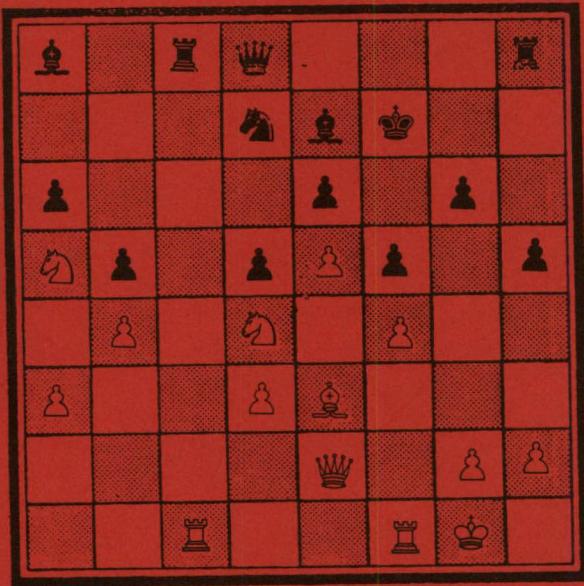
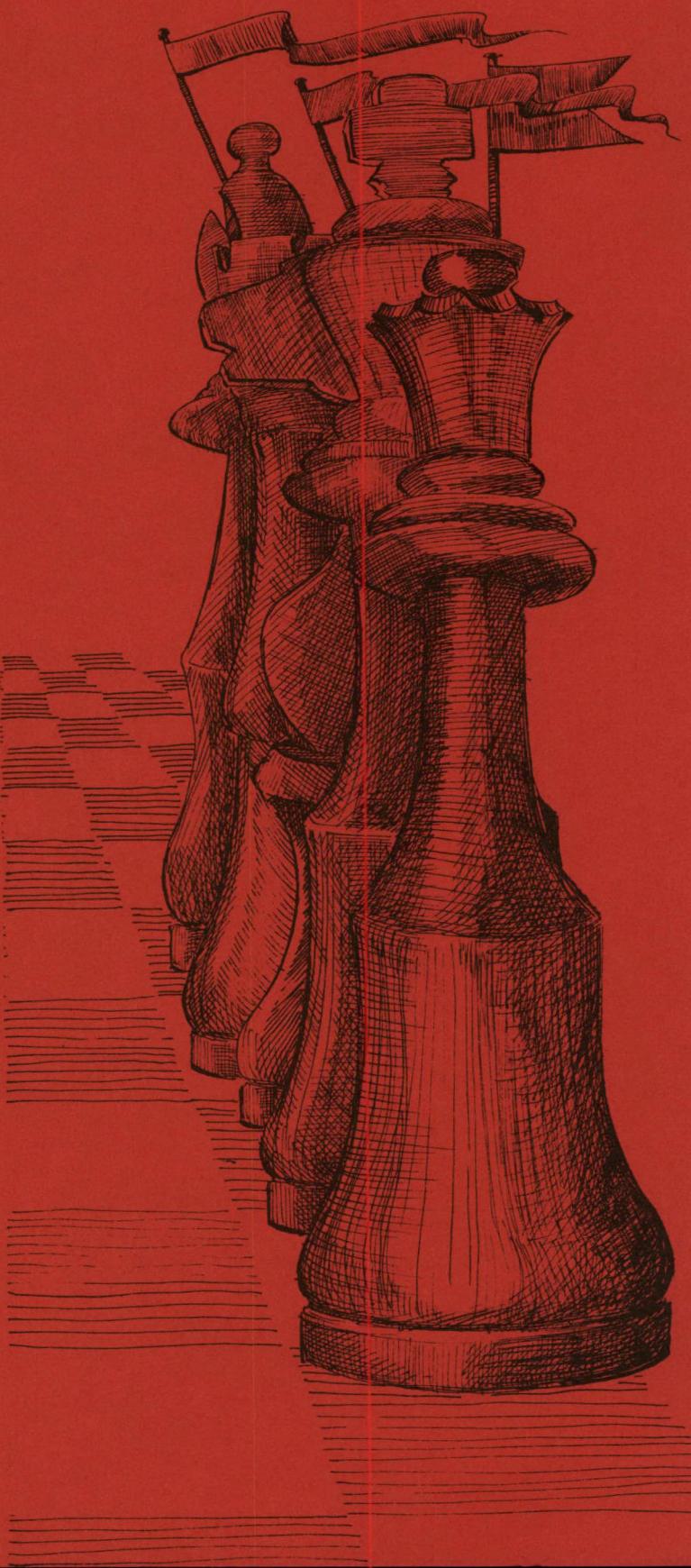


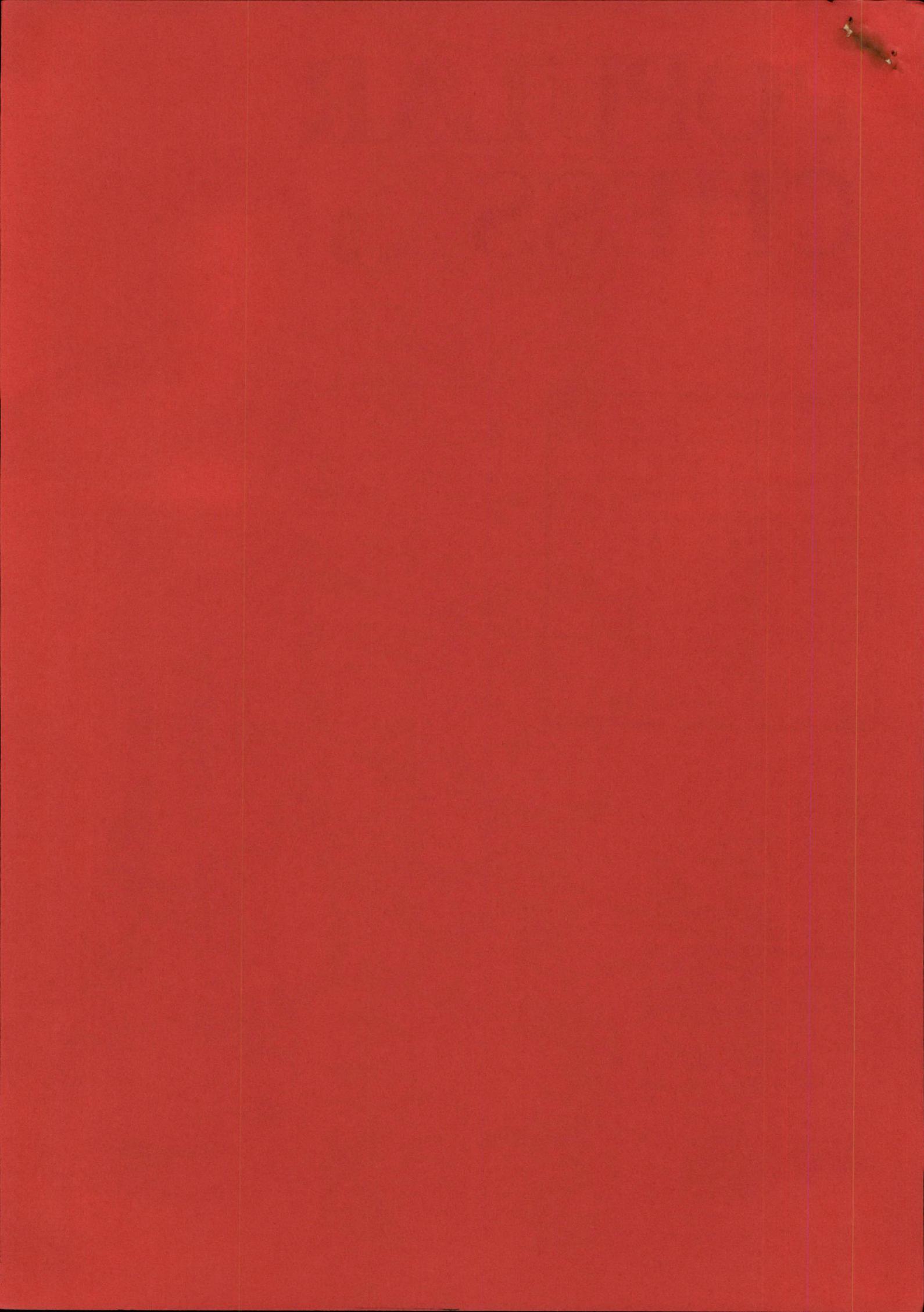
POPULAR CHESS

No. 8



STUDY THIS POSITION
FOR TEN MINUTES
BEFORE OPENING THIS
MAGAZINE.
IT IS WHITE TO PLAY.
DECIDE ON THREE
REASONS WHY YOU THINK
HE IS BETTER, AND
WORK OUT A PLAN OF
CAMPAIGN.





From our leader, Michael Basman:-

As Popular Chess lurches off the presses just in time for Christmas (I should be selling something), the public justifiably asks 'what sort of periodical is this'? I think it's a quarterly. But you will still get the six issues you subscribed to, they will just take 50% longer to appear. Which will give you time to do other things besides chess.

We have put down several new cassettes in the last few months, mainly due to the industry of Andrew Martin. His tapes on the Modern Defence and Tchigorin Defence were really first rate and I can thoroughly recommend them. A further seven or eight tapes have also been recorded, and these will be announced in the next issue.

The computer manufacturers are shaping up for another clash of champions. The Sensory 12, Super Constellation and the new Conchess range look set to exceed in strength anything that has so far appeared.

Just as soon as I get review machines, I will try to put them through their paces. The 'big match' looks like SuperConstellation against 6 Megahertz Conchess.

Meanwhile the Gold...not ready yet. Maybe in the new year. There's still the Bronze (beginner's) and Silver (intermediate) courses.

World Chess: we waited three years for this! If this is what happens when the world's top two players get together, then the title is meaningless, for the margin of the draw is too great. To save us a lot of unnecessary bother, the world championship should be held every year, consisting of ten games played in a fortnight. If an institution has no purpose or value it should be scrapped - and six month long drawing contests belong to that category.

Finally, England seem to have a team that can take the Silver medals at the Olympiads. In previous years they have played well, but have not had quite the class to overcome the vagaries of the Swiss system, and often finished below their real strength. A success this time will prove encouraging, especially for people who can recall, not so long ago, the words of Grandmaster Yefim Bogolyubov after a heavy defeat: 'what's the matter with me, I am playing like an Englishman!'.

POPULAR CHESS, which appears four times a year, costs £5 post free for six issues, from 7 Billockby Close, Chessington, Surrey, KT9 2ED. Make cheques payable to Audio Chess.

POSTAL CHESS - THE WAY TO PROGRESS!

The Stars Barred Postal Chess Club welcomes new members. A great way to play, which gives you time to work out your moves. And no-one can join the club who has an over the board grade of over 135. Write to the controller, Francis Hynes, 104 Circle Court, Stretford, Manchester, M32 9GJ.

THE TRADER

If you are a pawn up, exchange pieces to win the ending. If your opponent has an attack, exchange pieces, especially the queens, to avoid the danger.

Cogent and boring advice; exchanging takes the life out of a game, so naturally players shy away from this course of action. Yet this is the life a chess trader chooses; his profit is the eventual win, the point on the score card.

Perhaps the push to exchange would not be so strong were it not for the crock of gold at the end of the rainbow - or in this case the queen at the end of the pawns journey. At any rate, the twin pulls are always there - the urge to attack, to win quickly and beautifully, and the opposing lure of material advantage, long term but sure victory.

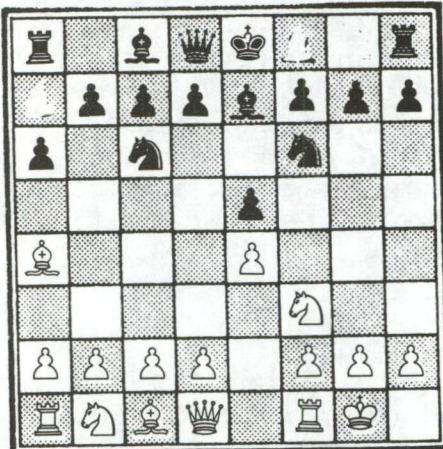
Here is a game, annotated by the winner, I.S. Comley, which shows the two forces at work. White, the trader, black, the attacker.

WHITE I.S. Comley 141

BLACK R.J. Webb 152

10th April 1984

- | | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| 1 | e4 | e5 |
| 2 | Nf3 | Nc6 |
| 3 | Bb5 | a6 |
| 4 | Ba4 | Nf6 |
| 5 | 0-0 | Be7 |

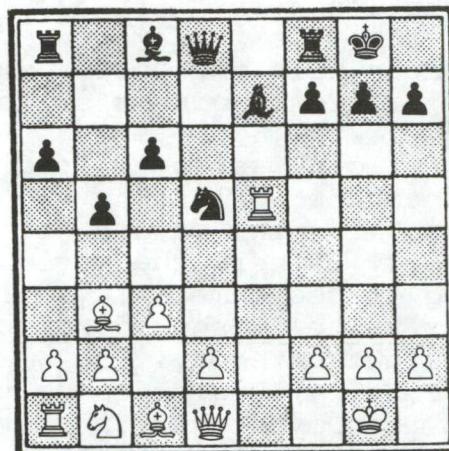


If 5...Nxe4, apparently winning a pawn, white gets a tremendous initiative along the e file with an eventual Rel. He will win the e5 pawn with a strong attack. This continuation is known as the Open Spanish Defence.

- | | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| 6 | Re1 | b5 |
| 7 | Bb3 | 0-0 |
| 8 | c3 | d5 |

This is the Marshall Attack. Black sacrifices a pawn for a kingside attack. I follow the maxim 'if he gives it, I grab it'.

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 9 | exd5 | Nxd5 |
| 10 | Nxe5 | Nxe5 |
| 11 | Rxe5 | c6 |



White is now a pawn up but will lose time. Black hopes to take advantage of the rook on e5 to gain time and begin an attack. White must therefore develop as fast as possible.

- | | | |
|----|----|-----|
| 12 | d4 | Bd6 |
|----|----|-----|

Black gains time and attacks h2 - a very vulnerable square.

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 13 | Re1 | Qh4 |
| 14 | g3 | Qh3 |
| 15 | Bxd5 | cxd5 |

White has given up his two bishops advantage. He has none of his queen-side pieces developed. The reason he took the knight off is that the bishop is doing little to defend white's king side. The knight, however, had the potential to aid black's attack - Nf6 and Ng4 (or Nh5).

- | | |
|----|-----|
| 16 | Qf3 |
|----|-----|

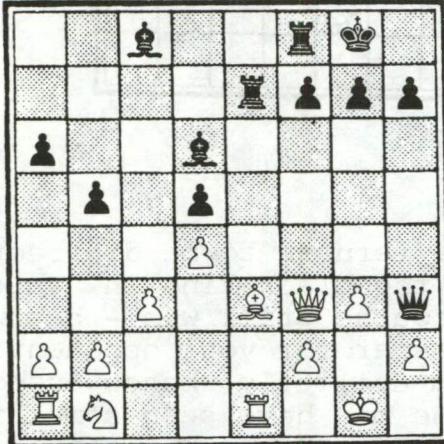
White is attempting to button up the weak white squares. Black was threatening ...Bg4 with possibilities of utilising the weak squares on f3,g2

and h3. If in reply to Bg4, white relied on f3, this weakens the b8-h2 diagonal and allows the possible sacrifice on g3.

16 ... Ra7

This protects the d5 pawn for if 15 Qxd5 Bb7 16 Qxd6 Qg2 mate.

17 Be3 Re7



Black attempts to get more pieces into the attack and white hurries to rush his into defence. Note that white does not play 17 Bf4 Bg4! 18 Qg2 Bxf4 19 gxf4 Re7 and white is in a lot of trouble. He is still a pawn up but his pawns on the f file are doubled and he is about to drop his b2 pawn; his knight has nowhere to go and black has the introduction of his other rook into the attack as his next threat.

18 Nd2 Kh1

I really wonder about this move for black - it just seems too slow for this position.

19 Qg2 Qh5

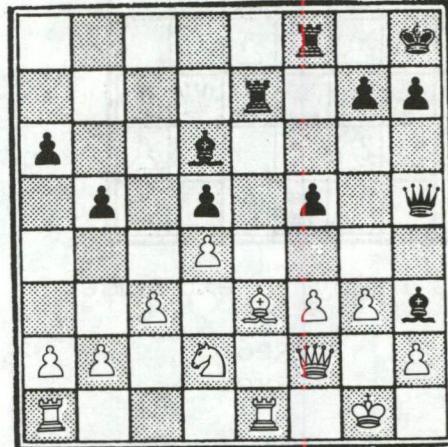
Obviously, black does not exchange queens - so what has he gained with this dreadful positioning of the queen? What I hoped to achieve in the position we will see in a moment where the queens bishop that black is using in his attack gets isolated.

20 f3 Bh3

21 Qf2

White can now use the second rank to protect his h2 pawn - the b7-h2 diagonal is not significantly weakened. In the event black plays a rook to g6, white has Nf1, which holds his entire position together.

21 ... f5



Before we proceed, consider what you might do in this position.

22 Bf4!

I really think this to be the best move in this position. This blocks black's bishop on h3 out of the game. It also forces exchanges which hopefully finish off black's attack. The forcing nature of this move cannot be over-emphasised, black has no time to play Rf6 or g5 etc.etc., which he had wanted to do. It also frees white's game for the first time.

22 ... Rxel+
23 Rxel Bxf4
24 gxf4

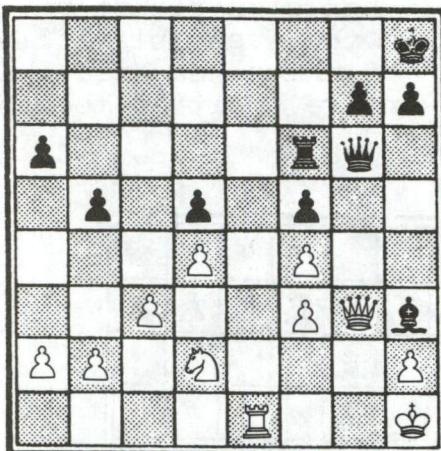
The only question in this position is whether black can use this open g file. I decided he couldn't. Black's big problem now, of course, is that if he goes into an endgame he is hopelessly lost. He is a pawn down, and white has a pawn majority on the queen side - but much worse than that, his bishop is incarcerated at h3.

24 Rf6
25 Kh1

This is to stop black from gaining a tempo on the king. If 25 Re5 (for instance), Rg6+ 26 Kh1 Kg8 threatens ...Bg2+.

25 ... Qg6

26 Qg3



White is happy to exchange.

26 ... Re6
27 Re5! Rxe5

Again, before going any further, consider what you would play here.

28 dxe5

This is stronger than fxe5. If 28 fxe5 Qxg3 29 hxg3 f4 30 g4 h5 31 Kh2 hxg4 and black's bishop survives and possibly escapes. In any case, white can neither move his knight nor his king if he wishes to keep the bishop imprisoned. Why make hard work of an easy win?

28 ... Qxg3
29 hxg3 g5
30 fxg3 f4

White must keep the bishop imprisoned, so:

31 g4 Kg7

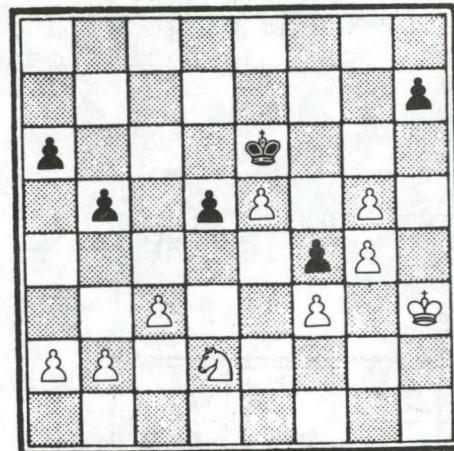
Note that ...h5 does not work here because of gxh6 e.p.!

32 Kh2 Kf7

If 32...Kg6? 33 e6! Kg7 and black has absolutely no chances.

33 Kxh3 Ke6

The win is now a 'matter of technique', but watch the way black refuses to lie down and die. He attempts to make things as hard as possible.



34 Kh4 Ke5
35 Kh5 d4
36 Kh6

White refuses to be distracted, and allow the black king in. White would of course still win - but why make it easier for your opponent? I give him as little chance as possible, for fear he may have seen something I have missed, or even - goodness - that I have miscounted.

37 cxb d3
38 Nb3

Still trying to keep the king out.

38 ... d2
39 Nxd2 Kd4
40 Kxh7 Ke3
41 g6 Kxd2
42 g7 Ke3
43 g8=Q Kxf3
44 g5 Resigns

This was an interesting game with no silly blunders. What was particularly interesting was the way in which black made considerable progress despite being hopelessly lost. I included the endgame for this reason alone.

CLINT MANN

EXPLORING THE ENGLISH

This article is a follow-up to 'The English Opening for the Club Player', first published in the Dengie Chess Review of September 1983. In that piece I recommended the English Opening (1. P-QB4) to the beginner and novice chess player, and suggested a 'simplistic' system that could be adopted, without taxing the brain or its memory. The article was subsequently published in Mike Basman's excellent 'Popular Chess' (Edition No. 5) and I know of at least one player who has taken up the opening as a result of reading it. This sequel attempts to resolve the difficulties arising from the over-simplification of the original system, and to extend the range of ideas which white may employ in the middle-game.

For those readers who saw the original article, let me briefly sum up the central ideas. The 'simplistic' system in the English allows White to play the following moves:

- | | | | | |
|----------|----------|----------|---------|----------|
| 1. P-QB4 | 2. N-QB3 | 3. P-KN3 | 4. B-N2 | 5. P-K3 |
| 6. KN-K2 | 7. O-O | 8. P-QN3 | 9. B-N2 | 10. Q-B2 |

As any intelligent reader will appreciate, there are times when some (or most) of those moves cannot be played, and the system completely breaks down. In the original article I referred to John Watson's books on the English, and the three major initial responses for Black. To 1.....P-QB4 (Symmetrical lines), the simplistic system seemed the best line to adopt. To 1.....N-KB3 I suggested 2. N-QB3, P-K3; 3. P-K4 (The Mikenas Attack). To 1.....P-K4 (The Reversed Sicilian) I suggested playing the simplistic system of Black defended passively, but pointed out the dangers in the 'Modern Variation' (1. P-QB4, P-K4; 2. N-QB3, N-KB3; 3. P-KN3, B-N5).

Up to this year, no-one had ever used the Modern line against me, so imagine my surprise when I found myself playing Black against my favourite line as White! My opponent, Derek Chamberlain of Tendring, had previously discussed the ideas with me, so here was a cruel opportunity to attempt to poison my own brainchild. Here is the game:

Game 1. Derek Chamberlain v Clint Mann. Essex University. 19/2/84.

- | | | | | | | | |
|----------|------|----------|-------|----------|-------|---------|-------|
| 1. P-QB4 | P-K4 | 2. N-QB3 | N-KB3 | 3. P-KN3 | B-QN5 | 4. B-N2 | P-QB3 |
|----------|------|----------|-------|----------|-------|---------|-------|

This often seems to be a useful move for Black against the English. It challenges White's Q5 square, which is often dominated in the middle-game.

- | | | | | | | |
|----------|-----|---------|------|--------|-----|----------|
| 5. P-QR3 | BxN | 6. NPxB | P-Q4 | 7. PxP | PxP | 8. Q-QN3 |
|----------|-----|---------|------|--------|-----|----------|

As beginners we are told not to bring our Queen out too early in the game. White's threats here are tactical - he wants to play P-QB4, with pressure on the White squares. I reckoned I could ignore this, and develop my Queen-side pieces, with pressure on the Queen's Bishop file.

- | | | |
|------------|----------|-------|
| 8.O-O | 9. P-QB4 | N-QB3 |
|------------|----------|-------|

Look at the position in Diagram One. Can you see the idea I have got in mind now?

- | | | | |
|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|
| 10. PxP | N-Q5 | 11. Q-QR2 | B-KB4 |
| 12. P-QR3 | R-QB1 | 13. K-B1 | R-B7 |
| 14. Q-N1 | Q-B2 | 15. B-B3 | R-QB1 |



Diagram
One

Diagram Two

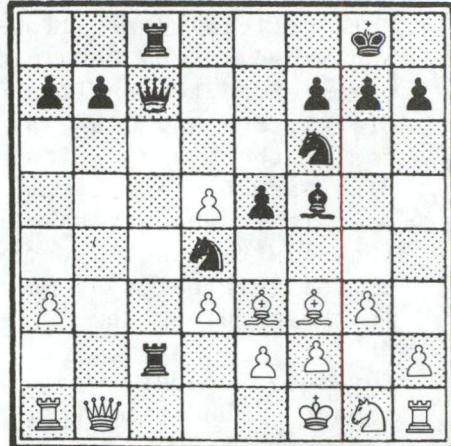
16. B-K3. (Diagram Two)

White's manoeuvres now prevent the threat of mate on Black's QB8 square, and the attack on the Queen and Rook has temporarily pattered out. How would you continue from here?

16. NxB

Now if he plays 17. PxN, BxP+ wins the Queen after 18. K-N2, RxP+.

17. NxN B-R6+ 18. K-K1 B-N7
19. R-N1 BxN



The idea is to remove one of the defenders of White's Q2 square.

20. PxR Q-QB6+ 21. K-B1 QxQP+ 22. K-N2 QxB !

(The pawn is pinned of course ...)

23. R-KB1 P-QN3 24. Q-N4 NxP 25. Q-Q6 Q-Q5

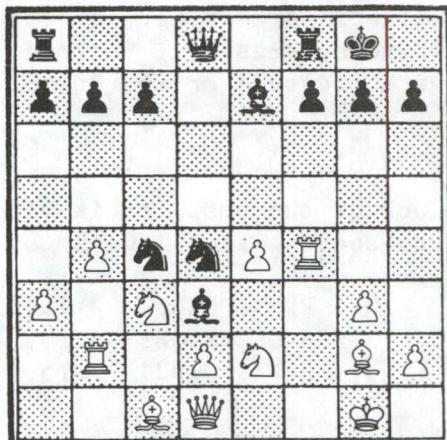
(and black eventually won with his extra piece).

This game alerted me to the dangers in adopting the simplistic system when Black plays 1....P-K4 and 2....N-KB3. Admittedly, my opponent didn't play P-K3 with N-K2, but on several occasions I had made similar errors myself early in the season by playing without thinking. One such example is a game against De La Mothe (Central YMCA) in the City Chess Quickplay, which began:

1. P-QB4 P-K4	2. N-QB3 N-KB3	3. P-KN3 P-Q4
4. PxP NxP	5. B-N2 N-N3	6. P-K3 N-QB3

Now Black's threat of N-N5 is dangerous, so I played:

7. P-QR3 B-KB4	8. P-K4 B-K3	9. P-QN4 N-Q5
10. R-N1 B-K2	11. N-K2 O-O	12. O-O B-B5
13. P-KB4 PxP	14. RxP B-Q6	15. R-N2 N-B5



From here on my position was overrun by Black's pieces, and I lost in 26 moves. Needless to say I was led to search for an alternative to my simplistic system against this opening by Black. (My sixth move (P-K3) had led to the creation of a hole on my Q3 square which Black was threatening to exploit. In some variations, the move P-Q3 defends this square with the Queen, but when Black plays P-Q4 early, his Queen is often on a half-open file, and he can attack it at least twice.

Back to the Drawing Board

After a certain amount of treasure hunting, I came across a variation often played by Nimzovitch in earlier years. Like the earlier system, this is another variation in which the onus is on Black to find the good moves, and less experienced players often play an inferior move, or use up a lot of time on the clock. Let's have a look at the opening moves.

- | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|------|----------|-------|----------|-------|
| 1. P-QB4 | P-K4 | 2. N-QB3 | N-KB3 | 3. N-KB3 | N-QB3 |
| 4. P-K4. (Diagram Four) | | | | | |

This is a position which the player of the English Opening will often encounter. Look at Diagram 4, and think about the position for a moment. If, like me, you were brought up to play chess with a diet of 1. P-K4, P-K4; 2. N-KB3, N-QB3; 3. N-QB3, N-KB3 you will see that the position has something in common with king's pawn openings, vis a vis the 'Four Knights'. Furthermore, your chess memory may recall the maxim in king's pawn openings: "When Black can play P-Q4 safely he has achieved equality." Herein lies the value of playing the English Opening with 4. P-K4: this prevents Black playing P-Q4. Thus Black has to find a good 4th move. The two most commonly played are:

- A)B-QB4
& B)B-QN5. Let's examine both of these moves.

A) After 4.B-QB4;

5. NxP will make any inexperienced player think for a minute! White doesn't lose a piece (well, not for long), nor does he win a pawn. After Black plays:
....NxN
6. P-Q4.

Black's best reply is B-QN5. Alternative moves give White additional pressure. Here are some examples:

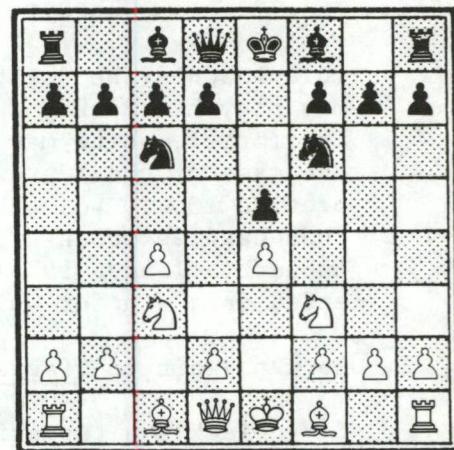
Nimzovitch v Reti, Berlin 1928. The game continued:-

- | | | | | |
|-------------|----------|-------------------------------------|--------|------|
| 6.B-Q3 | 7. P-QB5 | BxP | 8. PxN | N-N1 |
| 9. Q-KN4 | K-B1 | 10. Q-N3 (with advantage to White). | | |

Game 2: C. Mann v Don Imrie (Dengie v Maldon. 13/10/83)

- | | | | | | |
|------------|--------|-----------|---------|---------|-----|
| 6.BxP | 7. QxB | P-Q3 | 8. B-K2 | O-O | |
| 9. O-O | R-K1 | 10. B-N5 | P-KR3 | 11. BxN | QxB |
| 12. QR-Q1 | Q-N3 | 13. P-KB4 | | | |

(This pawn break is often a key move in White's middle-game strategy in the English, as discussed in the earlier article. Here it is played in spite of Black's counter-attack.)



13. B-R6 14. Q-KB2 N-QB3 15. P-KB5 Q-N4
 16. R-Q3 (Diagram 5) QxP+
 (Black's Bishop is compromised and lost).
 17. QxQ BxQ 18. KxB R-K4
 19. P-QR3 N-R4 20. R-KN3 N-N6
 21. P-B6 P-KN3 22. P-KR4 N-Q7
 23. R-B4 R-K1 24. RxP+ PxR
 25. P-B7+ K-B1 26. PxR-Q (Double check)
 26. KxQ 27. N-Q5 NxP
 28. RxN Black resigns.

The above examples show White seizing the initiative, with scope for tactical play. Let's return to the main line. From Diagram 4 again, play runs:

4. B-QB4 5. NxP NxN
 6. P-Q4 B-QN5
 Then: 7. PxN NxP 8. Q-Q4 NxN
 9. PxN

This reaches the position in Diagram 6. Black may play his Bishop to K2 or B4. In the case of the former, White may follow with 10. Q-N4. In the case of the latter, White may play 10. B-R3, meeting 10....P-Q3 with 11. PxP O-O and White then castles Queen-side. The game Korchnoi v Hubner (Solingen 1973) followed this line, and ended in a win for White after 66 moves !

Return again to Diagram 4.

- B) Black's alternative 4th move isB-N5.

One effect of this move is that, if White moves the Queen's Pawn, the Knight on QB3 is pinned. In spite of this, White can play the Queen's pawn forward so long as this fact is not forgotten. The variations are complex, but one line might run:

4. B-N5 5. P-Q3 P-Q3 6. P-KN3 O-O
 7. B-N2 N-K1 8. O-O BxN 9. PxN P-B4.

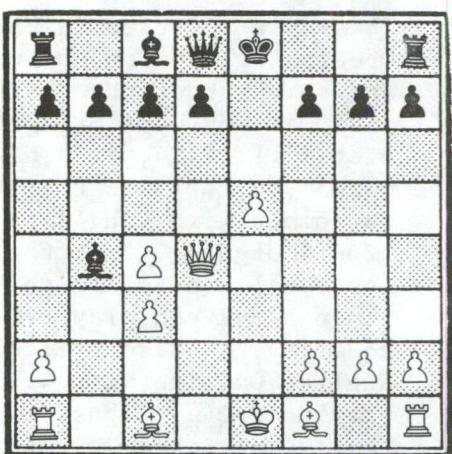
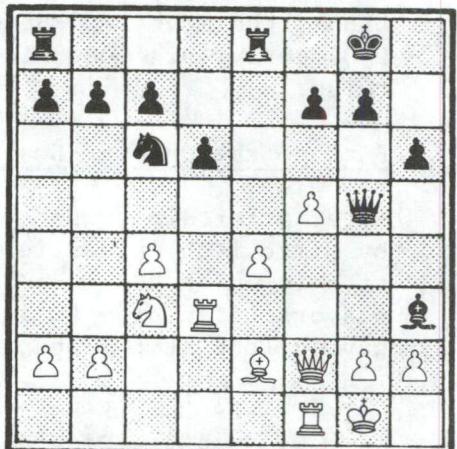
This position is said to be equal, though personally, I don't like it for White. One consequence of the 4....B-N5 line is that White invariably gets doubled pawns on the QB file. However, this does open up the QN file for a possible middle-game manoeuvre with the Queen's Rook. You pays your money and you takes your choice !

Alternatives on move 4

Earlier, after Diagram 4, I suggested that the onus was on Black to find a good move. So far we have considered the natural idea of developing the King-side Bishop. What if he does something different? Other moves are available, such as B-K2, P-KN3, P-Q3 or P-QN3. How is White going to meet these?

Let us pause again in the analysis, and consider some general principles. Remember, by playing 4. P-K4, you have prevented Black from playing the aggressive P-Q4. If he doesn't develop the Bishop aggressively on QB4 or QN5, Black will have to resort to playing a more passive move, or a move which doesn't directly contend the centre of the board. As a general rule, it pays for White to seize the initiative, and play to occupy the centre, with an immediate 5. P-Q4. This may

Diagram Five



be followed up with P-Q5, when White gains a space advantage with the central pawns, dislodges the Black Queen's Knight, but loses the opportunity to use the Q5 square as an outpost for a Knight. In 'English : Four Knights', Nigel Povah points out the following theoretical lines:

(From Diagram 4)

a).....B-K2
6. NxP O-O
9. B-KN5
5. P-Q4 PxP (in ...P-Q3, then 6. P-Q5);
7. B-K2 B-QN5
8. P-KB3 P-Q3

b).....P-KN3
7. B-K3 O-O
5. P-Q4 PxP
8. B-K2 R-K1
6. NxP B-KN2
9. P-KB3 P-Q3

This transposes to the Samisch variation of the Kings Indian. (A word about transpositions later).

c).....P-Q3
7. B-K3 NxN+
10. B-Q2 PxP
13. P-KR4. This line follows the game Panno v Savon (Petropolis 1973) and a plus is given to White here.
5. P-Q4 B-KN5
8. PxN B-Q2
11. BxP P-KN4
6. P-Q5 N-Q5
9. P-KB4 N-KN5
12. B-KN3 B-N2

If you don't like the look of this line of approach, you could always revert to the old system, with the white squared Bishop fianchettoed on KN2. This time your Knight has already been developed on KB3 instead of K2, so the pawn break P-KB4 is less easy to get in. Active play is more likely to occur on the Queen side. Look at the following game for an illustration:

Game Three. Clint Mann v Hugh Tanton (Dengie v Billericay. 11/1/84)

1. P-QB4	P-K4	2. N-QB3	N-KB3	3. N-KB3	N-QB3
4. P-K4	P-Q3	5. P-KN3	B-KN5	6. B-N2	B-K2
7. P-Q3	O-O	8. B-K3	Q-Q2	9. P-QR3	P-QR3
10. P-QN4	N-R2	11. O-O	P-QN3	12. Q-QB2	P-QB4

(Already I had a vague endgame plan in mind at this point - to exchange off some of the pieces, especially Black's Knight on his KB3 square, and to gain an attacking outpost for one of my Knights.)

13. NPxP	NPxP	14. QR-N1	QR-N1	15. RxR	RxR
16. KR-N1	R-N2	17. RxR	QxR	18. Q-N1	Q-B2 ?

(In retrospect, I think Black should have exchanged off Queens, and played N-QB3, with the Q5 square to exploit.)

19. B-KN5	P-KR3	20. BxN	BxB	21. N-Q5	Q-B1
22. Q-N6	N-B3	23. Q-B7	QxQ	24. NxQ	P-QR4
25. N-N5	B-K2	26. N-Q2			

(Can you see where this Knight is going to end up?)

26.K-B1	27. N-N1	N-Q1	28. N(N1)-B3	N-N2	
29. N-Q5	B-Q1	30. P-B3	B-K3	31. B-B1	BxN
32. KPxB	P-KB4	33. P-KN4	P-N3		

(Notice that Black's Knight is immobile - the White bishop is threatening to come round and collect it.)

34. PxP	PxP	35. B-R3	P-R5	36. BxP	B-K2
37. N-B3	B-N4	38. B-Q7	B-B8	39. N-N1	K-B2

(White won this position on adjudication, being about to go two pawns up. I was somewhat lucky, but include the game to illustrate the importance of Queen side play if White fianchettoes the King's Bishop in the Four Knights line. It also illustrates the idea of exploiting key squares as outposts for the Knights.)

Transposition nightmare

Up to now, I have focussed on the English Four Knights (with 4. P-K4) as a way of supplementing the 'simplistic system' mentioned earlier. With this repertoire I have suggested that you will oblige your opponent to think, and maybe to use up time on the clock. Nevertheless, it is all too easy to be lulled into a false sense of security, and sooner or later in the English you will find yourself facing an unusual move order by Black which can transpose into an opening about which your opponent knows more than you!

As an example, consider the following:

Mann v Jackman (Weekend Minor, Brighton. 5/8/84)

1. P-QB4	N-KB3	2. N-QB3	P-Q4
----------	-------	----------	------

This move prevents the Mikenas Attack (3. P-K4). To be consistent with the system, I should have taken the pawn. Instead, I played the natural 3. P-Q4, and afterP-K3; 4. p-K3 P-QB3; we reached a Sem-Slav in which my opponent was a good deal happier than I was.

Similarly, games beginning with L. P-QB4 may also transpose into the Kings Indian Defence. Once again, this will occur should White choose to play P-Q4 to create a space advantage early in the game. We have seen one such example in Povah's analysis (b) above; here is another:

C Mann v R F Gray (Suffolk Premier Event. 21/7/84)

1. P-B4	N-KB3	2. N-QB3	P-KN3	3. P-K4	P-Q3
4. P-Q4	B-N2	5. N-KB3	O-O	6. B-K2	P-K4
7. PxP	PxP	8. QxQ	RxQ	9. B-N5	

(Unbeknown to me, I had been playing the book line of the Kings Indian Defence so far - see Barden et al. 'The King's Indian Defence' - Batsford p.172.) Now my opponent faltered:

9.....N-QB3	10. BxN	BxB	11. N-Q5
-------------	---------	-----	----------

(This won a pawn, and eventually the game, in 29 moves. Notice again how useful the Q5 outpost is for the Knight.)

Thus, in the English Opening, there is often the opportunity to transpose into an alternative line, or a different system from the one with which you are most familiar. Last season I would have played the 'simplistic system' against almost all Black responses, with catastrophe on several occasions. This year I have tried to be more adventurous, and explore some avenues previously untrodden. In this article I have tried to point out some such occasions when deviations from the norm may be safely attempted.

Conducting one's own Post-Mortem!

If the English Opening is really worthwhile for the beginner, it should allow the person who plays it some incentive to continue to use it. In other words, one ought to demonstrate that you can win with it. Those of you who read my original article will have noticed that there wasn't a single game included which led to a win for White. You may have been justifiably put off the opening as a result. Furthermore, an examination of games played by Grandmasters and the chess elite will reveal nothing new that sheds any further light on the specific merits and demerits of the English Opening." What you have to do is critically analyse how you play it, and survey your own results.

This idea is discussed in a most interesting way in Simon Webb's entertaining book "Chess for Tigers". In Chapter Three he considers how you can analyse your own style by breaking down your games into different openings used, and apportioning or measuring your degree of success in each line.

I decided to conduct a simplified form of this analysis based on my own results in the English Opening. I split the analysis into two time periods: first, the 1982-83 season (when I employed the simplistic system against most Black responses) and secondly, the 1983-84 season (when I have made fuller use of the 4-Knights, the Mikenas Attack, and the possibility of transposing into alternative lines). I have broken down the English Opening into seven categories as follows:

- (a) The English Four Knights
- (b) English Symmetrical
- (c) Black plays an Indian Defence
- (d) Black plays some unorthodox defence/so does White
- (e) Black plays a Dutch line
- (f) White plays the simplistic system
- (g) The opening transposes.

Having made these seven sub-divisions, see how it works out over two seasons.

<u>1982-1983</u>	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	Total
Won	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	3
Drew	-	3	-	1	-	2	-	6
Lost	-	-	2	1	3	4	-	10

1983-1984

Won	3	1	3	2	-	-	-	9
Drew	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Lost	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	9

Obviously, the above analysis suffers from an oversimplification in the categories chosen, but the general trend is quite clear to see. By playing the English Opening for at least two years, my results obviously contributed towards this. You can try conducting this sort of analysis on your own opening repertoire, but it is always worth doing so over a period of time rather than just one season. Only then can you tell whether you have made any real progress.

Summing up

In this article I have once again recommended the English Opening for the beginner and the average club player. I have tried to show how it can be employed in a more sophisticated way than merely the oversimplification of the earlier article. Nevertheless, as a general rule, there are some key points which the novice can bear in mind. These are:

1. Play for Control of the Centre.
2. If your opponent plays an Indian Defence (in the first two moves), play the Mikenas Attack.
3. If your opponent plays passively, play the simplistic system.
4. Be on the look out for a chance to exploit the Q5 with a Knight outpost.
5. Look for an opportunity to play the pawn break P-KB4.
6. Don't play the opening by rote unthinkingly, and be prepared to transpose out of the opening.
7. If your Knight is developed on KB3 rather than K2, you may need to play for an advance on the Queen side, or in the centre. (The advanced pawn on QB4 may often support either manoeuvre.)

As an illustration of some of these principles in practice, I close with the following two games, played during this recent season, both of which ended in wins for White.

Game Four. Clint Mann v S. Peters (Weekend Minor, Brighton. 3/8/84)

1. P-QB4	P-QB4	2. N-QB3	N-KB3	3. P-KN3	P-KN3
4. B-N2	B-N2	5. P-K3	P-Q3	6. KN-K2	P-QR3
7. P-Q4	QN-Q2	8. O-O	R-QN1	9. P-QR4	P-QN3
10. P-QN3	B-N2	11. P-Q5			

(This time the critical Q5 square is occupied by a pawn, which does the useful job of shutting Black's White-squared Bishop out of the game.)

11. N-K4	12. P-KB4	N(K4)-N5	13. P-KR3	N-R3
14. P-K4	N-Q2			

(Notice how White has made space for his pieces by advancing the central pawns. Black's development has cramped his own central pawns, and the adjustment necessary to release them allows White to force exchanges, weakening Black's pawn structure.)

15. P-KB5	PxP	16. BxN	BxB	17. PxP	B-N2
18. Q-K1	N-K4	19. R-Q1	Q-Q2	20. N-QB1	P-K3 ?
21. P-B6	B-R3	22. N-Q3	Q-B2	23. NxN	PxN
24. P-Q6	Q-Q2	25. QxP	BxB	26. KxB	Q-B3+
27. K-R2	QR-Q1	28. P-Q7+	(Reaching Diagram Seven).		

(Black cannot play RxP because 29. Q-N8+ leads to mate!)

Diagram Seven

28. K-B1	29. Q-Q6+	QxQ	
30. RxQ	B-K6	31. N-K4	B-Q5
32. R-Q1	P-KR4	33. RxNP	

(Black cannot take the QP because of mate.)

33. P-R5	34. P-KN4	R-R3
35. P-N5	R-N3	(Reaching Diagram Eight).

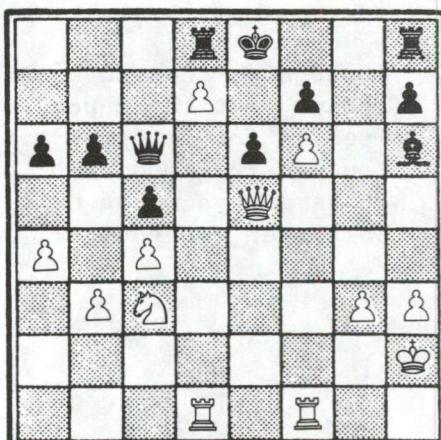
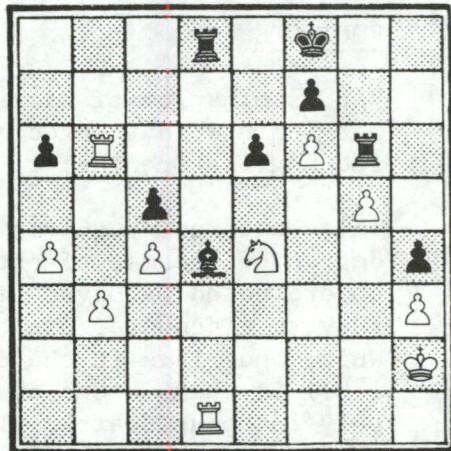


Diagram Eight

(now can you spot White's winning tactical plan?)

- | | | | | | |
|-----|------------|-------|------|--------|-------|
| 36. | R-B6 | K-N1 | 37. | R-B8 | B-K4+ |
| 38. | K-R1 | B-B2 | 39. | RxB | K-R2 |
| 40. | R-B8 | KR-N1 | 41. | RxR | RxR |
| 42. | K-N2 | K-N3 | 43. | NxBP | KxNp |
| 44. | N-N7 | R-KN1 | 45. | P-Q8=Q | K-B5+ |
| 46. | QxR | P-R4 | 47. | Q-N4+ | K-K4 |
| 48. | Q-Q4+ | K-B4 | 49. | N-Q6+ | K-N4 |
| 50. | K-B3 | R-K4 | 51.. | QxP+ | K-N3 |
| 52. | R-N1+ | K-R3 | 53. | Q-N5+ | K-R2 |
| 54. | Q-R5 mate. | | | | |



Finally, a game illustrating the power of White's P-KB4 as a means of setting up tactics on the King side.

Game Five: Clint Mann v Dave Millward (Dengie v Marconi. 26/1/84)

- | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|-------|-------|-----|-------|------|-----|-------|-------|
| 1. | P-QB4 | N-KB3 | 2. | N-QB3 | P-K3 | 3. | P-K4 | N-QB3 |
| 4. | N-B3 | P-K4 | 5. | P-Q4 | PxP | 6. | NxP | P-Q3 |
| 7. | NxN | PxN | 8. | B-Q3 | B-K2 | 9. | O-O | O-O |
| 10. | Q-QB2 | P-KR3 | 11. | P-KB3 | N-Q2 | 12. | P-QN3 | B-B3 |
| 13. | B-N2 | N-B4 | 14. | QR-Q1 | N-K3 | 15. | N-K2 | B-Q2 |

(I think Black wasted too much time with his Knight moves. The purpose of White's 11th move was to prevent Black occupying his KN5 square. Now White can start his advance.)

- | | | | | | |
|-----|-------|-------|-----|---------------------|-------------|
| 16. | P-KB4 | N-QB4 | 17. | P-K5 (Diagram Nine) | B-K2 |
|-----|-------|-------|-----|---------------------|-------------|

(The game has reached a complicated position, from which 17....PxP would allow White a strong attack.)

- | | | | | | |
|-----|-------------|--------|-----|-------|------|
| 18. | R-KB3 | P-KB3 | 19. | PxQP | PxQP |
| 20. | B-KB5 | BxB | 21. | QxB | Q-B1 |
| 22. | Q-N6 | Q-K1 | 23. | QxQ | KRxQ |
| 24. | N-Q4 | QR-QB1 | 25. | R-K1 | B-B1 |
| 26. | KR-K3 | RxR | 27. | RxR | K-B2 |
| 28. | B-R3 | P-Q4 | 29. | PxP | PxP |
| 30. | R-QB3 | R-B2 | 31. | N-N5 | R-N2 |
| 32. | BxN | RxN | 33. | BxB | KxB |
| 34. | R-B8+ | K-K2 | 35. | R-B7+ | K-K3 |
| 36. | RxRP | P-Q5 | 37. | R-R4 | K-Q4 |
| 38. | K-B2 | R-B4 | 39. | R-B4 | RxR |
| 40. | PxR+ | KxP | 41. | K-K2 | K-B6 |
| 42. | K-Q1 | P-R4 | | | |

Here we ran out of time, and Black resigned the position (see Diagram Ten). The superior station of White's King allows him time to hit the King side first.

Diagram Nine

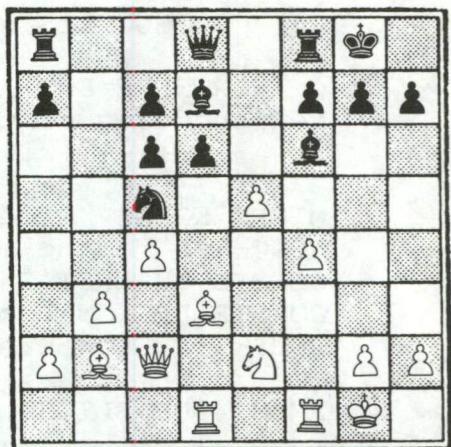
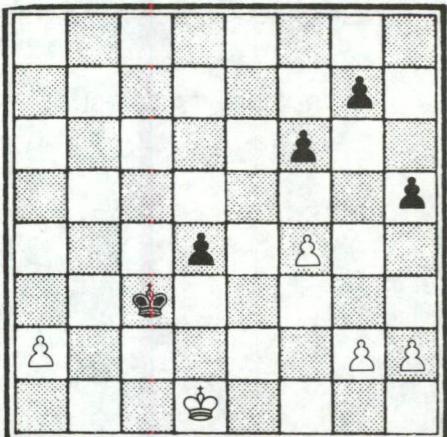


Diagram Ten



* FOOTNOTE

"An examination of games played by Grandmasters and the chess elite will reveal nothing new that sheds any further light on the specific merits and demerits of the English Opening."

This statement requires a degree of qualification. An attempt to quantify the degree of success of the English Opening has been made, in a statistical analysis co-ordinated by David Levy, using the 'Imprint Capablanca' database. In this survey, a computer has analysed the major variations and sub-variations used by White and Black in the English, and has worked out the % success rate (win/draw/loss) in them. One of the problems with this book is that the statistics are only introduced after Black's second move. Furthermore, the games referred to are merely those played in 1980. Some factors are noteworthy however. For example, in those games which began: 1. P-QB4 P-K4 2. N-QB3....., ten were won by White, six were drawn, and four were won by Black. Games in which the moves: 1. P-QB4 N-KB3 were played led to seven wins for White, five draws, and four wins for Black. Although it would be comforting to quote such statistics in support of the English Opening, one might just as well go and advise any chess player to try to play White in every game, for all the good it would do. Playing a sound opening is advisable inasmuch as there are good grounds for recommending a player not to play an unsound opening. Over and above this, an opening system is only sound if a player understands what to do, and develops the pieces harmoniously. This is why the average player cannot gain much from a mere analysis of the statistical probability of success of games played by Grandmasters. He can benefit more fruitfully by applying the analysis to his own games and openings.

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POSITIONAL PLAY

When one side has more material than the other, the material advantage, say an extra piece, will usually bring victory. The first stage in a chess player's development is over when he knows how to convert large material plusses into wins. For example, when he uses an extra rook or queen to mop up opposing pawns, push his own pawns through to queen and finally deliver mate.

After that stage is over, and the player fairly clearly understands that loss of a piece is usually certain defeat, he learns the tactics of the game, which are short term manoeuvres designed either to gain a material advantage - forks, skewers, pins, overloaded pieces etc - or attacks on an exposed king - that is, one without sufficient protection from surrounding pawns and pieces. Or sometimes the tactics may be a combination of both material gains or mating possibilities.

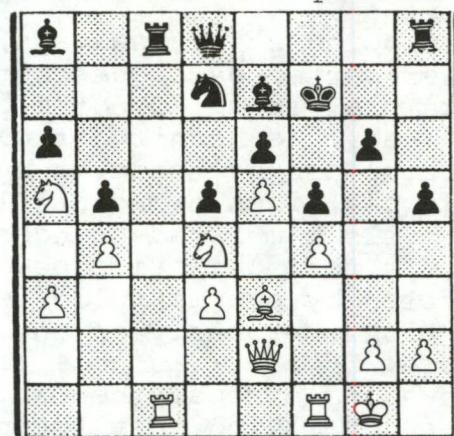
The third stage of a player's development comes when he is able to recognize positional factors. This means that the placing of the pieces or pawns may be such that the opponent is at a long term disadvantage. It may be a considerable time before the positional advantage is converted into a gain of material, or a mating attack; yet still the advantage is there and the stronger the player, the better his ability to recognize the advantages.

Positions that arise over the chess board are usually conglomerates. That is, any given position holds several ideas, of varying significance. It is important to realise this factor whenever one studies a position.

Take this position for example:

STEINITZ - SELLMAN

Baltimore, 1885.



To a beginner or even a club player, this position will appear a mess. He sees the pieces on the board, but often they make no meaningful pattern. If you ask him to reconstruct the position after looking at it for a few minutes, he will probably be unable to do so. A stronger player, however, after looking at the position for half a minute, will quite likely be able to place about 90% of the pieces correctly on the board. This is because the position makes a meaningful pattern to him.

What are the factors of this position?

- 1) It is a French Defence type of position (white pawn at K5 against black pawns at K3 and Q4).
- 2) Black has a bishop at QR1 deprived of scope because it is blocked in by its own pawn at Q4 (a bad bishop).
- 3) White's knight at Q4 is well placed because it cannot be driven away from its outpost by an enemy pawn; the same is true of the white knight at QR5, which, however, is less well centralised.
- 4) The white bishop at K3 has good scope along the g1-a7 diagonal; this is a peculiarity of the position, because in most positions arising from the French Defence (1 P-K4 P-K3 2 P-Q4 P-Q4), a white pawn is placed on Q4, which would in that case have blocked the line of the bishop at K3.
- 5) There is an open file in the position, upon which both sides have placed their rooks. Here, because the black pieces are not fully developed, (the black queen is still on the back row, interfering with the action of the rooks), white has the ability to control the open file and thus invade

along it with queen and rooks. The kernel of the matter is that black's queen is on Q1, and therefore by capturing the rook at QB8, and then attacking the black queen by R-QB1, white can drive off the black queen and then gain total control of the open file by placing his queen on it as well.

He would play 1 RxR QxR 2 R-QB1 Q-N1 3 Q-QB2.

In this position black would be unable to play ...R-QB1 now, which he would like to do to exchange rooks, because of the reply 4 QxR.

Now each of the five factors enumerated above do not exhaust the positional features of the position in diagram 1. There are many others; for example, the square c6 may be occupied by one or other of the white knights; but white will think twice about putting a knight there, because black might then be able to exchange off his poor bishop at QRL; there is also the pawn at Q3, which is important because black is unable to block the QB file by the manouvre N-N3-QB5 and so on.

Furthermore, knowing these ideas and many more, is not enough. The player must know how to exploit the positions. For this he must:-

- a) have an idea of his long term plan
- b) know the possible pitfalls against its execution.

Once a player has a long term plan, he does not need to work out all the possible moves '50 moves ahead'. He must use a device called stepping stone analysis.

STEPPING STONE ANALYSIS

with stepping stone analysis, the player chops his long term plan into smaller parts, each one containing a shorter term objective.

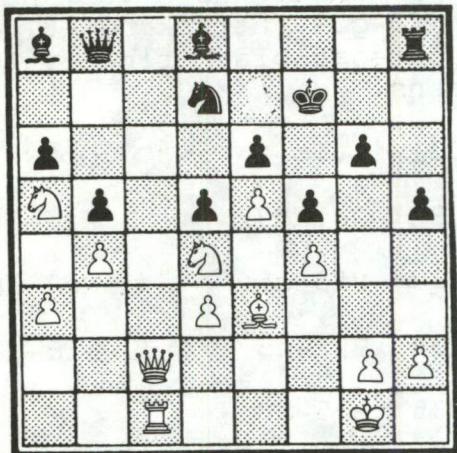
For example, in the diagram position, what is white's long term objective? Well, he hasn't got one yet. However, he sees that a short term objective can be achieved by the moves 1 Rxc8 Qxc8 2 Rcl Qb8 3 Qc2; this has given him control of the c file, which his existing knowledge tells him is advantageous.

His short term objective now becomes to successfully invade along the open file; by successfully, we mean he must be able to enter the enemy position, probably on the 6th, 7th or 8th rank, and be able to remain there. If black is able to subsequently drive him off or exchange off his invading pieces, then white's invasion will have failed. This is what we mean by saying that the player must be aware of the possible pitfalls in his plan, in order to be able to counteract them.

What of the longer term plan? Assume that white is able to establish say a rook on the seventh rank? How should he go on from there? Well, surprisingly enough it is not the black king, which has a number of defending pieces around it, but the black pawn at a6 which is marked out for destruction.

If you are attacking an empire, it's often best to start on the outlying areas, as the barbarians did to the Roman empire; but the capture of the pawn at a6 (no doubt effected by the manouvre Rc7-a7) is more than symbolic. Once the a6 pawn goes, then the pawn at b5 may also fall, and then white will be able to advance his queen side pawns down to queen.

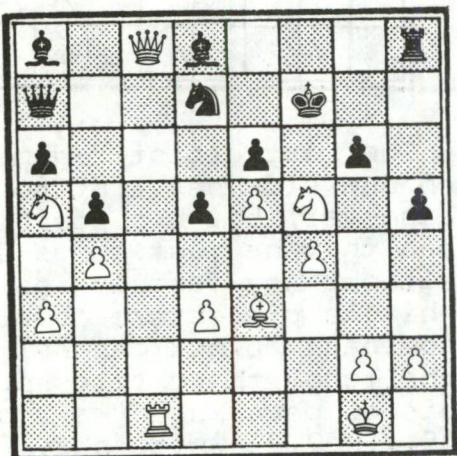
That would be white's longer term plan in this position. For this he needs to ensure that at least one pair of rooks remains on the board. He is not worried by an exchange of queens. In fact, he even welcomes a queen exchange, because he may then get down to a simple win in the ending.



Reaching the position of diagram 2, how does an ordinary master tackle the short term positional objective he has set himself - invasion down the c file? Black has just played 3...Be7-d8, which prevents 4 Qc1-c7, but also leaves c8 available for invasion.

The master then engages in some concrete analysis, which is usually necessary at such junctures. To give an analogy, again with stepping stones, it is no good saying aha - I want to play Qc8. For a start, the stone you step on may be insecurely placed in the water, so it caves in under your weight. It is necessary to feel it gently with your foot first, before putting your full weight on it. This is the role of concrete analysis at these junctures.

So the master first sees that the queen coming to c8 threatens the knight at d7, so that cuts down black's choice of replies. He sees that black cannot defend the knight at d7 by Ke7, because Nc6+ forks king and queen. He then looks round for ways for black to avoid the queen exchange and spots ...Qa7. This move has a tricky point in that the knight at d4 is now pinned against the undefended bishop at e3 - an unusual sort of pin. But here white digs into his tactical arsenal and comes up with the move Nxf5.



In this position the knight is en prise but it cannot be taken because black's queen is under attack from the white bishop at e3 which cannot be taken because it is defended by the white knight at f5 which cannot be taken because... black breaks the vicious circle with the move ...Bd8-b6, which is also a complicated tactical idea because the bishop move discovers an attack on the white queen from the undefended rook in the corner. The master decides that white in this situation can reply with the move Nd6+ and then curtails his analysis at this point and plays the intended 1 Qc8.

Actually, there are a few flaws in the master's analysis which are not crucial here, but could be in other situations. In the first place he doesn't analyse deeply the consequences of 1...Qxc8 2 Rxc8 Nb6, which is, as it happens, answered strongly by 3 Rb8 when black is in trouble due to threats of discovered attacks on his knight by 4 Nxf5 and 5Bxb6.

Also in the long tactical variation 1 Qc8 Qa7 2 Nxf5 Bb6, 3 Nd6+ as planned is inadequate after 3...Kg7, when black defends his rook with his king. Better would be 3 Qxh8 Bxe3+ 4 Khl gxf5 5 Qh7+ Ke8 6 Rc8++.

Now we shall see how the real player of the white pieces, World Champion Wilhelm Steinitz, tackled this position over 99 years ago. From the diagram at the top of the page, Steinitz played

27 Na5-c6!

a very unexpected choice, since white seems to voluntarily allow black to exchange his awful bishop at a8. However, this generosity is illusory. Black cannot play 27...Ba8xc6, without allowing the reply 28 Qc2xc6, attacking e6, a6, and d7 all at the same time. So white here traded one advantage (bad black bishop) to

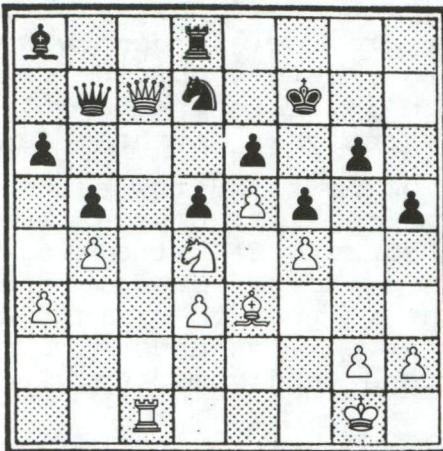
exploit another (the open file).

27 Qb8-b7

As black cannot exchange his bad bishop, he must aquiesce in white exchanging his other, stronger bishop, which enables white to then invade at c7.

28 Nc6xd8+ Rh8xd8

29 Qc2-c7!



All according to plan. If black now exchanges queens, the white rook will come in on the seventh row and then move over to a7, winning the a6 pawn.

29 Qb7-b8!

A stubborn defence. Black wants his rook at b8 after 30 Qc7xb8 Rd8xb8 31 Rcl-c7 Kf7-e7 32 Rc7-a7 so that he can play 32...Ba8-b7, defending a6.

White seems to be able to make no progress. He solves his next problem quite patiently and quite unexpectedly.

30 Be3-f2!

A direct threat appears of 31 Bf2-h4 driving away the rook at d8 and picking up the knight at d7.

30 ... Qb8-b6!

Once again black is equal to the task, putting the maximum obstacles in white's path. The bishop at f2 cannot now move to h4 without losing the knight at d4, and the tactical shot 31 Nd4xf5 fails miserably to 31...Qb6xc7 32 Rclxc7 g6xf5.

31 Nd4xf3

One can imagine that Steinitz considered 31 Qc7xb6 Nd7xb6 32 Nd4xf5 g6xf5

33 Bf2xb6, but he probably decided he could get more by keeping the pieces on the board.

Now white has a very harmful threat of Nf3-g5+, attacking e6, which encourages black finally to trade queens.

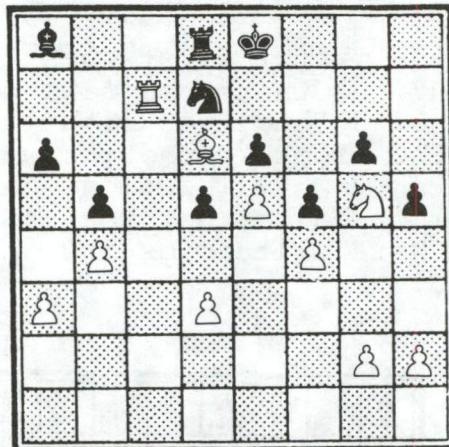
31 ... Qb6xc7

32 Rclxc7 Kf7-e8

33 Nf3-g5 Nd7-f8

34 Bf2-c5 Nf8-d7

35 Bc5-d6



The most artistic games occur when one side has lost no material whatsoever, but his position is so bad that he just cedes defeat without any further resistance. White's pieces are completely dominant, black can neither challenge the c file nor defend his e6 pawn in anyway, since if 35...Nd7-f8 white plays 36 Rc7-e7 mate.

Black resigned here.

The diagram shows that a bad bishop, locked in by its own pawns on squares of one colour usually has an additional disadvantage, besides the restriction of the mobility of the bishop. The squares of the other colour become very hard to defend against enemy invasion, and in this game we saw how white used several black squares as outposts. Throughout most of the game, a white knight was placed at d4, and in the final position, white has pieces at c7, d6, g5 - all dark squares!

ODDBALL MASTER

Some years ago, articles appeared in the chess press, claiming that I had resuscitated the defence 1 e4 b6 (Owen's Defence). Having lost most of the games I played with that opening, I felt this was a dubious statement. The real protagonist of the defence is Grandmaster Dragutin Sahovic, from Belgrade, Yugoslavia.

He has won several fine games with 1...b6, including a win over Soviet Grandmaster Yefim Geller. Here is one scintillating effort against Dutch IM van der Sterren.

WHITE van der Sterren

BLACK D. Sahovic

Lone Pine 1979

1 e4 b6

We must consider this move very carefully. Black prepares to place his bishop at b7, where it will attack the centre, so this is, in a sense, a developing move. However, though the opening was played regularly in the late 19th century by the Rev. Owen, it fell into disuse due to the generally prevailing opinion that pawn occupation of the centre was vital in the early stages of the game, and this requirement even overrode that of piece development. Hence defences such as the Queen's Gambit Declined, and the French Defence were more popular, even though the pawn formations harmed the development of the pieces.

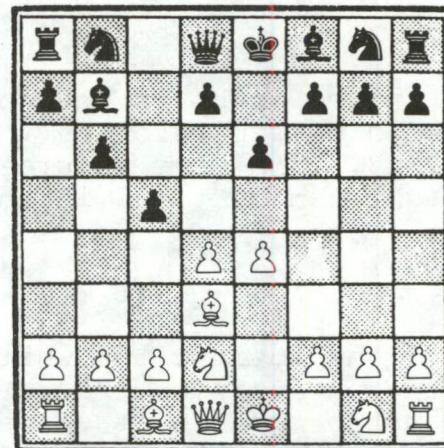
This is a logical assumption: the pieces, being of higher value than the pawns, cannot maintain themselves in the centre of the board without pawn support.

We shall see in this game how black manages to overcome the problems of development in the face of a dominating enemy centre.

2 d4 Bb7
3 Bd3 e6

The counterattack 3...f5 4 exf5 Bxg2, though exciting, was busted long ago by Russian analysis.

4 Nd2 c5



First strike at the centre. For various reasons, black does not want to push his f, e, or d pawns two squares up - so the c pawn is the only one left!

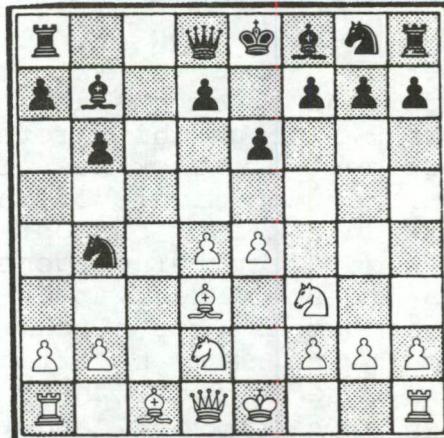
5 c3 Nc6

This move is only possible because white has not yet played Nf3, preferring the inferior 4Nd2. Otherwise 5 d5 would be strong, since the knight could not then have gone to e5.

6 Nf3 cxd4

White is now threatening d5, hence black's pawn exchange.

7 cxd4 Nb4!



It is fascinating how the exposure rule is followed so precisely in chess openings. Knights are harrassed by pawns, but themselves can harrass bishops, reckoned as slightly more valuable than knights.

8 Be2

White could have retreated his bishop to b1, but this would allow 8...Ba6, preventing white from castling.

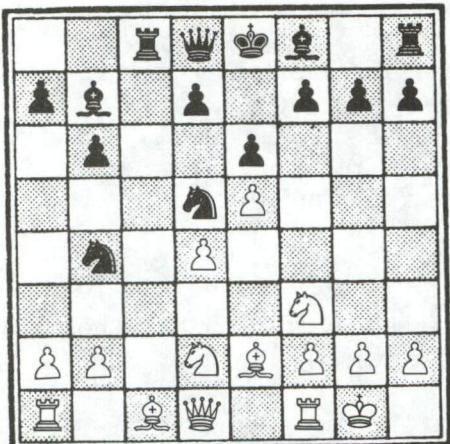
8 ... Rc8

The knight at b4 is insecure, threatened by expulsion by the move a2-a3. This move ensures that the knight can go to c2 in that event.

9 0-0 Nf6

The fight against the white pawn centre continues. Black threatens to capture at e4, and though white can easily meet this threat by playing e4-e5, black will then move to d5. The sequence shows a possible weakness of pawn centres, which can often be exploited.

10 e5 Nf6-d5



After this move we can conclude that black has done quite well. Though white retains his pawn centre, black has also his share of the middle of the board, with a knight outpost at d5 and a good central diagonal for his bishop. Note that d5 is a central outpost for black because it can never be attacked by pawns. One of them, the c pawn has been exchanged off, and the other, the e pawn, has moved past and cannot now retreat. As the

knight cannot be attacked by a weaker piece, the worst that can happen to it is exchange, so therefore we call the d5 square an OUTPOST square.

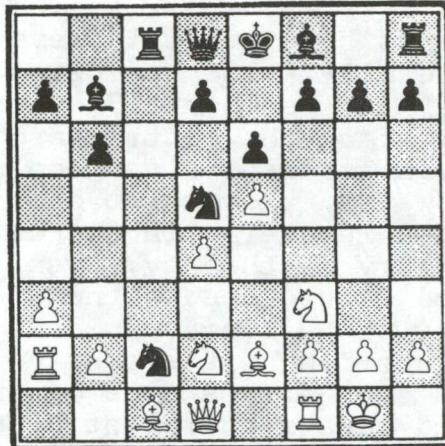
11 a3

White decides to declare open war against the other black knight at b4, daring it to come in to c2 or retreat.

111 ... Nc2!

Taking up the gauntlet. At first sight the knight move is very powerful, as it gains a tempo against the rook at a1.

12 Ra2!



Now the hostile intent behind white's actions becomes apparent. The knight at c2 has no retreat, and white intends to play b3 and round the poor animal up.

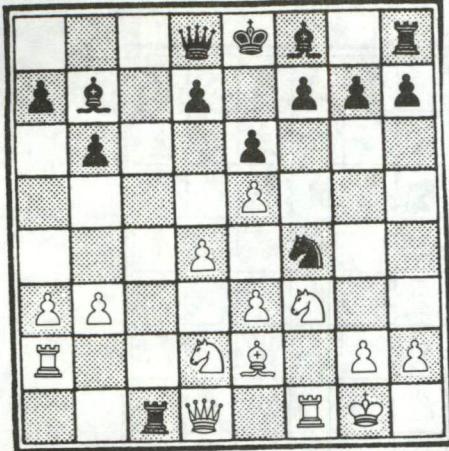
12 ... Nf4!

But no! The cavalry are not finished yet and come charging to the rescue.

13 b3 Ne3!!

A stupendous shot that completely turns the tables on hapless van de Steroid. Black's knights are now crawling all over white's hole-ridden position.

14 fxe3 Rxcl!!

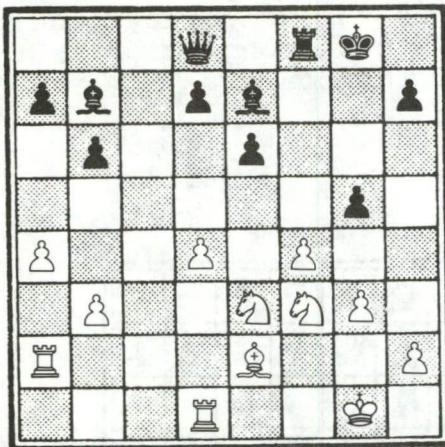


A second sacrifice to lure the white queen to c1, after which the black knight at f4 deals the death blow with an exquisite fork at e2. In desperation white jettisons his queen to eliminate the troublesome blacks knights, but then Sahovic has no difficulty in mobilising the remainder of his army and winning with his extra force.

15 exf4	Rxd1
16 Rxdl	Be7
17 Nc4	O-O
18 a4	f6

Opening up the f file to give his rook some air.

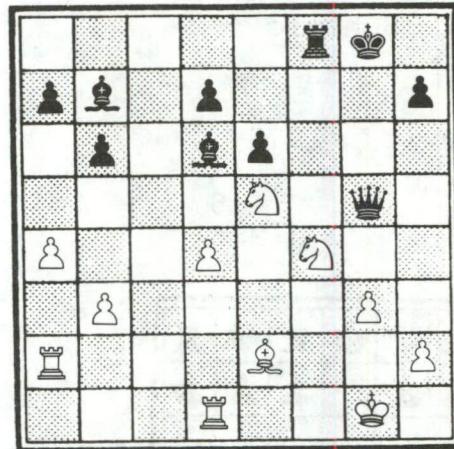
19 exf6	Bxf6
20 Ne3	Be7
21 g3	g5!



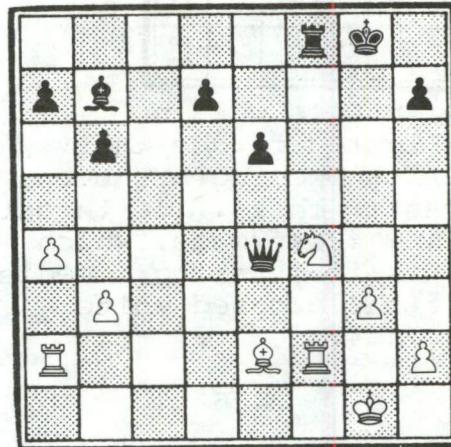
Black does not hang about. He can afford this king side weakening as the enemy is too weak to mount a credible offensive.

22 Ng2	gxf4
23 Nxf4	Bd6
24 Ne5	Qg5!

Remarkably, this is the first queen move of the game (white's queen was assassinated in her bed). It is another perfect demonstration of the exposure rule (the strongest pieces are brought out last).



25 Rf1	Bxe5
26 fxe5	Qxe5
27 Rf2	Qe4



WHITE RESIGNS. He is threatened by mate in one, and if he defends by 28 Bf3 the agile queen soon forces the gain of more material. But let's test you out: how would you continue after Bf3? Answer at bottom of page.

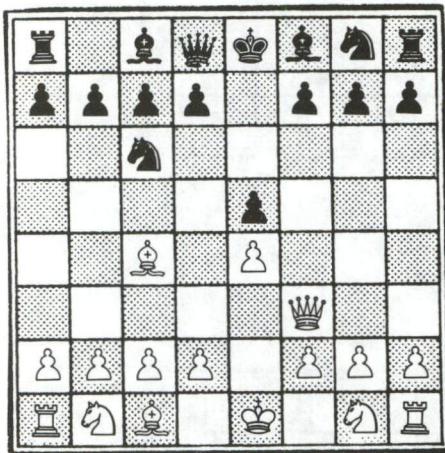
Sahovic's originality is not confined to 1...b6. He has experimented in a whole range of openings, yet still remains a strong grandmaster player. In the next game he gives his own version of Scholar's mate.

WHITE Sahovic

BLACK Rajna

Mladanovic 1975

- | | | |
|---|-------|-----|
| 1 | e4 | e5 |
| 2 | Qf3!? | Nc6 |
| 3 | Bc4! | |



My junior pupils will no doubt be delighted to see that their favourite opening has been played in master chess. The threat is, of course, 4 Qxf7mate, which prevents black from taking immediate advantage of the exposed white queen by 3...Nd4.

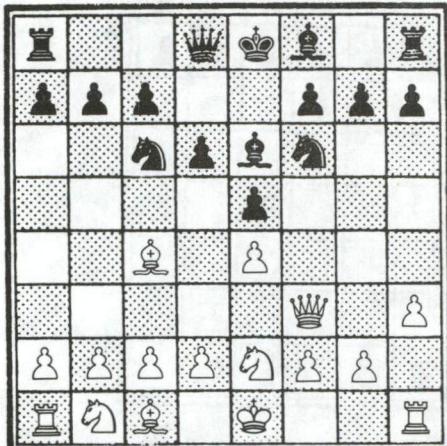
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|---|------|-----|
| 3 | ... | Nf6 |
| 4 | Ne2! | |

And this move comes just in time to prevent black's actual threat of ...Nd4.

- | | | |
|---|-----|----|
| 4 | ... | d6 |
| 5 | h3 | |

Again Sahovic shows greater subtlety than the average 10 year old. His h3 move is to prevent harassment to his queen by ...Bg4, and also plans a later g2-g4, if black automatically castles king side.

- | | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| 5 | ... | Be6 |
|---|-----|-----|



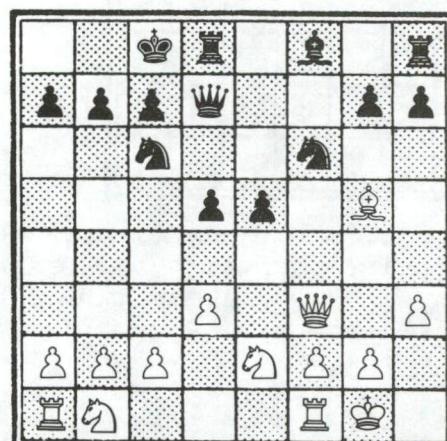
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|---|------|--|
| 6 | Bxe6 | |
|---|------|--|

I don't like this move, because it opens the f file for black and ensures that the white queen, which has been so carefully nurtured at f3, will eventually fall under attack from a rook at f8. As 6b3 does not look inviting after 6...d5, which forces white to exchange pawns in the centre, perhaps white could have tried 6 Bb5, ready to answer 6...d5 with 7 d3 dx4 8 dx4, keeping a solid pawn in the centre.

- | | | |
|---|------|------|
| 6 | ... | fxe5 |
| 7 | 0-0 | |
| 8 | exd5 | d5 |

Here too, 8 d3 looks stronger, rather than the voluntary liquidation of black's pawn congestion in the middle of the board.

- | | | |
|----|------|--------|
| 8 | | exd5 |
| 9 | d3 | Qd7 |
| 10 | Bg5 | 0-0-0! |



It looks like white's chickens are coming home to roost, as black

is not at all awed by his opponent's strange set up, and sacrifices a pawn on the king side to accelerate his development and start up an attack. But Sahovic, brought up in a rough Yugoslavian school of chess, is quite at home in bar-room brawls.

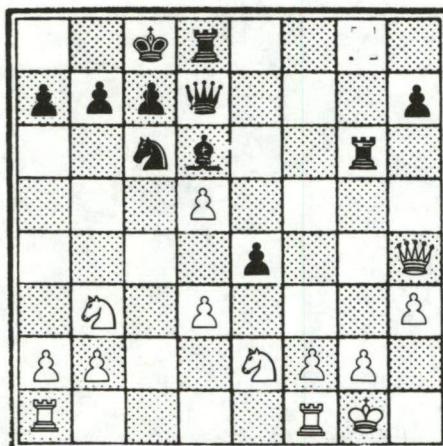
- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 11 | Bxf6 | gxf6 |
| 12 | Qxf6 | Rg8 |
| 13 | Qh4 | |

Black was already threatening 13...Qxh3.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 13 | ... | Bc5 |
| 14 | Nd2 | |

Black's compensation is obvious: dominant two pawn centre, and open files against the white king.

- | | | |
|----|-------|-----|
| 14 | ... | Rg6 |
| 15 | Nb3 | Bd6 |
| 16 | c4 | e4 |
| 17 | cx d5 | |



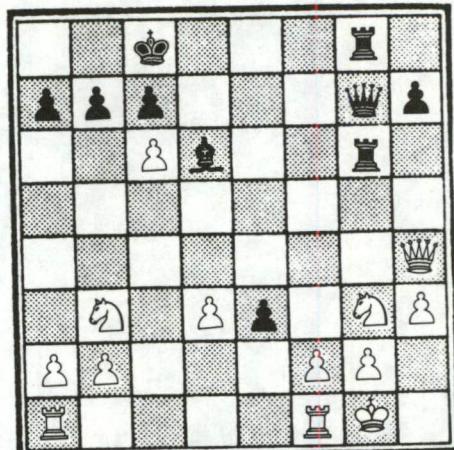
The crisis point. Black can now play the dangerous 17...Ne5, threatening ...Nf3+ winning white's queen. If white defends by 18 Qxe4 then 18...Qxh3 19 Qxg6 Nf3+! still wins for black.

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 17 | ... | Rdg8 |
| 18 | Ng3! | |

Not 18 dxc6?? Rxg2+ 19 Khl Rh2++ - the variation that obviously attracted black.

Now matters are not so clear. If black tries 18...Ne7, white can answer 19 dxe4, since after ...Bxg3 20 fxg3 Rxg3 21 he can sacrifice his queen by 21 Qxg3 Rxg3 22 Rf8+ and wins; there's an unexpected variation.

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 18 | ... | e3!? |
| 19 | dxc6 | Qg7 |



The fire down the g file is now tremendous, but it has cost black a piece, and white sharply defuses the attack by offering an exchange of queens.

- | | | |
|----|-------|-----|
| 20 | Qd4! | Qh6 |
| 21 | Qxa7! | |

Black has kept the queens on, but now the surprise threat of mate at a8 gives white the respite he needs.

- | | | |
|----|-------|------|
| 21 | ... | bxc6 |
| 22 | Nd4 | Bf4 |
| 23 | Ndf5! | |

White's nimble knight play leaves his opponent as flat-footed as van der Sterren was in the previous example.

- | | | |
|----|------|-----|
| 23 | ... | Qg5 |
| 24 | Nxe3 | |

Now white is ahead in material he plays the trader's game. Black is offered his piece back if he agrees to exchange queens. After 24...Bxe3 25 Qxe3 Qxe3 26 fxg3 Rxg3 27 Rf2 Rxe3 black is still a pawn or two behind in a poor ending.

- | | | |
|----|-------|------|
| 24 | ... | h5 |
| 25 | Rael | h4 |
| 26 | Ng4 | Bd6 |
| 27 | Ne4 | Qd5 |
| 28 | Nxd6+ | Qxd6 |

and white won easily.

