W}h6$**

Preparing ...b5-b4 and trying to gain a tempo by attacking the pawn on h3. Another idea is to stop the bulldozing pawns with 22...f5 23.  $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$ , after which White will have to break with g3-g4, now or later.

**23.  $\mathbb{W}f3$  b4**

23...  $\mathbb{W}xh3$  24.  $\mathbb{W}xd5$   $\mathbb{H}a6$  (again this rook lift!) seems alright for Black despite White's awesome pawn centre, because 25.  $\mathbb{W}xb5$  (25.  $\mathbb{H}ad1$ ) is met with 25...  $\mathbb{H}h6$  26.  $\mathbb{W}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}c5!$  27. dxc5  $\mathbb{H}d8$  28.  $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathbb{W}h2+$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{H}g6$  and White is in trouble.

**24.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  25. g4  $\mathbb{W}c6$**

Would it not have been better to play this straightforwardly at move 22? 25...c3 26. bxc3 b3!? would have been an interesting break to set the pawn running.

**26. f5 f6 27.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{H}fc8$**

27...bxa3 28.bxa3 fxe5 29.dxe5  $\mathbb{Q}c5+$   
 30. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{K}fc8$ , with ...d5-d4 to follow,  
 is more challenging.

**28.exf6  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  29. $\mathbb{Q}e6$**



I don't know whether it was this octopus Bogoljubow was referring to when he said: 'to have a knight planted in your position at e6 is worse than a rusty nail in your knee'.

**29...c3 30.bxc3  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  31. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  32.g5  $\mathbb{Q}d8$  33. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{K}a7$  34. $\mathbb{W}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  35.cxb4**

Instead both 35. $\mathbb{W}xg7$   $\mathbb{K}xg7$  36. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  37.f6+ (Bogoljubow) and 35.g6 h6 36. $\mathbb{W}xg7$   $\mathbb{K}xg7$  37. $\mathbb{W}xh6$  (Lasker) would have led to a quicker win.

**35... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  36.dxe5  $\mathbb{Q}b6+$  37. $\mathbb{Q}h1$  d4+ 38. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{W}xf3+$  39. $\mathbb{W}xf3$   $\mathbb{K}c3$  40. $\mathbb{W}ff1$  d3 41.f6  $\mathbb{K}c6$  42. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{K}xg7$  43.fxg7 axb4 44. $\mathbb{W}f6$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  45. $\mathbb{W}a8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  46. $\mathbb{W}xc6$  d2 47. $\mathbb{W}c7+$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  48. $\mathbb{W}g8+$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  49. $\mathbb{W}f8+$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  50. $\mathbb{W}f1$**

...and White won.

## The Opening According to Simen

Ni Hua

Simen Agdestein

Gibraltar 2008

**1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  5.c4 e6 6.cxd5 exd5 7. $\mathbb{Q}c3$**



**7...c4!?**

Again advancing the c-pawn beyond the opponent's centre to create a queen-side majority, and as a result handing the opponent a pawn majority in the centre. In general this is not uncommon and can be seen in other openings like the Queen's Gambit, the Tarrasch Variation of the Queen's Gambit or the Ragozin (Cheparinov-Carlsen, World Cup 2005). Most of the time, however, you will find that Black controls the e4-square, so White will have some trouble getting his pawn majority rolling.

Here the concept seems quite daring, considering that White's e-pawn has already advanced to e5. Also note that earlier in this year Agdestein, among other things a former trainer of Magnus, had himself opted for the same 8...c4 in the Nimzo-Indian that occurred in the opening of our main game (Anand-Carlsen, 9th game), against Bolek, Prague 2013. About 10.g4 in that game, he appears to have said: 'this is something Magnus has prepared, we've looked at this together on the national team.' I wonder whether we are going to learn more about that!

**8.a3**

Preventing Black from developing easily with ... $\mathbb{Q}b4$  and ... $\mathbb{Q}ge7$ , though ceding the b3-square to the opponent.

**8... $\mathbb{Q}a5$**

## Improve Your Chess Pattern Recognition

Immediately going for it. A familiar spot for the knight, isn't it?

**9.♗g5 ♗e7 10.♗e3**

Sophisticated play; now the ♗e7 is in the way of the ♗g8.

**10...♗b3 11.♗b1!?**

Sacrificing the exchange to support the kingside majority. Black turned out to be fine, with the ♗b3 eyeing the d4-pawn!

### Offside Knight vs Beastly Bishop

Of course, there are other middlegame structures which feature races with kings on the same side of the board, for example the Noteboom (Triangle) system – an overwhelming pawn centre versus two passed queenside pawns –, see for instance Hammer-Nakamura, Sandnes 2013, the queenside vs kingside attacks from the closed Sicilians in the Spassky-Geller match from 1965, etc...

For now, let us stick to the same pawn structure and consider ideas which illustrate the manoeuvring battle between White's dark-squared bishop and Black's queen's knight. Here is an old game between two strong players from the past.

**Jaroslav Sajtar  
Cenek Kottnauer**

Prague 1946



**14...c4 15.♔c2 ♗b8 16.♗ae1**

White had played an unusually quick a3-a4 and ♗c1-a3, which makes it

somewhat harder to get the e-pawn moving as the pawn on e3 is not protected. However, in the long run the bishop will be brilliantly placed.

**16...♘c6 17.♗g3 ♘e4 18.f3**

**♗xg3 19.hxg3**

If there is an appropriate moment to transfer the knight to b3, I guess it must be here, as then the a4-pawn will be under attack. Black, however, decides to 'improve' his queen's position.

**19...♕e6 20.e4 ♕g6 21.♔f2**

**♕e6 22.g4 ♘a5 23.e5 ♘b3**

**24.♗e3 a5**



Finally Black starts setting his queenside pawns in motion, but White's pawn storm on the kingside seems more threatening by now.

**25.♔e2 ♕d7 26.f4 ♕xa4**

**27.♗d6 ♕d7**

White has established a beastly bishop whereas the position of the ♗b3 can only be justified if the d4-pawn can become a target. However, after 27...b5 the black queen will also be offside, allowing the winning 28.e6!.

**28.f5 b5 29.g5 b4**

By now it is clear that the bulldozer will do its job. The alternative is also of no avail: 29...g6 30.fxg6 fxg6 31.♗f6 b4 32.♔f3 ♕b7 33.e6.

**30.♔h5 ♕xd6 31.exd6 ♜xe3**

**32.g6**

**1-0**

## Another Classic

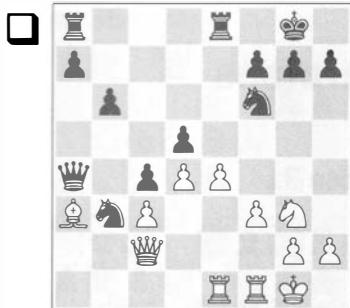
**Mikhail Botvinnik  
Conel Hugh Alexander**

ENG-USSR radio match 1946

We end with a classic example from another former World Champion, Mikhail Botvinnik.

'Oh please no', I hear you thinking, having looked at the diagram position, not Botvinnik-Capablanca AVRO 1938 again. And indeed it was this game which Giri referred to in a somewhat puzzling tweet: 'Magnus with his great memory no doubt remembers Botvinnik-Capablanca 1-0 :) Let's see if he can make use of it!' (The fact is that the then up and coming Botvinnik had about the same age difference with Capa as Carlsen with Anand, though with colours reversed.) But no.

Had the bishop been on b2 in the diagram position, then you would have been completely right! This position, however, stems from Botvinnik-Alexander, Radio match 1946 (no need for the internet in those days!). And, as a matter of fact, Botvinnik had deviated from his previous classic by playing the same early a2-a4 and ♜a3 as in the former game.



**20.♗b2**

'It takes a tempo to cover it, but the bishop is more actively placed than in the Capa game' (Botvinnik).

**20...a5 21.e5 b5 22.♗d6**

22.exf6 b4 23.♘f5 bxa3 (23...♝xa3 24.♗f2 g6 25.♘h6+ ♛f8 26.♗g3 bxc3 27.♗c7 Botvinnik) 24.♗f2 would have given White a big advantage.

**22...♝e6 23.exf6 ♜xd6 24.fxg7  
b4 25.♜e5 ♜e8 26.f4 ♜d7  
27.♜e2 ♜de6 28.f5 ♜xe5  
29.dxe5 bxc3 30.f6**

Now Black could have struck back with 30...♝d4!. 30.e6! fxe6 31.♘h5 would have won; though surprisingly not 30.♘h5 ♜d8! 31.e6 ♜c5 or 31...♝d2.

**30...♝a7+ 31.♔h1 ♜d4 32.♝e3  
♜a8 33.♝xc3 a4 34.♝xd4  
♝xd4 35.♝f5 h5 36.♝xd4 ♜e8  
37.♝f5 d4 38.e6**

1-0

Connection ended.

## Summary

Here we have seen the pawn structure as a pattern recurring from different openings. Clearly the study of one opening variation would fall short here when it comes to the ensuing middlegame positions. Where speed is the main issue, several other patterns can be detected: the offside knight on b3 or the beastly bishop on d6.

# Exercises

## Exercise 31



Here White continued with 12.  $\mathcal{Q}g5$ . What would be his idea and should it work out?

(solution on page 289)

## Exercise 32



(solution on page 290)

## Exercise 33



(solution on page 290)

## Exercise 34



(solution on page 291)

**Exercise 35**

Is there a sensible alternative to 9...Qe7?

(solution on page 291)

**Exercise 37**

(solution on page 292)

**Exercise 39**

After 13.Qxf6 Wxf6 14.Qxd5 Qxd5 15.Qxd5 Black wins back his pawn on e2. Find an imaginative way to reinforce White's threat to take on f6.

(solution on page 293)

**Exercise 36**

(solution on page 292)

**Exercise 38**

(solution on page 292)

**Exercise 40**

After 13...b5 Anand (vs Carlsen, Chennai Wch (9) 2013) played 14.Qg3, among others preparing e3-e4. Volkov found a new move, though not a new idea in this structure. What did he play?

(solution on page 293)

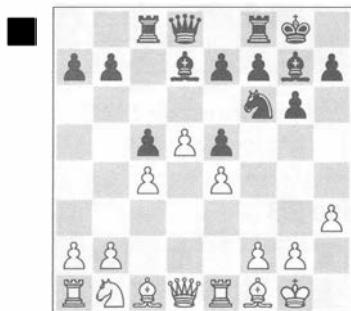
## Solutions

### Exercise 1 (page 84)

**Samvel Ter Sahakyan**

**Zaven Andriasian**

Yerevan 2014



**12...♘e8!**

Although d5 is not a passed pawn, d6 will be an excellent post for the knight.

**13.♘c3 ♘d6**

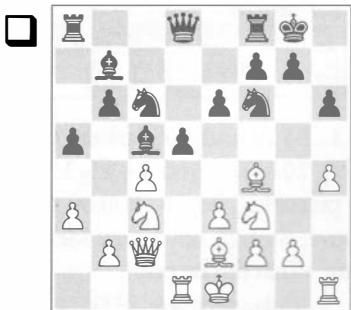
As we saw in Chapter 3 on 'Nimzo's Strong Centre-Back', from here the white pawns on c4 and e4 are attacked, while the knight also supports the flank attacks ...b7-b5 and ...f7-f5. In the game Black realized both, after which White soon faced a passive defence.

### Exercise 2 (page 84)

**Merab Gagunashvili**

**B. Kumaran**

Mumbai 2013



**13.♗g5!?**

This shouldn't have come as a surprise after the preparatory h2-h4 two moves before.

**13...♝e7**

It is easy to see that 13...hxg5 14.hxg5 is not desirable for Black, but typically he has alternatives: he can leave the knight en prise for the moment, as there is no immediate threat of mate (though he should watch the d5-pawn).

13...♜e8?! seems too light-hearted though: 14.cxd5 exd5 15.♗xd5 ♔d4 16.♗xf6+ ♜xf6 17.♗h7+ ♔f8 18.exd4 ♜xf4 19.dxc5 ♜xg2 (19...♜xe2+ 20.♔xe2 ♔a6+ 21.♔d3) 20.♔g1 ♜xe2+ 21.♔xe2 ♜e8+ 22.♔d3 hxg5 23.♗ge1; while 13...d4 14.♗ce4 (14.♗ge4 ♜e7) 14...hxg5 15.hxg5 ♜xe4 16.♗xe4 ♜e8 17.exd4 ♜xd4 18.♗h7+ ♔f8 19.g6 yields White a strong attack.

**14.♗e5!**

Eliminating the defender of h7.

**14...♞f5**

14...♝g6 15.♗xe6.

**15.cxd5 ♜xd5 16.g4!**

The g5-knight remains 'sur place'.

**16...hxg5 17.gxf5**

With lines opening up, the white pieces aiming at black's kingside and the black pieces drifted away from the defence, things look grim for Black.

**17...f6?**

But this loses at once. 17...♝e7 seems more natural, but the attack remains dangerous, for instance 18.hxg5!?, ♜xe3 19.fxe3 ♔xh1 20.f6.

**18.fxe6 ♜xc3**

18...fxe5 19.hxg5.  
**19.♗xd8 ♗axd8 20.♘xc3 ♗xh1**  
**21.hxg5 f5**  
**21...♗d5 22.♗g6.**  
**22.f3 ♗e7 23.♔f2**

1-0

**Exercise 3 (page 84)**  
**Alexander Rakhmanov**  
**Alexander Shimanov**

Minsk 2014



In this symmetrical position Black is slightly more active for the moment. With his next move he tried to gain some space.

**18...♘a4!?**

Not the only move, but a good example that shows how a knight can dominate from the edge. After Black's next the a1-bishop is not the stronger piece.

**19.♗a1 e5! 20.♗b3 g6 21.♗xc8  
 ♗xc8 22.♗c1 ♗xc1+ 23.♗xc1  
 ♜d5 24.♗d1**

Putting all White's pieces on the back rank! This move underlines the strength of the a4-knight, which also hampers the natural development of White's knight to c3.

**24..f5 25.♗xa4 bxa4 26.♖d3 e4**

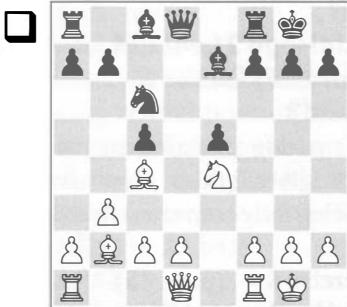
26...a5!?.

**27.♘c5**

And having eliminated the (powerful!) a4-knight White held the draw.

**Exercise 4 (page 84)**  
**Magnus Carlsen**  
**Viswanathan Anand**

Zurich 2014

**11.f4!**

Now the diagonals of both white bishops will be opened. Anand is facing his own twin gun!

**11...exf4 12.♗h5****12.♗xf4.****12...♘d4**

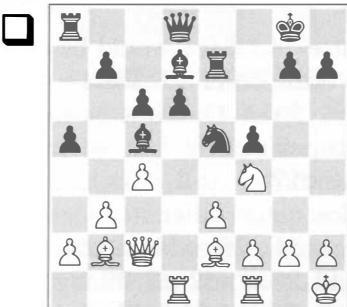
12...♗e6.

**13.♗xf4 g6 14.♗e5 b6 15.♗af1**

Now all white pieces, including a central queen, are aiming at Black's king-side. Very soon this proved to be too much for Black.

**Exercise 5 (page 85)****Evgeny Postny****Dan Zoler**

Legnica 2013



**19.♘h5**

Not an innocent bystander, but one exerting annoying pressure against g7, together with the b2-bishop!

**19...♝b6**

19...♞f7.

**20.f4! ♘g6 21.e4! ♜f8**

21...fxe4 22.f5 ♘e5 23.f6.

**22.♗d3**

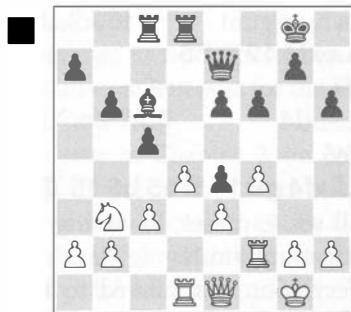
White's strong pressure against Black's kingside gives him a clear advantage. Postny elegantly converted this.

**Exercise 6 (page 85)**

**Harika Dronavalli**

**Anna Muzychuk**

Khanty-Mansiysk 2014



**20...♝b5!**

Improving the position of the bishop.

**21.dxc5 bxc5 22.♗xd8+**

Otherwise the beastly bishop will dominate both white rooks on d3.

**22...♜xd8 23.♗d2 ♘d3! 24.c4 e5!**

Of course 24...♝xc4 would be a positional waste after 25.♗xd8+ ♜xd8 26.♘xc5 ♜xa2 27.♗xe4. Now White slipped up with....

**25.♘c1?**

...and lost quickly after...

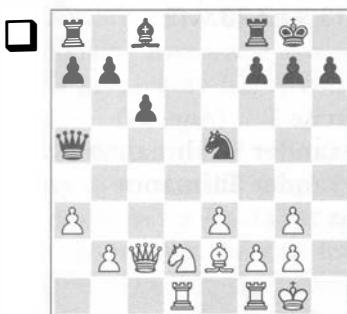
**25...exf4 26.exf4 ♘xc4 27.b3  
♝xd2 28.♗xd2 e3 29.♗e1 ♘d5  
30.♗e2 ♜e4 31.♗d3 c4 etc.**

**Exercise 7 (page 85)**

**Alexander Grischuk**

**Anton Shomoev**

Loo 2014



**19.♘e4!**

Reaching for the hole on d6 to become an octopus.

**19...h6 20.♗d4**

The immediate 20.♘d6 was also good.

**20...♝h8 21.♘d6**

With his last move Black had prepared 21...♞f5, so Grischuk decides to land the octopus. Within three moves White has established a big space advantage, which is practically winning.

**21...♜b8 22.b4 ♜c7 23.♗c5 ♘d7**

**24.♗xa7 ♘b6 25.♗a5**

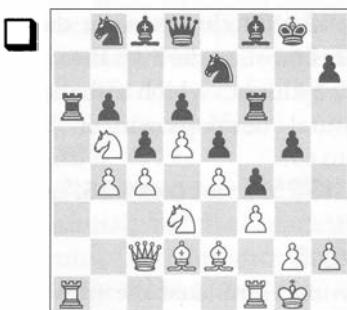
... and White converted his advantage.

**Exercise 8 (page 85)**

**Andrey Sumets**

**Vilka Sipila**

London 2012



**22.♘a7!**

The most direct approach to gain further entrance on the queenside and eliminate Black's attacking bishop. True, White is very comfortable, having made considerable headway on the queenside already.

**22...♝c7**

The attempt to preserve the bishop with 22...♝d7 runs into 23.b5 ♜xa1 24.♜xa1 ♜h6 25.♘c6 ♜e8 26.♞a8 when Black's attack is not strong enough.

**23.♘xc8! ♜xc8 24.bxc5 bxc5**

**25.♜xa6 ♜xa6 26.♝b1**

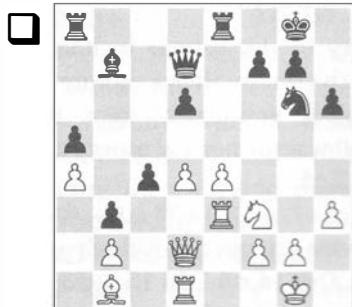
Now White is ready to enter Black's position on the queenside, while a black attack on the other side has lost considerable sting now the light-squared bishop from c8 has disappeared. White converted his big advantage.

**Exercise 9 (page 85)**

Ilya Smirin

Sabino Brunello

Yerevan 2014



Black targets the a4-pawn. Well, it seems that Kasparov has said that in general a knight on f5 is worth a pawn. So,

**27.d5!**

Making way for the knight, en route to f5!

**27...♝xa4 28.♘d4 ♜b4 29.♖c3 a4**

29...♝e7 (preventing 30.♘f5) 30.♛c1! ♜ac8 31.♞g3 is also scary. After 31...♝g6 32.♘f5 the knight has reached its destination anyway.

**30.♘f5**

The killer knight.

**30...a3?!**

This allows the white queen to take a devastating central position. Preventing this with 30...♛c5 would have been a better defence, though White's compensation is adequate after 31.♞dc1 ♜a6 32.♞g3 or 32.h4!?.

**31.bxa3**

31.♛d4! ♜e5 32.bxa3.

**31...♜xa3**

31...♛c5!.

**32.♛d4**

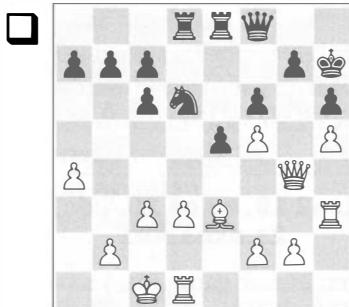
Now it is over. White took on c4 and won after a few more moves.

**Exercise 10 (page 85)**

Liu Qingnan

John Paul Gomez

Bangkok 2014

**26.♘xa7?! b6 27.a5 ♜d7**

It appears that the natural 27...♞c8 fails to 28.♗b8 and White also threatens a5-a6!. 28.axb6 ♜d7 would just transpose to the game.

27...♜a8 28.axb6 leads to an interesting status quo, where the b6-pawn cannot move, but neither can Black easily catch

the bishop, as ... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  can always be met with b6-b7. Which is why Black puts his rook not on a8 but on d7..

### 28.axb6

Black did not have an immediate concrete threat (... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  can still be met with  $\mathbb{Q}b8$ , and ... $\mathbb{R}a8$  with axb6), but did White have a more useful move than the text? 28.f4, to create a retreat for the bishop from b8, was one idea. Yet after 28...exf4 29.axb6  $\mathbb{R}a8$  30. $\mathbb{W}xf4$  cxb6 31. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$   $\mathbb{W}b8$  32. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{W}b3$  Black has a winning attack.

### 28... $\mathbb{Q}c8$

Now Black intends to catch the bishop with ...cxb6 and ... $\mathbb{R}b7$ .

### 29.d4 cxb6 30. $\mathbb{Q}b8$

In the 2013 World Championship match Anand-Carlsen (4th game) this square offered the bishop an easy way out (apparently overlooked by Anand):



**18... $\mathbb{Q}xa2$  19. b3 c4 20. $\mathbb{Q}dc1$  cxb3  
21.cxb3  $\mathbb{Q}b1$**

However, in our game Black's pawn on e5 is in the way.

### 30... $\mathbb{R}ed8?$

Black hesitates. 30... $\mathbb{R}b7$  was of course the consistent move. Now for example 31. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  (31.dxe5  $\mathbb{R}xb8$  32. $\mathbb{W}g6+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  33.exf6 gxf6 is no good for White) 31...fxe5 32. $\mathbb{R}e3$   $\mathbb{R}be7$  33.dxe5  $\mathbb{R}xe5$  34. $\mathbb{W}g6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  35. $\mathbb{R}xe5$   $\mathbb{R}xe5$  36.f6 and Black can hold with 36... $\mathbb{R}d5$ .

### 31. $\mathbb{W}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$

Now 31... $\mathbb{R}b7$  would give White too much for the piece after 32. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  fxe5 33.dxe5.

### 32. $\mathbb{W}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 33. $\mathbb{W}e6$ exd4!?

This definitely lets the bishop off the hook, though it seemed it could not be won on b8 anyway. Now White soon gained a considerable advantage and went on to win.

### Exercise 11 (page 86)

**Evgeny Romanov**

**Viktor Erdös**

Germany Bundesliga 2013/14



### 12... $\mathbb{W}b2!$ ?

Contrary to the natural inclination to retreat the queen after a capture on b2, here Black voluntarily steps into it. 12...0-0 was the normal move.

### 13. $\mathbb{R}c1$

13. $\mathbb{W}xc6+?$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  14. $\mathbb{W}xa8+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  and Black wins was not the difficult part.

### 13...0-0 14.e4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 15. $\mathbb{Q}d3$

It may seem that the queen sortie has been senseless, but in fact it is annoyingly restricting White's possibilities. On the other hand, White's chances to catch the queen with  $\mathbb{R}b1$  and  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  are remote.

### 15... $\mathbb{R}d8$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{R}b8!$ 17.e5

17. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  was perhaps better, when a black queen retreat seems likely after

all, although Black may remain consistent and try to meet  $\mathbb{B}b1$  with ... $\mathbb{A}a6+$ .

**17... $\mathbb{B}b5!$  18.0-0**

18. $\mathbb{E}xf6$   $\mathbb{E}e5+$  19. $\mathbb{G}d1$   $\mathbb{E}ed5$ .

**18... $\mathbb{B}xd2$  19. $\mathbb{E}xf6$   $\mathbb{G}xf6$**

And Black's activity made White take a draw by repetition after...

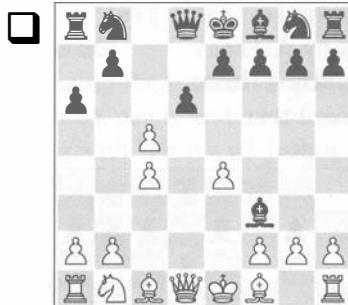
**20. $\mathbb{W}e4$   $\mathbb{B}f5$  21. $\mathbb{W}g4+$   $\mathbb{B}g5$  22. $\mathbb{W}e4$**

### Exercise 12 (page 145)

Tycho Dijkhuis

Adrian Tugui

Maastricht 2014



**6. $\mathbb{G}xf3!$**

You guessed it!

**6... $\mathbb{W}a5+$**

The pawn structure certainly will not bother White in the endgame after 6... $\mathbb{D}xc5$  7. $\mathbb{B}xd8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  8. $\mathbb{A}e3$  e6 9. $\mathbb{D}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  10.0-0-0  $\mathbb{Q}fd7$  11.f4. Yet by avoiding the endgame Black soon lands his queen in trouble.

**7. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}xc5$  8. $\mathbb{Q}d5!$   $\mathbb{W}c6?$**

8... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  9.b4  $\mathbb{W}c8$  10. $\mathbb{W}a4$   $\mathbb{B}b8$  11. $\mathbb{A}e3$  e6 12. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  13. $\mathbb{W}xc6$   $\mathbb{B}xc6$  14. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  15.a3, Codanotti-Bonafede, Spoleto 2011.

**9.b4!**

White is virtually winning already.

**9... $\mathbb{B}b6$**

9... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  10.b5  $\mathbb{W}c8$  11.b6.

**10.b5  $\mathbb{A}xb5$  11.c5!**

Very nice! White won 10 moves later.

### Exercise 13 (page 145)

Xu Jun

Nigel David Short

Gibraltar 2014



**18... $\mathbb{F}xg6!$**

Right again! Not only because of the now half-open f-file, but also to be able to challenge White's centralized knight with ... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ .

**19.b4  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$   $\mathbb{B}xf7$  21. $\mathbb{B}ab1$  a6 22.a4 h5 23.b5 axb5 24.axb5  $\mathbb{B}c8$  25.bxc6 bxc6 26. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  27.h4  $\mathbb{B}cf8$  28. $\mathbb{B}bc1$   $\mathbb{B}f3$  29. $\mathbb{B}c2$   $\mathbb{W}f7!$**

By now Black has a clear advantage. His strategy has prevailed: White's strong knight has been exchanged and the major pieces have been tripled on the f-file.

### Exercise 14 (page 145)

Levon Aronian

Simen Agdestein

Stavanger 2014



### 30... $\mathbb{B}b4!$

A silent sacrifice that remarkably took absolute world top player Aronian by surprise. It allows Black to fight for the b-file.

### 31. $\mathbb{A}xb4$

After the game Aronian admitted he had missed 30... $\mathbb{B}b4$  and that ‘Taking on b4 was completely ridiculous’. This should be a clear assessment of White’s last move, which is of course not bad in the sense that it loses immediately. Anyway, Black has easy play, since the white rooks remained passive.

31... $a xb4$  32. $\mathbb{W}b2$   $\mathbb{A}xd5$  33. $cxd5$

$\mathbb{A}b6$  34. $\mathbb{B}c1$   $\mathbb{A}a4$

Agdestein directs his knight to c3 right away, allowing White to return material and simplify the position.

35. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{A}c3$  36. $\mathbb{A}xc3$   $bxc3$

37. $\mathbb{W}xc3$   $\mathbb{A}xa2+$  38. $\mathbb{B}d2$

and shortly after the game was drawn:

38... $\mathbb{A}xd2+$  39. $\mathbb{W}xd2$   $\mathbb{W}b6$

40. $\mathbb{A}c4$  g5 41. $\mathbb{G}g2$  ½-½

### Exercise 15 (page 145)

Levan Pantsulaia

Tornika Sanikidze

Tbilisi 2014



### 20...a5!?

Stopping White’s a4-a5 once and for all (though at the moment ...b6-b5 seems

a suitable response), not minding the b5-square and the now backward b6-pawn. Black has a clear follow-up in mind though.

21. $\mathbb{B}db1$   $\mathbb{A}e6$  22. $\mathbb{W}b5$   $\mathbb{W}c7$

23. $\mathbb{W}b2$   $\mathbb{A}fd8$  24. $\mathbb{W}c1$  f5 25. $\mathbb{A}d2$

$\mathbb{A}c5$

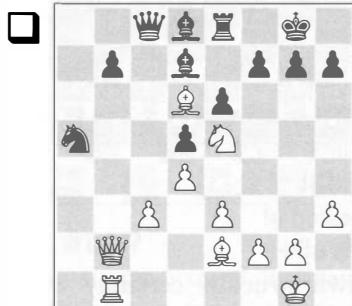
A fine post for the knight, from where it aims at the blocked a4-pawn and also supports the central advance of the e-pawn. After some adventures the game ended in a draw.

### Exercise 16 (page 146)

Evgenny Alexeev

Mustafa Yilmaz

Yerevan 2014



### 29. $\mathbb{A}xd7!$

Concrete chess. What counts is – as always – what will remain on the board after this surprising exchange. After White’s next it becomes clear that Black’s weak pawn on b7 will be increasingly hard to defend.

29... $\mathbb{W}xd7$  30. $\mathbb{W}b5$   $\mathbb{A}c6$

30... $\mathbb{W}xb5$  31. $\mathbb{A}xb5$   $\mathbb{A}c6$  32. $\mathbb{A}a4$   $\mathbb{A}e7$   
33. $\mathbb{A}xe7.$

31. $\mathbb{A}g3$   $\mathbb{A}e7$  32. $\mathbb{A}h4$  f6 33.c4

Of course, with a big positional plus. Black remained under severe pressure, but Yilmaz was lucky enough to escape with a draw.

**Exercise 17** (page 146)  
**Avetik Grigoryan**  
**Tigran Kotanjian**  
Yerevan 2014



**7... $\mathbb{Q}d5!$**

Centralizing the queen, simply protecting the c4-pawn and not fearing the vis-à-vis with White's g2-bishop.

**8.0-0**

8. $\mathbb{Q}b2$  e5 9. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$ .

**8...e5 9. $\mathbb{Q}b2$**

Invariably played, but the question is whether White can show that the black queen is vulnerable in the middle of the board. 9. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  10. $\mathbb{Q}b2$  0-0 seems OK for Black; as does 9.d3 cxd3 10.exd3 0-0 11. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  12. $\mathbb{Q}fe1$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$ .

**9...e4 10. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  gxf6 11. $\mathbb{Q}h4$  f5**

**12. $\mathbb{Q}fc1$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$**

... and Black successfully held on to his extra pawn, with his queen still centralized.

**Exercise 18** (page 146)  
**Alexey Dreev**  
**A.R.Saleh Salem**

Gibraltar 2014

First have a look at this: 1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  c5 4.d5 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  g6 7. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  8.e4  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  9. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  0-0 10.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  11. $\mathbb{Q}c2$



11... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  12. $\mathbb{Q}xh5$  gxh5 13. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  14. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}h4$  15. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  hxg4 17. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  18.g3  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  19.a4 b6 20. $\mathbb{Q}fe1$  a6 21. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  b5 22. $\mathbb{Q}ae1$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  23.b3  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  24. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  25.axb5 axb5 26.b4 c4 27. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}be8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  h5 29. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  30. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  31. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  34. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  35. $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  36. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}b1$  37. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  38. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e4+$  39. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c2+$  40. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}b3$  41. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}d3+$  0-1 Spassky-Fischer, Reykjavík 1972.



**15... $\mathbb{Q}h5!?$**

In Fischer's memorable footsteps, Salem may have thought 15... $\mathbb{Q}c4$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  b5 17.axb5 axb5 18. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  seems insufficient for Black. Perhaps plain development with 15... $\mathbb{Q}b7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  was the best alternative.

**16. $\mathbb{Q}xh5$  gxf5 17. $\mathbb{Q}f1$**

But here you can spot the difference: Fischer followed up with ... $\mathbb{Q}h4$  and ... $\mathbb{Q}e5-g4$ , which is impossible here.

**17...h4 18. $\mathbb{Q}g5$**

## Improve Your Chess Pattern Recognition

The most straightforward attempt.

18... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}e3$

19. $\mathbb{Q}xh4$   $\mathbb{Q}xh3$ .

19...c4 20. $\mathbb{Q}xh4$



20... $\mathbb{Q}d3!$

Active play in the Benoni spirit, instead of the messy 20... $\mathbb{Q}xh3$ . Note that the octopus could be created because White had to exchange his light-squared bishop in order to double Black's h-pawns.

21. $\mathbb{Q}ed1 b5$

And now 21... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  was best, since the text-move allows a tactical stroke:

22.axb5 axb5 23. $\mathbb{Q}g3$

23. $\mathbb{Q}xb5!$   $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  25. $\mathbb{Q}b3!$

$\mathbb{Q}xb3$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ . The text allowed...

23... $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  b4 25.e5

$\mathbb{Q}xe5$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

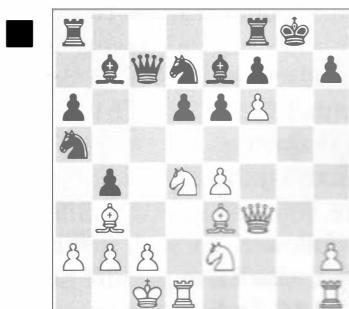
... but still White won after 27. $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ .

**Exercise 19** (page 146)

Sergey Rublevsky

Daniil Dubov

Khanty-Mansiysk 2013



17... $\mathbb{Q}xf6!!$

The intermediate 17... $\mathbb{Q}xb3+$  is also possible.

18. $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$

This was the idea: Black just ignored White's threat to win the exchange – not the mate threat, of course... Thus Black repulses White's attack; he has one pawn for the exchange as well as pressure against the e4-pawn and along the c-file.

19. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$

20...d5?! was an interesting try. If 21.exd5 then 21... $\mathbb{Q}xb3+$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xb3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ .

21. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$

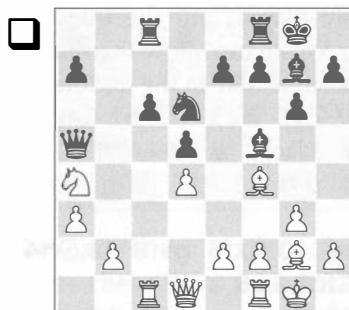
A fine central queen! Black clearly has sufficient play for the exchange and a draw was agreed on move 32.

**Exercise 20** (page 146)

Merab Gagunashvili

Rauf Mamedov

Nakhchivan 2014



15. $\mathbb{Q}d2?!$

Here the manoeuvre seems not that appropriate as Black can quickly counteract in the centre. Moreover, White's bishop will not be in trouble after 15.e3 h6, for example: 16. $\mathbb{Q}c5$  g5 17. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  f6 18. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  exd6 19. $\mathbb{Q}b7$  and 19... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  fails to 20. $\mathbb{Q}xd5+$ .

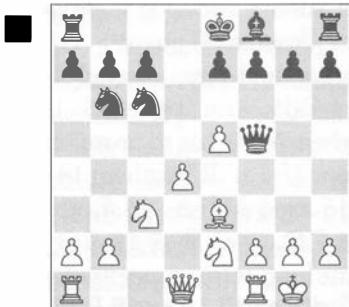
15... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  16.e3 h5 17. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$

18. $\mathbb{Q}e1$  e5! 19.dxe5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

20. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$

... with a complex equal struggle.

**Exercise 21** (page 210)  
**Sandro Mareco**  
**Sebastian Iermito**  
Buenos Aires 2013



**11...♝d7?**

No! 11...e6 (not fearing 12.♗g3 ♛g6) or 11...0-0-0 were better alternatives.

**12.e6!**

Splitting Black's camp into two; the positional punishment of Black's slow play.

**12..fxe6 13.♘e4 0-0-0 14.♘c5**

**♝d6 15.♘f4 ♘xd4**

A dead man eating.

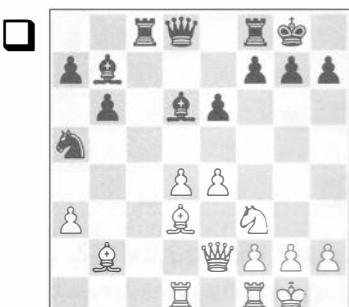
**16.♖c1 g5 17.♘xd4 ♘xd4**

**18.♗f3 c6 19.♘fxe6 ♘f6**

**20.♗a3 a6 21.♗a5 1-0**

The dark-squared bishop never left f8.

**Exercise 22** (page 210)  
**Romain Edouard**  
**Eric Hansen**  
Barcelona 2013 (5)



**17.d5!**

In a position which normally arises from the Queen's Indian with a2-a3, Black had just played ...♗e7-d6 instead of the usual ...♗f6. White's reply immediately shows the drawback.

**17...exd5 18.e5!**

The typical follow-up: all white pieces will aim at the kingside, while many black pieces are off-side for the moment.

**18...♞c5**

Black had two natural alternatives: 18...♗e7 may be answered with 19.e6, threatening ♘e5, or 18...♝e8 when both 19.h4 and 19.♗d2 seem decent follow-ups for White.

**19.h4**

This seems natural, enabling ♘g5 or ♘xh7+, yet 19.e6 could again be a possibility worth looking into.

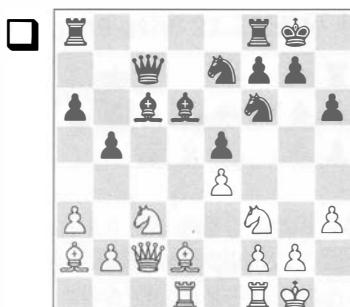
**19...♝c6 20.♗g5 h6 21.♗h5 d4**

Now White should have continued with something like 22.♗h7+ ♔h8 23.♗f5 ♔g8 24.e6, giving Black a hard time. Instead he played...

**22.♘c3**

... which gave Black the unsuspected possibility of 22...♝g6!!.

**Exercise 23** (page 210)  
**Kiril Georgiev**  
**Mircea Parligras**  
Skopje 2014



**18.♗xh6! gxh6 19.♗d2**

The fact that now the bishop on d6 is attacked (besides the h6-pawn) may be of help to you before hitting on the idea of sacrificing on h6. However the position is still complicated.

**19...♝c5**

19...♝ad8 20.♛xh6 ♜xe4 21.♝fe1 wins.

**20.♛xh6 ♜xe4 21.♝b1**

21.♝de1 fails to 21...♝xf2 22.♝xf2 ♜xf3 23.gxf3 ♜b6, but the natural 21.♝xe4 turns out to be strong: 21...♝xe4 22.♛g5+ ♜g6 23.♛g4! ♜c2 (23...♝b7 24.♝xe5 and White must be close to winning) 24.♝d7 (or the more simple 24.♝d2 ♜b6 25.♝h4 ♜g7 26.♝c1) 24...♜c8 25.♝xe5 ♜a7 26.b4 (26.♝fd1 ♜xd7 27.♝xd7 ♜xf2+ 28.♝xf2 ♜c5+) 26...♝b6 27.♝fd1! ♜xd7 28.♝xd7.

**21...♝f5 22.♛h5 ♜g7 23.♛h4?!**

23.♛h6 ♜f5 24.♛h5 could be a draw.

**23...♝e7 24.♛h6 ♜f5 25.♛c1!?**

White has only one pawn for the piece, but that does not stop Georgiev from playing for the win. Justifiably so, the black pieces are rather uncomfortable, and he went down in the attack after...

**25...♝b7?! 26.♝xe5 ♜ed6**

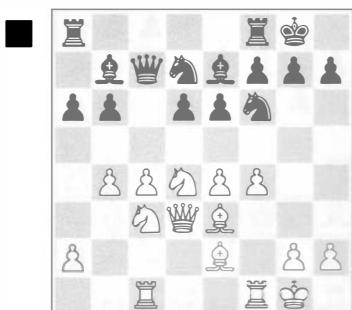
**27.♝xd6!**

#### Exercise 24 (page 210)

Alexander Khalifman

Vladimir Akopian

Minsk 2014



**13...♞ad8?**

Not a lucky choice. The colossal knight may be one of the well-known patterns in this book, but it isn't obvious enough to catch such a strong grandmaster as Vladimir Akopian off guard!

13...♞ac8 would have allowed Black to meet 14.♝d5 with 14...exd5 15.cxd5 ♜d8, when White has to prove his compensation. If 13...♞fe8 then 14.♝d5!? exd5 15.cxd5 ♜b8 16.♝c6 ♜xc6 17.dxc6 ♜f8 18.c7 ♜c8 19.♝f3 would give some long-term compensation.

**14.♝d5! exd5 15.cxd5 ♜c5**

After 15...♜b8 16.♝c6 ♜xc6 17.dxc6 White also wins back the piece immediately.

**16.bxc5 bxc5 17.♝b3**

17.♝f5 was also possible, though Black can immediately challenge the killer knight with 17...♞c8.

**17...♞fe8 18.♝d2! ♜b8 19.♝a5**

'Dominating from the edge'! White has a big advantage.

#### Exercise 25 (page 211)

Arkady Naiditsch

Ivan Saric

Germany Bundesliga 2013/14



**14...♝xf3 15.♝xf3 ♜xf3!?**

Launching a strong initiative, while the white queen is far away on the other side of the board.

**16.gxf3 ♜g6!**

16...♜xh3 17.♝f7 ♜g6 18.♝f5 is less clear.

**17.♝h2 ♜h4 18.♞h1 ♜f8 19.♝g1 ♜e8 20.♝f1**

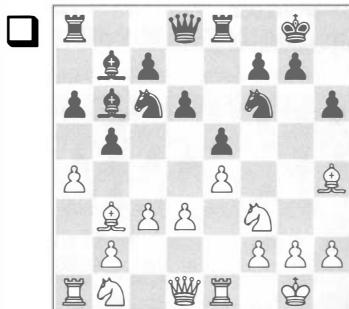
Inaccurate. It seems that 20.♞d1 would have saved a tempo (♞ad1) compared to the game. 20...♜g6+ (now 20...♜h5 can be met with 21.♝e6) 21.♝f1 ♜g2+ 22.♝e2 ♜xf3+ 23.♝d2 ♜xe4.

**20...♜h5 21.♝e2 ♜xf3+ 22.♝d2 ♜g2 23.♞ad1 ♜xe4 24.♝c1 ♜xe3 25.fxe3 h6!?**

Now that White has managed to transfer his king to the other wing, Black has only material and no longer positional compensation. He now first activates his pieces, taking care of any back-rank problems rather than capturing another pawn right away with 25...♜xe3+. Anyway, the game remained in a (complex) balance and ended in a draw.

**Exercise 26 (page 211)****Aleksander Mista****Csaba Balogh**

Germany Bundesliga 2013/14

**13.♝d5? g5**

Here it seems that Black does not have to fear the standard sacrifice on g5.

**14.♜xg5 ♜xd5**

Most likely White had taken this move into account, but missed something further on.

**15.exd5**

15.♛h5 hxg5 16.♝xg5 ♜f6 17.♝h4 ♜e6.

**15...hxg5 16.♝g4**

16.dxc6 ♜xc6 17.♝g3 wins back the piece, but leaves Black comfortable with his two bishops and strong pawn centre.

**16...♜c8! 17.♝g3**

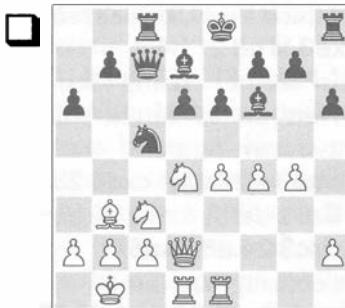
17.♝xg5+ ♜xg5 18.♝xg5 ♜e7.

**17...f6 18.dxc6 ♜f7**

White has insufficient compensation.

**Exercise 27 (page 211)****Richard Francisco****Anton Kovalyov**

Wheeling 2014

**16.h4!**

Very imaginative! Black has not castled, yet the capture of this pawn will speed up an initiative on the kingside.

**16...♜xh4 17.♞h1 ♜e7 18.g5 b5**

**19.a3 ♜b7 20.♝g2!?** a5?

Too slow. 20...h5!? 21.g6 f5.

**21.gxh6 gxh6 22.♞xh6!**

Oops.

**22...♜f8**

On 22...♞xh6 23.♝g8+ ♜f8 24.♝f5 wins back the rook, preserving a much better position.

**23.f5 b4 24.axb4 axb4 25.♝d5**

**♝xb3 26.♝xe7 ♜xe7 27.♝xb3**

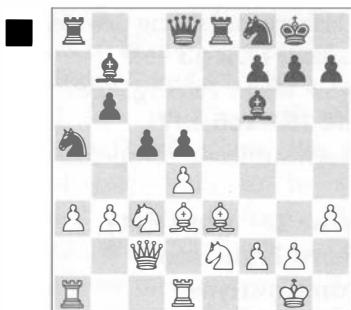
White should have a winning advantage, but eventually his much higher rated opponent escaped with a draw.

**Exercise 28** (page 211)

**Andrey Volokitin**

**Alexander Bortnik**

Loo 2014



**19...fxe3!?**

A brave decision from Ukraine's rising star.

**20.fxe3 ♕e8 21.b4?**

Ukraine's former rising star goes wrong. Now the a5-knight will soon have a more active future.

**21...♕xe3+ 22.♔h1 cxd4 23.bxa5**

23.♗b5 ♜c8 24.♕b1 ♗c4 25.♗bx d4 g6.

**23...dxc3 24.a6 ♜xa6!**

A double exchange sacrifice!

**25.♗xa6 ♜xa6 26.♗c1 d4 27.♗d3**

**♗b7 28.♗f2 ♜h4 29.♗f1 ♗e6**

Black's attack is unstoppable. White soon lost.

**Exercise 29** (page 211)

**Anna Ushenina**

**Katerina Lagno**

Khanty-Mansiysk 2014 (27)



**11...♗c7**

Some black players have experimented with 11...♗a5 12.f4 ♜d8, possibly followed by ...♗f8. Lagno's idea after...

**12.f4**

... was the pawn sac...

**12...b6!?**

... (which should be familiar to you by now!). Should White accept?

**13.cxb6!?**

Now as often after this capture, all black pieces will easily find their squares, while the white queenside pawns are rather a target than a force. Black has sufficient dynamic counterplay. 13.♗d6 was a better attempt, as the black queen can no longer proceed to a5. After 13...♗b7 14.♗b5 ♜d7 15.♗ad1 the black pieces are clearly less favourably placed than in the game.

**13...axb6 14.♗d3 ♜d8 15.♗b1 ♜a6**

15...♗b4!?.

**16.♗xa6 ♜xa6 17.e5 ♗a5**

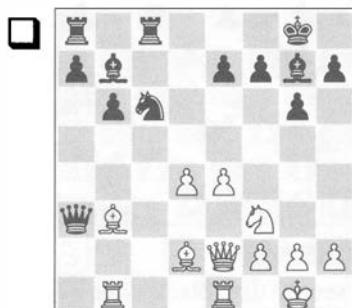
... and Black was just fine.

**Exercise 30** (page 211)

**Levon Aronian**

**Peter Svidler**

Khanty-Mansiysk 2014



**22.♗xf7+!?** ♗xf7 23.♗c4+ e6

Forced, because 23...♔e8 loses at once after 24.♗g8+ ♗f8 25.d5.

**24.♗g5+ ♔e8**

Again, as is not hard to see, the only move.

**25.♗xe6 ♕e7 26.♗xg7+ ♕xg7  
27.♗c3**

White has three central pawns for a piece while the black king is not in the safest of places in the middle of the board. Yet if we look at the material White has only one pawn for the piece!

**27...♗d8?**

Indeed it feels as if Black should be OK in the long run, but on the other hand White's position is much easier to play in practice. Therefore Svidler takes a brave decision, when he also could have simplified with 27...♗xd4 28.♕xd4 (28.♕a4+ ♔d7 29.♕xd7+ ♔xd7 30.♗xd4 might be slightly better) 28...♕xd4 29.♗xd4 ♜c4 30.♗a1 ♜c6, when Black could think about starting to advance his queenside pawns.

**28.♗b3 ♜c7 29.♗a1!**

Planning d4-d5, of course, but also leaving square b2 vacant for the queen.

**29...♜ac8 30.d5**

Let's start rolling!

**30...♝d7**

30...♝e7?! 31.♗bd1!; 31.e5 ♜c2.

**31.♗b2 ♕e7 32.♗bd1 ♗f7 33.e5**

And here comes number two!

**33...♜c2 34.♗b5+ ♜d7?**

Svidler no longer dares to refrain from a queen exchange, but as a result he ends up in a far less favourable ending than he could have had after move 27. 34...♗f8 was called for, though White seems to have sufficient play after, for example, 35.e6 (35.♗d3) 35...♗d6 36.♗a4, possibly switching the queen to the kingside.

**35.♗xd7+ ♔xd7 36.e6+ ♔d6**

**37.exf7 ♜f8 38.♗e6+ ♔d7 39.♗f6**

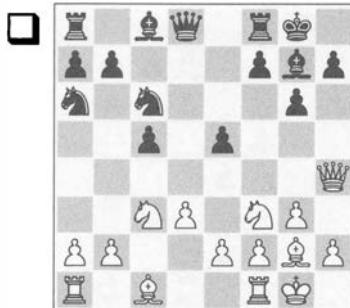
And Aronian won without too much trouble.

### Exercise 31 (page 274)

**Yury Shulman**

**Mackenzie Molner**

Wheeling 2014



**12.♗g5 h6 13.♗xc6**

This demolition of Black's pawn structure was the idea.

**13...bxcc6 14.♗f3 ♕xh4 15.♗xh4**

Now if White had some time to arrange his pieces he would have a good case against the isolated doubled c-pawns. As it is, however, Black is easily quick enough to resolve matters and exchange the weak pawns, while preserving his pair of bishops.

**15...♔e6 16.♗g2**

16.b3 can of course be met with 16...e4, for example 17.♗b2 exd3 18.exd3 ♔b4.

**16...c4 17.dxc4 ♔xc4 18.♗e3  
♔e6 19.b3 c5**

Black had a good alternative in the more dynamic 19...♜fd8 20.♗a3 (20.♗b2?! f5) 20...e4 21.♗ac1 ♔d2.

**20.♗a3 ♜fd8 21.♗fd1 ♔b4**

**22.♗xb4 cxb4 23.♗cd5 ♜ab8**

**24.♗e7+ ♔f8?!**

Better is 24...♔h7 when after 25.♗c6 ♜xd1+ 26.♗xd1 Black has 26...♜b6 which, with the king on f8, would be mate in one, of course.

**25.♗c6 ♜xd1+ 26.♗xd1 ♜c8**

**27.♗xb4 a5 28.♗bd5 f5 29.f3**

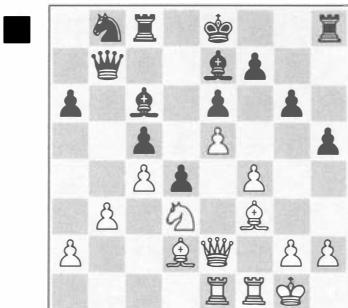
Black did not have enough for the pawn.

**Exercise 32** (page 274)

David Kanovsky

Jan Bernasek

Grygov 2014



**22... $\mathbb{Q}d7!$ ?**

Black decides to transfer the king to the other wing, because it will not be safe on the kingside. In fact, he should have started preparations for this on the previous move, when he retreated his knight from d7 to b8. Indeed, 22...0-0 is very dangerous after 23. $\mathbb{Q}xh5$   $gxh5$  24.f5, but 22... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  followed by ... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  looks like a more solid alternative.

**23. $\mathbb{B}b1$**

Immediately switching his attention to the queenside, trying to open up lines there.

**23... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  24. $\mathbb{B}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  25. $\mathbb{W}e1$**

**a5 26.a4**

Of course not 26. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$   $\mathbb{B}a8$ .

A more consistent move seems to be 26.a3, though after 26... $\mathbb{B}a8$  White cannot open up the queenside at once: 27.b4 axb4 28.axb4 cxb4 29. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$   $\mathbb{B}hb8$  31. $\mathbb{B}fb3$   $\mathbb{B}a2$  and Black wins.

After the text-move the black king proceed safely to b6. Both players kept the position closed and soon acquiesced in a draw.

**Exercise 33** (page 274)

Mhamal Anurag

Sethuraman P. Sethuraman

Dharamshala 2014



**21... $\mathbb{Q}h8!$**

Clearly the presence of the queen on h4 and that of the bishop on d6 could be an incentive to hit upon this manoeuvre.

**22. $\mathbb{B}g1$   $\mathbb{B}g8$  23. $\mathbb{B}g2$   $g5$**

Now the force of the manoeuvre is immediately clear, and already White is in dire straits.

**24. $\mathbb{B}ag1$**

24.fxg5  $\mathbb{B}xg5$  25. $\mathbb{B}ag1$  b4 26.axb4  $\mathbb{Q}f1$  27. $\mathbb{B}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$ ! 28. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ ?  $\mathbb{W}xh2+$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xh2$   $\mathbb{B}h5$  mate.

24.f5 is relatively best, but Black will not complain after 24...g4 25. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  26. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  exf5.

**24... $\mathbb{B}xf4$  25. $\mathbb{B}xg8+$**

25. $\mathbb{W}e2$  would be better. After the text-move the game is over immediately.

**25... $\mathbb{B}xg8$  26. $\mathbb{B}xg8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xg8$  27.e4**

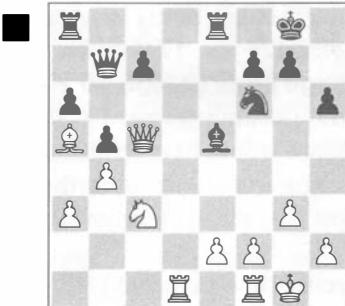
$\mathbb{Q}g4$  28. $\mathbb{B}xg4$  f3 29.h3 h5 30. $\mathbb{B}xf3$

30. $\mathbb{W}d1$  hxg4 31. $\mathbb{W}f1$  b4 also doesn't help, when Black's second bishop also has its say.

**30... $\mathbb{W}xh3+$  31. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}h2+$**

And White resigned.

**Exercise 34** (page 274)  
**Alexandr Kabatianski**  
**Felix Levin**  
Netherlands 2013/14 (7)



**23...♝xc3!?**

A remarkable decision! From a Catalan opening the a5-bishop has been pressing against the c7-pawn, and now Black voluntarily exchanges its defender. However, with this exchange it becomes more apparent that the a5-bishop is off-side (note that there is no return because earlier White had followed up the bishop move to a5 with b2-b4) and that Black is a piece up on the kingside. Soon my team mate Kabatianski was not able to deal with the practical problems. After the game he and his opponent Levin had a long analysis discussing the position of the bishop on a5 from the opening.

23...c6 was also an option, keeping ...♝xc3 in reserve.

**24.♝xc3 ♜ac8 25.♝c2 ♜e7  
26.♝d4 ♜ce8 27.♝e1 ♜e4**

Black is lining up for a kingside attack, while ...♝d6-c4 is also a strong positional threat. White next is a blunder, missing Black's main threat.

**28.♝c1? ♜g5 29.♝c6 ♜xc6  
30.♝xc6 ♜xe2**

Without queens the attack remains as strong. White has no defenders and is dead lost.

**Exercise 35** (page 275)  
**Denis Khismatullin**  
**Andrey Stukopin**  
Taganrog 2014 (8)



**9...♝d6**

In recent years 9...♝e7 has been met with 10.d4!? with the idea 10...exd4 11.♞d1 c5 12.e3. Stukopin was not interested in Khismatullin's improvement over his game against Sjugirov in 2013. The text had been tried once before, by Vachier-Lagrave against... Khismatullin!

**10.♞d1**

Now 10.d4 exd4 11.♞d1 can be met with 11...♝e5, for instance 12.♝g2 c6 13.f4 ♜c7 14.♝xd4 ♜b8!?.

**10...♝e8 11.d4 exd4 12.♝xd4  
♝e5 13.♞d1 d6 14.♝g2**

After the less ambitious 14.♝d2 the players decided to call it a day in the aforementioned game Khairullin-Vachier-Lagrave, Moscow 2011. The text move is a more logical attempt to put pressure on the e5-bishop.

**14...♝d7 15.♝e3 ♜b6**

The more patient 15...♝e7 had to be preferred, preventing White's next. After 16.♝c3 ♜f6 Black has a reasonable position.

**16.♝c5! ♜f6**

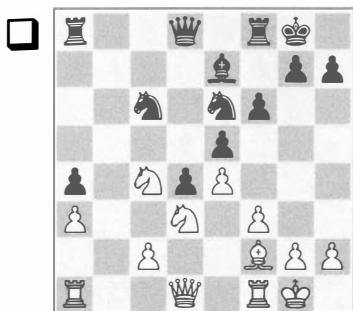
Now White could have caught the dark-squared bishop and obtained a better position with 17.♝d3!.

**Exercise 36** (page 275)

**Elisabeth Pähtz**

**Katerina Lagno**

Khanty-Mansiysk 2014



**22.♗b1!**

Black has a spatial advantage, but White finds the best way to activate her queen.

**22...♝b8 23.♕a2 ♜d7 24.♝ab1 ♖f7?!**

Asking for trouble. 24...♚h8 25.♘b6 ♜d6 is equal. This was a blitz game...

**25.f4 exf4 26.♘xf4 ♖e5? 27.♘xe5+ fxe5 28.♘d3**

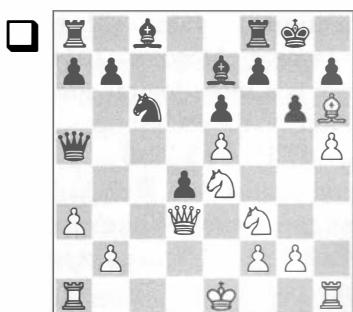
Now Black loses material.

**Exercise 37** (page 275)

**Anish Giri**

**Arkady Naiditsch**

Wijk aan Zee 2014



**16.♗d2!**

With a king's attack in the make, you would hardly be inclined to exchange

queens. Nevertheless, having eliminated the alternatives Giri came to the conclusion this was the best way to continue the attack. He wrote: 'I was very, very happy with this move, which only occurred to me after a pretty long think.'

**16...♛xd2+ 17.♔xd2 ♜d8**

**18.hxg6 fxg6 19.♘g5 h5 20.g4?**

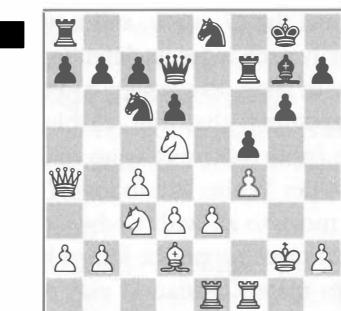
Here the straightforward 20.♖xe7 ♜xe7 21.g4 would have left Black not a single chance, though after the text-move Giri won the game anyway.

**Exercise 38** (page 275)

**Joshua Friedel**

**Alex Lenderman**

St Louis 2014



**16...♞f6!?**

A novelty. Lenderman decides not to bother about White's superfluous knight and prefers to develop. 16...♞d8 17.♕xd7 ♜xd7 18.e4 c6? (18...fxe4 19.♘xe4?! ♜xb2 20.f5 with a very dangerous initiative) 19.exf5! with a winning advantage in Dvoretsky(!)-Vadasz, Wijk aan Zee 1975. 16...♞b8?! was an interesting alternative though, to cause the superfluous knight on d5 some trouble. The difference compared to 16...♞d8 is clear: after 17.♕xd7 ♜xd7 18.e4 c6 White does not have 19.exf5.

**17.♘xf6+ ♜xf6 18.♘d5 ♜g7**

And Black had no problems.

**Exercise 39** (page 275)**Momchil Nikolov****Atanas Kolev**

Kozloduy 2014

**13...Ra2!?**

Protecting e2, while the rook can switch to d2 as well. This may not be your first idea due to the vis-à-vis with the e6-bishop. Regular moves like 13.Rc1 or 13.e3 are not bad, but less forceful.

**13...Rc8**

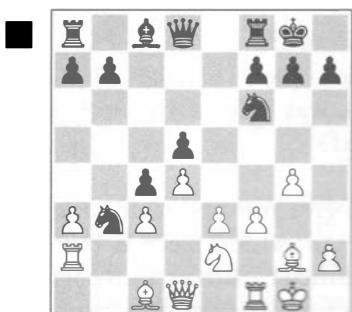
Black decides to allow doubled f-pawns. 13...Rc7 can be met with 14.Qd2 (after 13.e3 this would not have been possible).

**14.Qxf6 gxf6 15.Qb5 Rb6****16.Qbd4 Rg7**

Now with his damaged pawn structure Black should have looked for dynamic counterplay with, for example, 16...a5.

**Exercise 40** (page 275)**Sergey Volkov****Gennady Tunik**

Taganrog 2014

**13...b5 14.e4!?**

White sacrifices his g-pawn to obtain a strong pawn centre and quicker piece development. The idea has certainly been seen before. A few examples:

A) 13...a5 14.Qg3 b5 15.e4!? (15.g5 instead would have led to Anand-Carlsen) 15...dxe4 16.Qg5 h6 17.Qxf6 Rxf6 18.fxe4 Rg5 (18...Rb6 19.g5 b4! Giri) 19.e5!? as suggested by several commentators after the World Championship match, and successfully played a week after the match in Volkov-Smirnov, Khanty-Mansiysk 2013;

B) 13...h6 would by transposition lead to Kasparov-Polgar, Tilburg 1997. Actually, during the 9th match game Kasparov called ...h7-h6 just very bad as it gives White a 'hook' on the kingside.

14.Qg3 (again 14.e4!?, this time suggested by Giri: 14...dxe4 15.fxe4 Qxg4 16.Rc1 and the pawn centre is worth a pawn, Giri, New In Chess 2013/8) 14...Qd7 15.Rc1 Re8 16.e4 (! Kasparov) 16...dxe4 17.fxe4 Qxg4 18.Qf4 Rh4 19.h3 Qf6 20.e5 and White scored a convincing win;

C) 13...Ra5 14.Qd2 Qd7 15.Qc6 would transpose to Ipatov-Debashis, World Junior Championship, Kocaeli 2013. Here after 16.e4 dxe4 17.fxe4 Qxd2 18.Rxd2, now 18...Qxg4 would have been critical, but after 19.Qf5 White has ample play for the pawn.

**14...dxe4**

Here also, the debate will be about whether or not to exchange the b3-knight. Will it be off-side or will it be a useful contributor in the counterattack? After 14...Qxc1 15.Rxc1 dxe4 16.fxe4 Qxg4 17.Qf4 the a2-rook may join the attack along the second rank.

**15.fxe4 Qxg4 16.Qf4 a5 17.h3**

... and again White had compensation.

## Epilogue

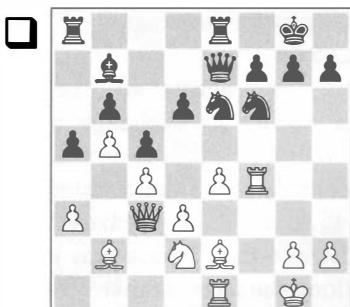
Having concluded my work on this book I kept running into new and old examples of the patterns discussed here. And in lots of different places: no matter if I was reading in an old Russian chess book, following a recent tournament or skipping through recent top games in a new *The Week In Chess* file.

Of course, not every pattern occurs in the same frequency. You are more likely to detect a typical exchange sacrifice than an enclosed bishop. I could easily pick out some more examples of the former, for instance the Bishop Snatcher in Gupta-David, Rethymno open 2014:



**14.... $\mathbb{B}xe3!$ ?**

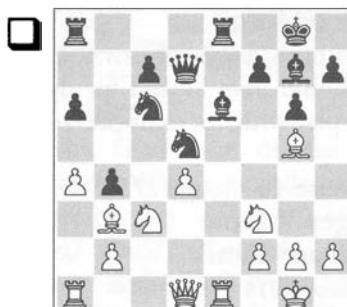
Or the 'Rook Takes King's Knight' in Bu Xiangzhi-Zhou Weiqi, Chinese Team Championships Jinan 2014:



**19. $\mathbb{B}xf6!$ ?**

Yet adding more examples to one and the same pattern in this book would be overdoing it and probably not be of further help to you.

Seeing the patterns recur is a nice thing in itself, and on occasion these examples did even cause me special pleasure. For instance when I saw Merijn van Delft, who is among others one of my former fellow columnists for the *ChessVibes Training Magazine*, executing the following Bishop Snatcher against fellow countryman Martijn Dambacher in the European Club Cup 2013:

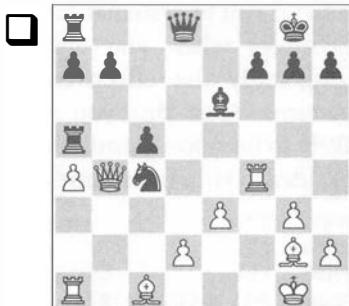


**16. $\mathbb{B}xe6!$ ?**

... which after 16...fxe6 17. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{B}f8$  18. $\mathbb{R}c1$  was promptly countered with 18... $\mathbb{B}xf3!?$ .

Let me give you one more striking example. An offside piece is one of the most difficult patterns to recognize, as there is no specific square involved. Yet

here too, I recently bumped into one. Remarkably, this time it was Timman who ended up with some sort of ‘Salov Rook’ on a5:



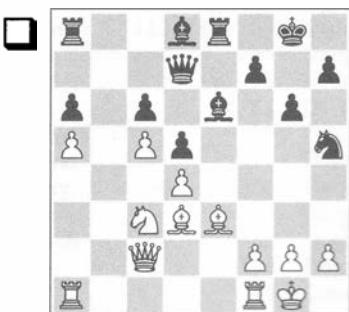
Position after **19...c5** in  
Matlakov-Timman, Politiken Cup 2014

It will not surprise you that after...

**20.♗c3 ♜d6 21.♗b2 f6 22.g4**

... White was soon successful on the other wing.

Books are also a good source of inspiration and material. Reading in Judit Polgar’s excellent second autobiographical book (*From GM to Top Ten*) I encountered yet another type of exchange sac, a ‘silent one’. Not in the actual game though, but in her considerations during the game:



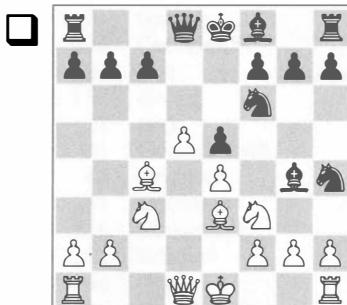
Here **19.♝a4!**? was played. Polgar adds the following comment: ‘I felt that occupying the b6-square was more important than material. I also considered

**19.♝fb1!?** followed by **♝b6** sacrificing an exchange with similar ideas.’ Indeed a familiar type of sacrifice which is also dealt with in this book. However, this time it wasn’t actually played. Which again goes to show that recognizing a pattern does not always equal the only or correct solution.

In the same book (Chapter 4) Polgar deals with ‘Positional Sacrifices’, which is of course a much broader term than the patterns in this book. Yet, when comparing two of her games against Karpov she draws some interesting and very specific parallels. Both games contain a knight sacrifice on the same square (d5) and yield a strong pawn centre for the sacrificed material. In fact, in particular the game from Buenos Aires 2000 would have neatly fitted in this book’s 27th chapter, on Central Avalanches.

I am sure that if you carefully read other chess writers, you will also detect such fragments which are closely connected to pattern recognition.

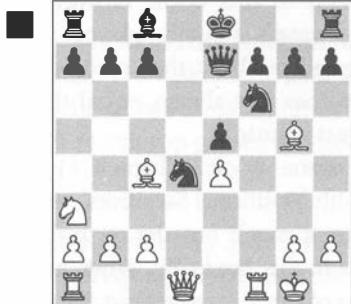
The number of patterns is by no means exhausted with the publication of this book. For the selection I have had to drop many, and meanwhile I keep running into other ‘fresh’ ones. Take this position from Maletin-Khismatullin, Izhevsk 2014:



**10.♝g1**

## Improve Your Chess Pattern Recognition

This immediately made me think of Bodnaruk-Kosteniuk, Russian championship 2010:



**10...Hg8!**

... and also of other ‘mysterious rook moves’, as I think they have been dubbed.

I recommend you to systematically save such examples when you encounter them and study the effectiveness of these patterns. After that you will be more likely to hit upon a similar unconventional idea in your own games.

In itself it is not strange at all that I keep running into new examples of the patterns presented in this book (also, most of the exercises have been picked from tournaments in 2014): I guess I have developed a sense of awareness for these patterns. I am convinced that when you, dear reader, have done the same by going through this book, you will be more inclined to have a fresh look at some typical piece positions or counter-intuitive sacrifices and consequently will profit from this recognition in your own games!

*Arthur van de Oudeweetering  
July 2014*

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## About the Author



Arthur van de Oudeweetering (1966) is a Dutch chess player, trainer, and columnist from Amsterdam. His youth in the chess-minded city of Apeldoorn brought him second place in the national youth championships under 16. Later (in 2003) he became an International Master, before shifting his attention to training.

For several years Van de Oudeweetering has trained the Dutch federation's youth selection under 14 (today some of these selected players have become strong grandmasters). He certainly benefited from his acquired experience with compiling training material when he started to write a weekly column on the middlegame for the *ChessVibes Training* magazine, which eventually laid the foundation for this book. More recently Van de Oudeweetering has been writing a monthly column for Chess.com's *Master's Bulletin*.

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