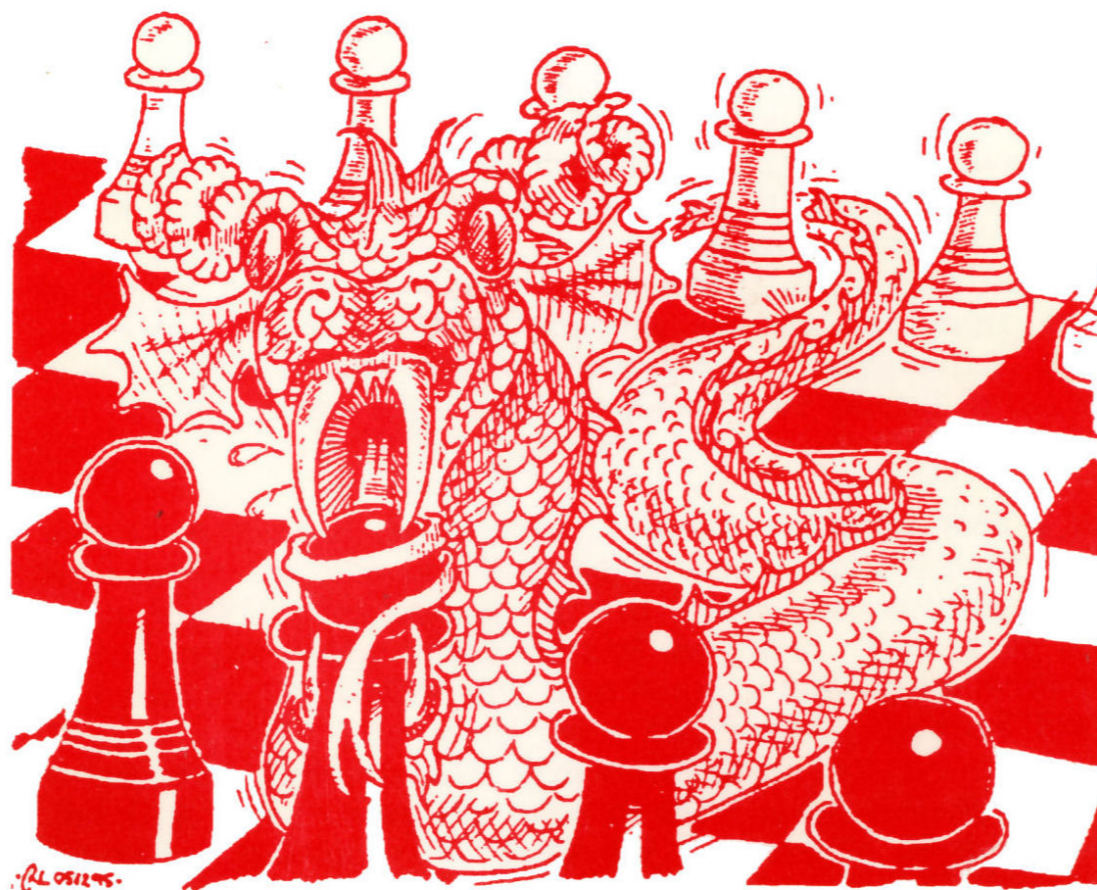


# The Creepy Crawly Opening



## The Creepy Crawly Opening

The classical opening rules go as follows:-

1. Place pawns in the centre
2. Put knights and bishops near the centre
3. Move each piece once in the opening, except when capturing or avoiding capture.
4. Castle into safety
5. Place queen one or two rows off the edge
6. Clear back rank to connect rooks
7. Place rooks on open files (swap pawns to open files.)

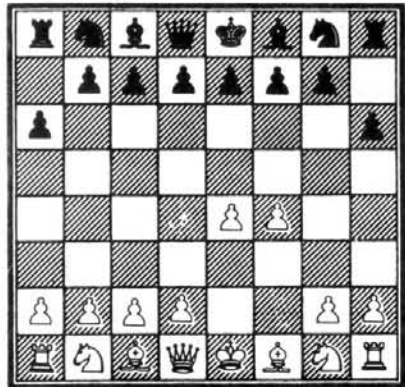
As for the reasons behind this scheme of opening play, it is due to two main factors. One, that the centre is considered the most important part of the board because pieces control more squares in the middle and can access all parts of the board more easily from the centre. Secondly, that the stronger the piece, the more in danger it is in the centre of the board, (as a corollary there is the idea: the more prominent the person, the more exposed, which explains why famous people need bodyguards), therefore the pawns, as the least valuable pieces, are placed in the middle first.

But when we ask the question, "What is weaker than a pawn?" we receive the answer "Nothing is weaker than a pawn". If we apply logic to this answer, it will follow that nothing should be placed in the centre at the start of the game. Following this line of reasoning, it would imply that beginning the game with 1 d4 or 1 e4 would be premature since the pawns, however low their value, are still worth more than nothing.

Our first game shows the ideas of the Creepy Crawly Opening in action. Black does not fight for the middle of the board - a contest in which he is disadvantaged as he moves after white - but first crawls around the edges.

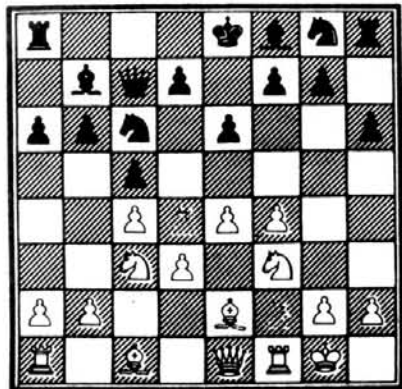
Game 1

	WHITE	BLACK
1	e4	h6
2	f4	a6



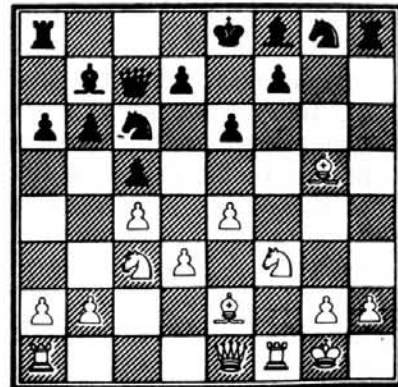
White has begun with movement of the centre pawns, but black sticks to his plan "place nothing in the centre at the start of the game!"

3	c4	c5
Black spots a weakness at d4 and makes his first strike against the centre.		
4	Nf3	e6
5	Nc3	Qc7
6	d3	Nc6
7	Be2	b6
8	0-0	Bb7
9	Qe1	



By not playing the pawns early to the centre, this has a "knock-on" effect against the other rules. The knights and bishops cannot approach the centre so securely, so black's knight has not yet reached f6, and the bishop has developed to b7. As the centre pawns have not moved yet, then the need to castle is not so great and it is possible for the black king to stay in the central fortress for longer. However, if the king remains in the middle, then rule 6, "connect the rooks" cannot occur and the rooks are liable to remain inactive in the corners. Black resolves this last problem by exchanging or sacrificing an edge pawn in order to open a file for his rook at h8.

9	...	g5!
10	fxg5	hxg5
11	Bxg5	



White has won a pawn, but we can see that, without even moving, the rook at h8 has

obtained an open file. In fact, in conjunction with the black queen at c7, a most dangerous attack has been created against the already committed white king and, in particular, against the square h2.

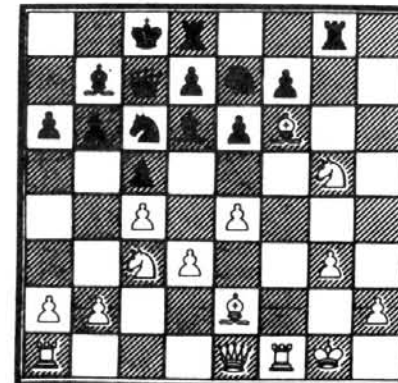
11 ... Bd6  
Black increases the pressure against white's king position

12 g3

Without the support of the white queen at e1, defending the pawn at g3, black would already be able to sacrifice on that square.

12 ... Nge7  
One rule that still does not change is rule 3 - "Move each piece once in the opening, except when capturing or avoiding capture". Black brings another piece off the back row and into the game.

13 Bf6 Rg8  
14 Ng5 0-0-0!



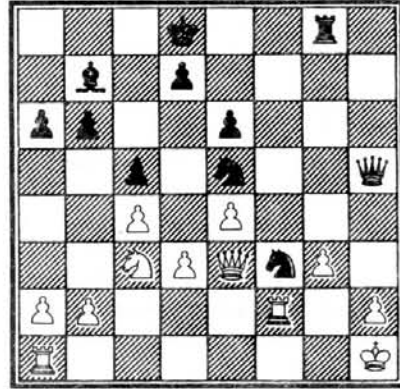
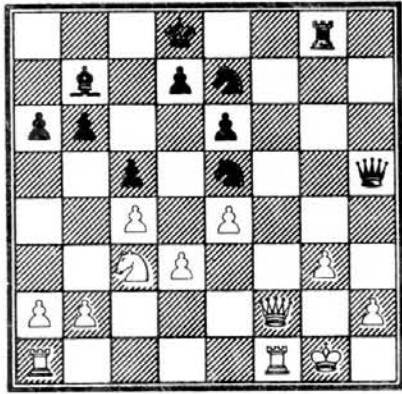
In this way black solves two more problems, the safety of his king (which was starting to feel uncomfortable due to the pressure on f7 and along the f file), and the mobilisation of his last piece, the rook at a8. Now both the black rooks will head for the kingside and see action against the white castled king.

15 Bh5  
White dare not capture at f7 with his knight because he hears the devastating riposte 15 ... Bxg3. Instead he puts more pressure on f7.

15 ... Be5!  
White's own king is too vulnerable and black sets about exchanging the advanced white pieces off.

16 Bxe5 Qxe5  
17 Nxf7  
In this way white gains a rook and a pawn for his two pieces, but then his own king is defenceless against the black onslaught.

17 ... Qxh5  
18 Nxd8 Kxd8  
19 Qf2 Ne5



Another idea of the opening surfaces with this move. Black now occupies the centre with his knight, but only when the predatory pawns on the d and f files have been neutralised. The f pawn has been exchanged off earlier and the d pawn is nailed down by black's pawn at c5. Thus the knight at e5 can finally enjoy his dominant central outpost.

20 Qf4  
Hoping in infiltrate after 20 ... Nxd3? 21 Qb8+)

20 ... N7g6!  
(Funny knight move) Not fearing 21 Qf6+ Kc7 and white gets nowhere

21 Qe3 Nh4  
Black's knights swarm all over the kingside.

22 Rf2 Nhf3+  
23 Kh1

23 ... Nxh2!  
A final sacrifice destroys white's game. If now 24 Rxh2 black wins by 24 ... Qxh2+ 25 Kxh2 Ng4+ and Nxe3

24 Kg2 and white resigned at the same time as, 24 ... Nhg4 is decisive.

So the new rules of Creepy Crawly play would look like this:-

- Rule 0 Place nothing in the centre at the start of the game.
- Rule 1 Develop knights and bishops, but further from the centre if the opponent has occupied it with pawns.
- Rule 3 Move each piece once in the opening, except when capturing or avoiding capture
- Rule 4 You now have a flexi-king. Depending on the situation, or the placing of the enemy king, your king stays in the central fortress, or castles either king or queen side.
- Rule 5 Queen is placed one or two rows off the edge.
- Rule 6 Clear back row but, if king stays in the centre, rooks may not be connected.
- Rule 7 Open files may often be found for rooks by exchanging edge pawns. Sometimes sacrificing edge pawns as in the previous game, may present the rook with an open file without even having to move.

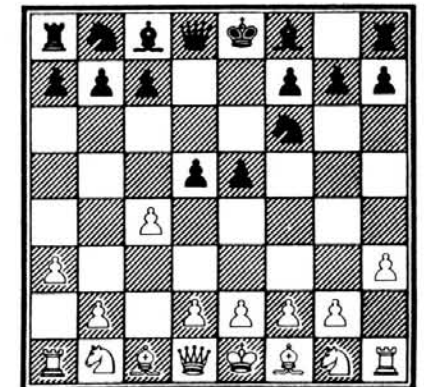
Whatever the formation chosen by both players, the Creepy Crawly player will frequently strike in the centre with c4 (or ...c5 as black). This is because the corresponding attack in the centre by f4 (or ...f5) is harder to arrange because of the danger to the king along the diagonals leading to e8 and e1.

After c4 (or ...c5 for black) the opponent either allows (I) an exchange of pawns, The Open Centre (II) blocks by advancing the d pawn, the Closed Centre, or (III) supports the d pawn with the c pawn, the Supported Centre. It is examples of these three types of response that we shall look at.

### I. The Open Centre

Game 2

1 h3 d5  
2 a3 e5  
3 c4 Nf6

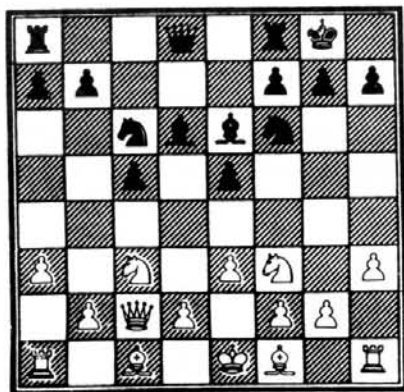


Black decides to support his pawn at d5 with a piece, which will lead to an open centre, as his d pawn will be exchanged off. If he had supported his pawn at d5 with a pawn, the game would fall into group III, (The Supported Centre).

4 cxd5 c6

Here black offers a gambit. He hopes for 5 dxc6 Nxc6 when he has an active position for the sacrificed pawn. White decides to close the position down instead.

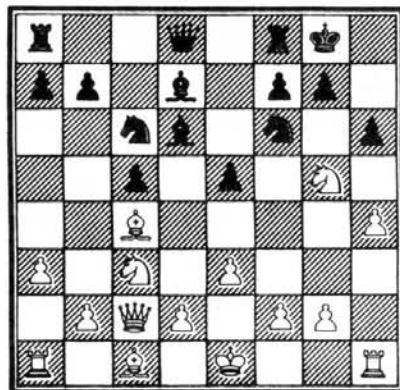
5 d6! Bxd6  
6 Nc3 0-0  
7 Qc2 c5  
8 e3 Be6  
9 Nf3 Nc6



Because of the exchange of pawns in the centre, black is not so dominant there, so the white knights have found good positions near the centre. Now white goes on a little adventure.

10 Ng5  
Threatening to gain a bishop for a knight by playing Nxe6.

10 ... Bd7  
11 Bc4 h6  
12 h4!?



Black's early castling has allowed white to make this speculative attack, instead of meekly retreating the knight. If black now plays 12 ...hxg5 13 hxg5 Ne8?? white mates with Qh7. However, matters are not quite so clear as this.

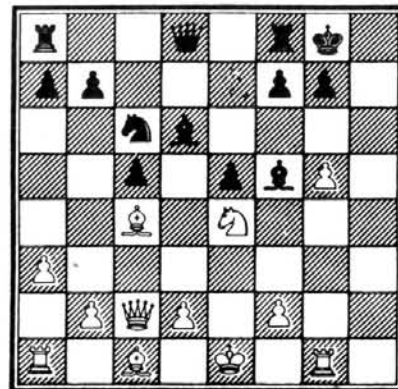
12 ... Ne7!  
Preparing to oppose the white queen on the diagonal by ...Bf5.

13 g4!?  
A further sacrificial offer. White is also no doubt planning 14 Nxf7 Rxf7 15 g5 if black does nothing. But probably better was 13 Nce4.

13 ... Bxg4  
14 Rg1 hxg5?  
Better was 14 ...Bf5 15 e4 Bg6, when 16 Nf3 is on the cards.

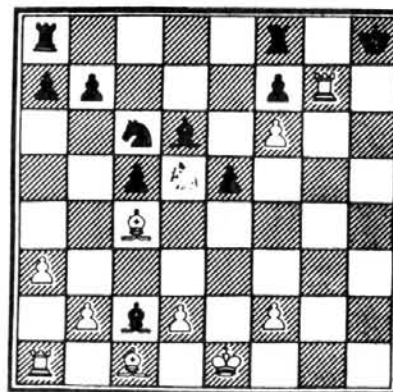
15 hxg5 Bf5  
Now this defence is less strong.

16 e4 Nxe4  
17 Nxe4 Nc6



18 Nf6+  
Exchanging into an ending where white still has the attack!

18 ... Qxf6  
19 gxf6 Bxc2  
20 Rxg7+ Kh8

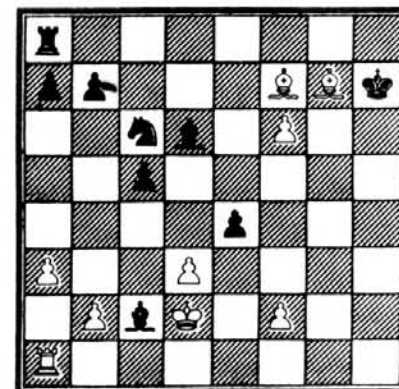


White's main aim is now to play his rook at a1 over to h1 to deliver checkmate. This is white's plan for the next 4 moves, but he has to be careful not to lose his f6 pawn on the way.

21 d3 e4  
22 Bh6 Rg8  
23 Kd2!

Black has no time to save his bishop at c2. If he plays 23 ...Ba4 or cxd3, 24 Rh1 is decisive.

23 ... Rxg7  
24 Bxg7+ Kh7  
25 Bxf7



And white soon won. The remaining moves were: 25 ...Bf4+ 26 Kxc2 exd3+ 27 Kc3 Be5+ 28 Kc4 b5+ 29 Kxc5 Bd4+ 30 Kxc6 Rc8+ 31 Kd7 Bxf6 32 Bxf6 and black resigned.

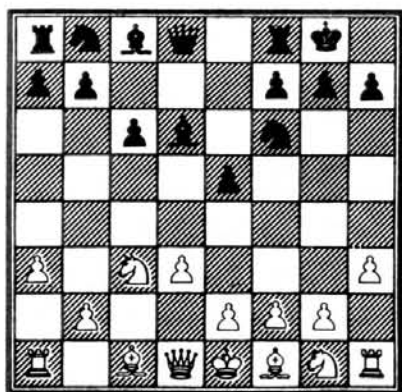
### Game 3

The next game shows that the central square at e4 is an important knight outpost in open positions. (If black, the corresponding outpost is at e5).

1        h3            d5  
 2        a3            e5  
 3        c4            Nf6  
 4        cxd5          c6

as in the previous game. White declines the gambit.

5        d6            Bxd6  
 6        Nc3          0-0  
 7        d3



But this time white decides on a slightly different pawn formation, supporting the e4 square with his pawn at d3, but blocking his queen's diagonal if it should go to c2.

7        ...            Be6  
 8        g4

All part of the plan of surrounding the e4 square, at the same time launching an attack on the black king.

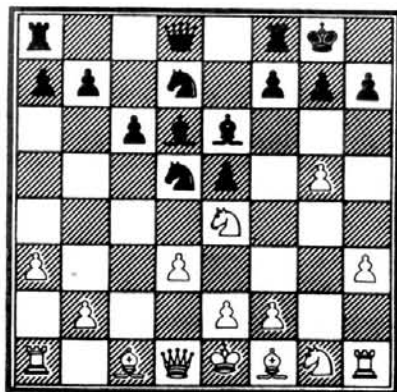
The pawn at g4, by attacking f5, makes it harder for black to play ...f5, to dislodge a white knight from the post at e4.

8        ...            Nbd7  
 9        g5

Tempting black to play 9 ...Nh5, when white could consider undermining the knight by 10 h4, e3, and Be2.

9        ...            Nd5  
 Black prefers to centralise.

10       Ne4  
 and so does white.



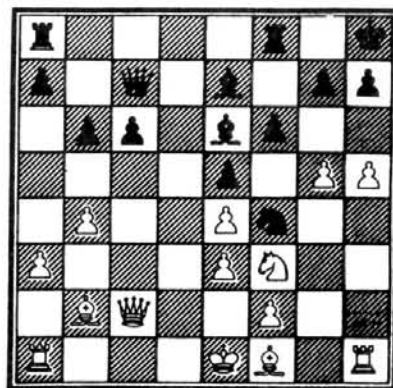
10       ...            Be7  
 11       Nf3            Qc7  
 12       Qc2            Kh8  
 13       h4            b6  
 14       h5            Nc5

White surely means business on the kingside, so black tries to gain counter play in the centre.

15       b4            Nxe4  
 16       dxe4          Nf4  
 17       Bh2

Beginning an attack from a different direction: white aims his bishop and knight against the e5 square.

17       ...            f6  
 18       e3!

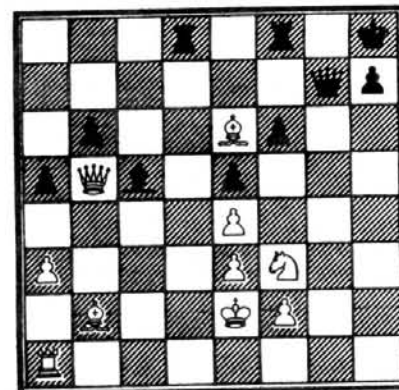


Now, in an unexpected manner, black finds his knight trapped in mid-board. Note how much better placed the white bishop is at f1, instead of g2, where it would have been exposed to attack.

18       ...            Nxh5  
 The alternative was 18 ...Bg4  
 19 Nh2

19       Rxxh5        Bg4  
 With this fork black regains some material, but still leaves himself with the disadvantage of a rook against two bishops.

20       Rh3            Bxh3  
 21       Bxh3            a5  
 22       b5            Bc5  
 23       gxf6          gxf6  
 24       Qc4            axb5  
 25       Qxb5          Rad8  
 26       Be6            Qg7  
 27       Ke2



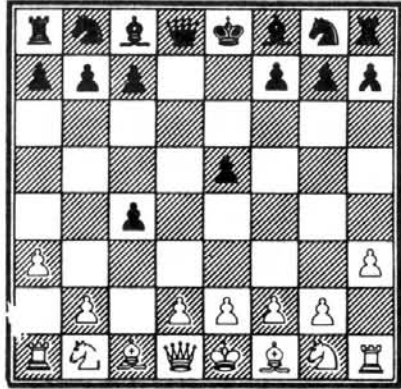
The white king is perfectly safe in the central position. With his last move white clears the back rank and prepares to swing his rook over to the king's wing.

27       ...            Rfe8  
 28       Rg1  
 Unfortunately, black sees that 28 ...Qh6 29 Nxe5 is quite devastating (29 ...fxe5 30 Bxe5+, or 29 ...Rxe6 30 Nf7++) He gives up the queen, but the game is virtually over.

28 ...Qxg1 29 Nxxg1 Rxe6 30 Nf3 Re7 31 Nh4 Red7 32 Nf5 Rd1 33 Qc6 R1d2+ 34 Kf3 Rf8 35 Qc7 black resigns. If 35 ... Rg8 36 Bxe5 wins.

Game 4

1 h3 d5  
2 a3 e5  
3 c4 dxc4



It should be possible for white to recover this pawn, after which he will be left with a central majority.

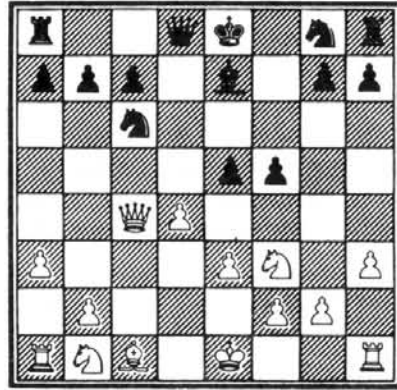
4 e3!  
Attempting to regain the pawn and continue development at the same time.

4 ... Be6  
5 Qc2 Nc6  
Black hands back the pawn. Against 5 ...b5 white could continue 6 a4 c6 7 axb5 cxb5 8 Nc3 Qb6 9 Nf3 Nd7 10 Ng5.

6 Nf3 Be7  
7 Bxc4 Bxc4  
8 Qxc4 f5

A very risky advance. Black is trying to control the e4 square and wants to attack the knight at f3. But it is too ambitious with the black king in the centre.

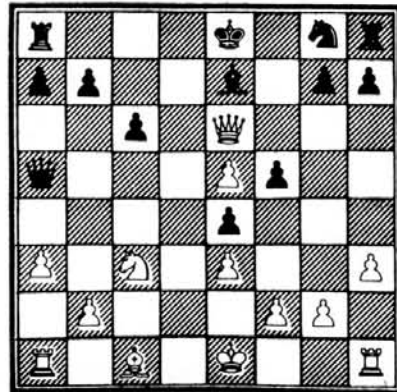
9 d4!



Opening the centre himself, now there is a chance of attack.

Black could now try to win a pawn by 9 ...exd4 10 exd4 Qd7 11 0-0 0-0-0 but would find his king too exposed after 12 Bf4.

9 ... e4  
10 Ne5 Nxe5  
11 dxe5 c6  
12 Nc3 Qa5  
13 Qe6

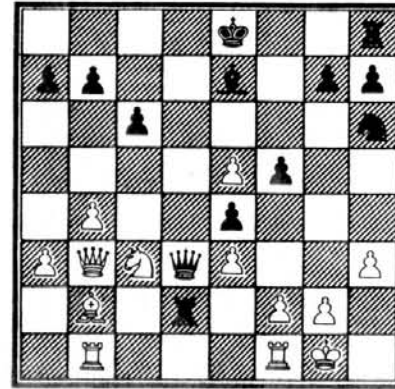


paralysing black completely.

13 ... Nh6  
14 b4 Qc7  
15 Bb2 Rd8  
16 0-0

The flexi-king has finally made up its mind where it wants to go. With black's rook at h8 out of action, white now threatens to take over the d file with Rd1.

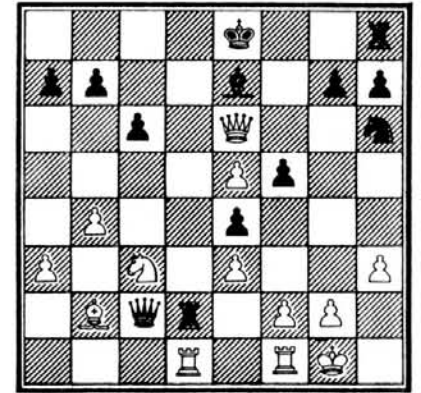
16 ... Rd2  
17 Rab1 Qd7  
18 Qb3! Qd3



Black's apparent dominance of the d file is all bluff, as his other rook at h8 still cannot get into the game.

19 Rbd1!  
Planning a double piece sacrifice to break down black's defences

19 ... Qe2  
20 Qe6!

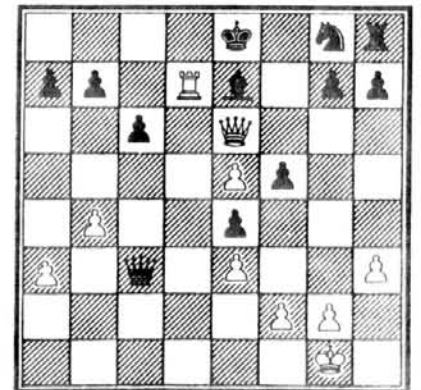


Back we go! Black has no alternative but to accept the 'gifts'

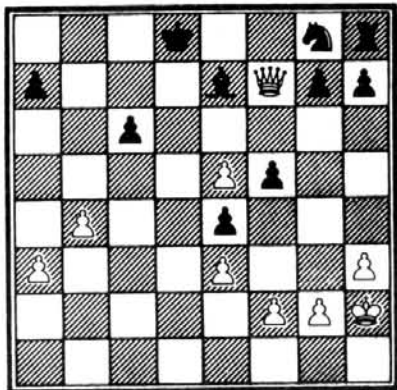
20 ... Qxb2  
21 Rxd2 Qxd2  
22 Rd1  
Decisive  
22 ... Qxc3  
23 Rd7!

Even better than winning the rook at h8 by 23 Qc8 + Kf7 24 Qxh8.

23 ... Ng8  
No alternative, as the bishop at e7 is under threat. Now white finishes off neatly.



24 Rxb7  
 threatening 25 Rb8 mate.  
 24 ... Qc1+  
 25 Kh2  
 the advantage of 1 h3 becomes  
 apparent!  
 25 ... Qd2  
 26 Rb8+ Qd8  
 27 Rxd8+ Kxd8  
 28 Qf7!

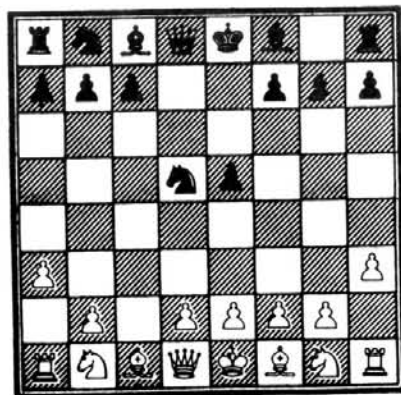


Black resigns. Although he has materially an advantage - 17 points to 16 - he is going to be massacred after white's Qxg7. The disorganised black pieces will be no match for the white queen.

The final game in the Open Centre shows the strength of the fianchettoed bishop as it bears down on the enemy king position. In fact it is because of the diagonal movement of the queen and bishops that a player is able to mount a co-ordinated attack on the enemy position from different parts of the board.

Game 5

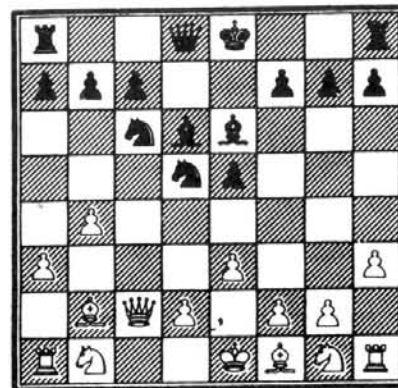
1 h3 e5  
 2 a3 d5  
 3 e4 Nf6  
 4 cxd5 Nxd5



Here, besides the plan white chooses of Qc2 and e3, he could play more directly in the centre: 5 Nf3 Nc6 (not 5 ...e4?? 6 Qa4+) 6 e4 Nf6 7 Bb5 - an O'Kelly variation of the Sicilian in reverse, with h3 added for white.

5 Qc2 Nc6  
 6 e3 Bd6?  
 Black fills the centre with pieces, but they tend to get in each other's way. Better was 6 ...Be7, to keep the d file clear.

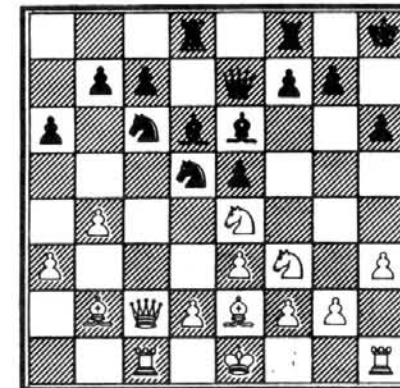
7 h4 Be6  
 8 Bb2



The lines are drawn; black comes up to the net whereas white counters from the baseline.

8 ... 0-0  
 9 Nf3 a6  
 Black plays this in order to stop 10 b5 which would drive his knight away from the defence of the pawn at e5.

10 Nc3 Qe7  
 11 Ne4 h6  
 12 Rc1 Rad8  
 13 Be2 Kh8



White's pieces have all found respectable positions, but how is he to activate the rook at h1?

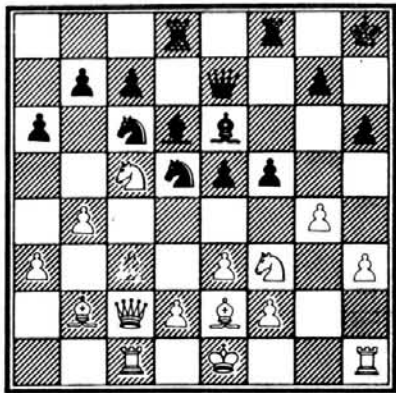
14 g4  
 The remedy is to open the files on the king's wing. The alternative was the more normal 14 0-0, which would have brought the white rook into the centre. Then, however, the white king might have succumbed to a black attack starting ...f5.

14 ... f5  
 A tempting move for black to play, since this opens the file for his own rook at f8.

15 Nc5

White rejects 15 Ng3 because of the answer 15 ...e4, discovering an attack on the knight at g3 from the bishop at d6.





The critical position. Black's attempt to go forward by 15 ...fxg4 16 hxg4 Bxg4 rebounds after 17 Nh4! threatening Ng6+.

An attack on the other wing by 15 ...Ndx b4 16 axb4 Nxb4 also fails after 17 Qc3 Na2 18 Nxe5 Nxc3 19 Ng6+ Kh7 20 Nxe7 and white wins a piece.

15 ... Bc8  
Among other things, 15 Nxb7 was threatened.

16 Rg1  
A difficult decision for white. Clearly he can wait until black captures at g4 and then the h file will be open for his rook.

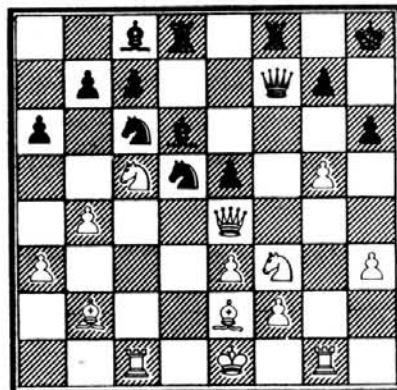
But what if black does not oblige? White, therefore, forces the issue, even though he rook may end up on the wrong file. He now threatens 17 g5 h5 18 Nh4 with Ng6+ or Bxh5 to follow.

16 ... f4  
Black gets on with his own attack, trying to get his f8 rook into action against the white king.

17 g5  
Here 17 ...Bf5 could be answered by 18 e4 or Qb3.

17 ... fxe3  
18 dxe3 Qf7  
lining up the heavy guns along the f file. Unfortunately, black never gets the chance to fire them.

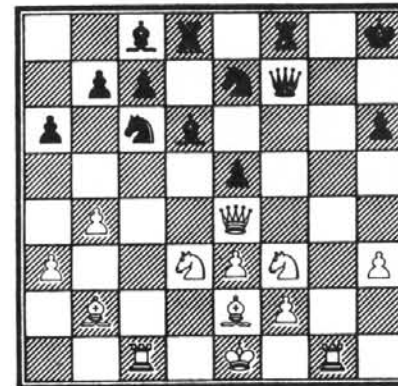
19 Qe4



First the knight, now the queen ventures onto the central e4 square. Bearing in mind that the more centralised the piece, the greater its power, but also its exposure, white is prepared to transfer his queen to h4 in case of 19 ...Bf5.

19 ... Nde7  
Parrying the afore mentioned threat of Qh4, which would be adequately met by 20 ... Nf5!

20 gxh6 gxh6



21 Nd3!  
This glorious retreat underlines the power of the bishop that has been lurking so long on b2, waiting to deliver the final blow to black's king at the other end of the diagonal. With four pieces trained on the hapless e5 pawn, black can resist no longer.

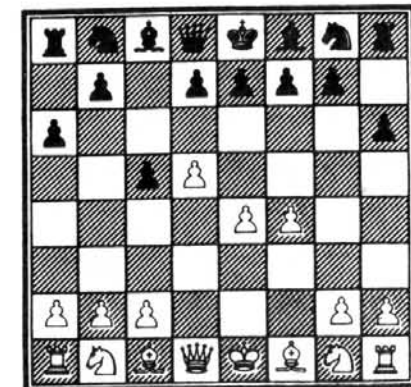
21 ... Bf5  
22 Ndx e5! Black resigns. If he plays 22 ...Bxe4 23 Nxf7+ Kh7 24 Rg7+, otherwise after 22 ...Nxe5 23 Nxe5 white simply crashes through on the diagonal.

## II The Closed Centre

With the closed centre, the opponent avoids pawn exchanges by advancing in the centre when challenged. Curiously, all our examples in this section are with the black pieces. But eventually we hope to learn to play without 'colour prejudice' - the prejudice being that, if you are white you have an advantage and must advance and attack, and if you are black you are at a disadvantage and must either defend or counter attack.

### Game 6

1	e4	h6
2	d4	a6
3	f4	c5
4	d5	



Now the centre will be locked for some time to come. The advantage for black with this move is that it will be easier to plant a piece at e5.

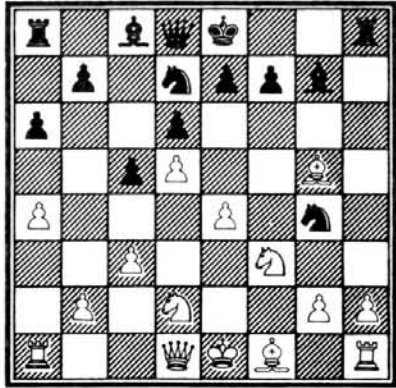
4 ... d6  
5 a4 g5

Played for two reasons:-

(1) to open the files on the kingside

(2) to draw the f pawn away from controlling e5.

6 fxg5 hxg5  
7 Bxg5 Bg7  
8 c3 Nd7  
9 Nf3 Ngf6  
10 Nbd2 Ng4



The black minor pieces circle round the central e5 square.

White decides to contest control of it.

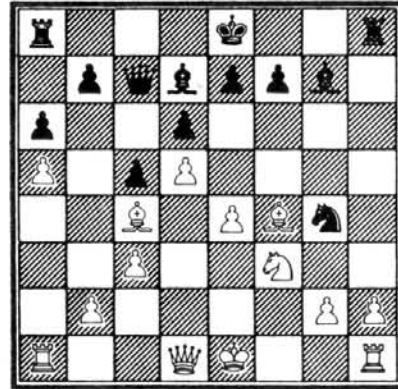
11 Nc4 Nde5  
12 Bf4

White hopes by a mass of exchanges to leave black with a pawn on e5, rather than a piece.

12 ... Nxc4  
Black temporarily releases his hold on e5, but also meets the threat.

16

13 Bxc4 Bd7  
14 a5 Qc7



Rule 3 of the opening is being observed. Black moves his pieces once, off the back row and prepares to castle queenside.

15 0-0 0-0-0  
16 Qe2 Rdg8

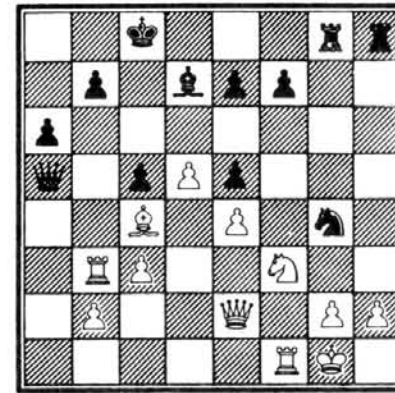
There is no likelihood of black swiftly regaining his pawn. He is simply relying on the active positioning of his pieces.

17 Ra3  
As both sides have castled on opposite wings, fierce attacks are in the offing and white's last move toys with the idea of Bxa6, as well as the pawn storming threat of 20 b4. So black decided to act sharply on the king's wing.

17 ... Be5!  
18 Bxe5 dxe5!

The recapture with a pawn allows the black queen to come into action via d6.

19 Rb3 Qxa5



Black cheekily snatches a pawn and braves whatever attack white can conjure up.

20 ... d6! exd6  
21 Ne1??

White is starting to lose confidence in his position, otherwise he would play the simple 21 Bx17, after which though, he is still clearly worse.

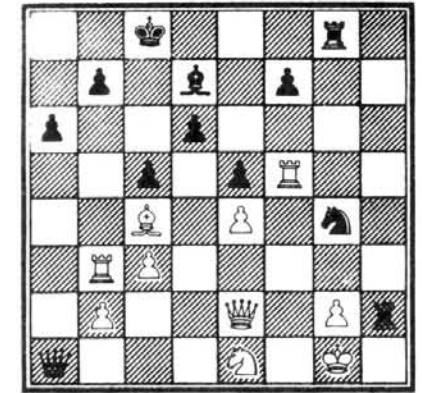
21 ... Rxb2  
Virtually decisive. Black now threatens ...Rgh8 and ...Rh1+.

22 Rf5  
hoping to answer 22 ...Rgh8? by 23 Qxg4.

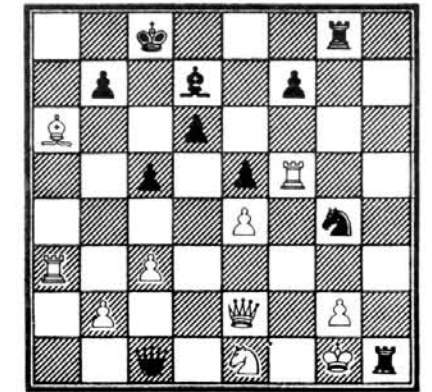
22 ... Qa1!

Invasion from both wings.

17



23 Ra3 Qc1  
24 Bxa6 Rh1+!



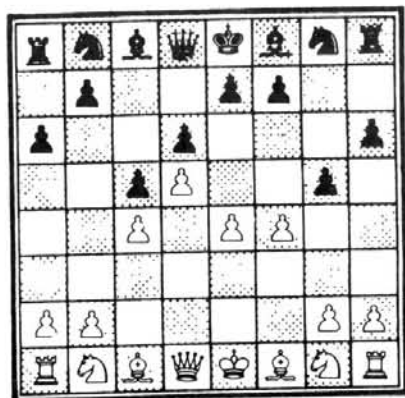
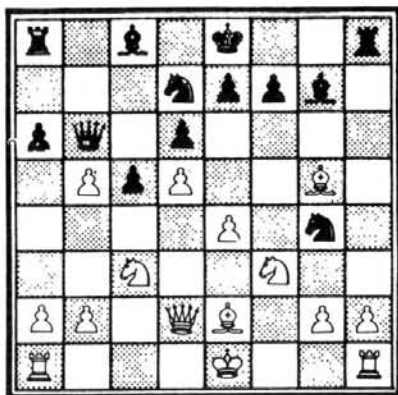
White resigns since he loses after 25 Kxh1 Qh6+ 26 Kg1 Qh2+ 27 Kf1 Qh1+.

In this variation the black queen completes a most striking sequence of moves, starting d8-c7-a5-a1-c1 on the queenside and ending h6-h2-h1 on the kingside. With the centre blocked, the agility of the queen is demonstrated from the wings.

### Game 7

Our next example shows black opening both sides of the board with pawn breaks.

1	d4	h6
2	e4	a6
3	f4	c5
4	d5	d6
5	c4	g5



The standard gambit position.

6	fxg5	hxg5
7	Bxg5	Bg7
8	Nc3	Nd7
9	Nf3	Ngf6
10	Be2	

Now the positional method of play would be to continue ...Qc7 ...Ng4 and ...Ne5 as in the previous game.

10	...	h5?!
11	cxb5	Ng4
12	Qd2	Qb6

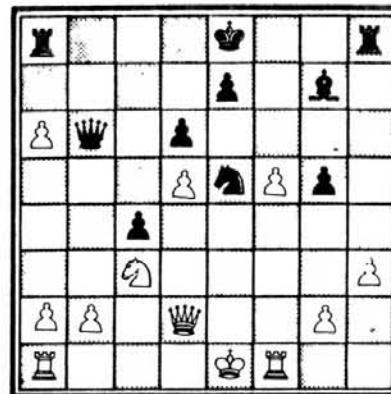
The position is now extremely unclear, but white's next move leads to a speedy loss.

13 Nh4?  
Headed for the f5 square.

13	...	Nde5
14	h3	f6

Now if 15 hxg4 fxg5 16 Qxg5 Bf6! wins the pinned knight at h4. Suddenly white is losing a piece - which was not his intention!

15	Nf5	Bxf5
16	exf5	fxg5
17	hxa6	c4
opening the diagonal to f2.		
18	Bxg4	Nxg4
19	Rf1	Ne5



The black knight wheels into another target, this time the d3 square.

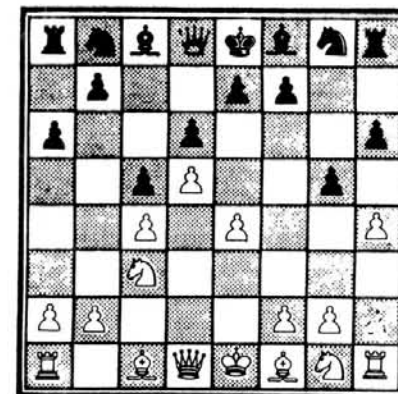
20	0-0-0	Nd3+
21	Kb1	Rb8

White resigns, a piece down and facing a crushing attack against b2.

Another game shows how quickly the opponent can be overrun after a pawn break on the queen's wing.

### Game 8

1	e4	h6
2	d4	a6
3	c4	c5
4	d5	d6
5	Nc3	g5
6	h4	



This time white challenges the pawn at g5 from the edge rather than from the centre.

6	...	g4
Closing the king's side.		

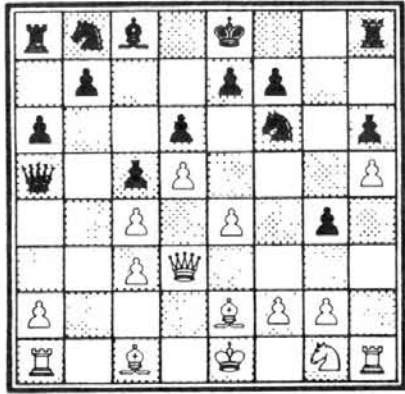
7	h5	
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The plan here is to split the pawns at g4 and h6, and make them later into sitting targets for the white pieces to attack. But it consumes time.

7	...	Bg7
8	Be2	Bxc3

Trading the powerful bishop to shatter white's queenside pawns - an unclear continuation.

9        bxc3        Qa5  
10        Qd3        Nf6



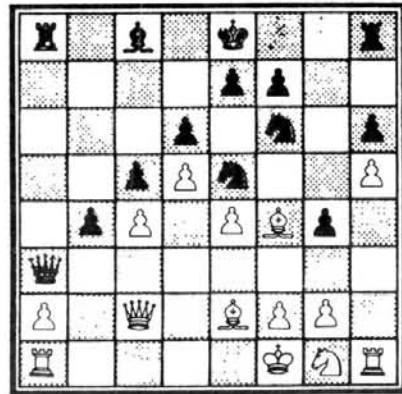
Black keeps up the pressure with the threat of ...Nxe4 Qxe4 Qxc3 +.

11        Bd2        Nbd7  
And now another tempo will be gained when the knight arrives at e5.

12        Qc2        b5!

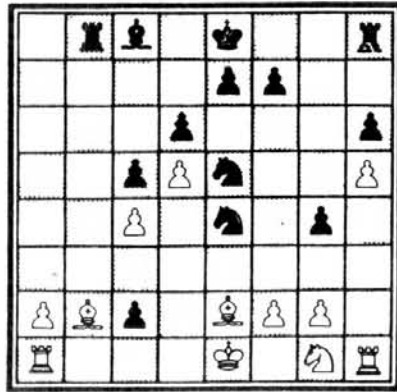
The break, though it undoubles the white pawns, allows black to bring his queenside forces into the game.

13        cxb5        axb5  
14        Kf1        Ne5  
15        e4        b4  
16        Bf4        Qa3



with the powerful threat of ...b3.

17        Bc1        b3!  
18        Bxa3        bxc2  
19        Bb2        Nxe4  
20        Ke1        Rb8

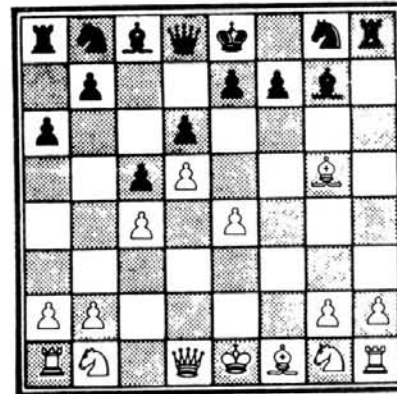


White resigns. If his bishop moves ... Rb1 + decides the game.

Finally, a heavyweight encounter from an International event.

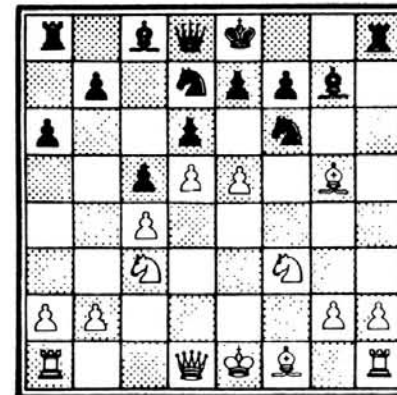
Game 9

1        d4        h6  
2        e4        a6  
3        f4        c5  
4        d5        d6  
5        c4        g5  
6        fxg5        hxg5  
7        Bxg5        Bg7



As seen in several encounters.

8        Nc3        Nd7  
9        Nf3        Ngf6  
10        e5!



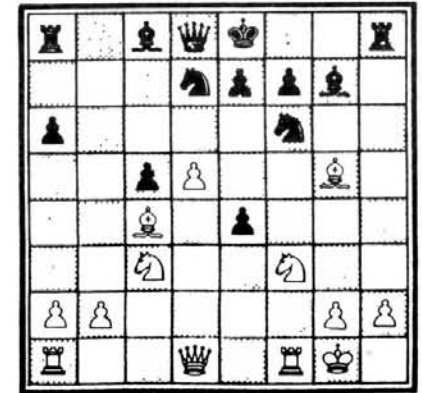
Imaginative play. White decides to 'kill' the e5 square as a possible knight outpost.

10        ...        dxe5  
11        Bd3

Given peace and tranquillity, white will increase the pressure on the pawn at e5 by 0-0, Qe2 and Rael.

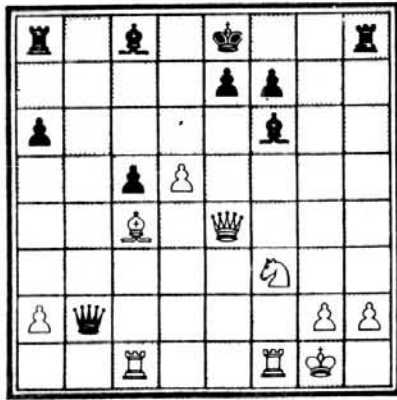
11        ...        b5  
But tranquillity is not at home. Black attempts to disrupt white's plans by another wing diversion.

12        0-0        hxc4  
13        Bxc4        e4!



The position is fast becoming desperate for both sides!

14        Nd2        Qb6  
15        Qe2        Qxb2  
16        Rac1        Ng4  
17        Qxg4        Bxc3  
18        Qxe4        Nf6  
19        Bxf6        Bxf6  
20        Nf3

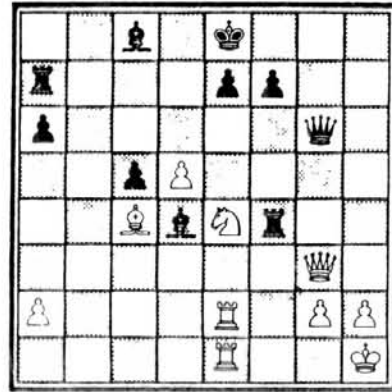


White still piles in. This time his threat is the devastating Ne4 move.

24 ... Bd4+  
 25 Kh1 Rf4  
 26 Rfe1 Ra7  
 27 Ne4 Qg6?

Much stronger here was 27 ...Qh6 with the threat of ...Rh4 to follow.

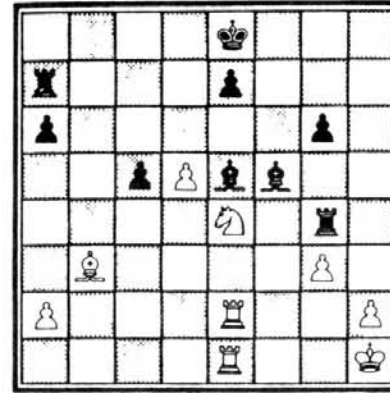
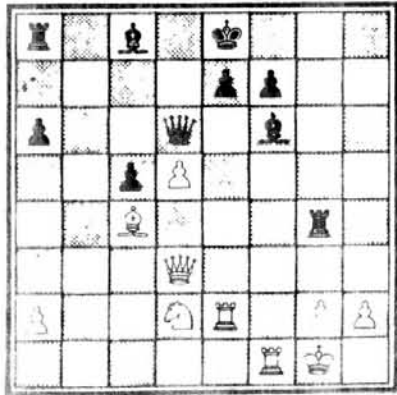
28 Qg3!  
 reasserting superiority. Black now has to play carefully to survive.



28 ... Be5  
 29 Qxg6 fxg6  
 30 g3 Rg4  
 31 Bh3 Bf5

The furious exchange of blows has left material level and the advantage apparently in white's hands, with his strongly centralised queen and the black king trapped in the centre. But matters do not turn out to be as clear cut as that.

20 ... Rg8  
 21 Rc2 Rg4!  
 22 Qd3 Qb6  
 23 Re2 Qd6  
 24 Nd2



The game now degenerated into a time scramble in which white lost his advantage; but skilful play secured him the draw.

32 Nxc5 Bc3 33 Rcl Bd4 34 Ne6 Kd7 35 Nxd4 Rxd4 36 Rce1 Kd6 37 Kg1 a5 38 a3 Rb7 39 Ba2 a4 40 Kg2 Rc7 41 h3 Rd3 42 g4 Bc8 43 Bb1 Rxa3 44 Bxg6 Rcc3 45 Bf5 Rg3+ 46 Kh2 Rxh3+ 47 Kg2 Rag3+ 48 Kf2 Rf3+ 49 Kg2 Rhg3+ 50 Kh2 Bxf5 51 gxf5 Rg7 52 Re6+ Kd7 53 d6 exd6 54 Rd1 Rxf5 55 Rdx6+ Kc7 56 Rc6+ Kb8 57 Rb6+ Rb7 58 Ra6 Rb4 59 Re8+ Kb7 60 Rea8 Rc5 61 R8a7+ Kc8 62 Ra8+ Kd7 63 R8a7+ Rc7 64 Rxa4 Drawn.

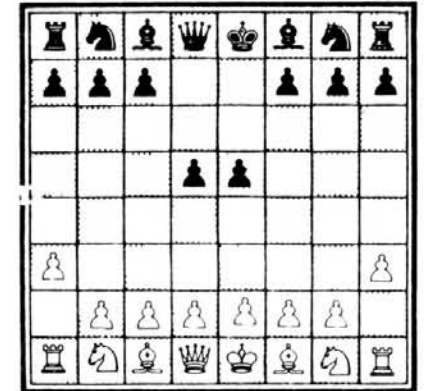
### III The supported centre

With the supported centre, c3 (or ...c6) will usually be played to support the central d pawn when attacked by another pawn. This ensures that a pawn can recapture and remain in the centre in the event of an exchange.

Because this approach is less aggressive, not trying to attack with the pieces (part I) or seize space by a pawn advance (part II), then the Creepy Crawly player has a greater range of options. Here are some examples of a 'St. George' formation.

#### Game 10

1 h3 d5  
 2 a3 e5



White could now play 3 e4 c6. In that case, if white plays 4

e3, black can respond sharply with 4 ...d4, since if 5 Nf3 dxe3 6 fxe3 e4 7 Nd4 Qh4+. However, white can improve with 6 dxe3 Qxd1+ 7 Kxd1 f6 8 Bd3! Nd7 9 Nbd2 Nc5 10 Bc2 a5 11 b3 Be6 12 Ke2.

Also possible is 3 c4 c6 4 e3 d4 5 Qe2!? Be6 6 Nf3 Qd6 7 exd4 exd4 8 Qe4 c5 9 Qxb7 Qc6 10 Qxc6 Nxc6 11 d3 with advantage to white. Therefore, black should play 5 ... Be7 6 Nf3 Qd6 7 d3 Nf6 8 e4 0-0 9 g3 a5 10 Bg2 with an unclear position.

Finally white could consider 3 c4 c6 4 Qc2 dxc4 5 Qxc4 Be6 6 Qc2 or 4 ... Nf6 5 d3 Bd6 6 g4.

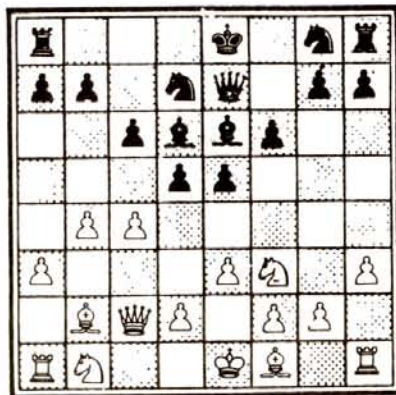
3 e3 c6  
4 h4

The 'St. George' formation, characterised by the fianchetto of the queen's bishop and the placing of pawns at b4 and e3 (or ...b5 and ...e6) instead of the 'Macho Grob' formation with a fianchettoed king bishop and pawns at g4 (...g5) and d3 (...d6).

4 ... Bd6  
5 Bb2 Qe7  
6 c4 Be6

If black had played 6 ...d4, white would reply 7 c5 Bc7 8 Bc4.

7 Qc2 Nd7  
8 Nf3 f6

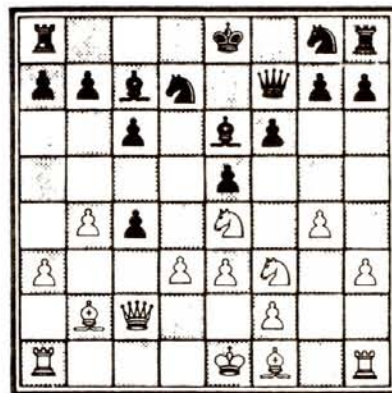


Black is supporting his centre 'par excellence'. He hopes that white will run out of ideas with nothing to do and with no way to break down the central fortress.

9 g4  
But white can still expand in other areas.

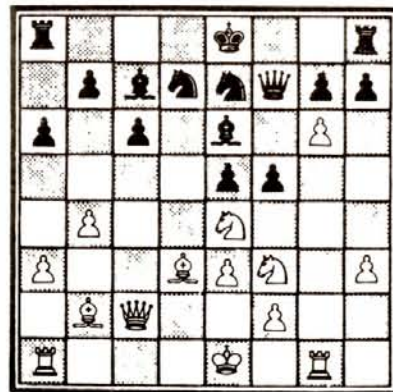
9 ... Qf7  
Putting pressure on the c pawn and trying to encourage white to play 10 cxd5 cxd5, when after a later ... Nb6 and ... Rc8, black takes over the c file. White responds by sacrificing his c pawn to obtain the out post at e4.

10 Nc3! dxc4  
11 Ne4 Bc7  
12 d3!



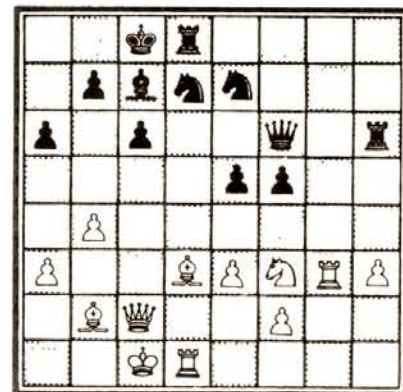
Completes the sacrifice by further exploiting the diagonal leading from c2 to h7.

12 ... cxd3  
13 Bxd3 a6  
14 Rg1 Ne7  
15 g5 f5  
16 g6!



Planning in the event of 16 ...hxg6 17 Neg5 Qg8 18 Nxe6 Qxe6 19 Ng5 Qf6 26 Bc4, or 16 ...Nxc6 17 Neg5 Qg8 18 Nxe6 Qxe6 19 Bxf5.

16 ... Qg8  
17 gxh7 Rxh7  
18 Neg5 Rh6  
19 Nxe6 Qxe6  
20 Rxc7 Qf6!  
21 Rg3 0-0-0!  
22 0-0-0



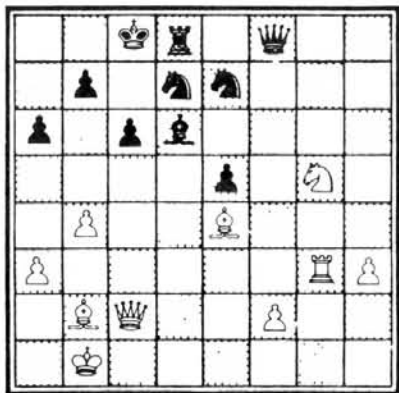
Apparently black has regained a lot of ground with his last active moves. But now he over reaches.

22 ... f4?  
23 exf4 Qxf4+  
24 Kbl Qf8

The cause of this abject retreat is white's threat of Bc1. And the natural 24 ... Rhh8 is met by 25 Ng5! with the powerful threat of 26 Ne6.

25 Be4!  
White regains control with this occupation of an outpost. He also prevents ...e4, discovering an attack on his rook at g3.

25 ... Rd6  
26 Rxd6 Bxd6  
27 Ng5!



A glorious retreat which threatens the deadly 36 Bh3.

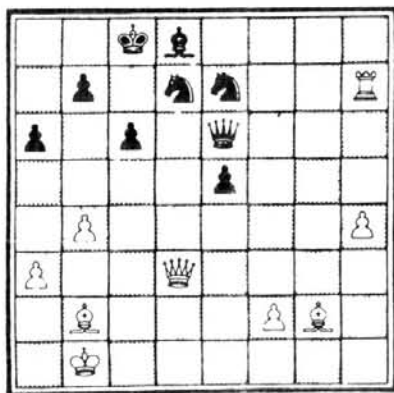
35 ... Qg6  
 36 Qxg6 Nxg6  
 37 Bh3 Nf8  
 38 Rf7 Black resigns. He is paralysed and threatened with 39 Rxf8. If 38 ...Kc7 39 Bxe5+ exploits another pin.

The move is nonetheless played, with dire effects for the squares at e6 and f7.

27 ... Qf6  
 28 h4 Rh8  
 29 Rf3 Qg7  
 30 Nf7

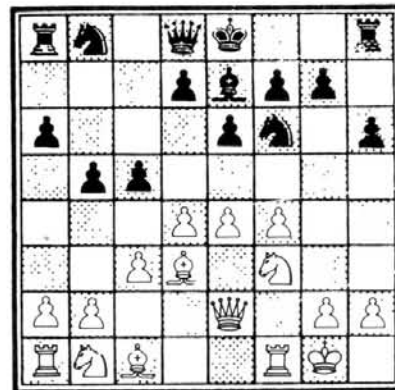
This simple fork wins material and the game.

30 ... Rh6  
 31 Nxh6 Qxh6  
 32 Qd3 Bc7  
 33 Rf7 Qe6  
 34 Rh7 Bd8  
 35 Bg2!



### Game 11

1 e4 h6  
 2 d4 a6  
 3 c3 e6  
 4 f4 b5  
 5 Bd3 Bb7  
 6 Nf3 Nf6  
 7 Qe2 c5  
 8 0-0 Be7

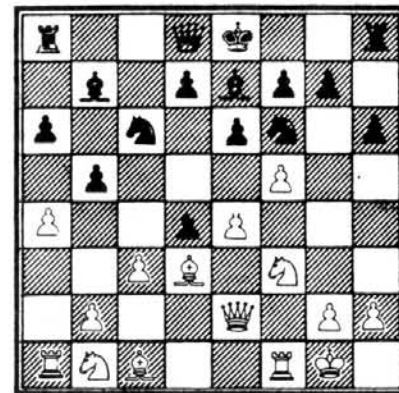


Black's ... Be7 is a necessary move to block the file between the white queen and the black king. Black does not wish to fall for 8 ... Nc6? 9 d5 exd5? 10 exd5+ Ne7 11 d6 winning a piece. Those central pawns must be watched like a hawk!

9 f5 Nc6  
 10 a4

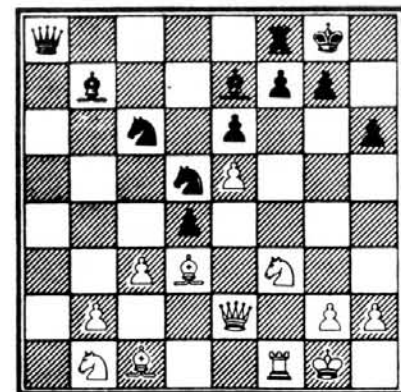
White finds another target. If black now plays 10 ...b4? 11 e5 Nd5 12 c4 drives him backwards.

10 ... cxd4!



Preparing to answer 11 cxd4 with 11 ...Nb4 exchanging off white's bishop at d3.

11 axb5 axb5  
 12 Rxa8 Qxa8  
 13 e5 Nd5  
 14 fxe6 dxe6  
 15 Bxb5 0-0  
 16 Bd3



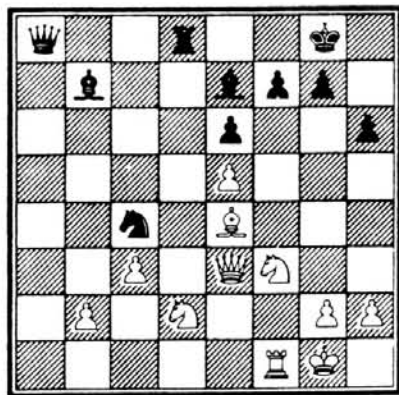
A critical position. White intends to cause trouble with 17 Qe4 (threatening mate) against which there are no satisfactory replies. So black bypasses this with his own pawn sacrifice.

16 ... Ne3!  
 17 Bxe3 dxe3  
 18 Qxe3 Rd8

Now 19 Qe4 has less terrors, as after 19 ... g6 the pawn at h6 is not en prise.

19 Be4  
 White tries to neutralise the concealed pressure along the central diagonal and steer for a simple position where he has an extra pawn.

19 ... Na5  
 20 Nbd2 Nc4!

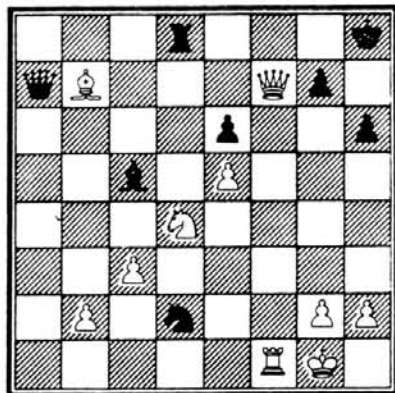


A move that throws white completely. He cannot contemplate 21 Bxb7 Nxe3 22 Bxa8 Nxf1, but his best was 21 Nxc4 Bxe4, when the two bishops give black ample compensation for the lost pawn.

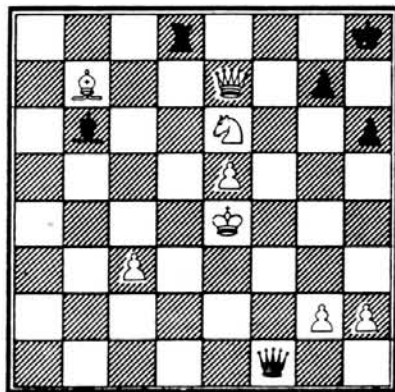
21 Qf4  
 This leads to speedy disaster.

21 ... Bc5 +  
 22 Nd4  
 Not 22 Kh1 Be3!  
 22 ... Nxd2

23 Qxf7 + Kh8  
 24 Bxb7 Qa7  
 White has still too many pieces "in the air".



25 Qc7 Bb6  
 26 Qe7 Nxf1  
 27 Kxf1 Qa1 +  
 28 Ke2 Qxb2 +  
 29 Kd3 Qb5 +  
 30 Ke4 Qf1  
 31 Nxe6

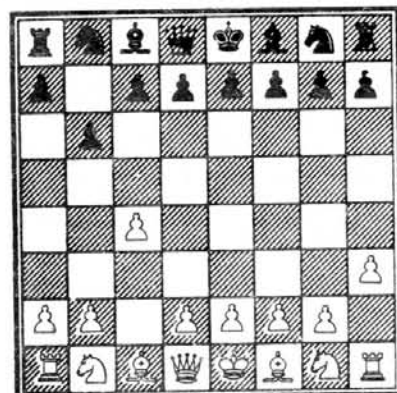


An interesting position. White can conjure up some threats against the rook at d8 and the pawn at g7, but not enough to cause an upset.

31 ... Qxg2 +  
 32 Kf5 and black later won.

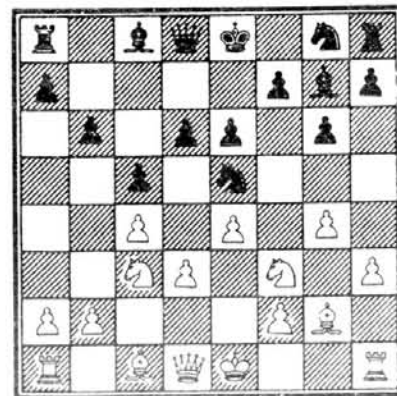
Of course, the opponent will not always place his pawns centrally, so here is an example of how to deal with a counter crawler!

1 h3 b6  
 2 c4



As black holds back in the centre, white moves forward.

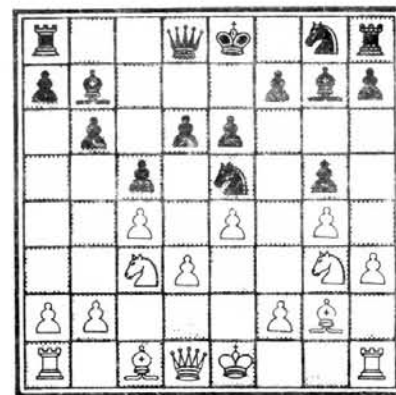
2 ... c5  
 3 Nc3 g6  
 4 Nf3 Bg7  
 5 d3 Nc6  
 6 e4 d6  
 7 g4 e6  
 8 Bg2 Ne5



The contestants lock horns over the control of prime central squares in particular the holes in the white position at d4, f4, h4.

9 Nh2  
 Declining to help black by exchanging with 9 Nxe5 dxe5!: White now threatens to flow forward with 10 f4.

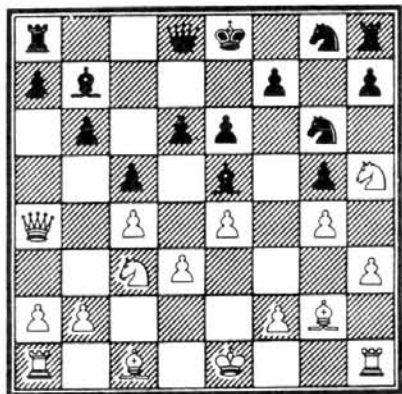
9 ... g5  
 10 Nf1 Bb7  
 11 Ng3



White causes his own disturbance by now threatening to move into the hole at h5 and attack the bishop at g7

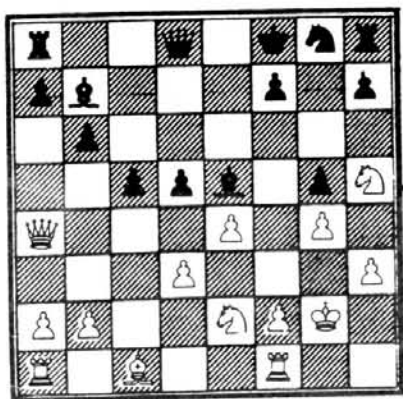
11 ... Ng6  
 12 Nh5 Be7  
 13 Qa4!





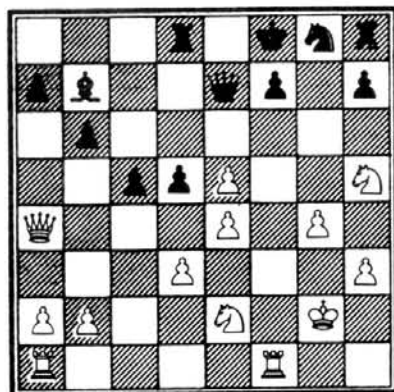
An awkward piece of opportunism. There is no completely satisfactory reply. If black plays 13 ... Qd7 14 Qxd7+ Kxd7 15 Bxg5 captures a key pawn.

13 ... Kf8  
 14 Ne2 Nh4  
 15 0-0 Nxc2  
 16 Kxc2 d5  
 17 cxd5 exd5



Apparently black has lined up his bishops nicely against the white king. But before black can strike, a fireball engulfs his own position.

18 Bxg5 Qxg5  
 19 f4 Qe7  
 20 fxe5 Rd8



21 Rxf7+! Kxf7  
 Capturing with the queen led to certain defeat after 22 Rf1, as the white queen is too powerful for the scattered black forces.

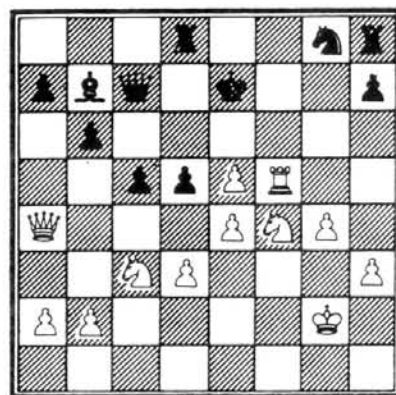
22 Rf1+ Ke6  
 Black must slog it out in the middle. There is no safe haven after 22 ...Kg6 23 Nef4+ Kh6 24 exd5! and now 24 ...Qxe5 loses to 25 h4 and g5+.

23 Rf5!  
 Threatens mate in one move.

23 ... Qc7  
 24 Nhf4+!

White must centralise his knights. If he loses his grip on the position, black will eventually win with his extra rook.

24 ... Ke7  
 25 Nc3!

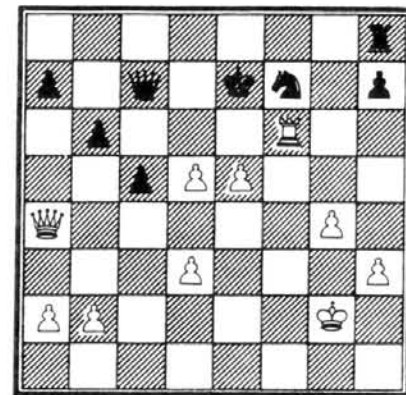


Putting the pressure on the pulse of black's position - the d5 square. 25 ... dxe4 now looks attractive, but loses immediately to 26 Qc4!

25 ... Nh6!  
 26 Rf6!

No easy escape for black. If he tries exchanges by 26 ... Rhf8, 27 Rxf8 leads to a winning fork at e6 or d5. An attempt to jettison the queen after 26 ... Qxe5 27 Re6+ Qxe6 28 Nxe6 Kxe6 also fails to 29 Qxa7.

26 ... Nf7  
 27 Nxd5+ Rxd5  
 28 Nxd5+ Bxd5  
 29 exd5



Though black still has material equality of a knight against three pawns, the unceasing defensive task has worn him down. He could still have defended by 29 ... Kd8 30 Qf4! 29 ... Nxe5? 30 d6+!

Decisive.  
 30 ... Qxd6  
 31 Rxd6 Kxd6  
 and white mopped up with 32 Qxa7 Nd7 33 Qa4 Re8 34 Qf4+ Kc6 35 Qh6+ Kc7 36 Qxh7 Re2 37 Kg3 Rxb2 38 g5 Rxa2 39 g6 Ra3 40 g7 Black resigns.

## HISTORY OF THE CREEPY CRAWLY

- 1979: 19 December, first St. George game played.
- 1980: December, Tony Miles (Britain's top board) defeats World Champion, Anatoly Karpov with St. George opening.
- 1981: Publication of St. George cassettes by Audio Chess.  
Pergamon Press print "The St. George" book, (now out of print).  
Publication of Macho Grob cassette.
- 1982: Publication of "The Grob Meets its Match" and "Polish Opening" cassettes.
- 1990: "The Killer Grob", published by Pergamon/Maxwell Macmillan.
- 1991: Maxwell Macmillan goes into liquidation.
- 1994: Publication of "The New St. George" book by Cadogan.  
Re-recording and re-issue of St. George tapes.  
Global Opening cassettes published
- 1996: Creepy Crawly book printed.

All books (except the St. George) and cassettes available from Audio Chess, 7 Billockby Close, Chessington, Surrey, KT9 2ED, send stamped addressed envelope for catalogues.