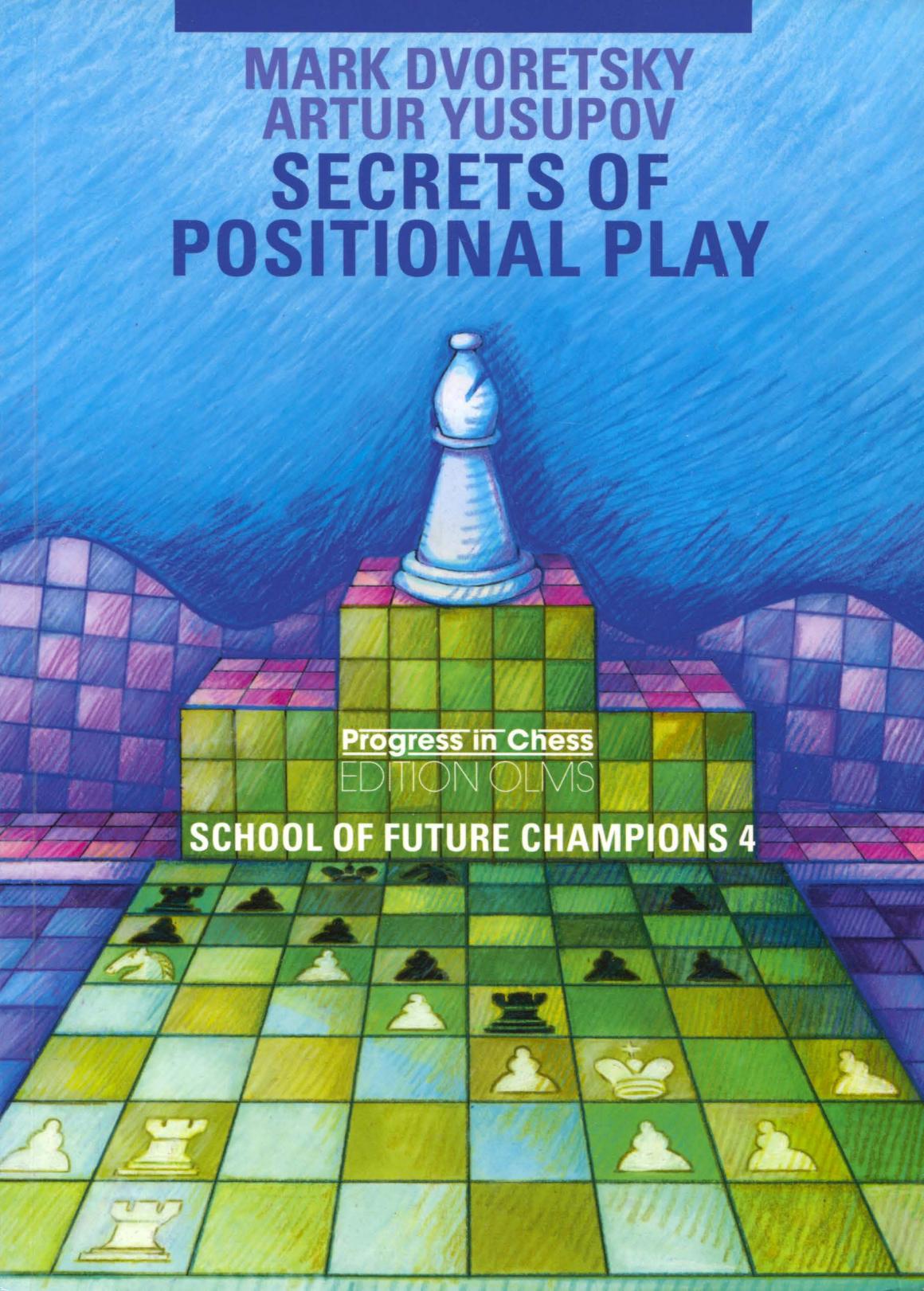


# MARK DVORETSKY ARTUR YUSUPOV **SECRETS OF POSITIONAL PLAY**



**Progress in Chess**  
EDITION OLMS

**SCHOOL OF FUTURE CHAMPIONS 4**

Dvoretsky / Yusupov • Secrets of Positional Play

# **Progress in Chess**

Volume 25 of the ongoing series

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2008

EDITION OLMS



Mark Dvoretsky and Artur Yusupov

# Secrets of Positional Play

School of Future Champions 4

Edited and translated  
by Ken Neat

2008  
EDITION OLMS





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## Mark Dvoretsky

### Preface

I am pleased to present the fourth book in the series based on material from the Dvoretsky-Yusupov school for talented young players. For those who are not familiar with the previous volumes (*Secrets of Chess Training*, *Secrets of Opening Preparation* and *Secrets of Endgame Technique*), I should explain that we held several thematic sessions of the school, devoted to the most important directions of chess improvement. We did not have sufficient time to pass on all the necessary specific knowledge, and indeed, this could not have happened – the process of chess development is practically without limit. We set ourselves the aim of disclosing the deficiencies in the pupils' play, helping them to eliminate them, demonstrating the most effective ways of studying chess, and acquainting them with the most general mechanisms, ideas and methods of playing. All the books in this series are based on this approach, the one before you being no exception. It is devoted to the improvement of positional mastery.

Even adults sometimes naively believe in the existence of some mysterious key to rapid success. The authors of many books happily exploit this delusion, asserting that they know of such a single correct way – new, original, and also hitherto secret. In fact there are many ways to the goal, but not one of them is easy. You need to master various methods of working on chess, and skilfully combine them depending on your tastes and individual traits, strength and style of play. I hope that the present book, like the previous ones, will help you to do this.

In the first and second parts of the book the authors acquaint the readers with various

aspects of positional play, approaches to the development of positional mastery, and methods of looking for positional solutions. You will see that sometimes it even makes sense to consider one and the same problem in different ways – like, for example, the conceptions of play on opposite wings in the lectures of Artur Yusupov and Alexey Kosikov.

Among the ideas developed in my own lectures, I advise you to pay particular attention to the topic 'Prophylactic thinking'. Why this topic is exceptionally important for the over-the-board player is something you will understand after reading the corresponding lecture.

Chess is a practical skill. Here theory alone is insufficient – purposeful training work is also necessary (a very important principle of effective work on chess!). The program of each session of the school invariably included not only lectures, but also training exercises. You will find a description of these exercises in the first and third parts of the book.

The session of the school, on which the material in the given book is based, was held in early 1992. Among those who took part in it were the talented young masters (soon to become grandmasters) Vladimir Kramnik and Igor Khenkin. They not only attended many classes, but also themselves read a lecture. At first sight their lecture seems to be purely about the opening. However, while explaining the theory of certain variations of the Dutch Defence, at the same time Kramnik and Khenkin expressed their understanding of the situations arising here, and the inherent strategic ideas. This is how

modern players master typical positions, characteristic of the openings they employ. Another approach to the study of typical middlegame positions is employed in my lecture, included in the same third part of the book.

The fourth part is devoted to the purely practical implementation of various principles of positional play. In it an analysis is given of some strategically complicated games, played in top-level events. Here too it is interesting to compare the ways of thinking and the approaches to the taking of decisions of such outstanding grandmasters as Artur Yusupov and Evgeny Bareev.

Incidentally, I should mention that Yusupov, who in 1991 took up residence in Germany, was unfortunately unable to take part in the final sessions of the school. His lectures were written later – when the book was being prepared for publication. This factor allowed Artur to make use of games played two or three years later, and in particular, two brilliant wins by Viswanathan Anand over Gata Kamsky in the Final Candidates Match, and some impressive games played by Yusupov himself at a tournament in Switzerland in 1994.

As for Bareev's material – this is indeed a lecture given at the school. It made a strong impression on the pupils, not only through its purely chess virtues, but also its unusual presentation – ironic, at times even caustic. In my view, such a manner of delivery, fully reflecting the character of the grandmaster, was an embellishment to the lecture. It could be perceived as being offensive only by a person totally lacking a sense of humour.

After all, Bareev's irony is not at all malicious, and in addition it is directed not only at his opponents or listeners, but also at himself.

Many years ago I saw a cartoon in which a grandmother was saying to a little boy: 'And now, grandson, let's repeat some words which you should never say.' I remembered it, when I looked through the traditional concluding material by Yusupov, analysing fragments from games played by pupils of the school. On this occasion the grandmaster focused his attention on instructive positional mistakes made by the young players. In chess teaching such an approach is quite appropriate. Not without reason do they say: 'Learn from your mistakes.'

In conclusion I have given several opinions expressed by legendary chess players, emphasising the exceptional importance, for any player, of the problems considered in the book:

*A sensible plan makes heroes of us all; the absence of a plan makes us faint-hearted fools.* (Em.Lasker)

*Contrary to general opinion, generated by ignorance, Morphy's main strength was not his combinative gift, but his positional play and general style. After all, a combination can be carried out only when the position permits it.* (J.R.Capablanca)

*The ability to evaluate a position is just as necessary as the ability to calculate variations.* (M.Botvinnik)

*Endeavour to memorise as few variations as possible! Positional feeling should become your release from the slavery of 'variations'. And therefore: try to develop your positional feeling.* (A.Nimzowitsch)



# PART I

## Methods of Improving in Positional Play

Mark Dvoretsky

### The Improvement of Positional Mastery

*Whereas by combination values are transformed, they are proved and confirmed by 'position play'.*

Emanuel Lasker

'**H**e has a subtle understanding of the game' – this is how we usually characterise a strong positional player. It is very flattering to hear such a comment about our own play, but, alas, not all of us can boast of this. And yet positional understanding is a very important condition for our competitive success. What should be studied by a player wishing to achieve serious progress in this field, and what are the main directions and forms of such work? These are the questions that will be answered in this lecture.

You, of course, know that grandmaster Yusupov is renowned as a skilful strategist. I will illustrate these thoughts with some examples from his games.

#### I. Some general recommendations

A number of books have been written about positional play. By no means all of them deserve attention, but some of them should

definitely be studied. And above all Aaron Nimzowitsch's remarkable book *My System*. Recently I looked at some of the games played in my youth, when I had first category rating, and I was staggered by the great number of crude, obvious positional mistakes. But at the time they weren't obvious to me. On the contrary, I was sure that I was playing quite strongly – the only things that hindered me were 'accidental' oversights, and a lack of opening knowledge. For a time I was quite unable to make any progress. And then, on the advice of my trainer (Alexander Roshal) I studied *My System*. I didn't read it, but studied it, and I even copied out the most important ideas and examples. This work quickly told on both the quality of my play, and my results – I won several first category tournaments, became a candidate master, and then achieved the master norm. I also recommend the study of collections of games played by outstanding positional

players, preferably with their own comments. You will realise, of course, that different players have their own way of playing – a universal positional style does not exist. Some grandmasters ('strategists') are characterised by their logical manner of thinking (for example: Rubinstein, Botvinnik, Portisch), while for others it is intuitive (Capablanca, Smyslov, Karpov). Also present in their play are other distinctions: they may adhere to an attacking or defensive style, they may aim for classical (with seizure of space) or less orthodox set-ups, and so on. Study the games of a player who is closest to you in style, or, on the contrary, one who is especially skilled in what you are not good at. I should like to remind you of the method with which you should record the episodes that are the most interesting and useful for you – 'positional sketches'. We recommended it in the first session of our school (cf. the book *Secrets of Chess Training*). Draw a diagram, and write a commentary expressing the essence of the position, the minimum necessary for the understanding of its moves and variations. As a result, the ideas and evaluations related to this instance will be firmly engraved in your memory. In exactly the same way you can record instructive examples from your own games.

## II. Positional operations

When assessing a position, an experienced player never tries straight away to take account of all its features, and does not compile a complete list of all its pluses and minuses (although this is what is called for in some books). If such work is done, then it is done subconsciously. The Russian master Benjamin Blumenfeld, who made a deep investigation of the problems of chess thinking, wrote: '*Evaluation relates to perception of the position and is largely a subconscious action, in the sense that, to a significant degree, if not fully, the intermedi-*

*ate links do not pass through the centre of consciousness.'*

The art of evaluation is the ability to pick out the essence of a position – those and only those features of it, which should be taken into consideration when searching for the strongest move. In training sessions it is useful to express in words your perception of the essence of a position, in order to note and subsequently correct mistakes in positional understanding,

After picking out the most important assessment considerations (most often – subconsciously) and checking the variations, we find the move (or a small number of moves) which corresponds to our perception of the situation. Usually this move pursues some definite aim, i.e. it is part of a specific operation.

Of course, often our decisions prove to be difficult and complex, based on the calculation of lengthy variations and on numerous different evaluative considerations. But nevertheless, at the basis of any strategic decision are simple positional operations, and it is very important to be able to find them quickly and confidently. You can assimilate them, by studying commentaries by grandmasters, and it is very useful also to try solving special exercises (for example, the form of training games for the development of intuition, which was discussed in a previous session of the school – it will be described in the next book).

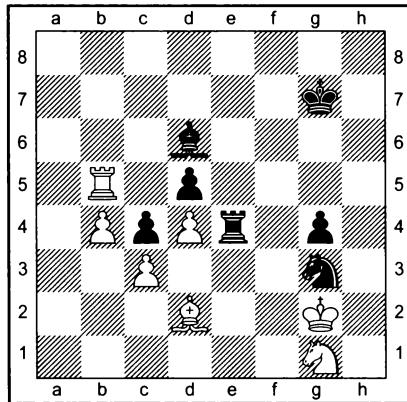
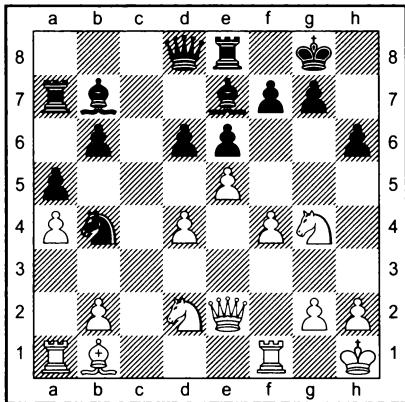
We will pick out the basic types of positional operations.

### *Improving the placing of the pieces, manoeuvres, regroupings*

**Yusupov – Kengis**

Moscow 1983

(see diagram)



White has excellent prospects on the king-side. The attack will become irresistible if the queen's rook, currently out of play, can be included in it.

**21 ♕a3!**

$\text{♚h8}$

**22 ♜g3**

Threatening 23 ♜xh6 gxh6 24 ♜h5. If 22...♜f8, then 23 ♜xh6 gxh6 24 ♜g4, while 22...♜a6 is hopeless in view of 23 ♜e4.

**22 . . .**

$\text{♜g8}$

**23 ♜c4**

$\text{♝d5}$

23...♝a6 24 ♜e4.

**24 ♜h3**

$\text{♝f8}$

**25 b3**

$\text{♝xc4?}$

**26 bxc4**

$\text{dx5}$

**27 ♜xe5**

Black resigned.

### Djuric – Yusupov

Sarajevo 1984

(see diagram)

At first sight the situation is not easy to assess. Black is more active, but his d5-pawn is under attack. Both sides' pieces are somehow chaotically placed.

Yusupov finds a regrouping which coordinates his small force and enables him to create real threats.

**36 . . .**

$\text{♝e8!}$

**37 ♜xd5**

If 37 ♜b7+ there follows not 37...♚f6? 38 ♜b6, but 37...♚g8! 38 ♜h6 ♜f5 39 ♜g5 ♜a8.

**37 . . .**

$\text{♝e4}$

**38 ♜e1**

$\text{♝h8}$

The operation carried out by Black has secured him an obvious advantage. His minor pieces have occupied active and at the same time invulnerable posts, and his rook is intending to invade the opponent's position.

**39 ♜f1**

Better practical chances of saving the game were offered by the piece sacrifice suggested by Robert Hübner: 39 ♜f3?! gx f3+ 40 ♜xf3 ♜e8 41 b5.bpk

**39 . . .**

$\text{♜h2}$

**40 b5**

$\text{♝b2}$

A standard elementary operation: the rook is placed behind the passed pawn.

**41 ♜e2**

$\text{♝b1!}$

Zugzwang! If 42 ♜f5, then 42...♝g3.

**42 b6**

$\text{♝xb6}$

**43 ♜h4**

$\text{♝b1+}$

**44 ♜g2**

$\text{♝b2}$

The rook has again returned to its position of maximum activity. It only remains to include the king in the play.



45 ♕g1	♔g6
46 ♜a5	g3!
47 ♜a8	♔h5
48 ♜xg3	♜xg3+
49 ♜xg3	♜xg3
50 ♜c8	♔g4
51 ♜xc4	♔f3
52 ♜b4	♜h2
53 ♔g1	♜h8
54 ♜b2	♜e8

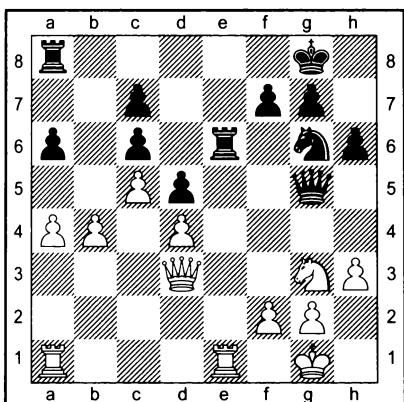
White resigned in view of 55 ♜b1 ♜f2+ 56 ♔f1 ♜h8.

### Pawn play; the formation of a favourable pawn structure

Many years ago, when Yusupov was still just a candidate master, I commented in my notebook, that 'Artur finds it hard to decide on sharp changes in the character of the play, and in particular on sharp pawn moves and changes in the pawn structure.' To try and correct this deficiency of his, we carefully analysed every such episode from his games.

**Gabdakhmanov – Yusupov**

Podolsk 1976



24 ♜xe6 ♜f4?!

In the given instance the 'dubious' sign reflects not the objective strength of the

move made by Black, but the assessment behind it. If 25 ♜e3 Artur was planning 25...♜xe6 (not changing the pawn structure), yet after 26 ♜xg5 hxg5 27 ♜e2 the position is roughly equal. Meanwhile Black has the right to fight for an advantage, by playing 24...fxe6! (and possibly ...e6–e5) or 24...♜f4 25 ♜e3 fxe6! with the threat of 26...h5.

However, the other, tactical idea, concealed behind 24...♜f4, was completely correct. This was the 'bait' that Rafik Gabdakhmanov swallowed. He was tempted by the possibility of winning a pawn.

25 ♜e8+? ♜xe8  
26 ♜xa6 h5!

Yusupov correctly judged that Black's attack would become extremely dangerous.

27 ♜xc6 ♜e6

27...♜e7 was perhaps stronger, since now White could have played 28 ♜xc7! h4 29 ♔h2. After 29...hxg3 30 fxg3 ♜xh3 31 gxh3 ♜e2+ (or 31...♜d2+) Black is guaranteed a draw, but it is not clear whether he can hope for more.

28 ♜h4 ♜xh4  
29 ♜a8+ ♔h7  
30 b5?!

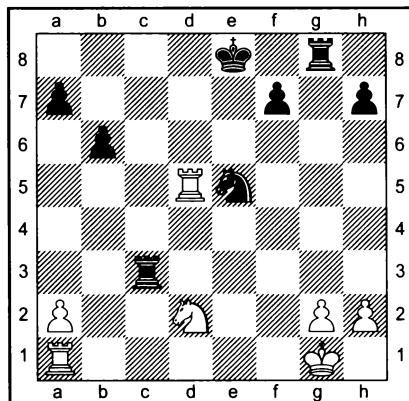
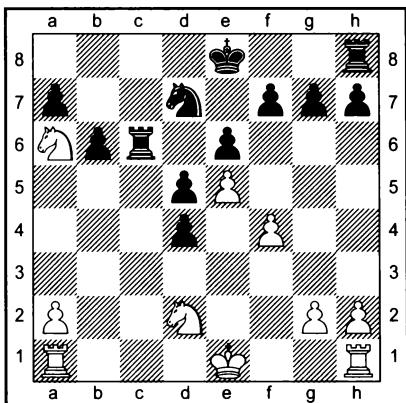
White resigned.

Of course, Artur gradually rid himself of the weakness mentioned, and his play became more dynamic.

(see diagram)

**Timman – Yusupov**

Candidates Match, 4th Game,  
Tilburg 1986



How should the position be assessed? For the knight Black has a sufficient equivalent – three pawns. But if White should succeed in consolidating ( $\mathbb{Q}f3$ , 0-0 etc.), he will have an obvious positional advantage. Something must be urgently done.

**19 ... g5!**

An excellent counter! If 20 g3 there follows 20...gxf4 21 gxf4  $\mathbb{Q}g8$ . Both black rooks become extremely active, and in addition the opponent constantly has to reckon with ...f7–f6.

<b>20 0-0</b>	<b>gxf4</b>
<b>21 <math>\mathbb{Q}xf4</math></b>	<b><math>\mathbb{Q}xe5</math></b>

The white centre has been completely destroyed.

<b>22 <math>\mathbb{Q}xd4</math></b>	<b><math>\mathbb{Q}g8</math></b>
<b>23 <math>\mathbb{Q}b4</math></b>	<b><math>\mathbb{Q}c3</math></b>

In the event of 24  $\mathbb{Q}e1$  f6 White's position is worse. ***In the endgame a knight which has no strong points often proves to be weaker than pawns.*** Therefore Jan Timman hurries to return the piece.

<b>24 <math>\mathbb{Q}xd5?</math></b>	<b>exd5</b>
<b>25 <math>\mathbb{Q}xd5</math></b>	

**25 ...  $\mathbb{Q}c5?$**

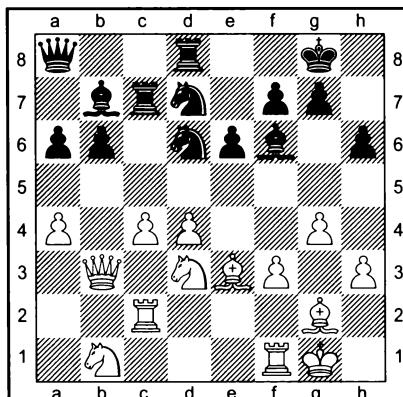
A vexing mistake. By playing 25... $\mathbb{Q}e3$ ! Black would have retained his extra pawn. For example: 26  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}f3+$ ! 27  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  28  $\mathbb{Q}ad1$  (28  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}gg5$ !) 28... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  29  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$ !, or 26  $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  (26...f6!?) 27  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}e2$  28  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$ ! 29  $\mathbb{Q}cd1$   $\mathbb{Q}e1+$ !.

<b>26 <math>\mathbb{Q}xc5</math></b>	<b>bxc5</b>
<b>27 <math>\mathbb{Q}e4</math></b>	<b><math>\mathbb{Q}e7</math></b>
<b>28 <math>\mathbb{Q}xc5</math></b>	

And the game soon ended in a draw.

**Spraggett – Yusupov**

Candidates Match, 9th Game,  
Quebec 1989



**25 ...**

**b5!**



A typical blow at a centre with hanging pawns. After the removal of the c4-pawn Yusupov's pieces will dominate on the light squares.

**26 axb5**

**axb5**

**27 c5**

In the event of 27 cxb5 Black has a pleasant choice between 27... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  and 27... $\mathbb{B}xc2$  28  $\mathbb{W}xc2$   $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ .

**27 ...**

**$\mathbb{Q}c4$**

**28  $\mathbb{B}a2$**

28  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ .

**28 ...**

**$\mathbb{W}xa2!!$**

**29  $\mathbb{W}xa2$**

**$\mathbb{Q}xe3$**

The positional queen sacrifice has enabled Black to destroy the white centre. If now 30  $\mathbb{W}a5$ , then 30... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ !.

**30  $\mathbb{B}c1$**

**$\mathbb{Q}xd4$**

**31  $\mathbb{Q}h1$**

**$\mathbb{Q}xc5$**

**32  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$**

**$\mathbb{Q}xc5$**

**33  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$**

**$\mathbb{Q}xc5$**

On the board it looks almost completely black, and soon Kevin Spraggett curtailed his resistance. The win in this game brought Yusupov overall victory in their Candidates match.

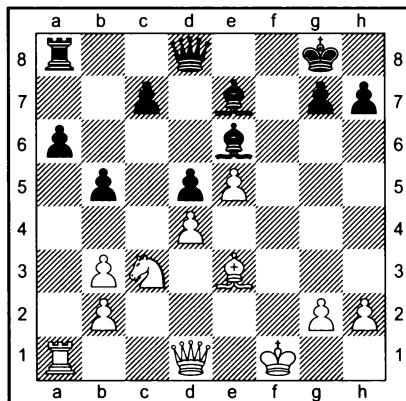
## Exchanges

In our analysis of the preceding examples we have already encountered elementary exchanging operations. Even the positional queen sacrifice made by Yusupov against Spraggett was also essentially an exchange, although an unusual one.

**Ghinda – Yusupov**

Olympiad, Dubai 1986

(see diagram)



**17 ...**

**$\mathbb{Q}b4!$**

**18  $\mathbb{Q}g1?$ !**

If 18  $\mathbb{Q}e2$ , then 18... $\mathbb{W}h4$  19  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{W}e4$  is unpleasant, but 18  $\mathbb{Q}a2$  or 18  $\mathbb{W}d2$  should have been preferred.

**18 ...**

**$\mathbb{Q}xc3!$**

**19  $bxc3$**

**a5**

What has Black achieved, by exchanging his bishop for the opponent's knight?

Firstly, his backward a6-pawn has been transformed into a dangerous passed pawn. At the same time the problem of his other backward pawn on c7 has been solved – since now the c-file is closed.

Secondly, the remaining black bishop is obviously stronger than its white opponent. It will soon be switched to e4 and will help to create threats to the enemy king (with opposite-colour bishops, playing for an attack is the correct strategy). By contrast, the white bishop is running up against its own pawns and is not capable of attacking anything.

**20  $\mathbb{W}d3?$ !**

A loss of time – all the same it is not possible to prevent the activation of the black bishop.

**20 ...**

**$\mathbb{W}d7$**

**21  $\mathbb{Q}c1$**

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

**22  $\mathbb{W}d2$**

**h6**

**23  $\mathbb{Q}a3$**

**$\mathbb{Q}a6!$**



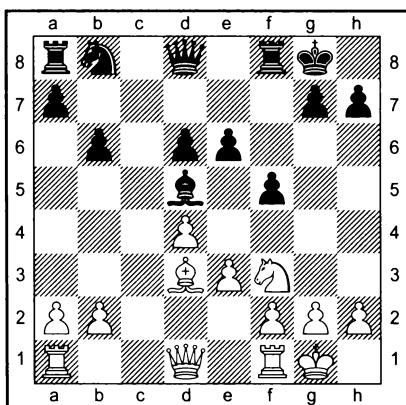
Black has an obvious advantage.

Unfortunately, after 24  $\mathbb{B}f1$  Yusupov committed a serious inaccuracy: 24... $\mathbb{B}g6?$  (24... $\mathbb{B}e4!$  was correct, and only then ... $\mathbb{B}g6$ ). His opponent promptly exchanged the rooks: 25  $\mathbb{R}f3!$   $\mathbb{R}e4$  26  $\mathbb{R}g3$   $\mathbb{R}xg3$  27  $\mathbb{R}xg3$ , and thereby significantly improved his chances of saving the game. However, subsequently in the endgame he nevertheless went wrong and lost.

In the next example the problem that had to be solved combined the problems of exchanging and the choice of pawn structure.

### **Yusupov – Spasov**

European Team Championship,  
Skara 1980



Yusupov planned to exchange the bishop on d5 – the opponent's only well-placed piece. But the way he chose to carry out this exchange was not the best.

He should have opened lines in the centre, in order to widen the front and press on the vulnerable e6-pawn. The strongest continuation was 13  $\mathbb{W}e2!$   $\mathbb{N}d7$  (after 13... $\mathbb{N}xf3$  14  $\mathbb{W}xf3$  d5 15  $\mathbb{N}fc1$  the white pieces control the entire board) 14 e4!  $\mathbb{N}xe4$  15  $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}xe4$  (15... $\mathbb{N}f6$  16  $\mathbb{N}xd5$   $\mathbb{N}xd5$  17  $\mathbb{W}e6+$   $\mathbb{N}h8$  18  $\mathbb{N}g5$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  19  $\mathbb{N}fe1$  also offers Black little joy)

16  $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{N}e8$  17  $\mathbb{N}ac1$  with an obvious positional advantage.

Unfortunately, in the game Yusupov did not play so dynamically, and did not change the pawn structure (perhaps he suffered a recurrence of the afore-mentioned 'childhood illness').

13 $\mathbb{N}c1?$	$\mathbb{N}d7$
14 $\mathbb{N}c4$	$\mathbb{N}f6$
15 $\mathbb{W}a4$	a6
16 $\mathbb{N}xd5$	$\mathbb{N}xd5$
17 $\mathbb{N}c2$	h6?

Now White's idea is justified – he gains control of the c-file. Without wasting precious time, Black should have prepared to exchange the heavy pieces: 17...b5! 18  $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  19  $\mathbb{N}fc1$   $\mathbb{N}fc8$ . In this case Black could have counted on equalising.

18 $\mathbb{N}fc1$	b5
19 $\mathbb{W}b3$	
19 $\mathbb{W}a3!?$	
19 ...	$\mathbb{N}f7$

Now if 19... $\mathbb{W}d7$  White has the unpleasant 20  $\mathbb{N}d2!$   $\mathbb{N}fc8$  21 e4.

20  $\mathbb{N}e1!$

This manoeuvre emphasises White's advantage. The knight goes via d3 to b4 or f4, in order to exchange the knight on d5 – the mainstay of the opponent's defences. White went on to win.

I should mention that the inaccuracy on the 13th move was discovered in home analysis by Yusupov himself. It is very important to instil in yourself a critical approach even to your won games, to analyse them carefully and, without being flattered by the decisive result, look for errors in your own actions. This will help you to avoid similar mistakes in the future.

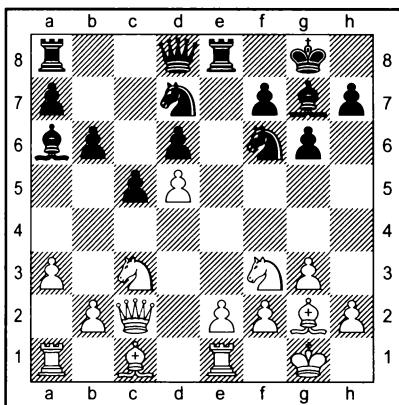
### **Prophylaxis**

In previous sessions of the school I have already emphasised several times the very

important role of prophylaxis, 'prophylactic thinking' in positional play. In this discussion about elementary positional operations it also cannot be avoided. After all, moves may be aimed not only at carrying out your own ideas (manoeuvres, exchanges, and so on), but also at preventing the opponent's ideas.

### **Yusupov – Timman**

Candidates Match, 5th Game,  
Tilburg 1986



Yusupov is planning a pawn offensive in the centre. However, he sees the manoeuvre planned by the opponent in reply to e2–e4: ... $\mathbb{N}f6$ –g4–e5, and the knight gains control of the d3- and c4-squares. This manoeuvre must be prevented.

**13 h3!**

$\mathbb{N}e5$

An important improvement for Black was demonstrated in the game Gelfand–Kasparov (Novgorod 1997): 13...b5! 14 e4  $\mathbb{W}c8!!$ , and the threat of 15...b4 is highly unpleasant.

**14  $\mathbb{N}xe5$**

$\mathbb{N}xe5$

**15 e4**

$\mathbb{N}e8$

**16  $\mathbb{N}e3$**

$\mathbb{N}d7$

The knight again dreams of going to e5.

**17 f4!**

**c4**

### **18 e5!**

A positional pawn sacrifice typical of such positions. Otherwise the opponent would have gained a comfortable game by ... $\mathbb{W}c7$  and ... $\mathbb{N}c5$ .

**18 . . .**  $\mathbb{N}xe5$

**19 d6**  $\mathbb{N}c8$

**20 f5**

20  $\mathbb{W}a4?$  would have been a mistake in view of 20...exf4! 21 gxf4 (21  $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{N}c5$ ) 21... $\mathbb{N}xe3$ !. It was also bad to play 20  $\mathbb{Q}d5?!$   $\mathbb{N}c5$  21  $\mathbb{Q}e7+$   $\mathbb{N}xe7$ , but 20  $\mathbb{W}ad1!?$  came into consideration.

**20 . . .**  $\mathbb{N}c5$

**21  $\mathbb{N}xc5!$**

Of course, the knight cannot be allowed to go to d3.

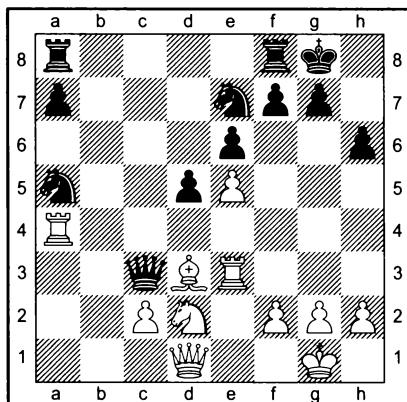
**21 . . .**  $\mathbb{N}xc5$

**22  $\mathbb{N}e4$**

22  $\mathbb{W}ad1$  was also possible. By skilfully combining offensive actions with prophylaxis, White has obtained a promising position.

### **Nunn – Yusupov**

Linares 1988



Black is a pawn up, but the enemy pieces are threateningly trained on the kingside. Both white rooks can quickly end up there. Now 19  $\mathbb{N}h7+$  is threatened.



The first desire is to remove the queen from the danger zone by 18... $\mathbb{W}c7$ . But then there follows 19  $\mathbb{W}h5$ , and the white queen joins the attack on the king. 20  $\mathbb{E}g3$  or 20  $\mathbb{E}g4$  is threatened, and 19... $f5$ ?! is dangerous: 20  $\mathbb{E}g3$   $\mathbb{W}xe5$  21  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{W}c3$  22  $\mathbb{W}xh6$ . Black is forced to return the pawn: 19... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  20  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{exf}5$  21  $\mathbb{W}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$ , but in this case too White retains the better chances.

18 ...

 $\mathbb{Q}h8!$ 

Of course, on c3 the queen feels uncomfortable, but from there, by attacking the knight on d2, it restricts the mobility of the white queen and in general it rivets the opponent's attention, diverting him from the kingside. Remember: this defensive idea – restraining the opponent's activity with a far-advanced queen – was recommended in a lecture by Mikhail Shereshevsky, which he read at the first session of the school (*Secrets of Chess Training*).

19  $\mathbb{g}4$ ?!19  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  was better.

19 ...

 $\mathbb{Q}ac6!$ 

By attacking the e5-pawn, Black prevents the opening of lines on the kingside by g4–g5.

20  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  $\mathbb{Q}ab8!$ 

Again prophylaxis – this time against the threat of 21  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{W}b2$  22  $\mathbb{Q}b3$ . And if 21 g5 there follows 21... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ !.

21  $\mathbb{Q}c4$ ! $\mathbb{W}b2$ 22  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  $\mathbb{Q}g6!$ 23  $\mathbb{Q}a2$ 

The black queen is nevertheless trapped, but the compensation for it will be more than sufficient.

23 ...

 $\mathbb{Q}xb3$ 24  $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 25  $\mathbb{W}c1$ ?25  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  was better.

25 ...

 $\mathbb{Q}b4!$ 

Yusupov sees through the trap set by the

English grandmaster: after the natural 25... $\mathbb{Q}fb8$ ?! there follows 26  $\mathbb{Q}b3$ !  $\mathbb{Q}2xb3$  (forced) 27  $\mathbb{Q}xb3$ , and the white queen obtains use of the c-file.

26  $\mathbb{h}3$  $\mathbb{Q}fb8$ 

Now 27  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  is pointless – Black replies 27... $a5$ !. Less convincing is 27... $\mathbb{Q}gxe5$  28  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  29  $\mathbb{W}e3$ .

27  $\mathbb{Q}h2$ ! $a5$ 28  $\mathbb{Q}g3$ 

But what does White want now? Obviously, h3–h4–h5.

28 ...

 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ !

29 h4? is no longer possible in view of 29... $\mathbb{Q}bb4$ .

29  $c3$ 

Another trap: the tempting 29...d4 is refuted by 30  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  31  $\mathbb{W}f1$ !. Even so, 29  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  was more tenacious.

29 ...

 $a4$ !30  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  $\mathbb{Q}cxe5$ !!31  $\mathbb{W}a1$ 

31  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  32  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  a3 is hopeless for White.

31 ...

 $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 32  $\mathbb{W}xa4$  $\mathbb{Q}bc8$ 33  $\mathbb{W}a5$  $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 34  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 

Black clearly has a great advantage and subsequently be successfully converted it.

### III. Typical Positions

In our games we constantly reach positions with the same pawn structure, the same material balance and roughly the same arrangement of the pieces, as in numerous games played earlier. It is useful to know how strong players handled such positions, what plans they carried out and what ideas they implemented.

Many rules, relating to particular types of positions, are well-known and are clearly

formulated. For example: 'in open positions, bishops are stronger than knights'; 'the presence of opposite-colour bishops in the middlegame strengthens an attack'; 'the side fighting against an isolated pawn in the centre should aim for simplification, to transpose into an endgame.'

However, in the arsenal of grandmasters and masters there are also numerous more subtle, non-formal assessments. We understand that 'in this type of position you should act in this way', but sometimes we find it hard to formulate what exactly is 'this type' of position.

The question of working on typical middle-game positions has already been touched on in the second session of the school (cf. *Secrets of Opening Preparation*). There an important principle was emphasised: nowadays such work is unthinkable without linking it with the theory of the opening from which the typical position arises. The reverse is also true: opening studies will be effective only if a deep acquaintance is made with the ideas of the forthcoming middlegame.

### Taimanov – Yusupov

Leningrad–Moscow Match 1982

*English Opening*

1 d4	¤f6
2 c4	c5
3 ¤f3	cxd4
4 ¤xd4	b6
5 ¤c3	¤b7
6 f3	e6
7 e4	d6
8 ¤e2	a6
9 ¤e3	¤bd7
10 0-0	¤e7
11 ¤d2	0-0
12 ¤fd1	¤c8
13 ¤ac1	¤c7
14 ¤f1	¤fe8

15 ♖h1

♗b8

The opening stage has developed logically. White has constructed a powerful pawn-piece centre, and in reply Yusupov has chosen a flexible set-up known as the 'Hedgehog'. In his position there are no weaknesses, and all the time the opponent has to reckon with the undermining pawn moves ...d6–d5 and ...b6–b5. The chances are roughly equal, and the outcome of the subsequent struggle depends on the strategic skill of the two players.

A year earlier Yusupov obtained the same position with White in a game against Vitaly Tseshkovsky (49th USSR Championship, Frunze 1981). The events in it took a rather instructive course: 16 ♖g1 ♖f8 17 b4?!? ♜e5! (17...d5? 18 cxd5 ♖xb4 19 dxe6 fxe6 20 ♖b2 is unfavourable for Black) 18 ♜a4 ♜fd7 19 a3 ♖a8 20 ♜b3 (20 ♖e3!?). Now Tseshkovsky should have chosen between 20...¤c6 and 20...¤xc4?! 21 ♖xc4 b5. But he was tempted by the thematic advance 20...b5?, which in the given situation proved bad and led to a clear advantage for White after 21 cxb5 axb5 22 ♜c3 ♜c4 23 ♖a2! (threatening 24 ♖xb5!) 23...¤de5 24 ♜d4. Yusupov's success in this game was due in no small measure to the fact that he carefully watched for ...d6–d5 and ...b6–b5, and always had a worthy reply to them.

16 ♖f2

¤d8!?

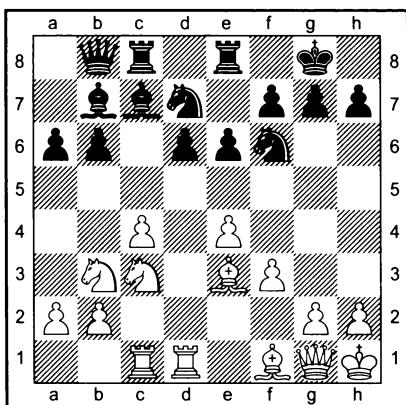
An unusual bishop manoeuvre. More often in such positions Black retreats it to f8 and then after ...g7–g6 develops it at g7.

17 ♜b3?

A passive move, which makes it hard for White to carry out the usual plan of play on the queenside: b2–b4, ♜b3 and at some point c4–c5. True, the immediate 17 b4?! was premature because of 17...¤e5 18 ♜a4 d5!. But it was possible, for example, to play 17 ♖g1 ♜e5 (17...¤c7 18 b4) 18 b3 h6 19 ♜a4, nevertheless intending to play b3–b4! at a convenient moment. In the game

Anikaev–Merkulov (USSR 1982), where White made these moves, Black carried out the central break 19...d5? (Yuri Anikaev recommends 19...♝fd7 20 b4 g5! 21 a3 ♜g7). Alas, like the advance on the queen-side made by Tseshkovsky, it proved premature. After 20 exd5 exd5 21 c5 b5 22 ♜b6 ♜xb6 23 cxb6 ♜d6 24 ♜f2 ♜xb6 25 ♜xb5 ♜xc1 26 ♜xc1 ♜d8 27 ♜b6! White gained the advantage.

17 ... ♜c7  
18 ♜g1



18 ... ♜h8!!

The start of a flexible plan of attack on the kingside.

19 ♜c2 ♜g8!  
20 ♜cd2 g5!  
21 ♜d4 ♜g6

21...h5 was probably more accurate.

22 ♜c1?

White underestimates the danger facing him. He should have halted the black pawns by playing 22 g4!

22 ... ♜cg8  
23 ♜d3  
23 g4 h5! 24 gxh5 ♜h6.  
23 ... ♜f8!  
24 ♜e1

24 ♜f2 was better.

24 ...  
25 ♜fxg4  
26 ♜e3  
27 ♜d5?

This natural move is in fact simply a loss of time, helping the opponent to include his dark-square bishop in the assault. 27 ♜f2 was correct, aiming for simplification.

27 ...  
28 ♜f2  
29 ♜ee2

29 ♜xb6 ♜xb6 30 ♜xb6 ♜xh2!.

29 ...  
30 ♜xe3  
30 ♜xe3 ♜g5.  
30 ...  
31 ♜xf2  
31 ♜xf2 ♜xe4

The game is decided – Black has both an extra pawn, and an attack.

32 ♜f5 ♜c5  
33 ♜g3 ♜a8

33...f5!, preparing 34...♝d3, was more energetic. The inaccuracies by both players in the concluding stage of the game are explained by the time scramble.

34 ♜d1 ♜e6!  
35 ♜xb6 ♜f4  
36 ♜f2 ♜h6?!

Sergey Shipov recommends 36...h5! 37 ♜xf4 (forced) 37...exf4 38 ♜d4+ ♜g7 39 ♜xf4 ♜e5! 40 ♜h4 ♜g4 41 ♜h3 h4 and wins.

37 ♜g1 ♜h4  
38 ♜b3?

If 38 ♜xd6 Yusupov had prepared 38...♝h3+! 39 gxh3 ♜xg3+ 40 hxg3 ♜xg3+ 41 ♜g2 ♜xg2. However, as Shipov pointed out, instead of 41 ♜g2? White can play 41 ♜g2! ♜xg2 42 ♜f2! ♜xf1+ 43 ♜xg3 ♜xg3+ 44 ♜xf1 with an unclear rook endgame.



- 38 ...  
 39  $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   
 40  $\mathbb{W}c3+$   
 41  $\mathbb{Q}f5$   
 42  $\mathbb{Q}xg2$

White resigned.

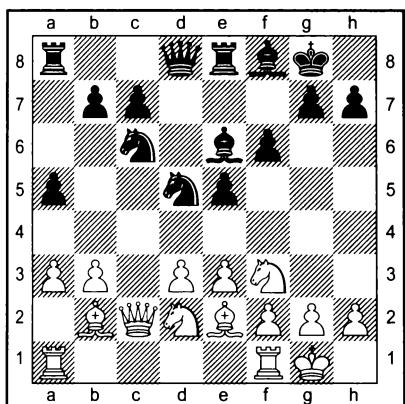
Would it have been easy at the board to devise such a plan: ... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ , ... $\mathbb{Q}g8$  and  $g7-g5$ ? Of course it wouldn't, but in the given instance there was also no need. Yusupov was well familiar with a game by Bobby Fischer, in which such a plan was apparently carried out for the first time.

### Fischer – Andersson

Siegen 1970

*Simagin-Larsen Opening*

- 1 b3 e5 2  $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3 c4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4 e3  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  5 a3  
 0-0-0  $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  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  $\mathbb{Q}e6$



After playing the opening of the game experimentally, Fischer has set up (with reversed colours) the same 'Hedgehog' construction. Incidentally, this is a good illustration of the universal nature of many strategic ideas – after studying them, you will be able to use them in the most varied opening lines.

13  $\mathbb{Q}h1!!$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  14  $\mathbb{Q}g1!$   $\mathbb{Q}ad8$  15  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}f7?!$   
 16 g4! g6?! (16... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ ) 17  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  18  
 $\mathbb{Q}ag1$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  19  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  20  $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  21  
 $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  22  $\mathbb{Q}f5!$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  23  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7?$   
 (23... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ ) 24  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  25 g5!  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  26  
 $\mathbb{Q}f3$  b6 27 gxf6+  $\mathbb{Q}h8$  28  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  29 d4!  
 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  30  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  d3 31  $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  32  $\mathbb{W}xd3$   
 $\mathbb{Q}d6$  33  $\mathbb{W}c4$ , and soon Black resigned.

## IV. Typical Situations

Typical positions are characterised by a purely chess pattern – by a particular balance of force and its arrangement on the board, whereas typical situations are characterised by the content of the forthcoming struggle, derived from a general evaluation of the position. For example, you can study the laws of attack and defence, the converting of an advantage or manoeuvring in a roughly equal position, playing for a blockade, the struggle for the initiative... Also of interest is the analysis of purely competitive situations, such as playing for a win or for a draw, time-trouble, the encountering of a surprise in the opening, the avoidance of oversights, and so on. In previous sessions we have already discussed many such situations, and some of them have been very thoroughly studied – for example, the problem of converting an advantage.

The rules and regularities that we set for ourselves in such an analysis are no longer purely chess, but are rather concerned with chess psychology and behaviour. Remember, for instance, the need to find a concrete solution at a key moment in the conversion of an advantage and the essentially contradictory recommendation 'do not hurry'. Such principles do not tell us directly what move should be made, but they suggest the correct direction of the search and help to create the frame of mind which is most appropriate to the situation.



### Yusupov – Timoshchenko

Kislovodsk 1982

Caro-Kann Defence

**1 c4**

**c6**

**2 e4**

This game was played in the USSR Team Championship, and the first challenge, involving the choice of opening weapon, arose before it began. When in his preparations Yusupov looked to see how the opponent replied to the English Opening, he noticed that there was a possibility of transposing into the Caro-Kann Defence. Sergey Dolmatov, who was playing for the same team as Artur, had played successfully against this opening, he had his own prepared lines in the Panov Attack, and he was prepared to share them with his friend. The problem was that Yusupov hardly ever played 1 e4 and he had no experience in the resulting positions. Yet he had made a deep study of chess as a whole and had analysed games played with all the openings. If you possess a broad chess erudition, you can permit yourself (and sometimes it is even useful) to take a risk in the opening.

**2 . . .**

**d5**

**3 exd5**

**cx<sub>d</sub>5**

**4 d4**

**g<sub>f</sub>6**

**5 g<sub>c</sub>3**

**g<sub>c</sub>6**

**6 g<sub>f</sub>3**

**g<sub>g</sub>4**

**7 cxd5**

**g<sub>x</sub>d5**

**8 w<sub>b</sub>3**

**w<sub>x</sub>f3**

**9 gxf3**

**g<sub>b</sub>6**

Another possibility for Black is the endgame arising after 9...e6 10 w<sub>b</sub>7 g<sub>x</sub>d4 11 g<sub>b</sub>5+ g<sub>x</sub>b5 12 w<sub>c</sub>6+! g<sub>e</sub>7 13 w<sub>b</sub>5 w<sub>d</sub>7 14 g<sub>x</sub>d5+ w<sub>x</sub>d5.

**10 d5**

**g<sub>d</sub>4**

**11 g<sub>b</sub>5+**

**g<sub>d</sub>7**

**12 w<sub>a</sub>4**

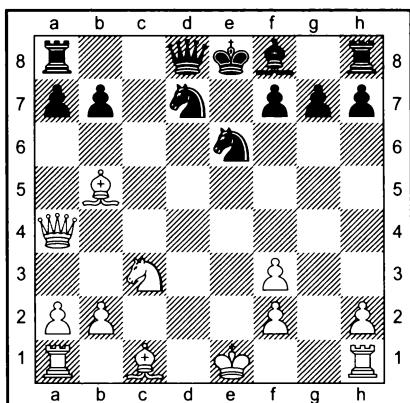
**e5?**

In his preparations Yusupov had only reckoned with 12...g<sub>x</sub>f3+ and 12...g<sub>x</sub>b5 13

w<sub>x</sub>b5 g<sub>6</sub>. A new situation now arose – the search for the correct response to an opening novelty by the opponent.

**13 dxe6**

**g<sub>x</sub>e6**



**14 g<sub>e</sub>3?**

A normal developing move – this would probably have been played without thinking by almost everyone. But now Black gains time, by attacking the bishop on b5, to force favourable exchanges.

Cast an unprejudiced glance at the position – doesn't it remind you of anything? Wouldn't you agree that we have seen something similar in the old games of Paul Morphy and Adolf Anderssen? The centre is open, the black king is stuck in the centre (true, at the moment White's is also there), and there is a pin on the a4–e8 diagonal as in the famous Morphy–Allies game. But do you remember what you should do in such situations? Sacrifice if necessary, inhibit the opponent's development and at the same time complete your own development as quickly as possible, bring your rooks to the open files in the centre and create a mating attack on the enemy king.

Alas, such opening strategy is something that we have now half-forgotten, since in modern set-ups the play is usually in a quite different key. I am in no doubt that without

thinking Morphy would have played 14  $\mathbb{Q}g5!!$ , in order to place his rook on d1 as quickly as possible. Black's position would immediately have become hopeless:

14... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  15 0-0-0;

14... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  15  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  16 0-0-0  $\mathbb{Q}d8$  17  $\mathbb{Q}d5$ ;

14... $\mathbb{Q}ec5$  15  $\mathbb{Q}xd8$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  16  $\mathbb{Q}xa4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  17 0-0-0  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  18  $\mathbb{Q}he1$  (or 18  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ );

14... $\mathbb{W}xg5$  15  $\mathbb{Q}xd7+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$ . Now 16  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  is not bad, but the striving for rapid castling may suggest an even more effective way: 16 f4!  $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  17 0-0-0!.

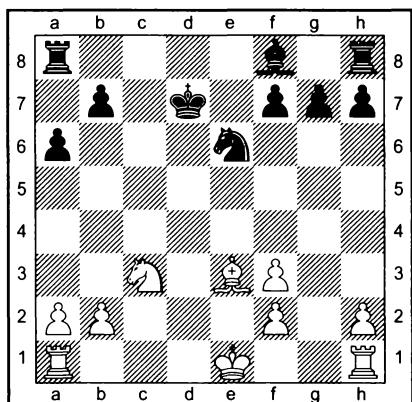
**14 ... a6**

**15  $\mathbb{Q}xd7+$**

If 15  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  there follows 15... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  or 15...b5 16  $\mathbb{W}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  and 17... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ .

**15 ...  $\mathbb{W}xd7$**

**16  $\mathbb{W}xd7+$**



A new situation has arisen, one that is rather difficult to play. Yusupov worked it out splendidly.

**17 0-0!**

It is well known that the favourable factors operating in a position can be sub-divided into constant (enduring) and temporary. It is obvious that White has no constantly operating advantages – on the contrary, his pawn structure is worse than the opponent's. His

only chance consists in the vulnerability of the enemy king, which comes under attack by the white rooks. But this is a temporary advantage, and if the opponent should manage to consolidate, it will evaporate. The flame of the initiative, which is about to go out at any moment, must be skilfully fanned, and this demands extremely accurate and dynamic play.

In the endgame one is supposed to keep the king closer to the centre, and therefore 17 0-0-0 or 17  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  suggests itself. But, as you will already have realised, here the position should not be approached as if it is an endgame. The white king retires to the kingside, in order to leave free for the rooks all three c-, d- and e-files, on which the opponent's king might be able to hide.

**17 ...  $\mathbb{Q}d6$**

The next move seems obvious: 18  $\mathbb{Q}fd1$ . But what will the opponent do in reply? – Yusupov asked himself. After some thought he found a strong defensive manoeuvre: ... $\mathbb{Q}a8-c8-c6$  followed by ... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ . For example, 18  $\mathbb{Q}fd1$ ?!  $\mathbb{Q}ac8$ ! 19  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  20  $\mathbb{Q}ac1$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$ !, and Black successfully completes his development.

**18  $\mathbb{Q}d5!$**

The grandmaster frustrates the suggested arrangement of the forces. As you see, even when fighting for the initiative, prophylactic operations are sometimes given preference over attacking ones.

**18 ...  $\mathbb{Q}ad8$**

What to do now? In the event of 19  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  after 19... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  Black will nevertheless play his rook to c6. And if 19  $\mathbb{Q}fd1$ , then 19... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  20  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  (20  $\mathbb{Q}a7$  b5!) 20... $\mathbb{Q}de8$ ! (20... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ? 21  $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ +  $\mathbb{Q}b8$  22  $\mathbb{Q}e3$ !, and  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  or  $\mathbb{Q}c2-d2$  is threatened) 21  $\mathbb{Q}a7$  b5! 22  $\mathbb{Q}b6+$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  23  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}xa7$ , and Black, at the least, stands no worse. Instead of 21  $\mathbb{Q}a7$  it is preferable to play 21  $\mathbb{Q}f6$ !?  $gxf6$  22  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  or 21... $\mathbb{Q}xh2$ + 22  $\mathbb{Q}xh2$   $gxf6$  23  $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ +  $\mathbb{Q}b8$  24  $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ,



retaining some pressure, but to Yusupov this evidently seemed insufficient.

### 19 ♜ac1!

Again prophylaxis: White prevents the retreat of the king. Now it does not have the c8-square, while if 19...♚e8 the simple 20 ♜fd1 is strong (20 ♜b6 is less convincing: 20...♜xh2+ 21 ♜xh2 ♜xd5 22 ♜c8+ ♜d8).

19 ...

♞c7

20 ♜b6+

♚e6

Perhaps at last it is time to place a rook on d1? No, it is still too early – Black will then consolidate his position with 21...g5! followed by ...f7–f6 and ...♜e5.

### 21 ♜fe1!

In the event of 21 f4!? White would have had to reckon with 21...♞f5 22 ♜fd1 ♜e6 23 ♜d5+ ♜g4, and the f4-pawn is attacked.

21 ...

♞f5

22 ♜ed1

23 ♜xd6 ♜xd6 24 ♜xc7 is threatened. 22...♚e6? is bad in view of 23 ♜xd6+! ♜xd6 24 ♜f4+, while after the knight moves the white rook invades with gain of tempo on d5.

22 ...

♞e6

23 ♜d5+

♞f6

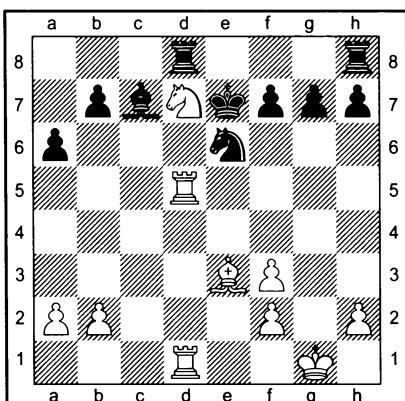
23...♞g6?! or 23...♜e5?! 24 ♜d7 f6 came into consideration.

24 ♜cd1

♞c7

25 ♜d7+

♚e7



The battle to retain the initiative has concluded successfully for White. With a series of precise prophylactic moves Yusupov has cramped the opponent's pieces and gained a definite spatial advantage.

Now the character of the play changes – there comes a phase of manoeuvring with the aim of accumulating additional positional pluses and gradually breaking up the enemy defences. I should mention that for the moment White's advantage is not yet decisive and for success he requires a certain 'cooperation' on the part of the opponent. But, of course, he won't go wrong of his own free will – in this he must be helped.

### 26 b4!

The plan is clear: a2–a4 and then at an appropriate moment b4–b5–b6. Of course, this is not fatal, but it is rather unpleasant. Incidentally, the attempt to win a pawn did not work: 26 ♜c5+? ♜xc5 27 ♜xc5 ♜xd5 28 ♜xd5 ♜d8 29 ♜xd8 ♜xd8 30 ♜xb7 ♜b6.

26 ...

f6

27 a4

g5?!

By strengthening his control of the f4-point, Timoshchenko fights against the advance of the b-pawn. If 28 b5 he had prepared 28...axb5 29 axb5 ♜he8 30 b6 ♜f4. However, the cure proves worse than the ailment – in Black's position there is now a real weakness: the f6-pawn. The restrained 27...♜he8 followed by ...♚f7 was better.

### 28 ♜c1?

The threat of 29 ♜b2 is highly unpleasant, and in some cases ♜a3 is also possible. However, 28 ♜d4!? also deserved serious consideration, forcing an advantageous exchange of minor pieces (28...♜xd7? is not possible on account of 29 ♜xd7+ ♜xd7 30 ♜xf6+ and 31 ♜xh8).

28 ...

♞f4?

Another mistake, provoked by Yusupov's last move. 28...♜hg8! was essential, preparing to defend the f6-pawn with the rook from g6.

**29 ♜xf4**

**♝xf4?!**

Now Black loses a pawn. But also after 29...gxsf4 White has a clear positional superiority.

**30 ♜xf6!**

The concluding phase of the game is the conversion of the advantage already achieved.

**30 ...**

**♝c8?!**

30...h6 was more tenacious.

**31 ♜h5**

31 ♜xh7?! was also possible.

**31 ...**

**♝c7**

**32 ♜e1+**

**♝f7**

**33 ♜d7+**

**♝g6**

**34 ♜g7?!**

34 ♜g3.

**34 ...**

**♝d8**

34...♜hf8 would have lost quickly: 35 ♜e6+ ♜f6 36 ♜xf6+ ♜xf6 37 ♜xc7 ♜xc7 38 ♜e8+.

**35 ♜xb7**

**♝f6**

**36 ♜e6**

**♜hf8**

36...♜b8 37 ♜xb8 (37 ♜a7!?) 37...♜xb8 38 ♜e8 ♜f7 39 ♜xf6+ ♜xe8 40 ♜xa6 was also hopeless.

**37 ♜xa6**

And White won easily.

## V. Planning

There is a widely-held opinion that the highest strategic skill is the ability to encompass virtually the entire game within a deep and integral plan, and that is how the leading grandmasters think. Of course, this is a delusion. It is pointless to decide on an ultra-long program of action, when the very next move may completely change the situation on the board and give the play a quite different direction.

It can happen that a position reached from the opening has been studied in detail by chess theory and that we do indeed have a

good knowledge of what to do in it. Also in the endgame a complicated plan may be put into effect – if we know how the theoretical reference books recommend playing it. But a multi-stage program of action found directly at the board is a great rarity.

How then in fact do players plan their play? Usually they decide only on a direction, a very general course of action. For example, we realise that the position requires an offensive on the queenside, and we draw up an approximate outline of such an offensive. Individual (as a rule – small) strategic operations are planned in more detail. If the operations carried out are timely and good, and they contribute to eventual success, when we look through the game in our eyes they unite into a consistent plan. Here is what grandmaster Alexander Kotov writes about this in his book *Think like a Grandmaster*:

*'A unified plan in a game of chess is a series of strategic operations, following one after another and each time carrying out a separate idea which arises from the demands of the position on the board.'*

In the game which we will now examine, at first sight the outline of a unified plan is visible: White closed the centre and the queenside, after which he successfully conducted an attack on the king. How such a plan is in fact constructed is something that I will endeavour to demonstrate in the notes.

## Yusupov – Rubinetti

Interzonal Tournament, Toluca 1982

*Old Indian Defence*

<b>1 d4</b>	<b>♝f6</b>
<b>2 c4</b>	<b>d6</b>
<b>3 ♜c3</b>	<b>♝bd7</b>
<b>4 ♜f3</b>	<b>c6</b>

Black is intending the development scheme ...e7–e5, ...♝e7 and ...0-0. In carrying out his ideas, a player usually endeavours to take into account, and if possible prevent the



opponent's plans that are unpleasant for him. Jorge Rubinetti did not play 4...e5 immediately, in order not to allow a well-known (and rather dangerous) white development scheme: 5 ♕g5 ♘e7 6 ♖c2 followed by e2–e3 and ♖d3. Now if 5 ♕g5 he has the good reply 5...h6 6 ♖h4 g5 7 ♖g3 ♖h5.

<b>5 e4</b>	<b>e5</b>
<b>6 ♖e2</b>	<b>♘e7</b>
<b>7 0-0</b>	<b>0-0</b>
<b>8 h3</b>	

The first small strategic idea (not counting the choice of arranging the pieces in the opening). White prepares ♘e3, in order then to play d4–d5 and after the reply ...♖c5 to defend the e4-pawn by ♖d2, without shutting in the bishop. It is with such operations that any experienced competitor plans his play. But, of course, this is not the only possible approach to the position – according to theory, the immediate 8 d5 is also strong.

<b>8 . . .</b>	<b>a6</b>
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Black wants to play 9...b5, creating the threat of 10...b4. Should White forestall the opponent's activity by 9 a4, in return conceding to him the c5-point, or is the simple 9 ♖e3 b5 10 a3 better? I don't know the correct answer to this question. Chess is a complicated and imprecise game, and the choice is often a matter of a player's style and tastes.

<b>9 a4</b>	<b>a5</b>
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Otherwise White would have seized space on the queenside with 10 a5.

<b>10 ♖e3</b>	
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In the event of 10 d5 ♖c5 11 ♖c2 Black replies 11...♖c7, creating the threat of 12...cx d5 13 cx d5? ♖xe4.

<b>10 . . .</b>	<b>♖e8</b>
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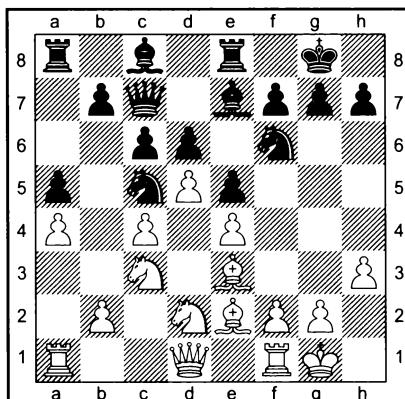
A questionable move. It is useful in the event of the pawn exchange on d4, but after White's intended d4–d5 the rook would do better to remain on f8. 10...exd4 11 ♖xd4 ♖c5, attacking the e4-pawn, looks more

logical (to defend it by f2–f3 with the pawn already on h3 is very undesirable). Yusupov would most probably have replied 12 ♖c2, 13 ♖ad1 (with the threat of 14 ♖xc6 bxc6 15 ♖xc5), and then either f2–f4 followed by ♖f3, or ♖f5. Again I would not venture to judge which is more important: White's spatial advantage or the opponent's control of the dark squares.

<b>11 d5</b>	
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Fully consistent (White has prepared this move) and also in the style of Yusupov, who likes positions with a spatial advantage.

<b>11 . . .</b>	<b>♖c7</b>
<b>12 ♖d2</b>	<b>♖c5</b>



White has largely completed the development of his pieces; now the time has come to decide what to do next. With the pawn on a2 the usual plan is an offensive on the queenside: ♖b1, b2–b3, a2–a3 and b3–b4. But the pawn is on a4 and there is no play on the queenside. The other standard advance f2–f4 will further weaken the dark squares, granting the opponent the excellent central square e5.

The grandmaster found what was probably the only promising plan (or more precisely – next strategic operation). The preceding operations of both sides were standard ones, and the only difficulty was choosing between

various possibilities. But the idea found now by Yusupov was very unusual, and would appear not to have occurred before in similar positions – it is this that makes the game special.

**13 ♜h2!**

**♝d8**

**14 ♞g1!!**

White prepares g2–g3 and then f2–f4. (After the immediate 14 g3 there was the reply 14...♛d7, whereas now it will be possible to defend the h3-pawn with the bishop from f1.) In the event of the exchange on f4, without conceding any central squares White increases his spatial advantage, and his rook is excellently placed on the newly-opened g-file. And if Black avoids the exchange of pawns, there follows f4–f5 and g3–g4–g5, and again the rook stands where it is needed.

This is the main plan of action, but Yusupov also envisaged another development of events. White can also play g2–g4, and then either organise a pawn storm on the kingside with g4–g5 and h3–h4–h5 (the rook will support it from g1), or manoeuvre his knight via the vacated f1-square to f5. In the event of the exchange on f5 the rook will end up on an open file.

We see that again one is not talking about a clear-cut plan, since depending on his opponent's reaction White can choose this or that line of play. But at any event we are right to admire the versatility of Yusupov's idea – the moves he has made will prove useful whatever the development of events.

For his part, Black did not manage to counter his opponent's excellent play. However, the plan, begun with his last move, of playing his bishop to b6 is quite logical. Also after 13...♝f8 14 ♞g1!! or 13...h6 14 ♞g1!! ♜h7 15 g3 White would have stood better.

**14 ...**

**♛b6?**

It turns out that, in order to prepare ...♝b6, Black has decided to play his queen to a7 –

an obviously unsound idea. The suggestion of Vladimir Kramnik was far stronger: 14...♛d7!, not only clearing the way for the bishop to go to b6, but also preventing g2–g3 for the moment and intending to meet 15 g4 with 15...♜h5!.

**15 ♜b1**

As the general plan is put into effect, the placing of the individual pieces is made more precise. 15 ♜c2 is weaker – from d1 the queen threatens the d6-pawn, and in addition it may later be needed on the d1–h5 diagonal.

**15 ...**

**♛a7**

In order to carry out his plan, Black has had to shut his queen out of the game – a clear sign that his idea is faulty.

**16 g4!**

Taking into account the poor placing of the opponent's pieces, Yusupov chooses the more aggressive of his two planned offensive options.

**16 ...**

**♝f8?**

Too passive (Black wants to support his d6-pawn with his knight from e8). 16...♝b6 17 g5 ♜fd7 was more consistent. Apparently, Rubinetti was afraid of losing a pawn after 18 ♜f1 ♜f8 19 dxc6 bxc6 20 ♛xd6, but even by playing simply 20...♝b7?! followed by ...♝ad8, ...♝ce6 and ...♝g6, Black would have gained fine counter-chances, and with 20...♝d8! 21 ♛xc6 (21 ♛xe5 ♜c7) 21...♝d7 he would have trapped the enemy queen. Yusupov was intending to prevent the appearance of the knight at g6 by 18 h4! ♜f8 19 h5, and if 19...♝a6, then 20 ♜g3, preparing an attack on the kingside and intending, of course, to capture on e3 with the f-pawn.

**17 ♜f1!**

17 g5?! ♜e8 was now inadvisable – Black would have advanced his f-pawn, obtaining counterplay. We once again see how flexibly you should vary your plans, depending on the opponent's actions.



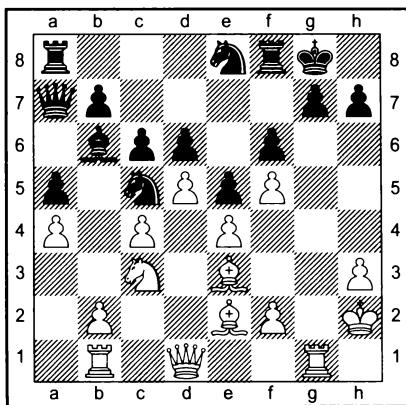
**17 ... ♜e8**

**18 ♜g3**

**19 ♜f5**

Positional capitulation, but all the same Black's position was already difficult.

**20 gxf5 ♜b6**



**21 ♜h5!**

Rubinetti has only just completed his planned bishop manoeuvre, but Yusupov is already embarking on the final attack. His bishop itself attacks something and at the same time clears the way for the queen.

**21 ... ♜d8**

Now a concrete path to the goal has to be chosen. For the moment 22 ♜g6 hxg6 23

fxg6 does not work because of 23...f5. The sacrifice can be prepared by 22 ♜g4 ♜d7 23 ♜h4. Yusupov was afraid that after 23...♜d3 24 ♜g6 the opponent would prolong the resistance by giving up the exchange: 24...hxg6 25 fxg6 ♜ff7. However, as was shown by grandmaster Patrick Wolff, White wins by force with 26 ♜h7+ ♜f8 27 ♜h8+ ♜e7 28 gxf7 ♜xf7 29 ♜xg7+! ♜xg7 30 ♜g1.

The winning method chosen in the game is in no way worse.

**22 ♜h6! ♜d7**

**23 ♜xe8 ♜xe8**

**24 ♜h5**

There was no need to calculate the immediate sacrifice on g7, since the queen can be brought up with gain of tempo.

**24 ... ♜b8**

**25 ♜xg7!**

Black resigned.

The entire game is an excellent, textbook example on the theme of 'strategy'. The events in it were explained not by variations, but by the plans of the two sides. White's rapid success was determined, on the one hand, by the deep plan found by Yusupov on the 13th move, and on the other hand – by the faulty strategic idea, which his opponent began carrying out at the same time.

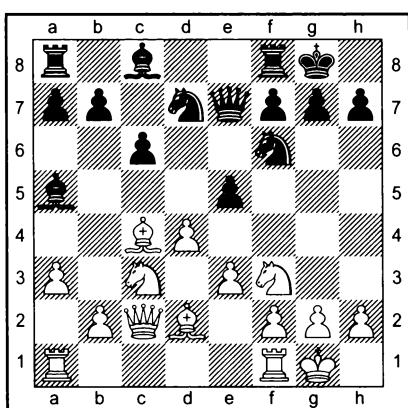
Mark Dvoretsky

## Prophylactic Thinking

The idea of prophylaxis was put forward by Nimzowitsch. He defines the aim of prophylaxis as being '*to blunt the edge of certain possibilities which in a positional sense would be undesirable.*' In his famous book *My System* Aaron Nimzowitsch makes a detailed examination of forms of prophylaxis such as the over-protection of strategically important points and the prevention of freeing pawn moves.

In Nimzowitsch's opinion, the role of prophylaxis in chess is extremely important. He writes: '*Neither attack nor defence is, in my opinion, a matter properly pertaining to position play, which is rather an energetic and systematic application of prophylactic measures.*'

This opinion seems paradoxical. In positional play there are so many different aspects – is it admissible to reduce it to just one element, even though a very important one? Nimzowitsch's idea became closer and more understandable to me after I studied the following example.



Many years ago, when I was still a schoolboy, grandmaster Simagin set up this position and invited me to find a winning move for White. After some thought, I said that the problem had no solution.

Vladimir Pavlovich retreated the bishop to a2.

'Can such a move really be winning?' I asked in perplexity.

'Try and find a satisfactory reply.'

I tried, but I couldn't find one. I remember that this episode made a very strong impression on me – for the first time I was able to sense the power and beauty of quiet positional moves.

A few years later, turning over the pages of the book by Paul Keres on the 1948 World Championship Match-Tournament, I came across the familiar position. It occurred there in two of the games. The initial moves were 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♜f3 ♜f6 4 ♜c3 c6 5 e3 ♜bd7 6 ♜d3 ♜b4 7 a3 ♜a5 8 ♜c2 ♜e7 9 ♜d2 dxec4 10 ♜xc4 e5 11 0-0 0-0.

**Reshevsky–Euwe:** 12 d5 c5? 13 d6! with advantage to White, since 13...♜xd6? 14 ♜b5 ♜b6 15 b4 is bad for Black. However, as Keres pointed out, Black could have achieved an acceptable game in at least three ways: a) 12...♜c7 13 dxec6 bxc6; b) 12...♜xc3 13 ♜xc3 cxd5 14 ♜b4 ♜c5 15 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 16 ♜xc5 ♜c7; c) 12...♜b6 13 ♜a2 ♜xc3 14 ♜xc3 ♜bxsd5 15 ♜xe5 ♜g4. In the first two cases White's position would nevertheless have remained preferable, but in the third one the chances are roughly equal.

**Botvinnik–Euwe:** White chose the logical move 12 ♜ae1, preparing the advance of his e- and f-pawns, which is typical of such



positions (after the exchange on e5). The opponent replied 12... $\mathbb{Q}c7$ , threatening 13...e4.

Now White can try to continue his plan with 13  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  14 dxe5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  15  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{W}xe5$  16 f4, but then 16... $\mathbb{W}h5$ , and Black is alright. The prophylactic move 13 h3!? deserved serious consideration, in order after 13...e4 14  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  to parry the threat of 14... $\mathbb{Q}xh2+$ . Black would have replied 14... $\mathbb{Q}b6!$  15  $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  or 15... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  with a complicated game.

Mikhail Botvinnik chose 13  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  14  $\mathbb{W}xe4$ , and after 14...a5?! 15  $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  16  $\mathbb{W}h4$  e4 17  $\mathbb{Q}e5!$  he seized the initiative. Sounder was 14... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  15  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  exd4 16  $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  or 14... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  15  $\mathbb{W}h4$  e4 16  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  with roughly equal chances.

Thus in neither of these two games did White demonstrate a convincing way to achieve an advantage. The strongest continuation was pointed out by Keres.

### 12 $\mathbb{Q}a2!!$

How can it be arrived at? Let us ask ourselves what Black wants, and how he is now intending to play. Obviously, not 12...e4? 13  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ . 12... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ ? is also clearly bad: 13  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  e4 14  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  with the threats of 15  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  or 15 f3. The opening of lines in the centre by 12...exd4?! 13 exd4! is also to White's advantage – he quickly develops dangerous pressure by  $\mathbb{Q}fe1$  and  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  (or  $\mathbb{Q}g5$ ). After 12... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ ? the f7-point is weakened, while in the event of 12...h6? there is the unpleasant reply 13  $\mathbb{Q}h4$ , when the knight goes to f5 or g6.

The only sensible move is 12... $\mathbb{Q}c7$ !, which prepares 13...e4 and thereby provokes the opponent into releasing the tension in the centre. If it were possible to prevent this move, Black would encounter serious problems.

Now we can appreciate the true worth of the modest bishop retreat. It is useful as regards White's subsequent plans (the bishop is not

attacked after ... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ , and it can possibly go to b1). But the main thing is that now in reply to 12... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  he has 13  $\mathbb{Q}b5!$ . For example, 13... $\mathbb{Q}b8$  14  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  c5 15  $\mathbb{Q}xc5!$ , winning a pawn. At the same time White creates the positional threat of gaining the advantage of the two bishops by 13  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  and 14  $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ . If this is parried, say, by 12... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ , then he strengthens his position with 13  $\mathbb{Q}ae1$ , when what Black should do is not clear. Perhaps it makes sense to nevertheless try 12... $\mathbb{Q}c7$ ? ('if it is impossible, but you very much want to, then you can!') 13  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  14  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  c5. However, after 15 dxc5  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  16  $\mathbb{Q}fd1!$  and the unavoidable  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  his position is unenviable.

The strong impression made by the given example induced me to make a serious study of the problem of prophylaxis in general. Soon I switched my attention from actual prophylactic moves to the process of searching for them – from the practical point of view this seemed more important.

It became clear that there was the need to develop an approach to the position, which I call '**prophylactic thinking**' – the habit of constantly **asking yourself** what the opponent wants to do, what he would play if it were him to move, the ability to **find an answer** to this question and to **take account of it** in the process of coming to a decision.

Developing the skill of prophylactic thinking enables a player to make an enormous step forward, and to greatly raise his standard of play. Why? I will single out two main reasons.

1) The range of positions in which prophylactic thinking can be used is extremely broad. Any significant positional decision is bound to combine the implementation of your own plans with actions against the opponent's (this is how I understand the sense of Nimzowitsch's statement given above about the role of prophylaxis). The main principle of converting an advantage is the restriction of the opponent's possibilities; it is clear that

here one cannot manage without prophylactic thinking. By developing this trait, you also become stronger in tactics and you make fewer blunders. When defending a difficult position, you must all the time see with what you are threatened; and when attacking you must reckon with the opponent's defensive resources. Thus a possession of the skill of prophylactic thinking exerts a favourable influence on practically all aspects of your play.

2) Chess is a battle between two players with equal rights, and your opponent's ideas may be no worse than yours. It is logically clear that the optimal strategy should harmoniously combine the implementation of your own ideas and the prevention of your opponent's. Of course, it is bad to remain passive and merely destroy, but the opposite tendency is also extremely dangerous, and liable to lead to constant failures.

Meanwhile, players often forget to think about their opponent's plans. This is understandable: concentration on one's own feelings is typical of human nature. After all, sometimes in life too, unfortunately, we do not take too much account of the thoughts and feelings of others.

Thus it is not a matter, of course, of giving priority to destructive actions over creative ones, but simply that the important skill of prophylactic thinking is most probably insufficiently well developed in us. By improving this aspect in which we are backward, and making our thinking more harmonious, we will certainly raise significantly our overall standard of play.

Of my own games on the theme of prophylaxis, the one that left the strongest impression was my encounter with Vitaly Tseshkovsky from the 1975 USSR Spartakiad.

This was a famous match, in which the Moscow team lost to Russia with a score of ½–8½! A certain folklore even developed around it. 'We will give up Moscow, but save Russia', the spectators quoted M.I.Kutuzov\* after the end of the match. And grandmaster Bukhuti Gurgenidze spread his hands in astonishment: 'Eight and half, was this deliberate? After all, there is a film of this name by Fellini.' With White against Lev Polugayevsky, the Moscow team captain Vasily Smyslov made the opening moves 1 d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2 c4 c5 3 d5. After losing the game, Vasily Vasilievich lamented: 'I was wrong to play 3 d5; I got carried away and over-rated my position. I should have played 3  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ '. But at a team meeting after the match Smyslov tried to reassure everyone: 'Never mind, the most important thing is that everyone is still alive.'

I also made my 'contribution' to the defeat of the Moscow team, but alas, it was my opponent who demonstrated the strength of prophylactic thinking.

### Tseshkovsky – Dvoretsky

Riga 1975

*French Defence*

1 e4	e6
2 d4	d5
3 $\mathbb{Q}d2$	c5
4 $\mathbb{Q}gf3$	$\mathbb{Q}c6$
5 exd5	exd5
6 $\mathbb{Q}b5$	$\mathbb{Q}d6$
7 dxc5	$\mathbb{Q}xc5$
8 $\mathbb{Q}b3$	$\mathbb{Q}d6$
9 0-0	$\mathbb{Q}ge7$

In 1974 I spent several days at a training session with Victor Korchnoi, who was

\*Russian army commander Mikhail Kutuzov, popularly credited with saving Russia against Napoleon's invasion in 1812. (translator's note)



preparing for his final Candidates match against Anatoly Karpov. I remember that we were analysing a similar position from the same opening variation, and I asked Victor Lvovich why he developed his knight at f6, and not at e7. The grandmaster looked at me in surprise.

'Let's stop and think about this. How should the pieces be arranged when you have an isolated pawn? The place for the knight is at f6, and later – at e4. And the bishop is best kept on the g1–a7 diagonal – from there it puts pressure on the f2-point. In the main variation Black plays 8... $\mathbb{B}d6$  and 9... $\mathbb{B}e7$  simply on account of concrete factors (if 9... $\mathbb{B}f6$  there is the unpleasant reply 10  $\mathbb{E}e1+$ , while in the event of 8... $\mathbb{B}b6$  White will immediately offer the advantageous exchange of bishops: 9  $\mathbb{E}e1+$  and 10  $\mathbb{B}e3$ ). But if you can develop the pieces on their lawful squares without being punished, you should do so.'

Such evaluations, heard from the lips (or read in the commentaries) of top players, sometimes help you to sense the subtleties of opening strategy far better than lengthy articles and specialised books.

<b>10 <math>\mathbb{E}e1</math></b>	<b>0-0</b>
<b>11 <math>\mathbb{B}g5</math></b>	<b><math>\mathbb{B}g4</math></b>

Many years later Artur Yusupov played this in the first game of his Candidates match against Vasily Ivanchuk (Brussels 1991). Ivanchuk replied 12  $\mathbb{B}h4$ , preparing 13  $\mathbb{B}g3$ . After the game Korchnoi asked Yusupov: 'What, old chap, did you allow the bishops to be exchanged? Back in 1974 I realised that 11... $\mathbb{B}c7$  should be played.'

However, in the 18th game of the Karpov–Korchnoi match (Moscow 1974) White was able to demonstrate what is in my view a convincing plan for gaining an advantage: 12 c3 (12  $\mathbb{B}h4?$   $\mathbb{B}f5$ ) 12... $\mathbb{B}g4$  13 h3  $\mathbb{B}h5$  14  $\mathbb{B}e2$  h6 15  $\mathbb{B}xe7!$   $\mathbb{B}xe7$  (the drawback of the queen's position at c7 is felt – the knight has to be placed in a passive position; with the

queen on d8 Black would have captured with the bishop and the d5-pawn would have been defended) 16  $\mathbb{Q}fd4$   $\mathbb{B}xe2$  17  $\mathbb{W}xe2$  a6 18  $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{B}ad8$  19  $\mathbb{B}ad1$ . By carrying out advantageous exchanges, Karpov has emphasised the weakness of the d5-pawn. He now plans to intensify the pressure on it, by doubling rooks on the d-file and playing his knight to e3.

<b>12 h3</b>	<b><math>\mathbb{B}h5</math></b>
<b>13 <math>\mathbb{B}xc6</math></b>	

Tseshkovsky 'takes the bull by the horns' – he immediately tries to refute the opponent's opening set-up. Other, more restrained possibilities, are 12  $\mathbb{B}e2$  and 12  $\mathbb{B}h4$  (without the inclusion of 12 h3).

<b>13 ...</b>	<b><math>\mathbb{B}xc6</math></b>
<b>14 <math>\mathbb{Q}bd4</math></b>	<b><math>\mathbb{B}c8</math></b>
<b>15 c4</b>	<b><math>\mathbb{B}e8</math></b>

Black prepares ...f7–f6. Later, also against Tseshkovsky (Sochi 1975), Boris Gulko played 15...h6, and after 16  $\mathbb{B}h4$  g5 (16... $\mathbb{W}c7$ ?) 17  $\mathbb{B}g3$   $\mathbb{B}xg3$  he obtained a good position. White chose a more critical continuation in the game Peters–Ervin (Lone Pine 1978): 16  $\mathbb{B}xe7$ !?

**17  $\mathbb{B}c1$ ?**

It was probably better to exchange pawns on d5. Subsequently the black bishop might have been able to go to d5.

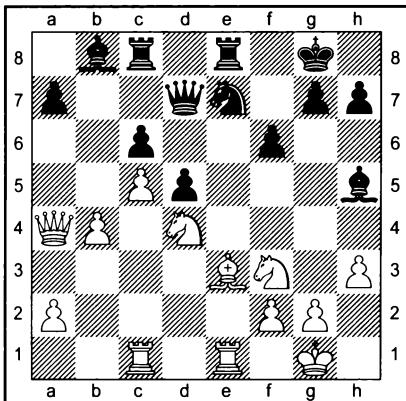
<b>16 ...</b>	<b>f6</b>
<b>17 <math>\mathbb{B}e3</math></b>	<b><math>\mathbb{W}d7</math></b>
<b>18 <math>\mathbb{W}a4</math></b>	<b><math>\mathbb{B}f7</math></b>

18...dxc4!? followed by ... $\mathbb{B}h5$ –f7–d5 came into consideration.

<b>19 c5</b>	<b><math>\mathbb{B}b8</math></b>
<b>20 b4</b>	<b><math>\mathbb{B}h5</math>?</b>

In the event of 20... $\mathbb{B}g6$  (intending ... $\mathbb{B}e5$ ) was concerned about the reply 21 b5.

(see diagram)



I took an optimistic view of this position. By playing 21... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  Black intends to develop pressure on the opponent's kingside. If 22  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  there follows either 22... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  23  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  (intending 24... $\mathbb{Q}c7$ ), or 22... $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  23  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  24 g3 (24 f4  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  with the threat of 25... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ ) 24... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ ! 25  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$ .

I will make a slight digression. I greatly respected my opponent Vitaly Tseskovsky. He was a deep, creative player, and the first encounters with him in championships of the country did not go my way. Tseskovsky played better, saw more and constantly outplayed me. But our most recent meeting in the Premier League of the 1974 USSR Championship had followed a different scenario. There I shared fifth place, but I could even have finished third if in the last round I had beaten Tseskovsky with Black. And, it has to be said, I was close to success. In a complicated strategic battle I outplayed him. In an overwhelming position and with my opponent in severe time-trouble, it was only a vexing, over-hasty move, involving an oversight, which prevented me from achieving my goal (cf. the lecture 'Transformation of a position').

After this game I decided that the era of his superiority over me had ended and that now we were fighting as equals. At the Spartakiad I was no longer afraid of my opponent.

Having coped successfully with my opening problems and seen how badly things were going on the other boards, I decided to play for a win.

I thought that Tseskovsky's main strength was in a fight for the initiative, in dynamic, attacking play, and that in positional play he felt less confident than me. But he demonstrated that he had a splendid mastery of all types of chess weapons.

**21  $\mathbb{Q}d2!!$**

An excellent prophylactic move. Now 21... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ ?! is pointless because of 22  $\mathbb{Q}xe8+$ , when Black has to recapture with the bishop (22... $\mathbb{Q}xe8$ ? 23  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ , or first 23  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ ). Black's idea is frustrated, and he has to readjust and develop a new plan. In such situations the probability of a mistake usually increases sharply.

I probably should have played 21... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ ! followed by ... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ . But I conceived another plan, involving the manoeuvre of my knight to c4. Unfortunately, I often used to carry out my ideas too hastily, without due verification.

**21 ...  $\mathbb{Q}f3?$**

**22  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$**

22... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ !?

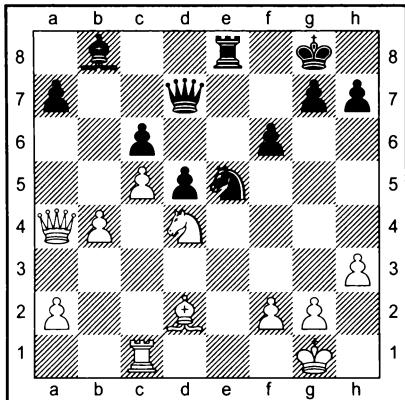
**23  $\mathbb{Q}xe8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xe8$**

**24  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5?$**

A serious mistake, which effectively decides the game. The correct move order was 24... $\mathbb{Q}c8!$ , intending ... $\mathbb{Q}e5-c4$  followed by ... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ , or, if the knight manoeuvre does not prove feasible, then 25... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ .

(see diagram)

However, even now it is not immediately apparent how to forestall Black's plan (25... $\mathbb{Q}c4$ , then 26... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  and 27... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ ). 25  $\mathbb{Q}f4$ ? fails to 25... $\mathbb{Q}d3$ . There is a pretty reply to 25  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  – 25... $\mathbb{Q}c4$ ! 26  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ !. If 25  $\mathbb{Q}e1$ , then 25... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ . It is probable that here



– position after 24... $\mathbb{Q}e5?$  –

too White retains the better chances after 26  $\mathbb{W}a6!$  (but not 26  $\mathbb{Q}f4?$   $\mathbb{Q}d3)$  26... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  (26... $\mathbb{Q}c4?$  27  $\mathbb{Q}e7!$ ) 27  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}f3+$  28  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ , but the continuation found by Tseshkovsky is far more convincing.

**25  $\mathbb{Q}d1!!$**

A second brilliant prophylactic move! The bishop is defended, and if 25... $\mathbb{Q}c4$  there follows 26  $\mathbb{W}xc6$ . But perhaps I should nevertheless have gone into the rook ending a pawn down, which arises after 26... $\mathbb{W}xc6$  27  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  28  $\mathbb{Q}xb8$   $\mathbb{Q}xb8$  29  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  30  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$ .

**25 ...**

$\mathbb{Q}c8$

**26  $\mathbb{Q}f4!$**

Now 26... $\mathbb{Q}c4$  is bad in view of 27  $\mathbb{Q}xb8$   $\mathbb{Q}b2$  (27... $\mathbb{Q}xb8$  28  $\mathbb{W}xc6$ ) 28  $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  29  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf2$  30  $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ . 26... $\mathbb{Q}f3+$  27  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  28  $b5!$  is also unfavourable for Black. Thus my plan has been disrupted, and White can calmly strengthen his position. Apart from the objective difficulties, one should not forget about the psychological effect of your own plans being wrecked. It is not surprising that Black loses without a fight.

**26 ...**

$\mathbb{W}b7$

Probably Black should have looked for counter-chances in the variation 26... $g5!?$  27  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $f5$ .

**27  $\mathbb{W}b3$**

**a6**

**28  $\mathbb{Q}e1$**

**g6**

**29  $\mathbb{Q}g3$**

$\mathbb{Q}f7$

**30  $\mathbb{W}e3$**

There is no defence against the invasion on the e-file.

30... $\mathbb{W}d7$  31  $f4$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  32  $\mathbb{W}e6+$   $\mathbb{W}xe6$  33  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}b2$  34  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  35  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  36  $\mathbb{Q}f2$  a5 37  $bxa5$   $\mathbb{Q}d3+$  38  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  39  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  40  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xg3$  41 a6  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  42 a4  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  43 a5  $\mathbb{Q}f2$  44  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  Black resigns.

How can you develop prophylactic thinking? In the first instance it is important simply to pay attention to this problem. Remember instructive episodes from your own play, and from the games of other players; look for them in books and magazines. Try to think prophylactically in your coming tournament battles. Concentrating your attention on a particular problem helps you to gradually resolve it, and achieve serious progress in the given field. I remember how, after attending a lecture of mine about prophylaxis, Boris Gelfand became interested in this topic and later he proudly showed me some subtle prophylactic moves which he had been able to find at the board. In 1988 Smbat Lputian won the second prize at an exceptionally strong international tournament in Saint John. He admitted that during the play he had repeatedly used the idea of prophylaxis, about which he had been chatting with me before the event.

Clearly, it is very useful to study the games and commentaries of great players, who are especially skilled in the sphere of prophylaxis. In particular – Tigran Petrosian and Anatoly Karpov. In contrast to the majority of their colleagues, it would appear that from nature they were endowed with highly developed prophylactic thinking.

The following game by Karpov (and to no lesser extent his comments on it) vividly

illustrate the style of play and way of thinking of the then world champion. It should be said that when I saw the game for the first time it did not make much of an impression, because Black lost without a struggle. And only later, when I read Karpov's comments, did I realise how much subtle work was concealed behind outward simplicity.

## Karpov – Timman

Montreal 1979

## *Pirc-Ufimtsev Defence*

1 e4	d6
2 d4	¤f6
3 ¤c3	g6
4 g3	¤g7
5 ¤g2	0-0
6 ¤ge2	e5
7 0-0	¤a6??

Theory recommends 7... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  or 7... $c6$ . After 7... $c6$  the usual reply is 8  $a4$  (preventing ... $b7-b5$ , a useful move for Black), but then the development of the knight at  $a6$  becomes more justified, since the  $b4$ -square is available to it.

8 ♜e1 c6  
9 h3

'A typical prophylactic move in such situations,' writes Karpov. 'White restricts the opponent's bishop, and at the same time he also creates a 'no-go' area on the kingside for the remaining minor pieces.'

'The remaining pieces' – this obviously means the knight on f6. The white bishop wants to get to e3, and it must be safeguarded against the attack by ...Bg4. The advance of the pawn to h3 is typical in such positions, and it is played without even thinking about the opponent's possibilities.

e8

'All Black's hopes of obtaining counterplay are associated with pressure on the e4-pawn.'

This is already prophylactic thinking. Karpov immediately defines the opponent's main idea, on which he will keep a careful watch throughout the entire game.

10 g5

A standard idea – White provokes ...h7–h6, in order to then develop his queen at d2 with an attack on the h6-pawn.

10

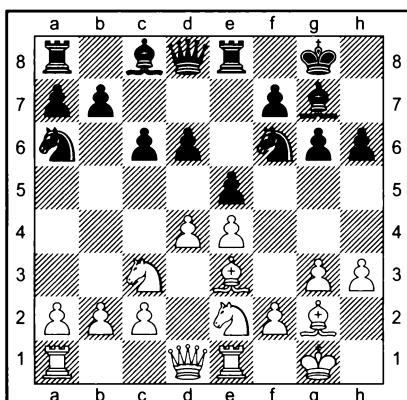
h6

10... $\text{exd}4$  11  $\text{Qxd}4$   $\text{h}6$  is tempting, hoping for 12  $\text{Qe}3$   $\text{Qc}5$ , when it is awkward to defend the e4-pawn (13  $\text{Qf}4$   $\text{Qh}5$ ). But White replies 12  $\text{Qf}4!$   $\text{g}5$  13  $\text{Qc}1$ , and the weakness of the f5-square will subsequently tell.

'After 10... $\mathbb{W}b6$  White could have gained an advantage by the simple 11  $\mathbb{E}b1$ , since 11...exd4 12  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  13 b4  $\mathbb{Q}cxe4$  is clearly unsatisfactory in view of 14  $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  15  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  16  $\mathbb{Q}f6+$ .'

A not altogether convincing comment! Of course, the e4-pawn should not be captured – the normal reply is 13... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ . Besides, instead of 12... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  Timman could have tried either 12...d5, or 12... $\mathbb{Q}g4!$ ? 13 hxg4  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  14  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  15  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  d5! with unclear play. This variation has its inner logic: the bishop at g5 is hardly participating in the battle for the centre, and Black exploits this factor.

11 e3



White obviously wants to complete his



development by 12  $\mathbb{W}d2$  (with gain of tempo!) 12... $\mathbb{Q}h7$  13  $\mathbb{K}ad1$ . Is it possible to hinder the implementation of his plan?

In the event of 11... $exd4$  12  $\mathbb{Q}xd4!$   $\mathbb{Q}c5?$  (12... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  is better) there is the unpleasant 13 e5!  $\mathbb{Q}h7$  14  $exd6$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  15 b4 (or 15  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{W}xd1$  16  $\mathbb{K}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  17 b4  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  18 b5) 15... $\mathbb{Q}a6$  16 b5 cxb5 17  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  with advantage to White.

The prophylactic move suggested by Karpov – 11... $\mathbb{Q}h7?!$ , defending the h6-pawn in advance, deserved serious consideration. The point is that if 12  $\mathbb{W}d2$  there follows 12... $exd4$ ! 13  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  (13  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  14 f3 is stronger, and if 14...d5, then 15  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ ) 13... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ , and 14 e5? is not possible because of the pin on the bishop after 14... $dxe5$ .

By continuing 12 g4 (instead of 12  $\mathbb{W}d2$ ), White would have retained the better chances. But at least Black would not have lost anything: while making a useful move, he has hindered the most natural arrangement of the opponent's pieces, and set him a problem. A good example of the solving of a strategic problem in the opening on the basis of prophylactic thinking.

**11 ...  $\mathbb{Q}c7?$**

Jan Timman does not even try to fight against his opponent's plans. In addition, the black queen takes away a square from the knight, which is now stuck on the edge of the board.

**12  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$**

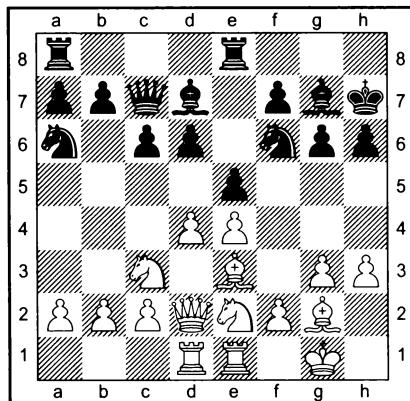
After 12... $exd4$  13  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  Black has to spend a tempo on parrying the threat of 14  $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ .

**13  $\mathbb{K}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$**

13... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  came into consideration, and if 14 g4  $\mathbb{K}ad8$  15 f4  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  16  $\mathbb{Q}g3$  (Karpov), then 16... $exf4$  17  $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  c5.

(see diagram)

White has successfully consolidated. Now 14 f4 or 14 g4 suggests itself. How did Karpov make his choice?



– position after 13... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  –

'On the threshold of the middlegame it is always useful to weight up the resources of the two sides, and to make adjustments to one's initial plans. Here I sank into thought, and I soon came to the conclusion that straightforward play in the centre would not get me anywhere. Now, with the aim of seizing fresh territory, the kingside pawns must be advanced. But I did not want to play 14 f4 immediately. It would be illogical to increase the tension straight away – all the same White will subsequently have to play g3–g4, so why not first utilise a resource for strengthening the position, such g3–g4 and  $\mathbb{Q}e2$ –g3. At the same time White also solves his main strategic problem – in the event of the centre being opened, he supports his e4-pawn.'

Incidentally, the game is an excellent illustration of Nimzowitsch's idea of the over-protection of strategically important points. Karpov all the time remembers about this, endeavouring to give maximum support to his central e4-pawn.

**14 g4  $\mathbb{K}ad8$**

**15  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$**

**16 f4 b5**

Knowing Karpov's style, it is very easy to guess his next move.

**17 a3! b4?!**

Timman is an active player, sometimes excessively active. It was hardly good to weaken the queenside pawns.

**18 axb4**   
**19 ♜ce2**

'Black's idea was to...' For heavens' sake, what does it matter about Black's idea! On a first glance at the position it is clear that White has gained a solid positional advantage, and we would probably have been thinking about how to exploit it as soon as possible – whether to play f4–f5, prepare g4–g5, and so on. But Karpov thinks completely differently – even in such situations he first of all monitors the opponent's possible intentions and endeavours to forestall them.

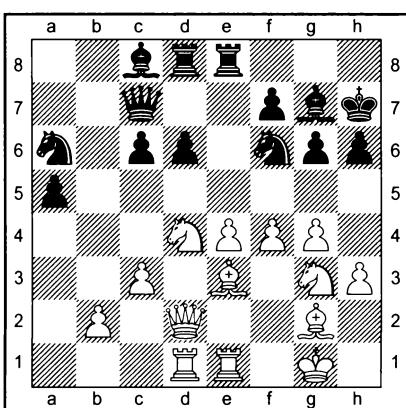
So, once more: 'Black's idea was to somehow bring his pieces together, by playing ...a7–a5, ...♜c8–a6, ...e5xd4 and ...c6–c5. But this is a lengthy process, and White succeeds in hindering his opponent's plan.'

Now if 19...a5 there follows 20 c3, driving away the knight and supporting the centre. Black also has a bad position after 19...c5 20 fxe5 dxe5 21 d5.

**19 . . .**   
**20 ♜xd4** 

'White's subsequent play essentially reduces to preventing the opponent's pieces from coming into play.'

**21 c3** 



Karpov's next move is probably the best in the game. How did he find it? Obviously he asked himself what the opponent wanted. The answer is clear: to bring the knight into play via c5. How can this be prevented?

**22 ♜c2!!**

'A subtle move, which, firstly, prevents the black knight from moving to c5 (in view of the reply b2–b4!), and secondly, continues the previous strategic policy – the supporting of the e4-pawn.'

As you see, here two forms of prophylaxis mentioned by Nimzowitsch are combined – prevention of the opponent's plans and over-protection.

It is curious that Karpov does not even examine 22 ♜xc6!? ♜xc6 23 e5 – a continuation which players nowadays would certainly seriously consider. Why? – in this case the enemy pieces would have become active. However, after 23...♜c7 24 exf6 ♜xf6 25 ♜e4 followed by ♜d4, or 23...d5 25 exf6, White would still have retained the better chances.

**22 . . .** 

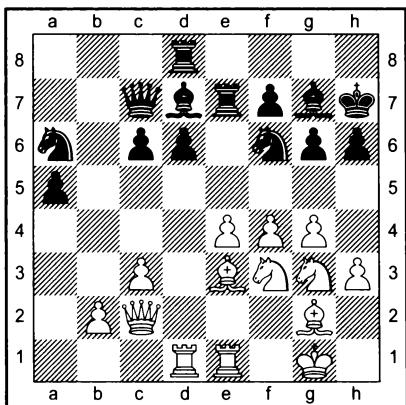
Again Black wants to play ...♜c5 (23...♜c5 24 b4 axb4 25 cxb4 ♜e6, and the c6-pawn is defended), and again White prevents this.

**23 ♜f3!** 

If 23...♜c5!? Karpov had prepared 24 e5. Timman believes his opponent, but he was apparently wrong to do so. In difficult positions you should carefully check any possibility of sharpening the play. I do not see how 24...♜d5 is refuted. If 25 exd6 ♜xd6 26 ♜f2 (26 c4? ♜xe3), then 26...♜xe3! 27 ♜xe3 ♜xf4 28 ♜ee1 ♜e6, and Black has definite compensation for the sacrificed exchange. White would probably have had to restrict himself to the quiet 25 ♜xc5 dxc5, but here too it is not easy for him to demonstrate his advantage: 26 ♜h5 (Adianto) 26...♜h8, or 26 ♜c1 (Nunn) 26...c4 27 ♜e4 f6 28 ♜d6 ♜f8.



Karpov's recommendation 23...c5 was also preferable to the move in the game.



**24 ♜f2!**

'One of the last prophylactic moves. Prior to his decisive offensive, White places his pieces in the most harmonious way possible, and... once again reinforces his central outpost at e4! 24 ♜d3 is premature in view of 24...♜c8.'

Here it is perhaps the last comment by Karpov that for me is the most informative. Using it, I will try to reconstruct his approximate train of thought:

'The double attack 24 ♜d3 is tempting, but after 24...♜c8 25 e5 ♜d5 26 exd6 ♜xd6 the move 27 c4? does not work because of 27...♝xe3! (but not 27...♝xe3? 28 ♜xd6 ♜xd1 29 ♜xe7) 28 ♜xe3 ♜xe3 29 ♜xd6 ♜xd1 (pointed out by Nunn). No, there's no point in going in for such adventures!'

'But what does Timman want to play; why did he make his last move? It can hardly be 24...♝de8 – then simply 25 ♜d3, and he loses a pawn. Perhaps 24...♝e8, to support the d6-pawn, and vacate the d7-square for his knight or rook. But then 25 ♜d3, and the bishop is no longer defending the knight. If 25...♝b7 it is possible to attack the a5-pawn.

'Well, this means that for the moment I should simply wait. What useful move can I

make? Probably 24 ♜f2 – it would not be bad to defend the e4-pawn once more, and also the threat of the e4–e5 breakthrough (after 25 ♜d3) gains in strength.'

As you see, prophylactic thinking is by no means synonymous with passivity; it involves simultaneously taking account of both the opponent's, and your own resources, with the accurate calculation of short variations. Opposing such a manner of play is not easy – you must be not inferior to the opponent in ability to guess the other side's plans. In this respect Timman was not fully Karpov's equal.

**24 ...**

**♝e8?!**

24...♝c8 was more tenacious.

**25 ♜d3!**

**♚b7**

25...♝b8 26 e5!.

**26 ♜a1!**

The modest manoeuvres of the white pieces within their own territory have led to material gains – the a5-pawn cannot be defended.

**26 ...**

**♝c7**

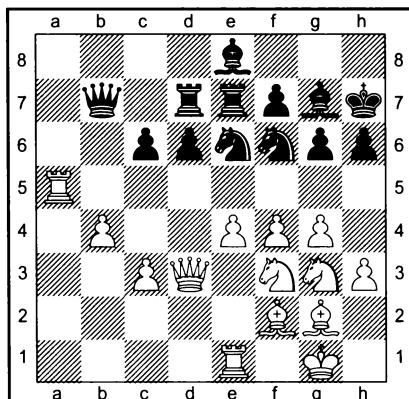
**27 ♜xa5**

**♝dd7**

27...♝xb2? 28 ♜b1.

**28 b4**

**♝e6**



Now, of course, 29 f5? ♜f4 is not good for White. He must defend his f4-pawn, but how? Karpov is vigilant right to the end.

'The position is completely won for White, but a certain accuracy is still required. Thus, after 29 ♜d2 d5!? Black could have obtained something resembling counterplay: 30 e5 ♜e4 31 ♜xe4 dxe4 32 ♜d4 c5, with complications.'

**29 ♜e3!**

**c5**

**30 f5**

**¤d8**

**31 b5**

Of course, the knight should not be allowed to go to c6. 'For "complete happiness", it only remains for White to play c3–c4, in order to achieve domination over the entire board.'

**31 ...**

**¤h8**

**32 ♜f2**

The bishop has done its work on e3 and it again retreats, in order to support the e4-point.

**32 ...**

**¤c7**

**33 ♜a4**

**¤b8**

**34 c4**

Apart from his material advantage, White also has an enormous positional advantage – the opponent's pieces are completely starved of oxygen. The decisive breakthrough is not far off.

**34 ...**

**¤a7**

**35 ♜xa7**

**¤xa7**

**36 e5**

**dxe5**

**37 ♜xe5**

**¤a2**

**38 ♜xc5**

Black resigned.

I repeat once more: on a superficial examination the game does not attract attention, and the impression is created (generally speaking, justified) that the play was 'all at one end'. And only after a serious study do you begin to sense the great mastery behind White's seemingly modest moves, a mastery largely connected with prophylactic thinking.

And now we will analyse a game by another legend in the field of prophylaxis – Tigran

Petrosian. In their manner of play Karpov and Petrosian have much in common, but even so it seems to me that Karpov is a more aggressive player. For him prophylactic thinking was always a reliable weapon in playing for a win, whereas Petrosian usually aimed above all to safeguard himself against defeat and his prophylaxis sometimes looked excessive.

### Petrosian – Gufeld

28th USSR Championship, Moscow 1961

*King's Indian Defence*

**1 c4**

**g6**

**2 d4**

**¤g7**

**3 ¤c3**

**¤f6**

**4 e4**

**0-0**

**5 ¤g5**

**d6**

**6 ¤d2**

White has chosen an unusual move order in the opening.

Once I was observing a joint analysis by Petrosian and Gufeld. The former world champion was constantly outplaying his opponent.

'How come,' asked Eduard Gufeld in perplexity, 'surely I have the better position?'

'Yes, but I have the better brain,' Petrosian explained.

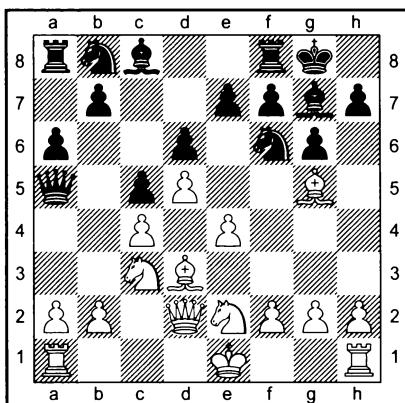
Tigran Vartanovich did not attach too great importance to opening theory and he often took certain liberties, in order to take his opponent away from familiar paths and make use of his 'better brain'. Indeed, why allow the young Gufeld, who was considered an expert on the King's Indian Defence, to demonstrate his knowledge? Wouldn't it be better to test his positional understanding, in which he was surely lacking? Especially since Petrosian himself had an excellent feeling for such situations: as he himself put it, he 'fed his family for many years thanks to King's Indian set-ups.'



6 ... c5  
7 d5 ♜a5

This position can also be interpreted in other ways: 7...e6 (after which Petrosian was planning 8 dxе6 followed by ♜d3 and ♜ge2), 7...b5!? 8 cxб5 a6, or 7...a6 8 a4 ♜a5.

8 ♜d3 a6  
9 ♜ge2



9 ... e5?

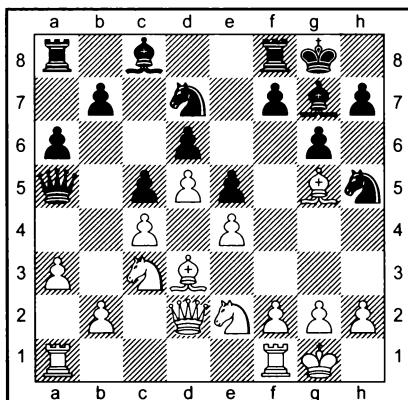
A serious positional mistake. By blocking his bishop's diagonal, Black deprives himself of any counterplay, and now White's spatial advantage guarantees him an enduring initiative. Petrosian gave an instructive assessment of the situation:

'Outwardly the position appears highly promising for Black. By blocking the pawn chain in the centre he has transferred the weight of the struggle to the wings, and the possibility of playing ...b7–b5 and ...f7–f5 would seem to give him the better chances. But if Black, in reasoning this way, was attaching the greatest importance to the mobility of his pawn structure on the wings, he should not have forgotten that it is the job of the pawns to clear the way for the pieces. Then he would not have overlooked the fact that White's pieces are much better placed in the event of the position being opened.'

In other words, there will hardly be a convenient opportunity to play ...b7–b5 or ...f7–f5. Whereas White can easily prepare play on the queenside with a2–a3 and b2–b4.

What then should Black have played? The logical consequence of his preceding moves was the active 9...b5!. After 10 cxб5 the position can be handled like a Volga Gambit: 10...♜bd7!?, but the more forcing 10...axб5!?, 11 ♜xb5 ♜xe4 also comes into consideration. Petrosian examines the variation 12 ♜xe4 ♜xb5 13 ♜xe7 ♜e8 14 ♜xd6 ♜xb2 15 ♜xb2 ♜xb2 16 ♜b1 (16 ♜xe8!? ♜xa1 17 ♜c1 ♜d7) 16...♜xe7 17 ♜xc8 ♜b7 18 ♜d6 ♜b4 19 ♜c4, and reckons that here Black faces a struggle for a draw. In fact after 19...♜xa2 it is exactly the other way round.

10 0-0 ♜bd7  
11 a3 ♜h5



Black is preparing 13...f5. Of course, he is not afraid of 13 ♜e7?! ♜e8 14 ♜xd6?? ♜b6, while 13 g4 allows a standard pawn sacrifice: 13...♞f4 14 ♜xf4 exf4 15 ♜xf4 ♜e5 16 ♜e2 ♜d7 followed by ...b7–b5. And in general, sharp moves such as this are not in Petrosian's style.

12 f3!

'A good prophylactic move, directed in particular against ...f7–f5. It transpires that

12...f5 is bad in view of 13 exf5 gxf5 14  $\mathbb{W}c2!$ , when there is no convenient way of defending the f5-pawn.'

White's move not only inhibits the opponent's counterplay, but is also useful in itself – now the idea of g2–g4 has to be more seriously reckoned with.

**12 . . .**

$\mathbb{B}f6$

**13  $\mathbb{Q}h6$**

$\mathbb{B}g7$

It was probably better to retreat the bishop to g7. Then White has a choice: a) 14  $\mathbb{Q}e3$ ; b) 14  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  15  $\mathbb{Q}e3$ ; c) the exchange of bishops (in one version or another). Since if he wishes White can repeat moves, he had no need to come to a decision beforehand – it is required only when (and if) the position arises on the board. Such reasoning is typical and important for the practical player, enabling him to save time on the clock. I am sure that Petrosian will have played 13  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  quite quickly. After all, perhaps (as in fact happened in the game) this problem will not have to be solved at all, or it will be possible to do this during the opponent's time, while he is considering which piece to place on g7.

**14 g3!?**

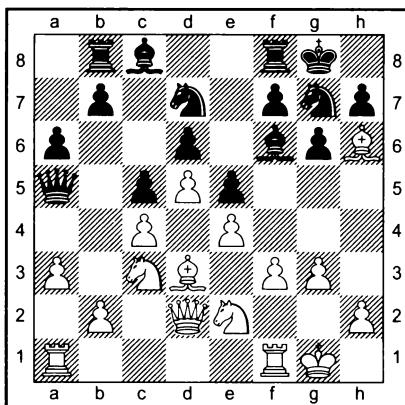
It was perhaps only Petrosian who used to play in this manner. The point of this move is not easy to understand without his own explanation.

'White's position is so good that he can choose between different plans. The advance of the g-pawn by two squares is for the moment replaced by the more modest g2–g3, but now Black has to reckon with a possible f3–f4. In situations where one side has no possibility of active counterplay, whereas the other, with a significant spatial advantage, has several ways of strengthening his position, such a method of play is sometimes more unpleasant and dangerous than direct action. After all, it is hard for the defender to guess from which direction danger will strike.'

It is clear that with the bishop on g7 there was no point in even thinking about f3–f4. But here Black intends to retreat his bishop to e7, and then he will have to reckon with this advance. However, in the game things do not come to this.

**14 . . .**

$\mathbb{B}b8$



What does Black want? Most probably, 15...b5. But is he prepared for the opening of the position? Let us check: 15...b5 16 cxb5 axb5 17 b4! cxb4 (17... $\mathbb{W}a6$  18  $\mathbb{Q}xb5!$   $\mathbb{B}xb5$  19 a4) 18 axb4, and 18... $\mathbb{W}xb4$  19  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  followed by 20  $\mathbb{B}fb1$  is bad for him.

Thus 15...b5 is not a threat. But does the opponent realise this? He must be helped to go wrong, by making some neutral move. Say, 15  $\mathbb{Q}h1$ , especially since if lines are opened it will be useful to remove the king from the g1–a7 diagonal.

Take note: prophylactic thinking implies constant monitoring of the opponent's ideas, but this by no means signifies that they should definitely be disrupted. Sometimes (as in the given instance) it makes sense, on the contrary, to provoke activity, if you judge its consequences to be in your favour.

**15  $\mathbb{Q}h1!?$**

$\mathbb{W}c7$

But now White seriously has to reckon with 16...b5 17 cxb5 c4.

**16 b3!**



'A continuation of the same unhurried strategy. Before playing his pawn to b4 White prepares to double rooks on the b-file, which sooner or later will be opened. At the same time another problem is solved: it is no longer necessary to watch out for ...b7–b5.' When studying the present game (and also the previous one) you should not attach too much significance to individual moves, or try to establish whether or not they were objectively the strongest – this is not the point. It is more important to follow and sense how the taking of decisions was approached by these great players, with whom prophylactic thinking was fully developed (in the case of Tigran Vartanovich, perhaps even slightly more than necessary!).

- |                    |                |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 16 . . .           | $\mathbb{Q}e7$ |
| 17 $\mathbb{Q}ab1$ | $\mathbb{Q}h8$ |
| 18 $\mathbb{Q}b2$  | $\mathbb{Q}f6$ |

Black embarks on a new regrouping, which in the end enables him to advance his pawn to f5. Had he tried to do this a move or two earlier, then after the exchange on f5 White would have created unpleasant pressure on the b1–h7 diagonal by  $\mathbb{W}d2–c2$ . In combination with g3–g4 and the opening (after b3–b4) of a 'second front' on the queenside, this would have led to a difficult situation for Black. It would have been most sensible for him to stick to passive tactics, and to wait for White to clarify his intentions. Moves such as 18...b6 followed by 19... $\mathbb{Q}b7$  would to some extent have improved his defensive resources.'

How should White now combat a standard plan in such positions: ... $\mathbb{Q}f6–g8$ , and after the retreat of the bishop – ...f7–f5? He can, of course, resort to g3–g4.

But let's remember a typical idea when seeking a solution – a question which in such cases it is useful to ask yourself: 'What is the drawback of my opponent's move?' (It would appear that this was first recommended by

Vyacheslav Chebanenko, the well-known trainer from Moldova). By moving his knight to the kingside, Black has weakened his defence of the important squares c5 and b6. It makes sense for White to exploit the factor immediately and to open up the game on the queenside.

- |                   |                |
|-------------------|----------------|
| 19 $\mathbb{b}4!$ | $\mathbb{Q}g8$ |
| 20 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ | $f5$           |

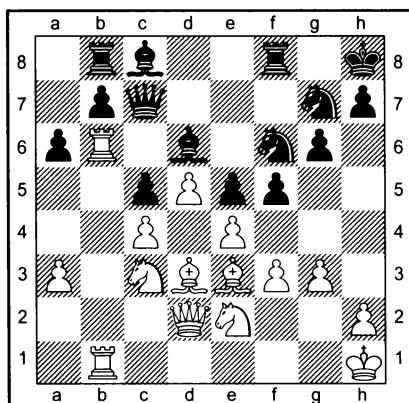
The lesser evil was 20...b6 21  $\mathbb{b}xc5$   $\mathbb{b}xc5$  22  $\mathbb{Q}xb8$   $\mathbb{W}xb8$ , although then too after 23  $\mathbb{Q}b1$  and 24  $\mathbb{W}b2$  White has a clear advantage.

- |                    |                |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 21 $\mathbb{b}xc5$ | $dxc5$         |
| 22 $\mathbb{Q}fb1$ | $\mathbb{Q}f6$ |

'The white rook should not have been allowed to go to b6. Of course, 22...b6 would have opened new possibilities for White, involving the advance of his a-pawn, but nevertheless it should have been played.'

- |                   |                |
|-------------------|----------------|
| 23 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ | $\mathbb{Q}d6$ |
|-------------------|----------------|

23... $\mathbb{Q}d7?$  did not work in view of 24 d6!  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  25  $\mathbb{Q}d5$ . However, 23...fxe4!? was more tenacious, trying to obtain the squares f5 or g4 for his pieces.



- |                    |
|--------------------|
| 24 $\mathbb{Q}h6!$ |
|--------------------|

'Despite the strong pressure, Black still retains hopes of obtaining counter-chances by exchanging on e4, when after the recapture with the pawn he can eliminate the dark-square bishop by ... $\mathbb{Q}f6–g4$ , while after



$\mathbb{Q}c3xe4$  or  $\mathbb{Q}d3xe4$  he has ... $\mathbb{Q}g7-f5$ . It should be mentioned that, with his overwhelming positional superiority, White would have retained an obvious advantage even if the 'threats' mentioned above were to be carried out, but there is no reason for him to part unnecessarily with even a portion of his positional gains.'

Now if 24...fxe4 there follows 25  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  26  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  27 g4!, restricting both the opponent's knight, and his bishop.

24 . . .  $\mathbb{Q}f7$   
25  $\mathbb{Q}g1$

Another purely Petrosian-like move. The grandmaster does not hurry to take specific action, but prefers, just in case, to support his f3-point beforehand. If 25...fxe4 he was intending 26  $\mathbb{Q}xg7+?$ ! (after 26  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  27  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  Black gains counter-chances) 26... $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  27  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  28  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ , followed by g3-g4 and  $\mathbb{Q}h3$ .

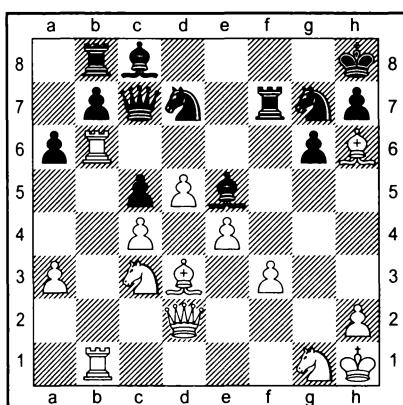
Black should probably have evicted the dangerous rook from b6 by 25... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ . Instead of this Gufeld tries to initiate complications, which turn out to be not in his favour.

25 . . . f4?  
26 gxf4  $\mathbb{Q}d7$

26...exf4 27  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ ! and wins.

27 fxe5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

27... $\mathbb{Q}xb6$  28 exd6  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  29 e5 was hopeless for Black.



'Now on the retreat of the rook there follows 28... $\mathbb{Q}h5$ !, when the black pieces obtain convenient posts at d6, e5 and f4. But if Black's plan could have been realised, this would naturally have called into question White's play in the middlegame. After all, from the opening Black stood badly.'

28  $\mathbb{Q}e6$ !

'All is in order! Black is prevented from playing 28... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  by the threat of 29  $\mathbb{Q}e8+$ . Simultaneously an attack is made on the bishop at e5 – the sole barrier in the path of the passed pawns in the centre. By eliminating this obstacle after 28... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  29  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ !, White would have won without difficulty.' (Indeed, 29... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  30 f4  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  31 f5!? looks threatening, but nevertheless Black should have gone in for this position – most probably he had nothing better.)

'The conclusion of the game, which my young opponent conducted in time-trouble, resembles 'give-away chess.'

28 . . . b5  
29 cxb5

Thanks!

29 . . . c4  
30  $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$   
31  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$

Thanks again!

31 . . .  $\mathbb{Q}h4$   
32  $\mathbb{Q}c1$

A familiar trait! White frees his queen from having to defend his c3-knight and hopes in the future to worry the c-bishop along the c-file.

32 . . .  $\mathbb{Q}h5$   
33  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}g3+$   
34  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   
35  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xh2+$   
36  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$   
37  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}h1+$   
38  $\mathbb{Q}f2$



'Here Black finally remembered that, apart from mate, in chess it is also possible simply to resign a game, which he very belatedly did.'

We will now examine a few examples, showing how prophylactic thinking helps in taking decisions in various stages of the game.

### Opening

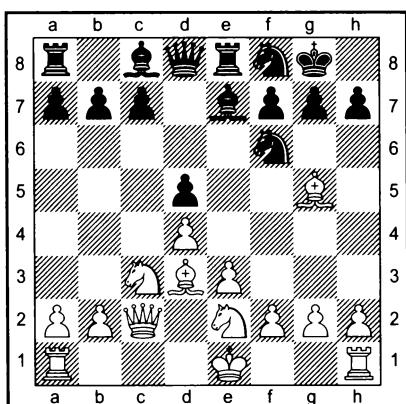
When analysing the following game we will at the same time recall certain strategic ideas, typical of the Carlsbad structure in the Queen's Gambit.

#### Botvinnik – Keres

20th USSR Championship, Moscow 1952

*Queen's Gambit*

1 d4	f6
2 c4	e6
3 ♜c3	d5
4 cxd5	exd5
5 ♜g5	♜e7
6 e3	0-0
7 ♜d3	♝bd7
8 ♜c2	♜e8
9 ♜ge2	♞f8



Why was Keres not in a hurry to play his

pawn to c6? The point is that White has not yet determined the position of his king. After queenside castling one of Black's best plans is the preparation of ...c7–c5 (...♞e6, ...a7–a6 and perhaps ...♝c8). It is clear that in this case ...c7–c6 will turn out to be a clear loss of tempo. A typical example of prophylaxis in the opening – taking account of the opponent's possible plans, in order to arrive at the most accurate move order.

10 0-0   c6  
   11 ♜ab1

White is preparing the standard minority pawn attack on the queenside. Here 11 ♜ae1 has also occurred, and later the rather dangerous variation 11 f3?! came into fashion. For example, the third game of the Ivanchuk–Yusupov Candidates match (Brussels 1991) went 11...♝h5 12 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 13 e4 dxе4 14 fxе4 ♜g4?! (14...♞e6!) 15 e5! ♜ad8 16 ♜e4, reaching a difficult position for Black, roughly similar to that which occurred in the game we have just begun examining. Mikhail Moiseevich, who was present at the match, caustically remarked: 'Aha, Yusupov doesn't know the Botvinnik–Keres game. That's bad!' In fact Artur knew this game, of course, but at the board he was unable to find a way of avoiding the unfavourable development of events.

11 ...   ♞d6?

Threatening 12...♞xh2+ 13 ♜xh2 ♜g4+, but Keres's main idea is to play 12...♝g6 and 13...h6, forcing the exchange of bishop for knight, and to recapture on f6 with the queen. Then his pieces will be actively placed and pressing on the opponent's kingside. Alas, Botvinnik refutes this idea.

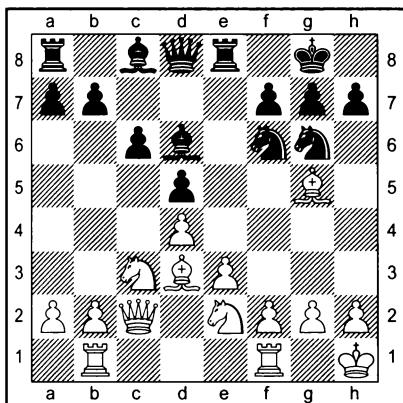
The correct move order was 11...♝g6 (of course, there are also other continuations, for example 11...♝g4!?) 12 b4?! ♜d6 (threatening 13...♞xh2+ or 13...h6) 13 ♜f4 ♜xf4 14 exf4 ♜d6 15 ♜fe1 ♜d7 16 f5 ♜f4, and Black is excellently placed (Lazarev–Fedorenko, Ternopol 1964).



White should remember about prophylaxis and frustrate this plan by 12  $\mathbb{Q}xf6!$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  13 b4, retaining somewhat the better game.

12  $\mathbb{Q}h1!$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$

After 12...h6 13  $\mathbb{Q}h4$  (or 13  $\mathbb{Q}f4$ ) the knight can no longer go to g6.



**13 f3!!**

This move practically wins the game, since it frustrates Black's plans. If now 13...h6, then 14  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  (14  $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  gxh6 15  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  fxg6 16  $\mathbb{W}xg6+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  17  $\mathbb{W}xh6+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  is unconvincing) 14... $\mathbb{W}xf6$  15 e4 with the terrible threat of 16 e5 – it transpires that all the black pieces are badly placed and are very vulnerable.

13 ...  $\mathbb{Q}e7$

An admission of the faultiness of Black's preceding strategy. But what else could he do? – the threat of e3–e4 was too serious.

**14  $\mathbb{Q}be1$**

It is probable that Botvinnik avoided the immediate 14 e4 because of 14...dxe4 15 fxe4  $\mathbb{Q}g4$ . Now Black should have played 14...h6, provoking his opponent into unclear complications after 15  $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  gxh6 16  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  fxg6 17  $\mathbb{W}xg6+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  or 15  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  16  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  fxg6 17  $\mathbb{W}xg6$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  18  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  19  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  20  $\mathbb{Q}e1$  d4. Keres opts for passive tactics and comes under terrible positional pressure.

14 ...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$

**15  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$**

**16  $\mathbb{Q}g3$**

'White does not hurry to advance e3–e4, remembering Tarrasch's saying that the threat is stronger than its execution. But it is not put off for long, only to a time when Black will not have any active replies.' As you see, while converting his advantage Botvinnik is thinking prophylactically.

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

17  $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$

18  $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$

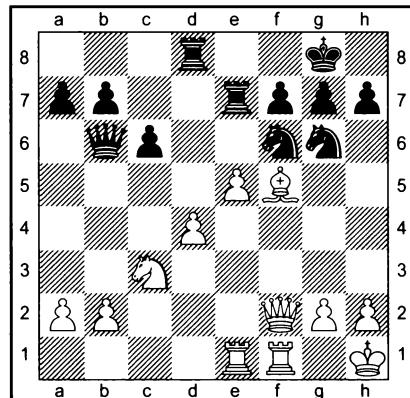
Otherwise 19 g4.

19  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{W}b6$

20 e4  $dxe4$

21 fxe4  $\mathbb{Q}d8$

22 e5



22 ...  $\mathbb{Q}d5$

The prophylactic move 22... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  was more tenacious, preventing the manoeuvre of the white knight to d6.

**23  $\mathbb{Q}e4$**

It should be said that, against Yusupov, Ivanchuk managed to obtain roughly the same position far more quickly.

23 ...  $\mathbb{Q}f8$

24  $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{W}c7$

**25  $\mathbb{Q}e4!$**



White prepares to exchange the opponent's only decently-placed piece – the knight on d5, and simultaneously he vacates the f5-square for his own knight.

**25 . . .**  $\text{N}e6$

**26  $\text{W}h4$**   $\text{g}6$

26...h6 27  $\text{Q}f5$   $\text{B}ed7$  28  $\text{Q}xh6+!$   $\text{gxh6}$  29  $\text{W}xh6$ .

**27  $\text{Q}xd5$**   $\text{cxd5}$

**28  $\text{B}c1!$**

It is useful to wrest control of the c-file and at the same time prevent the exchange sacrifice on d6.

**28 . . .**  $\text{W}d7$

**29  $\text{B}c3$**   $\text{B}f8$

**30  $\text{Q}f5!$**

Of course, White does not allow the freeing advance 30...f5!. Now 30...gxf5 31  $\text{Bg}3+$   $\text{Q}g7$  32  $\text{W}f6$  leads to mate, while if 30... $\text{B}ee8$  the simplest is 31  $\text{Q}h6+$   $\text{Q}h8$  32  $\text{W}f6+$   $\text{Q}g7$  33  $\text{Q}xf7+$ .

**30 . . .**  $\text{B}fe8$

**31  $\text{Q}h6+!$**   $\text{Q}f8$

**32  $\text{W}f6$**   $\text{Q}g7$

**33  $\text{B}cf3$**

The f7-point cannot be defended. 34  $\text{W}xf7+!$  is threatened.

**33 . . .**  $\text{B}c8$

**34  $\text{Q}xf7$**   $\text{B}e6$

**35  $\text{W}g5$**   $\text{Q}f5$

**36  $\text{Q}h6$**   $\text{Q}g7$

**37 g4**

Black resigned.

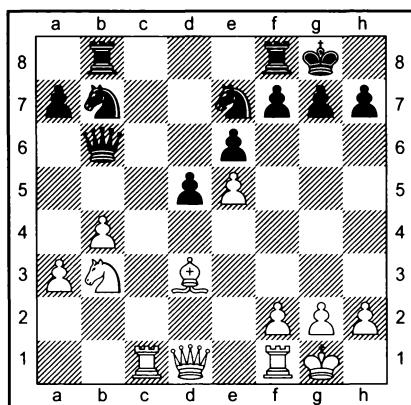
I was impressed by the strength of the seemingly modest move 13 f3!, which refuted Keres's strategy. It should be mentioned that in such positions play in the centre with e3–e4 is the best response to the plan of ... $\text{Q}d6$ , ... $\text{Q}g6$  and ...h7–h6. White's knight could have been on f3 – then f2–f3 is no longer possible, of course, but there is  $\text{Bae1}$  (or  $\text{Bfe1}$ ) followed by e3–e4.

## Middlegame

In order to improve in a certain aspect of chess, it is useful to study the games of players who are masters of this particular field. Therefore I am going to show you two extracts from the play of Anatoly Karpov, one of the 'classics' in the field of prophylaxis.

### Karpov – Bagirov

38th USSR Championship, Riga 1970



White has an undisputed positional advantage. He controls more space, and the knight on b7 has nowhere to go. But if it were Black to move he would play 27...a5!, and if 28 b5 a4, obtaining the c5-square for his knight. White also has to reckon with ...f7–f6.

After 27  $\text{B}b1$  a5?! 28  $\text{W}d4!$   $\text{W}xd4$  29  $\text{Q}xd4$  axb4 30 axb4 White's advantage increases. However, the opponent can play more strongly: 27... $\text{B}fc8$ !? (followed by a possible ... $\text{B}c4$ ), or 27... $\text{f}6$ !?.

27  $\text{W}d2$  looks quite good, but then too Black has the reply 27... $\text{f}6$ , giving him some counterplay.

Karpov found the optimal solution.

**27  $\text{W}g4!$**

White gains firm control of the central square d4 and at the same time he creates the threat of 28  $\text{Q}xh7+$   $\text{Q}xh7$  29  $\text{W}h4+$   $\text{Q}g8$  30  $\text{W}xe7$ .

Now 27...a5 no longer achieves its aim in view of 28  $\mathbb{W}d4$ , or even simply 28 b5, when 29...a4 is not possible (here 28  $\mathbb{Q}xh7+?$ !  $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  29  $\mathbb{W}h4+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  30  $\mathbb{W}xe7$  is less strong: 30...axb4 31  $\mathbb{W}xb4$   $\mathbb{W}xb4$  32 axb4  $\mathbb{Q}d8\pm$ ).

After 27...f6 there follows 28  $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  (28...h6 29  $\mathbb{Q}fe1$ ) 29  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  hgx6 30  $\mathbb{W}g3$ , while if 27... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  28  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  – in both cases with an obvious advantage for White.

**27 ... f5**

**28  $\mathbb{W}d4$**

28 exf6  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  29  $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}bf8$  is not so convincing.

**28 ...  $\mathbb{Q}d8$**

Black is hoping to place his knight at c6.

**29 b5!**

Karpov has achieved his favourite domination – the opponent's pieces are deprived of any active possibilities. White is free to carry out a pawn offensive on the queenside.

**29 ... g5**

The opponent is hoping to attack the e5-pawn, but he is not able to create any real counterplay.

**30 a4  $\mathbb{Q}g6$**

**31  $\mathbb{W}a1!$**

From here the queen defends the e5-pawn and supports the offensive on the queenside. Therefore on the previous move it would have made sense for Black to exchange the queens: 30... $\mathbb{W}xd4$  31  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$ , although after 32  $\mathbb{Q}fe1$  his position would have remained difficult. In turn, White also could have retreated his queen a move earlier.

**31 ...  $\mathbb{W}b7$**

**32  $\mathbb{Q}fe1$   $\mathbb{W}g7$**

Karpov easily forestalls the threat of 33... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  by attacking the weak e6-pawn.

**33  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$**

**34 a5  $\mathbb{Q}e7$**

Again 35... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  has to be parried.

**35  $\mathbb{Q}a6!$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$**

**36  $\mathbb{Q}f1!$**

The bishop withdraws beforehand from a tempo-gaining attack (after ... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  or ... $\mathbb{Q}f4$ ).

**36 ...  $\mathbb{Q}f7$**

**37  $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$**

Or 37... $\mathbb{Q}b8$  38 b6 axb6 39 a6!  $\mathbb{Q}d8$  40 a7  $\mathbb{Q}a8!$ ? 41  $\mathbb{Q}xa8$   $\mathbb{Q}xa7$  42  $\mathbb{Q}c8!$  and wins.

**38  $\mathbb{Q}c6$**

Now the point of the knight manoeuvre to c7 becomes clear. The e6-pawn is attacked, and therefore the knight is forced to defend it, instead of capturing the e5-pawn. Meanwhile, White is ready to create a passed pawn on the queenside.

**38 ...  $\mathbb{Q}f8$**

**39 b6  $\mathbb{Q}xb6$**

**40 a6!  $\mathbb{Q}h6$**

40...d4 41 a7 (41  $\mathbb{Q}c4!$ ?) 41... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  does not help in view of 42 a8 $\mathbb{W}$  (42  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ ; 42  $\mathbb{Q}xe6!$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}xa7$  43  $\mathbb{W}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  44  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$ ) 42... $\mathbb{Q}xa8$  43  $\mathbb{W}xa8$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  44  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ .

**41  $\mathbb{Q}ec1$**

41  $\mathbb{Q}c1?$ .

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

**42 a7  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$**

42... $\mathbb{W}xe5$  43  $\mathbb{W}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  44  $\mathbb{Q}xb6$  was equally hopeless.

**43  $\mathbb{Q}c4$**

**44 a8 $\mathbb{W}$   $\mathbb{Q}xa8$**

**45  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  b5**

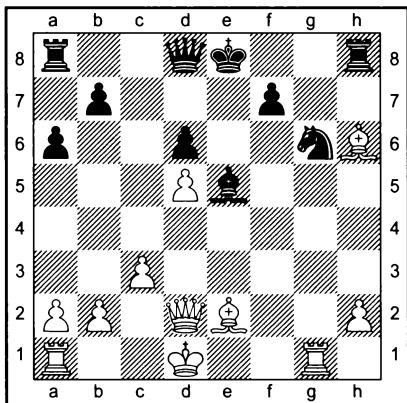
**46  $\mathbb{Q}a2$**

Black resigned.



## Karpov – Hort

Moscow 1971



In contrast to the previous example, here the situation is very tense. Both kings are stuck in the centre. Black's main threat is 22... $\mathbb{W}h4!$ , and it was for this reason that Karpov rejected the natural move 22 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ .

Black's activity can be prevented by 22 $\mathbb{Q}g5!?$ . Karpov was concerned about 22... $\mathbb{W}b6$  23 $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  (the h2-pawn is attacked, and Black wants to castle queenside, including his queen's rook in the game). But why retreat the bishop? – there is the simple 24 $\mathbb{Q}g2!?$ , while Kasparov recommended the energetic 23 $\mathbb{Q}c2!$   $\mathbb{Q}xh2$  24 $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{W}f2$  25 $\mathbb{Q}xh2$   $\mathbb{W}xh2$  26 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ .

However, the course chosen by Karpov is also very strong.

**22  $\mathbb{Q}g4!!$**

A multi-purpose move. The rook takes control of the important h4- and f4-squares, prevents the black queen from going to h4, and prepares the advance h2–h4. In addition it can be switched to the queenside along the 4th rank.

**22 ...  $\mathbb{W}f6!$**

After 22... $\mathbb{Q}xh2$  23 $\mathbb{Q}c2$  Black's position is difficult. He loses a piece after 23... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  24 $\mathbb{Q}g2!$  (24... $\mathbb{W}h4$  25 $\mathbb{Q}xh2$   $\mathbb{W}xh2$  26 $\mathbb{Q}b5+$ ), while if 23... $\mathbb{W}d7$ , then 24 $\mathbb{Q}f1$  or 24 $\mathbb{Q}e4+$  is strong.

**23  $\mathbb{h}4!$**

Black was hoping for 23 $\mathbb{Q}c2?$   $\mathbb{Q}e7!$  24 $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xh2$  or 24 $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{W}f5+$ . But now neither 23...0-0-0 nor 23... $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  is possible because of 24 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ .

**23 ...  $\mathbb{W}f5$**

**24  $\mathbb{B}b4!$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$**

Again castling is impossible (24...0-0-0?? 25 $\mathbb{Q}g4$ ), but 24... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  was more tenacious, or 24... $\mathbb{Q}g8$  25 $\mathbb{Q}d3$  (25 $\mathbb{Q}xb7?$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$ ) 25... $\mathbb{W}h3!$ , not conceding the important f4-square to the opponent (Kasparov).

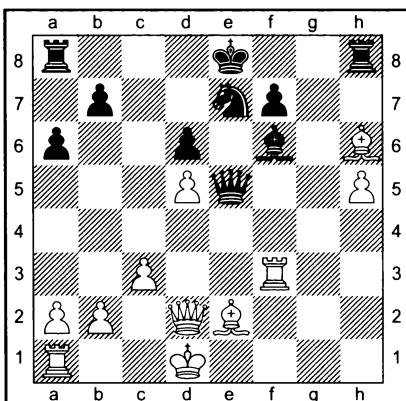
**25  $\mathbb{h}5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$**

25... $\mathbb{Q}e5?$  26 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ .

**26  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}e5$**

The culminating moment of the battle! As Kasparov remarked, playing the rook to f2, f1 or even a4 would have retained a great advantage, whereas the move in the game is significantly weaker. However, Vlastimil Hort failed to exploit his opponent's mistake.

**27  $\mathbb{Q}f3?$**



For the first time Black has gained an opportunity to castle, and he should definitely have made use of it. After 27...0-0-0! the outcome would have remained unclear. How should White reply? 28 $\mathbb{Q}c2?$  is a mistake because of 28... $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  29 $\mathbb{W}xh6$   $\mathbb{W}xe2+$ . If 28 $\mathbb{Q}d3$  there follows 28... $\mathbb{Q}dg8$  29 $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}f5$  with the unpleasant threat of 30... $\mathbb{Q}g2$ . 28

$\mathbb{A}e3$  is unconvincing: 28... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  29  $\mathbb{A}d4$   $\mathbb{A}e6$ .

28  $\mathbb{A}f4$  is tempting, hoping for 28... $\mathbb{W}xd5$ ? 29  $\mathbb{B}d3$   $\mathbb{W}h1+$  30  $\mathbb{Q}c2!$   $\mathbb{W}xa1$  31  $\mathbb{A}g4+$  (31  $\mathbb{B}xd6?$   $\mathbb{W}g1!)$  31... $\mathbb{A}b8$  32  $\mathbb{B}xd6$   $\mathbb{B}xd6$  33  $\mathbb{W}xd6+$   $\mathbb{A}a8$  34  $\mathbb{W}xf6$  and wins. In the event of 28... $\mathbb{W}e4$ ?! White does not play 29  $\mathbb{B}d3$  on account of the pretty reply 29... $\mathbb{A}g6$ !!, pointed out by Utut Adianto, but 29  $\mathbb{W}d3$ !, retaining the advantage. But it is not evident how to call into question the simple 28... $\mathbb{W}xh5$ !.

27 ...  $\mathbb{Q}xd5?$

27... $\mathbb{W}xh5$ ? would have lost to 28  $\mathbb{B}xf6$   $\mathbb{W}h1+$  29  $\mathbb{A}f1$   $\mathbb{A}g8$  30  $\mathbb{W}e1+$ , but the capture of the central pawn is little better.

28  $\mathbb{B}d3$   $\mathbb{W}xh6$

28... $\mathbb{A}e7$  29  $\mathbb{A}f4$ .

29  $\mathbb{B}xd5$ !

29  $\mathbb{W}xh6$ ?  $\mathbb{A}g5$  and 30... $\mathbb{A}e3+$

29 ...  $\mathbb{W}e4$

30  $\mathbb{B}d3$ !

The rook's manoeuvres have disrupted the opponent's defences.

30 ...  $\mathbb{W}h1+?$

Kasparov's suggestion 30... $\mathbb{W}h7$  was much more tenacious – here Black would still have retained chances of a successful outcome.

31  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{W}xa1$

32  $\mathbb{W}xh6$   $\mathbb{A}e5$

33  $\mathbb{W}g5$

Black lost on time.

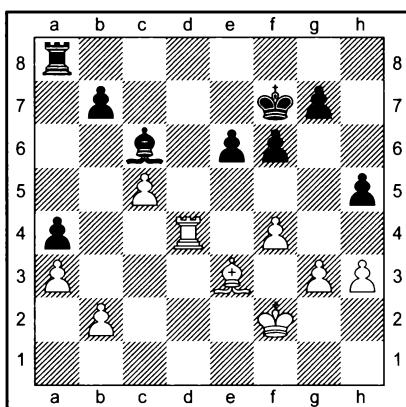
## Endgame

The following ending is taken from Nimzowitsch's *My System*. Old books give numerous positions in which one of the players, much weaker than the other, fails to put up a worthy resistance. In the commentary all the attention is usually focused on the play of the winner, and defensive possibilities are not

even mentioned. As a result, such games receive a one-sided coverage and a non-objective assessment. It is probable that at some stage of chess study this even has a definite pedagogical point. But when 'at a mature age' you again turn to them and look with quite different eyes, you easily notice a certain naivety of such examples and their book interpretation.

## Gottschall – Nimzowitsch

Hannover 1926



It is Black to move. How should the position be assessed? Nimzowitsch's chances are certainly better thanks to his superior pawn structure – his one pawn on a4 is holding back two of White's. To judge by the grandmaster's comments, his win was the logical outcome. In fact, with correct play the game should, of course, end in a draw. After all, material is equal with opposite-colour bishops, and in addition White controls the only open file.

Every player is obliged at times to try and 'squeeze' a microscopic advantage, or on the contrary, defend in a slightly inferior ending. Therefore it is instructive to follow the actions of Nimzowitsch, who completely outplayed his opponent, and to understand why this happened.



How can Black strengthen his position? It would not be bad to play his king to f5. However, if 28... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  White has 29 g4!  $\mathbb{h}xg4$  30  $\mathbb{h}xg4$   $\mathbb{h}h8$  31  $\mathbb{Q}g3$ . Generally speaking, g3–g4 is a move which Black has to reckon with. Is it not possible to prevent it?

**28 ...  $\mathbb{Q}h8!$**

An excellent prophylactic move. Now Black is threatening to play 29... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ , and if 30 g4 – 30... $\mathbb{h}xg4$  31  $\mathbb{h}xg4$   $\mathbb{h}h2+$  or (after 29  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  or 29  $\mathbb{Q}b4$ ) – 31... $\mathbb{h}h3$ . Regarding this Nimzowitsch writes:

'To demand of a piece only direct attacking activity is the stamp of the mere "wood-shifter". The keener chess mind quite rightly demands of the pieces that they also undertake preventive action. The following situation is typical: a freeing action (usually a pawn advance) planned by our opponent would in the result give us an open file. This potential file, to open which does not lie in our power, we nevertheless seize, and in advance, with the idea of giving our opponent a distaste for the freeing action. The "mysterious" rook move is an indisputable ingredient of a rational strategy... I will take the liberty of asserting that the prevention of freeing moves by the opponent is far more important than considerations about whether the rook is functioning at a given moment or is occupying a passive position.'

But now let's reason for White. Black is obviously preparing to play his king to f5. How can this be prevented? Very simply – by the prophylactic move 29  $\mathbb{Q}d6!$ . The king is now tied to the e6-pawn, and in the event of 29... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  the rook occupies the 7th rank. It is not apparent how Black can strengthen his position.

**29  $\mathbb{Q}d1?$ !**

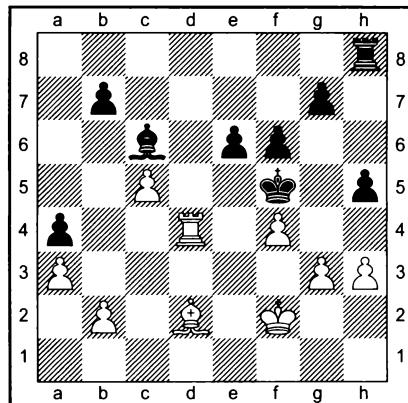
$\mathbb{Q}g6$

**30  $\mathbb{Q}d4$**

$\mathbb{Q}f5$

**31  $\mathbb{Q}d2$**

(see diagram)



Nimzowitsch was planning ...e6–e5. However, if 31...e5 there follows 32  $\mathbb{f}xe5$   $\mathbb{f}xe5$  33 g4+  $\mathbb{h}xg4$  34  $\mathbb{h}xg4+$  and 35  $\mathbb{Q}d6+$ , driving back the black king. Therefore the grandmaster does not hurry.

**31 ...  $\mathbb{Q}f8!$**

Another 'mysterious' move. The rook prepares to operate along the f-file, which will be opened in the near future. In any case, it is useful first to strengthen the position as much as possible, and only then change the pawn structure.

Let us again take White's side and think how to combat the opponent's plan.

He can remove his rook from a possible attack, by playing it to b4. Then if 32...e5 he has a pleasant choice between 33  $\mathbb{f}xe5$   $\mathbb{f}xe5$  34 h4, 33  $\mathbb{f}xe5$   $\mathbb{f}xe5$  34 g4+, and finally, the tactical stroke 33 g4+!. However, the move 32  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  has a serious drawback – the rook abandons the open d-file, and Black immediately exploits this factor: 32... $\mathbb{Q}d8!$  33  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}d1$  or 33  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  34  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$ .

Let us move the king off the f-file. For example, 32  $\mathbb{Q}g1$  (after 32  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  White has to reckon with 32... $\mathbb{Q}g2$ , although this is probably not dangerous) 32...e5 33  $\mathbb{f}xe5$  (33 g4+!?) 33... $\mathbb{f}xe5$  34 g4+  $\mathbb{h}xg4$  35  $\mathbb{h}xg4+$ , and Black does not achieve anything.

**32  $\mathbb{Q}e1?$ !**

**e5**

32...g5! was evidently more accurate,

since here White had the now familiar tactical stroke 33 g4+!.

33 fxe5? fxe5

34 ♜h4? g5!

The move 31...♜f8! has its effect – White cannot play 35 ♜xh5? ♔g6+.

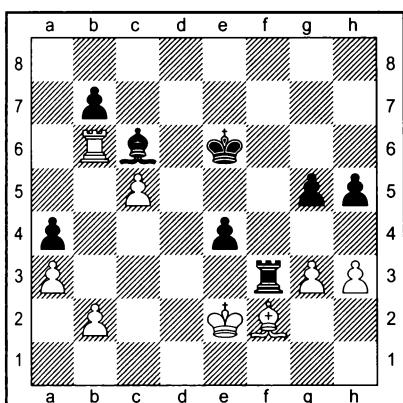
35 ♜b4 ♔e6+

36 ♔e2 e4

36...♜f3? 37 ♜xa4.

37 ♔f2 ♜f3

38 ♜b6



Nimzowitsch has achieved much, and now it is indeed not easy to defend. *'The passed pawn, the penetration of the rook into the enemy position, and a certain weakness in White's c5-pawn slowly wrought the destruction of White's game.'*

How can Black strengthen his position? It is unlikely that he will be able to prepare ...e4–e3 in circumstances such that all possible replies – ♜xc6, ♜xe3 and ♜e1 will prove unsatisfactory. He would like to place his king on d5, but what next? In some cases ...h5–h4 makes sense, although in principle the exchange of all the kingside pawns is to White's advantage.

Let us suppose that with the king on d5 and the rook on b4 it is White to move. If ♜d4+, then simply ...♔xc5, not fearing a discovered check. And if ♜b6 Black can reply ...h5–

h4, when after the capture by the bishop on h4 he can eliminate the c5-pawn with gain of tempo.

Of course, the win of a pawn when there are opposite-colour bishops by no means guarantees a win. But all the same Black has nothing better, and after capturing on c5 he creates the unpleasant threat of a bishop check on b5.

38 ... ♔e5!

39 ♜b4 ♔d5

A zugzwang position is created.

40 h4 ♜xh4

41 gxh4 ♜h3?!

New prospects are opened for the black rook. However, now the white rook also breaks free, and yet it could have been kept at b4 by making the prophylactic move 41...♔e5!. The rook will inevitably reach h3 a little later, whereas White cannot play 42 ♜d4? because of 42...♜xf2+.

42 ♜d4+ ♔e5

43 ♜d8 ♔d5

44 ♜e8+ ♔e6

Threatening 45...♜b3. The concluding stage of the game has been analysed in detail by grandmaster Robert Hübner. I will briefly acquaint you with his main conclusions.

45 ♜d8 ♔f4

The noose around the white king is drawn ever tighter. Perhaps it would have been slightly more accurate to first drive the king away from the e2-square: 45...♔g4+!?, 46 ♔d2 ♔f4 47 ♜f8+ ♔f5 48 ♔e2 ♜h2. However, in Hübner's opinion, here too with accurate play White would have gained a draw.

46 ♜f8+ ♔f5

47 ♜f7 ♜h2

Not immediately 47...e3 48 ♔g1.

48 ♜e7?

If 48 ♔e1?, then 48...e3 49 ♜xe3+ ♔xe3 50 ♜xf5 ♜h1+ 51 ♜f1 ♜xf1+ (51...♜xh4) 52



$\mathbb{Q}xf1$   $\mathbb{Q}d2!$  and wins (but not 52... $\mathbb{Q}f3?$  53  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}g3$  54  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  55 b4! axb3 56 a4). However, by playing 48  $\mathbb{Q}f1!$ , White would have retained quite good drawing chances, for example, after 48... $\mathbb{Q}g4$  49  $\mathbb{Q}g7+$   $\mathbb{Q}f3$  50  $\mathbb{Q}g3+$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  51  $\mathbb{Q}c3$ .

48 ...  $\mathbb{Q}g4+$

49  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}f3$

In Hübner's opinion, 49... $\mathbb{Q}h1+!$  50  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}d1+$  and 51... $\mathbb{Q}d3$  was stronger.

50  $\mathbb{Q}f7+$   $\mathbb{Q}g2$

51  $\mathbb{Q}d2?$

Now the game concludes quickly, whereas after 51  $\mathbb{Q}d4!$   $\mathbb{Q}h1+$  52  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}d1+$  53  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  it is possible that Black might not have been able to win.

51 ...	$\mathbb{Q}f1!$
52 $\mathbb{Q}e3$	$\mathbb{Q}f3$
53 $\mathbb{Q}g3$	$\mathbb{Q}xb2$
54 $\mathbb{Q}d6$	$\mathbb{Q}b3+$
55 $\mathbb{Q}d4$	$\mathbb{Q}f2$
56 $\mathbb{Q}g7$	e3
57 $\mathbb{Q}g3+$	$\mathbb{Q}f1$
58 $\mathbb{Q}f7$	e2
59 $\mathbb{Q}e7$	$\mathbb{Q}c6$

White resigned.

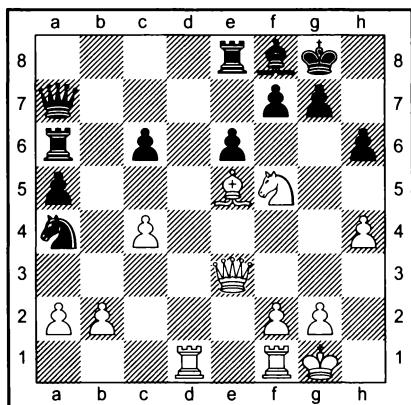
Take note: at the board (in contrast to his comments in the book) Nimzowitsch thought prophylactically – he took account of the opponent's resources and endeavoured to forestall them. This factor ensured the grandmaster an enormous playing superiority over his opponent, who did not even think about prophylaxis and as a result allowed Black to carry out his plans.

### Combination

Here, it would seem, there is altogether no place for prophylactic thinking, and what proves decisive is imagination and specific calculation. But take a look at the following example.

### Fischer – Donner

Olympiad, Varna 1962



The exchange of queens on a7 or e3 (24  $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  25  $fxe3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  26  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  f6 27 b3) leads to a roughly equal ending. What alternative does White have? Only the knight sacrifice on h6. Let's try to calculate its consequences.

24  $\mathbb{Q}xh6+!?$   $\mathbb{Q}xh6$

There is no direct way to give mate, but the rook can be included in the attack via d4. Before calculating variations, let's ask ourselves how Black will defend. Obviously it is very important for him to advance his f-pawn, to include his queen in the defence along the 7th rank.

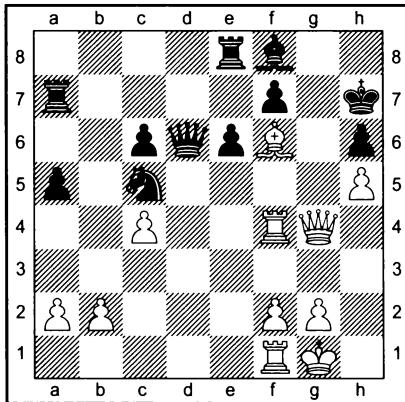
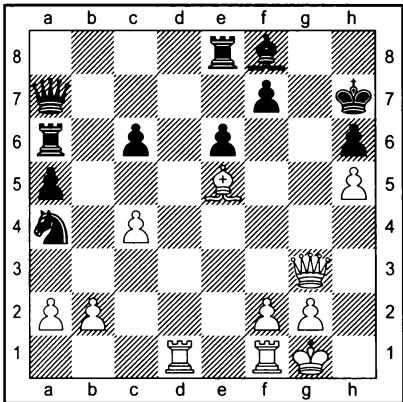
Alas, Bobby Fischer underestimated this factor and played 25  $\mathbb{Q}d4?$ , when after 25... $f5!$  Black parried the attack. The game continued: 26  $\mathbb{Q}fd1$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  27  $\mathbb{Q}d8$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  28  $\mathbb{Q}xe8$   $\mathbb{Q}xe8$  29  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  30 f3 e5! 31 fxe4 (31  $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ ) 31...exd4 32  $\mathbb{Q}g3+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  33  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ . Now 33...c5! would most simply have decided matters, but the queen exchange 33... $\mathbb{Q}e3+$  also proved sufficient for a win.

The key to the success of White's attack lies in prophylaxis – he must prevent ...f7–f5.

25  $\mathbb{Q}g3+$

26 h5!!

$\mathbb{Q}h7$



Now 26...f5? is no longer possible because of 27  $\mathbb{Q}g6$  mate. The black pieces are huddled together on the queenside, whereas White is intending 27  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  followed by  $\mathbb{Q}fd1$  or  $\mathbb{Q}g4$ . Bad, for example, is 26... $\mathbb{Q}c5(b6)$  27  $\mathbb{Q}d4 \mathbb{Q}d7?$  28  $\mathbb{Q}d3+$ . If 26...c5, then 27  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  28  $f4!$  (again prophylaxis – it is important not to allow 28... $\mathbb{Q}g5$ ) 28... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  29  $\mathbb{Q}ff3$  or 29  $\mathbb{Q}a3$ , preparing  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  and  $\mathbb{Q}g3$ .

**26 . . .**  $\mathbb{Q}e7$

**27  $\mathbb{Q}d4$**   $\mathbb{Q}c5$

**28  $\mathbb{Q}f4!$**

Not 28  $\mathbb{Q}g4?$  f6. 28  $\mathbb{Q}fd1!?$   $\mathbb{Q}a7$  is also inaccurate, since if 29  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  Black now has 29... $\mathbb{Q}d7!$  30  $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$ .

**28 . . .**  $\mathbb{Q}a7!$

28... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  is hopeless: 29  $\mathbb{Q}d6!$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  (29... $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  30  $\mathbb{Q}xf7+\mathbb{Q}h8$  31  $\mathbb{Q}g6$ ) 30  $\mathbb{Q}xf7+\mathbb{Q}g8$  31  $\mathbb{Q}xg5+$   $\mathbb{Q}hg5$  32  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ .

**29  $\mathbb{Q}f6$**   $\mathbb{Q}d6$

**30  $\mathbb{Q}g4!$**

(see diagram)

An attacking and simultaneously prophylactic move! After parrying the threat of 30...e5 (31  $\mathbb{Q}f5+$ ), White prepares  $\mathbb{Q}d1$  or  $\mathbb{Q}f4-f3-g3$ . If 30... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  he has the decisive 31  $\mathbb{Q}d4!$ . White's attack looks irresistible, and here, I have to admit, my initial analysis came to an end. But in fact the battle continues.

– position after 30  $\mathbb{Q}g4!$  –

**30 . . .**  $\mathbb{Q}d3!$

An excellent prophylactic move, pointed out by John Nunn. The immediate threats are parried: 31  $\mathbb{Q}f3?$   $\mathbb{Q}e4!$  32  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}c2$ , or 31  $\mathbb{Q}d1?$   $\mathbb{Q}c2$  32  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  f6. However, White's play can be improved.

**31  $\mathbb{Q}e1!$**

Again Black's position seems hopeless. 32  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  or 32  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  is threatened, and it is bad to play 31... $\mathbb{Q}d7?$  32  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}wd2$  33  $\mathbb{Q}g3!$  or 31... $\mathbb{Q}d2?$  32  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  33  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}d1+$  34  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  35  $\mathbb{Q}fxg4$ , when the only way of preventing the deadly 36  $\mathbb{Q}g8$  is to return the piece by 35... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ .

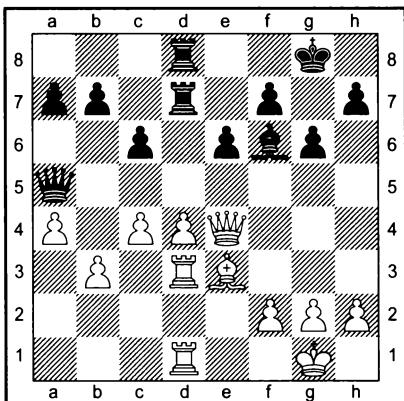
It seemed to me that after 31...e5! 32  $\mathbb{Q}e3!$  White's attack should also achieve its goal. However, the German analysts Klaus Dieter Mayer and Karsten Müller thoroughly checked this position with a computer and established that with accurate defence Black can hope to save the game. I will give the initial moves of their analysis: 32... $\mathbb{Q}b1+!$  33  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6!$  (33...exf4? 34  $\mathbb{Q}xe8$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  35  $\mathbb{Q}xd7!$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  36  $\mathbb{Q}xf8)$  34  $\mathbb{Q}fe4!?$  (34  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$ ) 34... $\mathbb{Q}g7!$  35  $\mathbb{Q}f5+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  36  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  (but not 36... $\mathbb{Q}g5?$  37  $\mathbb{Q}xg5!$   $\mathbb{Q}hg5$  38 h6). Their variations extend for a further dozen moves, but we will draw the line here.



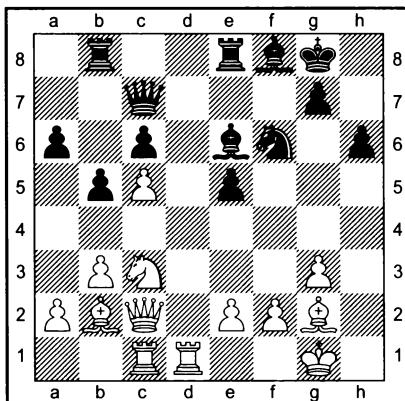
The examination of interesting examples on the theme of prophylaxis could have been continued. But for the mastery of prophylactic thinking (as also, in general, any practical skill) theory alone is insufficient – independent training is required. I invite you to solve

several exercises of different types, some easy and some more difficult. They are united by just one factor: everywhere the key to the solution is one and the same question: ‘What does my opponent want, and what would he play if it were him to move?’

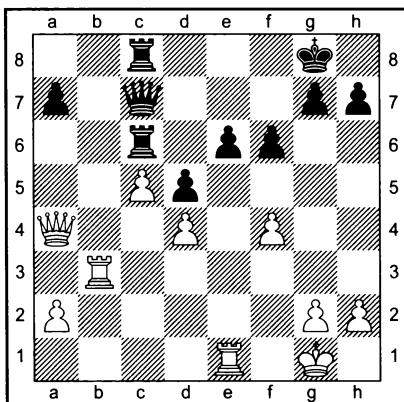
## Exercises



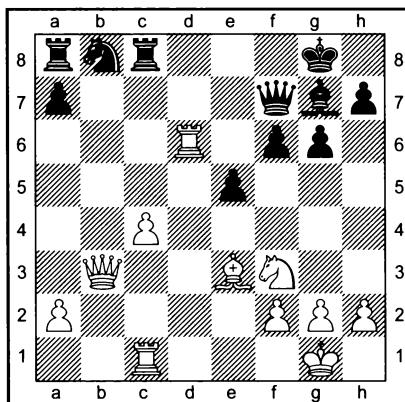
**1. White to move**



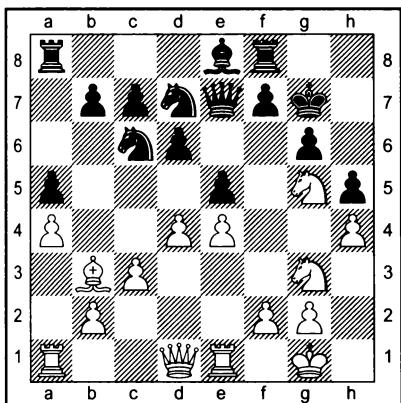
**2. Black to move**



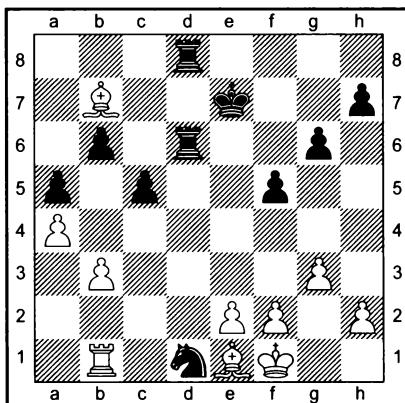
**3. White to move**



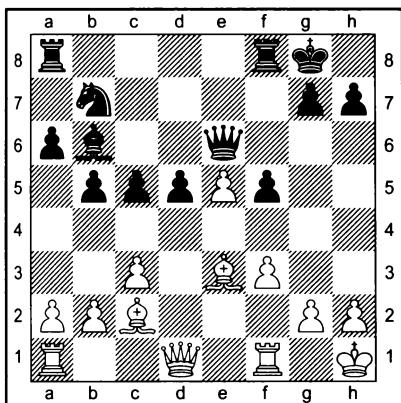
**4. White to move**



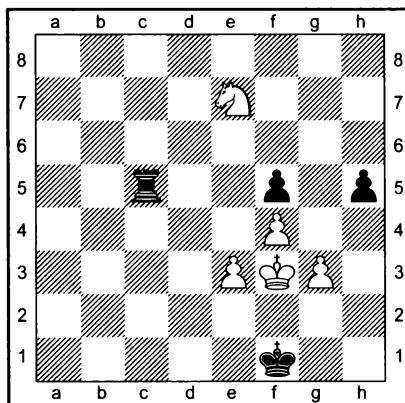
## 5. White to move



## 6. Black to move



## 7. White to move



## 8. Black to move



# Solutions

## 1. Kholmov–Geller (Vilnius 1957).

White needs an escape square for his king, and in addition it is important to prevent the exchange of queens 21... $\mathbb{W}f5!$  22  $\mathbb{W}xf5$   $gxf5$  which would favour the opponent.

**21 g4!**

This move solves both problems and retains somewhat the better chances for White.

**21 ... $\mathbb{W}b4$  22  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{W}e7$**

Now White has to reckon with 23... $\mathbb{Q}g5(g7)$  and 24... $f5$ . Therefore Ratmir Kholmov opens the centre.

**23 d5! exd5?** (23... $cxd5$  24  $cxd5$   $b6$  was essential) 24  $\mathbb{W}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  25  $g5!$  (25  $\mathbb{Q}xa7$ ? was weaker: 25... $\mathbb{Q}a8$  26  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  with equality) 25... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  26  $\mathbb{Q}xa7$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  27  $cxd5$   $\mathbb{Q}ed7$  28  $h4$ , and White gained the advantage.

## 2. Timman–Larsen (Mar del Plata 1982).

23... $\mathbb{Q}xc5?$  24  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  25  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  is unfavourable for Black. If White should occupy the e4-square unhindered, by playing 24  $\mathbb{Q}e4$ , his chances will be much better. Simple prophylaxis comes to Black's aid.

**23 ...**

**$\mathbb{Q}h8!$**

Now if 24  $\mathbb{Q}e4?$  the pin 24... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  is unpleasant. After 24  $e3$   $\mathbb{Q}bc8$  25  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  Black seized the initiative.

I should mention that his attack on the kingside could also have been begun immediately, without resorting to prophylaxis: 23... $\mathbb{W}f7!$  24  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  followed by ... $\mathbb{W}h5$ .

## 3. Hort–Mestel (London 1982).

In choosing a way of defending his f4-pawn, White has to reckon with the freeing advance ... $e6-e5!$ .

25  $\mathbb{Q}f1?$  is wrong in view of 25... $e5$ . 25  $g3!$ ? suggests itself, but in this case too the

opponent replies 25... $e5!$ ? 26  $fxe5$   $fxe5$  27  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}f8!$  (of course, not 27... $\mathbb{W}f7?$  28  $\mathbb{W}xc6!$ , and not 27... $\mathbb{Q}xc5?$  28  $\mathbb{Q}e8+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  29  $\mathbb{Q}f3+$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  30  $\mathbb{Q}e6+$  or 30  $\mathbb{W}a6+$ ). Black is threatening both 28... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ , and 28... $\mathbb{W}f7$  with dangerous pressure on the f-file.

White probably still has the right to go in for this variation, if he finds a set-up enabling him to parry the opponent's immediate threats: 28  $\mathbb{W}b5!$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  29  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  30  $\mathbb{Q}b2$ . But even here Black retains definite counter-chances, by continuing 30... $\mathbb{W}g6$  31  $\mathbb{Q}g2$  (31  $\mathbb{Q}g2?$   $\mathbb{W}d3!$ ; 31  $\mathbb{Q}d2!?$ ; 31  $\mathbb{Q}e7!?$ ) 31... $h5!?$  32  $\mathbb{W}xh5!?$  (32  $h4$ ) 32... $\mathbb{W}d3$ .

After 25  $g3!?$   $e5!$ ? an interesting idea was suggested by grandmaster Matthew Sadler: 26  $\mathbb{Q}be3!?$   $exd4$  (in the event of 26... $e4$  27  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  the position favours White) 27  $\mathbb{Q}e7$   $\mathbb{W}b8$  (27... $\mathbb{W}d8$  28  $\mathbb{Q}e8+$ ) 28  $\mathbb{W}d1!$  (threatening 29  $\mathbb{W}g4$  or 29  $\mathbb{W}h5$ ) 28... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  29  $\mathbb{W}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  30  $\mathbb{Q}xg7!?$ . Let us continue the variation: 30... $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  31  $\mathbb{Q}e8+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  32  $\mathbb{Q}xb8$   $\mathbb{Q}xb8$  33  $\mathbb{W}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}bc8$  34  $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$ . White has a clear advantage, but is it sufficient for a win?

Vlastimil Hort preferred a prophylactic move, enabling him to avoid complications.

**25  $\mathbb{Q}f3!?$**

From the practical point of view this decision is very sensible – White maintains a positional advantage, without the risk of miscalculating in complicated variations. For example, if 25... $\mathbb{W}b8!$  (with the idea of 26... $e5!$ ) he can reply 26  $\mathbb{W}b3!?$   $\mathbb{W}xb3$  27  $\mathbb{Q}xb3$  with the better endgame (27... $\mathbb{Q}a6$  28  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  or 27... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  28  $a4!?$ ).

After 25... $\mathbb{W}b7!?$  26  $\mathbb{W}d1!$  (with the idea of  $\mathbb{Q}fe3$  and  $\mathbb{W}e2$ ) Black should have defended against the threatened breakthrough on the e-file by 26... $f5!$ .

**26... $\mathbb{Q}a6?$  27  $\mathbb{Q}fe3$   $\mathbb{W}d7$**

After 27... $\mathbb{Q}xa2$  28  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{W}b2$  White would

have won by 29  $\mathbb{E}6e2!$   $\mathbb{W}a3$  30  $\mathbb{E}e7!$   $\mathbb{W}b2$  31  $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{W}xd4+$  32  $\mathbb{K}h1$  f5 33  $\mathbb{W}xf5$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  34  $\mathbb{E}e8$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  35  $\mathbb{W}xd5+$   $\mathbb{K}h8$  36  $\mathbb{W}xa2$ .

**28  $\mathbb{W}e2 \mathbb{E}a4$**  (28... $\mathbb{W}a4$  29  $\mathbb{E}xe6$   $\mathbb{W}xd4+$  30  $\mathbb{K}h1$ ; 28... $\mathbb{E}cc6$  29 f5) **29  $\mathbb{E}xe6$   $\mathbb{E}xd4$  30 c6!** (31  $\mathbb{E}e7$   $\mathbb{W}f5$  32 g4! was another way to the goal) 30... $\mathbb{W}f7$  31  $\mathbb{E}e8+$   $\mathbb{E}xe8$  32  $\mathbb{W}xe8+$   $\mathbb{W}f8$  33  $\mathbb{W}xf8+$

Black resigned in view of 33... $\mathbb{K}xf8$  34  $\mathbb{E}c1$ .

**4. Tal–Ribli** (European Team Championship, Skara 1980).

**23  $\mathbb{W}b5!$**

But not 23  $\mathbb{W}a4?$   $\mathbb{K}f8$ .

**23 ... a6**

23... $\mathbb{K}f8$  24  $\mathbb{E}xf6!$   $\mathbb{W}xf6$  25  $\mathbb{W}d5+$  and 26  $\mathbb{W}xa8$ .

**24  $\mathbb{W}d5$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$**

**25 cxd5**

By preventing the development of the knight on b8, White achieves a winning position.

23  $\mathbb{W}d1?$  is far weaker in view of 23... $\mathbb{E}c6$  24  $\mathbb{E}d7$   $\mathbb{E}d8!$ . The continuation in the game was also unsuccessful: 23  $\mathbb{E}d2?$ !  $\mathbb{E}c6$  24  $\mathbb{E}e4?$  (24  $\mathbb{W}a4$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  25  $\mathbb{E}e4$  f5 26  $\mathbb{E}g5$  was stronger) 24... $\mathbb{E}a5$  25  $\mathbb{W}b5$   $\mathbb{E}xc4$  (three moves earlier could the knight have dreamed of such a fate?!) 26  $\mathbb{E}c6$  (26  $\mathbb{E}d7?$   $\mathbb{E}xe3!$ ) 26... $\mathbb{E}xc6$  27  $\mathbb{W}xc6$   $\mathbb{E}d8$ , and Black equalised.

**5. Makarychev–Bellin** (Hastings 1979/80).

Black wants to play 18... $\mathbb{E}d8$  and 19...f6, driving away the menacing knight on g5. White also has to reckon with the manoeuvre ... $\mathbb{E}d7$ –f6–h7 and with 18... $\mathbb{W}f6$ . 18  $\mathbb{E}f1$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  19 f4 f6 20  $\mathbb{E}h3$  (with the threat of 21  $\mathbb{W}xh5!$ ) is not bad, but in this case Black can successfully defend: 20... $\mathbb{E}xd4$  21 cxd4 f5. It would be desirable to find a more active way of playing, after which the opponent does not succeed in implementing his planned defensive construction. But nothing is given by

18  $\mathbb{E}e3$  (with the threat of 19  $\mathbb{E}xh5+$ ) in view of 18... $\mathbb{K}h8$ .

**18  $\mathbb{E}f4!$**

**exf4**

18... $\mathbb{E}d8$  19 f5.

**19  $\mathbb{E}e2$**

**$\mathbb{E}d8$**

Little better was 19...f3!? 20  $\mathbb{gxf3}$   $\mathbb{E}f6$  21  $\mathbb{E}f4$   $\mathbb{E}h7$  22  $\mathbb{E}d5$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  23  $\mathbb{W}d2$  with advantage to White.

**20  $\mathbb{E}xf4$**

By taking control of the e6-square at just the right time, Sergey Makarychev has prevented the important defensive move ...f7–f6. Now the attack develops of its own accord.

20...c6 21  $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{E}h8$  (21... $\mathbb{E}f6$  22 e5!) 22  $\mathbb{E}e2!$  f6 23  $\mathbb{E}ge6+$   $\mathbb{E}xe6$  24  $\mathbb{E}xe6+$   $\mathbb{K}h7$  25  $\mathbb{E}f1$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  26 e5! dxe5 27 dxe5  $\mathbb{E}xe6$  28 exf6  $\mathbb{W}c5+$  29  $\mathbb{K}h1$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  30  $\mathbb{E}e7+$   $\mathbb{K}h6$  31  $\mathbb{W}e4$   $\mathbb{E}d7$  32 f7  $\mathbb{E}f8$  33  $\mathbb{E}c2$  Black resigned.

Of course, it would be strange to call the attacking move 18 f4! prophylactic. But at any event it was found with the aid of prophylactic thinking, suggesting the need to prevent the opponent from strengthening his position.

**6. Psakhis–Speelman** (Hastings 1987/88).

Black is the exchange up, but his knight is in danger. White is threatening  $\mathbb{E}b7$ –a6–d3. If 29... $\mathbb{E}d2$  30  $\mathbb{E}xd2$   $\mathbb{E}xd2$ , then 31  $\mathbb{K}e1$   $\mathbb{E}d7$  is unclear, but 31  $\mathbb{E}c1$  is very strong.

**29 ...**

**g5!!**

**30  $\mathbb{E}a6$**

**f4**

**31  $\mathbb{E}d3$**

The waiting move 31  $\mathbb{E}b5$  (or 31  $\mathbb{E}c4$ ) came into consideration.

**31 ...**

**$\mathbb{E}xd3$**

**32 exd3**

**$\mathbb{E}xd3$**

**33  $\mathbb{K}e2$**

**$\mathbb{E}d5!$**

It becomes clear why the kingside pawns were advanced: if 34  $\mathbb{E}xd1?$  Black now has 34...f3+. 34  $\mathbb{E}d2?$  also does not work in view



of 34... $\mathbb{Q}xf2!$ . Incidentally, in the event of 33... $\mathbb{Q}d4?$  (instead of 33... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ ) White would have won material by 34  $gxf4$   $gxf4$  35  $\mathbb{Q}d2!$   $\mathbb{Q}xf2$  36  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  37  $\mathbb{Q}e1.$

Now White should probably have played 34  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ . If 34... $\mathbb{Q}d4$  he retreats his king with 35  $\mathbb{Q}e2$ , creating the threat of 36  $gxf4$   $gxf4$  37  $\mathbb{Q}d2!$ . And 34... $\mathbb{Q}c3$  35  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}d3+$  36  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  37  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  leads to an unclear rook ending.

Lev Psakhis chose 34  $gxf4$   $gxf4$  35  $\mathbb{Q}c1?$  (here too 35  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  was necessary). After 35... $\mathbb{Q}b2$  36  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  Black went on to win.

## 7. Stein–Keres (Moscow 1967).

It would appear that there is nothing to think about here, and that White must defend his e5-pawn with 19 f4. But let's ask ourselves what Black will do then. And we establish that he is planning to defend his d5-pawn by 19... $\mathbb{Q}ad8$  and then play 20...c4!, including his knight via c5 and hoping at some point to advance ...d5–d4.

Leonid Stein finds a way of forestalling the opponent's idea.

### 19 a4!!

Now after 19... $\mathbb{Q}ad8$  White has the strong reply 20 axb5 axb5 21  $\mathbb{Q}a6$ . If 19... $\mathbb{W}xe5$ , then 20  $\mathbb{Q}e1!$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  (20... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  21  $\mathbb{Q}g1!$ ) 21 axb5 axb5 22  $\mathbb{Q}xa8$   $\mathbb{Q}xa8$  23  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ , and the opening of the position is clearly to the advantage of White, who has the two bishops. It is no better to play 19...f4 20  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{W}xe5$  21 axb5 axb5 22  $\mathbb{W}d3!$ .

The game continued: 19... $\mathbb{Q}a5$  20  $\mathbb{Q}f2!$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  (20...f4 21 b4; 20... $\mathbb{W}xe5$  21  $\mathbb{Q}e1!$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  22 axb5 axb5 23 b4!; 20... $\mathbb{Q}c4$  21 b3!  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  22 axb5 axb5 23  $\mathbb{Q}xa8$   $\mathbb{Q}xa8$  24  $\mathbb{Q}e1$  or 24  $\mathbb{Q}xf5!?$ ) 21  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}a7$  22  $\mathbb{W}e2!$  b4 23 cxb4 cxb4 24  $\mathbb{Q}xb6$   $\mathbb{W}xb6$  25  $\mathbb{Q}ad1$   $\mathbb{W}c5?$  (25...b3 26  $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  was more tenacious) 26  $\mathbb{Q}d3!$ , and soon White converted his advantage.

## 8. Kozul–Marjanovic (Yugoslav Championship, Novi Sad 1985, variation from the game).

It is clear that Black has to play for zugzwang. White will have to sacrifice his knight on f5, since if it moves anywhere else the rook will invade on the 2nd rank.

After 64  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  White has two possibilities: 65 e4 and 65 g4. Before turning to calculation, let's see whether it is possible to prevent at least one of them, in order to deny the opponent a choice.

63 . . .

$\mathbb{Q}g1!!$

In the event of 63... $\mathbb{Q}a5?$  64  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  65 g4!  $hxg4+$  66  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  White would have easily gained a draw: 66... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  67 f5  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  68  $\mathbb{Q}f4!$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  69  $\mathbb{Q}e5!$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  70 f6.

64  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$

$\mathbb{Q}xf5$

And 65 g4 is not possible because of 65...h4! 66  $gxf5$  h3.

Now let us analyse the consequences of 65 e4.

65 e4  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  66 f5  $\mathbb{Q}a3+$  67  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}f2$  68 f6

Other continuations also do not help:

68  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$  (68... $\mathbb{Q}xg3$  is also good) 69 e5  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  70 e6  $\mathbb{Q}xg3+$  71  $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}g4+!$  72  $\mathbb{Q}xh5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5;$

68 e5  $\mathbb{Q}f3+$  69  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  (69  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$  70 e6  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  71 f6  $\mathbb{Q}f5+!$ , transposing into the main variation 68 f6) 69... $\mathbb{Q}xg3$  (69... $\mathbb{Q}xg3$  70 f6  $\mathbb{Q}f3!$  is also possible; if 70 e6 Black has both 70...h4 71 f6 h3 72 f7  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  73 e7 h2 and 74...h1 $\mathbb{W}$ , and 70... $\mathbb{Q}f3$  71  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  h4 72 e7 h3) 70 e6  $\mathbb{Q}f1!$  71  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}e1$  72  $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  (72...h4) 73 f6  $\mathbb{Q}e5+!$  74  $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}f5.$

68... $\mathbb{Q}f3+$  69  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}e3!$

Not 69... $\mathbb{Q}xg3?$  70 e5! (70  $\mathbb{Q}xh5?$   $\mathbb{Q}f4!$ ) 70...h4 71 e6 h3 72 e7 h2 73 e8 $\mathbb{W}$  h1 $\mathbb{W}$  74  $\mathbb{W}e5+$  with a draw.

70 e5  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  71 e6  $\mathbb{Q}f5+!$  72  $\mathbb{Q}g6$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  73 e7  $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$  74  $\mathbb{Q}g7$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  75  $\mathbb{Q}f7$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$ , and Black wins.

## Max Dlugy

# A Novelty is born

When the most recent *Chess Informant* arrives in the mail, I really get excited! Now I can look at some of my favourite opening variations and see what novelties the world came up with, in the last few months. Now I'll be both armed with new exciting ideas and forewarned against unpleasant surprises in my next tournament.

I can look in the Queen's Gambit Accepted section and see that the line I started playing with Black in 1985 is all the rage now, but that I am still safe there. Skipping back to the Richter-Rauzer Sicilian B66 variation I've been playing since 1983, I find that Serper's novelty in the previous *Informant* has been virtually refuted by Ralf Lau's excellent 14  $\mathbb{Q}b1!$ . Good thing I did some work on that line before and that's not going to be a problem either. If I only knew how to handle that Grünfeld Defence!

Novelty, innovation, new idea, improvement – what are we talking about here? How is a novelty born?

This is a story about the evolution of one seemingly unimportant improvement in a ... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  variation of the Caro-Kann. It's only been played once on a GM level, but it was enough to put White's set-up out of commission.

The story starts with a game I played in the 1985 New York Open against Zoran Gajic, a player I felt I had to beat to have a shot at the top prizes in that first class Swiss.

### Gajic – Dlugy

New York Open 1985

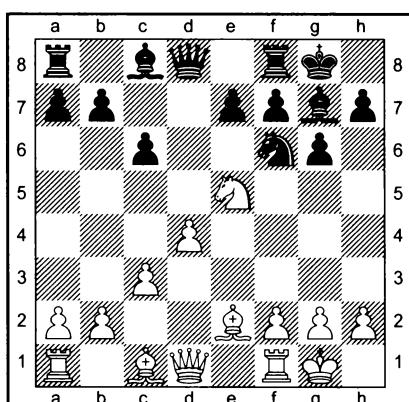
*Caro-Kann Defence*

1 e4	c6
2 d4	d5
3 $\mathbb{Q}d2$	$\mathbb{Q}xe4$
4 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$	$\mathbb{Q}d7$
5 $\mathbb{Q}f3$	$\mathbb{Q}gf6$
6 $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$	$\mathbb{Q}xf6$
7 $\mathbb{Q}e2$	g6
8 0-0	$\mathbb{Q}g7$
9 c3	

9 c4 is the topical line assessed as  $\pm$  in ECO. But more on that later.

9 ... 0-0

10  $\mathbb{Q}e5$



A well known and popular set-up back in 1985. After the usual 10... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  11  $\mathbb{Q}e1$  White maintains the centre and although Black doesn't have particular difficulties, it's ex-



tremendously hard to complicate the game. After some thought I came upon an interesting, if somewhat artificial knight manoeuvre in the attempt to mix it up.

- |                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 10 ...             | $\mathbb{Q}e8!$ |
| 11 $\mathbb{Q}f4$  | $\mathbb{Q}d6$  |
| 12 $\mathbb{Q}e1$  | $\mathbb{Q}e6$  |
| 13 $\mathbb{Q}g4?$ |                 |

My opponent is already confused by the new set-up and he begins an artificial knight manoeuvre of his own in the hope of attacking my king.

- |                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 13 ...             | $\mathbb{W}b6$  |
| 14 b4              | a5              |
| 15 $\mathbb{Q}h6+$ | $\mathbb{Q}h8$  |
| 16 a3              | $\mathbb{W}d8$  |
| 17 $\mathbb{Q}d3$  | $\mathbb{Q}b5$  |
| 18 $\mathbb{W}d2$  | axb4            |
| 19 axb4            | $\mathbb{Q}xa1$ |
| 20 $\mathbb{Q}xa1$ | $\mathbb{W}d5$  |
| 21 $\mathbb{Q}e1$  | $\mathbb{Q}d6$  |
| 22 h3              | $\mathbb{Q}a8$  |
| 23 $\mathbb{Q}g4$  | $\mathbb{Q}a2$  |
| 24 $\mathbb{W}c1$  | $\mathbb{W}b3$  |
| 25 $\mathbb{Q}g5$  | $\mathbb{Q}f5$  |
| 26 $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ | gxf5            |
| 27 $\mathbb{Q}h6$  |                 |

The knight comes back for more but this time he doesn't come home.

- |                    |    |
|--------------------|----|
| 27 ...             | f6 |
| 28 $\mathbb{Q}h4?$ |    |

After 28  $\mathbb{Q}h4!$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  29  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  30  $\mathbb{W}g3!$  White could have put Black's 'win at all costs' strategy to the test.

- |                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| 28 ...            | $\mathbb{Q}f8$  |
| 29 $\mathbb{W}e3$ | $\mathbb{Q}g7!$ |

The start of an unlikely king manoeuvre which is especially hard to stop in view of White's mounting time pressure.

- |                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 30 $\mathbb{W}f4?$ | $\mathbb{Q}g6!$ |
| 31 $\mathbb{W}g3+$ | $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ |

- |                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 32 $\mathbb{W}e3+$ | $\mathbb{Q}h5!$ |
| 33 $\mathbb{Q}g3$  | $\mathbb{Q}d7$  |
| 34 $\mathbb{Q}c7$  | $\mathbb{Q}g6$  |
| 35 $\mathbb{Q}d8$  | $\mathbb{Q}a8$  |
| 36 $\mathbb{W}g3+$ | $\mathbb{Q}f7$  |

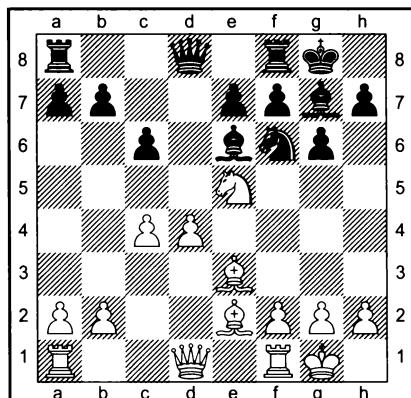
And Black, armed with an extra piece, won easily.

So the risky play paid off (I even managed to tie for first in the tournament), and I remembered the ... $\mathbb{Q}e8-d6$  manoeuvre as a distinct possibility in this variation.

Along comes the following:

**Gertler – Dlugy**  
Long Island Open 1985  
Caro-Kann Defence

- |                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1 e4               | c6              |
| 2 d4               | d5              |
| 3 $\mathbb{Q}d2$   | dxe4            |
| 4 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  | $\mathbb{Q}d7$  |
| 5 $\mathbb{Q}f3$   | $\mathbb{Q}gf6$ |
| 6 $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$ | $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ |
| 7 $\mathbb{Q}e5$   | $\mathbb{Q}e6$  |
| 8 $\mathbb{Q}e2$   | g6              |
| 9 0-0              | $\mathbb{Q}g7$  |
| 10 c4              | 0-0             |
| 11 $\mathbb{Q}e3$  |                 |



This, of course, is the main line favoured by

ECO. I stopped to think. Once again I need to complicate the game and make an effort to solve my opening problems at the same time. ECO gives 11... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ , 11... $\mathbb{W}c7$  and 11... $\mathbb{W}c8$  as the possible moves, evaluating the position as somewhat better for White in all lines. Remembering my experiment from earlier in the year I started contemplating 11... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ . And the more I looked – the more I liked it! The knight on d6 will be threatening the c4-pawn, the d4-pawn and e3-bishop via f5, while the opening of the long diagonal will make the break ...c6–c5 all the more plausible. In fact, I didn't really see what White could do to get any kind of play going. And so I played...

11 ...	$\mathbb{Q}e8!$
12 $\mathbb{Q}f3$	$\mathbb{Q}d6$
13 b3	$\mathbb{Q}f5$
14 $\mathbb{W}d2$	$\mathbb{Q}xe3$

Black is already equal and eventually he won a messy and somewhat lucky game.

In October of the same year I played in a GM tournament and once again encountered the same variation, this time against a tougher opponent.

### Gruenfeld – Drury

Manhattan Chess Club International 1985  
Caro-Kann Defence

(from previous diagram)

11 ...	$\mathbb{Q}e8!$
12 $\mathbb{Q}f4$	

White prepares to strike in the centre, but the attempt backfires as Black is extremely solid.

12 ...	$\mathbb{Q}d6$
13 d5	$\mathbb{W}xd5$
14 $\mathbb{W}xd5$	$\mathbb{Q}f5$
15 g4	$\mathbb{Q}c8$

White has gained some time at the cost of seriously compromising his pawn structure.

16 $\mathbb{W}d4$	$\mathbb{W}b6!$
-------------------	-----------------

In the ending only Black will have winning chances.

17 $\mathbb{Q}e3$	$\mathbb{W}xd4$
18 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$	e6!

The simplest way – Black completes his development.

19 $dxe6$	$\mathbb{Q}xe6$
20 $\mathbb{Q}fd1$	$\mathbb{Q}fd8$
21 b3	f5!
22 $\mathbb{W}xf5$	$\mathbb{Q}xf5$
23 $\mathbb{Q}b2$	$\mathbb{Q}ac8?$

23... $\mathbb{Q}h4$  with an advantage was stronger.

24 $\mathbb{Q}f3$	b6
25 $\mathbb{Q}b7$	$\mathbb{Q}b8$
26 $\mathbb{Q}e4$	$\mathbb{Q}d6$
27 $\mathbb{Q}d5$	$\mathbb{Q}xd5$
28 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$	$\mathbb{Q}f7$
29 $\mathbb{Q}xd8+$	$\mathbb{Q}xd8$
30 $\mathbb{Q}xf7$	$\mathbb{Q}xf7?$

Black's last chance to play for a win was 30... $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  31  $\mathbb{Q}xd8$   $\mathbb{Q}xa1$ .

31 $\mathbb{Q}xg7$	$\mathbb{Q}xg7$
32 $\mathbb{Q}c1$	$\mathbb{Q}d7$
33 a4	$\mathbb{Q}f6$
34 a5!	$\mathbb{W}xa5$
35 $\mathbb{Q}c5$	$\mathbb{Q}b7$
36 $\mathbb{Q}xa5$	$\mathbb{Q}xb3$

Draw.

Is this story over? Is the novelty born? In the same tournament Yehuda Gruenfeld put my novelty to a real test with an innovation of his own.

### Gruenfeld – Lein

New York 1985  
Caro-Kann Defence

(from previous diagram)

11 ...	$\mathbb{Q}e8$
12 $\mathbb{W}b3!$	

White targets the b7-pawn, tying Black's knight to its defence.



12 ...  $\mathbb{Q}d6$

13  $\mathbb{Q}ad1!$

White successfully defends his centre and keeps a comfortable edge.

13 ...  $\mathbb{W}c8$

14  $\mathbb{W}c3$

15 h3

16  $\mathbb{Q}f3$

17  $\mathbb{Q}fe1$

18  $\mathbb{Q}f1$

19  $\mathbb{Q}c1$

20 a4

21 b3

22  $\mathbb{Q}f4$

23 g3

24  $\mathbb{Q}g2$

25 dxc5

26  $\mathbb{Q}e3$

27  $\mathbb{Q}d4$

28  $\mathbb{W}c1$

29 gxf4

And White eventually converted his extra pawn into a full point.

Immediately after this game I started looking for improvements for Black after 12  $\mathbb{W}b3$ , but the longer I looked the more convinced I became that White had the upper hand. The tournament was over and I was off to Montpellier to watch the Candidates Tournament, to play in an Open there and to take lessons from Mark Dvoretsky.

Mark's approach to teaching chess is different from all other trainers; he teaches methods of thinking over anything else. We concentrated on prophylactics – or the prevention of your opponent's ideas, and when I came back to New York, I found the answer I was looking for. Instead of reacting to 12  $\mathbb{W}b3$ , Black has to prevent it! So I need the knight to go to d6, while preventing 12  $\mathbb{W}b3$ . The answer – 11... $\mathbb{Q}e4!!$ . The universal move. Now if 12  $\mathbb{W}b3$  Black plays 12... $\mathbb{Q}xe5!$

13 dxе5  $\mathbb{Q}d2!$  14  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $\mathbb{W}xd2$  with full equality, and all other moves transpose to 11... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  lines as Black safely reaches the d6-square with his knight.

The novelty is born!

Over a year later someone else caught up with me. It seems the great practitioner of prophylactics did his homework.

Behold!

### A.Sokolov – Karpov

Candidates Match 1987

*Caro-Kann Defence*

*(from previous diagram)*

11 ...  $\mathbb{Q}e4!!$

12  $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$

13 b3  $\mathbb{c}5!!$

14  $\mathbb{Q}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$

15 d5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

16 dxе6  $\mathbb{W}c7$

17 exf7+  $\mathbb{Q}xf7$

18 g3  $\mathbb{Q}af8$

19  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$

20 fxe3  $\mathbb{Q}xf1+$

21  $\mathbb{Q}xf1$

Draw.

You hardly see this once fashionable set-up for White against the ... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  Caro-Kann. It's been replaced by 5  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  and 5  $\mathbb{Q}c4$ . Yet when the new revised edition of ECO comes out I am sure the assessment of the line will revert from '=' to '}'. It takes quite a bit to erase a little plus sign, doesn't it?

P.S. Grandmaster Yuri Razuvayev reports having played 11... $\mathbb{Q}e4!!$  in numerous blitz games over 20 years ago against Karpov. He was surprised to see Karpov remember this move for his match against Sokolov. It seems there is nothing new under the sun, or is there?



Mark Dvoretsky

## Positional Exercises

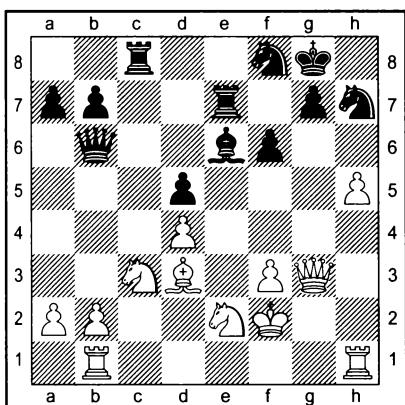
You have to solve ten exercises, connected with various aspects of positional play (manoeuvres, exchanges, prophylaxis etc.). Time for the taking of the decisions will be limited – from 5 to 15 minutes.

In my view, this is quite sufficient – after all, you don't have to calculate any lengthy and complicated variations. You merely have to approach the position correctly: try to gain a feeling for it, recognise the main problem facing you, and quickly point out the promising possibilities for you and your opponent.

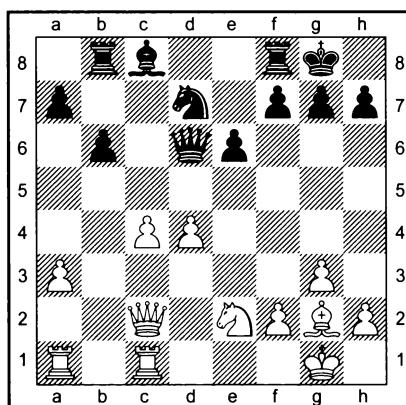
When you solve a study or try to find a forcing combination, on verification it is not difficult to ascertain (if, of course, the exercise is correct) that the solution devised is the only correct one, and that other continuations are significantly weaker. With

positional examples things are more complicated – here the situation sometimes allows different approaches. In comparing their strength, we base this not on precise variations, but on general evaluation, about which arguments are possible. Even so, I hope that in the exercises offered to you there will be no particular arguments – they have been carefully checked and already solved earlier by many of my pupils.

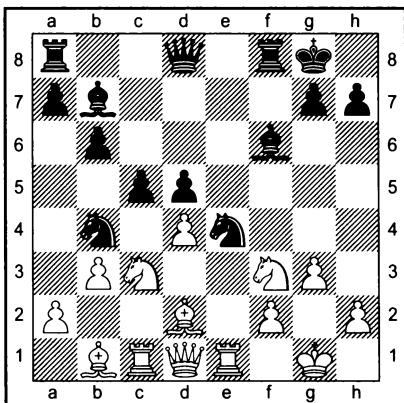
For each correct reply you receive two points, and for an incorrect one you score zero. If the reply is only partially correct, and you fail to give some important variations, then you receive one point. I assume that in some cases I will have to use intermediate values: a half or one and a half points.



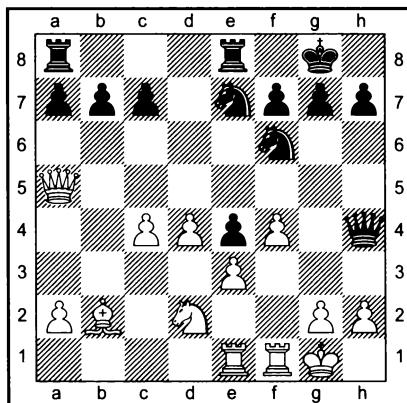
1. White to move (10 mins.)



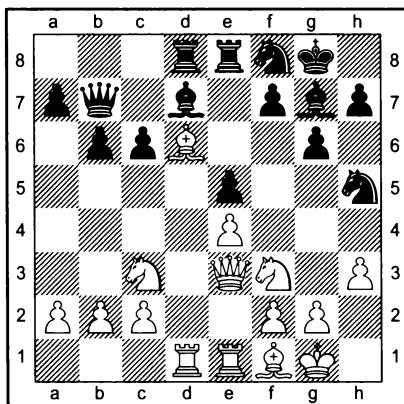
2. Black to move (5 mins.)



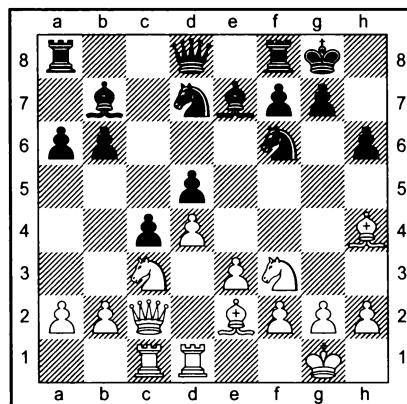
**3. White to move (10 mins.)**



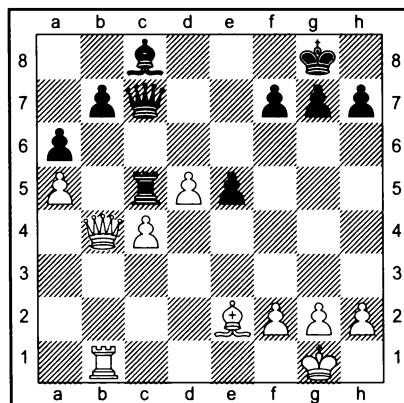
**4. Black to move (10 mins.)**



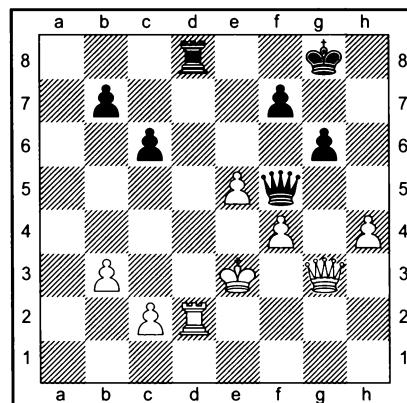
**5. White to move (10 mins.)**



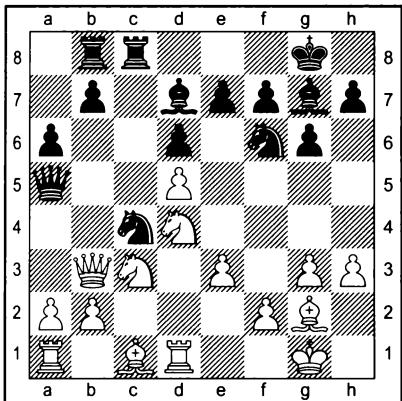
**6. White to move (5 mins.)**



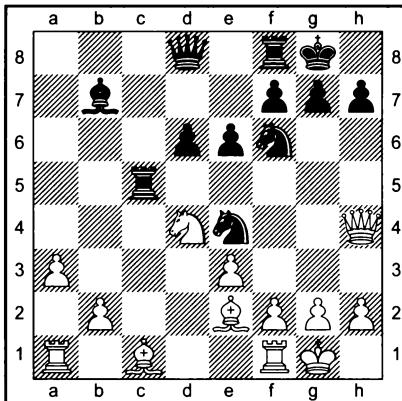
**7. White to move (15 mins.)**



**8. Black to move (15 mins.)**



**9. White to move (10 mins.)**



**10. Black to move (10 mins.)**

## Solutions

### 1. Knaak–Geller (Moscow 1982).

White has good attacking chances, but for the moment some of his pieces are not taking part in the activity on the kingside. He must first consolidate his position.

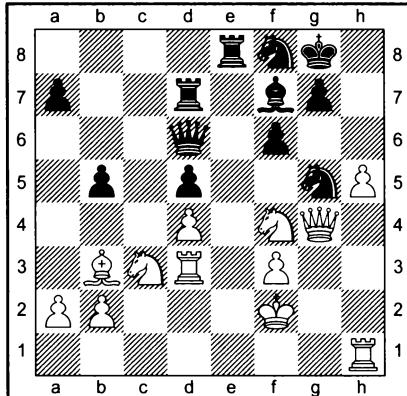
**22 ♜c2!**

An excellent regrouping. The bishop goes to b3, intensifying the pressure on the d5-point and simultaneously covering its own pawn on b2. Then the rook at b1 will defend the d4-pawn from d1, after which the knight will occupy the very important f4-point, once again attacking d5 and at the same time approaching the enemy king. Black is unable to oppose this plan of action. For example, in the event of 22...♜c4 there is the strong reply 23 ♜h4! followed by 24 ♜b3.

**22...♜f7 23 ♜b3 ♜ce8 24 ♜bd1 ♜g5**

In the event of 24...♜e3 25 ♜f4 ♜d6 White wins by 26 ♜fxd5! ♜e2+ 27 ♜xe2 ♜xe2+ 28 ♜xe2 ♜xg3 29 ♜e7+ ♜h8 30 ♜xf7.

**25 ♜f4 ♜d6 (25...♜e3 26 ♜fd5) 26 ♜d3!** (intending ♜g4 followed by ♜cxd5) 26...b5 27 ♜g4 ♜d7



White has a decisive advantage. The concluding moves were made in severe time-trouble.

**28 h6 (28 ♜cxd5 was simpler) 28...g6 29 ♜cxd5 (29 ♜xb5!?) 29...a5 (29...♜h7!?) 30 h7+ ♜gxh7? (30...♜h8! was essential) 31 ♜xg6** Black lost on time. His position is hopeless, as is apparent from the variation 31...♜xg6 32 ♜e7+ ♜exe7 33 ♜xg6+ ♜f8 34 ♜h6+ ♜e8 35 ♜xh7 ♜d8 36 ♜xf7 ♜f5.

**2. Zilberman–Taimanov (Moscow 1979).**

White is threatening to gain an advantage by advancing his c-pawn. This must be prevented.

17 ...

♔a6!

A good prophylactic move – it was suggested by nearly all the participants in the competition (18 c5? is not possible in view of 18...bxc5 19 dxc5 ♔xc5!). But Black had to reckon with the following reply by the opponent: anyone who did not see it receives only half a point.

18 ♕a4

Now the plausible 18...b5? is incorrect in view of 19 ♕b4! with a big advantage for White. Those who wanted to play this each lost a point.

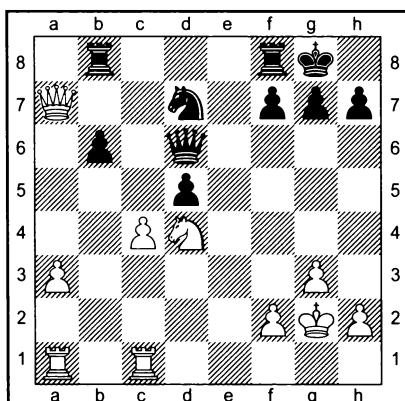
Vova Baklan earned one and a half points: he saw the refutation of ...b6–b5, but he did not manage to find the correct course, which, unfortunately, was suggested only by Sasha Chernosvitov.

18 ...

♗b7!

The capture of the a7-pawn is dangerous – the queen risks becoming trapped in the enemy position. White should reconcile himself to the roughly equal position arising after 19 ♕b4 ♕c7 20 d5 (20 ♔f4? ♗xg2 21 ♔xg2 ♕b7+ 22 ♔g1 e5!) 20...♔c5 21 ♔d1.

In the game there followed 19 ♕xa7? ♗xg2 20 ♔xg2 ♕c6+ 21 d5 (21 ♔g1 ♕a8) 21...exd5 22 ♔d4 ♕d6.



White is in serious difficulties, for example:

23 ♕a4 ♔e5! 24 cxd5 ♕xd5+ 25 f3 (25 ♔g1 ♕xd4) 25...b5. He should probably have sought salvation in the variation 23 ♔b5 ♕e6! 24 ♕e1 ♕c6 25 ♔d4 ♕xc4 26 ♔e6! (26 ♕xd7 ♕xd4 27 ♕ad1 ♕c5 is less good) 26...fxe6 27 ♕xd7.

23 ♕d1? ♔c5! (threatening ...♗b7 or ...♗a8; it does not help to play 24 ♔b5 ♕g6 25 ♕e7 dxc4) 24 ♔f5 ♕e5! 25 ♔e7+ ♔h8 26 ♕e1 (26 ♔c6 ♕e4+ 27 ♔g1 ♕b7) 26...♕d6 27 ♔f5 ♕f6 White resigned.

**3. Pinter–Adorjan (Prague 1985).**

17 ♔xe4!

dxe4

18 ♕xb4!

18 ♕xe4? ♕xe4 19 ♕xe4 is much weaker; Black can choose between 19...♔d5 20 ♕e2 ♕xa2 and 19...♔d3 20 ♕c3 ♕xf2 21 ♕xf2 ♕xd4+.

18 ... exf3

18...cbx4 19 ♕xe4 leads to the loss of a pawn without any compensation.

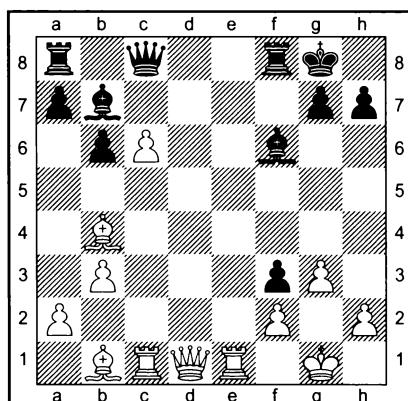
The game went 18...e3 19 ♕xf3 ♕c8 20 ♕c2! g6 21 dxc5 ♕g5 22 ♕d3 ♕c8 23 ♕c4+ ♕g7 24 ♕c3+ ♕h6 (24...♔f6 25 ♕d2) 25 h4 Black resigned.

19 dxc5

♕c8

19...bxc5 20 ♕xc5.

20 c6



This variation had to be calculated by White when he embarked on his operation. His position is won, for example: 20... $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  (20... $\mathbb{W}h3$  21  $\mathbb{W}xf3$ ) 21  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{W}h3$  22  $\mathbb{W}xh7+$   $\mathbb{W}xh7$  23  $\mathbb{Q}xh7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  24  $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ .

Jozsef Pinter found a purely concrete way of achieving an advantage. Only by a great stretch of the imagination can this example be called 'positional' (White carried out a series of favourable exchanges). But equally, White's solution cannot be called combinative – after all, nothing was sacrificed. It would perhaps be more correct to call it tactical.

Tactics are an immeasurably broader conception than combinations. When we say that Emanuel Lasker was a great tactician, we don't mean that he was constantly sacrificing something. No, simply the world champion was excellent at finding the strongest resources for both sides – accurate moves, precise variations.

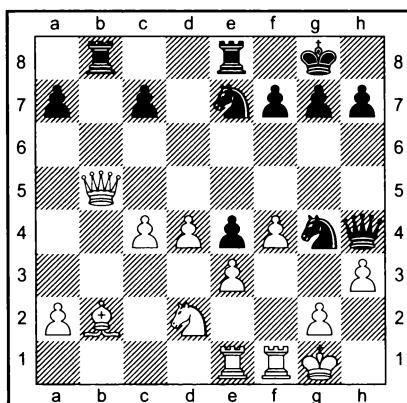
Tactical skill plays an enormous role in chess, and by no means only in sharp combinative situations. With its help a player can tenaciously hold difficult positions, constantly erecting new barriers in the opponent's path, or on the contrary, he can find the quickest way to convert an advantage. Even the solving of purely strategic problems in quiet positions cannot be done without tactical elements – after all, our plans can only be carried out by means of specific moves, which have to be seen and, if necessary, calculated.

#### 4. Lisitsyn–Tolush (Leningrad 1938).

What does White want? Without exception, all the participants in the competition correctly decided that Black should be thinking not about the defence of his c7-pawn, but about parrying the threat of the queen exchange ( $\mathbb{W}g5$ ). It is incorrect to play 18...c6? (or 18...b6?) 19  $\mathbb{W}g5!$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  (19... $\mathbb{W}xg5$  20  $\mathbb{fxg5}$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  21  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ ) 20  $\mathbb{W}xh4$   $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  21 f5!.

But, unfortunately, most of you chose a resourceful, but not very successful way of parrying the opponent's main idea – 18...b5?! (for it only half a point is awarded). After 19  $\mathbb{cxb5!}$  followed by 20  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  Black does not have sufficient compensation for the sacrificed pawn.

Less convincing is 19  $\mathbb{W}xb5?!$ , hoping for 19... $\mathbb{Tab8}$  20  $\mathbb{W}g5$   $\mathbb{W}xg5$  21  $\mathbb{fxg5}$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  22  $\mathbb{gx6}$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  23  $\mathbb{fxe7}$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  (or 23... $\mathbb{Q}xa2$  24  $\mathbb{Q}a1$ ) 24  $\mathbb{Q}f2$ , when in the rook ending the limit of Black's dreams is a draw. It is stronger to interpose 19... $\mathbb{Q}g4!$ , and only after 20 h3 – 20... $\mathbb{Tab8}$  (but not 20... $\mathbb{Q}eb8?$  21  $\mathbb{W}g5$   $\mathbb{W}xg5$  22  $\mathbb{fxg5}$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  23  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ ).



The reply 21  $\mathbb{W}a4?$  suggests itself, but it is prettily refuted by 21... $\mathbb{Q}f5!$  22  $\mathbb{hxg4}$   $\mathbb{Q}h6!$  with irresistible threats. White's position also looks anxious after 21  $\mathbb{W}a5?!$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  22  $\mathbb{hxg4}$   $\mathbb{W}xg4$  23  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}f5!$  24  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  followed by 25... $\mathbb{Q}h6$ . He is forced to play 21  $\mathbb{W}g5!$   $\mathbb{W}xg5$  22  $\mathbb{fxg5}$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  23  $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  24  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}h4$  25  $\mathbb{hxg4}$  or 24... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  25  $\mathbb{Q}f2$  with roughly equal chances.

The strongest is a cool-headed prophylactic move.

18 ...

**h6!**

After 19  $\mathbb{W}xc7?!$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  there is no satisfactory defence against the threat of 20... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ . For example: 20  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  21  $\mathbb{g3}$   $\mathbb{Q}xg3$  (21... $\mathbb{W}h3$



also looks tempting, intending either to capture the e3-pawn with the knight, or to play ...h6–h5–h4, or at an appropriate moment to nevertheless sacrifice the knight on g3) 22 hxg3  $\mathbb{W}xg3+$  23  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{W}h3+$  24  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  25  $\mathbb{B}ff2$   $\mathbb{B}ac8$  with advantage to Black.

After 20  $\mathbb{h}3$   $\mathbb{Q}g3$  Georgy Lisitsyn had to accept the loss of the exchange, since if 21  $\mathbb{B}f2$  there follows 21... $\mathbb{Q}g4!$ . 20... $\mathbb{W}g3?$ , attacking the e3-pawn, also came into consideration.

**Remember:** *a queen together with a knight (and the more so, with two knights) in the vicinity of the enemy king constitutes a powerful force!*

### 5. Beliavsky–Herzog (Mexico 1977).

White has an excellent position. It can be strengthened either by the quiet move 18 g3, or by 18  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  or 18  $\mathbb{Q}h2(h1)$ , preparing g2–g4. This is all not bad, but rather slow. The position lends itself to more energetic measures.

The only one to suggest the correct way was Ilya Makariev.

18 g4!  $\mathbb{Q}f4$

19  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

20  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xh3+$

21  $\mathbb{Q}xh3$

21  $\mathbb{W}xh3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  22 f4  $\mathbb{Q}ee8$  23 f5 (or 23 e5!? h5 24  $\mathbb{W}h4!$ ) was equally good.

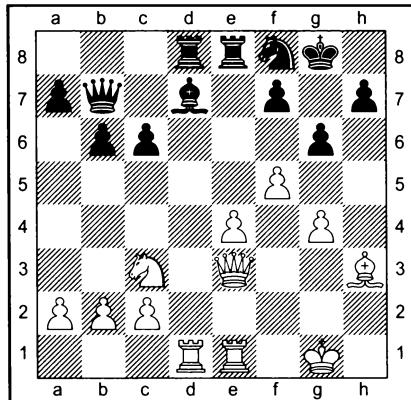
21 ...  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

22 f4  $\mathbb{Q}ee8$

23 f5

(see diagram)

The exchanging operation has enabled White to begin a very dangerous pawn storm. The f5-pawn has restricted the mobility of the opponent's bishop and knight. Things are bad for Black – White is threatening 24 f6 or 24 e5 followed by  $\mathbb{Q}e4$ .



– position after 23 f5 –

23...f6 24  $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  25  $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  (25  $\mathbb{Q}xf6?$  is weaker in view of 25... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  and 26... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ ) 25... $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  26 e5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  27  $\mathbb{W}xe5$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  28  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  29  $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  30  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{W}d5$  31  $\mathbb{Q}e6$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  32  $\mathbb{W}xf6$  Black resigned.

Why did this example prove so difficult? The sharp transformation of the position carried out by Alexander Beliavsky is somehow not in keeping with our usual approach to such favourable situations – in them we prefer to manoeuvre quietly, gradually improving the placing of the pieces. And sometimes we will miss favourable concrete possibilities. Generally speaking, the transformation of an advantage is a psychologically difficult procedure, demanding at the same time both dynamic thinking, and subtle positional evaluation.

Later the American player Maurice Ashley suggested another, also very concrete way of playing for White: 18  $\mathbb{Q}c4?$ . The pressure on the f7-point is rather unpleasant, and also the strategic threat 19 g4  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  20  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  remains in force. The critical reply is 18... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ . Then follows the unexpected 19  $\mathbb{Q}xf8!$   $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  20  $\mathbb{Q}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  (20... $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  21  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  is no better) 21  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  22  $\mathbb{Q}xe5!$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  23  $\mathbb{W}d4$ . However, this clever idea can be called into question by 20... $\mathbb{Q}xf8!$  21  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  22  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  (22  $\mathbb{Q}d8+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7!$ , but not 22... $\mathbb{Q}e8?$  23

$\text{Wd}2$ ) 22... $\text{Ee}8$  23  $\text{Qxh}7+$   $\text{Qg}8$  24  $\text{Qg}5$   $\text{Qh}6$ , when the position remains unclear.

### 6. Hort-Karpov (Amsterdam 1981).

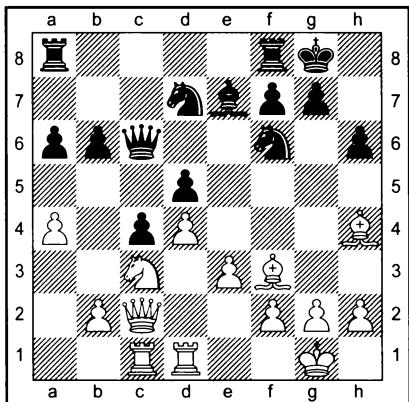
Black obviously wants to play ... $b6-b5$ , supporting his  $c4$ -pawn and preparing ... $\text{Ee}4$  or ... $\text{Qb}6$ . The same reply 14... $b5!$  follows both after the attempt to undermine the pawn chain by 14  $b3$ , and after the tempting 14  $\text{Qe}5$ .

**14 a4!**

An important prophylactic move. Now 15  $b3$  and 15  $\text{Qe}5$  are dangerous positional threats for White.

Anatoly Karpov played badly and was soon in serious difficulties.

14... $\text{Qc}6?!$  (in order to answer 15  $b3$  with 15... $b5$ ) 15  $\text{Qe}5$   $\text{Wc}7$  16  $\text{Qxc}6$   $\text{Wxc}6$  17  $\text{Qf}3$



After the exchange of Black's bishop his  $d5$ -pawn has become weak. 18  $\text{Qxd}5$  is threatened. After 17... $\text{Ee}8$  White has the strong reply 18  $\text{Qxf}6$   $\text{Qxf}6$  19  $e4$ , while if 17... $\text{Qae}8$ , then 18  $b3!$   $b5$  19  $\text{axb}5$   $\text{axb}5$  20  $\text{Wf}5!$ .

17... $\text{Qb}4?$  18  $\text{Qxd}5!$   $\text{Qxd}5$  19  $\text{Wf}5$  (but not 19  $\text{Wxc}4?$   $\text{Wxc}4$  20  $\text{Qxc}4$  in view of 20... $b5$  followed by ... $\text{Qb}7b6$ ) 19... $\text{Wxa}4$  20  $\text{Qxd}5$   $\text{Qac}21$   $b3!$   $\text{cx}b3$  22  $\text{Qxc}8$   $\text{Qxc}8$  23  $\text{Wxf}7+$   $\text{Qh}8$  24  $\text{Qxb}3$   $\text{Wb}5$  25  $\text{Qe}6$   $\text{Qf}8$  26  $\text{Qxd}7!$  (not 26  $\text{Wxd}7?!$   $\text{Wh}5!$ ) Black resigned.

The solution that you are looking for does not necessarily lead to immediate success. If the opponent also rises to the occasion and finds the best response, the outcome often remains unclear. That is the case here: although 14  $a4!$  was undoubtedly correct, if Black had replied 14... $\text{Ee}8!$  he would have retained a defensible position. Incidentally, 14... $\text{Qe}4?!$  was weaker in view of 15  $\text{Qxe}7$   $\text{Wxe}7$  16  $\text{Qxe}4$   $\text{dx}e4$  17  $\text{Qd}2$   $b5$  18  $b3!.$

### 7. Geller-Fischer (Curaçao Candidates 1962).

White has to reckon with the threat of 29... $\text{Wxa}5$ . He doesn't want to put his rook on  $a1$  – this is too passive. Nothing is achieved by 29  $\text{Wb}6$   $\text{Wxb}6$  30  $\text{Qxb}6$  (30  $\text{axb}6$   $\text{Qf}8$ ) 30... $\text{Qf}8!$  (of course, not 30... $\text{Qxa}5?$  31  $\text{Qd}6$ ) 31  $d6$   $\text{Qxa}5$  32  $h3$   $\text{Qc}5$ , and he is also unsuccessful with 29  $\text{Qd}1$   $\text{Wxa}5$  30  $\text{Wxa}5$   $\text{Wxa}5$  31  $d6$   $\text{Qd}7$  32  $\text{Qb}1$   $b5$ .

But if he were able to play his rook to  $b6$ ... This would solve the problem of the  $a5$ -pawn, and Black's central blockade would prove insecure.

**29  $\text{Wa}4!$**

$\text{Qd}7$

29... $\text{Qf}8$  30  $\text{Qb}6$ .

**30  $\text{Wa}3!$**

31  $\text{Qxb}7$  is threatened, and if 30... $\text{Qc}8$  there follows 31  $\text{Qb}6$  with a decisive positional advantage. Black is forced to capture the  $a5$ -pawn with his rook, allowing the counter-stroke on  $b7$ . 30... $\text{Wxa}5$  31  $\text{Wxa}5$   $\text{Qxa}5$  32  $\text{Qxb}7$  is totally bad for him.

30 ...

$\text{Wxa}5$

31  $\text{Qxb}7!$

Diana Darchiya and Sergey Movsesian suggested 31  $\text{We}7?!$ , which is much weaker – because of this they each lost half a point. The completely correct solution was found by Vova Baklan and Vadim Zviagintsev.

31 ...

$\text{Wxb}7$

31... $\text{Wxa}3$  is hopeless: 32  $\text{Qxc}7$   $\text{Qa}1+$  33  $\text{Qf}1$   $\text{Qf}5$  34  $g4!$  (34  $f3$   $h5$  35  $\text{Qf}2$   $\text{Qa}2+$  is far less



convincing) 34... $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  35  $\mathbb{h}3!$ ? (35  $\mathbb{Q}g2$ ) 35... $\mathbb{Q}xh3$  36  $\mathbb{Q}h2$  – after the exchange of bishops, the connected passed pawns in the centre decide the outcome.

**32  $\mathbb{W}xa5$**

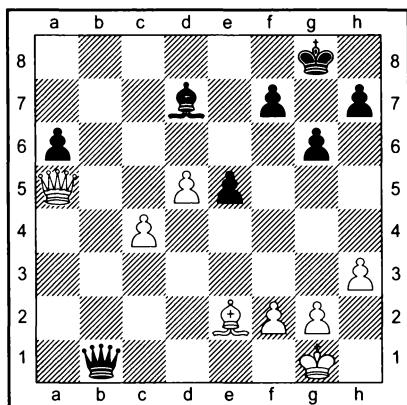
White has achieved a decisive positional superiority.

**32 ...**

**g6**

**33 h3**

**$\mathbb{W}b1+$**



**34  $\mathbb{Q}h2?$**

As Garry Kasparov pointed out, 34  $\mathbb{Q}f1!$  was correct: 34... $\mathbb{W}b7$  35  $\mathbb{W}d8+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  36  $\mathbb{W}e7$  or 34... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  35 d6  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  36 d7. The move in the game allows Black a saving chance.

**34 ...**

**$\mathbb{Q}f5?$**

34... $\mathbb{W}c2$  35  $\mathbb{W}d8+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  36  $\mathbb{W}xd7$   $\mathbb{W}xe2$  was necessary. The variation by Braslav Rabar: 37  $\mathbb{W}c7$  a5 38 f4! a4 (38...exf4 39  $\mathbb{W}xf4$ ) 39 fx5 a3 40 e6 a2 41  $\mathbb{W}xf7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  42  $\mathbb{W}f6$  contains many weak points. For example, instead of 37...a5 Black can consider 37... $\mathbb{W}e4!$ ? 38 g3  $\mathbb{W}d4$  39  $\mathbb{Q}g1$  e4, and on the next move 37... $\mathbb{W}e3!$ ? gives a draw. Finally, instead of the 'cooperative' 40...a2? there is 40... $\mathbb{W}f2!$  41 e7 (41  $\mathbb{W}e5+$  f6!) 41... $\mathbb{W}e3$ , and Black saves the game,

**35  $\mathbb{W}c3!$**

White has consolidated and his central pawns have become a powerful force.

35... $\mathbb{W}e4$  36  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{W}d4?$ ! (36... $\mathbb{W}d3$  was more tenacious) 37  $\mathbb{W}xd4$  exd4 38 g4!  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  38...a5 39 gxf5 a4 40 d6  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  41 c5 or 38... $\mathbb{Q}c2$  39 c5 d3 40 c6  $\mathbb{Q}a4$  41 d6 was no better.

**39 c5 a5 40 c6  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  41 d6**

Here the game was adjourned, and Fischer resigned: 41... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  42  $\mathbb{Q}d1$ , 41...d3 42 d7  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  43 cxd7  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  44  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  d2 45  $\mathbb{Q}a4$ , or 41...a4 42 c7 a3 43  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  a2 44 d7  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  45  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  a1 $\mathbb{W}$  46 c8 $\mathbb{W}+$ .

#### 8. Karpov–Lerner (Moscow 1983).

Black is a pawn down. Should he exchange rooks? At first sight it may seem that his hopes of counterplay involve creating an attack against the white king, which is stuck in the middle of the board, which means that the rooks should not be exchanged. That is how Konstantin Lerner reasoned, in choosing 41... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ ?

But after 42  $\mathbb{Q}g2!$  (42  $\mathbb{Q}h2?$ ! f6! was less accurate) there was the terrible threat of exchanging the queens: 43  $\mathbb{W}g4!$ . In the rook ending White's extra pawn and centralised king would give him an easy win.

But if the exchange is avoided, he is the first to begin an attack on the enemy king: 42... $\mathbb{W}d7$  43 h5  $\mathbb{Q}d8$  44 hxg6  $\mathbb{W}d4+$  45  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{W}d1+$  (45... $\mathbb{W}d5+$  46  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  was more tenacious) 46  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}f1$  47  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  f5 48  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{W}b5$  49  $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{W}c5+$  50  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  Black resigned.

A similar picture arises after 41... $\mathbb{Q}a8$ ? 42  $\mathbb{Q}h2!$  (better than 42  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}a1$ !). If 42... $\mathbb{Q}a1$ , then 43 h5, but otherwise White offers the advantageous exchange of queens: 42... $\mathbb{W}h5$  43  $\mathbb{W}f3$  or 42... $\mathbb{Q}a2$  43  $\mathbb{W}g5$ .

It turns out that the rooks should have been exchanged.

**41 ...**

**$\mathbb{Q}xd2!$**

41... $\mathbb{Q}d5?$  is much weaker in view of 42  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  cxd5 43  $\mathbb{W}g2!$  d4+ 44  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}xf4+$  45  $\mathbb{W}e4$ , and White should win the queen ending. All his pawns are securely defended by the

queen, whereas the black b7-pawn is weak and will soon be won.

**42 ♜xd2**

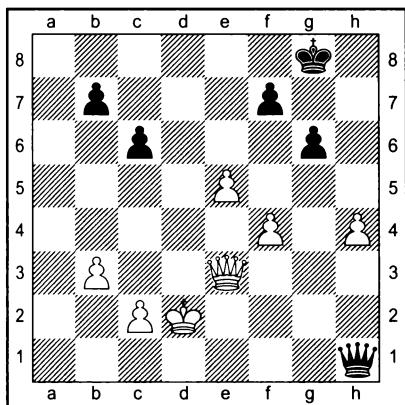
♛e4

**43 ♛e3**

43 h5 ♜d4+ 44 ♜e2 ♜e4+.

**43 ...**

♚h1



After 44 ♜f2 ♜e4 (or 44...♚h7) the material advantage is not felt in view of the activity of the black queen and the vulnerability of the white pawns. Black retains excellent drawing chances.

### 9. Korchnoi-Geller (Candidates Match, 7th Game, Moscow 1971).

Black is more actively placed. In particular White has to reckon with a pawn offensive on the queenside: ...b7–b5–b4. How can this be opposed? The correct solution was found by Maxim Boguslavsky and Vadim Zviagintsev.

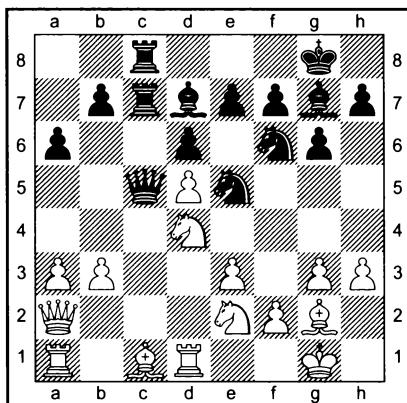
**17 a3!!**

A subtle prophylactic move. If 17...b5 White intends 18 ♜a2! and then ♜b4, exploiting the weakness of the c6-square. At the same time he plans to evict the powerful knight from c4 by ♜a2, ♜ce2 and b2–b3.

Yefim Geller was unable to devise an effective counter-plan, and as a result White soon completed the development of his pieces and seized the initiative. Black should have opted for a change of the pawn

structure, by advancing his e-pawn: 17...e6!? 18 dxe6 fxe6 (recommended by Alexander Shabalov), or 17...b5 18 ♜a2 e5! 19 dxe6 fxe6.

**17...♜c5 18 ♜a2 ♜c7 19 ♜ce2! ♜bc8**  
(19...♜xd5? 20 ♜b3) **20 b3 ♜e5!?** (20...♜b6 21 e4 with an obvious advantage to White)



**21 ♜d2!?**

With the opponent's pieces so active, White has to be extremely careful. In the event of 21 f4?! ♜b6(a7) the immediate capture of the knight is clearly bad – 22 fxe5? dxe5 (with the threat of the rook invasion at c2), while after 22 ♜b1 (or 22 ♜b1) 22...♜e8 it also looks risky.

But 21 e4!? followed by 22 ♜e3 deserved serious consideration.

**21...♜e8** (21...♜xd5? 22 b4) **22 ♜ac1 ♜b6**  
**23 ♜xc7 ♜xc7 24 ♜c3 ♜b5 25 ♜d2 ♜xe2**  
**26 ♜a5! ♜a7 27 ♜xe2 ♜c8 28 ♜c1 ♜b8 29 ♜c2** (29 ♜xc8+!?) **30 ♜c1 ♜c5 31 ♜xc5 ♜xc5 32 ♜c2 ♜e8 33 ♜d4**, and White stands clearly better – he has the two bishops and more space.

An example typical of Victor Korchnoi's play. He aimed for positions with a spatial advantage, even if this involved a certain risk. By cool-headed actions he usually managed to extinguish the opponent's activity and, by exploiting his strategic trumps, seize the initiative.



### 10. Gavrikov–Vitolins (Severodonetsk 1982).

Black is a pawn down, and his opponent is intending f2–f3. He must act with the utmost energy. By resourceful play Alvis Vitolins succeeds in emphasising the insecure position of the enemy king.

17 ... g5!

18 ♜h3

18 ♜h6 is completely bad: 18...g4 with the threat of 19...♜h5 20 ♜f4 e5.

18 ... g4!

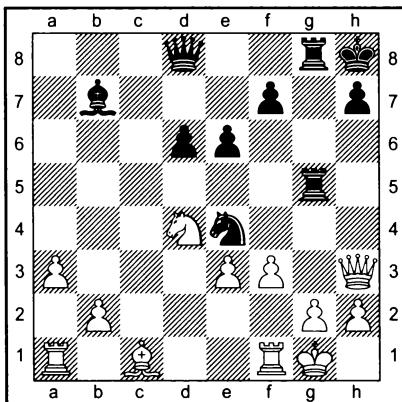
19 ♜xg4 ♜xg4

20 ♜xg4+ ♜g5

At the cost of another pawn, Black's bishop and rook have established coordination – they are both attacking the g2-point. But the calculation of the variation should probably be continued for a couple more moves.

21 ♜h3 ♜h8

22 f3 ♜fg8!



After 23 fxe4 ♜xg2+ Black retains a dangerous attack. It is impossible to calculate all its consequences in advance, but it is clear that there is practically no risk of losing, whereas a win may well be found (although it also may not). I, incidentally, do not see one. Here is a possible variation: 24 ♜xg2 ♜xe4 (24...♜xg2+!?) 25 ♜xg2 ♜g5+) 25 ♜f3 (25 ♜f2; 25 ♜g3!?) 25...♜xg2+ 26 ♜xg2 ♜g5+ (26...♜h4 27 h3) 27 ♜f2 ♜f5 28 ♜g3!.

The game concluded 23 g4? ♜g6 (threatening 24...♜g5) 24 ♜h5?! (if 24 ♜g2 Black would have replied 24...♜h4 or 24...f5) 24...♜f6 25 ♜b5 ♜xg4 26 fxg4 ♜h4, and White resigned in view of 27 ♜xb7 ♜xg4+ 28 ♜h1 ♜xh2+!.

Let us sum up. The competition proved significantly more difficult for you than I expected. Only Vadim Zviagintsev correctly solved more than half of the exercises. By a large margin he took first place (with twelve and a half points). In second place was Petya Kirjakov with three points less, while Vova Baklan finished third.

As you see, taking a positionally correct decision in a limited time is no easier than finding a combination or accurately calculating a long variation. Probably because here you simultaneously have to display both a correct evaluation of the resulting position, and a clear vision of the tactical resources. The slightest mistake in either of these factors makes the search much more difficult, demands additional expenditure of time, and in general takes you far away from the correct course.

## PART II

# Ways of Looking for Positional Solutions

Artur Yusupov

## Manoeuvring

One of the most complicated elements of positional play is the shifting of the struggle from one part of the board to another. The point is that a game is rarely won by breaking through the opponent's defences at one place. Normally one has to seek roundabout ways and try to give the opponent new weaknesses, in order to then begin manoeuvring against them. This procedure is closely linked with the principle of two weaknesses, which we have mentioned many times. This is one of the most important components in the technique of converting an advantage.

If the following game had been played by Aaron Nimzowitsch, it would certainly have been included in the chapter 'Manoeuvring against enemy weaknesses when possessing a spatial advantage' from his book *Chess Praxis*.

It is useful to follow how Anand constantly changed the direction of the attack, creating one problem after another for the opponent, and how subtly he combined offensive and prophylactic actions. The superficial impression, that Gata Kamsky lost the game submissively, proves deceptive: simply he was confronted with insoluble problems, defending on different fronts. The following

thought from Nimzowitsch's book gives an excellent description both of the events in this game, and of the essence of manoeuvring against weaknesses:

*'The process of manoeuvring against two weaknesses can roughly be characterised as follows: two weaknesses, in themselves quite defendable, are in turn put under fire, the attacker relying mainly on his territorial superiority – his superior lines of communication. The game is lost because at some moment the defender is unable to keep pace with the opponent in speed of regrouping.'*

Anand – Kamsky  
PCA Candidates Match, 9th Game, Las Palmas 1995  
Ruy Lopez

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**

In this match Kamsky pinned his hopes on the Zaitsev Variation of the Ruy Lopez. In my view, this game practically decided the outcome of the entire duel. Victory in it gave Anand additional confidence. In turn, Kamsky's failure forced him to change his opening and to take a risk in the 11th game, by playing the Sicilian Defence, which proved disastrous for him.

**11 ♜bd2**

**♞f8**

**12 a4**

**h6**

**13 ♜c2**

**exd4**

**14 cxd4**

**♝b4**

**15 ♜b1**

**♛d7**

Kamsky constantly varied his handling of the Zaitsev Variation. The move made by him, apart from the abstract aim of connecting the rooks, also has a somewhat more camouflaged aim: if 16 axb5 Black can recapture with the queen, creating the threat of ...♝d3. The standard 16 e5 dx5 17 dx5 ♜h5 18 axb5 led after 18...♛xb5 19 ♜b3 ♜ad8 to double-edged play in the game Beliavsky–Smejkal (Sarajevo 1982). Theory recommends 16 ♜a3, but in this case, by continuing 16...bxa4, Black gains a tempo compared with the variation 15...bxa4 16 ♜xa4 a5 17 ♜a3 ♛d7.

**16 b3!?**

Anand deviates from the well-studied paths and employs a rare, but solid and logical continuation. White does not hurry to determine the situation either in the centre, or on the queenside, preferring first to complete his development.

**16 . . .**

**g6**

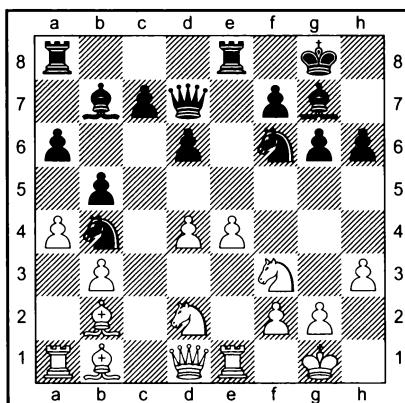
16...c5?! is premature, since after 17 ♜b2 the white bishop begins to threaten the knight on f6. True, in the variation 17...cx d4 18 ♜xd4 ♛d8 (Anand) Black can hold on: 19 axb5 axb5 20 ♜xa8 ♜xa8 21 ♜e2 ♜c6, but the simple 18 ♜xd4 sets him more unpleasant problems.

**17 ♜b2**

This natural move would appear to be a novelty. In the only game known to me in which this position occurred, Van der Wiel–Karpov (Amsterdam 1991), White continued 19 axb5 (on moves 11–12 the players employed a repetition of moves, typical of this variation – 11 ♜g5 ♜f8 12 ♜f3 ♜e8, and the move order was also different: instead of 13...exd4 the game went 15...♛d7 16 b3 exd4 17 cxd4 ♜b4 18 ♜b1 g6) 19...♛xb5!? 20 d5, but after 20...c6 21 ♜b2 ♜h5 Black created counterplay in the centre.

**17 . . .**

**♝g7**



**18 ♛c1!**

This subtle prophylactic move is significantly stronger than 18 d5, when there could have followed 18...c6, suggested by Van der Wiel. White defends his bishop and prepares a regrouping on the long diagonal: ♜c3 and ♜b2. Simultaneously he takes control of the f4-square and defends against the possible movement there of the black knight (now if 18...♞h5 there follows the simple 19 ♜f1). The white pieces begin as though to by-pass the knight on b4, which is gradually transformed into a detached observer.

**18 . . .**

**♝ac8?!**

Black prepares the ...c7–c5 advance, but now in many variations White acquires additional possibilities on the a-file. The immediate 18...c5 looks stronger, since if 19

dxc5 Black has 19... $\mathbb{Q}ac8!$  (19...dxc5 is weaker because of Anand's suggestion 20  $\mathbb{W}xc5 \mathbb{Q}xe4$  21  $\mathbb{Q}xe4 \mathbb{Q}xb2$  22  $\mathbb{Q}xb7!$ ). However, then he would have to reckon with 19 e5!?

**19  $\mathbb{Q}c3$**

**20 d5**

**c5**

**$\mathbb{W}e7?$ !**

Anand gives an interesting assessment of the position: 'It is not hard to see what White's advantage comprises. He has two "bad pieces" – bishop at b1 and rook at a1, but both contain considerable potential energy. It will be easy for me to open the a-file "at my leisure", while the bishop is restraining the f7–f5 break. But Black's knight at b4 and bishop at b7 are simply bad – and this is the main distinction.'

In view of the constant threat of an invasion on the a-file it is extremely difficult for Black to carry out a blockade on the dark squares, which is practically his only plan: ... $\mathbb{W}e7$  and ... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ . Therefore he should have considered the immediate 20... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  21  $\mathbb{Q}xg7 \mathbb{Q}xg7$  (21... $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  22  $\mathbb{Q}f1$  with advantage) 22  $\mathbb{W}b2+$  f6, although this position looks in favour of White. I prefer another defensive manoeuvre: 22... $\mathbb{W}d8?$ !, retaining the possibility of covering the queenside with the queen. After 23  $\mathbb{Q}f1$  Black can choose between 23... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  followed by ... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ , and 23... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  24  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ .

**21  $\mathbb{Q}f1$**

The knight has no future on d2, and so White transfers it to the kingside. The routine 21  $\mathbb{W}b2$  would merely have eased the opponent's defence, but now in the event of Kamsky's planned exchange of dark-square bishops the white queen will exert unpleasant pressure along the c1–h6 diagonal.

**21 ...**

**$\mathbb{Q}h7$**

The knight on h7 proves to be out of play. 21... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  is also dubious: 22  $\mathbb{Q}xg7 \mathbb{Q}xg7$  23  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  followed by  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  (but not Ludek Pachman's recommendation 23 g4? in view of 23... $\mathbb{W}f6!$ ). It looks better to play 21... $\mathbb{Q}d7$

22  $\mathbb{Q}xg7 \mathbb{Q}xg7$  23 axb5 axb5 24  $\mathbb{Q}a7 \mathbb{Q}b8$  25  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  h5, although in this case too White holds the initiative.

**22  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$**

**23  $\mathbb{Q}e3$**

**$\mathbb{Q}xg7$**

This knight causes Black serious anxiety. The threat is 24  $\mathbb{Q}g4$ . He is forced to weaken somewhat his castled position.

**23 ...**

**h5**

Anand also analyses other possibilities for Black:

1) 23... $\mathbb{W}f6$  24  $\mathbb{Q}g4!$   $\mathbb{W}xa1$  25  $\mathbb{W}xh6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  26 e5!  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  (26... $\mathbb{W}c3$  is weaker: 27  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  fxg6 28  $\mathbb{Q}f6+\mathbb{Q}xf6$  29  $\mathbb{W}xg6+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  30  $\mathbb{W}xf6+\mathbb{Q}g8$  31  $\mathbb{Q}e4!$ ) 27  $\mathbb{Q}gxe5!$  dxe5 28  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $\mathbb{W}xe1+$  29  $\mathbb{Q}xe1$  fxg6 30  $\mathbb{W}xg6+$  with advantage;

2) 23... $\mathbb{Q}g5$  24  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  hxg5 (or 24... $\mathbb{W}xg5$  25 axb5 axb5 26 f4! 'with strong prospects on both wings' – Anand) 25 axb5 axb5 26  $\mathbb{Q}a5!$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  27  $\mathbb{Q}a7$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  (if 27... $\mathbb{W}b6$ , then 28  $\mathbb{Q}f5+$  gxf5 29  $\mathbb{W}xg5+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  30  $\mathbb{W}h6+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  31 e5!) 28  $\mathbb{Q}f5!$  gxf5 (28... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  29  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{W}xb7$  30  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ ) 29  $\mathbb{W}xg5+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  30  $\mathbb{W}h6+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  31 e5! with a very strong attack.

**$\mathbb{Q}d2$**

One of many subtle positional moves in this game. White methodically strengthens his position, exploiting the fact that the opponent has no active counterplay. Now Black has to reckon with a possible  $\mathbb{Q}d4$ .

**24 ...**

**$\mathbb{Q}g8$**

24... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  is dangerous in view of 25  $\mathbb{Q}h4$ , while if 24... $\mathbb{W}f6$  White has 25  $\mathbb{Q}a3$ . Possibly, if Black had foreseen the following manoeuvre by his opponent, he would have chosen the lesser evil – 24... $\mathbb{W}xa3$ !, although in this case the white knight would have gained an excellent post at c4.

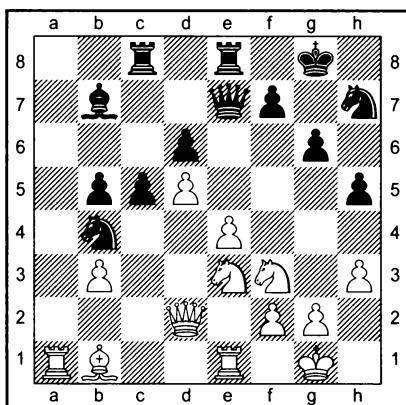
**25 axb5!**

White has waited for a long time before opening the a-file, but now, when the opponent has focused his attention on the kingside, Anand suddenly switches to the queenside.



25 ...

axb5



26 ♜d1!!

An excellent and timely manoeuvre, consolidating White's advantage. He prevents the defence-relieving move ...♝g5, and the opponent now has to reckon with the central breakthrough e4–e5. But, above all, it transpires that in the enemy position there is a serious weakness – the b5-pawn. The same manoeuvre, but without the preliminary exchange on b5, would have been weaker in view of 25...bxa4 (cf. the note to Black's 24th move).

The following stage of the game can serve as a textbook illustration of how to manoeuvre against enemy weaknesses.

26 ...

♜a6

Black is forced to defend passively. If 26...♝a8 White has the unpleasant 27 ♜xa8 ♜xa8 28 ♜c3 ♜d7 29 e5.

27 ♜c3

b4

28 ♜b5

28 ♜a4 with the idea of ♜b6–c4 also looks good.

28 ...

♜c7

29 ♜d3

Even the exchange of knights does not bring Black any relief. The light-square bishop moves with gain of tempo to an active position. A structure favourable for White has

arisen, one that is typical of certain variations of the Benoni Defence.

29 ...

♝xb5

30 ♜xb5

♝ed8

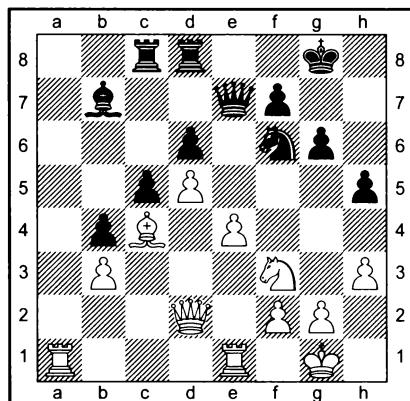
31 ♜c4

After this seemingly modest move there is the strong threat of a breakthrough in the centre.

31 ...

♝f6

In the event of 31...f6 the line recommended by Pachman is interesting: 32 e5 fxe5 33 ♜xe5 ♜f6 (33...dxe5 34 d6+ ♜g7 35 dxe7 ♜xd2 36 ♜xd2 ♜c6 37 ♜a7 ♜e8 38 ♜e4) 34 ♜ee1 ♜e8 35 ♜a7.



32 ♜h6!

White makes use of all the space on the board and all the resources of the position to disrupt the coordination of the opponent's forces. Now the threat is 33 e5 dxe5 34 d6 and 35 ♜xg6+.

32 ...

♝f8

The only move. The suicidal 32...♝xe4? is met by the simple 33 ♜a2 with the irresistible threat of 34 ♜ae2.

33 ♜g5

33 ♜f4 is also good.

33 ...

♝g7

If 33...♝h7 34 ♜f4, and the black pieces are even more badly placed. 33...♜e7 is no

better in view of 34  $\mathbb{Q}a7!$ .

**34  $\mathbb{Q}a7$**

For nine moves White has patiently been awaiting the most convenient moment to invade with his rook. After the white queen's diversionary raid on the kingside, the turn has come for active play on the queenside.

**34 . . .**

**$\mathbb{Q}c7$**

34... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  is strongly met by 35 e5!  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  (35... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  36 e6 fxe6 37  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ , or 35...dxe5 36  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}dc7$  37 d6 and wins) 36 e6  $\mathbb{Q}dc7$  37 exf7+  $\mathbb{W}xf7$  38  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  (Anand).

**35  $\mathbb{Q}a6$**

**$\mathbb{Q}b8$**

35... $\mathbb{Q}dd7$  also loses to Anand's suggestion 36  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{Q}xb7$  37  $\mathbb{Q}a8+$ !  $\mathbb{Q}h7$  38  $\mathbb{W}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  39 e5 dxe5 40  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  with complete domination.

**36 e5!**

Now, when the opponent's forces are tied down both on the queenside, and on the kingside, the breakthrough in the centre finally destroys his defences.

**36 . . .**

**$\mathbb{Q}e8$**

36...dxe5 is bad because of 37 d6  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  38  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ .

**37  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$**

**$\mathbb{Q}cxb7$**

**38  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$**

**$\mathbb{Q}xb7$**

**39  $\mathbb{W}d8$**

**$\mathbb{W}f8$**

**40  $\mathbb{Q}a1!$**

The cleanest solution, securing White a decisive gain of material. The plausible 40 e6 fxe6 41  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  is less clear in view of 41... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ , when Black acquires some saving chances.

**40 . . .**

**$\mathbb{Q}c7$**

40... $\mathbb{W}e7$  loses to 41  $\mathbb{Q}a8$ .

**41  $\mathbb{W}d7$**

**$\mathbb{W}b8$**

41... $\mathbb{W}e8$  is also hopeless because of 42  $\mathbb{W}c6$ !.

**42  $\mathbb{W}xd6$**

**c4!?**

**43 bxc4**

**b3**

Kamsky finds the best saving opportunity,

but his opponent is vigilant to the end.

**44  $\mathbb{Q}b1$**

Anand chooses the safest way, although he could also have won with the direct 44  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  b2 45  $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}a7$  46  $\mathbb{Q}h2$ ! (but not 46  $\mathbb{Q}xb2$   $\mathbb{W}xb2$  47  $\mathbb{W}d8+$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$ ? 48  $\mathbb{W}xe8+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$ ) 46... $\mathbb{Q}a1$  47  $\mathbb{Q}xb2$   $\mathbb{W}xb2$  48  $\mathbb{W}d8+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  49  $\mathbb{W}f6+$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  50  $\mathbb{Q}xf7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  51  $\mathbb{W}h8$  mate.

**44 . . .**

**$\mathbb{b}2$**

**45  $\mathbb{W}c5!$**

**$\mathbb{Q}b3$**

**46  $\mathbb{W}d4$**

**$\mathbb{W}b4$**

**47  $\mathbb{Q}g5$**

The weakness of the f7-square quickly decides the outcome.

**47 . . .**

**$\mathbb{Q}c3$**

**48  $\mathbb{W}f4$**

The final stroke, showing how defence and attack should be combined.

**48 . . .**

**$f6$**

**49  $\mathbb{exf6}$**

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

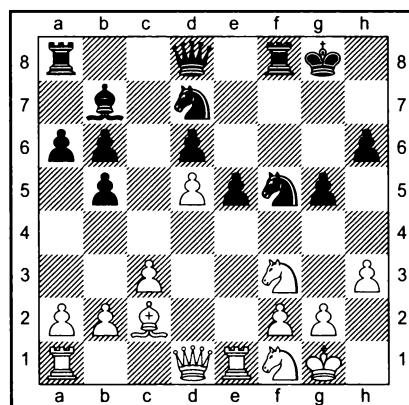
**50 f7+**

Black resigned.

Here is another example from the same match, splendidly illustrating the importance of a 'second front'.

### Anand – Kamsky

3rd Match Game, Las Palmas 1995



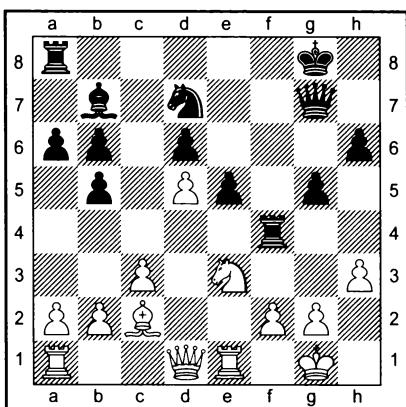


Black's castled position is weakened, and Anand immediately exploits this factor. He begins a crafty knight manoeuvre, the aim of which is to establish control over f5.

**20 ♟h3h2!**

Threatening 21 ♜h5 followed by ♜g4.

- |                |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| <b>20 ...</b>  | <b>♜f6</b>  |
| <b>21 ♜g4</b>  | <b>♝g7</b>  |
| <b>22 ♜ge3</b> | <b>♝xe3</b> |
| <b>23 ♜xe3</b> | <b>♞f4</b>  |



Although White has made progress in carrying out his plans, as yet he has not managed to gain complete control of the f5-square. Little is promised by 24 ♜f5 ♜f6, 24 g3 ♜f7 (24...♜f6!?) or 24 ♜f5 ♜f8. In turn, Black wants to set up pressure on the f-file. White would very much like to exchange a pair of rooks and at the same time bring his queen's rook into play. A 'second front' is needed!

**24 a4!!**

This move secures a clear advantage. Since Black could not be satisfied with either 24...b4 25 g3, or the more natural 24...bxa4 25 ♜xa4 ♜af8 26 ♜xf4 ♜xf4 (no better is 26...exf4? 27 ♜f5 ♜f6 28 ♜e6 or 26...gxsf4 27 ♜f5 ♜f6 28 ♜h5) 27 ♜f5! (variations by Anand), he decides on a pawn sacrifice, but he does not gain sufficient compensation.

**24 ...**

**♜af8**

**25 axb5**

**a5**

25...axb5 is completely bad in view of 26 ♜a7.

- |               |            |
|---------------|------------|
| <b>26 ♜f1</b> | <b>♝c8</b> |
| <b>27 g3</b>  | <b>♝f7</b> |

It is curious that in the event of 27...♜f6 28 gxsf4 gxsf4+ 29 ♜h2 fxe3 30 fxe3! (30 ♜g1? ♜g4+!) 30...♝g5 Black's counterplay is suppressed by the inclusion of the rook in the defence along the 4th rank: 31 ♜a4! (Anand).

**28 b4**

This emphasises White's advantage, although it is possible that Anand's suggestion of 28 ♜e4! ♜c5 29 ♜g2 e4 30 ♜c4 would have been more accurate. Subsequently, despite Kamsky's resourceful play, White converted his advantage into a win.

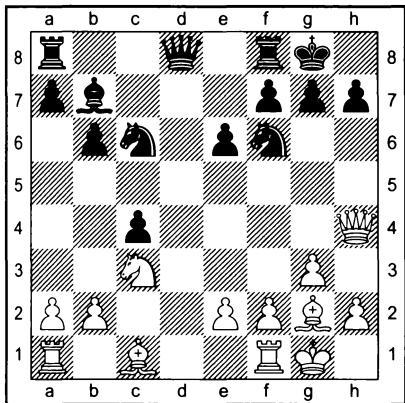
28...e4! 29 ♜xe4 ♜e5 30 ♜g2 axb4 31 cxb4 ♜f3+ 32 ♜xf3 ♜xf3 33 ♜a8 ♜xh3 34 ♜xf3 ♜xa8 35 ♜c1 ♜f8 36 ♜e2 ♜d7 37 ♜c7 ♜f7 38 ♜b7 ♜a1+ 39 ♜f1 ♜g7 40 ♜xb6 ♜d4 41 ♜b8 ♜xb4 42 ♜e3 h5 43 b6! h4 44 g4 ♜b5 45 ♜d1 ♜b2 46 ♜f5+ ♜xf5 47 gxsf5 ♜e2 48 ♜a4 (48 ♜e1!) 48...♜f3! 49 ♜d7+ (49 f6+!) 49...♜h6 50 ♜e6+ ♜h5 51 ♜e8+ ♜g4 52 ♜e1 ♜xd5 53 ♜e8 ♜f3 54 f6! ♜h5 55 f7 ♜d4 56 ♜e4! ♜f6 57 b7 ♜xe4 58 ♜xe4 Black resigned.

Anand's play makes a great impression and provokes strong associations with the games of Alexander Alekhine – an unsurpassed master of changing the direction of attack. Typical of Alekhine was his splendid vision of the entire chess board and his ability to find latent tactical resources, supporting his strategic ideas. The following three classic Alekhine examples illustrate best of all his style of play.



## Alekhine – Bogoljubow

Triberg 1921



Regaining the pawn leads merely to simplification after 12  $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathfrak{Q}a5$ . Alekhine finds a far from obvious way of developing his initiative, based on the strength of his two bishops.

**12  $\mathbb{B}d1!$**   $\mathbb{W}c8$

If 12... $\mathbb{W}e7$  Alekhine gives 13  $\mathbb{B}g5$  h6 14  $\mathbb{B}xf6$   $\mathbb{W}xf6$  15  $\mathbb{W}xf6$  gxf6 16  $\mathbb{B}d7$  with advantage. (Here and later Alekhine's analyses are taken from his book *My Best Games of Chess 1908-23*.) And in the event of 12... $\mathbb{W}e8$  Dvoretsky's suggestion is very strong: 13  $\mathbb{B}h6!!$  gxf6 14  $\mathbb{W}xf6$  followed by  $\mathfrak{Q}e4$ .

**13  $\mathbb{B}g5!$**   $\mathfrak{Q}d5$

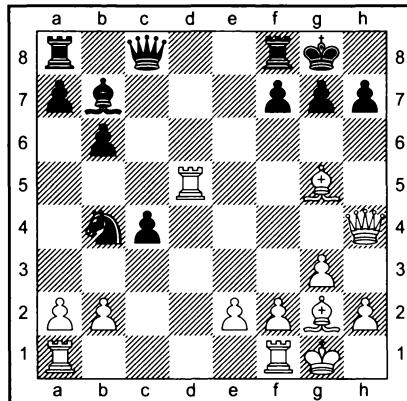
**14  $\mathfrak{Q}xd5$**   $exd5$

**15  $\mathbb{B}xd5!$**

An accurately calculated operation – the rook is switched to the kingside. In this chapter we will see further examples of a rook being included in an offensive along a rank. It is often quite difficult to activate a rook because of its own pawn chains, but if it does manage to take part in an attack, it normally causes the opponent a mass of problems.

**15 ...**  $\mathfrak{Q}b4$

15... $\mathbb{W}e6!$  was much more tenacious (Dvoretsky).



After White's operation in the centre has diverted the opponent's forces away from the kingside, there follows a swift and sudden attack.

**16  $\mathfrak{Q}e4!!$**

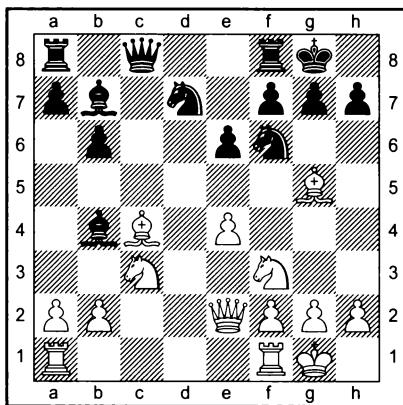
As shown by Alekhine, Black is not saved by either 16...h6 17  $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  f5 18  $\mathbb{W}g5$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  19  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{W}xg7$  20  $\mathbb{W}xg7+$   $\mathfrak{Q}xg7$  21  $\mathbb{B}d7+$  followed by  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ , or 16...g6 17  $\mathbb{Q}f6$   $\mathfrak{Q}xd5$  18  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ . The move in the game leads to loss of material and a quick finish.

<b>16 ...</b>	<b>f5</b>
<b>17 <math>\mathbb{Q}xf5</math></b>	$\mathbb{Q}xf5$
<b>18 <math>\mathbb{B}d8+</math></b>	$\mathbb{W}xd8$
<b>19 <math>\mathbb{Q}xd8</math></b>	$\mathbb{B}c8$
<b>20 <math>\mathbb{B}d1</math></b>	$\mathbb{F}7$
<b>21 <math>\mathbb{W}g4</math></b>	$\mathfrak{Q}d3$
<b>22 exd3</b>	$\mathbb{B}xd8$
<b>23 dxc4</b>	$\mathbb{B}df8$
<b>24 f4</b>	$\mathbb{E}e7$
<b>25 <math>\mathfrak{Q}f2</math></b>	<b>h6</b>
<b>26 <math>\mathbb{B}e1</math></b>	$\mathfrak{Q}c8$
<b>27 <math>\mathbb{W}f3</math></b>	$\mathbb{E}ef7$
<b>28 <math>\mathbb{W}d5</math></b>	<b>g5</b>
<b>29 <math>\mathbb{Q}e7</math></b>	$gxf4$
<b>30 gxf4</b>	

Black resigned.

**Alekhine – Sterk**

Budapest 1921



The critical position of the game. Black has developed strong pressure in the centre, but Alekhine finds a way of retaining approximate equality.

**16 ♜d3**

16 e5 was weaker in view of 16...♝g4, as was 16 ♜ac1 ♜xc3 17 ♜d3 ♜c5 18 ♜xc3 ♜xe4! 19 ♜xf6 ♜xd3 (Alekhine). 16 ♜fc1! ♜xc3 17 ♜d3 would have transposed.

**16 ... ♜xc3****17 ♜fc1 ♜xe4?**

Correct, as suggested by Alekhine, was 17...♜c5 18 ♜xc3 ♜xe4 19 ♜xf6 ♜xd3 20 ♜e3! (now it is clear why it was the king's rook that had to go to c1) 20...gxsf6 21 b4 ♜g6 22 bxc5 bxc5 23 ♜xc5 ♜d7 24 h4 with good compensation for the sacrificed pawn.

With the move in the game Black also wins a pawn, but he comes under an unpleasant pin on the c-file.

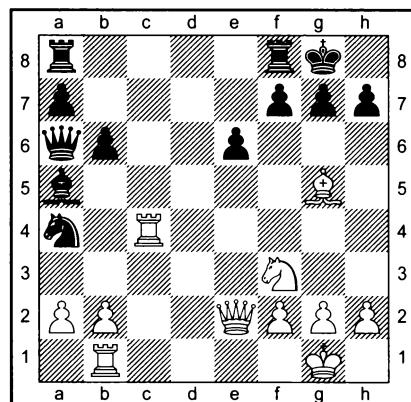
**18 ♜xe4 ♜xe4****19 ♜xe4 ♜c5****20 ♜e2**

Alekhine lures the black pieces onto poor squares on the queenside. However, he may have been wrong to avoid 20 ♜b1! ♜b4 21 a3, since if 21...♜b7 White does not play 22

axb4 ♜b3, and not 22 ♜c2 ♜d5!, but wins a piece with the simple 22 ♜a2! ♜d3 (22...♜d5 23 axb4 ♜b3 24 ♜d1) 23 ♜d1.

**20 ... ♜a5****21 ♜ab1 ♜a6****22 ♜c4**

If 22...♜ac8 there could have followed 23 b4 ♜a4 24 b5 or 23...♜d7 24 ♜e4 and wins. Black parries this threat (if 23 b4 he has 23...♜c3), but now, when the opponent's pieces are tied up on the queenside, Alekhine unexpectedly switches the play to the kingside.

**23 ♜f6!!**

Creating the highly unpleasant threat of 24 ♜g4. Thus, after 23...h5 24 ♜g4! ♜xe2 25 ♜xg7+ ♜h8 26 ♜g5 there is no defence against 27 ♜h7+ and 28 ♜h8 mate (Alekhine). 23...h6 also fails to save Black in view of 24 ♜e5 with the threat of 25 ♜g4.

**23 ... ♜fc8!****24 ♜e5!**

The point of White's idea. Alekhine's analysis shows that he wins in all variations:

1) 24...♜xc4 25 ♜g5 ♜f8 26 ♜xg7+ ♜e8 27 ♜g8+ ♜d7 28 ♜e5+ ♜c7 29 ♜xf7+ and 30 ♜xc4;

2) 24...♜xc4 25 ♜g5 ♜g4 26 ♜xg4 g6 27 ♜xa4;

3) 24...gxf6 25  $\mathbb{Q}g4+$  and mate in two moves.

**24 . . .**

$\mathbb{B}c5$

In the hope of 25  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  gxf6, but White decides the game more simply.

**25  $\mathbb{W}g3!$**

**g6**

**26  $\mathbb{Q}xa4$**

$\mathbb{W}d3$

**27  $\mathbb{Q}f1$**

$\mathbb{W}f5$

**28  $\mathbb{W}f4$**

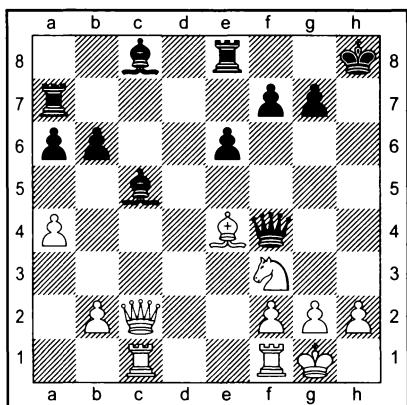
$\mathbb{W}c2$

**29  $\mathbb{W}h6$**

Black resigned.

### Alekhine – Rubinstein

Carlsbad 1923



There are two vulnerable points in Black's defensive lines: 1) with the loss of the h7-pawn his castled position is weakened; 2) there is a lack of harmony in the placing of his queenside pieces, and they may come under attack. With energetic action against the queenside Alekhine forces the opponent onto the defensive there, after which he unexpectedly switches to an attack on the king.

**21 b4!**

$\mathbb{Q}f8$

The only reply, since other bishop moves would have allowed the decisive 22  $\mathbb{W}xc8$ .

**22  $\mathbb{W}c6$**

In view of the double attack on the rook at e8 and the b6-pawn, Black's reply is forced.

**22 . . .**  $\mathbb{Q}d7$

**23 g3!**  $\mathbb{W}b8$

In the event of 23... $\mathbb{W}d6$  in Alekhine's opinion White had two winning lines:

1) 24  $\mathbb{Q}fd1$   $\mathbb{W}xd1+$  (24... $\mathbb{W}xc6$  25  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd1+$  26  $\mathbb{Q}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  27  $\mathbb{Q}d8$ ) 25  $\mathbb{Q}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd1+$  26  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  27  $\mathbb{W}xb6$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  28  $\mathbb{W}xa6$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  29  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  30  $\mathbb{W}e2$ ;

2) 24  $\mathbb{W}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  (24... $\mathbb{W}e7$  25  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  26  $\mathbb{Q}g6!$ ) 25  $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  26  $\mathbb{Q}fd1$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  27  $\mathbb{Q}d3!$ .

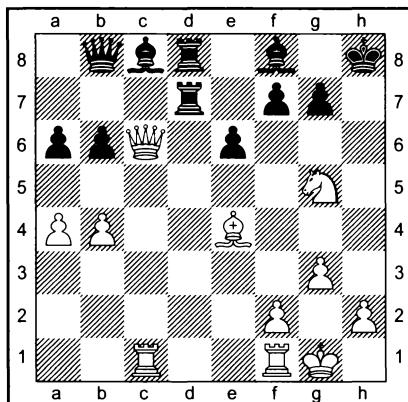
In fact the second way is unconvincing in view of 26... $\mathbb{Q}xc6!$  (instead of 26... $\mathbb{W}e7?$ ) 27  $\mathbb{W}xc6$   $\mathbb{W}xc6$  28  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  29  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  (John Nunn).

**24  $\mathbb{Q}g5!$**

White does not allow his opponent a moment's respite. The threat is 25  $\mathbb{Q}xf7+$ .

**24 . . .**

$\mathbb{Q}ed8$



**25  $\mathbb{Q}g6!!$**

With gain of tempo White clears the way for his queen to the kingside, and the black pieces, tied down to the defence of the opposite wing, simply do not have time to come to the aid of their king. Thus if 25...fxg6 (25... $\mathbb{Q}b7$  26  $\mathbb{W}c4$ ) there follows 26  $\mathbb{W}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  27  $\mathbb{W}h4+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  28  $\mathbb{W}h7+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  29  $\mathbb{W}h8+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  30  $\mathbb{W}xg7+$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  31  $\mathbb{W}g8+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  32  $\mathbb{W}xg6+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  33  $\mathbb{W}xe6$  mate (Alekhine).

To avoid being mated immediately, Black gives up material.



25 ...	$\mathbb{W}e5$
26 $\mathbb{Q}xf7+$	$\mathbb{Q}xf7$
27 $\mathbb{Q}xf7$	$\mathbb{Q}f5$
28 $\mathbb{Q}fd1$	$\mathbb{Q}xd1+$
29 $\mathbb{Q}xd1$	$\mathbb{Q}xf7$
30 $\mathbb{W}xc8$	$\mathbb{Q}h7$
31 $\mathbb{W}xa6$	$\mathbb{Q}f3$
32 $\mathbb{W}d3+$	

Black resigned.

In the following game White was able to win a roughly equal ending, by consistently employing the principle of two weaknesses. After creating targets to attack on opposite wings, White began manoeuvring. In this example the process of creating weaknesses in the opponent's position was perhaps more interesting than the manoeuvring against them.

#### Yusupov – Wirthensohn

Hamburg 1991

Torre Attack

1 d4	$\mathbb{Q}f6$
2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$	d5
3 $\mathbb{Q}g5$	$\mathbb{Q}e4$

A good move, casting doubts on the early bishop sortie.

4 $\mathbb{Q}h4$	$\mathbb{W}d6$
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Another tempting plan involves the standard advance ...c7–c5 followed by the development of the queen on b6.

5 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$	$\mathbb{W}h6$
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If I am not mistaken this manoeuvre was first employed by Vlastimil Hort. Black has created the unpleasant threat of ...g7–g5. With the queen on h6 the retreat of the bishop to g3 looks extremely unappealing, since after the capture on g3 White is forced to spoil his pawn structure and recapture with the f-pawn.

6 $\mathbb{W}c1!?$	$\mathbb{Q}xd2$
--------------------	-----------------

6... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  7 c3  $\mathbb{W}h5$  came into consideration, as in the game Loginov–Karpeshov (Volgograd 1983).

7 $\mathbb{W}xd2$	$\mathbb{W}xd2+$
-------------------	------------------

An endgame has arisen in which White has a purely symbolic advantage. At the given moment he is slightly ahead in development, but there are no weaknesses in Black's position. White's first objective is to transform his slight initiative into something more concrete, by creating a target in the opponent's position.

8 ...	$\mathbb{Q}f5$
9 e3	

If 9  $\mathbb{Q}g3!$ ? Black does not reply 9... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ? because of 10  $\mathbb{Q}h4$ , but simply 9...c6 10 e3 e6 or 10... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  with a solid position.

9 ...	$e6$
10 $\mathbb{Q}e2$	$\mathbb{Q}d6$

If 10... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  11  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  12  $\mathbb{Q}h4$  and White exchanges knight for bishop (an achievement, if only a slight one). 10...h6 came into consideration. In this case I would have continued 11  $\mathbb{Q}hc1$  followed by c2–c4.

11 $\mathbb{Q}g3$	$h6$
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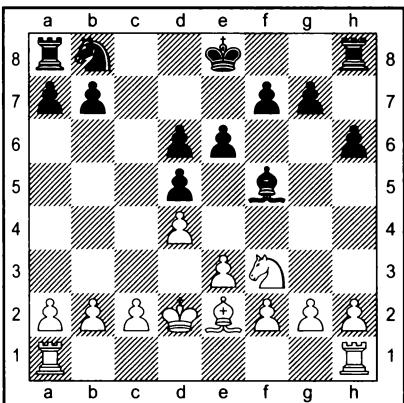
The threat was 12  $\mathbb{Q}h4$  with the exchange of the bishop. But what should White do now? Natural play, involving c2–c4, promises little, since after the exchange on c4 the black bishop will be splendidly placed to defend the queenside from e4. After a long think I found a way of maintaining my initiative.

12 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$	$cx d6$
--------------------	---------

(see diagram)

#### 13 a4!

In this way White becomes active on the queenside: his rook obtains the promising route a1–a3–b3. For the moment White is accumulating barely perceptible pluses: he has the more flexible pawn structure and the potentially better bishop.



– position after 12...cxd6 –

**13 ... ♔e7**

**14 a5 ♕d7**

If 14...♕c8?! 15 ♜hc1 ♜c6 16 ♜a4 b6 17 axb6 axb6 18 ♜ca1 with a minimal initiative for White.

**15 ♜hc1 ♜hc8?!**

15...♝f6 was more logical, forcing the retreat of the king to e1.

**16 ♜e1!**

Active prophylaxis! The knight had no prospects on f3, and therefore it aims for b4. In addition, now if 16...♝f6 there will be the good reply 17 f3.

**16 ... ♜c7**

**17 ♜d3 ♜xd3**

This exchange is practically forced – the knight would have been too unpleasantly placed at b4. But now, although for the moment the position is a closed one, the white bishop is stronger than the opponent's knight, since it will be able to take an active part in the play on **both wings**.

**18 ♜xd3 ♜b8?!**

**19 ♜a3 b6**

This attempt to play actively, which was planned on the previous move, in fact leads merely to the creation of weaknesses on the queenside.

**20 ♜ca1!**

20 axb6 was weaker in view of 20...♜xb6 21 b3 ♜b8!, and White has merely a minimal advantage.

**20 ... b5**

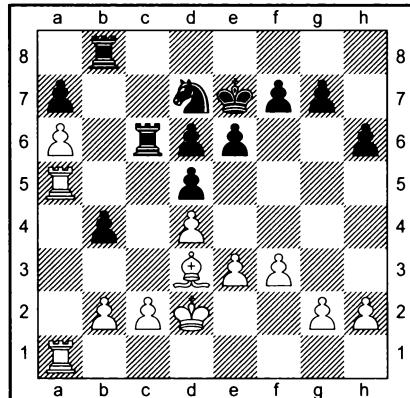
**21 a6**

Thus, White has finally succeeded in creating a first real target – the b-pawn.

**21 ... b4**

**22 ♜a5 ♜c6**

**23 f3**



It is not normally possible to win a game by attacking one single weakness. Therefore White's next objective is to initiate play on the kingside, with the aim of exploiting the power of his long-range bishop and the mobility of his rooks.

**23 ... ♜cb6**

**24 h4 ♜f6**

**25 g4 ♜h8**

Black realises the danger and takes precautionary measures on the kingside. Therefore I exchange a pair of rooks, after which the weakness of the b-pawn will be more keenly felt.

**26 ♜b5 ♜hb8**

**27 ♜xb6 ♜xb6**

**28 g5**



Acting in accordance with the 'two weaknesses' principle, White changes the direction of the attack, shifting the emphasis to the kingside.

28 . . .

hxg5

29 hxg5

d7

29...d8e8 30 h1 c7 is bad because of 31 h7! f8 32 h8+ e7 33 c1!, and if 33...xa6 White has 34 a8.

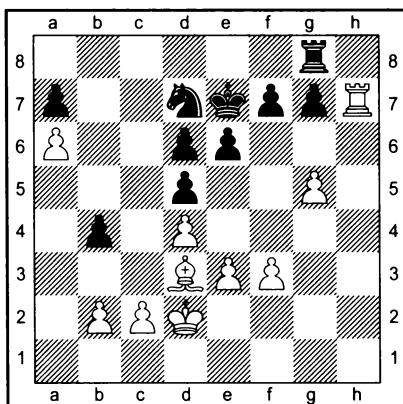
30 h1

b8

31 h7

g8

Better defensive chances were offered by 31...f8.



32 c3!

Now, when the black rook has taken up a passive position on the kingside, White again changes the direction of the play and activates his king. In the process the weak b-pawn is exchanged, but this is not so important, since Black remains with a real weakness on the queenside – he has to take measures against the breakthrough of the king to the a7-pawn. 32 c1 (with the idea of playing the king to b3) was less accurate, since Black would have succeeded in gaining counterplay after 32...b6 33 b1 c4.

32 . . .

bxc3+

33 xc3

d8

[Black incorrectly restricts himself to passive defence. He should have tried 34...e5!, intending the manoeuvre ...f8-e6 – Dvoretsky.]

34 b4

c7

35 a5

b6

If 35...b8, then 36 b5 c6+ 37 xc6 38 b4 is strong, with a won rook ending.

36 h2

After the immediate 36 b3 I did not like the reply 36...c8 with the idea of ...e7-c6.

36 . . .

c8

37 b3

d7

38 h7

g8

39 f4

A useful move, since now Black has to reckon with a possible f4-f5.

39 . . .

e7

40 b5

The tempting 40 b5 does not promise any immediate gains, in view of the unexpected resource 40...a8!, and if 41 c6??, then after 41...b8 White is mated.

40 . . .

f6

Fearing the manoeuvre of the bishop to b7, Black tries to initiate counterplay on the kingside. But this attempt is parried by White, who reverts to his initial plan – the advance of his king into the opponent's position via b5.

41 e2

fxg5

42 fxg5

d7?!

It is possible that the best defence was 42...a8?!, trying to prevent the white king's manoeuvre.

43 b5

After the activation of the king Black's defences begin to creak.

43 . . .

f8

44 h2

d7

45 c6

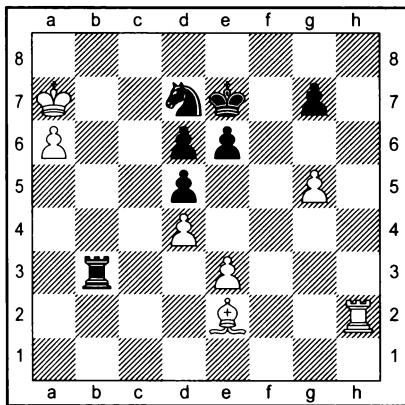
c8+

46 ♜b7

47 ♜xa7

♝b8+

♝xb3



Black appears to have gained counterplay, but White has another attacking resource, which he had to foresee in advance.

48 ♜h8!

With my small army I create threats to the opponent's king! It transpires that 48...♜xe3 is bad because of 49 ♜h5 ♜f8 50 ♜g8 g6 51 ♜g7+ ♜d8 52 ♜xg6. Black is torn in two: he has to keep watch over the dangerous passed a-pawn and at the same time repel the invasion of the white pieces on the kingside.

48 . . .

♞f8

49 ♜d1

♝b4

49...♝xe3 was more tenacious. If 50 ♜b7 Black has an unexpected defence: 50...♝e1!

with drawing chances after both 51 a7?! ♜xd1 52 a8♛ ♜b1+ 53 ♜c6 ♜c1+, and 51 ♜g8 ♜xd1 52 ♜xg7+ ♜e8 53 a7 ♜b1+ (or 53...♝a1 54 a8♛ ♜xa8 55 ♜xa8 e5) 54 ♜c6 ♜a1. [However, 51 ♜a4! is very strong – Dvoretsky.]

Instead of 50 ♜b7 the more cunning move 50 ♜b6! is possible, and if 50...♝a3 51 ♜b5 followed by 52 ♜a4.

50 ♜c2

52 ♜d3

♝c4

♝b4

After gaining an important tempo, White again changes the direction of the offensive, strengthening his position on the kingside.

52 g6

e5

If 52...♝b3 there would have followed 53 ♜c2 ♜xe3 54 ♜b7 ♜e2 55 ♜xf8! and wins. The move in the game also fails to ease Black's position.

53 ♜f5!

exd4

54 exd4

♝xd4

55 ♜b6

♝a4

Or 55...♝b4+ 56 ♜a5 ♜b2 57 ♜h4 and the a-pawn decides matters.

56 ♜g8!

The simplest and most thematic solution, illustrating the strength of play against two weaknesses.

56 . . .

♞e6

57 a7

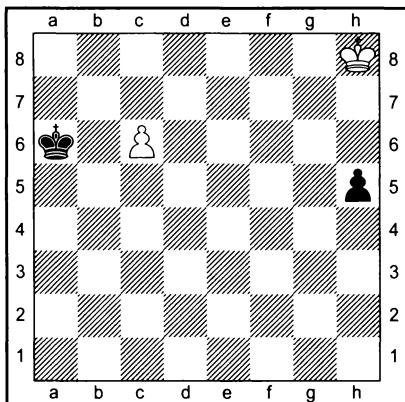
Black resigned.



Alexey Kosikov

## How to draw up a Plan

When we create simple threats, the opponent is able to parry them without particular difficulty. The secret of success often lies in the ability to create several threats simultaneously. I will illustrate this idea with a study by Richard Réti which will be well known to all of you.



After 1 ♕g7 h4 2 ♕f6 ♕b6 (2...h3 3 ♕e7) 3 ♕e5! White saves the game only because he simultaneously has two threats: to stop the enemy pawn by 4 ♕f4 and to support his own pawn by 4 ♕d6. Black can easily parry either of these threats, but not both of them. The idea of simultaneously creating two threats will serve as our starting point for understanding the process of compiling a plan.

The plans which we make pursue the aim of creating threats, but not simple, tactical threats, as in the example we have just analysed, but long-term strategic threats.

In trying to master the technique of convert-

ing an advantage, you will have met the 'principle of two weaknesses'. I think that this principle is also useful for the compiling of a strategic plan in the middlegame. In the broad sense of the word, a weakness is a long-term strategic threat. That is, not only a vulnerable enemy pawn, but also the threat of promoting your own pawn, the threat of invading along an open file, a mating net, and so on.

**Botvinnik – Zagoryansky**

Sverdlovsk 1943

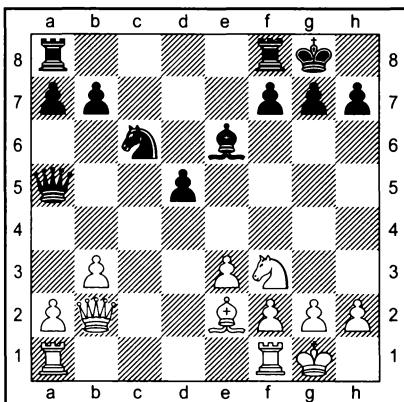
*Réti Opening*

1 ♘f3	d5
2 c4	e6
3 b3	♘f6
4 ♘b2	♗e7
5 e3	0-0
6 ♘c3	c5
7 cxd5	♕xd5
8 ♘xd5	exd5

I don't wish to dwell on the opening subtleties. I will merely remark that it would have been more promising for Black to capture on d5 with his queen, and if with the pawn, then a move earlier.

9 d4	cx d4
10 ♕xd4	♗f6
11 ♕d2	♘c6
12 ♘e2	♗e6
13 0-0	♕xb2
14 ♕xb2	♔a5

Black plays too passively. I would have preferred to develop the bishop at g4.



Up to here it would have been premature to talk about drawing up a plan, but now the position is ripe for this. Of course, to foresee to the end everything that will happen is not possible, but nor is it necessary. All you need to do is correctly imagine to yourself the character of the forthcoming play and decide what should be done now.

White obviously stands better. He has a target to attack – the weak d5-pawn, the black bishop is passive, and the opponent has no counterplay.

In the first instance Mikhail Botvinnik concentrates his forces against the enemy weakness.

- |                |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| <b>15 ♕fd1</b> | <b>♕fd8</b> |
| <b>16 ♕d2</b>  | <b>♕d7</b>  |
| <b>17 ♕ad1</b> | <b>♕ad8</b> |
| <b>18 h3</b>   | <b>h6</b>   |
| <b>19 ♜e5!</b> |             |

The black knight was controlling the blockading d4-square and restricting the white queen, so Botvinnik happily exchanges it. At the same time the f3-square is vacated for the bishop, which will join the attack on the d5-pawn.

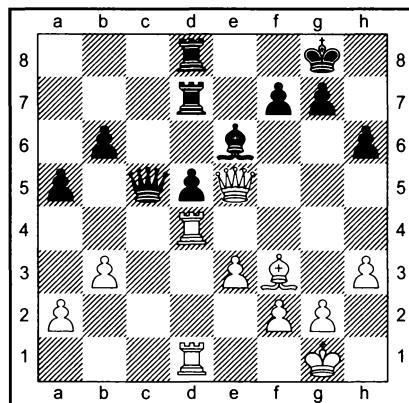
- |                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| <b>19 . . .</b> | <b>♘xe5</b>    |
| <b>19...♗d6</b> | <b>20 ♜c4!</b> |
| <b>20 ♔xe5</b>  | <b>♗c5</b>     |
| <b>21 ♕f3</b>   | <b>b6</b>      |

22 e4 was threatened.

- |               |             |
|---------------|-------------|
| <b>22 ♔b2</b> | <b>♗c8</b>  |
| <b>23 ♔e5</b> | <b>♗cd8</b> |

By repeating moves White has gained time on the clock.

- |               |           |
|---------------|-----------|
| <b>24 ♗d4</b> | <b>a5</b> |
|---------------|-----------|



The first part of the plan – the attack on the enemy weakness – has been completed. All the white pieces are ideally placed, whereas the opponent's pieces are passive and restricted in their movements. But even so White has not managed to win the d5-pawn, which is not surprising – an attack on only one weakness rarely proves successful. A new target is needed, and Botvinnik finds it on the kingside.

- |               |
|---------------|
| <b>25 g4!</b> |
|---------------|

'At the cost of weakening the position of his own king (which is possible only thanks to the fact that the enemy pieces are tied down), White opens up the play on the kingside. It soon transpires that Black is unable simultaneously to defend his king's fortress and the ill-starred d5-pawn.' – Botvinnik.

- |                 |             |
|-----------------|-------------|
| <b>25 . . .</b> | <b>♔c6</b>  |
| <b>26 g5</b>    | <b>hxg5</b> |
| <b>27 ♔xg5</b>  | <b>f6</b>   |

In principle, in such cases it is better to keep



the pawns on their initial squares. But in view of the threatened attack on the h-file ( $\mathbb{Q}h4$  and  $\mathbb{W}h5$ ) all the same Black cannot avoid pawn moves.

- 28  $\mathbb{W}g6$                      $\mathbb{Q}f7$   
 29  $\mathbb{W}g3$                     f5

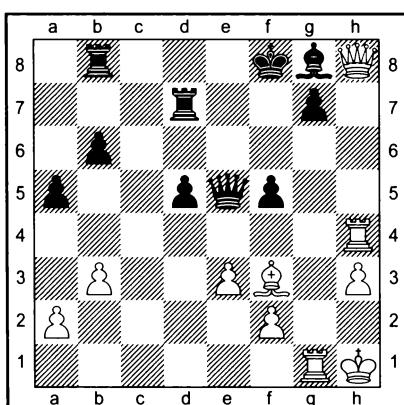
'An impulsive move, assisting the development of White's initiative, although the inevitable transference of the rook from d1 to g1 would in any case have set Black insoluble problems.' – Botvinnik.

Evgeny Zagoryansky essentially signed his positional capitulation. Now all the dark squares in his position are hopelessly weak.

- 30  $\mathbb{W}g5$                      $\mathbb{W}e6$   
 31  $\mathbb{Q}h1$                      $\mathbb{W}e5$   
 32  $\mathbb{Q}g1$                      $\mathbb{Q}f8$   
 33  $\mathbb{W}h6$                      $\mathbb{Q}b8$

Both 34  $\mathbb{Q}h4$  and 34  $\mathbb{W}xb6$  were threatened. If 33... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  34  $\mathbb{Q}xg7+$ , while after 33...g6 White decides matters with h3–h4–h5.

- 34  $\mathbb{Q}h4$                      $\mathbb{Q}f8$   
 35  $\mathbb{W}h8+$                      $\mathbb{Q}g8$



- 36  $\mathbb{Q}f4$

As the attack has developed, new weaknesses have appeared in Black's position. White now turns his attention to one of these weaknesses – the f5-pawn.

- 36 ...                         $\mathbb{Q}bb7$

- 37  $\mathbb{Q}g5$                      $\mathbb{Q}f7$   
 38  $\mathbb{W}h5$                      $\mathbb{W}a1+$   
 39  $\mathbb{Q}g2$                     g6  
 40  $\mathbb{W}xg6$                      $\mathbb{Q}h7$   
 41  $\mathbb{Q}d6+$                      $\mathbb{Q}be7$   
 42  $\mathbb{Q}d8+$

Here the game was adjourned. Black resigned without resuming.

Let us remind ourselves how events developed. After creating a weak d5-pawn in the enemy position, White then assailed it with all his forces. However, his aim was not to win this pawn (the opponent is always able to defend one weakness), but merely to tie the enemy pieces to its defence. Then White located a second target and successfully attacked it. The principle of two weaknesses in action!

Of course, in such positions Botvinnik was not the first to employ plans based on the principle of two weaknesses. Before him too, leading players consciously or sub-consciously made use of the same weapon. We will now examine another classic game, and follow how the great strategist Akiba Rubinstein provokes the creation of weaknesses in the opponent's position and then exploits them.

### Rubinstein – Takacs

Budapest 1926  
*Queen's Gambit*

- |                  |                 |
|------------------|-----------------|
| 1 c4             | $\mathbb{Q}f6$  |
| 2 d4             | e6              |
| 3 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ | d5              |
| 4 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ | $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ |
| 5 e3             | $\mathbb{Q}e7$  |
| 6 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ | 0-0             |
| 7 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ | c6              |
| 8 $\mathbb{W}c2$ | a6              |
| 9 cxd5           | $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ |

10 ♜d3

♝e8

11 0-0

♞f8

12 ♞fe1

♝g4?!

13 ♞d2

♝d7?!

Black's desire to simplify the position is quite understandable, but the move in the game does not achieve its aim.

14 ♜f4

♝g5

15 h3!

♝h5

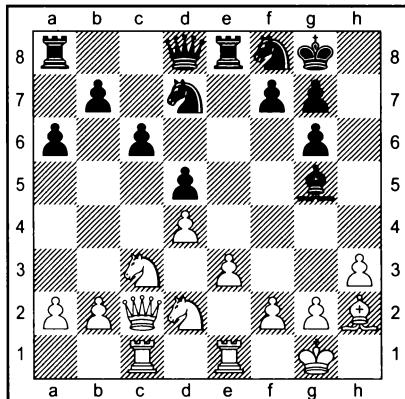
The bishop is forced to retreat, since after 15...♝xf4? 16 exf4 it is trapped. Sandor Takacs apparently overlooked this tactical subtlety. As a result White has retained his important dark-square bishop, and the opponent's last few moves have merely led to a loss of time and to his pieces being badly placed.

16 ♜h2

♝g6

17 ♜xg6

hxg6



White stands better and it is now time for him to decide on a plan of further action. With the light-square bishops no longer on the board, the routine minority pawn attack is unpromising, since in this case the important c4-point is weakened, and the enemy knight will aim for there (...b7–b5 and ...♞b6–c4).

Let's select a target in the opponent's position, which it will be possible to attack. Of course, this is the b7-pawn.

18 ♜b3!

♝b6

Black really doesn't want to play 18...♝a7.

19 ♞a4

♝xb3

Maxim Boguslavsky suggested a good defence: 19...♝b5!?. White would probably have replied 20 ♞c5, but then an exchange of minor pieces eases Black's defence: 20...♝xc5 21 ♜xc5 ♜xb3 22 ♜xb3 ♜e6 and 23...a5.

20 ♜xb3

♝e6?

Now Black's position becomes difficult. What does White want to play next move? That's right, 21 ♞a5!. This definitely should have been prevented: 20...a5! 21 ♜bc5 ♜xc5 22 ♜xc5 ♜a7.

21 ♞a5!

♜a7

22 ♜f1!

A good prophylactic move. White prepares to transfer his rook to b3 (the immediate 22 ♜c3? is not possible because of 22...♞xd4). The opponent prevents this manoeuvre.

22 . . .

♝d8

23 b4

f5

24 ♞b2

At d3 the knight will be better placed than at a4.

24 . . .

g5

25 ♞d3

♝f7

26 ♜c2

♝b6

27 ♜d6!

♞d8?!

Wishing to free his rook on a7, Black weakens his control of c5, and Rubinstein immediately exploits this.

28 ♞c5!

♝xc5

29 ♜xc5

♝xc5

30 bxc5

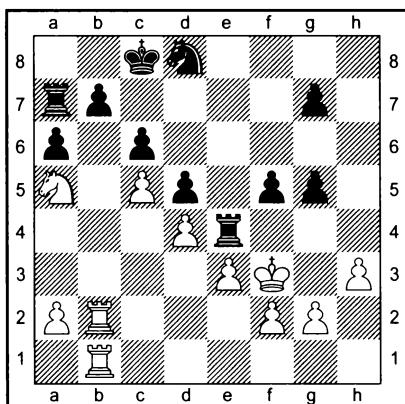
The weakness on b7 has been fixed. Now (as in the Botvinnik–Zagoryansky game) as many attacks as possible should be concentrated on it, in order to tie the opponent's pieces to its defence.

30 . . .

♚e7



- 31  $\mathbb{B}b2$        $\mathbb{d}7$   
 32  $\mathbb{B}eb1$        $\mathbb{c}8$   
 33  $\mathbb{K}e2$        $\mathbb{e}7$   
 34  $\mathbb{K}f3$        $\mathbb{e}4$



White has strengthened his position to the maximum. Now, in accordance with the principle of two weaknesses, he opens a 'second front' on the kingside.

- 35  $g4!$        $g6$   
 36  $\mathbb{B}g1$        $\mathbb{Q}f7$   
 37  $h4!$

The opening of lines emphasises the unfortunate position of the rook on a7, which is taking practically no part in the play.

- 37 ...       $\mathbb{Q}xh4$   
 38  $gx5$        $gxf5$

If 38... $g5$ , then 39  $\mathbb{Q}c4!$  is very strong.

- 39  $\mathbb{Q}g7$

Strategically the game is decided. White has created a second weakness in the opponent's position – the g-file for an invasion, and he confidently exploits it.

- 39 ...       $\mathbb{Q}d8$   
 40  $\mathbb{B}g8$        $f4$   
 41  $\mathbb{B}h8$

I think that Rubinstein did not even seriously consider regaining the pawn by 41  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{B}xb7$  42  $\mathbb{B}xd8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  43  $\mathbb{B}xb7$  – why

exchange the terrible rook on a7?

- 41 ...       $\mathbb{fxe}3$   
 42  $\mathbb{fxe}3$        $\mathbb{d}7$   
 43  $\mathbb{B}g2$        $\mathbb{e}8$   
 44  $\mathbb{B}xh4$        $\mathbb{e}7$   
 45  $\mathbb{B}h8$        $\mathbb{c}7$   
 46  $\mathbb{B}gg8$        $\mathbb{d}7$   
 47  $\mathbb{Q}b3!$

The knight has completed its work at a5 and it is now switched to a more active position – the e5-square.

- 47 ...       $a5$   
 48  $\mathbb{Q}c1$        $\mathbb{Q}a8$   
 49  $\mathbb{Q}d3$        $b5$

Against passive defence White could, for example, have placed his rook on e8 and his knight on e5, and then played his king to f6.

- 50  $cxb6+$        $\mathbb{Q}xb6$   
 51  $\mathbb{Q}c5$        $\mathbb{Q}d6$   
 52  $a4!$

'Do not hurry!' Black is deprived of any moves at all on the queenside, and in addition his king finds itself in a mating net.

- 52 ...       $\mathbb{Q}c8$   
 53  $\mathbb{Q}g4!$

Black resigned. The march of the king to e5 is threatened, and if 53... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  there follows 54  $\mathbb{B}g7+$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  (54... $\mathbb{Q}b8$  55  $\mathbb{B}hh7$ ) 55  $\mathbb{B}xd8$  56  $\mathbb{B}b7$  mate.

A wonderful positional game!

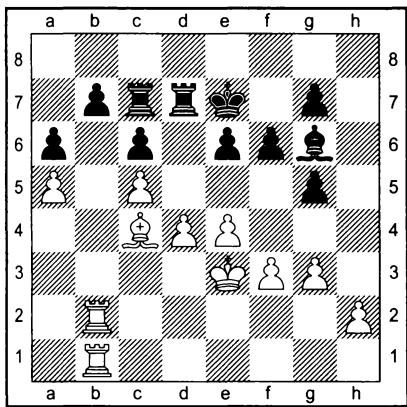
I will once again remind you in what order our strategy develops in such cases.

- 1) Creation of the first weakness. This is perhaps the most difficult thing – to be able somewhere to 'latch on' to the opponent.
- 2) Attack on the weakness (not with the aim of destroying it, but in order to tie the opponent's pieces to its defence).
- 3) Creation of a weakness on another part of the board.
- 4) Break through the opponent's defences.

The games which we have examined were played rather a long time ago. Of course, modern players have assimilated the lessons of the past and successfully make use of the same strategy.

**Shirov – Kinsman**

Paris 1990



It is White to move. He has an obvious advantage. How best to exploit it?

The first part of the standard plan has already been completed. In this commentary on the game Alexey Shirov writes:

'One weakness (the b7-pawn) is securely fixed. It is also important that the black rooks are tied down... But back in my childhood I was taught that to win you need at least one more weakness. And it turns out to be – the q7-pawn.'

**30 h4** **gxh4**

In the event of 30... $\Delta f7$  31 hxg5 fxg5 White will at some point play f3–f4 (but, of course, not immediately 32 f4? gxf4+ 33 gxf4 e5!), when the pattern of the game remains roughly the same.

**31 gxh4**      **g7**

32 e5!

'The point of White's idea. When he begins attacking the g7-point, the b7-pawn will no longer need to be defended: this means that

the other weakness should be the e6-pawn.' (Shirov)

32 . . . f5?

This makes things easier for the opponent. 32...fxe5 33 dxe5 ♜f8 was stronger, but here too after 34 ♜g2 Black's position remains difficult. For example: 34...♜e7 35 ♜d1! ♜g8 (35...♜cd7 36 ♜d6) 36 ♜gd2 (note that White immediately switches to exploiting the new weakness which has arisen – the d-file) 36...♝e8 37 ♜f4 followed by ♜g5 and f3–f4–f5 with an easy win. Or 34...♝g8 35 ♜bg1, intending h4–h5–h6, and the weakness of the e6-pawn does not allow Black to play his bishop to f5.

33	$\mathbb{E}g2$	g6
34	$\mathbb{E}bg1$	$\mathbb{E}c8$
35	$\mathbb{E}xg6$	f4+
36	$\mathbb{E}d3$	$\mathbb{E}cd8$
37	$\mathbb{E}f6$	$\mathbb{E}xd4+$
38	$\mathbb{E}c3$	$\mathbb{E}d1$
39	$\mathbb{E}g7$	$\mathbb{E}c1+$
40	$\mathbb{E}b3$	$\mathbb{E}b1+$
41	$\mathbb{E}c2$	

Black resigned.

In positions without counterplay for the opponent, such as those we have examined, each of us would feel very comfortable. But in practice things are usually much more complicated and it is not often that the principle of two weaknesses can be put into practice in such pure form. To draw up a plan in sharper situations one also has to be guided by other principles. One of these principles, which, incidentally, is by no means well known, will now be described.

## Kalikshtein – Vysochin

# CIS Junior Championship, Jurmala 1992

## *Slay Defence*

1 c4

29c3

f6

c6



- |              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| <b>3 d4</b>  | <b>d5</b>   |
| <b>4 ♜f3</b> | <b>dxc4</b> |
| <b>5 e3</b>  | <b>b5</b>   |
| <b>6 a4</b>  | <b>b4</b>   |
| <b>7 ♜b1</b> |             |

The knight more often retreats to a2, in order after the capture of the c4-pawn to continue ♜d2 and ♜c1–b3. The player with White is obviously not aiming for an opening advantage and is intending to transfer the entire weight of the struggle to the middlegame.

- |                |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| <b>7 . . .</b> | <b>♝a6</b>  |
| <b>8 ♜bd2</b>  | <b>e6?!</b> |

Theory recommends 8...c3 with equality, but the game continuation is also quite possible.

- |                |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| <b>9 ♜xc4</b>  | <b>♝e7</b>  |
| <b>10 ♜d3</b>  | <b>0-0</b>  |
| <b>11 0-0</b>  | <b>♝bd7</b> |
| <b>12 b3?!</b> |             |

A superficial move! 12 ♜ce5 is more logical, and after 12...♝c8 White's position remains slightly preferable.

- |                 |              |
|-----------------|--------------|
| <b>12 . . .</b> | <b>c5</b>    |
| <b>13 ♜b2</b>   | <b>♝c8</b>   |
| <b>14 ♜c1</b>   | <b>cxsd4</b> |
| <b>15 exd4?</b> |              |

There was no need for White to give himself an isolated pawn. However, Black would also have been excellently placed after 15 ♜xd4 ♜c5 followed by ...d5. White feels the weakness of his c3-square, which he incautiously weakened with his 12th move.

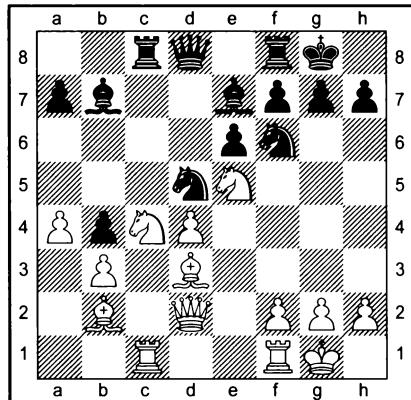
- |                 |            |
|-----------------|------------|
| <b>15 . . .</b> | <b>♜d5</b> |
| <b>16 ♜d2</b>   | <b>♝f6</b> |
| <b>17 ♜fe5</b>  | <b>♝b7</b> |

(see diagram)

- 18 f4?**

Another positional mistake, which puts White in an extremely difficult position. What are the defects of the pawn advance?

The h1–a8 diagonal is weakened. With the



– position after 17...♝b7 –

pawn on f2 it is always possible to place a barrier in the path of the opponent's bishop by f2–f3, but now this becomes impossible. The e4-point is weakened.

The c1–h6 diagonal is blocked, and the bishop on b2 is now altogether without prospects.

In positions with an isolated d4-pawn the move f2–f4 is sometimes made, but only when there is a hope of playing f4–f5. But here Black immediately prevents the further advance of the pawn.

- |                 |            |
|-----------------|------------|
| <b>18 . . .</b> | <b>g6!</b> |
| <b>19 ♜f2</b>   |            |

White's active moves have come to an end and he begins marking time, whereas the opponent consistently strengthens his position.

- |                 |            |
|-----------------|------------|
| <b>19 . . .</b> | <b>♝e8</b> |
| <b>20 ♜cf1</b>  | <b>♝d6</b> |
| <b>21 ♜h1</b>   | <b>♝f5</b> |
| <b>22 ♜xf5?</b> |            |

The decisive strategic mistake. Now there is nothing with which to oppose the bishop on b7.

- |                 |             |
|-----------------|-------------|
| <b>22 . . .</b> | <b>exf5</b> |
| <b>23 ♜c1</b>   |             |

What would you have now played for Black?

Let's first see what happened in the game, and then return again to this position.

**23 . . .**  $\mathbb{Q}f6$

Of course, a very natural move – the e4-square itself is as though inviting the knight to go there.

**24  $\mathbb{W}e3$**   $\mathbb{Q}e4$

**25  $\mathbb{R}fc2$**   $\mathbb{W}d5$

**26  $\mathbb{Q}d3$**   $\mathbb{R}fe8$

**27  $\mathbb{W}e1$**

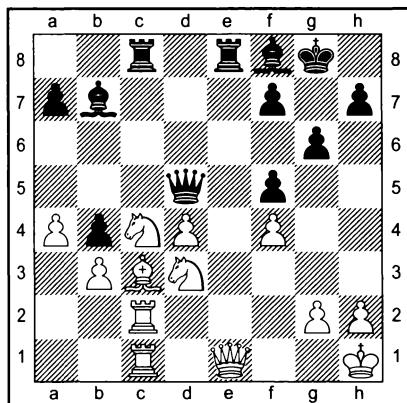
Black seems to have played well, but his actions have not been systematic. Whereas White, who just now was losing, has suddenly gained counter-chances. The b4-pawn is attacked, and 27...a5 28  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  is bad for Black.

**27 . . .**  $\mathbb{Q}c3$

Practically forced.

**28  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$**   $\mathbb{Q}f8$

Black prepares to play his bishop to g7.



A very interesting moment. Here it is appropriate to remember a procedure which is constantly employed by Mark Dvoretsky. In unfavourable situations he recommends looking for a way of radically changing the character of the struggle. Sometimes it is possible to complicate the play by means of a positional sacrifice (for example, of a pawn or the exchange) or by going into a position

with an unusual material balance. That is also the case here: 29  $\mathbb{Q}xb4!$   $\mathbb{R}xe1+$  30  $\mathbb{R}xe1$  deserved very serious consideration. For the queen White has rook, knight and pawn – almost a sufficient equivalent. If 30... $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  31  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$ , then 32  $\mathbb{Q}d6!$ . I would like to play  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  and then exploit the d-file for an attack ( $\mathbb{R}d2$ ,  $\mathbb{R}ed1$ ). Of course, White has to reckon with the counter-stroke 32... $\mathbb{R}xc4$ , but it leads only to a draw: 33  $\mathbb{R}e8+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  34  $\mathbb{Q}f8+$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  35  $\mathbb{Q}e7+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  (if 35... $\mathbb{Q}e6?$ , then 36  $\mathbb{Q}c5+!$  is strong) 36  $\mathbb{Q}f8+$ .

[I do not agree with this evaluation. After 32  $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $f6!$  Black does not allow the bishop to go to e5. The e-file can always be blocked by ... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ , and switching to the d-file requires too much time. Meanwhile, the b3- and g2-points are vulnerable. I do not see what there is to prevent Black from converting his material advantage. – John Nunn.]

In the game White missed his chance and lost without a fight.

**29  $\mathbb{Q}de5?$**   $\mathbb{B}xc3$

**30  $\mathbb{W}xc3$**   $\mathbb{Q}h6$

Despite White's extra pawn, his position is difficult. Black has two powerful bishops, and his pieces control the entire board.

**31  $\mathbb{Q}d3$**

If 31  $\mathbb{R}f1$ , then 31... $\mathbb{Q}xf4!$  32  $\mathbb{R}xf4$   $\mathbb{R}xe5!$ . [32  $\mathbb{Q}xg6!$  is White's best chance in this variation – Nunn.]

**31 . . .**  $\mathbb{R}ed8$

**32  $\mathbb{Q}c5?!$**   $\mathbb{Q}a8$

**33  $b4$**   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$

**34  $\mathbb{R}d1$**   $\mathbb{R}e8$

**35  $\mathbb{W}d3$**   $\mathbb{R}cd8$

**36  $\mathbb{R}e2$**   $\mathbb{R}xe2$

**37  $\mathbb{W}xe2$**   $\mathbb{Q}g7$

Black prepares 38... $\mathbb{R}e8$ .

**38  $\mathbb{Q}b2?$**   $\mathbb{R}e8$

**39  $\mathbb{W}f1$**   $\mathbb{Q}c7$

**40  $b5$**

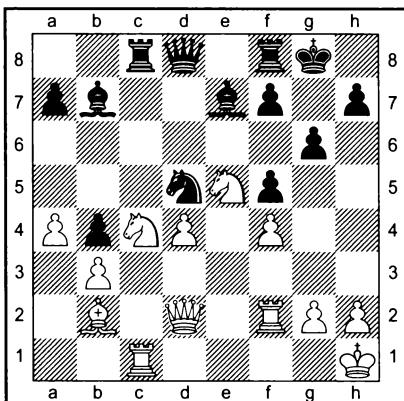


This loses immediately. 40  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  was more tenacious.

- |                   |                |
|-------------------|----------------|
| 40 ...            | $\mathbb{W}d6$ |
| 41 $\mathbb{K}g1$ | $\mathbb{B}e2$ |
| 42 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ | $\mathbb{W}d5$ |

White resigned.

Let's now return to the situation after White's 23rd move and consider whether it wasn't possible to convert Black's advantage in a more convincing way, without allowing the opponent any counter-chances.



For myself I have formulated a rule, which I call 'the principle of the worst piece'. In chess literature you will not find such a formulation, although, of course, leading players make use of this principle.

Imagine that you are a designer, and you have to improve a machine which consists of ten parts. Nearly all of them are operating at 90% of their power, but one is only at 10%. It is clear that if you can find a way of raising the efficiency of the 'backward' part, this will be the best way of improving the operation of the machine as a whole. In order to extract the maximum from your position (which is a kind of chess machine), you must first of all raise the efficiency of all the pieces which for the moment are taking no or hardly any part in the play.

**In positions with strategic manoeuvring (when the time factor is not of decisive importance) look for the piece which is worse placed than all the others. The activation of this piece is often the most reliable way of improving your position as a whole.**

Let's analyse the placing of the black pieces. The knight at d5 and bishop at b7 are operating, if not at 100%, then at least 90%. The rook at c8 also stands well, and in one move the other rook will be able to occupy an excellent square at e8 or d8. The queen is a mobile piece, and it is not hard to move it to where it is required. But for the moment the bishop on e7 is not taking part in the play. How can it be included in the attack? By ... $\mathbb{Q}f8-h6$  (after the preparatory 23... $\mathbb{B}e8!$ ). At the same time the way for the queen to h4 is vacated.

Incidentally, in choosing such a plan we are also acting in accordance with a principle discussed earlier – the principle of two weaknesses. The first weakness, the d4-pawn, has already been fixed, and Black begins looking for new targets – the white king and the f4-pawn. Subsequently (with his bishop on h6 and queen on h4) he will be able to consider playing his knight from d5 to g4 or e4 to strengthen the attack on the king.

The following game was played in the same tournament.

### Mirumian – Baklan

CIS Junior Championship, Jurmala 1992

*French Defence*

- |                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1 e4             | e6             |
| 2 d4             | d5             |
| 3 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ | $\mathbb{B}b4$ |
| 4 e5             | $\mathbb{Q}e7$ |
| 5 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ | b6             |

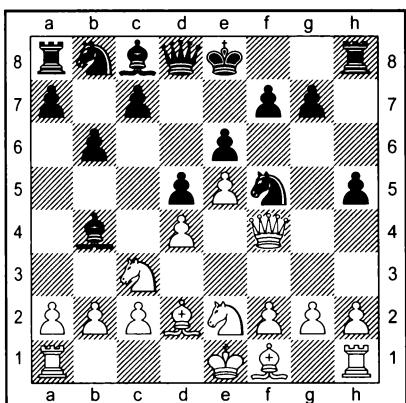
A comparatively rare move (5...c5 is usual).

**6 ♜g4****♝f5**

If now 7 ♜d3, then Black exploits the vulnerability of the d4-pawn to force the advantageous exchange of queens by 7...h5 8 ♛wf4 g5! (the game Leko–Panno, Argentina 1994, went 8...♝h4 9 ♛xh4 ♜xh4 10 g3 ♜f5 11 ♜b5 ♜xd2+ 12 ♜xd2 ♜a6 13 ♜e2 with the better chances for White) 9 ♜xg5 ♛xg5 10 ♜xg5 ♜xd4 (Martin Gonzalez–Psakhis, Benasque 1995).

**7 ♜ge2**

A thematic move, even though it looks rather awkward. White defends his d4-pawn and prevents the opponent's planned exchange of the light-square bishops after ...♜a6. The exchange of the bishop for the knight on e2 is not so advantageous for Black.

**7 ...****h5****8 ♛wf4**

If I had been playing Black, without thinking for long I would nevertheless have played 8...♞a6 – after all, this was the reason for the move ...b7–b6. The rapid development of the pieces is a basic principle of opening play. But our Vova Baklan is not a dogmatist, he does not often remember about general principles, and he always seeks his own way.

**8 ...****♝e7?!**

This second move with an already developed piece would simply not have occurred

to me, because I am in fact a dogmatist. In one instance out of ten, such violations of the chess laws by Vova prove successful, in a further five he gets away with it, but in three or four cases out of ten he is punished. However, on this occasion Black's unusual decision is justified. The threat of 9...g5 is very unpleasant, and it provoked the opponent into making a sharp reply, which proved unsuccessful. I would recommend 9 0-0-0 g5 10 ♛f3 g4 11 ♛f4, and if 11...♜g8 12 h3.

**9 h4?!****♝xh4****10 0-0-0****♝c6**

Black hurries to bring his pieces into play. Generally speaking his position is rather dangerous – after all, the opponent has a lead in development and the open h-file for an attack.

**11 g4****♝g6****12 ♛e3?!**

An over-optimistic decision. In an analysis of the game we decided that it would have been better to retreat the queen to g3, in order to provoke ...h5–h4, and only then play ♛e3 with the strategic threat of f2–f4–f5.

**12 ...****hxg4****13 ♜xh8+****♝xh8****14 ♜f4****♞g5**

By pinning the knight, for the moment Black does not allow it to go to h5.

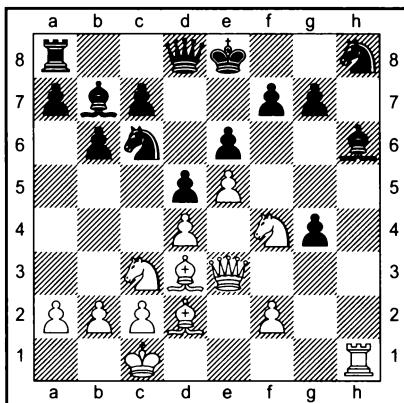
**15 ♜d3****♝b7****16 ♜h1**

The evaluation of the position depends literally on one tempo. Imagine that the queen were already on d7 – then Black would castle and the opponent would have no compensation for the two missing pawns. But Black does not have this tempo and the situation remains rather tense.

**16 ...****♞h6**

Now something must be done, as otherwise Black will prepare to castle.

(see diagram)



**17 ♜xh6!?**                            **gxh6**

**18 ♜fxd5!**

If 18...♜h5 there was the good reply 18...♝h4.

**18 . . .**                            **exd5**

**19 ♜xh6**

White's attacking looks menacing, but don't forget that for the sake of it he has sacrificed a whole rook. In such cases the opponent usually has an opportunity to buy his opponent off, by giving up part of his extra material.

**19 . . .**                            **♝xd4!**

**20 ♜xh8+**

Nothing was given by 20 ♜b5 ♜xb5 21 ♜xb5+ c6 22 ♜xc6+ ♜xc6 23 ♜xc6+ ♜f8 24 ♜h6+ ♜g8 25 ♜g5 ♜f8.

[Instead of 22 ♜xc6+? White maintains the balance by 22 ♜g5!, for example: 22...♝xg5+ 23 ♜xg5 cxb5 24 ♜f6! ♜d7 25 ♜d6+. The same move 20 ♜g5! was also not at all bad immediately, instead of capturing the knight – Dvoretsky.]

**20 . . .**                            **♝d7**

**21 ♜h5**                            **♝g8**

**22 ♜e3**                            **♝e6**

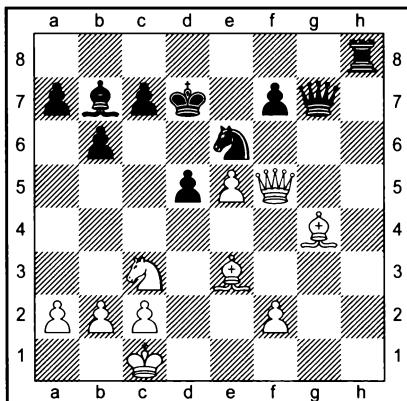
It is apparent that the worst for Black is over, and the attack should be parried.

**23 ♜f5**                            **♝g7**

**24 ♜xg4**                            **♝h8**

**25 ♜f5**

What would you play now?



Let us employ the principle of the worst piece. It is quite obvious that Black's worst piece is his king. If it were to be removed from the centre and placed at b8, the opponent would have to resign. Therefore 25...♚c8! followed by 26...♚b8 suggests itself.

National master Telman (the trainer of Seryozha Ovseevich, who was playing in the same tournament) suggested another, tactical solution: 25...♜h4 26 f3 d4! 27 ♜xd4 ♜xf3, achieving simplification advantageous to Black. Also not bad, although the march of the king away from the centre appeals to me more.

It was a pity that, as a consequence of tiredness and approaching time-trouble (of course, this is not a justification, but merely an explanation), Vova did not find the correct path and missed an almost certain win.

**25 . . .**                            **♚e7?**

**26 ♜e2**                            **♚c8?**

A clear waste of time – the bishop stood better at b7.

**27 ♜g3**                            **♝g6**

**28 ♜f3**                            **♝b7?**

[The logical continuation of Black's preceding moves would have been 28...♝g5! 29

$\mathbb{W}f6+$  (29  $\mathbb{W}f4 \mathbb{Q}xg4$  30  $\mathbb{W}xg4 \mathbb{Q}e4$ ) 29...  $\mathbb{W}xf6$  30  $\mathbb{exf}6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  31  $\mathbb{Q}d4+$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  32  $\mathbb{Q}xh8 \mathbb{Q}xg4$  with an extra pawn and definite winning chances, despite the opposite-colour bishops – Dvoretsky.]

**29 c4**

Black's position has become dangerous. After thinking for almost all his remaining time, Baklan took the correct decision – to force a draw.

<b>29 . . .</b>	<b>d4</b>
<b>30 <math>\mathbb{Q}f5+</math></b>	$\mathbb{Q}d8$
<b>31 <math>\mathbb{W}xb7</math></b>	$\mathbb{W}xg4$
<b>32 <math>\mathbb{W}a8+</math></b>	$\mathbb{Q}d7$
<b>33 <math>\mathbb{W}d5+</math></b>	$\mathbb{Q}e8$
<b>34 <math>\mathbb{W}c6+</math></b>	$\mathbb{Q}d8$
<b>35 <math>\mathbb{W}a8+</math></b>	

Draw agreed.

Remembering the turning point of this game, we see that any of our pieces can be the 'worst', including the king.

Now I will illustrate the principle of the worst piece in a game not between two young candidate masters, but between two experienced grandmasters.

### Dorfman – Balashov

Tallinn 1983

*King's Indian Defence*

<b>1 <math>\mathbb{Q}f3</math></b>	<b><math>\mathbb{Q}f6</math></b>
<b>2 c4</b>	<b>g6</b>
<b>3 <math>\mathbb{Q}c3</math></b>	$\mathbb{Q}g7$
<b>4 e4</b>	<b>d6</b>
<b>5 d4</b>	<b>0-0</b>
<b>6 <math>\mathbb{Q}e2</math></b>	$\mathbb{Q}g4$
<b>7 <math>\mathbb{Q}e3</math></b>	<b><math>\mathbb{Q}c6</math></b>
<b>8 d5</b>	$\mathbb{Q}xf3$
<b>9 <math>\mathbb{Q}xf3</math></b>	$\mathbb{Q}e5$
<b>10 <math>\mathbb{Q}e2</math></b>	<b>c6</b>
<b>11 0-0</b>	<b><math>\mathbb{Q}e8</math></b>

A rather passive plan. Theory recommends 11...  $\mathbb{Q}a5$ .

**12  $\mathbb{Q}c1$**  **e6**  
**13  $\mathbb{dx}c6$**

In the event of 13 f4 Black could have initiated complications not unfavourable for him by 13...  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  14  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  exd5. Here in reply to 13...  $\mathbb{bx}c6?$  the move 14 f4 would now be much stronger.

**13 . . .**  **$\mathbb{Q}xc6$**   
**14  $\mathbb{W}b3$**   **$\mathbb{We}7$**   
**15  $\mathbb{Q}fd1$**

White sees a weakness in the opponent's position – the d6-pawn, and he concentrates his attacks on it.

**15 . . .**  **$\mathbb{Q}ed8$**   
**16  $\mathbb{Q}d2$**   **$\mathbb{Q}d7$**   
**17  $\mathbb{Q}cd1$**   **$\mathbb{Q}ad8$**   
**18  $\mathbb{W}a3$**   **$\mathbb{Q}f8?!$**

For the moment the d6-pawn was adequately defended, so was it worth retreating the bishop to a passive position?

**19  $\mathbb{Q}g5$**

With the bishop on f8 this pin is especially unpleasant.

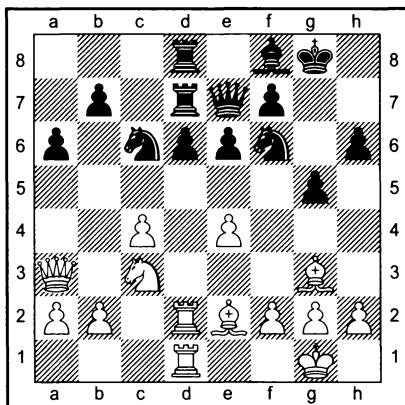
**19 . . .** **h6**  
**20  $\mathbb{Q}h4$**  **g5**

Otherwise 21 f4.

**21  $\mathbb{Q}g3$**  **a6**

In 'Hedgehog'-type positions this is a normal move, taking away the b5-square from the white knight. But in the given instance it is not too successful and lossif Dorfman subtly exploits its drawback – the weakening of the b6-square. 21... b6 was preferable.

(see diagram)



Let's approach this position from the stand-point of the 'worst piece' principle. White's rooks and bishops are excellently placed. For the moment his knight is not very strongly involved – it would not be bad to transfer it to b6. But first the e4-pawn must be defended. How? In the event of 22 f3 the opponent acquires not only the ... $\mathbb{Q}h5-f4$  manoeuvre, but also 22...d5, which, it turns out, Yuri Balashov had prepared by playing 21...a6. It could not be played immediately: 21...d5? 22  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  23 cxd5 exd5 24  $\mathbb{Q}b5!$ .

But what can be said about the white queen? It has already fulfilled its function on a3 – lured the enemy bishop to the passive square f8. But now there is nothing for it to do here: to attack a well-defended pawn is a rather pitiful role for White's strongest piece. Where would he like to play it to? Of course, to e3 – from here the queen defends the e4-pawn, releasing the knight, and has the possibility of taking part in an attack against the opponent's kingside, which has been weakened by ...g7–g5.

**22  $\mathbb{Q}b3!$**

While intending the manoeuvre  $\mathbb{Q}b3-b6-e3$ , White simultaneously prevents ...d6–d5.

**22 ...**

$\mathbb{Q}g7$

**23  $\mathbb{Q}b6$**

$\mathbb{Q}e8$

**24  $\mathbb{Q}a4$**

$\mathbb{Q}e5$

**25  $\mathbb{Q}e3$**

$\mathbb{Q}f6$

**26  $\mathbb{Q}b6$**

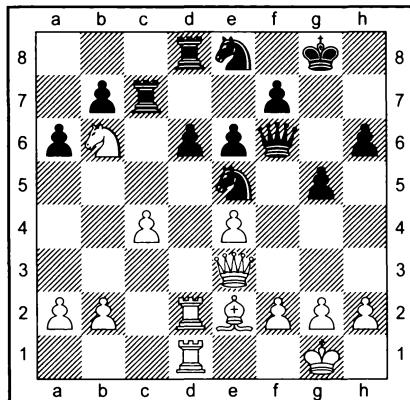
$\mathbb{Q}c7$

It's done – White has switched his queen and knight to more active positions. Now he clarifies the situation in the centre (if it were the opponent to move, he would happily play 27... $\mathbb{Q}f4$ ).

**27  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$**

$\mathbb{Q}xe5$

If 27... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ , then 28 c5 with the threat of 29  $\mathbb{Q}c4$ . And if 27...dxe5 there follows 28  $\mathbb{Q}xd8$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  29  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  and 30  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ .



**28 g3!**

*'This and especially the next move came to me with great difficulty. After investigating the position, I realised that the exchange of queens (after 28... $\mathbb{Q}f4$  or 29... $\mathbb{Q}g5$ ) would be advantageous to the opponent, since the knight on b6 would become vulnerable.'* – Dorfman.

The problem of which pieces to exchange is an inseparable component of chess strategy!

**28 ...**

**g4**

**29 h4!**

After 29...gxh3 30 f4 White's advantage is obvious. 29 h3?! is weaker: 29... $\mathbb{Q}g5!$  30  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  hxg5 31 hxg4  $\mathbb{Q}c6$ , and Black regains his pawn.

**29 ...**

**$\mathbb{Q}b8$**

What should White do now? We are not able to intensify the pressure on the weak d6-pawn. According to the principle of two weaknesses, our attention should be switched to new targets. Black's kingside pawns are weakened and demand attention. His king is unlikely to be mated, but it will feel uncomfortable.

But also on the queenside White can make progress. It makes sense to place the pawns on a5 and b4, after which the opponent will have to reckon with the breakthroughs b4–b5 or c4–c5.

Balashov does not want to allow a4–a5, with a bind on Black's queenside.

32 bxa5 ♜c5  
33 ♜b1

Of course, not 33  $\mathbb{Q}xd6?$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  34  $\mathbb{W}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4.$

33 ...  $\blacksquare x a 5$   
 34  $\blacksquare b 5$   $\blacksquare a 6$

In the event of 34... $\blacksquare b5$  35  $cxb5!$  White acquires a menacing passed pawn on the a-file.

35 c5

White's pieces are very active, whereas the opponent's forces are disunited – with the exception of the knight on e5, he has no good pieces. In such cases it makes sense to quickly open the position, and come into direct contact with the opponent, before he has coordinated his forces.

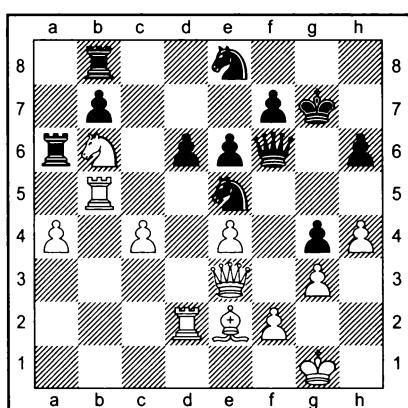
35... d8  
35...dxc5 36 xc5 was also bad for Black.

36 ♜g2  
 37 ♜xd8  
 38 ♜xc5

[38 a5!, intending 39 ♜xc5, was more accurate, since after the move in the game Black could still have put up a tough defence by playing 38...♝c6! – Dvoretsky.]

38 . . .  
 ♜d6  
 39 ♜c3  
 39 ♜e3? .  
 39 . . .  
 ♜xb6  
 40 ♜xb6  
 ♜xb6  
 41 ♜xe5+  
 f6  
 42 ♜h5

**Black resigned**



Of course, chess strategy does not reduce merely to the two principles we have considered. But even so, I hope that, by using them, you will find it easier to plan your actions at the board.



Alexey Kosikov

## Sensing the Tempo

The evaluation of a position is determined by three main factors: material, placing of the pieces and pawns (king safety, the existence of weaknesses etc.) and time.

The role of time in chess is not clearly defined. In tactical positions every tempo is of decisive importance, whereas in situations of strategic manoeuvring the time factor sometimes fades into the background.

In many types of sport the concept of a 'sense of rhythm' exists. In its best years the Dynamo Kiev football team played at an irregular tempo – first quietly, dulling the vigilance of the opponents, and then suddenly with a sharp increase in speed. This skilful organisation of the play (of course, in combination with high individual skills) helped the team to become one of the strongest in Europe.

Another example. A long-distance runner has to control his speed. He supposedly should run as quickly as possible, but nevertheless not too quickly – otherwise he won't have enough strength for the entire distance. It is very important for him to seek his optimal running rhythm.

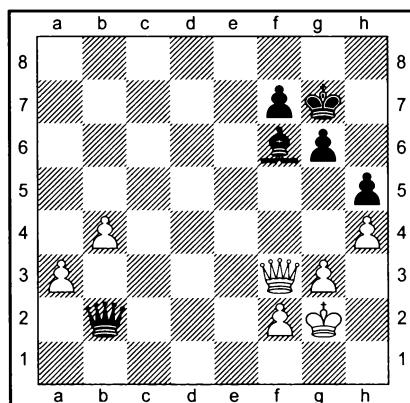
In chess too we can talk about a similar feeling. It may relate to expenditure of time in the direct meaning of the word (ability to decide when moves can be made quickly, and where one should stop and have a good think). This is a separate, very important topic, but today we are talking about something else – about 'sensing the tempo'. This is what I call the ability to sense how important the time factor is at a given moment, and at what tempo one should be acting: quietly, even waiting, or very specifically and energetically.

Like other practical chess skills, sensing the tempo can be developed by solving specially selected exercises with a tactical content, which demand sharp combinative vision. I recommend that, when analysing games, both your own and those of other players, focus your attention on this problem. And, of course, of great help here is a general growth in your erudition, your chess culture.

Today we will analyse various situations, in which the time factor plays a greater or lesser role.

**Kornev – Kosikov**

Smolensk 1991



Black's position is won, of course. However, the simple variation 56... $\mathbb{Q}c3$  57  $b5 \mathbb{Q}xa3$  58  $b6 \mathbb{Q}b2$  59  $b7$  did not completely satisfy me – the far-advanced pawn on  $b7$  makes the win rather difficult. The question is, doesn't Black have a more reliable way to win?

The white queen is overloaded, since it simultaneously has to defend the  $f2$ - and  $a3$ -pawns. There immediately comes to mind

the idea of zugzwang – a device with the help of which numerous endings are won.

**56 . . .**

**♗d4!**

If now 57 ♕f4, then 57...♝c3 58 ♕f3 ♕xa3 59 b5 ♜b2 (or 59...♝b4), and the pawn does not succeed in advancing to b7.

**57 ♔g1**

**♝c3**

57...♝c3 would also have won easily.

**58 b5**

**♗d4!**

The b5-pawn is attacked, and if 59 a4 there follows 59...♕a1+ and 60...♕xa4. This is why Black lured the king onto the 1st rank! White has only one reply.

**59 ♕f4**

**♔e5**

**60 ♜c4**

Otherwise 60...♜xb5.

**60 . . .**

**♗d4!**

The bishop has moved to this square three times, and each time with increasing effect.

**61 ♕f1**

**♕xa3**

**62 ♔g2**

**♝b2**

**63 ♔f3**

**♝f8**

White resigned.

Thus a zugzwang position is one of the situations where the time factor tells, and in a highly distinctive form.

In the opening stage your forces must be quickly developed, and here any loss of tempo may prove fatal. Numerous games have been lost merely because one of the players neglected his development. I will restrict myself to one example on this theme.

### Petrosian – Suetin

27th USSR Championship, Leningrad 1960  
Queen's Gambit

**1 c4**

**c5**

**2 ♜f3**

**♝f6**

**3 ♜c3**

**♝c6**

**4 e3**

**e6**

**5 d4**

**d5**

**6 cxd5**

**7 ♜e2**

**8 0-0**

**exd5**

**a6**

**c4**

The Tarrasch Defence to the Queen's Gambit has been played. But the ideas of different openings sometimes intersect. Tell me, does this position remind you of anything? That's right, we've reached the Panov Attack against the Caro-Kann Defence with colours reversed and an extra tempo for White. There the plan involving c4–c5 is not considered very favourable for White. And this applies even more here – with a tempo less, it is hardly good to advance the c-pawn.

**9 ♜e5**

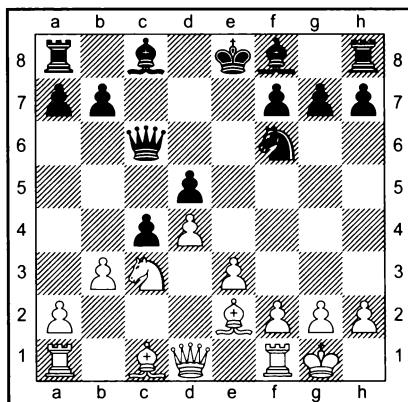
**♛c7**

Now 10 f4, supporting the knight on e5, suggests itself. But this move has a positional defect – it weakens the e4-point. Black completes his development with 10...♝b4, and later at some point he will capture on c3 and invade at e4.

**10 ♜xc6**

**♛xc6**

**11 b3**



The danger of Black's position begins to be felt, and he must be extremely careful. His king is still in the centre and the opponent is already taking the initiative and creating concrete threats. He should complete his development as quickly as possible by playing 11...♝b4 (with gain of tempo!) and at



the first convenient opportunity – castle. But that which I call 'sensing the tempo' apparently betrayed Alexey Suetin.

- |         |                   |
|---------|-------------------|
| 11 ...  | b5?               |
| 12 bxc4 | bx <sub>c</sub> 4 |
| 13 e4!  |                   |

If White wants to punish the opponent for neglecting his development, he must delay it, come into direct contact with him, and sharpen the play.

- |        |      |
|--------|------|
| 13 ... | dxe4 |
|--------|------|

The lesser evil was 13... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  (exchanges usually favour the defending side), but even here after 14  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  dxe4 15 d5  $\mathbb{W}g6$  16  $\mathbb{Q}h5!$  (a recommendation by Yuri Razuvaev) 16... $\mathbb{W}f5$  17  $\mathbb{Q}e1$  White has the advantage.

- |                   |                |
|-------------------|----------------|
| 14 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ | $\mathbb{Q}f5$ |
|-------------------|----------------|

The middlegame is in full swing, but Black is still not in a hurry to develop his kingside. Good or bad, he had to play 14... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ .

- |                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 15 d5              | $\mathbb{W}c7$  |
| 16 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ | $\mathbb{W}xf6$ |
| 17 $\mathbb{Q}g4!$ |                 |

The last accurate move, exchanging the opponent's only developed piece – the bishop which is defending the e4-pawn (if 17... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  White wins by 18  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  19  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{W}e5$  20  $\mathbb{W}a4+$  with mate). The outcome is now not in doubt.

- |                     |                 |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| 17 ...              | $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ |
| 18 $\mathbb{W}xg4$  | $\mathbb{W}e5$  |
| 19 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  | f5              |
| 20 $\mathbb{W}h5$   | 0-0-0           |
| 21 $\mathbb{Q}d2$   | c3              |
| 22 $\mathbb{Q}c4$   | $\mathbb{W}d4$  |
| 23 $\mathbb{W}xf5+$ | $\mathbb{Q}d7$  |
| 24 $\mathbb{Q}e5$   |                 |

Black resigned.

It is not only neglect of development that can be the cause of failure. The same consequences can follow from a superficial, ill-judged handling of the opening.

### Soloviov – Kosikov

Smolensk 1991

*French Defence*

- |                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1 e4             | e6             |
| 2 d4             | d5             |
| 3 e5             | c5             |
| 4 c3             | $\mathbb{Q}c6$ |
| 5 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ | $\mathbb{W}b6$ |
| 6 a3             | $\mathbb{Q}d7$ |
| 7 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ |                |

The combination of 6 a3 and 7  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  is hardly good; the latest word in fashion in this variation is 7 b4. However, when playing White one can take some liberties without being punished.

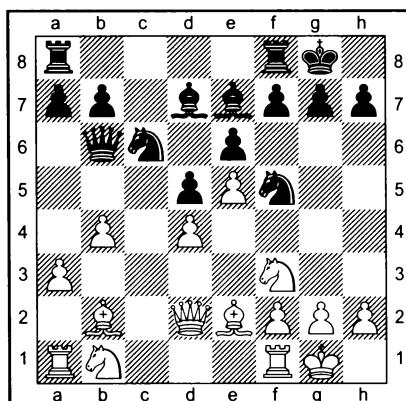
- |                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| 7 ...             | $\mathbb{Q}h6$  |
| 8 b4              | $\mathbb{cx}d4$ |
| 9 cxd4            | $\mathbb{Q}f5$  |
| 10 $\mathbb{Q}b2$ | $\mathbb{Q}e7$  |
| 11 0-0            | 0-0             |

White has problems with the completion of his development – he cannot bring out his knight in view of the loss of the d4-pawn. The move b4–b5 is anti-positional, since it seriously weakens the queenside.

- |                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| 12 $\mathbb{Q}d2?$ |  |
|--------------------|--|

12  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  and then  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  was necessary, with roughly equal chances.

What would you now have played as Black?



You suggest playing for the exchange of the light-square bishops? It is too slow. With his last move the opponent began carrying out what is general a sensible idea: he is planning 13  $\mathbb{B}d1$  and 14  $\mathbb{Q}c3$ . To frustrate his plan, you must play more energetically. Let us check specifically: 12... $\mathbb{Q}b8?$  13  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  or 12... $a6!?$  13  $\mathbb{B}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}a7$  14  $\mathbb{Q}c3$ , and White is excellently placed.

Another suggestion is 12... $g5$ . You know, I like playing ... $g7-g5$  in the French Defence, but here this is really too sharp!

There is another possibility: 12... $f6$ . But, in suggesting it, did you miss 13  $g4$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  14  $\mathbb{exf}6$  followed by the fork  $g4-g5$ ? You missed it? But even so, that's what I played.

**12 ... f6!**

The tactical idea associated with this move is well known – it is analysed in Aaron Nimzowitsch's famous book *My System*.

**13 g4  $\mathbb{Q}h6$**

**14  $\mathbb{exf}6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$**

**15 g5  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$**

**16  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$**

Black also has the advantage after 16  $gxh6$ .

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

**17  $\mathbb{B}d1$**

The positional exchange sacrifice has given Black a splendid position. It is amusing that at this point my opponent offered a draw.

**17 ...  $\mathbb{W}d8!$**

The  $g5$ -pawn is lost. The next few moves are forced.

**18  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$**

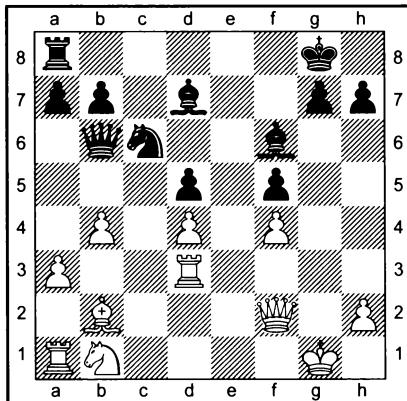
**19 f4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$**

**20  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{exf}5$**

**21  $\mathbb{W}b2$   $\mathbb{W}b6$**

White wanted to develop his knight, but I prevent this by tying him to the defence of the  $d4$ -pawn.

**22  $\mathbb{B}d3$**



The initiative is on my side, but the position is one where every tempo is important. If White should succeed in playing  $\mathbb{Q}d2-f3-e5$  or  $\mathbb{Q}d2-b3-c5$ , I will have to forget about any hopes of an advantage. Sensing the tempo suggests that Black should urgently 'latch on' to the opponent, using concrete threats to divert him from the completion of his development.

**22 ... a5!  
23  $\mathbb{bxa5}$   $\mathbb{Q}xa5$**

But not 23... $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  because of 24  $\mathbb{Q}c3$ . The black rook comes into play, and White still cannot move his knight.

**24 a4**

Here I stopped to think and I found what I believe is a good solution. I was helped by the 'principle of the worst piece'. The bishop on  $d7$  is not taking any part in the play. The standard route for the bishop is via  $e8$  to  $h5$ , but from there it will be firing into empty space. It is most probably better to attack the  $a4$ -pawn with it, i.e. move the knight.

**24 ...  $\mathbb{Q}d8!$**

The knight goes either to  $e6$ , or via  $f7$  to  $d6$ . If Black should capture the  $a4$ -pawn, he will already have two pawns for the exchange.

**25  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$**

The  $d4$ -pawn is again under fire.

**26  $\mathbb{Q}d1$**

Here the knight is not much better placed than on b1. Now I could have simply captured with my rook on a4 with an advantage, but in such cases it is important not to sell yourself too cheaply. You should check whether or not there is something stronger. And indeed, if you see Black's next two moves, it immediately becomes clear that this is what should be played.

**26 ... ♜d6**

The f4-pawn is attacked.

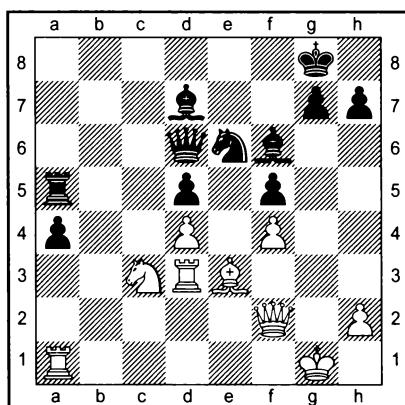
**27 ♜c1 ♜b5!**

The pawn is won in a version that is more advantageous to Black. His passed pawn will be much more dangerous on the a-file than on the b-file.

**28 ♜e3 ♜xa4**

**29 ♜c3**

A new question: how would you characterise the resulting situation (from the standpoint of our topic – 'sensing the tempo') and what would you suggest playing?



I thought that I had already gained a decisive advantage (two pawns for the exchange, dangerous passed a-pawn, weaknesses on d4 and f4) and I spent some time looking for concrete ways to break through the opponent's defences. But gradually I realised that the defensive resources were quite considerable, and that the position was not yet ripe

for decisive action – it was not tempo-dependent. For a time Black needs to maintain it, to manoeuvre. Such manoeuvring, on the one hand, enables the position to be strengthened to the maximum, by making all moves that will be useful in the future, and on the other hand, it allows the most appropriate moment to be chosen for switching to positive action, when the opponent goes wrong and makes the task easier.

**30 ... h6!**

Now the king will feel more secure, and ...g7–g5 is also a possibility.

**31 ♜d2 ♜b4**

**32 ♜a2 ♜d6**

**33 ♜c3 ♜h8**

As you see, in non-tempo positions the principle 'do not hurry' comes to the fore. I very much did not want to play ...g7–g5 (the opponent is condemned to passivity, so why sharpen the play?), and yet now White has to reckon with this move. You see, after 34...g5 35 fxg5 hxg5 36 ♜xf5 I have the reply 36...♜xd4, which would not have been the case with the king on g8. And in general, the king stands slightly better at h8 than at g8, even if only marginally.

Note that my last few actions (...h7–h6, ...♜b4, ...♜h8) have not involved the slightest risk. But the opponent has to be constantly on the alert, since any move of his may turn out to be a serious mistake. It is very difficult to defend in such situations.

**34 ♜b2 ♜c7**

Advancing the pawn to a3 is premature – this move should be held over White like a sword of Damocles and made only with decisive effect. But for the moment Black should prolong the manoeuvring, trying with minor threats to disrupt the coordination of the white pieces.

**35 ♜d2 ♜a7**

**36 ♜d1**

36 ♜e2 is bad in view of 36...♜b5, when the

bishop comes very strongly into play. But after the rook has moved, the advance of the a-pawn will crack the opponent's defences. We see the principle of two weaknesses in action – White is unable simultaneously to defend the d4-pawn and to combat the passed a-pawn.

36 ... a3  
37  $\mathbb{R}a2$   $\mathbb{A}a4$

After both a move of the rook and the exchange on a4, the d4-pawn is lost. The game is practically decided.

In such situations the opponent usually 'goes berserk', trying at any cost to create some counter-chances, and here one should be especially careful.

38  $\mathbb{R}xa3$   $\mathbb{A}xd1$   
39  $\mathbb{Q}b5$

A clever reply. But since Black's previous strategy was correct, the tactical complications should turn out to his advantage.

39 ...  $\mathbb{R}xa3$   
40  $\mathbb{Q}xa7$   $\mathbb{R}xe3$   
41  $\mathbb{Q}c6$

41  $\mathbb{R}xd1$   $\mathbb{A}xd4$  was totally bad.

41 ...  $\mathbb{A}e4$   
42  $\mathbb{R}xd1$   $\mathbb{A}xf4$

Of course, 42... $\mathbb{A}xd4$  would also have won, but why exchange the white knight when it is shut out of the game?

43  $\mathbb{R}a4$   
43  $\mathbb{R}f3$   $\mathbb{A}e1+$  44  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{A}h4+$ .  
43 ...  $\mathbb{A}h4$

White resigned.

We have seen what sort of approach a player should adopt in non-tempo positions (the principle 'do not hurry' etc.). The following examples will be devoted to the problem of the initiative.

In the previous game no particular imagination was demanded of Black – self-control and patience were more necessary. But for seizing and retaining the initiative, accurate and resourceful play is required, and the value of each move is usually extremely high.

**Romanishin – Farago**  
European Team Championship,  
Skara 1980  
*Réti Opening*

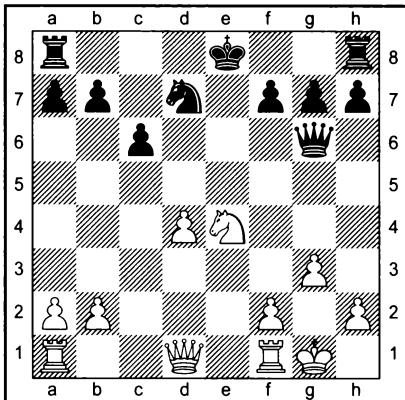
1 $\mathbb{Q}f3$	$\mathbb{Q}f6$
2 g3	d5
3 $\mathbb{Q}g2$	c6
4 0-0	$\mathbb{A}g4$
5 c4	e6
6 d4	$\mathbb{Q}bd7$
7 $\mathbb{Q}e5$	$\mathbb{A}f5$
8 $\mathbb{Q}c3$	$\mathbb{A}d6$
9 $\mathbb{Q}f4$	$\mathbb{W}b8$

Black is slightly slow in castling. Oleg Romanishin tries to exploit this factor by sharpening the play.

10 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$	$\mathbb{R}xd7$
11 cxd5	exd5
11... $\mathbb{A}xf4?$	12 dxс6.
12 e4!	$\mathbb{D}xe4$
13 $\mathbb{A}xe4$	$\mathbb{A}xe4$
14 $\mathbb{A}xd6$	$\mathbb{W}xd6$
15 $\mathbb{A}xe4$	$\mathbb{W}g6$

Here is the position, for the sake of which we are analysing this game. What would you suggest?

(see diagram)



If White does have any advantage, it is clear that after the slightest inaccuracy it will instantly evaporate. After all, there are no weaknesses in Black's position, and the only straw at which one can clutch is the tempo which the opponent will have to spend on castling. But how to exploit it?

16  $\mathbb{Q}c5?$  is incorrect in view of 16...0-0-0, and Black already stands better.

Grandmaster Igor Zaitsev pointed out the strongest continuation: 16  $\mathbb{W}b3!$ . Now 16... $\mathbb{Q}b6$  17  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  0-0-0 18 a4 is clearly advantageous to White, which means that kingside and queenside castling must be examined.

It is good if after 16...0-0-0 you instantly saw the tactical motif  $\mathbb{W}xf7!$ . But the immediate 17  $\mathbb{W}xf7?$  does not work because of 17... $\mathbb{W}xe4$ . 17  $\mathbb{Q}e1$  suggests itself, but Black replies 17... $\mathbb{Q}he8$ , when 18  $\mathbb{W}xf7?$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  19  $\mathbb{W}xg6$   $\mathbb{Q}xe1+$  is not possible. Therefore 17  $\mathbb{Q}ae1!$  must be tried. Now after 17... $\mathbb{Q}he8$  18  $\mathbb{W}xf7$  White wins a pawn. If 17... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ , then 18  $\mathbb{Q}c5$ , intending 19 a4 or 19  $\mathbb{Q}e7$ , for example: 18... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  19  $\mathbb{Q}e7$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  20  $\mathbb{W}xf7$   $\mathbb{W}xc5$  21  $\mathbb{W}xg7!$  and wins, or 18... $\mathbb{W}f6$  19  $\mathbb{W}a3!$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  20  $\mathbb{Q}e7!$ . Finally, if 17... $\mathbb{Q}b8$  White can reply 18  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  (18 a4?!  $\mathbb{Q}he8$  is less accurate) with the better chances.

In the 16...0-0 variation White can fight for an advantage, only by finding after 17  $\mathbb{W}xb7$   $\mathbb{W}xe4$  18  $\mathbb{W}xd7$   $\mathbb{Q}fd8$  (18... $\mathbb{Q}ad8$  19  $\mathbb{W}xa7$ )

the intermediate move 19  $\mathbb{Q}ae1!$ . How should Black defend? He loses his queen after 19... $\mathbb{W}xd4$ ? 20  $\mathbb{Q}e8+!$ , while 19... $\mathbb{Q}xe1$  20  $\mathbb{W}xd8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  21  $\mathbb{Q}xe1$  leaves White a sound pawn to the good. White also has the advantage after 19... $\mathbb{W}f3$  20  $\mathbb{W}b7$  followed by  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  or  $\mathbb{Q}e7$ . It remains to check 19... $\mathbb{Q}c2$  20  $\mathbb{W}b7$   $\mathbb{Q}db8$  (20... $\mathbb{Q}ab8$  21  $\mathbb{W}xa7$   $\mathbb{W}xb2$  22  $\mathbb{Q}e4$ ) 21  $\mathbb{W}a6$   $\mathbb{W}xb2$  (21... $\mathbb{Q}b6$  22  $\mathbb{W}e2$ ; 21... $\mathbb{W}xb2$  22  $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{W}e2$  23  $\mathbb{W}xc6$  or 22... $\mathbb{Q}e4$  23  $\mathbb{W}xc6$ , retaining the extra pawn) 22  $\mathbb{W}xc6$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  23  $\mathbb{Q}e7$ . Although material equality has been restored, the initiative undoubtedly remains with White (analysis by Zaitsev and Dvoretsky).

Romanishin is a player with an original, dynamic style, and even so he missed this opportunity. However, the move made by him looks very natural.

**16 d5?!** **0-0!**

**17  $\mathbb{Q}e1?$ !**

17  $dxc6$ !  $\mathbb{W}xc6$  18  $\mathbb{Q}e1$  followed by  $\mathbb{Q}c1$  was stronger, when White still retains some initiative, although not as promising as after 16  $\mathbb{W}b3!$ . In chess, you know, mistakes often come in series. Romanishin was apparently oppressed by the subconscious feeling that somewhere he had not exploited all the advantages of his position. In trying to maintain his fading advantage, he lost his objectivity and soon encountered serious difficulties.

**17 ...  $\mathbb{Q}ad8$**

**18 d6?**

Here too he should have captured on c6, although now after 18... $\mathbb{Q}e5!$  (with the idea of 19... $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ ) the initiative would have passed to Black.

**18 ...  $f5!$**

Apparently Romanishin overlooked or underestimated this move. The pawn on d6 becomes a real weakness and will soon be lost.

**19  $\mathbb{W}b3+$**

**$\mathbb{Q}h8$**

20 ♜c3

21 ♛c4

22 ♜ad1

23 ♜e2

23 ♜e3? ♜xb2.

23 ...

24 ♛h4

♘c5

♗xd6

♘d3

b5!

28 ♜xd1

29 ♛xf5

♘xc3

♗f6?

Only by retaining the queens (29...♛a3!) could Black have continued playing for a win.

30 ♛xf6

gxg6

31 ♜d7

Now White is no worse, in view of the activity of his rook and the unfortunate placing of the opponent's pieces.

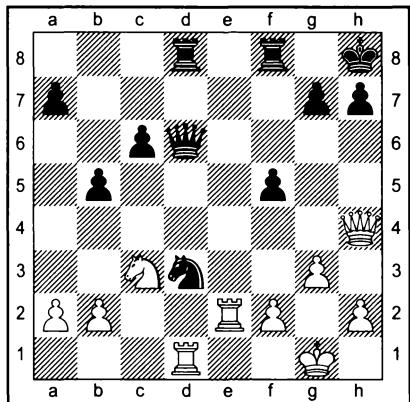
31...c5 32 ♜xa7 ♜c8 33 ♜b7 (33 ♜f1!?)

33...b4 34 ♜g2 ♜g8 35 h4 h5 36 ♜f3 ♜a8

37 ♜b5 ♜a3+ 38 ♜e4 ♜xa2 39 ♜xc5 ♜xf2

40 ♜b5 ♜g7 Draw.

The game we have analysed, in which from the very start White's initiative hung by a thread, shows how difficult it can be in such situations to find the only continuations, sometimes far from obvious, which do not allow the flame of the initiative to be extinguished. Sensing the tempo should help you to decide on that moment, when the maximum concentration is required in searching for the correct solution.



Black has an obvious advantage. However, because of the pin on the knight at d3 there is still some tension in the position, making it tempo-dependent, and forcing him to look for a clear, concrete solution. After saying 'a', he should have said 'b' – advanced his b5-pawn further, disrupting the coordination of the enemy pieces. After 24...b4! 25 ♜a4 ♜d5 26 ♜e3 (26 ♜ed2 ♜f3 with the threat of 27...♘e1!) 26...♜b5 (but not 26...♛xa2? 27 ♜c5) White's position would have become extremely dangerous. For example: 27 b3 f4! or 27 ♜e7?! ♜g8! 28 b3 f4 29 gxg4 ♜d5 (analysis by Dvoretsky).

Ivan Farago found another way, also very concrete – a forcibly simplifying operation, which, however, seems to me to be less convincing.

24 ...

♘c5?!

25 ♜ed2

♗d4

26 ♛h5

♜xb2!

27 ♜xd4

♘xd1

### Ilinchenko – Kosikov

Kiev 1991

English Opening

1 d4	♘f6
2 ♜f3	c5
3 c4	cxsd4
4 ♜xd4	e5
5 ♜b5	d5
6 cxsd5	♘c5

The 'Vaganian Gambit'. For the pawn Black obtains an enduring initiative, which is not at all easy to extinguish.

7 ♜1c3?

A poor move. The c3-square should have been occupied by the other knight.

7 ...

0-0

8 e3

a6

9 ♜a3

b5

**10 ♜c2 ♜f5**

Although Black is a pawn down, for the moment he can play without particular thought – so natural is the development of his pieces. He is not thinking about regaining the material, but is planning ...♝bd7, ...e5–e4 and ...♞e5. From e5 the knight will exert pressure on both wings.

**11 ♜d3**

My opponent was apparently afraid of me regaining the pawn by 11...♜xc2 and 12...♝xd5, which did not come into my plans at all. However, after 11...♝bd7 and 12...♝c8 the threat of the exchange on c2 would indeed have become real.

**11 ... e4**

**12 ♜e2 ♜g6**

This is not yet a tempo-position, and so I decided to spend time on a prophylactic move. After the immediate 12...♝bd7 I would have had to reckon with 13 g4!?

**13 b4?!**

The start of an over-sharp plan, which in the end led to my opponent's defeat.

**13 ... ♜d6**

**14 a4**

A continuation of the same faulty strategy. With the white king still stuck in the centre, the opening of lines on the queenside is to Black's advantage. White would have done better to 'let sleeping dogs lie'.

**14 ... bxa4**

**15 ♜xa4 ♜c8**

I did not like 15...♝bd7 because of the manoeuvre ♜c2–d4–c6.

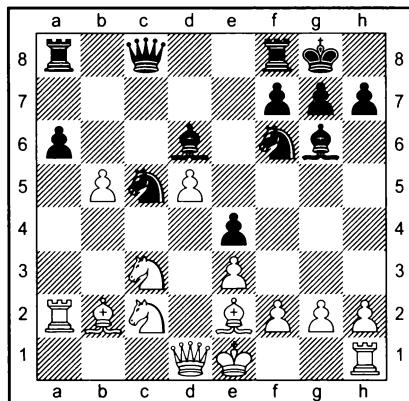
**16 ♜b2 ♜bd7**

If now 17 ♜d4, then 17...♝b6 followed by 18...♝bx5, 18...♝c4 or 18...♝xb4.

**17 b5 ♜c5**

**18 ♜a2**

How should I now continue?



If the opponent should succeed in removing his king from the centre, he will obtain an acceptable position. Moreover, his slight delay in castling will then acquire a logical basis. In fact, if White had castled a few moves earlier, then by placing my knight on e5 I would have begun an attack on the kingside. But now, when the opening of the play on another part of the board has diverted my pieces, the king will feel completely safe on the kingside.

Thus, I am obliged to undertake something. 18...♝d3+ suggests itself, but how should one assess the position arising after 19 ♜xd3 exd3 20 ♜d4 axb5 21 ♜xa8 ♜xa8 22 ♜dxb5 (or 22 ♜cxb5)? Of course, Black retains the initiative, and this cannot be bad for him. But nevertheless it is pity that at the end of the variation the opponent has a choice – he can capture on b5 with either knight, 22 ♜dxb5 apparently being the stronger option. And I found a transposition of moves, which denied White this possibility.

**18 ... axb5**

**19 ♜xa8 ♜xa8**

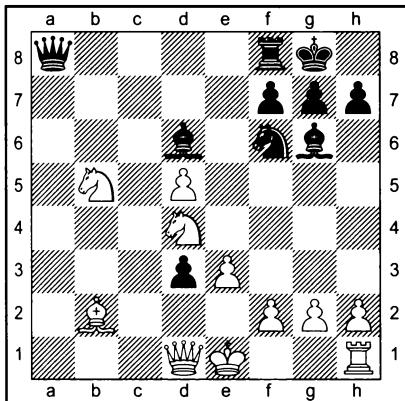
**20 ♜xb5**

[20 0-0 was better – Dvoretsky.]

**20 ... ♜d3+**

**21 ♜xd3**

**22 ♜cd4**



In aiming for this position, I did not see a concrete solution, but I sensed that something should be found. It is now possible to latch on to the white king, by checking with the queen at a5 or the bishop at b4, and the d3-pawn is very dangerous.

I delved into the position, and in the end I found and calculated a forced way to win.

**22 . . .      ♜b4+**

**23 ♜c3**

23 ♜f1 was more tenacious, but then Black simply captures on d5 with an overwhelming advantage. [There is a quicker way to win: 23...♛a2! 24 ♜c3 ♜e4 – Dvoretsky.]

**23 . . .      ♛a5**

**24 ♜d2**

If 24 ♜xb4 ♛xb4+ 25 ♜d2 I had prepared 25...♛b1+ 26 ♜d1 d2+! 27 ♜xd2 ♜e4+ 28 ♜e1 (28 ♜e2 ♛b2+) 28...♛xd1+ 29 ♜xd1 ♜xf2+ and 30...♜xh1, winning the rook.

**24 . . .      ♜c8!**

The key move, which, of course, had to be seen beforehand. If now 25 ♜xb4, then 25...♛a1+ 26 ♜d1 ♜c1 27 ♜c3 ♜xd1+ 28 ♜xd1 ♜xd5 29 ♜d2 ♛a2 – Black's material and positional advantage ensure him an easy win.

**25 ♜c6      ♛xb5**

**26 ♜xb4**

26 ♜xb4 ♜e4 was bad for White, as was 26

♞a7 ♜xc3 27 ♜xb5 ♜c1 mate.

**26 . . .      ♜xd5**

26...♞e4 was also strong. Here Black was able to terminate his calculations, since it was now obvious that the opponent's defences were collapsing.

**27 ♜a7      ♜xb4**

**28 ♜xc8**

28 ♜xb4 ♜c1+ 29 ♜d2 ♜c2+.

**28 . . .      ♜b1+**

**29 ♜d1      d2+!**

**30 ♜xd2      ♜b4+**

White resigned.

We have talked about the development and use of the initiative, but this is only part of the story. Before that you have to be able to seize it. The fight for possession of the initiative (as well as subsequent actions to exploit it) is usually of a tempo-dependent nature, demanding accuracy and resourcefulness.

### Ilyin-Genevsky – Ragozin

3rd Match Game, Leningrad 1929/30

*French Defence*

<b>1 e4</b>	<b>e6</b>
-------------	-----------

<b>2 d4</b>	<b>d5</b>
-------------	-----------

<b>3 ♜c3</b>	<b>♝b4</b>
--------------	------------

<b>4 ♜d3</b>	<b>c5</b>
--------------	-----------

4...dxe4 5 ♜xe4 ♜f6 is also good.

**5 a3**

Many years later the Soviet master Pavel Kondratiev introduced an interesting gambit line: 5 exd5 ♜xd5 6 ♜d2 ♜xc3 7 ♜c3 cxd4 8 ♜xd4 ♜xg2 9 ♜f3 ♜xf3 10 ♜xf3 f6 11 ♜g1 ♜f7 12 0-0-0. For the sacrificed pawn White has a lead in development and the two bishops.

**5 . . .      ♜xc3+**

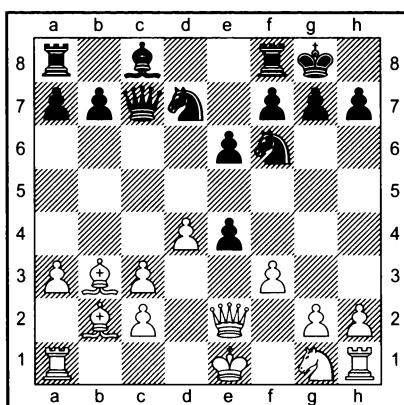
**6 bxc3**

**7 ♜e2**

7 ♜f1! was stronger, in order to answer 7...dxe4 with 8 ♕q4.

- |         |             |
|---------|-------------|
| 7 . . . | <b>dxe4</b> |
| 8 ♜xc4  | <b>♛c7</b>  |
| 9 ♜e2   | <b>♝d7</b>  |
| 10 ♜b2  | <b>♝gf6</b> |
| 11 f3   | <b>0-0</b>  |
| 12 ♜b3  |             |

Give some thought to the situation that has arisen



As yet the evaluation of the position has not been determined – now is the time when it will be decided which of the two players will seize the initiative. White is threatening not only the capture 13 fxe4, but also 13 c4, activating his dark-square bishop.

- 12 ... b5!

An excellent solution. If 13  $\mathbb{W}xb5$  there follows 13...a5! (intending 14... $\mathbb{Q}a6$  or 14...a4! 15  $\mathbb{Q}xa4$   $\mathbb{B}b8$ ) 14  $\mathbb{W}c4$   $\mathbb{W}b6$ , creating dangerous threats with the white king caught in the centre.

Incidentally, it would have been very good to play this a move earlier: in the 5th game of the match Vyacheslav Ragozin chose 11...b5!

- 13 fxe4 ♕b7  
14 e5

With the two bishops White should have

arranged his pawns on light squares, to give scope to the dark-square bishop, which has no opponent. But the opposite has happened – the pawns are fixed on dark squares and the bishop at b2 has been transformed into a 'large pawn'.

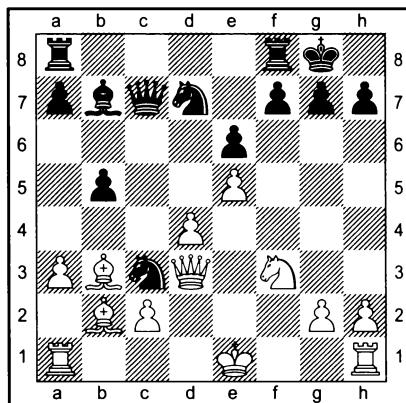
- 14 . . . ♕d5  
15 ♖f3

15  $\mathbb{W}xb5?$   $\mathfrak{d}xc3$  (the g2-pawn is under attack) 16  $\mathbb{W}f1$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  is clearly bad for White.

- 15 x3

Black has restored material equality and seized the initiative. This happened because Ragozin correctly recognised the moment when it was necessary to delve deeply into the position and find the correct solution (12...b5!).

- 16 ♚d3



- 16... ♕xf3!

The routine 16... $\mathbb{Q}ac8?$  would have allowed White to launch a counterattack by 17  $\mathbb{Q}g5!$   $g6$  18 0-0 with the threat of 19  $\mathbb{Q}h3$ , and if 18... $h6$  there follows 19  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ . The initiative is a fragile thing – it does not last long, and it can be lost after the very first inaccuracy.

- 17 ♜xf3 ♜ac8  
18 0-0 ♜b6

Black is excellently placed. Now he is intending to advance his a-pawn.

19  $\mathbb{Q}ae1$ 

a5

20  $\mathbb{W}h5$ 

20  $\mathbb{W}g4!$ ? came into consideration, although after 20... $\mathbb{Q}bd5!$  21  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  a4 22  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  23  $\mathbb{Q}g3$  g6 24 c3  $\mathbb{W}e7$  Black would have retained the advantage.

20 ...

 $\mathbb{W}d7!$ 

But not 20...a4? 21  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ .

21  $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 

a4

22  $\mathbb{Q}h4$ 

h6

23  $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 

23  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  axb3 24  $\mathbb{W}xh6$  did not work because of 24... $\mathbb{W}xd4$ !.

23 ...

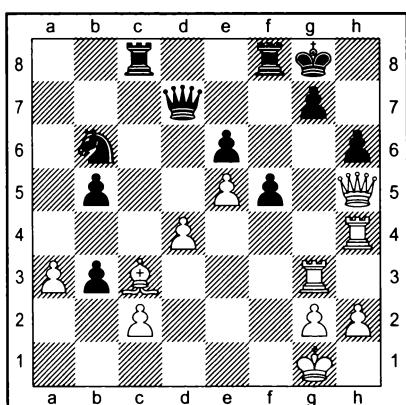
AXB3

24  $\mathbb{Q}g3$ 

f5

25  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 

How does Black best exploit his advantage?



There is no time for 25... $\mathbb{W}xc2$ ? in view of the threat of 26  $\mathbb{W}xh6$ , and 25...f4 26  $\mathbb{W}xh6$ ! fxg3 27  $\mathbb{W}h8+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  28  $\mathbb{Q}f4$ + is also bad for Black. [In fact this leads to a draw after 28... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ ! 29  $\mathbb{Q}g4+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$ , and if 30  $\mathbb{Q}xg7+$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  31  $\mathbb{W}h5$ !, then 31... $\mathbb{W}f7$ ! 32  $\mathbb{Q}xf7$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  – Dvoretsky.]

The prophylactic move 25... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ ! would have won: if 26 cxb3 f4, severing the link between the rook on h4 and the d4-pawn and preparing 27... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  on the next move, while after 26  $\mathbb{Q}g6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  (26... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ ) 27  $\mathbb{W}xh6$ + gxh6 28  $\mathbb{W}xh6$ +  $\mathbb{Q}g8$  29  $\mathbb{W}h8$ +  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  the checks

soon come to an end.

[This note contains a flaw. After 25... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  26 cxb3 f4 White can play 27  $\mathbb{Q}g6$ . In order to prevent a deadly sacrifice on h6 (which wins against 27... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ , for example) Black must defend by 27... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ . After the continuation 28 h3!  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  29  $\mathbb{Q}d2$ ! White undoubtedly has some advantage, since Black is a pawn down. In view of the lavish praise bestowed on Black's moves throughout the game, it would appear that a reassessment is in order. – John Nunn.]

[It seems to me that the entire game does not need a reassessment, but only the recommendation 25... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ : cf. the note to White's 27th move – Dvoretsky.]

Alas, the concluding stage of the game was far from faultless. Black won, but not without the help of his opponent.

25 ...  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 26  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  b227  $\mathbb{W}d1$ ?

27  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  was necessary, since now 27...b4! would have immediately decided the outcome: 28 axb4  $\mathbb{Q}a8$  or 28  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  bxa3 29  $\mathbb{Q}xa3$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$ .

[However, after 27  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  Black would also have retained a dangerous initiative, by continuing 27... $\mathbb{Q}a4$ ! 28  $\mathbb{W}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$ , intending ... $\mathbb{Q}c4$  and ... $\mathbb{W}c6$ , or in some cases ... $\mathbb{Q}c3$ . Here is a possible variation: 29  $\mathbb{Q}hh3$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  30  $\mathbb{Q}hd3$   $\mathbb{W}c7$ ! (stronger than 30... $\mathbb{W}c6$  31  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ !) 31  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$ ! and wins – Dvoretsky.]

27 ...  $\mathbb{Q}c4$ ?28  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{W}e7$ 29  $\mathbb{Q}hh3$ ?

Apparently White could have saved the game with 29  $\mathbb{Q}f4$ !  $\mathbb{Q}a8$  30  $\mathbb{W}b1$  followed by  $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ .

29 ...  $\mathbb{W}g5$ !

Threatening 30... $\mathbb{W}c1$ .

30  $\mathbb{Q}hf3$   $\mathbb{Q}d2$ 

If now 31  $\mathbb{Q}g3$ , then 31... $\mathbb{Q}xb3$ ! 32  $\mathbb{Q}xg3$   $\mathbb{Q}c1$ .



31 h4	$\text{Qxf3+}$
32 $\text{Bxf3}$	$\text{Qc1}$
33 $\text{Bf1}$	$\text{Be3+}$
34 $\text{Bf2}$	b4!
35 a4	$\text{Bd8}$
36 $\text{Wb1}$	$\text{Bxd4}$

11 $\text{Wb3}$	d6
12 $\text{Bfd1}$	$\text{We7}$
13 $\text{Bac1}$	$\text{Bac8}$
14 e3	e5
15 $\text{Be1}$	

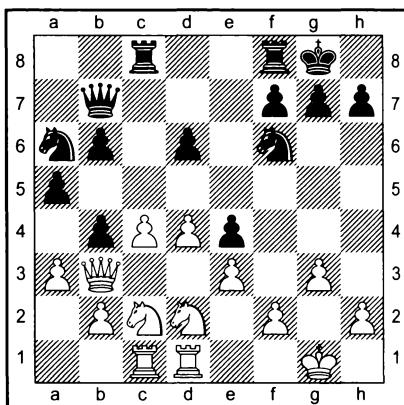
White resigned.

The last game that we will look at today is perhaps the most important one for our topic. Its leitmotif is 'change of rhythm'.

Many players remark that it is most difficult for them to find their bearings when there is a sharp change of scene: the transition from attack to defence or from defence to attack, from a position played in accordance with the principle 'do not hurry', to tempo play and vice versa, and so on. Even for leading grandmasters this is sometimes a serious problem. To make progress in this field you must consciously develop and train your 'sensing the tempo'.

A thematic, but committing move. White wants to attack the b4-pawn with his knight, in order to resolve the situation on the queenside. But as a result of the exchange of bishops, the white king's position is weakened somewhat. However, there are hardly any black pieces there, so that this factor seems purely academic.

15 . . .	$\text{Bxg2}$
16 $\text{Kxg2}$	$\text{Bb7+}$
17 $\text{Bg1}$	e4
18 $\text{Bc2}$	



### Tukmakov – Vitolins

Yerevan 1980  
Bogo-Indian Defence

1 d4	$\text{Bf6}$
2 c4	e6
3 $\text{Bb4+}$	$\text{Bb4+}$
4 $\text{Bd2}$	c5
5 $\text{Bxb4}$	$\text{cxb4}$
6 g3	b6
7 $\text{Bg2}$	$\text{Bb7}$
8 0-0	

A slight inaccuracy! If White had played 8 a3 immediately, the opponent would not have been able to obtain the position that occurred in the game.

8 . . .	a5
9 a3	$\text{Bab6}$
10 $\text{Bbd2}$	0-0

Let us dwell on this position a little. Vladimir Tukmakov has carried out his plan, and after 18...bxa3 19 bxa3 followed by  $\text{Bb1}$  he will be the first to 'latch on' to the opponent, by exploiting the defects in his pawn structure.

Alvis Vitolins was an unusual player, exceptionally inventive and always seeking the initiative. He had a subtle feeling for the rhythm of a game, and he knew how to change it. Here too he emerged with honour from a difficult position.

18 . . .	$\text{Bd7!}$
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By giving up a pawn, Black essentially burns his boats behind him. If he does not give mate, he will of course lose. Yet for mate there would appear to be insufficient force. After ... $\mathbb{Q}h3$  and ... $\mathbb{Q}g4$  there follows  $\mathbb{Q}f1$ , and what then?

### 19 axb4

It is not possible to take away the h3-square from the queen – if 19  $\mathbb{Q}g2$  there follows 19...a4.

19 ...

$\mathbb{Q}h3$

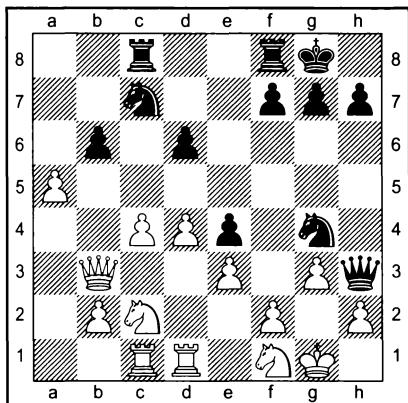
20 bxa5

$\mathbb{Q}g4$

21  $\mathbb{Q}f1$

$\mathbb{Q}c7!$

This is the point! Black transfers his isolated knight to the kingside, where it will take part in the attack. (The 'principle of the worst piece' in action – the correct strategy is to improve the position of the piece that is least well placed.)



It is quite obvious that if the knight should reach g5, Black's threats will become extremely dangerous, and probably even irresistible. White must forestall his opponent and undertake something before the appearance of the knight on g5. He should have played 22  $\mathbb{Q}e1!$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  23 f3. Then 23... $\mathbb{Q}xh2$  24  $\mathbb{Q}xh2$   $\mathbb{W}xg3+$  25  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  (which Tukmakov feared, apparently) does not work in view of 26  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  27  $\mathbb{Q}xf3!$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  28 e4, when the pin along the 3rd rank proves decisive. And

in the event of 23... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  24  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{B}xa5$  White remains with an extra pawn, for which the opponent has insufficient compensation.

### 22 d5?!

In mechanically preventing the manoeuvre ... $\mathbb{Q}c7-e6-g5$ , White weakens the important e5-square.

22 ...

$\mathbb{Q}e8!$

The knight changes course and aims for g4 (after the other knight, by moving to e5, has made way for it).

23  $\mathbb{Q}d4$

$\mathbb{Q}ef6$

Now it was essential to prevent ... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ , by playing 24 f4!  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  25  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ . However, after 25... $\mathbb{B}xa5$  the position would remain unclear – vulnerable points appear in White's position, giving Black quite good compensation for the pawn.

### 24 axb6?

Tukmakov clearly underestimates the danger of his position.

24 ...

$\mathbb{Q}e5$

Threatening 25... $\mathbb{Q}f3+$  26  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  (or 26... $\mathbb{Q}xh2$  27  $\mathbb{Q}xh2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$ ).

25 f4

$\mathbb{Q}xf3$

26 e4??

$\mathbb{Q}g2$  mate

White's last move shows that he was completely unprepared for the sharp change in the situation on the board. However, his position had already become difficult. To 26  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  there is the strong reply 26... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ , while if 26  $\mathbb{Q}c2$ , then 26... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  27  $\mathbb{Q}f2$  (27 b7  $\mathbb{Q}xc2$  28  $\mathbb{W}xc2$   $\mathbb{Q}fg4$ ) 27... $\mathbb{Q}e4$  28  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf2$  29  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  dxe5 30  $\mathbb{Q}xf2$   $\mathbb{W}f5+$  followed by 31... $\mathbb{Q}c2$ .

[In fact in the final position it would appear that White could have parried the attack and even claimed an advantage. Here is a sample variation: 26  $\mathbb{Q}c2!$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  27 b7!  $\mathbb{Q}xc2$  28  $\mathbb{W}xc2$   $\mathbb{Q}fg4$  (28... $\mathbb{Q}e4$  29  $\mathbb{Q}a1$ ; 28... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  29  $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  30  $\mathbb{Q}a1$ ) 29  $\mathbb{Q}a1$ ! f2+ 30  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}xh2$  31  $\mathbb{Q}xh2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  32  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  f1 $\mathbb{W}$ + 33  $\mathbb{Q}xf1$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  34  $\mathbb{Q}a1!$   $\mathbb{Q}xc2$  35  $\mathbb{Q}a8$  and wins.]



*I think that in this game Black attacked really too recklessly, too riskily. At some point he should have captured the a5-pawn (for example, on the 22nd move). And instead of the clever, but objectively not fully correct queen manoeuvre (18... $\mathbb{Q}d7?!$ ) he had the*

*much stronger 18...b5! 19 cxb5  $\mathbb{W}xb5$  20 axb4 axb4. Black stands better – all the opponent's pieces are cramped, and in addition he constantly has to reckon with the switching of the queen to the kingside by ... $\mathbb{W}b5-h5$  – Dvoretsky.]*

Mark Dvoretsky

## Transformation of a Position

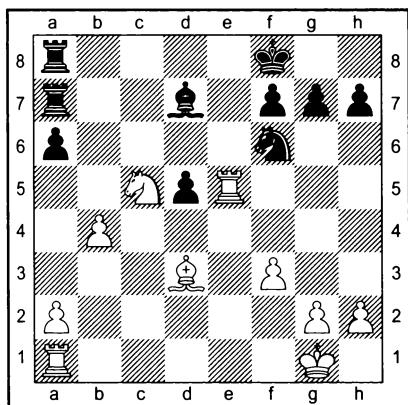
We will now discuss a complicated problem, which in one form or another we invariably encounter in every game – the transformation of a position.

What is understood by transformation is a sharp change in the position, leading to a change in the character of the play, which usually occurs with an exchange of pieces (often several pieces) and/or a significant change in the pawn structure.

During the course of a game the position changes repeatedly, but by no means every change is perceived as a transformation. Sometimes such changes are beyond our control and depend completely on the will of the opponent, but at other times they are so natural, so self-evident, that they are not perceived as any specific chess technique. In my analysis of various instances of transformation of a position, I should like to begin with a classic example.

### Fischer – Petrosian

Final Candidates Match, 7th Game,  
Buenos Aires 1971



White's positional superiority is obvious. He has numerous tempting continuations. He can place his queen's rook on the open file, bring his king towards the centre by 22  $\mathbb{K}f2$ , or play 22 g4, creating a threat against the d5-pawn.

But if we employ prophylactic thinking, and ask ourselves about the opponent's intentions (and this is how we should think in such situations), White's choice is immediately narrowed. It is clear that if it were Black to move he would play 22... $\mathbb{Q}b5$ . It is not hard to prevent the exchange of bishops by 22 a4, but then there follows 22... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ , threatening to exchange knights by 23... $\mathbb{N}d7$ . After this exchange Black gains the opportunity to attack the b4-pawn with his rooks.

Robert Fischer found a wonderful solution to the position, which came as a complete surprise to the experts gathered in the press centre.

**22  $\mathbb{B}xd7+!!$**

$\mathbb{B}xd7$

**23  $\mathbb{R}c1$**

Commenting on this episode, grandmaster Lev Polugayevsky remarks:

'Very typical of the present-day Fischer. He often resorts to the possibility of transforming one type of advantage into another.'

Why did White give up his finely-placed knight for the passive black bishop? First of all, he eliminates the opponent's hopes of counterplay. His rooks control the open files and the enemy rooks do not have anything to attack. The b4-pawn is invulnerable: ... $\mathbb{R}b7$  is always met by a2-a3; if ...a6-a5, then b4-b5. The white bishop remaining on the board is much stronger than the black knight. Both



24 ♜xa6 and 24 ♜c6 are threatened, and if Black defends the 6th rank with his rook, the white rook will invade on the 7th rank. All these advantages are quite sufficient for a win.

- 23 ... ♜d6  
 24 ♜c7 ♜d7  
 25 ♜e2

If the knight moves from d7 there is the unpleasant reply ♜ee7. There is literally nothing that Black can move.

- 25 ... g6  
 26 ♔f2 h5  
 27 f4 h4

27...♜b6 28 ♜ee7 ♜f6 was more tenacious.

- 28 ♔f3!  
 29 ♔g4 was threatened.  
 29 ♔e3 d4+  
 30 ♔d2

Zugzwang! Any move will worsen Black's position.

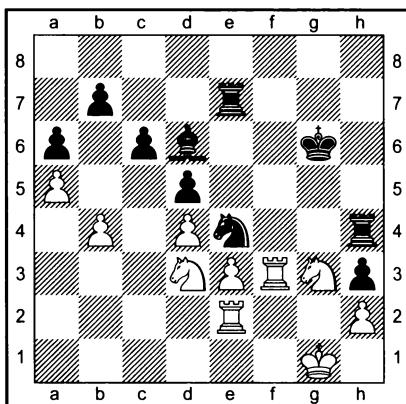
- 30 ... ♜b6  
 31 ♜ee7 ♜d5  
 32 ♜f7+ ♜e8  
 33 ♜b7 ♜xb4  
 34 ♜c4

Black resigned.

Transformation is one of the methods for converting an advantage. The example we have examined (like some of those that follow) illustrates this particular case. But one also has to resort to transformation in other situations, for example, in the defence of difficult positions.

### Charushin – Franke

European Correspondence Championship  
 1979/83



White's position is difficult. Both 39...♜g4 and 39...♜xg3 40 hxg3 ♜xd4 are threatened. If 39 ♜f4+? Black does not reply 39...♔g5?! in view of 40 ♜xe4+! ♜xe4 41 ♜xh3+ ♔g4 42 ♔g2 with a probable draw, but 39...♜xf4!, transposing into a favourable rook ending. For example, 40 ♜xf4 ♜xg3 41 hxg3 ♜xf4 42 gxf4 ♔f5 followed by 43...♔e4, and the invasion of the king is bound to win. Or 40 exf4!? ♜g4 (if 40...♔f6 there is the strong reply 41 ♔h1!) 41 ♔f1 ♜xg3+ 42 ♜xg3 ♜xg3 43 ♜xe7 ♜g2 44 ♜xb7 ♜xh2. Here the outcome is still not altogether certain, but it is clear that White is in serious danger.

Such a transformation of the position did not satisfy the player with White, and he found a more favourable series of exchanges.

- 39 ♜f5!  
 40 ♔h1!

Of course, not 40 ♔f1? ♜f7.

- 40 ... ♜f7  
 41 ♜xd6 ♜xf3  
 42 ♜e5+ ♔h5  
 43 ♜xf3 ♜xd6  
 44 ♜g1!

This move certainly had to be foreseen when

the exchanging operation was begun – otherwise the opponent could have played 44... $\mathbb{E}e4$  and 45... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ . However, 44  $\mathbb{Q}e5!$ ?  $\mathbb{E}e4$  45  $\mathbb{Q}g1$  was nevertheless possible (45... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  46  $\mathbb{Q}f2$ ). Black would probably have changed the pattern of the play by 45... $\mathbb{Q}c4!$ ? 46  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{E}g4+$ ! 47  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  (now White has to reckon with 48... $\mathbb{E}g2$ ) 48  $e4 \mathbb{Q}g5!$ , retaining some chances of success in a sharp rook ending.

But now it is awkward for Black to defend the h3-pawn: 44... $\mathbb{Q}h4$  45  $\mathbb{Q}f3+$  or 44... $\mathbb{E}h4$  45  $\mathbb{E}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  46  $\mathbb{E}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  47  $\mathbb{E}f4+$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  48  $\mathbb{E}f3$ .

44 ...	$\mathbb{E}e4$
45 $\mathbb{Q}xh3$	$\mathbb{Q}f5$
46 $\mathbb{Q}f2!$	

White would have lost after 46  $\mathbb{Q}f4+$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  47  $\mathbb{E}g2+$   $\mathbb{Q}f3$  48  $\mathbb{E}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  (but not 48... $\mathbb{Q}xe3?$  49  $\mathbb{Q}g2!$ ).

46 ...	$\mathbb{Q}xe3$
47 $\mathbb{E}xe3$	$\mathbb{Q}xe3$
48 $\mathbb{Q}g1$	$\mathbb{Q}c2$
49 $\mathbb{Q}d3$	

The knight ending is drawn.

49 ...	$\mathbb{Q}g4$
50 $\mathbb{Q}f2$	$\mathbb{Q}xd4$
51 $\mathbb{Q}c5$	$\mathbb{Q}f4$
52 $\mathbb{Q}xb7$	$\mathbb{Q}e6!$

After 52... $\mathbb{Q}c2$  53  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  54  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  55  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  it is now Black who has to exercise caution: 55... $\mathbb{Q}d4?$  loses to 56  $h4!$ .

53 $\mathbb{Q}e2$	$\mathbb{Q}e4$
54 $\mathbb{Q}c5+?$	

Yet another transformation!

54 ...	$\mathbb{Q}xc5$
55 $bxc5$	$\mathbb{Q}d4$
56 $h4$	$\mathbb{Q}e4$
57 $\mathbb{Q}d2$	$\mathbb{Q}f4$
58 $\mathbb{Q}d3$	$\mathbb{Q}g4$
59 $\mathbb{Q}d4$	$\mathbb{Q}xh4$
60 $\mathbb{Q}e5$	$\mathbb{Q}g5$

61 $\mathbb{Q}d6$	d4
62 $\mathbb{Q}xc6$	d3
63 $\mathbb{Q}b7$	d2
64 c6	d1 $\mathbb{W}$
65 c7	$\mathbb{W}d5+$
66 $\mathbb{Q}a7$	$\mathbb{W}c5+$
67 $\mathbb{Q}b7$	$\mathbb{W}xa5$
68 c8 $\mathbb{W}$	

Draw.

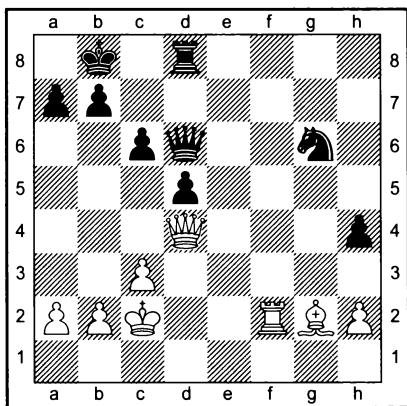
In each of the endings examined it was not easy for White to take the correct decision, but these difficulties were of a different nature. In the Fischer game the problem was to overcome a psychological prejudice ('good' knight, 'bad' bishop) and to assess the advisability of the unexpected exchange. In the second example an accurate calculation of the variations is required, and the evaluation of the final positions is made difficult by the fact that it is not easy to picture them in your mind – they differ so much from the initial one. (However, in this particular instance this did not cause any particular problem, since the game was played by correspondence and it was possible to move the pieces).

From this discussion it is apparent how diverse are the qualities (both chess and psychological) which you have to develop, in order to be able to transform a position to your advantage at the appropriate moment.

Now let us examine an example of an unsuccessful transformation.

**Kupchik – Marshall**

New York 1915



Black is a sound pawn to the good and he has excellent winning chances after the simple 35... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  or 35... $\mathbb{W}e5$  36  $\mathbb{Q}f6$   $\mathbb{W}e2+!$ .

Frank Marshall took a different decision – he carried out a complicated combination involving a piece sacrifice, by which he hoped to obtain a won ending.

**35 . . .**  $\mathbb{W}xh2?!$

**36  $\mathbb{Q}e4!$**   $\mathbb{W}g3!$

After 36... $\mathbb{W}g1$  37  $\mathbb{Q}f8!$  Black again has to give a check on h2, since after 37... $\mathbb{W}xd4?$  38  $\mathbb{Q}xd8+$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  39  $cxd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  40  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  he remains a piece down. 36... $\mathbb{W}d6$  37  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  also leads to a repetition of moves.

**37  $\mathbb{Q}g2$**   $\mathbb{W}f4!$

**38  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$**

The variation 38  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $\mathbb{W}xe4+$  39  $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $dxe4$  40  $\mathbb{Q}h6!$  (but not 40  $\mathbb{Q}g4?$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$ ) was also sufficient to cast doubt on Marshall's idea. In my view White has significant drawing chances here, and in any case better than after 35... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  or 35... $\mathbb{W}e5$ .

**38 . . .**  $\mathbb{W}xd4$

**39  $cxd4$**   $h3$

**40  $\mathbb{Q}e2!$**

Only this move (as well as 40  $\mathbb{Q}d2!$ ) enables White to retain his extra piece. 40  $\mathbb{Q}h2?$   $\mathbb{Q}g8!$

leads to a difficult rook ending: 41  $\mathbb{Q}xh3$   $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ . It is the same after 40  $\mathbb{Q}g1(g5)? \mathbb{Q}g8$  or 40  $\mathbb{Q}g4?$   $\mathbb{Q}h8!$  41  $\mathbb{Q}g1 \mathbb{Q}g8!$

**40 . . .**

**$\mathbb{Q}h8$**

Nothing was achieved by 40... $\mathbb{Q}g8$  41  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  (or 41  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}g2$  42  $\mathbb{Q}c3$ ) 41... $\mathbb{Q}g2$  42  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ .

**41  $\mathbb{Q}e1!$**

**$h2$**

**42  $\mathbb{Q}h1$**

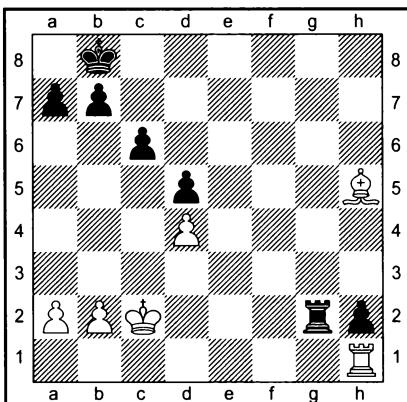
**$\mathbb{Q}g8$**

**43  $\mathbb{Q}h5!$**

At d3 the bishop is less well placed: 43  $\mathbb{Q}d3?$   $\mathbb{Q}g2+$  44  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$ , and the march of the black king to g3 is threatened.

**43 . . .**

**$\mathbb{Q}g2+$**



Marshall was aiming for this position when he began his combination. He obviously considered it to be won. This evaluation really is too bold, especially if one considers that it had to be made nine moves earlier, when the material balance and the arrangement of the pieces were completely different!

Now 44  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  suggests itself, followed by the removal of the queenside pawns from the second rank. In his commentary Marshall gives this variation: 44... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  45  $a4$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  46  $b4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  47  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  48  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}g3+$  49  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}h3$  50  $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  51  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  52  $\mathbb{Q}xh2$   $\mathbb{Q}xh2+$  53  $\mathbb{Q}xh2$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$  54  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  55  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$ , when Black, in his opinion, should win. I am not convinced that this is so (56  $b5!$ ), but there is no need to study the concluding

position, since the entire variation is unconvincing. Instead of 49  $\mathbb{Q}f2$  White plays 49  $\mathbb{Q}f3!$   $\mathbb{B}h3$  50  $\mathbb{B}b1$  and he is out of danger.

Abraham Kupchik was apparently too frightened by the powerful pawn on h2 and he hurried across to it with his king, abandoning his queenside pawns to their fate.

- 44  $\mathbb{Q}d3?$                      $\mathbb{B}xb2$
- 45  $\mathbb{Q}e2$                      $\mathbb{B}xa2$
- 46  $\mathbb{B}xh2$

Here the three pawns are stronger than the bishop, and this means that the transformation carried out by White has worsened his position. His defence is difficult – he has to try and halt the advance of the opponent's pawns and at the same time not forget about the defence of his weak d4-pawn. I don't know whether this problem can be solved, but at any event Kupchik failed to cope with it.

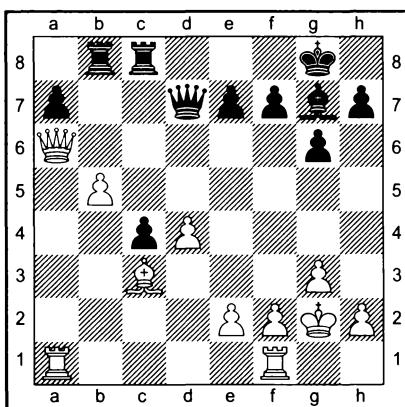
46... $\mathbb{B}a3+$  47  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  a5 48  $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{B}e3$  49  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  b5 50  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  51  $\mathbb{B}h8$  a4 52  $\mathbb{B}a8$   $\mathbb{B}g3$  53  $\mathbb{B}a7+$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  54  $\mathbb{B}a8$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  55  $\mathbb{B}f8$  b4 56  $\mathbb{B}f7+$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  57  $\mathbb{B}f8$   $\mathbb{B}g2+$  58  $\mathbb{Q}c1$  a3 59  $\mathbb{B}b8+$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  60  $\mathbb{B}a8$  (60  $\mathbb{B}xb4$   $\mathbb{B}g1+$  61  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  a2) 60... $\mathbb{B}g4$  61  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{B}xd4$  62  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{B}e4$  63  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{B}e3$  64  $\mathbb{B}a4$  c5 65  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{B}g3$  66  $\mathbb{B}a5$  c4 67  $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  68  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  a2 69  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  b3 White resigned.

Marshall's clever although insufficiently justified decision is explained to some extent by his romantic nature – he simply could not resist the temptation to put into effect a deep and pretty idea.

Very often players commit similar mistakes due to lack of composure. They aim to pick the fruit as soon as possible, not sensing that it is not yet fully ripe. Such haste once cost me very dearly.

## Tseshkovsky – Dvoretsky

42nd USSR Championship,  
Leningrad 1974



This game was played in the last round and a win would make me bronze prize-winner in the championship of the country. I had managed to outplay my opponent and gain an appreciable positional advantage. In addition, Vitaly Tseshkovsky was acutely short of time – for 17 moves he had less than 20 minutes left on his clock.

First of all I considered 23... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ . In the event of 24  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  25  $\mathbb{W}xa7$   $\mathbb{We}4+$  White comes out a pawn down. Playing for a pin does not work: 24  $\mathbb{Q}ad1?$  e5 25 e3  $\mathbb{B}b6!$ , and after the queen moves Black gives a check with his queen from b7.

I was concerned about the variation 24  $\mathbb{B}fd1!$  e5 25  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  26  $\mathbb{W}xa7$ . By continuing 26... $\mathbb{W}xa7$  27  $\mathbb{B}xa7$  c3! Black retains an advantage, but whether it is sufficient for a win is not clear.

For an opponent who is in time-trouble the most unpleasant strategy is definitely not forcing play, which allows him quickly to make several obligatory moves. It is better to force him to search, all the time maintaining the tension and posing one problem after another. From this point of view I should have simply played 23... $\mathbb{B}c7!$ .



When short of time it is almost impossible to find the tactical variation 24 ♜a5!? ♜d5+ (with the idea of playing the rook to d7) 25 e4!! ♜xe4+ 26 f3. At any event, several precious minutes would have to be spent on it, whereas Black would have the right to revert to the idea of capturing the d4-pawn after 24...♜cc8 25 ♜c3.

White would probably have replied 24 ♜fb1, but after 24...g5! things would not have been easy for him, especially in time-trouble. 25 b6 ♜c6+ leads to the loss of a pawn, and how otherwise can he parry the terrible threat of ...♝b8–b6–h6? In the event of 25 ♜a4 the idea of exchanging pawns by b5–b6 is no longer possible, and Black can strengthen his position with 25...♜e6 or 25...h5 followed by 26...h4.

I saw the correct plan, but unfortunately here I lacked composure and patience. I wanted immediately to transform my positional advantage into something more tangible. Alas, a mistake crept into my calculations and my winning chances promptly evaporated.

23 . . .	♜xb5?!
24 ♜xa7	♜xa7?

If Black had avoided the exchange of queens by 24...♝b7?! 25 ♜a4 ♜d5+ 26 ♜g1 h5, he would still have retained the initiative. 24...♜e6! was even stronger, and if 25 ♜a6?, which I was afraid of (25 e3 is better), then not 25...♜e4+? 26 f3!, but 25...♝b6! 26 ♜a5 ♜xd4! 27 ♜xd4 ♜e4+ 28 ♜g1 ♜xd4 with a decisive advantage. However, I continued playing in accordance with my plan.

25 ♜xa7	♝b3
26 ♜d2!	

Black was hoping for 26 ♜c1? ♜xc3! 27 ♜xc3 ♜xd4 with an extra pawn in the rook ending.

26 . . .	♝b2
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I could hardly have hoped to win after 26...♜xd4 27 ♜xe7, but here at least my bishop would not have remained inactive, as

occurred in the game.

**27 ♜e3!**

I overlooked this move, or more precisely, not the move itself, but the fact that after it I do not win a pawn, since if 27...♜xe2 there follows 28 ♜f3! and 29 ♜xe7.

27 . . .	e6
28 ♜fa1!	♜bb8
29 ♜c1	♜c6
30 ♜c3	h5
31 ♜a4	♜bc8
32 f4!	

White prevents ...e6–e5 and intends ♜f2, ♜f3 and e2–e4. The initiative is now on his side, and I have to act carefully, to avoid myself ending up in a difficult position.

32 . . .	♜6c7
33 h3	f6?!
34 g4	hxg4
35 hxg4	e5
36 f5	gxsf5
37 gxsf5	♝e7?!
38 ♜f3	♜ce8
39 ♜xc4	exd4
40 ♜xd4	e5
41 ♜f4	

An amusing situation: White cannot strengthen his position, but I do not have a single harmless waiting move – each one involves some concession. After 41...♝e7 there follows 42 ♜c5 ♜c7 43 ♜d4, while if 41...♝h6 42 ♜g4+.

**41 . . .** ♜h7!

The lesser evil!

**42 ♜f2**

This leads to an immediate draw, but also after 42 ♜h4+ ♜g8 43 ♜h5 ♜e7 White cannot undertake anything.

42 . . .	♝h6!
43 ♜c7+	

The variations are easily calculated: 43 ♜h4

$\mathbb{Q}xe3$  44  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  45  $\mathbb{Q}xh6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  46  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  47  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  or 43  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3+$  44  $\mathbb{Q}cx e3$   $\mathbb{Q}h6!$  with a draw.

43...  $\mathbb{Q}h8!$

43...  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  was worse: 44  $\mathbb{Q}xe7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  45

$\mathbb{Q}f3$ .

44  $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5+$

Draw.

In all the examples we have examined the question to be decided was whether to change sharply the character of the play, or maintain the existing situation. But sometimes it is possible for a player to transform a position in several ways. Grandmaster Boris Gulko once said to me that he considered such problems to be the most difficult in chess, making the most severe demands on a player's mastery, his calculating technique and his depth of positional evaluation.

I will show how Gulko himself copes with such problems. In the following game I remember how one of his decisions made a strong impression on me.

### Gulko – Dvoretsky

Vilnius 1978

Slav Defence

1 c4	c6
2 $\mathbb{Q}c3$	d5
3 cxd5	cxd5
4 d4	$\mathbb{Q}f6$
5 $\mathbb{Q}f4$	$\mathbb{Q}b6$

In my preparations for the game I glanced in the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (in the first edition the corresponding section was written by grandmaster Alexey Suetin) and saw there a recommendation that after the move order chosen by White, Black should respond with 5...  $\mathbb{Q}b6$ . Generally speaking, it is dangerous to trust Suetin's assessments – too much hack-work was produced by his pen. But I considered it

unlikely that my opponent would play this particular system, and so I did not bother to check the book variations, but simply accepted them.

6  $\mathbb{Q}c1!$

And immediately I ran into a novelty, found by Gulko at the board. The opening guide only considered strange variations such as 6  $\mathbb{Q}c2?$ !  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  7 e3  $\mathbb{Q}f5!$  or 6  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ . The rook move to c1 is logical – White develops a piece, defends his knight in advance in the event of the capture of the b2-pawn, and, incidentally, prevents the immediate 6...  $\mathbb{Q}xb2?$  because of 7  $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}b4+$  8  $\mathbb{Q}d2$ .

6...  $\mathbb{Q}c6$   
7 e3  $\mathbb{Q}xb2?$

Consistent: if Black doesn't take the pawn, it is not clear why his queen was developed at b6. Even so, 7...  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  or 7...  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  8 f3  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  would have been more cautious.

8  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$

There is no longer time for quiet development: 8...e6? 9  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}b4+$  10  $\mathbb{Q}f1$  0-0 11  $\mathbb{Q}c2$ .

9  $\mathbb{Q}ge2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2$   
10  $\mathbb{Q}xe2!$  e5

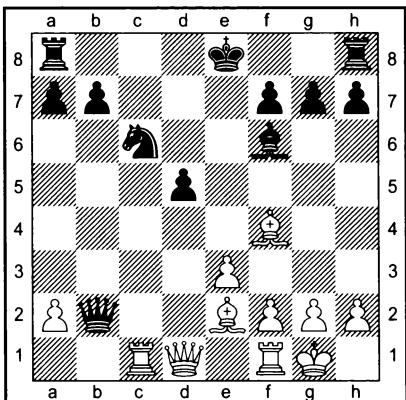
The transformation of the position caused by this move proves clearly advantageous to White. 10...e6!? came into consideration, for example: 11  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}b4+$  12  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}c8!$  13  $\mathbb{Q}c7+$  (13  $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  14  $\mathbb{Q}c7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xc7$  15  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}xa2$  16  $\mathbb{Q}xc7$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$ ) 13...  $\mathbb{Q}d8$  14  $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  15  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$  g5!, or 11 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  12  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  0-0 13 a4 (threatening 14  $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}a2$  15  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}a3$  16  $\mathbb{Q}b3$ ) 13...  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  (13...  $\mathbb{Q}b4$ ?) 14  $\mathbb{Q}c7$ ! (14  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  followed by  $\mathbb{Q}b1$  is stronger) 14...  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  15  $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}d2$ ! (but not 15...  $\mathbb{Q}c3$ ? 16  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  17  $\mathbb{Q}b3$ ). However, in these variations Black's position looks uneasy, and I recommend the readers to look for an improvement in White's play – I would not be at all surprised if one should be found.

11 dx5  $\mathbb{Q}b4$   
12 0-0!  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$

**13 exf6**

13  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  14 exf6  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  15  $\mathbb{W}xd5$  is also not bad. The game Rashkovsky–Arnason (Sochi 1980) continued 15...0-0 (15... $\mathbb{Q}d8?$  16  $\mathbb{W}f5!$  0-0? 17  $\mathbb{Q}d3$ ) 16  $\mathbb{Q}f3!$  (nothing is given by 16  $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ ) 16... $\mathbb{Q}ad8$  17  $\mathbb{W}f5!$ , and Black experienced serious difficulties.

13 ...

 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 

White's superiority has become obvious. In an open position he has two strong bishops, and the black king is still in the centre. Several attractive possibilities immediately suggest themselves. For example,  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  is tempting, or  $\mathbb{Q}b1$  followed by  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ . It is also not bad to capture the d5-pawn with the queen (after the preparatory 14  $\mathbb{Q}c2$ ), or with the bishop after 14  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ .

Most probably there is not just one way for White to maintain his superiority, but how does he best exploit the advantages of his position? Gulko had a long think, and during this time I tried to find an acceptable defence against the opponent's various attacking attempts. I decided that to 14  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  I would reply 14... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ , although after 15  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  16  $\mathbb{Q}b1$  or 16  $\mathbb{W}a4+$  Black's position is unattractive. But 14... $\mathbb{Q}d8?$  15  $\mathbb{W}xd5$  appealed to me even less – later I learned that the game Matsula–Filipenko (Krasnodar 1978) went 15... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  16  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  0-0 17  $\mathbb{Q}d3!$  with a decisive advantage for White.

**14  $\mathbb{Q}f3!$**  $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 

The alternative is 14...0-0 15  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ . Here is one of the possible variations: 15... $\mathbb{Q}ad8$  16  $e4!$  (16  $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{W}c3$  17  $\mathbb{Q}xb7?$  is weaker: 17... $\mathbb{Q}b4$  18  $e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  19  $exd5$   $\mathbb{W}c4$ ) 16... $\mathbb{Q}b4?$  17  $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{W}a3$  18  $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{W}c3!$  19  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  20  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  21  $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}xb1$  22  $\mathbb{Q}xb1$ , and White will most probably succeed in converting his material advantage.

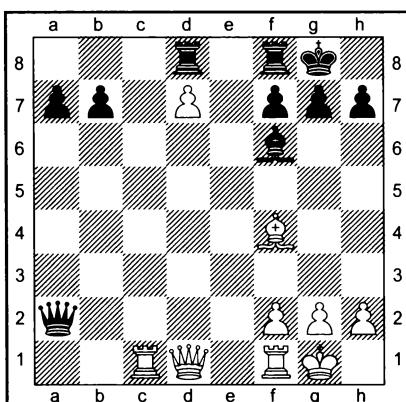
**15  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$**  $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 

I was expecting 16  $\mathbb{W}a4+$  b5 17  $\mathbb{W}e4$  0-0 (17... $\mathbb{Q}xd5?$  18  $\mathbb{Q}c8+$ ) 18  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  a5!, when it is not easy for White to maintain his advantage. Here is a possible variation: 19  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  (the a5-pawn is under attack) 19... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  20  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{W}a3$  21  $\mathbb{W}d3$  (threatening not only the b5-pawn, but also the queen) 21...b4 22  $\mathbb{W}d7$  a4! 23  $\mathbb{W}xa4$   $\mathbb{W}xa4$  24  $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  with counterplay.

To my surprise, my opponent allowed me to exchange his strong light-square bishop, and in addition he sacrificed his a2-pawn.

**16  $e4!$**  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 16...0-0 17  $\mathbb{Q}c7!$ **17  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$** **0-0****18  $d6$** 18  $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  19  $d6$  also looks good.**18 ...** $\mathbb{W}xa2$ 

If I am going to suffer, let it at least be for a pawn!

**19  $d7$** 

Gulko had aimed for this position, when he took his decision on the 14th move. He subtly judged that, by restricting the black pieces, the far-advanced passed d-pawn would more than compensate for the lost material and promise him enormous winning chances. Only a player of the highest class is capable of taking such a decision!

The conclusion of the game confirmed that White's choice was correct – I don't know where Black's defence could be seriously improved.

**19 . . .**  $\mathbb{W}e6$

20  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  was threatened.

**20  $\mathbb{Q}c7$**   $\mathbb{Q}e5$

If 20... $a5$ , then 21  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{W}a6$  22  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  or 21... $\mathbb{W}b6$  22  $\mathbb{W}d5$  (22  $\mathbb{W}d6$ ).

**21  $\mathbb{Q}xe5!$**

Of course, not 21  $\mathbb{Q}e1?$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4!?$  (21... $f6$  is also possible) 22  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ , and the position becomes unclear.

**21 . . .**  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

**22  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$**   $a5$

**23 g3**  $h5$

**24 h4**  $g6$

**25  $\mathbb{Q}e1$**   $\mathbb{Q}c5$

**26  $\mathbb{W}a4$**   $\mathbb{Q}h7$

**27  $\mathbb{Q}b5$**   $\mathbb{Q}c3$

**28  $\mathbb{Q}bb1$**

White gradually regroups his pieces, moving them closer to the kingside and preparing a decisive attack on the king. At the same time he keeps a careful eye on the  $a5$ -pawn – he does not allow it to advance and, of course, he is ready to capture it at the first convenient opportunity.

**28 . . .**  $\mathbb{Q}b8$

**29  $\mathbb{W}e4$**   $\mathbb{Q}bd8$

**30  $\mathbb{Q}bd1$**   $\mathbb{Q}b4$

**31  $\mathbb{Q}d4$**   $\mathbb{Q}c3$

**32  $\mathbb{Q}ed1$**   $\mathbb{Q}b3$

**33  $\mathbb{Q}d5$**   $\mathbb{Q}g8$

**34  $\mathbb{Q}1d4$**   $\mathbb{Q}c3$

**35  $\mathbb{Q}d6$**   $\mathbb{Q}h7$

**36  $\mathbb{Q}g2$**   $\mathbb{Q}b3$

**37  $\mathbb{Q}4d5$**   $\mathbb{Q}g7$

**38  $\mathbb{Q}g5$**

Black resigned.

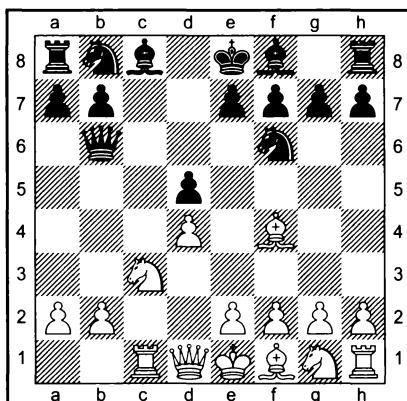
Attempts to rehabilitate the entire variation were made by the Soviet master Alexander Filipenko. He found new resources for Black and several times successfully upheld his position in practice. Other players, using his analyses, also began employing this system. Many years later, Gulko, who knew nothing about these new investigations, again obtained the same position with White, this time against a well-prepared opponent.

### Gulko – Shcherbakov

Helsinki 1992

Slav Defence

**1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 cxd5 cxd5 4  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}b6$**   
**5  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  6  $\mathbb{Q}c1$**



**6 . . .**  $\mathbb{Q}d7!?$

A recommendation of Filipenko, who considered this move to be more necessary for the defence than my move 6... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ . White must sacrifice a pawn, since after 7  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $e6$  (with the threat of 8... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ ) he has nothing.

**7  $e3$**

**$\mathbb{W}xb2$**

8 ♜d3

9 ♜ge2

9 ♜f3? ♜b4.

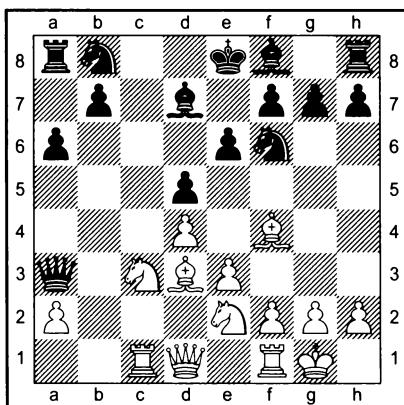
9 ...

10 0-0

Nothing is given by either 10 ♜b5 ♜a5+ 11 ♜f1 ♜a6, or 10 ♜b1 ♜c6 11 ♜b5 ♜a5+.

10 ... a6

This is the idea of the defensive plan suggested by Filipenko.



In the game Gleizerov–Filipenko (Kursk 1987) White did not even try to solve the problem of the position, but chose the passive knight retreat 11 ♜b1?, and after 11...♜b4! 12 a3 ♜b6 13 ♜ec3 ♜d6 he did not gain any compensation for the sacrificed pawn.

If 11 ♜b1 Black replies 11...b5 12 ♜c7 ♜c6! (of course, not 12...♜e7?? 13 ♜b3) 13 ♜b3 ♜e7.

To exploit his lead in development, it is advantageous for White to open lines. However, after the immediate 11 e4 dxe4 12 ♜xe4 ♜d5! he does not achieve anything.

As in the previous game, after weighing up the various possibilities, Gulko chose the most promising one. He found a way of advancing e3–e4, without conceding the central squares to his opponent.

e6

♜a3!

11 ♜e5!!

♜e7

Other replies also do not bring any relief:

11...♜c6 12 ♜xf6 gxf6 13 e4 dxe4 14 ♜xe4;

11...♜c6 12 ♜xf6 gxf6 13 e4 dxe4 14 ♜xe4 with the threat of 15 d5.

12 e4!

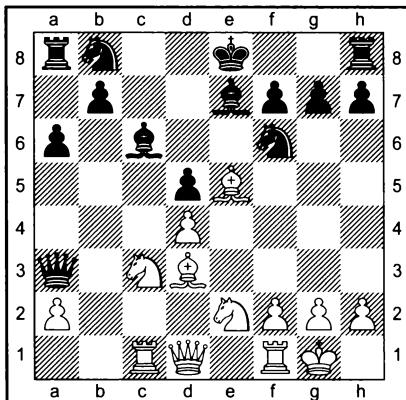
Now after 12...dxe4 13 ♜xe4 the knight cannot go to d5 – the g7-pawn is under attack. White also retains a dangerous initiative after 12...♜c6 13 ♜xf6 ♜xf6 14 exd5 ♜xd4 (or 14...exd5 15 ♜xd5) 15 ♜e4 ♜xe2+ 16 ♜xe2 ♜e7 17 ♜c7.

12 ...

♜c6

13 exd5

exd5



A timely and skilful transformation has enabled Gulko to obtain an attractive position. But now he is again at the cross-roads. Which is better, to direct the knight via g3 to f5, or, after exchanging on f6, attack the d5-pawn by ♜f4? When he showed me the game, Gulko suggested that the second way would have been stronger. Indeed: after 14 ♜xf6!? ♜xf6 15 ♜f4 0-0 16 ♜cxd5 (weaker is 16 ♜fxd5?! ♜d7!) Black cannot play 16...♜d7? in view of 17 ♜c3 ♜d6 18 ♜xh7+! ♜xh7 19 ♜h3+ ♜g8 20 ♜h5. 16...♜xd5? is also bad: 17 ♜xd5 ♜d6 18 ♜f3 ♜d7 19 ♜f5! g6 20 ♜xd7. There only remains 16...♜d6 17 ♜xf6+ ♜xf6 18 ♜d2. It is clear that White has the advantage, but how great is it?

In my view, the continuation chosen by the grandmaster is no weaker.

**14 ♜g3?**

**♝bd7!**

It is not possible to cover the f5-square: 14...g6? 15 ♜xd5!. If 14...0-0? White decides matters with 15 ♜f5 ♕e8 16 ♜b1 ♕b4 17 a3 ♕b6 18 ♜xe7+ ♕xe7 19 ♜xf6 gxf6 20 ♕g4+.

**15 ♜f5**

**g6**

15...0-0? 16 ♜b1 is bad for Black, while if 15...♜b4 there follows 16 ♜xg7+ ♔f8 17 ♜h5.

**16 ♜b1**

**♚a4**

Now White restores material equality and transposes into a favourable ending. Gulko considered the strongest reply to be 16...♛a5 and after 17 ♜xe7 ♛xe7 he was intending to play 18 ♜f4 h6! 19 ♜d2 ♛f8 20 ♜f3 ♛g7 21 ♜e5. White certainly retains excellent compensation for the pawn, but the outcome still remains unclear – this is why Gulko had doubts about his choice on the 14th move.

Later grandmaster Viorel Bologan suggested strengthening the attack by 18 ♕f3!, for example: 18...♜he8 (in the hope after 19 ♜fe1?! of running away with the king by 19...♚f8!) 19 ♕f4!, or 18...♜xe5 19 dxe5 ♜d7 20 ♜fe1 followed by ♕f4, and Black's position is very difficult.

**17 ♜d6+!**

**♚f8**

If 17...♜xd6 White would have interposed 18 ♜c2!, and only then played 19 ♜xd6.

**18 ♕xa4**

**♚xa4**

**19 ♜xb7**

**♛xe5**

**20 dxe5**

**♝d7**

Black should probably have tried 20...♝g4!? 21 ♜fe1 (21 f4 ♜e3 22 ♜f3 d4) 21...♚g5 22 ♜c5 ♜f4.

**21 f4**

**♚a7**

Black avoided 21...♚g7 because of 22 ♜c3 ♜c6 23 ♜a5, but here not all is clear after 23...♜b5.

**22 ♜d6**

**♚g7**

**23 ♜c3**

**♚c6**

**24 ♜e2**

**♚b5?!**

24...♚a4 is more tenacious, but here too White gains an advantage by playing 25 ♜d4 ♜b8 26 ♜c6.

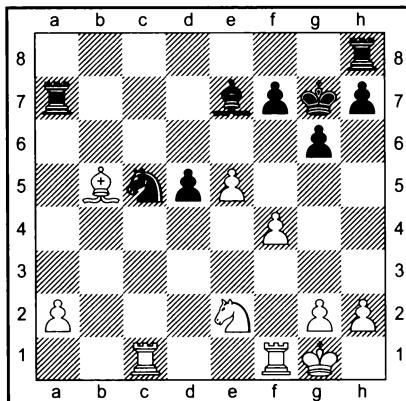
**25 ♜xb5**

**axb5**

**26 ♜xb5**

**♜c5**

26...♜xa2 27 ♜c3 ♜a7 28 ♜xd5.



**27 f5!**

The attack on the king is maintained even in the endgame. A sample variation goes 27...♚g5 28 f6+ ♚h6 29 ♜c3 ♚d2 30 ♜h3+ ♚g5 31 ♜g3+ ♚h6 32 ♜d4 ♜e4 33 ♜h3+ ♚g5 34 ♜f3+.

**27 ...**

**gxf5**

**28 ♜g3**

**♜b8**

**29 ♜xf5+**

**♚f8**

**30 ♜xe7**

**♜xb5**

**31 ♜xd5**

**♚g7**

31...♜d3 would not have helped: 32 ♜c8+ ♚g7 33 ♜f6 ♜xe5 34 ♜g8+ ♚h6 35 h4!.

**32 ♜c4**

**♚a4**

**33 ♜e3!**

**♚xa2**

**34 ♜f5+**

After playing 34...♚g6 in this hopeless position, Black lost on time.

I should like to show you one more example



from the games of Boris Gulko, connected with the topic under discussion.

### Gulko – Kupreichik

52nd USSR Championship, Riga 1985

*King's Indian Defence*

- |                   |                |
|-------------------|----------------|
| 1 d4              | $\mathbb{Q}f6$ |
| 2 c4              | $g6$           |
| 3 $\mathbb{Q}c3$  | $\mathbb{Q}g7$ |
| 4 e4              | d6             |
| 5 f3              | a6             |
| 6 $\mathbb{Q}e3$  | 0-0            |
| 7 $\mathbb{W}d2$  | $\mathbb{Q}c6$ |
| 8 $\mathbb{Q}ge2$ | $\mathbb{Q}b8$ |
| 9 $\mathbb{B}b1$  |                |

A rare plan. Theory considers the strongest reply to be 9...b5 10 cxb5 axb5 11 b4 e5! 12 d5  $\mathbb{Q}e7$ .

- |       |                |
|-------|----------------|
| 9 ... | $\mathbb{Q}d7$ |
| 10 b4 | $\mathbb{W}c8$ |

If now 10...b5 11 cxb5 axb5 12 d5  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  13  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  with the better chances for White.

- |                    |                |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 11 b5              | $\mathbb{Q}a5$ |
| 12 $\mathbb{Q}f4!$ | c6!?           |

After 12...b6 13 e5!? or 13  $\mathbb{Q}c1$ !? c6 14 bxc6 Black would have stood worse. Therefore Viktor Kupreichik initiates risky play – he abandons to its fate his knight on a5, which now has no retreat square. As we will see, this idea has a clever tactical basis and it is not at all easy to refute.

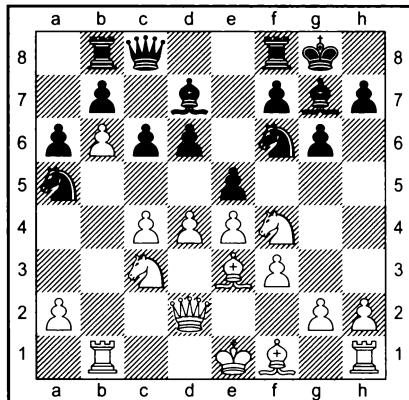
- 13 b6!

Stronger than 13 e5?!  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  14 b6  $\mathbb{Q}e6$ !.

- |        |    |
|--------|----|
| 13 ... | e5 |
|--------|----|

(see diagram)

What position should White go in for? It is clear that he must attack the knight on a5, but in return he will evidently have to part with his knight on f4 – he does not want to retreat it to h3! 14  $\mathbb{Q}d1$  exf4 15  $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  suggests itself, since both the knight and the



– position after 13...e5 –

d6-pawn are attacked. But take note: the position has been opened up, and White is behind in development. In such positions one must be extremely cautious, especially when sitting opposite you is such a resourceful tactician as Kupreichik. He will most probably play 15... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ !, intending to meet 16  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  or 16  $\mathbb{W}xa5$  with 16... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ !. It is possible to defer winning material, by reinforcing the e4-point with 16  $\mathbb{Q}f2$ . The position after 16... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  17  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  is advantageous to White. But the opponent finds a brilliant counterattack: 16...d5!! 17  $\mathbb{W}xa5$  dxе4, or 17  $\mathbb{Q}xb8$   $\mathbb{W}xb8$  (17...dxе4 18  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  exf3 can also be considered) 18  $\mathbb{W}xa5$  dxе4 with dangerous threats.

Let us now turn to the pawn exchange 14 dxе5 dxе5. Perhaps here White should retreat his knight to d1? Let us check: 15  $\mathbb{Q}d1$  exf4 16  $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  17  $\mathbb{Q}f2$  (17  $\mathbb{W}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ !) 17... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  18  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  19 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}e6$ . The next move will be 20... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ , and White has nothing.

Let us check 15  $\mathbb{Q}a4$  (instead of 15  $\mathbb{Q}d1$ ) 15...exf4 16  $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ . After 16... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ ! 17  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  the white knight is far more actively placed at c5 than at f2. But on the other hand, the opponent acquires an excellent tactical resource: 16...c5! 17  $\mathbb{W}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  18  $\mathbb{Q}xb8$  (18  $\mathbb{W}xa4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ !! 19 fxе4  $\mathbb{W}g4$ ) 18... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ !?

(18... $\mathbb{W}xb8$  19  $\mathbb{W}xa4$   $\mathbb{Q}h5!$ ? is also possible, with fine compensation for the sacrificed exchange) 19  $f \times e 4$   $\mathbb{W}g4$ , and again Black is able to initiate irrational complications.

It should also be mentioned that the modest 15  $\mathbb{Q}h3$  allows the opponent to gain good counterplay by 15... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  16  $\mathbb{B}b4$   $\mathbb{B}d8$  17  $\mathbb{W}f2$  c5! (17... $\mathbb{B}d4$ ?) 18  $\mathbb{W}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$ .

It can happen this way: you analyse complicated variations, and at some point you grasp the essence of the position and realise what your reply should be. Thus here the solution is to 'deaden' the play— not allow Black to activate his pieces, especially his bishop on g7.

**14 dxe5!**

**dxe5**

**15  $\mathbb{Q}xg6!!$**

**hxg6**

**16  $\mathbb{Q}a4$**

**$\mathbb{Q}xc4$**

**17  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$**

White has a spatial advantage, and his knight will reach c5.

**17 ...**

**$\mathbb{Q}e6$**

**18  $\mathbb{W}c2$**

**$\mathbb{B}d8$**

The attempt by Black to sharpen the play by 18... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  does not achieve anything: 19  $exd5$   $cxd5$  20  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{W}xc2$  21  $\mathbb{W}xc2$  d4 22  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}xa2$  23  $\mathbb{B}b2$ .

**19 0-0**

**$\mathbb{Q}xc4$**

**20  $\mathbb{W}xc4$**

**$\mathbb{Q}e8!$**

The knight heads via e8–d6–b5 to the central d4-point.

**21  $\mathbb{W}b3!$**

**$\mathbb{Q}d6$**

**22  $\mathbb{Q}g5!$**

**$\mathbb{Q}e8$**

22... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ? 23  $\mathbb{Q}c5$ .

**23  $\mathbb{B}bd1$**

**$\mathbb{Q}b5$**

**24  $\mathbb{Q}c5$**

**$\mathbb{Q}d4$**

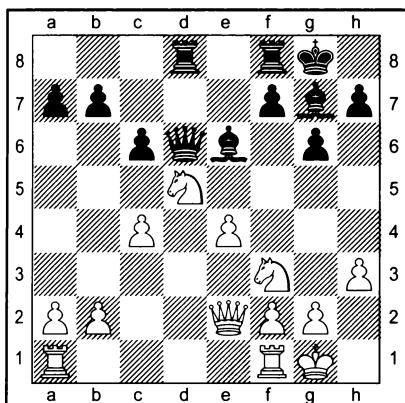
**25  $\mathbb{W}c4$**

**$\mathbb{Q}f8$**

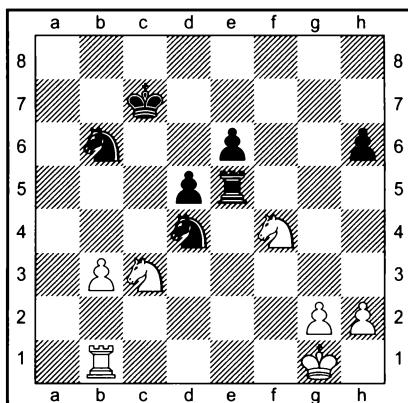
**26  $\mathbb{Q}e3!$**

White has retained a positional advantage and subsequently he successfully converted it.

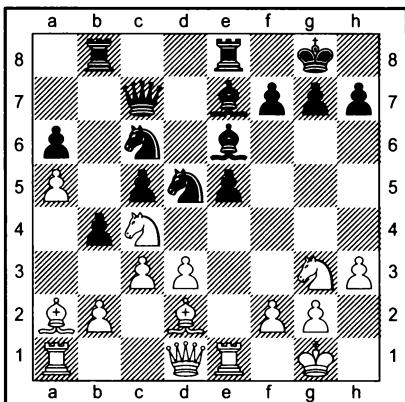
## Exercises



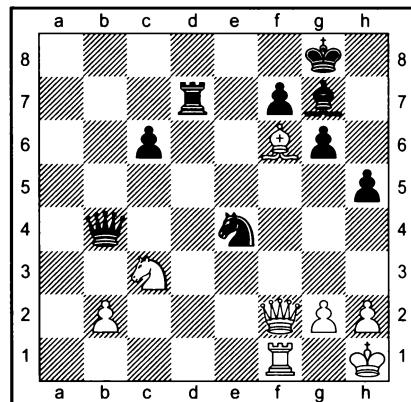
**1. White to play**



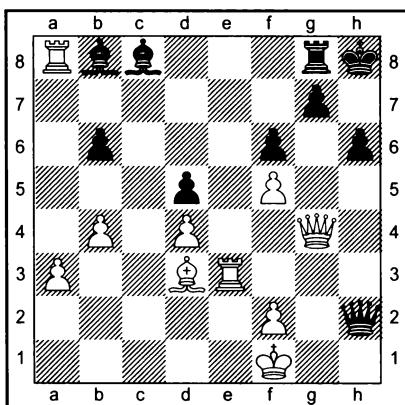
**2. White to play**



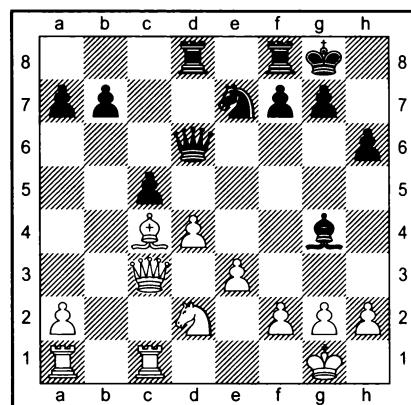
**3. White to play**



**4. White to play**



**5. White to play**



**6. White to play**

## Solutions

## 1. Marshall–Ed.Lasker (New York 1924).

If the knight retreats, then Black, with his two strong bishops, will gain excellent play: 19  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}c5!$ , or 19  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}f4$ .

**19 e5! ♕xe5**

19... $\mathbb{W}c5$ ? 20 b4 is bad for Black, while after 19... $\mathbb{W}d7$  or 19... $\mathbb{W}b8$  he will no longer have sufficient compensation for the pawn.

20 ♜xe5 cxd5

20...  $\mathbb{W}xe5?$  21  $\mathbb{N}e7+$ .

21 ♔xd6 ♜xd6

22 c5

After returning the pawn, in exchange White has obtained some appreciable positional gains: control of the d4-point and a pawn majority on the queenside.

22... $\mathbb{Q}a6$  23  $a4!?$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  24  $\mathbb{Q}fd1!$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  25  
 $\mathbb{Q}xa4$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  26  $\mathbb{Q}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  27  $\mathbb{Q}xa7$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  28  $b4$

White has an undoubted positional advantage, although it is unclear whether it is sufficient for a win.

## 2. Mednis-Keene (Mannheim 1975).

White's position is difficult, despite the equal material. After some preparation the central passed pawns are threatening to begin advancing. The best defensive possibility is the sacrifice of a knight for two pawns.

41 ♜d1!! ♞xb3

42 ♜xe6+! ♜xe6

43 ♗xd5+ ♖xd5

44 ♜xd5

There is no forced draw here – White does not succeed in exchanging the opponent's last pawn. But the ending with rook and g- and h-pawns against rook, knight and h6-pawn turns out to be drawn. This conclusion is worth remembering – there may be a time when you are able to save a difficult position,

by taking play into such an ending.

44... $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{c}6$  45  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{h}5$   $\text{\textcircled{d}}\text{d}4$  46  $\text{g}4$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{g}6$  47  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{f}2!$   
 $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{e}6$  48  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{g}3$   $\text{\textcircled{d}}\text{d}6$  49  $\text{h}4$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{e}7$  50  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{f}5$  (White  
 would have lost after 50 g5?  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{g}7!$ ) 50... $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{g}7$   
 51  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{a}5$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{d}6$  52  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{a}7+$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{f}8$  53  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{a}8+$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{f}7$  54  
 $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{a}7+$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{g}6$  55  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{a}3$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{e}6$  56  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{c}3$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{d}4$  57  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{a}3$   
 $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{b}6$  (threatening 58... $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{b}3+$ ) 58  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{a}5!$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{e}6$   
 59  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{a}3$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{c}5$  60  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{a}5$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{b}3+$  61  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{g}2$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{c}3$  62  
 $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{b}5$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{c}4$  63  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{b}6+$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{g}7$  64  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{h}3$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{d}7$  65  
 $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{b}5$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{c}5$  66  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{b}7$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{d}5$  67  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{a}7$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{d}6$  68  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{a}5$   
 $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{d}3+$  69  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{g}2$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{e}3$  70  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{a}7$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{e}7$  71  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{g}3$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{f}7$   
 72  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{a}6$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{e}6$  73  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{a}7$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{d}6$  74  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{a}5$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{g}6$  75  
 $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{h}3!$  (White does not want to allow the  
 knight to go to f6, and for this he must  
 prevent it from giving a check in reply to g4-  
 g5) 75... $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{c}6$  76  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{d}5$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{c}5$  77  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{d}4$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{e}6$  78  
 $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{c}4$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{d}3$  79  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{a}4$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{e}3+$  80  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{g}2$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{c}5$  81  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{c}4$   
 $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{e}6$  82  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{a}4$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{d}3$  83  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{a}6$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{f}7$  84  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{a}7+$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{g}8$   
 85  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{a}8+$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{f}7$  86  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{a}7+$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{f}6$  87  $\text{g}5+$   $\text{hxg}5$  88  
 $\text{hxg}5+$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{xq}5$  89  $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{e}7$   $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{f}5$  Draw.

### **3. Geller–P.Littlewood (European Team Championship, Plovdiv 1983).**

**21 ♗b6!**

If 21... $\mathbb{Q}bd8$ , then 22  $\mathbb{W}f3$  is a satisfactory reply.

**22**  **xe6**

**23 axb6**  **xb6**

24 e4

With his pawn sacrifice Yefim Geller has obtained a number of important positional gains: he has left the opponent with a 'bad' bishop and created pawn weaknesses in his position. Black faces a difficult defence.

24... ♕b8 25 ♔g4 ♖d7 26 ♕h6! g6 (26... ♕f8  
 27 ♕e3 ♘h8 28 ♕g3 or 28 ♕f3 gxh6? 29  
 ♕g3) 27 cxb4 cxb4 28 ♕ac1 ♕d8?

28...  $\mathbb{W}b7!$  29  $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  30  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{B}b5$  was better, although after 31  $\mathbb{Q}c6!$  Black still experiences serious difficulties.

**29 ♜e3 ♜b5 30 ♜xe6+ ♜h8 31 ♜xa6**

It is now White who is a pawn up, and in the subsequent play he successfully converted it.

**4. Miles–Romanishin (Tilburg 1985).**

White's best saving chance is to transpose into a heavy piece ending.

36 ♜xe4!

♜xe4

37 ♜xg7

♝xg7

38 ♜f6+

♝g8(h7)

39 h3

White's queen is well placed on f6 – it defends the b2-pawn and ties the rook to the defence of the f7-pawn, making it hard for Black to create an attack on the king. And in the event of the queens being exchanged, the famous formula may apply: 'Rook endings are always drawn.'

The tempting 36 ♜f4? chosen by Tony Miles was weaker because of the reply 36...♜d6!. Now 37 ♜xe4? ♜xf4 loses immediately, and 37 ♜xe4?! ♜xf6 is also bad for White, since after 38 ♜e8+ ♜g7 39 ♜e4 Black has the decisive 39...♜d3! 40 ♜g3 h4. There only remains 37 ♜xd6 ♜xd6 38 ♜xg7 ♜xg7, but this endgame is much more difficult than the one with heavy pieces, since Black can improve without hindrance the placing of his pieces (in particular, his king).

In the game there followed 39 ♜d1 ♜e7 40 ♜g1 (40 g4!?! ♜c4 41 gxh5 g5!?) 40...♜f5 41 ♜c1 ♜f6 42 b4 ♜e5 43 ♜f2 ♜e6 44 g3 ♜d4, and Black won.

**5. Psakhis–Romanishin (49th USSR Championship, Frunze 1981).**

It is not easy for White to exploit his exchange advantage. His king is exposed, his pieces are poorly coordinated, and the opponent's position is solid. For a long time Lev Psakhis was unable to find a plan which promised chances of success. And suddenly

it dawned on him – he saw a way of returning the extra material and forcibly transposing into an ending with a great positional advantage.

44 ♜g2!

♚c7!

45 ♜g3!!

♚c1+

45...♜xg3 46 fxg3 ♜b7 47 ♜a4 is hopeless for Black.

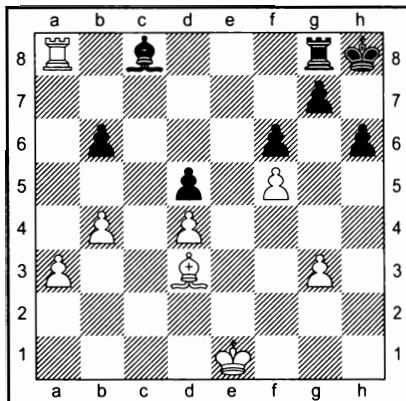
46 ♜e1

♜xe1+

47 ♜xe1

♝xg3

48 fxg3



48...♝b7

If 48...♝d7, then 49 ♜a7 is strong. This move was also not bad now, but Psakhis decided to exchange the rooks, since he correctly judged the bishop ending to be won.

49 ♜xg8+ ♜xg8 50 a4 ♜f7 51 a5 bxa5 52 bxa5 ♜e7 53 ♜d2 ♜d6 54 ♜c3 ♜c6 55 ♜b4 ♜c8 56 ♜a4! (zugzwang) 56...♝b7 57 a6 Black resigned.

**6. Grau–Eliskases (Olympiad, Buenos Aires 1939).**

Of course, 18 dxc5?? ♜xd2 is not possible, while 18 ♜b3 cxd4 leads to an equal game. The only way of fighting for an advantage is the critical move 18 ♜e4, the consequences of which must be accurately calculated and correctly assessed.

- 18 ♜e4!**                    **cxd4**  
**19 ♜xd6**                    **dxc3**  
**20 ♜xb7**                    **♝d7**

In the opinion of Alexander Alekhine, by attacking the knight Black refutes the opponent's raid. The world champion gives the following variation: 21 ♜a5 ♜d5! 22 f3 ♜e6 23 e4 ♜f4 24 ♜xc3 ♜xc4 25 ♜xc4 ♜d2 with the better chances for Black.

But White can play more strongly.

- 21 ♜c5!**                    **♝c7**  
**22 ♜xc3**                    **♜xc5**
- Little is changed by 22...♜fc8 23 ♜ac1 ♜xc5 24 ♜xf7+ ♜xf7 25 ♜xc5 ♜xc5 26 ♜xc5.
- 23 ♜xf7+**                    **♜xf7**  
**24 ♜xc5**

In such endings a rook and two pawns are stronger than two minor pieces. White can hope for success.

Apart from 20...♜d7, 20...♜d2 21 ♜xc3 ♜c8 must also be considered. Then there follows

22 ♜d3! ♜c2 23 ♜xf7+!, obtaining a position with the same advantageous material balance as in the previous variation.

White made a weaker move, and the subsequent play also saw some serious mistakes.

- 18 ♜b3?!** **cxd4** **19 ♜xd4 ♜f5?**

This loses a pawn. The balance would have been maintained by 19...a6 or 19...♝c6.

- 20 ♜xf5 ♜xf5** **21 ♜a5!** **♜e4** **22 ♜xa7** (22 f3? b6!) 22...♜g6 23 ♜f1 ♜d2 24 ♜a5 ♜d5 (24...♜fd8 25 ♜c8!) 25 ♜b4 ♜fd8 26 ♜c4??

A blunder, which changes the evaluation of the position to diametrically opposite. After 26 a4 or 26 g3 followed by ♜g2 White would have retained his extra pawn.

- 26...♜xg2! 27 ♜g4 (27 ♜xg2 ♜d1+) 27...♜f6  
**28 ♜b1 ♜f3** **29 ♜g3 ♜d1** 30 ♜xd1 ♜xd1 (threatening 31...♜a6) 31 ♜c4 ♜c6 32 ♜xc6 ♜xc6 33 ♜f4 ♜a1 34 ♜f5 ♜f8 35 ♜f6 ♜xf6 36 ♜h3 ♜b5 37 ♜f3 ♜e7 38 ♜e4 ♜e6 White resigned.



## PART III

# Typical Positions

Mark Dvoretsky

## Opposite-Colour Bishops in the Middlegame

**S**uppose that you want to try and gain an understanding of some typical position from the middlegame or endgame. The most desirable is to have in your possession a good book or article, in which it is all clearly explained. But, unfortunately, there is not a great deal of material of this sort, and the standard of much of it is rather low.

The alternative is independent study. Compile as many examples as you can on the topic that interests you, desirably with good annotations. Study these examples, analyse them and try to pick out typical ideas and make generalising conclusions, which then may be verified with new examples.

In practice you usually have to combine both methods of working. Thus for me a stimulus for the study of middlegame positions with opposite-colour bishops was provided by an article on this topic by grandmaster Vladimir Simagin, published in 1962 in the magazine *Shakhmaty v SSSR*. The grandmaster's assessments interested me, although by no means all the examples seemed convincing. I compiled an extensive amount of material, and in particular I used the games of Simagin himself, who played skilfully with opposite-colour bishops. As a result I was able to gain an understanding of the given problem.

The laws which operate with opposite-colour bishops in the middlegame and the endgame are different, and sometimes completely opposed. *In endings the presence of opposite-colour bishops usually increases the weaker side's chances of saving the game ('drawing tendencies'). In the middlegame, opposite-colour bishops strengthen an attack and increase its chances of success, and this also means the chances of a decisive outcome to the game.*

We will now draw up a few further general principles, which will help in the understanding of middlegame positions with opposite-colour bishops, and analyse some examples illustrating them.

### The Initiative

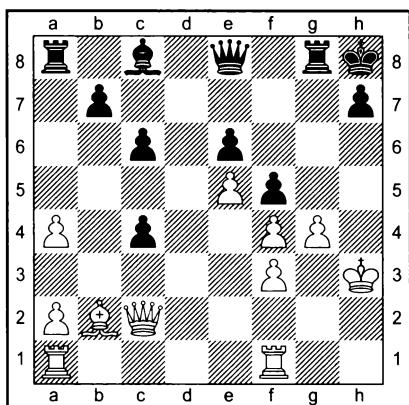
*Play as energetically as possible, and endeavour at all costs to seize the initiative. With opposite-colour bishops, the possession of the initiative is a serious advantage.*

In my book *School of Chess Excellence 1: Endgame Analysis* (p.64) I give an ending from the 4th game of the Alexandria-Litinskaya Candidates match. There, apart

from opposite-colour bishops, each side had only a rook. Nevertheless, at the basis of the paradoxical solution found by White was the same idea – the striving to avoid passive defence and at any cost to create counter-threats. If you are not familiar with this ending, I recommend that you take a look at it.

But now we will examine some examples from the middlegame.

### Simagin–Chistyakov Moscow Championship 1946



It is White to move. He would appear to stand better, since his bishop has some prospects, whereas in the immediate future it is doubtful whether the enemy bishop will be able to take part in the play. However, the white king does not feel too comfortable, and the opponent retains counter-attacking possibilities on both wings. Therefore White must play accurately and energetically.

The direct attempt to exploit the h-file by playing 26  $\mathbb{Q}g3$  is ineffective in view of the reply 26... $\mathbb{W}g6$ . Perhaps White should simply capture the c4-pawn? Simagin does not even analyse this move – a general assessment is sufficient for him:

*The position is so sharp, that the black pawn is a ‘trifle’, and time should not be wasted on capturing it.*

**26  $\mathbb{W}f2!$**

The queen is switched to h4. Here it will safeguard its own king and threaten the enemy king from f6. In the event of the exchange of queens on f6, the diagonal of the b2-bishop will be extended.

**26 . . .      c3!?**

Black creates scope for his rook. The initiative is more important than a pawn!

In endings with opposite-colour bishops an outwardly very similar principle applies: ‘Even seemingly imperceptible nuances are often far more important than pawns.’ But there pawns are sacrificed with a completely different aim – for the sake of constructing or destroying a fortress.

It perhaps made sense to activate not the rook, but the queen by 26... $\mathbb{W}g6$ ? 27  $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{R}fxg4+$  28  $\mathbb{R}fxg4$   $\mathbb{W}d3+$ . This would have led to a sharp situation, difficult to evaluate.

**27  $\mathbb{B}xc3$        $\mathbb{R}xa4$**

The f4-pawn is under attack, but Simagin is not at all concerned about this.

**28  $\mathbb{W}h4!$**

White prepares a check at f6 or 29  $\mathbb{Q}g3$ .

Black’s position is difficult. In Simagin’s opinion, he should have fanned the flame of a counter-initiative, by harassing the enemy pieces. He recommends 28... $\mathbb{R}a3$ . If the bishop moves, Black captures on g4, while in the event of 29  $\mathbb{R}ac1$  he can consider ...b7–b5–b4. However, by playing 29  $\mathbb{W}f6+$   $\mathbb{R}g7$  30  $\mathbb{B}b4!$  (weaker is 30  $\mathbb{R}ad1$   $\mathbb{R}fxg4+$  31  $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{B}d7$  32  $\mathbb{B}b4$   $\mathbb{R}xa2$ ) 30... $\mathbb{R}fxg4+$  31  $\mathbb{W}h4$  White creates decisive threats.

**28 . . .       $\mathbb{R}xf4$**

Now Simagin launches an attack on the king, and in it a very important role is played by his bishop, which has no opponent. After all, the offensive is conducted on the dark squares, which are inaccessible to the opponent’s bishop.

**29  $\mathbb{W}f6+$        $\mathbb{R}g7$**



30 ♜g3

♝c4

31 ♞ad1!

An important tempo!

31 ...

♝d7

32 ♜d2!

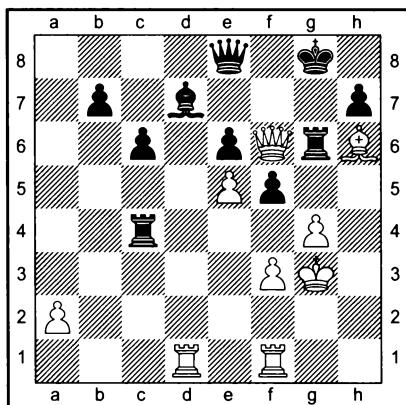
After the disappearance of the f4-pawn, the c1-h6 diagonal has been opened, and White skilfully exploits this factor.

32 ... ♜g8

32...♝g6 was a tougher defence.

33 ♜h6

♜g6



34 ♞xd7!

As one of the classics said: 'A combination in such positions is as natural as a baby's smile.'

34 ... ♜xf6

35 ♜g7+

36 exf6

37 f4

38 ♜h4

There was no satisfactory defence against the threat of 39 f7.

39 ♜xh7+

♝xh7

40 ♜xf8

♝g8

41 ♜e7

fxg4

42 ♜g1

♝h3+

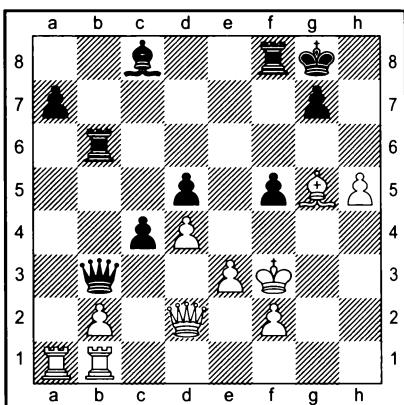
43 ♜xg4

Black resigned.

An instructive example! Both players fought energetically for the initiative, willingly sacrificing pawns. White's actions were more vigorous and purposeful, and it was this that brought him victory.

## Yakubovich–Simagin

Moscow 1936



Who stands better? Black, you say, since the position of the white king is insecure? But if I play ♜f4, intending ♜xa7, ♜g1 and ♜e5 – which of the kings will be in danger? The bishop at c8 is out of play, White will assail the g7-point, and the h5-pawn will help in the attack.

Who is it to move? This is the question which should have been asked at the start. If it were White to move, the advantage would be on his side, but in fact it is Black to move and he immediately opens lines in the vicinity of the enemy king.

34 ... f4!

Of course, this pawn sacrifice suggests itself even 'on general grounds'. But Simagin linked it with a combination, leading to a forced win.

35 ♜xf4 g5!!

It is important to obtain the g6-square for the rook.

36 hxg6

♜xf4+!

37 ♜xf4 ♚f6+  
38 ♜g3

queenside, underestimating the threats to his own king.

If 38 ♜g5 Black would have decided matters with 38...♝b6 39 ♜c2 ♛e6 (or 39...♜f3 followed by 40...♝f6+) 40 ♜xa7 ♜f5+ 41 ♜h6 ♜h5+! 42 ♜xh5 ♛g4+, and mate next move.

38 . . .	$\blacksquare xg6+$
39 $\mathbb{Q}f3$	$\mathbb{Q}g4+$
40 $\mathbb{Q}g3$	$\mathbb{Q}e2+$
41 $\mathbb{Q}h4$	$\mathbb{Q}b7$
42 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$	$\mathbb{Q}e7+!$

White resigned. An attractive attack!

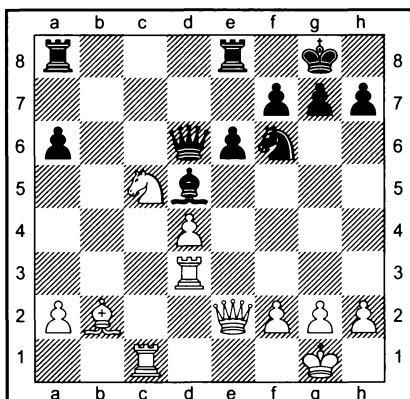
With these first two examples I pay tribute to Vladimir Pavlovich Simagin. Many reckon that there's Kasparov, Karpov and perhaps a few other greats, but that all other players are weaker and therefore uninteresting. Indeed, among the grandmasters of the second and third echelon there are some who skilfully move the pieces, but do not display any striking creative individuality. However, among them one also encounters true artists with original ideas and deep conceptions, and one can learn as much from their games as from the games of the champions. Simagin was one of these artists. I insistently recommend that you make a study of his games. For a time a book of his selected games was one that I constantly referred to.

## Attack

**The correct strategy with opposite-colour bishops is an attack on the king. Material or positional gains are worth little if your king is in danger. Any opportunity to play for an attack should be exploited.**

In the episodes which we have already examined, the game was decided by a direct attack. I should now like to show you two more examples from Simagin's games. In each of them the opponent was enticed by the possibility of winning a pawn on the

**Uusi-Simagim  
Gorky 1954**



Black's position is preferable. The mighty bishop on d5 is attacking the a2-pawn, putting pressure on the kingside and also, finally, blocking the d4-pawn. Even so, for the moment White is not in any real danger. For example, he can play 21 ♕a3, defending the a2-pawn and threatening 22 ♔e4. If 21... ♛f4, then 22 ♖d2 or 22 ♖e5, aiming for simplification.

**21 ♜a3?!** **a5**  
**22 ♛c3?!**

Assessing the plan chosen by his opponent, Simagin writes: *'White decided to win a pawn on the queenside. Black happily gives up this pawn and, for a minimal material cost, he creates a strong attack on the kingside.'*

22 . . . e5!  
iting a convenient moment, the pawn  
ances to e4. Up till now it was difficult for  
to develop an offensive, since the  
ent was always able to neutralise the  
ful bishop at d5 by f2-f3. But now the  
on e4 will cramp White on the kingside  
the attacking possibilities are increased.  
urse, it is hard to establish beforehand



whether the attack will be successful. But in principle this is sound strategy, and this is how one should act when there are opposite-colour bishops.

**23 ♕d2**

White would have lost after 23...♝xa5? exd4, but it would have been more accurate to play the queen to e3 (or d1).

**23 . . . e4**

Apart from moves that are part of a plan, you should always be on the lookout for chance tactical resources such as 23...♞e4!?. After 24 ♖e3 ♜xc3 25 ♖xc3 ♜g6 Black's advantage is obvious.

**24 h3**

White has to prevent 24...♝g4. If 24 ♜g5 Simagin was intending 24...e3! 25 fxe3 h6 26 ♜g3 ♜xg3 27 hxg3 ♜xe3 or 26 ♜f4 ♜xf4 27 exf4 ♜e2, retaining an advantage in the ending.

**24 . . . ♜h5**

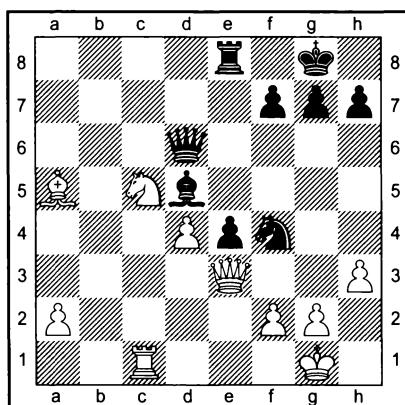
Since the knight has not been allowed to go to g4, it aims for f4, from where together with the bishop it will threaten the g2-point.

**25 ♜xa5                            ♜xa5**

**26 ♜xa5                            ♜f4**

Threatening 27...♜xg2!.

**27 ♜e3**



White has won a pawn and he has parried

the immediate threats. The knight on f4 is dangerous, of course, but for the moment the other pieces are not able to help it: the queen cannot go to g6, and the bishop is running up against the e4-pawn. Has Black's strategy proved to be a fiasco?

With opposite-colour bishops you must believe in the attacking possibilities of a position! Black's pressure on the kingside is, after all, more important than the opponent's material gains. In order to increase it, he needs to drive the queen from the blockading e3-square, and for this the pawns have to be included in the attack.

**27 . . . f5!**

With the impending threat of 28...♜xg2! 29 ♜xg2 f4. A 'Tal-like' piece sacrifice also came into consideration: 27...♝xg2!? 28 ♜xg2 f5 with dangerous threats.

**28 ♜b7?!**

An interesting reply. In the event of 28...♝xb7? 29 ♜c7 and 30 ♜xf4 the attack passes to White. However, it is not essential to take the knight.

Available to Gunnar Uusi was another clever resource: 28 ♜c7! ♜xc7 29 ♜d3. However, after 29...♜xg2!? 30 ♜xc7 ♜xe3 31 ♜f4 (31 ♜b4!?) Black would have retained the better chances in the ending, by continuing 31...♜f7 32 fxe3 g5.

**28 . . . ♜h6!**

**29 ♜d2**

**29 ♜c7? ♜e2+!.**

**29 . . . g5?**

Black could have won by 29...♜g6!! 30 ♜xf4 e3 (Nunn).

**30 ♜c5**

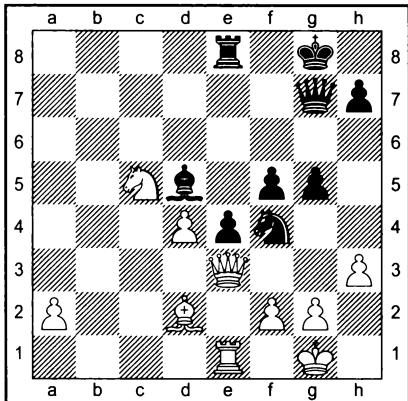
**30 ♜c7? ♜b6.**

**30 . . . ♜g7**

**31 ♜e1**

White overlooks the knight sacrifice, which has been in the offing for a long time. But what was he to do? After 31 ♜h2 h6

(31... $\mathbb{Q}xg2?$  32  $\mathbb{W}xg5$ ) 32 g3  $\mathbb{Q}g6$  his position would have remained anxious. And if 31 h4 the opponent would have had a pleasant choice between 31...gxh4 32  $\mathbb{W}xf4$  e3 and 31... $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  32  $\mathbb{W}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}xh4$ .



**31 ...  $\mathbb{Q}xg2!?$**

Here too the quiet 31...h6!? deserved serious consideration, but Simagin is unable to resist the temptation and he forces events.

**32  $\mathbb{Q}xg2$**

**f4**

**33  $\mathbb{W}c3$**

**e3+**

**34 f3?**

If 34  $\mathbb{Q}h2$ , then 34...g4! 35 fxe3 g3+ 36  $\mathbb{Q}g1$  f3 (Simagin). However, John Nunn has shown that this variation is unconvincing – White saves himself by 37 e4! f2+ 38  $\mathbb{Q}g2$  fxe1 $\mathbb{W}$  39  $\mathbb{W}xe1$   $\mathbb{W}xe4+$  40  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}xe4$  41  $\mathbb{W}b3+$ .

**34 ...**

**g4!**

**35  $\mathbb{W}g1$**

**$\mathbb{Q}xf3+$**

**36  $\mathbb{Q}f1$**

**g3**

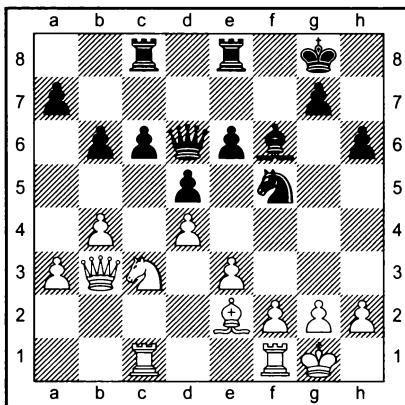
**37  $\mathbb{Q}c1$**

**g2+**

White resigned.

## Simagin–Saigin

Vilnius 1958



The position looks roughly equal. Black is hoping to gradually prepare ...c6–c5. Had his pawn been not at h6, but at h7, he would indeed have been quite alright.

**20  $\mathbb{Q}d3!$**

Simagin observes that the only defect in the opponent's set-up is the weak b1–h7 diagonal, on which he can set up a dangerous battery with queen and bishop.

**20 ...**

**$\mathbb{Q}e7$**

**21  $\mathbb{Q}b1$**

**c5**

**22 dxc5**

**$\mathbb{B}xc5$**

**23 bxc5**

**$\mathbb{B}xc5$**

**24  $\mathbb{Q}e2$**

**$\mathbb{B}xc1$**

**25  $\mathbb{B}xc1$**

**$\mathbb{B}b8$**

Regarding this move, Simagin writes:

*'It is possible that Black could still have held the position, if he had realised that he stood worse. For example, 25...e5 came into consideration, in order to answer 26  $\mathbb{W}d3$  with 26...e4. But he serenely tries to win a pawn, thinking that his position is very good.'*

**26  $\mathbb{W}d3$**

**$\mathbb{B}b2$**

**27  $\mathbb{B}d1$**

**$\mathbb{W}xa3$**

**28  $\mathbb{W}h7+$**

**$\mathbb{Q}f7$**

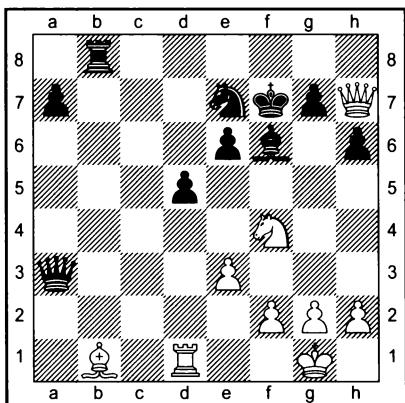
**29  $\mathbb{Q}f4$**

Threatening 30  $\mathbb{Q}g6+$ .



29 . . .

♗f6



The situation resembles the previous game. It may seem that White's offensive has come to a standstill, because he achieves nothing with 30 ♜g6+? ♜xg6 31 ♜xg6+ ♔e7. In fact, as usual, the attack compensates for the sacrificed pawn, and there are even two different ways of strengthening it.

30 g4!

It transpires that after 31 g5 either capture of the pawn will weaken the defence. Also good was the manoeuvre 30 ♜d3!? followed by 31 ♜e2 and 32 ♜h5+. Even so, against accurate defence by the opponent White can hardly hope to win – there are too few attacking pieces left on the board.

30 . . .

♗b4

30...♗d6! came into consideration, for example: 31 h4! (renewing the threat of g4–g5) 31...♗xh4 32 ♜g6+ ♜xg6! (it is hopeless to play 32...♔f6? 33 ♜h5+ ♔g5 34 ♜xg7, or 32...♔f8? 33 ♜c1! with the threat of 34 ♜c7!) 33 ♜xg6+ ♗g8 34 ♜xe6 ♗e7 35 ♜xd5 ♗f7, and Black maintains the balance.

31 g5!

♗xg5

It is also not easy to defend after other continuations: 31...hxg5 32 ♜h5+ g6! 33 ♜xg6+ ♜xg6 34 ♜h7+ ♔e8 35 ♜xg6 ♗a4 36 ♗g8+ ♔d7 37 ♜f8+, or 31...♗xf4!? 32 exf4 hxg5 (32...♗f3 33 ♜d3 ♗g4+ 34 ♜g3!) 33 fxg5 (weaker is 33 ♜h5+ g6 34 ♜h7+

♗g7 35 fxg5 ♗a4!) 33...♗xg5 34 ♜h5+ ♔f6 35 ♗e8.

32 ♜g6+

♔f6

After 32...♗xg6 33 ♜xg6+ the e6-pawn is under attack – this is the idea of the g2–g4–g5 advance.

33 ♜h5+

♔e5

34 ♜xg7+

♔d6

35 ♜f8

White has broken through, but after 35...♔c7?! the outcome would still have been unclear (pointed out by Artur Yusupov). However, the opponent was already in severe time-trouble.

35 . . .

♗a4

36 ♜c1

♗b5?

The decisive mistake. 36...♗c4! was essential.

37 ♜e8!

♔d3

38 ♜c6+

♔e5

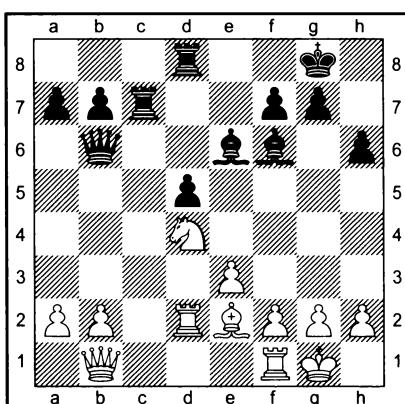
39 ♜g7+

Black resigned.

It is curious that many years later a similar strategic situation occurred in the 4th game of the second match for the world championship between Anatoly Karpov and Garry Kasparov.

### Karpov–Kasparov

Moscow 1985



Black could have equalised by playing 20... $\mathbb{Q}xd4!$  21  $\mathbb{Q}xd4 \mathbb{B}dc8$  (with the threat of 22... $\mathbb{B}c2$ ). For example: 22  $\mathbb{Q}fd1?$   $\mathbb{B}c2$  23  $\mathbb{Q}d4d2 \mathbb{Q}f5$ , or 22  $\mathbb{Q}d2 \mathbb{W}b4$  23  $\mathbb{Q}fd1$  (23  $\mathbb{W}d1?$   $\mathbb{B}c1$ ) 23... $\mathbb{W}xd2!$  (23... $\mathbb{B}c1!?$ ) 24  $\mathbb{Q}xd2 \mathbb{B}c1+$ , or, finally, 22  $\mathbb{Q}d3!?$   $\mathbb{B}c5$  23  $h3$  (23  $f4 \mathbb{Q}d7!$ ) 23... $\mathbb{W}c7$  followed by ... $\mathbb{B}c1$ .

20 ...  $\mathbb{B}dc8?!$

21  $\mathbb{Q}xe6!$

In the event of 21... $\mathbb{W}xe6!?$  the d5-pawn is rather weak, while 21... $fxe6$  leads to the structure with which we are already familiar.

21 ...  $fxe6$

Kasparov probably did not know the Simagin–Saigin game, and therefore he underestimated the threatened attack on his king along the light squares and exaggerated the role of his pressure on the queenside.

Objectively speaking, Black can still hope for a draw. In the previous game a significant role in the offensive was played by the white knight, but here there are no knights on the board and therefore it is easier to defend. In the event of the direct 22  $\mathbb{W}g6?$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  White loses a pawn, without creating any serious threats in return. Karpov resorts to more refined strategy.

*'What is required of White is systematic play, the essence of which can be described as follows: the consolidation of his position on the queenside, the switching of his queen to the kingside, the opening of the position by e3–e4, and only then the mounting of an attack on the light squares, making use of the now open e-file. In the game Karpov skilfully put all these ideas into practice, but, of course, not without substantial 'help' on my part.'* (Kasparov)

22  $\mathbb{Q}g4!$

Weaker was 22  $\mathbb{Q}fd1?$   $\mathbb{W}b4$ , intending 23... $\mathbb{W}xd2$ .

22 ...  $\mathbb{B}c4$

23  $h3$   $\mathbb{W}c6$

24  $\mathbb{Q}d3$

$\mathbb{Q}h8?!$

It is evident that Kasparov does not properly understand the position. After all, sooner or later White will set up the battery on the b1–h7 diagonal, and then the king will have to exit hastily from the corner.

25  $\mathbb{Q}fd1$  a5

26  $b3!$   $\mathbb{B}c3$

27  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}f8!?$

28  $\mathbb{Q}h5!$

At last the bishop switches to its 'lawful' diagonal.

28 ... b5

29  $\mathbb{Q}g6$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$

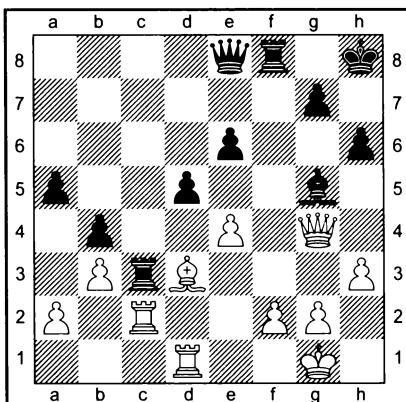
30  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  b4

31  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$

32  $e4!$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$

To me, this move seems not altogether logical. It would appear that, by placing his rook on f8 and bishop on d8, in reply to the inevitable e3–e4 breakthrough Kasparov was preparing to play ... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ , to develop counter-pressure on the f2-point. But suddenly the bishop occupies a completely different diagonal! The grandmaster was probably tempted by a simple trap: 33  $\mathbb{Q}e2??$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$ .

33  $\mathbb{Q}c2$



33 ...  $\mathbb{Q}xc2?$



A serious positional mistake. By exchanging his active rook, Black submissively concedes the initiative to the opponent. He should have exchanged not the rooks, but the queens. Since if 33... $\mathbb{W}f7$  there is the reply 34  $\mathbb{Q}e2!$ , he should have chosen 33... $\mathbb{W}c6$  or 33... $\mathbb{W}c8$ . For example: 33... $\mathbb{W}c8$ !? 34 exd5 exd5 (34... $\mathbb{Q}xc2?$ ) 35  $\mathbb{W}e4$ ) 35  $\mathbb{Q}xc8$   $\mathbb{Q}fxc8$  36  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}c1$  37  $\mathbb{Q}xc1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc1+$  38  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  39  $\mathbb{Q}g6$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  with an inferior, but probably tenable ending.

34 $\mathbb{Q}xc2$	$\mathbb{W}c6$
35 $\mathbb{W}e2$	$\mathbb{W}c5$
36 $\mathbb{Q}f1$	$\mathbb{W}c3$
37 exd5	exd5
38 $\mathbb{Q}b1!$	

The triumph of White's strategy – the queen inevitably reaches the b1–h7 diagonal. I will give the remaining part of the game with brief notes.

38... $\mathbb{W}d2$  39  $\mathbb{W}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$ ?! (39... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ !?) 40  $\mathbb{W}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$ ) 40  $\mathbb{W}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  41  $\mathbb{W}e6+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  (41... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  42  $\mathbb{Q}g6$   $\mathbb{W}f4$  43  $\mathbb{Q}e1$ ) 42  $\mathbb{W}g6$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  43  $\mathbb{W}e6+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  44  $\mathbb{Q}f5$ ! (43  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{W}f8$ !) 44... $\mathbb{W}c3$  45  $\mathbb{W}g6$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  46  $\mathbb{Q}e6+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  47  $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  48 g3!  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  49  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  50  $\mathbb{W}h7$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  51 h4  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  (otherwise 52  $\mathbb{Q}e1$ ) 52  $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  53  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  54  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ ! (54  $\mathbb{Q}e3$ ? g5!) 54... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  (54... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  55  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  56  $\mathbb{W}h8+$   $\mathbb{W}g8$  57  $\mathbb{Q}e8+$ ) 55  $\mathbb{W}h8$  d4 56  $\mathbb{W}c8$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  57  $\mathbb{W}c5+$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  58  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}b7+$  59  $\mathbb{Q}e4+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  (59... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ !?) would not have helped in view of 60  $\mathbb{W}c4!$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  61  $\mathbb{W}g8+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  62  $\mathbb{W}xg7+$ ) 60  $\mathbb{W}c4+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  61  $\mathbb{Q}h7!$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  62  $\mathbb{W}e6$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  63  $\mathbb{W}e5$  Black resigned.

### Arrangement of the pawns

*The stronger side should (as in the endgame) arrange his pawns on squares of the colour of the opponent's bishop.* But for the weaker side, the endgame recommendation (to place the pawns on squares of the colour of his own bishop) is no longer suitable. There this was done in order to set up a fortress. If his bishop and king are

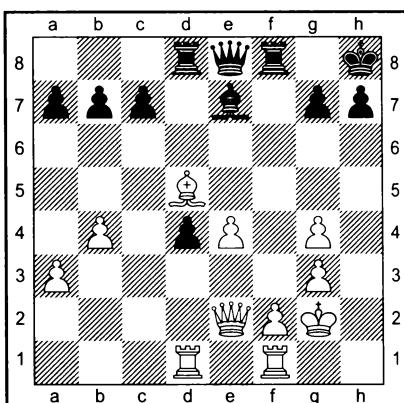
defending all their pawns and blocking a passed pawn of the opponent, he does not have to fear the penetration by the enemy pieces on squares of the opposite colour.

Of course, in the middlegame this logic does not apply. ***The pawns should cover the squares which are not controlled by the bishop.*** It is clear that, if Kasparov's kingside pawns had been standing on light squares (g6 and h7), he wouldn't have had any problems. I should also mention the typical regrouping of pawns on dark squares (g2–g3 and h3–h4) carried out by Karpov.

And here is another useful observation. ***The flexibility of the pawn structure and the presence of a mobile pawn chain can decisively influence the evaluation of a position. A pawn storm gains significantly in strength if it is supported by an active bishop.***

### Botvinnik–Tal

World Championship Return Match,  
3rd Game, Moscow 1961



Is it worth capturing the b7-pawn? We have already gained sufficient experience with opposite-colour bishops to decide immediately: not, it is not worth it. The capture on b7 merely leads to a loss of time, which the opponent will exploit to create counterplay. For example, he can choose 35...d3!? 36

$\mathbb{B}xd3$  (36  $\mathbb{W}e3$  is stronger) 36... $\mathbb{W}b5$  37  $\mathbb{B}d5$  c6, and White can save his piece only by playing 38 a4!. Of course, he has no reason to go in for such complications.

35  $\mathbb{B}c4!$

'It only remains for White to place his bishop at d3, after which his pawns will begin advancing. The capture of the b7-pawn would merely have diverted him from this plan.' (Botvinnik). Concise and to the point! The bishop looks to be well placed on d5, but that is all. By playing it to d3 (from where it will be eyeing h7) and advancing f2–f4, e4–e5 and g4–g5, White will cramp the enemy pieces and then switch to a direct attack on the king, exploiting the open h-file.

35 . . .	c5
36 b5	$\mathbb{B}f6$
37 f4	d3

It was for the sake of this pawn sacrifice that Black's two preceding moves were made. Mikhail Tal wants to exchange a pair of rooks and establish his bishop on the secure square d4. However, this does not ease his position. The bishop on d4 is firing into space, whereas the white bishop is threatening the kingside.

38  $\mathbb{B}xd3$

Less good was 38  $\mathbb{B}xd3$   $\mathbb{B}d4$ , when the black rook is active. One rook is all Botvinnik needs for his attack.

38 . . .	$\mathbb{B}xd3$
39 $\mathbb{B}xd3$	$\mathbb{B}d4$
40 e5	g6
41 $\mathbb{B}h1$	$\mathbb{B}g7$
42 $\mathbb{W}e4$	b6
43 $\mathbb{B}c4$	

A check on b7 is threatened; if 43... $\mathbb{W}d7$  the simplest is 44  $\mathbb{W}c6$   $\mathbb{W}xc6$  45 bxc6  $\mathbb{B}c8$  46 e6. If instead 43... $\mathbb{W}e7$ , then 44 g5 (with the idea of 45  $\mathbb{W}c6$  and 46  $\mathbb{W}f6+!$ ) 44... $\mathbb{B}c8$  45 f5 gxf5 46  $\mathbb{B}xh7+!$   $\mathbb{B}xh7$  47  $\mathbb{W}h4+$  and 48  $\mathbb{W}h6$  mate. Black resigned.

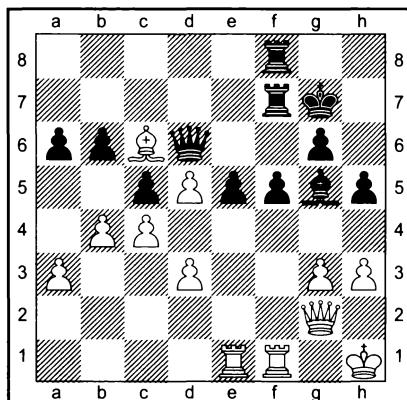
## Bad bishop

Here the concept of 'bad bishop' has a rather different meaning than usual. Botvinnik's bishop was good, because it was attacking the kingside, whereas Tal's bishop was bad – it was not creating any counter-threats. **Thus the main thing for a bishop is the prospect of taking part in an attack, and often this factor decisively influences the evaluation of the position.**

**A pawn obstructing the action of its own bishop can be a serious defect in a position.**

## Spassky–Simagin

28th USSR Championship, Moscow 1961



How should the position be assessed? Simagin is playing Black, and when there are opposite-colour bishops we are already accustomed to the advantage always being on his side. Firstly, he has mobile pawns – all the time the opponent has to reckon with the thrusts ...h5–h4 and ...e5–e4. There is also a second, exceptionally important factor: White has an obstructing pawn on d5, on a square of the colour of his own bishop. It would be better if it were not there at all! It is absolutely clear that the bishop on c6 has no prospects. But replace it at g2 – and it is also doing nothing here.

How can Black strengthen his position?



36...h4? 37 g4 is premature. Simagin finds an excellent plan: he switches his bishop to c7, setting up a battery which will threaten the white king. Then the pawn breakthroughs will become more dangerous.

**36 . . .** **♝d8!**

**37 bxc5**

White cannot get by without this exchange: from c7 the bishop will be defending the e5-point, and the b4-pawn will be attacked.

**37 . . .** **bxc5**

**38 ♜b1?!** **♝c7**

**39 ♜a4**

Boris Spassky tries to include his bishop in the defence. Now, when the bishop is still on its way to the kingside and the black pieces have already taken up ideal attacking positions, it is the right time to break through the opponent's defences.

**39 . . .** **e4!**

**40 dxе4** **fxe4**

**41 ♜xf7+** **♜xf7**

**42 ♜d1**

42 ♜xe4 ♜xg3 43 ♜g2 ♜e3! is also hopeless for White – Black effectively has an extra piece, since the enemy bishop is taking no part in the play. For example: 44 ♜g1 ♜h8 45 ♜f1 (defending against 45...♜f2) 45...♜xf1+ 46 ♜xf1 ♜g7 47 ♜d7 ♜d2! 48 ♜g1 ♜e2, and White is completely helpless (variation by Simagin).

**42 . . .** **e3**

Threatening 43...♜f2.

**43 ♜f3** **h4!**

Black has a decisive attack. 44 g4 or 44 gxh4 is not possible because of 44...♜xf3.

**44 ♜f1** **hxg3**

**45 ♜e2** **♝e5**

**46 ♜g2** **♝a5**

Spassky has somehow managed to set up a barricade, but his position remains lost. After playing his bishop to d2, Black will then

attack the weak a3- and c4-pawns. And if the white rook goes to their defence, the exchange sacrifice on f3 then becomes possible.

**47 ♜b1**

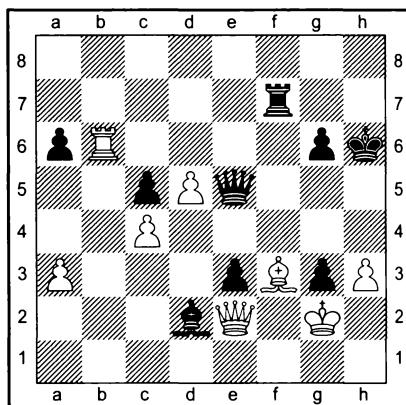
**♝h6**

Already now it was possible to give up the exchange: 47...♜xf3! 48 ♜xf3 (48 ♜xf3 ♜f5+ and 49...♜xb1; 48 ♜b7+ ♜f7) 48...e2 49 ♜b7+ ♜h6 50 ♜f8+ ♜g5 51 h4+ ♜g4 52 ♜f3+ ♜xh4 53 ♜h7+ ♜g5 and wins. However, this possibility will never run away from Black.

**48 ♜b3**

**♝d2**

**49 ♜b6**



**49 . . .** **♜xf3!**

**50 ♜e6**

50 ♜xf3 ♜h5+; 50 ♜xf3 e2.

**50 . . .** **♝xe6**

**51 dxе6** **♞f2+**

**52 ♜xg3**

52 ♜xf2 gxg2 53 e7 e2 or 53 ♜f1 ♜g7.

**52 . . .** **♜xe2**

**53 e7** **♝g2+!**

**54 ♜xg2**

**e2**

**55 e8♛**

**e1♛**

**56 ♜f8+**

**♞h5**

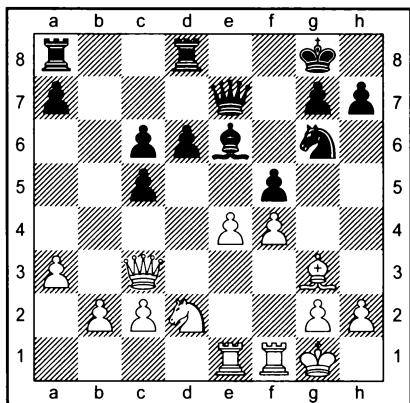
**57 ♜xc5+**

**♝g5**

White resigned.

**Glushniov–Sakharov**

USSR 1961



Here it is more difficult to evaluate the position. (Simagin was not playing either White, or Black, so we are forced to proceed from other considerations).

The black bishop has more of a future. In the event of a pawn exchange in the centre it will be able to press either on c2, or on g2. There is also a resource such as ...h7–h5–h4. Of course, on no account should f4–f5 be allowed – then the opponent's bishop will be activated.

But in principle it is hardly correct to try and evaluate such a dynamic position on general considerations alone – one must look specifically to see what may result from it.

Now 22 exf5 is threatened, and if 21... $\mathbb{W}f7$  there follows 22  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ , forcing the reply 22...h6.

In the game a highly non-routine move was made.

**21 . . .**  $\mathbb{W}f6!$

In the event of the queen exchange on f6 Black acquires a number of useful moves which strengthen his position: ... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ , ... $\mathbb{B}b8$ , ... $\mathbb{B}g8$ , and ...h7–h5–h4.

**22 e5**  $\mathbb{dxe5}$   
**23 fxe5**  $\mathbb{Wg5}$

The situation has become sharper. Black is

in danger of losing his weak c5-pawn, but he is hoping to develop an attack on the opponent's king. White has a weak pawn on e5, obstructing his own bishop, knight (after 24  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ ) and rook. 'We already know that an obstructing move on a square of the colour of a bishop creates nothing but problems.' (Simagin)

**24  $\mathbb{Q}f3$**   $\mathbb{Wg4}$   
**25 b3**

White rejected 25  $\mathbb{W}xc5$  because of 25...f4 26  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$ , but he was wrong to do so. As grandmaster Sergey Shipov rightly pointed out, after 27  $\mathbb{W}c3$  he would not have stood worse – the opponent has no immediate threats, and the e-pawn is now ready to advance. For example, 27... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  28 e6!  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  29  $\mathbb{Q}e5$ , or 27... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  28 h3!  $\mathbb{W}f5$  (28... $\mathbb{W}h5$  29 e6) 29  $\mathbb{Q}d4$ !  $\mathbb{W}g5$  30  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ .

**25 . . .**  $\mathbb{h5}$

25...f4 26  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$ ? does not work, because the knight on f3 is defended and White has 27 e6. The bishop must blockade the pawn for the present, and move to d5 only at the appropriate moment.

**26  $\mathbb{Q}h4$ ?**

By tactical means White manages to exchange a couple of pieces, but this does not bring any relief, since the black rook breaks through to d2, strengthening the attack on the king. Here too 26  $\mathbb{W}xc5$  was correct, since 26...h4? can be met by 27  $\mathbb{Q}xh4$ !  $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  28  $\mathbb{Q}f4$ .

**26 . . .**  $\mathbb{Q}xh4$   
**27  $\mathbb{Q}f4$**   $\mathbb{Wg5}$   
**28  $\mathbb{Q}xh4$**   $\mathbb{Q}d2$ !

Threatening 29... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ .

**29  $\mathbb{Q}f4$**   $\mathbb{Qad8}$   
**30  $\mathbb{W}xc5$**

Now this pawn-grabbing involves a loss of time. 30 h4 was safer.

**30 . . .**  $\mathbb{h4}$ !  
**31  $\mathbb{Q}xh4$**   $\mathbb{Qd1}$ !



31... $\hat{Q}d5$  suggests itself, but after 32 e6! the white pieces come alive. Therefore the bishop remains on its blockading square to the end of the game. Thus the threat of ... $\hat{Q}d5$  remained (according to the ironic definition of Bobby Fischer) 'an eventual possibility'.

**32  $\hat{W}b4?$**

White parries the threat of 32... $\hat{Q}xe1+$  33  $\hat{Q}xe1$   $\hat{Q}d1$  in the most unfortunate way. Meanwhile, in the event of 32  $\hat{W}c3$  or 32  $\hat{Q}f1$  the outcome would have remained unclear.

**32 ...  $\hat{W}e3+$**

**33  $\hat{Q}f2$   $\hat{Q}8d2!!$**

In this hopeless position (the black king hides from the check queens at g6) White lost on time.

We have probably analysed all the most general principles of playing middlegame positions with opposite-colour bishops. After assimilating these ideas and getting a feel for the spirit of such positions, you will certainly be able to find your way more confidently in them and successfully solve specific problems facing you. In order to assimilate the topic better it makes sense to analyse a few more practical examples, to check whether the laws already studied apply, and to seek new ones.

It is advisable also to pick out and examine the patterns which occur most often with the given material. The chief of these are:

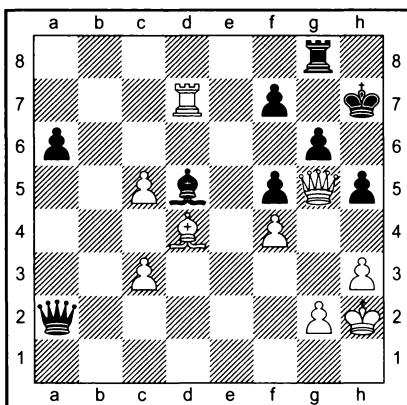
- 1) attack on the g7- (g2) point, as in the last example, or attack on the long diagonal in the absence of the g7- (g2) pawn, as in Simagin–Chistyakov, the first game examined by us;
- 2) attack on the f7- (f2) point;
- 3) King's Indian structure.

## Attack on the long diagonal

We will begin with a rather simple example.

**Perlis–Marshall**

Vienna 1908



Both players are pressing on the long diagonals, but, of course, White has a great advantage: his rook is active, and his pawns on the c-file can be used to divert the enemy pieces.

**37 c4!**

As usual when there are opposite-colour bishops, pawns do not count. It is important, if only for a moment, to free the queen from the defence of the g2-point.

**37 ...**

**$\hat{W}xc4$**

If 37... $\hat{Q}xc4$ , then 38  $\hat{Q}d8$  is immediately decisive.

**38  $\hat{W}f6$**

**$\hat{W}a2$**

**39  $\hat{Q}b2!$**

Again threatening 40  $\hat{Q}d8$  followed by 41  $\hat{W}h8+!$ , as well as 40 c6. Black can resist, only by pestering the opponent with counter-threats. The initiative, first and foremost – neither side can delay!

**39 ...**

**$\hat{W}c4$**

**40  $\hat{W}e5$**

**$\hat{Q}e6$**

**41  $\hat{Q}d8!$**

**f6**

**42  $\hat{W}c7+$**

42  $\mathbb{W}xf6$  is also good. After 42... $\mathbb{W}xf4+$  note the typical king manoeuvre, with which it diverts the enemy queen from the necessary trajectory and avoids perpetual check: 43  $\mathbb{Q}g1!$   $\mathbb{W}e3+$  44  $\mathbb{Q}h1!$   $\mathbb{W}e1+$  45  $\mathbb{Q}h2$ .

**42 . . .**  $\mathbb{B}g7$

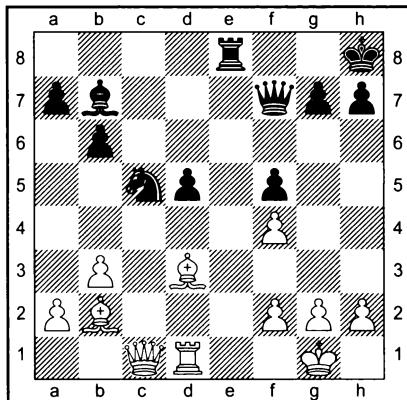
After 42... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  White wins most quickly by an already familiar manoeuvre: 43  $\mathbb{B}xg8$   $\mathbb{Q}xg8$  44  $\mathbb{W}d8+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  45  $\mathbb{W}xf6$   $\mathbb{W}xf4+$  46  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{W}e3+$  47  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{W}e1+$  48  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  49 h4.

**43  $\mathbb{Q}xf6!$**

Black resigned.

### Petrosian–Polugayevsky

4th Match Game, Moscow 1970



**29  $\mathbb{Q}e5!$**

The ex-world champion readily allows the opponent to exchange one of his bishops, since there will be no way of countering the pressure on the g7-point.

**29 . . .**  $\mathbb{B}c8$

**30  $\mathbb{W}b2$**   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$

With the opposite-colour bishops Black has almost no chance of saving the game. But things would hardly have been any better for him after 30... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  (in the hope at some point of playing ...d5–d4) 31  $\mathbb{W}b1$ !

**31  $\mathbb{B}xd3$**   $\mathbb{B}c6$

**32 h3**  $\mathbb{h}6$

**33  $\mathbb{B}e3!$**

The rook must be included in the attack on the g7-point. This cannot be done on the g-file (33  $\mathbb{B}g3$   $\mathbb{B}g6$ ), and so Tigran Petrosian plans an invasion on the e-file ( $\mathbb{Q}d4$ ,  $\mathbb{W}e2$  and  $\mathbb{B}e7$ ).

**33 . . .**  $\mathbb{B}g6?$

Now the black bishop is completely shut out of the game. The pawn sacrifice 33...d4 suggests itself, for example: 34  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{B}g6$  35 f3  $\mathbb{Q}d5$ .

**34  $\mathbb{Q}d4!$**   $\mathbb{B}h7$

**35  $\mathbb{B}c2$**

In the event of 35  $\mathbb{W}e2$  Black still has the defence 35... $\mathbb{B}c7!$ , so therefore Petrosian threatens to seize the c-file with 36  $\mathbb{B}c3$ . If 35... $\mathbb{B}c6$ , then 36  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{B}c7$  37  $\mathbb{B}e5$   $\mathbb{B}c2$  38  $\mathbb{B}e3$  is now decisive. 35... $\mathbb{B}e6$  36  $\mathbb{B}xe6$   $\mathbb{W}xe6$  37  $\mathbb{B}c7$  is also bad for Black.

**35 . . .**  $\mathbb{B}d7$

**36  $\mathbb{Q}h2!$**

There is no reason to hurry – the opponent simply has nothing he can move. Besides, now the threat of 37  $\mathbb{W}e2$  gains in strength, since if 37... $\mathbb{B}c7$  there follows 38  $\mathbb{B}e5$ , and there is no check on c1.

**36 . . .**  $\mathbb{B}c8?!$

**37  $\mathbb{B}c3!$**

The rook finally breaks through onto the 7th rank (the opponent cannot reply 37... $\mathbb{B}c6$ ). A triumph of flexible manoeuvring, typical of Petrosian's play!

**37 . . .**  $\mathbb{B}a6$

**38  $\mathbb{B}c7$**   $\mathbb{W}e6$

**39 g4!**

It would hardly have been possible even to contemplate this move, if Black had got rid of his d-pawn at the right time.

**39 . . .**  $\mathbb{Q}f1$

**40  $\mathbb{W}xf5$**   $\mathbb{W}xf5$

**41 gxf5**  $\mathbb{B}g2+!$

**42  $\mathbb{Q}h1$**



Black resigned, because there is no defence against the threats of 43 f6 and 43  $\mathbb{B}c1$ .

I now want to show you two of my games, played with one and the same opening variation. And although the positions arising were nearly identical, the character of the play in them was diametrically opposite. Everything depended on which of the players was able to seize the initiative.

### Vikulov–Dvoretsky

Moscow Championship Semi-Final 1971

*Queen's Indian Defence*

1 d4	$\mathbb{Q}f6$
2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$	e6
3 c4	b6
4 e3	$\mathbb{Q}b7$
5 $\mathbb{Q}d3$	$\mathbb{Q}b4+$

The idea of this check is to lure the knight to d2, so that it should not occupy the best square c3. Theory recommends 5...d5 or 5...c5.

6 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$	0-0
7 0-0	d5
8 a3	$\mathbb{Q}d6?$

8... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  is preferable. Where does this tell? Firstly, after 9  $\mathbb{Q}c2!$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  9 e4  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  10  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  the bishop would be better placed at e7 rather than d6. Secondly, after 9 b4!? c5 10 cxd5 it is desirable to capture on d5 with the queen.

9  $\mathbb{Q}e2?$

But now my opening set-up proves completely justified.

9 ...  $\mathbb{Q}e4!$

10 b3

10 b4!? c5.

10 ...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$

11  $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$

Black can be pleased with the outcome of the opening – he already stands slightly

better. He has been able to provoke a2–a3, and now the white rook has to defend the a-pawn. The knight has occupied the strong e4-point and will soon be supported by ...f7–f5. The exchange on e4 is unfavourable for White, whereas after  $\mathbb{Q}f3–e5$  he has to reckon seriously with the exchange on e5, since then Black can occupy the c5-square with his knight. Which is what happened in the game.

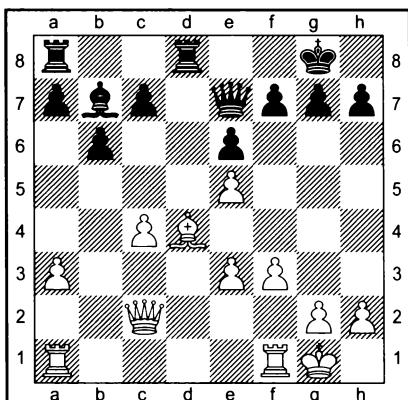
12 $\mathbb{Q}e5?$	$\mathbb{Q}xe5!$
13 dxe5	$\mathbb{Q}xd2$
14 $\mathbb{Q}xd2$	$\mathbb{Q}c5$
15 $\mathbb{Q}c2$	$\mathbb{Q}xc4$
16 bxc4	$\mathbb{Q}fd8$
17 $\mathbb{Q}d4?!$	

In the event of 17  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  the knight is stronger than the passive bishop on b2. But now Black reaches a favourable position with opposite-colour bishops.

17 ...	$\mathbb{Q}e4!$
18 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$	$\mathbb{Q}xe4$
19 f3	$\mathbb{Q}b7$

19... $\mathbb{Q}g6?!$  followed by 20...c5 also came into consideration.

20  $\mathbb{Q}c2$



Black effectively has an extra pawn on the queenside, but the difference in the placing of the bishops is even more important. My

bishop is pressing on the kingside, and it can also attack the c4-pawn, whereas the white bishop is obstructed by its own pawn on e5 and has no prospects at all.

In the first instance Black must prevent c4–c5 and gain control of the only open file.

20 ... **c5**  
21 **Qc3** **Qd7**  
22 **a4**

My opponent wants to get rid of his vulnerable rook's pawn and give me a weakness on b6. But we know that, when there are opposite-colour bishops, play on the queen-side is less effective than activity on the opposite side of the board, which Black will soon develop. I would have preferred 22 **Qfd1**, although after 22...**Qad8** 23 **Qxd7** **Qxd7** Black has an obvious advantage.

22 ... **Qad8**  
23 **a5** **Qg5!**  
24 **Qae1**

24 f4? would have lost immediately to 24...**Qd2!**

24 ... **Qd3**

I make on that I am attacking the pawn. But, of course, this is not so: it is not possible to capture on e3 in view of f3-f4 or the pin on the c1-h6 diagonal.

25 **axb6** **AXB6**

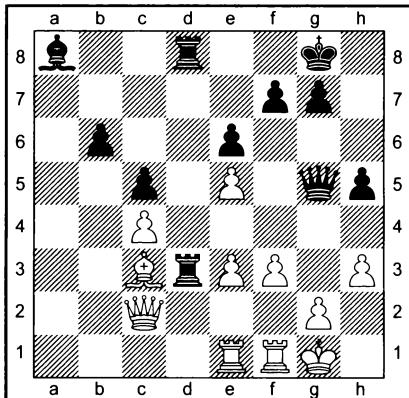
If 26 **Qd4** I was intending 26...**Qxh4**! 27 **exd4** **Qd2**. Of course, I overlooked the unexpected intermediate move 27 **h4!**, winning the exchange, but in overwhelming positions such oversights are not too dangerous. After 27...**Qxh4** 28 **exd4** **Qxd4+** 29 **Qf2** **Qc6?** (more accurate than 29...**h6** 30 **Qa4**) White's position is unenviable.

26 **Qb2**

Now Black would have liked to include his h-pawn in the attack, but after 26...**h5?**! 27 **Qxb6** **Qxc3** 28 **Qxb7** **Qc2** (or 28...**Qxe5**) the opponent has the good defence 29 **f4!** The most accurate move was the prophylactic

26...**Qd7!** I delayed and played something slightly weaker, but this did not change the character of the play.

26 ...  
27 **h3**  
28 **Qc2**



Black's pressure on the kingside has enabled him to tie down the opponent, but for the moment there is no direct way to win. To his aid comes the principle of two weaknesses. He must stretch the opponent's defences by creating diversionary threats on the opposite side of the board. The new target is the c4-pawn.

28 ...  
29 **Qe2**  
30 **Qh1**  
30 **Qb2** **Qa6.**  
30 ...  
31 **Qa4**

If 31 **Qb2** Black can finally capture the e3-pawn, which has been en prise for a long time.

31 ...  
32 **Qxa6**

32 **Qxd7** **Qxc4** was no better for White.

32 ... **Qd8!**

The queen defends the b6-pawn and takes up the 'approved' position behind the rook on



the open file. Black's position is won. If 33  $\mathbb{Q}h2$  I was intending 33...h4 followed by 34... $\mathbb{Q}d1$  (or 34... $\mathbb{Q}d2$ ).

**33  $\mathbb{W}a1!$ ?**

**34  $\mathbb{Q}a2$**

**35  $\mathbb{Q}a8+$**

**36  $\mathbb{W}b1+$**

**37 g4**

37  $\mathbb{W}xb6$   $\mathbb{Q}c2$  38  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}d1$ .

**37 ...**  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$

**38 hgx4?!**

Of course, there were also no saving chances after 38  $\mathbb{W}xg6+$ .

**38 ...**  $\mathbb{Q}c2$

**39  $\mathbb{Q}g1$**   $\mathbb{Q}d2$

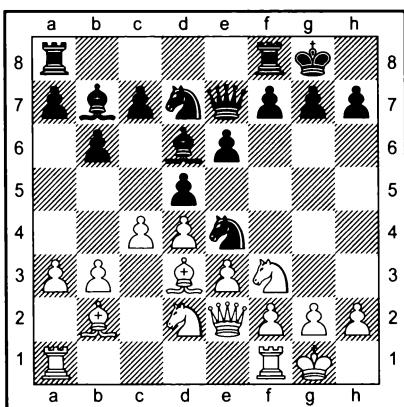
White resigned.

### Nisman–Dvoretsky

Moscow 1972

Queen's Indian Defence

1 d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2 c4 e6 3  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  b6 4 e3  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  5  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4+$  6  $\mathbb{Q}bd2$  0-0 7 0-0 d5 8 a3  $\mathbb{Q}d6?!$  9  $\mathbb{W}e2?$   $\mathbb{Q}e4!$  10 b3  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  11  $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{W}e7$



The same opening moves have been made as in the previous game. But this time my opponent was not in a hurry to play his knight to e5.

**12  $\mathbb{Q}fd1$**

**$\mathbb{Q}ad8?!$**

Of course, 12...f5 suggests itself. However, I was not sure that the advance of the f-pawn was appropriate in the positions arising after 13 b4 c5 or 13 cxd5 exd5 14  $\mathbb{Q}a6$ .

On the basis of this, it was logical to play 12...a5!, preventing both of these possibilities for the opponent. But I made a less accurate move, which neutralises only the second of them. What operated, apparently, were associations with the previous game – I remembered that there my rooks had operated quite well on the d-file, and I hurried to occupy it.

**13  $\mathbb{Q}c2$**

**a5**

Again Black defers ...f7–f5 because of 14 b4.

**14  $\mathbb{Q}e5$**

**$\mathbb{Q}xe5?$**

Another move made by analogy. But whereas in the game against Alexander Vikulov the exchanges led to an advantage for Black, here the result is the opposite.

**15 dxе5**

**$\mathbb{Q}xd2$**

**16  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$**

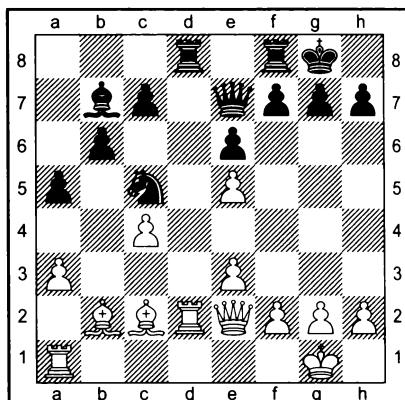
**dxc4**

**17 bxc4**

17  $\mathbb{W}xc4?$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5!.$

**17 ...**

**$\mathbb{Q}c5$**



I assumed that my opponent would be unable to avoid exchanges on the e4-square or the d-file, which are advantageous to me.

But I simply overlooked the following strong move by White.

**18 ♕d4!**

The rook takes control of the e4-square, at the same time creating the threat of 19 ♜xh7+! ♜xh7 20 ♖h5+ ♜g8 21 ♖h4. But the main thing is that now the exchange of rooks becomes practically impossible for Black, since White will recapture on d4 with his pawn, obtaining a mobile pawn chain in the centre, and then will soon advance d4–d5.

Instead of the plausible 17...♝c5 it made sense for Black to play 17...♝b8, with the idea of attacking the rook on d4 with the knight. However, as Vadim Zviagintsev pointed out, after 18 ♕d4! g6 (19 ♜xh7+! was threatened) 19 ♖g4! ♖d7 20 h4 ♖fd8 21 ♜c3 his position would have remained anxious. For example: 21...♝c6 22 h5 ♜xe5? 23 ♜xe5 (less accurate is 23 hxg6 ♜xg6!?) 24 ♖g3 ♖h4) 23...♜d2 24 hxg6! hxg6 25 ♖xg6+! fxg6 26 ♖g4 ♖xc2 (26...♜f7 27 ♖f1 ♖xc2 28 ♖h4) 27 ♖xg6+ ♜f8 28 ♖xc2 with advantage to White.

**18 ... g6**

**19 ♖g4**

19 a4!?

**19 ... a4!**

The only counter-chance! By placing his knight on b3 Black will most probably provoke the advantageous exchange of the dangerous bishop on c2. The far-advanced pawn on b3 will promise tactical counter-chances, or for a certain time will at least divert the opponent from his attack.

**20 ♖ad1 ♜b3**

**21 ♜xb3 axb3**

**22 h4**

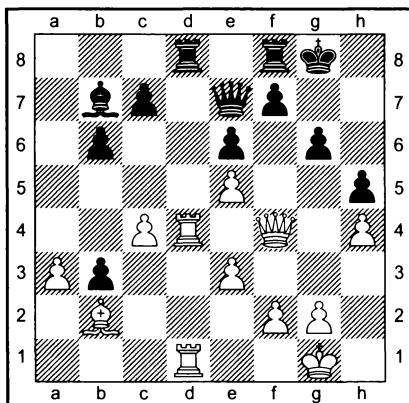
As is customary with opposite-colour bishops, White attacks on the kingside. It is important to note that his rook cannot be driven from the d4-square by ...c7–c5 – it will occupy an even more powerful position at d6. Exchanging it there will be altogether

impossible – then the terrible diagonal for the b2-bishop is opened. Incidentally, precisely such a structure occurred in the highly interesting game Taimanov–Averbakh, which I insistently recommend that you look at – you will find it in David Bronstein's famous book, devoted to the 1953 Candidates Tournament.

**22 ...**

**h5**

**23 ♖f4**



What do you think, whose bishop is better? It may seem that the comparison is in favour of Black – after all, his bishop is pressing on g2, whereas its opposite number is obstructed by the pawn on e5. But let us look a little more deeply. Not one of my pieces is supporting the bishop, so that its activity is purely superficial. Whereas the opponent has chances of penetrating on the weakened dark squares on the kingside (after the opening of the long diagonal, or on the c1–h6 diagonal), and then my king will be in trouble.

Black cannot passively mark time – the opponent will play ♖1d3, capture the b3-pawn, and then prepare either e3–e4, or g2–g4. He must try to seize the initiative, but how? He had to decide on a very risky operation.

**23 ...**

**♖xd4!?**

**24 exd4**

**b5!**

24...♜d8 25 ♖d3.

**25 d5!**

Boris Nisman correctly senses the spirit of the position and, not paying any attention to pawns, endeavours to open the diagonal for his bishop. The miserable 25 cxb5?! would have allowed me to activate my forces by 25... $\mathbb{W}d7$  26 a4  $\mathbb{B}a8$  27  $\mathbb{B}a1$   $\mathbb{W}d5$  28 f3 c6!? (but not 28... $\mathbb{W}c4$ ? 29  $\mathbb{B}c1$ ) 29 b6  $\mathbb{W}c4$ .

**25 . . .**

$\mathbb{W}c5!$

Activity first and foremost! In the event of 25...bxc4? 26 d6 things are bad for Black, since the exchange on d6 is suicidal, and after 26... $\mathbb{W}d7$  27  $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathbb{B}d5$  28  $\mathbb{W}f4$ ! he has no counterplay.

**26  $\mathbb{B}f6$ ?**

White is intending to switch his bishop to h6. For the sake of this he is ready to part with his pawns and even his rook. A clever idea, but, as we will see, Black has a defence. However, all the same I do not see a direct way for the opponent to win. In the event of 26 dxe6 fxe6 27  $\mathbb{W}g3$  Black has a choice between 27... $\mathbb{B}e4$  and 27... $\mathbb{W}g7$  28  $\mathbb{B}d7+$   $\mathbb{B}f7$ . If instead 26 d6, then 26... $\mathbb{W}xc4$ . In the endgame it is now White who would have to find a way to save himself: 27  $\mathbb{W}xc4$ ? bxc4 28 d7  $\mathbb{B}d8$  followed by 29... $\mathbb{B}d5$ , or 28 dxc7  $\mathbb{B}d5$  and 29... $\mathbb{B}c8$ . If 27  $\mathbb{B}d4$ ! Black can reply 27... $\mathbb{W}c6$ !? (not 27... $\mathbb{W}c2$ ? in view of 28 d7!  $\mathbb{B}d5$  29  $\mathbb{B}xd5$  exd5 30 e6, but 27... $\mathbb{W}e2$  comes into consideration) 28  $\mathbb{W}g5$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  and 29...c5. Here Black's position is uneasy, but nevertheless his queenside pawns guarantee him counter-chances.

**26 . . .**

$\mathbb{W}xc4$

**27  $\mathbb{B}c1$ !**

$\mathbb{B}h7$

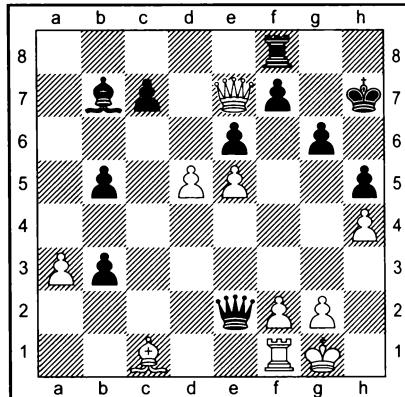
Of course, not 27... $\mathbb{W}c2$ ? 28  $\mathbb{B}h6$ !  $\mathbb{W}xd1+$  29  $\mathbb{B}h2$  with unavoidable mate.

**28  $\mathbb{W}e7$**

$\mathbb{W}e2$

**29  $\mathbb{B}f1$**

(see diagram)



How should Black defend? 29... $\mathbb{B}g7$ ? 30  $\mathbb{B}h6+$  and 29... $\mathbb{B}g8$ ? 30  $\mathbb{B}h6$   $\mathbb{B}a8$  31  $\mathbb{W}f6$  are completely bad. Only two possibilities remain: 29... $\mathbb{B}g8$  and 29...b2 30  $\mathbb{B}xb2$  (30  $\mathbb{W}xf8$   $\mathbb{W}xf1+$ ) 30... $\mathbb{B}g8$ .

It is easy to make the only possible moves, but far more difficult when there is a choice. The price of a mistake in such a sharp situation is extremely high, and therefore a very careful calculation is demanded. Alas, I failed to display this.

When checking the variation 29...b2 30  $\mathbb{B}xb2$   $\mathbb{B}g8$  I was not afraid of the return of the bishop to the c1-h6 diagonal: 31  $\mathbb{B}c1$   $\mathbb{W}xe5$  32  $\mathbb{B}h6$   $\mathbb{B}a8$ , or 31  $\mathbb{B}d4$   $\mathbb{W}e4$ !. But I was frightened by the combination 31 dxe6  $\mathbb{W}xb2$  32 exf7+  $\mathbb{B}xf7$  33  $\mathbb{W}e8+$   $\mathbb{B}g7$  34 e6 and wins, for example: 34... $\mathbb{B}f4$  35  $\mathbb{W}d7$ + (or 35  $\mathbb{W}e7+$   $\mathbb{B}g8$  36  $\mathbb{W}d8+$   $\mathbb{B}f8$  37 e7) 35... $\mathbb{B}h6$  36 e7  $\mathbb{B}g4$  37  $\mathbb{W}xg4$ !. In fact Black can save himself, by playing 32... $\mathbb{B}g7$ ! (instead of 32... $\mathbb{B}xf7$ ?). There is an even simpler draw by 31... $\mathbb{B}xg2$ ! (instead of 31... $\mathbb{W}xb2$ ).

**29 . . .**

$\mathbb{B}g8$ ?

**30  $\mathbb{B}g5$ !**

**b2**

**31  $\mathbb{B}f6$**

$\mathbb{W}xf1+$

**32  $\mathbb{B}h2$**

Black is a rook up, and his pawn is on the threshold of queening. And yet there is no satisfactory defence against the mating threats, created by just two enemy pieces.

There you have it – the formidable strength of an attack with opposite-colour bishops.

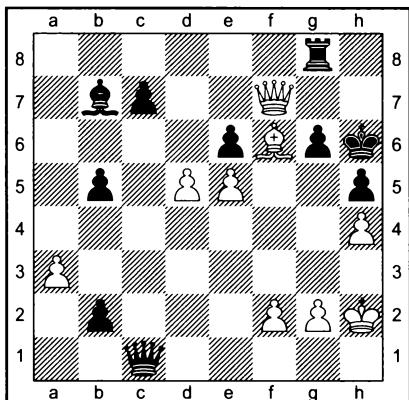
32 . . .

$\mathbb{W}c1$

32... $\mathbb{B}g7$  33  $\mathbb{W}f8$ .

33  $\mathbb{W}xf7+$

$\mathbb{B}h6$



34  $\mathbb{B}g5+?$

A vexing, over-hasty move just a step away from victory. 34  $\mathbb{W}xg8$ ?  $\mathbb{W}f4+$  would have led to a draw, but the modest move 34 g3!! with the idea of 35  $\mathbb{B}g5+$   $\mathbb{W}xg5$  36 hxg5+  $\mathbb{W}xg5$  37  $\mathbb{W}f4$  mate, would have forced immediate capitulation.

34 . . .

$\mathbb{W}xg5$

35 hxg5+

$\mathbb{B}xg5$

36  $\mathbb{W}f6+$

There is no longer a win: 36 g3  $\mathbb{W}h6$ !, 36  $\mathbb{W}g3$  h4+! (but not 36... $\mathbb{W}h6$ ? 37  $\mathbb{W}xg8$  b1 $\mathbb{W}$  38  $\mathbb{W}h8+$   $\mathbb{B}g5$  39 f4+  $\mathbb{W}f5$  40  $\mathbb{W}f6+$  and 41  $\mathbb{W}xg6+$ ), or 36 f4+  $\mathbb{W}g4$ ! 37  $\mathbb{W}f6$  g5!.

36 . . .

$\mathbb{B}h6$

37  $\mathbb{W}f4+$

$\mathbb{B}h7$

38  $\mathbb{W}b4$

$\mathbb{B}xd5$

39  $\mathbb{W}xb5$

c5

40  $\mathbb{W}xb2$

c4

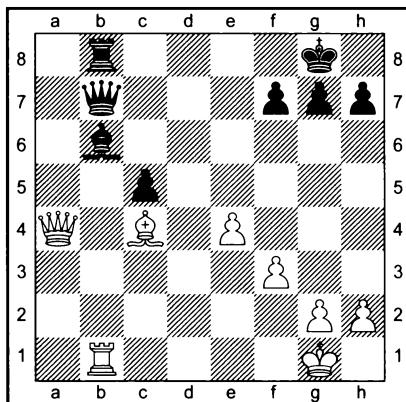
41  $\mathbb{W}g3$

White adjourned the game, after sealing this last move. On the invitation of his opponent a draw was agreed without the game being resumed.

## The f7 (f2) point

Boleslavsky–Sterner

Sweden–USSR Match 1954



At first sight it may seem that a draw is inevitable. Material is equal, and all the white pawns are on one wing. Practically any endgame will be drawn, for example the one with ‘pure’ opposite-colour bishops where Black has lost his c5- and f7-pawns.

In fact White has a great and, most probably, decisive advantage. Exploiting the powerful position of his bishop and the vulnerability of the f7-point, he condemns his opponent to passive defence. And with opposite-colour bishops we already know that the unchallenged possession of the initiative is usually a very important factor.

First the pressure on the f7-pawn must be intensified, in order to tie the enemy pieces to its defence.

38  $\mathbb{B}d1$

$\mathbb{B}c7$

38... $\mathbb{B}f8$  was weaker in view of 39  $\mathbb{B}d7$   $\mathbb{B}c7$  40 g3. Now the rook cannot leave the back rank because of the check on b1.

39  $\mathbb{B}d7$

$\mathbb{B}f8$

40 e5!

A typical move. Remember: with opposite-colour bishops the pawns should be placed on squares of the colour of the opponent’s bishop. The bishop on c7 is now restricted by

the e5-pawn, which at a convenient opportunity may also be able to advance further, to open up the black king's position.

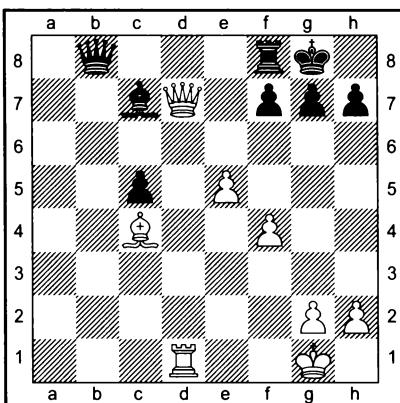
**40 . . .**

**♗b6**

A waste of a tempo. The bishop is doing nothing on c7 – its place is at d4, and Black should immediately have begun manoeuvring it there: 40...♗b8 41 f4 ♜a5.

**41 f4**

**♗b8**



**42 h4!**

A typical attacking resource in such situations! The pawn wants to advance to h6, breaking up the enemy king's defences. If it is met by ...h7–h6, the b1–h7 diagonal is weakened and White's bishop and queen can switch to it. The pawn on h5 will also come in useful if the opponent plays ...g7–g6.

Incidentally, in reply to 42...g6 Isaak Boleslavsky suggests the spectacular breakthrough 43 e6 fxe6 44 f5. But after 44...gxsf5 45 ♜xe6+ ♜h8 46 ♜xf5 Black has a defence: 46...♜h2+! 47 ♜h1 ♜c7. Therefore White should prefer the simple 43 h5! or 43 e6 fxe6 44 h5!.

**42 . . .**

**♜a5**

**43 h5**

**♜c3**

43...♗b4 should also be considered, after which Boleslavsky was intending 44 e6!. In the event of 44...f6 45 ♜xe6+ ♜h8 White

attacks the g7-point: 46 ♜e7 ♜b8 (46...♗b8 47 h6 ♜c3 48 ♜d7 ♜d4+ 49 ♜xd4) 47 h6 ♜c3 48 ♜d7 ♜b1+ (48...♜c1+ 49 ♜f1) 49 ♜h2 ♜h1+ 50 ♜xh1 ♜c1+ 51 ♜h2 ♜xf4+ 52 ♜g1 ♜c1+ 53 ♜f1. It is better to give up the exchange: 44...♜xc4 45 e7 ♜e6 46 exf8+ ♜xf8, in the hope after 47 ♜xe6 fxe6 of putting up a stiff resistance in the endgame. But it is not essential to exchange queens – stronger is 47 ♜a7! ♜b6 (47...♗b6 48 ♜a8+ ♜e7 49 ♜a1!) 48 ♜b8+ ♜e7 49 ♜b1 ♜d8 50 ♜a7+ and 51 ♜xc5.

**44 ♜d6!**

The bishop was wanting to go to d4, blocking the d-file, and so the rook hurriedly advances to an active position. The threat is 45 h6. If 44...h6, then 45 ♜f5, intending 46 ♜xh6, 46 ♜d7 or 46 ♜d3.

**44 . . .**

**♗b1+**

**45 ♜h2**

**h6**

**46 ♜xf7+!**

**♜xf7**

**47 ♜d8+**

**♚h7**

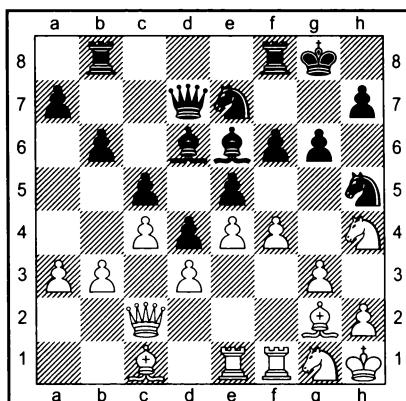
**48 ♜xf7**

Black resigned.

### King's Indian structure

#### Levenfish–Kan

Moscow 1927



This a characteristic position from the King's

Indian Defence (with reversed colours). The typical pawn sacrifice made by Grigory Levenfish should be in the arsenal of every King's Indian player.

**22 f5! gxf5**

The challenge has to be accepted: weaker is 22... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  23 fxg6 hxg6 24  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  followed by 25  $\mathbb{Q}h3$ .

**23  $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$**

**24 exf5  $\mathbb{Q}exf5$**

**25  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$**

**26  $\mathbb{Q}f3$**

By placing his knight on h4, White intends to seize control of the e4- and f5-squares. What can be done to oppose this? Probably 26... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  27  $\mathbb{Q}h4$  f5 should have been tried, although after 28  $\mathbb{W}d2$  with the idea of 29  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  hxg6 30  $\mathbb{W}g5$  White would have retained the initiative.

**26 ...  $\mathbb{Q}e6$**

**27  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$**

**28  $\mathbb{Q}h4$  b5**

White would have had the advantage after 28...f5 29  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  e4 30 dxe4 fxe4 31  $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  32  $\mathbb{W}h4$  (32  $\mathbb{W}d5!$ ?) 32... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  33  $\mathbb{Q}e5$ .

**29  $\mathbb{Q}ef1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$**

But now 29...f5! was simply essential. Ilya Kan decided to keep his pawn on f6, restricting himself on the kingside to passive defence. Hopeless strategy!

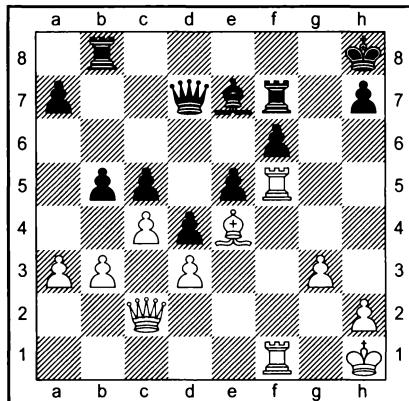
**30  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$**

**31  $\mathbb{Q}f5+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$**

**32  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$**

**33  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$**

(see diagram)



– position after 33  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  –

advancing his g-pawn, whereas Black has no counterplay.

**33 ...  $\mathbb{Q}g7$**

**34  $\mathbb{W}d2$**

The queen goes to h6, to take part in the attack.

**34 ...  $\mathbb{W}h6$   $\mathbb{W}xc4$**

**35  $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$**

Of course, it would be crazy to go chasing the a3-pawn: 35... $\mathbb{B}b3$  36  $\mathbb{W}h6$   $\mathbb{W}xa3$  37  $\mathbb{Q}h5$ .

**36  $\mathbb{W}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$**

**37 a4**

With the opponent completely deprived of counter-chances, White can even permit himself this rather abstract move. 37  $\mathbb{Q}xe5?$   $\mathbb{W}xe5$  38  $\mathbb{Q}f8+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  39  $\mathbb{Q}xg8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xg8$  40  $\mathbb{Q}d5+$  did not work in view of 40... $\mathbb{W}xd5+$  41 cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ .

**37 ... a5**

**38  $\mathbb{Q}d5$**

Threatening 39  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ .

**38 ...  $\mathbb{W}e7$**

Now the thematic advance 39 g4! strongly suggests itself. 39... $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  40  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  is bad for Black. Apparently Levenfish did not find anything convincing after 39... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  40  $\mathbb{W}h5$  (40  $\mathbb{W}h3!$  is stronger, and if 40... $\mathbb{W}g7$  41  $\mathbb{Q}h5$ ) 40... $\mathbb{W}g7$  41 g5  $\mathbb{Q}e7$ . He decided not to

Levenfish has carried out his plan and, despite being a pawn down, he has gained an overwhelming advantage. To realise this, it is sufficient to compare the positions of the two bishops. White can attack the h7-point or undermine the opponent's pawn chain by

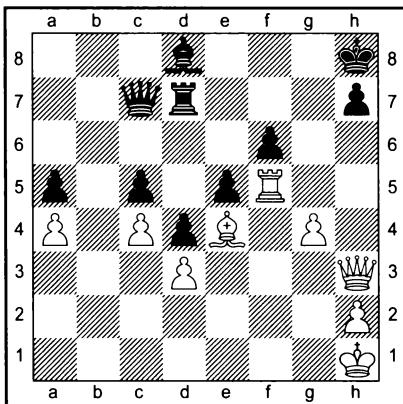


hurry, but to keep manoeuvring and await a more convenient moment for the breakthrough.

39 ♜h5	♝g6
40 ♜f2	♝d7
41 ♜e4	♝g5
42 ♜h6	♝g7
43 ♜h3	♝c7
44 ♜h6	♝g7
45 ♜h3	♝c7
46 ♜f5!	♝xf5

If 46...♝g7 there would probably now have followed 47 g4 with the threat of 48 g5 ♜xg5 49 ♜xg5 fxg5 50 ♜f8+ ♜g7 51 ♜e8 ♜h6 52 ♜f5 ♜d6 (or 52...♜f6) 53 ♜d5.

47 ♜xf5	♝d6
48 g4	♝d7



49 g5!                   fxg5

Kan reckons that he could have held the position by 49...♜f7 50 g6 ♜g7. Romanovsky retorted that the ending arising after 51 ♜h5 ♜d7 52 ♜xh7+ ♜xh7 53 ♜xh7+ ♜xh7 54 gxh7 was hopeless for Black. The white king invades the enemy position via e4 and goes across to the queenside pawns. If the bishop

defends them from b4, White advances his pawn to h6, putting the opponent in zugzwang.

This conclusion is not altogether accurate – in fact Black saves himself by sacrificing two pawns and changing the roles of his pieces: 54...f5! 55 ♜xf5 e4! 56 ♜xe4 ♜f6 57 ♜g2 ♜g7 58 ♜f3 ♜f7 59 ♜f5 ♜e7 60 ♜e4 ♜d6 with a draw. But, of course, White can easily gain the tempo that he lacks in this variation by 52 ♜xd7 ♜xd7 53 ♜f5! ♜g7 54 ♜xh7+ (or first 54 ♜g2).

50 ♜xe5??

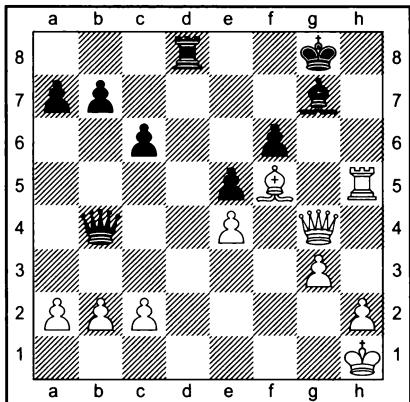
In his book of selected games and reminiscences, Levenfish lamented a serious deficiency in his play. After outplaying his opponent and gaining a decisive advantage, he would often make a serious error and ruin the fruits of his preceding work. This was also the case here. It is hard even to explain why White felt the need to exchange rooks. Surely not for the sake of winning the e-pawn? But when there are opposite-colour bishops, pawns are of no significance – you should be thinking only of attack!

After 50 ♜f8+! ♜g7 51 ♜e8 Black would have had to resign, whereas the move in the game leads only to a draw.

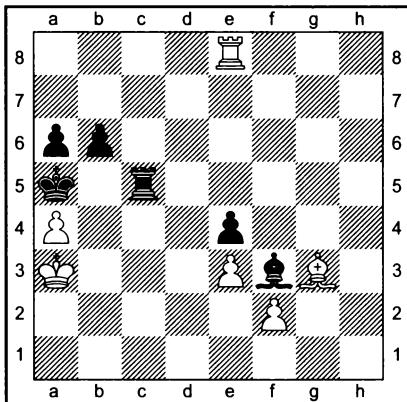
50...♝xe5 51 ♜xd7 ♜e7 52 ♜f5 ♜c7 53 ♜g2 ♜d8 54 ♜f3 ♜c7 55 h3 ♜d8 56 ♜g4 ♜g8 57 ♜d5+ ♜g7 58 ♜e4 ♜g8 59 ♜d5+ ♜h8 60 ♜f3?! ♜e3+ 61 ♜g4 ♜e2+ 62 ♜f3 ♜e7 63 ♜e4 h5+?! 64 ♜xh5 ♜xe4 Draw.

We have mainly been studying the strategy of play with opposite-colour bishops, but for dessert I invite you to solve a few combinative exercises. Most of them (although not all) are elementary, but nevertheless useful, since they demonstrate tactical ideas typical of positions with opposite-colour bishops.

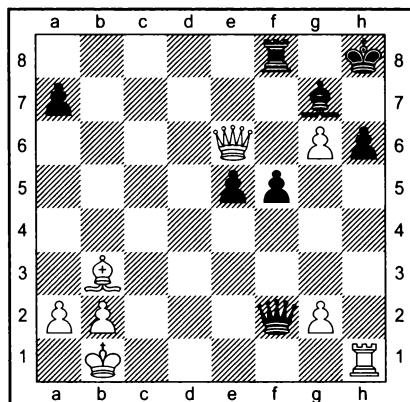
# Exercises



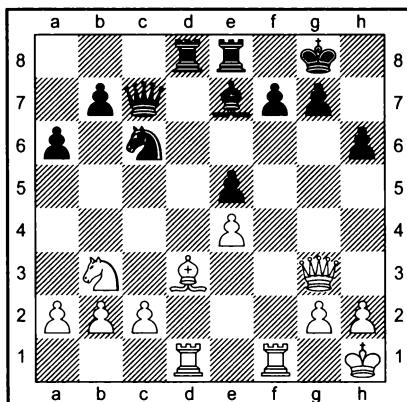
**1. White to move**



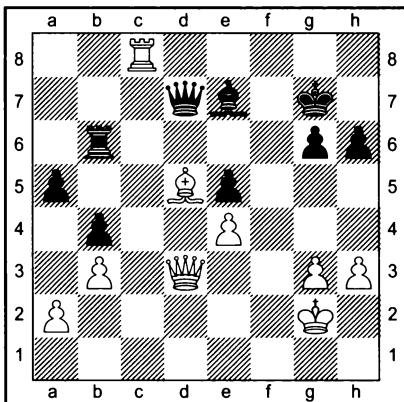
**2. White to move**



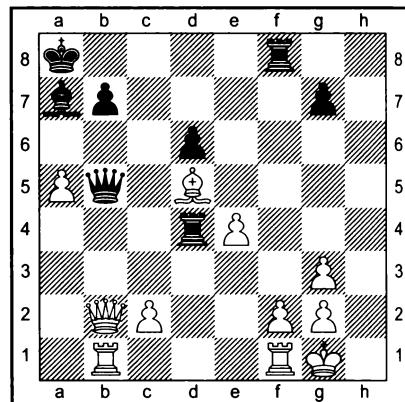
**3. White to move**



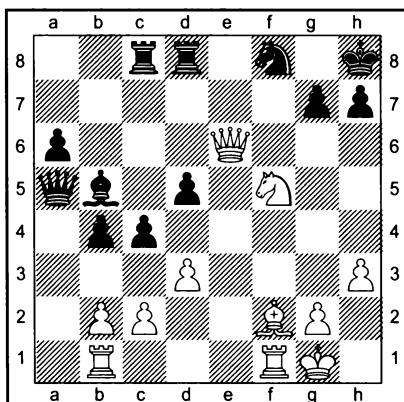
**4. White to move**



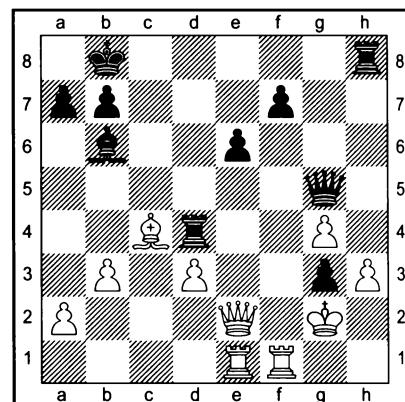
**5. White to move**



**6. Black to move**



**7. White to move**



**8. Black to move**

# Solutions

**1. A.Petrosian–Moldagaliев** (USSR Junior Championship, Yerevan 1969).

30  $\mathbb{Q}h8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xh8$

31  $\mathbb{W}h5+$

Black resigned.

**2. Wachtel–Michel** (1953).

1  $\mathbb{R}e5!!$

Paradoxically, it is the exchange of rooks that leads to inevitable mate.

**3. Wade–Kuijpers** (Holland–England Match 1972).

29  $\mathbb{Q}xh6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xh6$

30  $\mathbb{W}xe5+$

Black resigned in view of 30... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  31  $\mathbb{W}h2+$  with mate.

**4. Hartston–Penrose** (London 1963).

1  $\mathbb{R}xf7!$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$

2  $\mathbb{Q}c4+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$

3  $\mathbb{Q}f1+$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$

4  $\mathbb{R}xf6+$   $gx6$

5  $\mathbb{W}g8+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$

6  $\mathbb{W}e6+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$

7  $\mathbb{W}xf6+$

Alas, White did not find this combination and he offered a draw, which, of course, was accepted.

**5. Karpov–Hübner** (Montreal 1979).

Karpov played 39  $\mathbb{W}c4?$  (apparently expecting 39... $\mathbb{W}b5?$  40  $\mathbb{R}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  41  $\mathbb{R}xe7!$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  42  $\mathbb{R}c7+$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  43  $\mathbb{R}f7+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  44  $\mathbb{R}c4$ ), but after 39... $\mathbb{R}f6!$  40  $\mathbb{R}c7$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  White's advantage proved insufficient for a win.

39  $\mathbb{R}g8+!$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$

Now the showy 40  $\mathbb{R}xg6$  suggests itself (in

the hope of winning the enemy queen after giving a bishop check). But the cool-headed reply 40... $\mathbb{R}d6!$  forces the exchange of rooks, after which White's success becomes problematic. With opposite-colour bishops, an extra pawn by no means guarantees a win.

40  $\mathbb{W}e3!!$

A decisive double attack – White is threatening not only 41  $\mathbb{W}xb6$ , but also 41  $\mathbb{R}h8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xh8$  42  $\mathbb{W}xh6$  mate.

**6. NN–Rossolimo** (Paris 1957).

The b7-point against the f2-point! Whose attack is stronger?

1 ...  $\mathbb{R}d1!!$

2  $c4$

There is nothing else: 2  $\mathbb{R}bx d1$   $\mathbb{W}xb2$ , 2  $\mathbb{W}xb5$  (or 2  $\mathbb{R}fx d1$ ) 2... $\mathbb{Q}xf2+$  3  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{R}h8$  mate, or 2  $\mathbb{Q}xb7+$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$ .

Now the consequences of the following two lines are not too clear: 2... $\mathbb{Q}xf1+$  3  $\mathbb{Q}xf1$   $\mathbb{R}xf2+$  4  $\mathbb{W}xf2$   $\mathbb{W}xb1+$  5  $\mathbb{W}e1$ , or 2... $\mathbb{Q}xf2+$  3  $\mathbb{W}xf2$   $\mathbb{R}xf2$  4  $\mathbb{R}bx d1$   $\mathbb{Q}xf1+$  5  $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ .

2 ...  $\mathbb{R}xf2!!$

3  $\mathbb{Q}xb7+$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$

4  $\mathbb{W}xb5$   $\mathbb{R}fx f1+$

5  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{R}h1$  mate

**7. Blumenthal–McGunnigle** (correspondence 1962).

The prosaic 31  $\mathbb{W}f7!?$   $\mathbb{R}d7$  32  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  is not bad, forcing the opponent to give up the exchange. However, after 32... $\mathbb{R}xe7$  33  $\mathbb{W}xe7$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  Black is still capable of putting up a tough resistance.

31  $\mathbb{W}h6!!$

With this pretty move White begins a deadly attack on the g7-point. The queen is taboo: 31... $gxh6$  32  $\mathbb{Q}d4+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  33  $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  mate.



**31 . . .** **♖d7**

**32 ♖d4**

32 ♖xg7! ♕xg7 33 ♖b6! was stronger (V.Bologan). Black could have excluded this possibility, by transposing moves: 31...♕c7 32 ♖d4 (32 ♖b6 ♕e5) 32...♖d7.

**32 . . .** **♕c7**

**33 ♖f3**

By doubling rooks on the f-file White will create the threat of ♖xg7 followed by ♖f7.

**33...♗g6 34 ♖bf1 ♗g8**

Black would also have lost after 34...♗e5 35 ♕e3! gxh6 (35...♘c6 36 ♖fe1 or 36 ♕e6) 36 ♕xe5 (S.Shipov).

**35 ♕xg7+?!**

A spectacular blow, although, as soon becomes clear, White inaccurately calculated its consequences. He would have retained a winning attack after 35 ♕e3! (threatening 36 ♖h6+ gxh6 37 ♕e6+) 35...♘c6 36 ♖xg7! ♕xg7 37 ♕xg7.

**35 . . .** **♕xg7**

**36 ♖h6+** **♔h8**

**37 ♖f7** **♕xf7?**

37...♗e5? 38 ♕xc7 also would not have helped. As was pointed out by Taylor Kingston, Black could have saved himself by playing 37...♕e5! 38 ♔xe5 ♖xe5 39 ♖f8+ ♕g8 40 ♖xg8 ♖xf8 41 ♖xf8 ♗g7, for example, 42 ♖f5 cxd3 43 cxd3 ♖xd3 44 ♖e7 ♖xb2 45 ♖d5 with a double-edged endgame.

**38 ♖xf7** **♗g8**

**39 ♖d7!**

It is important to cut off the bishop's path to e8.

**39 . . .** **♔xd7**

**40 ♖f7 mate**

**8. Kholmov–Geller (USSR Spartakiad, Moscow 1959).**

**29 . . .** **♖xh3!!**

This rook sacrifice is the most energetic continuation of the attack. In the event of 29...♕h4 30 ♕e5+ ♔c7 31 ♕xd4 ♕xh3+ 32 ♖f3 g2+ 33 ♔e2 gxf1♕+ 34 ♖xf1 or 29...♕h6 30 h4!? (weaker is 30 ♕e5+ ♖a8!) 31 ♖h1 ♕f4) White would have retained drawing chances.

**30 ♔xh3**

As was shown by grandmaster Shipov, White would have had a difficult endgame after 30 ♕e5+!? ♕xe5 31 ♖xe5 ♕xg4! 32 ♖xh3 g2 33 ♖ee1 (33 ♖fe1 g1♕) 33...gxf1♕+ 34 ♖xf1 ♕g7.

**30 . . .** **♕h6+**

**31 ♕xg3**

31 ♖g2 ♕h2+ 32 ♖f3 g2 was altogether bad for White.

**31 . . .** **♔c7+**

**32 ♖f2**

Now nothing is given by 32...♕h2+? 33 ♖e3 or 32...♕f4+? 33 ♕g1! (33 ♖f3? ♕h2+ 34 ♖e3 ♖b6) 33...♕g5 34 ♖xe6!. Black could have won by 32...♕h3! 33 ♖f3 (33 ♖d2 ♕xg4 34 ♖e2 ♖g2+ 35 ♖d1 ♖xd2+ 36 ♖xd2 ♖a5+) 33...♕f4 (33...♕h2+!? 34 ♖e3 ♖b6 is also strong) 34 ♖xf4 ♖xf4 35 ♖g1 (35 ♖e4 ♖g3+) 35...♕g5!. Yefim Geller played something different and, apparently, less strong.

**32 . . .** **♕g5?!**

A pretty quiet move, with the terrible threat of 33...♕f4+.

**33 ♖b1?**

White vacates the e1-square for his king. But it was much stronger to play 33 ♕e3! ♕xg4, and only now 34 ♖b1!.

**33 . . .** **♕xg4**

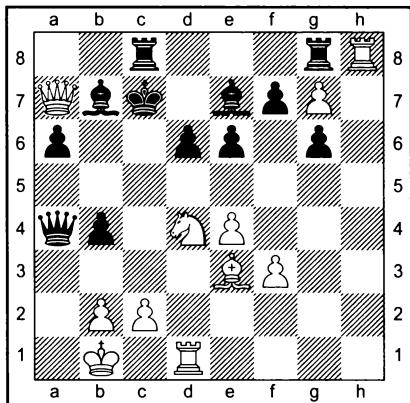
**34 ♖e1** **♕g2**

If now 35 ♖xf7, then 35...♕xe2+ 36 ♖xe2 b5. 35 d4 ♕h4+ 36 ♖d1 ♕xe2 37 ♖xe2 ♕e4+ 38 ♖d2 ♖a5+ 39 ♖c1 ♕e3+ 40 ♖b2 ♕d2+ 41 ♖a3 ♖b4+ White resigned.

Mark Dvoretsky

## You can't get by without a Combination!

**W**hen studying the excellent book *Secrets of Grandmaster Play* by John Nunn and Peter Griffiths, my attention was drawn to a position which occurred in the game **Nunn–Van der Wiel** (Wijk aan Zee 1982).



**White to move**

It was suggested to pupils of our school as a piece of homework (with the right to move the pieces on the board) after studying the topic 'Opposite-colour bishops in the middle-game'.

'But where are the opposite-colour bishops here?' you may ask. This will soon become clear.

White has a clear advantage. 28  $\mathbb{Q}dh1$  suggests itself, but Black has the reply 28... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ . Not finding anything convincing here, John Nunn decided not to allow the bishop to go to f6.

**29 e5!?**

The start of a combination calculated 12 (!) moves ahead.

**29 . . .**

$\mathbb{Q}xh8!$

The only defence. All other attempts are easily refuted.

A) 29...d5. Petya Kiryakov and Vova Baklan pointed out the amusing variation 30  $\mathbb{Q}g5!?$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  (30... $\mathbb{Q}a8$  31  $\mathbb{Q}xa8$ ) 31  $\mathbb{Q}c5+$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  32  $\mathbb{Q}xg8$  (there is also 32  $\mathbb{Q}xc8+)$  32... $\mathbb{Q}xg8$  33  $\mathbb{Q}f8+$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  34  $\mathbb{Q}xe8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xe8$  35  $\mathbb{Q}h1$ . Not bad, but why go for a combination, when there is a simple solution: 30  $\mathbb{Q}dh1$  with the threat of 31  $\mathbb{Q}xg8$   $\mathbb{Q}xg8$  32  $\mathbb{Q}h8$ .

B) 29... $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  30  $\mathbb{Q}xe6+$ . (The suggestion of Ilakha Kadymova is also strong: 30  $exd6!+\mathbb{Q}xd6$ , but then she continued 31  $\mathbb{Q}xc8+\mathbb{Q}xc8$  32  $\mathbb{Q}f4!$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  33  $\mathbb{Q}c5+$ , which is unconvincing: 33... $\mathbb{Q}b8$  34  $\mathbb{Q}f8+\mathbb{Q}c8$  35  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$ . Meanwhile, 31  $\mathbb{Q}f5!!$  wins immediately.) 30... $fxe6$  31  $exd6+$ . (There is also another way: 31  $\mathbb{Q}b6+\mathbb{Q}c6$  32  $\mathbb{Q}xc8+\mathbb{Q}xc8$  33  $\mathbb{Q}c7+\mathbb{Q}b5$  34  $exd6$  (34 b3; 34  $\mathbb{Q}e3).) 31... $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  32  $\mathbb{Q}b6+\mathbb{Q}b8$  33  $\mathbb{Q}xd6+\mathbb{Q}c7$  (33... $\mathbb{Q}a8$  34  $\mathbb{Q}c5!$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  35  $\mathbb{Q}f4+)$  34  $\mathbb{Q}xc8+\mathbb{Q}xc8$  35  $\mathbb{Q}a7+$  and wins.$

C) 29... $dxe5$  30  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  31  $\mathbb{Q}b6+\mathbb{Q}xb6$  32  $\mathbb{Q}d7+\mathbb{Q}c6$  (32... $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  33  $\mathbb{Q}xb6$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  34  $\mathbb{Q}a7+)$  33  $\mathbb{Q}a5+\mathbb{Q}xa5$  34  $\mathbb{Q}xb7+\mathbb{Q}c5$  35  $\mathbb{Q}xg8$   $\mathbb{Q}xg8$  36  $\mathbb{Q}c7+$ . Many pupils of our school found another, perhaps even more spectacular way of attacking: 30  $\mathbb{Q}xe6+!?$   $fxe6$  31  $\mathbb{Q}b6+\mathbb{Q}c6$  32  $\mathbb{Q}d7!$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  (32... $\mathbb{Q}b5$  33 b3) 33  $\mathbb{Q}xb7+\mathbb{Q}d6$  34  $\mathbb{Q}xc8$   $\mathbb{Q}xc8$  35  $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ .

**30 exd6+**

$\mathbb{Q}xd6$

**31 gxh8 $\mathbb{Q}$**

The obvious move, but not the only one. We will return later to this position.

**31 . . .**

$\mathbb{Q}xh8$



32 ♜xe6+

fxe6

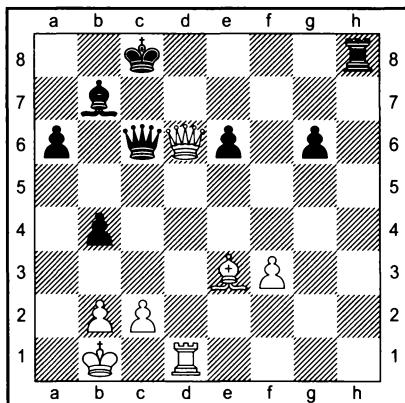
33 ♛b6+

♚c8

34 ♛xd6

♚c6

The only defence against the numerous threats. Bad was 34...♝d5 35 ♜f4 ♚b7 36 ♜c7+ ♚a8 37 ♜e3 ♜b7 38 ♜d8+.



Nothing is given by 35 ♜d4 ♜e8 36 ♜f4 (with the threat of 37 ♜e5) in view of 36...♜d5. Therefore 35 ♜xb4 suggests itself, but after 35...♜d8! 36 ♜xd8+ ♜xd8 Black successfully defends, for example: 37 ♜g5+ ♚c7 38 ♜a5+ ♚b8 39 ♜d8+ ♚c8, or 37 ♜f8+ ♜e8! (weaker is 37...♚c7 38 ♜f4+).

In a middlegame with opposite-colour bishops the most important thing, as we know, is the initiative. Even if there are comparatively few pieces left on the board, in the first instance you should think not about winning material, but about creating threats to the enemy king.

35 ♜e5!!

Threatening 36 ♜f4; if 35...♜h5 there follows 36 ♜g5.

35 . . .

♜d8

36 ♜xd8+

♚xd8

37 ♜g5+

♚d7

37...♚c8? 38 ♜h8+, or 37...♚e8? 38 ♜h8+ ♜f7 39 ♜h7+ ♜f8 40 ♜e7+ ♜g8 41 ♜f6.

38 ♜g7+

♚d6

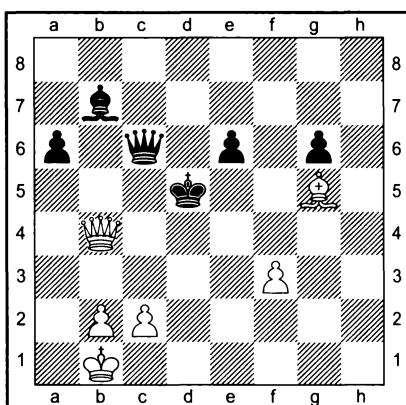
39 ♜f8+

♚d5

39...♚e5 40 ♜f4+ ♚d5 41 ♜xb4 was even worse for Black.

40 ♜xb4

Only now is this an appropriate moment to capture the b4-pawn.



This was the position for which Nunn aimed, when he made his 29th move. He sensed that, despite the material equality, things would be bad for Black. A very deep calculation and a completely correct assessment!

Why is White's advantage so appreciable? The entire blame lies on the awkward position of the black king in the centre of the board, and, as usual, the presence of opposite-colour bishops greatly strengthens the attack. Nunn's pieces are dominant on the dark squares. The enemy bishop is unable to help here in any way, and the queen also is hardly participating in the defence, since it is tied to its own bishop. Thus the king remains alone against White's superior forces.

I should also mention the good position of the f3-pawn (as stipulated by the rules – on a square of the colour of the opponent's bishop) – it secures the e4-point for the queen and takes away this square from the black queen. The queenside pawns are also

ready to join the attack: b2–b3 followed by c2–c4+. White is also threatening the immediate 41 c4+ ♜d4 (41... ♜e5 42 ♜c3+ ♜d6 43 ♜d4+) 42 ♜c3+ ♜c5 43 b4+ ♜b6 44 ♜d4+ with inevitable mate. In the event of 40... ♜e5? he gives mate by 41 ♜f4+ ♜f5(f6) 42 ♜f8. If 40... ♜d7 there is the strong reply 41 ♜f4! with the threat of 42 c4+ ♜c6 43 ♜a4+.

The concluding stage of the game convincingly demonstrates how helpless Black is. We will only examine the main variations – a detailed analysis can be found in the aforementioned book.

**40 ... e5!**

**41 ♜e4+ ♜d6**

41... ♜c5 42 ♜xe5+ ♜d5 43 ♜c7+ ♜c6 44 ♜e7+ ♜b5 45 ♜e3! followed by b2–b3 and c2–c4+.

**42 ♜xg6+ ♜d5?!**

42... ♜c5 43 ♜e3+ ♜d5 was a much tougher defence, but even then after 44 ♜f7+ ♜d6 45 c4! ♜d7 (45... ♜c7? 46 c5+ ♜c6 47 ♜e6+ ♜b5 48 c6!) 46 ♜f8+ ♜e6 47 ♜h6+ ♜f7 48 ♜h7+ White would have retained a powerful attack.

**43 ♜f7+ ♜d4**

**44 ♜b3! e4**

The only defence against mate by the bishop from e3.

**45 ♜e3+ ♜e5**

**46 f4+**

Apart from a continuing attack, White has also acquired a new ‘trump’ – a passed f-pawn.

**46 ... ♜f6**

**47 ♜g8 ♜d5**

**48 ♜d4+! ♜e7**

**49 ♜g7+ ♜d6**

**50 b3! ♜c6**

**51 ♜e5**

Threatening not only a terrible check at c7, but also 52 f5. If Black advances his pawn:

51... ♜b6 52 f5 e3, then after 53 ♜d4+ ♜c6 54 ♜g6+ ♜d6 55 ♜e8 it will be lost.

**51 ... ♜d7**

**52 ♜h6+ ♜d5**

**53 ♜b6! ♜c6**

**54 ♜d8+ ♜e6**

**55 ♜f6+ ♜d7**

**56 ♜g7+ ♜e6**

56... ♜c8 57 f5 e3 58 f6 e2 59 ♜g4+.

**57 ♜g4+ ♜f7**

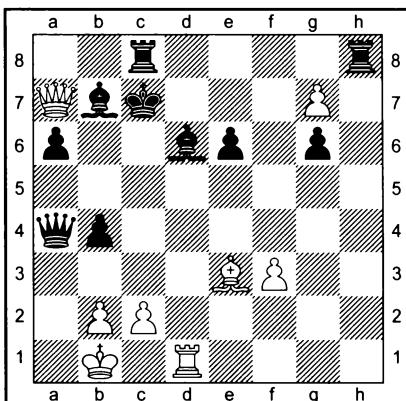
**58 f5 ♜h6**

**59 f6**

Black resigned.

According to the comments in the book, transposing into a position with opposite-colour bishops was the only correct solution for White. However, in their analysis only two of our pupils opted for this course (and on the 35th move, alas, they only considered 35 ♜xb4? instead of 35 ♜e5!!). All the rest tried to exploit immediately the unfortunate position of the black king and the power of the g7-pawn. To my surprise they succeeded, and, what's more, in various ways.

Let us return to the position arising after 29 e5 ♜xh8 30 exd6+ ♜xd6. Apart from the move in the game, Nunn also examines 31 ♜xe6+ fxe6.



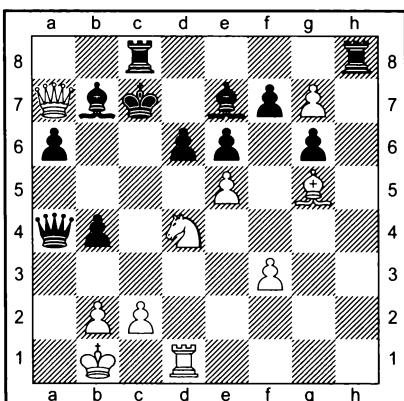


The variation he gives is 32  $\mathbb{W}b6+$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  33  $\mathbb{W}xd6+$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$ , and White has no time to capture on h8, since his c2-pawn is attacked.

Kiryakov and Baklan found the excellent quiet move 32  $\mathbb{W}d4!!$ . If 32... $\mathbb{Q}hd8$  White wins by 33  $g8\mathbb{W}!!$ . If instead 32... $\mathbb{Q}b8$ , then 33  $b3!$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  (33... $\mathbb{W}e8$  34  $\mathbb{W}xd6+$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  35  $gxh8\mathbb{W}$   $\mathbb{W}xh8$  36  $\mathbb{W}b6$ ) 34  $gxh8\mathbb{W}$   $\mathbb{W}xc2+ 35 \mathbb{Q}a1 \mathbb{Q}xh8$  36  $\mathbb{W}xh8+$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  37  $\mathbb{Q}c1$  and wins. However, as Nunn pointed out in the 2nd edition of his book *Secrets of Grandmaster Chess*, Black can put up a tough defence by 32... $\mathbb{Q}d5!$  33  $gxh8\mathbb{W}$   $\mathbb{W}xh8$  34  $\mathbb{W}g7+$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  35  $\mathbb{W}xh8$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  or 34  $\mathbb{W}xh8$  b3.

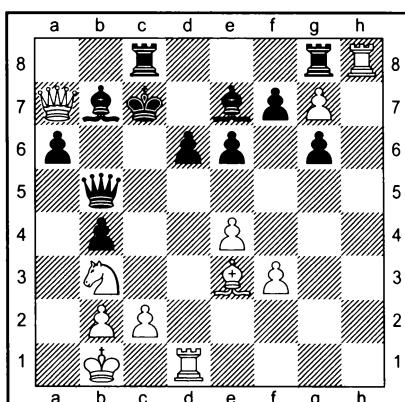
The analysis by Kadymova was less good, unfortunately: 32  $\mathbb{Q}b6+$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  33  $gxh8\mathbb{W}$   $\mathbb{W}xh8$  34  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  35  $\mathbb{W}b6+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$ . She then considered 36  $\mathbb{W}xb7+$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  37  $\mathbb{W}e4$ , but this is unconvincing in view of 37...b3! 38 cxb3  $\mathbb{W}xb3$ , and Black's chances are not worse. 36  $\mathbb{Q}c5!$  wins. However, Black can defend more accurately: 34... $\mathbb{W}b5$  (instead of 34... $\mathbb{Q}c8?$ ) 35  $\mathbb{Q}xh8$   $\mathbb{W}c5$  36  $\mathbb{W}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ , and the most probable outcome is a draw. Another way of making a draw was later suggested by Nunn: 34... $\mathbb{Q}b8!$ ? 35  $\mathbb{W}b6+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  36  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}a2+!$  37  $\mathbb{Q}xa2$   $\mathbb{Q}d5+$  38  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ .

Perhaps the most unexpected and spectacular idea was found by grandmaster Sergey Dolmatov during a training game which began from the original position: 30  $\mathbb{Q}g5!?$ .



After checking the variations we concluded that Black is helpless, for example: 30... $\mathbb{Q}he8$  31  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  32  $exd6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  33  $\mathbb{Q}b5+$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  (33... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  34  $\mathbb{Q}d6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  35  $\mathbb{W}b6+)$  34  $\mathbb{W}d4+$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  35  $\mathbb{Q}d6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  36  $\mathbb{Q}g1+$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  37  $\mathbb{Q}h1+$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  38  $\mathbb{W}h4$  mate. Nunn agreed with our opinion, adding the interesting variation 30... $\mathbb{Q}hg8$  31  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $dxe5$  32  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  (perpetual check results from 32  $\mathbb{Q}xe6+$   $fxe6$  33  $\mathbb{Q}d6+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  34  $\mathbb{Q}c5+)$  32... $\mathbb{W}b5!$  33  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  (33  $\mathbb{Q}d6+$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  34  $\mathbb{W}e3$  is unclear) 33... $\mathbb{Q}a8$  34  $\mathbb{Q}d7+$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  35  $\mathbb{W}xb7+$   $\mathbb{W}xb7$  36  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  37  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  and wins (the refinements in brackets are mine). However, here Black's defence can be improved: 34... $\mathbb{Q}c6!$  (instead of 34... $\mathbb{Q}c8?$ ). Going into an ending by 35  $\mathbb{W}xb7+$  is now unpromising, which means that White is obliged to repeat moves: 35  $\mathbb{Q}d6+$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  36  $\mathbb{Q}d7+$   $\mathbb{Q}c6!$ . So that, alas, the brilliant bishop move to g5 is not good enough to win.

Let us return to the position with which we began. Seryozha Movsesian analysed the consequences of 29  $\mathbb{Q}b3!?$   $\mathbb{W}b5$  (29... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  30  $\mathbb{Q}a5$   $\mathbb{W}b5$  31  $\mathbb{Q}xg8$   $\mathbb{Q}xg8$  32  $\mathbb{Q}d4$ ). Incidentally, in the game the knight had only just been at b3, and the queen at b5 – the last moves were 28  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{W}a4$ .



**30  $\mathbb{Q}xg8$   $\mathbb{Q}xg8$  31  $e5!$  d5**

Black loses quickly after 31... $\mathbb{W}xe5$  32  $\mathbb{Q}b6+$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  33  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  or 31... $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  32  $exd6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  33

$\mathbb{W}d4 \mathbb{W}e5 34 \mathbb{W}b6+$ . If 31...dxe5 Movsesian suggested 32  $\mathbb{Q}b6+!$ ?  $\mathbb{W}xb6$  (32... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  33  $\mathbb{Q}a5$ ; 32... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  33  $\mathbb{Q}a5+$   $\mathbb{W}xa5$  34  $\mathbb{Q}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  35  $\mathbb{Q}d8$  or 35  $\mathbb{Q}d6+)$  33  $\mathbb{Q}d7+$ , but the situation arising after the win of the queen (33... $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  34  $\mathbb{W}xb6$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$ , or 33... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  34  $\mathbb{Q}a5+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  35  $\mathbb{W}xb6$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$ ), is unclear, in Nunn's opinion. White's attack can be strengthened by 32  $\mathbb{Q}c5!$ , for example, 32... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  33  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  34  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{W}xb7$  35  $\mathbb{W}c5+$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  (35... $\mathbb{W}c7$  36  $\mathbb{W}f8+$ ) 36  $\mathbb{Q}d6$ , and this time the black queen is lost without any compensation.

### 32 c4!?

A spectacular breakthrough. However, as Volodya Kramnik rightly pointed out, the simple 32  $\mathbb{Q}h1$  is also sufficient.

### 32...bxc3

Or 32...dxc4 33  $\mathbb{Q}b6+!$   $\mathbb{W}xb6$  (33... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  34  $\mathbb{Q}a5$ ) 34  $\mathbb{Q}d7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  35  $\mathbb{W}xb6$   $cxb3$  36  $\mathbb{W}xb7+$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  37  $\mathbb{W}c6+$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  38  $\mathbb{W}a8+$ , and Black loses his rook.

### 33 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$

No better is 33... $\mathbb{W}xb3$  34  $\mathbb{Q}xc3+$   $\mathbb{W}xc3$  35  $bxc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  36  $\mathbb{Q}c5!$  (but not 36  $\mathbb{W}b6+?$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  37  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  with chances for both sides).

### 34 $\mathbb{Q}d4$

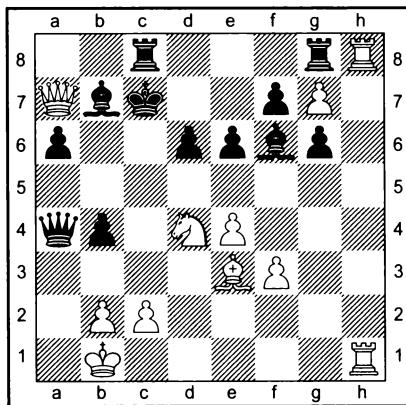
34  $\mathbb{Q}c5?$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  35  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  is a mistake in view of 35... $\mathbb{W}d3+!$ .

34... $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  (34... $\mathbb{W}d3+$  35  $\mathbb{Q}a1$  c2 36  $\mathbb{W}b6+$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  37  $\mathbb{W}xb4)$  35  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  36  $\mathbb{Q}xc3+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  (36... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  37  $\mathbb{W}b8+)$  37  $\mathbb{Q}c5+$ , and Black has no defence.

In conclusion, let us check 29  $\mathbb{Q}dh1$  (with the threat of 30  $\mathbb{Q}xg8$   $\mathbb{Q}xg8$  31  $\mathbb{Q}h8$ ). In Nunn's opinion, it is insufficient because of the reply 29... $\mathbb{Q}f6!$ .

(see diagram)

An interesting way of attacking was later suggested by Artur Yusupov: 30 e5!?  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  (30...dxe5 31  $\mathbb{Q}xe6+!$   $\mathbb{W}xe6$  32  $\mathbb{Q}xg8$   $\mathbb{Q}xg8$  33  $\mathbb{W}b6+$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  34  $\mathbb{W}d6+$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  35  $\mathbb{Q}h8$ ) 31  $\mathbb{Q}1h4!$



– position after 29... $\mathbb{Q}f6!$  –

– the rook wants to break through on c4 (after  $\mathbb{Q}xe6+$  or  $\mathbb{Q}b3$ ). But also available to White is another, perhaps more convincing way.

### 30 $\mathbb{Q}xe6+!$ $\mathbb{W}xe6$ 31 $\mathbb{W}b6+$

Nothing is promised by 31  $\mathbb{Q}xg8$   $\mathbb{Q}xg8$  32  $\mathbb{W}b6+$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  33  $\mathbb{W}xd6$  (without check!) 33... $\mathbb{W}d7$ .

### 31... $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 32 $\mathbb{W}xd6+$ $\mathbb{Q}a8$

Now there is no time for the exchange on g8, since the c2-pawn is attacked.

### 33 $\mathbb{Q}c5!!$

This excellent stroke, found by Vadim Zviagintsev and Maxim Boguslavsky, decides the game in White's favour. If 33... $\mathbb{Q}b8$  there follows 34  $\mathbb{Q}xg8$   $\mathbb{Q}xg8$  35  $\mathbb{Q}h8$   $\mathbb{Q}xh8$  36  $gxh8\mathbb{W}+$   $\mathbb{Q}xh8$  37  $\mathbb{W}d6+$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  38  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  with unavoidable mate.

33... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  34  $\mathbb{Q}xg8+$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  35  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  36  $\mathbb{Q}xc8$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  37  $\mathbb{Q}g8$ , and, as it is not hard to see, White wins.

Thus the position could have been won in various ways, and the path chosen by Nunn was by no means the shortest. But this does not imply that the win is achieved 'as you please' – success was not possible without the discovery of far from obvious combinative subtleties and a very accurate calculation of variations.



Igor Khenkin, Vladimir Kramnik

# Modern Interpretation of the Dutch Defence

## I. Igor Khenkin

We will introduce you to the main ideas of the 'Stonewall' set-up in the Dutch Defence, and also touch briefly on the Leningrad Variation.

I have to admit that the move 1...f5 has always seemed to me to be positionally not altogether correct. When playing against it, I usually avoid the main opening lines, and prepare some rare set-up, which nevertheless has a definite strategic basis. Such a set-up will usually serve me faithfully for a year or two, then my opponents adapt to it, after which it has to be repaired or replaced.

In both of the afore-mentioned variations I aim to develop my king's knight at h3. The f3-square remains free for the other knight, and sometimes it does indeed move there.

Let us make the following initial moves:

- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| <b>1 d4</b>  | <b>f5</b>  |
| <b>2 g3</b>  | <b>♘f6</b> |
| <b>3 ♘g2</b> | <b>g6</b>  |

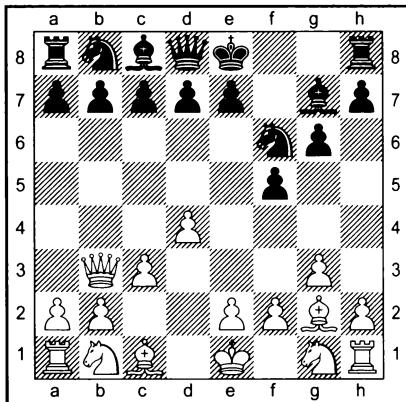
Here for many years I successfully employed an idea of Viktor Gavrikov.

- 4 c3**

White brings out his queen to b3, to prevent castling. A very unusual set-up! Often the black player proves unprepared for it. This is not surprising – he always also has plenty of problems in the main, more popular variations.

- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| <b>4 ...</b> | <b>♗g7</b> |
| <b>5 ♕b3</b> |            |

(see diagram)



Here Black has many possible moves. The most usual are 5...d5 or 5...c6, while in recent times the idea of ...c7–c5 has appeared.

5...d5 allows me clear play on the dark squares. The moves 6 ♜d2, 7 ♜h3 and 8 ♜f3 follow almost automatically. Then the knight goes from h3 to f4 (occasionally it can also be placed on g5) and the pawn to h4, after which White plays either h4–h5, or (if this is prevented) ♜d3 and ♗f4.

[**Kramnik:** All is not so simple – if the knight is developed at h3, the opponent acquires quite a good counter-plan: ...e7–e6, ...♗e4, ...♗c6, ...a7–a5, ...b7–b6 and ...♗a6. I have played this a couple of times with Black and, in my opinion, here White has no advantage. In reply to 5...d5 I am much more concerned about the simple 6 ♜f3.]

A few years ago Sergey Gorelov tried 5...c6 against me. The game developed as follows: 6 ♜d2 ♖b6 7 ♜c4 ♖c7?! 8 ♜h3, and then 9 0-0, when White was evidently better. Later I came to the conclusion that Black should

have exchanged queens by 7... $\mathbb{Q}xb3$  8  $\mathbb{Q}xb3$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$ , with chances of equalising. Nevertheless, I am satisfied with the resulting pattern of play.

In 1990, in a rapid-play tournament in Belgorod, Igor Glek chose 5...c5. In reply I should have captured 6 dxc5!, and after 6... $\mathbb{Q}a6$  played 7  $\mathbb{Q}c4$ . But at first sight it was not clear why I shouldn't capture the b7-pawn. And I captured it, but this did not turn out well.

6  $\mathbb{Q}xb7?$  c4 7  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  (7  $\mathbb{Q}b5?$  was bad: 7..a6 8  $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}xb7$  9  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  with the irresistible threat of 10... $\mathbb{Q}a7$ ) 7... $\mathbb{Q}a6$  8  $\mathbb{Q}xa6$   $\mathbb{Q}xa6$  9  $\mathbb{Q}d2?$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  10  $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  11  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  0-0 12  $\mathbb{Q}gf3$  d6. Despite the extra pawn, my position is worse – the knight on d2 has no prospects, and the light squares are weak. There followed 13 b3  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  14 a4?! (14 bxc4 really was better) 14... $\mathbb{Q}a6$  15 b4  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  16 0-0 e5 with advantage to Black.

Instead of 9  $\mathbb{Q}d2?$  it would have been stronger to play 9  $\mathbb{Q}a3$ , but after 9... $\mathbb{Q}b8$  10  $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  all the same Black has excellent compensation for the sacrificed pawn. It is hard for White to fight without his light-square bishop!

However, in view of the possibility of 6 dxc5, I was still prepared to try and uphold this variation. But soon Stuart Conquest, an international master from England, devised a set-up which would appear to put an end to the plan with c2–c3 and  $\mathbb{Q}b3$ .

### Khenkin–Conquest

Gausdal 1991

5 ...  $\mathbb{Q}a6!$

A logical move – Black prepares ...c7–c5. With the queen on d1 it is pointless – White can even reply b2–b4.

6  $\mathbb{Q}d2$

c5

7 d5

$\mathbb{Q}c7$

8  $\mathbb{Q}h3$

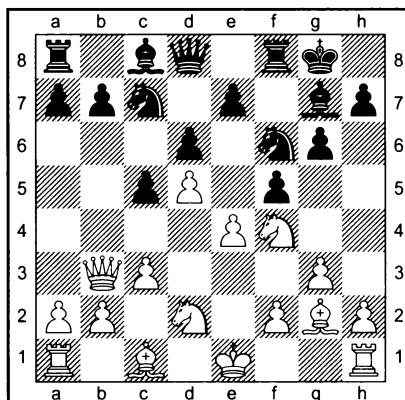
d6

9  $\mathbb{Q}f4$

0-0

### 10 e4

This central break is normal in such positions. It would probably have been better to concern myself with maintaining equality, but I did not yet sense the danger.



10 ...

11 a4

b5

$\mathbb{Q}xa4!$

I had not considered this at all – I had only reckoned with the attempt to win the d5-pawn after 11...c4 and 12...fxe4.

12  $\mathbb{Q}xa4$

$\mathbb{Q}d7$

13  $\mathbb{Q}a3$

I thought for a long time about where to retreat the rook to, but even so I did not guess right. It would have been better to place it on a2, so that subsequently the b2-pawn should be defended.

13 ...

a5

14 c4

$\mathbb{Q}a6$

Black's position is clearly better, and he went on to win the game.

The set-up with ... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ , ...c7–c5, ...d7–d6 and ... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  seems to be an excellent antidote to the plan of c2–c3 and  $\mathbb{Q}b3$ . This plan cannot be employed until an improvement is devised for White.

I had to change my opening weapon. I have to admit that, when playing against the Leningrad Variation, I don't like placing my

pawn on c4, and so I again tried to manage without this move.

**1 d4 f5 2 g3 ♘f6 3 ♘g2 g6**

**4 ♘h3**

My favourite knight manoeuvre!

**4 ... ♘g7**

For some reason Black very rarely plays **4...d6** here, after which White should probably reply **5 ♘c3!?**. The endgame after **5...e5 6 dx5 dx5 7 ♜xd8+ ♕xd8 8 e4** is clearly in White's favour. **5...c6 6 d5!?** **♗g7 7 ♘f4** leads to roughly the same situation as after **4...♗g7**. The move **5...d5** is of independent significance. White's plan of action in this case is simple: **6 0-0, then ♗g5, ♘f4, e2–e3, ♘ce2 and ♘d3**. I cannot guarantee an advantage, but this kind of position appeals to me.

Incidentally, this move – **5 ♘c3** – was played in the game **Korchnoi–M.Gurevich** (Rotterdam 1990), in which White scored a fine win. Here are the opening moves: **5...♗g7 6 ♘f4 c6 7 d5! e5! 8 dx6 d5!** (if **8...♝e7**, then **9 e4!** is very strong) **9 h4! ♜e7 10 h5 g5 11 h6 ♜f8 12 ♘h5!?** **♝g8 13 ♘xf6+ ♜xf6 14 ♜xd5!?** **♝e6?** (Black should have accepted the challenge) **15 ♜xe6 ♜xe6 16 e4! ♘xh6 17 ♜f3! fxe4 18 ♜xe4 ♜g6 19 ♘e3 ♘d7 20 0-0-0**, with an appreciable advantage for White.

**5 ♘f4**

**d6**

After **5...0-0** there is the unpleasant reply **6 h4**. The game **Savchenko–Malanyuk** (Kherson 1989) continued **6...d6 7 c3!?** **c6 8 ♜b3+ d5** (**8...♝h8 9 h5**) **9 h5 g5 10 h6** with the initiative for White.

**6 d5**

It is also possible to transpose moves: **6 ♘c3** followed by **d4–d5**.

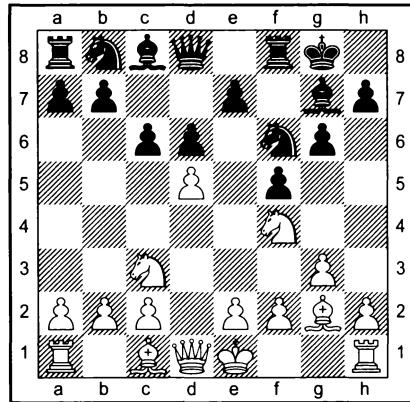
**6 ...**

**c6**

**7 ♘c3**

**0-0**

If **7...cx5** the correct capture is **8 ♜fxd5!?**, in view of the variation **8...e6 9 ♘xf6+ ♜xf6 9 e4!**.



This position was reached in the game **Khenkin–Wilson** (Gausdal 1992). The theoretical continuation here is **8 e4**. But I had not prepared for the game (in Swiss tournaments you find out only at the last minute who you are playing against). My opponent's rating was fairly modest (around 2300), and I decided that it was not essential to create tension immediately – it would do no harm to first consolidate the knight's position with **h2–h4**. But this once again confirmed how dangerous it is to underestimate your opponent – he manoeuvred very confidently.

**8 h4!?**

Threatening **h4–h5–h6**.

**8 ...**

**♝g4!**

An excellent response! If **9 h5** Black replies **9...♜b6!**, and only after **10 e3** or **10 0-0 – 10...g5**.

**9 0-0**

**♝e5**

**10 e4**

**♞a6**

**11 exf5**

It is unfavourable to continue **11 h5 g5 12 ♜e6 ♜xe6 13 dx6 g4** (or **13...f4!?**).

**11 ...**

**♞xf5**

**12 h5**

I felt quite optimistic about this position, expecting only **12...g5 13 ♘e6 ♜xe6 14 dx6 h6 15 ♜e2 d5 16 f4**, or **12...♝b4 13 hxg6 hxg5 14 ♘e4**.

12...  $\mathbb{Q}c7!$

The knight is excellently placed here – it is attacking d5 and defending the only weakness in Black's position – the e6-square. Black's position is probably already more promising.

13  $h \times g6$   $h \times g6$

14  $\mathbb{Q}e4?$

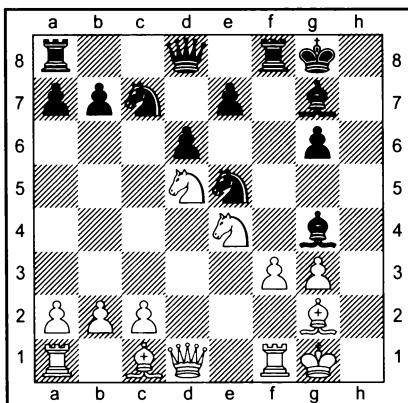
A continuation of the same optimistic tactics – the knight aims for g5. It would have been better to 'stand still' – 14  $\mathbb{W}e2$  or 14  $\mathbb{Q}e1$ .

14...  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

15  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$

16 f3

Of course, I didn't want to play 16  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f3+$ , but the move in the game is no better. Now Black was faced with solving a fairly simple little problem in the calculation of variations.



With what should he take on f3? The most natural captures lose, for example: 16... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ ? 17  $\mathbb{Q}xf3!$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$  18  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  19  $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ , or 16... $\mathbb{Q}xf3+?$  17  $\mathbb{Q}xf3!$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  18  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  19  $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ . Correct was 16... $\mathbb{Q}xf3!!$  (I saw this possibility only after the game). The cunning point is that all the subsequent captures on f3 are made with gain of tempo – with check or with an attack on the white queen. For example, 17  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  (or 17... $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$  18  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ ):

a) 18  $\mathbb{W}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}e2$ .

b) 18  $\mathbb{Q}xe7+$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  19  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$  20  $\mathbb{W}xf3$  d5!.

c) [The most tenacious is 18  $\mathbb{Q}ef6+!$   $exf6$  19  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$  20  $\mathbb{W}xf3$  f5 21  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  – Dvoretsky.]

d) 18  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$ . In the event of 19  $\mathbb{Q}g2$  Black can simply retreat his knight: 19... $\mathbb{Q}d4$  20  $\mathbb{Q}xc7$   $\mathbb{W}xc7$  21 c3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  22  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$ . But it is probably even stronger to give a cunning check: 19... $\mathbb{Q}e1+!$  20  $\mathbb{W}xe1$  (21  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc2!$  22  $\mathbb{Q}xc7$   $\mathbb{W}xc7$  23  $\mathbb{Q}d5+$  e6! 24  $\mathbb{W}xe6+$   $\mathbb{W}f7+)$  20... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ , and Black is a sound pawn to the good. 19  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  20  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{W}b6+$  21  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  is no better for White.

16...  $\mathbb{Q}xf3+?$

Fortunately, my opponent did not see what was bad about this move, and so he did not consider the capture with the rook. Incidentally, when playing in Swiss tournaments I have noticed that less skilled players usually go wrong in a tense tactical battle. At decisive moments I have often succeeded in out-calculating them.

17  $\mathbb{Q}xf3!$

Here everything became clear to my opponent, but it was no longer possible to change course.

17...  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$

18  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$

19  $\mathbb{Q}g5$

The two minor pieces are much stronger than the rook and pawn, especially since the black king comes under attack.

19...  $\mathbb{Q}xb2$

This loses by force.

20  $\mathbb{Q}xc7$   $\mathbb{Q}xa1$

21  $\mathbb{Q}d5+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$

22  $\mathbb{Q}g2!$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$

23  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc7$

24  $\mathbb{Q}h1+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$

25  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  mate

Everything turned out well, although it could have been the other way round.



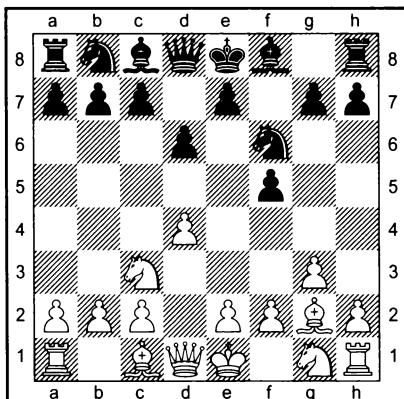
For the moment this variation suits me for White, although, of course, the next time I won't play 8 h4?!, but the right move 8 e4!. In the opening you should fight in the centre, and not on the wing.

After 1 d4 f5 2 g3 ♜f6 3 ♜g2 Black sometimes changes his move order in the opening and plays 3...d6. Now it is ridiculous to place the knight on h3 because of the reply 4...e5. Of course, one can simply play 4 ♜f3, transposing into the main lines of the Dutch Defence. But I don't like developing my knight on f3 and, when I encountered this problem a couple of years ago, at the board I devised a new plan.

### Khenkin–Vasyukov

Voskresensk 1990

4 ♜c3!?



If now 4...e5, then 5 dx5 dx5 6 ♜xd8+ ♜xd8 7 e4 with the better endgame for White. The reply 4...d5!? deserves serious consideration. White continues 5 ♜f3 and 6 0-0. This leads to a rather unusual, complicated position, with chances for both sides.

4 ...

c6

5 e4

fxe4

6 ♜xe4

qxе4

7 ♜xe4

qf5

8 ♜f3

8 ♜xf5 ♜a5+.

8 ...

qxе4

9 ♜xe4

qa5+

10 c3

qd5

Here Black offered a draw. Evgeny Vasyukov is an active player and it was apparently tedious for him to play without the queens. But in the endgame I am not in any danger – at best Black can hope for equality.

11 ♜xd5

cx d5

12 ♜h3

12 ♜e2 is equally good. White then castled, placed his rook on e1 and his knight on f4, and retained a slight but stable initiative. After a lengthy struggle I managed to win.

I like the situation arising after 4 ♜c3!?, and I am ready to play it again. In recent times I have come to realise that it is not so important whether you gain an opening advantage with White – this is problematic in any opening. The main thing is to obtain 'your' position, in which you feel more confident than your opponent.

It is now time to turn to the main topic of our lecture – the 'Stonewall'.

1 d4

f5

2 g3

qf6

3 ♜g2

e6

4 c4

White has also tried immediately developing his knight at h3 with his pawn still on c2. But I think that after 4 ♜h3 the reply 4...c5!? is unpleasant (quite logical: as soon as the knight has moved onto the rim, Black attacks the centre).

4 ...

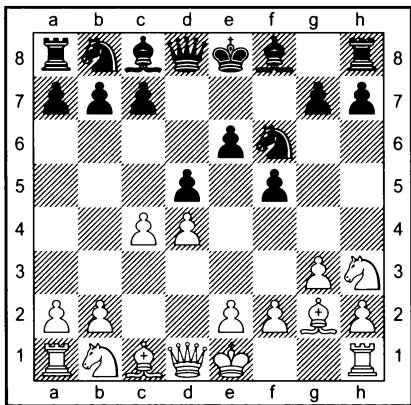
d5

For some reason this is the reply I have faced, although it is considered more accurate to begin the construction of the 'stone-wall' with 4...c6!?, waiting to see where the g1-knight goes. After 5 ♜h3 Black places his

pawn not on d5, but on d6, preparing ...e6–e5. For White I can recommend that you check 5 d5!?, which, I think, as yet no one has played.

Of course, I must also mention the Ilyin-Genevsky Variation (4... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ , 5...0-0 and 6...d6). 4... $\mathbb{Q}b4+$  has also been employed, with the idea after 5  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  of retreating 5... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  – the bishop on d2 is not too well placed. 5  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  is stronger, when it is not clear what the black bishop is doing on b4.

**5  $\mathbb{Q}h3!$**



For Black this plan is the most dangerous. When I made my first grandmaster norm, I scored a very important win in this variation against Vladimir Tukmakov.

### Khenkin – Tukmakov

Metz 1991

**5 ...  $\mathbb{Q}e7$**

5... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  6 0-0 c6 has also been played. If 7  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  Black should reply 7... $\mathbb{Q}e7!$ . In the game **Bareev-Vaisser** (Pula 1988) after 8  $\mathbb{W}b3$  0-0 9  $\mathbb{Q}a3$  (if 9  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  there is the unpleasant reply 9... $\mathbb{W}b6$ ) 9...h6!? 10  $\mathbb{Q}ad1$  g5 11  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  a5! 12 f3 b5! Black seized the initiative. But later **Kozul** improved White's play against **Bareev** (Biel 1991): 8  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  0-0 9

$\mathbb{Q}c2$  h6 (after 9... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  10 cxd5 Black does not have 10...exd5, the essential capture in

such cases – his f5-pawn is 'hanging') 10  $\mathbb{Q}xb8!$   $\mathbb{Q}xb8$  11  $\mathbb{Q}f4$ . White's chances are better – he places his knights on d3 and f3, and then he begins an attack on the queenside, by advancing his b-pawn.

7 b3  $\mathbb{W}e7$  8  $\mathbb{Q}b2$  0-0 9  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  is another promising set-up. Then the d2-knight goes to e5, and the other knight is quite well placed on h3, controlling the f4-point. (If it had come out in the opening to f3, to obtain a similar construction White would have had to spend a couple more tempi:  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ –e5–d3 and  $\mathbb{Q}d2$ –f3–e5). One of the possible subsequent plans is  $\mathbb{W}c2$ ,  $\mathbb{Q}ad1$ ,  $\mathbb{Q}f4$ , f2-f3 and e2-e4.

**6 0-0**

**0-0**

**7 b3**

7  $\mathbb{W}c2$  is also possible, but I prefer first to develop my bishop – who knows, perhaps the queen will also come in useful on d1.

**7 ...**

**c6**

Grandmaster Nigel Short, who constantly employs the Dutch Defence with Black, plays 7... $\mathbb{Q}c6!$ ? and then ...a7–a5 in such positions. The knight presses on d4, thereby preventing the exchange of the dark-square bishops (8  $\mathbb{Q}a3?$   $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  9  $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  dxc4). After 8  $\mathbb{Q}b2$  a5 White is obliged to make the not very useful move 9 e3 – otherwise he cannot develop his queen's knight. However, even in this case I prefer White's position.

**8  $\mathbb{Q}b2$**

The exchange of bishops does not bring White any particular benefits – after 8  $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  9  $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  the black queen obtains a comfortable post at e7, whereas the knight at a3 is badly placed, and it faces a lengthy journey via c2 and e1 to d3 or f3. If the king's knight were at f3, controlling the e5-point, such a plan would make sense, but here, while the queen's knight is on its way, Black will surely have time to play ...d5xc4 and ...e6–e5.

**8 ...**

**$\mathbb{Q}e4$**

Black has problems with the development of

his queen's knight: 8... $\mathbb{Q}bd7?$  9  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  is bad for him. For the same reason – the weakness of the e6-point – the normal (with the knight on f3) plan of ...b7–b6 and ... $\mathbb{Q}b7$  does not work.

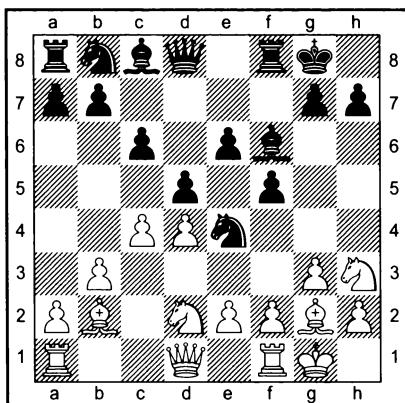
Tukmakov plans ... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  and ...c6–c5, not fearing 9 f3?!  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  (or 9... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ ). I was able to find a strategic refutation of his idea. With his other knight on c6, ... $\mathbb{Q}e4$  would have been more justified – Black would have retained pressure on the opponent's centre.

Theory mainly deals with 8... $\mathbb{W}e8$ . It is recommended that 8...b5 should also be considered. But I am sure that Black's problems cannot be solved in this way – White can simply reply 9  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  or 9 c5.

**[Kramnik** In the 'stonewall' the ...b7–b5 advance has always seemed dubious to me – a whole complex of squares is immediately weakened, and Black does not gain any real counterplay.]

9  $\mathbb{Q}d2$

$\mathbb{Q}f6$



10  $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$

I exchange the opponent's only active piece, and then open lines in the centre by f2–f3, to exploit my lead in development. It is important that the pawn is still at e2 – after the exchange on f3 White will recapture with this pawn.

10 ...

dxe4

11  $\mathbb{W}c2$

For the moment 11 f3 is premature in view of 11...exf3 12 exf3 c5!.

11 ...

$\mathbb{W}e7?$ !

The threat was 12  $\mathbb{Q}ad1$  and 13 f3. 11... $\mathbb{W}c7$  12 f3 exf3 13 exf3 e5! was more tenacious, but after 14 dxe5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  15  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{W}xe5$  16  $\mathbb{Q}fe1$  White has an obvious advantage. It is very difficult to find a good post for the c8-bishop.

12 f3

c5

12...exf3 13 exf3 c5 14 d5! exd5 15 cxd5.

13 fxe4!

Here 13 d5 is no longer so good in view of the reply 13...e3!.

13 ...

$\mathbb{Q}xd4+$

14  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$

cx d4

15 exf5

exf5

16  $\mathbb{Q}f4$

$\mathbb{Q}c6$

17  $\mathbb{Q}ad1$

$\mathbb{Q}d7$

Now White has to find an energetic plan. He only needs to delay slightly, by allowing his opponent time to play ... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ , ... $\mathbb{Q}ad8$  and ... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ , and his entire advantage will evaporate. After all, my position has its weaknesses on the e-file. Of course, I need to play e2–e3.

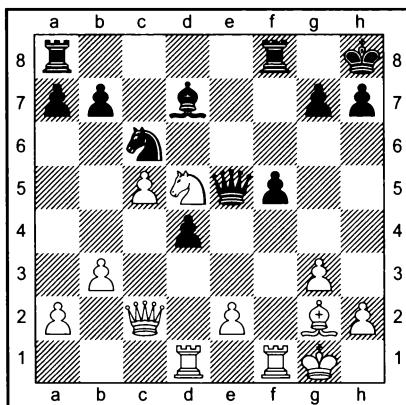
18 c5!

$\mathbb{Q}h8$

18... $\mathbb{Q}ad8$  19 b4!.

19  $\mathbb{Q}d5$

$\mathbb{W}e5$



**20 e3!****dxe3**

I also had to reckon with 20... $\mathbb{A}e6$ . After this I was intending 21  $\mathbb{E}fe1!! \mathbb{A}xd5$  22 exd4  $\mathbb{W}f6$  (22... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  does not help: 23  $\mathbb{E}xe5 \mathbb{Q}xc2$  24  $\mathbb{E}xd5!$  f4 25 gxf4  $\mathbb{E}xf4$  26  $\mathbb{E}d7)$  23  $\mathbb{A}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  24  $\mathbb{W}f2!$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  25  $\mathbb{E}e6$  with a winning position.

**21  $\mathbb{E}fe1$** **f4?!**

Tukmakov is an active player, and he tries to avoid going totally onto the defensive. However, after 21... $\mathbb{A}e8$  22  $\mathbb{E}xe3$   $\mathbb{W}b8$  23  $\mathbb{E}de1$   $\mathbb{E}xe3$  24  $\mathbb{E}xe3$  Black's position would also have remained difficult – his bishop on d7 has no future, and the threatened pawn advance b3–b4–b5 is extremely unpleasant. The ending arising after 24... $\mathbb{E}e8$  25  $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{E}xe3$  26  $\mathbb{W}xe3$   $\mathbb{W}e5$  27  $\mathbb{W}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  28  $\mathbb{Q}e7!$  is obviously in White's favour.

**22 gxf4** **$\mathbb{W}h5$** **23  $\mathbb{E}xe3$**  **$\mathbb{W}ad8$** **24  $\mathbb{E}de1!$**  **$\mathbb{A}g4$** **25  $\mathbb{W}c4$** 

Black would have compensation for the pawn if he were able to drive the knight from d5, but it is not possible to achieve this. Initially I wanted to exchange something, to simplify the position, but then I realised that this was incorrect strategy. The active placing of the white pieces should be exploited for an attack.

**25 ...** **$\mathbb{W}f5$** **26 b4** **$\mathbb{A}h5$** **27 b5** **$\mathbb{Q}a5$** 

No better was 27... $\mathbb{A}f7$  28 bxc6  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  29  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{E}xd5$  30 cxb7  $\mathbb{E}xc5$  31  $\mathbb{W}b4$   $\mathbb{B}b5$  32  $\mathbb{W}xf8+!$   $\mathbb{W}xf8$  33  $\mathbb{E}e8$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  34  $\mathbb{E}1e7!$ , or 28...bxc6 29  $\mathbb{Q}e7!$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  30  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{E}xf5$  31  $\mathbb{E}e8+$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  32  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xa2$  33  $\mathbb{E}xf8+$   $\mathbb{E}xf8$  34  $\mathbb{Q}d7$ .

**28  $\mathbb{W}c3$** 

It was possible to support the knight with 28  $\mathbb{W}d4$  followed by  $\mathbb{E}e5$ , but I decided to force matters.

**28 ...** **$\mathbb{E}xd5$** **29  $\mathbb{A}xd5$**  **$\mathbb{W}xd5$** **30  $\mathbb{W}xa5$**  **$\mathbb{W}xc5$** **31  $\mathbb{W}c3!$**  **$\mathbb{W}xb5$** **32  $\mathbb{W}e5!$** **a6****33  $\mathbb{E}b3!$** 

White forces the most favourable version of the exchange.

**33 ...** **$\mathbb{W}xe5$** **34 fxe5** **$\mathbb{F}7$** **35  $\mathbb{E}eb1!$**  **$\mathbb{E}e7$** **36  $\mathbb{E}xb7$**  **$\mathbb{W}xe5$** **37  $\mathbb{E}b8+$**  **$\mathbb{A}e8$** **38  $\mathbb{E}a8$**  **$\mathbb{G}g8$** **39  $\mathbb{E}bb8$**  **$\mathbb{F}f7$** **40  $\mathbb{E}b7+!$**  **$\mathbb{W}f6$** **41  $\mathbb{E}xa6+$**  **$\mathbb{A}f5$** **42  $\mathbb{E}xg7$**  **$\mathbb{A}g6$** **43  $\mathbb{W}f2$**  **$\mathbb{G}g4$** **44  $\mathbb{E}a3$**  **$\mathbb{E}f5+$** **45  $\mathbb{W}e2$**  **$\mathbb{E}h5$** **46 h3+!**

Black resigned.

## II. Vladimir Kramnik

I will show you the main branches of the 'stonewall' system with the white knight on f3. First I will express my views on this opening set-up, and then I will give a theoretical review and show you a few games.

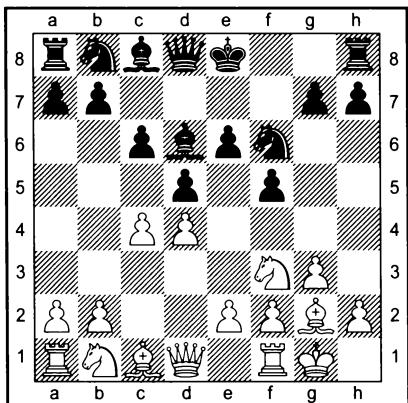
The 'stonewall' is one of the few opening systems in which Black immediately gains some advantage in space. But, of course, there is a price to pay for this – the weakening of the dark squares in his position. However, it is not easy for White to exploit the e5-point – things often end in a simple exchange of pieces on this square.



The central idea of Black's strategy is the restriction of the g2-bishop. In my view, here it is no stronger at all than the bishop on c8. I have played this opening for both sides and as a result I have become aware that it is even simpler to play for Black than for White. At any event, it is usually more difficult for White to choose a plan. His actions must often vary depending on the opponent's plans, i.e. he has to adapt flexibly to Black's play, which is never easy. I like to employ the 'stonewall' as Black against a player with an attacking, combinative style, because here White will not give mate, and the strategic problems sometimes prove too difficult for such players.

In one order or another let us make the initial moves:

- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| <b>1 d4</b>  | <b>f5</b>  |
| <b>2 c4</b>  | <b>¤f6</b> |
| <b>3 ¤f3</b> | <b>e6</b>  |
| <b>4 g3</b>  | <b>d5</b>  |
| <b>5 ¤g2</b> | <b>c6</b>  |
| <b>6 0-0</b> | <b>¤d6</b> |



After Black castles, he has to choose one of two ways of developing his queen's bishop. Sometimes he directs it via d7 to e8, vacating the d7-square for the knight. Later the bishop can be taken further, to h5, after

which it can be exchanged, or ...c6–c5 prepared.

But Black more often plays ...b7–b6, ...¤b7 and ...¤bd7, developing his queenside as in the Queen's Indian Defence or the Catalan Opening. The main difference with these openings is the position of the pawn on f5. White's thematic e2–e4 advance is now greatly hindered (if White prepares it with f2–f3, Black immediately counters with ...c6–c5). On the other hand, after Black carries out his basic plan – completes his development, places his rooks on c8 and d8, and advances ...c6–c5 – pawn exchanges occur in the centre and the weakness of the e5-square may become perceptible.

White usually chooses one of two continuations: 7.¤f4 or 7.b3. 7.¤bd2 (or 7.¤c2) has no independent significance – all the same he cannot manage without b2–b3. The move 7.¤c3 is not very dangerous for Black, and in general it seems to me that the knight is not best placed at c3 – all the time White has to reckon with ...d5xc4. However, this is sometimes played with the idea of developing the bishop at g5 on the next move. 7.¤e5 also occasionally occurs.

I think that the development of the bishop at f4 is more logical. With it on b2, both white bishops lack prospects: one is obstructed by its own pawn on d4, and the other by the enemy pawn on d5. Incidentally, I agree with Khenkin: it is more difficult for Black to defend if the opponent's king's knight is developed not at f3, but at h3.

### Plan with b2–b3

- 7 b3**



If 7...0-0 there follows 8.¤a3, and White's position is better – he gains control of the e5-square. There is no point in allowing the exchange which is advantageous to White.

- 8.¤b2**

8.¤bd2 is also played.

First let's analyse the plan with ... $\mathbb{Q}c8-d7-e8$ .

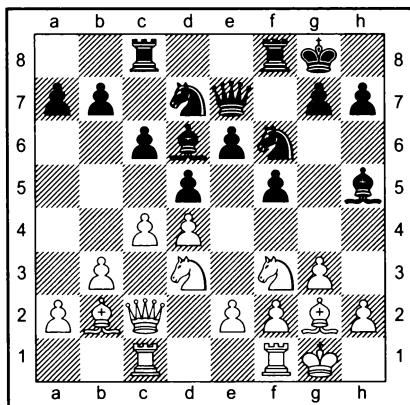
- |                    |                |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 8 ...              | $\mathbb{Q}c8$ |
| 9 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$  | $\mathbb{Q}d7$ |
| 10 $\mathbb{Q}e5$  | $\mathbb{Q}e8$ |
| 11 $\mathbb{Q}df3$ |                |

White's moves are natural, but if you ask what does he want, what is his plan, it is not easy to obtain a sensible reply. Most probably he has to adapt to the actions of his opponent.

- |                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| 11 ...            | $\mathbb{Q}h5$  |
| 12 $\mathbb{Q}c2$ | $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ |
| 13 $\mathbb{Q}d3$ | $\mathbb{Q}ac8$ |

Black prepares ...c6–c5.

- 14  $\mathbb{Q}act1$



The game **Schmidt–Haba** (Prague 1989) developed as follows: 14... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ ?! 15  $\mathbb{Q}fe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ ?! 16 dx5  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  17 f3  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  18 h4  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  19  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  20 h5, and the battle was decided. A curious example, but it vividly demonstrates how ruinous superficial decisions can be (such as 14... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ ?!).

14...c5! is correct, with good chances of equalising, although accuracy is still required – after all, White can maintain the tension in the centre by playing, say, 15  $\mathbb{Q}b1$ !?

In principle, this entire plan does not really appeal to me. Of course, at h5 the bishop is better placed than at c8, but even so it is

hardly doing anything here. Imagine that Black has not managed to exchange it: the knight has gone from f3 to e5, and the e2-pawn has moved to e3. When Black advances ...c6–c5, the g2-bishop immediately begins operating on the long diagonal, and there is nothing to oppose it.

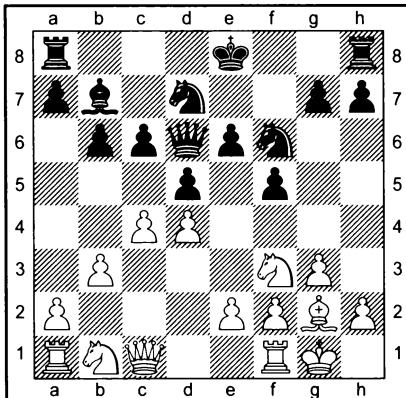
- |       |                |
|-------|----------------|
| 8 ... | $\mathbb{Q}b6$ |
|-------|----------------|

This move is probably more accurate than 8...0-0.

- 9  $\mathbb{Q}c1$

White insists on the idea of exchanging bishops. A completely harmless undertaking! It simply wastes too many tempi. Once I myself played this, but I immediately ended up in a somewhat inferior position.

- |                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 9 ...              | $\mathbb{Q}b7$  |
| 10 $\mathbb{Q}a3$  | $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ |
| 11 $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ | $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ |



- 12  $\mathbb{Q}a3$ ?

12 e3 may still maintain the balance, but in several games White went in for the exchange of queens. For example: **Albert–Short** (Subbotica 1987) and **Goldin–Dolmatov** (Klaipeda 1988).

- |                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 12 ...             | $\mathbb{Q}xa3$ |
| 13 $\mathbb{Q}xa3$ | $\mathbb{Q}e7$  |

In my view, Black's position is preferable. His king is closer to the centre and he is ready to play ...c6–c5.

Incidentally, after 8...0-0 (instead of 8...b6) 9  $\mathbb{W}c1$  b6 (9...b5!?) 10  $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  11  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  12  $\mathbb{W}a3$  Black can play the same endgame, although without his king on e7 – here there is nothing terrible for him. But he is not obliged to go into the endgame – 12...c5 is not bad.

If White really wants to exchange the dark-square bishops on a3, he should do this by 8 a4 and 9  $\mathbb{Q}a3$ .

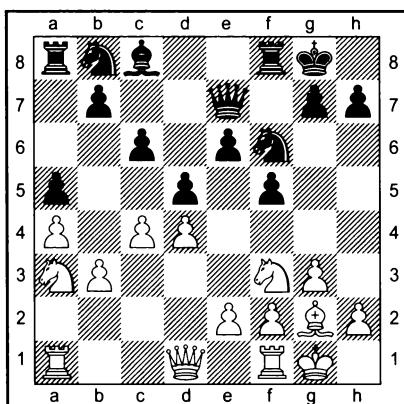
8 a4

a5

8...0-0 9  $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  10  $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  a5 is equally good, but not 11 a5! with the better chances for White, as in the game **Kasparov–Short** (London 1987).

9  $\mathbb{Q}a3$  $\mathbb{Q}xa3$ 10  $\mathbb{Q}xa3$ 

0-0



Here are a few examples showing how this position is handled:

11  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  b6 12  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  13  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  14  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}exd5$

I think that 14... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  is also good enough to maintain the balance, but when a2–a4 and ...a7–a5 have already been played, Black usually captures ...e6xd5. He then plays his knight to b4 and advances ...c6–c5.

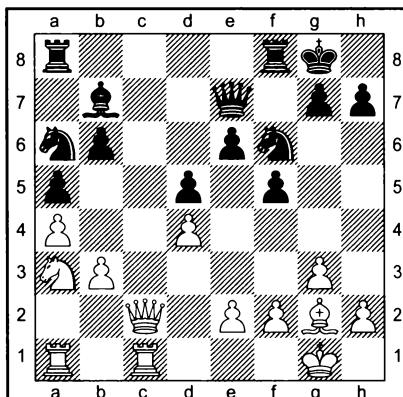
15  $\mathbb{Q}1d3$  c5 16 e3  $\mathbb{Q}ac8$  17  $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$

Black is excellent placed; his next moves will be ... $\mathbb{Q}b4$  and ... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ .

**Akopian–Ulybin** (Mamaia 1991): 11  $\mathbb{Q}e5$

b6 12  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  13  $\mathbb{Q}fc1$  (threatening 14 c5)  
13... $\mathbb{Q}a6$  14  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

Forced: 14... $\mathbb{Q}exd5$  is now impossible, while if 14... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ , then 15 d6!  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  16  $\mathbb{Q}b2$  followed by  $\mathbb{Q}ac4$  is strong.



The resulting situation seems harmless, but in analysis I have not in fact found a clear-cut way to equalise. White has nothing special here, of course, but nevertheless Black faces a lengthy and tedious defence in a slightly inferior position. I will give a few more moves: 15  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}fc8$  16  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  17 h3  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  18  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}dxe4$  19  $\mathbb{Q}xc8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xc8$  20  $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc1+$  21  $\mathbb{Q}xc1$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  22 e3 g5?! 23  $\mathbb{Q}d1!$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  24  $\mathbb{Q}h5$ , and Black faces difficulties.

It is understandable, therefore, why in the preparations for my game with Vladimir Akopian in the 1991 USSR Championship I did not go in for this with Black, but chose a different set-up – I decided to fight immediately for the e5-point.

### Akopian–Kramnik

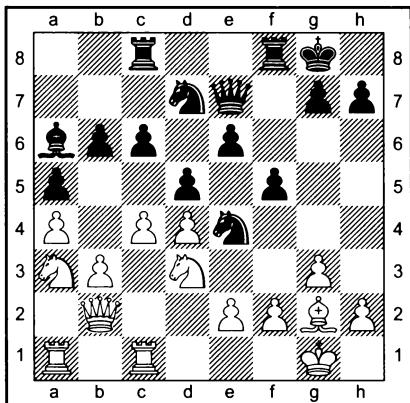
Moscow 1991

11  $\mathbb{Q}e5$

$\mathbb{Q}bd7$

With this move Black succeeds in driving back the enemy knight, but on the other hand his knight is less actively placed at d7 than at a6. Which method of development is better will be revealed by future games.

- 12  $\mathbb{N}d3$                     b6  
 13  $\mathbb{W}c2$                      $\mathbb{A}a6$   
 14  $\mathbb{M}fc1$                      $\mathbb{M}ac8$   
 15  $\mathbb{W}b2$                      $\mathbb{N}e4$



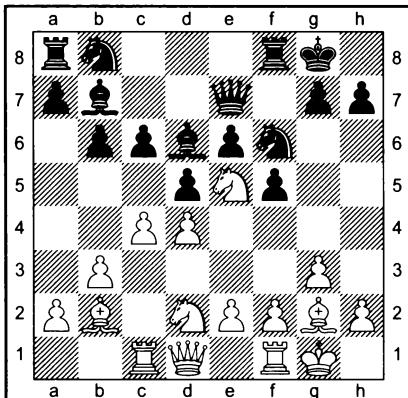
After a series of natural moves we have reached a position which did not greatly appeal to me, although objectively it is close to equal. Neither side appears to have any serious plan. Of course, White has to reckon with ...c6–c5 and also even a possible ...g7–g5, and Black with b3–b4. Akopian decided on immediate activity, although the unhurried 16  $\mathbb{M}c2$ ! and 17  $\mathbb{M}ac1$  came into consideration.

- 16 b4                             $\mathbb{A}xb4$   
 17  $\mathbb{N}xb4$                              $\mathbb{A}b7$   
 18 e3                                    c5  
 19  $\mathbb{N}d3$                                      $\mathbb{C}xd4$

Draw agreed. After the game Akopian and I found a long, forcing variation, which concluded 15 moves later in a drawn endgame, but now I am unable to remember it.

Let us turn to the set-up with the bishop on b2.

- 8  $\mathbb{N}bd2$                             b6  
 9  $\mathbb{N}e5$                                      $\mathbb{A}b7$   
 10  $\mathbb{A}b2$                                     0-0  
 11  $\mathbb{M}c1$



A little exercise for you: should Black play 11... $\mathbb{N}bd7$ ?

No, he shouldn't! After 12 cxd5! cxd5 (forced) 13  $\mathbb{N}dc4$ ! White exchanges his knight for the dark-square bishop and gains the advantage (**Tukmakov–Dolmatov**, Odessa 1989). This is the point of the set-up with the knight on e5 – to hinder the development of the knight at d7. (Imagine that instead of  $\mathbb{N}e5$  White has, say, made the move e2–e3 – Black plays 11... $\mathbb{N}bd7$ , soon advances ...c6–c5, and he is perfectly alright.)

However, the knight also has another satisfactory route.

- 11 ...                                    a5

Black is intending 12... $\mathbb{A}a6$  and at some point ...c6–c5 – quite a logical plan.

It has been suggested that 11... $\mathbb{N}e4$  should be considered. Then there can follow 12  $\mathbb{N}xe4$  (12 cxd5 cxd5 13  $\mathbb{N}xe4$   $\mathbb{D}xe4$  should also be checked) 12...fxe4 13 f3 exf3 14 exf3 (nothing is given by 14  $\mathbb{M}xf3$   $\mathbb{M}xf3$  15  $\mathbb{A}xf3$   $\mathbb{N}d7$  16 cxd5  $\mathbb{N}xe5$ ! 17 dxе6  $\mathbb{A}c5+$ ). The critical reaction for Black is 14... $\mathbb{A}xe5$  15  $\mathbb{D}xe5$  c5 (threatening 16..d4) 16 cxd5  $\mathbb{A}xd5$ . If he should succeed in completing his development, he will, of course, be quite alright, but on the other hand after 17 f4 he seriously has to reckon with f4–f5. Here additional analysis is required.

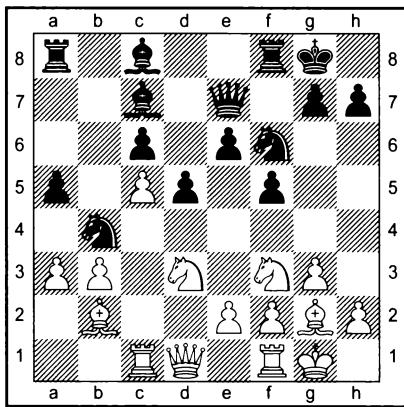
The position after 11...a5 has occurred many

times in practice.

**Chiburdanidze–Agdestein** (Hanine 1988):

12 ♜d3 ♜a6 (12...♜d7 is also possible) 13 ♜f3 ♜b4 14 c5 (there is nothing else – the a2-pawn is attacked) 14...bxc5 15 dxc5 ♜c7

16 a3



Of course, White was counting on 16...♝xd3 17 exd3, but Simen Agdestein unexpectedly retreated his knight – via a6 and b8 to d7. A strong and original manoeuvre!

16...♝a6! 17 ♜fe5 ♜b8

White appears to stand well, but in fact she has nothing. Black will now exchange the knight on e5, then place his bishop on a6 and rook on b8, and endeavour to play ...e6–e5.

18 f3 ♜bd7 19 ♜xd7 ♜xd7 20 e4 fxe4 21 fxe4 ♜xf1+ 22 ♜xf1 ♜a6 23 ♜d1 ♜b8

Black has seized the initiative.

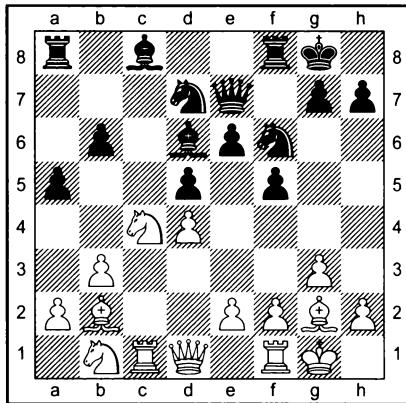
**Tukmakov–Agdestein** (Dortmund 1987):

12 ♜b1

White plays his knight to c3, in order then to exchange pawns on d5 and in the event of ...c6xd5 to occupy the b5-square with the knight. But this plan is slow, and now it is not obligatory for the black knight to go to a6.

12...♝bd7 13 cxd5 cxd5 14 ♜c4

(see diagram)



14...b5!

Black is agreeable to the exchange of a couple of minor pieces. After all, his pawn will now advance to b4, shutting the opponent's bishop and knight out of the game.

15 ♜xd6 ♜xd6 16 ♜c3 ♜a6 17 ♜d2 ♜fc8 18 f3 b4 19 ♜d1 a4 20 ♜e3

In the event of 20 bxa4 both white pawns on the a-file will soon be lost.

20...a3

Black has an obvious advantage. The resulting position illustrates well the thoughts expressed earlier about the unenviable fate of the white bishops in this variation. Compare the light-square bishops on g2 and a6 – which of them is bad?

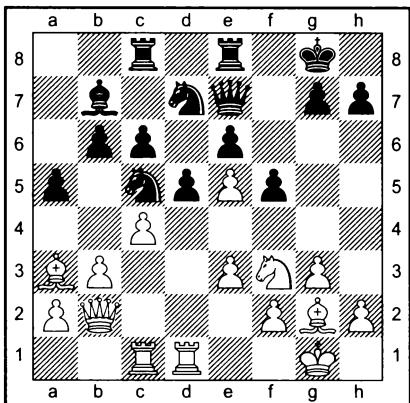
The following is a more solid continuation for White:

12 e3  
13 ♜e2  
    ♜a6

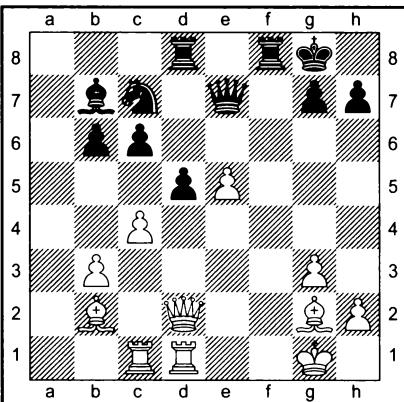
Black usually replies 13...♝e4. In the game **Petursson–Dolmatov** (Akureyri 1988) Black carried out a different, although strategically rather risky plan. I have to admit that it does not greatly appeal to me.

13...♝xe5?! 14 dxe5 ♜d7 15 ♜fd1 ♜ac5 16 ♜f3 ♜ac8 17 ♜a3 ♜fe8 18 ♜b2

(see diagram)



- 18 fxe4  
19 axb3  
20 dxe5  
21 exd5  
axb3  
fxe5  
ad8  
exd5



**18...g5!**

At first sight a senseless decision. But in fact, with the centre closed it is hardly possible to exploit the weakening of the kingside. And Black, by advancing his pawn to g4, will threaten the e5-pawn.

**19 ♜e1 g4**

The next move planned is 20...♛g7. True, if the white queen retreats to a1, it will be very dangerous to capture the e5-pawn. On the other hand, the mobility of the g2-bishop is now still further restricted, and it is unlikely that the white knight will manage to reach f4. At any event, Margeir Petursson hastened to simplify the play.

**20 ♜xc5 ♜xc5 21 ♜d3 ♜xd3 22 ♜xd3**

The position would appear to be roughly equal.

### Petursson–Short

Reykjavik 1987

Black won this game in classic style.

- 13 ... ♜e4  
14 ♜fd1 ♜c7

Later the provocative 14...♝b4!? 15 a3 ♜a6 was also tried, when White has problems with his a3-pawn.

- 15 f3 ♜xd2  
16 ♜xd2 a4  
17 e4 fxe4

Black's position is preferable. He will now play ...c6–c5 and later either follow up with ...d5–d4, or force the advantageous exchange on d5. He will place one of his pieces on e6, blocking the e5-pawn and thereby restricting the mobility of the bishop on b2. The position of the white king is somewhat weakened and in the future it may come under attack.

Here is the continuation of the game, without any notes.

22 ♜e3 c5 23 ♜e2 ♜a6 24 ♜a1 d4 25 ♜c1 b5 26 ♜f4 ♜e6 27 ♜h5?! bxc4 28 ♜h3 ♜b6 29 bxc4 ♜xc4 30 ♜db1 ♜c6 31 ♜a7 ♜e4 32 ♜ba1 ♜d5 33 ♜xc7 ♜h1+ 34 ♜f2 ♜xf4+ 35 gxf4 ♜xh2+ 36 ♜e1 ♜g3+ 37 ♜e2 ♜c4+ 38 ♜d1 ♜d3+ White resigned.

As you see, in all the examples we have examined nothing special was demanded of Black – he simply completed his development and fully prepared himself for the opponent's active possibilities. The e3–e4 advance did not promise any particular benefits and was double-edged, but White does not appear to have any other effective plan.

After it became clear that the set-up with  $\text{Bb}2$  and  $\text{Bbd}2$  does not promise anything, a new idea appeared.

**8  $\text{Be}5$**

White wants to prevent the development of the bishop on b7. If 8... $b6$ ? he has the strong reply 9  $\text{cxd}5!$   $\text{cxd}5$  10  $\text{Bc}4$ . I should mention that I consider the position arising after 9... $\text{exd}5$  to be unfavourable for Black. It leads to a structure typical of the Queen's Indian Defence, but with the pawn worse placed on f5, where it is doing nothing. Of course, this evaluation only applies with the pawn on b6 – if it is still on b7, there are no objections to the capture ... $\text{e6xd}5$ .

**8 . . .                    0-0**  
**9  $\text{Bb}2$**

9  $\text{Bd}3$  has also occurred, but then Black again has the opportunity to fianchetto his bishop.

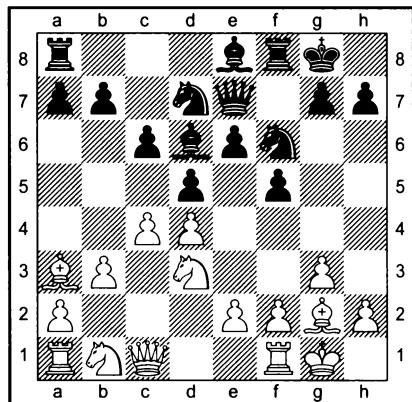
**9 . . .                     $\text{Bd}7$**   
**10  $\text{Wc}1$**                      $\text{Be}8$   
**11  $\text{Ba}3$**                      $\text{Bbd}7$

In contrast to the similar situation which we analysed earlier, when the bishop has been moved to e8 the transition into the endgame by 11... $\text{Bxa}3$  12  $\text{Wxa}3$   $\text{Wxa}3$  13  $\text{Bxa}3$  condemns Black to a lengthy and passive defence. It will hardly be possible for him to play ... $\text{c}6-\text{c}5$ , and White will begin a pawn offensive on the queenside.

**12  $\text{Bd}3$**

(see diagram)

In the game **Timman–Short** (Brussels 1987) the English grandmaster made the rather pointless move 12... $\text{Bf}7$ . After 13  $\text{Bxd}6$   $\text{Wxd}6$  14  $\text{Waa}3$   $\text{Wxa}3$  15  $\text{Bxa}3$   $\text{Bfe}8$  (intending 16... $e5$ ) 16  $f4$  Jan Timman reached a better endgame and later he converted it into a win.



– position after 12  $\text{Bd}3$  –

Black acted more logically in the following game.

**Kir.Georgiev–Knaak**  
 East Germany–Bulgaria Match 1987

**12 . . .                     $\text{Bh}5$**

If Black does place his bishop on f7, it will be only after luring the knight to f4.

**13  $\text{Be}1$**

Or 13  $\text{Bf}4$   $\text{Bf}7$  14  $\text{Bxd}6$   $\text{Wxd}6$  15  $\text{Waa}3$   $\text{Wc}7$ , and Black has the idea of ... $d5xc4$  followed by ... $e6-e5$ .

<b>13 . . .</b>	<b><math>\text{Bae}8</math></b>
<b>14 <math>\text{Bxd}6</math></b>	<b><math>\text{Wxd}6</math></b>
<b>15 <math>\text{Waa}3</math></b>	<b><math>\text{Wc}7</math></b>
<b>16 <math>\text{Bd}2</math></b>	<b><math>\text{Bf}4</math></b>
<b>17 <math>\text{Bf}3</math></b>	<b><math>\text{dx}c4!</math></b>
<b>18 <math>\text{bxc}4</math></b>	<b><math>\text{c}5</math></b>

A transformation of the centre which is typical of this variation.

**19  $\text{Wac}1$**                     **a6**

19... $\text{cxd}4$ !?

**20  $\text{e}3$**                      **$\text{Bxf}3!$**

Only now, when White cannot recapture with the e-pawn.

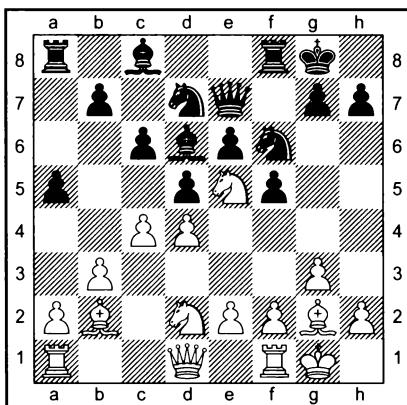
<b>21 <math>\text{Bxf}3</math></b>	<b><math>\text{e}5</math></b>
<b>22 <math>\text{Bxe}4</math></b>	<b><math>\text{fxe}4</math></b>

- |                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 23 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ | $\mathbb{exd}4$ |
| 24 $\mathbb{exd}4$ | $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ |
| 25 $\mathbb{W}xc5$ | $\mathbb{W}xc5$ |
| 26 $dxc5$          | $\mathbb{f}5$   |
| 27 $\mathbb{B}b1$  | $\mathbb{e}7$   |

The double rook ending is drawish.

Later an even more convincing plan of defence was found.

- |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| 9 ...             | $\mathbb{Q}bd7!?$ |
| 10 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ | a5                |



An amusing situation: it is not easy for Black to continue his development (he can only aim for exchanges with ... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ ), but for White too no concrete plan is apparent. It is a kind of mutual zugzwang position, immediately after emerging from the opening!

**Adorjan–Moskalenko** (Hungary 1990): 11 a3  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  12  $\mathbb{Q}df3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  13  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  14  $dxe5$  b6 (with the idea of 15... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ ).

Draw agreed. White has nothing: his bishops are so useless, that one cannot talk about him having the advantage of the two bishops – rather the opposite!

**Ruban–Meister** (Hungary 1990): 11  $\mathbb{Q}df3$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  12  $\mathbb{W}c2$

The game continued 12... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  13  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  14  $dxe5$  b5 15 f3  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  16  $cxb5$   $cxb5$  17  $\mathbb{Q}fc1$  with advantage to White. But after the

correct 12...a4! 13  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  (in the event of 13... $bxa4$  Black now begins exchanging: 13... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ , and the pawns on the a-file are very weak) 13... $axb3$  14  $axb3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  White's position is in no way better.

To conclude this section I should like to show you one of my own games.

**Van Wely – Kramnik**  
European Junior Championship,  
Arnhem 1990

- |                    |                |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 7 b3               | $\mathbb{W}e7$ |
| 8 $\mathbb{Q}b2$   | b6             |
| 9 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$  | $\mathbb{Q}b7$ |
| 10 $\mathbb{Q}e5$  | 0-0            |
| 11 $\mathbb{Q}df3$ |                |

Apparently my opponent was not very skilled in the subtleties of the opening – he allows Black to develop his knight at d7 without any hindrance.

- |                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| 11 ...            | $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ |
| 12 $\mathbb{W}c2$ | $\mathbb{Q}ac8$ |

The ...c6–c5 advance is in the air.

- |                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 13 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ | $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ |
| 14 $\mathbb{W}d3$  | $\mathbb{Q}e4$  |

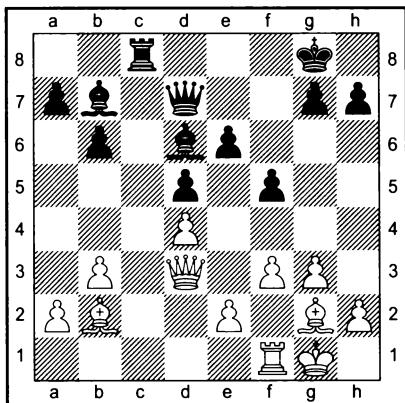
Now White has to reckon with 15... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  16  $dxe5$   $\mathbb{Q}a3$  17  $\mathbb{Q}xa3$   $\mathbb{W}xa3$  with a strong initiative on the queenside.

- |                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 15 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ | $\mathbb{W}xd7$ |
| 16 $\mathbb{Q}e5$  | $\mathbb{W}e7$  |
| 17 f3              | $\mathbb{Q}f6$  |

It remains for Black to play 18... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ , disturbing the knight on e5, and he will no longer have any problems.

- |                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 18 $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ | $\mathbb{Q}d7$  |
| 19 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ | $\mathbb{W}xd7$ |
| 20 $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ | $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ |

(see diagram)



White has a choice between the cautious 21  $\mathbb{B}c1$  and the more active 21  $e4$ . Which is correct?

### 21 $e4?!$

After playing this, my opponent offered a draw. If he had done this after 21  $\mathbb{B}c1$ , I would probably have had to agree.

- |                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 21 ...             | $\mathbb{dxe4}$ |
| 22 $\mathbb{fxe4}$ | $\mathbb{xe4}$  |
| 23 $\mathbb{exe4}$ | $fxe4$          |
| 24 $\mathbb{wxe4}$ | $\mathbb{e7!}$  |

A very strong manoeuvre, which was underestimated by my opponent. Here too he should have offered the exchange of rooks: 25  $\mathbb{B}c1$ .

### 25 $\mathbb{B}e1?!$      $\mathbb{f6}$

In the event of the  $e6$ -pawn being captured, the black rook invades at  $c2$ . But otherwise White is condemned to passive defence. After 26  $\mathbb{B}e2$  I defended the pawn with my rook from  $c6$ , advanced ... $b6$ – $b5$ – $b4$ , exchanged queens by ... $\mathbb{Wd5}$ , and placed my rook on  $a6$ , my king on  $f7$  and my pawn on  $h5$ . This led to an interesting bishop ending, which I managed to win.

### Plan with $\mathbb{B}c1-f4$

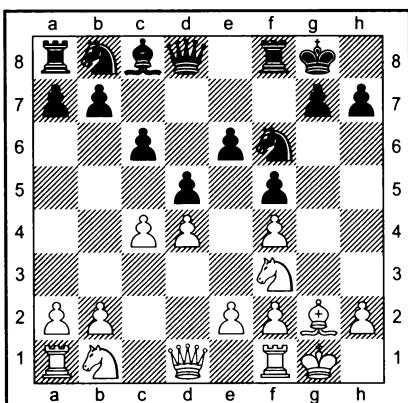
#### 7 $\mathbb{B}f4$      $\mathbb{xf4}$

Of course, White's kingside pawns must be spoiled. Otherwise he will play 8  $e3$  and

subsequently recapture on  $f4$  with the  $e$ -pawn.

#### 8 $gxf4$

#### 0-0



A unified theory of this variation does not exist. The continuations which occur here – 9  $\mathbb{B}bd2$ , 9  $\mathbb{B}e5$  and 9  $e3$  – usually transpose into the same positions.

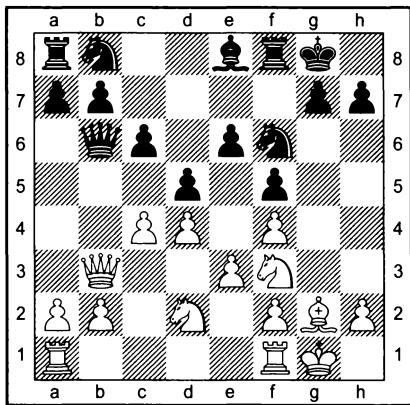
Since White's kingside has been weakened by the exchange on  $f4$ , the bishop manoeuvre to  $h5$ , which is not very effective after 7  $b3$ , is much stronger here. There is now the idea of opening the  $g$ -file by ... $g7$ – $g5$ . Black's standard scheme of action is: his bishop goes to  $h5$ , knight to  $e4$ , other knight to  $d7$ , then ... $\mathbb{h}8$  and ... $g7$ – $g5$ . Of course, the opponent must try and oppose this plan.

Let us make the moves 9  $\mathbb{B}bd2$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  10  $\mathbb{B}c1$ . Why is 10... $\mathbb{d}7$ ? a mistake here? White continues 11  $\mathbb{B}b3!$   $\mathbb{L}e8$  12  $\mathbb{B}e5$   $\mathbb{L}h5$  13  $e3$ , and the development of the black pieces is hindered. The knight cannot be played to  $d7$ , and  $a6$  is the wrong place for it.

13... $\mathbb{h}8$  14  $\mathbb{B}c3$  (14  $\mathbb{h}1!?$ ) 14... $\mathbb{a}6$  15  $\mathbb{B}a3$   $\mathbb{B}b4$  16  $c5$ . Black's position is worse, since his knight is roaming about on inappropriate squares.

Thus, if we want to develop our bishop at  $d7$ , we must seriously reckon with  $\mathbb{B}b3$ . And if we choose this plan, we should do so immediately, without 9... $\mathbb{W}e7$ .

**Nikolic–Salov** (Leningrad 1987): 9  $\mathbb{Q}bd2$   
 $\mathbb{Q}d7$  10  $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  11 e3  $\mathbb{Q}e8$



Now Black's knight wants to go to d7, and his queen, incidentally, can retreat to c7. Therefore White hurried to exchange queens.

12  $\mathbb{W}xb6$  axb6 13  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  14  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  15  $\mathbb{Q}dxsf3$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$

In the endgame even this route is not bad. Although White's position is slightly more pleasant, he has no real winning chances. The game ended in a draw.

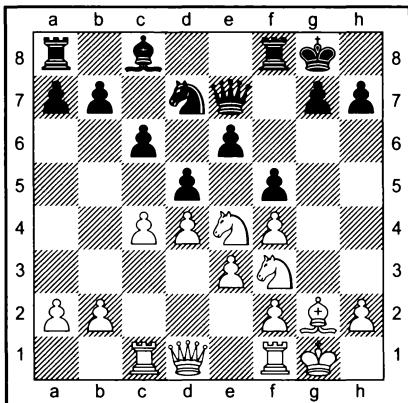
**Kalinichev–Glek** (USSR 1987): 9  $\mathbb{Q}bd2$   
 $\mathbb{Q}bd7$

Along with ... $\mathbb{Q}c8-d7$ , also not a bad plan. Black aims for any exchanges of knights in the centre, after which he usually does not have any problems.

10  $\mathbb{Q}c1$  (10 e3 and 11  $\mathbb{W}c2$  is more accurate)  
10... $\mathbb{Q}e4$  11 e3  $\mathbb{W}e7$

After 12 a3 in one game there followed 12... $\mathbb{Q}df6$  13  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  14 f3  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  15  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  16  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$ . Then Black played ... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  and ... $\mathbb{Q}g8$ , and after c4–c5 he retreated his knight to f7 and prepared ...g7–g5. For White it is simply not apparent what he can do. As usual, the g2-bishop is no better than its opponent on h5.

12  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$



12... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ ?

An original decision! The standard 12... $\mathbb{Q}fxe4$  is sounder. Then events can develop roughly as follows: 13  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  14 f3 exf3 15  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  16  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$ . Black is planning to play 17... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  and after the exchange of knights to bring his bishop via g6 to f5. If he should succeed in doing this, it is White who will be having to try to equalise.

13  $\mathbb{Q}d2$ ?

The only way to cast doubts on the opponent's strategy was by 13  $\mathbb{Q}e5$ . Now Black is entirely successful.

13... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  14  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  (altogether the wrong place!)  
14... $\mathbb{Q}b6$  15  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  16  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}bcx5$

White's position is worse. The ...e6–e5 advance is imminent, the g2-bishop is shut in, and if White should try to activate it by f2–f3, then after the exchange of bishops the weakening of his king's position may tell.

The game which I now wish to show you ended in a crushing defeat for White in just 23 moves. And this is not surprising – on an examination of it one gains the impression that the player with White simply did not know where to place his pieces, or which changes in the structure were advantageous to him, and which were not.

**Shabalov – Vyzhmanavin**

Tashkent 1987

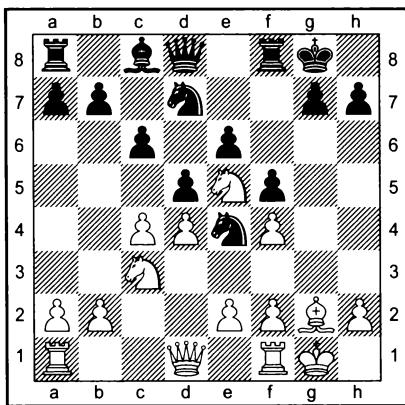
9 ♜c3

♝bd7

9...♝d7? is incorrect: 10 ♜b3 ♜b6 11 ♜a4 ♜xb3 12 axb3, and Black has a difficult endgame.

10 ♜e5

♝e4



11 ♜xe4?

fxe4

The exchange of knights on e4 is advantageous to Black. Now comes a further positional mistake – White allows the exchange on e5. He should have played 12 ♜xd7 ♜xd7 13 e3 ♜e8 14 f3, although after 14...exf3 and 15...♝g6 Black's position is preferable.

12 e3?

♝xe5

13 fxe5

13 dxe5 g5 was even worse for White. [A dubious assertion – in view of the reply 14 ♜g4. 13...♝d7 is sounder – Dvoretsky.]

13 . . .

♝d7

If 14 f3, then 14...exf3 followed by the manoeuvre of the bishop to g6. However, this was probably the lesser evil. But for some reason White took his queen to the queenside – away from the main events.

14 ♜b3?

b6

15 cxd5

cxd5

16 ♜ac1

♝g5

17 ♜c7

♝e8

The rook on c7 looks well placed, but that is all, whereas it would seem that Black's attack on the kingside is already irresistible.

18 ♜h1

♝h5

19 ♜a3

♝e2

20 ♜g1

♝xf2

21 ♜xe4

♝f1

22 ♜xf1

♝xf1

23 ♜d6

♝g4!

White resigned in view of 24 ♜xd5 ♜g2+!.

In the next example it was Black who played inaccurately in the opening. Let us see what this led to.

**Beliavsky – Van der Wiel**

Amsterdam 1990

9 e3

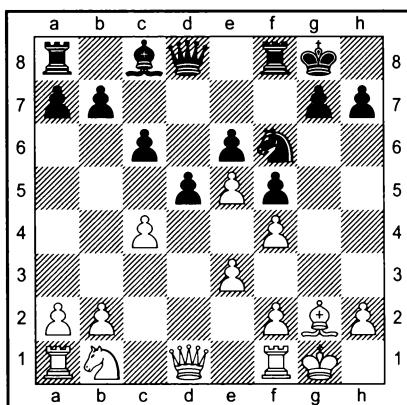
♝bd7

10 ♜e5

♝xe5?!

10...♝e4.

11 dxe5!



Earlier in such situations everyone, for some reason, captured with the f-pawn, including Beliavsky himself. The second game of his match with Salov (Vilnius 1987) went 11 fxe5?! ♜g4 (11...♝d7 12 f4 b6 is also good) 12 ♜d2 ♜d7 13 h3 ♜h6 14 f4 ♜e8 15 ♜h2 ♜h8 16 ♜e2 g5 with excellent prospects for Black.

**11 . . .**  $\text{N}d7$

As Beliavsky remarked, after 11... $\text{N}e4$  12  $b4!$  (the knight is in danger!) 12... $\text{B}b6$  13  $a3$   $a5$  (13... $dxc4$  14  $\text{Q}xe4$   $fxe4$  15  $\text{Q}d2$  with an obvious advantage) 14  $c5$   $\text{B}a7$  15  $f3$   $axb4$  16  $fxe4$   $\text{B}xc5$  17  $\text{Q}d2$  White's extra piece is more valuable than the pawns. But after the move in the game Black's position also remains significantly worse.

The conclusion: Black cannot exchange on  $e5$  with the knights on  $b1$  and  $f6$ . This sometimes happens – you commit just one inaccuracy, and it then becomes difficult to save the game.

<b>12 <math>\text{Q}d2</math></b>	$\text{B}e7$
<b>13 <math>\text{B}c1</math></b>	$\text{B}d8$
<b>14 <math>\text{B}c2</math></b>	$\text{B}f8$
<b>15 <math>\text{B}b3</math></b>	$\text{B}g6$

By placing his knight on  $h4$ , Van der Wiel tries to create threats to the white king. Nothing comes of this, because the  $c8$ -bishop is too far away from the kingside.

<b>16 <math>\text{cxd5}</math></b>	$\text{exd5}$
<b>17 <math>\text{B}d4</math></b>	$\text{B}h4$
<b>18 <math>\text{Q}h3</math></b>	$g5$
<b>19 <math>\text{Q}h1</math></b>	$g4$

In the event of 19... $gxf4$  20  $\text{exf4}$  the white rook goes to  $g5$ .

<b>20 <math>\text{B}g1</math></b>	$h5$
<b>21 <math>\text{Q}f1</math></b>	$\text{B}f8$
<b>22 <math>f3</math></b>	$\text{B}f7$
<b>23 <math>\text{B}f2</math></b>	$\text{B}g6$
<b>24 <math>\text{Q}d3</math></b>	$\text{B}g7$
<b>25 <math>b4!</math></b>	

Black stands badly on both wings. Within a few moves the game concluded.

### Novikov – Kramnik

Moscow 1991

**9  $e3$**

Igor Novikov later told me that it was under the impression of the Beliavsky–Van der Wiel game that he chose the variation with 7

$\text{Q}f4$  and 9  $e3$  against me – previously he had preferred other set-ups.

**9 . . .**  $\text{B}e7$

I wanted a fight, and therefore I did not play 9... $\text{Q}d7$  10  $\text{B}b3$   $\text{B}b6$ .

<b>10 <math>\text{Q}bd2</math></b>	$\text{Q}bd7$
<b>11 <math>\text{B}c2</math></b>	$\text{Q}e4$
<b>12 <math>\text{Q}xe4</math></b>	

It is not clear what else to suggest for White. Whereas I was intending to continue 12... $\text{Q}h8$  or 12... $\text{Q}df6$  13  $\text{Q}e5$   $\text{Q}d7$  14  $f3$   $\text{Q}d6$ , and then to follow the usual plan: ... $\text{Q}e8-h5$ , ... $\text{Q}h8$  and ... $g7-g5$ .

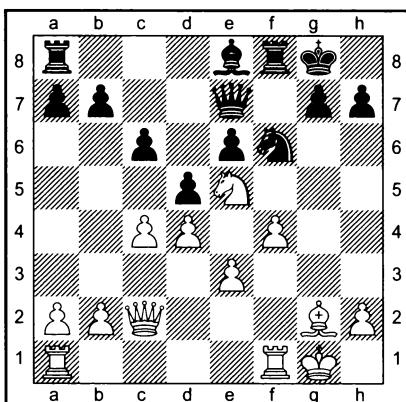
**12 . . .**  $\text{fxe4}$

Here the capture 12... $dxe4?$ , as in the Kalinichev–Glek game, would have led to a difficult position after 13  $\text{Q}e5$   $\text{Q}xe5$  14  $dxe5$  or 13... $c5$  14  $\text{B}c3$ .

**13  $\text{Q}d2$**

Of course, not as Shabalov played: 13  $\text{Q}e5?$   $\text{Q}xe5$  with the better chances for Black.

<b>13 . . .</b>	$\text{Q}f6$
<b>14 <math>f3</math></b>	$\text{exf3}$
<b>15 <math>\text{Q}xf3</math></b>	$\text{Q}d7$
<b>16 <math>\text{Q}e5</math></b>	$\text{Q}e8$



You already know Black's plan: the exchange of knights by 17... $\text{Q}d7$  followed by playing the bishop to  $g6$ . White must fight against it.



- 17  $\mathbb{N}f3$**        **$\mathbb{Q}d7$**   
**18  $\mathbb{N}h3!$**       **h6**  
**19  $\mathbb{N}g4$**

Draw agreed. There is no other move apart from 19... $\mathbb{N}f6$ , but then the knight returns to e5.

It may seem that, by playing 19  $\mathbb{N}xd7$ , White would have retained the better position, but in fact this is not so. I reply 19... $\mathbb{N}xd7$  (intending 20...e5).

After 20  $\mathbb{N}h5$   $\mathbb{N}f5!$  21  $\mathbb{N}xf5$  exf5 22 cxd5  $\mathbb{W}xe3+$  23  $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{W}d3$  White most probably has to repeat moves: 24  $\mathbb{N}f1$  (24  $\mathbb{N}e1$   $\mathbb{N}e8$ )

24... $\mathbb{W}e4$  25  $\mathbb{N}g2$ .

And if 20  $\mathbb{N}g3$  Black has 20...c5!.

[20  $\mathbb{N}g3$  c5 21 dxc5!  $\mathbb{W}xc5$  22  $\mathbb{W}g6$   $\mathbb{N}f7$  23 cxd5 exd5 24  $\mathbb{N}d1$  gives White a clear advantage. It is probable that somewhere earlier Black's play can be improved. Perhaps he should manage without 9... $\mathbb{W}e7$  – Dvoretsky.]

In this game both players apparently made the best moves, and neither managed to gain an advantage. Such a course of events is in accordance with the present-day state of theory in the 'stonewall' variation – it is perfectly playable for Black!

## PART IV

# Complicated Strategy in Practice

Artur Yusupov

## Crux of the Position

**O**n one occasion, when discussing chess topics with the former world champion Boris Spassky, the author heard a very interesting description of the play of another great chess player, Robert Fischer. I especially remember that Spassky singled out only one relative weakness in the play of the American champion: even Fischer did not always manage to sense the critical, turning-points of a game. What, then, can be said about mere mortals!

How often do we ponder over a position and seek a solution, where we simply need to make a normal move, or, on the contrary, quickly skip over a situation in which there is a direct way to our goal. The ability to concentrate at the required moment, and to understand or sense when it is possible to decide the game or at least direct it along desirable lines – this is a distinguishing trait of a great player.

How many times have I heard or myself said, in explanation of a failure: 'I didn't understand what was going on!' In nearly every game of chess one can pick out decisions, moves, which radically influenced the result (here, of course, we are not talking about blunders or serious positional mistakes). But when a player is able to grasp the essence of a position, whether it be a veiled tactical

nuance or a positional idea, by holding on to this guiding thread he is often able to change the course of the play in his favour.

### Wang Zili – Yusupov

Olympiad, Novi Sad 1990

*Ruy Lopez*

1 e4	e5
2 ♜f3	¤c6
3 ♜b5	a6
4 ♜a4	¤f6
5 0-0	¤xe4
6 d4	b5
7 ♜b3	d5
8 dx5	¤e6
9 ♜bd2	¤c5
10 c3	

This is a well-known position from the Open Variation of the Ruy Lopez. Now Black has a choice between 10...d4 and the move in the game.

10 ...	¤e7
11 ♜c2	

The pawn sacrifice 11 ♜d4 is a standard idea, but here it is clearly premature because of 11...¤xe5 12 f4 ♜c4 13 ♜c6 ♜d7 14 ♜xe7 ♜e3!.

11 ...	¤g4
--------	-----



A forced move, since now 11...0-0 is very strongly met by 12 ♜d4 ♜xe5 13 ♖h5 ♜g6 14 f4 f5 15 h4.

12 ♜e1

0-0

Nowadays 12...♜d7 13 ♜f1 ♜d8, supporting the d5-pawn, is more usual.

13 ♜f1

The other developing move is 13 ♜b3!?

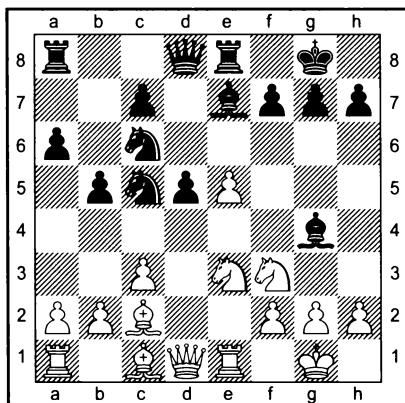
13 ...

♜e8!?

An interesting continuation, the point of which is to begin play against the e5-pawn.

14 ♜e3

White has a variety of possibilities: 14 h3, 14 ♜f4, 14 b4?! and 14 ♜g3. The Chinese player begins a tactical operation, but Black is well enough prepared for the immediate clash of the forces.



14 ...

♜xe5

After serious thought Black decided to go along with his opponent's idea, rightly assuming that the resulting position would promise him at least equal chances. The alternative 14...♝xf3 15 ♖xf3 ♜xe5 16 ♖xd5 is also acceptable for Black, only now he should not continue 16...♝cd3 in view of 17 ♜d1, but 16...♝f8, obtaining counterplay thanks to the weakness of the d3-square.

15 ♜xh7+!

This intermediate check is the point of

White's idea: in this way he regains the pawn.

15 ...

♚xh7

16 ♜c2+

♚g8

It is extremely dangerous to play 16...♝ed3 17 ♜xg4 f5 (17...♝g8!), since, along with 18 ♜ge5 ♜xe1 19 ♖xf5+ with a guaranteed draw, there is also 18 ♜d1 fxe4 19 ♜e5, and White stands better.

17 ♜xe5

♚e6

18 ♜c6

It is important to deprive Black of the advantage of two bishops.

18 ...

♝d6

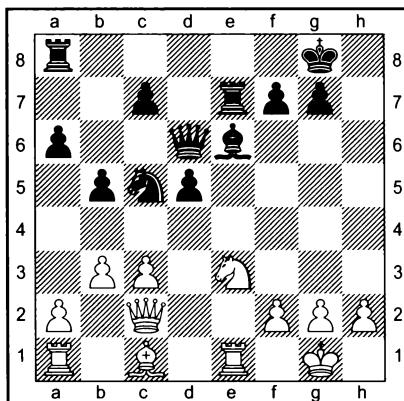
19 ♜xe7+

♝xe7

The outcome of White's tactical operation can be assessed: he has not gained any advantage. Black is not badly developed and given the opportunity he is ready to seize the initiative.

20 b3!

A subtle move, creating the unpleasant threat of a pin by 21 ♜a3.



20 ...

♝d7!

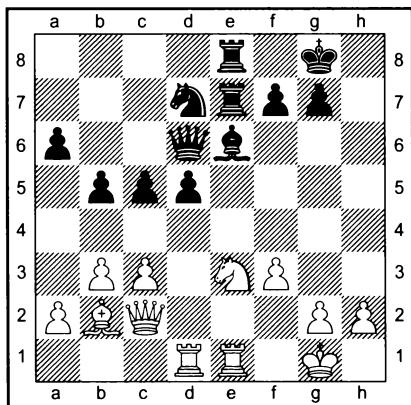
One of the most difficult moves in the game. It is always unpleasant to have to retreat, but the natural 20...♝e4 is weaker, since after 21 ♜b2 ♜ae8 (if 21...c5, then 22 c4) 22 ♜ad1 the black centre is under fire: c3-c4 is

threatened, and 22...c6 is not possible in view of 23  $\mathbb{W}xe4$ . It transpires that the knight on e4 prevents Black from consolidating his position in the centre.

**21  $\mathbb{B}b2?$ !**

Played too abstractly. White will be unable to advance c3–c4 in view of the reply ...d5–d4. It follows that at b2 the bishop stands badly. 21 a4 came into consideration, bringing the rook into play. After 21... $\mathbb{B}b8$  22 axb5 axb5 the position is roughly equal. Perhaps Black should change his plan by choosing 21... $\mathbb{E}e8!$ ?, and if 22  $\mathbb{A}a3$ , then 22...c5.

<b>21 . . .</b>	<b><math>\mathbb{B}ae8</math></b>
<b>22 <math>\mathbb{B}ad1</math></b>	<b>c5</b>
<b>23 f3?!</b>	



White made this move after a serious consideration of the position. However, if the Chinese player had taken Black's counter-actions into account, he would probably have restricted himself to the safe move 23  $\mathbb{W}d2$ , maintaining approximate equality.

At this, perhaps the decisive moment of the game, I thought for more than half an hour. The train of my thinking was roughly as follows:

What does the opponent want? It would appear that White has devised an interesting plan: he wants to play his queen to g3, force the exchange of queens, and obtain a good

endgame in view of the weakness of the d5- and c5-pawns.

How can the opponent's plan be prevented? The direct 23...f5 (24  $\mathbb{Q}xf5??$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ ) did not appeal to me because of the simple 24  $\mathbb{W}d2$ , and Black has somewhat weakened his position.

How can I strengthen my position? The black pieces are not badly placed, but the position of the knight is rather passive.

What are the drawbacks of White's set-up? Thinking in this way, I gradually managed to discover a weak point in the opponent's position – the d3-square! Indeed, the invasion there of the knight after ...c5–c4, combined with action on the e-file and on the a7–g1 diagonal, may decide the outcome of the battle. This means that 23... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  followed by ...c5–c4 and ... $\mathbb{Q}d3$  is tempting.

Even so, it was not easy for me to evaluate the consequences of this plan, until I discovered a strong possibility on the 26th move. General considerations may prove faulty, therefore they should be supported by specific calculation.

<b>23 . . .</b>	<b><math>\mathbb{Q}e5!</math></b>
	<b>24 <math>\mathbb{W}f2</math></b>

If 24 c4!? Black had the reply 24...d4 (but not 24... $\mathbb{B}xc4$  because of 25  $\mathbb{Q}xe5!$ ), and after 25  $\mathbb{C}xb5$  (25 b4  $\mathbb{W}c7!$ ) not 25...axb5 in view of 26 b4!  $\mathbb{W}c7$  (or 26... $\mathbb{W}b8$ ) 27  $\mathbb{W}xc5$ , but the subtle 25... $\mathbb{W}c7!$  26  $\mathbb{Q}f1$  (26  $\mathbb{Q}c4??$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  27  $\mathbb{B}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$ ) 26... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  with the advantage.

[This is not altogether so: White maintains the balance by 27  $\mathbb{W}xe5!$   $\mathbb{W}xe5$  28  $\mathbb{W}xc5$  or 27... $\mathbb{B}xe5$  28  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ . Therefore Black does better to play 26... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  (with the threat of 27... $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$ ) 27  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ . Even stronger, apparently, is 25... $\mathbb{Q}c8!$  (instead of 25... $\mathbb{W}c7$ ) 26  $\mathbb{Q}a3$  (the knight cannot move because of 26... $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$ ) 26... $\mathbb{W}h6!$  27  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$  28  $\mathbb{G}xf3$   $\mathbb{B}xe3$  29  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  (the only defence) 29...axb5 with a great advantage – Dvoretsky.]

24 . . . c4!

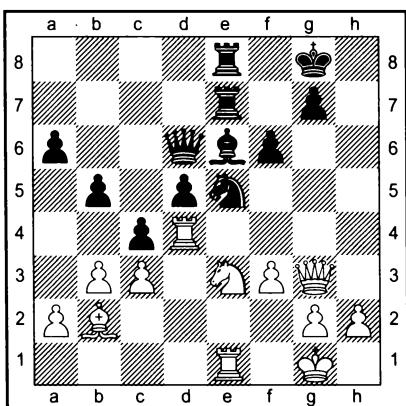
25 ♜g3?!

In such a situation it is difficult to bring oneself to sacrifice the exchange, but this was probably the best practical solution: after 25  $\mathbb{Q}c2!$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  26  $\mathbb{Q}a3$  (26  $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $cxd3$  27  $\mathbb{Q}a3$  can be met by either 27... $\mathbb{W}c7$  28  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{W}xc3$  29  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ , or 27... $\mathbb{W}f4$  28  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $dxc2$  29  $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  30  $\mathbb{W}xc2$   $b4!$ ) 26... $\mathbb{Q}xf2$  (26... $\mathbb{W}c7$  27  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe1$  28  $\mathbb{Q}xe1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  29  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  with compensation) 27  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  28  $\mathbb{Q}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  29  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  White would have blocked the position and retained good drawing chances. Thus if 29... $\mathbb{Q}a8$  there follows 30  $\mathbb{Q}a5$ , and 30... $cx b3$  31  $axb3$   $d4?$  is not dangerous in view of 32  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ .

25 ... f6

26 ♕d4?!

The most principled continuation, with which I had to reckon with first of all when beginning the operation to play my knight to d3. But 26  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{W}b6+$  27  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  28  $\mathbb{E}e2$  was nevertheless stronger, although after 28...a5!? Black's advantage is undisputed. [Instead of 28  $\mathbb{E}e2$  possible is 28  $\mathbb{Q}a3!$  with good equalising chances, and therefore it makes sense to advance the a-pawn a move earlier: 27...a5!? – Dvoretsky.]



26 . . . c5!

After this key move the strategic battle is

won, although White can still put up a tough resistance. 26... $\mathbb{W}b6$  was less accurate on account of 27  $\mathbb{A}a3$  with counterplay. But now Black renewes the threat of ... $\mathbb{Q}d3$  and at the same time prevents the activation of the white pieces: if 27  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  there follows 27... $cx b3!$  28  $axb3$   $\mathbb{A}f5$  29  $\mathbb{A}a3$  (or 29  $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc2$  30  $\mathbb{E}xc2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$ ) 29... $\mathbb{W}xc3$  30  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}xc2$  31  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3+!$  32  $gxf3$   $\mathbb{W}xe1+$  33  $\mathbb{W}xe1$   $\mathbb{Q}xe1+$  34  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{E}e6$  35  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}xb3$  and wins.

**27 bxc4 dxcc4**

**a5!**

Unnecessary complications would have resulted from 28... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  29  $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ + 30  $\mathbb{W}xf3$  (30  $\mathbb{Q}f2$ ?!  $\mathbb{Q}xe1$  31  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}e2+$  32  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc2$  with a decisive advantage for Black) 30...  $\mathbb{Q}xe1+$  31  $\mathbb{Q}xe1$   $\mathbb{W}xa3$  32  $\mathbb{W}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe1+$  33  $\mathbb{Q}f2$ . The quiet 28... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  29  $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{W}a7$  was not bad, but here it is still not easy to breach the opponent's defences. By undermining White's centre, Black achieves his goal more simply and quickly.

29 ♜a3 b4  
30 cxb4 ♕a7

The point of Black's idea. The rook is still pinned and deprived of support; the threat is 31... ♜c6.

31 b5 ♕d7

The simplest. 31... $\hat{Q}f5$ ? 32  $\hat{Q}xe7$   $\hat{Q}xc2$  did not work because of 33  $\hat{Q}xf6$ !

32 ♕ee4

Wang Zili was in serious time-trouble, but in any case White's position can no longer be defended. After 32  $\mathbb{E}e1$  Black would have won by 32... $\mathbb{Q}d3$ , while if 32  $\mathbb{E}xe5$  the simplest was 32... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ .

32 . . .	$\mathbb{Q}f5$
33 $\mathbb{W}f2$	$\mathbb{Q}xe4$
34 $\mathbb{Q}xd7$	$\mathbb{W}xd7$
35 $fxe4$	$\mathbb{W}d1+$
36 $\mathbb{Q}e1$	$\mathbb{Q}d3$

At last the knight has reached the square for

which it was aiming 13 moves earlier! White resigned.

In this game I was able to concentrate at critical moments and come to successful decisions on the 14th, 20th and 23rd moves. After the 23rd move the game was controlled by Black, who found and carried out the good plan of playing his knight to d3. This positional idea became the guiding thread which led him to his goal.

### **Yusupov – Gavrikov**

Zurich 1994

Grünfeld Defence

1 d4	♘f6
2 c4	g6
3 ♘c3	d5
4 ♜f4	♗g7
5 ♜c1	0-0
6 ♘f3	c6

The quiet system of development chosen by Black is not altogether in the spirit of the Grünfeld Defence. In contrast to the main variations, here he does not aim to undermine the opponent's centre immediately, but restricts himself to a solid but rather passive position.

7 e3	♗e6
8 ♘g5	♗f5
9 ♜e2	♗b6

The alternative was the modest 9...h6 10 ♘f3 ♛e6. White can hope for a slight advantage after both 11 cxd5 ♘xd5 12 ♜e5 f6 13 ♜g3, and 11 b3 ♘bd7 12 h3.

10 ♛d2?

A new move, the idea of which is seen in the variation 10...♘bd7 11 cxd5 cxd5 12 ♜a4! ♛d8 13 ♛b4 with advantage to White.

10 ...	h6
11 ♘f3	♗e4

Now too after 11...♘bd7 White can advantageously exchange on d5: 12 cxd5 cxd5 13

♘a4 ♛d8 14 ♛b4 or 12...♘xd5 13 ♘xd5 cxd5 14 ♜c7 ♛e6 15 ♛b4 ♘b6 16 0-0 ♘fc8 17 ♜c5 with the better game. What operates here is a standard consideration in such structures: White should delay the exchange of c-pawns as long as the knight is still on b8, in order not to allow its development on the active c6-square.

12 ♘xe4

♗xe4

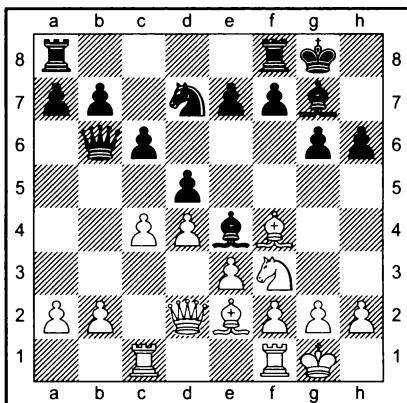
The capture with the pawn is less natural: then 13 c5 ♛d8 14 ♛e5 is good, as is the immediate 13 ♛e5, since after 13...c5 14 dxc5 ♛xc5 15 b4 Black cannot play 15...♛c7? 16 ♘xf7 e5 17 ♘xh6+.

13 0-0

13 c5 ♛d8 14 ♛b4 is weaker in view of 14...b6 (as my opponent pointed out, the simple 14...♛c8 is also good enough to equalise) 15 cxb6?! axb6 16 ♜xb8 c5!. However, 13 ♛e5!? came into consideration, with favourable complications.

13 ...

♘d7



An important moment in the game. White is at the cross-roads: he can either block the queenside, or exchange on d5. However, for the moment neither of these continuations promises a clear advantage. After 14 c5 ♛d8 15 ♛b4 the simple reply 15...♛c8 is good, but Black can also consider 15...♘xf3 16 ♘xf3 e5 17 dxe5 ♘xe5 18 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 19



$\mathbb{W}xb7$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  b3 a5. And in the event of 14 cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  15 e4  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  16  $\mathbb{Q}xh6$   $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  17  $\mathbb{W}xh6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  18  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  19  $\mathbb{Q}fd1$   $\mathbb{Q}ad8$  the opponent begins attacking my weak pawns. What does Black want? His most natural plan is to exchange on f3 and c4 and then attack the centre with ...e7–e5, simplifying the game. It turns out that with a simple developing move I can parry this threat and simultaneously prepare 15 cxd5.

**14  $\mathbb{Q}fd1!$**

Such prophylactic moves are always unpleasant for the opponent. Especially since he cannot reply in the same style: the careless 14... $\mathbb{Q}ad8??$  loses immediately to 15 c5.

**14 ... dxc4**

After 14...a5 White can now play 15 cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  16 e4  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  17  $\mathbb{Q}xh6$   $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  18  $\mathbb{W}xh6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  19  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ , when after 19... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  he has the unpleasant 20 h4, while if 19... $\mathbb{W}xb2$ , then 20 h4  $\mathbb{W}xa2$  21 h5  $\mathbb{W}e6$  22 d5  $\mathbb{W}f6$  23  $\mathbb{W}hxg6$  is good, with the possible variation 23...fxg6?! 24 dxc6  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  25 cxb7  $\mathbb{Q}ab8$  26  $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$  27 gxf3 with advantage to White. 14... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  15  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  dxc4 16  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  e5 is no better in view of 17  $\mathbb{Q}g3$  exd4 18 exd4 with the threat of 19  $\mathbb{Q}b4$ , and if 18...a5, then 19 d5. With the move in the game Black makes concessions in the centre, but retains a solid position.

**15  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$**

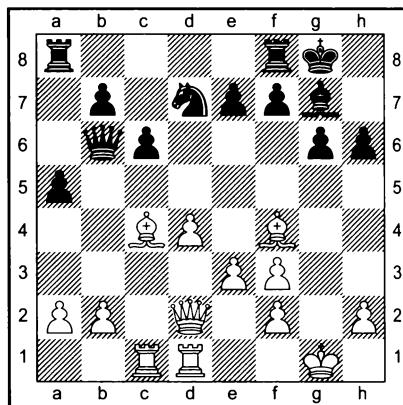
$\mathbb{Q}xf3$

**16 gxf3**

**a5**

The point of White's idea is revealed in the variation 16...e5 17 dxe5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  18  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  19  $\mathbb{W}c2!$  with advantage. For example, 19... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  20  $\mathbb{Q}d7$   $\mathbb{W}xb2$  (20... $\mathbb{Q}ad8$  21  $\mathbb{Q}cd1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  22  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{W}xb2$  23  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  with the better game) 21  $\mathbb{W}xb2$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  22  $\mathbb{Q}c2!$  (but not 22  $\mathbb{Q}b1?$  in view of 22...b5!) 22... $\mathbb{Q}a1$  (22...b5 23  $\mathbb{Q}b3$ ) 23  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$  a5 24  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}ab8$  25  $\mathbb{Q}a7$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  26  $\mathbb{Q}dd7$   $\mathbb{Q}xa7$  27  $\mathbb{Q}xa7$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$ , and now the best is 28 h4!, to be able to answer 28...g5 with 29 h5.

Instead of the move in the game, 16... $\mathbb{Q}ad8$  was more accurate, fighting against 17 e4, on which there would have followed 17...g5 18  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  19  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$ , although in this case too after 20 d5 White would have retained the better chances. 17  $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  18  $\mathbb{Q}h1$  e5 19 dxe5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  20  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  21 f4 was also not bad, with a minimal advantage for White.



**17  $\mathbb{W}c2$**

I was wrong to avoid the consistent 17 e4, since after 17... $\mathbb{Q}h7$  18  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  19  $\mathbb{W}e2$  the thematic 19...e5 can be strongly answered by both 20 dxe5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  21  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  22 f4  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  23 e5, and 20 d5. But now the play takes on a closed, manoeuvring character, where it is harder for White to probe the weak points in his opponent's defences.

**17 ...**

**e6**

**18  $\mathbb{Q}h1$**

**$\mathbb{Q}fd8$**

**19  $\mathbb{Q}g1$**

With the primitive threat of 20  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ , which, of course, Black easily parries.

**19 ...**

**$\mathbb{Q}f8$**

**20  $\mathbb{Q}b3?$**

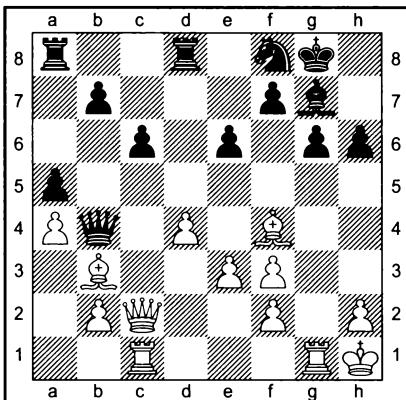
Prophylactic play by White. He prevents the opponent from gaining space on the queen-side with 20...a4 followed by ...a5.

**20 ...**

**$\mathbb{W}b5$**

**21 a4**

**$\mathbb{W}b4$**

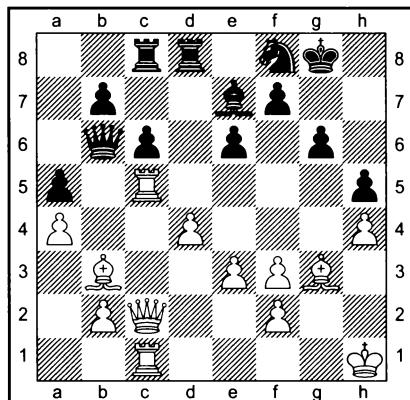


$\blacksquare c4 \blacksquare xb2$  30  $c6 bxc6$  31  $\blacksquare xc6$  are in his favour.

**26  $\blacksquare c5$**

$\blacksquare e7?$

My opponent falls into the trap. Carried away by the struggle for ...c6–c5, for an instant he drops his guard and forgets about the weakening of his king's position. 26... $\blacksquare d7$  was more cautious, with a minimal advantage for White.



With the threat of 22...c5. This advance is the key to the position: after it my advantage my completely vanish. White's subsequent actions become understandable: he actively fights against the opponent's intentions. What will look like an attack on the kingside is in fact a defence of the queenside.

**22  $\blacksquare g4!$**

$\blacksquare ac8$

If 22...c5 Black did not like the reply 23  $\blacksquare c7$ . However, after the exchange sacrifice 23...h5 24  $\blacksquare e4$  (or 24  $\blacksquare xd8 \blacksquare xd8$ ) 24...cx d4 25  $\blacksquare xd8 \blacksquare xd8$  he would have retained quite good defensive chances. Thus if 26  $\blacksquare d1$ , then 26...f5 is quite acceptable. He could also have considered the more modest 22... $\blacksquare d7$ ! 23  $\blacksquare g3 \blacksquare e7$  with a minimal advantage for White.

**23  $\blacksquare g3$**

$\blacksquare b6$

If 23...h5 I would not have played 24  $\blacksquare g5$  in view of 24...c5 25  $\blacksquare xc5 \blacksquare xc5$  26  $dxc5 \blacksquare d2$ , but 24  $\blacksquare e4$ . Now after both 24...c5 25 d5 (25  $dxc5 \blacksquare d2$  26  $\blacksquare c4 \blacksquare xb2$  is unclear) 25...c4 26  $\blacksquare xc4 \blacksquare xc4$  27  $\blacksquare xc4 \blacksquare xc4$  28  $\blacksquare xc4$  and 24... $\blacksquare b6$  25  $\blacksquare e5$  White retains a slight advantage.

**24 h4**

**h5**

**25  $\blacksquare g5$**

$\blacksquare f6$

Here too White is well prepared for 25...c5. After this there follows simply 26  $\blacksquare xc5 \blacksquare xc5$  27  $dxc5 \blacksquare b4$  28  $\blacksquare c4$ , when both 28... $\blacksquare xb2$  29  $\blacksquare xb4$  axb4 30  $\blacksquare c4$  and 28... $\blacksquare xc4$  29

**27  $\blacksquare xh5!!$**

An unexpected tactical blow on the kingside. In this game, which would also be fully appropriate for the theme of manoeuvring, I was successful with play by my advanced rook.

**27 ...**

$\blacksquare gxh5?$

The sharp change in the situation affects my opponent and he chooses a poor move, which leads by force to his defeat. 27...c5! was much more tenacious, after which White would have had to play accurately: 28  $\blacksquare e5$ ! (unconvincing is 28  $dxc5 \blacksquare c6$  or 28  $\blacksquare xc5 \blacksquare xc5$  29  $dxc5 \blacksquare b4$ ) 28...f6 29  $\blacksquare g1$  cxd4 (29...fxe5 30  $\blacksquare xg6+$   $\blacksquare f7$  31  $\blacksquare xf6$  32  $\blacksquare xe6 \blacksquare xe6$  33  $\blacksquare xe6$  is hopeless for Black) 30  $\blacksquare xg6+!$   $\blacksquare f7$  31  $\blacksquare xf6+$   $\blacksquare xf6$  (31... $\blacksquare e8$  32  $\blacksquare xf8+$ ) 32  $\blacksquare h7+$   $\blacksquare e8$  (32... $\blacksquare g8$  33  $\blacksquare xf6$ !  $\blacksquare xc2$  34  $\blacksquare g7+$   $\blacksquare h8$  35  $\blacksquare xb7+$   $\blacksquare g8$  36  $\blacksquare xb6$   $\blacksquare c1+ 37 \blacksquare g2$ ) 33  $\blacksquare xf6$ ! (threatening 34  $\blacksquare e7$  mate) 33... $\blacksquare d6$  34  $\blacksquare e4 \blacksquare xh7$ , and now not

35  $\mathbb{W}xh7?$   $\mathbb{W}f8!$ , but 35  $\mathbb{Q}xe6!$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  (35... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  36  $\mathbb{W}g6+$ ) 36  $\mathbb{W}f5!$  – the ‘ambush’ threats created by the queen are deadly.

**28  $\mathbb{B}g1$**

Threatening to move the bishop to c7 with a discovered check.

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

28... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  29  $\mathbb{Q}e5+$  f6 would also have lost to 30  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  31  $\mathbb{W}g6$ .

**29  $\mathbb{Q}xe6!$**

All the white pieces swiftly join the attack.

**29 ...  $\mathbb{Q}h7$**

After 29...fxe5 30  $\mathbb{W}xg6+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  any move by the bishop from g3 is decisive. After 29... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  White wins by 30  $\mathbb{Q}e5+$ , while if 29... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  – 30  $\mathbb{W}f5$ .

**30  $\mathbb{W}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$**

Or 30...fxe5 31  $\mathbb{W}f7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  32  $\mathbb{Q}f4+$ .

**31  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$**

**32  $\mathbb{Q}f4+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$**

It was no better to play 32... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  33  $\mathbb{W}xf7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  34  $\mathbb{Q}e5+$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  35  $\mathbb{W}xh5$  mate, or 32... $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  33  $\mathbb{W}xf4+$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  34  $\mathbb{Q}hg5+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  35  $\mathbb{W}xf7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  36  $\mathbb{W}xh5+$ .

**33  $\mathbb{W}xh5+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$**

**34  $\mathbb{Q}h6+$**

Black resigned.

### Yusupov–Lautier

Amsterdam 1994

Queen’s Gambit

**1 d4**  $\mathbb{d}5$

**2 c4**  $\mathbb{e}6$

**3  $\mathbb{Q}c3$**   $\mathbb{Q}b4$

Joël Lautier plays the opening in an original way, employing an unusual hybrid of the Queen’s Gambit Declined and the Nimzo-Indian Defence. But if White does not object to a Nimzo-Indian with 4 e3, this does not bring Black any benefits.

**4  $\mathbb{e}3$**   $\mathbb{Q}e7$

Here the knight is more passively placed than at f6, and White gains the advantage of the two bishops without any particular compensation for Black. 4...c5 is another original continuation, which after 5 cxd5 exd5 6 dxc5 (in the game Psakhis–Korzubov, USSR Championship First League 1983, Black equalised after 6  $\mathbb{Q}b5+$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  7  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  8 0-0 0-0 9 dxc5  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  10 b3  $\mathbb{Q}g4!$  11 h3  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  12  $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$ ) 6... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  7  $\mathbb{Q}b5+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  8  $\mathbb{Q}xd7+$   $\mathbb{Q}bx d7$  9  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  led to a more pleasant position for White in the game Bandza-Aleksandrov (Frunze, 1989).

**5  $\mathbb{Q}d2?$**

**0-0**

5...c5 6 a3  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  7  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  cxd4 8  $\mathbb{W}xd4$  f6 came into consideration, as in the game Psakhis–Kupreichik (USSR 1984). However, after 9  $\mathbb{Q}d1$  White’s position is preferable.

**6 a3**

**$\mathbb{Q}xc3$**

**7  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$**

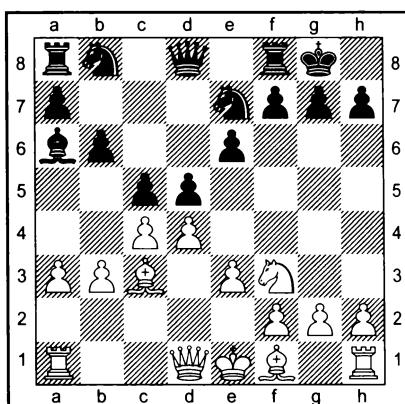
**b6**

**8  $\mathbb{Q}f3$**

**$\mathbb{Q}a6$**

**9 b3**

**c5**



The first serious problem for White: he has to decide what pawn structure it would be desirable to obtain. Despite his advantage of the two bishops, he has to take serious account of the opponent’s counterplay, as shown by the following variations:

A) 10  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  cxd4 11 exd4  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  12 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  13  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}g6!$  14 g3  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  15  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  e5 (or

15...dxc4 16 bxc4 e5);

B) 10  $\mathbb{B}c1$  dxc4 11 bxc4 cxd4 12 exd4  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  13  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{B}c8$  14  $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}g6!$  15  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  16  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{W}f6$ .

Usually with the two bishops you should not avoid hanging pawns, but in the given instance the black knight obtains good prospects on g6. In view of this feature of the position, I preferred a sound continuation, which secures a slight but enduring advantage.

**10 dxc5!**

**dxc4**

This intermediate capture was the main problem. After 10...bxc5 White would have secured the better pawn structure by 11  $\mathbb{B}c1$ !? (the simple 11  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  is also not bad). If now 11... $\mathbb{Q}bc6$ ?, then 12 cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xf1$  13 dxc6. The reaction to 11... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  is similar – after 12 cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xf1$  13 dxe6 White has a great advantage. If 11... $\mathbb{W}b6$  there is the adequate reply 12  $\mathbb{Q}d3$ . It remains to consider the most critical reply 11...dxc4. After 12  $\mathbb{W}xd8$   $\mathbb{B}xd8$  13  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  White's idea becomes clear: he takes play into an endgame, where the weakness of the opponent's pawns begins to tell. There can follow:

A) 13... $\mathbb{B}d5$  14 bxc4 (14  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  is also not bad) 14... $\mathbb{B}d6$ ?! (14... $\mathbb{B}d7$  is better) 15  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  16  $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{B}a6$  17  $\mathbb{B}b1$  with a decisive advantage;

B) 13... $\mathbb{B}c8$  14  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  15  $\mathbb{B}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  16  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  17  $\mathbb{B}c2$  c4 18  $\mathbb{Q}xb6$  axb6 19  $\mathbb{B}xc4$ ! (19 bxc4 is less accurate because of the reply 19...b5!) 19... $\mathbb{B}xc4$  20 bxc4  $\mathbb{B}xa3$  21  $\mathbb{B}b1$  with advantage;

C) 13... $\mathbb{B}d6$  14  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  15  $\mathbb{B}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  16  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{B}a6$  17  $\mathbb{B}d1$   $\mathbb{B}xa5$ ?! (17... $\mathbb{B}d5$  18 b4) 18  $\mathbb{B}xd7$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  19  $\mathbb{B}b7$   $\mathbb{B}xa3$  20  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  with somewhat the better game.

**11  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$**

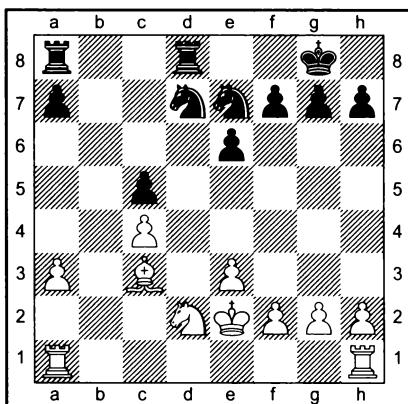
I made this natural move without any particular hesitation, although perhaps it would have been worth giving it some thought. After 11 cxb6!? the opponent would

probably not have replied 11...cxb3 in view of 12  $\mathbb{Q}b4$ , but 11... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ !?. However, after 12 bxa7  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  (12... $\mathbb{B}xa7$  13  $\mathbb{Q}d4$ ; 12... $\mathbb{Q}bc6$  13  $\mathbb{W}d2$ ) 13  $\mathbb{W}xd8$   $\mathbb{B}xd8$  14 axb8 $\mathbb{W}$   $\mathbb{B}axb8$  15  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  (or 15 b4  $\mathbb{Q}a4$  16  $\mathbb{B}c1$ ) 15... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  16 bxc4 it is not clear whether he would have been able to demonstrate that Black's initiative is worth the sacrificed pawns. 11 bxc4! also deserved serious consideration. After 11... $\mathbb{W}xd1$ + (11...bxc5 is weaker because of 12  $\mathbb{Q}d3$ ) 12  $\mathbb{B}xd1$  bxc5 13  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}bc6$ ! 14  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{B}ab8$  15  $\mathbb{B}c1$  (15 0-0 is of equal merit) 15... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ ! (15...f5 is weaker in view of 16 f4! followed by g2–g4) 16  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  White has a slight advantage.

11 ...	<b><math>\mathbb{Q}xc4</math></b>
12 bxc4	<b><math>\mathbb{B}xc5</math></b>
13 $\mathbb{W}xd8$	<b><math>\mathbb{B}xd8</math></b>
14 $\mathbb{Q}e2$	

Of course, in the endgame the king should remain in the centre.

14 ...	<b><math>\mathbb{Q}d7</math></b>
15 $\mathbb{Q}d2$	



Here it was Lautier's turn to take an important decision: he had to decide on a plan of action. Generally speaking, here Black has little possibility of influencing the character of the subsequent play. His only plan of exerting some pressure on my position is by active play with his knights.

Therefore here the placing of the knights is of great importance. My opponent did not sense the importance of the moment, and without much thought he made an outwardly natural and 'pretty' move...

**15 . . .**  $\mathbb{Q}c6?$

The c6-square is only apparently a good one for the knight – in fact here it is restricted by the opponent's bishop, it is not attacking anything, it is not preventing anything and it lacks any clear prospects. When I discussed and analysed the game with Mark Dvoretsky, we came to the conclusion that this superficial and aimless move was the main cause of Black's defeat.

The knights should have been deployed more actively, aiming for pressure on the c4-pawn. 15... $\mathbb{Q}c8?$  was correct, in order to play one knight to d6, and the other to b6. As the variations given below demonstrate, at best White would have retained only a slight advantage:

- A) 16 a4  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  17 a5 f6 18 g4  $\mathbb{Q}ab8$  19 h4 e5 (with the idea of ...e5–e4, but 19... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  20 f3  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  and by playing his knight via f8 to e6, Black equalises;
- B) 16 g4  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  17  $\mathbb{Q}ac1$  f6 (if 17... $\mathbb{Q}b6$  18  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  f6, then 19  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  20  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  with the better chances for White) 18 h4  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  19  $\mathbb{Q}a1$  e5 20 g5  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  21  $\mathbb{Q}hg1$  h5 22 gxh6 gxh6 23 h5  $\mathbb{Q}g8$  24 f4 exf4 25 exf4  $\mathbb{Q}ae8+$  26  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  (if 26  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  there follows 26... $\mathbb{Q}bxc4!$  27  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  28  $\mathbb{Q}xg8$  ( $\mathbb{Q}d2+$ ) 26... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  27  $\mathbb{Q}xg8$   $\mathbb{Q}xg8$  28  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  29  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}e8+$  (29... $\mathbb{Q}e6!$ ? 30 f5+  $\mathbb{Q}f7$ ) 30  $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  31  $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7+$  32  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}g8+$  33  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  with an equal position;
- C) 16  $\mathbb{Q}hb1$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  17  $\mathbb{Q}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}dc8$  18  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  19 f4 (less is promised by 19  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  20  $\mathbb{Q}d1$  in view of 20... $\mathbb{Q}b6$  21  $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}a4$ ) 19... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  20 e4 f6! 21  $\mathbb{Q}ab1$   $\mathbb{Q}ab8$  with a minimal advantage for White.

**16  $\mathbb{Q}hb1$**

White would have secured a slight advan-

tage with 16 g4  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  17  $\mathbb{Q}ab1$  f6 18 h4 (18  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}a4$ ) 18... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  19 h5  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  20  $\mathbb{Q}hc1$   $\mathbb{Q}ad8$  21  $\mathbb{Q}c2$ .

**16 . . .**

**$\mathbb{Q}ab8$**

Now if 16... $\mathbb{Q}b6$  there would naturally have followed 17 a4.

**17  $\mathbb{Q}b5!$**

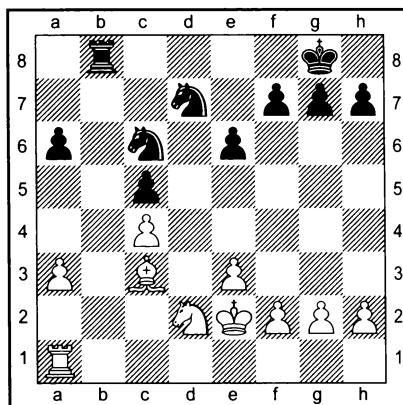
*In principle it is advantageous for White to exchange one pair of rooks*, since he holds the initiative and it will be easier for him to invade the opponent's rear, while at the same time it will more difficult for Black to gain counterplay. However, every trifle is important, and before exchanging rooks it is not bad to provoke a weakening of the b6-square.

**17 . . .**

**a6**

**18  $\mathbb{Q}xb8$**

**$\mathbb{Q}xb8$**



What to do now? The direct 19  $\mathbb{Q}b1$  does not promise anything, since the exchange of all the rooks merely eases Black's defence: he will not have to worry about the invasion of the enemy rook. I need another target to attack. In this position the superiority of bishop over knight is somewhat camouflaged, but it only requires White to begin exploiting his qualitative advantage on the kingside (the fact that he can advance his pawns there, whereas Black is forced to remain passive), when the long-range power of the bishop will tell.

<b>19 g4!</b>	<b>f6</b>
<b>20 h4</b>	<b>g7</b>
<b>21 h5</b>	<b>b6</b>
<b>22 d1</b>	<b>a4</b>

Disconcerted by the advance of the enemy pawns on the kingside, Lautier looks for counterplay on the queenside, but he chooses an unfortunate moment for this. He should have opposed rooks by playing 22...d8!?, although here too White would be clearly better.

<b>23 a1</b>	<b>a5??</b>
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With his previous move Black prepared this mistake. Of course, 23...b2 was unattractive in view of 24 b1 (or immediately 24 g1!) 24...a4 25 g1 followed by f2-f4 and g4-g5, as was 23...d8 24 f4 e5 25 fxe5 xe5 (if 25...fxe5 there is the strong reply 26 f1+ e6 27 e4 h6 28 g5 – less convincing is 26 b1 a5!, when 27 xe5? is not possible in view of 27...xd2+) 26 xe5 fxe5 27 f1+ e7 28 e4 – in every case White has a great advantage. But the move in the game leads to a rapid defeat.

<b>24 e4</b>	<b>b6</b>
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It was hopeless to play 24...xc4 25 d7+ f8 26 h6 or 24...e7 25 h6, when Black's kingside pawn chain is destroyed.

<b>25 g5</b>	
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White has successfully carried out his strategic aim: he has created targets to attack on the kingside.

<b>25 . . .</b>	<b>f5</b>
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25...axc4 would also have lost in view of 26 gx6 gxf6 27 xf6 h6 28 g4.

<b>26 xc5</b>	<b>axc4</b>
<b>27 d7</b>	<b>c8</b>

The point of White's manoeuvre is that 27...b7 28 xb6 xb6 loses because of the pin: 29 b1 b8 30 e5.

<b>28 xb6</b>	<b>xb6</b>
<b>29 d6</b>	

The final touch: there is no defence against the invasion of the 7th rank by the rook, since if 29...b8 White decides matters with 30 d4.

<b>29 . . .</b>	<b>c2+</b>
<b>30 f3</b>	<b>a2</b>
<b>31 xg7</b>	<b>c4</b>
<b>32 d7+</b>	<b>e8</b>
<b>33 a7</b>	<b>d6!?</b>

Black defends imaginatively, but his counter-attacking resources are clearly insufficient.

<b>34 g6</b>	<b>hxg6</b>
<b>35 h6</b>	<b>e4</b>
<b>36 g2</b>	<b>xf2+</b>

Or 36...g5 37 f6.

<b>37 g1</b>	<b>d2</b>
<b>38 h7</b>	<b>d1+</b>
<b>39 g2</b>	<b>d2+</b>
<b>40 f1</b>	

Black resigned.

Only a superficial glance will suggest that Black lost because of his blunder on the 23rd move. I think that the reader will agree with the author's opinion: the real reason for his defeat was that my young opponent lost the thread of the game, by failing to find the correct defensive plan, involving the more active placing of his knights.

I recommend the readers to compare this episode with another, thematically very similar one, which occurred in the 3rd game of the A.Sokolov–Yusupov Candidates Match (Riga 1986). It is analysed in my lecture 'Surprises in the Opening' in the book *Secrets of Opening Preparation* by Dvoretsky and Yusupov. There Black faced a similar problem. By finding the correct arrangement of his knights, he not only successfully solved his opening problems, but also, after exploiting his opponent's mistake, seized the initiative.



Evgeny Bareev

## Strategy in Grandmaster Games

I am going to show you a few games that were played at the recent tournament in Linares. Or more, correctly, we will look at them together. After I returned home I analysed my game with Anatoly Karpov, in which at first sight all was simple and clear, but even on this one I had to spend a mass of time. This applies even more to the other games, which I have not yet looked at. I am afraid that many of my preliminary impressions of them will prove false. With your help we will try to investigate them, so you will have to do some real work, and to solve the problems which the players faced during the game.

We will focus mainly on positional problems. However, in modern chess everything is mixed up: even quiet situations are usually full of tactical nuances, and in sharp positions one cannot forget about strategy. Now you have to be a universal player, since it is impossible to achieve good results thanks only to a good knowledge of the opening, or, say, mastery of the endgame – comprehensive and versatile preparation is required.

The leading players in the world have a mastery of all the different chess weapons, and what often come to the fore are psychological factors. For example, flexibility of thinking – the rapid switching during the course of a game from the solving of positional problems to the finding of tactical subtleties, and vice versa. Of enormous importance are competitive form, reserve of energy, and the ability to perform at one and the same high level throughout an event. In Linares, towards the finish there for a decline in the standard of play even with young

players such as Boris Gelfand and Vishwanathan Anand (and to a lesser extent with Vasily Ivanchuk, who was in indifferent form from the very start). And the experienced grandmasters Artur Yusupov and Alexander Beliavsky, whose class is widely recognised, were simply nowhere to be seen at the end. They weakened physically and were incapable of solving problems with which they easily coped at the start.

Only Garry Kasparov was able to play evenly throughout the tournament. It is not just that he calculates variations excellently and possesses enormous experience; the world champion's opening knowledge is universally recognised, and on top of everything his nerves at the board are usually stronger than even those of his younger opponents. Therefore his success is fully merited. But, incidentally, in cases when Kasparov does not devote sufficient attention to special preparation before an event, it is possible to fight with him on equal terms, and for this reason in some recent tournaments he did not take first place.

The whole range of questions on which I have touched here makes up a separate and very important topic, to some aspects of which I will return. But now it is time to turn to the games.

I will begin in chronological order with my game against Valery Salov, which took place in the third round. In the first two games I had scored just half a point.

What should you do in such a position? How should you base your play? To hope for overall competitive success, you have to win

quite a number of games. But if your opponent does not make any very serious errors, it will be very difficult to outplay him. Should you play in your usual manner, circumspectly, aiming to exploit isolated inaccuracies by the opponent, or try to overcome him quickly, by playing extremely sharply? It is my impression that players have now stopped launching forward desperately – they all prefer to play their own game, and this is probably correct.

### Bareev – Salov

Linares 1992

*Bogo-Indian Defence*

- |                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1 d4           | $\text{Qf6}$  |
| 2 c4           | e6            |
| 3 $\text{Qf3}$ | $\text{Qb4+}$ |

Today the Queen's Indian Defence and the Bogo-Indian Defence 3... $\text{Qb4+}$  are to be found in the repertoire of nearly every player. Without a deep study of Queen's Indian set-ups it is impossible to play the Closed Games, just as a knowledge of the Ruy Lopez is necessary for the Open Games.

- |                 |    |
|-----------------|----|
| 4 $\text{Qbd2}$ | b6 |
|-----------------|----|

Positions of quite different types arise after 4...d5 or 4...0-0.

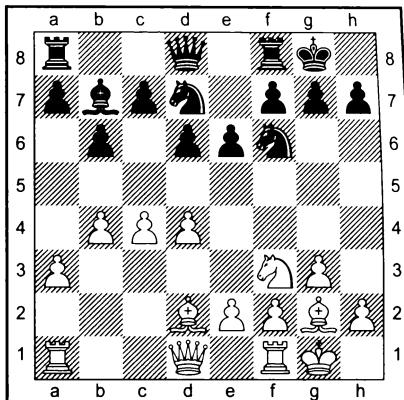
- |                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 5 a3            | $\text{Qxd2+}$ |
| 6 $\text{Qxd2}$ | $\text{Qb7}$   |
| 7 g3            |                |

7  $\text{Qg5}$  is more often played, but the move made by me is no weaker.

- |                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| 7 ...          | d6            |
| 8 $\text{Qg2}$ | $\text{Qbd7}$ |
| 9 0-0          | 0-0           |
| 10 b4          |               |

(see diagram)

Do you know the typical ways of playing such positions? What plans does Black usually carry out?



– position after 10 b4 –

Three suggestions have been received: 1) ... $\text{We7}$  and ...e6–e5; 2) ...c7–c5; 3) ...a7–a6 and ...b6–b5. It is evident that you lack experience in such situations, otherwise you would have known that first you should place your bishop on e4. Not your knight, but your bishop! Then you can play ...c7–c5. This is how Black acted in most of the games I know, and Salov made his next move practically without thinking.

- |                 |              |
|-----------------|--------------|
| 10 ...          | $\text{Qe4}$ |
| 11 $\text{Qc1}$ |              |

For the moment the play is of a quiet, manoeuvring character, and the players are solving purely positional problems. Time for thought is restricted – only two hours. It is not known when the maximum output of time and effort will be demanded, but in the future such a moment is bound to come. And for the present you must comparatively quickly – within one or two minutes – make sensible moves. If on each move you spend, say, three, five or ten minutes, then later, when the crisis is reached and it becomes important to think perhaps for half an hour, you will not have a reserve of time. And even if you outplay your opponent and obtain the better position, because of approaching time-trouble, accumulated fatigue and lack of freshness, mistakes will become simply inevitable.

and you will be unable to conclude the game successfully. This is why White's last move was made very quickly. At a1 the rook was doing nothing, whereas at c1 it may come in useful. Quite sufficient grounds for the taking of a decision.

**11 . . .**  $\mathbb{Q}e7$

Why didn't my opponent play 11... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  with the idea of placing his queen on b7? I think that then the reply 12 c5 is unpleasant.

**12  $\mathbb{Q}b3$**

I had to think about this move, after which I had already used 35 minutes, whereas Salov had spent just five. An appreciable advantage on the clock, which might well tell in the future! But here my opponent made a serious mistake – he did not sense that one of the key moments in the game had now arisen. If you miss a key moment, later it will be very difficult to make up for this.

I have set a positional trap. I make on that I want to play 13  $\mathbb{Q}fd1$ , but in fact I am planning something quite different. If Salov had thought here for ten minutes or so, he would have realised that it was now time to advance his c-pawn. But he made another, rather unexpected move, although one that sometimes occurs in similar positions. Can anyone suggest what this might have been? No? What does the expert – Igor Khenkin – say? He suggests 12...c6. Yes, this is a typical idea, and not a bad one. Ulf Andersson simply adored playing like that. However, even so I would have preferred 12...c5. But Salov, who was expecting the rook move to d1, overlooked my main threat c4–c5!

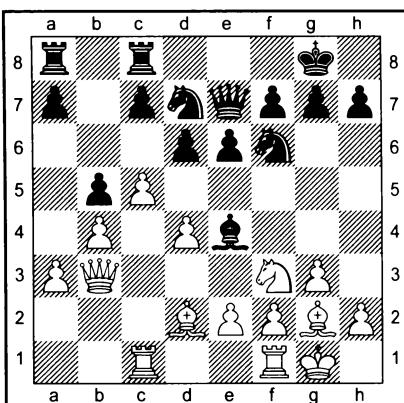
**12 . . .**  $\mathbb{Q}fc8?$

**13 c5!**

Here Salov quickly began catching me up on the clock. By advancing my pawn to c5 I have gained space. It is obvious that the capture on c5 does not work and Black now has serious problems. Try to assess the resulting position and decide how Black should defend.

**13 . . .** **b5**

Correct! Black has to fight for the light squares, and try to exchange a few pieces, to leave the opponent with a passive bishop on d2. If 14 c6 he now has the reply 14... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ . And what plan do you recommend for White? It is appropriate to have a proper think – if we find the correct plan, it will be possible to make the next few moves practically without thinking.



Incidentally, for the present we are solving strategic problems. But at any moment tactics may begin. It is important to be constantly ready (in particular – psychologically) to switch from positional manoeuvring to tactical lines.

I don't like the suggestion of 14  $\mathbb{Q}h3$ . This is sometimes played by Karpov in similar positions, but at h3 the bishop is badly placed. This move can be good when it creates the strong threat of attacking the bishop on e4. This is clearly not the case here.

Play the bishop to g5? Well, you and I have different views on life. I never give up a bishop – only if you put a knife to my throat. Yes, one of the possible plans is  $\mathbb{Q}a1$  followed by  $\mathbb{Q}fc1$  and a3–a4. Such play is especially appropriate when the centre is closed. I didn't want to begin it now, not because it is bad, but because it is nevertheless

less a pity that the centre is not closed. The opponent has a strong square at d5. It is desirable to force him somehow to declare his intentions in the centre.

The correct decision was found by our expert Igor Khenkin: 14 ♜b2. For the moment White does not determine anything. He intends ♜fd1, he retains the possibility of playing ♜a1, and the reply ...♝d5 will be made without gain of tempo. The modest queen move contains another veiled idea, which will become clear from what follows.

**14 ♜b2!**

**h6**

**15 ♜fd1**

**a6**

**16 ♜e1**

**d5**

White has calmly improved the placing of his pieces; his opponent has finally been unable to withstand the tension and has declared his intentions. Why did he play this? He wants to move his passive d7-knight via b8 to c6, but with the pawn on d6 it is bad to play ...♝b8 because of the reply c5xd6. Do you now understand the reason why I was not in a hurry to move my rook from c1?

**17 ♜f1!**

Only here did Valery see to his horror the strategic danger threatening him. The knight is going not to e5, but to a5 via the b3-square, which the queen has vacated for it. The bishop on f1 is required for an attack on the b5-pawn after the thematic a3–a4.

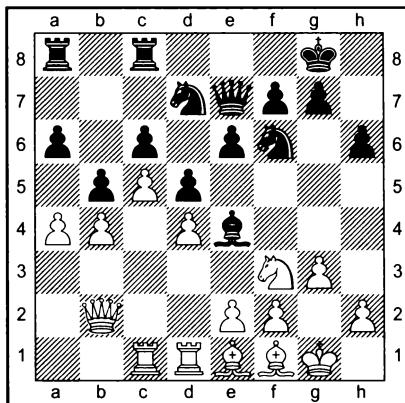
There is a suggestion for Black to remove his bishop in advance from e4, in order to meet the knight manoeuvre with his own knight: 18 ♜d2 ♜b8 19 ♜b3 ♜c6. However, for the moment I will not move my knight, but will play ♜a1 and a3–a4. And only after the opponent defends his b5-pawn with ...c7–c6 will I transfer my knight to a5. The threat of the sacrifice ♜xc6 also arises.

**17 . . .**

**c6**

If Black takes his knight to c6, it is not clear how he can hold his pawn on b5.

**18 a4**



Now, as our second expert Volodya Kramnik rightly remarked, Black should have seriously thought about the exchange on f3, in order to forestall the unpleasant knight manoeuvre. The position is a closed one, and in such cases bishops are no stronger than knights.

So, 18...♝xf3 19 exf3 g6 20 ♜a1. What should Black do? After 20...h5, apart from the manoeuvre ♜d2–g5, he has to reckon with the pawn offensive f3–f4, f2–f3, h2–h3 and g3–g4. Then the bishop will go to h4 or g3, with the constant threat of f4–f5. Moreover, it is not essential to do all this immediately – White can first play on the queenside, by doubling rooks on the a-file.

After 18...♝xf3 19 exf3 Khenkin suggests playing 19...e5. Unfortunately for Black, it is not clear what he wants. The bishop comes out to h3, and the rook endeavours to go to e1 as soon as possible. In the event of ...e5–e4 the white pawns are undoubled.

Thus the exchange on f3 does not promise Black an easy life. What other plan of defence can he choose?

18...♜a7 19 ♜a1 ♜b8 (to capture on b5 with the c-pawn and place the knight on c6) is an unpromising idea. It is too passive – White will not hurry with the exchange on b5, and the knight on b8 will be so pitiful!

Mark Dvoretsky's suggestion of ...♝f6–e8–c7 looks much better. But how is it, Mark

Izrailevich, that you seem to know everything, but your pupils can't discover a simple knight manoeuvre?

Here Salov quickly took a difficult decision, and, it would appear, a very strong one – he deferred the suggested manoeuvre and made a pawn move on the kingside. It is probable that previously he had already encountered this idea.

**18 ... g5!?**

Initially I did not understand the opponent's idea and I continued in the same direction.

**19 ♜a1 ♜e8**

It is hard to imagine, but ...g7–g5 and ...♞f6–e8 are links in the same plan. In the event of 20 ♜d2 ♜g6 21 f3 it will be possible to prevent the e3–e4 break by 21...f5. And if, after playing g3–g4, White tries to prepare ♜g3, the bishop will encounter the reply ...f5–f4. Generally speaking, for active play in the centre my bishop on e1 is badly placed. As you see, Salov not only hopes to hold the queenside, by placing his knight on c7, but he also takes measures beforehand to eliminate my future play in the centre and on the kingside. It would appear that a serious war in the future cannot be avoided.

The situation had seemed to be completely safe. I was manoeuvring my pieces within my own territory and, comfortably seated in my chair, I was thinking of how to win the game most simply. I will strengthen my position here, strengthen it there, and gradually break through the defence. But now it becomes clear that there will be no easy success, and I will definitely have to devise something.

However, my next few moves do not require any particular thought and are easily found.

**20 axb5**

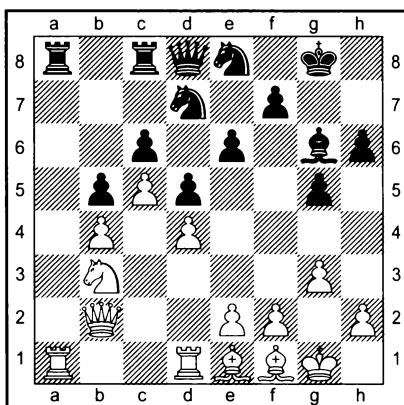
Just in case, I hurry to exchange pawns before the appearance of the knight on c7. But on the other wing too the knight has a comfortable square at g7.

**20 ... axb5**

**21 ♜d2 ♜g6**

**22 ♜b3 ♜d8**

What to do next – how can White strengthen his position?



It would appear that White should seek a way of exploiting the a-file and the weakness on c6. The seizure of the file would be a considerable achievement, but who is going to concede it? In the event of the exchange of all the rooks I did not see how to achieve anything real. For the moment the bishops are not taking part in the play, and diagonals for them must be found.

The solution to the position would seem to be to block the file as soon as possible (in the hope of again opening it in the future) and to initiate play on the kingside.

**23 ♜a5 ♜c7**

**24 ♜a3 ♜a6**

**25 ♜da1 ♜ca8**

But what to do now? Since I myself am not sure that what I did next was correct, let's discuss it together.

White would like to play f2–f3 and g3–g4, in order to bring his bishop out to g3. The opponent will obviously meet this with ...f7–f5.

It would be desirable to shake the enemy

defences as strongly as possible. From this point of view it is worth considering the attempt to latch on to the g5- and h6-pawns by 26 h4. If 26...gxh4, then 27 gxh4, and the rook can be switched to the kingside along the third rank.

It would not be bad first to include the queen in the attack, by placing it, say, at c1. But then it will cease to oppose the ...e6–e5 break.

I did not in fact manage to find a move which completely satisfied me, but in a practical game this is often a very difficult, almost unrealistic task. Time is limited, and a reserve of it is needed for the solving of purely tactical problems after the inevitable opening of the position. Thus sometimes you must quickly make some logical move, realising that it may not be the strongest.

**26 ♕c1?**

**f6**

Black decides against playing ...f7–f5 because of h2–h4, but now the plan of f2–f3, g3–g4 and ♖g3 gains in strength.

**27 f3**

**♘g7**

**28 ♖g2**

The bishop is no longer needed at f1, and from g2 it will support the e2–e4 advance. If White should succeed in playing this, the opponent will be deprived of ...e6–e5, his only real counter-chance, and therefore he must exploit it immediately.

**28 . . .**

**e5**

**29 dx5**

Strategy gives way to tactics. I exploit the fact that 29...fxe5? is bad in view of 30 h4!, when the g5-pawn cannot be held. If necessary, the pressure on the c1-h6 diagonal can be further intensified by ♖d2 (now it will be understandable why the queen went to c1).

**29 . . .**

**♘xe5**

**30 f4**

Strange: White's actions look logical, but the opponent's position is still holding out –

Salov has deployed his pieces very skilfully.

**30 . . .** **♘f7**

I was expecting only 30...♗d7, so that the knight should guard the f6-pawn. It turns out that this is by no means obligatory. But which is more correct, 30...♗d7 or 30...♘f7? I don't know – I fear that this is an irresolvable problem.

**31 ♗c3** **♖e8**

This was Salov's idea. I am forced to launch into tactical complications.

**32 ♗xf6** **gxsf4**

**33 ♗xg7**

If 33 gxf4 there is the unpleasant reply 33...♗h5.

**33 . . .** **♔xg7**

**34 gxf4**

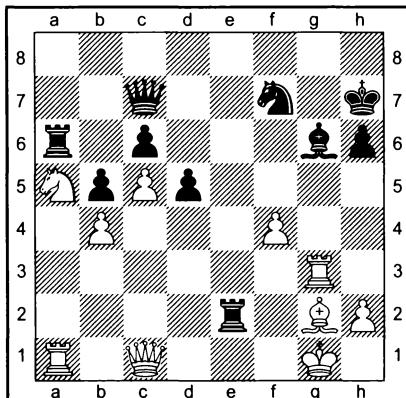
I am playing on the knight at f7 and the rook at a6, which are not too well placed, and I hope to be the first to switch my pieces to the kingside.

**34 . . .** **♖xe2**

**35 ♗g3**

A natural move, but 35 ♘f1!, intending f4–f5 and ♗g3+, was probably stronger. After some five minutes' thought I did not find this possibility, but I saw another idea.

**35 . . .** **♔h7**



**36 ♘f1**



A question: why did I play this? Was my flag about to fall? Well, we each did indeed have only about a minute left. Perhaps you don't like my move, but you realise that I did have some idea? That's right, the switching of my rook to g2 – I very much wanted to give mate on the g-file.

The black rook has to retreat on the e-file (36... $\mathbb{R}c2$  37  $\mathbb{W}e3$  is obviously not worth considering). But to which square? To e4, e7 or e8, or perhaps even e6?

The correct reply is e7, in order to defend the 7th rank. And from a8 the second rook will defend the 8th rank. But definitely not the other way round!

Let's look concretely at 36... $\mathbb{R}e7$ . Sacrifice on g6? This gives nothing – the knight on f7 securely defends the king. That means 37  $\mathbb{R}a2 \mathbb{Q}h8$  38  $\mathbb{R}ag2 \mathbb{R}a8$ .

How should White continue the attack? That's right, 39 f5!  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  40  $\mathbb{Q}d3$ , and if 40... $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  White has the decisive 41  $\mathbb{W}xh6+$ . But Black finds the defence 40... $\mathbb{R}f8$ . After 41  $\mathbb{R}h3$  there is 41... $\mathbb{R}e6$ , so 41  $\mathbb{R}f3!$  must be tried, and if 41... $\mathbb{R}ef7?$ , only then 42  $\mathbb{R}h3$ , and mate is inevitable. But how to win the game after 41... $\mathbb{R}e5$ , do you see? There is a pretty idea suggested by Kramnik: 42  $\mathbb{R}g4$  (renewing the threat of 43  $\mathbb{W}xh6+$ ), and if 42... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ , then 43  $\mathbb{R}h3 \mathbb{R}e1+ 44 \mathbb{W}xe1 \mathbb{Q}xg4$  45  $\mathbb{R}g3$  with an attack. But Black has the reply 42... $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ , and if 43  $\mathbb{R}xf8$  the double attack 43... $\mathbb{W}e7$ . There is no mate: 44  $\mathbb{R}xh8+$   $\mathbb{W}xh8$  45  $\mathbb{W}xh6+ \mathbb{Q}h7$ . [It is not essential to take the h6-pawn: 45  $\mathbb{R}c3!$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  46  $\mathbb{R}g3$  – the bishop is attacked, and the deadly 47  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  is threatened. But after 42... $\mathbb{Q}g6!$  43  $\mathbb{R}h3$  Black parries the attack by 43... $\mathbb{W}g7!$  – Dvoretsky.]

Instead of 42  $\mathbb{R}g4$  I would probably have preferred 42  $\mathbb{W}f1!$  (or 42  $\mathbb{W}b1!$ ).

If my opponent had played 36... $\mathbb{R}e7!$ , in time-trouble I would have been unlikely to see the mating idea f4–f5 and  $\mathbb{W}xh6+$  – this is within

the powers of perhaps only our expert Volodya Kramnik. Besides, Black's defence can be improved. Instead of 38... $\mathbb{R}a8?$  he can choose 38... $\mathbb{Q}e4!$ .

It is good if you have at least half an hour in reserve – you can sit calmly and calculate variations. But for some reason time is invariably lacking when you most need it. If only one could learn to play chess, so that at the required moment there is always sufficient time!

36 . . .  $\mathbb{R}e8?$

37  $\mathbb{R}a2$

It is probable that the position is now lost – it is hard to defend against the mate on g7.

37 . . .  $\mathbb{Q}e4$

38  $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$

In the event of 38... $\mathbb{R}g8$  the simple 39  $\mathbb{W}f6$  is strong. It transpires that Salov had his own idea – the switching of his knight to g6. The ideas of grandmasters sometimes turn out to be bad, but it is very rarely that they play without ideas.

39  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}g6?$

39... $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  40  $\mathbb{W}xd3+$   $\mathbb{R}e4$  41  $\mathbb{R}ag2 \mathbb{R}a7$  was essential.

40  $\mathbb{R}ag2$   $\mathbb{R}xa5??$

A typical fortieth move in time-trouble. In the tournament bulletin it is awarded two question marks, but undeservedly – all the same there was no way of saving the game.

[No, quite deservedly – since Black could have seized the initiative with 40... $\mathbb{Q}xd3!$  41  $\mathbb{W}xd3 \mathbb{R}e1+$  42  $\mathbb{Q}f2 \mathbb{R}e4$ . Therefore White's last move should be awarded not an exclamation mark, but a question mark. He could have won by 40  $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$   $\mathbb{R}xe4$  (40... $dxe4$  41  $\mathbb{R}ag2$ ) 41  $\mathbb{R}xg6$  or 41  $\mathbb{W}f6$ . In a sharp time-scramble such mutual tactical errors are, alas, almost inevitable – Dvoretsky.]

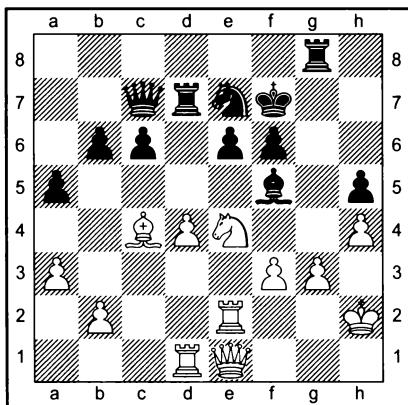
41  $\mathbb{R}xg6$

Black resigned.

It anyone should tell you that grandmasters play without making mistakes – don't believe it! In Linares, an elite tournament (17th FIDE Category), there was a huge number of blunders, and not only in time-trouble. Artur Yusupov, for example, blundered away an important pawn against Miguel Illescas as early as the 8th move. And here is another example of a surprising 40th move.

### Timman – Karpov

Linares 1992



For a start, in a good position Jan Timman for some reason gave up his central pawn: **39**  $\blacksquare c1?? \blacksquare xd4$  **40**  $\blacksquare xf6$ . And now, instead of the easily winning  $40... \blacksquare xh4+ 41 \blacksquare g2 \blacksquare h3+$ , Karpov chose  $40... \blacksquare xf6?? 41 \blacksquare xe6+ \blacksquare xe6$  **42**  $\blacksquare xe6+ \blacksquare g7$  **43**  $\blacksquare f7+ \blacksquare h6$  **44**  $\blacksquare f6+ \blacksquare g6$  ( $44... \blacksquare g6$  allows mate on h8) **45**  $\blacksquare xd4$ . Although he held on for a further ten moves, it was exclusively thanks to his personal qualities.

In the eighth round my game with the world champion took place. At that point I had just two points, but I was still wanting to finish in the prize-winners. This meant that I had to beat Kasparov. But how to achieve this?

### Bareev – Kasparov

Linares 1992

*King's Indian Defence*

- |                            |                   |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>1</b> d4                | $\blacksquare f6$ |
| <b>2</b> c4                | $g6$              |
| <b>3</b> $\blacksquare c3$ | $\blacksquare g7$ |
| <b>4</b> e4                | d6                |
| <b>5</b> $\blacksquare e2$ | 0-0               |
| <b>6</b> $\blacksquare g5$ |                   |

This is the Averbakh Variation. Which of you King's Indian players can tell me, what is the most popular move for Black? This was the one that was made.

- |                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| <b>6</b> . . . | $\blacksquare a6$ |
| <b>7</b> h4    |                   |

A novelty? No, it's not. Here, you can read in the bulletin: Budnikov–Kruppa, USSR Championship 1991.

What is the idea of the move h2–h4? Do you think that I want to give mate? No, here there is no mate. On the contrary, White is hoping to block the kingside, in order to deprive the opponent of active possibilities. Khenkin adds: '...and develop the knight at h3'. Yes, here the knight is more actively placed – I think it was Tarrasch who first said this?

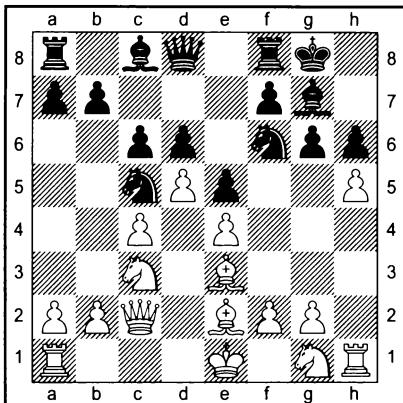
Here the world champion fell asleep. In principle, of course, he knows everything and he usually plays the opening quickly. But if you set him some problem, he becomes the same as anyone else – he starts to think, and sometimes for a long time.

- |                |      |
|----------------|------|
| <b>7</b> . . . | $h6$ |
|----------------|------|

After the game the champion timidly suggested that he should have played  $7...c5$ .

- |                             |                   |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>8</b> $\blacksquare e3$  | e5                |
| <b>9</b> d5                 | $\blacksquare c5$ |
| <b>10</b> $\blacksquare c2$ | c6                |
| <b>11</b> h5                |                   |

(see diagram)



When in a joint analysis after the game I mentioned the move made by Yuri Kruppa, Kasparov immediately pooh-poohed it. Try to guess what decision was condemned (and, probably, rightly) by the world champion. The move ...g6–g5? No, that's in fact what he played. The reply that he didn't like was 11...gxh5?!. It not only weakens the f5-square, but the h6-pawn comes under attack and the h1-rook is immediately in play. The King's Indian Defence is a resilient opening, and even here not all is clear, but nevertheless this is not what Black should play.

11 ...

g5

[A year later in the Interzonal Tournament (Biel 1993) Gelfand tried against Bareev a clever idea of Mikhail Shereshevsky: 11...cx d5 12 cxd5 ♜d7?! 13 hxg6 fxg6. After 14 b4 (the capture of the h6-pawn would allow Black to gain excellent counterplay along the newly-opened h-file: 14 ♜xh6 ♜xh6 15 ♜xh6 ♛g7 16 ♜h1 ♜h8 17 ♜xh8 ♛xh8) 14...d5 15 a3 h5 16 f3 a complicated position was reached with chances for both sides. And later 11...cx d5 12 cxd5 ♜a5?! was also employed – Dvoretsky.]

12 f3

a5

13 g4

As was planned, the kingside has been successfully blocked. But what would you say about attempts such as 13 0-0-0 or 13

qd1? The idea of them is to hinder the development of the bishop at d7, and to force the preliminary exchange of pawns on d5.

More specifically: 13 ♜d1 (or 13 0-0-0) 13...cx d5 14 cxd5 ♜d7 15 ♜xc5 dxc5. What is the assessment of the resulting position? Can't I succeed with the plan of seizing control of the light squares?

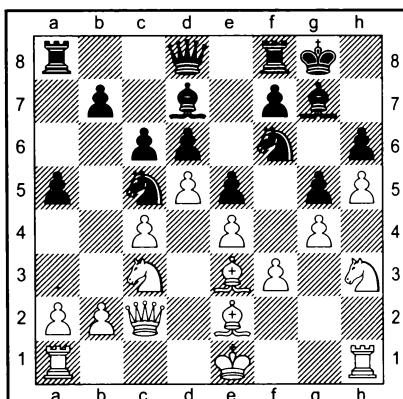
Khenkin thinks that strategically White stands better. Perhaps strategically this is so, if, say, we make two successive moves for White – a2–a4 and ♜e2–c4. But dynamically, after 16 a4 c4! (with the idea of ...wb6, ...fc8 and ...f8–c5) the situation is far from clear. The dark squares are very weak, and nowhere will my king feel comfortable. Of course, it is possible to play this as White, but I would not recommend it. And not with every opponent can you decide to go in for a position of this sort. Against Kasparov this is completely hopeless – he has too keen a feeling for the initiative. I chose a completely different strategy, aimed at restriction – I tried not to allow him to calculate variations, and to remind him what it was like to fight in his matches against Karpov.

13 ...

qd7

14 ♜h3

Let's try and devise a plan for Black.



There is a suggestion that he should play

14... $\mathbb{W}b8$ . I remember that a similar manoeuvre was carried out in 1982 in a game Bareev–Khenkin, and in the meantime it has not become any better. At that time Igor was not yet a King's Indian player and he can be excused.

Another proposal is 14...cxd5 15 cxd5  $\mathbb{W}c8$  (threatening 16... $\mathbb{Q}xh5$ ) 16  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}a4$ . I will tell you in secret that I myself was dreaming of finding some way to exchange the knight on c5.

Here, finally, is the correct idea: 14...a4, preparing ... $\mathbb{W}a5$  followed by the exchange on d5, ... $\mathbb{Q}fc8$  and ...b7–b5. Black only needs to delay slightly, when he would find himself in a positional bind, and therefore he needs urgently to take the offensive on the queenside. If the b7-pawn should reach b4 and drive away the knight, White will suffer from a lack of space and will be unable to arrange his pieces normally.

14...

a4!

What should I do now? In a game there can be key moments, on which its entire subsequent course depends. Either you find the correct plan and you hold the initiative, or you fail to solve the problem and you begin to drift.

Perhaps the move made by me is not too good, but something had to be done, and I do not see any other way of combating the opponent's plan. At any event, against the world champion my idea justified itself. If you are able to find it, you can confidently play the Averbakh Variation with White.

Take on c6? This is what many have done and for none of them did it turn out well. Black recaptures 15...bxc6 and the weakness of the d6-pawn is of no significance.

Yes, you're right, you must play the queen to d2. A difficult move! Only, don't think that I wanted to sacrifice a piece on g5. The idea is to exchange the queens.

15  $\mathbb{W}d2!$

cxd5

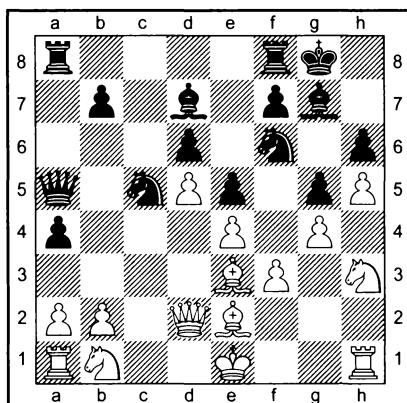
16 cxd5

$\mathbb{W}a5$

The champion sat for 25 minutes, calculating the variation 16... $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  17 fxe4  $\mathbb{Q}fxe4$  18  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ . After the game he regretted that he had not gone in for this continuation, although he also agreed that after 19  $\mathbb{W}b4$  the piece is worth more than the pawns.

17  $\mathbb{Q}b1$

And what would you now play with Black?



First, let's assess the position. You think that White stands slightly better? Apparently that's what Kasparov also assumed, but I am not so sure. I think that the chances are roughly equal.

Who suggested 17... $\mathbb{W}c7$ ? But why immediately capitulate in this way? I reply 18  $\mathbb{Q}a3$ , then  $\mathbb{B}c1$ ,  $\mathbb{Q}f2$  and at some point  $\mathbb{Q}c4$ . Black is left with no counterplay.

Khenkin recommends 17... $\mathbb{W}xd2+$  18  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  (18  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $\mathbb{Q}fxe4+$  is dangerous for White) 18...b5 19  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}fc8$ . Correct! Black should probably have gone in for this position – to me it seemed roughly equal. To fight for an advantage the white knight should stand not at d2, but at a3.

In view of this, 18  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  can also be considered. But I would not have ventured this, since then the sacrifice of a piece is unpleasant. If 18... $\mathbb{Q}fxe4$  19 fxe4  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ , then 20  $\mathbb{Q}c3$ ; therefore I suggest 18... $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  19

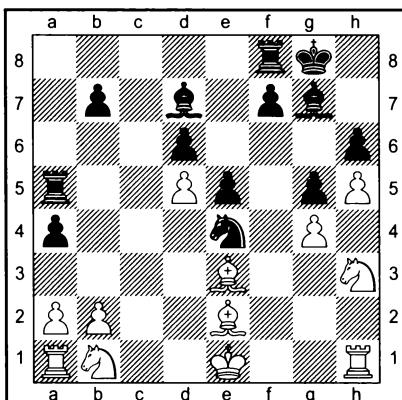


$\text{fxg4 } \mathbb{Q}\text{cxe4}$  (with the idea of ... $\mathbb{Q}\text{xd5}$ ), and if 20  $\mathbb{Q}\text{f3} - 20\ldots \mathbb{Q}\text{xd2}$  followed by 21...e4. [Apparently, after 20  $\mathbb{Q}\text{c3? } \mathbb{Q}\text{xc3} 21 \text{ bxc3 } \mathbb{Q}\text{xd5} 22 \text{ c4 White would nevertheless have stood better} - \text{Dvoretsky.}]$

Each of us has his own style, his own way of playing. In Black's place I would have agreed to the exchange of queens. But Kasparov does not like positions in which he has no counterplay. He did not want to go into a quiet and slightly inferior (as it seemed to him) endgame, and so he decided on a rather dubious piece sacrifice. In addition he took into account my reputation of being a player who is incapable of calculating a single variation, and he wanted to exploit this. In the end I did indeed go wrong, but here he was simply lucky – the resulting position was not one of those where I often go wrong, since in fact there was hardly anything to calculate.

17 ...	$\mathbb{Q}\text{fxe4}$
18 $\text{fxe4}$	$\mathbb{Q}\text{xe4}$
19 $\mathbb{W}\text{x a5}$	$\mathbb{Q}\text{x a5}$

What move should White make?



After the game Kasparov showed me many interesting variations. I hadn't seen them, but there was no need to.

**20  $\mathbb{Q}\text{c3!}$**

A simple and very strong move. If 20... $\mathbb{Q}\text{xc3}$

21  $\text{bxc3 } \mathbb{Q}\text{xd5}$ , then 22  $\mathbb{Q}\text{f2}$  with a subsequent blockade on the light squares. Black has three pawns for the knight, but without counterplay this is insufficient – he needs some dynamic factor, such as two connected passed pawns.

White would have lost (or almost lost) after 20  $\mathbb{Q}\text{f2? } \mathbb{Q}\text{g3} 21 \mathbb{Q}\text{g1 } \mathbb{Q}\text{xe2} 22 \mathbb{Q}\text{xe2 e4}$ , and the b2-pawn cannot be defended.

Khenkin suggests 20  $\mathbb{Q}\text{b6 } \mathbb{Q}\text{xd5} 21 \mathbb{Q}\text{f3}$ . I don't like this – I wanted to make normal, solid moves, whereas here, with his development incomplete, White scatters his pieces around too much. Apart from 21... $\mathbb{Q}\text{b5}$ , he even has to reckon with 21... $\mathbb{Q}\text{f6} 22 \mathbb{Q}\text{xd5 } \mathbb{Q}\text{xd5}$ . He is a rook up, but the g4-pawn is lost, and in the future also, possibly, the h5-pawn. Too complicated!

**20 ...**  $\mathbb{Q}\text{g3}$   
**21  $\mathbb{Q}\text{g1}$**

I thought for a long time about 21  $\mathbb{Q}\text{f2}$  – an attempt, by also giving up the exchange, to play for a blockade. But a rook is nevertheless stronger than a knight.

**21 ...**  $\mathbb{Q}\text{xe2}$

21... $\mathbb{Q}\text{h5}$  has been suggested. Then, if there is nothing better, 22  $\mathbb{Q}\text{xg5 } \mathbb{Q}\text{f4} 23 \mathbb{Q}\text{ge4 } \mathbb{Q}\text{xd5} 24 \mathbb{Q}\text{xd5 } \mathbb{Q}\text{xd5} 25 \text{ g5}$  and White has an obvious advantage. 21... $\text{f5} 22 \mathbb{Q}\text{xg3 } \mathbb{Q}\text{f4}$  also did not work: 23  $\mathbb{Q}\text{b6!}$ .

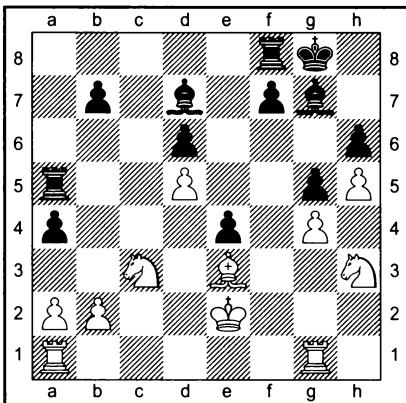
**22  $\mathbb{Q}\text{xe2}$**

What move should Black make? Of course, he has to open the diagonal of his dark-square bishop.

**22 ...**  $\mathbf{e4}$

And what should White play?

(see diagram)



He has to reckon not only with 23...a3, but also 23... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  24 bxc3  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ , then ... $\mathbb{Q}b5+$  and ... $\mathbb{Q}d3$ . His king is not too secure, and the e4-pawn can never be captured – in general, he has problems in converting his advantage. And yet White's position is already close to being won.

### 23 $\mathbb{Q}ac1!$

Now to 23...a3 there is the reply 24 b4, while if 23... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ , then either 24  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ , or 24 bxc3  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  25 c4. It is by such uncomplicated but accurate moves that a game is held together. Many of them have to be made – miss one somewhere, and the result can change.

The other natural continuation 23  $\mathbb{Q}ad1$  would apparently have been weaker because of 23...f5! 24 gxf5 a3 25  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  (25 b4  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  26 bxa5  $\mathbb{Q}b5+$  27  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5+$  28  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}e2!$ ) 25... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  26  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  axb2 with an unclear game.

**23 . . .** **f5**  
**24 gxf5**

One of the critical moments of the game. Here the champion thought for a long time. Incidentally, good players also differ from the not so good in that, for some reason, it is at the critical, most important moments that they think.

Black stands worse. If he hopes to save the game, he must all the time find the strongest moves, which do not worsen his position any

further and maintain counterplay – otherwise the opponent's task will become too easy. He has three possibilities: the capture on f5 with bishop or rook, and also the attack on the h5-pawn.

The last possibility is the strongest. If Black should manage to obtain two connected passed pawns on the kingside, and also post his bishop at f3, nothing will remain of White's advantage. Kasparov saw 24... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ , of course, but he rejected it. Why?

Dvoretsky suggested that it was because of 25  $\mathbb{Q}f4$ . It is unlikely that Kasparov considered this, since he did not mention it in our joint analysis after the game. 25...gxf4 26  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  is certainly dangerous for Black, but he has the simple 25... $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ .

The world champion was concerned about the position arising after 25  $\mathbb{Q}xg5!$  hxg5 26  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$ . But he had no need to – here at least the number of pieces is equal. For example, if 27  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  Black can consider either 27... $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ , or 27... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ , intending ... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  or ... $\mathbb{Q}b5$ .

**24 . . .**  **$\mathbb{Q}xf5?$**   
**25  $\mathbb{Q}f2$**   **$\mathbb{Q}e8$**

Which move did I make, without any thought at all? That's correct, the pawn has to be defended – it is just too important.

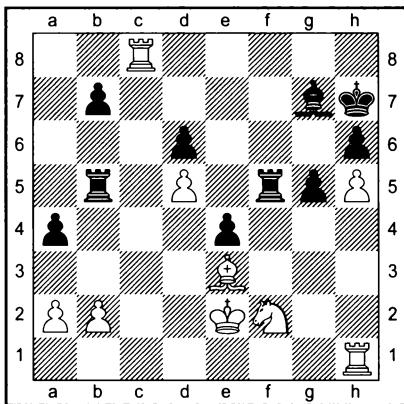
**26  $\mathbb{Q}h1$**

At this moment Kasparov's wife became anxious. Apparently she can't play chess, but she can clearly determine the situation on the board either from the expression on her husband's face, or by the movement with which he straightens his tie. Evidently at this moment he pulled his tie the wrong way.

**26 . . .**  **$\mathbb{Q}b5+$**

Here I believed that I was going to win. If the opponent himself gives up such an important bishop, it means that all is not well in his position.

**27  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$**   **$\mathbb{Q}xb5$**   
**28  $\mathbb{Q}c8+$**   **$\mathbb{Q}h7$**



If you can now find one more correct move, you will win the game, irrespective of whom you are playing against.

After 26  $\mathbb{H}h1!$  it should not have been so difficult to play again in the same style: 29... $\mathbb{B}b1!$ . At the board after 29... $\mathbb{B}fxd5$  I considered only the reply 30  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ . But it is not the strongest: after all, Black is dreaming of placing either of his rooks on h4 and picking up the h5-pawn, and the capture of the e4-pawn makes it easier to carry out this plan. 30 b4! axb3 (otherwise 31 a3) 31 axb3 is much stronger. It is true that there are few pawns left on the board, but this is unimportant. It only remains for me to begin an attack – place my rook on c7 and then direct the second rook into the opponent's position.

Unfortunately, I did not see as far as 30 b4. As a result I rejected 29  $\mathbb{B}b1!$  and threw away the win.

**29  $\mathbb{B}d1?$**

$\mathbb{B}xb2+$

**30  $\mathbb{B}d2$**

That day I would have been better playing draughts, because I only calculated variations with captures: 30... $\mathbb{B}xd2+$  31  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $\mathbb{B}xd5$  32  $\mathbb{Q}c3$ . After the exchange of bishops there is nothing to defend the king and my attack would be bound to succeed.

**30 . . .**

**a3!**

With a sigh of relief Kasparov's wife sat back in her chair – it was sensed that she was now

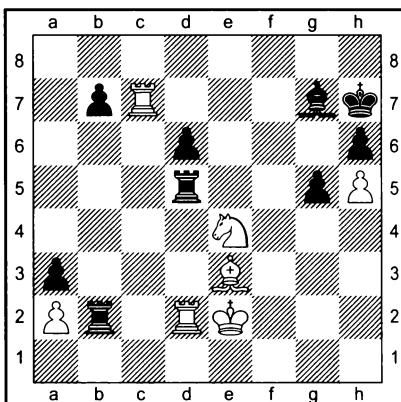
relaxed about the outcome of the game.

**31  $\mathbb{B}c7$**

**$\mathbb{B}xd5$**

**32  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$**

What should Black play?



The correct course was 32... $\mathbb{B}xd2+$  33  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  followed by 34... $\mathbb{B}xa2$ . But Kasparov preferred to move his king immediately.

**32 . . .**

**$\mathbb{Q}g8?$**

How did White reply?

**33  $\mathbb{B}cc2!$**

This move does not change the evaluation of the position. But whereas after the exchange of rooks on d2 the position would have been simply equal, now, in time-trouble, to hold the game Black had to demonstrate everything he was capable of. To the credit of the world champion, who was again under the threat of defeat, he began playing with redoubled strength.

White wants to exchange a pair of rooks: 34  $\mathbb{B}xd5$   $\mathbb{B}xc2+$  35  $\mathbb{B}d2$ , and if 35... $\mathbb{B}b2$  – 36  $\mathbb{Q}d3$ , intending 37  $\mathbb{B}xb2$  axb2 38  $\mathbb{Q}c2$ . The h5-pawn is alive, and the black pawns are weak – in general I retain excellent chances of success.

**33 . . .**

**b5!**

**34  $\mathbb{B}xd5$**

**$\mathbb{B}xc2+$**

**35  $\mathbb{B}d2$**

**$\mathbb{B}b2$**



**Karpov – Bareev**

Linares 1992

Slav Defence

1 d4 d5

2 c4 c6

3 ♜c3

Delaying the development of the g1-knight has some point. For example, in the variation 3...♝f6 4 cxd5 cxd5 5 ♜f4 ♜c6 6 e3 e6 7 ♜d3 ♜d6 White can play 8 ♜xd6 ♜xd6 9 f4!. But it is well known that nothing comes for free. The move order chosen by Karpov also contains a drawback: the opponent has a sharp gambit continuation, which has now come into fashion.

3... e5!?

4 dx5 d4

5 ♜e4 ♜a5+

6 ♜d2

6 ♜d2!? would seem to be stronger. But I don't want to dwell on the subtleties of the opening – it would take too much time to investigate the numerous complicated and non-standard positions which can arise. So let's restrict ourselves to just one – that which arises on emerging from the opening in this game. And if you want to work on the theory of the opening, you can do that yourself.

6... ♜d7

7 e6!?

Here 7 ♜f3 ♜xe5 has also been played, but usually Black has managed to maintain the balance.

7... fxe6

8 g3 e5

9 ♜g2 ♜gf6

10 ♜gf3

10 ♜h3.

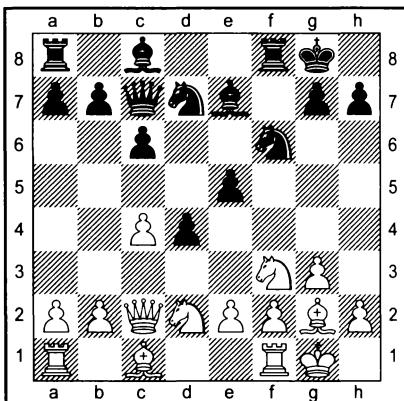
10... ♜e7

11 0-0 ♜c7

12 ♜c2

A very natural move, but in my opinion, not a very good one. In the game Nikolic–Schwartzman (Wijk aan Zee 1995) 12 ♜e1!? 0-0 13 e3 was tried.

12... 0-0



Let's begin from here! I wonder if anyone can suggest the move chosen by the former world champion?

13 ♜g5 easily comes to mind. It is not very good, since after 13... ♜c5 Black is threatening 14... h6. All the pieces are exchanged on e4, and the result is a draw.

You want to play 13 c5, placing the pawn en prise? To say the least, this is not at all a Karpov move.

No other suggestions? A pity. He made his move very quickly.

13 b3

It can happen that you are thinking after a move made by Karpov, and you find an idea which you want to carry out. But first you have to understand his plan. He does not want to exchange pieces prematurely; he will develop his bishop at b2, place his queen's rook at e1 or d1, and attack the centre with e2–e3. All his pieces will be harmoniously placed. Black must somehow oppose the opponent's plan, and find a counter-plan.

I see two ideas for Black. Neither of them is immediately apparent.

The first begins with the obvious 13... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ , but after 14  $\mathbb{A}b2$  he needs a move which does not immediately suggest itself: 14...g6!. After e2–e3 the bishop goes with gain of tempo to f5, and then the knight to d3.

You suggest preparing the development of the bishop by 14... $\mathbb{Q}g4$  (instead of 14...g6)? To be honest, I didn't see this move. Let's have a look: 15 h3  $\mathbb{A}f5$  16  $\mathbb{W}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  17 g4  $\mathbb{A}g6$  – everything would seem to be alright. Perhaps this was even stronger.

I chose a different plan – an interesting one, but on another occasion I would not have gone in for it (13... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  is simpler and safer).

**13 ...**  $\mathbb{E}e8$

**14  $\mathbb{A}b2$**   $\mathbb{A}f8!$

Now if 15 e3 there follows 15...d3! and 16...e4.

**15  $\mathbb{Q}g5$**   $\mathbb{Q}c5$

If the e4-square is conceded to White's knight, he will gain an obvious advantage, and for free. My idea is first to exchange the knights, then the light-square bishops, to leave the opponent with only a bishop on b2 and not to allow it to become active, by meeting e2–e3 with ...c6–c5.

It is impossible to guess Karpov's next move. Dvoretsky's suggestion is 16 a3. Close! This was the second move suggested by the ex-champion after the game.

**16 h3**

Typical Karpov! After thinking what he was defending against, I finally realised what I myself want – 16...g6 and 17... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ . I am ashamed to say that even after 15... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  I did not yet see the idea of bringing out the bishop to f5. After mentally thanking my opponent for the hint, I continued playing.

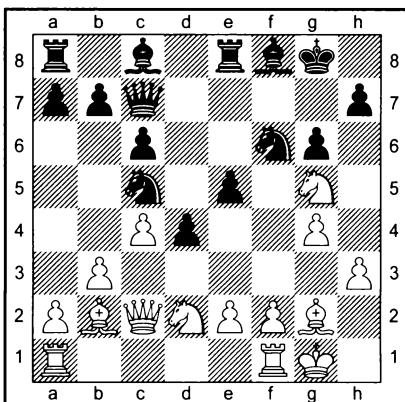
**16 ...**  $\mathbb{g}6$

**17 g4**

Karpov has taken control of the f5-square and is continuing the fight for the light squares.

When you are playing such a complicated game, you constantly have to choose from continuations that are almost equivalent. One move is slightly stronger, another is slightly weaker – how do you sense this? After analysing the position later, I came to the conclusion that instead of 16...g6 it would have been more accurate to play 16...a5!. The move is a sensible one, of course, but why it should be made at this precise moment – during the game it was completely impossible to understand this. I will explain: after  $\mathbb{Q}g5$ –e4 it is important to have the reply ...a5–a4. There is the threat of driving away the bishop by ...a4–a3, and if the white rook is no longer at a1, it will be possible to exchange pawns on b3 and advance the rook to a2.

All this is rather complicated, and I cannot condemn myself for the move made in the game, 16...g6. But my next inaccuracy was altogether more serious.



An important and rather complicated moment in the game. Can you work out what is happening here and what should be played? Often, for some reason, it is bad moves which instantly come to mind. However, it is easier to find a bad move than to make it, because you cannot bring yourself to play it and you begin to have doubts.

And here we have the first not altogether



successful suggestion: 17...b6. Why weaken the c6-square? In order to combat White's plan? But what is his plan? You think it is to place the knight on e4? Nothing of the sort! His main idea is the undermining move e2–e3! You would have played your bishop to g7? You have found something to boast about. Many would have played this, and that's what I played. But I shouldn't have done.

We will find the correct solution if we understand why the seemingly rather natural move 17...g7 is bad. No, it is not a matter of 18 b4 ♜e6 19 ♜ge4 – after all, here I have the excellent f4-point.

Incidentally, the problem also proved to be too difficult for Karpov. He is a mighty prophylactic player, and is especially strong in moves such as 16 h3, but here there is nothing for White to defend against – he simply needs to find an active plan.

After 17...g7? the reply 18 e3! is very strong. If 18...d3, then 19 ♕d1. The idea was to support the d3-pawn by ...e5–e4, but now 19...e4 is dangerous because of the exchange sacrifice 20 ♜xf6 ♜xf6 21 ♜gxe4, or first 20 b4!?. If 19...h6 20 ♜ge4, while after 19...h5 there is the strong reply 20 b4. In every case the d3-pawn, lacking support by the other pieces and pawns, is lost.

Black would probably have had to reject 18...d3 in favour of 18...dxe3 19 fxe3, when White has achieved exactly what he wanted. He has deployed his forces well and has won the strategic battle.

One of the experts suggested that, although the strategic battle has been lost, the position can be held by tactics: 19...h6. Let us check: 20 ♜xf6 ♜xg5 21 ♜xg6+! hxg6 22 ♜xg6+, and in whose favour are the tactics? Of course, it does sometimes happen that a chance tactical opportunity changes the evaluation of a position. But normally, if you are strategically lost, here everything collapses and all the variations turn out not in your favour.

18...h6 (instead of 18...dxe3) hardly helps Black. White has a pleasant choice between 19 exd4 and 19 ♜ge4.

How should Black defend? 17...h6 is better than 17...g7, but it involves a loss of time (the bishop is doing nothing on h6). After 18 ♜ge4 ♜xe4 19 ♜xe4 ♜xe4 20 ♜xe4 White's position is preferable in view of the same idea of the undermining move e2–e3. The correct solution is 17...e6!. Now if e2–e3 Black always has the reply ...c6–c5. In the event of 18 ♜ge4 ♜xe4 19 ♜xe4 g7 we reach a position which occurred in the game.

I will once again emphasise: sometimes in a game a critical moment is reached. If you miss it, if you fail to find an accurate move, the game changes course and may begin to go downhill.

The problems which Karpov and I were trying to solve were seemingly purely strategic, but at the same time the play was full of tactics, little concrete variations, which needed to be discovered and calculated. Sometimes you have to delve into a position and think for at least ten minutes. You can't spend ten minutes on every move – otherwise, before you know it, you end up in time-trouble. But at important, critical moments, time should be spent. The question is merely to decide which moment is critical. Anatoly Evgenievich and I did not manage to do this, and we both missed it.

17 . . .	g7?
18 ♜de4?	fxe4
19 ♜xe4	e6

It is now time for White to forget about striving for an advantage and to think about how to equalise. The undermining move 20 e3 is now pointless because of 20...c5, and the exchange on d4 will give me the very important f4-point.

20 b4

Apart from 20 e3, I also considered 20 c5,

but the move in the game did not occur to me. Meanwhile it is quite thematic. Why was Karpov not in a hurry to advance his pawn to c5? To avoid conceding the d5-point to the bishop (20 c5  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  21 e3  $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  and .. $\mathbb{Q}e6-d5$ ).

**20 . . .**  $\mathbb{Q}f4$

**21 e3**  $\mathbb{Q}xg2$

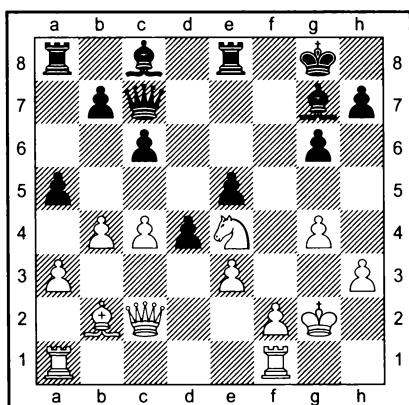
**22  $\mathbb{Q}xg2$**

How would you assess this position? More pleasant for Black? But it is not enough to give such an assessment – you must also demonstrate it, and this is not easy. For example, nothing is given by 22... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  in view of 23  $\mathbb{Q}g5$ . Here I engaged in something rather pointless – I tried to breach the opponent's defences immediately, by analysing 22...c5 23  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  b6 24  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$ . Finally I sensed: this does not work, White's position is too solid. In addition I have an extremely stupid bishop on g7. It was very useful to realise that at the very first opportunity I should try to get rid of this useless piece.

**22 . . .**  $a5!$

**23 a3**

Of course, I advanced my a-pawn. If you don't play this, you simply lose your self-respect! But what next?



I still can't understand why I didn't make the natural move 23... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ !. At c7 the queen is

doing nothing, whereas from e7 it covers two important diagonals, defends the f6-square and attacks the b4-pawn. If 24 c5, then 24... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  25  $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$ . It is probable that I was instinctively afraid of placing my queen at e7 because of some tactics involving  $\mathbb{Q}ae1$  – but I was wrong! 24  $\mathbb{Q}ae1$  axb4 25 axb4  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  26 exd4 does not work in view of 26... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ , or, even better, 26... $\mathbb{Q}a2$ . Perhaps White should play 24 exd4 immediately, but then he has to reckon with the interposition of 24...axb4!?

**23 . . .**  $\mathbb{Q}f8$

The next problem is what to do as White. It is like this, when you are playing a game, and there is no time to relax – one problem after another!

24 c5 is obviously illogical – it was against this that Black's last move was aimed: now the knight goes to d6 without gain of tempo.

The correct reply was 24 f3!. White must consolidate. If Karpov had found it, he would not have lost. But he made a move from the ranks of 'how not to play chess'.

**24  $\mathbb{Q}ad1?$**

He wants to capture on d4, but he plays this in the wrong order. For a start I open the file which has been conceded to me.

**24 . . .**  $axb4$

**25 axb4**  $dxe3!$

Now the two possibilities available to White are of roughly equal merit, and neither gives clear equality. If he captures 26 fxe3, then after 26... $\mathbb{Q}xf1$  27  $\mathbb{Q}xf1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  the b4-pawn is hanging. I develop my bishop at e6 and at some point play ...h7–h5.

**26 f3**

If White were to make another couple of moves in succession and pick up the e3-pawn, he would stand better. But who is going to allow that? Can you guess what I played?

**26 . . .**  $\mathbb{Q}e7$

At last! 26... $\mathbb{Q}a2$  was premature – the opponent would have replied 27  $\mathbb{Q}de1$  and then driven away the rook with 28  $\mathbb{W}b3$ . But now the b4-pawn is hanging, and in the event of 27 c5  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  I am now securely controlling the a2-square.

**27  $\mathbb{Q}c1$**

'What candidate moves are there?' Artur Yusupov would have asked you here.

Excellent – 27... $\mathbb{Q}h6$  and 27... $\mathbb{W}xb4$ . And which one shall we make?

**27 ...  $\mathbb{Q}h6!$**

After 27... $\mathbb{W}xb4$  28  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  White's position is not worse, despite being a pawn down.

**28  $\mathbb{Q}de1$**

Karpov finally realised that his rook on d1 was doing nothing. What should Black play now?

**28 ...  $\mathbb{Q}e6$**

And again in the event of 28... $\mathbb{W}xb4$ ? I would have been tricked: 29 g5  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  30  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  with equality. Now, however, things become bad for White – he has nothing better than 29  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ , but then he will not have sufficient compensation for the b4-pawn.

You wish to try 29  $\mathbb{Q}c5$ ? Black replies 29... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  30  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  31  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  b5, and how is White to defend? Let us continue the variation: 32  $\mathbb{Q}fe1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  33  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{W}f7(f6)$ . There is a double attack on f3 and a2, and later I will add the bishop on d5.

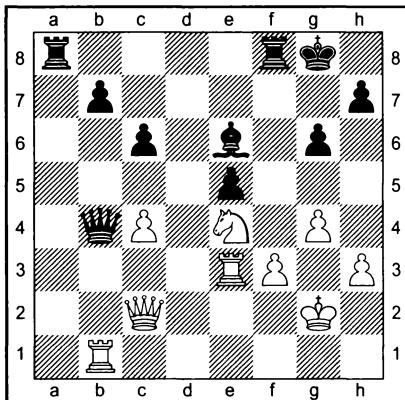
32  $\mathbb{W}c3$ ? (instead of 32  $\mathbb{Q}fe1$ ) is a cleverer idea: 32... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  (32... $\mathbb{Q}a2+ 33 \mathbb{Q}f2$ ) 33  $\mathbb{Q}a1$ , but after 33... $\mathbb{Q}xa1$  34  $\mathbb{W}xa1$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  White still stands worse, and worse than in the game. After all, a bishop is stronger than a knight!

**29  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$                      $\mathbb{Q}xe3$**

**30  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$                      $\mathbb{W}xb4$**

**31  $\mathbb{Q}b1$**

Again there are two candidate moves: 31... $\mathbb{W}xc4$  and 31... $\mathbb{W}e7$ . Which would you prefer?



I thought that in the endgame after 31... $\mathbb{W}xc4$  32  $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  33  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$  I would have only a slight advantage thanks to my extra pawn, but Karpov said that it was altogether drawn. You may not believe me, but you should believe Karpov!

**31 ...  $\mathbb{W}e7!$**

White's position would appear to be tenable, but he needs to make accurate moves. And here Karpov had run into time-trouble.

**32  $\mathbb{Q}f2$**

This move did not even occur to me – why remove the knight from the centre? I thought that it was important for White to pick up the b7-pawn and therefore I was expecting 32  $\mathbb{W}b2!$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  33  $\mathbb{W}xb7$ . What can I do? Exchange queens and after 33... $\mathbb{W}xb7$  34  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$  attempt by 34... $\mathbb{Q}a2+$  35  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}f1$  to give mate? This is clearly a utopian dream. It is probably better to play 33... $\mathbb{W}h4$  (threatening a rook check) and then 34... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ . But how to win here, I don't know – it is extremely difficult to shake White's defences. In the game I had trouble in breaching a similar position even though I was the exchange up. Why, though, did the opponent play his knight to f2? He wanted to capture the e5-pawn, but here he was unfortunate – I found a strong reply. What was it?

No, not 32... $\mathbb{W}c5$ . Here he had something prepared – 33  $\mathbb{W}c3$  or 33  $\mathbb{Q}be1$ , I don't

remember. But the idea is correct: Black needs to attack the c4-pawn, to obtain the d5-square for his bishop.

**32 . . .**

**♕f7!**

Grandmaster Razuvayev very much likes moves which fulfil two or more functions. From f7 the queen attacks f3 and c4, and defends the b7-pawn, so that Yuri Sergeyevich would have praised me here. If now 33 ♜d3, then 33...e4! 34 fxe4 (things are also not easy for White after the more tenacious 34 ♜e5 exf3+ 35 ♜xf3 ♕g7) 34...♜xc4 35 ♜e5 ♜a2 36 ♜xa2 ♜f1+.

**33 ♜b2**

'Better late than never!'

**33 . . .**

**♜xc4**

**34 ♜xb7**

34 ♜xe5 is hopeless – the b7-pawn is still alive, and the weakness at f3 is perceptible. Now White seemingly achieves his aim, but in fact he runs into a blow prepared beforehand.

**34 . . .**

**♚f4!**

An extremely unpleasant surprise. It is said that Karpov plays very well in time-trouble. He confirmed this opinion in the present game, mainly by the fact that he managed to make all his moves, on the way losing only the exchange.

**35 ♜xc6!**

35 ♜be1 ♜d5 (or 35...♜a2) is hopeless for White, and therefore the exchange sacrifice is forced.

**35 . . .**

**♜xe3**

**36 ♜xc4+**

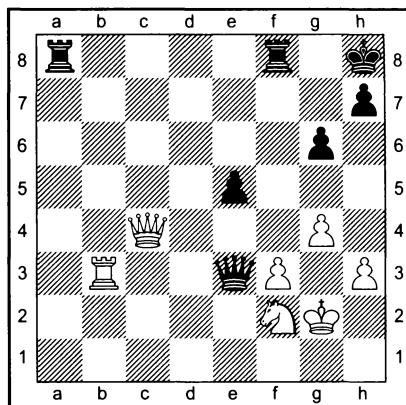
A very simple question: what should Black play, 36...♚h8 or 36...♚f7?

You suggest 36...♚h8. Why? So as not to come under a pin? And what do the experts say? Their opinions are divided. So, 2–1 in favour of the king move – this means it must be deemed the strongest. Why? Indeed, to avoid coming under a pin (37 ♜d5).

**36 . . .**

**♚h8**

**37 ♜b3**



You may not believe me, but here White has great drawing chances. Enormous! Until I reached the time control, I didn't realise this – I thought I was winning easily. Fortunately, over the remaining moves to the control Karpov managed to thoroughly spoil his position.

Yet the idea of the defence is very simple. White must play his queen to e2 and his rook to e3 – to hold the third rank, to hold the second, defend the f3-pawn and threaten a further attack on the e5-pawn by ♜d3.

**37 . . .**

**♜d2!**

I try to confuse my opponent – I do not allow the queen to go to e2.

**38 ♜c5**

**♜ae8**

**39 ♜d3**

It is possible that the position is drawn even after the exchange of queens: 39 ♜e3 ♜xe3 40 ♜xe3. The weakness of the e5-pawn is too serious. But if Black moves his queen, White carries out the necessary regrouping – ♜e2 and ♜e3. Here it would have been very useful for my opponent to have a reserve of time, to work out what he should be aiming for, which positions were draw, and which were not (say, after the exchange of queens on f4 Black takes with the pawn, and the



endgame is now lost). But Karpov's flag was hanging, he had no time to think, and for the moment he did not offer the exchange of queens.

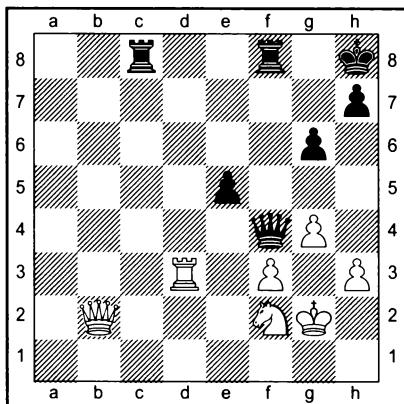
**39 ...**  $\mathbb{Q}f4$

**40  $\mathbb{Q}c3?$ !**

40  $\mathbb{Q}c2!$  should have been played, followed by  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  and  $\mathbb{Q}e3$ . Perhaps my opponent was instinctively afraid of 40...e4, but he had no need to be.

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

**41  $\mathbb{Q}b2$**



Benefiting from the bitter experience of the previous rounds, after the time control I immediately thought for 25 minutes. Of course, it will not be possible for you to determine quickly that very strong move, which in the game I sought for so long. But nevertheless try suggesting some ideas for a playing for a win. How can the opponent's position be shaken?

Yes, it is tempting to play ...h7–h5. If Black is able to place his pawn on h4, his winning chances will be sharply improved. Therefore White is obliged to reply h3–h4!

**41 ...**  $\mathbb{Q}c4!!$

A very strong move. What do you think the point of it is? In fact it simultaneously contains three ideas (again Razuvayev would be happy).

Here we have the first explanation: it blocks the a2–g8 diagonal, the king obtains the g8-square, and after the inclusion of ...h7–h5 and h3–h4 the advance ...e5–e4! becomes possible. This idea is correct, but what is more important is that this advance follows if White places his queen on e2 (as in fact occurred in the game). Therefore my move is prophylaxis against the regrouping of the white pieces, about which I have already spoken. I sat and came to realise that it was necessary to defend against it – this was the main reason why Black's move was made.

Instead of 41... $\mathbb{Q}c4$  Kramnik suggested playing 41... $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ , but then 42  $\mathbb{Q}e2!$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  43  $\mathbb{Q}e3$ . However, now I am ready to carry out his plan: 42... $\mathbb{Q}d4$  followed by 43... $\mathbb{Q}fd8$ .

The third idea is very primitive, but it also has to be reckoned with – 42... $\mathbb{Q}fc8$  with the threat of ... $\mathbb{Q}c2$ , and if 43  $\mathbb{Q}d2$ , then 43... $\mathbb{Q}c3$ . Karpov did not guess my idea, and he quickly placed his queen on e2. After my reply he sat and thought for 45 minutes, but he was unable to find any defence.

**42  $\mathbb{Q}e2$**

**h5!**

Of course, my opponent was planning 43 h4, but now he saw the refutation: 43...hxg4 44  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  (44 fxg4  $\mathbb{Q}f6!$  followed by 45... $\mathbb{Q}c6+)$  44...e4 (the breakthrough has become possible thanks to the rook on c4) 45 fxe4  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  46  $\mathbb{Q}b2+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  47  $\mathbb{Q}a2+$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$ . There is no time to exploit the pin on the rook, since the white king is threatened with mate. [If 48  $\mathbb{Q}e5?$  there follows 48... $\mathbb{Q}e4+$  49  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}f1+!$  50  $\mathbb{Q}xf1$   $\mathbb{Q}h1$ , winning the queen – Dvoretsky.]

**43  $\mathbb{Q}e4$**

**h4**

A new and very serious weakness has appeared in White's position – the g3-square. Dvoretsky likes to emphasise the importance of a second weakness when converting an advantage. It was easy to defend the f3-pawn while simultaneously attacking e5, but now, to cover the second

weakness, the knight will be forced to keep guard on e4, where it is doing nothing. If, by playing his queen to f2, White were able to force the reply ...g6–g5, from e4 the knight would at least be attacking a pawn, but this hope cannot be realised.

**44 ♜e3**

**♝c8**

**45 ♜f2**

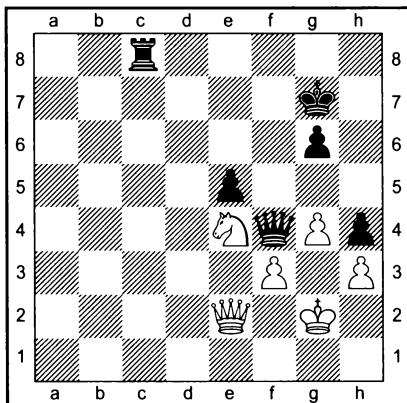
**♝c2**

**46 ♜e2**

**♝xe2**

**47 ♜xe2**

**♛g7!**



Karpov set me many traps in this game, but I too set him quite a few. Black's last move not only comes into his plans (it reinforces the g6- and f6-squares, and prevents the capture of the h4-pawn with check), but it also contains a trap, into which my opponent falls. But all the same things were bad for him – if he had marked time, at some point I would have jumped in with my queen at c1, for example: 48 ♜d3 ♜c7 49 ♜e2 ♜c1.

**48 ♜f2**

A natural move – intending to capture on h4 or give a check on a7. What had I prepared here?

That's right, the pawn can be sacrificed, in

order to pin the opponent's pieces and place him in zugzwang.

**48 . . .**

**♛c1!**

**49 ♜xh4**

**♜c2+**

**50 ♜f2**

**g5**

**51 ♜g3**

**♜e1**

**52 h4**

**♛g6?!**

To where is it more accurate to play the king – g6 or h6?

**52 . . .**

**♛g6?!**

In completely winning positions one should be particularly watchful. After the move made by me White has acquired a chance tactical opportunity: 53 f4! with the threat of 54 ♜d3+. Fortunately, here Black's advantage is too great and he wins by 53...♜c3 54 ♜h2 ♜e2, but in other circumstances such an oversight might have cost him very dearly. However, Karpov was again in severe time-trouble and was forced to make his moves instantly.

**53 hxg5**

**♛xg5**

**54 f4+?**

There are no other moves.

**54 . . .**

**exf4**

**55 ♜f3**

**♜d2!**

**56 ♜h3**

**♞f1+!**

An important check – I saw it earlier when I played 47...♛g7!. The capture with the rook would have led to stalemate, while the capture with the rook would have allowed numerous checks. Also not possible was 56...♜e3? 57 ♜e4+ and 58 ♜xd2.

**57 ♜g2**

**♞xf2**

White resigned.

The game concluded, just in time for us to go off for dinner.



Mark Dvoretsky

## Whose Strategy will triumph?

**A**t the first session of our school Artur Yusupov showed two of his games (against Anatoly Karpov and Jan Timman), in which over a number of moves a tense struggle revolved around one pivotal feature – some central strategic problem. In this struggle the outcome of the entire battle was effectively decided. Here it is very important that you skilfully maintain the tension, not conceding an inch to the opponent, and that in the protracted strategic dispute you continually find new tactical arguments.

I should like to invite you to look at two of my games of the same sort. The first of them was exceptionally significant for me in the competitive sense. It was played four rounds before the end of the Moscow Championship. Grandmaster Anatoly Lein and I had broken away from all our other rivals and were leading with eight and a half points out of eleven. Our individual meeting could decide (and did indeed decide) who won the title of champion.

### Lein – Dvoretsky

Moscow Championship 1973

*French Defence*

1 e4	e6
2 ♜f3	d5
3 ♜c3	♜f6
4 e5	♞fd7
5 d4	

This position also sometimes arises via the ‘normal’ move order: 2 d4 d5 3 ♜c3 ♜f6 4 e5 ♞fd7 5 ♜f3, although 5 f4 is considered to be more dangerous for Black.

5 . . .	c5
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6 dxc5	♝c6
7 ♜f4	♝xc5
8 ♜d3	f6
8...0-0? 9 ♜xh7+!.	
9 exf6	♛xf6

Opening books recommend 9...♛xf6. But I did not like playing in accordance with theory (partly because I did not know it very well) and I used to take the first convenient opportunity to diverge from the main theoretical paths.

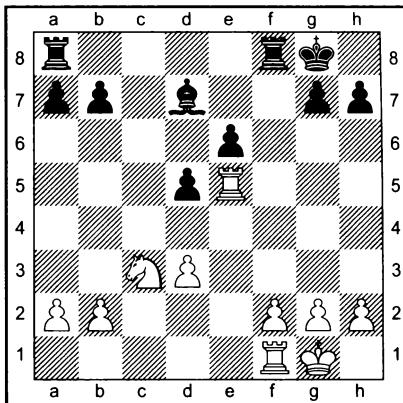
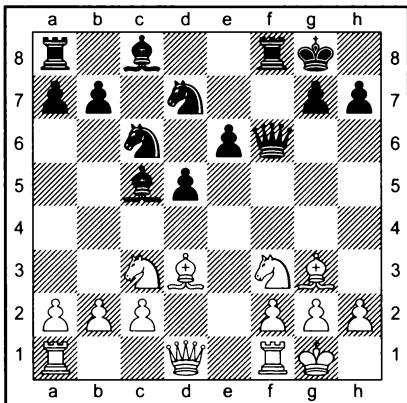
Objectively the capture on f6 with the knight is sounder, and the move made by me is rather risky. But I had already tested it in two games played not long before the Moscow Championship, so that I had managed to gain some experience. Whereas my opponent was probably encountering it for the first time.

Success in the opening struggle is often determined not by objective factors, but by your (and your opponent’s) preparedness for the events which develop on the board. Realising this, in this decisive game I unhesitatingly took a risk in the opening.

10 ♜g3
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Another possibility is 10 ♜g5!?. The game Bareev–Dvoretsky (Minsk 1972) developed as follows: 10...♛f7 11 ♜d2?! (the start of an incorrect plan – 11 0-0 0-0 12 ♜h4 is stronger) 11...0-0 12 0-0-0 ♜de5 13 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 14 f3 ♜d7 15 ♜he1 ♜xd3+ 16 ♛xd3 ♜ac8 17 ♜e3 ♜b4 18 ♜d4 ♜c4 19 ♜b1 ♜fc8 20 ♛e3 b5, and Black had the initiative.

10 . . .	0-0
11 0-0	



Already here one can trace the strategic motifs around which the struggle will revolve over the course of many moves. By advancing his e-pawn, Black would like to set up a powerful pawn centre. But this is still a long way off – first he must complete his development, exchange the most dangerous enemy pieces (the f3-knight and the d3-bishop) and reinforce his d5-point. For his part, White dreams of establishing control over the d4- and e5-squares, blocking the black pawns and making the c8-bishop ‘bad’.

**11 ... ♜d4**

11...♜de5? did not work because of 12 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 13 ♜xh7+.

**12 ♜xd4 ♜xd4**

**13 ♜d2**

Rudolf Kimelfeld (Moscow 1972) played more purposefully against me: 13 ♜e2 ♜c5 14 ♜ae1 (nothing is given by 14 ♜b5 ♜xb2 15 ♜ab1 ♜d7) 14...♜xd3 15 cxd3. Here the win of a pawn by 15...♜xc3? 16 bxc3 ♜xc3 would be suicidal – after 17 ♜e5, relying on his powerful bishop, White develops an attack on the g7-point, whereas Black’s ‘opposite-colour’ bishop is completely useless.

There followed 15...♜d7 16 ♜e5 ♜xe5 17 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 18 ♜xe5.

(see diagram)

At first sight it seems that White has been successful: he has seized control of the e5-square and left himself with a knight against a ‘bad’ French bishop. Indeed, imagine if he were to play f2–f4 and switch his knight to d4 – my position would immediately become strategically hopeless. But the opponent does not have time for this, and for the moment the bishop is not in fact as bad as it appears. Black has dynamic resources at his disposal, involving ...d5–d4 and play on the open c-file. To be honest, I do not even see a safe way for White to gain equality.

**18...♝ac8 19 f4**

The following variation is typical (although by no means forced): 19 d4 ♜c4 (the immediate 19...b5! is more accurate) 20 ♜d1 b5 21 ♜d2 b4 22 ♜e2 ♜fc8 23 ♜f1 ♜c2 24 ♜e1 ♜f7 (intending 25...♜b5) 25 ♜d1? (25 ♜f4 is better) 25...♜a4! 26 b3?! (26 ♜xc2 ♜xc2+ 27 ♜e1 is necessary, although after 27...♜f5 the initiative is with Black) 26...♜xa2!. There’s the bad bishop for you!

Nearly thirty years later the diagram position was reached in a blitz game which I played against the Cuban grandmaster Rivero Besserra (Miami 2000). My opponent chose the cautious 19 ♜e2, but he too was unable to extinguish Black’s initiative: 19...b5 20 ♜fe1 b4 21 ♜d1 ♜c1 22 f3 (White is hoping to transfer his knight via f2 or e3 to g4 and then

to e5) 22... $\mathbb{Q}fc8$  23  $\mathbb{Q}e3?!$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  24  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  25  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  26  $\mathbb{Q}e8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xe8$  27  $\mathbb{Q}xc1$   $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  28  $f\#$  29  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  a5 30  $\mathbb{Q}a7$  d4 31 h4 (31  $\mathbb{Q}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  32  $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}xa2$  33  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  b3) 31... $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  32  $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  d3 33  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  d2 34  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}xa2$  White resigned.

### 19...d4! 20 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}c2$ 21 f5!?

The simple 21  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  22  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  was preferable, when I would have had to go into a sharp double-rook ending, since 22... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  23  $\mathbb{Q}f2$  or 22... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  23  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  followed by  $\mathbb{Q}f2$  is hopeless for Black.

### 21...exf5 22 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2$

If now 23  $\mathbb{Q}e7$ , then 23... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  24  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  (24... $\mathbb{Q}f8?!$  25  $\mathbb{Q}xf7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  also comes into consideration) 25  $\mathbb{Q}e8+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  26  $\mathbb{Q}xf8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  27  $\mathbb{Q}xf5+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  with the better rook endgame for Black.

### 23 $\mathbb{Q}c1$ g6!

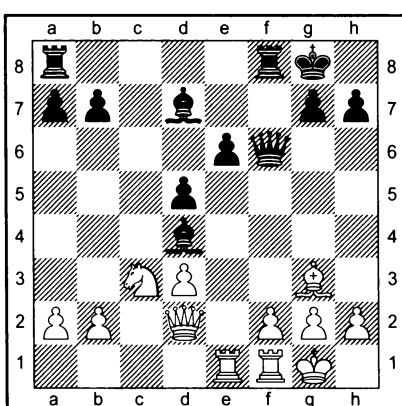
And I remained with an appreciable advantage.

Let us return to the game with Lein.

13 ...	$\mathbb{Q}c5$
14 $\mathbb{Q}ae1$	$\mathbb{Q}xd3?!$

14... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  was more accurate, with an excellent position for Black. The premature exchange affords the opponent additional possibilities.

15 cxd3	$\mathbb{Q}d7$
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From this moment there develops an exceptionally tense battle for control of the central squares.

16 $\mathbb{Q}e2$	$\mathbb{Q}b6$
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17  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  18  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  was threatened. 16... $\mathbb{Q}xb2?!$  is unfavourable, since after 17  $\mathbb{Q}b1$  the rook penetrates onto the 7th rank.

Now White could play 17 d4, but after 17... $\mathbb{Q}b5$  the chances are roughly equal. This is not enough for Lein – he wants finally to win the battle for the centre and he finds a subtle idea.

17 $\mathbb{Q}h1!$	
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A multi-purpose move! It creates a direct positional threat: 18  $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  19 f4, then  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  and at some point  $\mathbb{Q}d4$ . 17...e5? is not possible because of 18  $\mathbb{Q}c3$ , and both central pawns are under attack.

17 ...	$\mathbb{Q}ae8$
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Black parries the opponent's threat (18  $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  19 f4 e5!) and prepares ...e6–e5.

18 $\mathbb{Q}g1!$	
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A logical development of the idea begun with the previous move. Again I am forced to reject 18...e5? in view of 19  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  (19...e4 20 dx $\mathbb{Q}$ e4 dx $\mathbb{Q}$ e4 21  $\mathbb{W}xd7$ ) 20  $\mathbb{W}c3!$  (weaker is 20 d4 e4). At the same time measures have to be taken against the seizure of the centre by 19  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  or 19  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  followed by 20 f4 (20  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ ).

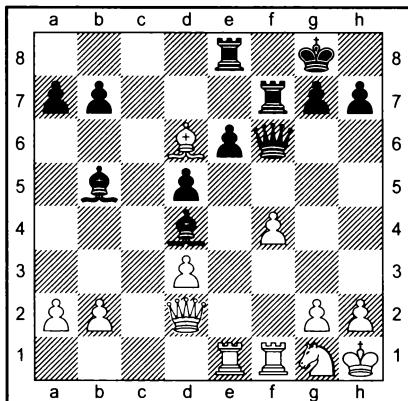
18 ...	$\mathbb{Q}b5!$
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A counterattack against the d3-point: 19  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{W}f5$  or 19  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{W}f5$  20  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$ .

Take note: the two players are engaged in a strategic war, but the means employed are purely tactical – concrete strong moves, short variations, threats, double attacks... In chess, tactics and strategy are inseparably linked – deficiencies in either of these fields will inevitably tell on your quality of play and results.

19 $\mathbb{Q}d6$	$\mathbb{Q}f7$
20 f4	$\mathbb{Q}d4!$

Black has defended against 21  $\mathbb{A}e5$  (after which 21... $\mathbb{A}xe5$  22  $\mathbb{B}xe5$   $\mathbb{W}xe5$  was intended). Less accurate was 20... $\mathbb{W}f5$  21  $\mathbb{B}f3$  followed by  $\mathbb{A}e5$  or  $\mathbb{E}e5$ .



Now the culminating point of the fierce battle for the central squares has been reached. By attacking the b2-pawn, I try to divert my opponent from the natural knight move to f3. Even so, it deserved serious consideration. True, after 21  $\mathbb{Q}f3?$   $\mathbb{A}xb2$  nothing is given by 22  $\mathbb{B}b1$   $\mathbb{A}c3$ , and 22 d4?  $\mathbb{A}xf1$  22  $\mathbb{B}xf1$  does not work, as this can be strongly answered by either 22... $\mathbb{A}xd4!$ ? 23  $\mathbb{W}xd4$  (23  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  e5! 24  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  a6 25  $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{B}d8$ ) 23... $\mathbb{W}xd4$  24  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  e5! (P.Wolff), or 22... $\mathbb{W}d8?$  23  $\mathbb{A}b4$  a5! 24  $\mathbb{A}xa5$   $\mathbb{W}a8$ . However, the simple 22  $\mathbb{A}e5!$   $\mathbb{A}xe5$  23  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{B}ff8$  (23... $\mathbb{B}c7?$  24  $\mathbb{W}a5$ ) 24  $\mathbb{W}b4$  or 24  $\mathbb{W}a5$  would have secured White excellent positional compensation for the sacrificed pawn.

### 21 $\mathbb{Q}e2$

Not the best square for the knight, but White has a specific idea. Here 21... $\mathbb{A}xb2?$  22  $\mathbb{B}b1$  is now bad for Black, while if 21... $\mathbb{A}b6$  there follows 22  $\mathbb{A}e5$   $\mathbb{W}f5$  23  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ , and the battle for the centre concludes not in my favour.

### 21 ...

### $\mathbb{W}d8!$

An important intermediate move. It would have been a mistake to attack the bishop with the other rook: 21... $\mathbb{Q}d7?$  22  $\mathbb{A}e5!$   $\mathbb{A}xe5$  23  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ ? 24  $\mathbb{Q}c3$ . But now 22  $\mathbb{A}e5$  is

not possible (the rook on f1 is hanging), and 22  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  23  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{W}xd3$  24  $\mathbb{W}xd3$   $\mathbb{A}xd3$  leads to a somewhat better ending for Black.

It was necessary to reckon with 22  $\mathbb{W}b4$ . In the event of 22... $\mathbb{A}xd3?$  23  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{A}xf1$  (23... $\mathbb{B}xd6?$  24  $\mathbb{W}xd6$   $\mathbb{A}xf1$  25  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  or 25  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  24  $\mathbb{A}e5!$   $\mathbb{A}xg2+$  25  $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  the advantage is with White – his pieces are very strongly placed. However, the cool-headed 22... $\mathbb{A}xb2!$  would have changed the picture, for example: 23  $\mathbb{B}b1$   $\mathbb{A}xd3$  24  $\mathbb{B}xb2$   $\mathbb{B}xd6$ , or 23 d4  $\mathbb{A}xe2$  24  $\mathbb{A}e5$   $\mathbb{W}e7!$  25  $\mathbb{W}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  26  $\mathbb{B}xe2$   $\mathbb{A}a3$ . There is also 23  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ , which was later analysed by grandmaster Patrick Wolff. In the event of 23... $\mathbb{A}c6?$  White gains an advantage by 24 d4! a5 25  $\mathbb{W}c5$  a4 26 a3!, but the two other possible replies, 23... $\mathbb{A}a6!$ ? and 23... $\mathbb{A}a5!$ ?, are sufficient to parry the opponent's aggression.

### 22 $\mathbb{A}a3$

### $\mathbb{A}b6$

I breathe a sigh of relief. The white pieces have been driven away from the key e5-square, which means that I have won the strategic battle. But, of course, not yet the game.

Grandmaster Milan Matulovic used to pay enormous attention to opening theory. It is said that he kept a special score of the outcome of the opening duels in his own games, and, to his delight, more often than not he was successful. But things were much worse as regards overall successes in tournaments. For me it was not enough to win an intermediate stage – I also wanted to win the race as a whole. And for this it was necessary, without relaxing, to carry on working.

### 23 $\mathbb{Q}c3$

### $\mathbb{A}c6$

24  $\mathbb{W}e2$

A new problem. The e-pawn is attacked, and if Black defends it by 24... $\mathbb{B}e8$ , then 25  $\mathbb{A}d6$  – the bishop returns to the e5-square and memories alone are all that remain of my positional achievements.

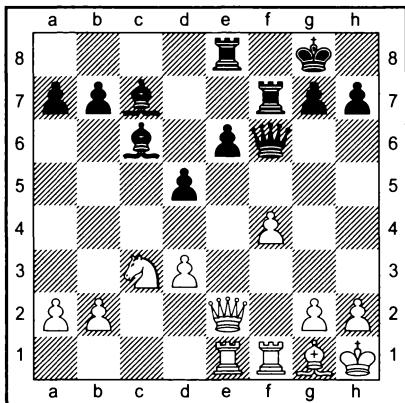


**24 . . .**                    **♗c7!**

An important intermediate move. After 25 ♜xe6 ♜xe6 26 ♜xe6 ♜xf4 or 26...♜xf4 the ending favours Black in view of his two bishops.

**25 ♜c5**  
**26 ♜g1**

**♝e8**



Apparently White is now ready to admit defeat in the piece battle for the centre and he intends to play d3–d4, which will prevent for ever the ...e6–e5 break. My opponent had little time left, and I decided that this was the moment to switch from strategy to tactics. Try to find and calculate Black's combination.

**26 . . .**                    **♝xf4!?**

I fairly quickly saw the variation 27 g3 ♜xc3!! 28 bxc3 d4+ 29 ♜g2! (weaker is 29 ♜e4 ♜d2 30 ♜xf7 ♜xe1) 29...♝xg2+ 30 ♜xg2 ♜d2 31 ♜xf7 ♜xe1 32 ♜xb7 dxc3 and I was relying on the strength of my passed c3-pawn. Indeed, White loses after 33 ♜xa7? ♜c8 34 ♜e3 ♜d2. Also bad for him is 33 ♜f3?! ♜c8! 34 ♜e3 c2 35 ♜c1 ♜c3 36 ♜xa7 (36 ♜e2 ♜d4 37 ♜d2 ♜f8) 36...♜f8+ 37 ♜e2 ♜d4 38 ♜c7 ♜f2+ 39 ♜e1 ♜xh2 or 37 ♜g2 ♜d4 38 ♜c7 ♜f2+ 39 ♜h3 h5! (analysis by Wolff). However, the cautious 33 ♜c7! enables him to gain a draw.

Even so, from the practical point of view I

think that Black's decision was justified. With time-trouble imminent, my opponent had insufficient time for an accurate calculation of the variations and he simply took me at my word.

**27 ♜xa7?!**  
**28 ♜g1**  
**29 ♜xf7**

**♛h4**  
**♝d6**  
**♚xf7**

Black has a clear advantage. He has two strong bishops, and the ...e6–e5 advance, about which I have been dreaming since the very opening, can no longer be prevented.

**30 d4**  
**31 ♜f1**

**♝g8**  
**h6**

The threat is often stronger than its immediate execution! Black does not hurry with the breakthrough in the centre, preferring first to make all the useful moves to improve his position. Such tactics are especially effective in the opponent's time-trouble.

**32 a3**  
**33 ♜f2?**

An oversight, but White's position is already difficult. My light-square bishop is threatening to come very strongly into play.

**33 . . .**  
**34 ♜xf2**  
**35 ♜g1**

**♞xf2**  
**♝f8!**

When he exchanged the queens Lein was counting on this move. 35 dxe5 ♜xe5 36 ♜g1 d4 was also hopeless.

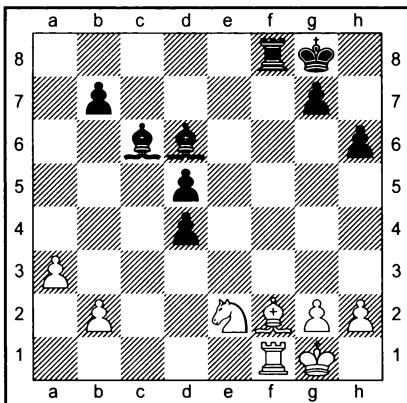
**35 . . .**                    **exd4**

Only here did my opponent see that he could not take on d4 because of 36...♝xh2+.

**36 ♜e2**

(see diagram)

Unfortunately, my play was typified by a serious deficiency, which I was quite unable to overcome – a tendency towards hasty decisions, especially when the main problems in the game had already been solved. I don't even wish to try and remember how



– position after 36  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  –

many important points were lost as a result! That was also the case here. I realised that my position was completely won and I considered two tempting moves: 36... $\mathbb{Q}b5$  and 36...d3. I instantly weighed up the variation 36... $\mathbb{Q}b5$  37  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}xh2+$  38  $\mathbb{Q}xh2$   $\mathbb{Q}xf2$  39  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  and decided that the opponent would gain good positional compensation for the pawn (strong knight against passive bishop) – and I promptly played ...d4–d3. But this ‘calculation’ was completely wrong: firstly, after 39... $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  I would be not one, but two pawns up, and secondly, it is possible to transfer the bishop via d3 to the excellent square e4.

**36 . . .**  $\mathbb{Q}d3?$

**37  $\mathbb{Q}d4$**

Here I discovered to my surprise that it was not at all easy to breach my opponent’s defences. He wants to play h2–h3, then  $\mathbb{Q}d1$ , and what can I do? If 37... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  there follows 38  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ .

**37 . . .**  $\mathbb{Q}a4!?$

**38 b3**  $\mathbb{Q}d7$

The bishop wants to go to g4 and, with his flag about to fall, this threat seemed so dangerous to Lein that he decided to part with his a-pawn.

**39  $\mathbb{Q}d1$**

$\mathbb{Q}xa3$

**40  $\mathbb{Q}xd3$**

**41 h3**

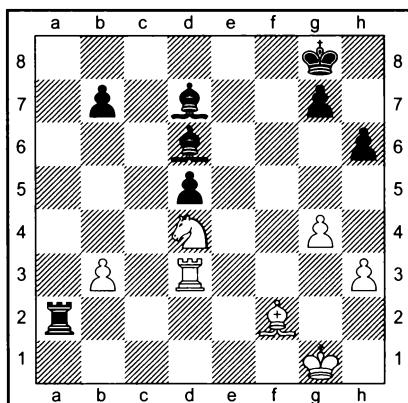
$\mathbb{Q}d6$

$\mathbb{Q}a8$

Here the game was adjourned, and White sealed his next move. I am a sound pawn to the good, and in addition I have the advantage of the two bishops. It appears that the win is a matter of straightforward technique. At any event, that is what I assumed at the adjournment. Alas, analysis did not confirm this evaluation – for a long time I was unable to find a convincing plan leading to a win.

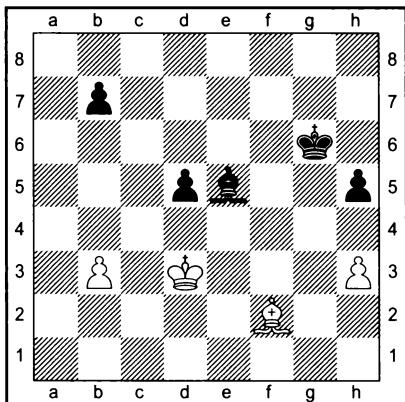
**42 g4**

$\mathbb{Q}a2$



43  $\mathbb{Q}f3?$   $\mathbb{Q}a1+$  44  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  was completely bad for White, but I had to reckon seriously with 43  $\mathbb{Q}f5!?$ . Analysing this continuation during the adjournment, I made a serious mistake, which could have cost me dearly. I was intending to go into a rook ending, relying on a variation which, as it seemed to me, led to a forced win. Because of this I did not bother to analyse seriously the bishop ending arising after 43... $\mathbb{Q}h2+!?$  44  $\mathbb{Q}g2!$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  45  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  46  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  (46  $\mathbb{Q}xd5??$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$ ) 46... $\mathbb{Q}d2$  47  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  (bad is 47  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$ ) 47... $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  48  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  49  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  50  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  51  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  52  $\mathbb{Q}h4$  g6 53 fxg6+  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  54  $\mathbb{Q}f2$  h5.

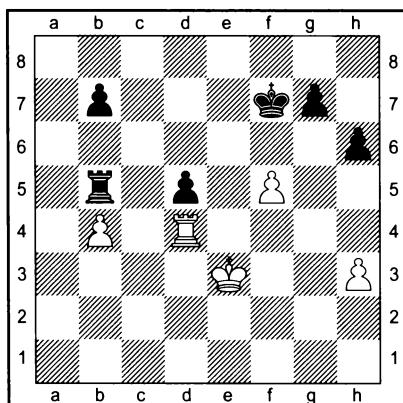
(see diagram)



And indeed, the evaluation of this position is not obvious. The opponent's dark-square bishop and his pawns arranged on light squares create a barrier in front of my king which is difficult to cross.

Here is the variation which I was intending to go in for:

43... $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  44  $gxf5$  (44  $\mathbb{Q}xd5?$   $\mathbb{Q}a1+$ ) 44... $\mathbb{Q}a5$  (with the positional threat of 45... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ ) 45  $\mathbb{Q}d4 \mathbb{Q}c5!$  (now, before the white king has reached e3) 46  $\mathbb{Q}f2 \mathbb{Q}xd4+$  47  $\mathbb{Q}xd4 \mathbb{Q}b5$  48  $b4 \mathbb{Q}f7$  49  $\mathbb{Q}e3$ .



49... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  50  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $h5$  51  $h4$   $b6$ . White is in zugzwang and he has to give up a second pawn. Studying a book of mine in which this variation was reproduced, grandmaster Ilya Smirin noticed that after 52  $\mathbb{Q}f3 \mathbb{Q}xf5$  53

$\mathbb{Q}e3$  it is not possible for Black to convert his advantage because of the tragic-comic position of his rook, shut in at b5. Black is also unsuccessful with 51... $\mathbb{Q}b6$  (instead of 51... $b6$ ) 52  $\mathbb{Q}xd5 \mathbb{Q}xb4+$  53  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $b6$  54  $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}b3+$  55  $\mathbb{Q}g2$ .

The third session of the Dvoretsky–Yusupov School (1991) was devoted to the improvement of endgame mastery. As one of the homework tasks for those taking part, it was suggested that they should check my analysis of 43  $\mathbb{Q}f5$ .

I assumed that after the mistake had been found, in search of a win the students would have to analyse the bishop ending. However, Vadim Zviagintsev and Maxim Boguslavsky found a simpler solution to the problem – they improved Black's play in the rook ending.

Instead of 49... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ ? they suggested 49... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ ! Then 50  $\mathbb{Q}f4 \mathbb{Q}f6$  51  $h4$   $h5$  leads to the familiar zugzwang position, but with the pawn on b7. After 52  $\mathbb{Q}f3 \mathbb{Q}xf5$  53  $\mathbb{Q}e3 \mathbb{Q}e5$  the rook comes into play via b6. And if 50  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ , then 50... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  51  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  (51  $\mathbb{Q}g4 \mathbb{Q}e5$  52  $\mathbb{Q}xg7 \mathbb{Q}xb4$  is also hopeless) 51... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ , intending ... $\mathbb{Q}b6-c6-c4$ .

As you see, although objectively it should have led to defeat, 43  $\mathbb{Q}f5$ ! would have set Black serious problems. But it turns out to be no easier to find a win after the quiet continuation chosen by my opponent.

**43  $\mathbb{Q}g2$ !?**

Over the next few moves Lein has a clear plan of action. He wants to bring his king to f3 and then, after playing  $\mathbb{Q}g3$  or  $\mathbb{Q}e3-f4$ , offer the advantageous exchange of dark-square bishops, and if Black avoids the exchange – place his bishop on e5. Then all the white pieces will be ideally placed, the d5-pawn will remain securely blockaded, and in addition all the time Black will have to reckon with the threat of  $\mathbb{Q}f5$ .

And how can I strengthen my position? Of course, if I were able to transfer my bishop to

e4, the game would be decided. But can this be achieved, when ♜f5 is a constant problem for Black?

Initially I was pinning my hopes on the variation 43...h5 44 gxh5 ♜e8 (intending 45...♜xh5, then ...♜g6 and ...♜e4) 45 ♜e6 (45 ♜f5 ♜c5) 45...♜f7! 46 ♜xd5 ♜e7!. But I did not find anything convincing after 45 ♜g1! ♜xh5 46 ♜f5.

I also examined 43...♜c5 44 ♜f3 ♜e8 (44...♜b5? 45 ♜xb5 ♜xf2+ 46 ♜g3) 45 ♜e3 ♜g6, but the rook ending arising after 46 ♜f5 ♜xf5 47 gxh5 ♜xe3 48 ♜xe3 is most probably drawn.

Only after studying these and many other variations did I finally discover the correct plan.

**43 ... ♜c5  
44 ♜f3**

In the event of 44 ♜g3 there can follow 44...g5! (44...♜e8 is weaker: 45 ♜e3 ♜g6 46 ♜f5 ♜xf5 47 gxh5 ♜xe3 48 ♜xe3 ♜f7 49 ♜f4) 45 ♜e3 ♜d6+ 46 ♜f3 ♜h2, or 45 ♜f3 h5!.

**44 ... h5!!**

Here my opponent thought for a long time. It became clear that he was not prepared for this turn of events.

**45 ♜e3**

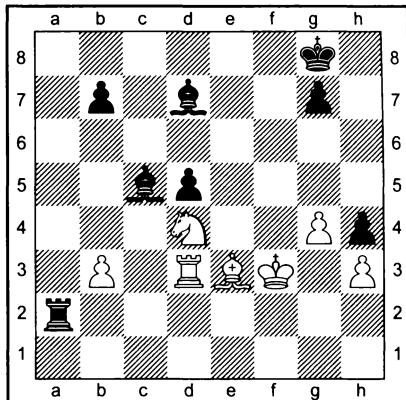
45 gxh5 ♜xh3 (or 45...♜e8) was clearly bad for White. If 45 ♜g3 I was planning the waiting move 45...♝h7, and if 46 ♜f4 or 46 ♜e5, then, as in the game, 46...h4!.

**45 ... h4!**

(see diagram)

Black has fixed the h3-pawn and it has become a real weakness: 46...♜h2 is threatened (the king has been deprived of the g3-square). If the bishop moves from e3, White has to reckon with ...♝b5!, since the capture of the bishop is not possible in view of mate with the rook on f2.

The tactical basis of Black's plan is the



– position after 45...h4! –

variation 46 ♜f5 ♜h2! 47 ♜xc5 ♜xh3+ 48 ♜e2 ♜b5 49 ♜e3 (or 49 ♜e3) 49...♜h2+.

**46 ♜c3 ♜b6**

In the event of 46...b6?! White would have gained counterplay by 47 b4! ♜xb4 48 ♜c7 ♜a4 49 ♜f5 (but not 49 ♜e6? ♜d1+ 50 ♜f4 ♜d6+).

**47 ♜f5?!**

Lein nevertheless overlooks his opponent's tactical idea. He could have put up a tougher defence with 47 ♜e2 (after which I was intending 47...♜d8) or 47 ♜c2.

**47 ... ♜h2!**

**48 ♜e7+**

48 ♜xb6? ♜xh3+.

**48 ... ♜f7**

**49 ♜xd5 ♜xh3+**

The game is decided! The position has opened up and the two bishops can at last demonstrate their true strength.

**50 ♜f4 ♜d8!**

**51 ♜c1 ♜c6**

**52 ♜b6**

52 ♜d1 ♜e6!.

**52 ... ♜f3+**

Of course, it was also possible to play 52...♜xb6 53 ♜xb6 ♜xb3 54 ♜c4 ♜f6! 55 g5+ ♜g6 56 ♜e5+ ♜h5.



**53 ♜e5**

**54 ♜c3?**

And White resigned.

What was the strategic basis of Black's winning plan in the endgame, and which positional considerations could have helped it to be discovered at the board?

When defending, your opponent endeavours to protect securely all his weaknesses. In the broad sense of the word a weakness in his position may be not only a vulnerable point or a badly-placed piece, but also, for example, an invasion square which must be covered, or an enemy passed pawn, which needs to be blockaded.

With skilful defence it is usually not too difficult to hold one weakness. In such cases the correct strategy for the stronger side is always to seek or create a second weakness in the opponent's position. By attacking this second weakness, and then if necessary again switching our attack to the first, we stretch and finally break the opponent's defences.

Look at how the great masters of the endgame convert an advantage. You will see that nearly always at some point they open a 'second front'.

In the above ending White initially only had to solve the problem of the passed d5-pawn. His pieces were excellently placed for combating it and, of course, Black could not hope for success with the passed pawn alone. By the advance of his h-pawn to h4 he was able to fix a second weakness in the opponent's position – the h3-pawn. White's position immediately became critical.

The following game, played at the start of a tournament in the small Estonian town of Vilyandi, is also a memorable one for me. First of all, it was my first win against a grandmaster. After beating another grandmaster two rounds later (also with Black!), I was so inspired by my success that I began

**♗g5**

winning game after game and with a score of 11 points out of 13 I took first place, ahead of the great Mikhail Tal. It was probably the best tournament in my life, in both the competitive and the creative sense.

It is useful to think about the reasons for both your own failures, and your successes, in order to pick out the factors which influence your results. I had only just finished University, I had received my diploma, put it away in a drawer and switched to chess. Before the event I held a training session with the Moscow youth team, I played football with the lads and perhaps we even studied a bit of chess. Mentally and physically I was in excellent shape. And although from the opening I often obtained dubious positions (the present game is a good example), this did not hinder me. If you have sufficient energy for the subsequent play, you can often manage to repair the consequences of unsuccessful opening strategy.

### Shamkovich – Dvoretsky

Vilyandi 1972

*Nimzo-Indian Defence*

<b>1 d4</b>	<b>♘f6</b>
<b>2 c4</b>	<b>e6</b>
<b>3 ♜c3</b>	<b>♗b4</b>
<b>4 e3</b>	<b>b6</b>
<b>5 ♜ge2?</b>	<b>♗e4?!</b>

This move does not enjoy a good reputation. Correct play leads to a position which is somewhat inferior and, more important, passive for Black.

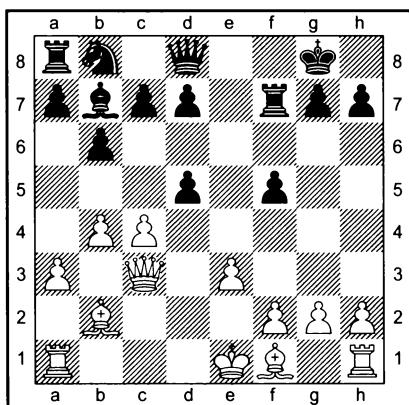
**6 f3**

A dynamic reply. Leonid Shamkovich allows the doubling of his pawns in order to quickly create a strong pawn centre.

6 ♜c2 is more often played. In the game Gulko–Dvoretsky (Moscow Championship 1972) after 6...♗b7 7 a3 ♜xc3+ 8 ♜xc3 ♜xc3 9 ♜xc3 0-0 10 b3 d6 11 ♜b2 ♜d7 White gained some positional advantage (he

has the two bishops and more space). However, Black has no real weaknesses and in the end I gained a draw, although it will be realised that there is little pleasure in defending such a position.

Events developed in more lively fashion in the game Vaisser–Dvoretsky (Kiev 1970): 6...f5 7 a3 ♜xc3+ 8 ♜xc3 ♜xc3 9 ♜xc3 ♜b7 10 d5! 0-0 (10...♜e7 is better, intending after 11 dxе6 dxе6 to play ...♝d7 and castle on the queenside) 11 b4! (an excellent positional pawn sacrifice) 11...exd5 12 ♜b2 ♜f7. Let's try to decide how White should develop his initiative.



There followed 13 ♜d1?! dxс4 14 ♜xc4 d5 15 0-0 c6 16 b5 cxb5 17 ♜xb5 ♜d7 18 f3 ♜c8 19 ♜d4 ♜f6 with roughly equal chances. 13 0-0-0! was much stronger: 13...dxс4 (otherwise 14 cxд5 with an obvious advantage) 14 ♜xc4 d5 15 b5!, and the threat of 16 ♜xd5! ♜xd5 17 ♜d1 is extremely unpleasant.

**6 ... ♜xc3**

The game Meulders–Winants (Belgian Championship 1983) went 6...♜xc3+ 7 bxс3 ♜d6 8 ♜g3 ♜a6 9 ♜a4 ♜h4 10 ♜d3 ♜f5 11 ♜xf5 exf5 12 0-0 ♜f6 13 e4 ♜c6 14 ♜a3! ♜xc4 15 ♜e1, and the black king was in great danger.

**7 bxс3 ♜e7**

7...♜d6!? 8 e4 ♜a6 was interesting, aiming

to lure the pawn to e5 in order later to attack it by ...d7–d6 or ...f7–f6.

<b>8 ♜g3</b>	<b>♜c6</b>
<b>9 ♜d3</b>	<b>♜a6</b>
<b>10 e4</b>	<b>♝a5</b>
<b>11 ♜e2</b>	

The same pawn structure has been reached as in the Sämisch Variation of the Nimzo-Indian Defence (4 a3). There Black is left with his knight on f6, whereas here he has his dark-square bishop, which, generally speaking, is a slightly stronger piece. But on the other hand I have lost several tempi in the opening (...♝f6–e4xc3, ...♝b4–e7), and in addition the opponent has managed without the move a2 a3, and so Black has not succeeded in creating counterplay against the c4-pawn.

**11 ... 0-0?!**

The king will not feel too comfortable on the kingside. In the game I.Sokolov–Johansen (Olympiad, Manila 1992) Black retained an acceptable position after 11...d6 12 0-0 ♜d7 13 ♜b1 (13 a4!?) 13...h5. A recommendation by Alexey Shirov also deserved consideration: 11...c6!? (Black prepares 12...d5) 12 e5 d5 13 exd6 ♜xd6 14 ♜e4 ♜d7.

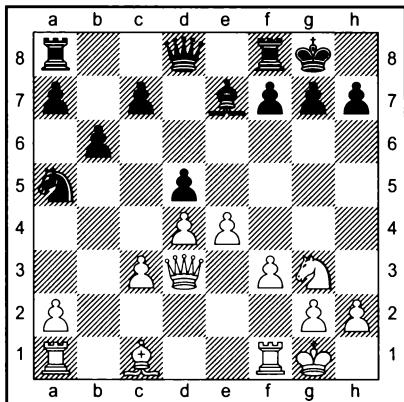
**12 0-0 d5?!**

In the event of 12...c5 13 d5 e5 14 f4 (or 14 ♜f5) Black's position is clearly worse. I should probably have tried 12...g6!? 13 ♜h6 ♜e8, subsequently choosing between ...d7–d5 and ...f7–f5.

<b>13 cxd5</b>	<b>♜xd3</b>
<b>14 ♜xd3</b>	<b>exd5</b>

(see diagram)

White's plan is obvious: e4–e5 and f3–f4–f5, creating a powerful attack on the kingside. 15 ♜f5 also looks quite good. What do you think, which move is stronger? To answer this question you must also take Black's counter-actions into account.



15 e5?!

wd7

16 ♜f5

Practically forced – since otherwise I would have played 16...f5!, halting the opponent's attack. Now it is clear that he should have begun with 15 ♜f5!, since this would have created the additional threat of 16 ♜xe7+ ♜xe7 17 exd5. I would have had to make some not very useful move such as 15...c6, and then the e4–e5 advance would have gained in strength.

16 ...

g6!?

White wants to play f3–f4, then ♜xe7+ and f4–f5, and to crush me with these pawns. Therefore I decided to weaken my kingside, in order to drive the knight from f5 and meet the opponent's attack with ...f7–f5!.

We see that, as in the previous game, a battle of plans has developed: White dreams of obtaining a powerful pawn pair at e5 and f5, while Black tries to disrupt this plan by advancing his f-pawn, after which he will be able to breathe more easily. But whereas in the game with Lein I was an equal partner, here my opponent has far more chances of success. However, White also has his problems – on every move he has several tempting possibilities, and it is not at all easy to make the correct choice.

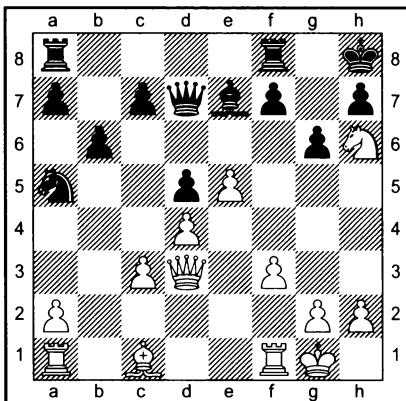
17 ♜h6+

After 17 ♜xe7+ ♜xe7 18 ♜h6 ♜e8 nothing is

given by either 19 f4 f5!, or 19 g4 (taking control of the f5-square) 19...♜h4!. And in general, when the opponent's position is cramped, it is natural to keep as many pieces as possible on the board. Bad now is 17...♚g7? 18 ♜g4 ♚h8 19 ♜h6.

17 ...

♚h8



In the event of 18 f4 f5 19 exf6 ♜xf6 20 f5 I still stand worse, but rather freer than before. It is desirable to prevent ...f7–f5, but if 18 g4 there follows 18...f6.

After the game Mikhail Tal suggested 18 ♜f4??. A question for you: how should the reply 18...f5 be evaluated?

After any other move by me (18...♜c4, for example) there follows 19 ♜ae1, and then the bishop retreats, renewing the threat of f3–f4–f5. The knight on c4 is prettily placed, but in fact it is not much use – here it does not have the slightest influence on the defence of the kingside. In the positional sense 18...f5 is, of course, the correct reaction, but in reply White has the possibility of a clever combination.

19 e6 ♜xe6 20 ♜ae1 ♜d7 21 ♜xe7! ♜xe7 22 ♜e5+ ♜f6 23 ♜g4! (23 g4? ♜c4 24 g5 ♜xe5) 23...fxg4 24 fxg4 – White regains his rook and would appear to gain the advantage.

If your opponent has devised something,

from the practical point of view it sometimes makes sense to deviate, and not go along with his ideas. But here the ...f7–f5 advance is too important for Black for him to reject it at the first sign of difficulties. Let's continue checking the combination. There are two possible replies: 24... $\mathbb{R}f8$  and 24... $\mathbb{Q}g8$ .

After 24... $\mathbb{R}f8$  25  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  (25 g5?  $\mathbb{W}xe5!$ ) 25... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  26 g5  $\mathbb{Q}g8$  27 gxf6 White stands better, but not so much better that because of this Black should reject the strategically necessary move 18...f5.

Besides, there is also a second possibility: 24... $\mathbb{Q}g8$ !?. After 25  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  the reply 25... $\mathbb{Q}c4$ ? is incorrect in view of 26  $\mathbb{Q}xg6+$ ! hxg6 27  $\mathbb{W}xg6+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  28  $\mathbb{W}h6+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  (28... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  29  $\mathbb{W}c6$ +) 29  $\mathbb{W}h5$ !  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  30  $\mathbb{W}h8$ +  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  31  $\mathbb{W}xa8$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ ! 32  $\mathbb{W}xd5$ +. Well, before placing the knight on c4, let's move the rook to the safe square d8 (or e8), and the position becomes unclear.

Many years later the young Polish player Kamil Miton found an important strengthening of the attack. He suggested including the move 19 g4!. In the event of 19... $\mathbb{W}e6$  20 gxf5 gxf5 21  $\mathbb{Q}h1$  followed by 22  $\mathbb{Q}g1$  Black's position is difficult, since his pieces are tied to the defence of the weak f5-pawn. And after 19...fxg4 the idea of 20 e6!  $\mathbb{W}xe6$  21  $\mathbb{Q}ae1$  gains in strength. 21... $\mathbb{W}d7$  no longer works in view of 22  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ !  $\mathbb{W}xe7$  23  $\mathbb{Q}e5$ +  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  24 fxg4, and White also gains a great advantage after 21... $\mathbb{W}c6$  22  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  23  $\mathbb{W}e3$ .

Imagine to yourself that, deliberating over the move 18...f5, you initially ascertained that the combination beginning with 19 e6 was harmless, but you then discovered the idea of 19 g4!. Should you still decide on the advance of the f-pawn? It is hardly possible to give a definite reply, but I would probably have taken the risk. Black's position is anxious, in most variations the move ...f7–f5 solves his defensive problems, and the probably of the opponent finding a latent refutation is not too great.

### 18 $\mathbb{Q}e1$

Now 18...f5? is not possible because of 19 e6 and 20  $\mathbb{Q}f7$ +. In addition White has created the threat of 19  $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ +  $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  20 e6. And yet this last move causes some doubts. The rook moves off the f-file, where it could have come in useful.

### 18 ...

### $\mathbb{Q}ae8$ !

Tactics at the service of strategy! I prepare ... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  followed by ...f7–f5, and in the event of 19  $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ +  $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  20 e6 I have the saving resource 20... $\mathbb{Q}h4$ ! 21  $\mathbb{Q}g5$ !  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ .

### 19 $\mathbb{Q}f4$

### $\mathbb{Q}h4$ ?

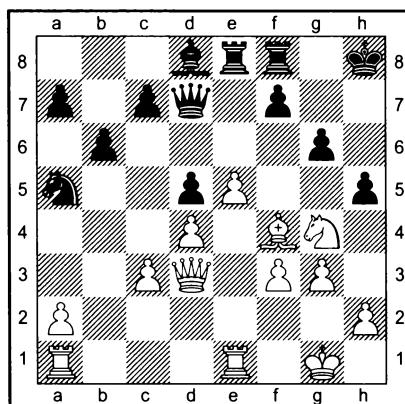
### 20 g3

### $\mathbb{Q}d8$

### 21 $\mathbb{Q}g4$

### h5!

I am obliged to further weaken my kingside – otherwise the opponent will place his bishop on h6, depriving me of any hope of counterplay.



### 22 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ ?

Shamkovich overestimates his attacking chances. After the exchange of minor pieces he hopes to establish his bishop on e5 and then, after opening lines on the kingside, get at my king. However, he is not able to put this plan into effect – Black has adequate defensive resources. At any event, psychologically I felt far easier. After all, now Black has only one concern – to survive, avoid being mated. In any quiet endgame his



knight will be stronger than the opponent's bishop.

White should have simply played 22  $\mathbb{Q}f2!$  (but not 22  $\mathbb{Q}e3?$  g5), and then prepared g3–g4.

**22 . . .**  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   
**23 exf6**  $\mathbb{Q}c4$

At last the time has come to place the knight on its lawful square.

**24  $\mathbb{Q}e5$**  **c6**

The queen must be freed from the need to guard the c7-pawn.

**25  $\mathbb{Q}g2$**   $\mathbb{W}f5!$   
**26  $\mathbb{W}e2$**

26  $\mathbb{W}xf5$  gxf5 27  $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  28  $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  29  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  30  $\mathbb{Q}ae1$  would have led to an unclear ending.

**26 . . .**  $\mathbb{Q}e6$

I have already begun to take an interest in the f6-pawn: I am intending 27... $\mathbb{Q}fe8$  28 f4  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  and 29... $\mathbb{W}xf6$  (or 28... $\mathbb{Q}g8$  with the threat of 29... $\mathbb{W}xf6$ ). Therefore White hurries to open lines.

**27 g4**  $\mathbb{W}g5$   
**28 h4**

The start of a forcing variation, at the end of which my opponent overlooked a small tactical subtlety. The balance would have been maintained after 28 f4  $\mathbb{W}xg4+$  29  $\mathbb{W}xg4$  h4xg4 30 h3 (30  $\mathbb{Q}g3$ !?) 30...gxh3+ 31  $\mathbb{Q}xh3$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$ ! 32  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  33  $\mathbb{Q}g3+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  34  $\mathbb{Q}xh8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xh8$  35 f5! gxf5 36  $\mathbb{Q}f4$ .

**28 . . .**  $\mathbb{W}xh4$   
**29 f4!**  
**30  $\mathbb{Q}h1$ ?**

Shamkovitch is still in the grip of an illusion. Of course, 30 gxh5? gxh5 or 30 f5?  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  31 dx5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  was unfavourable for him, but it was better to play 30  $\mathbb{W}f3$  h4xg4 31  $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}h3$ ! 32  $\mathbb{W}xh3$  (32  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}d2$  33  $\mathbb{W}xh3$ + gxh3 34  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$ + and 35... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ ) 32...gxh3+

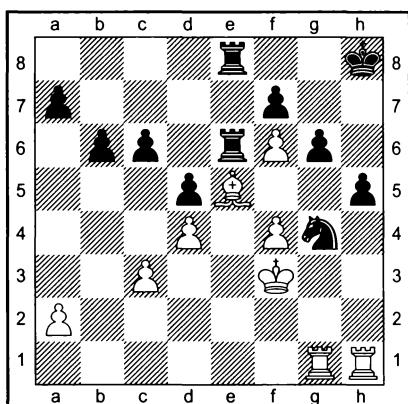
33  $\mathbb{Q}xh3$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$ , transposing into the equal position which occurred in the variation with 28 f4.

**30 . . .**  
**31  $\mathbb{W}xg4$**   $\mathbb{Q}e3+$   
**32  $\mathbb{Q}f3$**

32  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  33 f5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  (33... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ !?) 34 dx5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  35 fxg6 fxg6 was hopeless for White.

**32 . . .**  
**33  $\mathbb{Q}ag1$**

What would you now play as Black?



The exchange of minor pieces by 33... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ ! 34 dx5 looks premature; also dubious is 33... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ ! 34 f5!  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  35 dx5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  36 fxg6. But after 33... $\mathbb{Q}h6$ ! 34  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  White's attack would have come to an end and Black should have calmly begun the conversion of his two extra pawns (...c6–c5 etc.). Unfortunately, here the same story occurred as in my game against Lein. Having gained a winning position after great emotional stress, I relaxed and quickly made a superficial move with my king, underestimating the exchange sacrifice which my opponent had prepared.

**33 . . .**  
**34  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$**   $\mathbb{W}g8?$   
**35  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$**

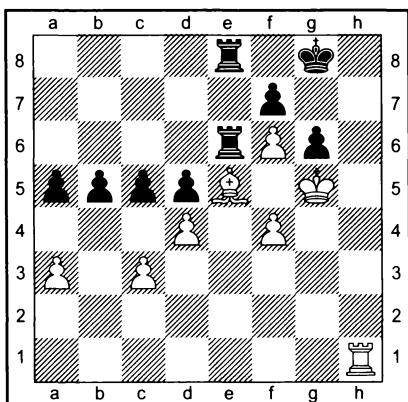
It is staggering but, deep in the endgame and

the exchange and a pawn down, White still retains an attack. He wants to prepare f4–f5 and pursue my king with his rook. Of course, here 36 f5 is not yet a threat in view of 36... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  (it is Black's dream to return the exchange at an appropriate moment), but soon such a threat will become real. It is not possible for Black to strengthen his kingside defences – all that remains is a counter-attack on the queenside.

**35 . . .** **c5**  
**36 ♖g5**

If now 36...cx $d$ 4 37 cx $d$ 4  $\mathbb{Q}c6$ , then 38 f5! (since Black no longer has a double capture on e5) 38... $\mathbb{Q}c2$  39  $\mathbb{Q}g1!$  with an unclear position. I found another idea – I tried to undermine White's pawn chain, to weaken the defence of the bishop on e5.

**36 . . .** **b5!**  
**37 a3** **a5**



**38  $\mathbb{Q}b1?$**

The decisive mistake, after which Black's idea triumphs. Meanwhile, after 38  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  or 38  $\mathbb{Q}e1$  followed by f4–f5 the win for me would still have been very much in doubt.

**38 . . .** **b4**  
**39 axb4** **axb4**  
**40 cxb4** **cxd4**  
**41 ♖xd4**

Variations such as 41 b5 d3 42 b6 d2 43 b7

$\mathbb{Q}b6!$  are easy and pleasant to calculate.

**41 . . .**  **$\mathbb{Q}e1!$**   
**42  $\mathbb{Q}b3$**   **$\mathbb{Q}e4$**

Here the game was adjourned. White sealed the move 43  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  and then resigned without resuming. I was intending 43... $\mathbb{Q}f1!$  (43...d4?!) is weaker in view of 44  $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}g1+$  45  $\mathbb{Q}h4$  (45  $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}e2$  or 45... $\mathbb{Q}ee1$ ) 45...g5+.

We have analysed two tense games. In both of them the outcome depended on the correct perception by the two players of the strategic problems facing them, but at the same time on their tactical resourcefulness, without which it is not possible to successfully put your plans into effect, and later also on their endgame technique. Good grounds for once more thinking about the need for every player to rid himself of his playing weaknesses and to achieve harmony in his play, by developing and perfecting all aspects of his mastery.

What other conclusions should be drawn from these games? Remember: in each of them there came a moment when it should have become clear to White that he would be unable to achieve complete strategic success – the opponent had sufficient counter-chances. In such situations it is important to display a sober and flexible approach, to be able to call a halt and, giving up your unrealisable aims, seek a way to achieve an acceptable, relatively safe position. Neither of my opponents coped with this problem.

Finally, as we have seen, the loss of a strategic battle by no means signifies the loss of the game. Nearly always there remain sufficient opportunities to make life difficult for the opponent, by continually setting him new problems.

And, on the contrary, after outplaying your opponent you must not relax, but continue playing at full intensity. Otherwise you risk missing a deserved win, as almost occurred with me in both of these games.



# PART V

Artur Yusupov

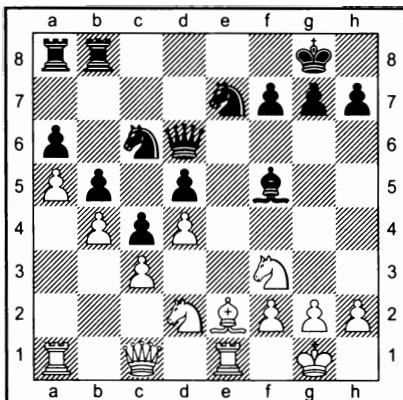
## From Games by Pupils of the School

Those readers who are familiar with our previous books will know that the authors consider one of the main ways of improving at chess to be the analysis of your own games. Before each session of our school, the pupils did some 'homework' by annotating several of their games. The most interesting of these were then discussed during the lessons. The present chapter contains some episodes where instructive positional problems occurred. The ages of the pupils are given in brackets.

### Choice of plan

Kovalevskaya – Kadymova (14)

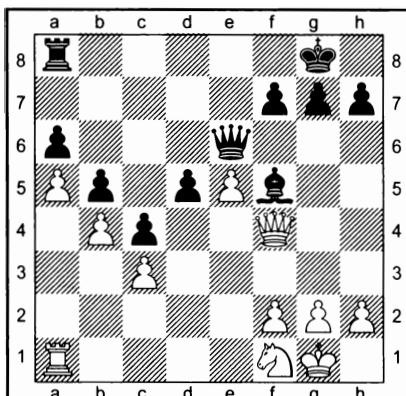
USSR 1990



Ilakha Kadymova has successfully solved her opening problems and obtained the freer position. But what to do next? Black can use her advantage in space to gradually advance

the pawns on the kingside, where she has a 'qualitative majority' (compare this example with the Yusupov-Lautier game on p.190). After 17...f6 18 ♜f1 ♛f7 19 ♜g3 ♜d7 20 ♜c2 g6 Black continues with ...♜h8, ...♜ag8, ...h7–h5 and ...g6–g5. Of course, such a plan, which somewhat weakens the castled position, should be carried out carefully, but in this case White is unable to create counterplay on the open e-file: note how well Black's pieces cover all the invasion squares. The piece attack carried out by Kadymova led merely to simplification.

- |          |       |
|----------|-------|
| 17 . . . | ♜g6?  |
| 18 ♜f1   | ♝f4   |
| 19 ♜e5!  | ♝xe2+ |
| 20 ♜xe2  | ♜e8   |
| 21 ♜f4   | ♝xe5  |
| 22 ♜xe5  | ♜xe5  |
| 23 dxe5  | ♜e6   |



The situation has changed sharply. Black has been left with a 'bad' bishop. White should activate her knight and bring it to d4. In the game she chose the incorrect route.

**24 ♜g3? ♜d3**

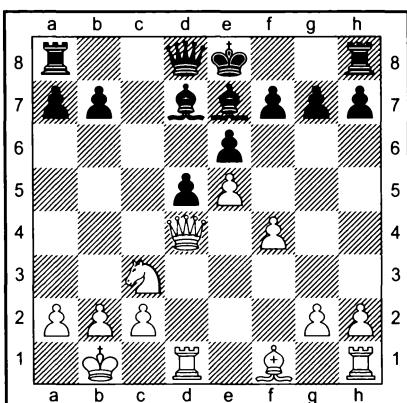
The knight did not in fact reach its goal.

24 ♜d2! suggested itself. If 24...♜e8 25 ♜e1 f6 26 ♜f3 ♜e4, then 27 exf6 ♜xf6 28 ♜xf6 gxf6 29 ♜d4 ♜f7 (the more tenacious 29...♜e5 is also unpromising: 30 f3 ♜g6 31 ♜f2) 30 f3 ♜d3 31 ♜xe8 ♜xe8 32 ♜xb5! and wins. As Dvoretsky pointed out, instead of 26...♜e4 Black has the stronger 26...♜g4! 27 ♜d4 fxe5! 28 ♜g5 exd4! (after 28...♜g6 29 ♜xg6 hxg6 30 ♜c6 e4 31 f4 followed by ♜f2–e3 White retains the better chances, despite the pawn deficit, in view of the control over the weakened dark squares) 29 ♜xe6 ♜xe6 30 cxd4 c3, and the passed pawn has to be blocked by the queen, which means that the position favours Black. Therefore it makes sense for White to play not 25 ♜e1, but 25 ♜f3?!, and after 25...♜g4 26 ♜d4 ♜xe5 27 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 28 f3 ♜d7 29 ♜f2 the excellent position of the knight on d4 fully compensates for the sacrificed pawn, although not more.

### Arrangement of the pieces

#### Morozov – Baklan (12)

Kiev 1990



In this example too, both players made mistakes. Here Black should have continued his development with 14...♜a5 followed by ...♜c8 and ...♝c5 or ...♝b4. Instead of this Baklan offered the exchange of queens, which spoiled his pawn structure.

**14 . . . ♜b6?**  
**15 ♜xb6 axb6**  
**16 ♜e2**

The simple 16 ♜b5 would have led to an advantage for White.

**16 . . . 0-0**  
**17 ♜f3?**

White continues to play inaccurately and without a plan. He clearly does not understand the essence of the position and simply makes 'solid' moves. The bishop is doing nothing on f3, whereas the thematic ...b6–b5 advance should have been prevented.

**17 . . . ♜a5?!**  
Of course, the immediate 17...b5! was stronger.  
**18 a3 b5**  
**19 ♜a2 ♜a4**  
**20 g3 f6?!**

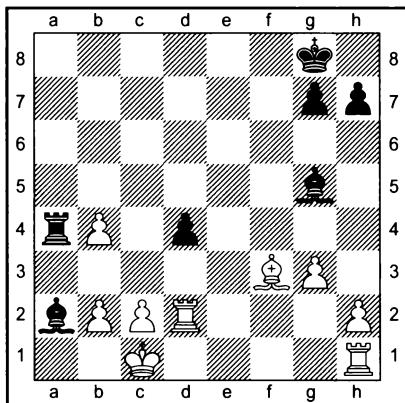
As was shown by Dvoretsky, Black should have played 20...b4!, since if 21 axb4?? there is 21...♜fa8.

**21 f5?!**  
The preparatory 21 ♜c3! ♜a5 was more accurate, and only now 22 f5.

**21 . . . d4?!**  
**22 exf6 ♜xf6**  
**23 fxe6 ♜xe6**  
**24 ♜xb7?!**

A typical mistake: White is tempted by material gain, underestimating the opponent's counterplay. 24 ♜b4! was sounder, with the advantage.

**24 . . . ♜b8**  
**25 ♜f3 b4?!**  
**26 ♜xb4 ♜xb4**

27  $\text{axb4}$  $\text{a}2+$ 28  $\text{c1}$  $\text{g}5+$ 29  $\text{d2}$ 29 ...  $\text{e}6?$ 

The bishop should have moved to another square: after 29... $\text{c}4$  30  $\text{b}3$   $\text{a}1+$  31  $\text{b}2$   $\text{xh}1$  Black would have retained excellent drawing chances. But, as sometimes happens, a mistake which should have led to a loss, in fact leads to a win for Black!

30  $\text{c}3??$ 

White would have won by 30  $\text{d}1!$   $\text{a}1+$  (30... $\text{c}4$  31  $\text{e}1$   $\text{a}1+$  32  $\text{d}1)$  31  $\text{e}2$   $\text{c}4+$  32  $\text{d}3$ .

30 ...  $\text{d}3$ 

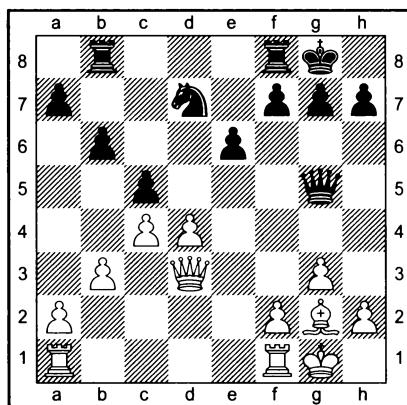
Or 30... $\text{b}3$  31  $\text{b}1$   $\text{xd}2.$

31  $\text{b}3$   $\text{a}2$ 32  $\text{d}1$   $\text{xb}3$ 

White resigned.

## Arbakov – Boguslavsky (16)

Moscow 1991



A rook move to d8 suggests itself. But sometimes it is very difficult to decide which rook to place on an open file. In this case too Black did not guess right.

16 ...  $\text{bd}8?!$ 

16... $\text{fd}8!$  was stronger, and if White plays 17  $\text{e}3$  as in the game, then after 17... $\text{xe}3$  18  $\text{fxe}3$   $\text{f}6$  19  $\text{ad}1$   $\text{e}5$  (or 19... $\text{f}8$ ) 20  $\text{dxc}5$   $\text{bxc}5$  21  $\text{h}3$  Black has the important move 21... $\text{f}8$ , consolidating his position.

17  $\text{e}3!$   $\text{xe}3?!$ 

17... $\text{f}6$  or even 17... $\text{g}4!?$  was preferable.

18  $\text{fxe}3$   $\text{f}6$ 19  $\text{ad}1$   $\text{e}5$ 

19... $\text{cxd}4$  20  $\text{exd}4$   $\text{d}7$  came into consideration.

20  $\text{dxc}5!$   $\text{bxc}5$ 21  $\text{h}3$   $\text{fe}8$ 22  $\text{c}6!$   $\text{xd}1$ 23  $\text{xd}1$   $\text{c}8$ 24  $\text{d}6!$ 

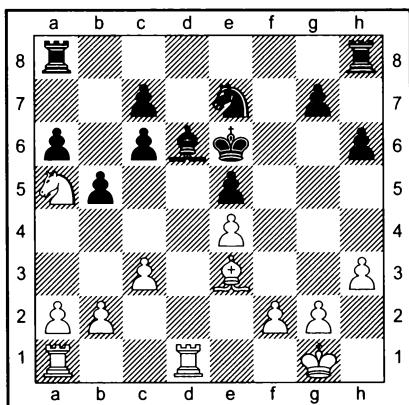
White stands significantly better in view of the threat of retreating his bishop followed by  $\text{a}6$ .

## Exchanging

Exchanging is undoubtedly one of the most complicated elements of positional play. It was no accident that an experienced Soviet trainer offered roughly the following advice: 'If you are playing a weaker opponent, exchange a few pieces. It is probable that he will not understand which pieces he should exchange, and which he should keep on the board.'

### Baklan (13) – Shiyansky

Kiev 1991



Instead of calmly strengthening his position by playing 20 b4!, then a2–a3,  $\mathbb{Q}d3$ ,  $\mathbb{Q}ad1$  and at a convenient moment c3–c4, White hurries to exchange his active knight and loses nearly all his advantage.

20  $\mathbb{Q}b7?$

$\mathbb{Q}ab8$

21  $\mathbb{Q}c5+$

$\mathbb{Q}xc5$

22  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$

$\mathbb{Q}c8$

23 f3

$\mathbb{Q}d6$

24  $\mathbb{Q}d3$

$\mathbb{Q}b7$

25  $\mathbb{Q}f2$

$\mathbb{Q}hd8$

26  $\mathbb{Q}ad1$

$\mathbb{Q}d6$

27  $\mathbb{Q}f1$

$\mathbb{Q}bd8$

28  $\mathbb{Q}e2$

c5

29 b3

c4

30  $bxc4$

$\mathbb{Q}bc4$

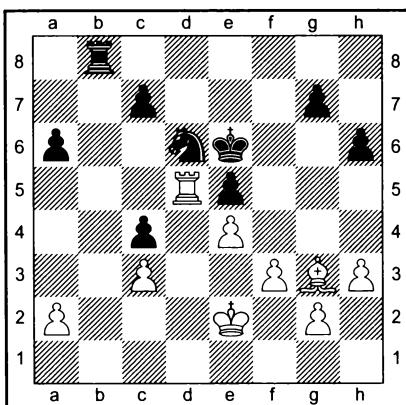
31  $\mathbb{Q}xd6+$

$\mathbb{Q}xd6$

32  $\mathbb{Q}d5$

$\mathbb{Q}b8$

33  $\mathbb{Q}g3$



33 . . .

$\mathbb{Q}b5?!$

A technical inaccuracy. Before changing the structure, it is useful to improve your position as much as possible, or worsen the opponent's position. As shown by Dvoretsky, Black should first have given a series of checks: 33... $\mathbb{Q}b2+$  34  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}b1+$  35  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}b2+$  36  $\mathbb{Q}g1$ , and only now played 36... $\mathbb{Q}b5$  with equality.

34  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$

$\mathbb{Q}xb5$

35  $\mathbb{Q}f2$

$\mathbb{Q}b7$

36  $\mathbb{Q}d2$

h5

37  $\mathbb{Q}e3$

g6

38  $\mathbb{Q}c2$

$\mathbb{Q}d6$

39 h4

$\mathbb{Q}c5?$

When offering to go into a pawn ending, you must calculate the variations very accurately. In this case Black got it wrong! 39... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  was correct.

40  $\mathbb{Q}xc5+$

$\mathbb{Q}xc5$

41 g3

$\mathbb{Q}b6$

42 f4

c5

43 a4!

$exf4$

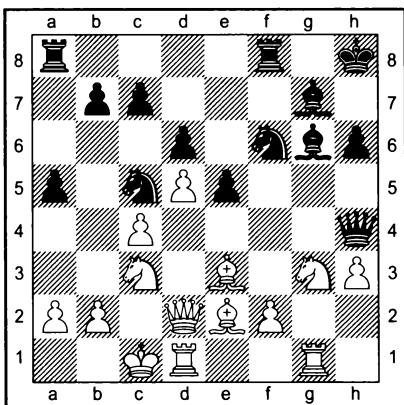
44  $gxf4$

$bxa4$

And White soon won.

**Zviagintsev (15) – Galkin**

Kramatorsk 1991



The problem of exchanging was central to this game. Black should have retained and made use of his active knights. 19...a4 suggests itself, after which White would have to reckon with 20... $\mathbb{Q}b3+$ . In the event of the exchange on c5 (of which, possibly, Black was afraid, but quite unnecessarily) White creates a weakness for himself on f2. If 20  $\mathbb{W}e1$ , then 20... $\mathbb{Q}h7$  with good play.

19 ...  $\mathbb{Q}fe4?$ 20  $\mathbb{Q}gx e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 21  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ Or 21  $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  22  $\mathbb{W}xc3$ .21 ...  $\mathbb{W}xe4$ 22  $\mathbb{W}c3!$ 

It is probable that this simple move was overlooked by Black. 23  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  is threatened.

22 ...  $\mathbb{W}b1+$ 23  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}f5$ 

With the idea of 24...e4.

24  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{W}f6$ 25  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $h5!$ 

A good plan: Black wants to retreat his bishop to h7 and then exchange the dark-square bishops, after which he will gain counterplay on the f-file. After 25...e4 26  $\mathbb{Q}e6$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  Vadim Zviagintsev had prepared a

queen sacrifice: 27  $\mathbb{Q}xg6!$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3+$  28  $\mathbb{B}xc3$  with a winning attack.

26  $\mathbb{Q}e2$ 

As shown by Zviagintsev's analysis, the active 26  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  also came into consideration:

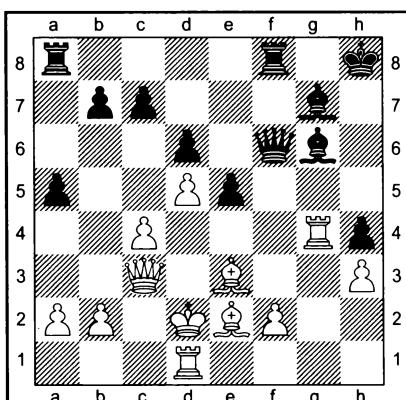
A) 26... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  27  $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  (White consolidates his advantage more simply with 27  $\mathbb{Q}dg1!$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  28  $\mathbb{Q}xh6$   $\mathbb{W}xh6+$  29  $\mathbb{W}e3$ ) 27... $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  (if 27... $\mathbb{Q}h6$ ?, then 28  $\mathbb{Q}xh5$   $\mathbb{W}xf2+$  29  $\mathbb{Q}e2$ ) 28  $\mathbb{Q}g5!$   $\mathbb{W}f3$  (28... $\mathbb{Q}h6$ ? is bad in view of 29  $\mathbb{Q}xh5$   $\mathbb{W}xf2+$  30  $\mathbb{Q}c1$ ) 29  $\mathbb{Q}g6!$  with the advantage;

B) 26... $\mathbb{Q}h7!$  27  $\mathbb{Q}dg1$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$ , retaining counterplay.

26 ...

h4

If 26... $\mathbb{Q}h7$ ?! White was not intending to reply 27  $\mathbb{Q}xh5$  in view of 27... $\mathbb{Q}h6$  with chances for both sides, but 27  $\mathbb{Q}g5!$ .

27  $\mathbb{Q}g4!$ If 27  $\mathbb{Q}g5$ ?, then 27... $\mathbb{Q}h6$ .

A critical moment in the game. 27... $\mathbb{Q}h5$ ? loses to 28  $\mathbb{Q}xg7!$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  29  $\mathbb{Q}dg1$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  30  $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ . In order to hold the position, without fail Black must achieve the exchange of his passive dark-square bishop for its active opponent. Therefore correct was 27... $\mathbb{Q}h7$ ! 28  $\mathbb{Q}dg1$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  29  $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  (29  $f4$ ?!  $\mathbb{Q}ae8$ ) 29... $\mathbb{W}xh6+$  30  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{W}f6!$  with a double-edged game.

However, as Dvoretsky pointed out, White

would nevertheless have retained the better chances by offering the exchange of the light-square bishops: 28  $\mathbb{B}d3!$ , and if 28... $\mathbb{B}h6$  29  $\mathbb{B}c1$ .

27 ...  $\mathbb{B}f5?$   
 28  $\mathbb{B}g5$   $\mathbb{B}f7!?$

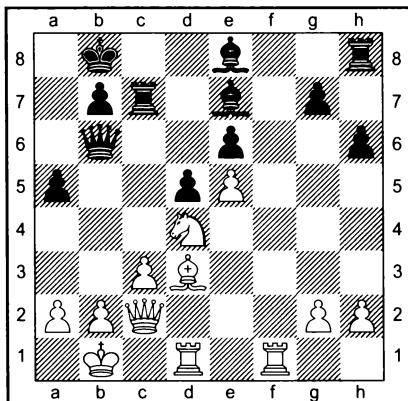
Black recognises his mistake and tries to prepare 29... $\mathbb{B}h6$  (if 30  $\mathbb{B}h5$  he has the reply 30... $\mathbb{B}h7$ ). However, he should have reconciled himself to the loss of a tempo and played 28... $\mathbb{B}h7$  29  $\mathbb{B}h5!$   $\mathbb{W}g6$ . Now White easily prevents the exchange of the dark-square bishops and quickly decides the game with an attack on the g- and h-files.

29  $\mathbb{B}h5+!$   $\mathbb{B}g8$   
 30  $\mathbb{B}g1$   $\mathbb{B}f8?!$   
 31  $\mathbb{B}g5$

Black resigned.

### Darchiya (14) – Gedyev

Moscow 1991



Often the assessment of a position depends on slight nuances. Thus if the a5-pawn were moved to a4, Black would have a defensible position.

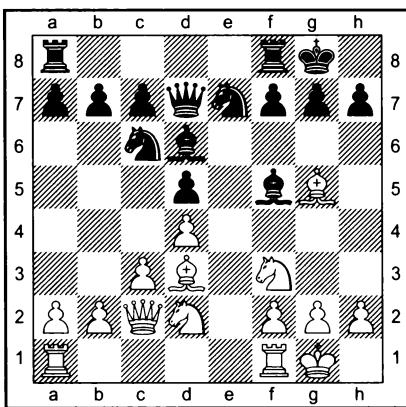
25  $\mathbb{B}g6?$

The exchange of bishops is anti-positional. Although White later won the game, this occurred only thanks to a blunder by the opponent.

Meanwhile, Diana Darchiya could have immediately decided the outcome with another exchange: 25  $\mathbb{W}b3!$ . It is important to eliminate the queen, the defender of the e6-pawn, and thereby completely disorganise the opponent's defences. Black has no defence, for example: 25... $\mathbb{W}xb3$  26 axb3  $\mathbb{B}d7$  27  $\mathbb{B}f7$ .

### Rasted – Kadymova (15)

Germany 1992



Even in such a completely level situation one must take care over exchanges, so as not to be left in the end with bad pieces.

11  $\mathbb{B}xf5?!$

White should have exchanged her 'bad' g5-bishop (which otherwise is doomed to run up against its own pawn chain) for the opponent's more active knight. In this case the game would have remained completely level, whereas now Black gains the initiative.

11 ...  $\mathbb{B}xf5$   
 12  $\mathbb{B}fe1$   $h6$   
 13  $\mathbb{B}e3$   $\mathbb{B}ae8$   
 14  $\mathbb{B}f1$   $\mathbb{B}xe3?!$

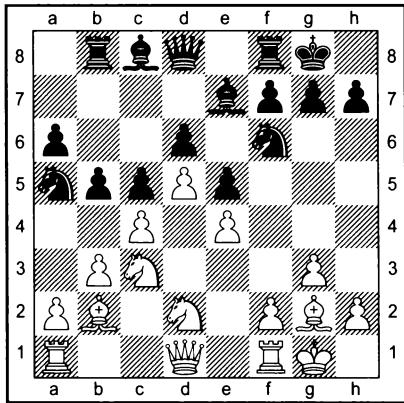
Returning the favour. Of course, Black should have played 14... $\mathbb{B}e7$  followed by the doubling of rooks, and if 15  $\mathbb{B}g3$  captured the knight with the bishop, aiming to exploit her knight's greater manoeuvrability com-

pared with the passive bishop. Now, however, not a trace of Black's advantage remains and the game soon ended in a draw.

### Pawn structure

**Chekhaev (13) – Goldaev**

USSR 1989



White could have parried the threat of 13...bxc4 with the simple 13  $\mathbb{Q}c2!$  and then carried out a standard plan:  $\mathbb{Q}ae1$ ,  $\mathbb{Q}d1$  and f2–f4 with the advantage. Instead he exchanges pawns, which merely increases the opponent's chances on the queenside.

**13 cxb5?**

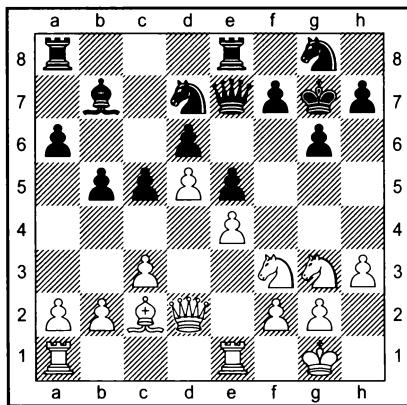
**axb5**

**14 f4**

Now Black would have obtained the more pleasant game by continuing 14...b4! 15  $\mathbb{Q}a4$  (or 15  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  16  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  c4! with the threat of 17... $\mathbb{Q}b6+$ ) 15... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  followed by ... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ , ... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  and at a convenient moment ...c5–c4.

**Smirnov – Emelin (13)**

Leningrad 1989



What distinguishes a grandmaster from a master? Such a question is often asked by chess enthusiasts. Many think that a grandmaster calculates variations further or has a better knowledge of opening theory. In fact this is not the real difference. One can pick out two important traits, in which a higher-ranked player is normally superior to one of lower rank: this is a feeling for the critical moment in a game and a more subtle understanding of various positional problems.

The diagram position is an excellent illustration of this last trait. When Sergey Dolmatov looked at the game, he gave the following assessment, which is very important for such structures:

'When in Spanish positions White closes the centre, the placing of his a-pawn becomes important. If White has already played a2–a4, then Black gains counterplay by advancing his pawn to c4 and occupying the c5-square with his knight. However, if the white pawn is still at a2, the ...c5–c4 plan is now weaker in view of b2–b3, weakening the c4-pawn. White, in turn, should prepare the opening of the a-file with the preparatory b2–b3, and only then play a2–a4.'

Subtle evaluations of this type are gradually accumulated by a player, and make up his store of positional knowledge.

Now it will be easy for the reader to understand why the following natural move by White has a question mark attached to it.

**20 a4?**

Correct was 20 b3 followed by a2–a4, when, in Dolmatov's opinion, White's chances are slightly better.

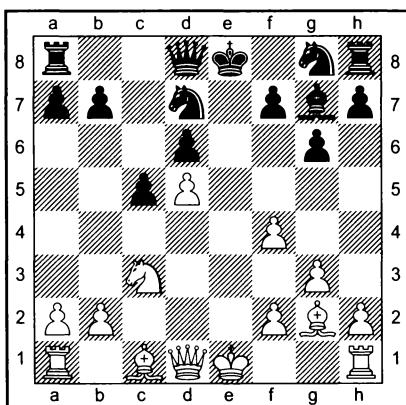
**20 . . .**

**c4!**

After this standard reply Black seized the initiative.

**Boguslavsky (16) – Cherniak**

Moscow 1991



White's pawn structure has been spoiled. He should have taken the opportunity not only to rectify it, but also to open up the game, which is undoubtedly advantageous to the side with the two bishops. After the correct 11 f5! White would have gained the advantage. The natural castling move proved to be a serious mistake, and the situation changed sharply.

**11 0-0?**

**Qe7**

**12 Qe1**

**0-0**

**13 Qe4**

**Qf6**

**14 Qxf6+**

**Qxf6**

**15 g4**

**Qe8**

**16 f5?**

Excessively sharp! 16 Qd2 followed by 17 Qc3 was better.

**16 . . .**

**gxf5**

**17 gxf5**

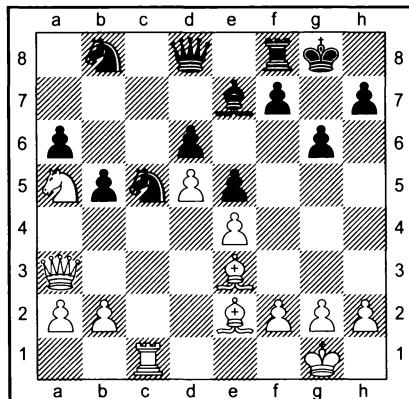
Now the simple 17...Qd7 followed by ...Qh8 would have placed White in a critical position.

### Material-grabbing

This is a common mistake: many young players, on seeing an opportunity to win material, often do not pay due attention to the opponent's counterplay and disregard sounder alternatives (remember the Morozov–Baklan game). Here is another example on the same theme.

**Darchiya (11) – Welcheva**

World Girls Championship,  
Fond du Lac 1990



**20 Qxc5?!**

White should simply have strengthened her position with 20 f3, when against the threat of 21 b4 followed by the invasion of the knight at c6 Black would have no adequate defence. The move in the game allows her opponent more saving chances.

**20 . . .**

**dxc5**



21 ♜b7

♝b6

28 ♛e8

♚a7

22 ♜xc5

♝c8

29 ♜xb5?

23 b4

a5

It was possible to play for a win only by making the prophylactic move 29 ♜f1!. White was fortunate still to have a draw after her opponent's strong reply.

24 ♜d3

♝xc1+

25 ♛xc1

axb4

26 ♜xe5?!

White repeats the same mistake, gradually making things more difficult for herself. The modest 26 g3 was stronger.

26 . . .

♜f6

29 . . .

b3!

27 ♛c8+

♚g7

30 ♜d7!

♝xe5

Draw.

31 ♛xe5+

♚g8

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