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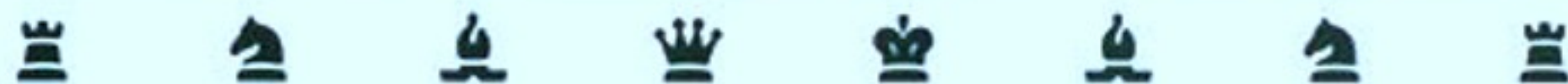


**Best Lessons of a
Chess Coach**

ALGEBRAIC NOTATION

Sunil Weeramantry
and **Ed Eusebi**

Introduction by Bruce Pandolfini





Hello everybody!!

We are a group of chess fans who are producing new chess material. We have members from all around the world, belonging to different cultures and speaking different languages, all of us joined by our common love for chess! We hope you will enjoy our work!

If you are interested in joining us, or send any comments drop us an email at: caissa_lovers@yahoo.com.

Best regards!!

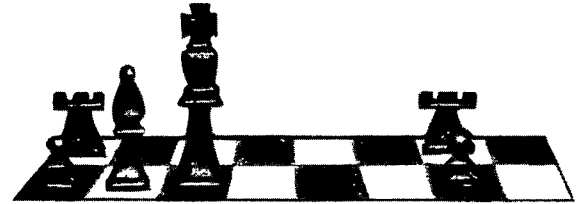
Hola a todos!

Somos un grupo de fanáticos del ajedrez, que estamos tratando de producir nuevo material como este, desarrollando diferentes proyectos e ideas. Tenemos miembros de diferentes partes del mundo, provenientes de diferentes culturas, hablando diferentes lenguas, unidos por nuestra pasión por el ajedrez!. Esperamos que disfruten de esta muestra de nuestro trabajo!.

Si alguien estuviese interesado en unirse al grupo nos pueden escribir a: caissa_lovers@yahoo.com.

Saludos!

Caissa Lovers



BEST LESSONS
— OF A —
CHESS COACH

SUNIL WEERAMANTRY

and

ED EUSEBI

With an introduction by Bruce Pandolfini

DM
DAVID MCKAY
COMPANY, INC.

To my parents for finally accepting my work;
to all my students past and present.

—S.W.

To Sylvia, Lenny, and Clara for putting us up
and putting up with us.

—E.E.

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Weeramantry, Sunil.

Best lessons of a chess coach / Sunil Weeramantry and Ed Eusebi; with an introd. by Bruce Pandolfini.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN: 0-8129-2265-4

1. Chess. I. Eusebi, Ed. II. Title.

GV1449.5.W44 1993

794'.12—dc20

93-1375

Designed by M M Design 2000, Inc.

Manufactured in the United States of America

9 8 7 6 5 4 3

INTRODUCTION

Bruce Pandolfini

Most people can't take lessons from a great chess teacher. If you try to contact one, it might be a while before he returns your call or answers your letter. Then you learn he's booked up for a year and doesn't take students without a reference. Factor in high fees and travel time and you might start thinking about switching to checkers. You could buy the teacher's book, if one exists, but chess coaches are loathe to publish their truly valuable trade secrets. So their books tend to look alike—indistinguishable rehashings of abstract texts written fifty years before by strong players who weren't teachers and had no empathy with students.

Enter *Best Lessons of a Chess Coach*, a manual that welcomes you to the heart of the master. Sunil Weeramantry is a strong player, but more important, he's a gifted chess teacher—one of the most successful the United States has ever had. Many students who began under his tutelage as rank beginners have won national titles. What is his secret? Sunil simply understands the didactic process and loves teaching. Having helped thousands of students, he knows what pitfalls to avoid. You can benefit from his invaluable experience by reading this eye-opening book.

Best Lessons of a Chess Coach consists of ten lessons given by Sunil in his scholastic programs, like the one he offers at the Hunter College Elementary School in New York City. These lessons, recorded, selected, and edited by Ed Eusebi, are not abstract stagings created at a keyboard, but actual dialogues with students. Their overriding theme

is the attack, and how to start, develop, and conclude it. The linchpins of strategy and tactics are all here: strong and weak squares, bishops vs. knights, open files, the seventh rank, king safety, outposts, color complexes, doubled rooks, pawn structure, and much more. Yet Sunil goes far beyond sterile platitudes. He injects these fundamentals with life, integrating advice into chess games he and other masters have played.

The format is made interactive through a cogent series of questions and answers. The questions find their mark because they are natural, not theoretical, and because Sunil has a sixth (and seventh) sense of what is truly relevant. He is a scientist who realizes that asking a good question practically gives the solution. He is a teacher who knows when to turn a student's mistake into a learning experience. Few chess books provide students' erroneous responses to posed problems. In most cases, these initial replies are edited out and corrected. But Sunil recognizes that when you're learning, wrong answers often have more value than right ones. Why? Because if your answer is right, you tend to stop thinking, whereas if it's wrong, you might try to understand why. Using his pupil's gut responses as points of departure for discussion, Sunil segues into principles, backbone variations, helpful techniques, and pragmatic tips, exposing the underlying logic of a position. Socrates would have enjoyed this approach. Anyone can train you to be a parrot, but Sunil shows you how to think.

In fact, much of Sunil's discourse pinpoints logical errors and helps to unjumble your thinking. Some of his suggestions are hard to find anywhere else, such as how to distinguish between planning and mere dreaming. It's not uncommon for a player to devise a plan of attack (for

example, I will go here, and there, then to that square, and then I'll do this . . .) without regard to the opponent's possible defenses. But this is wishful thinking, not strategic planning. These lessons demonstrate that it's better to anticipate an opponent who could defend himself well enough to crush such dreaming.

Sunil's clever questioning never lets a student forget the main themes of a session. Like other fine educators, he understands the need to reinforce crucial concepts and principles by constantly referring back to them, regardless of where the path of analysis started. And he drives home all the key points with summaries, another technique of the skilled expositor. Many chess writers merely present an idea and that's that. Sunil's logic won't give up, but should the student still not get the message, each chapter concludes with a review section, including a listing of essential themes, guidelines, advice, and a selection of related games.

The clear language is another plus. It reduces confusion and can be understood by everyone. Sunil doesn't use an abundance of terms to say the same thing, or reiterate ambiguous ones throughout the book or within a lesson. He thus avoids the common error of striving to find unusual metaphors and colorful words, which actually hinder understanding. And if you should forget a term, just turn to the glossary on page 310, one of the best to be found in any instructional chess book.

The book's layout also aids learning. Pertinent ideas and moves stand out instantly. Some are italicized or highlighted in boldface; others are set apart, giving them special emphasis. The final bonus of *Best Lessons of a Chess Coach* is the abundance of clear diagrams that effectively break up the text.

Certainly newcomers who know the moves and rules can benefit from this book. But any amateur can use it to better his play. For chess players who think they already know a lot, Sunil's inexorable logic should clear away misconceptions and start them looking at the game from a fresh perspective.

For anyone interested in the art of teaching, *Best Lessons of a Chess Coach* should be required reading. I plan to recommend it to all my colleagues and students. After all, Sunil Weeramantry is a chess teacher par excellence. Coaches respect him, parents value him, students love him. I call Sunil "the wizard" because it seems there isn't a losing situation he can't salvage and turn into victory. Some of my greatest pleasures have come when my students topped his at national events, and some of my biggest disappointments occurred when his students defeated mine. In the world of chess, he is one of the few teachers whose acumen astonishes me.

PREFACE

One of the biggest stumbling blocks in the development of a chess player comes sometime after he or she has begun to play in tournaments. Many players find that they lose easily to higher-rated players, but cannot tell why. They may point to the final tactical denouement and say, "If I had played here instead, I might have been able to hold the game." In fact, they find themselves in losing positions because they are suffering from a lack of knowledge of *what is important* in a given chess situation.

Their minds may be plagued with questions they do not know how to answer: "Who has the better position?"; "Should I resolve the tension in the center?"; "How can I improve the placement of my pieces?"; "What is the best way to penetrate my opponent's defenses?" The ability to answer such questions is gleaned from a wealth of chess lore and experience. This is where the guidance of an experienced, well-practiced chess coach becomes critical.

Such questions cannot be answered by mere reference to a laundry list of canned precepts. Every truth about chess must be couched in **context**—preferably in the context of a real game. A good chess game is a powerful living drama, imbued with a plethora of twists and turns and surprises, and infused with a wealth of possible stratagems. To play chess well, and to appreciate it the most, one can do no better than to study complete, well-annotated master games.

This book presents the study of chess as a series of game-oriented lectures given to young players of various

skill levels. These lectures are presented by nationally acclaimed chess coach Sunil Weeramantry, a FIDE master who is in current and continual practice. Sunil's lectures bring the reader through the entire life cycle of various chess games, in a way that makes clear what is transpiring at each stage of the game.

Questions are posed and answered, instructive alternatives are explored, and aspects of the chess struggle (the practical side of chess) are infused into the discussions with numerous asides.

The cumulative effect of a number of lectures of this nature is to give the improving young chess player a feel for how to conduct a winning game of chess, while providing him or her with a variety of tools for doing so.

Of course, the benefits that may accrue from reading this material are not limited to the young and inexperienced—there is material here for every amateur to absorb, young or old, weak or strong.

We hope the reader will also find a good share of chess entertainment while seeing how the story of each of these games unfolds in the lecture room. There is a great deal of beauty, logic, and artistry to admire and enjoy in the games and ideas presented here. When Sunil lectures on the games of the great masters, one can imagine oneself producing such games. When Sunil lectures on his own games one can share the experience along with him—the tension, excitement, surprise, disappointment, triumph, and occasional glee of the chess struggle.

This particular volume of game lectures focuses primarily on the theme of *building and maintaining an attack*. It explores and reexplores a number of basic themes and presents guidelines on how to wrest and maintain a winning initiative.

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HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book is organized into two main sections, with several lessons in each. Each lesson presents a lecture on a complete game that exemplifies one or more thematic ideas. Naturally, some of the games will contain the themes of both sections. For example, the Paulsen–Morphy game (Lesson 5) is an excellent example of the **initiative and piece coordination** as well as of **controlling strong squares**.

Many ideas are introduced more than once, so that they may be seen in new contexts. The games taken as a whole enlarge upon the themes and engrave them in chess memory.

Each lecture is a dialogue in which the lecturer frames questions at various stages. You should pause to frame your own answer and compare it to the respondent's. Note that the first answer given in the text may not be the correct one.

Ample diagrams are provided to help you follow the flow of the game and visualize the possibilities, but you may prefer to follow the game on your own chess set.

You, the reader, will sometimes be given exercises in the footnotes. You may wish to set up the position on a board, analyse, and make notes for comparison to the answers given at the end of the lecture.

Review notes are provided to reinforce the important points made during each lecture. These notes are segmented into Themes, Guidelines, and Advice. As you read

these, try to recall the context in which the ideas were presented during the lecture. If necessary, go back and find the relevant paragraphs. Highlighted text is used to help you find them.

At the end of each lesson, you will also find a *Supplementary Games* section for your perusal. These games illustrate the theory and/or themes of the lecture game. Play these over to get a feel for how the thematic positions develop and are exploited in different situations. Such **pattern reinforcement** is essential to the development of chess skill.

If you should encounter terms you do not understand, please refer to the Glossary. For further study, the authors urge you to read the recommended books listed in the Bibliography.

I

STRONG SQUARES

AND

WEAK COLOR COMPLEXES

The games in this section emphasize the importance of pawn structure and the role it plays in supporting the attack.

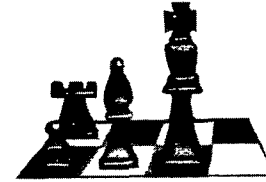
Lesson 1: *Home away from Home* introduces the idea of the *outpost square* as a permanent advantage that can support the steady build-up of an attack. In this game, note especially how Smyslov secures his position against counterplay before launching the final assault.

Lesson 2: *A Wonderful Knight* shows the disruptive influence that an advanced outpost can have on an opponent's development. Once Black obtains an outpost on d3, he has the time to realize a carefully crafted plan for providing further support of the outpost and for taking more control of the position.

Lesson 3: *A Real Together Feeling* introduces the idea of the *weak color complex*. In this game, White concedes control of two dark diagonals and the dark squares around the enemy king. The Black attack is then unstoppable.

Lesson 4: *One to Remember* is a sharp game in which Black seizes the opportunity to weaken the dark squares around the enemy king and to control the dark diagonals leading to the king's position. The final attack features the queen, the dark-square bishop, and both Black knights working in unison.

Lesson 5: *Playing with a Full Deck* demonstrates the occupation of an advanced outpost square, fast mobilization of forces while maintaining the bind, and the exploitation of the resultant advantage in space by means of a *destructive sacrifice*. This Morphy game has everything!



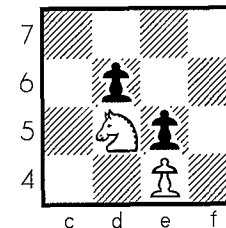
LESSON 1

HOME AWAY FROM HOME

Today we have a game to demonstrate the outpost square. There are three conditions for a square to qualify as an outpost:

- It must be near enemy territory.
- It must be safe from attack by a pawn.
- It must be protected—it must have an **anchor**. The anchor should be a pawn.
- It must be subject to effective occupation, preferably by a knight.

d5 is an outpost



Why is an outpost square important? If you can establish a safe place in enemy territory (“a home away from home”), you can use that square to enforce your attack.

This is a Scheveningen Sicilian. The e7 bishop holds the center—it protects the weakness at d6. Not every piece can go on the attack. Black will complete his development, expand on the queenside by pushing his a- and b-pawns, line up his heavy pieces on the c-file, and play for ...d5.

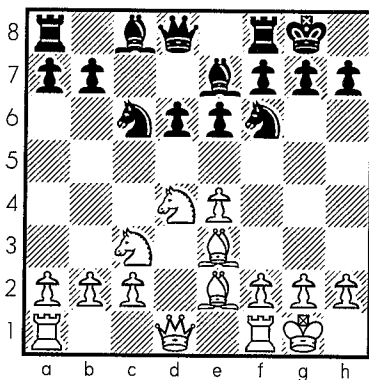
In the Sicilian, if Black succeeds in playing ...d5, he will equalize. This is why White will sometimes play an early c4—the “Maroczy bind” position. The pawns on e4 and c4 suppress ...d5.¹

7.0-0 0-0 8.Be3 Nc6

Notice that White has placed both bishops on the e-file, leaving the d-file uncluttered, in case he needs to control d5.

We have now reached the end of the opening. White has all of his minor pieces developed; Black has all but one. At this stage you have to decide what you are going to do. This is where most players have trouble.

After 8...Nc6



Question: How should White further develop his position?

Answer: 9.Bb5.

No. It does not do anything. Black will defend with ...Bd7. White must not take the knight because Black will play ...bxc6, strengthening the center.

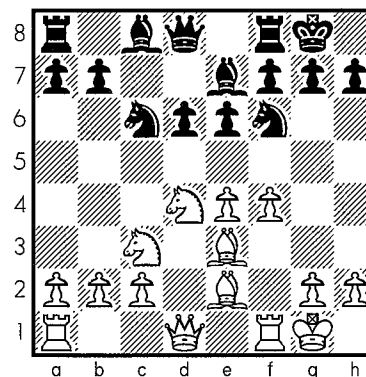
The correct move is ...

9. f4

It is extremely important to get two pawns together on the fourth rank whenever feasible. This controls a lot of space, not only in front but also in back of the pawns. *Two pawns on the fourth can act as a screen to move pieces around.* You do not necessarily have to move these pawns—they perform a valuable function where they are.

This move also improves the position of the rook on f1, and gives you a middlegame plan: White will attack on the kingside.

After 9.f4



¹For a clear explanation of Maroczy bind positions and the Sicilian in general, see [Levy].

Always try to start an attack on the side of the board where you have more space. Once you establish a space advantage in a sector (the kingside, queenside, or center), move your pieces to that part of the board and conduct an attack. This idea, of building up an attack in a sector, is very important. Pay attention to how Smyslov builds up his attack without giving Black counterplay.

Think about this, *how to accumulate advantages*, when you are playing your games. It must be done very carefully—most players do not have the patience for it. This lesson is a very important one. You should play this game over again on occasion so that you do not forget it.

What about the weakness on f2? It is not an important weakness if it cannot be exploited. *Your king is only as weak as your opponent's ability to attack it.*

9...Qc7 10.Qe1

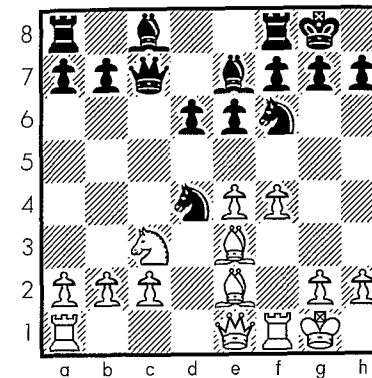
A very strong move—the key move. Smyslov has created a way for his queen to move to the kingside. You would not think of this without the idea of kingside expansion. *This is why you must study an opening system—to learn what the middlegame plans are.*

Note if 10...Nb4, then 11.Rc1—not where you want your rook permanently, but okay as a temporary measure. The rook can move again once the Black knight is chased away with a3. This does not represent a loss of time because each player has moved his piece twice.

10...Nxd4

Question: Black is a strong player. Why is he taking the knight?

After 10...Nxd4



Answer: After Bxd4, he can play his pawn to e5.

Very good. Black will gain a little space.

Question: Now, what about 11.Bxd4 e5 12.fxe5 dxe5 13.Qg3? Analyze 12.fxe5 versus 12.Be3. Which is the better move? Do not move the pieces—you must *visualize*.

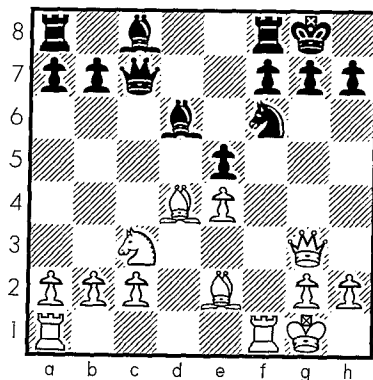
Answer: After 12.fxe5 dxe5 13.Qg3 Bd6 14.Be3, White's attack is on its way. The f-pawn has been traded and White has opened another file for his rooks.

Answer: On the other hand, if White trades pawns, he is giving Black more space. Also, White may prefer to keep open the possibility of f5.

So you see how difficult it is. You can almost make a chart of pros and cons. The correct move is 12.Be3, because the most critical factor is space! An important consideration here is that 12.fxe5 frees Black's dark-square bishop.

In chess, strategy and tactics do not always go hand in hand—you can have a great plan and get checkmated in two moves! The pawn trade $12.fxe5 dxe5$ does not fit into Smyslov's strategy, but it sets up a **tactical threat**. Is the pin $13.Qg3$ so strong that White can ignore his strategic plan and go for the combination?

Question: Go a step further after $13...Bd6$. What move does White have here?

After $13...Bd6$ (variation)

Answer: $14.Rxf6$ is possible.

No. Black will get too much counterplay.² White has a much simpler move.

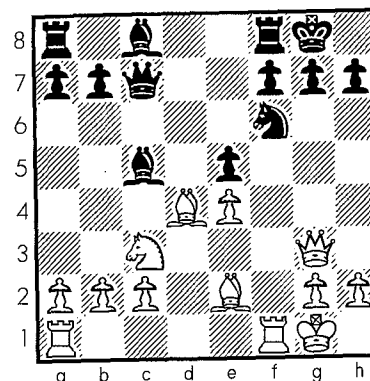
Answer: $14.Nb5$.

Correct. So $13...Bd6$ is not such a great defense after all! Black has a much better 13th move. What is it?

Answer: $13...Ng4$ $14.Bxg4 Bxg4$ $15.Qxg4 exd4$...

Then $16.Nd5$ is strong for White.

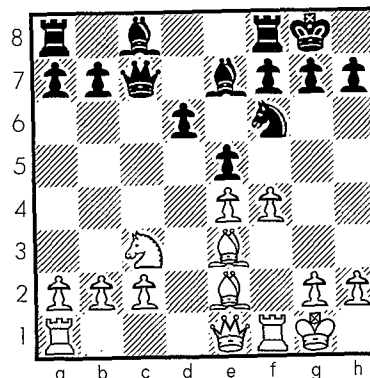
Answer: $13...Bc5$ pinning the bishop.

After $13...Bc5$ (variation)

A very strong move! If White plays $14.Qxe5$, Black will play queen takes queen and laugh! If $14.Bxc5$, then $14...Qxc5+$ $15.Kh1 Kh8$ stopping $Rxf6$, and Black is fine.

So the tactics do not work. Smyslov decides to go for the strategic plan.

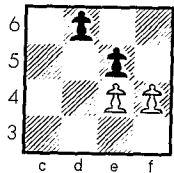
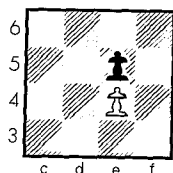
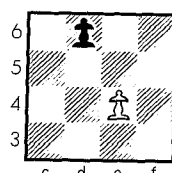
$11.Bxd4$ $e5$ $12.Be3$

After $12.Be3$ 

²Exercise 1: Analyze the consequences of $14.Rxf6$.

Now, White can sit on this position, because Black can't play $12...exf4$. This would leave White with a pawn on his fourth rank versus an enemy pawn on Black's third rank. Space is in White's favor. White does **not** want to initiate the trade himself, as this would leave **each** player with a pawn on his fourth rank.³

It is important to understand the various pawn trades that can occur in the center, with regard to control of space. It is a question of whether to *maintain or release tension*. Let's look at a few:

1. *Better*2. *Equal*3. *Better*

In the first case above, a pawn trade by White leads only to equality (case 2). If he can coerce Black into a trade, he gets case 3. Then the d6 pawn is a backward isolated pawn. White will play to control and occupy the d5 square, and perhaps to win the d6 pawn.

You may be wondering, "What does all this have to do with checkmate?" Well, in chess, you fight all sorts of battles, big and small. Winning a game of chess is a matter of *accumulating advantages*. Eventually, you will overwhelm your opponent. There is no need to attempt a quick knockout.

Conducting an attack takes guts, and a sense of timing. Here is a bit of philosophy, for chess and for life: **Control your own destiny**. Do not wait for things to happen to you.

³For a discussion of various center pawn configurations, see [Keres].

Now, with the next three moves, you will see how White's advantage increases even more.

$12...Be6$ $13.f5$ $Bc4$

Question: Should Black offer to trade light-square bishops?

Answer: Yes. White's light-square bishop might be able to attack on the kingside.

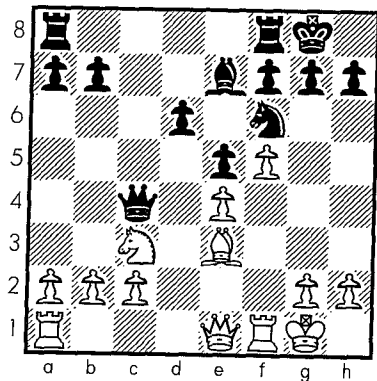
Not at all. Here is something to keep in mind: you must distinguish between *thinking ahead and planning*, and merely *dreaming!* There really is no way for White's e2 bishop to take part in a kingside attack. You must not handicap your thinking by dreaming up threats that cannot be made.

White's light-square bishop is a **bad bishop** because its movement is restricted by its own pawns. Black's light-square bishop is a **good bishop** because it can move freely. Generally, one would not like to trade the good for the bad. Nevertheless, Black is offering to trade his good bishop for White's bad bishop so that he can get his queen to c4. His idea is to put pressure on e4 and support $...d5$. However, White's superior pawn structure will win out. Best is to back out with $13...Bd7$.

$14.Bxc4$ $Qxc4$

Question: Now, what is White's best move? Hint: it ties in with my introduction to the game. Note that White's immediate problem is what to do about his e-pawn that is under attack.

After 14...Qxc4



Answer: 15.Qb4.

That protects e4, but White must be careful about a discovered attack, for example 15...Nd5. Sometimes the best course of action in chess is to *anticipate trouble before it happens*. Any other ideas?

Answer: 15.Bg5.

A very good move! By pinning the knight, this move does two things—it protects the e-pawn, and it also prevents the freeing move ...d5.

Question: What is Smyslov thinking about doing next?

Answer: He can play Nd5 next.

Not yet. Smyslov first wants to get rid of the knight, to maintain **absolute control** over the outpost square.⁴

15.Bg5 Rfe8

To protect the pinned piece.

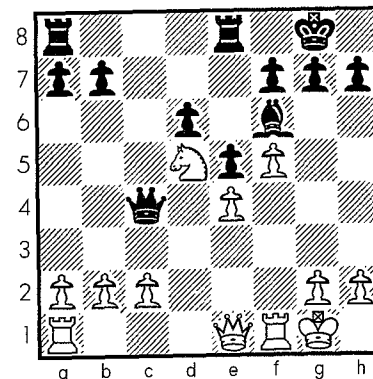
16.Bxf6 Bxf6

⁴Exercise 2: In fact, after 15.Bg5 Rfe8, 16.Nd5 is a blunder. Why?

White takes the knight on f6 so that he can control the outpost square. Here's a good rule of thumb when considering exchanges: *do not look at what you are trading; look at what is left on the board after the trade.*

17.Nd5

After 17.Nd5



This is a central outpost square. The knight will control f6 and e7 and also influence the queenside. You do not know yet how this game will end, but what you do know is: you have **one great square!** The knight is like a tennis player in the middle of the court: it can move right or move left. It will *dominate* the bad bishop.

Of course, White may choose to trade his knight at the right time, and for the right price. For example, taking the bishop on the next move would weaken Black's castled position.

Question: What if Black plays 17...Qxc2?

Answer: Attack the queen with 18.Rc1.

That would lose too many pawns. There is a better move for White.

Answer: 18.Qg3 threatening to win the f6 knight.

18...Kh8 should hold.

The right move is 18.Rf2. White wins the exchange without dropping two pawns: 18...Qc4 19.b3 Qc6 20.Rac1 Qd7 21. Nc7 forking the two rooks.

17...Bd8

Smyslov will now *take the time to attend to a few small problems*. He will put a pawn on c3 protected by his knight, stopping all of Black's counterplay on the queenside. Then he will switch over to a crushing kingside attack.

18.c3

Now, if 18...Bb6+, do not even consider giving up the knight for the bishop. White simply plays 19.Kb1. Then his king is safer and Black's bishop is on the wrong side of the board.

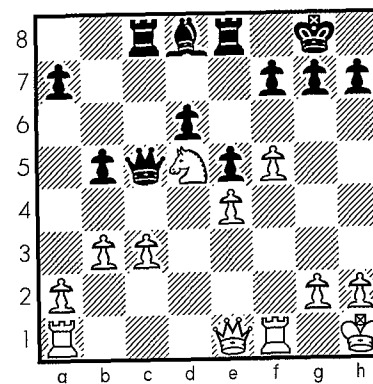
18...b5 19.b3

A difficult move. The idea is to play c4 and close the queenside if Black continues with 19...b4. Smyslov continues to show restraint. He will attack later.

19...Qc5+ 20.Kh1 Rc8

This move just *looks* good; it doesn't appear to have any specific purpose. *Avoid good-looking moves that do nothing for your game.*

After 20...Rc8



21.Rf3

White has played a **rook lift**. This maneuver is one of two ways to attack the castled king. The other is a **pawn storm**. These two methods cannot always work together. *A rook lift is generally preferred over a pawn storm if both players are castled on the same side of the board.*

Compare the relative strengths of the rooks. **Rooks, to be strong, must have a turning point on the file.** This is why Black's c8 rook is not as well-placed as it looks.

White now has a number of favorable elements for a kingside attack: Black's g7 and h7 are weak, his queen is out of place, and White's pawn on f5 gives him more space to attack.

21...Kh8

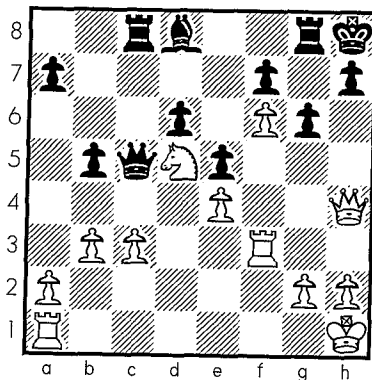
Black could have slowed White's attack at this point with 21...f6. This gives him a very passive position, but sometimes it is necessary to retrench.

22.f6

Question: If 22...g6, White plays 23.Qh4 with the idea of Qh6 threatening mate on g7. Then, what

if Black plays 23...Rg8 to guard against the mate?

After 23...Rg8 (variation)

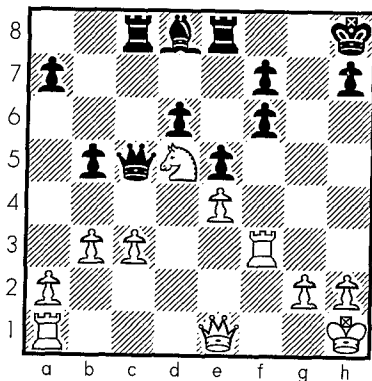


Answer: 24.Qxb7+ followed by mate.

Excellent. If 24...Kxb7, then 25.Rh3 mate! All serious players must *know* this combination! Learn as many of these checkmating patterns as you can.⁵

22...gxf6

After 22...gxf6



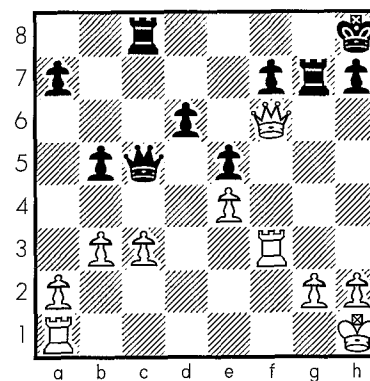
⁵To sharpen your combinative vision, read [Du Mont] and [Fine].

Choose your target, h7 or g7.

23.Qh4 Rg8 24.Nxf6 Bxf6 25.Qxf6+ Rg7

Notice that the target has shifted, from h7 to g7. It is not uncommon for the focus of the attack to change as the defender begins to protect his position. When there are several weak squares around the king, they provide the attacker with different focal points.⁶

After 25...Rg7



26.Rg3 Rg8

Note that the rook on g3 performs two functions. It attacks g7, and it also defends c3.

27.Rd1 d5 28.Rxg7 Rxg7 29.Rxd5
Black resigns.

The best way to summarize this game is to note that there are two kinds of advantages:

temporary advantages such as development, piece placement, and mobility; and

⁶For a discussion of focal points, see [Vukovich].

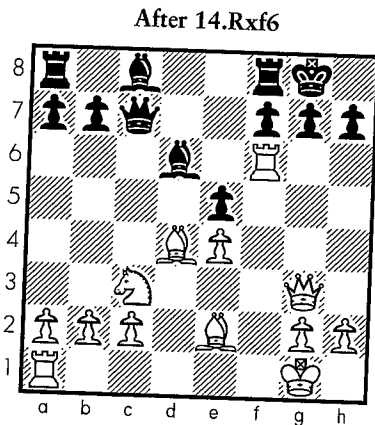
permanent advantages such as material and pawn structure.

In your own games, you want to convert temporary advantages into permanent ones.



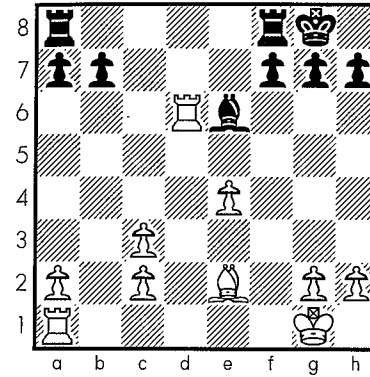
ANSWERS

1. In the variation 12.fxe5 dxe5 13.Qg3 Bd6, White can try 14.Rxf6.



This is answered by 14...exd4 15.Qxd6 Qxd6 16.Rxd6 dxc3 17.bxc3 Be6.

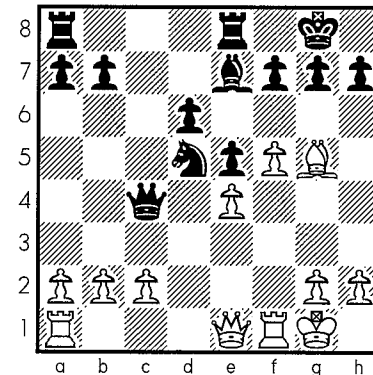
After 17...Be6



Now Black can get counterplay against the c-pawns, by putting a rook on c8.

2. After 15.Bg5 Rfe8, the immediate 16.Nd5 would lose to 16...Nxd5, as White's g5 bishop is attacked.

After 16...Nxd5



Now $17.Bxe7$ is answered by $17...Nxe7$, when White finds he has lost the opportunity to recapture the knight!

Note that this tactic would work even without the rook on e8. It is a common pin-breaking trick.



REVIEW

Themes

Making a middlegame plan (*9.f4 and 10.Qe1*).

Space advantage in the center (*9.f4*).

Maintaining tension (*12.Be3*).

Bad bishop versus good bishop (*12...Be6 and 13...Bc4*).

The outpost square (*15.Bg5, 16.Bxf6, 17.Nd5*).

Building the attack (*10.Qe1; 15.Bg5 through 21.Rf3*).

Preventing counterplay (*18.c3 and 19.b3*).

Shifting focal points (*23.Qh4 through 29.Rxd5*).

Guidelines

An outpost square serves as a base in enemy territory from which we can conduct operations. Try to obtain absolute control over such squares.

Position and structure are prerequisites for a winning attack.

Two pawns abreast on the fourth rank control a lot of space. They can act as a screen to move your pieces around.

Start an attack on the side of the board where you have more space.

Be patient when building up an attack. Take the time to stop your opponent's counterplay. (Replay this game and note how Smyslov's c3, b3 contain Black's queenside plans.)

Your king is only as weak as your opponent's ability to attack it.

Be careful about initiating pawn trades that release your opponent's pieces and give him more space.

Prefer tactics to strategy only if the tactics lead to a clear advantage.

When considering a trade, look not at what is leaving the board, but at what is left on the board afterward.

In attacking the enemy king when you are castled on the same side of the board, rook lifts should be given preference over pawn storms.

Rooks, to be strong, must have a turning point on the file they occupy.

Advice

Study the openings to help find good middlegame plans.

Distinguish between plans and dreams.

Anticipate trouble before it happens.

Take the time to attend to small problems.

In chess and life, try to control your own destiny (take the initiative).

Avoid good-looking moves that do nothing for your game.



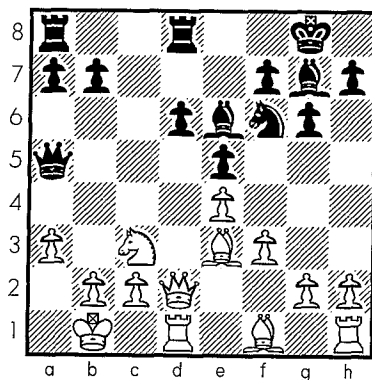
SUPPLEMENTARY GAMES

(1) Boleslavsky–Lissitzin, Moscow, 1956

[Knight Outpost on d5]

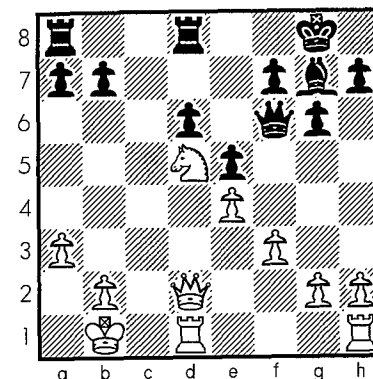
1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 g6 6.Be3
Bg7 7.f3 O-O 8.Qd2 Nc6 9.O-O-O Nxd4 10.Bxd4 Qa5
11.Kb1 e5 12.Be3 Be6 13.a3 Rfd8

After 13...Rfd8



[Prepares the freeing ...d5.] 14.Nb5 Qa4 15.c4! [Sacrifices a pawn to trade for the bishop on e6—a protector of the potential outpost square d5.] 15...Bxc4 16.Nc3 Qb3 17.Bxc4 Qxc4 18.Bg5 Qe6 19.Bxf6 [Removes the second protector of d5.] Qxf6 20.Nd5

After 20.Nd5



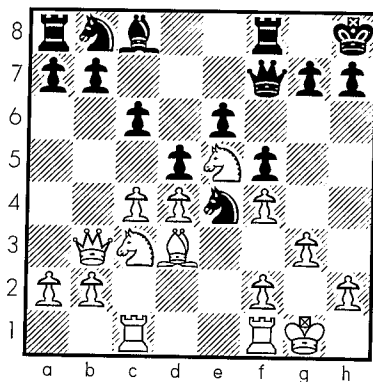
[A secure outpost.] 20...Qh4 21.Qe2 Bf8 22.Qf1! [22.g3 Qh3] 22...Rac8 23.g3 Qg5 24.h4 Qh6 25.g4 g5 26.hxg5 Qxg5 27.Rh5 Qg6 28.g5 h6 29.Rxb6 Qxg5 30.Rh5 [Black resigns in view of 30...Qg6 31.Qh1 Qe6 32.Rh8+ Kg7 33.Qh7 mate.] 1-0

(2) Schlechter–John, Barmen, 1905

[Dark-Square Outposts]

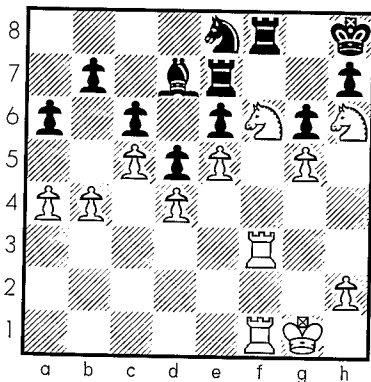
1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 f5 4.Nf3 c6 5.Bf4 Bd6 6.e3 Nf6
7.Bd3 Qc7 8.g3 O-O 9.O-O Ne4 10.Qb3 Kh8 11.Rac1
Bxf4 12.exf4 Qf7 13.Ne5

After 13.Ne5



[A strong outpost. Black's dark squares have no protector.] 13...Qe7 14.Bxe4 fxe4 15.f3 exf3 16.Rce1 [Threatens 17. cxd5 cxd5 18.Nxd5.] 16...Qc7 17.Qa3 17...Kg8 18.Rxf3 Na6 19.b3 Qd8 20.c5 Nc7 21.Qb2 Bd7 22.Qc2 Qe7 23.Ref1 Rae8 24.g4 Bc8 25.Rh3 g6 [Now f6 and h6 are weak.] 26.b4 Qf6 27.Rhf3 Re7 28.a4 a6 29.Nd1 Rg7 30.Ne3 [To hold f5.] 30...Qe7 31.g5 Bd7 32.N3g4 Be8 33.Nh6+ Kh8 34.Qe2 Qd8 35.Neg4 Bd7 36.Qe5 Ne8 37.Rh3 Qc7 38.Nf6 Qxe5 39.fxe5 Re7 40.Rhf3

After 40.Rhf3

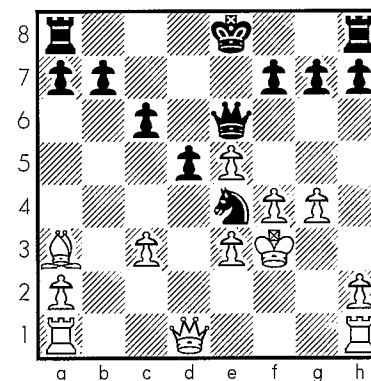


40...Nxf6 41.Rxf6 Rxf6 42.exf6 [Now e5 is available.] 42...Re8 43.Nf7+ Kg8 44.Ne5 Rd8 45.Kg2 Kf8 46.h4 Be8 47.Kf3 Bf7 48.Kf4 Ke8 49.Rb1! [Play the whole board!] 49...Kf8 50.b5 [Black resigns. 50...axb5 51.axb5 Be8 52.bxc6 Bxc6 53.Nxc6 bxc6 54.Ke5 Re8 55.Rb7] 1-0

(3) Makogonov–Botvinnik, Sverdlovsk, 1943
[Weakened e4 = Outpost]

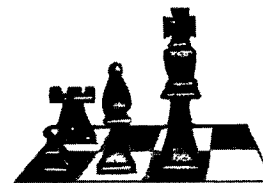
1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 c6 4.e3 Nf6 5.Nf3 Nbd7 6.Ne5 Nxe5 7.dxe5 Nd7 8.f4 [The square e4 is now weak—it will become an outpost square for Black.] 8...Bb4 9.cxd5 exd5 10.Bd3 Nc5 11.Bc2 Qh4+ 12.g3 Qh3 13.Kf2 Bxc3 14.bxc3 Bf5 15.Bxf5 Qxf5 16.g4 Qe6 17.Ba3 Ne4+ 18.Kf3

After 18.Kf3



18...h5 [18...Nxc3 19.Qb3 forces...Nb5, decentralizing the knight] 19.b3 f6 20.c4 hxg4+ 21.hxg4 Rxh1 22.Qxb1 O-O-O 23.Rd1 fxe5 24.cxd5 cxd5 25.Rc1+ Kb8 26.Qb4 Re8 27.f5 Qf7 28.Rc2 g6 29.Bb2 a6 30.Ke2 Ka7 31.Qh2 Qf6 32.fxg6 Qxg6 33.Qg2 Rf8 34.Bxe5 Rf2+ 35.Qxf2 Nxf2 [A good reason to leave his

post!] 36.Bd4+ b6 37.Rc7+ Kb8 38.Be5 Nxc4 39.Bf4
 [39.Rg7+ Nxe5] 39...Ne5! 40.Re7 Qc2+ 41.Ke1 Kc8
 42.Bxe5 Qxa2 43.Rc7+ Kd8 44.Rc1 a5 45.Bd4 b5
 46.Ra1 Qb3 47.Kf2 a4 48.Kf3 Qc2 49.Kf4 Kd7 50.Ke5
 Qe4+ 51.Kf6 Qe7+ 52.Kg6 a3 53.Rf1 b4 54.Rf7
 Qxf7+! [54...b3? 55.Rxe7+ Kxe7 56.Bc5+] 55.Kxf7 b3
 0-1



LESSON 2

A WONDERFUL KNIGHT

In the previous game, we saw the strength of a knight that took up residence on a centralized outpost square, and eventually lent support to a direct attack on the king. In this game, one that I played, we shall see how a knight posted one rank deeper in enemy territory totally paralyzes the opposing rooks. This completely disrupts White's development. After Black finds the right plan to back up the knight, White just falls apart. We may conclude that the strongest outpost squares are the ones that are centralized and advanced.

— L. PUGH-S. WEERAMANTRY —

Somerset, NJ, 1992

This game was played in the U.S. Amateur Team Championship. Over a thousand players compete in this annual "chess extravaganza," and they all compete in the same division. It is a great tournament, especially for young and improving players like yourselves. The best way to im-

prove your game is to challenge older, more experienced players. Last year, one of my students, an eleven-year-old, defeated an expert rated over 700 points above him and won a special prize for the top upset in that round. You must think positive! Do not let a player's rating defeat you before you begin the game.

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6

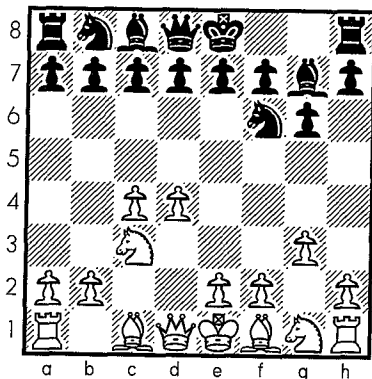
Introducing the King's Indian Defense. Black will fianchetto the king's bishop.

3.Nc3 Bg7

Now White has two choices. The most common move is 4.e4, to establish the **big center**. If you are playing Black, it is all right to let White get control of the big center so long as you *fight back and don't let the center advance on you*.¹ My opponent chose to play more conservatively.

4.g3

After 4.g3



This is a little of each—two pawns in the center plus the fianchetto.

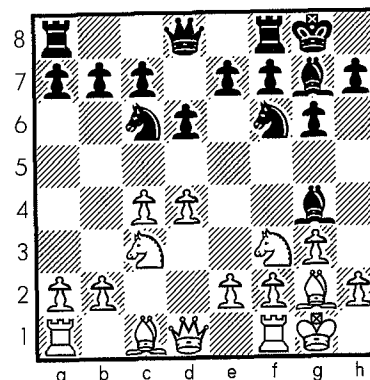
¹For a further discussion, see Lesson 4, *One to Remember*.

4...0-0 5.Bg2 d6 6.Nf3 Nc6 7.0-0

Black has a choice of many moves here. The move I chose is not seen often, but has worked out very well for me.

7...Bg4

After 7...Bg4



The variation introduced by this move is named after IM Vladimir Simagin.² What I like about this move is that it introduces a very clear strategy. Black wants to control the central dark squares.

Question: What is the connection between this plan and the move 7...Bg4?

Answer: It targets the knight that protects the d4 and e5 squares.

Exactly. The knight on f3 is the principal protector of the central dark squares. Black's purpose in coming to g4 is not just to develop the bishop, but to eliminate this knight.

²For the theory, see [Barden].

You should know that trading bishop for knight early in the game is most commonly seen in the Exchange Variation of the Ruy Lopez and in the Nimzo-Indian Defense. In both cases, however, the player initiating the trade gives the opponent a set of doubled pawns, thus securing a small structural advantage. This trade is not as common when doubled pawns are not created, because strong players tend to value bishops over knights. Yet I find nothing wrong with trading as long as it fits into an overall plan.

Funny thing about ...Bg4. I have played it against players of various strengths. The first thing that most of them will do is chase the bishop away. When they do this, I smile to myself, because it shows that they do not fully understand the purpose of the move.

My opponent chased the bishop. I was very happy about that!

8.h3

Wasting a move and encouraging Black to do exactly what he intends to do. *Don't help your opponent carry out his plans!* White can certainly do something more constructive.

Question: Suggest something more useful for White than 8.h3.

Answer: 8.Be3.

A solid developing move, but it is too early to decide where to place the bishop. There are other good moves.

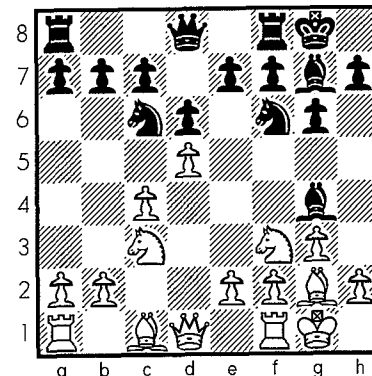
Answer: 8.Qd3.

Not very useful, because she can get chased away with ...Nb4.

Answer: 8.d5.

Yes. Move your center pawn and chase the knight around! This is White's best move, according to current opening theory. The knight on c6 does not have any good squares to go to.

After 8.d5 (variation)



Question: After 8.d5, what is Black's best move?

Answer: Move the knight back to b8.

That may not be so bad at all—back to b8, then out to d7. As long as the center remains closed, the loss of time is not crucial.³ Now look at the other choices.

Answer: Knight to b4.

This will be met by a3, forcing the knight to retreat to a6. The only useful thing the knight can do later is to go to c5, but this would be short-lived, because he will be chased by b4. If Black wants to play ...Nb4 successfully, his a-pawn should first be on a5.

Answer: Knight to a5.

³Lesson 7, *Strike While the Knight Is Cold*, shows what can happen when the center can be opened.

This attacks the c4 pawn, but the *knight is on the rim* and Black must be careful lest the knight gets trapped. He will have to play ...b6 to allow the knight to come to b7. That knight is never coming out; I don't recommend fianchettoing your knight!

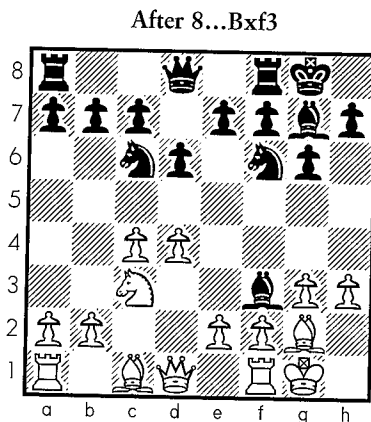
So far we have only looked at knight moves. What else is there?

Answer: Black can play 8...Bxf3, then 9...Ne5.

Yes. This is compatible with Black's strategy, and it allows the knight to move to a central square. I will have more to say about this sequence later.

Back to the game. After my opponent played 8.b3, I took the knight. It's amazing how my opponents always treat this with disbelief!

8...Bxf3

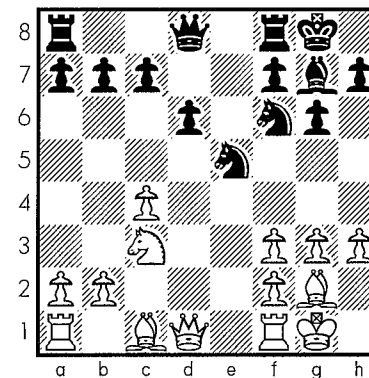


Question: Which way is he going to take back?

Answer: With the bishop, because taking with the pawn doubles the pawns and blocks the bishop.

It looks like it doesn't make sense to take with the pawn, but let me tell you this. A long time ago I played this opening, and at the time I didn't really know it well. I was playing Black against an experienced master. He took with the pawn (9.exf3). I thought it was a terrible move, but I ran into a lot of trouble. I will show you what happened. I played 9...e5 to break up the center. He took me, and I took back with the knight (10.dxe5 Nxe5).

After 10...Nxe5 (variation)



Later on in the game, he advanced the pawn to f4, chasing back my e5 knight. Even though he had doubled pawns, his pawns controlled the center, and he had open diagonals for his two bishops. My knights had no central squares. Knights need central squares and good pawn protection. You will see in this game how that makes a difference.

Getting stronger at chess is largely a matter of experience and study. After you lose (or even win) a game, *you must go back and study the critical positions* so that you can play it better the next time. I studied this position, and I found the reason why White does not usually take with the pawn.

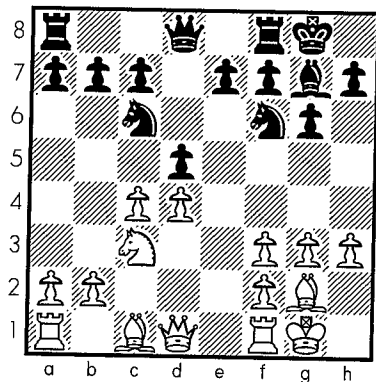
Question: It is true that taking with the pawn is wrong in this position, but how do you **prove** it is bad? What does Black do after $9.exf3$? We have already seen that $9...e5$ is no solution.

Answer: $9...Nh5$.

No. White simply chases the knight back with $g4$, and follows with $f4$, releasing the power of his bishops.

Well, I am not surprised that you did not find the answer to this one. Believe it or not, Black has a very powerful move here. You see, when the White e-pawn moved over to the f-file, it *split the pawn structure*. White lost the possibility of giving his d-pawn support with $e3$. Black can now play $9...d5$, threatening to weaken the pawns further.

After $9...d5$ (variation)



Question: What happens to White's pawn structure if he trades his c4 pawn for Black's d5 pawn?

Answer: White's d-pawn will be isolated.

Exactly. White gets an isolated pawn, and it just happens to be located at the intersection of the a1-h8 diagonal and the d-file. How unfortunate for White!

Once an isolated pawn is created, another weakness is created along with it. Not only does the pawn itself come under pressure; *the square in front of the isolated pawn becomes a beautiful outpost square* for an enemy knight. You can put a knight on the d5 square, and the pawn isn't going anywhere. Eventually you double and triple on the d-file, and that pawn will become a serious problem.

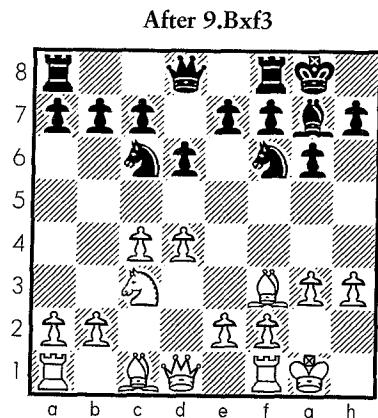
Of course, White can choose to push his c-pawn instead of trading it. This will protect the d-pawn from a frontal assault on the file, but will still leave a weakness on d4.

One more point about isolated pawns. This is very important. Do not think that all isolated pawns are weak. It depends on how far the pawn has advanced. It is safe to say that *if the isolated pawn is on the fourth rank or below, it is weak* because it cramps your pieces. It reduces their mobility. On the other hand, *if the isolated pawn has advanced to the fifth rank or beyond and is well protected, it is strong. It becomes more dangerous as it advances. When playing against the isolated pawn, blockade it*, especially with a knight. *When playing with an isolated pawn, advance it to gain space and create play on the adjacent open or half-open files.*⁴

In this game, White took the correct way, with the bishop.

⁴For a complete discussion of isolated pawns, see [Pachman].

9.Bxf3



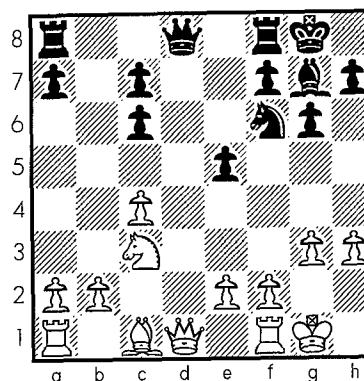
Question: After 9. *Bxf3*, Black wants to pursue his plan of putting pressure on the dark squares. What should he play?

Answer: Pawn to e5.

The first time I had this position, in a tournament in England some twenty years ago, I played the same move. I went for the center immediately with 9...*e5*, but my opponent countered with 10.*Bxc6*, forcing me to get doubled pawns with 10...*bxc6*, then he broke up the whole position by taking on e5 (11.*dxe5 dxe5*).

(See following diagram.)

I don't like this structure at all. The closer Black comes to an endgame, the worse his position will be. Black must do better than 9...*e5*.

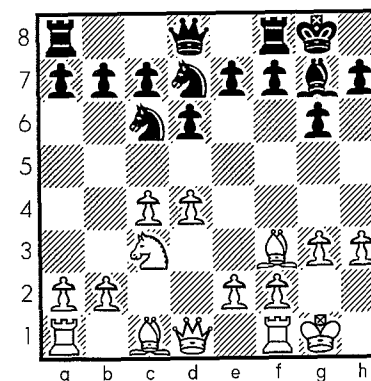
After 11...*dxe5* (variation)

Answer: Black should have played 9...*Nd7*.

That's the move. Retreating the knight sometimes is fine—*sometimes you have to retreat to make progress*.

9...*Nd7*

Now we have a double attack on the d4 pawn, and it is not too easy to protect it.

After 9...*Nd7*

Question: How does White protect the d4 pawn?

Answer: Push it.

Question: Not this time. Why is d5 no longer good?

Answer: Black has ...Nd4.

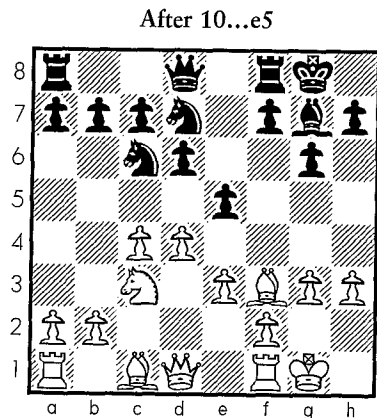
Not bad. You are coming to a center square, but you are not choosing the best square for the knight, because White will be able to chase you away.

Answer: ...Ne5, forking the bishop and the c-pawn.

Right. This is a double attack on the c4 pawn and the f3 bishop. White has to protect the pawn, and then Black can take the bishop. You eliminate White's bishop pair, double his f-pawns, and rule over the central dark squares.

After 9...Nd7, White can't push the d-pawn, so he must choose 10.e3 or 10.Be3. White does not want to play 10.Bxc6 here because Black has not played ...e5, and his center is not vulnerable. Besides, if Black does play ...e5 later, he can now recapture on e5 with the d7 knight, leaving the pawns intact. So all White would be doing is giving up a good bishop to give Black doubled c-pawns.

10.e3 e5



Question: What is the main point of ...e5?

Answer: To fight for control of the center.

Question: What is Black's best against 11.dxe5?

Answer: 11...Ndx e5.

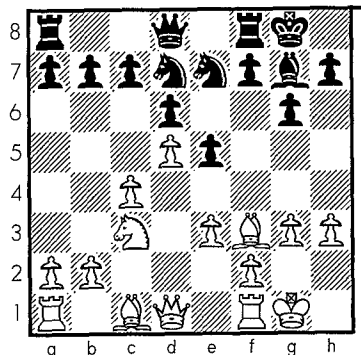
Exactly, and again both the c4 pawn and the bishop are attacked.

Question: What will Black do against 11.d5?

Answer: Retreat the knight to e7.

Correct.

After 11...Ne7 (variation)



Question: In this pawn structure, with the center closed, what is the one move that Black must play at some point if he is to free his position?

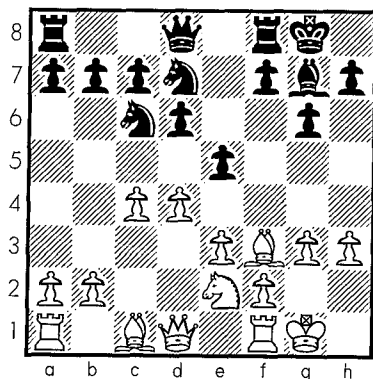
Answer: Pawn to f5.

Yes. You **must** play ...f5, and expand. Do not forget this—I cannot say it enough times: *when a pawn is on the fourth rank, and there is a chance to get another pawn to an adjacent square on the same rank, do it!* The two pawns create many possibilities. This is how the game would usually go after 10 ...e5.

I have had this position so many times that I was just settling into another routine game. But my opponent played something I had never seen before.

11.Ne2

After 11.Ne2



This is not the type of move that will drive an opening into oblivion, but it's very annoying. My opponent is simply not cooperating! King's Indian players generally like the center closed. They want White to advance his pawn to d5 so that they may carry out the usual strategy: swing the knights over to the kingside, expand with ...f5, and launch a fierce attack. *Flank attacks are more successful when the center is closed.*

Since this tournament was being played at a civilized time control, I took 15 minutes to decide whether to play ...f5 even though the center is not closed. Finally, I went ahead with it—in part because I didn't fear a pawn trade on e5, and in part because my knights do not appear to have any good squares at the moment. Putting a knight on b6 just puts it out of play, on the wrong side of the board.

Question: How do I know the queenside is the wrong side of the board for my pieces?

Answer: You have more space on the kingside.

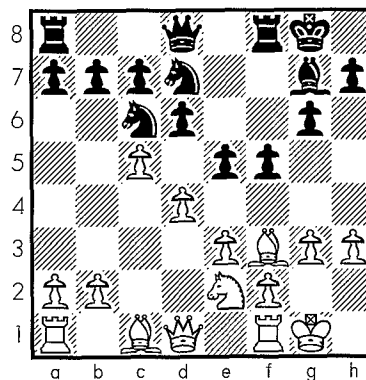
Space is the key. *Try to attack on the side of the board where you have more space.* Your attack will be stronger if your pieces have more room to maneuver.⁵

After the move ...f5, the knight on d7 can reclaim his proper place on f6 and join the attack on the kingside.

11...f5 12.c5

He decides to open up the position for the bishops. Remember, bishops are very strong in open positions. What better way to guarantee such a position than by creating more pawn contact?

After 12.c5



A challenging move. If Kasparov played 12.c5, I would probably be sitting there shaking! I would think this is some incredible move, just because of the person who played it. Well, you have to *forget about whom you are playing against, and concentrate on the game itself.*

⁵For further discussion, see Lesson 9, *Connect-the-Dots*.

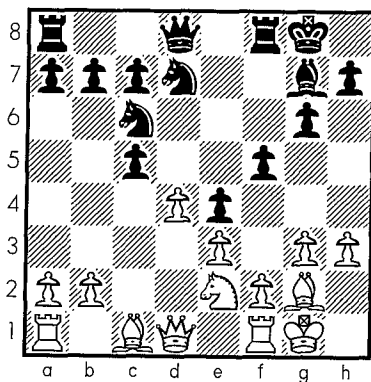
When confronted with a novel or surprising move, take your time. Don't rush your reply. It is always scary to leave the security of the familiar behind you, but *a chess player must have the confidence and the courage to strike out on his own*. Personally, I find the prospect of creating something new to be quite exciting!

I decided to play 12...e4 first, blocking out the bishop with tempo, then take the pawn.

12...e4 13.Bg2 dxc5

Question: What does White do now?

After 13...dxc5



Answer: 14.Qb3+ recovers the pawn.

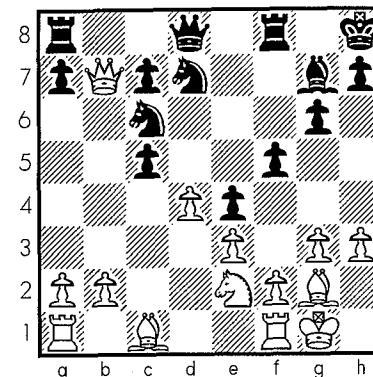
Good. This was his plan when he played c5. I'm not saying it was a good one. Never **assume** your opponent's plan is correct.

14.Qb3+ Kh8 15.Qxb7

White has succeeded in destroying Black's queenside pawn structure. Black now has an isolated a-pawn and doubled isolated c-pawns.

Question: What compensation does Black have for his shattered pawn structure?

After 15.Qxb7



Answer: Maybe Black can trap the White queen.

A good point. You should be alert to such opportunities. Even if the queen does not get trapped, she will lose a lot of time getting out.

Look at the placement of the White pieces. There is not a single piece that is past the second rank, except the queen. Remember, not even the most powerful piece can successfully tackle an entire army.

Answer: The c-pawn can be traded off.

That's possible, but I have to be careful about the timing of that trade. If I trade at the wrong time and let his knight get to d4, my light squares are vulnerable, as I don't have a light-square bishop. I'd rather see his knight stay on e2. *Be wary of trades that increase the activity of your opponent's pieces.*

Question: What else does Black have?

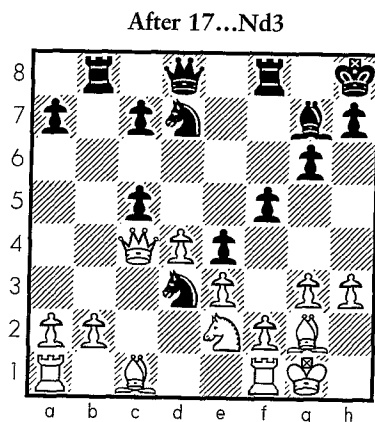
Answer: The knight on c6 can go into d3.

Exactly. Black has obtained *active piece play* in return for structural weaknesses. Before deciding to enter the move sequence that began with 12...e4, I had to make a decision about whether the position now reached was good or bad for me. I came to the conclusion that I was better off even though the pawn structure had been destroyed.

15...Nb4 16.Qb5 Rb8 17.Qc4

Now it is time to go into the outpost square.

17...Nd3



The knight has found a home! Look at the strength of this outpost square. It cannot be attacked easily, cannot be driven away by a pawn. *Putting a piece on an outpost square is an end in itself.*

The Black knight on d3 is a pain in the neck for White. It neutralizes the d-file and takes away e1 and c1 from the White rooks, single-handedly knocking them out of the game. Meanwhile, look at the Black rooks—they have their choice of files.

It is important to realize that *attacking is not just trying to win material*. Sometimes you need to *disrupt your opponent's development* and give the rest of your pieces a chance to get into position.

White cannot let the knight stay on d3. However, if he tries to get rid of it with Nf4, he will get destroyed in the center after ...Nxf4 and ...cxd4. Another idea for White to eliminate that troublesome knight is to play Rb1, Bd2, and Nc1. Black can counter by preparing the advance of his c-pawn to c4, strengthening the knight. Then, if White ever captures the knight on d3, Black can take with the c-pawn and establish a monstrous protected passed pawn on d3.

White retreats his queen, so that ...Nb6 is not with tempo.

18.Qc2

I hope you have noticed that White's last five moves have all been queen moves. What started aggressively (14.Qb3+) has ended rather timidly. *Do not move the queen out too early*. Even the 14th move can be too early if you have not developed all your pieces. White has nothing to show for the queen's adventures, while Black has gained in development at her expense.

As he is not presently under any pressure, Black has time to regroup. The next step, then, is to improve the position of the major pieces. The Black rook on b8 is already in a good position. The queen on d8 and the rook on f8, on the other hand, are not doing anything significant.

Question: From a long-term point of view, where should the king's rook be placed to help you form a winning plan?

Answer: Play the rook to f6, then c6, to support the push of the c-pawn.

On the whole, a good plan. But there is a problem. Why have one rook on b8 and the other on c6? There is no strength there, no coordination. *Rooks are better when they are connected.*

Answer: Rook to f6 to d6.

To play on the d-file. Yes, that is good, because d4 is a target. The plan I came up with focused on the c-file.

Answer: Rook to c8, then ...Nb6 and push the c-pawn.

Close, very close. My idea is based on *eliminating a weakness*. Black's doubled isolated c-pawns may become a problem later on. Therefore I decided to place my f8 rook on c8, trade the advanced c-pawn, then advance the other!

Question: But first the queen must be moved. Where?

Answer: Queen to g5.

This puts pressure on some key squares. I considered that move, but I did not play it because I felt that my play right now is on the queenside, and I did not want to divert my attention to the other side.

Answer: Queen to e7.

That's the move I played.

18...Qe7

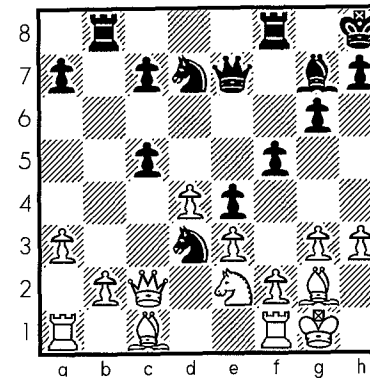
This move helps guard e6 against a possible invasion by the White knight and connects the rooks. It fits in neatly with the plan I have already outlined. The queen would

not be well placed on g5, because Black's forces are concentrated on the queenside. *Play where your strength is.*

White now thought for a long time and did what many players are guilty of doing when they can't find a constructive plan. He pushed a pawn.

19.a3

After 19.a3



This just makes matters worse. Perhaps White is trying to keep the knight from coming back to b4. Actually, this looks very much like a “wait and see” move. The problem with waiting is that Black has too many options; White can't afford to be passive. Perhaps White should try f3 to undermine the knight's support. While this does create weaknesses, at least it is an active plan. *Avoid passive plans.*

Not only is a3 passive; it also creates another critical weakness.

Question: What new weakness does 19.a3 create in White's position?

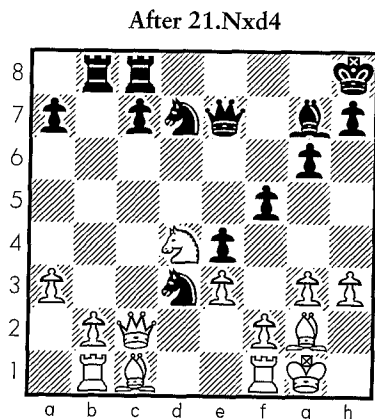
Answer: The square b3 is weak.

Look at that beautiful square! I was sitting there thinking, “Wow—another perfect outpost square!” But first things first. It is time to take over the c-file.

19...Rfc8 20.Rb1

White wants to free the bishop on c1.

20...cxd4 21.Nxd4



White doesn't take with the pawn, because it is as good as dead on d4. By taking with the knight, he keeps his pawn chain intact but pays a greater price later on as his position remains horribly cramped. Sometimes, it is better not to hang on desperately to every single pawn, but to *let one go to secure active play*.

21...c5 22..Ne2 c4

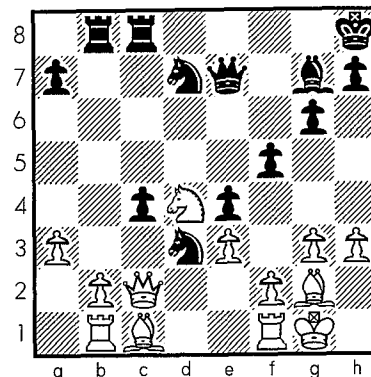
Now the Black knight on d3 is there to stay.

23.Nd4

Jumping back into the center. But what can the White Knight do without help from the rest of his pieces?

Question: What does Black do now that he has completed the conquest of the c-file?

After 23..Nd4



Answer: Black wants to place his d7 knight on b3. He will play 23...N7c5. If 24.Qxc4, 24...Nb3 discovers an attack on the queen. The White bishop behind it is also attacked.

When the queen moves, the bishop on c1 will be attacked three times and defended twice. Therefore, White cannot capture the c4 pawn.

23...N7c5 24.Bd2

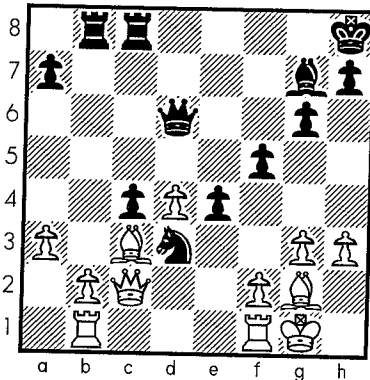
White finally gets his bishop out. On the twenty-fourth move!

24...Nb3 25.Bc3

The bishop on c3 reminds me of an overgrown pawn—it is just part of the pawn chain. If White takes the knight instead, ...cxb3 forces the queen back, and gives Black another outpost square, this time on c2! Once a rook goes into that square, White is crushed.

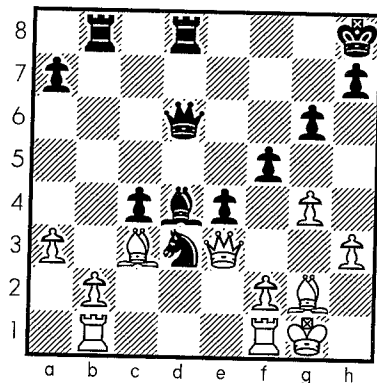
25...Nxd4 26.exd4 Qd6

After 26...Qd6



27.Qd2 Bxd4 28.Qe3 Rd8 29.g4

After 29.g4



Desperation. White has waited too long to create play. He can't break the stranglehold. Notice that even if White trades pawns on f5, it is Black with his superior mobility who will be able to switch his forces over more effectively for a kingside attack.

29...Rb3

Setting a trap which White does not see. (See previous diagram.)

30.gxf5 Rxc3 31.Qxe4 Rc2

White is down a piece without adequate compensation. He resigned shortly.



REVIEW

Themes

Contesting the central dark squares (7...Bg4).

The isolated pawn and the square in front of it (9.exf3 d5 variation).

Playing with and against an isolated pawn (9.exf3 d5 variation).

Flank attacks and closed centers (comments after 11.Ne2).

The outpost square as an end in itself (17...Nd3).

Improving piece placement (discussion after 18.Qc2).

Eliminating a weakness (discussion after 18.Qc2).

Guidelines

Fight back against the pawn center; do not let it advance unopposed.

Occupy the square in front of the isolated pawn, preferably with a knight; it is an excellent outpost square.

If you have an isolated pawn, try to advance it. Isolated pawns are weak if they are on the fourth rank or below; they cramp your pieces.

Seize the chance to get two pawns abreast on the fourth rank.

Before you start a flank attack, make sure the center is closed.

Attack on the side of the board where you have more space.

Avoid trades that increase the activity of your opponent's pieces.

Do not send the queen into enemy territory without support. She can get trapped, or lose time getting out.

Attacking is not just winning material; play to disrupt your opponent's development.

Before undertaking active operations, improve the position of badly placed pieces.

Connect your rooks; they work best together.

Do not hold onto pawns at all costs. Let one go to secure active play.

Advice

Don't help your opponent!

Study your games, to do better the next time.

If necessary, retreat to make progress.

Play where your strength is.

Avoid passive plans.

Forget about whom you are playing against, and concentrate on the game itself.

Have the confidence and courage to strike out on your own.

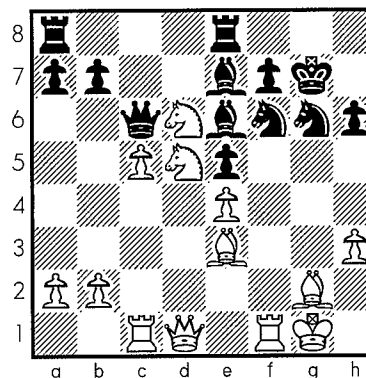


SUPPLEMENTARY GAMES

(1) Botvinnik–Tartakower, Nottingham, 1936
[Advanced Outpost]

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 d6 3.d4 Nbd7 4.g3 e5 5.Bg2 Be7 6.O-O
O-O 7.Nc3 c6 8.e4 Qc7 9.h3 Re8 10.Be3 Nf8 11.Rc1
b6 12.d5 Bd7 13.Nd2 g5 14.f4 gxf4 15.gxf4 Kg7
16.fxe5 dxe5 17.c5 cxd5 18.Nxd5 Qc6 19.Nc4 Ng6
20.Nd6 Be6

After 20...Be6



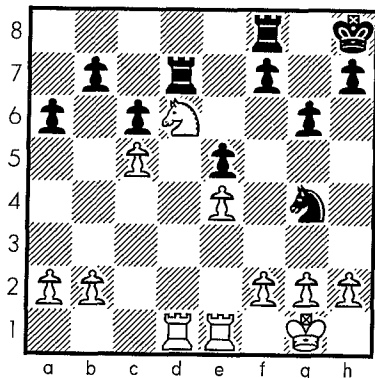
21.Nxe7 Nxe7 22.Rxf6 Kxf6 23.Qh5 Ng6 24.Nf5 Rg8
25.Qxb6 Bxa2 26.Rd1 Rad8 27.Qg5+ Ke6 28.Rxd8 f6
29.Rxg8 Nf4 30.Qg7 1-0

(2) Tarrasch–Vogel, Nuremberg, 1910

[In and Out of the Outpost]

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 d6 4.d4 Bd7 5.Nc3 Nf6 6.O-O
 Be7 7.Re1 exd4 8.Nxd4 Nxd4 9.Qxd4 Bxb5 10.Nxb5
 O-O 11.Bg5 Ng4 12.Bxe7 Qxe7 13.c4 a6 14.Nc3 Qe5
 15.Qxe5 dxe5 16.Nd5 c6 17.Ne7+ Kh8 18.Nf5 Rad8
 19.Rad1 g6 20.Nd6 Rd7 21.c5

After 21.c5



21...Kg8 [21...Rfd8 22.Nxf7+] 22.Nc4 Rfd8 23.Rxd7
 Rxd7 24.f3 Nh6 25.Nxe5 Rd2 26.Nc4 Rc2 27.b3 Rxa2
 28.Rd1 a5 29.Rd8+ Kg7 30.Ra8 a4 31.Rxa4 Rxa4
 32.bxa4 Ng8 33.Nd6 Kf6 34.Nxb7 Ke5 35.a5 Ne7
 36.Nd6 Kd4 37.a6 1–0

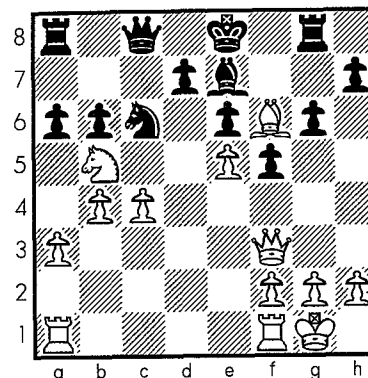
(3) Short–Penrose, Brighton, 1977

[Cramping Outpost on d6]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.c3 Nf6 4.Bd3 b6 5.O-O Ba6 6.Bxa6
 Nxa6 7.d4 cxd4 8.Nxd4 Be7 9.e5 Nd5 10.Qg4 g6

11.Bh6 Nc5 12.c4 f5 13.Qf3 Nc7 14.Nc3 Qc8 15.b4
 Nb7 16.a3 Nd8 17.Ndb5 Nxb5 18.Nxb5 Nc6 19.Bg7
 Rg8 20.Bf6 a6

After 20...a6



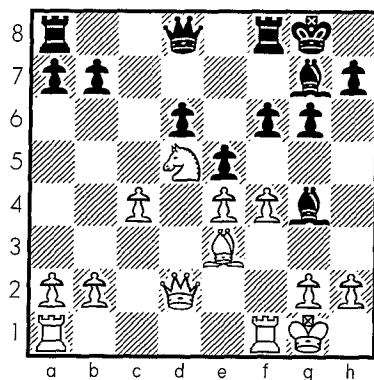
21.Bxe7 Kxe7 22.Nd6 Qc7 23.Qg3 g5 24.Qh3 Nxe5
 25.Rad1 Raf8 26.Rfe1 Ng6 27.Qxb7+ Kf6
 28.Ne8+ Rxe8 29.Rxd7 Re7 30.Rxc7 Rxb7 31.Rxb7
 Rc8 32.Ra7 Ne5 33.Rxa6 Nxc4 34.a4 Ke7 35.a5 Rb8
 36.axb6 Nxb6 37.b5 Kd6 38.h3 Kd5 39.Raa1 Nc4
 40.Rad1+ Kc5 41.Rxe6 1–0 [Nigel Short was only
 twelve years old when he played this game!]

(4) Seirawan–Shirazi, Durango, 1992

[Outpost at d5; Buried Bishop]

1.c4 c5 2.Nf3 g6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Bg7 5.e4 [Transpos-
 ing into a Maroczy Bind Sicilian.] 5...Nc6 6.Be3 Nh6
 7.Be2 O-O 8.Qd2 Nxd4 9.Bxd4 f6 10.Nc3 d6 11.O-O
 Ng4 12.Nd5 Bh6 13.f4 e5 14.Bxg4 Bxg4 15.Be3 Bg7

After 15...Bg7

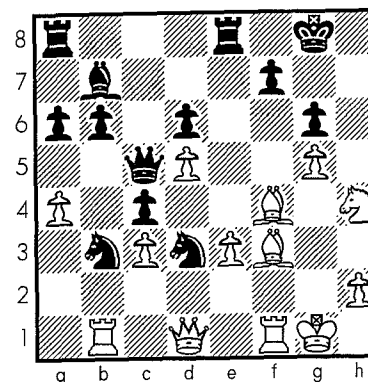


16.f5! [Burying Black's g7 bishop.] 16...g5 17.a4 Bh5
 18.a5 Rf7 19.b3 Rd7 20.Qf2 Qb8 21.Nc3 Be8 22.Nb5
 b6 23.axb6 axb6 24.Qd2 Bf7 25.Qd3 Rxa1 26.Rxa1
 Bf8 27.Qd2 Rb7 28.h4 h6 [28...gxh4 29.Bf2 h3 30.Kh2
 hxg2 31.Rg1 (Seirawan).] 29.Nc3 Be7 30.Ra6 Kg7
 31.Qa2 Qc7 32.Qa4 d5 33.Nb5 Qd7 34.cxd5 Be8
 35.Na7 [Eyeing a new outpost on c6. This forces ex-
 changes.] 35...Qxa4 36.bxa4 b5 37.axb5 Bxb5
 38.Nxb5 Rxb5 39.d6 Bd8 40.Ra8 Bb6 41.Bxb6 Rxb6
 42.d7 1-0

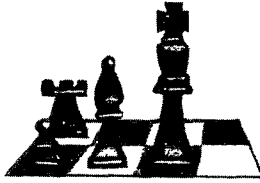
(5) Alekhine–Capablanca, New York, 1927
 [Two Advanced Outposts]

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.g3 Bb7 5.Bg2 c5 6.d5 exd5
 7.Nb4 g6 8.Nc3 Bg7 9.O-O O-O 10.Bf4 d6 11.cxd5
 Nh5 12.Bd2 Nd7 13.f4 a6 14.Bf3 Nhf6 15.a4 c4
 [Clearing c5 for the knight.] 16.Be3 Qc7 17.g4 Nc5
 18.g5 Nfd7 19.f5 [This yields a second strong square at
 e5.] 19...Rfe8 20.Bf4 Be5 21.Bg4 Nb3 22.fxg6 hxg6
 23.Rb1 Bxc3 24.bxc3 Qc5+ 25.e3 Ne5 26.Bf3 Nd3

After 26...Nd3



27.Kh1 Bxd5 28.Rxb3 Nxf4 29.Rb1 Rxe3 30.Ng2 Rxf3
 31.Rxf3 Nxf4 32.Kxg2 Re8 33.Kf1 Bxf3 34.Qxf3 Qxg5
 35.Re1 Rxe1+ 36.Kxe1 Qg1+ 37.Kd2 Qxb2+ 38.Kc1
 Qe5 39.Kb2 Kg7 40.Qf2 b5 41.Qb6 bxa4 42.Qxa6
 Qe2+ 0-1



LESSON 3

A REAL TOGETHER FEELING

Every move of a chess game is a decision in which you have to balance advantages and disadvantages. One guideline you can use to help you make such decisions is: *avoid saddling yourself with a long-term weakness*. You do this only if you have no choice. An important long-term weakness to avoid is a pawn structure that leaves you unprotected on a set of related squares of the same color. This is called a **weak color complex**.

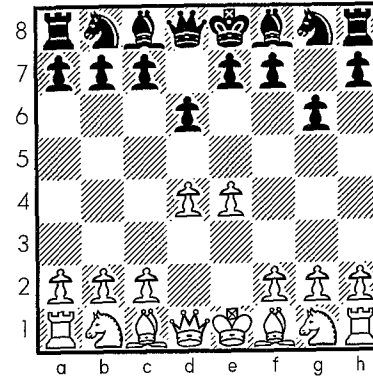
To illustrate the danger, I will show you a game I played in the U.S. Open. The game opens rather quietly, as both players develop their pieces without making contact with the opposing army. Then my opponent makes a poor defensive move which weakens the dark squares around his castled king. He compounds this with a move that leaves him vulnerable on the long dark diagonal. The remainder of the game shows how to organize your attacking forces to exploit such weaknesses.

M. LAMON-S. WEERAMANTRY

Jacksonville, FL, 1990

1.e4 d6 2.d4 g6

After 2...g6



The Modern or King's Fianchetto Defense. It belongs to the family of openings known as **hypermodern systems**, which generally advocate flank development (the fianchettoed bishop) coupled with a later attack against the center.

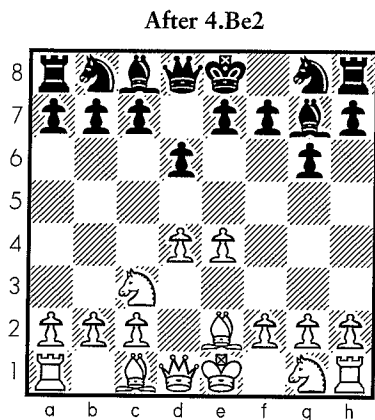
Notice that the e7 and d6 pawns complement the bishop's influence along the long dark diagonal (a1-h8). As the game progresses, Black will try to increase this influence by putting a pawn on c5.

The reason for delaying the knight development (...Nf6) is to forestall an attempt by White to counter the fianchetto by setting up a battery on the c1-h6 diagonal (with queen on d2, bishop on e3) and playing *Bh6*. Keeping the knight on g8 delays this.

Unfortunately, you can't get something without giving something in exchange. The disadvantage of not bringing

out the knight is that you lose a lot of influence in the center. It all depends on how you want to play the game.

3.Nc3 Bg7 4.Be2



This is a good move, a flexible move. *It is wise not to telegraph your intentions to your opponent.* Keep him guessing. With this move order, White can direct his play in a number of ways: he could bring his knight to f3 (the Classical System), set up a broad pawn center with f4 (the Pseudo-Austrian Attack), or start a flank attack with b4-b5 or even g4 (the Bayonet Attack).

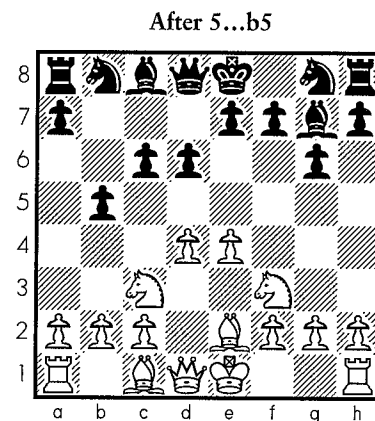
I replied with 4...c6, to prepare queenside expansion with ...b5.

4...c6 5.Nf3

Why is it so important for Black to expand immediately? Why not complete the kingside development first? The answer is quite simple. Notice that Black has taken up only three ranks, while White has occupied four. Black needs to expand somewhere, or risk running out of space.

The choices are 5...d5 or 5...b5. In this game, I chose queenside expansion with ...b5. If I don't do it now, White can stop it with a4. In fact, White should have done this instead of playing 5.Nf3. He may have thought that the purpose of 4...c6 was to play in the center, so he didn't pay much attention to ...b5. Had I played 4...a6, he would probably have played 5.a4 without hesitation.

5...b5



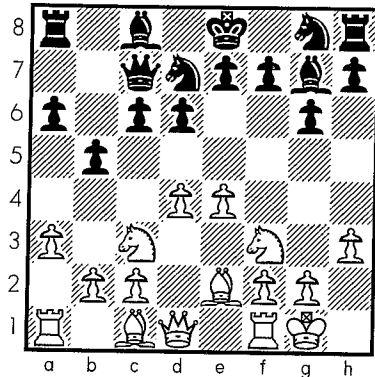
6.a3 a6

Five pawn moves in the first six moves of the game! Shouldn't I develop some pieces instead? Well, in this opening, you stake out your territory first, then you bring out your pieces.

The point of ...a6 is to *consolidate the pawn structure*, in order to allow a later push of the c-pawn. This will challenge the central dark squares and open the diagonal for the g7 bishop. Naturally, I can't play the move ...c5 if the pawn on b5 is unprotected, therefore ...a6 must be played to prepare ...c5.

7.0-0 Nd7 8.h3 Qc7

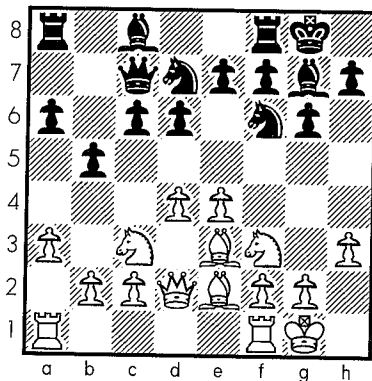
After 8...Qc7



Black's last two moves prepare an eventual ...c5.

9.Be3 Ngf6 10.Qd2 0-0

After 10...0-0



Notice that both Black and White have moved their queens off the back rank. The White rooks are now connected. Black's rooks will soon be connected, once he plays ...Bb7. *Development is not complete until the rooks are connected.*

Comment: Why is the bishop going to b7? What can it do from there? Can't the knight go to b6 and the bishop to d7?

Question: What is my plan for expansion? After I complete my development, what move am I going to play?

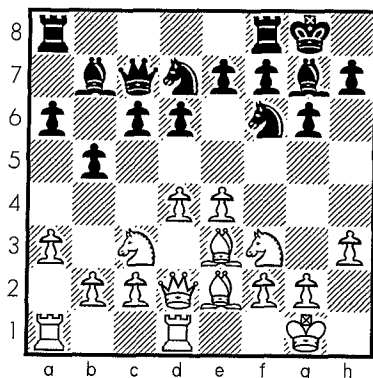
Answer: ...c5.

Yes. That explains why the bishop goes to b7. Once ...c5 is played, the bishop will have plenty of scope. When your opponent has two central pawns, on e4 and d4, the bishop is much better off fianchettoed, because it can hit the central pawns from a distance. On d7 or e6, the bishop does not attack the center.

With regard to the knight, irrespective of where the bishop goes, you may want to play ...Nb6 with the idea of going to c4. This would force White to trade on c4 in order to preserve his important dark-square bishop. For the moment, I prefer to preserve that option and keep my knight on d7 in order to support ...c5.

11.Rfd1 Bb7

After 11...Bb7



Here is the first critical position of the game. Nothing has been captured. Nothing is in contact. There's no tension. Each player has set up his development to his satisfaction. This is where chess becomes difficult. *Once the opening stage has been completed, you must formulate a suitable plan of action.*

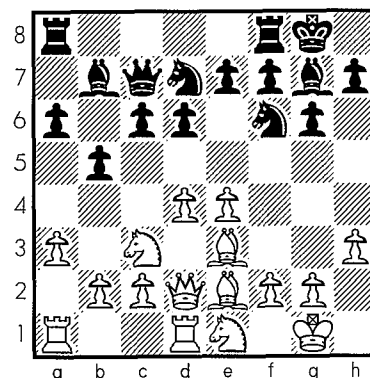
In this position, I have a very definite plan. I have been setting up for ...c5, which will give me direct attacking chances in the center. I will *focus on a point of attack* and *improve the position by expanding and gaining more space.*

White, on the other hand, does not have a similar pawn thrust. One idea for White is to try for e5, but I have three defenders already on that square—he's never going to get in there! What about d5? If he goes to d5, I have a choice. I can pass him with ...c5, with play on the long dark diagonal and with mobile queenside pawns. Or I can open up the position by trading pawns (...cxd5), with play against the center and along the half-open c-file.

Notice something about the bishops. Black has his bishops fianchettoed, and they are on the outside attacking in. White has his bishops in the center, and they are on the inside attacking out. Because there is no direct attack against Black's king, *the bishops that are attacking the center from the flanks are stronger*—they have targets.

12.Ne1

After 12.Ne1



Perhaps he is reorganizing his pieces—maybe the knight will go to d3. When someone plays a move like this, though, you know his intent is f4. After f4, he can try to get in e5. However, *decentralizing a knight can hurt you if your opponent can counterattack immediately in the center.*

Best for White is probably 12.Bh6. From Black's point of view, there is no need to fear the exchange on g7, as it is not part of a broad plan of attack against the kingside fianchetto. After the trade, Black can put a pawn on e5 and fix White's e4 pawn, to limit the scope of White's other bishop. White can trade pawns on e5 and try to penetrate on the d-file, but Black's rooks should comfortably neutralize that.

In the game, after *12.Ne1*, I hit the center with *12...c5*.

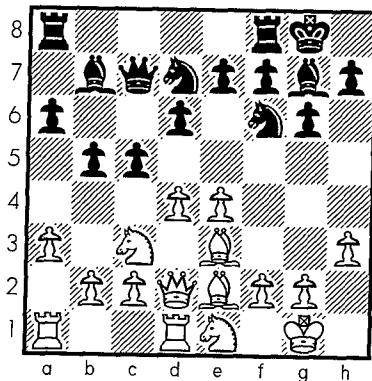
12...c5

Comment: Why did you have to break with *...c5*? Why not with *...e5*?

There are some problems with *...e5*. If White trades pawns Black will be forced to capture on e5 with his d6 pawn. This will surrender the d-file to White's heavy artillery, bury the g7 bishop, and reduce Black's mobility. On the other hand, with the *...c5* break, Black can recapture with the knight. White's control of the d-file will then be useless as Black will still have a pawn on e7 to protect d6.

Question: After *12...c5*, what is Black threatening?

After *12...c5*



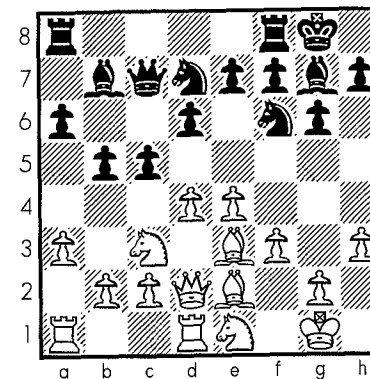
Answer: The e4 pawn is threatened.

A very serious threat. White can stop this by playing *d5*, but as I noted earlier, I would be very happy with the re-

sulting pawn structure. The c5 and b5 pawns are very strong, and create dynamic attacking chances. Nevertheless, I think he should play *d5* here. Instead, he made a very serious positional mistake.

13.f3

After *13.f3*



Question: White played *f3* to protect his e4 pawn. Why is it a positional mistake?

Answer: It keeps the knight from coming back to f3. He wanted to play *f4*, then bring the knight back—now he can't play it.

He has totally compromised his position. He has given up on *f4*, and notice how *f3 restricts the mobility* of both the knight and the bishop.

Question: There is another very important point here. What is it?

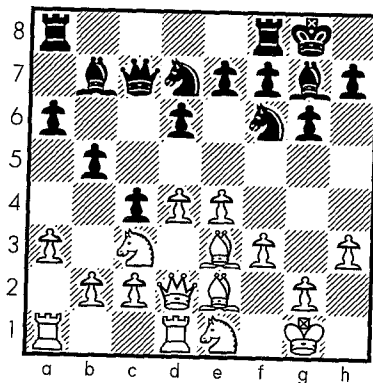
Answer: The dark squares are weak.

Very good. This answer shows you are thinking like a chess player, because you are looking at the board differently. Some people look at a chessboard and see 64 squares, while others *look at a chessboard and see 32 dark squares and 32 light squares*. It all depends on what you focus on. If you are strong enough to look at a position like this and say, "Aha, $f3$ is bad because it weakened the dark squares," then you see the position clearly. This is the observation that a good player will make.

The entire kingside pawn structure is on white squares, so Black will *try to organize play on the opponent's weak squares*. He will look for opportunities to control the dark squares and use them as outpost squares for his pieces. You will see how the game proceeded with the dark square weaknesses as the main theme.

Question: What if Black pushes the c-pawn to c4, to keep the knight on e1 out of the game? Do you think $13...c4$ is a desirable move? Why?

After $13...c4$ (variation)



Answer: I like the move $...c4$. The knight on c3 can't move either. If it goes to d5, Black can take it. Also, $...c4$ shuts out the bishop on e2.

Well, it does take away several moves from White, but it also hurts Black's mobility.

Question: Now give me a reason why you **don't** like the move $...c4$.

Answer: It weakens the dark squares on the queenside.

True. I guess you'll never forget color weaknesses again! However, I must point out that the weak square complex is most significant when it is situated in the vicinity of the king. It gives you an avenue to come in on and attack the king. It is less significant when it is away from the king.

Answer: You are giving up some control in the center.

That's the right idea. The truth is, $...c4$ is a very bad move because Black can no longer open the center. The reason you don't want to close the center is simple. It comes down to the bishops. As we discussed earlier, Black's bishops are stronger because they have potential targets. If you close the position, you will not have targets.

Question: When you are playing against the center what should you do?

Answer: Weaken the center. Trade pawns.

There is no question that *you must destroy the center. Trade the pawns off and free the bishops*. The position then has much more potential than it would have with

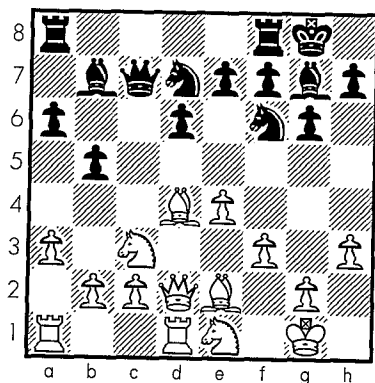
...c4. You really can't let the two White pawns on d4 and e4 continue to sit there. If you do, then the entire hyper-modern strategy of playing against the center with fianchettoed bishops is ruined. Not trading pawns now would be a serious strategic error.

So the correct move is

13...cxd4 14.Bxd4

Question: The opening that started off as a Modern has changed character. What are we in now? Which opening has this structure? It is one that most players are familiar with.

After 14.Bxd4



Answer: The Sicilian Dragon.¹

This happens a lot in chess. You can take an opening system, play it a certain way, and then transpose into another system. The c5 and d4 pawns have been traded, and now we have a Sicilian Dragon.

Question: If you compare this to a normal Sicilian Dragon, the structure is the same but certain

¹For an explanation of Sicilian Defense structures and themes, read [Levy].

pieces are in different places. Who is the better for this?

Answer: Black is.

Question: Good guess, but why? What advantage does Black have that he does not normally get?

Answer: Black has a lot of space on the queenside.

Yes. This is something that Black prays for in the Dragon!

Question: Now, how is White inferior? Where should his pieces be placed in the Sicilian?

Answer: White looks cramped. The light-square bishop and the knight on e1 are both useless.

Question: Where is that knight normally placed?

Answer: On d4.

Yes. It is the knight that is normally on d4!

Question: Where should the bishop that is now on d4 be?

Answer: On e3.

Notice how the knight should be ahead of the bishop, instead of the other way around. If the bishop is out there, it will be exposed to attack.

Question: If the bishop on d4 gets traded, what are the consequences?

Answer: The dark-square diagonal (g1-a7) falls into Black's hands.

Yes, and White will get killed on the dark squares! This explains the entire strategy for the rest of the game. We

will go after this bishop, eliminate it, and *infiltrate on the dark squares*.

14...Nb6

This move contains a temptation—wouldn't you like to take my knight? This would be the ultimate trade—he gives up his dark-square bishop while mine is still on the board. Of course, no master would do this.

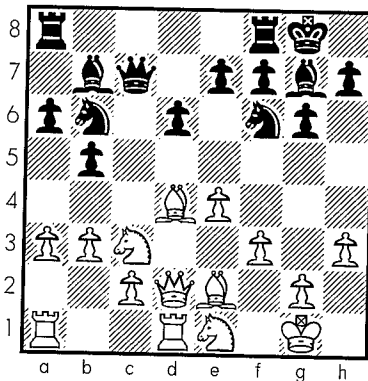
The idea is to play ...Nc4 and annoy him a little. Even though the bishop on e2 is not too active, I would not mind forcing a trade on c4 and having two bishops against a bishop and knight. He decides not to permit the knight to come to c4.

15.b3?

When he made this move, I nearly fell out of my chair! This is such a bad move. It is a short term move—he is only thinking one move ahead. It stops ...Nc4, but *the long-term consequences are enormous!*

Question: What weaknesses are created by this move that just will not go away?

After 15.b3?



Answer: The bishop on g7 is much stronger now.

He just turned that bishop into a monster! It will bear down on the diagonal and exploit the pinned knight on c3.

Question: Can you tell me any other long-term consequences of b3?

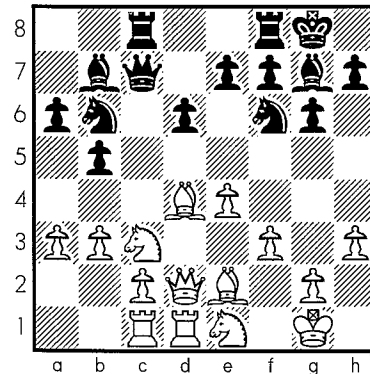
Answer: You can set up a queen-rook battery along the c-file, and get more pressure on c3.

Excellent. Black has two lines of attack, on the c-file and along the long diagonal. The two lines intersect at c3. The square c3 is one of the most vulnerable squares in White's entire setup, and he has just removed the pawn protection from it. He has turned this square into a disaster area! The knight coming into c4 would have been annoying, but this is much worse. Unfortunately, this kind of mistake is common. *Do not sacrifice long-term interests for short-term gain.*

At this point we can be pretty confident of winning this game, but we still have a little work to do.

15...Rac8 16.Rac1

After 16.Rac1



Question: What should Black play now?

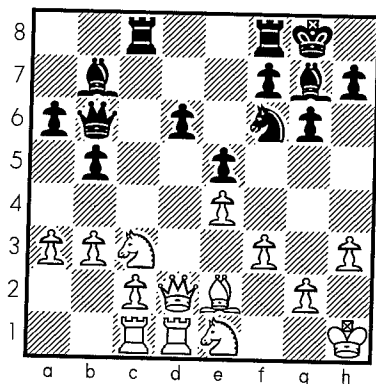
Answer: 16...e5.

Very good. White's bishop on d4 is presently protecting his knight on c3. This move chases the bishop away and forces it to capture Black's knight on b6. Otherwise White's knight on c3 will be lost to the queen-rook battery along the c-file.

This is the trade I was waiting for. Playing ...e5 does block the diagonal of Black's g7 bishop, but *eliminating White's dark-square bishop is what counts*. This gains a lasting advantage in return for a temporary reduction in the mobility of Black's g7 bishop, which will reenter the game elsewhere at a later point.

16...e5 17.Bxb6 Qxb6+ 18.Kh1

After 18.Kh1



Now we come to the final phase of the game. Do you see the difference in the two positions? Look at White's pieces—they are all huddled together. You can't control much space this way. Contrast that with the mobility of the Black pieces. Rather than interfering with each other's

movements, their freedom enhances their power. This gives me a *real* together feeling!

There's a very interesting little game you can play if you want to judge how much space you control: count the number of squares you attack in your opponent's half of the board, and compare it to the squares he attacks in your half. Let's try it (see preceding diagram):

Squares Black Pieces Attack	Squares White Pieces Attack
Qb6 → d4,e3,f2,g1	Qd2 → d5,d6,g5,h6
Rc8 → c4,c3	Nc3 → b5,d5
Bb7 → e4	Be2 → b5
Nf6 → e4,g4	Pe4 → d5,f5
Pe5 → d4,f4	
Pb5 → a4,c4	

Comment: You counted some squares twice.

We can count a square as many times as it is being attacked. We can count d4 twice, as it is attacked twice. So we have thirteen attacks by Black, and nine by White. That's a big difference. Doing this exercise gives you a sense of piece mobility. The more squares you can get to in your opponent's territory, the more attacking chances you will have.

Now, how does Black proceed? How does he penetrate the White position? I will tell you what a lot of players would do in this position. They would play ...Qf2, thinking the queen is accomplishing something by penetrating into the heart of White's position. What can the queen do from f2 that she is not already doing from b6? *The queen is a long-range piece. She does not necessarily become more powerful when she penetrates the enemy position.* It is best to weaken the position first. First you break up the position, then you penetrate with the queen.

Question: Now, what moves can Black play to realize his attacking potential?

Answer: 18...Nh5.

Yes, a very good idea. You can then come in on f4, or g3. Notice how the queen and knight own these dark squares now that White no longer has a dark-square bishop. The bishop on e2 is useless defensively.

Question: 18...Nh5 is correct, but Black needs still more firepower. Which other piece should he activate?

Answer: Move the c8 rook to c7 and double rooks.

That is a good move but it has no connection with the knight move.

Answer: The bishop on g7.

That's the idea. This is crucial. You must realize how important it is to get the dark-square bishop into the game. You can't ignore it just because it is difficult to do right now. Think in terms of what you want to accomplish in a position, not in terms of individual moves, and you will succeed.

What I am trying to say is that *you must first focus on ideas*, and then on moves. If you focus on moves first, you may go off on the wrong track.

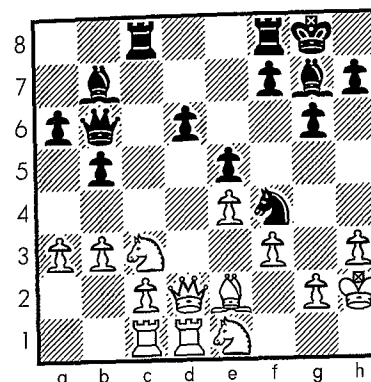
18...Nh5 19.Kh2

He is worried about the knight coming to g3.

19...Nf4

Question: Why did I decide to bring my knight into f4?

After 19...Nf4



Answer: To play ...Qf2, attacking g2.

It's still too soon to bring the queen in. Besides, g2 is already protected.

Answer: To attack the bishop on e2.

I did not come in here to attack his bishop. Sometimes, you see, there are friends in the enemy camp. At the moment, the bishop on e2 is my greatest friend; it gets in White's way. Right now, you can't pay me to take that bishop! *Do not trade active pieces for inactive pieces.*

Question: When we talked about ideas, what did we say Black is trying to do?

Answer: Black is trying to get the bishop on g7 into the game.

Question: Now you must have the answer. Why ...Nf4?

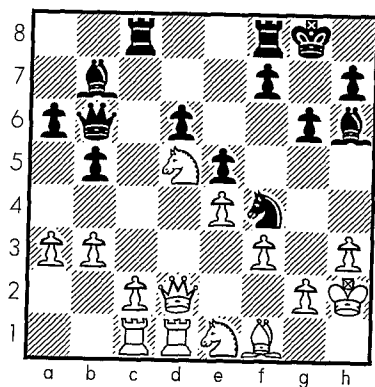
Answer: To bring the bishop to h6.

Of course! We are setting up a screen for the bishop to come out on h6. Now look at what's at the end of this diagonal (c1-h6)—a nice lineup of pieces! At the right time, in the right way, we will pull the knight aside. Maybe we will even take the bishop at that point, because ...Nxe2 discovers an attack on the queen and threatens ...Qg1 mate. Even though I stated earlier that you can't pay me to take the bishop, in chess you can always change your mind if the price is right. *General principles may be broken with good reason.*

20.Bf1 Bh6 21.Nd5

Question: White's last move simply delays the inevitable. How does Black reply?

After 21..Nd5



Answer: Bishop takes knight.

Question: Excellent! 21...Bxd5 is absolutely the best move in the position. Why?

Answer: To remove the centralized knight—the light-square bishop isn't doing much.

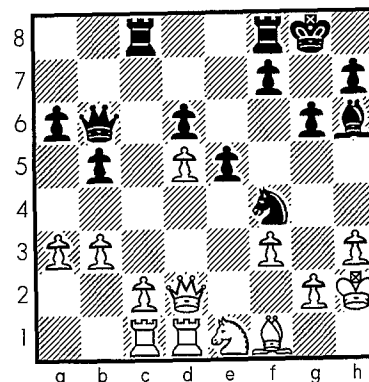
Right! This bishop isn't participating in the attack, so use him to remove the troublesome knight. A good rule of thumb for trades (the inverse of a rule we just stated) is to *trade inactive pieces for active ones.*

21...Bxd5 22.exd5

Everything appears in place for the attack, but there is one final preparation that is required. The pin along the c1-h6 diagonal must be neutralized.

Question: What's the final piece to this puzzle?

After 22.exd5



Answer: 22...Ne2.

No. Hardly a preparatory move. White will never fall for 23.Qxb6?? Qg1 mate. Instead, he will realize that 23.Qxe2 Bxc1 24.Rxc1 just trades off Black's two best attacking pieces for an impotent rook. *Never assume your opponent will play inferior moves.*

Think back to what Black is trying to do.

Question: What is the problem? What is keeping Black from launching his attack?

Answer: The bishop is not protected.

Question: So, what's the move?

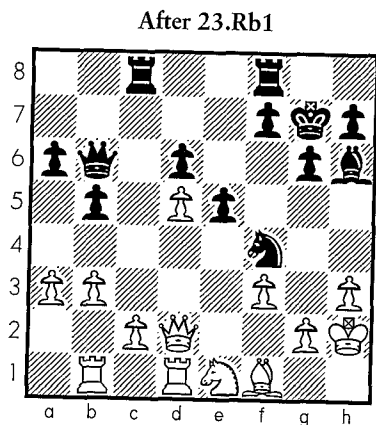
Answer: 22...Kg7.

Now you are talking chess! Look how easy it is. Black wants to move his knight, so what does he do? He plays this quiet little king move which turns out to be the best attacking move in the entire game. Even the king has joined in the attack!

22...Kg7! 23.Rb1

To clear at least one heavy piece off the c1-h6 diagonal.

Question: Now we are ready for the final assault. What is the best move?



Answer: 23...Nxb3.

Question: Very good. I would like you to analyze that a little further.

Answer: The queen goes somewhere, say 24.Qd3, then 24...Qg1+ 25.Kxh3 Qh1+ 26.Kg3 Bf4+...

Stop! That's close, but the king may escape to e2. It's like the song "Here we go round the mulberry bush. . . ." The proper thing to do, instead of just checking the king around in circles, is to **construct a mating net**.

Question: After 23...Nxb3 24.Qd3 Qg1+ 25.Kxh3 find a definite win. If you cannot find anything convincing, then you should not sacrifice a knight with ...Qg1+.

Answer: 25...Bf4.

Right! That seals off the escape square. Can you still visualize the position, or is it beginning to fade? If the picture is not clear, go back to 23...Nxb3 and start over. It takes practice, but I know you can do it!

Question: Can you go one step further? What if White plays 26.Kg4?

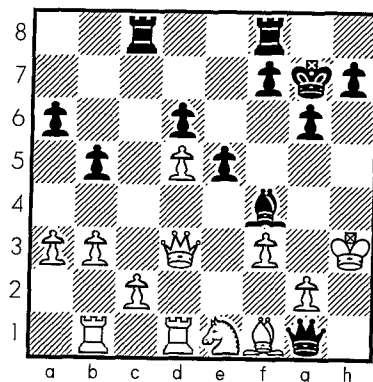
Answer: Just play 26...h5+ and drive him back.

Congratulations! You just looked four moves ahead without moving the pieces.

23...Nxb3 24.Qd3 Qg1+² 25.Kxh3 Bf4

²24...Bf4+ also wins.

After 25...Bf4



White resigns. Just a glance at the final diagram should make it clear to what extent Black's control of the dark squares was the critical factor in the game.



REVIEW

Themes

- Hypermodern systems (*comments on 2...g6*)
- Flexible opening moves (*4.Be2*).
- Connecting rooks on the back rank (*8...Qc7; 10.Qd2*).
- Attacking the center with fianchettoed bishops (*11...Bb7; comment on 2...g6*).
- Weak color complexes (*introduction; 13.f3*).
- Closing versus opening the center (*13...c4 variation; 13..cxd4*).
- Opening system transpositions (*comments after 14.Bxd4*).
- Trading to weaken squares of a color (*discussion after 14.Bxd4*).

- Long-term weaknesses (*introduction; 13.f3; 15.b3*).
- Counting the space you control (*after 18.Kh1*).
- Trading inactive pieces for active ones (*21...Bxd5*).
- Constructing a mating net (*25...Bf4*).

Guidelines

- Avoid saddling yourself with a long-term weakness.
- Development is not complete until rooks are connected.
- Once the opening stage is complete, formulate a plan of action.
- Focus on a point of attack.
- To improve your position, expand and gain space.
- Use your fianchettoed bishops to attack the center from the flanks.
- Before decentralizing a knight, watch out for a central counterattack.
- Learn to look at a chessboard as having 32 dark squares and 32 white squares.
- Try to organize play on the opponent's weak squares.
- Provoke piece trades in order to remove protectors of your opponent's weak squares.
- The queen is a long-range piece. It is powerful even from a distance.
- Queen penetration is more effective after the enemy position has been weakened.
- Trade inactive pieces for active ones.
- Take the time to construct a mating net when you are on a king hunt.

Advice

- Do not telegraph your ideas to your opponent.
- Focus on ideas first, then moves.

Do not sacrifice long-term interests for short-term gain.
 Never assume your opponent will play an inferior move.
 You must be prepared to justify sacrifices.

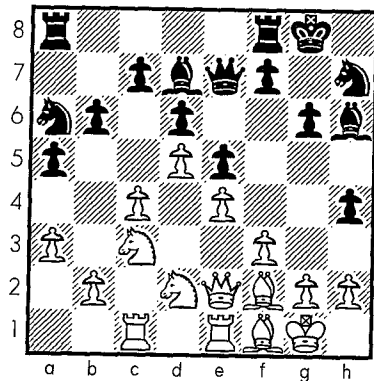


SUPPLEMENTARY GAMES

(1) Barnett–Weeramantry, Estes Park, 1986
 [Dark-Square Control]

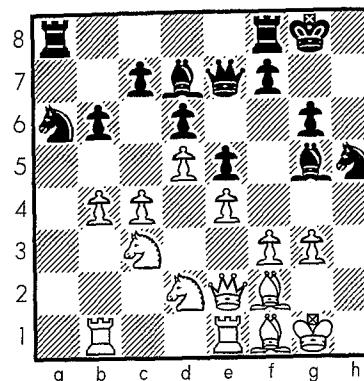
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Nf3 O-O 6.Be2
 e5 7.d5 a5 [With the idea ...Na6, controlling dark
 squares on the queenside and slowing down White's c5
 break.] 8.Bg5 h6 9.Bh4 Na6 10.O-O Qe8 11.Nd2
 [White wants to play f3, and bring his bishop back.]
 11...Nh7 [Black is planning ...h5 and ...Bh6. The N on
 h7 stops White's bishop from going back to g5.] 12.Rc1
 h5 13.f3 Bh6 14.Bf2 Bd7 15.Re1 Qe7 16.a3 h4 17.Bf1
 b6 18.Qe2

After 18.Qe2



[White has all eight pawns on the board and still no
 pawn play—nor can he move his pieces.] 18...Bg5
 19.Rb1 Nf6 [Heading for h5 and f4.] 20.b4 axb4
 21.axb4 Nh5 [White is in trouble—he can't allow
 ...Nf4.] 22.g3 hxg3 23.hxg3 [What is the crushing
 move?]

After 23.hxg3



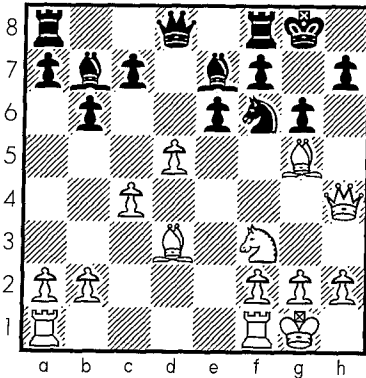
23...Bf4! [Blocking the f-pawn.] 24.g4 [Black is now in
 total control of the dark squares.] 24...Qg5 25.Be3 Kg7
 26.Bg2 Bxe3+ 27.Qxe3 Nf4 28.Nf1 Qh4 29.Rb2 Rh8
 30.Ne2? [Ruins the game with a blunder.] 30...Nxg2
 31.Kxg2 Qxe1 0-1

(2) Dobias–Podgorny, Prague, 1952
 [Exploiting Dark Square Weaknesses]

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nd7 5.Nf3 Be7
 6.Bd3 Ngf6 7.Qe2 [Maintains tension. 7.Nxf6+ just
 helps Black develop the queen's knight.] 7...O-O 8.O-O
 Nxe4 [Best is ...b6, continuing development.] 9.Qxe4
 Nf6 10.Qh4 b6 [Creates a target on a8.] 11.Bg5 g6
 [11...h6 12.Bxf6 Bxf6 13.Qe4 hitting a8.] 12.c4 [Most
 of you would say, "Aha, weakness!" and stick something

into h6. Dobias continues to develop his position—the structural weakness will not go away.] 12...Bb7 13.d5

After 13.d5



[Four pieces are attacking d5. Why play this move? See White's next move.] 13...exd5 14.Rfe1 [Threatening Rxe7. This move exploits the dark-square weakness created by ...g6.] 14...h6 15.Qxh6 Ng4 16.Qh4 Bxg5 17.Nxg5 Nf6 18.Qh6 d4 [To stop Re3.] 19.Re6 [Threat: Rxf6 and Qh7 mate.] 19...fxe6 20.Qxg6+ Kh8 21.Qh6+ Kg8 22.Bh7+ Kh8 23.Bf5+ 1-0

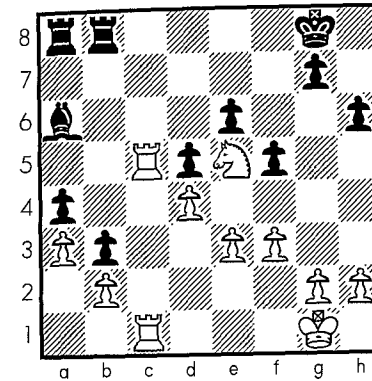
(3) Alekhine–Yates, London, 1922

[Outpost; Dark-Square Control]

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 d5 4.Nc3 Be7 5.Bg5 O-O 6.e3 Nbd7 7.Rc1 c6 8.Qc2 Re8 9.Bd3 dxc4 10.Bxc4 Nd5 11.Ne4 f5? [11...Qa5+] 12.Bxe7 Qxe7 13.Ned2 b5? 14.Bxd5 cxd5 15.O-O a5 16.Nb3 a4 17.Nc5 Nxc5 18.Qxc5 Qxc5 19.Rxc5 b4 20.Rfc1 Ba6 21.Ne5 Reb8 22.f3 b3 23.a3 h6 [Alekhine now conceives of a plan based on his total control of the dark squares and

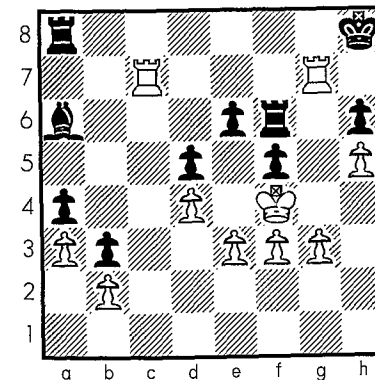
Black's lack of mobility. He will bring his king in to finish Black!]

After 23...h6



24.Kf2! Kh7 25.b4 Rf8 26.Kg3 Rfb8 27.Rc7 Bb5 28.R1c5 Ba6 29.R5c6 Re8 30.Kf4 Kg8 31.h5 Bc8 32.g3 Ba6 33.Rf7 Kh7 34.Rcc7 Rg8 35.Nd7 Kh8 36.Nf6! Rgf8 37.Rxg7 Rxf6

After 37...Rxf6



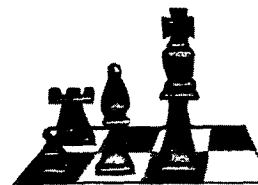
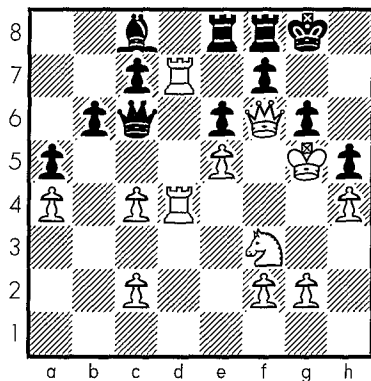
38.Ke5 1-0

(4) Short–Timman, Tilburg, 1991

[Compare to Alekhine–Yates]

1.e4 Nf6 2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6 4.Nf3 g6 5.Bc4 Nb6 6.Bb3
 Bg7 7.Qe2 Nc6 8.0-0 0-0 [8...Bg4 9.Bxf7+ Kxf7
 10.Ng5+ Ke8 11.Qxg4] 9.h3 a5 10.a4 dxe5 11.dxe5
 Nd4 12.Nxd4 Qxd4 13.Re1 e6 14.Nd2 Nd5 15.Nf3
 Qc5 16.Qe4 Qb4 17.Bc4 Nb6 18.b3 Nxc4 19.bxc4 Re8
 20.Rd1 Qc5 21.Qh4 b6 22.Be3 Qc6 23.Bh6 Bh8
 24.Rd8 Bb7 25.Rad1 Bg7 26.R8d7 Rf8 27.Bxg7 Kxg7
 28.R1d4 Rae8 29.Qf6+ Kg8 30.h4 h5 31.Kh2 [Going
 for a walk.] 31...Rc8 32.Kg3 Rce8 33.Kf4 Bc8 34.Kg5
 1–0

After 34.Kg5



LESSON 4

ONE TO REMEMBER

I am going to show a game I played in England back in 1972. You may play thousands of games in your life, but there are some games you never forget because they capture your imagination. You will all have such experiences. This is one of those games. It is another illustration of how to exploit a **weak color complex**. However, the circumstances leading up to that stage are quite different from the Lamon game. You will see how I pounce on an unusual opportunity to weaken the dark squares around White's king. I sacrifice a whole rook to decoy the dark-square bishop which is the natural protector of the weakened squares, and build an attack which yields victory.

R. HARRIS-S.WEERAMANTRY

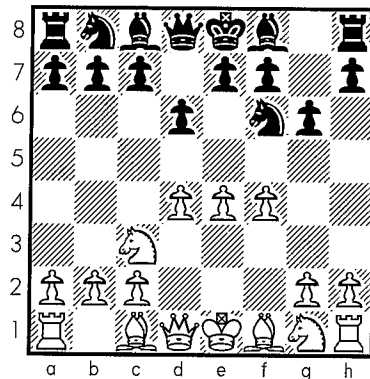
London, England, 1972

1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6

The Pirc Defense,¹ popularized by the Yugoslav GM Vasja Pirc. The essential difference between the Pirc and the Modern Defense² is the fact that Black, in the Pirc, develops his king's knight on the second move.

3.Nc3 g6 4.f4

After 4.f4



The Austrian Attack. This is one of those variations where White sets up a broad center, while Black quietly fianchettoes his king's bishop. So this turns into a fight between the **broad pawn center** and the **fianchetto**. It is the classical method of development versus the hypermodern.

White's strategy is to set up the center, bring his pieces out, consolidate the position, then advance the center pawns on Black's pieces. Black's plan is to complete the fianchetto, and, before White gets a chance to strike, to

bombard the center with pawns.

I happen to like playing against the broad center; king's fianchetto players get energized when they see a wall of pawns in front of them. They offer a great target! While your opponent is setting up his center, you can use the time to your advantage by getting an early lead in development.

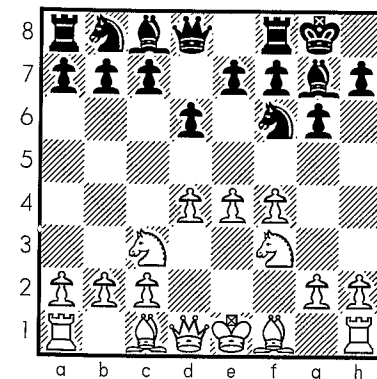
True, the center is very strong, but so is the fianchetto. Do not underestimate the fianchetto—it is very dangerous. This is like two people of equal strength fighting with different weapons, like the gladiators of old—one has a sword and shield, the other has a net and trident.

4...Bg7 5.Nf3 0-0

There is an important alternative here. We can hit back at the center immediately with 5...c5. This move was made popular after it was employed by Bobby Fischer in his celebrated 1972 World Championship match against Boris Spassky. It led to a hard-fought draw.

Question: After 5...0-0, White has a choice of how to proceed. What are the moves that should be considered here?

After 5...0-0



¹For the theory of the Pirc, see [Nunn].

²See Lesson 3, *A Real Together Feeling*.

Answer: 6.f5.

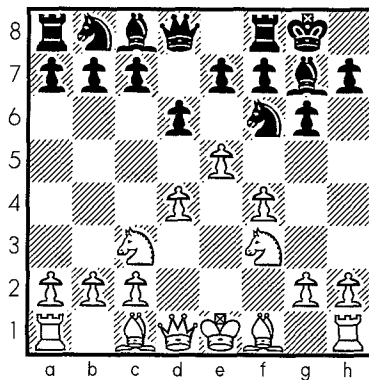
No. The problem is, you have started to attack with the center pawns before consolidating your position. It is too soon. Notice you would lose a pawn here (5.f5 gxf5 6.exf5 Bxf5).

Some people may argue that it is worth the pawn because it breaks up the fianchettoed position. I disagree. That pawn can be taken safely because the bishop will come out to f5, and back into g6 to defend the castled position. If you want to play f5, the proper way to do it is to play Bd3 first, and give f5 more support.

Answer: 6.e5.

Now, there is an interesting move. In fact, I have played this move from both sides. Among my most recent efforts in this variation are a win with the Black pieces against IM Kamran Shirazi,³ and a loss with White against GM Patrick Wolff. Both games appear to support the theoretical view that White's attack is premature.

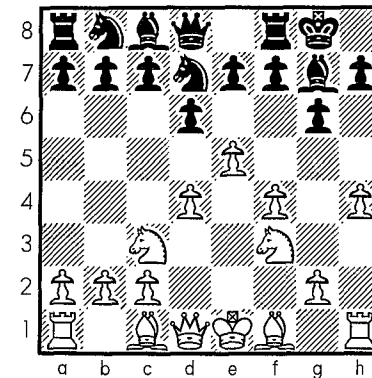
After 6.e5 (variation)



Black can play safely with 6...dxe5, but this leads to a slight advantage for White after 7.dxe5 Qxd1+ 8.Kxd1. White is controlling more space in the center, and the balanced pawn structure makes it difficult for Black to counter that control. The fact that the White king has moved does not present any danger as queens have been traded and Black is not fully developed.

Or Black can accept the challenge with 6...Nfd7 7.h4, which is how my games with Shirazi and Wolff continued.

After 7.h4 (variation)



Question: What is the best way to answer an attack on the flank?

Answer: With a counterattack in the center.

Right! *The surest way to handle a flank attack is to strike back in the center.* Do you understand why? The attacker must have unimpeded movement of his pieces from one sector of the board to the other in order to reinforce the attack. If the enemy breaks through the middle, he will *break the coordination of the attacking pieces.*

³See Supplementary Game 5, Shirazi-Weeramantry.

Question: Now that you understand the idea, what should Black play?

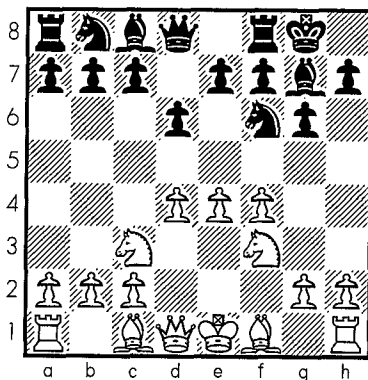
Answer: 7...c5.

Yes. This is a very clever move. You are attacking the base of White's pawn chain and *placing pawns in contact at two different points*. If White takes the c5 pawn, Black takes the e5 pawn. If White takes the d6 pawn, Black takes the d4 pawn. If White doesn't take either, then Black takes both! First take the d4 pawn, then the e5 pawn. If both of White's pawns disappear, so does his center. *To break a pawn chain, undermine the base and simultaneously put pressure at other points along the chain.*

Back to the game after 5...0-0.

Question: So far we have examined pawn advances. What else should we consider?

After 5...0-0



Answer: 6.Bc4.

Yes, it's time to consider some bishop moves. However, c4 is not a good square for the bishop. White loses central

flexibility by placing it on the same rank as his center pawns. He will be forced to submit to an indirect piece trade by the **center fork trick**, 6...Nxe4 7.Nxe4 d5 breaking the center. Without the bishop there, an attack on the center by ...d5 is well met by the central advance e5.

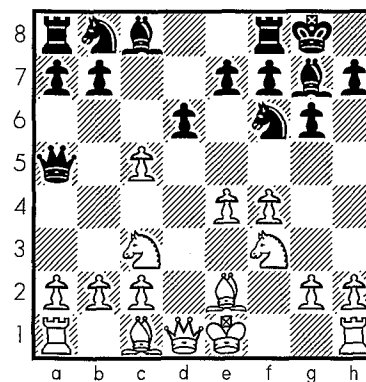
Answer: 6.Be2.

This was the most popular move at one time, and it may well be regaining the old charm. Black usually answers with 6...c5, but, after 7.dxc5, does not recapture on c5. To do so would eliminate his d6 pawn and with it his best chance of holding the White center in check.

Question: If Black will not recapture 7...dxc5, how can he justify 6...c5?

Answer: 7...Qa5, pinning the knight on c3 and threatening the e4 pawn.

After 7...Qa5 (variation)



Excellent. 7...Qa5 is a very powerful move, because once White protects his center pawn, Black can recapture on c5 with the queen and maintain his d6 pawn. Most inexperienced players will respond by capturing the entire

Black pawn chain (continuing 8.cxd6 Nxe4 9.dxe7 Re8). This actually works out very well for Black. The White king is caught in the center, and the attack on the pinned knight on c3 is very strong—the fianchettoed bishop on g7 has also joined the attack. *When Black opens up the center, it increases the sphere of influence of the fianchettoed bishop.* Black will get his two pawns back easily, with the better position.

Best after 7...Qa5 is 8.0-0 Qxc5+ 9.Kb1 Nbd7.⁴

There is one other bishop move White can try.

Answer: 6.Bd3.

By a process of elimination, we have arrived at the best move.

Question: In this game, White did play 6.Bd3. Now Black does not have the ...c5 idea. Why?

Answer: After White plays cxd6, Black can no longer play ...Nxe4 because the bishop is protecting e4.

Once you can start answering questions like this, you just know you are on your way to becoming a better player. You must be able to take an idea and determine if it is still applicable once changes have taken place in the position. *You must learn to appreciate slight differences.*

Question: How does Black continue his development after 6.Bd3?

Answer: Black can now play ...c6 followed by ...b5.

⁴See Supplementary Game 6, Sax-Hoi.

In this position, there is a drawback to this plan. By taking time for queenside expansion, you leave White's center intact too long. When the Black knight has already been developed on f6, leaving the center unchallenged is dangerous, because White can strike early with e5.

I played 6...Nc6.

6.Bd3 Nc6

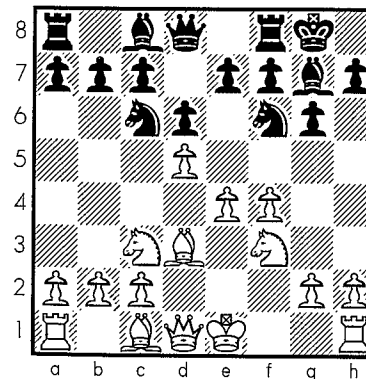
The move 6...Nc6 is the old way of treating the opening. Recently, there have been some new developments in other lines, in particular 6...Na6, and you may wish to examine them yourself.

The point of ...Nc6 is to put pressure on the central dark squares (d4, e5), and to get ready for the break on e5.

7.0-0

Question: Why doesn't White play 7.d5, with the idea of a later e5?

After 7.d5 (variation)

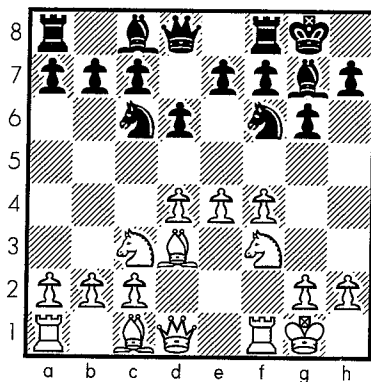


Answer: It opens up the long Black diagonal.

The problem with *d5* is that *it makes the bishop on g7 very powerful*. Once the knight on f6 moves, the bishop on g7 will have an open diagonal. White is therefore helping Black by playing *d5* voluntarily.

Back to the game.

After 7.0-0



Question: There is one piece left to develop. What does Black play?

Answer: 7...Bg4, threatening ...Nxd4.

7...Bg4 8.Be3

The move that I find most difficult to play against is *8.e5*, which appears to give White a slight edge. However, there is nothing wrong with *8.Be3*. His development is complete. Knights and bishops are out, and he is castled.

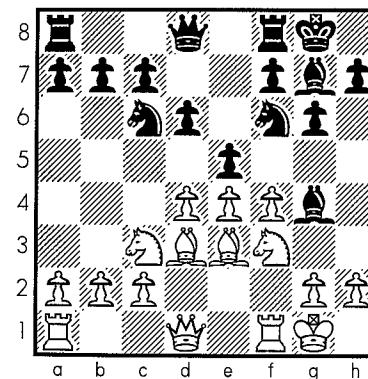
Question: Now, what must Black do, before it is too late?

Answer: Push the e-pawn.

Push the pawn and hit the center before White plays *e5* himself! Notice how Black's last two moves (6...Nc6 and 7...Bg4) support ...e5. The knight move adds a defender and the bishop move subtracts an attacker. Black will be giving up a bishop for a knight, but it is all part of his overall strategy. You can see already that *the battle is going to be fought over control of the dark squares*.

8...e5

After 8...e5

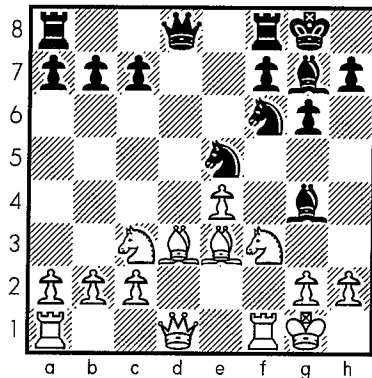


Most times, when one player has three pawns abreast and the other player attacks in the middle, the best way to handle this from the first player's point of view is to *capture with one pawn and push the other*. Take with the d-pawn and push the f-pawn, or vice versa. What he must **not** do is to take twice (9.dxe5 dxe5 10.fxe5 Nxe5). If he does, look at what happens to his center. (See following diagram.)

His once-proud center is reduced to rubble. Furthermore, the Black knight on e5 is very strong, because it is

on the square in front of the isolated pawn. It cannot be chased away by a pawn.

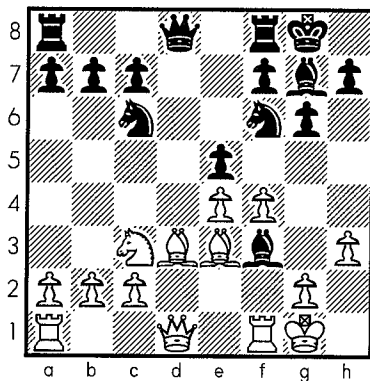
After 10...Nxe5 (variation)



In the game, White took once, but did not push the second pawn. He should have.

9.dxe5 dxe5 10.h3 Bxf3

After 10...Bxf3



This is not the most accurate order of moves. Black should have played 10...exf4. The best play is then 11.Bxf4 Be6 with an even game. If White tries 11.Bc5 it transposes back into this game with 11...Bxf3 12.Qxf3 Nh5.

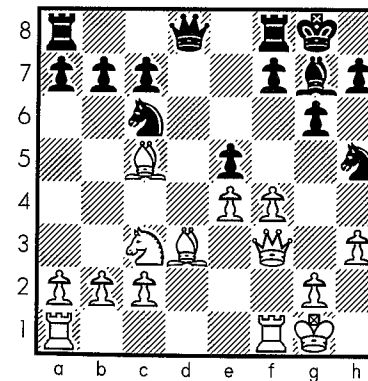
11.Qxf3 Nh5

Now best is 12.f5. Instead White decides to attack the rook. Maybe he wants to put pressure on the f7 pawn by chasing the rook out of f8.

12.Bc5

Watch out! The fireworks are about to begin.

After 12.Bc5



Look at White's pawn structure. What do you notice about the e4, g2, and h3 pawns? They are all on light squares, right? I figured if I could get rid of the f4 pawn, then all of his dark squares would become weak. So I started to calculate whether I could actually do this right away and let the exchange go. I came up with some interesting play.

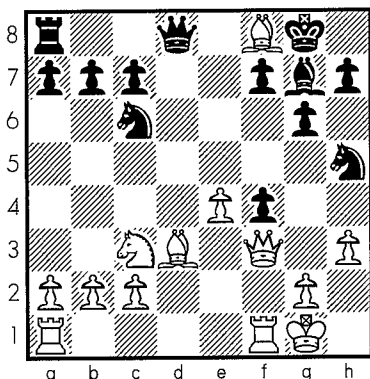
12...exf4 13.Bxf8

This position was also reached (by transposition) in a 1988 correspondence game.⁵ In that game, Black took back on f8 with his bishop. He did so because he had found an amazing defense to the line that I chose! After 13...Bxf8, he must have felt that the compensation he had on the dark squares more than made up for being down an exchange.

I played it differently. I made a couple of **intermediate moves**. This moved my pieces into position for the attack. Intermediate moves are usually checks, captures, or something else that is totally compelling.

Question: There are two intermediate moves that will place two of Black's pieces in more aggressive positions. What is the first one?

After 13.Bxf8

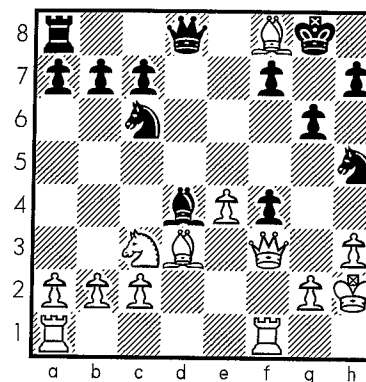


Answer: 13...Bd4+.

Good. This brings the bishop to a critical diagonal. White moved his king to h2, because K**h1** lets the knight into g3 with check.

13...Bd4+ 14.Kh2

After 14.Kh2



Question: Black still does not have all of his pieces in the best attacking positions. The bishop is fine, but it is not enough to justify the sacrifice. More preparation is required.

Answer: 14...Qb4.

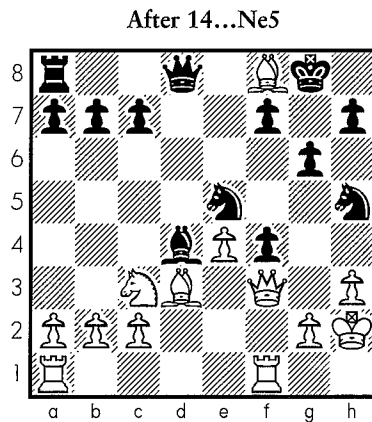
You'll see that I do play ...Q**b4**—it is a very important part of the attack, because it targets the weakened dark squares. Unfortunately, if I play it now, White can play 15.Q**g4**. *When defending against strong pressure, try to trade queens.*

Answer: 14...Ne5.

⁵See Supplementary Game 1, *Carlsson–Carlsson*.

Here comes the second knight into the game! Look at what is happening—in just a few moves, Black's pieces have taken over total control of the dark squares. We could make a movie out of this—*Invasion of the Dark Squares*. Notice where White's dark-square bishop is while all this is going on—conveniently out of the picture!

14...Ne5



Now the queen must move. If she goes to e2, Black plays ...Ng3, and the other knight comes dancing in with tempo!

15.Qd1

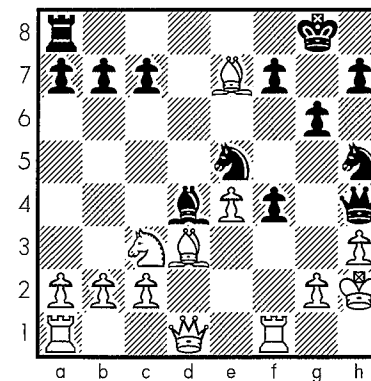
Do you think Black has enough compensation? The problem is, Black is down a rook. As long as the momentum can be kept up, Black does not want to waste a single move taking the bishop on f8. This raises a tough question. I spent a good half hour trying to decide whether to take the bishop or keep on attacking. I calculated as best I could, and came to the conclusion that I could just leave the bishop there.

Today I know that 15...Kxf8 would have been more prudent and would have preserved good attacking chances.

15...Qh4

Despite all my calculations, I missed a most annoying reply for White, the move pointed out in the notes to the correspondence game I mentioned earlier. My opponent should have played 16.Be7! It is disarming to find out years later that a line of play I considered flawless has a refutation. There is much more to this game of chess than easily meets the eye.

After 16.Be7! (variation)



An astonishing move—I never even looked at it! You can see what he is doing—he is trying to draw the Black queen back, because she is far too dangerous where she is. If 16...Qxe7, 17.Be2 is very strong.⁶ A great advantage of being ahead in material is that *when you are in trouble, you can try giving something back*. My opponent was greedy—he tried to keep the whole rook by playing his bishop to h6.

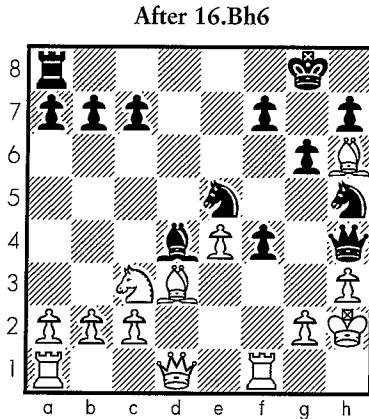
⁶After 16.Be7, Black can try 16...g5.

Exercise 1: Analyze 17.Be2.

Exercise 2: Analyze 17.Nd5.

16.Bh6

Now White has serious problems. Let's analyze this position and calculate the possibilities: I would like you to appreciate the position.



See how strong the f4 pawn is; it is controlling a key square—g3. Look at the strength of the bishop on d4—it is patrolling the diagonal, and preventing the White king from sheltering on g1. The two knights are getting ready to jump into the fray. Meanwhile, what is White doing? The bishop on d3 is nothing but an overgrown pawn. The rook on f1 is limited defensively. The bishop on h6 is still out of the game. White has no influence over the dark squares at all. *When all the pawns are on the same color, the opposite color squares become very weak.* He has a lot of pieces on the board, but none of them is doing anything to help him on the dark squares.

Question: Everything is ready for the final attack. What does Black do?

Answer: Play ...f5, then the knight can come to g4 with check.

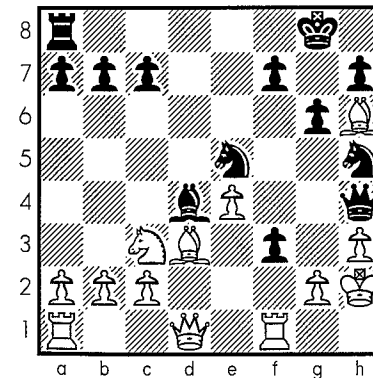
No—White just plays *exf5*. It is true that Black would like to get in ...Ng4+, followed by ...Ng3 mate. Unfortunately, the White queen is guarding g4, so your idea of protecting g4 is good. Show me another way to get in ...Ng4+.

Answer: Black can play ...f3.

Excellent! This is an **interference** move. It interferes with the queen's protection of g4 and attempts to destroy the pawn cover in front of White's king.

16...f3!

After 16...f3!



White must do something, because Black is threatening ...Ng4+ followed by ...Ng3 mate. If 17.gxf3, Qg3+ 18.Kh1 Qxh3 mate.

17.Rxf3

White is still up a whole rook, but with the Black pieces swarming around his king, it certainly does not appear that way. Inactive or underdeveloped pieces have a way of blending inconspicuously into the background, while

active pieces seem to jump right at you! White is hoping Black will take the rook, because he is afraid of the knights.

Question: What should Black play now? Keep on attacking!

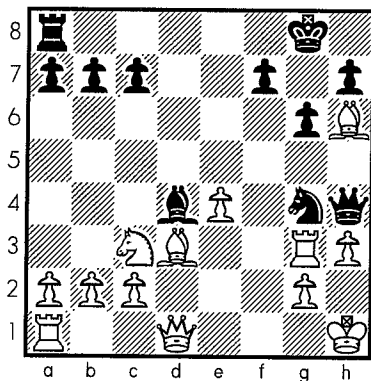
Answer: 17...Ng4+ 18.Kh1 Ng3+.

Very strong moves. White must play 19.Rxg3. Try to follow this sequence without moving the pieces.

17...Ng4+ 18.Kh1 Ng3+ 19.Rxg3

Question: Now find the best move for Black.

After 19.Rxg3



Answer: 19...Qxg3.

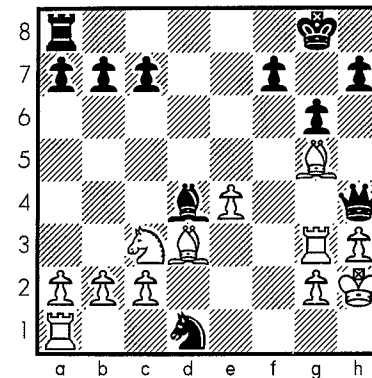
No. That's probably what White is hoping for; he can then play Qxg4. Black has something much better.

Answer: 19...Nf2+.

That's it. Look at how the Black knights have jumped over each other in their hurry to get at the White king. Here I was feeling quite happy, but I knew that White had one little trick left. He saw it.

19...Nf2+ 20.Kh2 Nxd1 21.Bg5

After 21.Bg5



Question: What if the Black queen now goes to h5?

Answer: Be2.

And the queen is trapped! This is what White was planning. He thought he had caught me in a trap, but I was ready for him.

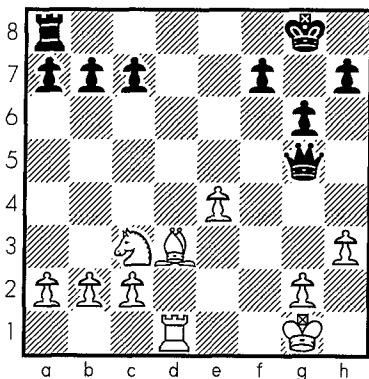
Question: Instead of 21...Qh5, what is the winning move?

Answer: 21...Bg1+.

Drawing the king away from the rook. His face fell a mile when he saw this!

21...Bg1+ 22.Kxg1 Qxg3 23.Rxd1 Qxg5

After 23...Qxg5



White resigns.

You should not resign in this position; there is some play left. However, we are both strong masters, and evidently he felt that there were no real chances against an experienced player. Indeed, the bishop and knight are powerless against the queen—she will penetrate White’s position and start destroying everything. Even if White sets up a fortress where nothing is left unprotected, there will come a point when something will have to move and the fortress will crumble.

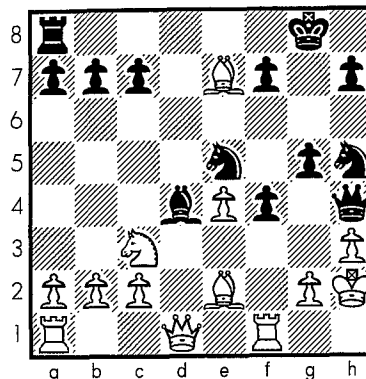
Now take the Black pieces against a strong adversary and see if you are capable of winning. To see the win through without faltering is one of the more difficult tasks in chess. This kind of practice is certain to improve your technique.



ANSWERS

1. After 16.Be7! g5, White must not play 17.Be2.

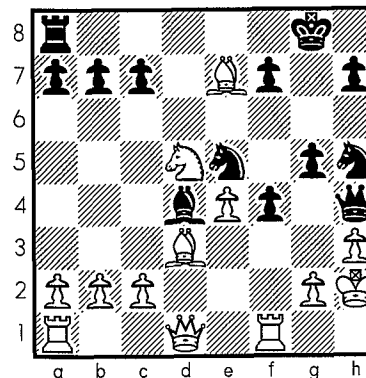
After 17.Be2



Black wins with 17...f3 18.Bxf3 Qf4+ 19.Kh1 Ng3+ 20.Kb2 Nxf1+ 21.Kh1 Qh2 mate.

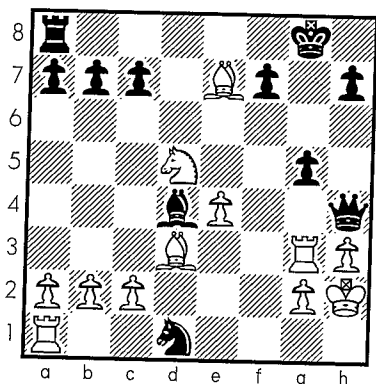
2. However, 16 Be7! g5 17.Nd5 is a different matter.

After 17.Nd5



Now if Black tries 17...f3 18.Rxf3 Ng4+ 19.Kh1 Ng3+ 20.Rxg3 Nf2+ 21.Kh2 Nxd1

After 21...Nxd1



White wins by playing 22.Rxg5+ Kh8 23.Rg8+ winning back the queen.



REVIEW

Themes

- Weak color complexes (*introduction*).
- Broad pawn center versus the fianchetto (*4.f4*).
- Central counterattack versus a flank attack (*7.b4 variation*).
- Breaking a pawn chain (*7.b4 c5 variation*).
- Attacking the central dark squares (*8...e5*).
- Intermediate moves to improve piece position (*13...Bd4+; 14...Ne5*).
- Giving back material to slow an attack (*16.Be7 variation*).
- Interference move (*16...f3*).

Guidelines

Strengthen your own position before attacking with the center pawns.

The surest way to destroy a flank attack is with a counterattack in the center.

To break up a pawn chain, attack the base and put pressure at other points along the chain.

Do not place a bishop on the fourth rank if it allows your opponent to play the center fork trick.

Open up the center to increase the sphere of influence of a fianchettoed bishop.

Do not spend time in the opening expanding on the queen-side unless you can contain your opponent's central advances.

Where you have three pawns abreast and your opponent pushes his own pawn into the middle, capture with one pawn and push the other.

When all pawns are on one color, the opposite color squares become weak. Look for a weakness on squares of a color and pursue your attack on that color.

When defending against strong pressure, try to trade queens.

When in trouble but ahead in material, try giving some back to blunt the attack.

Advice

Calculate as deeply as possible.

Don't be too greedy—give up excess material to retain a playable game.



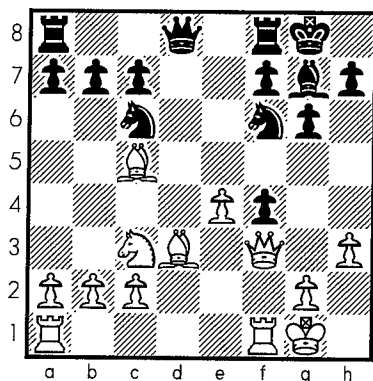
SUPPLEMENTARY GAMES

(1) N. Carlsson–M. Carlsson, Sweden (Correspondence),
1988

[Compare to Harris–Weeramantry]

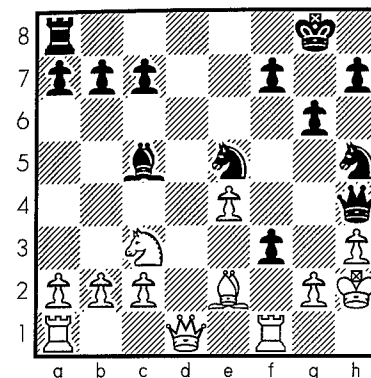
1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.f4 Bg7 5.Nf3 O-O 6.Bd3
Nc6 7.O-O Bg4 8.Be3 e5 9.dxe5 dxe5 10.h3 exf4
11.Bc5 [11.Bxf4 Be6=] 11...Bxf3 12.Qxf3

After 12.Qxf3



12...Nh5! 13.Bxf8 Bxf8 [13...Bd4+ 14.Kh2 Ne5
15.Qd1 Qh4 16.Be7!] 14.Bb5? [A loss of time. 14.Qd1
Bc5+ 15.Kh2 Ne5 16.Be2 Qh4 17.Bxh5 gxh5 is un-
clear.] 14...Bc5+ 15.Kh2 Ne5 16.Qd1 Qh4 17.Be2 f3!
0-1

After 17...f3



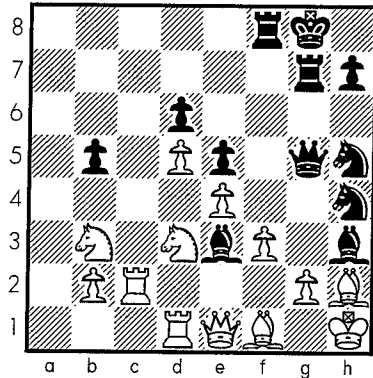
[18.gxf3 Qg3+ 19.Kh1 Qxb3 mate]
[18.Rxf3 Nxf3+ 19.Bxf3 Qf4+ 20.Kh1 Ng3+ 21.Kh2
Nf1+ 22.Kh1 Qh2 mate]
[18.Bxf3 Qf4+ 19.Kh1 Ng3+ 20.Kh2 Nxf1+ 21.Kh1
Qh2 mate]

(2) Taimanov–Najdorf, Zurich, 1953

[All the Dark Squares]

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Nf3 O-O 6.Be2
e5 7.O-O Nc6 8.d5 Ne7 9.Ne1 Nd7 10.Be3 f5 11.f3 f4
12.Bf2 [Black has seized all the dark squares.] 12...g5
13.Nd3 Nf6 14.c5 Ng6 15.Rc1 Rf7 16.Rc2 Bf8 17.cxd6
cxd6 18.Qd2 g4 19.Rfc1 g3! 20.hxg3 fxg3 21.Bxg3
Nh5 22.Bh2 Be7 23.Nb1 Bd7 24.Qe1 Bg5 25.Nd2 Be3+
26.Kh1 Qg5 27.Bf1 Raf8 28.Rd1 b5 29.a4 a6 30.axb5
axb5 31.Rc7 Rg7 32.Nb3 Nh4 33.Rc2 Bh3

After 33...Bh3



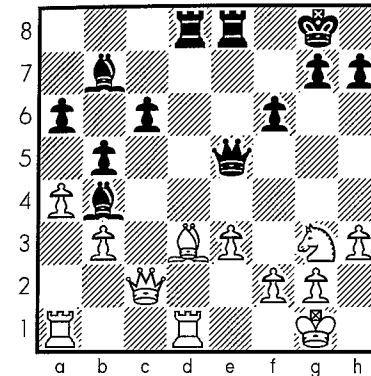
[White is helpless.] 34.Qe2 Nxc2 35.Bxc2 Bxc2+
36.Qxc2 Qb4 37.Qxc7+ Kxc7 38.Rg2+ Kh8 39.Ne1
Nf4 40.Rg3 Bf2 41.Rg4 Qb3 42.Nd2 h5 43.Rg5 0-1

(3) Karpov-Shirov, Biel, 1992

[Creating Color Weaknesses]

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.e3 e6 5.Nf3 Nbd7 6.Qc2
Bd6 7.Be2 O-O 8.O-O dxc4 9.Bxc4 b5 10.Be2 Re8
11.Rd1 Qc7 12.b3 e5 13.h3 Bb7 14.Bb2 a6 15.dxe5
Nxe5 16.a4 Rad8 17.Ng5 Qe7 18.Nce4 Nxe4 19.Nxe4
Bb4 20.Ng3 f6 21.Bxe5 Qxe5 22.Bd3

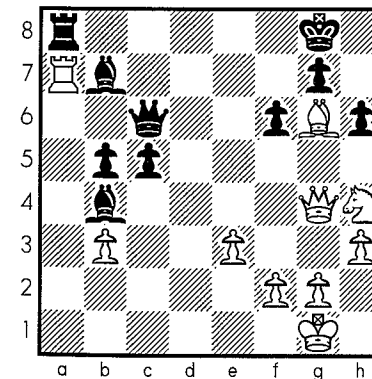
After 22.Bd3



[To force light-square weaknesses in the Black kingside.]

22...b6 [22...g6 23.Bxc6 hxc6 24.Qxc6+ Kf8 25.Nf5
Qc7 26.Qxf6+ Qf7 27.Qh6+ Kg8 28.Qg5+ Kb7
29.Rxd8] 23.Bg6 Rf8 24.Nf5 c5 25.axb5 axb5 26.Ra7
Qc7 27.Nh4 Rxd1+ 28.Qxd1 Ra8 29.Qg4 Qc6

After 29...Qc6



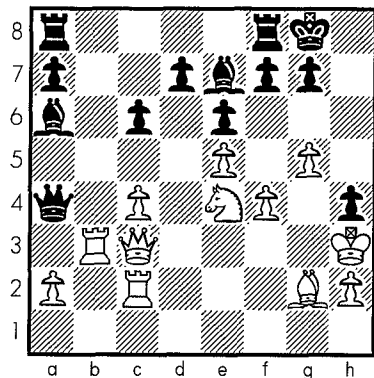
30.Rxb7 Qxb7 31.Qe6+ Kh8 32.Be4 1-0 [32...Qa6
33.Ng6+ Kh7 34.Ne7+ Kh8 35.Qf5]

(4) Kasparov–Illescas, Linares, 1992

[Dark-Square Bind; Light-Square Attack]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nc6 5.Nc3 Nf6
 6.Nxc6 bxc6 7.e5 Nd5 8.Ne4 Qc7 9.f4 Qb6 10.c4 Ne3
 11.Qd3 Nf5 12.g4 Nd4 13.Bg2 h5 14.g5 Bb7 15.Be3
 Nc2+16.Kf2 Nxe3 17.Qxe3 Qxb2+ 18.Kg3 Ba6
 19.Rab1 h4+ 20.Kh3 Qc2 21.Rhc1 Qa4 22.Qc3 Ba3
 23.Rc2 Be7 24.Rb3 O-O

After 24...0-0



25.Nf6+! gxf6 26.gxf6 Bc5 27.Be4 Rfb8 28.Kxb4 Kf8
 29.Rg2 Qxc4 30.Qxc4 Bxc4 31.Bh7 Bf2+ [31...Ke8
 32.Rg8+ Bf8 33.Rxf8+ Kxf8 34.Rg3] 32.Kh5 1-0

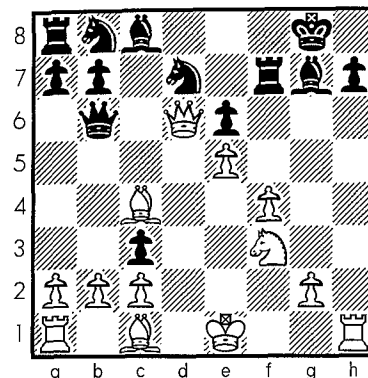
(5) Shirazi–Weeramantry, New York, 1988

[Pirc Austrian Attack with 6.e5]

1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.f4 Bg7 5.Nf3 O-O 6.e5
 Nfd7 7.h4 c5 8.h5 cxd4 9.hxg6 dxc3 10.gxf7+ Rxf7
 [10...Kh8? 11.Rxb7+ Kxb7 12.Ng5+ Kb6 13.Qd3]
 11.Bc4 [11.e6 Rf6 12.exd7 Bxd7 13.Bd3 h6 14.bxc3

*Nc6 Black has a better pawn structure.] 11...e6!
 12.Qxd6 Qb6*

After 12...Qb6



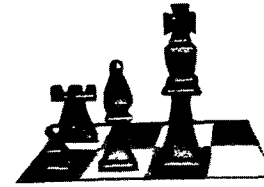
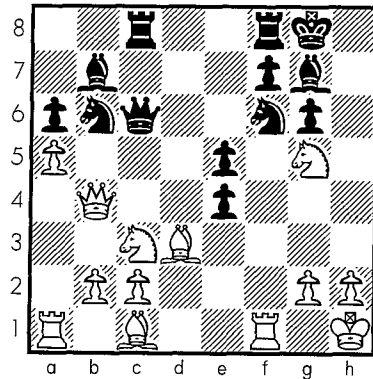
13.Qd3 [13.Bxe6 Nxe5 14.Bxf7+ Nxf7 15.Qxb6 axb6
 16.b3 Bf5] 13...cxb2 14.Bxb2 Qxb2 15.Ke2 Nc5
 16.Qxb7+ Kf8 17.Nb4 Nc6 18.Rad1 Nd4+ 19.Ke3
 Qc3+ 20.Bd3 Nf5+ 21.Ke2 Nxd3 22.Ng6+ Ke8 23.cxd3
 Qc2+ 24.Rd2 Nd4+ 25.Ke3 Nf5+ 26.Ke2 Ng3+ 27.Ke3
 Qc5+ 28.d4 Nf5+ 29.Kf3 Qc3+ 30.Ke2 Qe3+ 31.Kd1
 Bd7 32.Rc2 Ba4 33.Qg8+ Bf8 34.Nxf8 Bxc2+ 35.Kxc2
 Nxd4+ 36.Kb1 Qd3+ 37.Ka1 Qc3+ 38.Kb1 Qb4+
 39.Kc1 Rc8+ 40.Kd1 Qb1+ 41.Kd2 Qc2+ 42.Ke3 Qe2+
 0-1

(6) Sax–Hoi, Seville, 1987

[Pirc Austrian Attack with 6.Be2]

1.e4 g6 2.d4 Bg7 3.Nc3 d6 4.f4 Nf6 5.Nf3 O-O 6.Be2
 c5 7.dxc5 Qa5 8.O-O Qxc5+ 9.Kb1 Nbd7 10.Bd3 a6
 11.Qe2 e5 12.f5 b5 13.fxg6 hxg6 14.Ng5 Bb7 15.Qe1
 b4 16.Na4 Qc6 17.Qxb4 d5 18.Nc3 Nb6 19.a4 Rac8
 20.a5 dxe4

After 20...dxe4



LESSON 5

PLAYING WITH
A FULL DECK

21.Rxf6 Qxf6 [21...Bxf6 22.Bxe4] 22.Ncxe4 Qc6
 23.Qxb6 Rfd8 24.Be3 f5 25.Qb3+ Qd5 26.Qxd5+
 Rxd5 27.Nd2 Bh6 28.h4 [28.Bc4 f4] 28...Bxg5 29.Bxg5
 Kg7 30.Nc4 Re8 31.Re1 Bc6 32.Kg1 e4 33.Be2 Rc8
 34.b4 Rcd8 35.Nb6 Rd2 36.Bxd2 Rxd2 37.Bxa6 e3
 38.Bf1 1-0

The game we are going to look at now is one of Paul Morphy's games. This is not the well-known game against the Duke of Brunswick and Count Isouard,¹ but the ending is every bit as memorable.

Paul Morphy was a famous American chess player in the 1850s who is generally regarded to have been the greatest player of his time. He was a great attacking player who had a particularly fine understanding of open positions. What distinguished Morphy's play from that of his contemporaries is that he always developed all his pieces before attacking.

In this game, Morphy seizes the opportunity to plant his queen on an advanced outpost square. It paralyzes the White pieces. When White fails to dislodge the queen, Morphy uses the time to complete his development and move his pieces into attacking position. The final attack is introduced by a dazzling queen sacrifice.

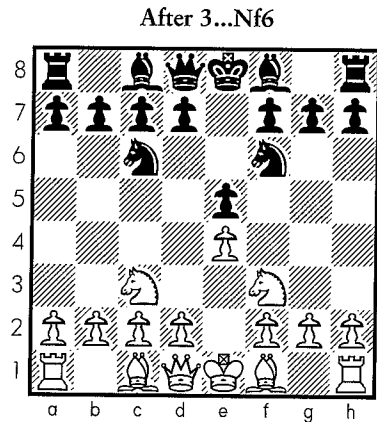
¹See Supplementary Game 1.

Morphy's opponent is Louis Paulsen, a famous player who has several opening systems named after him.

L. PAULSEN-P. MORPHY

New York, NY, 1857

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 Nf6



The Four Knights opening. I cannot say that this is a bad opening, but I find in general that the kind of positions you encounter with the Four Knights tend to be quiet and not very exciting. This game is an exception.

In this position, there is one mistake that is repeated over and over again by beginning and intermediate players, and that is 4.Bc4. Even though c4 is a natural developing square for the bishop, especially in double king pawn openings, Bc4 must not be played here.

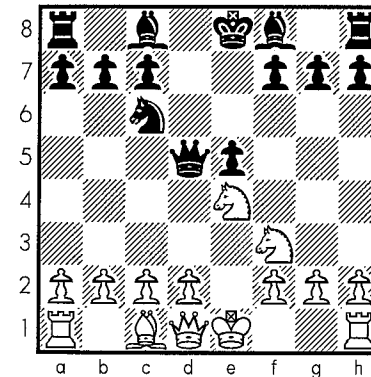
Question: Why is 4.Bc4 a bad move?

Answer: The Black knight can take the e4 pawn. After the White knight takes back, Black can answer with ...d5.

That's correct. This is called the center fork trick. After 4.Bc4 Nxe4 5.Nxe4 d5 6.Bxd5 Qxd5, material is even, but Black has the better position.

Question: Why does Black have the better position here?

After 6...Qxd5 (variation)



Answer: Both bishop diagonals and the queen file are open.

True, Black has a lot more mobility. There is another reason.

Answer: He has more of a center.

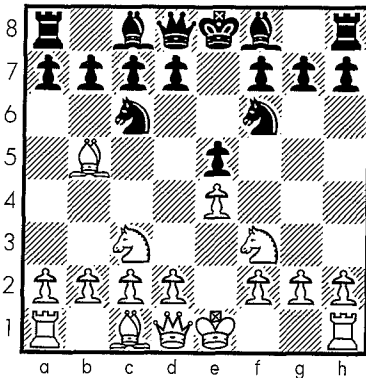
Good. Notice Black has a center pawn, and White does not. The presence of the center pawn is very important; it controls key squares and gives Black a space advantage.

Remember the center fork trick. It does not win material, but it does get you a better position.

White avoids this trap and chooses the most reliable move.

4.Bb5

After 4.Bb5



The most popular reply here is $4...Bb4$, which sets up a **symmetrical position**; if I fold the board in the center, all the opposing pieces will overlap, one on one. Symmetrical positions, if they stay that way, tend to lead to quiet games because they contain balanced pawn structures. On the other hand, imbalanced structures allow more pawn contact and thus create more dynamic play.

A reliable alternative is $4...Nd4$, the Rubinstein variation. I don't recommend this move to intermediate players because it moves the same piece twice in the opening. It is better at this stage of chess education to concentrate on normal piece development and to observe basic opening principles.

Morphy chose a less common move.

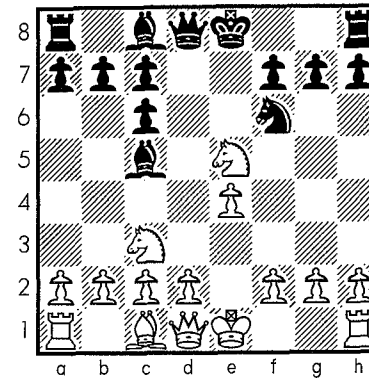
4...Bc5

Question: How can White now win a pawn?

Answer: $5.Bxc6 dxc6$ $6.Nxe5$

Question: Should White go for the pawn? Is it safe?

After 6.Nxe5 (variation)



Answer: No, because Black then has $6...Qd4$.

This threatens the knight and also threatens mate. However, White can protect against both threats with $7.Nd3$. White is in an awkward position because the knight on d3 is blocking his d-pawn, but he is not in immediate trouble. An attempt by Black to win the pawn back with $7...Nxe4$ fails to $8.Qe2$ $0-0$ $9.Nxe4$ $Re8?$ $10.Nf6+$.

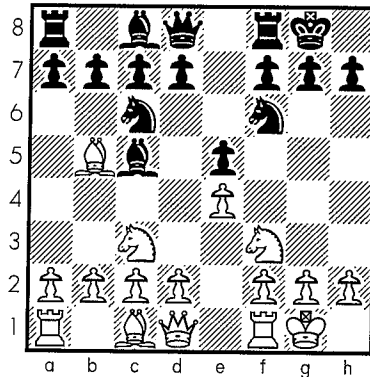
Black can do better after $6.Nxe5$. Think again.

Answer: $6...Bxf2+$ $7.Kxf2$ $Qd4+$.

This is much stronger. Black wins the pawn back and stops White from castling as well.

5.0-0 0-0

After 5...0-0



6.Nxe5

Question: Why is White taking this pawn now?

Answer: White now has the same fork trick we saw earlier for Black.

You recognized it! Paulsen is trying the center fork trick on Morphy! It is important to be able to recognize a pattern when colors are reversed. If Black plays 6...Nxe5, White replies 7.d4 Bd6 8.f4! He gets his piece back and has a strong center.

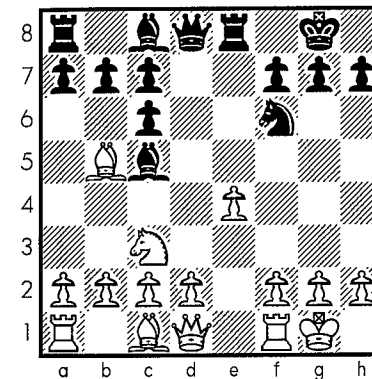
Morphy has other ideas. Rather than take the time to capture the knight, he plays a move that furthers his development. His idea is to entice White to capture on c6. After Black replies ...dxc6, he gains time as White must move his bishop.

6...Re8 7.Nxc6

This plays into Black's hands. White should give the pawn back immediately with 7.Nf3 Nxe4 8.d4. After 8...Nxc3 9.bxc3 Bf8 White retains a small advantage.

7...dxc6

After 7...dxc6



This is the correct way to recapture the knight.

Question: Why is it better to take with the d-pawn?

Answer: To open the d-file.

Yes. You get more mobility and *aid your development*.

Question: There is something else that should be noted about this move. What principle does 7...dxc6 violate?

Answer: It does not capture toward the center.

Good. Generally speaking, when you capture with pawns you are supposed to capture toward the center. You

can build up a more powerful central pawn position that way. However, in this particular position, it is more important to capture away from the center, because it opens up lines for your pieces. There is an important lesson to be learned here: *do not blindly follow general principles*. In chess, you learn to recognize that there are many times when there are exceptions.

White must now save his bishop, so he brings it back to c4.

8.Bc4 b5²

For a long time, this move was considered to be best. However, according to Sergeant, Black may have an improvement in 8...Ng4.³ The idea is to develop an attack against f2 and h2.

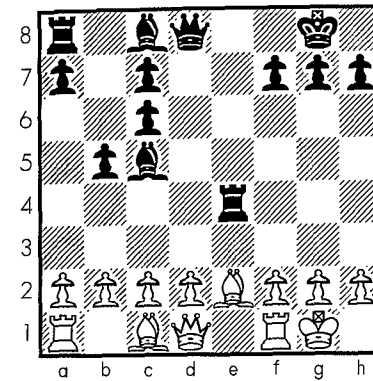
9.Be2

White chooses e2 for his bishop, rather than b3, because he is worried about ...Bg4. Notice the direction in which Black's pieces are poised to strike. Both bishops are pointing toward the kingside, the knight is on the kingside, the rook is on the e-file, the queen can come to the kingside—do you see that? White does not have enough pieces on the kingside to counter this concentration of forces. He brings his bishop back to contest Black's control of the kingside.

Now Black decides to get his pawn back. Otherwise, White will play d3, strengthening the center and holding up the attack.

9...Nxe4 10.Nxe4 Rxe4

After 10...Rxe4



I don't think White makes the best move in this position.

Question: White played 11.Bf3. Suggest a better move.

Answer: Pawn to d3.

A solid developing move. There is a more ambitious move.

Answer: Pawn to c3. This will give White more space in the center after d4.

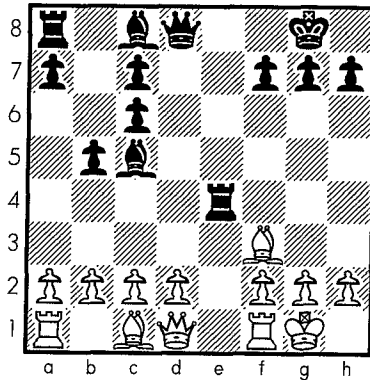
Yes. The move c3 works as long as White's light-square bishop stays on e2 to protect the d3 square.

11.Bf3

²Exercise 1: If instead 8...Nxe4, find the best continuation for White.

³See [Sergeant], p. 57.

After 11.Bf3



Question: What is Black's best move?

Answer: ...Re6, because the c-pawn is attacked.

That's exactly what Morphy played. There is more to this move than just protecting the pawn. How will the e6 rook be useful later?

Answer: Black can move the rook to h6.

Good. At the right moment, Black can swing the rook over to the g-file or h-file to set up a direct attack on the king's position. Usually you do not get the chance to carry out this maneuver (a "rook lift") early in the game, because rooks have trouble coming out safely when minor pieces are still around.

Question: What will White do if Black follows up with ...Rh6 on his very next move?

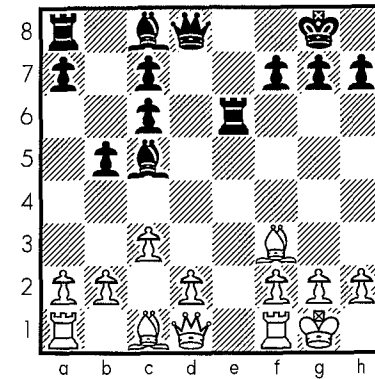
Answer: Play d4. This discovers an attack on the rook and threatens the c5 bishop. The rook has to come back to d6 to pin White's d-pawn.

That's correct. White then protects the d4 pawn with c3. White thus gains time to complete his development while Black shuttles his rook back and forth. As I said, Black will use the idea of swinging the rook over only at the right moment.

11...Re6 12.c3

Question: Why does White play c3?

After 12.c3



Answer: So he can play d4 next.

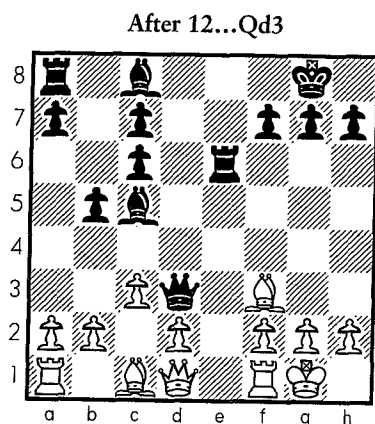
Yes, this is White's plan. If he succeeds in extending his pawn chain to d4 he will take over the center. However, it was impatient of White to move the c-pawn first. In the absence of the e2 bishop, the proper way to build the pawn chain is first 12.d3, then c3 and d4. *When you can't take a giant step, try two small steps.*

Question: What does Black play to take advantage of White's incorrect move order?

Answer: ...Qd3.

Excellent. I know that we have talked about not spearheading an attack with the queen, but this case is different. The queen's primary function in this position is not one of attack. It is one of restriction. You may sometimes hear the word **prophylactic** used to refer to a move like this. This means a preventive move; a move that restricts your opponent's development or reduces his chances in some way.

12...Qd3



Remember when I told you in the introduction to the game that Morphy would find this great outpost square for his queen and *paralyze* White? Do you see the effect of this move? It blocks the d-pawn, the bishop on c1, and the rook on a1. Suddenly, these pieces are out of the picture.

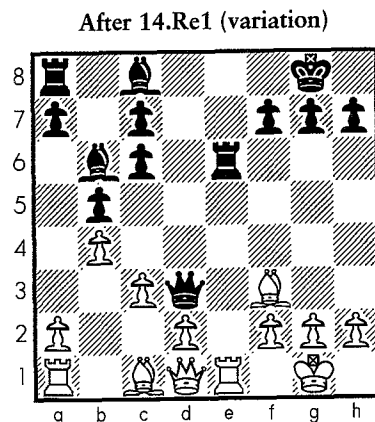
The move 12...Qd3 is not a check; it is not a capture; it is not even threatening to take anything, yet it is such a powerful move! The Black queen cannot easily be flushed out of d3, because Black is controlling the central light squares. In addition, Black has increased his own space. The Black position after 12...Qd3 is an excellent example

of how controlling more space in the center can dramatically increase the mobility of your pieces.

Paulsen must have felt a little frustrated in this position, because he has very little piece activity or pawn play. Yet he has to do something—he can't just sit there and wait for Black to bring all his pieces out and launch an attack. Therefore, he decides to expand on the queenside, but this does not address the problem directly.

13.b4 Bb6 14.a4

Comment: What about 14.Re1 instead, to remove the rook on e6?



You may have found White's best defense. If Black plays 14...Rxe1+ 15.Qxe1 Bf5, White has 16.Bxc6, which wins a pawn and keeps Black's remaining rook from coming to e8. After 16...Rd8 17.Qf1, the queens will be traded and White will develop his queenside pieces and hold on.⁴

If, after 14...Rxe1+ 15.Qxe1, Black plays 15...Bd7, then 16.Qe4 can be played. Now if 16...Qd6, 17.Qc2 holds the d2 pawn and enables White to play Bb2.⁵

⁴Exercise 2: What are the consequences of 17...Qxf1+?

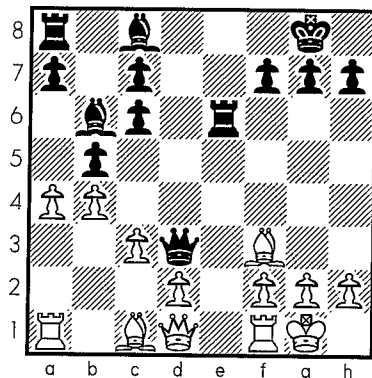
⁵Exercise 3: Analyze 16...Qxe4 17.Bxe4 Re8.

All this was not easy for White to find. When you have a strong bind and a space advantage like Black does, it makes it difficult for your opponent to find the correct moves. Just one missed opportunity or error in move order can be fatal for him. Thus, your practical chances in such positions are always very good.

Back to the game. White has just played 14.a4.

Question: What is White's threat?

After 14.a4



Answer: To trap the bishop on b6.

Of course, Black does not allow that.

14...bxa4 15.Qxa4

White is starting to free himself a little, but the freedom is not in the area of the board that he would like. The Black queen on d3 continues to dominate the position. Look at White's c1 bishop—it's paralyzed!

At this point, I would like to comment on the pawn structure. White has a solid structure—only two islands,

three pawns in each. Black, on the other hand, has a poor structure—doubled isolated c-pawns, isolated a-pawn. His queenside pawns do not protect each other.

Question: Which stage of the game would be the worst from Black's point of view?

Answer: The endgame.

Of course. Black does not want to get anywhere close to an endgame. Even though Black's pawn structure would handicap him in an endgame, it has very little effect on his overall strategy in the earlier stages of the game.

Question: What is Black's next move?

Answer: 15...Rg6, threatening the bishop on f3 by pinning the g-pawn.

Not a bad move, but Morphy didn't do that. The threat is too simple. There is a lesson you should learn from Morphy's games: *a great attacker never attacks without getting all his pieces out first.*

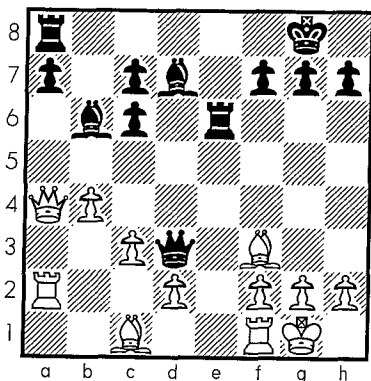
Question: How does Black proceed to get the rest of his pieces out?

Answer: 15...Bd7.

Of course. A nice simple developing move that gets the bishop out and gets ready to bring the rook into a better position.

15...Bd7 16.Ra2

After 16.Ra2



What a strange square for the rook. It is unlikely that White is playing there just to protect his d2 pawn. He probably intends to challenge the Black queen with *Qc2*. If so, he is taking far too long. He just missed his last chance to drive the Black queen out of d3. *16.Qa6* would have kept him alive.

Question: Now, what is the next move for Black? Remember what I said earlier about Morphy's style.

Answer: *16...Rae8*.

Now you are playing like Morphy! I can't stress this enough—how Morphy always prepared everything, got everything into position. Black's position is stronger because his doubled rooks are much more powerful than White's rooks. White is already wishing that his a2 rook had never left the back rank.

16...Rae8

Question: Pretend it is Black's move now. What can he do?

Answer: ...*Qxf1+* and then ...*Re1* mate.

Very good. I like this better than ...*Re1* first because it is a **forcing sequence**, and therefore clearer.

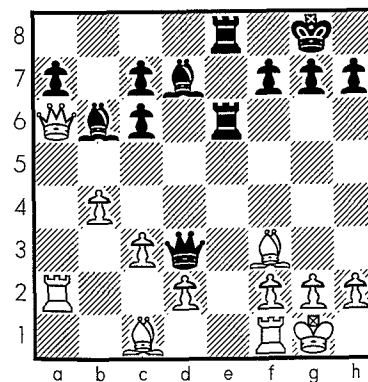
Question: An escape square would not help White. Why?

Answer: If *h3*, then ...*Qxf1+* draws the king away from the escape square, and if ...*g3*, then Black takes the bishop on f3.

White finally challenges Black's queen and finds an unusual defense to the mate threat.

17.Qa6

After 17.Qa6



This is an **X-ray defense**. Just like an X-ray passes through your body, the White queen on a6 operates through the Black queen on d3 to defend the f1 rook. Now *17...Qxf1+* *18.Qxf1 Re1* *19.Bb2* is just a fancy trade.

Question: *Qd1* would also defend against mate. Why did White choose *Qa6* instead?

Answer: Because he wants to trade off queens.

Yes. *Qd1* does not break the bind.

Question: This is the critical position in the game. White is on the verge of driving Black's pieces back, but Morphy finds this brilliant move. Do you know what it is?

Answer: Queen takes bishop.

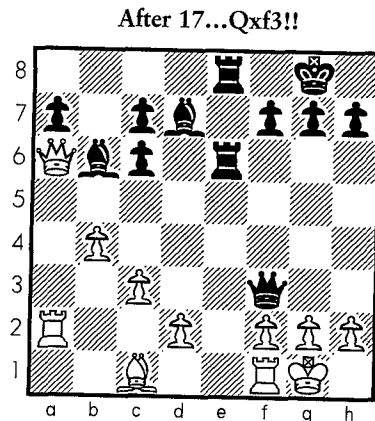
Are you quite sure? When you play a move like this, you had better be certain it works. I cannot accept your response unless you tell me more. Let's analyze together. You play Black, I'll play White.

Question: After *17...Qxf3 18.gxf3*, what is your move?

Answer: *18...Rg6+*.

Good. I must play *19.Kh1*. That much is obvious; now comes the hard part. As this is a long and difficult combination, let's take one step at a time. Let me begin by telling you that *17...Qxf3* is indeed the right move.

17...Qxf3!!



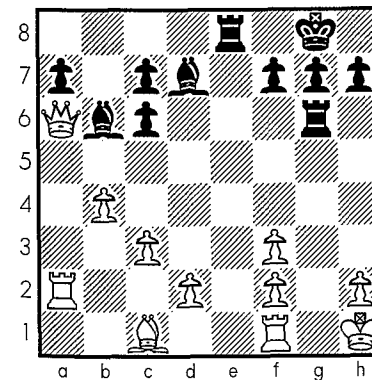
A beautiful sacrifice. Black shatters White's castled position in one tremendous blow. Such moves are known as **destructive sacrifices**. Look for such possibilities when infiltration into enemy territory and occupation of key squares prove insufficient to break through. Destructive sacrifices are more common when the attacking forces aiming at the enemy king are greater than the defending forces at hand.

18.gxf3 Rg6+ 19.Kh1

The concluding sequence of this combination contains a valuable lesson in conducting a mating attack: *whenever possible, limit the movement of the defending king*. Even though Morphy does miss a shorter win on two separate occasions, he does not let the White king slither out of the mating net that he constructs.

Question: How does Black continue the attack?

After *19.Kh1*



Answer: Open the long diagonal with *19...c5*.

No, that is too slow.

Remember this: *once you sacrifice material, it is important to pursue the attack actively and aggressively.* You do not always have to capture or deliver check, but you must make moves that threaten. In order to justify a queen sacrifice, the threat must be powerful. It must be equal to or greater than the value of the sacrificed piece.

Question: What is the most forcing move?

Answer: 19...Bh3.

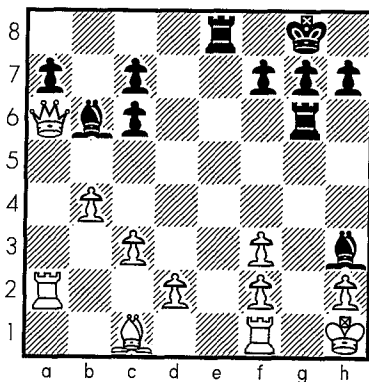
Question: That's the move. What is the threat?

Answer: 20...Bg2+ 21.Kg1 Bxf3 mate.

Good. That's the real threat—Black is not interested in the f1 rook. He has sacrificed his queen; just getting back some material is not enough.

19...Bh3

After 19...Bh3



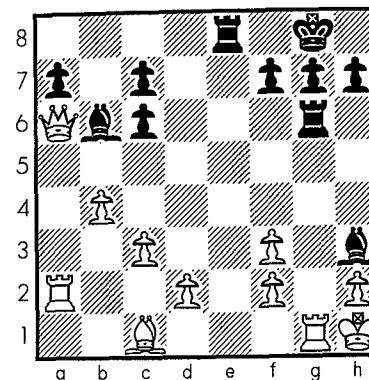
White now has three ways to avert mate:

- (1) Protect the g2 square with 20.Rg1.
- (2) Attack the g6 rook with 20.Qd3.
- (3) Create an escape square with 20.Rd1.

Let's first examine the most direct defensive method, which is to *protect the first point of attack*, the square g2. This can only be done with 20.Rg1.

Question: After 20.Rg1, Black has mate in three. Can you find it?

After 20.Rg1 (variation)



Answer: 20...Rxcg1+ 21.Kxcg1 Re1+ 22.Qf1 Rxf1 mate.

Question: This is the simplest. There is also a more complicated mate. What is it?

Answer: 20...Bg2+ 21.Rxcg2 Re1+ 22.Rg1 Rxcg1 mate.

That's it. This is an important back rank mating pattern that we should keep in mind. If we were to change the position in the above diagram by removing the f2 pawn and the b6 bishop, then we would need this pattern—20...Rxcg1+ would not work. It is important to learn a variety of attacking patterns—they will give you the knowledge to close out a game successfully.⁶

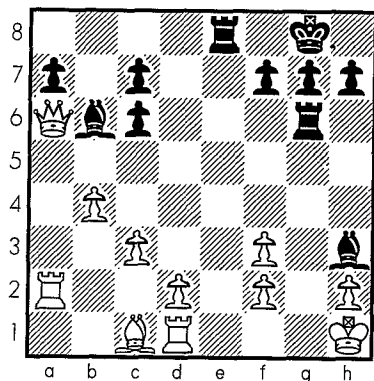
⁶ For further study of mating patterns, see [Vukovich].

Since the g2 square can't be defended adequately, White could try removing a key attacker. White can afford to sacrifice the queen for the rook on g6 because he is ahead in material. Unfortunately, this defense does not work either because 20.Qd3 is met by 20...f5 reestablishing the original threat. Now 21.Qc4+ is met by ...Kf8 winning easily because White's queen is exposed to a discovered attack.

As the first two lines of defense fail, White, as a last resort, frees f1 so that the king can run away.

20.Rd1

After 20.Rd1



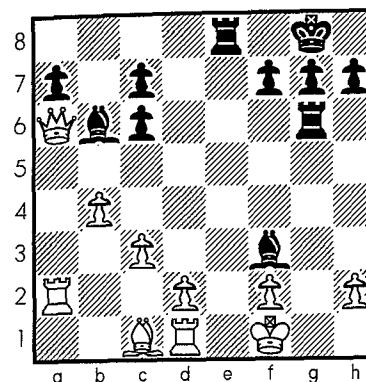
The next few moves are forced.

20...Bg2+ 21.Kg1 Bxf3+

The point of this move is not so much to win a pawn as to free the longer diagonal for the bishop. This increases its scope.

22.Kf1

After 22.Kf1

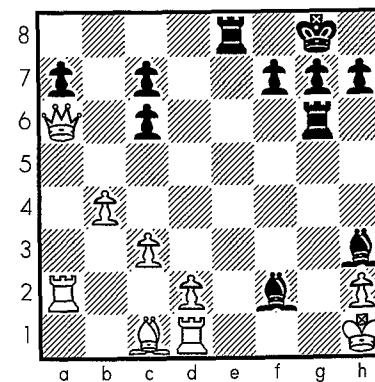


22...Bg2+⁷ 23.Kg1 Bh3+

There is a quicker win here with 23...Be4+ 24.Kf1 Bf5! This is a good illustration of the concept of **redeployment**. Black brings his bishop back along the h1-a8 diagonal to keep the king out of h1. He then switches to another diagonal so that he can come back to h3 with mate! White has no defense.

24.Kh1 Bxf2

After 24...Bxf2



⁷Exercise 4: Find a quicker win for Black after 22.Kf1.

Morphy did give up his queen, but look at the havoc he is causing with a rook and two bishops! Even a cursory glance at the board shows that the poor White king has been abandoned by his army. Black's pieces are all working together in harmony and are moving in for the kill.

Question: What is Black threatening?

Answer: ...Bg2 mate.

There's only one way to stop it. White has to return some of his material.

25.Qf1 Bxf1 26.Rxf1

The smoke has cleared. Black is up two pawns and retains an attacking position. The White king is still in a mating net.

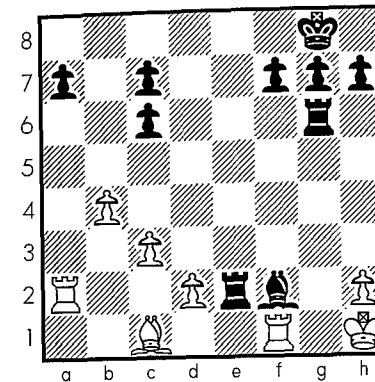
Question: What does Black do next?

Answer: 26...Re1.

26...Re1 is good because it forces an exchange when ahead in material—but it is not the best. *Often you can win more efficiently by retaining the more active piece.* There is no question whose rooks are more active. The best thing to do in this position is to penetrate to the seventh rank with the rook.

26...Re2

After 26...Re2



Remember to *place your rooks on your seventh rank, especially when your opponent's king is trapped on his first rank.*

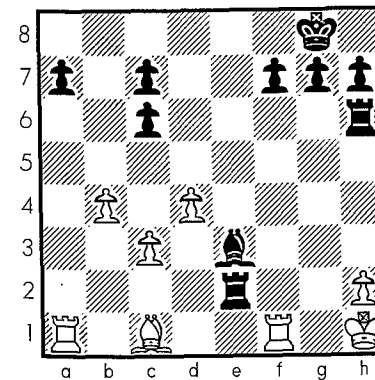
This game is over now.

27.Ra1 Rh6

Targeting h2.

28.d4 Be3 0-1

After 28...Be3



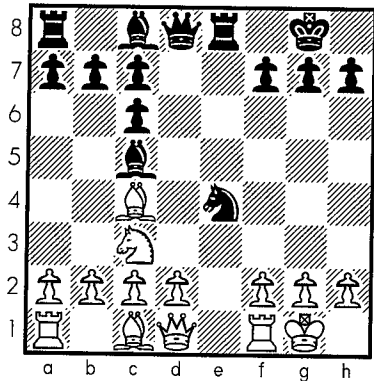
White resigned. Take a final look at the White bishop that is still sitting on c1—it never left that square! If 29.*Bxe3*, then 29...*Rbxb2*+ 30.*Kg1* *Reg2* *mate*.



ANSWERS

1. If Black plays 8...*Nxe4*, (instead of 8...*b5*), White has two good moves.

After 8...*Nxe4* (variation)

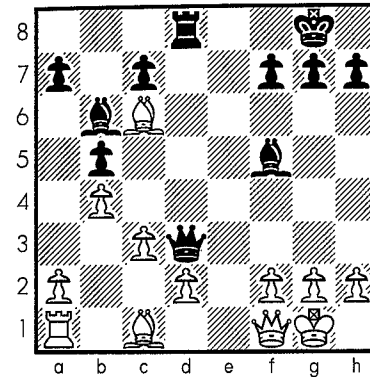


You may have chosen 9.*Nxe4* *Rxe4* 10.*Bxf7*+ *Kxf7* 11.*Qf3*+, which wins the rook for the bishop. This is good, but Black can cut his losses by playing 10...*Kb8*.

A stronger alternative for White is to start with 9.*Bxf7*+ *Kxf7* 10.*Nxe4*. Again, Black can't play 10...*Rxe4* because of 11.*Qf3*+ winning the exchange. White is a pawn ahead and Black's king must spend time getting to safety.

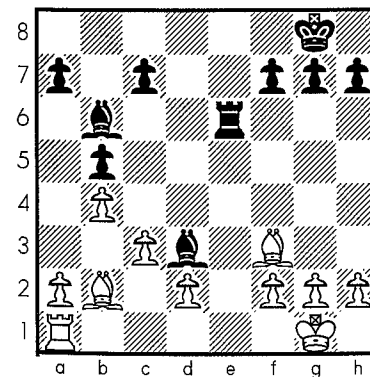
2. After 14.*Re1* *Rxe1*+ 15.*Qxe1* *Bf5* 16.*Bxc6* *Rd8* 17.*Qf1*, Black may retreat the queen (allowing *d4*), let White trade queens, or try to force matters by initiating a queen trade.

After 17.*Qf1* (variation)



After the forcing line 17...*Qxf1*+ 18.*Kxf1* *Bd3*+ 19.*Kg1* *Rd6* 20.*Bf3* *Re6* 21.*Bb2*, can anyone win?

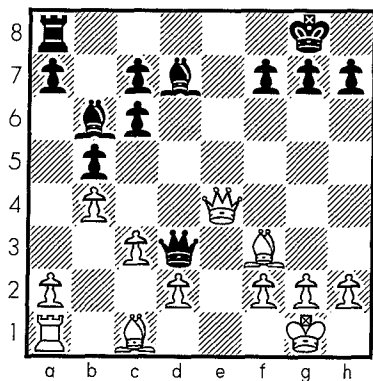
After 21.*Bb2* (variation)



Black is down a pawn, but still has a bind. White's b2 bishop is buried and his f3 bishop must guard e2. A draw is the likely outcome.

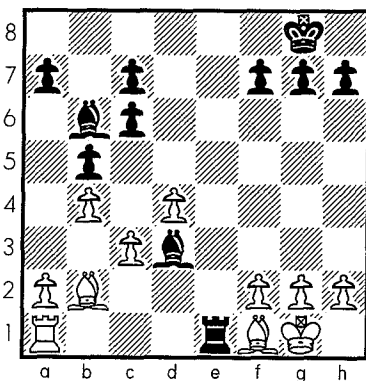
3. After 14.Re1 Rxe1+ 15.Qxe1 Bd7 16.Qe4, Black cannot win by trading queens.

After 16.Qe4 (variation)



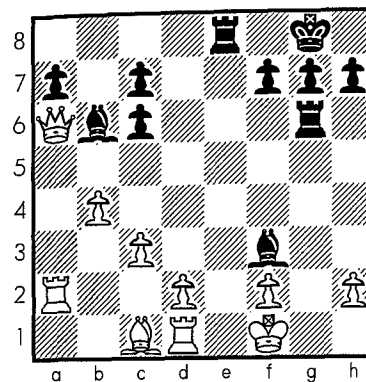
If 16...Qxe4 17.Bxe4 Re8 18.Bd3 Re1+ (18...Bf5 19.Bf1) 19.Bf1 Bf5 20.d4 Bd3 21.Bb2 White has no more problems.

After 21.Bb2 (variation)



4. After 22.Kf1 Black could have forced a fast conclusion.

After 22.Kf1



Best is 22...Rg2 23.Qd3 Rxf2+ 24.Kg1 Rg2+ 25.Kf1 Rg1 mate.

REVIEW

Themes

Center fork trick (after 4.Bc4; after 5...0-0).

Symmetrical positions (4...Bb4 variation).

Gaining time for development (6...Re8; 7...dxc6).

Capturing away from the center to open lines (7...dxc6).

Shifting pieces to contest control of a sector (9.Be2).

Rook lift (11...Re6).

Advanced outpost to restrict enemy movement (12...Qd3).

Controlling light squares (discussion after 12...Qd3).

Completing development before attacking (15...Bd7; 16...Rae8).

X-ray Defense (17.Qa6).

Destructive sacrifice (17...Qxf3).

Defensive techniques (*discussion after 19...Bh3*).

Controlling the seventh rank with rooks (26...Re2).

Guidelines

Seize the opportunity to establish a center in which you have the sole advanced center pawn.

Whenever possible, try to limit the movement of the enemy king.

Once you sacrifice material, pursue the attack actively and aggressively.

Strive to achieve a positional objective by small steps when you can't do it all at once.

Capture away from the center when you judge that obtaining open lines and quick development outweighs building a strong central pawn mass.

Place a rook on the third rank to retain the option of moving it to another sector of the board, while continuing to exert influence on the file it inhabits.

Get your rooks to your seventh rank, especially when your opponent's king is restricted to his first rank.

When defending, try to protect the first point of attack. Failing this, try to remove key attacking pieces. If all else fails, run with the king.

Often you can win more efficiently by retaining the more active piece.

Advice

Do not blindly follow general principles.

Prefer forcing sequences; they are clearer.

Anticipate trouble before it happens.

Study tactical patterns.

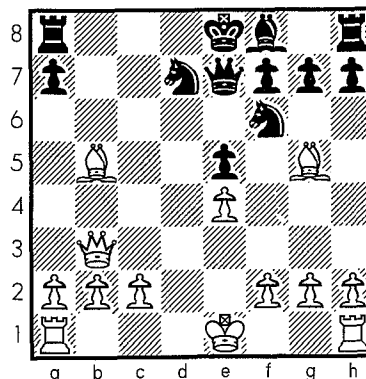


SUPPLEMENTARY GAMES

(1) Morphy–Duke Karl/Count Isouard, Paris, 1858
[Quick Development]

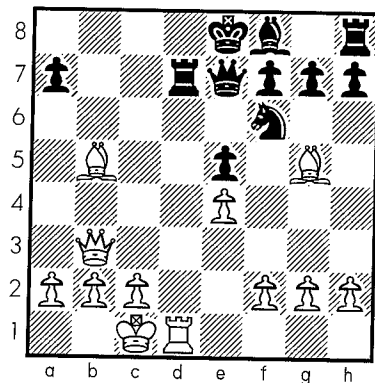
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 Bg4 4.dxe5 Bxf3 5.Qxf3 dxe5
6.Bc4 Nf6 7.Qb3 Qe7 8.Nc3 c6 9.Bg5 b5 10.Nxb5 cxb5
11.Bxb5+ Nbd7

After 11...Nbd7



12.0-0-0 Rd8 13.Rxd7 Rxd7 14.Rd1

After 14 Rd1

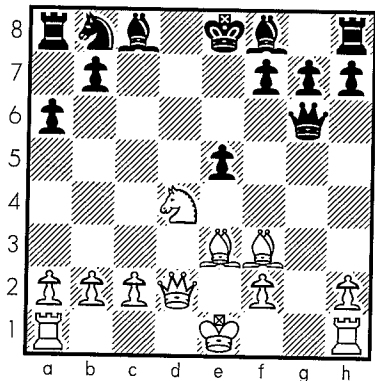


14...Qe6 15.Bxd7+ Nxd7 16.Qb8+ Nxb8 17.Rd8+
mate 1-0

(2) Nimzovich–Alapin, St. Petersburg, 1913
[Quick Development]

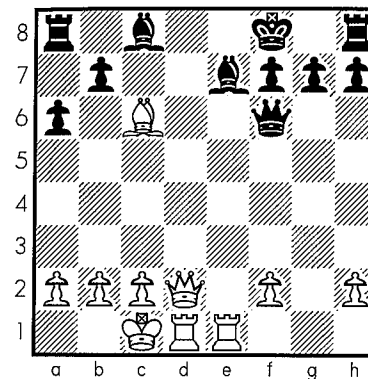
1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.exd5 Nxd5 5.Nf3 c5
6.Nxd5 Qxd5 7.Be3 cxd4 8.Nxd4 a6 9.Be2 Qxg2
10.Bf3 Qg6 11.Qd2 e5

After 11...e5



12.O-O-O exd4 13.Bxd4 Nc6 14.Bf6 Qxf6 15.Rhe1+
Be7 16.Bxc6+ Kf8

After 16...Kf8

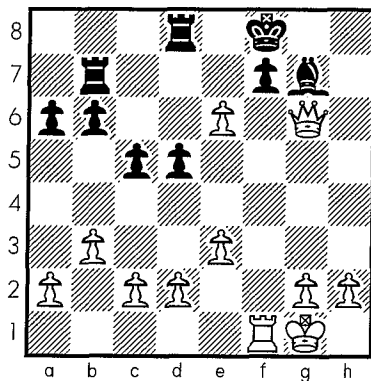


17.Qd8+ Bxd8 18.Re8+ mate. 1-0

(3) Lasker–Bauer, Amsterdam, 1889
[Destructive Sacrifice]

1.f4 d5 2.e3 Nf6 3.b3 e6 4.Bb2 Be7 5.Bd3 b6 6.Nf3 Bb7
7.Nc3 Nbd7 8.O-O O-O 9.Ne2 c5 10.Ng3 Qc7 11.Ne5
Nxe5 12.Bxe5 Qc6 13.Qe2 a6 14.Nh5 Nxb5
15.Bxb7+ Kxb7 16.Qxb5+ Kg8 17.Bxg7 Kxg7 18.Qg4+
Kh7 19.Rf3 e5 20.Rh3+ Qh6 21.Rxb6+ Kxb6 22.Qd7
Bf6 23.Qxb7 Kg7 24.Rf1 Rab8 25.Qd7 Rfd8 26.Qg4+
Kf8 27.fxe5 Bg7 28.e6 Rb7 29.Qg6

After 29.Qg6

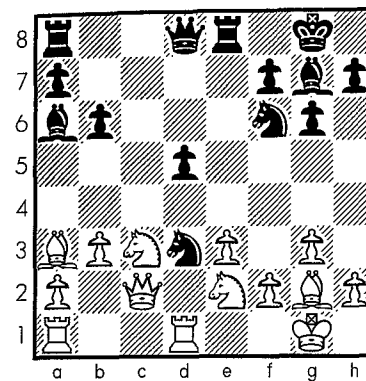


29...f6 30.Rxf6+ Bxf6 31.Qxf6+ Ke8 32.Qh8+ Ke7
33.Qg7+ 1-0

(4) R. Byrne–Fischer, New York, 1963
[Destructive Sacrifice]

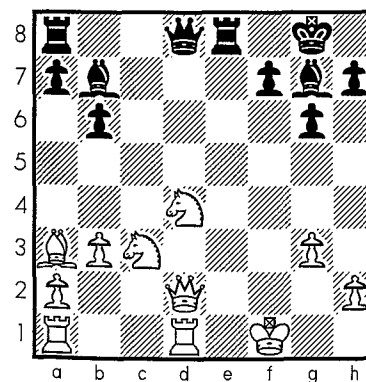
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 c6 4.Bg2 d5 5.cxd5 cxd5 6.Nc3
Bg7 7.e3 [All but one of White's pawns are on the same
color.] 7...O-O 8.Nge2 Nc6 9.O-O b6 10.b3 Ba6
11.Ba3 Re8 12.Qd2 e5 13.dxe5 Nxe5 14.Rfd1 [The
wrong rook. Very easy to see after the game. The weak-
ening of f2 is the critical factor.] 14...Nd3 15.Qc2

After 15.Qc2

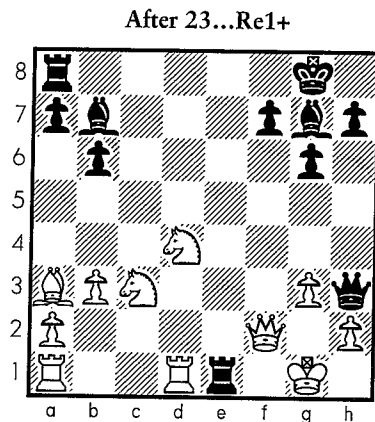


[Stops ...Ne4 because of the threat Rxd3. Fischer now
finds a surprise.] 15...Nxf2! 16.Kxf2 Ng4+ 17.Kg1
Nxe3 18.Qd2 Nxe2 [Removing the one piece that is de-
fending the kingside.] 19.Kxg2 d4 20.Nxd4 Bb7+
21.Kf1

After 21.Kf1



21...Qd7! [Coming in on the White squares. An unstop-
pable "quiet move." Byrne resigned! Fischer had
planned 22.Qf2 Qh3+ 23.Kg1 Re1+



A decoy. 24.Rxe1 Bxd4 25.Qxd4 Qg2+ mate. It all seems so simple in concept and execution! The idea was to break up White's castled position, get rid of his fianchettoed bishop and take over the long diagonal. Then nothing can stop the light-square attack!] 0-1

II

THE INITIATIVE

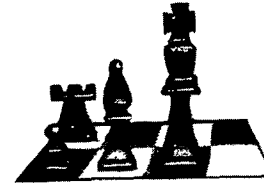
AND

PIECE COORDINATION

The games in this section emphasize the dynamic elements of an attacking game. The dynamic player strives to seize and maintain the initiative, and to deploy his pieces so that they are active and work well together in attack and defense.

Lesson 6: “*Saw It—Went Home*” illustrates these themes in concert with positional ideas introduced in Part I. You will see a sustained initiative involving a clearance sacrifice that enables the control of a strong square. The final combination is characterized by the queen, a knight, and two rooks working together in perfect harmony.

Lesson 7: *Strike While the Knight Is Cold* shows White jumping at the opportunity to attack Black while his pieces are still disorganized. The result is a kingside bind that lets White carry out an unimpeded attack on the other side of the board.



LESSON 6

"SAW IT—WENT HOME"

Lesson 8: *Three for the Lady* demonstrates how to wrest the initiative by introducing a material imbalance into the position. Three minor pieces coordinate their powers to overwhelm Black's queen plus pawns.

Lesson 9: *Connect-the-Dots* features the exploitation of a pawn structure which yields White a space advantage. White maintains the initiative by organizing his pieces for a kingside attack. An instructive miscue in the manner in which White coordinates his rooks slows the attack. Black escapes the guillotine when White oversteps on time.

Lesson 10: *It's Never Over* is a lesson in the coordination of pieces for attack and defense. Black finds a surprising way to parry White's dark-square attack. White renews the attack, but loses his way and must act fast to parry a Black counterattack on the light squares.

There are two ways to play chess: you can take control of events, or you can sit back and wait for things to happen. The attacking player prefers to be in control; he will always strive for the **initiative**. To gain the initiative, you make a threat that your opponent must meet. To retain the initiative, you continue to operate with threats. The following game is characterized by such a continuing initiative.

This game was played in 1895 by the first official World Champion, Wilhelm Steinitz. In the history of the evolution of chess style, Steinitz is considered to be the first great master of positional play. He took positional play to a high level by stressing concepts such as strong squares, weak pawns, and the importance of good technique.

In this game, you will see Steinitz build an initiative in the center through a series of trades, then translate it into control of a strong square. Once he establishes that control, he just dominates the board.

The famous story about this game is that, when von Bardeleben realized he had lost, he left the room without resigning. One version of this story states that Steinitz was

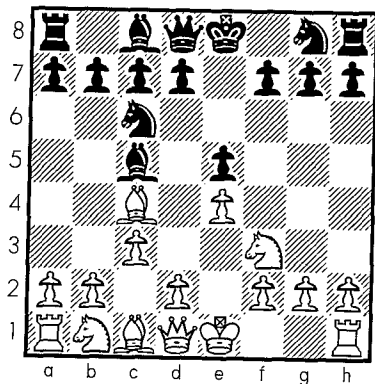
out of the room at the time and von Bardeleben left a message saying “Saw it—went home.” What made him give up and go home was something truly amazing, as you will see. The final combination is so stunning that Steinitz is said to have been very upset when he realized he wouldn’t get a chance to play it! His only satisfaction was to show it to the spectators after the game.

—W. STEINITZ–C. VON BARDELEBEN—

Hastings, England, 1895

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.c3

After 4.c3



The Giuoco Piano is also known as the Italian Game. This is one of the oldest known openings that is still practiced today. It was popular as far back as the 1400s. White plays the most challenging line with 4.c3, trying to take over the center with 5.d4. This is a good way to play for

an advantage in the opening. Other developing moves like 4.0–0 or 4.Nc3 or 4.d3 have nothing wrong with them, but they are slower and do not attempt to wrest the initiative.

Question: Black can’t really do anything to prevent d4. He cannot even try to suppress it by playing 4...Qf6, because he would find himself in trouble. Why?

Answer: Because the queen is coming out too early and would be chased around. Black would lose time.

That’s the general idea.¹

Question: Black can also try to suppress d4 with 4...Qe7. However, you don’t meet this very often. Do you see the point of this move?

Answer: After 5.d4 exd4, Black is threatening to capture the e4 pawn with check.

Question: That’s right. Now, if you were playing White and your opponent played 4...Qe7 against you, what would your reaction be?

Answer: I would castle.

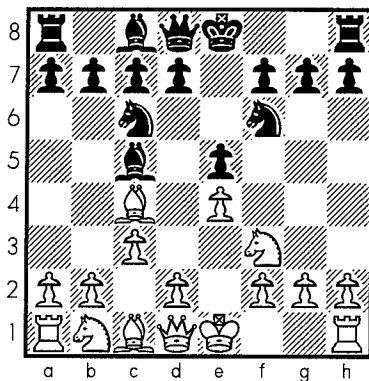
Very good. After you castle, the threat of d4 is renewed. Black has to be careful because his king and queen are on the same file.

In this line, after 4...Qe7 5.0–0 Bb6 6.d4, Black must not capture on d4, losing control of the center.² Instead, he should hold the center with 6...d6.

4...Nf6

¹Exercise 1: Analyse the consequences of 4... Qf6 5.d4 exd4.
²See Supplementary Game 6, *Weeramantry–Fiaccabrino*.

After 4...Nf6



The best move for Black.

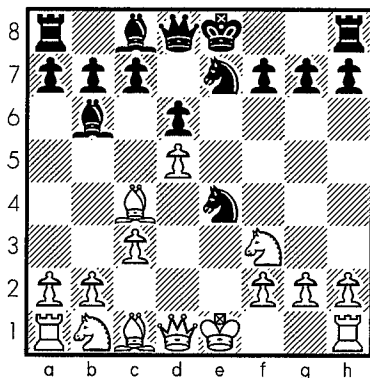
5.d4 exd4

Question: What if Black chooses not to capture, and plays 5...Bb6?

Answer: White plays 6.d5 attacking the knight.

No. That move is bad on two counts: it opens the diagonal for Black's dark-square bishop and closes it for White's light-square bishop. If White tries to win a pawn with 6.d5 Ne7 7.Nxe5, Black regains it easily with 7...d6 8.Nf3 Nxe4.

After 8...Nxe4 (variation)



Now you can see clearly the effect 6.d5 has on the two bishops. *Do not place your pawns where they diminish the scope of your pieces.*

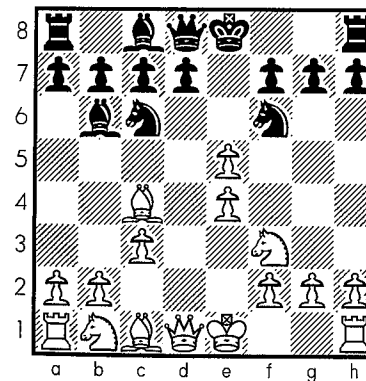
Answer: 6.Qb3 looks strong against 5...Bb6.

Not bad. This sets up a battery with queen and bishop against the f7 square. However, Black can just castle and follow up with ...Na5.

Answer: Just play 6.dxe5.

Question: Of course! Now analyze further and show that White is better after 5...Bb6 6.dxe5.

After 6.dxe5 (variation)



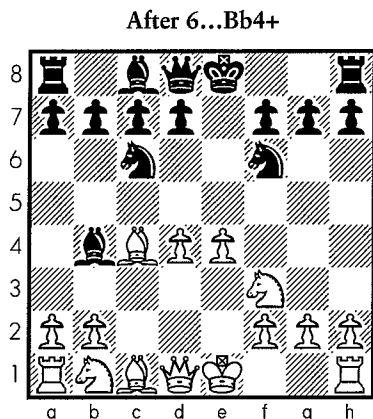
Answer: If Black tries to win back the pawn with 6...Nxe4, then 7.Qd5 wins by threatening mate on f7 and the knight on e4.

Excellent! After 7...Bxf2+ 8.Kf1, White will win the knight and be ahead in material.³ The retreat 5...Bb6 is too passive. It gives White time to do whatever he pleases. *When your opponent plays passively, seize the initiative.*

6.cxd4 Bb4+

³Exercise 2: After 6.dxe5, Black may also try 6...Ng4. How should White proceed?

This bishop move is different. White is in check, so Black has not yielded a tempo in moving the bishop.



There are two reasonable ways to block the check. Playing the b1 knight to d2 is not one of them because it impedes the development of White's dark-square bishop. The main line of the Giuoco, which Steinitz did not employ, is 7.Bd2.

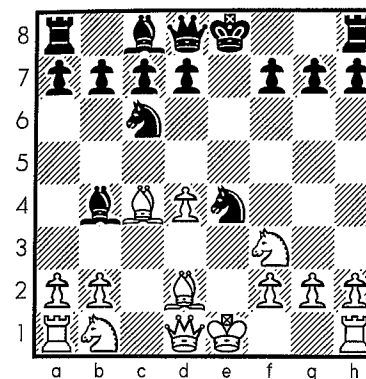
Question: After 7.Bd2 Bxd2+ 8.Nbxd2, it is extremely important for Black to play the right move. What is it?

Answer: Pawn to d5.

Yes. Black **must** play ...d5 at this point. Otherwise, White will start to advance the connected center pawns. *Two unopposed center pawns can advance with devastating effect*, pushing aside any pieces that are in the vicinity.

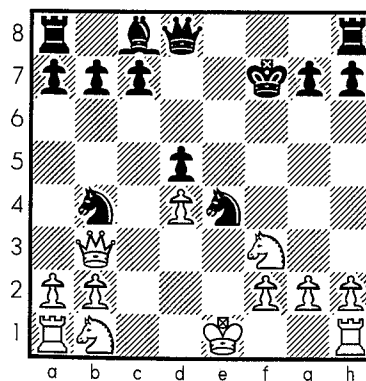
Question: Another important point to remember is that it is a mistake for Black to reply to 7.Bd2 with 7...Nxe4. Why?

After 7...Nxe4 (variation)



Answer: White can play 8.Bxb4 Nxb4 9.Bxf7+ Kxf7 10.Qb3+ d5 11.Qxb4, winning back the piece.

After 10...d5 (variation)



Question: Good, but 11.Qb4 is not best. After 10...d5, White has an important intermediate move. What is it?

Answer: White can play Ne5+, and get his knight to a strong square.

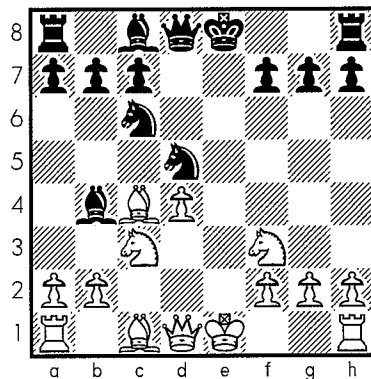
Yes, *11.Ne5+* centralizes the knight with gain of time. What is far more important is that it forces the Black king to stay in the center. If White does not play this move, Black will be able to castle artificially by bringing the rook to e8 and then retreating the king to g8. *Always look for ways to keep your opponent's king in the center.*⁴

In the game, Steinitz played the other good move, *7.Nc3*. This line is called the Moeller Attack, after the Danish theorist who analyzed it extensively. It involves sacrificing the pawn on e4. If Black accepts, White castles (*7...Nxe4 8.0-0*). Then the question is: does White have enough compensation for the sacrificed pawn? Today, this line is well known to theory. If both sides play the best moves, the fireworks fizzle out and leave Black in a slightly better position.⁵

Here, Black declines the sacrifice.

7.Nc3 d5 8.exd5 Nxd5

After 8...Nxd5



This looks dangerous because of the attack on the c3 knight. However, White can ignore it. He just castles, and

it is too risky for Black to go after the material while his king is still in the center.

9.0-0

Question: If *9...Bxc3 10.bxc3 Nxc3*, how does White win?

Answer: *11.Qe1+* and *12.Qxc3*.

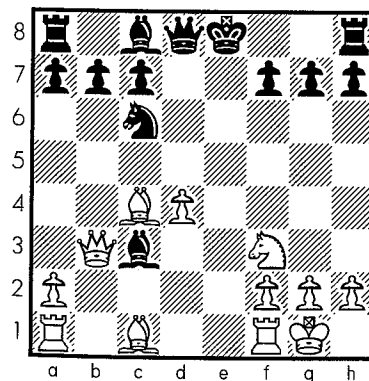
Question: Correct. What if Black takes with the knight first?

Answer: After *9...Nxc3*, White can play *10.Qe1+* and *11.bxc3*.

Question: This is certainly adequate. There is, however, a more aggressive line, where White sacrifices material for a powerful attack. Can you find it?

Answer: White plays *10.bxc3 Bxc3 11.Qb3*, giving up the a1 rook for a direct attack on the king.

After 11.Qb3 (variation)



⁴Exercise 3: After *10...d5 11.Ne5+ Ke8 12.Qxb4*, how should White reply to *12...Qg5*?

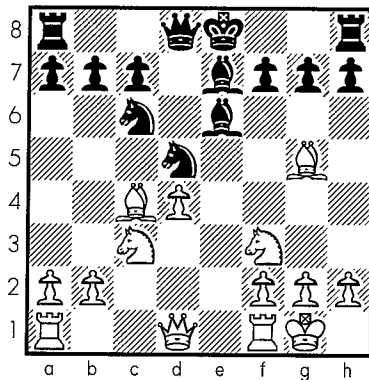
⁵See [Harding]

Yes, but you should take your analysis further. Remember, *before sacrificing material you must be confident in the outcome*. Here, after 11...Bxa1, White wins with 12.Bxf7+ Kf8 13.Ba3+ Ne7 14.Rxa1 threatening 15.Re1. Black is helpless.

In any event, von Bardeleben played more sensibly.

9...Be6 10.Bg5 Be7

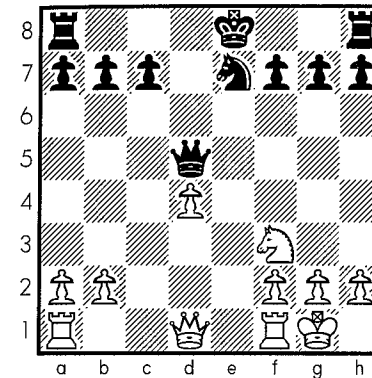
After 10...Be7



A mistake. This leads to a series of trades that enables Steinitz to create pressure along the open e-file and keep Black from castling.

11.Bxd5 Bxd5 12.Nxd5 Qxd5
13.Bxe7 Nxe7

After 13...Nxe7



Question: What has Steinitz gained by all these trades? Who stands better and why?

Answer: White does. He is castled and Black is not. He has a pawn in the center and is better developed.

Good. The omission of castling can compromise the safety of the king, especially when the e-file is open. Look at how lonely the Black king is. The piece trades have removed his defenders, one by one, and left him exposed in the center.

Question: You also mentioned the White pawn on d4. Is this pawn strong or weak?

Answer: It's weak because it's isolated.

Let's pursue this further, because it is critical to understanding the position. We know that isolated pawns are weak because they cannot be protected by another pawn. They have other disadvantages as well. As you may recall

from an earlier lesson, one of them is that isolated pawns are obstructive when they are on your own side of the board. When a pawn on your second, third, or fourth rank is blockaded, your opponent has more space to maneuver, while you have less. On the other hand, if the pawn advances to the fifth rank or further, then the space advantage you obtain will compensate for the inherent weakness of the pawn.

Now that I've given you a principle, I have to tell you that this position is an exception. Here the isolated pawn is only on the fourth rank, but it is the only center pawn. As such, *it strengthens White's position by controlling some key central squares*. In addition, White's position is enhanced by control of the adjacent files. White has the open e-file with pressure against the uncastled king and he can occupy the c-file at his convenience.

I would say that for the moment the d4 pawn is strong, but it could become weak as the game goes on. White must act now to exploit his lead in development.

Question: What is White's next move? It should be obvious.

Answer: Rook to e1.

There is no question about it. White pins the e7 knight and keeps Black's king from castling. This presents serious difficulties for Black. He must do something about it. *You cannot ignore a problem and hope it just goes away by itself*—you must make some effort to find a solution.

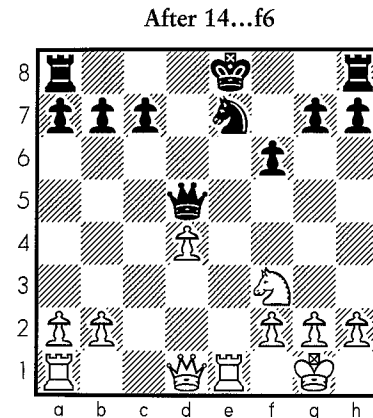
Question: Black must find a way to relieve the pin and get his king to safety. If he tries 14...Qd7,

White will just renew the threat with Qe2. How can he do it?

Answer: Play ...f6 and ...Kf7.

Good. That's exactly what Black tried.

14.Re1 f6



Steinitz now increases the pressure.

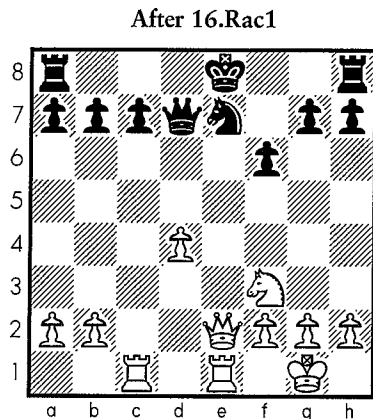
15.Qe2 Qd7

Question: Steinitz, like Morphy, always liked to attack from a fully developed position. What is the natural developing move?

Answer: Rook on a1 to c1.

Excellent. Bringing the second rook to an open file, while Black's rooks are still buried in the corners. This move is also a strong bluff; it uses a tactical threat to scare Black into delaying his plan.

16.Rac1



Question: If Black now plays 16...Kf7, there is a combination that White can try. What is it?

Answer: 17.Qc4+

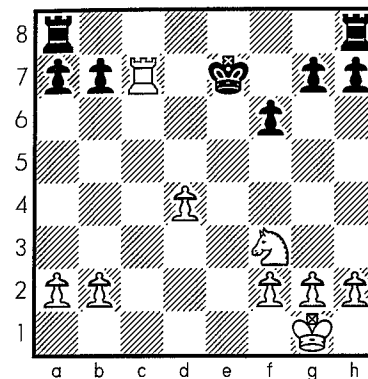
This can be handled by ...Nd5, which blocks the check and protects c7. Then Black is happy because his knight takes up residence in front of the isolated pawn.

Answer: Sacrifice an exchange: 17.Qxe7+ Qxe7 18.Rxe7+ Kxe7 19.Rxc7+ and 20.Rxb7. You get a knight and two pawns for the rook.

That's right. Let me ask a further question about this variation.

Question: After 19.Rxc7+, where is the best place for the king?

After 19.Rxc7+ (variation)

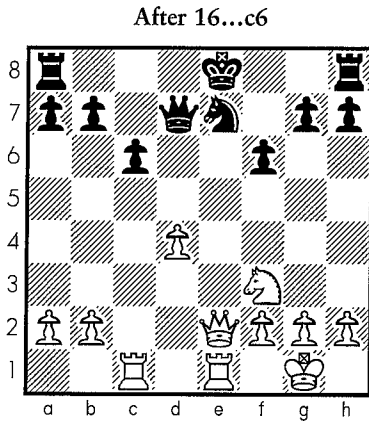


Answer: On d6.

Yes. This is now an endgame and it is important to centralize the king. The big question is: after 19...Kd6 20.Rxb7 or 20.Rxg7, does White have enough compensation?

White has two pawns for the exchange and a rook on the seventh rank, but if we look one move deeper, it's a different story. After 20...Rbc8 threatening mate, Black continues with 21...Rc7 and gets an excellent endgame. Black's king is closer to the center, White's d-pawn is weak, and the rook is stronger than the knight on the open board. Unfortunately for him, von Bardeleben failed to make this evaluation. Instead, he was intimidated into pushing his c-pawn. This is exactly what White wanted; his bluff worked!

16...c6



From here on the game is just beautiful. Steinitz finds the right plan and executes it with astounding clarity and precision. The whole thing has a certain natural flow to it. Steinitz focuses on a weak square in Black's position. He realizes that if he can get his knight to this square he can dominate the entire board.

Question: To which square would White most want to get his knight?

Answer: c5.

A very good square, but maybe not sufficiently deep to cause trouble.

Answer: d6.

This is a very good square indeed, but White would have trouble supporting a knight on this square. It is attacked by the Black queen, the rook on a8 can come to d8 to attack it again, and White cannot easily get his pieces into position to protect a piece on d6.

Answer: e6.

Imagine a knight jumping into e6! A lovely square for a knight. White's rook and queen already support that square. Can the knight get there? You are now playing fantasy chess. Pick a square, and dream! As long as it isn't totally unrealistic, you may have a chance.

Question: Can we get a knight to e6, or is it an impossible dream?

Answer: Play 17.Rcd1 and 18.d5.

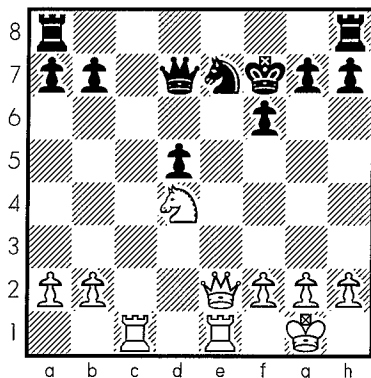
Steinitz goes one better than that. He realizes he can play d5 right away, without preparation. Black cannot take with the knight or the queen, so he must take with the pawn. This kind of sacrifice is called a **clearance sacrifice**. White clears the square d4 for his knight, which will use it as a transit square on its way to e6. There is another reason behind 17.d5. It is also a **blockading sacrifice**. By forcing Black to capture on d5 with a pawn, White permanently denies that square to the Black knight because of its location in front of the isolated pawn. The move 17.d5 is a sacrifice in the purest sense of the word—a **positional sacrifice**. Look for such sacrifices to gain or maintain the initiative when your opponent is not fully developed.

17.d5! cxd5 18.Nd4

The fantasy is becoming reality.

18...Kf7

After 18...Kf7



Black is threatening to untangle himself slowly. He will move out the rook, slide the king behind it, and escape. White must attack now!

19.Ne6

Question: What are White's threats?

Answer: Penetrate to the seventh rank with Rc7.

Good. Remember the seventh rank. The knight is beginning to orchestrate the attack from its advanced outpost square. Black now moves his h8 rook to cover the c-file and to create a safe haven for the king on g8.

19...Rhc8

Question: *Attack where the enemy is weakest.* When the h8 rook moves over to the queenside, it leaves the kingside temporarily unprotected. White has a move that sets up two different threats. Can you find it?

Answer: 20.Qh5+.

This looks attractive because if Black plays 20...g6, White can take the pawn on h7. However, Black can just retreat his king to g8, and he will have castled after all!

Answer: 20.Nc5.

The knight is well placed as it is. Why back it out without a good reason?

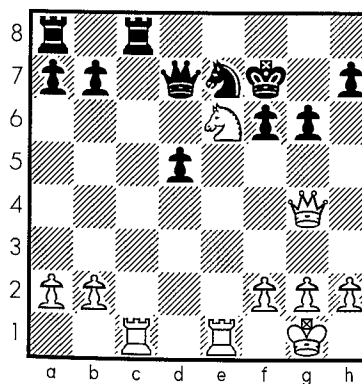
Answer: 20.Qg4.

Excellent! This move stops the Black king from escaping because of the threat on g7. Another threat is to play Ng4+ with a discovered attack on the Black queen. The king will have to move back to e8 to protect her.

20.Qg4 g6

Black must defend his g7 pawn.

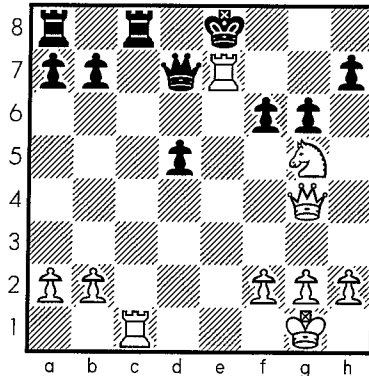
After 20...g6



21.Ng5+ Ke8 22.Rxe7+!

The initial move of a fascinating sequence. White must make this destructive sacrifice to strip away the last defenses around Black's king.

After 22.Rxe7+



Black can't recapture with the queen because of 23.Rxc8+ winning easily. Nor can he recapture with the king.⁶

22...Kf8

The only alternative. Incredibly, all four of White's pieces are threatened, and one of the threatened captures will lead to a back rank mate! White has no time to waste. He has to keep on checking.

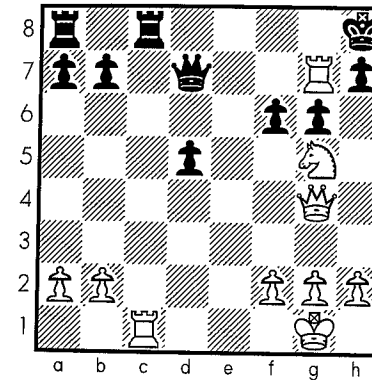
There are two distinct parts to Steinitz' combination. The key to the first part is to recognize the strength of the pin along the g4-c8 diagonal. The Black queen is pinned to the rook on c8. Many players find it difficult to see such pins because both the pinned piece and the piece doing the pinning are queens. The pin allows the White rook to walk arrogantly along the seventh rank without the queen ever being able to capture it!

⁶Exercise 4: How does White win by force after 22...Kxe7?

23.Rf7+ Kg8 24.Rg7+ Kh8

The Black king can never move up a rank because the White queen will capture on d7 with check. Therefore it is out of the question for the Black king to capture the White rook.

After 24...Kh8

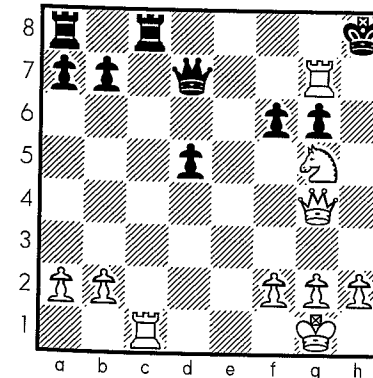


25.Rxh7+

At this point, von Bardeleben left the room, never to return! Steinitz demonstrated the following forced win:

25...Kg8 26.Rg7+ Kh8

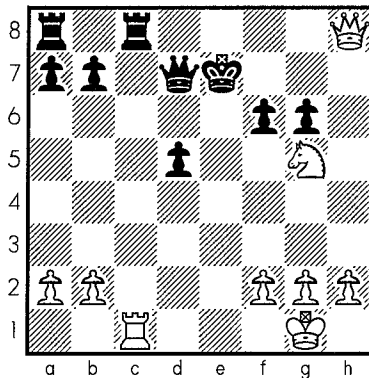
After 26...Kh8



We are entering the second stage of the combination. The rook has done its duty in eliminating Black's h7 pawn and is ready to make the king an offer he can't refuse. Now the White queen takes over.

27.Qh4+ Kxg7 28.Qh7+ Kf8 29.Qh8+ Ke7

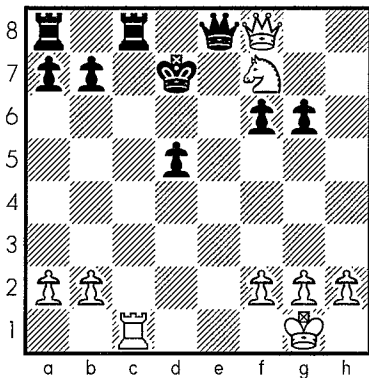
After 29...Ke7



The White queen will begin to inch toward Black's king, denying him critical squares. Meanwhile, White's rook plays a silent but powerful role, cutting off the entire c-file.

30.Qg7+ Ke8 31.Qg8+ Ke7 32.Qf7+ Kd8
33.Qf8+ Qe8 34.Nf7+ Kd7

After 34...Kd7



35.Qd6+ mate.

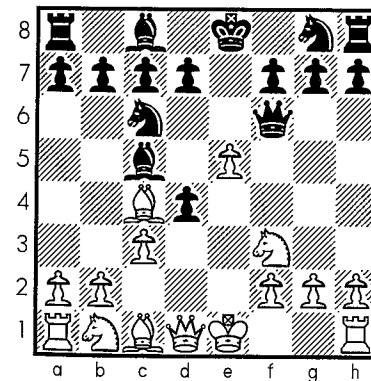
A classic illustration of the harmonious collaboration between queen and knight.



ANSWERS

1. After 4...Qf6 5.d4 exd4 (better is 5...Bb6), White can play 6.e5.

After 6.e5

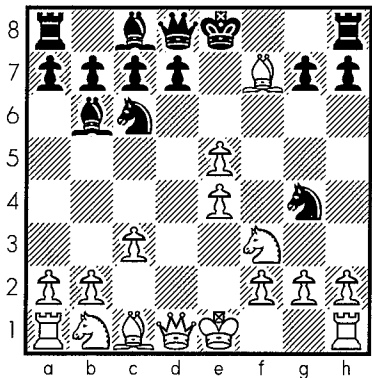


Then 6...Nxe5 7.Qe2 wins material (7...dxc3 8.Nxe5 Bxf2 + 9.Kd1).

If Black tries 6...Qg6, then 7.cxd4 Qxg2 8.Rg1 Bb4+ 9.Nc3 Qh3 10.Bxf7+ with a White advantage.

2. After 6.dxe5, Black could have tried 6...Ng4, attacking f2 and e5, but then White has 7.Bxf7+!

After 7.Bxf7+

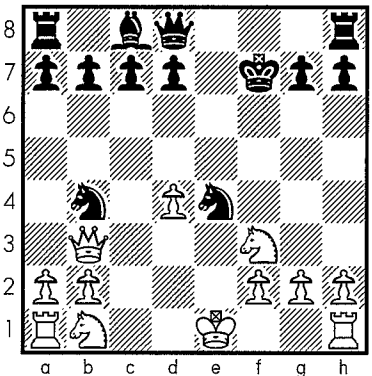


If 7...Kxf7, 8.Ng5+ and 9.Qxg4 leave White a pawn ahead after 9...Nxe5 10.Qe2.

If 7...Kf8, then 8.Bb3 Nxf2 (8...Bxf2+ 9.Ke2 Bb6 10.Rf1) 9.Qd5 Qe8 10.Rf1 wins.

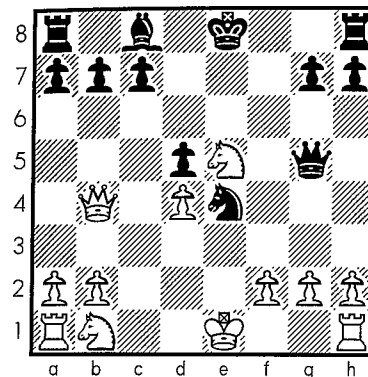
3. One of my students was practicing the position after 7.Bd2 Nxe4 8.Bxb4 Nxb4 9.Bxf7+ Kxf7 10.Qb3+ against a computer, and was surprised by the following sequence:

After 10.Qb3+



10...d5 11.Ne5+ Ke8 12.Qxb4 Qg5

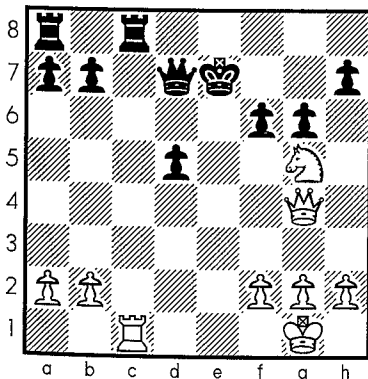
After 12...Qg5



The main threat is 13...Qc1+. White cannot answer this with 13.0-0 because 13...Bb3 presents problems. I suggest 13.Nbd2 and if 13...Qxg2, 14.0-0-0 with a dangerous attack. White stands well because of the strong knight at e5.

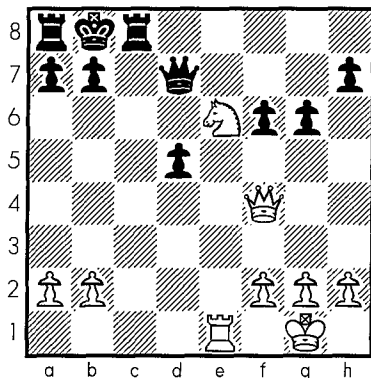
4. After 22.Rxe7+, Black cannot recapture with the king (22...Kxe7).

After 22...Kxe7



White wins with 23.Re1+ Kd6 24.Qb4+ Kc7 (24...Rc5 25.Re6+) 25.Ne6+ Kb8 26.Qf4+.

After 26.Qf4+



26...Rc7 27.Rc1 is curtains for Black.



REVIEW

Themes

- Control of the center with pawns (4.c3, 5.d4).
- Seizing the initiative against passive play (4...Bb6 variation).
- King in the center (10...d5 11.Ne5+ variation; 14.Re1; 22.Rxe7+!).
- Trading to remove defenders (11.Bxd5 through 13...Nxe7).
- Isolated center pawns (discussion after 13...Nxe7).

- Evaluation of an exchange sacrifice (16...Kf7 17.Qxe7+ variation).
- Positional sacrifice (clearance, blockading) (17.d5).
- Destructive sacrifice (22.Rxe7+).
- Queen, knight, rook coordination (28.Qh7+ through 35.Qd6+ mate).

Guidelines

- Do not place your pawns where they diminish the scope of your pieces.
- When your opponent plays passively, seize the initiative.
- Two unopposed center pawns can advance with devastating effect.
- Always look for ways to keep your opponent's king in the center.
- An isolated pawn can be strong when it is the only center pawn and controls critical squares.

Advice

- You cannot ignore a problem and hope it will just go away by itself.
- Before sacrificing material, you must be confident in the outcome.
- Attack where the enemy is weakest.



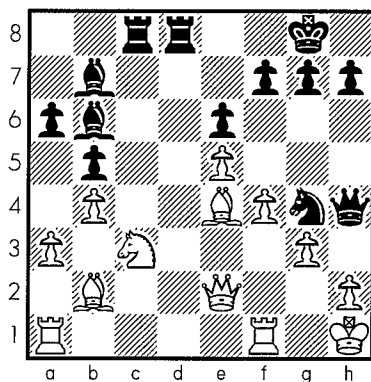
SUPPLEMENTARY GAMES

(1) Rotlewi–Rubinstein, Lodz, 1907

[Coordinated Attack]

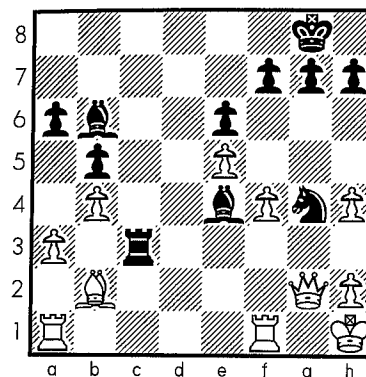
1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 e6 3.e3 c5 4.c4 Nc6 5.Nc3 Nf6 6.dxc5
 Bxc5 7.a3 a6 8.b4 Bd6 9.Bb2 O-O 10.Qd2 Qe7 11.Bd3
 [11.cxd5 exd5 12.Nxd5 Nxd5 13.Qxd5 Be6 14.Qd1
 Nxb4] 11...dxc4 12.Bxc4 b5 13.Bd3 Rd8 14.Qe2 Bb7
 15.O-O Ne5 16.Nxe5 Bxe5 17.f4 Bc7 18.e4 Rac8 19.e5
 Bb6+ 20.Kh1 Ng4! 21.Be4 [21.Qxg4 Rxd3; 21.Ne4
 Rxd3 22.Qxd3 Bxe4 23.Qxe4 Qh4 24.h3 Qg3 25.hxg4
 Qh4 mate.] 21...Qh4 22.g3

After 22.g3



22...Rxc3!! 23.gxh4 Rd2 24.Qxd2 Bxe4+ 25.Qg2

After 25.Qg2



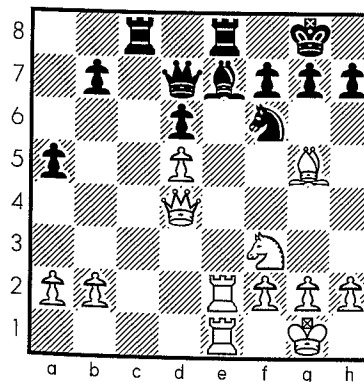
25...Rh3 [White resigns. Compare the finale to the
 Byrne–Fischer game given at the end of Lesson 5.] 0–1

(2) Adams–Torre, New Orleans, 1925

[Initiative]

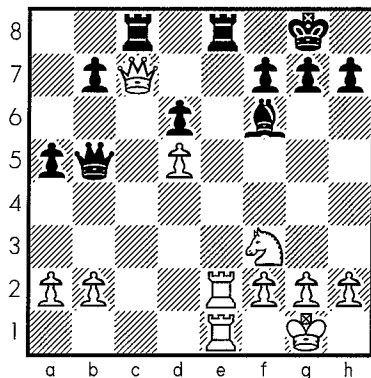
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 exd4 4.Qxd4 Nc6 5.Bb5 Bd7
 6.Bxc6 Bxc6 7.Nc3 Nf6 8.O-O Be7 9.Nd5 Bxd5
 10.exd5 O-O 11.Bg5 c6 12.c4 cxd5 13.cxd5 Re8
 14.Rfe1 a5 15.Re2 Rc8 16.Rae1 Qd7

After 16...Qd7



17.Bxf6! Bxf6 18.Qg4! Qb5 19.Qc4 Qd7 20.Qc7 Qb5

After 20...Qb5



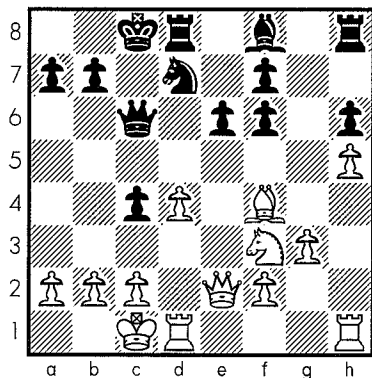
21.a4! [21.Qxb7? Qxe2!] Qxa4 22.Re4 Qb5 23.Qxb7 1-0

(3) Tseshkovsky–Kasparov, USSR, 1978

[Clearance Sacrifice]

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Bf5 5.Ng3 Bg6 6.h4
b6 7.h5 Bh7 8.Nf3 Nd7 9.Bd3 Bxd3 10.Qxd3 Qc7
11.Bd2 Ngf6 12.O-O-O e6 13.Ne4 O-O-O 14.g3 c5
15.Bf4 c4 16.Qe2 Qc6 17.Nxf6 gxf6

After 17...gxf6



18.d5 [A clearance sacrifice. It also forces Black to block d5 with his pawn. White will set up a blockade on d4.]

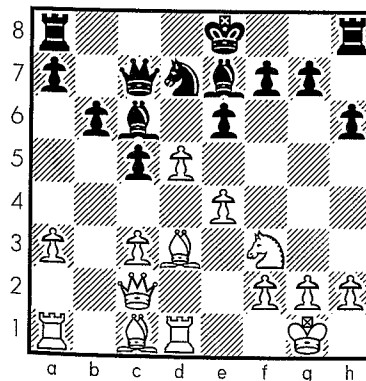
18...exd5 19.Nd4 Qa6 20.Kb1 Bd6 21.Qf3 Bxf4
22.Qxf4 Ne5 23.Qf5+ Kb8 24.f4 Nd7 25.Qxd5 Ne5
26.Qe4 Ng4 27.Qe2 Qb6 28.c3 f5 29.Rhe1 Qc5 30.Qe7
Qxe7 31.Rxe7 Rhe8 32.Rde1 Rxe7 33.Rxe7 Nf6
34.Rxf7 Nxb5 35.Nxf5 Rd3 36.Rf8+ Kc7 37.Rg8 Kd7
38.Rg6 b5 39.a3 Rd1+ 40.Ka2 Rg1 41.Rd6+ Kc7
42.Rxb6 Nxb3 43.Nd4 Ne4 44.Nxb5+ Kd7 45.Rb7+
Ke6 46.Rxa7 Nc5 47.Nd4+ Kd6 48.Nf5+ Kd5 49.Ne3+
Ke4 50.Rc7 Nd3 51.Re7+ 0-1

(4) Kasparov–Gheorghiu, Moscow, 1982

[Central Initiative]

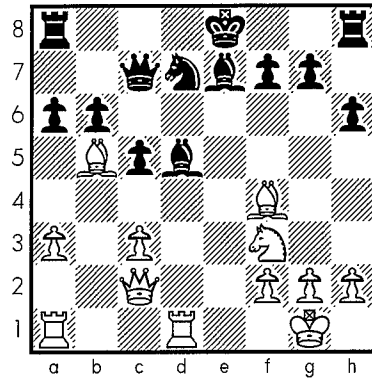
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.a3 Bb7 5.Nc3 d5 6.cxd5
Nxd5 7.Qc2 c5 8.e4 Nxc3 9.bxc3 Be7 [Ready to cas-
tle...] 10.Bb5+ Bc6 11.Bd3 Nd7 12.O-O h6 13.Rd1
Qc7 14.d5

After 14.d5



14...exd5 15.exd5 Bxd5 16.Bb5 a6 17.Bf4

After 17.Bf4

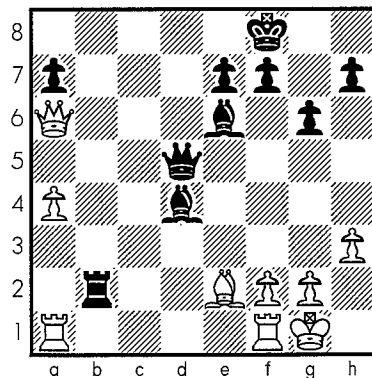


17...Qxf4 18.Bxd7+ Kxd7 19.Rxd5+ Kc7 20.Re1 Bd6
21.Rf5 Qc4 22.Re4 Qb5 23.Rxf7+ Kb8 24.Re6 Rd8
25.c4 Qc6 26.Ne5 Qc8 27.Qb1 1-0

(5) Bareyev–Kasparov, Paris, 1991
[Coordination = Control of Space]

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.Nf3 O-O 5.e3 c5 6.Be2
cxd4 7.exd4 d5 8.O-O Nc6 9.h3 Bf5 10.cxd5 Nxd5
11.Qb3 Be6 12.Qxb7 Nxd4 13.Nxd4 Bxd4 14.Bh6 Rb8
15.Qa6 Rxb2 16.Nxd5 Qxd5 17.Bxf8 Kxf8 18.a4

After 18.a4

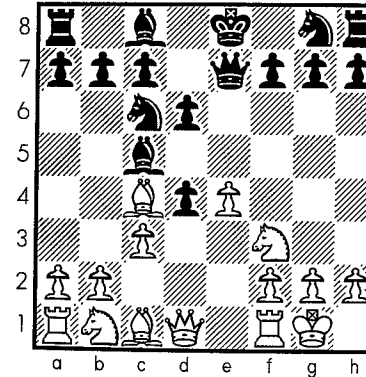


18...Rb3 [Check the space count: White 12, Black 21!]
19.Rad1 Rg3! 0-1

(6) Weeramantry–Fiaccabrino, Geneva, 1963
[Giuoco Piano with 4...Qe7]

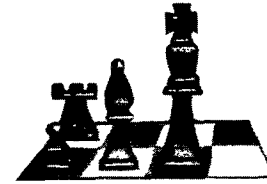
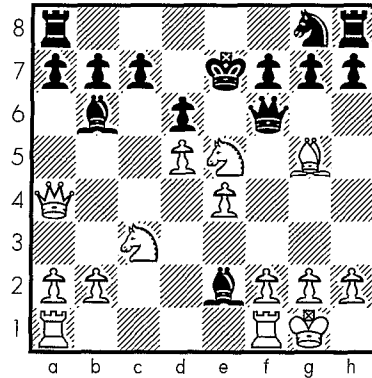
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.c3 Qe7 [Suppresses d4
by the masked attack on the e-pawn.] 5.O-O d6 6.d4
exd4?!

After 6...exd4?!



[Loses control of the center.] 7.cxd4 Bb6 8.Nc3 Bg4 [A
very awkward move for White to meet. Black is threaten-
ing to take the knight, removing both d-pawn defend-
ers or giving White doubled f-pawns.] 9.d5 Ne5 10.Be2
[Now 10...Nf6 is best, but Black gets greedy.] 10...Qf6
[Black wants to give White doubled pawns, but he is ne-
glecting his development.] 11.Nxe5 Bxe2 12.Qa4+ Ke7
13.Bg5

After 13.Bg5



LESSON 7

STRIKE WHILE THE KNIGHT IS COLD

13...Qxg5 14.Qd7+ Kf6 15.Qxf7+ Kxe5 16.Qe6+ Kd4
 [16...Kf4 17.Nxe2+ mate.] 17.Nxe2+ Kc4 18.Qd7
 [White won in a few moves.] 1-0

In order to become a good chess player, you must above all understand the idea of **compensation**. You may sacrifice material or structure in return for time and space, with the idea of gaining the initiative. Many intermediate players are reluctant to sacrifice something of value unless they can see an immediate return, but learning to make concessions for dynamic play is part of modern chess. World Champion Kasparov, especially, is a very dynamic player, and most Grandmasters are following his example.

I gave up a pawn very early in this game, judging that my sacrifice would generate sufficient practical chances, even though I had not calculated each and every variation to a definite conclusion. As you'll see, it was a matter of *seizing the initiative* at the proper time.

My opponent, Mitchell Goldberg, is a FIDE Master.

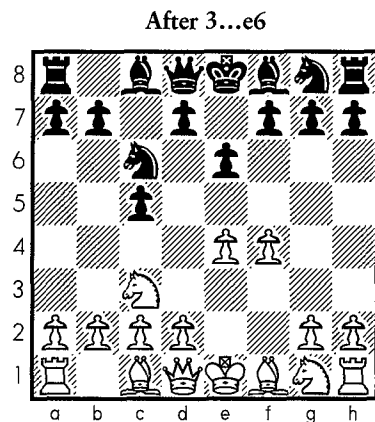
— S. WEERAMANTRY-M. GOLDBERG —

New York, NY, 1991

1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.f4

The Sicilian Grand Prix Attack. This opening was introduced to me during my early chess-playing days at the Geneva chess club. I used it for the first time, with success, against Werner Hug in a four-way playoff for the final qualifying spot in the Under-20 Championship of Switzerland. I was ecstatic when I won the game and the playoffs along with it. This has been one of my favorite openings ever since.¹

3...e6

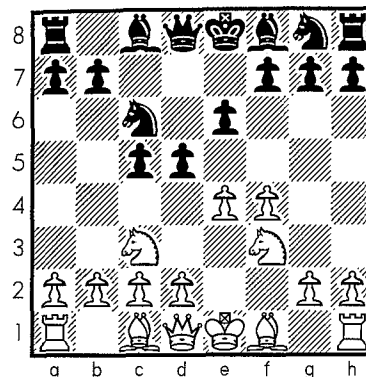


I'll tell you a little secret: I really enjoy playing against the 2...Nc6 move order for Black. I find that *Bb5*, a key move in this system, is not as effective when ...Nc6 is delayed in favor of 2...e6 and 3...d5.

¹For a complete discussion of the Grand Prix Attack, see [Hodgson].

4.Nf3 d5

After 4...d5



Black immediately contests the center. White must play accurately because his center pawns are not as well placed as Black's. White's f4 pawn takes away good squares from his c1 bishop. By way of contrast, Black's c5 pawn does not hurt him because his f8 bishop will be quite happy just going to e7.

Instead of 4...d5, Black's alternatives are 4...Nge7 and 4...a6, after which White's best plan may well be to turn this into an open Sicilian formation with 5.d4 cxd4 6.Nxd4.² Transpositions are valuable tools for taking your opponent out of his chosen system and compelling him to conform to yours.

5.Bb5

This is one of the main ideas of the opening. White would like to play *Bxc6*, doubling Black's c-pawns and hoping to use them as targets. The strategy is similar to that used by Black in the Nimzo-Indian Defense, where Black plays ...Bb4 and doubles White's pawns by taking the knight on c3.³

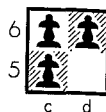
²For an open Sicilian, see Lesson 1, *Home away from Home*.

³See Supplementary Game 4, *Williams-Dzhindzichashvili*.

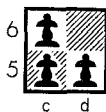
Here, Black cannot play ...Bd7 to avoid the doubled pawns, because this would mask the queen's protection of the d5 pawn.

Learning to play against doubled pawns is important. Let's look at some typical structures.

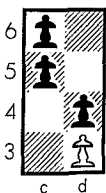
If you have a three-pawn island that includes a set of doubled pawns, the strongest formation is this:



As the single pawn advances, the doubled pawns get weaker because they lose support.



The weakest formation. Notice how a single opposing pawn move cripples all three Black pawns. Black cannot generate much pawn play.

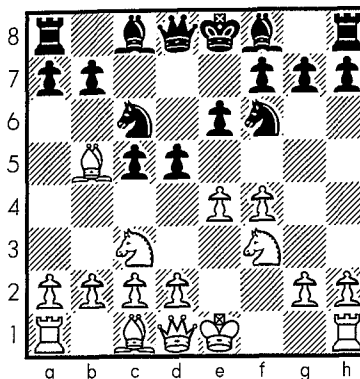


I have had tremendous success over the years playing against this particular pawn formation in the Sicilian Grand Prix. When your opponent has virtually no pawn play, it is easy to predict his plans, and thus to keep the game under control. A fluid pawn structure complicates a game and makes long-term planning more difficult. *Fixed structures are easier to play against.*

Goldberg plays a move that has been recommended by Gligoric and other Grandmasters.

5...Nf6

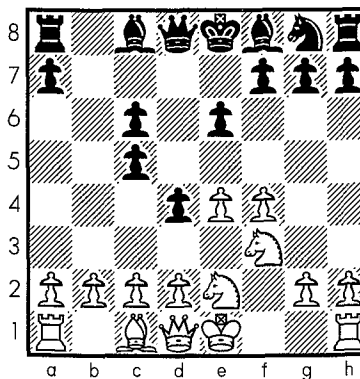
Aft... 5...Nf6



Other moves are inferior. If Black plays 5...a6, he will waste a move because he will simply force White to carry out his intentions. On 5...d4 or 5...dxe4, White will once again capture on c6, weakening Black's pawn structure.

As we have already examined the pawn structure weaknesses resulting from the doubled c-pawns, let us look at the position that would have arisen after 5...d4 6.Bxc6+ bxc6 7.Ne2.

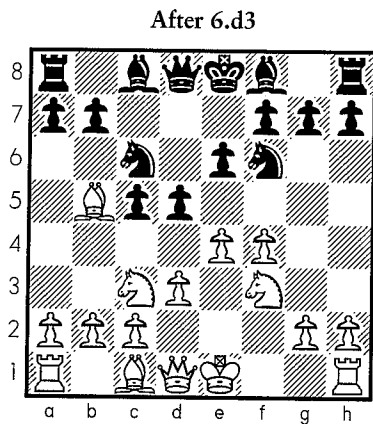
After 7.Ne2



If White is given the opportunity, he will cripple Black's c- and d-pawns with *8.d3*. White will proceed to deny Black any hope of achieving the pawn advance ...*c4* by further strengthening his hold over the *c4* square with *9.b3*.

To avoid this, Black would have to try *7...d3*. However, after *8.cxd3 Qxd3 9.Qa4 Qb5 10.Nc3*, White has excellent play against Black's doubled c-pawns, which are now isolated as well.

6.d3

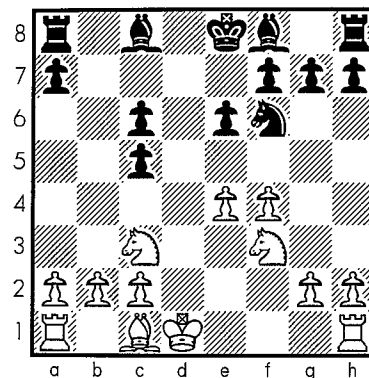


This move order requires an explanation. The normal sequence, and one I have frequently employed, is *6.Bxc6 bxc6 7.e5*. However, after *7...Nd7 8.d3 Ba6*, I have had trouble with the ...*c4* pawn thrust. The move *6.d3* is an attempt on my part to delay this counterplay. After all, the *c8* bishop cannot go to *a6* until Black's *b*-pawn has recaptured on *c6*.

The only drawback to this move order could be if Black decides to play *6...dxe4* with the idea of trading queens.

Recently, this move was played against me for the first time in Somerset, New Jersey, when it was used by the young American master Ralph Zimmer. Although I lost this game, I was quite happy with my position after *7.Bxc6+ bxc6 8.dxe4 Qxd1+ 9.Kxd1* and would not mind tackling this sequence again.

After 9.Kxd1 (variation)



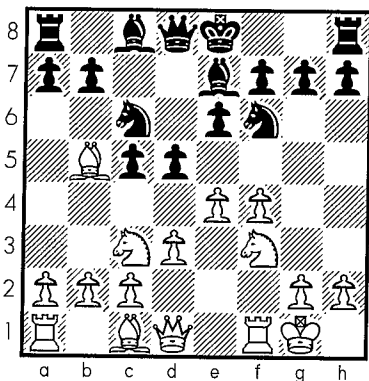
Black's structural weaknesses and lack of space in the center present him with serious problems. White should be able to exploit these advantages despite the fact that his king is uncastled and that Black's bishop pair does give him some activity.

If the above variation proves to be satisfactory upon closer scrutiny, my move order with *6.d3* would represent an improvement.

In our game, Goldberg played a normal developing move.

6...Be7 7.0-0

After 7.0-0



If Black castles now, I would immediately play 8.*Bxc6* followed by 9.*e5*; and I will have succeeded in what I set out to do. The two extra moves that have been played make ...*Ba6* less effective. I can now play *b3* and control the ...*c4* thrust more easily.

7...Bd7

Black attempts to avoid the doubled pawns. However, all things considered, this is a dubious move. We shall see why. You should search for other moves for Black in this position, perhaps 7...*Qc7* or 7...*Qb6*.

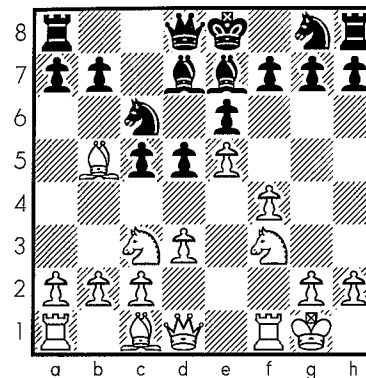
I was now in unfamiliar territory, as it was the first time I had encountered this exact sequence. In such situations, you must remember to take your time and consider how the position differs. *Do not rush your reply*. I thought for a while and came up with a strong move.

8.e5 Ng8

The knight has nowhere else to go. That's why ...*Bd7* is dubious. A knight retreat to the first rank should be a last resort because it is difficult to get it back into the game.

Question: Does White have an advantage? If so, wherein does it lie?

After 8...Ng8



Answer: White has an advantage in space because he has the most advanced pawn, and also in time because the Black knight wasted a move.

Be careful. Do not assume that the most advanced pawn will give you an overall space advantage. Look at the Black pawns on c5 and d5. They control important central squares. Black is not without his own space advantage. I think it is fair to say that White has a space advantage on the kingside, and Black has a similar advantage in the center and on the queenside. *When thinking about space, divide the board into three sectors—kingside, queenside, center*. When the two sides have space advantages in different sectors, each will gear his strategy to maximize his advantage.

With regard to time, White gained a lead in development by forcing Black's knight back to its original square. Indeed, White has gained two tempi—two free moves.

However, *an advantage in time is a temporary advantage*. Give Black enough time, and he will correct his position. *Don't give him that time.*

One way of exploiting an advantage in time is to force a change in pawn structure. As a general rule, *whenever you chase a knight back to the first rank, look for an immediate central pawn advance, even if it's a pawn sacrifice*. As his development is temporarily delayed and the coordination of his pieces temporarily interrupted, you may be able to take advantage of the situation with a sacrifice. Knowing what to look for at the appropriate time is the secret to finding good moves.

What reminded me of this idea was a game I observed at the 1987 World Youth Championships in Puerto Rico. White tried to relocate the c3 knight to the kingside by moving back to d1. The moment the knight hit d1, Black advanced a center pawn. Suddenly White's entire position disintegrated, just in the space of that one move. You will not always have a central advance to play, but that is what you should look for.

Note that *in a position that is totally locked, you can afford to go back and redeploy, because time is not as critical*.

Question: So what's the best move?

Answer: White should play 9.d4. If 9...cxd4 10.Nxd4 Bc5 11.Be3.

This does solidify White's center, but does not radically change the pawn structure. It does not exploit ...Ng8. *A loss in time must be exploited immediately.*

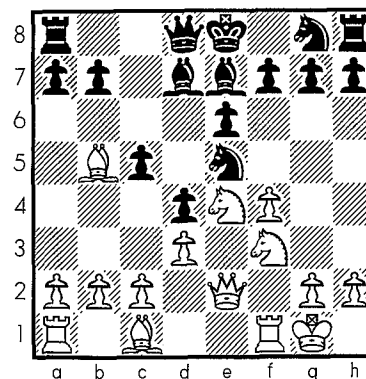
Answer: Play g4 to gain more space on the kingside.

You would use such a plan only if the other player has already castled on the kingside. If he has not, when you play g4, he can run his king the other way fast! Then he can break up your castled position by advancing his kingside pawns.

Answer: Qe2, and if Black plays ...d4, bring the knight to e4.

No. On 9.Qe2 d4 10.Ne4, Black has a well-known combination beginning with 10...Nxe5. He can play this because White is no longer protecting the b5 bishop.

After 10...Nxe5 (variation)



Remember this pattern. With 10...Nxe5, Black sets up a discovered attack on the b5 bishop, and wins the e5 pawn. If 11.Bxd7+, ...Nxd7. If 11.fxex5 Bxb5, White has insufficient compensation for the pawn.

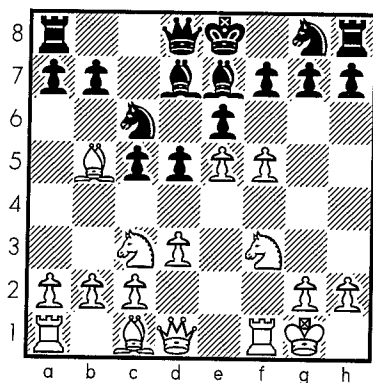
There are two kinds of plans in chess—**active plans**, where you are initiating events, and **passive plans**, where you wait for your opponent to take the first step. If you want to be sure to take advantage of ...Ng8, then you must choose an active plan. *You must force the issue!*

Answer: Play *f5*. It may be possible to continue with *e6* after he takes on *f5*. Later the queen can go to *h5*.

Now **there's** an aggressive pawn move! It is what I played, but it requires a lot of analysis to support it.

9.f5

After 9.f5



In the first place, the *f4* pawn was blocking the development of White's *c1* bishop and *f1* rook. Remove the *f4* pawn from the board and observe the difference. See how these two pieces come alive! Ideally, White wants to trade the *f*-pawn for Black's *e*-pawn and open new lines of attack.

Second, White is attempting to undermine Black's pawn chain (*f7-e6-d5*) and weaken the *d5* pawn. However, your idea of continuing with *e6* after *...exf5* is inaccurate because it allows Black to mend his broken pawn structure.

Finally, if White does not play *f5* immediately, Black will stop it with *9...Nh6*, and be ready to get his king out of the center.

Question: Now that we have established White's intent in general, take some time and analyze *f5* in more detail. Keep in mind the *...Nxe5* idea that we discussed earlier.

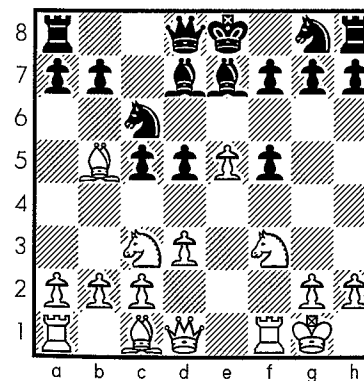
Answer: If Black goes for the *e5* pawn immediately with *9...d4 10.Ne4 Nxe5*, White can reply *11.Nxe5 Bxb5 12.fxex6* threatening to get a knight into *f7*.

This gives White everything he wants. It is clear that Black must not allow White to trade on *e6*. He must accept the pawn offer and capture on *f5*.

9...exf5

Question: How can White justify this pawn sacrifice?

After 9...exf5



Answer: White should play *10.Nxd5*. Black still wins a pawn with *10...Nxe5*, but after the exchange *11.Nxe5 Bxb5*, White stands better. He has pressure along the *f*-file.

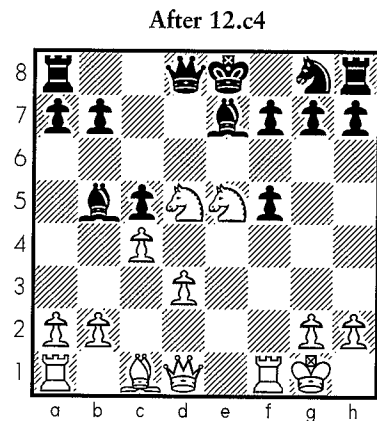
This analysis is correct, but incomplete. The decision on whether to play *f5* or not will depend on the evaluation of this position. You are clearly sacrificing a pawn. Is there enough compensation? It is one thing to talk about a strong square here, an open file there, but you must have a clear idea of what is likely to happen. This means always going one step further in analysis. *Learn to push yourself.* Remember that in an actual tournament game there is no one else to help you.

Question: After *10.Nxd5 Nxe5 11.Nxe5 Bxb5*, what should White play?

Answer: Play *12.c4*, protecting the knight and attacking the b5 bishop. White has two centralized knights and pressure on Black's f5 pawn.

The pawn on c4 anchors the White knight on its outpost square on d5. It stabilizes the central pawn structure and makes it difficult for Black to obtain open diagonals for his bishops.

10.Nxd5 Nxe5 11.Nxe5 Bxb5 12.c4

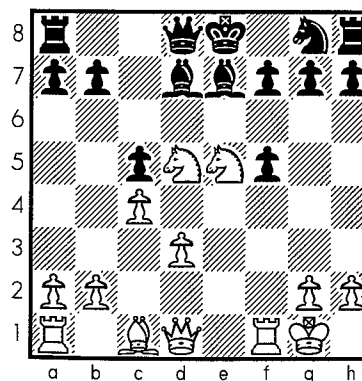


This is the position I had envisioned when I decided to play *9.f5*. I did not analyze beyond this point. I was quite satisfied with my position—in particular, the two centralized knights—and judged that the superior mobility of my pieces and clear lead in development gave me ample compensation for the pawn. From a practical point of view, knowing where to stop your analysis is important. Make sure that your opponent has no forcing moves beyond that point. Trust your own judgment and be decisive. *Do not be afraid to make mistakes—you will learn from them!*

12...Bd7

Black must move the bishop before he can free his position. Immediate development with *12...Nf6* leads to disaster.⁴ If *12...Bc6*, White plays *13.Nxc6*, destroying Black's pawn structure. After *13...bxc6 14.Qa4*, White obtains a strong initiative.

After 12...Bd7



Once you gain the initiative, you must do everything possible to retain it. Follow up actively and aggressively—

⁴Exercise 1: Find White's best reply against *12...Nf6*.

don't let up! Every move should have a threat. An opponent that must parry threat after threat will not have time to attend to routine matters like completing his development.

Question: With that in mind, what next?

Answer: 13.Bf4. It threatens Nxd7 followed by Nc7+.

Very good! You are developing a piece to an active square, with a threat.

13.Bf4 Be6

Question: This prevents White from playing Nxd7 and threatens ...Bxd5. How does White proceed?

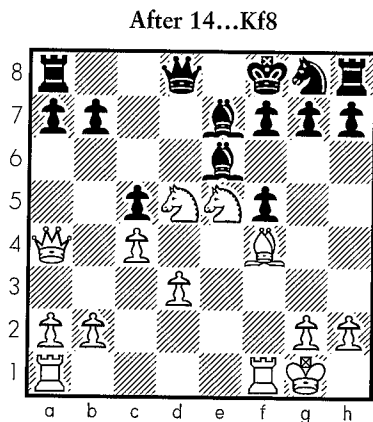
Answer: 14.Qa4+.

Good—look for forcing moves. If you keep up your threats, Black's knight and rook are never going to get out.

14.Qa4+ Kf8

The only defense. Now Black intends ...g6 in order to sneak his king into g7.

Question: How do we keep the attack going?



Answer: 15.Nc7. If 15...Qxc7, 16.Ng6+ wins the queen.

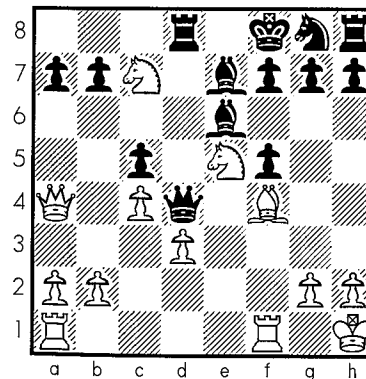
A pretty move. You definitely have a good tactical sense. 15.Nc7 introduces a **combination of attraction**. White attempts to lure Black's queen to c7 in order to set up a discovered attack.

15.Nc7 Qd4+ 16.Kh1 Rd8

Notice if White ever plays Nxe6, and Black replies ...fxe6, then e5 becomes an outpost square.

Question: Find the best way to continue the attack. Take your time.

After 16...Rd8



Answer: Qd1, and then over to h5. That sets up Ng6+.

Redeploying pieces is an important concept in general. Here it is not warranted. Look at Black's pieces—most of his army is on the kingside. Why move the queen over to the side of the board where Black's pieces are lying in wait? Remember, you attack where the enemy is weakest.

Answer: Qxa7.

You would go pawn hunting in this position? You are right!

17.Qxa7

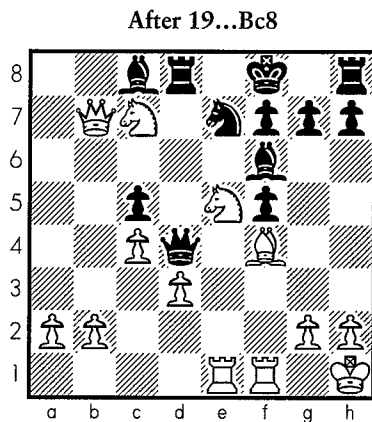
We have already observed that Black's pieces are huddled on the kingside. They are unable to switch over in time to protect the poor defenseless queenside pawns. Who said you always need a combination to win? We are going to blow him away by queening the a-pawn!

17...Bf6 18.Rae1

Bringing the last piece into the game. All my pieces are now well placed. I am getting ready to capture his b-pawn and start advancing my a-pawn, and he is still not fully developed. All this for a pawn in the opening, and I even got it back. This is called "getting it back with interest"!

18...Ne7⁵ 19.Qxb7 Bc8

Question: Where should the queen move to?



⁵Exercise 2: What does White do if Black instead tries 18...Bxe5 19.Bxe5 Qxd3?

Answer: Qb6.

An excellent square. Notice that the location of the queen does not alter White's overall strategy of pushing his passed a-pawn. The queen is perfectly placed on b6 because she keeps an eye on Black's c5 pawn while applying pressure on f6 and indirectly on d8. Black cannot play ...Rd6 because of Ng6+ with a discovered attack on the d6 rook. Now the game is over. Black offers no resistance.

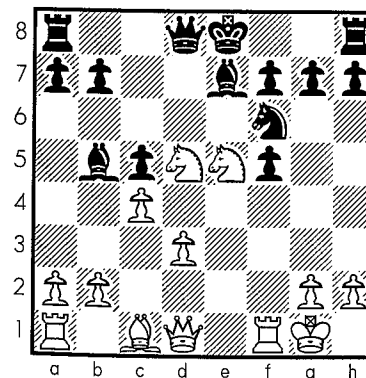
20.Qb6 Ng6 21.Nc6 Qxd3 22.Nxd8
Nxf4 23.Re8 mate.



ANSWERS

1. After 12...Nf6

After 12...Nf6

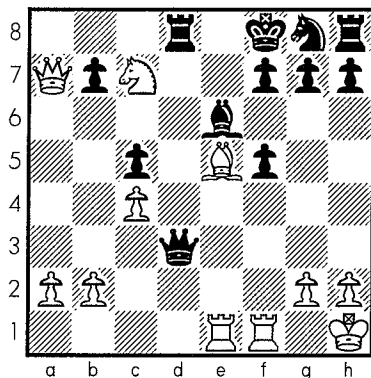


White wins a piece with 13.Nxe7 Qxe7 14.cxb5 Qxe5 15.Re1 Ne4 16.dxe4.

No better is 13...Qd4+ 14.Kh1 Qxe5 15.Re1.

2. After 18...Bxe5 19.Bxe5 Qxd3

After 19...Qxd3



White wins with 20.Qxc5+ Ne7 21.Bxg7+ Kxg7
22.Nxe6+ fxe6 23.Qxe7+ Kg6 24.Rxe6+ Kh5 25.Qf7+, and
mate in two.



REVIEW

Themes

Weaknesses of doubled pawn formations (5...d4 6.Bxc6+ variation).

Incurring a loss of time for an advantage in structure and space (9.Kxd1 variation).

Space advantage in a sector (discussion after 8...Ng8).

Active versus passive plans (discussion after 8...Ng8).

Central pawn advance to exploit a time advantage (9.f5).

When to expand on the kingside (9.g4 suggestion).

Supporting an outpost (12.c4).

Shifting the focus of the attack (17.Qxa7).

Guidelines

You can give yourself a weakness if you have active play in return.

Freeze your opponent's structural weaknesses; they will be easier to play against.

Complete your development before making captures that open lines for enemy pieces.

Think about space advantages in terms of different sectors of the board.

Expand on the side you are castled on only if the center is locked and your opponent has already committed his king to that side.

Look for the opportunity to strike with a central pawn advance while your opponent is regrouping.

Advice

Take your time in an unfamiliar situation—do not rush your reply.

Don't be afraid to make mistakes—you will learn from them.

Don't give your opponent time to realize his plans.

Learn to push yourself.



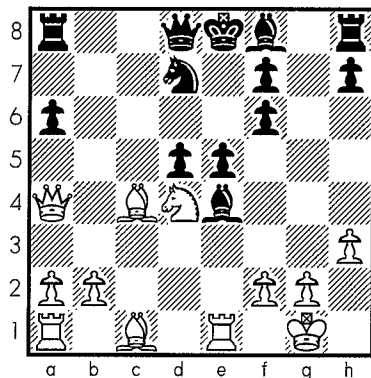
SUPPLEMENTARY GAMES

(1) Fischer–Najdorf, Varna, 1962

[Sacrifice for Initiative]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.h3
b5 7.Nd5 Bb7 8.Nxf6+ gxf6 9.c4 bxc4 10.Bxc4 Bxe4
11.O-O d5 12.Re1 e5 13.Qa4+ Nd7

After 13...Nd7



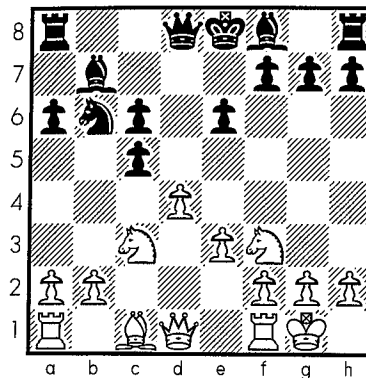
14.Rxe4! dxe4 15.Nf5 Bc5 16.Ng7+ Ke7 [16...Kf8
17.Bh6 Kg8 18.Qb3] 17.Nf5+ Ke8 18.Be3 Bxe3 19.fxe3
Qb6 20.Rd1 Ra7 21.Rd6 Qd8 22.Qb3 Qc7 23.Bxf7+
Kd8 24.Be6 [Black is helpless.] 1–0

(2) Tal–Milev, Munich, 1958

[Sustained Initiative]

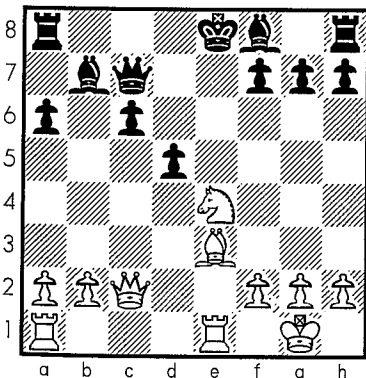
1.c4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.e3 e6 5.d4 d5 6.cxd5
Nxd5 7.Bc4 Nb6 [Neglecting his development.] 8.Bb5
a6 9.Bxc6+ bxc6 10.0-0 Bb7

After 10...Bb7



[White now begins to find one threat after another, to
keep the king in the center.] 11.Ne4 Nd7 12.Qc2 Qb6
13.Ne5 cxd4? [13...Nxe5] 14.Nxd7 Kxd7 15.exd4 Ke8
16.Be3 Qc7 17.d5 exd5 18.Rfe1!

After 18.Rfe1!



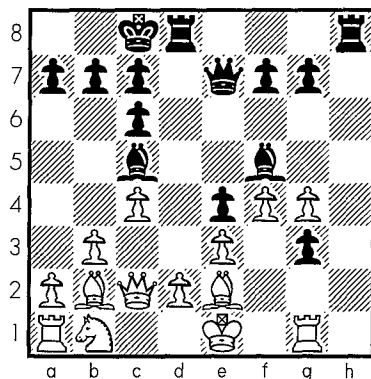
18...Kd8 [18...dxe4 19.Qxe4+ Qe7 20.Qc4; 18...Be7
19.Nf6+ Kd8 20.Qb3 Kc8 21.Bf4!] 19.Qb3 c5
20.Nxc5! 1–0

(3) Larsen–Spassky, Belgrade, 1970

[Edge in Development]

1.b3 e5 2.Bb2 Nc6 3.c4 Nf6 4.Nf3 e4 5.Nd4 Bc5
6.Nxc6 dxc6 7.e3 Bf5 8.Qc2 Qe7 9.Be2 O-O-O 10.f4
Ng4 11.g3 b5 12.h3 h4 13.hxg4 hxg3 14.Rg1

After 14.Rg1



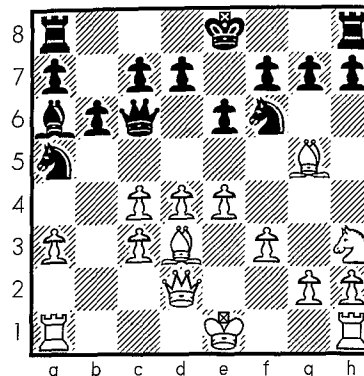
14...Rb1 15.Rxb1 g2 16.Rf1 Qb4+ 17.Kd1 gxf1(Q)+
0-1

(4) Williams–Dzindzichashvili, Thessaloniki, 1984

[Playing Against Doubled Pawns]

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.a3 Bxc3+ 5.bxc3 b6 6.f3
Ba6 7.e4 Nc6 8.Bg5 Qc8 9.Bd3 Na5 10.Qd2 Qb7
11.Nh3 Qc6

After 11...Qc6



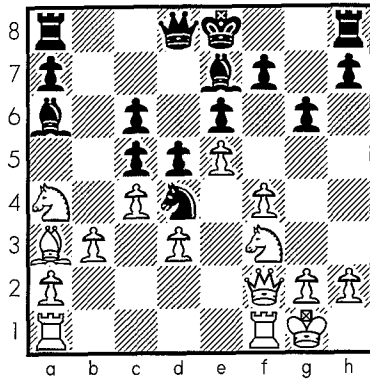
12.0-0 Bxc4 13.Nf2 Bxd3 14.Qxd3 Qc4 15.Qe3 Ng8
16.Rad1 f6 17.Bh4 Ne7 18.Bg3 O-O 19.Rfe1 Rac8
20.Qd2 d6 21.Ng4 Qa4 22.Ne3 Nc4 23.Nxc4 Qxc4
24.Rb1 Rce8 25.Rb4 Qc6 26.Qa2 Qd7 27.a4 Kh8
28.Rbb1 Nc6 29.Rbd1 Na5 30.c4 e5 31.c5 exd4
32.cxd6 c5 33.e5 fxe5 34.Bxe5 Nc6 35.Bg3 Qf5 36.Qc4
h6 37.h4 Nb4 38.Qb5 Rxe1+ 39.Rxe1 d3 40.Re8
a6 41.Rxf8+ Qxf8 42.Qc4 Qe8 43.Qf4 Nd5 44.Qf5 d2
45.Qxd5 Qe2 0-1

(5) Weeramantry–Thompson, Southampton, 1972

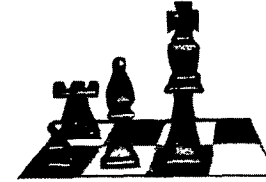
[Playing Against Doubled Pawns]

1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.f4 d6 4.Nf3 g6 5.Bb5 Bg7 6.Bxc6+
bxc6 7.O-O e6 8.e5 d5 9.d3 Nh6 10.b3 Ba6 11.Na4
Bf8 12.c4 Be7 13.Ba3 Nf5 14.Qe1 Nd4 15.Qf2

After 15.Qf2



15...dxc4 [15...Nxf3+ 16.Qxf3 Qa5 17.Qf2 d4
 18.Qe1! winning the c-pawn.] 16.dxc4 Qa5 17.Nxd4
 cxd4 18.Bxe7 Kxe7 19.Qxd4 Rhd8 20.Qc5+ Qxc5+
 21.Nxc5 Bc8 22.Rad1 Rxd1 23.Rxd1 Rb8 24.Kf2 a5
 25.Rd6 Rb6 26.Ke3 h6 27.b4 Ke8 28.Kd4 Ke7 29.Na4
 Ra6 30.Kc5 Bb7 31.Nb6 Ke8 32.Nd7 Bc8 33.Nf6+ Ke7
 34.Ng8+ 1-0



LESSON 8

THREE FOR THE LADY

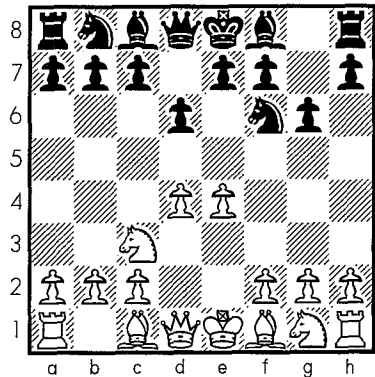
An important concept to understand in chess is that of **material imbalance**. A common example of an imbalance is **rook and pawn versus bishop and knight**. The point count is even, but to evaluate the position you must consider the relative merits of four different pieces. These judgments may change at different stages of the game. There are other interesting types of material imbalance. For example, queen and pawn versus two rooks, or three minor pieces versus a queen.

The game I am going to show you now is one of the most exciting games I've ever played. I parted with my queen in return for three minor pieces. My opponent had trouble activating his pieces, while my pieces coordinated beautifully in the attack. Seeing how this type of game develops will give you the confidence to play with material imbalances and will make you a much stronger player.

S. WEERAMANTRY-M. SCHLAGENHAUF*Harrisburg, PA, 1977*

1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6

After 3...g6



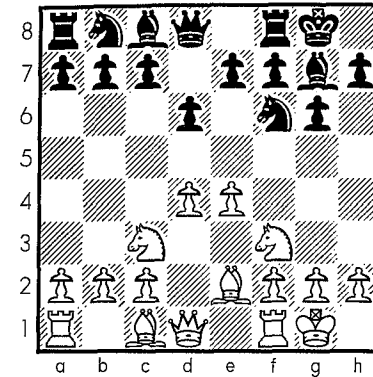
Question: We have already discussed the Pirc Austrian Attack formation with 4.f4.¹ What are some other good moves for White?

Answer: 4.Nf3.

The Classical System. This is the most solid formation for White, quite unlike the unbridled aggression of the Austrian Attack. White is content with a modest two-pawn center (e4, d4). He places his knights on c3 and f3 and his light-square bishop on e2, and castles kingside (4...Bg7 5.Be2 0-0 6.0-0).

¹See Lesson 4, *One to Remember*.

After 6.0-0 (variation)



Then White waits patiently until Black plays his hand, indicating how he plans to set up his defense, and reacts accordingly. This system favors the conservative player who prefers a quiet game and relies on his technical skill at nursing minute positional advantages to ultimate victory.

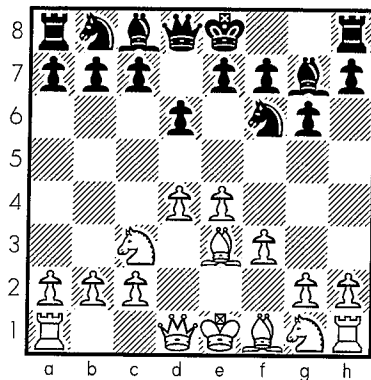
Answer: 4.Be3 and 5.Qd2 to attack the fianchettoed bishop.

The Be3/Qd2 battery is a popular attacking formation against the Black fianchettoed bishop on g7. If White wishes to employ this setup, he must play f3 before bringing his bishop to e3, so that Black may not harass the bishop with ...Ng4.

After the moves 4.f3 Bg7 5.Be3, Black should hold off castling in favor of immediate queenside expansion. If not, he will be subjected to a vitriolic attack similar to the St. George (or Yugoslav) Attack against the Sicilian Dragon Defense.² This attack will be even more powerful because Black will have less counterplay along the c-file and on the queenside.

²See [Levy].

After 5.Be3 (variation)



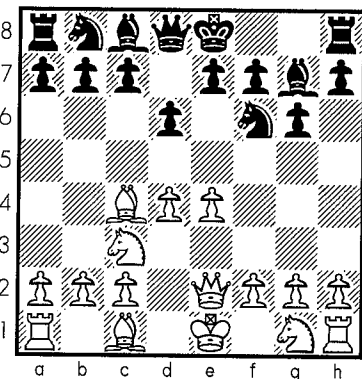
Black's best play at this point is 5...c6 6.Qd2 b5 with a complex game.

In this game, I chose a less popular but equally aggressive line.

4.Bc4 Bg7 5.Qe2

Question: This is an unusual move. Why does White play Qe2? What is going on here?

After 5.Qe2

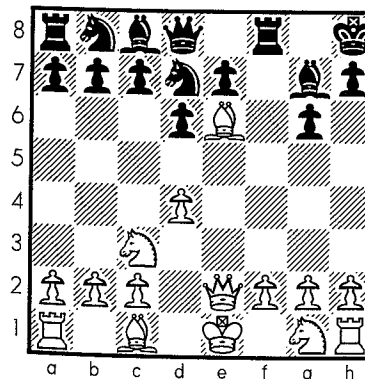


Answer: I think White wants to push the e-pawn.

Very good. There is no other reason for Qe2 except to support the advance of the e-pawn. The intent is to push the pawn to e5 without allowing a queen trade on d1 should Black exchange pawns on e5. This idea is simple and direct and quite difficult to meet. It works particularly well against players who blindly follow the first five moves of the Pirc formation and castle as a matter of course. White can then continue advancing with e6 and drive a wedge into the heart of Black's position.

Let me show you briefly what could happen. I won a sharp game against 5...0-0 at the 1978 Chess Olympiad in Buenos Aires, where I played first board for Sri Lanka, my native country. This game was one of the shortest in the entire Olympiad—it lasted only twelve moves! It was contested against the top player from Andorra. The game continued 6.e5 Nfd7 7.e6 fxe6 8.Bxe6+ (not 8.Qxe6+; Black can free himself later with a counterattack on the queen) Kh8.

After 8...Kh8 (variation)

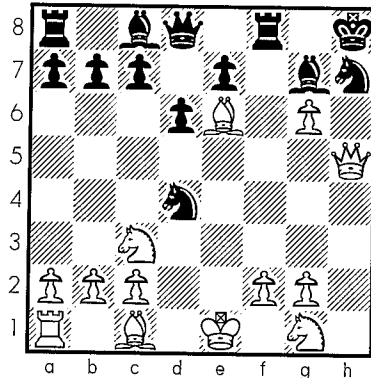


Question: White has destroyed part of Black's kingside pawn structure. How can he destroy the rest of it?

Answer: Play pawn to h4.

That's right. After h5 and hxg6, you destroy his pawn cover and get your rook into the game. You know, sometimes you have to play **fantasy chess**. You look at a position and say, if this were here and that were there, I could play such and such. Then you figure out what you have to do in order to make it all happen. The game continued 9.h4 Nc6. (Weak. Neither this move nor 9...Bxd4 prevents the opening of the h-file. The best defense is 9...Nf6. *Do not let enemy pieces remain in your territory unchallenged.*) 10.h5 Nxd4 11.hxg6 Nf6 12.Rxb7+ 1-0 (12...Nxb7 13.Qh5).

After 13.Qh5 (variation)



My opponent in the above game is a master. See how easy it is to beat masters? Even masters make mistakes. In this case, he made two mistakes: he castled “automatically” on the fifth move, and he retreated his knight to d7

on the sixth move. I hope you realize that all mistakes will not miraculously disappear once you acquire masterhood!

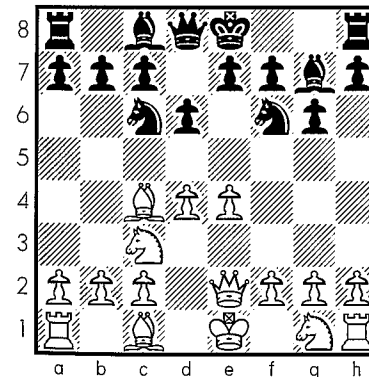
Let's get back to the game. Black played one of the two moves generally recommended.

5...Nc6

Attacking the d4 pawn. This is the most challenging move against Qe2. The other move is 5...c6. After 6.e5 dxe5 7.dxe5 Nd5 8.Bd2, White may have a slight advantage.

Question: After 5...Nc6, what is a natural move for White?

After 5...Nc6



Answer: 6.d5.

Does this make sense? You just put your bishop on c4. Why? To attack f7, right? Why do you then want to play d5? You are pushing a pawn for no other reason than to attack a piece. The piece is not even trapped and has excellent squares to move to. The long term consequence of this move is that you shut your bishop out of the game!

You do not want to play *d5* unless it is an essential part of a combination.

Let me give you some guidelines about when to push pawns and attack minor pieces—knights in particular. *Whenever you consider such a plan, ask yourself, “Where can the knight go?”* If it can move to a better square, a centralized square, don’t attack it. If it does not have a good square, go ahead and push the pawn. In this position the knight has a good square—*e5*, so you do not want to attack it.

Answer: 6.Nf3.

Yes, this is perhaps the most natural move, but Black has the strong reply 6...Bg4. After 7.Be3 *e5*, he would achieve a very good position.

Question: Is there a more aggressive sixth move for White? A move that may not appear to be playable at first?

Answer: Attack the knight with *e5*.

Good. That’s the most aggressive move, and that’s precisely what I played. Black can now take the d-pawn with his knight. This brings about a wild series of exchanges leading to an unusual imbalance of material.

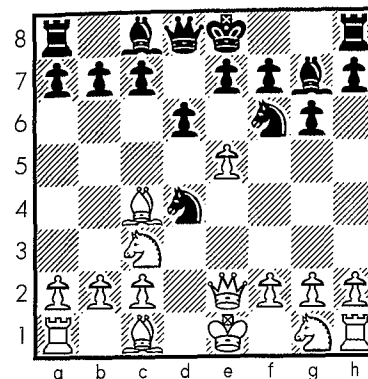
This is one of those lines I like to play that involve giving up the queen for material and positional compensation. Most people sacrifice their queen only for a checkmate; I am quite willing to give up my queen for active play and good attacking potential.

6.e5 Nxd4

Other playable moves for Black are 6...Ng4 and 6...Nd7.

Question: How does White continue?

After 6...Nxd4



Answer: Ignore the attack on the queen and keep on capturing.

7.exf6 Nxe2

(Oh no! He took my queen!)

8.fxg7 Rg8 9.Ngxe2

There’s the third minor piece for the queen. Now Black takes the pawn on g7 because it can be a real annoyance later.

9...Rxc7

Having given up the queen for three pieces, *White needs to complete his development quickly*. This is the only chance he has to break through Black’s defenses.

10.Bh6 Rg8

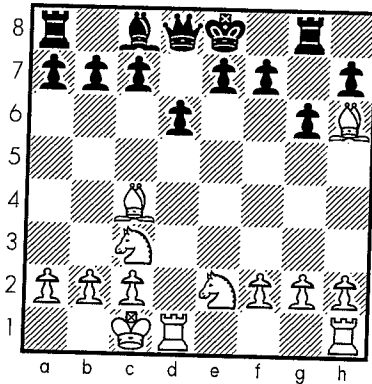
Question: Now what is White’s most accurate developing move?

Answer: Castle queenside.

Right. You want that rook on d1.

11.0-0-0

After 11.0-0-0



The smoke has cleared and it is time to take stock of the position.

Question: Which side do you prefer, Black or White? Don't be influenced by the fact that I played White in this game. You should ask yourself which side you would be most comfortable playing. Do you prefer the queen or the three minor pieces, and why?

Answer: I like Black because he has the queen and he can start pushing all those pawns.

Answer: I like White and the three pieces. I especially like the rooks in the center with Black's king and queen on the e- and d-files.

There is no definitive answer. The first reaction most people have is to favor the queen. After all, it's the most

powerful piece. However, positions with material imbalances such as this are difficult to assess. Even Grandmasters have had trouble reaching a clear verdict on this variation. I myself have played both sides of this position, but, on the whole, would rather play White.

Three minor pieces can run rings around a queen, as long as they have good coordination. The problem is that you don't have any strong squares to anchor them on. Wherever they go, they can be chased away by pawns. There are so many Black pawns that if he succeeds in castling long and getting his king to safety, he can let loose an avalanche of pawns. He will simply push his pawns down the center and shut out the minor pieces, which will be forced to retreat in total confusion. The next five moves are critical. Will Black get his king out of the center and start a pawn roller, or will White succeed in creating strong squares for his pieces?

Black, of course, has all eight pawns still on the board. I have already explained under what conditions these pawns will become powerful.

Question: Now, is there another side to this story? Can having all those pawns work against Black?

Answer: White has most of his pieces developed, but Black still has to get his out. Black's pawns get in the way of his development.

Question: The development of which pieces in particular?

Answer: The rooks.

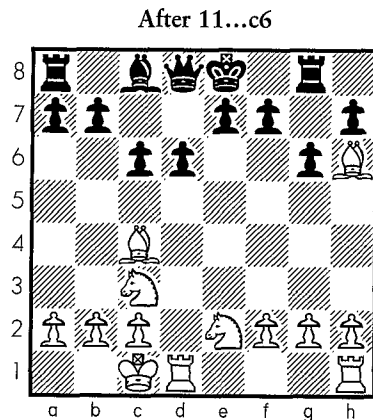
Yes. What Black really suffers from is the fact that *the rooks have no open files*. By contrast, White will soon have

two rooks on the central d- and e-files, both in perfect attacking position with the Black king still in the center. White's current edge in development gives him the initiative, but *the initiative is not a permanent advantage—one moment you may have it and the next it may be gone.*

I should point out that, at the time I played this game, there was very little theory available. Today we understand this position better. If you are interested in playing this line or researching it further, one of the moves now recommended for Black is *11...Be6*. The idea is to trade off a piece and thereby transfer another pawn onto the e-file, to clog the middle. However, the e6 pawn is a weakness and White can exploit it as follows: *12.Bxe6 fxe6 13.Nf4 Qd7 14.Rhe1 e5 15.Rxe5 dxe5 16.Rxd7 Kxd7 17.Nd3* creating yet another example of material imbalance—three active minor pieces against two crippled rooks!

In this game, my opponent played a different move, which is not mentioned elsewhere.

11...c6



Getting ready to castle long, and making a little space for the queen. This also takes away an important central

square from White's minor pieces. Overall, it appears to be a pretty good move.

12.Rhe1 Qc7 13.Nd4

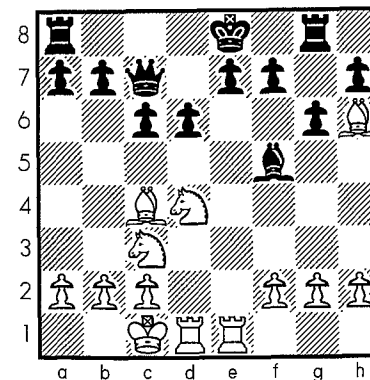
Inching closer. White now has every piece within striking range.

13...Bf5

Black is still preparing to castle. Given the weakness of the f7 pawn, that will not be easy to accomplish without losing material.

He doesn't mind *14.Nxf5*, which only serves to free his rook on g8. However, *13...Bf5* turns out to be a losing move.

After 13...Bf5



Without question, this is the critical position of the game. If he succeeds in completing his strategy, the initiative will move over to Black.

Despite Black's difficulties castling, I was worried he would escape, so I kept looking for a way to break into his position. Suddenly, the winning idea hit me like a bolt from the blue! I blinked several times and looked again, amazed that I was staring at a forced win.

Question: How does White win after 13...Bf5?

Answer: I like 14.Bg5, threatening to take on e7.

That's a good move. You have identified a good point of attack. Eliminating the e7 pawn would cause Black's position to crumble. Black can't play ...f6 because White just takes it. If Black moves his e-pawn, the bishop on g5 stops him from castling. If ...Kf8, at least Black will never find shelter on the queenside.

So Bg5 is good, but there is something more direct, more forceful, and definitely more convincing.

Answer: 14.Nd5.

Definitely direct and forceful—but is it convincing? What happens next? After 14...cxd5 15.Bxd5, Black can escape by castling.

Answer: Wait! After 14...cxd5, 15.Nb5 is better. Then if 15...Qxc4, 16.Nxd6+ Kd7 17.Nxc4, White comes out a piece ahead.

That's pretty. Unfortunately, Black can play 15...Qd7 instead, refusing the second sacrifice. Calculating sacrifices that involve nonforcing moves is difficult because it gives the defender a wide choice of replies. Remember, **your opponent is not compelled to accept every piece you throw at him!** After 15...Qd7, White does not have much to show for the sacrificed knight. Therefore, 14.Nd5 is incorrect.

Let me give you a hint: look for another point of attack. The e7 pawn is not the only vulnerable point.

Answer: 14.Ndb5.

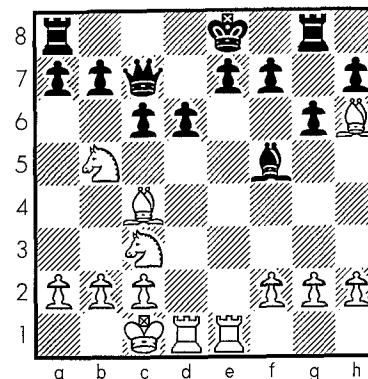
That's the idea! You are using a similar tactic, but with the d-file clear, you also have pressure against d6. Yes—this wins by force!³

³Exercise 1: If Black had prevented Ndb5 by playing 13...a6, what would White do then?

14.Ndb5!

Now we will see pins, forks, and discovered checks all rolled into one mouth-watering combination. This is the bread and butter of chess!

After 14.Ndb5!



Try to visualize the next few moves without moving the pieces.

14...cxb5 15.Nxb5

Question: We have already seen that the Black queen can't capture the bishop on c4. So where does the queen go?

Answer: Not to c8, because of the king-queen fork. Not to d8, because 16.Nxd6+ Kd7 17.Nxb7+ wins the queen. That leaves b8, b6, and a5.

It really is not going to make much difference where the queen moves. White has an embarrassing array of strong moves to choose from and any one will win material.

15...Qb6

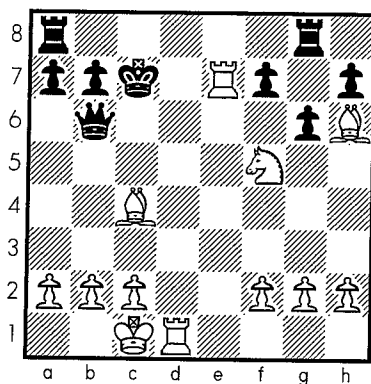
See if you can continue to visualize the moves.

16.Nxd6+ Kd8 17.Nxf5+

This is so much fun! How often do you get a chance to rip off one piece after another with check? Against 16...Kd7, I would have played the same move.

17...Kc7 18.Rxe7+

After 18.Rxe7+



You should have been able to reach this position without moving the pieces. Most players of intermediate strength tell me that it is too difficult to visualize several moves ahead. That's not true. As I told you in an earlier lesson,⁴ it's a matter of practice. Remember to pay particular attention to pieces that have been captured or that have changed position.

Question: Now he is crushed no matter where the king goes. If the king goes to b8, what is the best way to continue the attack?

Answer: 19.Bf4+

Excellent. Best move on the board. After all, that bishop has not been doing anything for a while. Remember, *in*

⁴See Lesson 3, *A Real Together Feeling*, after 23.Rb1.

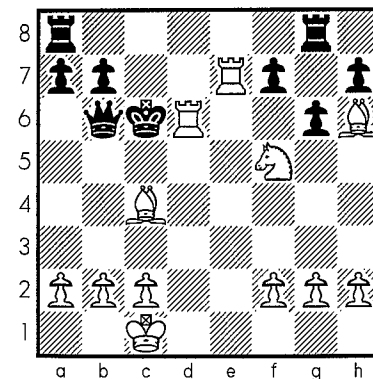
order to strengthen an attack, bring in a new piece, preferably with check. After 18...Kb8, 19.Bf4+ Kc8 20.Bxf7, White is attacking with all his pieces. If 18...Kc8, 19.Bxf7 sets up too many threats.

Question: In the game, the king moved to c6. What does White play now?

Answer: Rook to d6, check.

18...Kc6 19.Rd6+

After 19.Rd6+



Black resigned rather than submit to more punishment.⁵

The funny thing about this game is that everything seemed quiet. Suddenly there was this one knight move and the entire position exploded. This shows how dangerous three pieces can be against a queen when the pieces are well coordinated and the player with the minor pieces can retain the initiative.

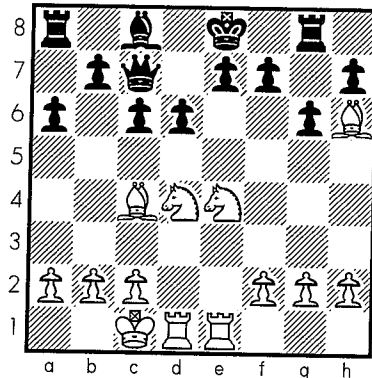


⁵Exercise 2: After 19...Kc5 there is a forced mating sequence. Find it.

ANSWERS

1. Against 13...a6, 14.Bg5 is good, but better is 14.Ne4, threatening Nf6+.

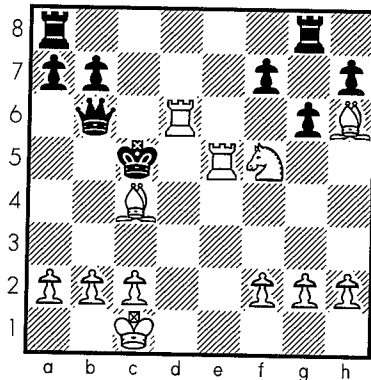
After 14.Ne4



Black's rook can't be saved. After 14...Rb8, White wins material with 15.Bg7 Rf8 16.Nf6+ Kd8 17.Bxf8 exf6 18.Bxd6.

2. After 19...Kc5, White mates with 20.Re5+.

After 20.Re5+



If 20...Kxc4, 21.b3+ Kb4 22.Kb2 (a "quiet move") Qc5 23.Bd2+ Kb5 24.Nd4 mate, with all of White's pieces participating.

If 20...Kb4 21.Bd2+ Ka4 22.Bb3+ Qxb3 23.axb3 mate. (Capturing "toward the center"!)



REVIEW

Themes

Systems against the Pirc (*discussion after 3...g6*).

Material imbalances and compensation (*6.e5; discussion after 11.0-0-0*).

Pawn roller as an offensive weapon. (*11.0-0-0*).

Disadvantage of too many pawns (*11.0-0-0*).

Temporary nature of the initiative (*11.0-0-0; discussion after 13...Bf5*).

Pins, forks, and discovered checks (*14.Ndb5!*).

Guidelines

Do not chase a knight with a center pawn if the knight can go to a better central square.

Minor pieces are effective against the queen when they are coordinated.

Pawns are an asset when they can drive your opponent's pieces back or control key squares. They are a liability when they inhibit your development.

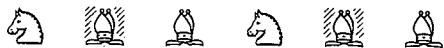
To strengthen an attack, bring in a new piece, preferably with check.

Advice

Do not let enemy pieces remain in your territory.

The initiative is a temporary advantage. Do not waste it.

Remember, not every sacrifice must be accepted.



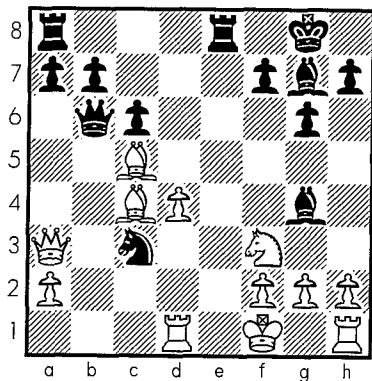
SUPPLEMENTARY GAMES

(1) D. Byrne–Fischer, New York, 1956

[Queen for Rook + Bishops]

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.d4 O-O 5.Bf4 d5 6.Qb3
dxc4 7.Qxc4 c6 8.e4 Nbd7 9.Rd1 Nb6 10.Qc5 Bg4
11.Bg5 Na4 12.Qa3 Nxc3 13.bxc3 Nxe4 14.Bxe7 Qb6
15.Bc4 Nxc3 16.Bc5 Rfe8+ 17.Kf1

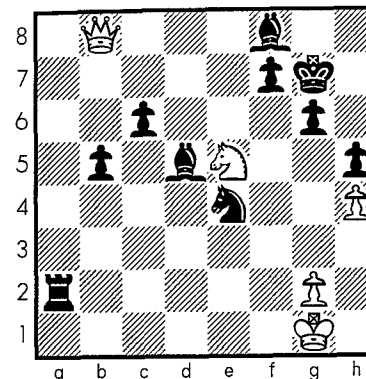
After 17.Kf1



17...Be6! 18.Bxb6 Bxc4+ 19.Kg1 Ne2+ 20.Kf1 Nxd4+
21.Kg1 Ne2+ 22.Kf1 Nc3+ 23.Kg1 axb6 24.Qb4 Ra4
25.Qxb6 Nxd1 26.h3 Rxa2 27.Kh2 Nxf2 28.Re1 Rxe1

29.Qd8+ Bf8 30.Nxe1 Bd5 31.Nf3 Ne4 32.Qb8 b5
33.h4 b5 34.Ne5 Kg7 35.Kg1

After 35.Kg1



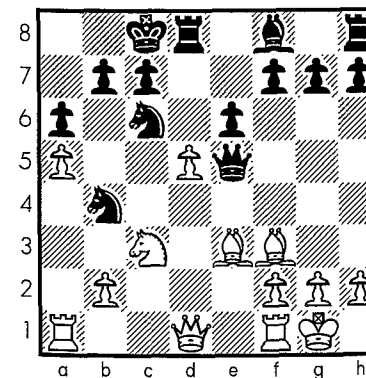
35...Bc5+ 36.Kf1 Ng3+ 37.Ke1 Bb4+ 38.Kd1 Bb3+
39.Kc1 Ne2+ 40.Kb1 Nc3+ 41.Kc1 Rc2 mate.

(2) Karpov–Timman, Brussels, 1988

[Queen for Rook + Bishop]

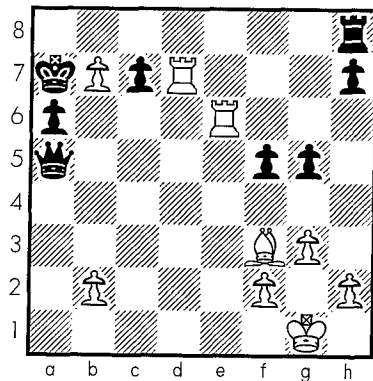
1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e4 Nf6 4.e5 Nd5 5.Bxc4 Nb6
6.Bd3 Nc6 7.Ne2 Bg4 8.Be3 Bxe2 9.Bxe2 Qd7 10.Nc3
O-O-O 11.a4 a6 12.a5 Nd5 13.Bf3 Ndb4 14.e6

After 16...e6



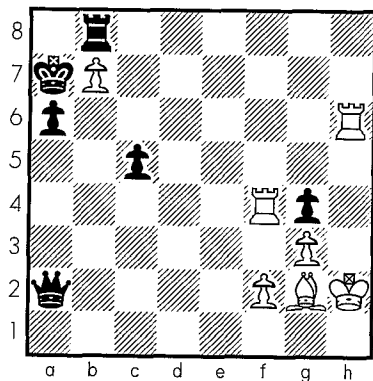
14...Qxe6 15.d5 Qe5 16.O-O e6 (See preceding diagram.) 17.dxc6! Rxd1 18.cxb7+ [White has bishop, rook, and the b7 pawn as compensation for the queen.] 18...Kb8 19.Rfxd1 Bc5 20.Bxc5 Qxc5 21.Rd7 f5 22.Rad1 Nc6 23.Na4 Qb5 24.Rc1 Qxa4 25.Rxc6 Qxa5 26.Rxe6 Ka7 27.g3 [27.h4] 27...g5!

After 27...g5



28.Rxb7! Rb8 29.h3 g4 30.hxg4 fxg4 31.Bg2 Qa1+ 32.Kh2 Qxb2 33.Rhh6 Qa2 [33...Rxb7 34.Rxa6+ Kb8 35.Rhf6 Qb4 36.Rf4 Qe7 37.Rxg4 Qh7+ 38.Rh4 Qg7 39.Bxb7] 34.Ref6 c5 35.Rf4

After 35.Rf4

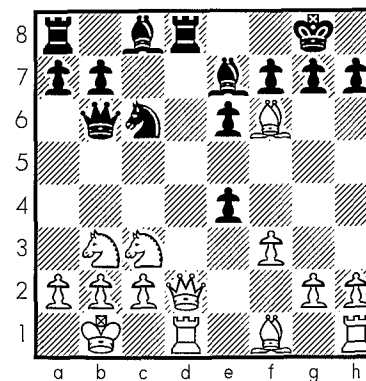


35...Qd2 36.Bf1! Rxb7 37.Rxa6+ Kb8 38.Rf8+ Kc7 39.Bg2 [White's pieces weave a coordinated net around the Black king.] 39...Qd7 40.Rh8 c4 41.Be4 1-0

(3) Anand-Benjamin, Wijk ann Zee, 1989
[Queen for Rook + Bishop]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 Nc6 6.Bg5 e6 7.Qd2 Be7 8.O-O-O O-O 9.Nb3 Qb6 10.f3 Rd8 11.Kb1 d5 12.Bxf6 dxe4

After 12...dxe4



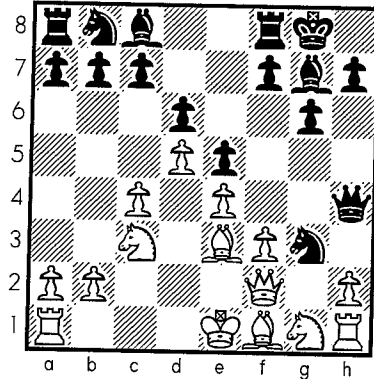
13.Bxe7! Rxd2 14.Nxd2 exf3 [14...Nxe7 15.Nc4 Qc7 16.Nb5] 15.gxf3 e5 16.Bh4 Be6 17.Nde4 Nd4 18.Bg2 Rc8 19.Bf2 f5 20.f4! fxe4 21.fxe5 Rc4 [21...Rxc3 22.Bxd4] 22.Rhe1 Rb4 23.Kc1 Bg4 24.Nd5 Qc5 25.Nxb4 Bxd1 26.Kxd1 [26.Rxd1 Ne2+] 26...e3 27.Rxe3 Nf5 28.Bd5+ Kf8 29.Rf3 Qxb4 30.Rxf5+ Ke8 31.e6 1-0

(4) Spycher–Piket, Groningen, 1986

[Two Pieces Versus a Queen]

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.f3 O-O 6.Be3 e5
7.d5 Nb5 8.Qd2 Qb4+ 9.g3 Nxc3 10.Qf2

After 10.Qf2



10...Nxf1 11.Qxb4 Nxe3 12.Ke2 Nxc4 [Black has two pieces and two pawns for the queen.] 13.Rc1 Na6 14.Nd1 Nb6 15.Nh3 f6 16.Rg1 Bd7 17.Ne3 Rae8 18.Rg2 Re7 19.Kf1 Nc5 20.Rd2 h5 21.b4 Na6 22.a3 Kh7 23.Rg2 Bh6 [Black's solid structure makes it difficult for White to do anything.] 24.Kf2 c5 [24...Be8] 25.dxc6 bxc6 26.Nf5 gxf5 27.Qxb5 Be8 28.Qxf5+ Kh8 29.Rcg1 [Threatens Rg8+] 29...Nd7 30.Rg4 Nc7 31.Rh4 Rh7 32.Qg4 f5 33.exf5 Nf6 34.Qc4 Bf7 35.Qxc6 Ncd5 36.Rc4? Be3+ 0-1

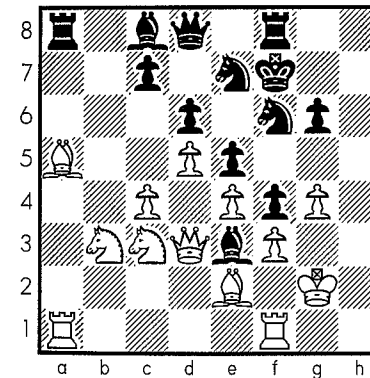
(5) Buehl–Weeramantry, U.S. Open, 1985

First Brilliancy Prize

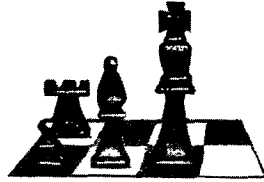
[Three Sacrifices for the King!]

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Be2 O-O 6.Nf3 e5 7.O-O Nc6 8.d5 Ne7 9.Nd2 a5 10.b3 Nd7 11.Ba3 f5 12.b4 axb4 13.Bxb4 b6 14.a4 Nf6 15.f3 Bh6 16.Nb3 Nh5 17.g3 Be3+ 18.Kg2 f4 19.g4 Nf6 20.a5 bxa5 21.Bxa5 h5 22.h3 [22.g5 Nh7 23.Bxc7? Rxa1] 22...Kf7 23.Qd3 hxc4 24.hxc4

After 24.hxc4



24...Rb8! 25.Nb5 Nexd5 26.cxd5 [26.exd5 Nxc4 27.fxg4 Bxc4 28.Be1 Qg5] 26...Rxb5 27.Qxb5 Nxc4 [Black's third consecutive sacrifice.] 28.fxg4 Qg5 29.Rh1 Bxc4 30.Kf1 f3 31.Bxf3 Kg7 32.Qc6 Rxf3+ 33.Ke1 Bf2+ 34.Kf1 Bh4+ 35.Kg2 Bh5+ 0-1



LESSON 9

CONNECT-THE-DOTS

Sometimes, the better pawn structure can give you a lasting initiative and dictate the course of events. In this game, White controls the e5 square and prevents Black from activating his central pawn majority. As a result, Black is reduced to passive defense and White is able to build up his attack at will.

The opening is a Caro-Kann Defense. This opening has become more popular in recent years because former World Champion Anatoly Karpov uses it regularly as one of his principal defenses against *1.e4*. Most Grandmasters concede that this is a solid opening system. However, many feel it is too passive and dislike its laid-back approach. One needs a certain temperament to enjoy playing the Caro-Kann; a good dose of patience is a prerequisite.

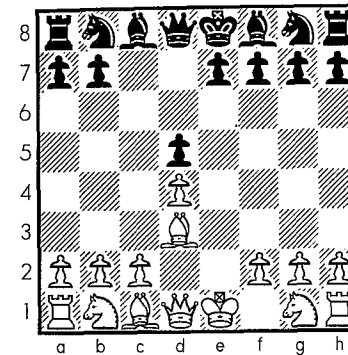
The outcome of this game is a reminder that chess is not just a cerebral activity, but a sporting contest as well. I was winning, but I got into time pressure and lost on time. My opponent, Larry Tamarkin, is a National Master.

— S. WEERAMANTRY-L. TAMARKIN —

New York, NY, 1991

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.Bd3

After 4.Bd3



This trade of pawns in the center is known as the Exchange Variation of the Caro-Kann. There are many other variations in the Caro-Kann, but you do not need to study them all just yet. You need only one line against each opening. You can always add others later.

What is the point of *4.Bd3*? It is a good developing move and it does not allow certain moves by Black: ...*Bf5* ...*Bg4*.

Question: Black also should not play ...*Be6*. Why?

Answer: It blocks the e-pawn.

Generally speaking, *when you develop pieces you must do it in such a way as not to interfere with the movement of other pieces*. The bishop on e6 blocks the e-pawn, and this in turn blocks the development of the dark-square bishop on f8.

The value of *Bd3* is twofold: first, it controls *f5*, stopping Black's light-square bishop from coming out; second, it is on the diagonal leading to *h7*, and thus prepares for a later kingside attack.

4...Nc6

Question: What is the obvious threat?

Answer: To take the pawn on *d4*.

Question: Yes. There is also a less obvious threat. What is it?

Answer: Play ...*Nb4* and trade knight for bishop.

Question: Good. White has established a powerful bishop on *d3*; Black would love to trade it off. What White move would take care of both threats?

Answer: Push the pawn to *c3*.

Correct. This builds a pawn chain and stops ...*Nb4*. Here's something to keep in mind whenever you play chess. *Don't think of moves as being either totally good or totally bad.* Obviously, there will be some such moves, but in general there are advantages and disadvantages associated with every move.

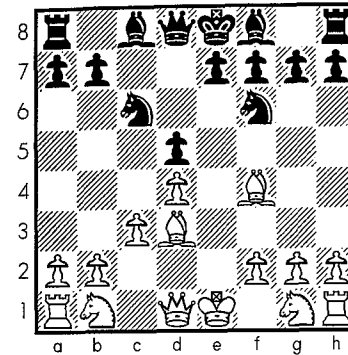
Question: We have already discussed the value of *5.c3*. What about the other side of the coin? Is there a disadvantage?

Answer: Yes. It takes away *c3* from the knight.

That's right. It takes away the best developing square for the knight. However, the positive value of the move outweighs this. You will often have to make such assessments, balancing the advantages and disadvantages.

5.c3 Nf6 6.Bf4

After 6.Bf4



Question: There is a basic opening principle in chess that states: develop knights before bishops. Why do we have this principle?

Answer: Knights are short range pieces, so they should move out early.

True, but wouldn't you be getting them out soon enough even if you took a move or two to develop the bishops first?

Answer: Knights can attack center pawns. Bishops cannot.

Very good. I must admit I never thought of it that way. I suppose a bishop would have trouble coming out to attack a center pawn without getting captured itself! However, that's not the reason.

There is one good square for a knight in the opening—on the third rank and in the center. Other squares are less desirable. The reason for the principle “knights before bishops” is that *it is clear where the knights should go.* On the other hand, it is not always clear which square is

best for the bishop. For example, if you move a bishop into enemy territory before his knight comes out, the bishop can be chased away easily with a pawn. However, if his knight is already developed, you have the option of trading bishop for knight. It makes more sense to wait to see how your opponent develops his pieces before deciding where to place the bishop.

So here I am breaking another principle! I would like, at this point, to reiterate some earlier advice: Do not take any principle for granted. Examine each and every position on its own merits. In chess, *there are two words that you should be wary of—one is ALWAYS, and the other is NEVER*. What Grandmasters are very good at is knowing when a principle does not apply. That shows a real understanding of chess.

There has to be some justification for moving bishops first, as this is the **exception**, not the rule. Here the reason is quite clear. If White wanted to move the b1 knight, he would move it to d2. Unfortunately, this would interfere with the rest of his development.

Question: What about the other knight? Why didn't White play *Nf3* right away?

Answer: Black would reply with *...Bg4*, pinning the knight.

Yes. There is absolutely no reason to let Black have that opportunity!

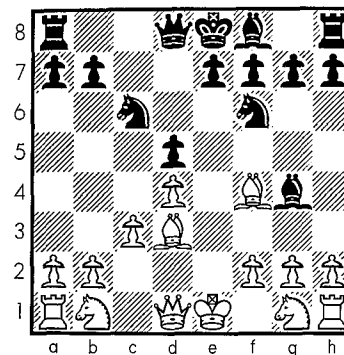
If White chooses the move order *5.Nf3* and *6.Bf4*, his pieces will get tied down and he will not be able to take an early initiative.

6...Bg4

Black decides to play *...Bg4* anyway, in order to attack White's queen. An important alternative is to fianchetto the king's bishop with *6...g6* and *7...Bg7*.

Question: Now that you know that I should not move into the pin, what should I do?

After 6...Bg4



Answer: 7.Be2.

Question: No. Where is the logic behind this move? There is one overpowering reason why White should not play *7.Be2*. What is it?

Answer: You have already developed the bishop to d3. Why move it back?

Exactly. This bishop is on a great square. As I have said before: *do not retreat a developed piece without good reason*.

Question: Give me another suggestion for White's seventh move.

Answer: 7.f3.

Question: I do not like this move. What is its drawback?

Answer: It takes the f3 square away from the knight.

You'll find that strong players will sometimes move a piece out to provoke a pawn advance, then move the piece back. 7.f3 may appear good at first, because it attacks the bishop and gains a tempo. However, think about the long-term consequences. Once this pawn has advanced to f3, the only way to use that square in the future is to advance the pawn further to f4. This will lock in White's c1 bishop. Black's strategy would then be justified.

Question: Can you find a better move?

Answer: 7.Qc2.

Good move. The queen and bishop battery on the long diagonal is strong. Indeed, one reason for c3 is to allow that setup.

Question: At the moment, though, there is a better move. What is it?

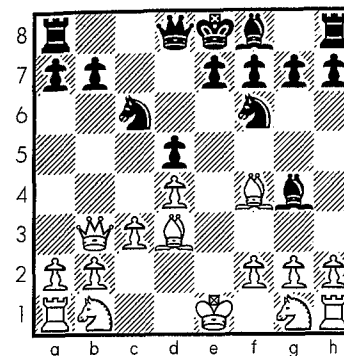
Answer: 7.Qb3.

Finally! 7.Qb3 takes the initiative by threatening the b7 pawn. This is the square that was weakened by the bishop move. Black can't ignore the attack and let the pawn go because his queenside will collapse.

7.Qb3 (see following diagram)

Black is not going to defend with ...b6, because it weakens his queenside pawn structure. He can't play ...Rb8 either, because the f4 bishop is attacking b8. So, he protects b7 with the queen.

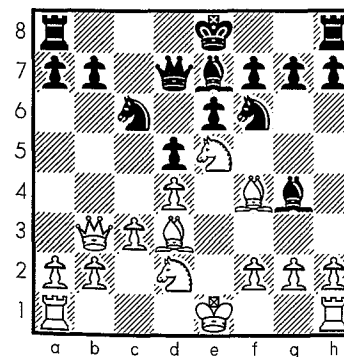
After 7.Qb3



7...Qc8¹

The theoretical move. 7...Qd7 also defends the b7 pawn but is not quite as good because it may allow White to gain an important tempo later on with Ng1-f3-e5. I once had a very pleasant experience against ...Qd7. It went like this: 7...Qd7 8.Nd2 e6 9.Ngf3 Be7 10.Ne5.

After 10.Ne5 (variation)



Here is the gain of tempo I was talking about.

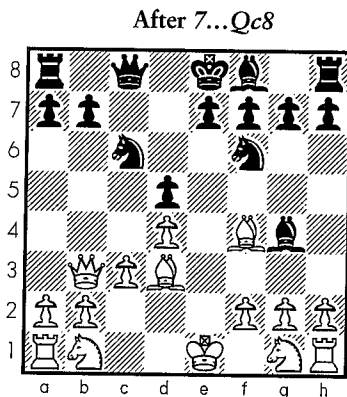
Question: Now, what if Black plays 10...Nxe5?

¹For 7...Na5, see Supplementary Game 3, Fischer-Petrosian.

Answer: Then 11.dxe5 Nh5 12.Bb5, pinning the queen.

Very good. My opponent fell for this! Of course, you cannot expect Black to lose his queen this way. He can survive with 10...Qc8 instead, but this would represent a loss of time.

Back to the game. Black has just played 7...Qc8.



Question: Can you guess the next few moves for each side?

Answer: 8.Nd2 e6 9.Ngf3 Be7 10.0-0

Isn't this simple? Both sides are making natural developing moves. Chess is easy—when you do the expected!

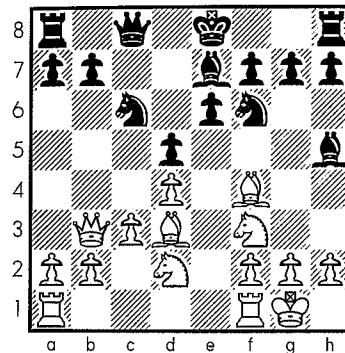
8.Nd2 e6 9.Ngf3 Be7 10.0-0

To this point, both Tamarkin and I have been following a well-trodden path. The nature of chess competition has changed drastically over the years. A sound knowledge of opening theory is essential if you are to succeed at the master level in modern tournament play. Much of the

work is done before ever coming to the board. Black shows that his theoretical knowledge is current by introducing the latest wrinkle.

10...Bh5

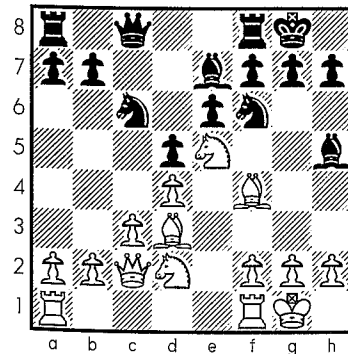
After 10...Bh5



The idea behind playing ...Bh5 is to play ...Bg6 and neutralize White's pressure along the b1-h7 diagonal.

If instead Black castles *before* playing ...Bh5, White will play Qc2. Then the ...Bh5 idea fails to Ne5 (10...O-O 11.Qc2 Bh5 12.Ne5).

After 12.Ne5 (variation)

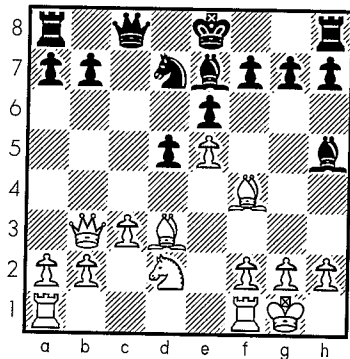


Now 12...Nxe5 13.dxe5 Nd7 14.Bxb7+ costs Black a pawn. So he cannot take the e5 knight.

With White's knight on e5, Black cannot oppose bishops with 12...Bg6, because White can trade the knight for the bishop. This eliminates Black's light-square bishop and leaves White's queen-bishop battery unchallenged. This is not what Black wants. If Black is to surrender his light-square bishop, he would like to take White's d3 bishop with him.

By playing ...Bh5 before castling, Black threatens to place his bishop on g6 before Ne5 can be played. An attempt by White to rush Ne5 would lead to the following variation: 10...Bh5 11.Ne5 Nxe5 12.dxe5 Nd7.

After 12...Nd7 (variation)

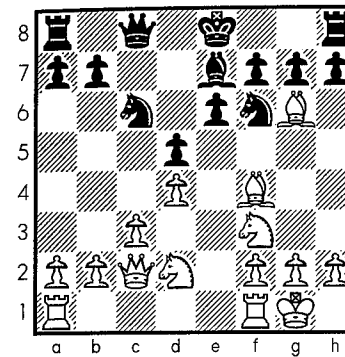


Now Black can play his bishop to g6 as planned, and the d7 knight can go to c5.

Small details like this slight difference in move order sometimes take many years to surface. When they do, they change old ideas forever.

11.Qc2 Bg6 12.Bxg6

After 12.Bxg6



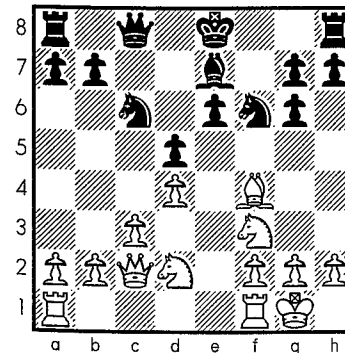
The trade of bishops cannot be avoided. White prefers to initiate the bishop trade himself, in order to double Black's pawns.

Question: Which way does Black recapture?

Answer: With the h-pawn, because the rook has an open file.

Question: Give me another reason. What happens to the position if Black recaptures with the other pawn?

After 12...fxg6 (variation)



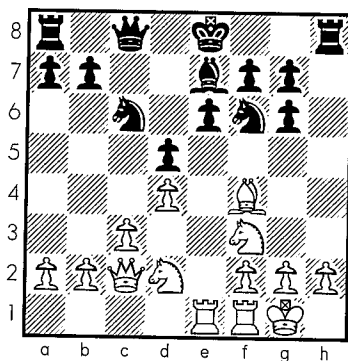
Answer: The pawns will break up and Black will have a backward pawn on e6.

Yes. It is a question of pawn structure. Every time pawns break up into small groups, we refer to each group as a **pawn island**. *The more pawn islands there are, the weaker the pawn structure.* Certain squares become difficult to defend. If Black recaptures with the f-pawn, his pawns will break up into three islands. The base of the pawn chain will shift from f7 to e6, making the e6 pawn backward and vulnerable because it is situated on White's half-open e-file. On the other hand, if Black recaptures with the h-pawn, then f7 provides a solid foundation for the entire structure.

12...hxc6 13.Rae1

Question: Why do I play *Rae1* when I could just as easily move the other rook over? How do you decide which rook to activate when there is only one open file?

After 13.Rae1



Answer: The a1 rook is not doing anything on the other side of the board.

Question: True, but what about the other rook? Is it any better on f1? How is this rook going to participate in the game?

Answer: You could double rooks on the e-file.

If your intention is to double rooks, it makes no difference which rook you move first. White may be able to mount some pressure on the half-open e-file, but that was not my intention.

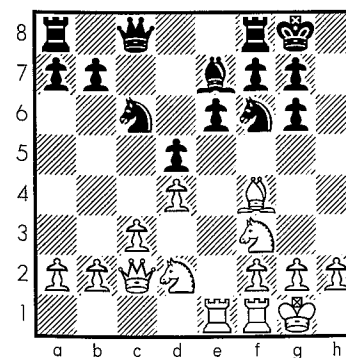
Question: When I played *13.Rae1*, I already had a plan for activating the f1 rook. What's my plan?

Answer: Move your bishop and knight out of the way, and push your f-pawn.

Excellent. Just imagine for a moment that the f4 bishop and f3 knight have moved somewhere else and I have completed the advance f4. Do you now see what I had in mind for my rooks? They will suddenly become very active on the e- and f-files. *Place your rooks where they will be most active.*

13...0-0

After 13...0-0



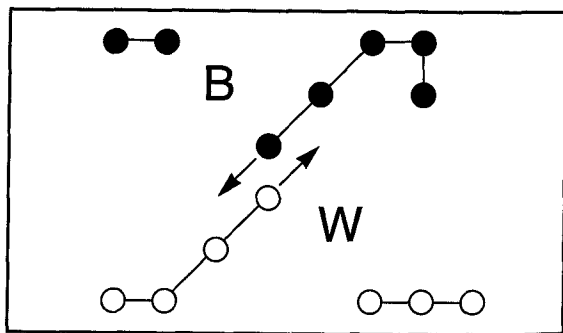
Black castles because he is nervous about his king being on the e-file.

Now the opening is over—both sides are fully developed. This is where chess becomes interesting. It's one kind of chess to catch your opponent in an opening trap and crush him because he doesn't know the latest theory in some line. It is another kind of chess to get into a position in which both sides have completed their development, and win because you find the better plan. This is where the real struggle lies. At this stage of the game, *it is very important to come up with a good long-term plan.*

I will show you how I came up with a plan in this position. Plans do not suddenly appear out of nowhere—*the position dictates the plan.* In closed positions, plans are primarily determined by the pawn structure.

Pawn structure establishes the boundary of your territory. You can look at it the way you read a map. Your entire middlegame plan can be based on how the boundaries are drawn.

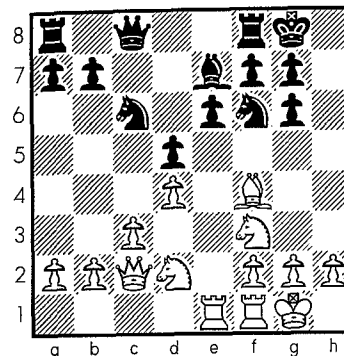
To see this, let's play *connect-the-dots*.



If these dots represent the pawns, we could say that “W” is one person’s territory and “B” is the other’s. Now look at the direction in which White’s pawn chain is

pointing—that is the side on which he has more space. *You build an attack on the side where you have more space.*

After 13...0-0



Once the pieces are placed, you can see that White has more pieces on the kingside. It will be difficult for Black to challenge this superiority because in order to do that, he will have to bring some of his army over from the queenside. However, his pawn structure makes this difficult—the pawn on e6 acts as a bottleneck, stopping the queenside pieces from moving over easily. He has a very narrow funnel to move his pieces through.

If you read this structure correctly, you will understand that White has a natural kingside attack, and that it has a high chance of success. You will also realize the importance of preventing the move ...e5. *Control of e5 determines the space that both sides have.* If Black succeeds in playing ...e5, he will be able to free his position. I won't let him do that. Look at the pieces I have concentrated on that square—a pawn, a rook, a knight, a bishop. That pawn isn't going anywhere!

The most remarkable feature about this position is that not one of Black's five kingside pawns can move without

serious consequences. The g6 pawn can't move without endangering the king; the pawn behind it can't move at all; the e6 pawn is frozen in its tracks; the d5 pawn is blocked; and if the f7 pawn moves, the entire pawn structure will collapse!

Once you determine that a structure is not going to change, you can organize the attack more effectively. *A fixed target is easier to shoot at.*

How shall we organize the attack? A methodical approach is essential. I like to follow a four-step process:

- (1) First, think ahead to the kind of position you want.
- (2) Then decide if your pieces have a way to get to the squares you want them to occupy.

The order of these first two steps is important. You must *start with the concept, then consider specifics*. The danger of not following this order is that you will make isolated moves, and never put them together into an organized attack.

- (3) The next step is to say: "Wait a minute, I am playing against someone—what is he going to do? Can he stop my pieces from reaching their desired destinations?"
- (4) Finally, see if he can ignore your plan completely and launch a counterattack.

If you go through all four steps and are satisfied that your ideas can be implemented, then go ahead and do it.

Now, let's try to apply this process to the game position. First, **step one**.

Question: Where should we place our pieces for an attack on the king? Don't worry about how to get there.

Answer: I would like one knight on g5, and the other on f3.

Question: That certainly brings the knights into the attack. What about the other pieces?

Answer: I'd like a rook on h3 and the queen on h4, threatening mate on h8.

Excellent. Even if it does not lead to mate, an invasion on the h-file will present many problems for Black.

Question: We did not mention anything about pawns. Will they be used in the attack?

Answer: No. Do not push the h-pawn. It will block the file for the queen and rook.

Good. The h-file must be kept clear. What about the other kingside pawns? We have already noted that f4 is a desirable move. This not only frees the f1 rook, but also helps to control the e5 square. The g2 pawn might go to g4 to keep Black's knight out of h5.

Now let's consider **step two**. Can we get our pieces where we want them? The f3 knight can go directly to g5. The e1 rook can go to h3 via e3. The d2 knight has immediate access to f3. The queen can go to d3, then g3, then h4. We can play f4 once we move the f4 bishop somewhere, and nothing obstructs g4. That was easy!

Step three is to see whether he can stop us. Black can try to keep the knight out of g5 by playing ...f6, but that would destroy his kingside pawn structure. There is no

reasonable way for him to attack the squares the rook will move to. Nor can he prevent the d2 knight from going to f3. That leaves the queen.

Question: Can he stop the queen from occupying h4?

Answer: Yes, because his bishop on e7 attacks h4.

Question: True. Can we counter that?

Answer: Yes. That's why we want our knight on g5.

Or we can play *Bg5* and trade bishops. We have already noted that he cannot play *...f6*.

Finally, **step four**. Let's consider his counterplay.

Question: Where is the danger in this position?

Answer: He may be able to attack down the c-file.

Question: Thank you! That is his half-open file—the logical place to look. What is sitting on that file?

Answer: The two opposing queens.

Question: Right. If you think about that, you will see a tactic Black can use.

Answer: He can play *...Nxd4* if White's f3 knight moves.

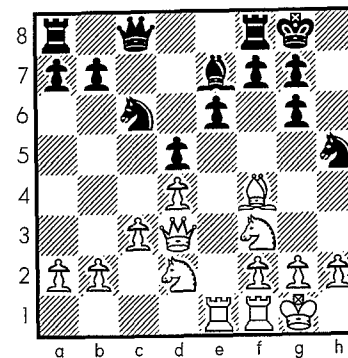
Do you see the value of using this process? If you do all but one thing right in formulating your strategy—you apply step one correctly, step two correctly, step three correctly, but make a mistake on step four ... you have ruined everything! That's where chess is hard. You must understand that *when you play chess, you are not playing just one game, you are playing two games*. It is you against him, and he against you! You must *put yourself in his*

position and ask, "If I were playing his side, what would I do?" The day you start making this effort, you will become a much stronger player.

During the game, I went through all four steps and came to the conclusion that the smartest thing was to play *14.Qd3*. With this move I do two things: I take away his counterplay on the c-file, and inch my way to h4.

14.Qd3 Nh5

After 14...Nh5



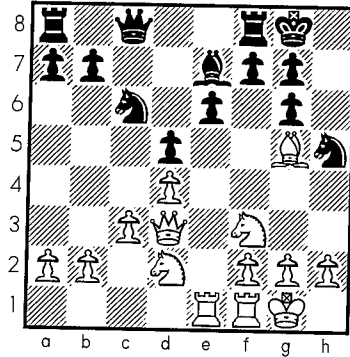
Black's choices are limited. His only reasonable alternative is to expand on the queenside. The idea is to push the b-pawn to b4 (perhaps supported by the a-pawn), then initiate a trade on c3. The trade saddles White with a backward pawn, which then becomes a target for Black. This is called a **minority attack**—two pawns are attacking three.² Such a plan is too slow compared to a direct assault on the king.

Black has a real problem on the kingside. White's attack is too strong. He should move his f-rook away, run with his king, and try to bring the knights back defensively. It is very hard to plan an active defense of this position because those kingside pawns cannot move.

²For a discussion of the minority attack, see [Pachman].

15.Bg5

After 15.Bg5



Question: What is the point of this move?

Answer: It moves the bishop to safety and prepares f4.

Yes. I am hoping he will trade off bishops, which would let me recapture with the knight and get my pawn to f4.

15...Qd8

Question: Now, how can I handle the attack without changing my plan? What's my best move?

Answer: Capture the bishop.

No. That helps him. If I trade, he recaptures with his queen. I must then play *Qe3* to support *Ng5*.

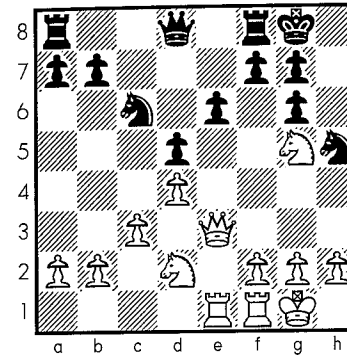
Answer: 16.Qe3.

Good. Now if he trades, I recapture with my knight, bringing it exactly to where I want it. It is a matter of **gaining a tempo**.

The queen is still inching toward h4 and is protecting g5 at the same time. Black now decides to trade. I was delighted!

16.Qe3 Bxg5 17.Nxg5

After 17.Nxg5



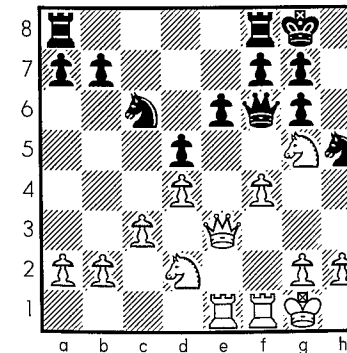
My position is getting better and better. He has no counterplay.

17...Qf6

A careless move. He probably intended 18...*Qf4*, setting up a trade of queens and turning back the attack.

18.f4

After 18.f4



Finally achieved it! So much for ...Qf4. The White pawns on d4 and f4 now have a stranglehold on the e5 square. Now that the center is firmly under control, the flank attack will be more difficult to repulse.

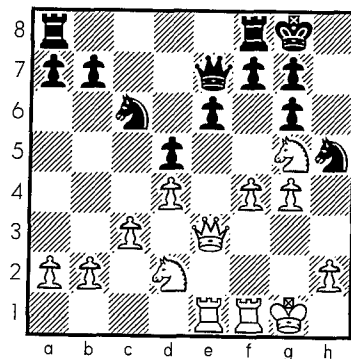
Question: What is my immediate threat?

Answer: Play g4, trapping the knight.

Yes. The only way to save it is to move the queen back. Black definitely regrets 17...Qf6.

18...Qe7 19.g4

After 19.g4



This move appears to violate another important principle—in this case a middlegame principle. Sometimes you can advance the pawns in front of your castled king, even though you will be opening up the castled position. Here some people might automatically assume you cannot move the g-pawn.

Question: Under what circumstances can you safely play a move like 19.g4?

Answer: You can play it when he has no counterplay.

Question: True, and how do we know that he has no counterplay in this position? In what kind of position do we know that we can safely do this because he is not going to have any counter-play?

Answer: He has a pawn chain in the center that is blocking all his pieces.

Exactly. You want a totally locked center formation, or, as here, you want such control that he cannot open the position. *When the center is fluid, it is dangerous to move the pawns in front of your castled king. When the center is locked or fixed, they can be moved.*

19...Nf6

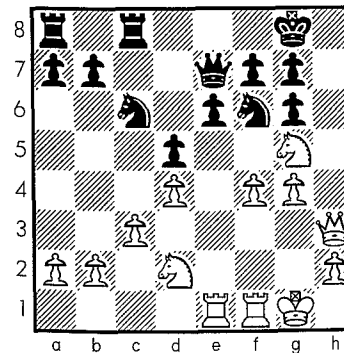
Question: Can you tell me my next move?

Answer: 20.Qh3

Heading toward the promised land! Now he realizes he is in trouble, and comes up with a defensive plan.

20...Rfc8

After 20...Rfc8



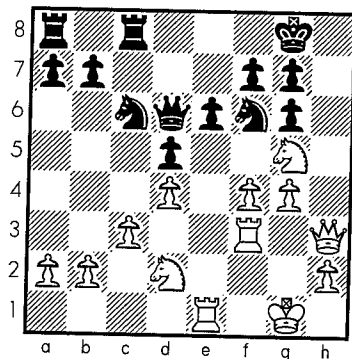
He will run with the king, and use his knight to block on g8.

21.Rf3

This rook is going to the h-file. I should have used the other rook so that my f4 pawn would remain protected.

21...Qd6

After 21...Qd6



This move draws a bead on the f4 square, anticipating a later *Rh3*. He is letting my queen go to h8, hoping it will prove to be out of play there. Once I set up a queen and rook battery along the h-file, he will simply move his king to f8 and defend a queen check on h8 by retreating his knight to g8. Meanwhile, he will have counterplay against my f4 pawn. I won a very nice game against that defensive formation in the 1986 U.S. Open.³

This is where I lost the game. I took fifteen minutes to make my next move, even though the time control was game in thirty minutes! There really was no need to spend so much time, because I had already seen a beautiful combination.

Question: Do you see it?

³See Supplementary Game 1, *Weeramantry–Walton*.

Answer: The queen checks at h8, setting up a knight fork at f7.

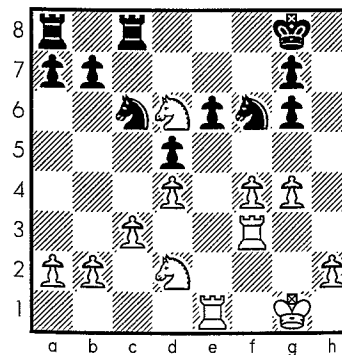
Absolutely correct. Isn't this a pretty move? How many chances do you get to stick your queen right in front of the enemy king? This is another example of a **combination of attraction**. There was no need to resist it because it leads to the win of a pawn and destroys Black's kingside pawn structure.

Unfortunately, I was reluctant to trade queens and kept searching for a checkmate. I remembered from my Walton game that an invasion down the h-file could be successful because, despite Black's defensive plan of ...*Kf8* and ...*Ng8*, Black's g7 square would eventually prove to be a fatal weakness. I couldn't shake this thought and kept going back and forth between the combination and the fatal mating attack—and wishing that I had played *Re3* back on move 21!

After this unhappy experience, I can give you the following advice: *when uncertain, choose the clearest variation that gives an advantage, and play it!* Not finding a mate, I decided to play the combination.

22.Qh8+ Kxh8 23.Nxf7+ Kg8 24.Nxd6

After 24.Nxd6

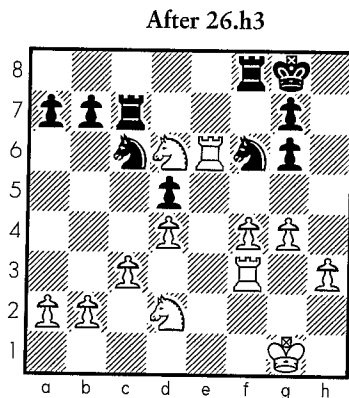


Correct, but too late for comfort.

24...Rc7 25.Rxe6 Rf8

He decided not to take my g4 pawn because I would reply with Rg3 and capture the g6 pawn.

26.h3



Comment: Couldn't you have pushed to g5?

A good question. I didn't do that because after 26.g5 Nb5 27.Rxg6, he has 27...Nxf4 trapping my rook! So I must play 27.f5 letting him undouble his g-pawns.

After 26.h3, I am two pawns up and have a position where his pieces have few squares. White should win easily. I just have to consolidate—double the rooks, bring the knight up. I did manage to make ten or more additional moves from this position, but he hung on three pawns down in an endgame, and my flag fell!



REVIEW

Themes

Tempo moves and piece placement (6...Bg4 7.Be2 variation; 7...Qc8 vs. 7...Qd7).

Proper timing of move sequences (10...Bh5 vs. 10...0-0).

When to initiate a trade (12.Bxg6; after 15...Qd8).

Capturing toward the center; pawn islands (12...fxg6 discussion).

Choosing the right rook to place on a file (13.Rae1).

How to develop a middlegame plan (discussion after 13...0-0):

- (1) the role of structure;
- (2) controlling the freeing square;
- (3) the planning process.

When kingside pawns can be advanced (19.g4).

Choosing the right rook for a rook lift (21.Rf3 vs. 21.Re3).

Choosing between two good alternatives (after 21...Qd6).

Guidelines

Develop pieces in such a way as to avoid interfering with the movements of other pieces.

A bishop is bad if it is locked inside its own pawns. Do not let your opponent trade a bishop that is or will become bad.

Develop knights before bishops because it is clear where the knights should go. You may violate this rule when you have a good reason, such as not interfering with the development of another piece.

Do not retreat a well-developed piece without a good reason.

Avoid blocking good piece development squares with your pawns.

Avoid placing a piece where your opponent can gain a tempo by attacking it.

The more pawn islands you have, the weaker your pawn structure is. Capture toward the center to avoid breaking up pawns into islands.

Base the choice of which rook to place on a file on an overall plan. The goal is to maximize the activity of your rooks while restraining your opponent's activity.

A middlegame plan must fit the position. The right plan is especially determined by the pawn structure.

Attack on the side where you have more space and a greater concentration of pieces.

It is important to maintain control of critical squares that your opponent can use to free his position. A fixed target is easier to attack.

When forming a plan, follow this four-step process:

- (1) Visualize the position you want,
- (2) Determine if and how it can be achieved,
- (3) Consider how your opponent would stop your plan,
- (4) Look for your opponent's counterplay.

When the center is fluid, it is dangerous to move the pawns in front of your king. It is safe to move them when the center is locked or fixed under your control.

If your opponent has a cramped position, do not initiate trades. You may allow him to initiate a trade if it helps you bring the right piece to an advanced position.

Advice

Do not think of chess moves as necessarily being either totally good or totally bad.

Do not take any principle for granted. Strong players know when a principle does not apply.

There are two words to be wary of—ALWAYS and NEVER.

It is always better to have a plan than to play isolated moves.

When you play chess, you are playing two games—you against him and he against you. Put yourself in his position when deciding on a move.

When uncertain about the relative strength of two good moves, choose the clearest continuation that gives a winning advantage.



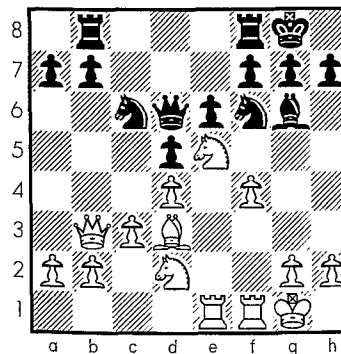
SUPPLEMENTARY GAMES

(1) Weeramantry–Walton, U.S. Open, 1986

[Compare to Weeramantry–Tamarkin]

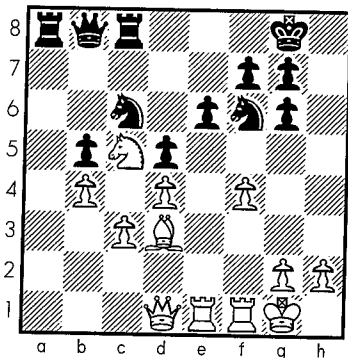
1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.Bd3 Nc6 5.c3 Nf6 6.Bf4 Bg4 7.Qb3 Qd7 8.Nd2 e6 9.Ngf3 Bd6 10.Bxd6 Qxd6 11.O-O O-O 12.Rae1 Rab8 13.Ne5 Bh5 14.f4 Bg6

After 14...Bg6



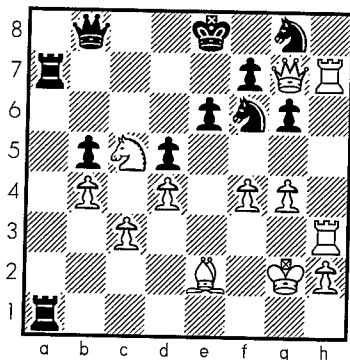
15.Nxg6 hxg6 16.Qd1 b5 17.b4 Rfc8 18.Nb3 a5 19.a3
axb4 20.axb4 Ra8 21.Nc5 Qb8

After 21...Qb8



22.Re3 Ne7 23.Qe1 Nf5 24.Rh3 Rc7 25.Be2 Rca7 26.g4
Nd6 27.Qb4 Kf8 28.Qh8+ Ng8 29.Rh7 Ne8 30.Rf3
Ra1+ 31.Kg2 R8a7 32.Rfh3 Nef6 33.Qxg7+ Ke8

After 33...Ke8

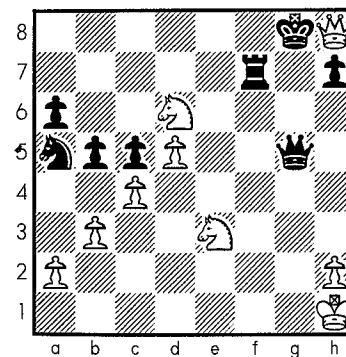


34.Qxf6 R1a2 35.Rh8 Rxe2+ 36.Kf3 1-0

(2) Petrosian–Spassky, Moscow, 1966
[Knight, Queen Coordination]

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.g3 g6 3.c4 Bg7 4.Bg2 O-O 5.O-O Nc6
6.Nc3 d6 7.d4 a6 8.d5 Na5 9.Nd2 c5 10.Qc2 e5 11.b3
Ng4 12.e4 f5 13.exf5 gxf5 14.Nd1 b5 15.f3 e4 16.Bb2
exf3 17.Bxf3 Bxb2 18.Qxb2 Ne5 19.Be2 f4 20.gxf4 Bh3
21.Ne3 Bxf1 22.Rxf1 Ng6 23.Bg4 Nxf4 24.Rxf4 Rxf4
25.Be6+ Rf7 26.Ne4 Qh4 27.Nxd6 Qg5+ 28.Kh1 Ra7
29.Bxf7+ Rxf7 30.Qh8+

After 30.Qh8+



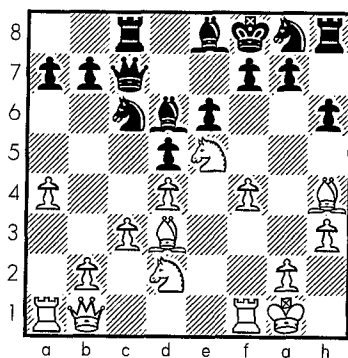
1-0

(3) Fischer–Petrosian, Belgrade, 1970

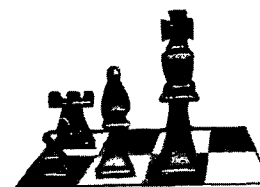
[Caro–Kann Exchange Variation with 7.Qb3 Na5]

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.Bd3 Nc6 5.c3 Nf6 6.Bf4
Bg4 7.Qb3 Na5 8.Qa4+ Bd7 9.Qc2 e6 10.Nf3 Qb6
11.a4 Rc8 12.Nbd2 Nc6 13.Qb1 Nh5 14.Be3 h6 15.Ne5
Nf6 16.h3 Bd6 17.O-O Kf8 18.f4 Be8 19.Bf2 Qc7
20.Bh4 Ng8

After 20...Ng8



21.f5 [*“Strike while the knight is cold...”*] 21...Nxe5
22.dxe5 Bxe5 23.fxe6 Bf6 24.exf7 Bxf7 25.Nf3 Bxb4
26.Nxb4 Nf6 27.Ng6+ Bxg6 28.Bxg6 Ke7 29.Qf5 Kd8
30.Rae1 Qc5+ 31.Kh1 Rf8 32.Qe5 Rc7 33.b4 Qc6
34.c4 dxc4 35.Bf5 Rff7 36.Rd1+ Rfd7 37.Bxd7 Rxd7
38.Qb8+ Ke7 39.Rde1+ 1-0



LESSON 10

IT'S NEVER OVER

You may tend to think of drawn games as dull games, but this isn't always the case. I am going to show you a game I drew that was far from dull. In fact, this is one of the more interesting games I've played recently. I play a lot of crazy games, so that's really saying something! If you look for a main theme, you would have to say this game has mostly to do with the **coordination of pieces** in attack and defense. It is also a good example of “chess as a struggle.” The initiative shifts back and forth during the game.

— S. WEERAMANTRY–J. C. URBANEJA —

New York, NY, 1991

1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.f4

Another Grand Prix Attack. Do you know how it got its name? It was used frequently in the Cutty Sark Grand Prix tournaments in England in the mid-seventies. The

strongest player to popularize this opening is the Danish Grandmaster, Bent Larsen. Larsen is well known as an original, creative chess player.

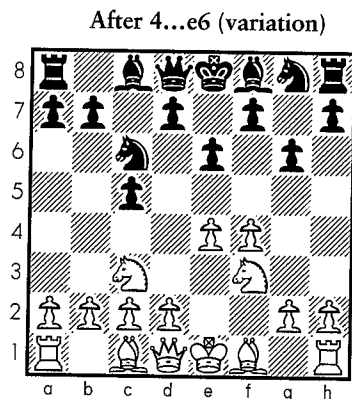
3...g6

This introduces the fianchetto and is a popular alternative to 3...e6.¹

4.Nf3

This is a very instructive position. A common mistake is to play 4...e6 here. It cannot be played.

Question: Why is 4...e6 a positional mistake?



It is not necessary to find an exact sequence. Think back to previous lectures and give me a general answer.

Answer: It leaves holes on the dark squares.

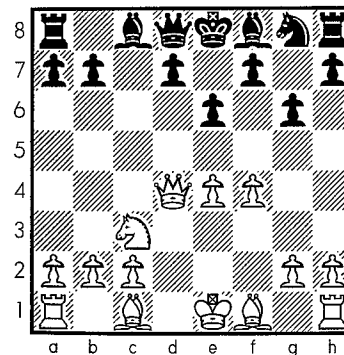
Good. I am glad you remembered about color weaknesses. You have been paying attention. By playing ...e6 and ...g6 Black opens up two diagonals, but has only one dark-square bishop to control them. Consequently, he is

creating *weaknesses that cannot be controlled*. As the game goes on, and Black gets better piece development, he may be able to cover some of the weak squares with other pieces. At this stage of the game, he is not prepared to do that.

Question: If 4...e6 is such a bad move, how does White take advantage of it? How do you prove the move is bad?

Answer: 5.d4 cxd4 6.Nxd4 Nxd4 7.Qxd4, and Black's bishop cannot go to g7.

After 7.Qxd4 (variation)



Your answer is close enough. The right move is 5.d4, and the rest of your analysis is correct, but it is important to understand the situation fully. The point is, in order to take advantage of weaknesses like this, you've got to *open the position*. Once you open the position, then you will be able to do something about the dark squares.

After 7.Qxd4, White has transposed from the Grand Prix Attack to an open Sicilian. Now it is easy to see that White has a clear advantage, because of the weakness of

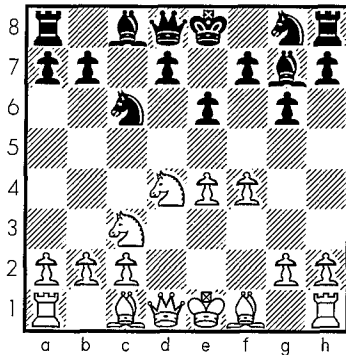
¹See Lesson 7, *Strike While the Knight Is Cold*.

the long black diagonal (a1-h8). He is not winning material, but has a very good position.

Of course, any decent player of the Black pieces is not going to take the knight with $6...Nxd4$ and let the White queen into d4. The most pressing need for Black is to develop the f8 bishop. Most players, when faced with the problem of which diagonal to control, will put the bishop on g7.

Question: After $6...Bg7$, what will White play?

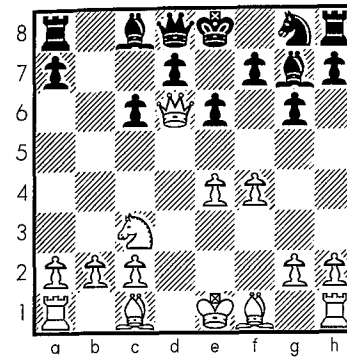
After $6...Bg7$ (variation)



Answer: $7.Nxc6$ $bxc6$ $8.Qd6$.

It looks like you are getting somewhere with this line, but actually you are not. You are trying to control the diagonal, but you can get chased away very easily. The queen is a long-range piece—you do not have to stick your queen into d6 in order to control the dark squares.

After $8.Qd6$ (variation)



There is something else I don't like about this move. This was already discussed in another game.² *The queen should not be the most advanced attacking piece when there is no backup.* If she can do some damage and get out, that's another thing. Here the queen cannot do any damage by herself, and none of White's other pieces is ready to come in.

Posting the queen on d6 is not going to help White, therefore $7.Nxc6$ is not correct. In the Sicilian, when White captures the knight on c6 and Black recaptures with his b-pawn, all White is doing is strengthening Black's center and giving Black a chance to play $...d5$. Unless the capture is part of a much broader plan, *stay away from $Nxc6$ in the Sicilian when Black still has a pawn on b7.*³

Answer: Play $7.e5$, and that will help White control the dark squares.

This point is correct. The move $7.e5$ is definitely in White's plans, but there is a more important move to be played first.

²See Lesson 3, *A Real Together Feeling*.

³For an exception, see *Kasparov–Illescas*, Supplementary Game 4 in Lesson 4.

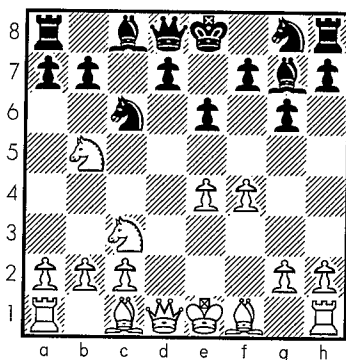
Answer: 7.Be3.

Be3 is okay, but it is not best. It is a good developing move and it strengthens the center, but it is a move that merely *reacts* to the threat against d4. White can *take control* of this position; 7.Be3 is too passive.

Answer: Play 7.Ndb5.

Best! Ndb5 is much stronger than Be3. This plan is unstoppable! This is what I meant when I said the Bishop cannot control both diagonals. Once you get the knight into d6, then the move e5 makes a lot more sense, because you are anchoring the knight on the **advanced outpost square**.

After 7.Ndb5 (variation)



Playing e5 first is not as strong, because Black can play ...Nxd4, so you can no longer get that knight into d6. After you play Ndb5 and e5, the knight on c3 can go into e4, and you can jump knights in and out of d6.

Notice that going into d6 has several purposes: it is a good outpost square; the check will stop him from castling; and the d7 pawn can't move, so the c8 bishop is buried. It will take Black several moves to get the c8 bishop out, and

meanwhile, with all the space he has, White can start another attack somewhere else. Black is in serious trouble.

So, because the d6 square is such a powerful square for White, and he can establish a knight there, Black cannot use the move order 4...e6 in this opening.

Back to the actual game. Unfortunately, Black did not play 4...e6, he played the correct move 4...Bg7. Sometimes you may go into a tournament feeling a little lazy, and hoping your opponent will make some bad moves. That's a bad situation. The strong player tends to take it easy the first couple of rounds. You may say to yourself, "I'll think when I have to." This is the most dangerous part of the tournament—even bad players can make good moves. The best thing that can happen to you in the first round is to have a tough game, and win it. When you *work hard at your first game*, you really play yourself into the tournament, and you are ready to sit down and fight.

4...Bg7 5.Bc4

The king's bishop usually goes to c4 or b5. In general, it should go to b5 if the d7 pawn has moved, allowing a pin. Otherwise, it should go to c4.

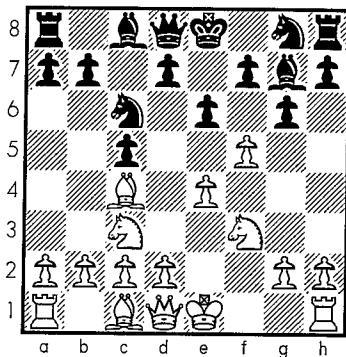
5...e6

Now ...e6 is fine. This time it is quite different, since White cannot play his pawn to d4.

6.f5

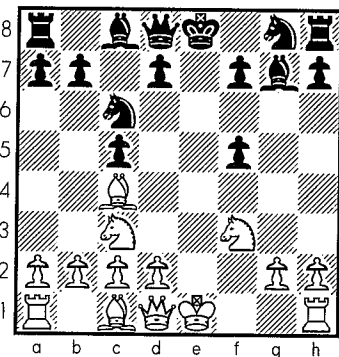
This is one of those moves that you really have to study before you try to play it in a serious game. It is a pawn sacrifice. No one seems to know for certain whether it is good or bad. I just like to play it, because I like to sacrifice pawns for the initiative!

After 6.f5



On a certain level, you can understand what the sacrifice is all about, because if Black takes twice (6...exf5 7.exf5 gxf5), who really cares if he has an extra pawn?

After 7...gxf5 (variation)

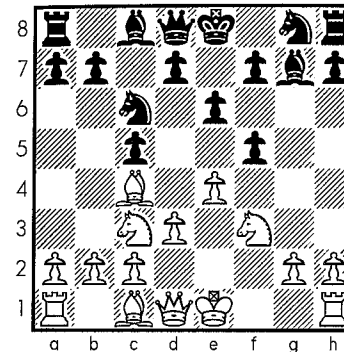


He has doubled isolated f-pawns. His structure is weakened, and the pawns are going to fall sometime.

To understand this sacrifice properly, you have to look at what happens if Black takes once, starting with the g-pawn. If White takes back with the e-pawn, Black can take immediate control of the center with ...d5. Black can always castle on the queenside.

So if they take me (6...gxf5), I do not take back, I just play 7.d3.

After 6...gxf5 7.d3 (variation)



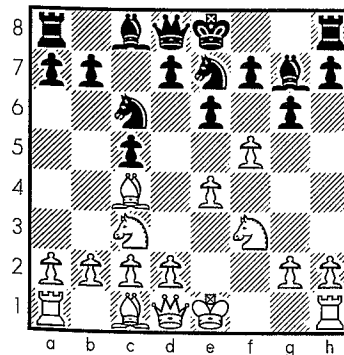
The key pawn, from White's point of view, is the one on e4. White must have a pawn on this square to control d5. If Black takes on e4, White takes back (7...fxe4 8.dxe4). White then has a lot of play for his pawn. Black's bishop on c8 is very bad.

Back to the game position. My opponent played the most popular move—the one recommended by theory.

6...Nge7

The idea is to put more pressure on the f5 square.

After 6...Nge7



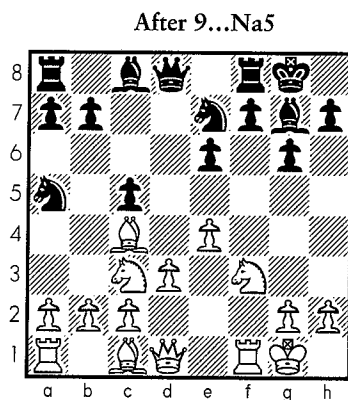
7.fxe6 dxe6

He could have chosen to play 7...fxe6, but that is another story.

8.d3 0-0 9.0-0

We have pretty much reached the end of the opening stage. There are a couple of pieces left to be developed, but now the fun starts.

9...Na5



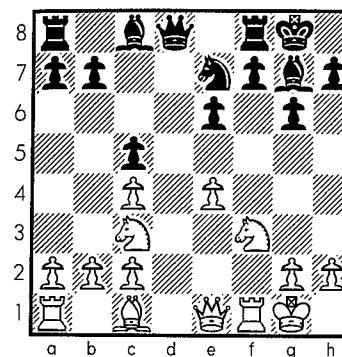
Black wants to get rid of the c4 bishop. The negative aspect of this move is that he is *decentralizing the knight*, and will have to move it a second time to make the capture. He is spending a lot of time to realize this plan, so I said “Fine” and played

10.Qe1

If he takes the bishop, I take back with the d-pawn (10...Nxc4 11.dxc4). I get more center control and an open d-file for my rook. The only play along the d-file is for White—the Bc8 impedes the coordination of Black’s

rooks. The value of having a c4 pawn is that the e4 pawn is no longer needed to control d5, so it can go to e5. Then White controls both d5 and d6. In addition to that, e5 is also a clearance move.

After 11.dxc4 (variation)



Question: What becomes possible after White moves his pawn to e5?

Answer: Ne4.

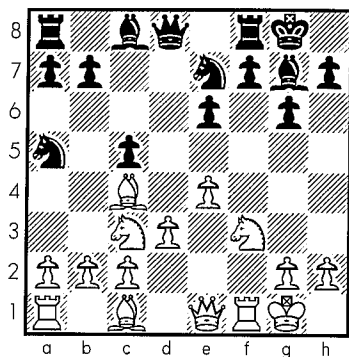
Yes. Then you decide whether you want to go into d6, or play Bg5 and Nf6. Do you see, against the fianchetto, how powerful the two pawns on c4 and e5 can be? You are controlling two central squares, and f6 as well.

Question: Now, why did I move my queen to the e1 square?

Answer: If you don’t, after he takes the bishop and you take back, he trades off the queens.

Yes, it is true that I need to keep my queen for the attack. There are other good reasons for 10.Qe1.

After 10.Qe1



Answer: Get the rook to the d-file.

Answer: You can play *Be3*, *Qd2*, and *Bh6*.

Answer: Instead of the battery with the queen on d2, play *Qh4*, then play *Bh6*.

All of those answers are good, but the last is best. You want the queen on h4. You will still be attacking the dark squares, but the attack is stronger. The queen and bishop are *approaching from different angles*, so both pieces are more actively involved in the attack. Look at the difference—on d2, the queen plays a more restricted role.

My opponent, I guess, anticipated *Qh4*. He played

10...h6

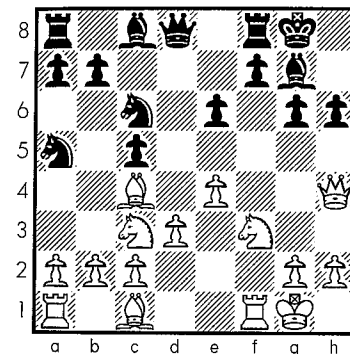
It turns out this is a bad move, though it is not obvious why. Black wants to meet *Qh4* by playing *...Nec6*, offering a queen trade. He played *...h6* to keep the bishop out of g5. I played *Qh4* anyway.

11.Qh4 Nec6

I have had a similar position before. White now has a very powerful move.

Question: What is the best move for White?

After 11...Nec6



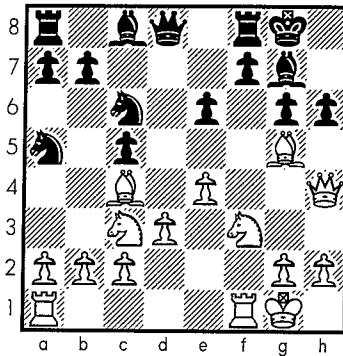
Answer: **12.Bg5**. If Black takes the bishop, the knight takes back, threatening *Qh7* mate. If he doesn't take, White has *Bxb6*.

Congratulations; **12.Bg5** is the best move! If White plays **12.Qh3** instead, Black replies with **12...e5**. The White queen can't stay on the h-file when Black's queen and bishop are covering h4 and h3 between them.

12.Bg5

The first time I used this idea was in a similar position against Dr. Hans Berliner, in the 1975 Eastern Open. Dr. Berliner is a former World Correspondence Chess Champion, and an International Master. He is also the programmer of HiTech, which is one of the strongest computer chess programs in the world. He lost to the *Bg5* idea.

After 12.Bg5



If the queen moves away, then after 13.Bxb6, Black's position is shattered. White's next move will be Ng5. **Remember this pattern**—Bb6, Ng5, Qh4—the three dark squares. This is the formation you are going for when you play your queen to e1, and you are thinking about the dark square attack.

At this point, I was walking around, confident that I had this game won already. The problem with chess is, *it's never over!* After forty-five minutes' thought, he came up with an ingenious defense. All I got for it was one pawn, and the attack was stopped.

Question: What is Black's defensive maneuver? It is a three- or four-move sequence.

It looks impossible, doesn't it? The minute he made his first move, I saw it, and thought, "Oh no, I have to start thinking again." This is what I meant about taking it too easy. *You must never think you have a game won until he resigns.* Once he resigns, then you can relax.

Answer: 12...f6.

In some ways this does stop the attack, but it creates serious weaknesses. I would just play 13.Bxb6, breaking up his castled position.

This is tough, so I will give you one clue. The only way to survive the attack is somehow to think of a way to get the Black queen to g7. My opponent just sat there until he figured out how to get her there. I couldn't believe it!

Answer: 12...Bd4+ 13.Nxd4 ...

I will not take the knight! I would just play 13.Kh1. Obviously, though, the square d4 has something to do with it. Time for another hint.

Question: What is the one move we are all assuming he cannot play?

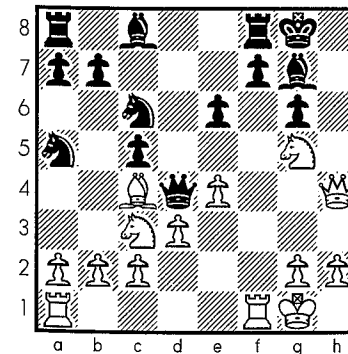
Answer: 12...hxc5.

Bad assumption!

12...hxc5! 13.Nxc5 Qd4+

Notice that when the White knight moved from f3 to g5, ...Qd4+ became possible.

After 13...Qd4+



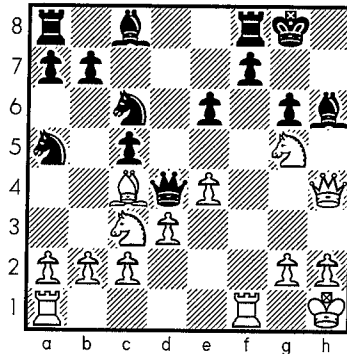
14.Kh1

Question: What does Black play next?

Answer: ...Bh6, so the queen can go to g7.

14...Bh6

After 14...Bh6



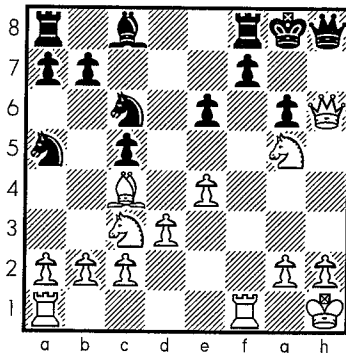
A strange move, but ...Bh6 saves the day! Unbelievable!

15.Qxh6 Qg7

End of attack. I was very disappointed—I had already decided how I was going to spend my next two hours!

Question: Why can't Black play 15...Qh8 instead?

After 15...Qh8 (variation)



Answer: 16.Nxf7.

Yes. If 16...Rxf7, White plays 17.Qxh8+ and 18.Rxf7.

I would say that now the **first phase** of the middlegame attack has been completed. He suffered a little damage, but he was able to regroup and defend. Now the attacker must retreat, reorganize, and come back again. It's like the old movies where the cowboys put the wagons in a circle and beat off the first wave of the attack, then the Indians come back again.

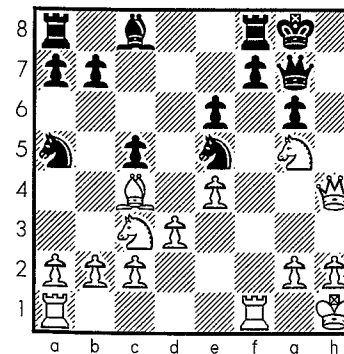
16.Qh4

I do not want the queen on h3, where it is exposed to a tempo move by the bishop on c8.

Now the game gets even more interesting. The problem is, it is not clear how White should proceed with the attack.

I have a sad story to tell. This is not the only time I have had this position. A little more than a year after this game was played, I got to this position in a thirty-minute game against the 1991 U.S. Champion, Grandmaster Gata Kamsky. Kamsky took only a few minutes to find the correct defense to 12.Bg5!, and having reached this point, played 16...Ne5.

After 16...Ne5 (variation)



I failed to find the best continuation, and went on to lose. The move I missed was *17.Rf6!*, establishing a dark-square bind that is difficult to break. The consensus in the postmortem analysis was that White had excellent chances.

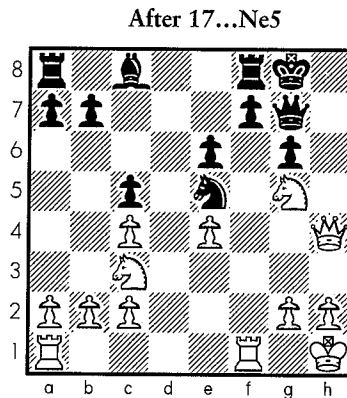
Back to the game in question.

16...Nxc4

The idea is to break up the pawn structure. However, it is a mistake because it gives up the d-file.

17.dxc4 Ne5

Question: Why does *17...Ne5* make sense?



Answer: It attacks a pawn.

It attacks a pawn, moves the knight to the center, and what else? What can you tell me about the square e5?

Answer: It's an outpost square.

Remember, not just the pawn itself, but *the square in front of the isolated pawn is weak*. Whenever you see your

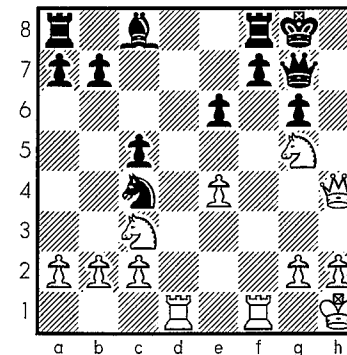
opponent with an isolated pawn, target the square in front of it. Put a homing device on that square, and jump right in there.

18.Rad1

This move develops, takes over the d-file, and has a sneaky indirect defense to *...Nxc4*. It is what is known as an **active defense**. White is answering the attack on the c4 pawn with a counterattack.

Question: What is White's defense to *18...Nxc4*? An acceptable answer will require a complete analysis.

After 18...Nxc4 (variation)



Answer: *19.Nxf7 Rxf7 20.Rd8+ Rf8 21.Rxf8+ Qxf8 22.Rxf8+ Kxf8*, and White can continue with *23.Qf6+*.

Correct. To find a move like this, you must see the idea and follow it through to a conclusion. When analyzing such possibilities, you must not only look at all captures and checks, but also at quiet moves. Also be sure to look at the "final" position to see if there are any nasty surprises wait-

ing. Always be willing to *go that extra step!* This will require **discipline**. Remember, if a move looks good, keep looking at it—you never know what you will find.

18...f6

Stop everything. Black is waiting to take on c4. Unfortunately, I can't play *Rxf6*, because after *19...Rxf6 20.Rd8+ Rf8*, I do not have a third rook to attack f8 with!

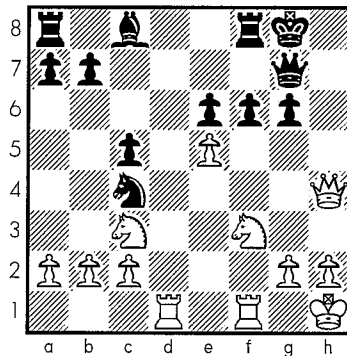
19.Nf3 Nxc4

Now material is even. However, I foresaw this when I played *18.Rad1*; I have a plan. Here comes the **second wave of the attack**.

20.e5!

Sacrifice another pawn!

After 20.e5



Now, if he plays *20...Nxe5*, I will reply with *21.Nxe5 fxe5 22.Rxf8+ Kxf8 23.Ne4*. Do I care about being down a pawn in this position? Not with the weak pawns on e5 and g6; not with the c8 bishop that cannot come out; not with the beautiful outpost square on e4 for my knight! From e4 my knight can go into f6 with all sorts of threats. Of course, he did not take the pawn.

20...Ne3

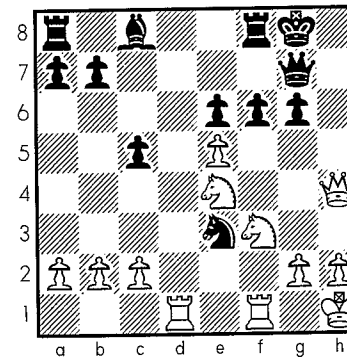
Forking the rooks—I had expected this. Now you will see the real point of *20.e5*. It is a **clearance move**.

21.Ne4

If the knight reaches f6, White's attack is overwhelming. The last piece will have joined the attack with devastating effect. Black is dead.

Meanwhile, Black can take only one rook at a time. Why bother trying to save either one? Leave them there and let him have his pick!

After 21.Ne4



Let's say he plays *21...Nxf1*. I would reply with *22.Nxf6+*. If he continues with *22...Kf7*, then the other knight joins the attack with *23.Ng5+ Ke7 24.Rxf1* and I have good chances. If instead of *22...Kf7*, he returns material with *22...Rxf6*, then *23.exf6 Qf7 24.Rd8+* wins.

If he takes the other rook with *21...Nxd1*, then after *22.Nxf6+ Rxf6 23.exf6 Qf7 24.Ng5*, I push the f-pawn and get my queen into h7.

He did not take either rook. Instead, he counterattacked with...

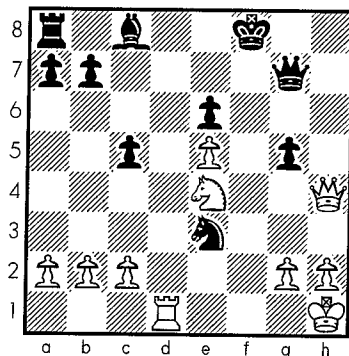
21...g5⁴

⁴Exercise 1: Find the best line for White after *21...fxe5*.

Now both rooks are hanging, and the queen! Forget about retreating anything in a situation like this. Carry on, and sacrifice the next piece!

22.Nfxg5 fxg5 23.Rxf8+ Kxf8

After 23...Kxf8

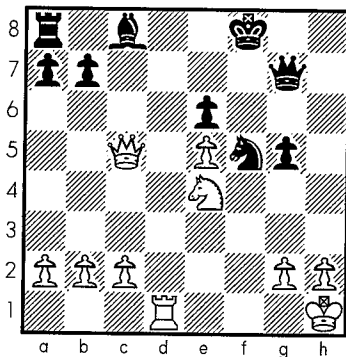


If instead 23...Qxf8, 24.Qxg5+ and 25 Qxe3.

Unfortunately, all these moves had taken me a very long time, and *my flag was hanging!* I had a minute left to get to move thirty.

24.Qf2+ Nf5 25.Qxc5+

After 25.Qxc5+



Now I am winning. If he runs to g8, I have Rd8+, winning the bishop.⁵

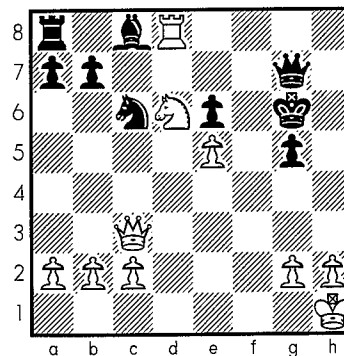
25...Ne7 26.Rd8+ Kf7 27.Nd6+

An alternative is 27.Nf6, to restrict the queen some more. However, the text move, if played correctly, leads to a forced win.

27...Kg6 28.Qc3 Nc6

In time trouble, I missed a forced win here.⁶

After 28...Nc6



29.g4 Nxe5

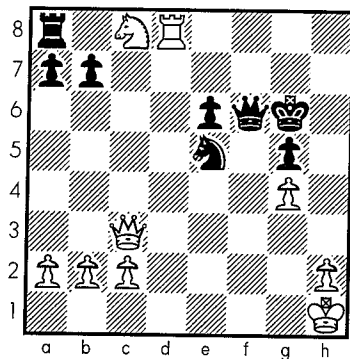
Not 29...Nxd8 30.Qd3+ Kh6 31.Qh3+ Kg6 32.Qh5+ mate.

30.Nxc8 Qf6

⁵Exercise 2: How would White proceed against 25...Ke8?

⁶Exercise 3: Find the winning line for White.

After 30...Qf6

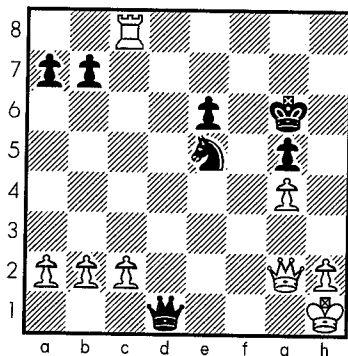


I was so relieved to have reached time control that at first I didn't realize the danger I was in. The position has changed, and Black has taken over the initiative. White's king on h1 is in more danger than Black's king on g6.

I could no longer control the white squares and protect the rook at the same time, so I set up my defenses on the dark squares.

31.Qd4 Rxc8 32.Rxc8 Qf1+ 33.Qg1 Qf3+ 34.Qg2 Qd1+

After 34...Qd1+



35.Qg1 Qd5+ 1/2—1/2

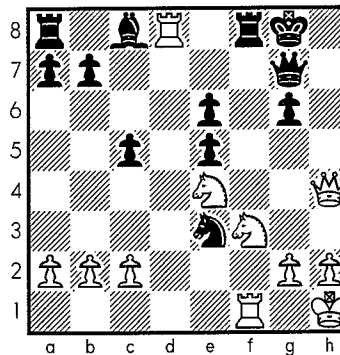
He offered a draw and I accepted.⁷



ANSWERS

1. Against 21...fxe5, White intended 22.Rd8.

After 22.Rd8



If 22...Nxf1 23.Nf6+ Kf7 24.Nxe5+ Ke7 25.Nd5 mate.
 If 22...Bd7, 23.Nf6+ Qxf6 (23...Kf7 24.Nxe5+ Ke7 25.Rxd7 mate) 24.Qxf6 Raxd8 25.Qxg6+ Kh8 26.Qh6+ Kg8 27.Qxe3 wins.

If 22...Nd5 (to protect f6), simply 23.c4.

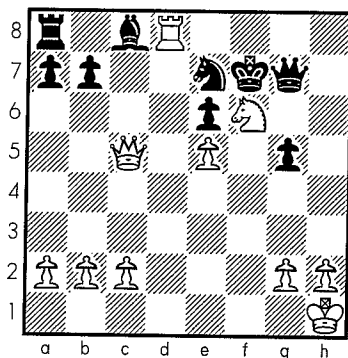
This leaves 22...Rxd8 23.Qxd8+ Qf8 24.Qg5 Nxf1 (24...Qf4 25.Qxg6+ Kg8 26.g3; 24...Nd5 25.Nfd2 Qg7 26.c4) 25.Qxg6+ Kh8 26.Nf6 Qg7 27.Qe8+ and mate.

⁷Exercise 4: After 36.Qg2, Black could have tried 36...Nf3. Why didn't he?

Having trouble *visualizing* all of these variations? Set up the position after 21...fxe5 with a tournament-standard chess set and try to find all of the sequences, without moving the pieces. Work at it!

2. If 25...Ke8, then 26.Nf6+ Kf7 27.Rd8 Ne7

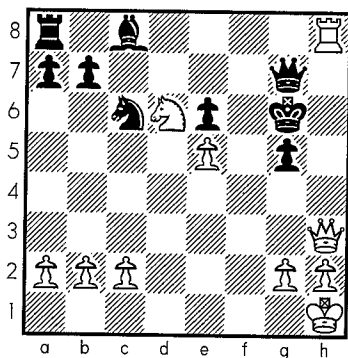
After 27...Ne7 (variation)



The game could proceed with 28.Re8 Nc6 29.Qd6 Qb6 30.Qc7+ Kg6 31.g4 winning.

3. White could have won with 29.Qd3+ Kh6 30.Qb3+ Kg6 31.Rb8

After 31.Rb8



White is threatening Qh5 mate.

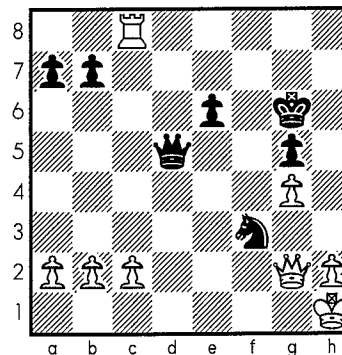
If 31...Qxe5, 32.Qb6 mate.

If 31...Nxe5, 32.Qb5+ Kf6 33 Ne8+, winning the queen.

It's important to look at all forcing variations first, especially in situations where the king is exposed and open to attack.

4. It would have been a mistake for Black to try to win with 30...Nf3:

After 36...Nf3 (variation)



Black threatens ...Qd1+, but after 37.Rd8! White would wind up with a one-pawn advantage.



REVIEW

Themes

Weak color complex (4...e6 variation).

Outpost square (d6 square in 4...e6 variation; 27.Nd6+ or 27.Nf6; 17...Ne5).

Pawn sacrifice for structural advantage (6.f5 exf5 7.exf5 gxf5).

Pawn sacrifice for initiative (6.f5 gxf5 7.d3).

Attacking the dark squares in Black's fianchettoed king's field (10.Qe1; 11.Qh4; 12.Bg5).

Setting up defenses along one color complex (12...bxc5 through 15...Qg7; 31.Qd4).

Accepting doubled pawns to control critical squares (10...Nxc4 variation).

Square in front of isolated pawn (17...Ne5; note to 20.e5).

Reorganizing the attack (15.Qh4 through 20.e5).

Square clearance (20.e5).

Guidelines

Do not put all your pawns on the same color if you cannot control the opposite color squares with your pieces.

To exploit unprotected weak squares, open the position.

In the Open Sicilian, stay away from Nxc6 when Black can recapture with his b-pawn—it strengthens his center.

Restrain your opponent's attempts at expansion.

To clear a square for a piece (especially a knight), look for the opportunity to advance a pawn.

Seek to approach a target from different angles.

Whenever possible, defend actively, and counterattack.

To maintain the initiative, sacrifice again if necessary.

When two pieces of the same value are attacked, it may be a waste of time to move either one—your opponent can only capture one at a time.

Advice

Work hard at your first game in a tournament.

Never relax—it is never over until he resigns.

Do not abandon an idea without exploring it to the end.
Take that extra step in analysis.

Examine all forcing variations first.



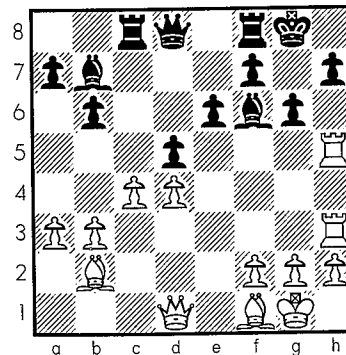
SUPPLEMENTARY GAMES

(1) Keres–Smyslov, Zurich, 1953

[Attack and Counterattack]

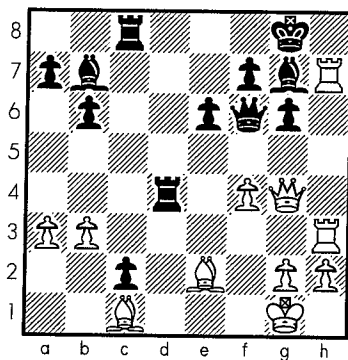
1.c4 Nf6 2.Nc3 e6 3.Nf3 c5 4.e3 Be7 5.b3 O-O 6.Bb2
b6 7.d4 cxd4 8.exd4 d5 9.Bd3 Nc6 10.O-O Bb7 11.Rc1
Rc8 12.Re1 Nb4 13.Bf1 Ne4 14.a3 Nxc3 15.Rxc3 Nc6
16.Ne5 Nxe5 17.Rxe5 Bf6 18.Rh5 g6 19.Rch3

After 19.Rch3



[Offering a rook for a kingside attack. Black declines and counterattacks in the center. After 19...gxb5 20.Qxb5 Re8, White would play 21.a4, threatening Ba3] 19...dxc4 20.Rxb7 c3 21.Qc1 Qxd4 22.Qb6 Rfd8 23.Bc1 Bg7 24.Qg5 Qf6 25.Qg4 c2 26.Be2 Rd4 27.f4

After 27.f4

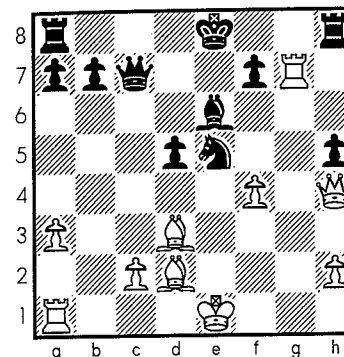


27...Rd1+ 28.Bxd1 Qd4+ 0-1

(2) J. Polgar-Knaak, Cologne, 1990 (TV Match)
[Attack on Dark Diagonals]

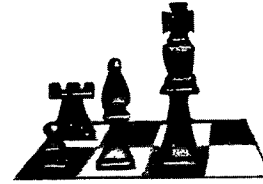
1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 Ne7 7.Qg4 Qc7 8.Bd3 cxd4 9.Ne2 Qxe5 10.Bf4 Qf6 11.Bg5 Qe5 12.cxd4 h5 13.Qh4 Qc7 14.Bf4 Qa5+ 15.Bd2 Qd8 16.g4 e5 17.dxe5 Bxg4 18.Rg1 Qd7 19.f3 Be6 20.Nd4 Nbc6 21.Nxc6 Nxc6 22.Rxg7 Qc7 23.f4 [A rook offer!] Nxe5

After 23...Nxe5



24.fxe5 Qxe5+ 25.Kf2 Qxg7 [25...Qxa1 26.Bb4] 26.Rg1 Qb2 27.Bb4 [White has been after the dark diagonals!] 27...f6 28.Re1 O-O-O [Running away at a cost. 28...Kf7 29.Rxe6 Kxe6 30.Qh3+ wins.] 29.Rxe6 Kb8 30.Qxf6 Qa2 31.Qd4 Rc8 32.Bd2 Ka8 33.Be3 Rxc2+ 34.Bxc2 Qxc2+ 35.Ke1 Qb1+ 36.Kd2 Qa2+ 37.Kd1 Qb1+ 38.Ke2 Qc2+ 39.Bd2 Rf8 40.Qxd5 1-0





GLOSSARY

Active defense: When the defender chooses to employ a counterattack as a defensive technique rather than set up passively and attempt to cover his weaknesses.

Active piece: A piece that is developed and is actively participating in the conduct of the game. Active pieces provide the basis for attack.

Advantage, material: A preponderance in piece value of one side over another. See “point count.”

Advantage, permanent: An advantage in material or pawn structure. Such advantages tend to be lasting.

Advantage, positional: An advantage in time, space, mobility, pawn structure, or the control of critical squares.

Advantage, temporary: An advantage that may gradually disappear during the course of a game, such as a lead in development.

Back rank: The first rank for each player. The back rank becomes vulnerable late in the game if the rooks do not provide adequate coverage.

Backward pawn: A pawn that constitutes the base of a pawn chain and whose forward movement is controlled by one or more enemy pawns on adjacent files. It is weak because it cannot be protected by other pawns. The weakness is significant only when it is subject to a frontal assault.

Bad bishop: A bishop that is hemmed in by its own pawns. This occurs as the result of pawns on the color of the bishop’s diagonal being immobilized by enemy pawns or pieces.

Base of a pawn chain: The very last pawn in a chain is referred to as the base. It is the weakest link because it is not defended by another pawn.

Battery: A lineup (on a single file or diagonal) of two or more pieces that move the same way, usually directed at a critical point in the enemy position. For example, the battery Qc2/Bd3 directs a two-piece attack against the h7 square.

Bind: If a player is so constrained by enemy pieces that he finds it difficult to make useful moves, he is said to be “in a bind.” See “squeeze.”

Blockading square: The square directly in front of an isolated or backward pawn. The blockading square can also serve as an *outpost square* because a piece on that square cannot be chased away by pawns.

Break: A pawn move that offers to trade pawns in order to increase control of space or free a cramped position.

Broad pawn center: Three or four center pawns abreast. Indicates very aggressive intentions. The player facing such a center must play to restrain it and break it up. Also called the *big center*.

Buried piece: A piece that is hemmed in by its own pieces and pawns, and will have trouble finding a way to play an active role. Such a piece can also hinder the development of other pieces.

Castle long; castle short: Castling on the queenside; castling on the kingside.

Center break: A situation in which two or more pawns abreast on the fourth rank are attacked by an enemy pawn that seeks to disrupt this formation.

Center fork trick: A series of moves in which one sacrifices a knight for a center pawn, knowing that the sacrificed piece will be recovered by a pawn fork and the opponent’s central pawn structure destroyed in the process.

Clearance move: A move that frees an occupied square for use by another one of your pieces. The new piece can put the vacated square to better use.

Closed center: A center which is *locked* or *fixed*. See “locked center” and “fixed center.”

Closed game: A game in which the center is closed. The piece that has the best mobility in such positions is the knight. See “closed center.”

Combination: A precisely calculated sequence of forcing moves that leads to a permanent advantage.

Combination of attraction: Luring an enemy piece to a particular square, to create a tactical possibility that did not previously exist.

Compensation: What one gets in return for giving up something of value. One may sacrifice material or accept a structural weakness such as doubled pawns. Compensation for such sacrifices consists of acquiring an advantage of a different nature.

Connected rooks: Two rooks on the back rank are connected when there are no other pieces between them. The power of the rooks is greatly enhanced in such situations.

Consolidate: Sometimes it is necessary to “put one’s house in order” before continuing with active operations. Consolidation may consist of adding extra protection to critical pawns or squares, improving piece placement, or taking care of king safety.

Coordinated pieces: Pieces are coordinated when they work in concert, either to defend or attack. They may protect each other, complement each other in attack, or supplement each other by covering a large number of critical squares.

Dark-square bishop: The White bishop that starts on c1, or the Black bishop that starts on f8. They always travel on dark-colored squares.

Decoy: An offer of material in order to induce an enemy piece to change position.

Destructive sacrifice: A type of sacrifice where you destroy the pawn cover or other piece protection around the enemy king. It usually signifies a point of no return.

Development: Moving a piece out early in the opening to a square where it will play a more active role.

Discovered attack: When a piece moves out of the way to expose an attack by the piece it was masking. Discovered at-

- tacks are dangerous because the piece that moves away can do so with impunity.
- Double attack:** When a player makes two simultaneous threats, it is referred to as a double attack. It should be distinguished from a *fork* in that both attacks need not threaten the immediate capture of material. See “fork.”
- Doubled pawns:** When two pawns of the same color occupy squares on the same file, they are said to be doubled. They are generally weak because they lack mobility. However, they can also be useful because they permit use of an adjacent file.
- Draw:** A tie game (neither player wins). A draw awards $\frac{1}{2}$ point to each player and is scored as such when (1) there is insufficient mating material; (2) there is a stalemate; (3) a three-fold repetition of position is claimed; or (4) there is mutual agreement.
- Draw offer:** The proper way to offer a draw is to make your move, say “Draw?” and then start your opponent’s clock. You should not make a draw offer when your opponent is on the move.
- Dynamic play:** Play is said to be dynamic when there are frequent structural changes that require a continual revision of strategy. This is usually brought about by tactical threats or significant changes in pawn structure.
- Exchange, the:** The trade of a minor piece for a rook. The player who trades the minor piece is said to “win the exchange.”
- Exchange sacrifice:** This occurs when a player willfully gives up a rook for a minor piece in return for some form of compensation. See “compensation.”
- Expansion:** Expansion increases the space that is directly under one’s control. It is achieved by pushing pawns forward in an attempt to enlarge the boundaries of your territory.
- Fianchetto:** The development of a bishop to g2, b2, g7, or b7. An Italian term that means “on the flank.”
- Fixed center:** A center which is occupied by multiple pawns and where some opposing pawns block each other. Pawn

- movement is possible but not without being subject to capture. See “closed center.”
- Fixed pawn structures:** Pawn structures with little or no mobility. The lack of pawn play makes it easier to predict strategy.
- Flag, hanging:** The red flag on a chess clock is lifted slowly by the minute hand when a player has three minutes left to complete the moves needed to reach time control. When it reaches the final seconds, it is said to be “hanging.” When it falls, the game may be forfeited.
- Flank attack:** An attack on either the kingside or queenside. A flank attack has a greater likelihood of success when the center is closed.
- Fluid pawn structure:** Pawn structures where further pawn movement is likely. Strategy is difficult to predict because changes in pawn structure often entail changes in strategy.
- Focal point:** A weak square in the vicinity of the king which is targeted by the attacker and which the defender will find difficult to protect. The presence of more than one focal point makes an attack stronger.
- Fork:** A form of double attack whereby a single piece threatens two pieces simultaneously.
- Frontal assault:** A direct assault on an enemy pawn located on the same half-open file as one’s heavy pieces.
- GM; IM; FM:** Grandmaster; International Master; FIDE Master. Titles awarded by the Fédération Internationale des Echecs (FIDE).
- Good bishop:** A bishop that is not hemmed in by its own pawns; a bishop with adequate *scope*.
- Half-open file:** A file on which only one side has pawns. Such a file is closed to one player, open to the other. The player to whom it is open can amass heavy pieces on it and attack the enemy pawns.
- Hanging piece:** A piece that is left unprotected and is subject to immediate capture. Hanging pieces will ruin the best strategy!
- Heavy pieces:** The rooks and queens; major pieces. Sometimes called *heavy artillery*.

Hypermodern strategy: A system of development that concentrates on controlling the center from a distance, rather than occupying it early with pawns.

Inactive piece: A piece that is not actively involved in the conduct of the game.

Initiative, the: The prerogative to control the course of action. To gain the initiative, you make a threat that your opponent must meet. To retain the initiative, you continue to operate with threats.

Interference move: A move that obstructs the line of attack of an enemy piece.

Isolated pawn: A pawn that stands alone without pawns on adjacent files. It is generally weak because, like the backward pawn, it cannot be protected by other pawns. It is particularly vulnerable if it is subject to a frontal assault.

Knight on the rim: A knight that is placed on the a- or h- files, or on the back rank. Unless it is performing a specific task, its future is “dim.” It may get trapped, or have trouble getting back to a centralized position.

Light-square bishop: The White bishop that starts on f1 or the Black bishop that starts on c8. They always travel on light-colored squares.

Locked center: A center which is occupied by multiple pawns and the opposing pawns are interlocked. No pawn movement is possible.

Major piece: A rook or a queen.

Maroczy bind: When White sets up a formation with pawns on c4 and e4 against the Sicilian Defense, he is said to have a “Maroczy bind.” The pawns suppress Black’s freeing maneuver ...d5. This formation was introduced by the Hungarian Grandmaster Geza Maroczy.

Mating pattern: A move sequence in the middlegame or endgame that contains a recognized pattern for executing checkmate.

Minor piece: A bishop or a knight.

Minority attack: Attack by a pawn minority against a pawn majority, usually on the queenside. The idea is to force a

pawn trade that leaves the opponent with a weakened pawn structure.

Mobility: Being able to move. Time and space are two essential components of mobility.

Open file: A file that is not occupied by pawns of either color. Major pieces have good mobility when placed on open files.

Open game: Positions that are characterized by few center pawns and many open lines. They usually arise from openings where White begins with 1.e4. Long-range pieces have good mobility in such positions.

Outpost: A safe square near enemy territory that is protected by one’s own pieces and is subject to effective occupation.

Passed pawn: A pawn that is unopposed by enemy pawns on its own file and the two adjacent files. Such a pawn is a candidate for promotion.

Pawn center: Commonly refers to pawns that may occupy any of the four central squares (d4,e4,d5,e5). Pawns on adjacent files are also considered to be part of the center if they are connected to pawns that occupy these squares.

Pawn chain: Two or more pawns of the same color standing adjacent on a diagonal. Only the rearmost pawn in the chain is not protected by another pawn. See “base of a pawn chain.”

Pawn contact: Opposing pawns are in contact when they can capture each other. Maintaining pawn contact *maintains the tension* in a position, keeping open more options. Capturing *resolves the tension*.

Pawn island: A cluster of pawns of the same color that is separated from the next pawn by at least one open file. The more islands, the weaker the pawn structure.

Pawn storm: The action of advancing one or more pawns against the enemy king with the intent of breaking up his pawn cover. It is commonly used when the two players are castled on the opposite side of the board.

Pin, absolute: A tactic whereby a piece is attacked and rendered immobile because it would expose the king to check.

- Pin, relative:** A pin wherein the pinned piece may elect to move but its movement would lead to a loss of material or other unfavorable outcome.
- Point count:** The prescribed value of each piece: Q=9, R=5, B=3, N=3, P=1. An advantage in the point count denotes superiority in material.
- Position:** The disposition of the pieces on the chessboard at any given time.
- Positional mistake:** A mistake that has no direct tactical consequences but still leads to a disadvantage by surrendering control of critical squares, losing time or space, or incurring structural weaknesses.
- Positional sacrifice:** A sacrifice that yields no immediate tactical gain but still leads to a positional advantage.
- Quiet move:** Sometimes played during an attacking sequence, a quiet move does not contain an immediate threat but sets up another more aggressive move. Quiet moves can be the most deadly moves of all.
- Rating:** The measurement of a player's performance, calculated by a generally accepted formula administered by an official organization. The United States Chess Federation (USCF) rates its players on a scale from 0 to 3000 (or more). A typical novice rating is 1000; a master rating is 2200 and higher.
- Redeploy:** To maneuver a piece so that it has access to another square, file, or diagonal where it will be more effective.
- Restrain:** To control the movement of enemy pieces in order to prevent them from getting active play.
- Rook lift:** A maneuver that involves moving the rook off the back rank and up a few squares. The intent is to swing the rook over to another file so that it may assist in an attack without being impeded by its own pawns.
- Running:** Moving the king rapidly from one sector of the board to another in order to evade an attack.
- Scope:** The scope of a piece refers to the number of squares it has access to. A piece hemmed in by its own pawns is said to have limited scope.

- Sector:** One way to look at the board is to divide it into three sectors: the queenside (a-, b-, and c-files), the center (d- and e-files), and the kingside (f-, g-, and h-files). Learning to focus on each sector separately will help to formulate strategy.
- Skewer:** A tactic whereby an enemy piece that stands in front of another along a rank, file, or diagonal is attacked and thereby compelled to move. This exposes the piece behind it to capture.
- Space count:** A numerical system whereby the number of squares that each player attacks in the other player's half of the board is counted. A square may be attacked more than once. Each time it is attacked, one point is allocated. The player who is ahead in the space count has greater mobility.
- Squeeze:** The exploitation of a bind by gradually increasing the pressure on an opponent's position. This is accomplished by creating new threats until the defender is unable to meet them all.
- Strategy:** Formulation and execution of a long-term plan, designed to improve one's position.
- Symmetrical pawn position:** A position in which the pawns on both sides are on the same files.
- Symmetrical position:** A chess position in which, if the board were to be folded in the center, all opposing pieces of the same kind would overlap. Symmetrical positions tend to lead to equality, unless the player on the move can find a way to break the symmetry advantageously.
- Tactic(s):** A mode of action characterized by the use of threats to win material or mate the opposing king. They are said to be "the means to an end"—the means to realize the culmination of a strategy.
- Tempo:** A unit of time in chess. The plural is "tempi." The best method of gaining time is to develop with a threat.
- Tension:** A position in which pieces and/or pawns square off against each other without capturing. In such positions, good nerves and exact calculations are essential for survival.

Theoretical move, or “theory”: A move recommended by one or more authorities on the theory of best opening play.

Transposition: A transposition occurs when a position (usually an opening position) is arrived at through a different order of moves than normal. The player who is alert to possibilities of transposing to favorable opening positions has an extra weapon at his disposal.

Trap: A sequence of moves that relies solely on tactics and frequently disregards strategical considerations. Traps usually succeed when one is not alert. They seldom work against the more experienced player.

Value, dynamic: The value of a piece in a given position. This may be lesser or greater than the static value.

Value, static: The given value of a piece. See “point count.”

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