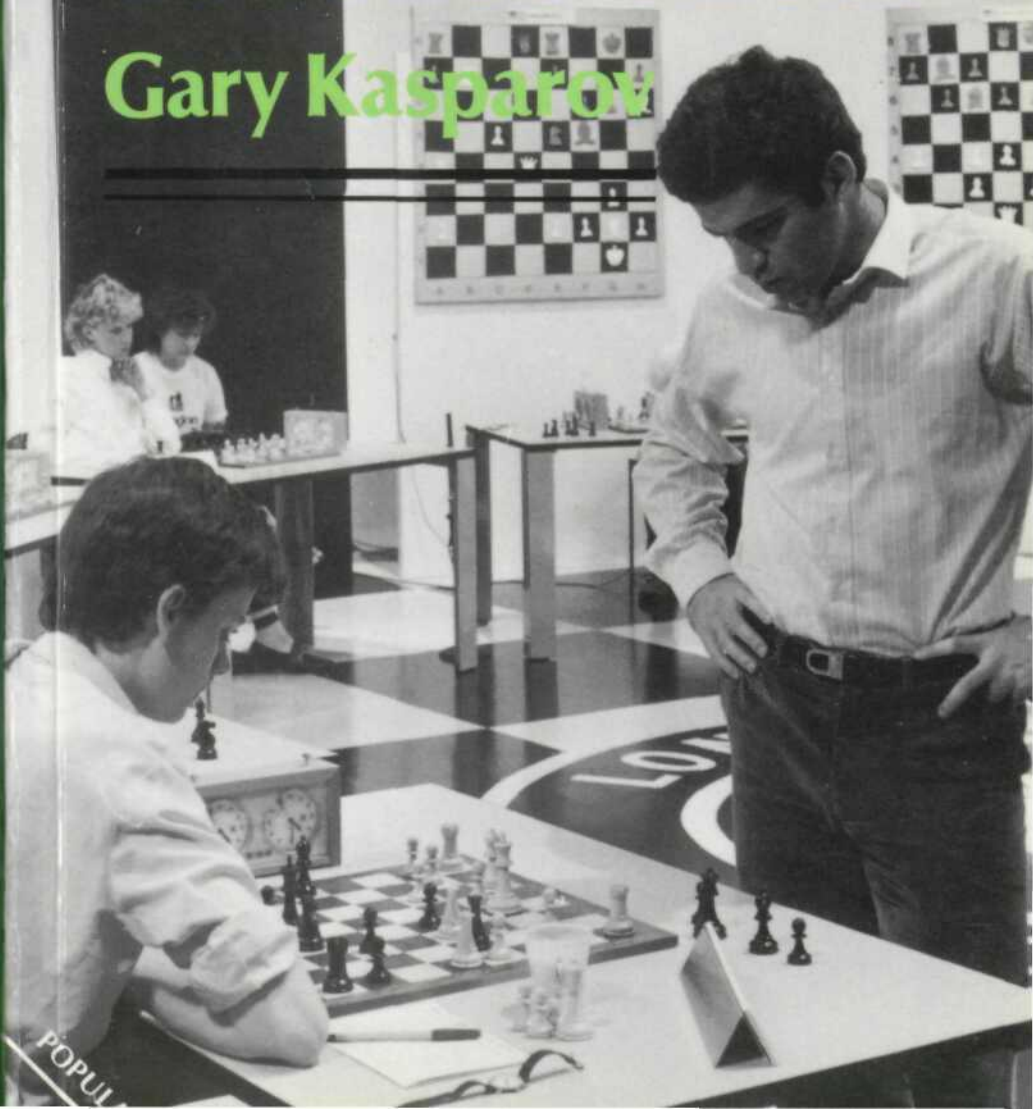
KASPAROV Teaches Chess

Gary Kasparov



First published 1984/5

First Batsford Edition 1986

ISBN 0 7134 55268 (limp)

Set by TUI Ltd
and printed in Great Britain by
Billings Ltd, Worcester,
for the publishers
B.T.Batsford Ltd, 4 Fitzhardinge **Street,**
London W1H OAH

A BATSFORD CHESS BOOK
Adviser: R.D.Keene OBE
Technical Editor: P.A.Lamford

Contents

Foreword

Over the last two years *Sport in the USSR* magazine published a series of 24 lessons introducing chess fans, in simple language, to openings, the most common middle and end games, and other typical situations at all stages of the game.

This series of articles forms a 'chess school', taught by Gary Kasparov. B.T.Batsford Ltd. are proud to reproduce these lessons in book form.

Gary Kasparov is World Champion. He was born on April 13, 1963 in Baku. He won the world junior championship in 1980. As a member of the USSR team he shared the gold medals at the 1980 and 1982 World Olympiads and the 1980 and 1983 European championships. Gary Kasparov, as the officially qualified challenger, has played two matches for the world championship with the 1975-85 title holder, Anatoly Karpov; the first was aborted after a record 48 games when Gary though trailing 5-3 had the initiative; the second in 1985 — one of the great encounters in world championship history — he won 5-3 with 16 draws. He was awarded an Oscar as the world's best chess player for 1982, 1983 and 1985.

Gary Kasparov delves into the tactics and strategy in the openings, middle and end game. He gives examples from games of the world's outstanding grandmasters illustrating endings, planning, combinations, and many other aspects of the game. We hope that the recommendations of the famous grandmaster will expand the outlook of chess enthusiasts and improve their understanding.

R.G.Wade
London, 1986

Lesson 1: Why Study Chess?

The proposal by *Sport in the USSR* magazine to conduct a series of correspondence study sessions for their readers came as a surprise to me because I am still studying the subtleties of chess myself.

After some consideration I decided that to write about my understanding and interpretation of chess basics would also be useful for me.

I love chess. I have been in love with the game for many years and this love is for life. I study chess all the time and very thoroughly; nevertheless, while analysing what I have done and in planning for the future I cannot help but be amazed at the inexhaustibility of chess and I am becoming even more convinced about its unpredictability. Judge for yourself; millions of games have been played, thousands of books have been written on various aspects of the game, yet there is no chess formula or method which can guarantee victory, there are no mathematically justified criteria for evaluating even a single move, let alone a position. Chess experts do not doubt that in most situations there is more than one strong continuation and everyone chooses his own 'strongest' move guided by his own experience, evaluation abilities, even his own character. The possibility of using computers as consultants does not seem very serious at present since no algorithm of the game of chess has been found and there is no program which can deal reliably with complications. Why talk about details, situations and stages of the game at a time when there is no answer to the question 'What is the game of chess? Is it a sport? Or is it a science? Or an art?'

Some say: 'Chess players participate in tournaments and matches, they fight to win, the result is important for

them — this means that chess is sport. It develops will power and helps strengthen oneself.'

How can one convince others of the correctness of the opinion of those who are amazed at the beauty of combinations and the logic of chess tactics; for whom a smart sacrifice of the queen in a lost game is a source of pleasure while a dull, forced game leaves them indifferent. For them chess is an art that brings happiness and makes leisure meaningful.

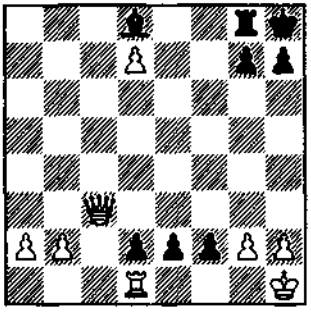
At the same time there are many chess enthusiasts who can spend night after night trying to solve one problem: 'Why did Black move the rook to d8 instead of the knight to c6? Why is Black's position better?' For them chess is mainly a science of logical thinking.

I love chess even more for its versatility and manysidedness. It was the beauty and brilliance of tactical blows that captivated me in early childhood. First, it was the admiration of this brilliance, then the search for it in my own games, later it was an attempt to play a beautiful game — these were the stages of my growth as a captive of the art of chess. But the time came when I began to compete with others, to take part in tournament after tournament, and this meant that I had set out on the path of sporting chess. I still enjoy playing beautiful games but I am not indifferent to whether I beat my opponents or end up way down in the standings.

I want to win, I want to beat everyone, but I want to do it in style, in an honest sporting battle. The former world champion Mikhail Botvinnik, whom I consider my chess teacher, is a chess academic, whose work helped to make chess a scientific subject. He developed my love for chess research and for solving innumerable problems. In my preparations for competitions, during my game analysis and analysis of openings, I suddenly discovered that I was trying to study thoroughly and methodically with a persistence which is typical of a researcher. I am convinced today that my affection for all aspects of chess will help preserve my love for it for the

rest of my life.

My parents taught me the moves of the pieces when I was only five, and I was fascinated by them. One year later I was taken to a chess group at the Young Pioneer Club in Baku where I thought I found myself in a kingdom of chess players. Our instructor in his desire to convince the novices of the paradoxical character of chess set the following position on the board at one of the first sessions.



This position, where the small pawns were victorious over the enemy, was so surprising that it seemed like a fairy tale and I was unable to live without chess after seeing it. I have admired this position ever since.

I have loved to attack since childhood. I still like to be on the offensive. But it took a lot of time to study the basics, which do not seem to have any direct bearing on the game itself. I am convinced that it is necessary for both a grandmaster and an amateur who wants to improve his game and get some pleasure from his play in tournaments. To achieve this high standard of play the grandmaster has spent thousands of hours studying hundreds of games. His talent would not have developed without this amount of work. If you like to play chess but do not have enough time for an independent study of it, but want to beat your friends, you will have to spend dozens of hours over the chessboard.

In this series of articles I intend to explain my understanding of the basics of chess in a language clear to everybody, and to talk about subtleties which are necessary for true chess enthusiasts.

Lesson 2: Ideas and Techniques

Before discussing the basics of the game of chess I would like to show you an episode from a recent game and give my comments which are prepared specifically for average chess players. I hope that after reading my analysis you will see for yourself that anyone who wants to make his moves meaningful and beautiful needs a lot of chess knowledge.

G.Kasparov-F.Gheorghiu
Moscow 1982

1 d4

Experienced chess players know that this move, just like the move by the king's pawn to e4, is the most logical and straightforward, or to put it simply, the best in the opening. Every one of you may come to the same conclusion after studying for two or three hours the basic principles guiding the first stages of the game which are to bring one's pieces into action as soon as possible and to gain control over the centre of the board.

1 ... ♘f6

This is one of the best moves by Black. Black brings a piece into action and prevents the opponent from bringing his e-pawn to the centre to consolidate his domination there.

2 c4

Now White impedes the free progress of the d-pawn to d5, as in this case after 3 cd Black will have to choose between 3 ... ♕xd5 4 ♘c3, when White brings the knight into play while Black has to make a second move with the queen, thus slowing down the process of bringing his pieces into action, or lagging behind in development, as it is customarily called. If Black takes the pawn with the knight by 3 ... ♘xd5, this would allow White to play 4 e4 with a strong pair of pawns in the

centre which controls all important positions in Black's camp, the squares c5, d5, e5 and f5.

Let us go back to the first lines of our analysis of the move 2 c4, where we say that 'White impedes ...'. This is the beginning of a conscious conflict in a chess game. Ideas have clashed, the battle has begun. The greater the player's abilities and knowledge the better he is equipped to spot the appearance of such micro-conflicts of which there are multitudes in each game, and the better are his judgement of consequences and future decisions.

2 ... e6

Black opens up a path for the bishop, and, as if trying to make up for lost time, gets ready to move his d-pawn to d5.

3 ♘f3

White has a good choice of strong continuations, including 3 ♘c3 and even 3 ♗g5 or 3 ♗f4. It is of primary importance to adhere to the principle of rapid development of one's pieces and to implement it in practice during the opening stage.

3 ... b6

Black is concerned about the bishop on c8, and prepares to bring it to the main combat position b7 or to the alternative one on a6.

4 a3

In order to make this seemingly passive move one needs a deep understanding of preventive measures in the game of chess. This unobtrusive move by the white pawn bars the black bishop from an active position on b4 and at the same time prepares to move the white knight to c3 where it may have a vital role to play in the struggle for the centre.

4 ... ♗b7

5 ♘c3

Both sides are trying to introduce their pieces into the game so as to consolidate their grip on the further struggle in the centre of the board.

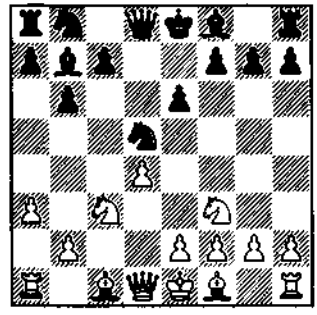
5 ... d5

Black radically strengthens his position in the centre. The move ... d5, however, has its disadvantages, as it blocks the diagonal for the b7-bishop.

6 cd ♘xd5

After 6 ... ed the b7-bishop would have been obstructed

by its own pawn and risked remaining immobilised for some time. Although this feature of Black's position alone cannot pre-determine White's success, a consistent accumulation of such minor advantages allows an experienced grandmaster to turn the tide in his favour.



7 ♕c2

Another micro-conflict on the chess stage develops around the move e4, which would allow White to occupy the centre. In choosing his move White takes into account the fact that after 7 e4? ♘xc3 8 bc ♗xe4 Black has an extra Pawn.

7 ... c5

Black could have destroyed White's plan by 7 ... f5 but at great cost. He would be left with a weak backward e6-pawn.

8 e4 ♘xc3
9 bc

This is a new gain by White. He has achieved a strong pawn centre and is engaged in combat for domination over the fifth rank, i.e., over 'enemy' territory. Chess players call this a 'space advantage'.

9 ... ♗e7
10 ♗b5+ ♗c6
11 ♗d3

In chess a straight line is not always the shortest distance between two points. By moving the Bishop to d3 in two moves White has gained more advantages than he would have by doing it in one move. Black was prevented from replying with the most natural move against the check, because after, 10 ♗b5+ ♘c6 11 ♘e5 ♖c8 12 ♕a4 ♕c7 13 ♕xa7 ♖a8? 14 ♗xc6+ White wins. Black's bishop is unfortunately placed on c6, getting in the way of its own pieces. In such cases chess players refer to bad piece location and poor co-ordination of forces.

11 ... ♘bd7

The bishop occupying c6 has

forced the knight to take a passive position instead of the active one on c6 where it would have attacked the White centre. It could be that Black did not want to give the opponent the advantage of two bishops after 11 ... 0-0 12 ♘e5, but this would have been the lesser of two evils in the present situation, as in the actual game the black king remained in the centre. It would be more reasonable for Black to see to the safety of his king by trying to remove it from the centre as soon as possible.

12 0-0

As Black has delayed placing his king safely in shelter White aims to open up the centre at any cost (to clear the central files of pawns.) For this reason White removes his king from the scene of action vacating the area for his rooks.

12 ... h6

Like 4 a3 which stopped Black's ... ♗b4 this is a preventive move. But 12 ... 0-0 would have been more appropriate.

An important game component is the accurate timing of an operation. Grandmaster Florian Gheorghiu chooses an unfortunate moment for preventive measures.

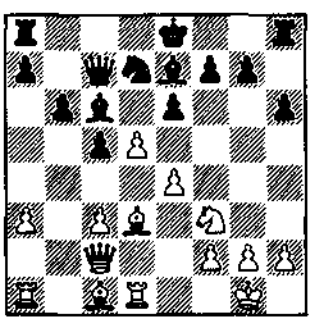
13 ♖d1

White centralises his rook, foreseeing the opening of the d-file.

13 ... ♕c7

It is already too late for Black to castle. After 13 ... 0-0 14 d5 (a pawn sacrifice) 14 ... ed (14 ... ♗b7? is poor, 15 de fe 16 ♗b5! and Black suffers because of the knight stranded on d7) 15 ed ♗b7 16 c4 ♗f6 17 ♗b2 and White gets a strong passed pawn in the centre.

14 d5!



'He who has the advantage has to act fast.' This was one of the maxims of the great chess thinker and the first world champion Wilhelm Steinitz (1836-1900) who formulated

the basic laws of chess strategy. An analysis of the classic heritage left by the coryphaei of the past is useful for all chess enthusiasts and a must for those who study chess seriously and want to improve their game.

In the above game White sacrificed only a pawn but gained everything he wanted — it opened up the central files, tied up the Black pieces on the d-file and held the opponent's king in the centre. He clearly won the first stage of the chess game — the opening — and he did so thanks to a consistent plan of action. However, to capitalize on this, one has to act resolutely and accurately.

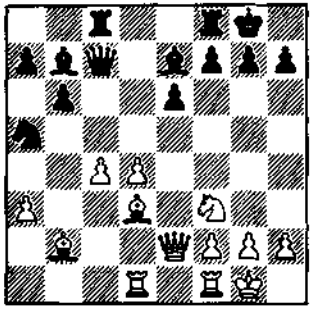
Lesson 3: Material Balance

In order to assess correctly the balance of power on the chessboard, one first of all has to be aware of the comparative value of each piece. The king occupies an exceptional place. It is priceless. It cannot be exchanged and any threat to its life must be removed, otherwise the game immediately comes to an end. The most powerful chess piece is the queen which on average is one bishop plus one and a half pawns stronger than a rook. A rook is also stronger than a bishop or a knight by a pawn and a half. And lastly, a bishop or a knight is about equivalent to three pawns.

But apart from the face value of each chessman there exists a real value which changes in the course of the game. This more subtle and important notion reflects the importance of each chessman with respect to its workload at a given moment (at the time of a given move), to its prospects, resulting from the specific situation on the chessboard, and to the plan of the game. The correct assessment of each piece's true strength on each move determines to a great extent the player's chess potential.

The notion of material advantage in chess is this disparity of power. When one side has gained a material advantage it tries to increase it in order to break the opponent's resistance or, preserving this advantage, to exchange as many pieces as possible and to enter the endgame. But it often happens that one of the opponents incurs material losses deliberately. I, for example, like attacking the king's position and don't begrudge sacrificing pieces for pawns that shield the king in order to break down its fortress. Thus, a while ago I played Lajos Portisch, a grandmaster from Hungary. After 16 moves the

position was as follows:



If one were to imagine that the d4-pawn is removed from the board, it would be clear that the white bishops are aiming at the two black pawns guarding the king. It has no other protection so far. All this calls for a lightning attack, *the aim of which — to strip the* king of its last defenders — justifies the means, in this case the loss of a white pawn and two formidable bishops.

First, one has to pave the way for the b2-bishop.

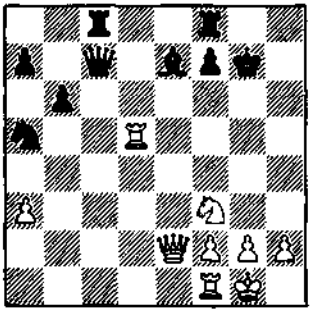
17 d5! ed
18 cd ♗xd5

The next step is to reduce the number of the black king's defenders.

19 ♗xh7+ ♔xh7
20 ♖xd5

Now when the king again seeks protection behind its pawn the remaining white bishop at the price of its own life annihilates the black king's last stronghold.

20 ... ♔g8
21 ♗xg7 ♔xg7

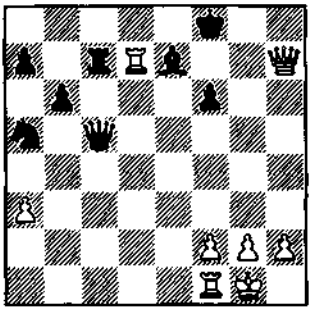


A combinative whirlwind has left the Black king facing isolation, the White queen posing the greatest danger.

22 ♘e5! ♖d8
23 ♕g4+ ♔f8
24 ♕f5 f6
25 ♘d7+ ♖xd7

25 ... ♔f7 allows an immediate win by 26 ♕h7! ♔e6 27 ♖e1+! ♔xd5 28 ♕e4+ ♔d6 29 ♕e6 mate.

26 ♖xd7 ♕c5
27 ♕h7 ♖c7



There is an approximate material balance in the above position. A white rook and a pawn confront a bishop and a knight. The black pieces are poorly positioned however, especially the king, while two most formidable white pieces have broken through to the seventh rank and the end of the battle is near. Everything depends on how quickly White will get one of its rooks to g3. The last Black move, however, contains a hidden trap for hasty players.

28 ♕h8+

If White had played 28 ♖d3 right away, he would have faced disaster after an overwhelming sacrifice of the queen — 28 ... ♕xf2+! 29 ♔xf2 ♗c5+ and then ♖xh7. He would have fared still worse in case of 29 ♖xf2? ♖c1+ 30 ♖f1 ♗c5+ 31 ♔h1 ♖xf1 mate.

28 ... ♔f7
29 ♖d3 ♘c4
30 ♖fd1

It never hurts to bring into the game one's reserves.

30 ... ♘e5
31 ♕h7+ ♔e6

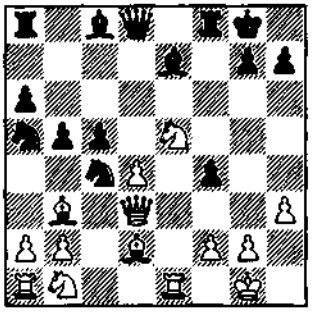
It is impossible to retreat by 31 ... ♔f8 because of the new sacrifice 32 ♖d8+! ♗xd8 33 ♖xd8 mate. The king has to move to the centre of the board, and in 99 cases out of 100 that is tantamount to ruin.

32 ♕g8+ ♔f5
33 g4+ ♔f4
34 ♖d4+ ♔f3
35 ♕b3+

Black resigns.

It goes without saying that all chess players should know and respect basic chess principles, including the table of comparative values of pieces. But it is exactly the multitude of exceptions to the rules that make chess such a fascinating game. They often lead to so called non-standard situations and balance, where the correct path is often discovered by intuition and experience. As part of such experience I recall an episode

from a game that I had studied between Mikhail Tal and Oscar Panno which they played in 1958.



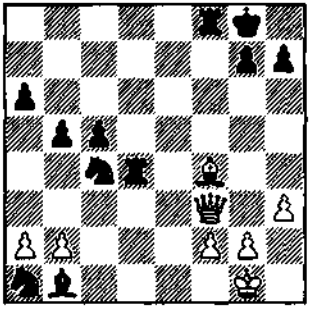
Without having completed the development of the pieces the opponents rushed into a fierce clash in which the material balance of forces lost its immediate importance. The vital thing is how to correctly assess the scope and the effectiveness of the pieces.

18 ... ♘xb3
19 ♘c6!

White aims to win the queen by this move but the material given away is too great.

19 ... ♘xa1
20 ♘xd8 ♗f5!
21 ♕f3 ♖axd8
22 ♖xe7 ♗xb1
23 ♗xf4 ♖xd4

The position has changed beyond recognition after five



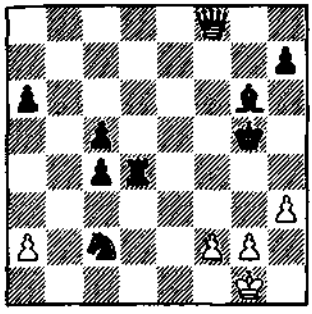
moves. Two knights and a rook are of no less value than a queen while the white bishop cannot properly fit into the game. Obviously, the outcome of the struggle depends on the white queen's agility.

24 ♕g4! ♗g6
25 ♕e6+ ♗f7
26 ♕f5 ♘c2
27 b3 ♗g6

Tal was more fearful of a counter attack by Black after 27 ... ♖d1+ 28 ♔h2 ♘d2. Black makes a solid move which forces White to complicate the game still further.

28 ♖xg7+ ♔xg7
29 ♗h6+ ♔xh6
30 ♕xf8+ ♔g5
31 bc bc

The position has drastically changed again. White has only the queen and several pawns



on the offensive.

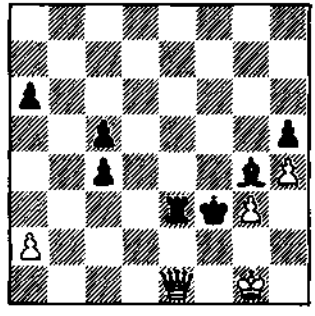
32 g3 ♗e4
33 h4+ ♔g4
34 ♔h2 ♗f5!

Panno gives up a piece (35 f3+ ♔xf3 36 ♕xf5+ ♔e3) to bring his king to the queen's flank. That's why White bought an opportunity to keep the king on the right flank within reach of the white pawns.

35 ♕f6 h6
36 ♕e5 ♖e4
37 ♕g7+ ♔f3
38 ♕c3+ ♘e3

A simpler draw would have been 38 ... ♔xf2 39 ♕xc2+ ♔f3.

39 ♔g1 ♗g4
40 fe h5
41 ♕e1 ♖xe3



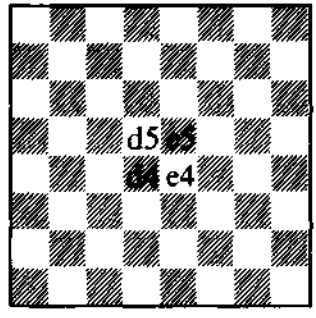
41 ... ♖e6 42 e4 c3 could have been another path to a draw as Black's pieces would end up protecting each other with the white king locked in a cage.

42 ♕f1+ ♔e4
43 ♕xc4+ ♔f3
44 ♕f1+ ♔e4
45 ♕xa6

Now the White queen has received a helper — a passed pawn on a2. It was this pawn that finally decided the outcome of the battle, but that is a subject for another lesson.

Lesson 4: The Importance of the Centre

The e4, d4, e5 and d5 squares in the centre of the board are very important. They are like a hill giving a full view of the chess battlefield and allowing a knock-out blow to be delivered on any target of the board.



Such expressions as 'battle for the centre', 'domination in the centre' and 'undermining the centre' also reflect the crucial moments of combat and are well known to any experienced chess player.

The struggle for the centre begins with the very first moves. The side which has advantage in the centre (or occupied the centre) usually receives an opportunity to shift its pieces easily from one part of the board to another, creating an advantage in forces where the fighting begins.

A hundred years ago the battle for the centre was a lot more carefree and chivalrous. White usually rushed to occupy the centre with his pawns and would be quite prepared to sacrifice material. Gambits, or openings in which material is sacrificed, were very much in vogue at the time.

1 e4 e5
2 f4! ef

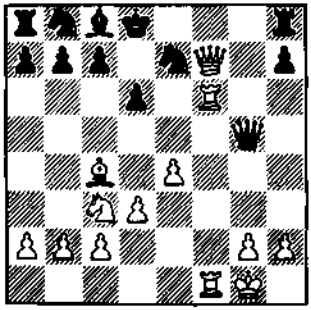
At present, the most popular reply is the counter gambit 2 ... d5 3 ed e4! and the battle for the centre becomes more subtle.

3 ♘f3

Wilhelm Steinitz, the first official world champion (1836-1900) liked to play 3 d4, allowing 3 ... ♕h4+ 4 ♔e2. He believed that having an

advantage in the centre was more important than having good protection for the king.

3	...	g5
4	♗c4	g4
5	0-0!	gf
6	♕xf3	♕f6
7	d3	♗h6
8	♘c3	♘e7
9	♗xf4	d6
10	♗xh6	♕xh6
11	♕xf7+	♔d8
12	♖f6	♕g5
13	♖af1	

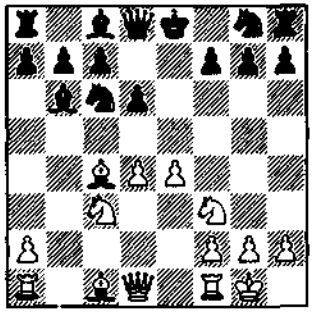


This was the continuation of one of the games played by the great Russian chess player, Mikhail Chigorin, in 1878. White sacrificed a piece and launched a strong attack, with superiority in the centre playing a decisive role.

Another more vivid illustration of White's strategy in the centre was demonstrated by the emininent American chess player, Paul Morphy (1837-1884).

P.Morphy-J.Arnous de Rivière
Paris 1863

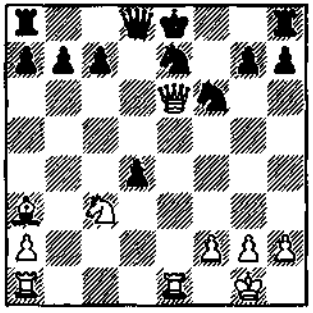
1	e4	e5
2	♘f3	♘c6
3	♗c4	♗c5
4	b4	♗xb4
5	c3	♗c5
6	0-0	d6
7	d4	ed
8	cd	♗b6
9	♘c3	



At that time this most interesting position was no less popular than the Spanish game is at present. By sacrificing a pawn White gets a clear advantage in the centre where he has a powerful pair of pawns which, use as a solid shield, allows White to

regroup his forces as necessary. He has also established strong control over the Black centre, i.e., over e5 (two threats against two defences) and particularly over d5 (three threats and no defence).

Black cannot play 9 ... ♘f6 because of an immediate attack 10 e5! de 11 ♗a3! ♗xd4 12 ♕b3! ♗e6 13 ♗xe6 fe 14 ♕xe6+ ♘e7 15 ♘xd4 ed 16 ♖fe1!



The best response for Black is considered to be 9 ... ♗g4 and 10 ♗b5 may be followed by either 10 ... ♗d7 or 10 ... ♔f8. J.Arnous de Rivière made a natural but unfortunate move which allowed White to use another advantage of the central pawn pair — its mobility. Indeed, while the e4 and d4 pawns are only standing in the centre, they form a situation to which Black can easily adapt. But each of these pawns can move forward, thus creating new situations in which Black will have to find a defence, which is considerably more difficult. For this reason 'a mobile centre' made up of pawns is a significant factor in evaluating the chances of both sides in the forthcoming battle.

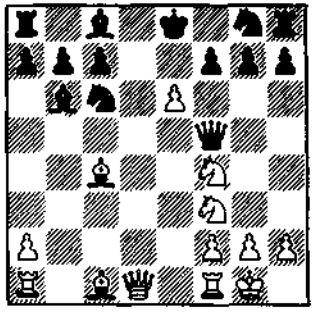
9	**...**	**♕f6**
10	**♘d5**	**♕g6**
11	**♘f4!**	**♕f6**
12	**e5!**	

The central pawn has moved forward and immediately created a situation in which Black, instead of developing his pieces in an orderly fashion, has to protect his king from real threats. This is a formidable task, since most of Black's pieces are stuck in their initial positions. At this stage, using his advantage in the number of men actively engaged in combat, White carries out a typical operation — he opens up the centre (clearing away his own and the enemy pawns) to give his men freedom. When the centre is open the

role of the pieces increases greatly, and their location assumes critical importance. This stage requires calculation of timing which needs exceptional precision and exact calculation.

13 de ♕f5

Black cannot, of course, take the pawn 13 ... ♘xe5? 14 ♘xe5? 14 ♘xe5 ♕xe5? 15 ♖e1, winning the queen. But the e-pawn keeps on moving forward.



14 ... f6

Black is no better after 14 ... fe 15 ♘xe6 ♗xe6 16 ♗xe6! ♕f6 17 ♕d7+ ♔f8 18 ♗b2! (this is why the pawn has vacated the e5 square) 18 ... ♕xb2 19 ♕f7 mate. Now the e6 pawn splits Black's position into two parts and its value assumes increased significance. White only has to prevent Black's king from escaping to a flank.

15 ♘h4 ♕c5
16 ♗e3! ♕g5

If 16 ... ♕xc4 then 17 ♕h5+.

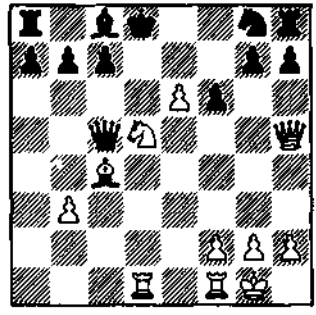
17 ♘f3 ♕a5
18 ♗xb6 ♕xb6
19 ♘d5 ♕a5
20 ♘d2!

Now Black can do nothing against the threat to the a8 rook after 21 ♘b3 and 22 ♘xc7+ and against a no less significant threat ♕h5+. The end is imminent.

20 ... ♘d4
21 ♘b3 ♘xb3
22 ab ♕c5
23 ♕h5+ ♔d8

After 23 ... g6 24 ♘xf6+ the queen is taken.

24 ♖ad1



There is no esacaping the grave consequences of the

discovered check (25 ♘b6+; the knight leaves the d-file and Black's king finds itself checked by the White rook) so **Black resigned.**

It is essential for each side to pay attention to the central pawn formation and to try to maintain a pawn preponderance.

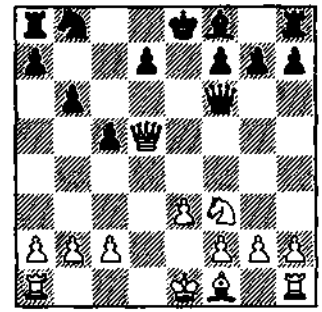
It sometimes happens that only one pawn remains in the centre. This creates new problems, for instance, how to occupy an outpost in the centre which often permits the pieces to be used to advantage and superiority to be gained over the opponent.

T.Petrosian-Kozma
Munich 1958

1	**♘f3**	**♘f6**
2	**d4**	**e6**
3	**♗g5**	**c5**
4	**e3**	**b6?!**

White's unpretentious method of playing the opening lowers Black's vigilance and the latter, by this seemingly natural move, allows his opponent to occupy an outpost in the centre with a piece.

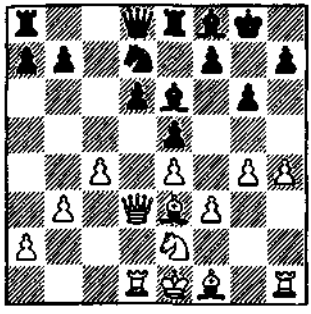
5	**d5!**	**ed**
6	**♘c3**	**♗b7**
7	**♘xd5!**	**♗xd5**
8	**♗xf6**	**♕xf6**
9	**♕xd5**	



White has a strong hold on the d5 square, since Black is unable to oust the queen from its strong position in the next few moves. At the same time, Black's weaknesses on the d-file are permanent and may be very significant.

Experienced chess players never begin aggressive operations on the flanks before they shore up their positions in the centre.

In the following diagram White, without having made the necessary move ♘c3, has begun a pawn offensive on the king's flank. In itself it does not pose much of a threat but in a game played between



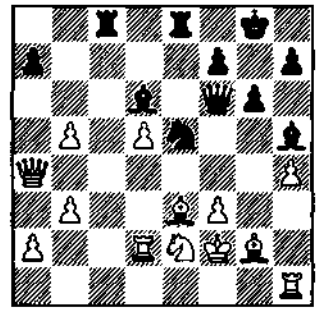
Neergard and Simagin (by correspondence, in 1964) Black proved its extreme danger for White (!) very convincingly.

1	**...**	**b5!!**
2	**cb**	**d5!!**
3	**ed**	**e4!**
4	**♕xe4**	

4 fe would be followed by 4 ... ♘e5! but even now White is uncomfortable.

4	**...**	**♗xg4**
5	**♕f4**	**♗h5**
6	**♔f2**	**♘e5**
7	**♗g2**	**♗d6**
8	**♕a4**	**♖c8!**
9	**♖d2**	**♕f6**

In only a few moves White's seemingly solid fortifications



have collapsed after a timely counter-blow in the centre.

The game continued

10	**♗g5**	**♕f5**
11	**♘f4**	**♗xf3**
12	**♗h3**	

If 12 ♗xf3 ♘xf3 13 ♔xf3 then 13 ... ♖c3+ 14 ♔f2 ♗c5+ 15 ♔f1 ♖f3+ 16 ♔g2 ♕g4+ would follow.

11	**...**	**♗g4**
12	**♔g2**	**♖c2**

and **White resigns.**

For if 13 ♖hd1 ♗xh3+ 14 ♘xh3 ♕f3+ or 13 ♖f2 ♖xf2+ 14 ♔xf2 ♘d3+ is decisive.

Therefore, try to get control of the centre squares, protect the centre and value it dearly!

Lesson 5: How to Gain Space

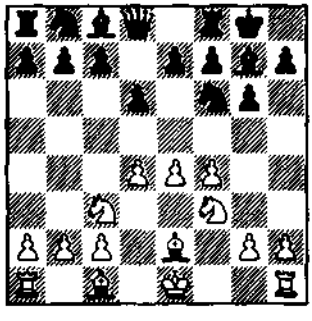
Since chess is played on a limited area of the 64 squares of the chessboard, the dimension of space, that is, the number of squares obtained by each side on which they can freely position their forces, usually influences greatly the game's progress. At the start of the game White and Black control the same space. But as a rule any move in the opening pursues the idea of gaining control over a large number of squares, especially in the opponent's territory. Pawns, pressing the opponent's pieces and giving their own pieces freedom to manoeuvre, play the main role in the seizure of space. But the movement of pawns must necessarily be accompanied by the support of pieces, otherwise the army of pawns will soon perish. An experienced chess player tries, first of all, to ensure superiority in the central sector of the board, bounded by the c- and f-files, since the best positions for the pieces are situated there.

To make our discussion more specific, let us analyse two games.

The first one was played at the end of the last century.

S.Tarrasch-R.Charousek
Nuremberg 1896

1	**d4**	**d6**
2	**e4**	**♘f6**
3	**♘c3**	**g6**
4	**f4**	**♗g7**
5	**♘f3**	**0-0**
6	**♗e2**	



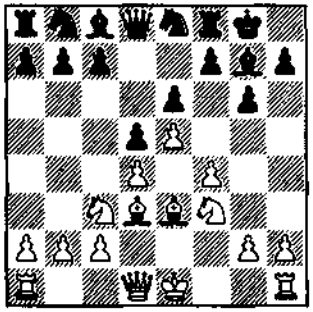
Only five moves have been made, but White's gains in the seizure of chess space are great: three pawns are controlling very important squares on the fifth rank, which is the opponent's territory. With the support of their pieces they will be able to advance further, gaining control of the opponent's territory.

In modern chess a reliable strategic method to combat such pawn chains is an immediate pawn counter-attack (most often with the pieces' support) with the aim of preventing the chain's further movement or at least to make use of it by pawn exchanges to open lines for one's own pieces. It is followed by a pawn assault on the opposing pawns with the aim of breaking the chain into separate sections, or, as chess players say, 'islands'. The variation 6 ... c5! 7 d5 e6 8 0-0 ed 9 ed is a good illustration of this method.

Charousek, one of the strongest players of the time, also tries to restrain White's pawn chain, but not successfully. He hampers the freedom of movement of his own pieces and, most importantly, makes the assault on White's pawn centre impossible.

Black's position becomes extremely difficult after three further moves.

6	**...**	**d5**
7	**e5**	**♘e8**
8	**♗e3**	**e6**



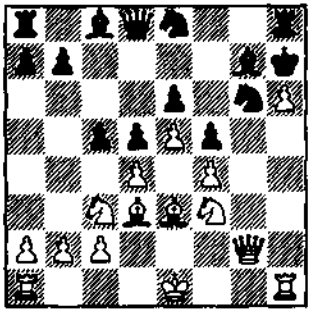
Under the protection of the pawn trident d4-e5-f4 the White pieces have many squares for manoeuvring and can be easily relocated to any area of the board. The great German player Tarrasch solves the problem of realising this superiority in a very simple way. He begins a pawn attack on the king's flank. His pawns are to open the lines for the major pieces, and the Black pieces, confined to the

back two ranks, will just get in each other's way and will fail to organise a defence.

9 h4!

One of the basic rules of chess: 'An offensive on a flank is best parried by a counter-attack in the centre.' Unfortunately by the move 6 ... d5 Black has lost this chance and is doomed.

9	**...**	**♘c6**
10	**h5**	**♘e7**
11	**g4**	**f5**
12	**hg**	**♔xg6**
13	**♗d3**	**h6**
14	**g5**	**♘h7**
15	**♕e2**	**♖h8**
16	**♕g2**	**c5**
17	**gh**	



Black resigned in view of unavoidable heavy losses, e.g. If 17 ... ♗xh6 18 ♕g5!

The second game is an illustration of modern methods of gaining space. For me this game is especially memorable as my first victory in a purely positional style over a strong opponent in high-level competitions.

G.Kasparov-T.Georgadze
Minsk 1979

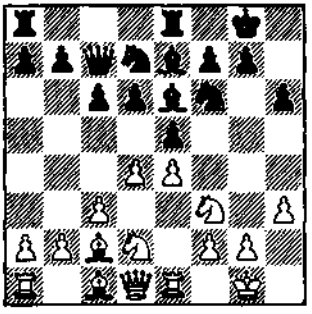
1	**e4**	**e5**
2	**♘f3**	**d6**
3	**♗c4**	**♗e7**
4	**d3**	

This is not fear, but a desire to avoid opening variations after 4 d4 ed 5 ♘xd4, well studied by my opponent.

4	**...**	**♘f6**
5	**c3**	**0-0**
6	**0-0**	**c6**
7	**♗b3**	**♗e6**
8	**♗c2**	**h6**
9	**♖e1**	**♘bd7**
10	**♘bd2**	**♕c7**

Both players are unhurriedly manoeuvring apparently with equal success, but this is not so. White is the first to start acquiring space.

11 d4! ♖fe8
12 h3!



Limiting the opponent's opportunities (neither the black bishop nor knight will reach g4 now) is also a way of winning space.

12 ... ♘f8
13 c4! ♘g6
14 d5

Black did not wish to open the centre to activate the White pieces after 13 ... ed 14 ♘xd4 ♕b6 15 ♘2f3! ♗xc4 16 ♘f5. Instead Black abandons territory marked out by the pawn trident c4-d5-e4.

14 ... ♗d7

Black should have played 14 ... cd to gain space for manoeuvring on the queen's flank by 15 ... b5!

15 ♘b1! ♗f8
16 ♘c3 c5?
17 ♗a4

In such a cramped position most exchanges would suit Black. But not his white squared bishop. It is defending important squares and has the greatest potential scope of his minor pieces.

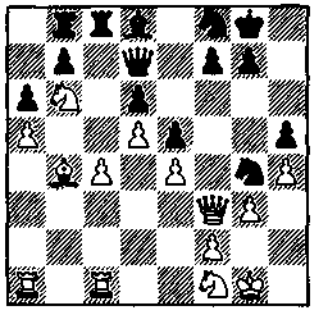
17 ... a6
18 ♗xd7 ♘xd7
19 g3 ♗e7
20 h4!

White decided to pursue the strategy of limiting the mobility of Black's pieces on the king's flank, and to prepare a breakthrough on the queenside.

20 ... ♘f6
21 ♘h2 ♕d7
22 a4 ♕h3
23 ♕f3 ♕d7
24 a5!

White has crossed the centre line on the queen's flank, too, continuing to elbow out Black. His further expansion is evident to both players, but Black, virtually unable to manoeuvre any reserves, can do nothing about it.

24 ... ♘f8
25 ♗d2 ♖ec8
26 ♘f1 ♘g4
27 ♘a4 ♗d8
28 ♖ec1 ♖ab8
29 b4! cb
30 ♗xb4 h5
31 ♘b6!



At first glance, this is an illogical continuation; after all, greater pressure could have been exerted along the b-file. But White planned to open up the c-file and in this case it is very important to have at his disposal a square of entry. The c7-square is the best bridgehead for a White attack.

31	**...**	**♗xb6**
32	**ab**	**♕e7**
33	**♕a3**	**♖d8**

The last opportunity for resistance was to impede the advance of the c-pawn by sacrificing rook for bishop — 33 ... ♖c5! 34 ♗xc5 dc. However White would retain all chances for victory.

Now, however, the White offensive is developing quickly and exactly according to plan.

34	**f3**	**♘h6**
35	**c5**	**dc**
36	**♗xc5**	**♕f6**
37	**♔g2**	**♖e8**
38	**♗e3**	**♘d7**
39	**♖ab1**	**♕e7**

Black lost on time through not completing 40 moves within the allotted 2½ hours. But after 40 ♕xe7 ♖xe7 41 ♖c7 Black's position would be hopeless.

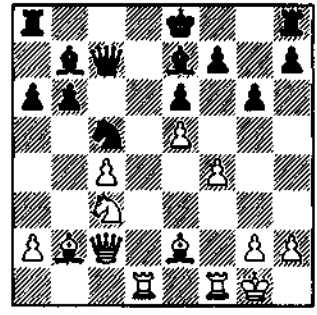
In conclusion, value space, try to grab as much of it as possible. But do not be too greedy. Your far advanced pawn chain could be halted and destroyed, and your opponent's pieces could burst through the breaches formed, and then any result is possible.

Lesson 6: Pawn Structures

Though the pawns are the weakest pieces they often determine the progress of a game and its outcome. If one side has an advantage of two or three pawns, more often than not this advantage is sufficient to win. The situation is more complex when the number of pawns is the same. Then the position evaluation is largely determined by the location of the pawns.

Before the game starts the opponent's pawns are lined up on their original squares. While advancing forward they support each other and restrict the mobility of the opponent's pieces. Experienced chess players often make material sacrifices in order to get a mobile, flexible line of pawns protecting each other, as in the following diagram.

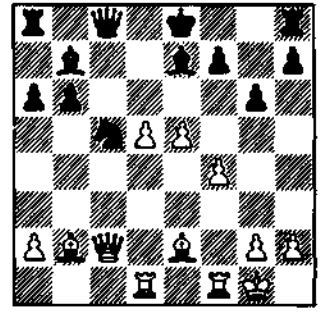
T.Petrosian-H.Pfleger
USSR v West Germany 1960



1 ♘d5!! ed
2 cd

Now the d5- and e5-pawns become the decisive factor.

2 ... ♕c8

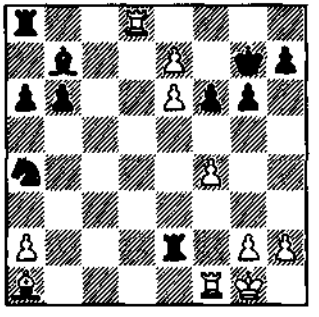


3 e6! 0-0
4 ♕c3 f6
5 d6 ♘a4

5 ... ♕xe6 is no good, as the queen is lost after 6 ♗c4.

6 ♕xc8 ♖fxc8
7 ♗a1 ♖c2
8 de ♖xe2
9 ♖d8+ ♔g7
10 ♖c1

It would be an error to queen by 10 e8♕ since after 10 ... ♖xg2+!! 11 ♔h1 ♖g3+ and White is unexpectedly mated.



10 ... ♖xe6
11 ♖c7

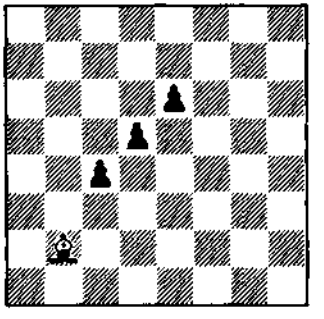
Now there is a threat of 12 e8♕+.

11 ... ♔h6
12 ♗xf6

Black resigns.

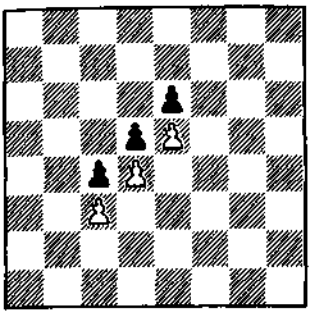
How can one cope with such a mighty pawn phalanx? A radical remedy is called for: it is necessary to destroy the whole line or at least its middle link, in other words, to break the chain into seperate entities unable to protect each other.

If often happens, however, that the most effective method of fighting a mobile pawn line is to contain its mobility or to set up a blockade. This can be done, for instance, by 'covering' the squares in front of the pawns. For example , a line of black pawns on c4, d5 and e6 may be contained by a white bishop located on the diagonal a1-h8.



But when the advance of the above pawns is supported by a Black knight from c6, the White bishop alone is unable to stop the advance of the pawn chain.

The best way to set up a blockade is to restrain pawns with pawns. If Black pawns on c4, d5 and e6 were held not by a bishop but by three pawns located on c3, d4 and e5,

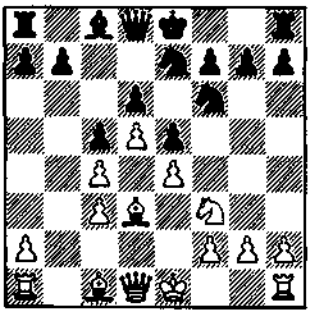


this would form an insurmountable barrier.

In modern chess the opposing parties try to restrict the mobility of pawn lines in the early stages of the game Take this opening for example:

1	d4	♘f6
2	c4	e6
3	♘c3	♗b4
4	e3	c5
5	♗d3	♘c6
6	♘f3	♗xc3+
7	bc	d6
8	e4	e5
9	d5	♘e7

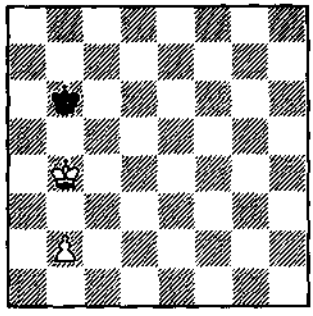
As you can see, three pawns c4, d5, e4 are opposed by a Black formation c5, e5, protected by a pawn on d6. This turns out to be sufficient to make the position in the centre stable. Not all players, however, try to restrict pawn



mobility with such thoroughness. The dynamic properties of the pawn line offer great opportunities for a combinative game which can lead to interesting complications, particularly when the opponents have a preference for an open game. On the other hand, a stationary blocked pawn chain often makes for a slow and unspectacular development of the game.

You may have come across in chess literature or in commentaries on games such terms as 'weak pawn', 'isolated pawn', etc. Each of them denotes a flaw in the pawn structure which restricts its mobility and increases its vulnerability.

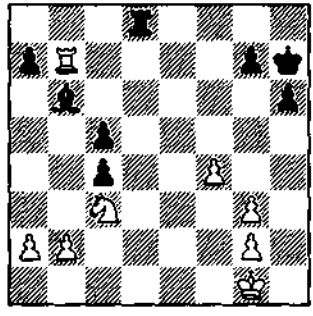
Here is a simple example.



Despite the obstacle of the Black king, White, playing correctly, can not only protect the pawn but can shepherd it through to promotion. But as soon as we move the White king, say, to the h-file, the pawn becomes weak because it falls under an easy attack from the Black king.

Other common weaknesses of the pawn formation include pawns doubled or trebled on the same file. Therefore it is very seldom that one puts them in an Indian file voluntarily. They are very difficult to protect, particularly in the end game, where they may become a source of many problems. But there is an exception to every rule, and this also holds true in the game of chess.

Here is an effective ending from a game between two Polish players, Tulkowski and Wojciewski, played in Poznan some 55 years ago.



After the obvious moves

1 ... ♖d2
2 ♘a4

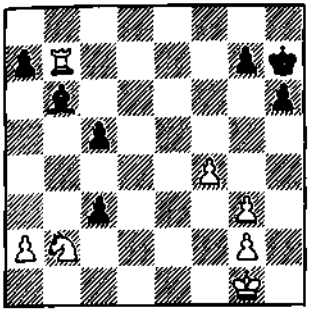
miracles begin to happen on the board.

2 ... ♖xb2

It turns out that the flaws of the pawn structure (look at the Black pawns) may be compensated for by resourceful play. Black gives away his rook for no obvious reason whatsoever.

3 ♘b2 c3

It transpires that after 4 ♘d3 c4+ the 'sleeping' bishop comes into play, and this settles it. 5 ♖xb6 cd 6 ♔f2 c2 7 ♖c6 d2 and a pawn queens.



4 ♖xb6

The obvious 4 ... ab is followed by 5 ♘d3 and White wins with his extra piece.

Black, however, strikes with

4 ... c4!

Now the d3-square is taken away from the knight and after 5 ♘xc4 the c-pawn becomes a queen. Can it be true that two pieces are unable to contain two 'crippled' pawns crawling along the c-file?

5 ♖b4

It looks as if White is likely to win as there seems to be no defence against 6 ♖xc4.

5 ... a5!

This is a true ode to pawns. The deserted pawn which had not taken the rook settles the battle by a seemingly unreal leap. Now 6 ♖xc4 is followed by 6 ... cb when the rook cannot return to b4, and the b-pawn queens. 6 ♘xc4 is followed by 6 ... c2 and the pawn still queens. A surprisingly beautiful ending!

Even such classical endings can be critically explored. What happens if White plays 2 a4 to meet 2 ... ♖xb2 with 3 a5?

A similar ending, Sanz-Ortueta, Madrid, with slight differences in the position of the kingside pawns happened two years later.

We will conclude our brief introduction to the peculiarities of pawn structures with this example. You will find a more detailed description of the terms, rules and exceptions mentioned in this lesson in chess manuals.

I would like to recommend to beginners to stick to the common principles of setting up and fortifying a pawn chain and to avoid weaknesses in it as far as possible. Experienced chess players may use the exception to the rule. It is the ability to appreciate when exceptions are justified that to a great degree makes chess so beautiful and full of surprises.

Lesson 7: Dynamism and Initiative

The rules of chess are similar to those of any other sport, and not only sport: success comes to those who are more active, skilful and resourceful.

Then what is dynamism in the game of chess? In my opinion, dynamism is the strengthening of the positions of one's pieces with each move and the threatening of the opponent's pieces. To make the moves successful they have to fall within the rules of the game and to be based on a solid tactical foundation.

A chess player with a reputation as an energetic individual normally tries from the very outset to impose his own style on the opponent, forcing him to tackle numerous problems.

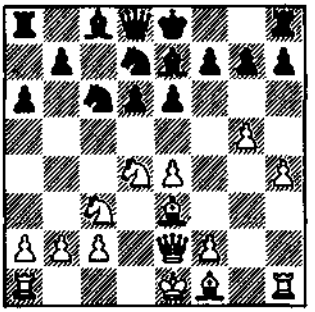
To illustrate the principles of active play let us analyse a game by the then world champion Anatoly Karpov.

A.Karpov-I.Dorfman
Moscow 1976

1	**e4**	**c5**
2	**♘f3**	**d6**
3	**d4**	**cd**
4	**♘xd4**	**♘f6**
5	**♘c3**	**e6**
6	**g4**	**♗e7**
7	**g5**	**♘fd7**
8	**h4**	

Some results of the opening are evident. White has limited the opponent's pieces on the king's flank to the back two ranks with the knight on d7 blocking the bishop on c8 and even the queen, to some extent.

8	**...**	**♘c6**
9	**♗e3**	**a6**
10	**♕e2!?**	



This is a very interesting and active idea which leads to a balanced deployment of the pieces. Karpov places his queen on the e-file where it will not be in the way of the rook on d1 and at the same time creates combinational threats. The queen does not obstruct the bishop on f1 which is about to go to h3 with a latter ♗xe6. As you can see, each White move is effective and builds up pressure.

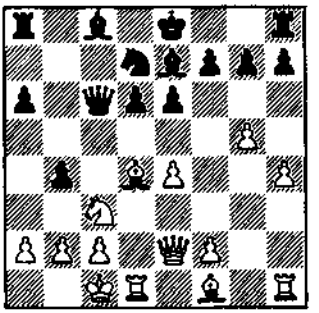
10 ... ♕c7
11 0-0-0 b5

The opponent's response is of a forced nature. Black is forced back and tries to find some remedy to prevent White from making a decisive advance. It is, however, late in the game, and for this reason Black's latest move carries more despair than justified action.

12 ♘xc6 ♕xc6
13 ♗d4!

This move is very unpleasant for Black, as a natural 13 ... 0-0 will soon lead to defeat because of the attack by the White pawns, while 13 ... e5 will create a weak point in the Black's position on d5.

13 ... b4



Black tries to force the knight away from its control of d5. He is logical in his advance but his strategy lacks a solid base, and his pieces are poorly placed. How can White take advantage of these weak points?

14 ♘d5!

This is a most effective move as the bishop on d4 becomes powerful and the White queen joins the fray, much to Black's surprise.

14 ... ed
15 ♗xg7! ♖g8
16 ed ♕c7
17 ♗f6

White has gained two pawns for the knight and good prospects for an attack on the king which is stuck in the middle of the board.

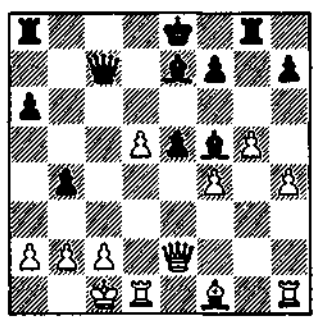
17 ... ♘e5!

This is the only possibility to hold on. As there is a threat of 18 ... ♗g4 White has no time for 18 f4. Black must try to reduce White's attacking potential.

18 ♗xe5 de
19 f4

Now the pawn attack replaces the attack by the pieces. Black is unable to stop White obtaining connected pawns since 17 ... e4 is followed by the winning 18 d6 ♗xd6 19 ♕xe4, etc.

19 ... ♗f5



20 ♗h3

The desire to restrict the opponent's counterplay is very typical of the world champion's style. White could have played 20 fe without any risk of 20 ... ♖c8 because of 21 ♖h2 ♕a5 22 ♕xa6 ♕xa6 23 ♗xa6. Karpov decides to exchange the light-squared bishops thus eliminating the danger to c2.

20 ... ♗xh3
21 ♖xh3 ♖c8
22 fe

In my opinion, 22 b3 e4 23 ♕xe4 ♖f8 24 f5 would have been better as it would have prevented the Black queen from getting into play.

22 ... ♕c4!

Black puts his queen in an active position and the balance seems to change.

23 ♖dd3

Rook manoeuvres along the third rank are among the champion's favourite tactics. In this case his move not only precedes the queen exchange but also serves the purpose of improving the co-ordination of the White pieces. The co-ordination of the pieces is a very important factor which in effect determines the strength of a chess player. The ability to co-ordinate the moves of each piece and of each pawn in such a way that they act together in a single plan and at the same time protect each other is a great art.

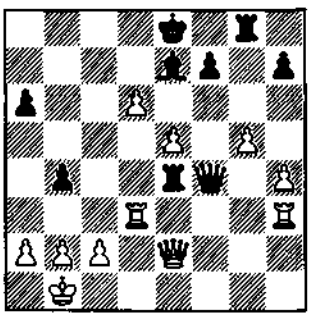
Here again both rooks on the third rank are ready to

support the progress of the two central pawns while the queen protects c2 and is ready to help the rooks. The pawn duo (d5, e5), protected by its own pieces, is a powerful force. Such pawns can push the opponent's pieces to the back rank and disorganise their actions.

23 ... ♕f4+

This seems the best response. If 23 ... ♕xa2 24 d6.

24 ♔b1 ♖c4!
25 d6 ♖e4!



26 ♖he3

White has to exchange another pair of pieces, abandoning all hopes of exploiting the unfavourable location of the Black king and rook.

The lack of co-ordination of the opponent's pieces is a result of the poor location of the g8 rook and the limitation in its mobility.

26 ... ♖xe3
27 ♖xe3 ♕xh4

The counter-sacrifice 27 ... ♖xg5 28 hg ♗xg5 is ineffective because of the poor location of the king — 29 d7+ ♔d8 30 ♕xa6 ♕xe3 31 ♕c8+ ♖e7 32 ♕e8 mate.

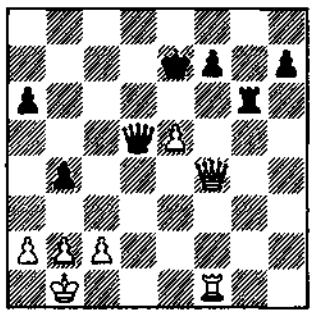
28 ♕f3!

White's pawn wedge divides Black's position into two parts and there is no adequate defence against the threats of ♕c6+ or ♕a8+. A protected pawn which has penetrated deep into an opponent's position or a similarly established outpost will disorganise the opponent's forces and split them into two separated and weakened parts.

28 ... ♕xg5
29 ♖e1 ♕g2?!
30 ♕f5 ♖g6
31 ♖f1 ♕d5
32 de ♔xe7
33 ♕f4!

White has regained the piece and retained the attack. The small number of remaining pieces only slightly improves Black's chances of survival. When only a few

attacking pieces remain on the battlefield everything depends on the strength of the king's defences. In this case the Black king has practically no protection and all White needs is precision in the assault and this is perfectly conducted by the then world champion.



33	...	a5
34	♕h4+	♔e8
35	♕xh7	♕f3
36	♕h8+	♔e7
37	♕h4+	♔e8
38	♕c4!	♕b7
39	b3	♖e6
40	♖g1!	♖xe5
41	♖g8+	♔e7
42	♕h4+	♔d7
43	♕f6!	♖e7
44	♕f5+	♔d6
45	♕xa5	♖e5
46	♕d8+	♔e6
47	♔b2!	f6
48	♖f8	♕g7
49	♕c8+	♔d5
50	♕c4+	

Black resigns.

Therefore, try to be energetic and then you will truly enjoy the benefits. Let your pieces interact well, and help each other — and then you will experience the joy of victory more often than the bitterness of defeat.

Lesson 8: Avoiding Disaster in the Opening

Having barely learned the basics of the game, every chess player will notice that moves in the opening, when almost all pieces are still on the board, most often predetermine the course of the game and in some cases its outcome. More often than not a chess player who has mastered the basics and seen brilliant attacks by masters and grandmasters has to spend the whole game in a boring defence trying to mend gaps in his position which appeared in the opening, but with little success. This is a result of a poor knowledge of the theory of openings and a lack of basic skills in playing the first stage of the game.

A chess game is to a certain extent similar to military combat where, as is known, a lot depends not only on the technical abilities and equipment of the troops but also on the ability of the commanders to foresee the contours of the forthcoming battle and deploy troops accordingly in order to commit them in due time and in the most favourable sequence. It is for this reason that every player who directs the actions of his wooden troops ought to know the basics of the game in the opening.

It is a known fact that any chess game may be preserved for posterity, as it is recorded by means of chess notation. An enormous number of games have been recorded in the history of chess and their analysis has helped develop all the nuances of opening strategy.

I do not intend to delve into all the existing openings and their characteristics, which would be an impossible task to handle, in view of the abundance of information. I will confine myself to describing some general principles of the opening and how to avoid disaster.

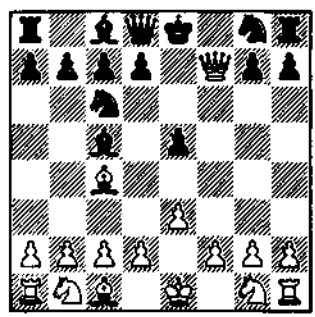
The First Principle

The opening is won by the player who brings major pieces into play faster.

This is a basic rule and it is very important to use it correctly.

Let us take a simple example.

1	**e3**	**e5**
2	**♗c4**	**♘c6**
3	**♕f3**	**♗c5**
4	**♕xf7 mate**	



It looks as if White has done everything correctly — two pieces were developed and White mated. Nevertheless, the play deserves some criticism.

The first move is poor. We have stated in one of our previous lessons how important it is to occupy the centre of the board with one's pawns. This has to be done in the opening so as to locate one's pieces most favourably. It is for this reason that e4 is stronger and more logical than e3. I want to stress once again that it is important to try to capture squares with pawns, especially the central squares.

The second White move (2 ♗c4) is not so easy to reject, though its merits are not very high for two reasons. The experience of previous generations gives us the best procedure for advancing one's pieces — first the pawns advance to the centre, then the knights move in, followed by the bishops and only later the heavy pieces — the rooks and the queens. In our case the bishop jumped out to a powerful position without regard to a possible response from Black — 2 ... d5, in which case the latter gets a powerful pawn centre and the White bishop is forced to poorer locations on d3, e2, b5 or b3.

Chess is a game of logic and a combination of a timid 1 e3 and an aggressive 2 ♗c4 is illogical and for this reason should be punished. Black replied with 2 ... ♘c6, which is to be viewed as a regular but not the strongest continuation

in this situation. It is true that 2 ... ♘c6 accords with the principles of rapid development of the pieces but it does not create problems for White which could have been the case had he moved 2 ... d5! White's third move 3 ♕f3 looks effective, but an experienced player would not have made it; moreover, he would not have even considered it. Had Black reacted correctly with 3 ... ♘f6!, the move of the queen would have been wasted. Furthermore, by occupying f3, the queen robbed his king's knight of a good square for its actions and the latter has no choice but to occupy a passive position on e2 or move to h3, thus staying away from all the action in the centre. The most powerful chess piece, the queen, should not move into the fray hastily, otherwise the opponent's minor pieces might pursue it with a gain of time. As for Black's 3 ... ♗c5??, it is logical only from the formal viewpoint (Black develops a second piece in the appropriate sequence) as it loses the game. The fact is that Black has not taken into account a real threat from the opponent. You can see how much can be discovered during a careful analysis of a very brief game full of mutual errors.

We will illustrate the first principle of the opening — the rapid development of the pieces — by a game played over a century ago.

J.Schulten-P.Morphy
New York 1857

1 e4 e5
2 f4

This old and romantic opening, which has acquired a beautiful name 'The King's Gambit', often resolves the outcome of the battle by a rapid advance of pieces. Modern theory believes that the best defence here is a counterattack. And this was clearly demonstrated by the talented American chess player Paul Morphy.

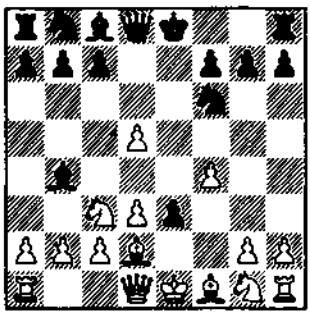
2 ... d5!
3 ed e4!

Taking either of the pawns would have been weak, Black tries to win time for development, as all his pieces have good prospective squares.

4 ♘c3 ♘f6
5 d3 ♗b4
6 ♗d2

After 6 de ♘xe4 7 ♕d4 ♕e7 8 ♗e2 0-0 9 ♗d2 ♘xd2 10 ♕xd2 ♗g4, it is not easy for White to activate his pieces.

6 ... e3!



This is a bold far-sighted sacrifice of a pawn, as after castling Black's rook occupies the e-file.

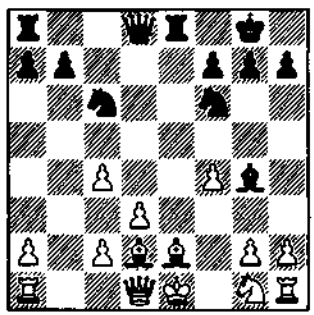
7 ♗xe3 0-0
8 ♗d2 ♗xc3
9 bc ♖e8+
10 ♗e2 ♗g4
11 c4?

One may say with a fair degree of confidence that this particular move is destructive for White. It was preferable to get rid of the pin on the e-file, preferably by 11 ♔f2. But White wishes to retain an extra pawn in the centre.

11 ... c6!
12 dc?!

It was not too late to play 12 ♔f2 or 12 h3. Still having a material advantage, White allows the opponent to develop his knight from b8 most effectively, and then Black's advantage on the relevant part of the board becomes overwhelming.

12 ... ♘xc6



13 ♔f1

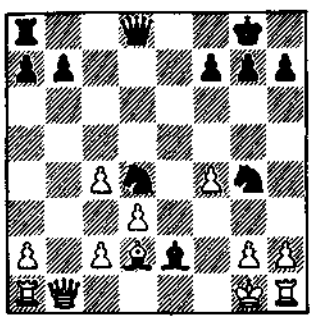
It is difficult to give good advice to White. 13 ♗c3 ♘d4 14 ♗xd4 ♕xd4 15 g3 is followed by 15 ... ♖xe2+ 16 ♘xe2 ♖e8 with a decisive attack. It seems that after 12 dc?! there was no defence for White.

13 ... ♖xe2!
14 ♘xe2 ♘d4

The main events will take place on the e-file where the

vertical pin will play a decisive role. And this is indeed what happens. The threats on the e-file have forced White to postpone the removal of his king from the pin. Now another minor combination follows which transforms the vertical pin into a more hazardous, diagonal one.

15 ♕b1 ♗xe2+
16 ♔f2 ♘g4+
17 ♔g1



The king begins to rush back and forth in his camp, feeling the approach of disaster.

I would recommend to those who want to develop their attacking skills to put aside this book and to try to find independently Black's rapid victory and only then (some 20 to 30 minutes later) to compare their decision with the one chosen by Paul Morphy.

17 ... ♘f3+
18 gf ♕d4+
18 ♔g2 ♕f2+
19 ♔h3 ♕xf3+
20 ♔h4 ♘e3
21 ♖hg1 ♘f5+
23 ♔g5 ♕h5 mate

We will continue to study the principles used in the openings in our next chapter.

Lesson 9: Neglecting Opening Principles

In our last lesson we learned that domination in the centre and rapid development of the pieces to a great degree determines the outcome of the battle in the opening, particularly when played by experienced players. Before proceeding further with opening theory, let us analyse errors most often committed in the initial stage of the game by inexperienced players.

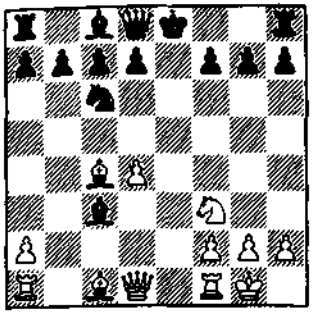
First of all, it is important to remember that the most vulnerable points in kingside defence are those protected by the king alone. In the initial position these points are the f2 and f7-pawns; after kingside castling they are the h2, g2, h7 and g7-pawns. Protection of these squares is of foremost concern. Experience shows that, as a rule, it is on these squares that disasters occur in even the most sophisticated opening systems.

Let us analyse a position which occurs up in the old and very romantic Italian game:

1	**e4**	**e5**
2	**♘f3**	**♘c6**
3	**♗c4**	**♗c5**
4	**c3**	**♘f6**
5	**d4**	**ed**
6	**cd**	**♗b4+**
7	**♘c3!**	

Instead of the cautious 7 ♗d2, White decides to sacrifice two pawns and a rook for the sake of rapid development — a typical device used by players with an aggressive style. Modern methods of struggle in the opening, based on the experience of past generations, do not favour Black's next moves, but one has to bear in mind that this was how the game was played one hundred years ago when nobody cast doubt on the principle 'any sacrifice must be taken'.

7	**...**	**♘xe4**
8	**0-0**	**♘xc3**
9	**bc**	**♗xc3?**

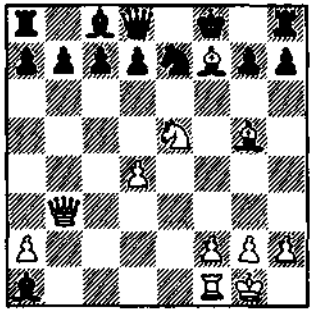


Black has taken two enemy pawns but lags behind in development. The punishment for such violations of opening rules usually follows very swiftly and savagely. The old analysis is a good illustration of the disastrous consequences of 'greed' in the opening. You should not think, however, that this experience is of historical value only. This situation is very frequent in simultaneous exhibitions. Do not get carried away capturing your opponent's pawns in the opening to the detriment of your own forces' mobilisation.

10 ♕b3 ♗xa1

Black is consistent in his desire to capture as much material as possible and loses his last chance to get his king out of the centre. And the chance was there: 10 ... d5 11 ♗xd5 0-0.

11 ♗xf7+ ♔f8
12 ♗g5 ♘e7
13 ♘e5!



This is the hour of reckoning for ignoring development and devouring pawns in the opening. By the way, it was on f7 that the disaster occurred. Black is lost no matter how he defends. For instance, 13 ... ♗xd4 14 ♗g6 d5 15 ♕f3+ ♗f5 16 ♗xf5 ♗xe5 17 ♗e6+ ♗f6 18 ♗xf6 gf 19 ♕xf6+ ♔e8 20 ♕f7 mate (the f7-square again).

Besides chasing pawns, another typical error of many chess players is delaying the removal of the king from the centre. In master practice, there are games when both kings remain in the very centre of action and survive, but this is an exception to the rule and

is based on a profound understanding of the situation and on defensive skills.

Beginners and those with insufficient experience should castle at the earliest opportunity. By remaining in the centre, the king may be lured to the very centre of the board by sacrifices and then disaster becomes imminent.

Y.Vasyukov-B.Lebedev
Moscow 1960

1 e4 e5
2 ♘f3 d6
3 d4 ♘d7

Black's unsophisticated deployment of his pieces is very frequent in the games of amateurs. The entirely sound idea of strengthening the advance post in the centre (e5) is brought about in a somewhat fanciful manner whereby the bishop on c8 gets blocked.

4 ♗c4 h6

This is an altogether dubious decision — instead of developing his pieces (for instance, 4 ... ♗e7) Black, planning to move his knight to f6, loses time trying to prevent the intervention of the White knight on g5. However, to prove the unsoundness of Black's strategy in the opening White had to play very resourcefully and vigorously.

5 de de

After 5 ... ♘xe5 6 ♘xe5 de 7 ♗xf7+! Black's position would have been hopeless.

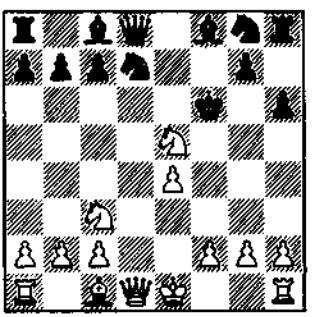
6 ♗xf7+!

The first strike is delivered on the most vulnerable point.

6 ... ♔xf7
7 ♘xe5+ ♔f6

Anything else would bring the end even faster.

8 ♘c3!



In order to bring the Black king into the open White sacrifices his knight. The threats of 9 ♘d5+ and 9 ♕d4 may be countered in only one way, as all other variations fail to save him, for example, 8 ... c6 9 ♕f3+ ♔xe5 10 ♕f5+

♔d6 11 ♗f4+ ♘e5 12 ♕xe5+ ♔d7 13 ♖d1+ or 8 ... ♗c5 9 ♕f3+ ♔xe5 *10* ♕f5+ ♔d6 *11* ♗f4+ ♔e7 12 ♘d5+ ♔e8 13 ♘xc7+ or 8 ... ♕e8 9 ♘d5+ ♔xe5 10 ♗f4+ ♔e6 *11* ♘c7+.

8 ... ♔xe5

The road from e8 to e5 turned out to be short but the reverse could also be true. For this reason White has to attack without delay.

9 ♕h5+ g5

Black is right in trying to use the pawn to cut off the queen. The weakening of these squares is not very important here because the continuation of the king's 'walk' is fraught with danger: 9 ... ♔e6 10 ♕f5+ ♔e7 11 ♘d5+ ♔d6 12 ♗f4+ ♔c6 13 ♕e6+ ♗d6 14 ♘b4+ etc.

10 ♗xg5!

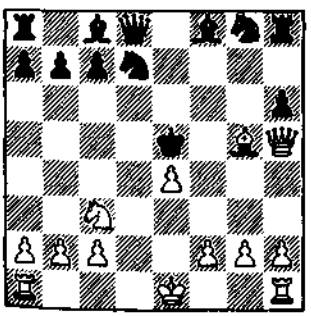
A brilliant stroke. 10 ... ♕xg5 can be followed by 11 *f4+! ♔xf4 12 0-0+* ♔e5 (12 ... ♔e3 13 ♖ad1! ♕xh5 14 ♖d3 mate) 13 ♖f5+ ♕xf5 14 ♕xf5+ ♔d6 15 ♖d1+ ♔e7 16 ♘d5+ ♔d8 17 ♘b6! cb 18 ♕xf8+ ♔c7 19 ♕g7 winning.

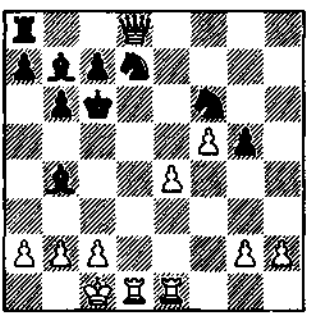
Black now tries to buy himself out with a rook.

10 ... hg
11 f4+! ♔e6
12 f5+ ♔e7
13 ♘d5+ ♔d6
14 ♕xh8 ♘gf6
15 0-0-0 ♔c6
16 ♖he1 b6
17 ♘b4+ ♗xb4!

Black finds a witty possibility to complicate the struggle by sacrificing the queen. 17 ... ♔b7 would be answered by 18 e5.

18 ♕xd8 ♗b7



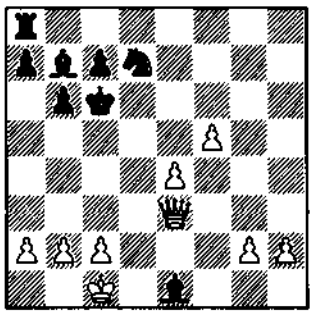


A devilish idea! The White queen ends up in a trap and is doomed to perish. But chess is a game of logic and it is very unlikely that White would wind up losing after having a advantage. However it transpires that White has a resource.

19 ♖xd7 ♘xd7

It would have been to White's advantage to play 19 ... ♖xd8 20 ♖xd8 ♗xe1 21 e5! ♘g4 22 e6 ♗b4 23 ♖d4.

20 ♕xg5 ♗xe1
21 ♕e3!



Now the situation is quite clear. Black's bishop is doomed, as 21 ... ♗b4 or 21 ... ♗a5 is followed by 22 ♕d4!

21 ... ♗h4
22 ♕h6+ ♗f6
23 e5 ♖f8
24 ef ♖xf6

The struggle is practically over. There is no way to contain White's kingside pawns supported by the queen.

25 ♕f4 ♗c8
26 g4 ♘c5
27 b4 ♘b7
28 ♕e4+ ♔d7
29 ♕d4+ ♖d6
30 ♕g7+ ♔c6
31 f6 ♘d8
32 f7 ♘xf7
33 ♕xf7 ♗e6
34 ♕e8+ ♔d5
35 ♕a8+ ♔e5
36 ♕xa7 ♖c6
37 ♕a4 ♖c4
38 ♕b5+ ♔f4
39 g5 c6
40 ♕xb6

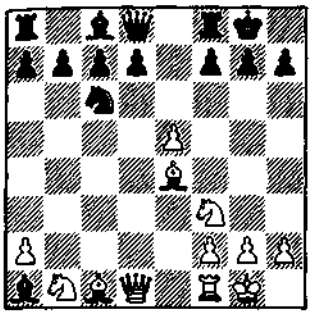
Black resigned.

As a confirmation of the above thesis I would like to offer for independent analysis by the readers an elegant and very instructive game played some 100 years ago.

M.Chigorin-S.Alapin
St. Petersburg 1883

1 e4 e5
2 ♘f3 ♘c6
3 ♗c4 ♗c5
4 b4 ♗xb4
5 c3 ♗a5

6	**0-0**	**♘f6**
7	**d4**	**0-0**
8	**de**	**♘xe4**
9	**♗d5!**	**♗xc3**
10	**♗xe4**	**♗xa1**



11 ♗xh7+

A bishop sacrifice striking at the most vulnerable point. As you can see, the king feels better on g8 than on e8 but is not yet one hundred per cent safe.

11 ... ♔h8

After 11 ... ♔xh7 White would win by 12 ♘g5+ ♔g6 13 ♕g4 f5 14 ef ♘e5 15 ♕g3! ♔xf6 16 f4 ♔e7 17 ♖e1 d6 18 ♘c3!

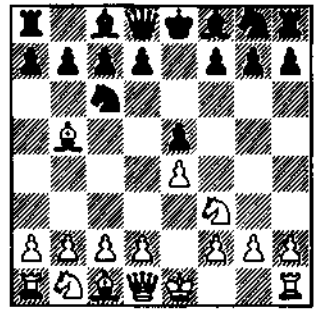
12	**♘g5**	**g6**
13	**♕g4**	**♗xe5**
14	**♕h4**	**♔g7**
15	**♘e6+!**	**fe**
16	**♕h6+**	**♔f7**
17	**♗xg6+**	**♔e7**
18	**♕h4+!**	**♖f6**
19	**♗a3+!**	**d6**
20	**♕h7+**	**♔f8**
21	**♕h8+**	**♔e7**
22	**♕g7+**	**♖f7**
23	**♕xf7**	**mate**

Lesson 10: The Aim of the Opening

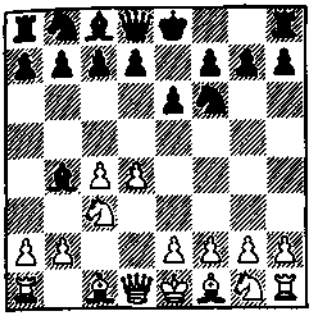
Our two previous lessons were devoted to the most common mistakes made by inexperienced players in the early stages of the game. Having seen how not to play the opening, let us now try to figure out what it is we should do to get a good position from the very outset.

Practically all instructions concerning this are contained in Lesson Eight, where the First Principle was given for the opening battle. The principle defines the most important development factors which hold true, no matter how the opening develops. One must remember that the pieces are brought out so as to achieve a definite advantage in the middle game, which is when the main events will take place. When developing your pieces, it is important, especially for players without much practice, to maintain harmony, that is, to leave yourself room to manoeuvre without crowding your pieces. At the same time, you must try to make it more difficult for your opponent to do the same.

No matter what the opening, the best moves for both sides are always subordinate to one goal — the fight for the centre. White, having the advantage of the first move, can attain this goal faster than Black, who does all he can to hinder White. Take the first few moves from two of the most complex systems in modern theory, the Ruy Lopez (1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗b5)



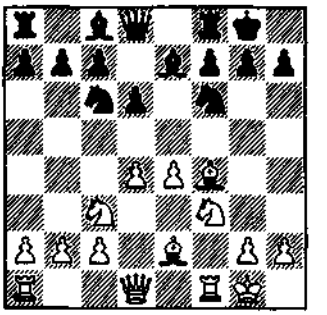
and the Nimzo-Indian Defence (1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗b4)



It is obvious that, from the very outset, the fight resolves around respectively the central e5 and e4 squares. This is only natural, since domination in the centre (meaning not just that pawns occupy the centre squares, but that these are controlled by pieces) allows for creation of a strong-point from which to operate in the middle game.

Let us try to illustrate this with a rather elementary example.

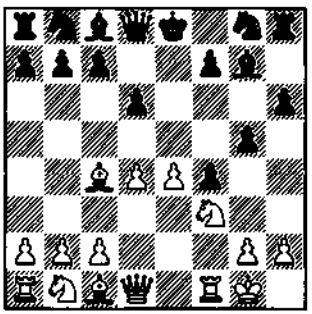
1	**e4**	**e5**
2	**f4**	**♘c6**
3	**♘f3**	**ef**
4	**d4**	**d6**
5	**♗xf4**	**♘f6**
6	**♘c3**	**♗e7**
7	**♗e2**	**0-0**
8	**0-0**	



This, by the way, is how games between beginners or at simultaneous exhibitions frequently start off. Both sides have seemingly tried to keep pace in development, but White has clearly managed to develop to a greater extent. He has a powerful pawn centre and his pieces have room to manoeuvre. Of course, Black's position is far from lost, but why resign yourself to passivity from the very outset?

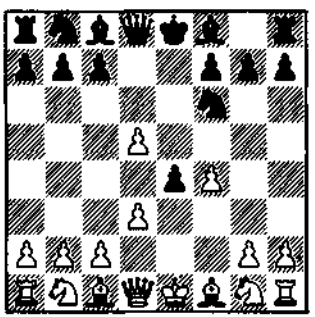
We are not concerned here with recommending any specific kind of opening, but considering the tremendous popularity of the King's Gambit amongst inexperienced players, we might start by examining the methods behind it.

1 e4 e5 2 f4 ef 3 ♘f3 d6 4 d4 g5 5 ♗c4 ♗g7 6 0-0 h6



Black has gained a pawn here which he can safely hold, and, at the same time has not neglected development.

1 e4 e5 2 f4 d5 3 ed e4 4 d3 ♘f6



This attempt at counter-attack conceals many dangers for both sides and demands a good knowledge of numerous variations.

From the following example, taken from grandmaster practice, we can see how neglecting the principles of opening development led to rapid disaster for White.

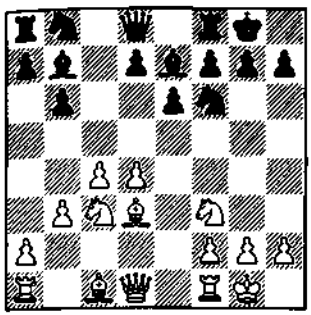
E.Bogoljubow-M.Botvinnik
Nottingham 1936

1	**d4**	**♘f6**
2	**♘f3**	**b6**
3	**e3**	

In essence, White is declining to fight actively for the centre. Attempts to achieve an opening advantage usually involve the moves c4 or ♘c3 (compare the Kasparov-Gheorghiu game from Lesson 2).

3	**...**	**♗b7**
4	**c4**	**c5**
5	**♘c3**	**cd**
6	**ed**	**e6**
7	**♗d3**	**♗e7**
8	**0-0**	**0-0?**
9	**b3?**	

An instructive moment. White, carried away with developing his own pieces, does not consider Black's problems and misses the move 9 d5! which would make the smooth development of his opponent's pieces impossible.



The point is that 9 ... ed 10 cd ♘xd5 11 ♘xd5 ♗xd5 12 ♗xh7+ ♔xh7 13 ♕xd5 is obviously to White's advantage, and therefore Black would be forced to reconcile himself to the existence of the White pawn on d5, which cramps his position.

9 ... d5

10 ♗e3?

We must bluntly say that this is a move of the 'wait and see' variety. The bishop on e3 is placed most awkwardly, as it hampers White's pieces and prevents White from controlling the important e4 square, where the Black knight will very soon secure itself. From his previous play, White should logically have continued with ♗b2 and ♕e2, and then, depending on what transpired, ♖ac1 and ♖fd1, or ♖ad1 and ♖fe1. White would then have had a free game and could have looked confidently to the future.

10 .. ♘e4

11 ♖ac1 ♘d7

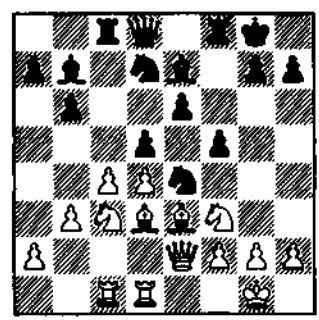
12 ♕e2

By continuing his same carefree play and allowing Black to strengthen his position without hindrance, White has now passed up his last chance to contest Black's control of the centre with 12 cd ed.

12 ... ♖c8

Now the exchange cd is no longer possible.

13 ♖fd1 f5



Black has consolidated his central knight. It has now become obvious that White is in serious trouble. First of all, Black prevails in the centre.

Secondly, White's queenside weakness on the black squares is beginning to be felt. We may recall that all this could have been avoided had White merely placed his bishop on b2 — the most natural spot for it in the present position! This example is a vivid illustration of how the inappropriate placing of a single piece can affect the solidity of the entire position.

14 ♗f4?

White tries to control the e5 square too late (and at the wrong moment!). It would have been wiser to switch to defence and try to simplify the position by a series of exchanges: 14 ♘b1, followed by cd and ♖xc8.

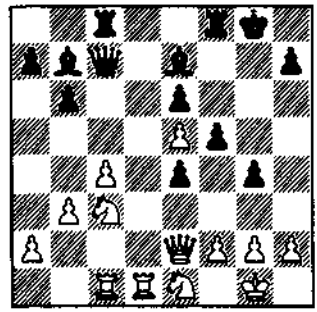
14 ... g5!

Using the cover of his powerful central post, ♘e4, Black undertakes the decisive attack without worrying about the supposed weakening of his king's position.

15 ♗e5

The maximum resistance was to be offered by 15 ♗e3, but how could he bring himself to play such a move?

15 ... g4
16 ♘e1 ♘xe5
17 ♗xe4 de
18 de ♕c7



The game is over. The e5 pawn will go, and Black's powerful central pawns, supported by two long-range bishops, will soon force White to resign.

19 ♘b5 ♕xe5
20 ♖d7 ♗g5!

A final finesse — the bishop simultaneously eludes danger and gains a tempo.

21 ♖cd1 ♗c6
22 ♖xa7 ♖cd8

In addition to everything else, Black grabs the d-file. The game finished:

23 h4 ♖xd1
24 ♕xd1 ♖d8
25 ♕c2 ♗d2

White resigned

He cannot defend against both ... ♕a1 and ... e3.

This might be a good time to

cite Mikhail Botvinnik's comment on a different game of his with Master Alexander Sokolsky in the semi-finals of the 1938 USSR Championship: " ... and control over the central squares goes over to Black. It gradually becomes clear that White has no game plan at all and is merely concerned with 'development' One could perhaps have got away with such play at the turn of the century, but nowadays, when every master starts putting together a middlegame plan beginning at the 6th or 8th move, there is no better way to get into a cramped position than to strive merely for development."

Botvinnik, of course, is speaking here of expert players, and for that reason, it would be frivolous at the least to demand a great degree of insight into the position from our readers. But I think this critical comment by an ex-world champion may be taken as a chess axiom valid for anyone who plays chess. Remember it and try while still in the opening to use every chance to plot out approximately what course the game will subsequently take.

Lesson 11: Choice of Opening

Having studied the previous lessons, you have set up your pieces and are thinking over the first move. Don't be in a hurry to read an opening manual — it will only lead you astray. Let's try to make a choice together. First of all, remember that there is no such thing as the 'best' or the 'strongest' move in the initial position. There are several moves corresponding to the principles of development in chess openings, and you have to make a choice in accordance with your taste, knowledge and experience.

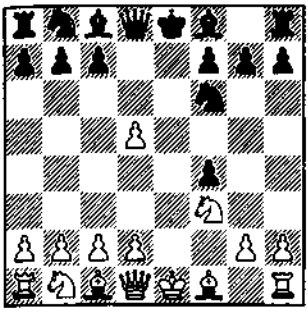
I would suggest starting the game with the advance of one of the centre pawns. Before becoming a grandmaster I liked starting the game with 1 e4! This move reminded me of chivalrous gallantry and a readiness to engage in open combat. The White pawn on e4 controls the important d5 square waiting for reinforcement on d4. As you can see, White's aims are straight forward and clear-cut, and it is natural that all openings starting with 1 e4 are referred to as 'open' or 'semi-open'.

So, White has played 1 e4 ... Which is the best reply for Black? Strange as it might seem, Black has a wide choice.

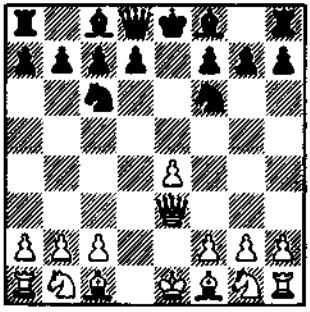
The most fundamental reaction is undoubtedly the symmetrical reply with the Black king's pawn.

All openings beginning with 1 e4 e5 fall under the category 'open' games, rich in history and tournament practice.

The King's Gambit: 1 e4 e5 2 f4 ef 3 ♘f3 d5 4 d4. This splendid opening has dropped out of major tournament practice mostly due to the counter-gambit ideas enabling Black to fight successfully for initiative by playing 2 ... d5! 3 ed e4! or 2 ... ef 3 ♘f3 d5 4 ed ♘f6.

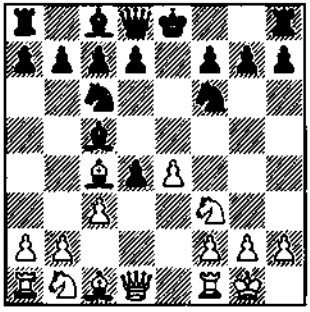


Another attempt to remove the pawn from the centre — 2 d4 ed 3 ♕xd4 — has found very few supporters. As a result of the White queen's walk 3 ... ♘c6 4 ♕e3 ♘f6

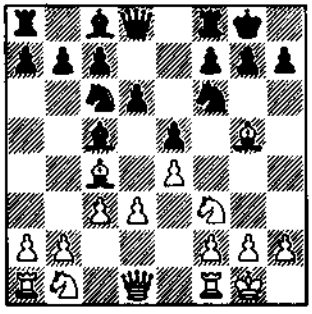


Black brings the two knights into play, securing equal chances.

The Giuoco Piano. 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5. The idea is to seize the centre and attack the f7-square. This is one of the oldest chess openings rich in possibilities. The attempts by means of sacrifices playing 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗c5 6 d4 or 4 c3 ♘f6 5 d4 ed 6 0-0

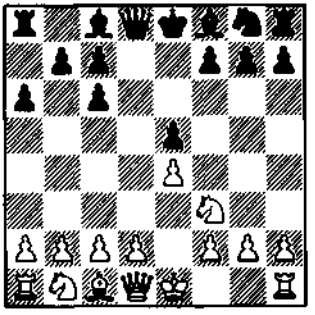


go side by side with the modern methods of slow deployment of the pieces after 4 d3 d6 5 c3 ♘f6 6 0-0 0-0 7 ♗g5

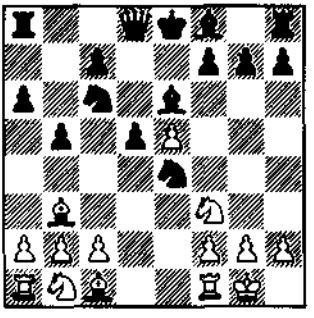


The Ruy Lopez, 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗b5, is the epitome of open games. The opening is rich in deep strategic and tactical

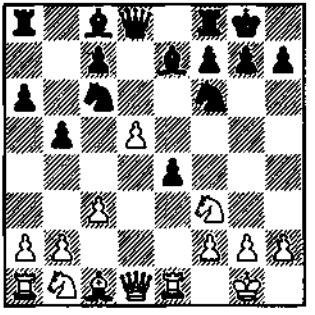
ideas. The best grandmasters regard the ability to play Ruy Lopez with both colours as a test of chess strength. The opening is to everyone's taste. For instance, the relatively simple Exchange Variation (3 ... a6 4 ♗xc6 dc)



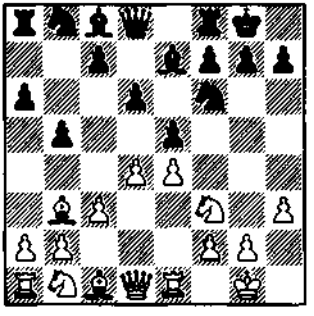
the clear cut fight for the centre in the Open Variation (3 ... a6 4 ♗a4 ♘f6 5 0-0 ♘xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 de ♗e6),



the famous Marshall's Counter-attack (3 ... a6 4 ♗a4 ♘f6 5 0-0 ♗e7 6 ♖e1 b5 7 ♗b3 0-0 8 c3 d5!? 9 ed ♘xd5 or even 9 ... e4),



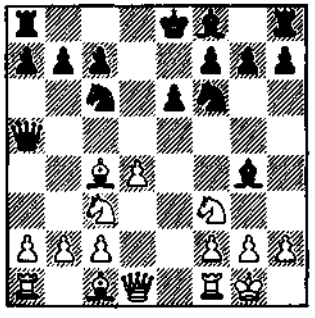
and finally the Classical Variation which is within the capacity only of experienced and well-prepared players (3 ... a6 4 ♗a4 ♘f6 5 0-0 ♗e7 6 ♖e1 b5 7 ♗b3 0-0 8 c3 d6 9 h3 ♘a5 10 ♗c2 or 9 ... ♘b8 10 d4).



Let's get back to the position after White's first move. Besides the straightforward 1 ... e5, Black can start the game with other opening formations different from the Ruy Lopez.

All chess openings where in response to 1 e4 Black avoids playing 1 ... e5 are called 'semi-open'.

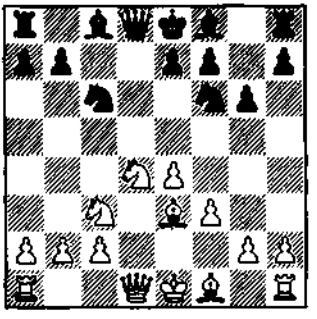
The simplest opening is the *Scandinavian Defence:* 1 e4 d5 2 ed ♕xd5 3 ♘c3 ♕a5. At the cost of losing a tempo in retreating his queen, Black reduces the tension in the centre, hoping to develop the pieces in the following way: 4 d4 ♘f6 5 ♘f3 ♗g4 6 ♗c4 e6 7 0-0 ♘c6,



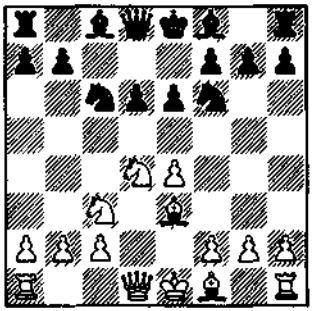
followed by ... 0-0-0. This opening is not popular with experienced chess players (we don't like to waste time), but for most players this is quite an acceptable opening.

The Sicilian Defence arising after 1 ... c5 is the most frequently played opening.

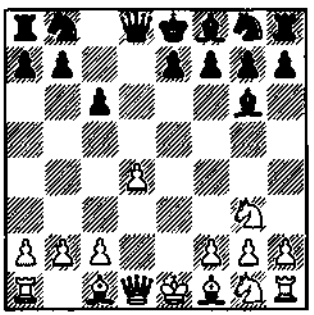
Black discourages White from having two strong pawns in the centre. The continuation 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 d4 cd 4 ♘xd4 often leads to positions rich in tactical possibilities and characterised by a complex struggle over the centre squares. I would advise you to begin studying the Sicilian Defence with some well known games played in the Dragon Variation: 4 ... ♘f6 5 ♘c3 d6 6 ♗e3 g6 7 f3



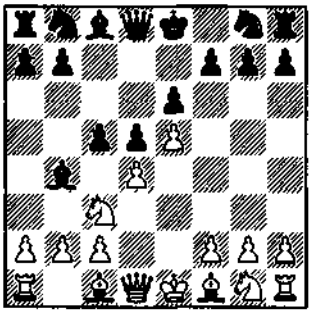
(or 7 ♗e2), or in the Scheveningen System: 4 ... ♘f6 5 ♘c3 d6 6 ♗e3 e6



Two openings — the *Caro-Kann* defence (1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5) and the *French Defence* (1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5) — have a similar stragetic concept. Black fights against the formation of the 'ideal' pawn centre by limiting its mobility and placing a well protected outpost on d5. The most crucial postions in the Caro-Kann are as follows: first — 1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 e5 ♗f5 4 ♘c3 e6; second — 1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 de 4 ♘xe4 ♗f5 5 ♘g3 ♗g6



where White has a slight advantage, but there are no weaknesses in Black's position and Black's development is unhindered. The basic position in the French Defence — 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e5 c5

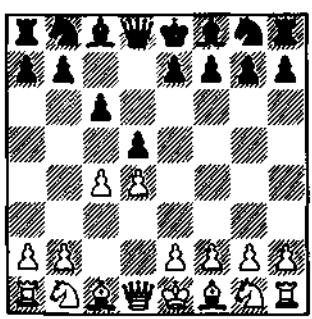


leads to the position with the blocked pawns on d4 and e5 under constant threat.

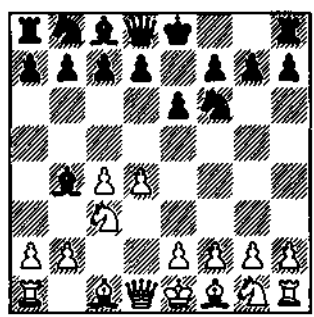
These two openings are regarded as quite reliable and lead to complex manoeuvring in the middlegame. Those who like scrupulous work at the chessboard and who can patiently bide their time would do well to study one of these openings. But I personally prefer the Caro-Kann Defence with a free development of Black's pieces, whereas in the French Defence the black bishop on c8 is hemmed in by its own pawns.

The course of events is much slower if White starts the game with the advance of the queen's pawn — 1 d4. Here, after the first opening moves the plans for both sides are unclear and concealed from the opponent. All chess openings starting with 1 d4 are called 'closed' or 'semi-closed'. To play them well and efficiently, one must have a certain understanding of position and some experience. Therefore I advise you to play, at least for a year, 'open' games, and only after this can you start playing 'closed' games.

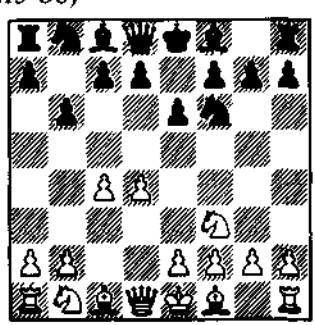
Analogous to 1 e4, the most fundamental reply to 1 d4 is 1 ... d5. And 2 c4 leads to different variations of the *Queen's Gambit.* By replying 2 ... *c6, the Slav Defence* or



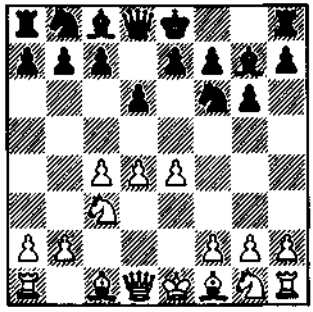
2 ... e6 leading to the *Orthodox* or *Tarrasch Defences,* Black will try to strengthen the outpost on d5, whereas White will be methodically creating favourable conditions for the king pawn's advance to e4. In this century other methods of development, aimed at providing Black with less straightforward counterplay in the centre, have evolved. In the *Nimzo-Indian Defence* (1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗b4)



and the *Queen's Indian Defence* (1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 b6)



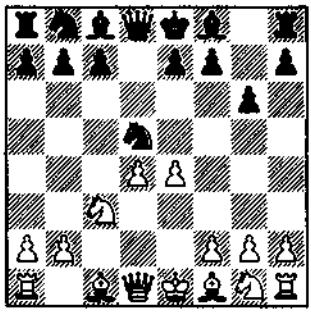
Black tries to fight for control over e4. In the *King's Indian Defence* (1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6)



and the *Grünfeld Defence* (1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 d5 4 cd ♘xd5 5 e4)

Black permits White to build up a powerful pawn centre and then embarks on an undermining strategy.

And that is the end of our



short outline of the basic chess openings. When you read one of the numerous chess manuals available, don't be confused by the multitude of variations you may come across. They reflect all that might be of importance in tournament practice, in other words, the basic laws of opening strategy. We have already dwelt upon it, and it is a must for the beginner.

Lesson 12: The Art of Planning

Before embarking on an activity, almost every person, in order to achieve his object, contemplates what operations he will have to perform and figures out the best sequence for these operations.

I firmly believe that chess is, to a certain extent, a model of life, and therefore planning is an essential feature of this game.

What is planning in a chess game? It is a well-considered order of operations aimed at achieving a definite and concrete objective, the order taking into account the situation on the chessboard and constantly modified by the opponent's actions.

The plan should not be confused with the object of the game. Some amateur may say 'I want to checkmate, therefore I play for a mate from the very start. So I play according to a plan.' This is an utterly wrong approach. In the initial position there are no real conditions for mating the opponent's king. The mate is the ultimate and most desired object of the game, and 'play for mate from the first move' is a wish to satisfy this desire.

Firstly, you develop your pieces according to a certain pattern to achieve some superiority in a certain area of the chessboard.

Then you increase your pressure in order to obtain concrete positional or material advantages in the middlegame.

And finally, you carefully exploit all your advantages in the endgame, obtaining a material superiority that renders any resistance impossible.

The defending side does not play in a free-wheeling fashion either; he also plays according to a plan, taking into account all dangers, threats and weaknesses in his camp and trying above all to get rid of the weaknesses.

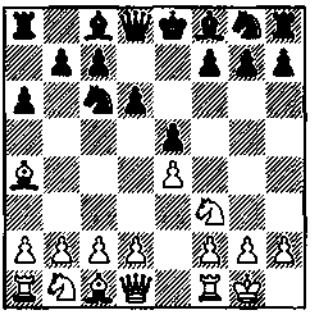
The plan is built up on the basis of a concrete evaluation of the position and its peculiarities. Therefore, it is important to be able to analyse the fighting formations of both sides and to understand all the subtleties of the position. The ability to build up a plan and to carry it out consistently on the board is one of the most attractive aspects of chess; sometimes it is more gratifying than, say, a direct attack on the enemy's king. And if you remember that quite often chess players camouflage their intentions by employing distracting manoeuvres, you will understand that playing according to plan is a great art.

Of course, it takes a long time to learn your operations at the chessboard. Serious and small mistakes are inevitable. But to my mind it is better to learn from your mistakes than to do without any plan whatsoever.

To illustrate this, let us consider the following examples.

A.Suetin-I.Bondarevsky
Moscow 1963

1	**e4**	**e5**
2	**♘f3**	**♘c6**
3	**♗b5**	**a6**
4	**♗a4**	**d6**
5	**0-0**	



This is one of the oldest variations of the Ruy Lopez. Having completed the first half of the plan in the opening (evacuation of the king from the centre), White is planning to create a pawn centre by continuing c2-c3 and d2-d4 and exerting pressure on the e5 pawn. Black ordinarily tries to hold the outpost on e5 by playing ♘g8-e7-g6 followed by ♗e7. It is also possible to build up another defensive formation: ... ♘g8-e7, ... g6, ... ♗g7. Both sides seem to be ready for slow positional manoeuvring. Suddenly Black makes an impulsive anti-positional move.

5 ... g5?!
6 d4!

Energetic actions in the centre should be regarded as the best reaction to Black's premature kingside escapade The best way to exploit effectively Black's slow development is to open up the centre. White's 6th move is a good example of timely correction of the previously envisaged plan prompted by the hazardous actions of the adversary.

6 ... g4
7 ♗xc6+ bc
8 ♘e1 ed?

Another positional concession. Labouring under the illusion that the advantage of two bishops permits him to open up the centre, Black, still conspicuously underdeveloped, makes serious concessions in the centre.

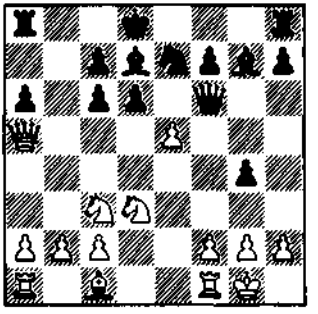
9 ♕xd4 ♕f6
10 ♕a4 ♘e7
11 ♘c3

One more correction to the opening plan. This position does not require the advance of the pawn to c3, and this square is now occupied by the knight which gets involved in the struggle for the centre — the decisive sector.

11 ... ♗d7
12 ♕a5!

White modifies his plan and uses the weakness of the c7-pawn to deter Black from castling, thereby frustrating his opponent's intention to mobilise his pieces. The loss of a tempo is more than compensated by the disharmony of Black's pieces.

12 ... ♔d8
13 ♘d3 ♗g7
14 e5!



This is part of White's plan aimed at organising an attack against the uncastled Black king. The quickest way is to clear the field in the centre.

14 ... ♕f5

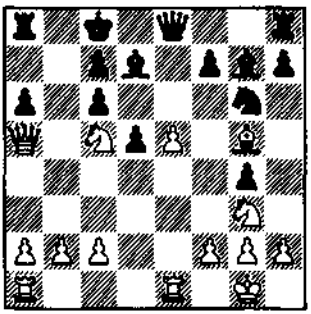
After 14 ... de 15 ♘c5 there is no defence against ♖d1.

15 ♖e1 d5

The only way to save the

game is to avoid opening up the d-file. However, the weakness of the squares in Black's camp turns out to be a decisive factor.

16 ♘e2 ♘g6
17 ♘g3 ♕e6
18 ♗g5+ ♔c8
19 ♘c5! ♕e8



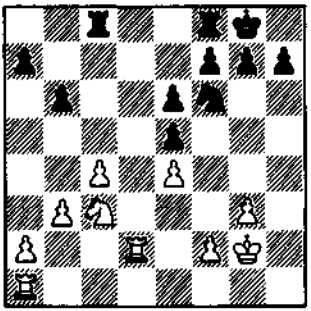
20 ♘h5!

White's knights have immediate exchange of one smithereens. The final stage of White's plan is to obtain a decisive material advantage.

20 ... ♖g8
21 ♘xg7 ♖xg7
22 ♘xa6 ♖a7
23 ♗e3 ♖xa6
24 ♕xa6+

and soon Black resigned.

Here is another example from the game between Svetozar Gligoric and Vasily Smyslov.

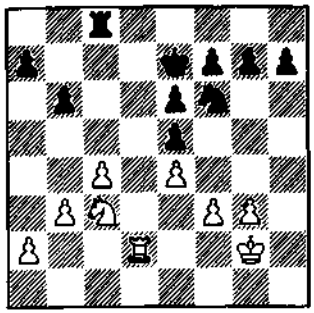


In addition to the extra pawn which can be exploited only in the ending, Black's chief advantage lies in the control of a number of squares in the centre: d4, d5, c5, f4 and f5. White has his counter-chances: the pawn majority on the queenside and the d-file. How many similar positions, as a result of superficial play, have ended in the draw! But Smyslov is a great expert on such endgames. His winning plan comprises three basic stages.

The first stage is the immediate exchange of one pair of rooks so as to prevent penetration on the d-file. The other rook should be preserved to combat the eventual advance of White's queenside pawns.

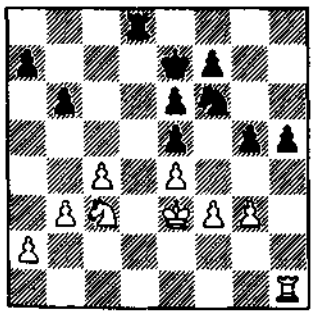
20 ... ♖fd8

21	♖ad1	♖xd2
22	♖xd2	♔f8
23	f3	♔e7



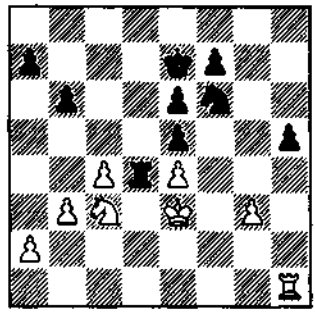
The second stage of the plan is to threaten the creation of a passed h-pawn. To prevent this, White's rook must concede the d-file to Black's rook.

24	♔f2	h5
25	♔e3	g5!
26	♖h2	♖d8
27	♖h1	



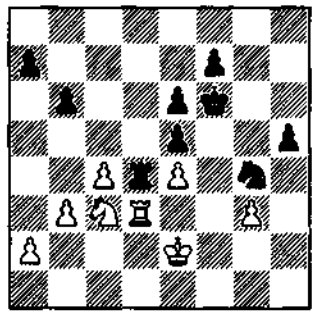
The third stage of the plan incorporates an attack on the e4-pawn.

27	...	g4
28	fg	♘xg4+
29	♔e2	♘f6
30	♔e3	♖d4



Now that White's pieces have to defend the e4-pawn, Black's king comes into play, heading for g4.

31	♖f1	♘g4+
32	♔e2	♔f8
33	♖f3	♔g7
34	♖d3	♔f6



A necessary correction of plan. Originally, the route of Black's king was g7-g6-g5-g4 provided the rooks were preserved. However, White seeks salvation in the knight endgame, and therefore Black's king must be kept close to the centre.

35 ♖xd4 ed
36 ♘b5 ♔e5!
37 ♘xa7 ♔xe4
38 ♘c8 d3+

Certainly not 38 ... e5? 39 ♘d6 mate!

39 ♔d2 ♔d4
40 c5 bc
41 ♘d6 ♘e5
White resigned

What is the best method of planning a chess game? Presumably, by analysing grandmasters' annotations where particular emphasis is placed on the logical sequence of operations to achieve the ultimate objective.

The annotations to their games by top ranking chess players will be highly beneficial for all lovers of chess keen on improving their game.

Lesson 13: Forcing Continuations

For most enthusiasts chess is primarily a game sparkling with impetuous attacks and combinational fireworks. Everyone is keen on attacking and creating beautiful combinations, but very few are enchanted by the genuine beauty of subtle positional manoeuvres and profound strategic plans.

The art of positional play is not duly appreciated by the rank-and-file who often fail to understand why grandmasters are so good at carrying out beautiful and effective attacks. Many amateurs can solve, no worse than well-known masters, problems and studies. And only upon plunging seriously into the intricacies of the game do they realize that the opportunities for effective attacks and combinations are not, as a rule, spontaneous, but they result from positional play based on the observance of the laws of chess strategy. Therefore those who want to succeed in chess should realise that combinative and positional play do not oppose but rather complement each other.

I like attacking and sacrificing, but nevertheless I am firmly convinced that positional play is the basis of chess, reflecting the inner logic of the chess struggle and more in keeping with the requirements of the modern game.

The basis of positional play is the plan we dwelt upon in some detail in our previous lesson. Forming a deep and efficient ('correct') plan requires as much imagination and versatility as calculating an intricate chess combination. If the idea of a combination has been found, then the calculation of the moves is a matter of time and technique. The moves frequently assume a forced character; they become

realistic and concrete.

In formulating a plan one has to consider the positions which may be encountered a few moves later. The concrete calculation of variations often gives away to semi-abstract speculations and assumptions about the likely resultant positions. The ability to play 'according to the position', or 'positionally', is important in complex and abstract situations when the target of the attack is not yet clear and one has to manoeuvre in order to consolidate one's pieces and discover a weak point in the enemy camp.

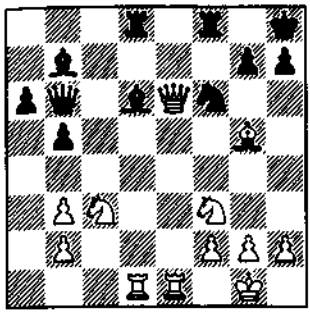
The mere mention of the name of Paul Morphy, the brilliant American chess player of the 19th century, makes many lovers of chess remember his outstanding attacks and combinations. However, very few know that these combinations were based on profound strategic principles such as maximum centralisation of the pieces, superiority in development, and opening of files in the centre. Morphy intuitively understood the laws of chess strategy and, owing to this, he scored a great number of brilliant victories.

The great chess thinker of the end of the 19th century, the first official world champion Wilhelm Steinitz was the first to formulate the basic laws of positional play (strategy). He showed that a plan cannot be inspired by the player' imagination. It should rely on something concrete hidden in the position on the chessboard at a particular moment. He demonstrated that each position on the chessboard is characterised by various factors, favourable or unfavourable for each side, which should be analysed both separately and together so as to evaluate the position. This evaluation will be helpful in formulating a plan taking into account the real possibilities of both sides.

The ability to evaluate properly the situation at any moment of the game determines, to a great extent, the strength of the chess player.

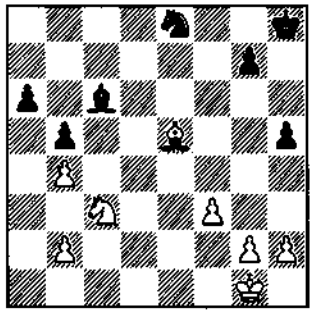
Let us consider a simple example.

I.Boleslavsky-A.Kotov
Zurich 1953



At first glance, the chances are unclear here — White has an extra pawn, but his queenside pawns are weak and Black's two long-range bishops are likely to give Black sufficient counterplay to achieve equality. The trouble is that the bishop on d6 is pinned. To free himself, Black has to play for simplifications, hoping to secure a draw in the ending with opposite coloured bishops. Alas, there is a small drawback in this evaluation of the position leading, 7 moves later, to Black's loss.

20	**♗f4**	**♗xf3**
21	**♖xd6**	**♖xd6**
22	**♕xd6**	**♕xd6**
23	**♗xd6**	**♖e8**
24	**♖xe8+**	**♘xe8**
25	**♗e5!**	**♗c6**
26	**b4!**	**h5**
27	**f3**	



If Black could exchange knights, the draw would be obvious, even if he let the White king into the centre and gave up the a6-pawn. But this is impossible. It is easy to see that White's bishop is ready to capture Black's knight if it moves. So, the ending with the opposite-coloured bishops does not save Black and the White king will take the shortest way to the queenside, after which Black's pawns are sure to fall. This elementary example shows that White managed to exploit his advantage so easily because among numerous middle-game positions he saw the best one arising after 25 ♗e5! and 26 b4! after which the calculation of variations was quite easy.

To evaluate the position

correctly, one should be able to analyse the disposition of the pieces, their centralisation, the quality of pawn structure, mobility, the availability of open lines, and the material relationships of the pieces. The depth and subtlety of the general evaluation of the position depends on the concrete estimation of each of the above-mentioned factors in any given position.

For example, it is common knowledge that a rook is stronger than a knight, but if the knight occupies a well-protected outpost in the centre of the board while the rook is completely out of the action, then the knight is obviously superior to the rook.

In the endgame the evaluation of the position is usually determined by the possession of passed pawns and centralisation of the king. In the middlegame, on the other hand, the king should be kept away from the centre.

An experienced chess player respects the art of positional play because he appreciates the benefit of the systematic accumulation of small positional 'pluses' providing, in the final analysis, the so-called positional advantage for one of the sides. The player having the positional advantage is in charge of the situation. Suddenly he discovers a great wealth of different possibilities for his pieces and a good choice of combinational and positional continuations.

If you take ten beautiful attacking combinations of any grandmaster and try to evaluate the initial positions, you will see that these combinations were based on positional superiority, for example superiority in development or superior mobility of the pieces.

In the past 100 years profound chess analysts have unravelled many mysteries in the theory of positional play. The basic laws of chess strategy formulated by the great Steinitz have remained unchanged, but more emphasis is being placed now on such factors as dynamics of the position, compensation for some positional drawbacks ('minuses') by some advantages ('pluses'). More importance is being attached now to

the co-ordination of the pieces since two or three well co-ordinated pieces can truimph over enemy pieces superior in force but less mobile.

And finally, whereas 150 years ago combinations were aimed ultimately at seizing the king's fortress, nowadays, with the progress of defensive technique, complex combinations are carried out to increase positional gains. 'Positional sacrifice' of chess material has become one of the most effective techniques when pawns and pieces are sacrifced to achieve substantial (but not decisive) positional gains.

In conclusion, I would like to advise all lovers of chess to study more persistently the art of positional play. I assure you you won't regret it!

Lesson 14: Queen Sacrifices

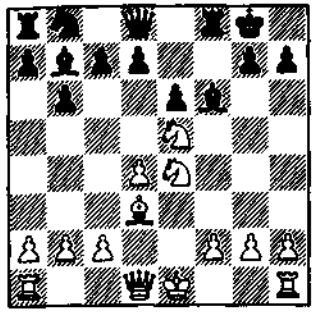
So long as a chess game develops steadily in accordance with the laws of strategy, the traditional hierarchical value of chess pieces is preserved. One can, of course, argue about which is stronger — the rook or the bishop and two pawns — depending on the position occupied by these pieces. But sometimes chess pieces acquire supernatural strength and begin performing miracles. All our traditional values are exploded: for instance, a pawn becomes stronger than a rook or even a queen. This happens most frequently when a well thought-out combination is implemented on the chess board.

It is a well known fact that combinational play appeals to chess enthusiasts. Why? First of all, by its beauty, unexpectedness and inexorable logic, for in the course of the combination the opponent usually makes forced moves. This is one of the most astonishing paradoxes of chess. When a struggle is in progress, each side can choose from several possible moves. But combinative complications violating normal material values strictly limit the ways in which the game can develop, and what is ore, the opponent has no choice of moves.

Let us analyse a game between Edward Lasker and George Thomas played in 1911. It developed quietly at first.

Edward Lasker-G.Thomas
London 1911

1	**d4**	**f5**
2	**♘f3**	**e6**
3	**♘c3**	**♘f6**
4	**♗g5**	**♗e7**
5	**♗xf6**	**♗xf6**
6	**e4**	**fe**
7	**♘xe4**	**b6**
8	**♗d3**	**♗b7**
9	**♘e5**	**0-0**

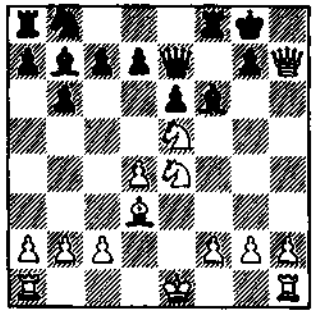


Now comes the signal for attack:

10 ♕h5! ♕e7

Black avoids 10 ... ♗xe5 thinking that after 11 ♘xf6+ he will be saved by 11 ... gf. If only he had known what was going to happen next!

11 ♕xh7+!!



An astonishing sacrifice. White gives up his queen for a pawn making the Black king run to the opposite end of the chessboard where he will meet an inglorious death.

11 ... ♔xh7
12 ♘xf6+ ♔h6

If the king had retreated to h8 the end would have been immediate: 13 ♘g6 mate.

13 ♘eg4+ ♔g5
14 h4+ ♔f4
15 g3+ ♔f3
16 ♗e2+ ♔g2
17 ♖h2+ ♔g1

This square usually provides shelter for the White king. But the Black king is sure to perish here.

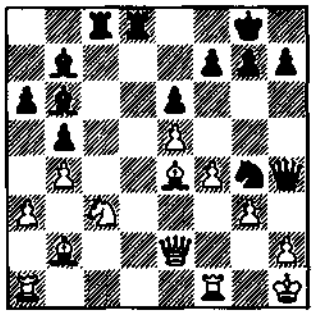
18 ♔d2 mate.

Beautiful? Yes! Unexpected! Yes! Forced? Yes! But why is it so sudden? How can the combination be foreseen and found? An experienced chess player knows that a combination never starts from scratch. To make a combination feasible, one must have certain advantages which are accumulated gradually, move after move. The accumulative process may substantially accelerate the opponent's mistakes.

What made the queen sacrifice in the game analysed above possible? White did not have the advantage in development, but his four

minor pieces were aimed at the Black king and the weak h7-square. The absence of the Black pawn on f7 created the preconditions for the mating position: White's knights on f6 and g6, Black king on h8 and Black's pawn on g7. This is a typical position.

The knowledge of such positions is essential for any chessplayer. There are many positions of this kind and it is quite easy to remember them. Therefore in a labyrinth of combinations one must be able to see the elements of elementary mating positions. Let us analyse a position from a game between G. Rotlevi and A. Rubinstein played in 1908.



22 ... ♖xc3!!
23 gh

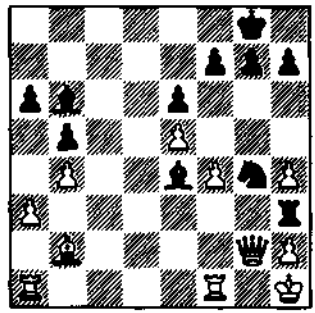
23 ♗xc3 is impossible because of 23 ... ♗xe4+ 24 ♕xe4 ♕xh2 mate.

23 ... ♖d2!!

The queen has too much to do protecting the important squares h2 and e4. Black's last move makes it impossible for her to protect these squares any longer.

24 ♕xd2 ♗xe4+
25 ♕g2 ♖h3!!

Brilliant! The pinned queen, cannot defend the king from being checkmated on h2, and the rooks cannot do it either.



Combinations like these are unforgettable.

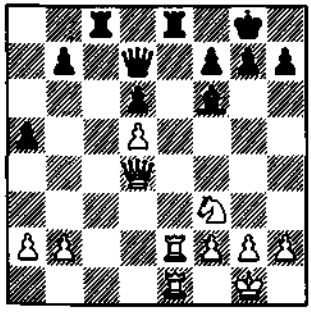
How do they arise? What is their essence? We shall devote a few lessons to these questions. Now we are going to specify the conditions necessary for carrying out combinations.

A combination, as has been stated, does not occur at a

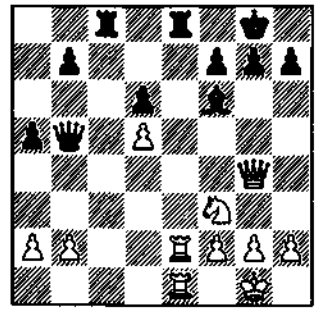
predetermined moment during the game. The idea for a combination may appear when the situation on the chessboard is characterised by certain specific features. They suggest the motif of the combinational explosion.

Such specific features include, for example, weakness of the first (White) or eighth (Black) rank which makes it possible for enemy pieces to penetrate the king's camp. If that happens, the defending side, in order to avoid being checkmated immediately, must accept heavy losses and the subsequent struggle becomes pointless.

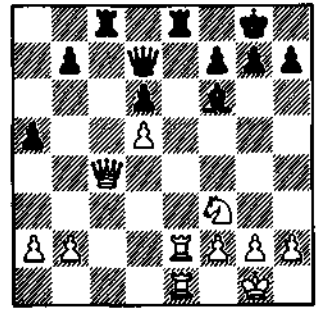
A classic example is provided by the game between Edward Adams and Carlos Torre in 1920.



1 ♕g4!! ♕b5



2 ♕c4!! ♕d7

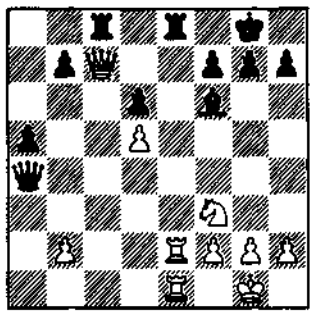


3 ♕c7!! ♕b5!

These elegant queen offers are beautiful but apparently pointless. What has White achieved? If he continues in the same style — 4 ♕xb7, then Black will continue 4 ... ♕xe2! 5 ♖xe2 ♖c1+ 6 ♘e1 ♖xe1+! 7 ♖xe1 with ♖xe1 when it is White who is mated because of the weakness of the first rank. Therefore a tricky way of distracting the Black queen from e8 must be found — this

is the theme of the combination.

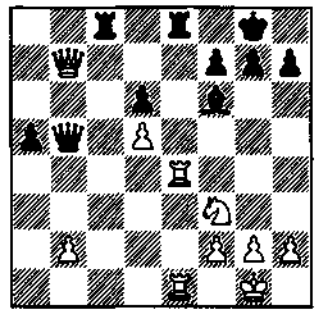
4 a4! ♕xa4



5 ♖e4!!

A brilliant knockout! Black has no time to create a flight square: 5 ... h6 6 ♕xc8 ♖xc8 7 ♖xa4 winning a rook. It is impossible to play 5 ... ♕xe4 because of 6 ♖xe4 and the White queen is taboo. So the queen has to retreat.

5 ... ♕b5
6 ♕xb7!!



This sacrifice is decisive. The Black queen can no longer stay on the a4-e8 diagonal. Black has to admit defeat.

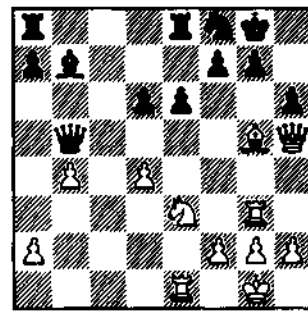
In our next lesson we shall continue our consideration of the conditions which are necessary if attacking combinations are to be carried out during a game.

Lesson 15: Tactical Devices

In our last lesson we dealt with combinations and how they occur in practical games. We also analysed some attacking combinations based on the weakness of the first (or eighth) rank. Now we are going to examine other specific situations giving rise to various combinations.

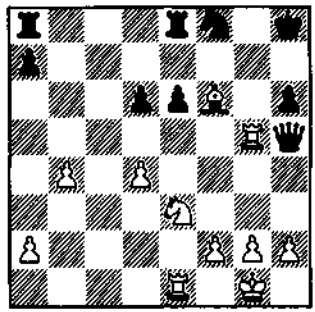
Firstly we look at the weakness of the second (seventh) rank.

The weakness of the back rank leads to mating threats against the White king. The weakness of the second or seventh rank most often leads to the destruction of the king's pawn protection thereby facilitating ultimate victory. In Lesson 14 we considered the game between G. Rotlevi and A. Rubinstein in which White capitulated because of the weakness of the second rank when both Black's rooks created threats to h2. Let us consider an analogous situation which was reached in the game Carlos Torre vs Emanuel Lasker (Moscow 1925).



It seems that Black may be happy with his position but an unexpected and brilliant sacrifice of White's bishop drastically changes the situation, making it possible to carry out a combination which in chess is called a 'windmill'.

1	♗f6!!	♕xh5
2	♖xg7+	♔h8
3	♖xf7+	♔g8
4	♖g7+	♔h8
5	♖xb7+	♔g8
6	♖g7+	♔h8
7	♖g5+!	



After a series of discovered checks the rook has mutilated the whole of Black's army on the seventh rank and now Black's queen is sure to fall too.

7	...	♔h7
8	♖xh5	♔g6
9	♖h3	♔xf6
10	♖xh6+	

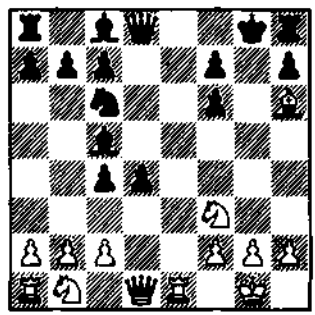
White, with two extra pawns, won easily.

Practice has shown that the incursion of two heavy pieces onto the second (seventh) rank is the surest way to success. It is also known that it is difficult to attack the enemy king protected by a solid pawn formation. Things are different, however, when there are weaknesses (called 'islands') in the pawn set-up. Just look at the game Caesias vs Vladmir Vuković, 1940.

1	e4	e5
2	♘f3	♘c6
3	♗c4	♘f6
4	d4	ed
5	0-0	♗c5
6	e5	d5
7	ef	dc
8	♖e1+	

In this position Black should give up a pawn in order to mobilise his pieces, for example: 8 ... ♗e6 9 fg ♖g8 10 ♗g5 ♕d5. However, Black decided to hold on to the pawn and after

8	...	♔f8?
9	♗g5	gf
10	♗h6+	♔g8



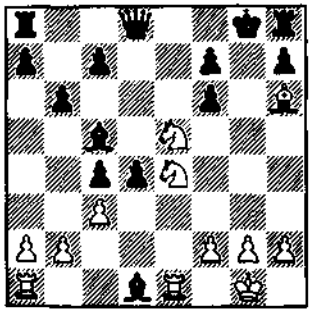
the pawns on f7, f6 and h7 set up a prison rather than a fortress for his king. White's bishop on h6 acts as guard preventing the Black king's escape. Now White should bring a mating piece into

action. But which piece? It would be a White knight on f6, a rook on e8, or the queen on g4. It is interesting that various situations could have occurred in this game where any of the pieces was capable of inflicting the decisive blow.

11 ♘c3! ♗g4
12 ♘e4 b6
13 c3 ♘e5?
14 ♘xe5

The threat is 15 ♕xg4 mate. Why not take the formidable queen?

14 ... ♗xd1



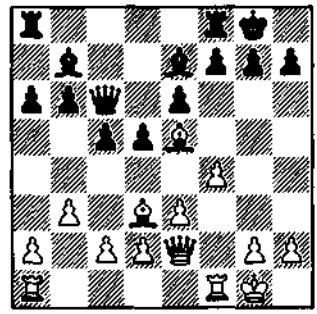
15 ♘d7!! ♗e7

It seems that Black is protected against mate on f6. However, there is no defence against the new sacrificial fireworks.

16 ♘exf6+!! ♗xf6
17 ♖e8+!! ♕xe8
18 ♘xf6 mate

Since a good pawn formation is particularly important for a successful defence, there are some typical attacking combinations wiping out the enemy king's defenders. Let us consider another characteristic example of the sacrificial destruction of the king's pawn cover.

Em.Lasker-J.H.Bauer
1889



After the natural 1 ♕h5 f5 it would be difficult to prove White's superiority. However, if White disposes of Black's pawns on g7 and h7 the rook's trip from f1 to f3 will be disastrous for Black.

1 ♗xh7+! ♔xh7
2 ♕h5+ ♔g8
3 ♗xg7! ♔xg7

4 ♕g4+ ♔h7

Not 4 ... ♔f6? 5 ♕g5 mate

5 ♖f3 e5

Black has to give up his queen.

6 ♖h3+ ♕h6

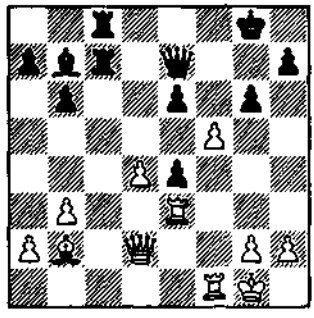
7 ♖xh6+ ♔xh6

It seems that Black has sufficient compensation for the queen but

8 ♕d7

White had foreseen this manoeuvre before the bishop sacrifice. Lasker won back one of the Black bishops which ensured his quick victory.

In conclusion, let us consider a classical example of brilliant combinational play in which another tactical device — 'deflection' — was used. While carrying out an attack it is often necessary to dispose of one of the enemy pieces protecting one or several important squares. The most simple way, i.e., destruction or exchange, is not always possible, and then the question arises as to whether it is possible to deflect the enemy piece by means of a tactical blow. A hundred years ago Johannes Zukertort was famous as a master of brilliant combinations. Here is his spectacular victory against J.H. Blackburne.



Black has just refused to take the pawn on f5 and by placing the rook on c8 he threatens to invade on c2. White, in his turn, has an attacking chance: 1 d5 ♖c2 2 ♕d4 practically forcing Black to capture on b2. However, White chose a more complex and beautiful way of resolving the conflict.

1 fg! ♖c2

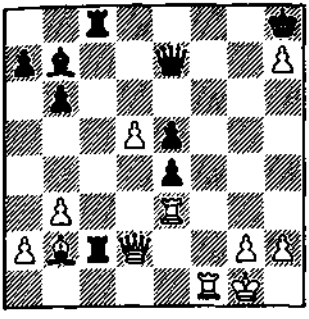
Black has no choice because after 1 ... hg his king becomes so weak that White does not have to resort to any forcing means in order to win.

2 gh+ ♔h8!

Looks drastic, but very effective. The king hides behind the enemy pawn. White cannot capture his own pawn and must make Black do

it, otherwise the attack will come to a standstill.

3 d5+ e5



4 ♕b4!!

This is essentially the beginning of the combination. What is White's idea? With the pawn on h7 disappearing, the two rooks and the bishop will mate the king. The e5-pawn, and its protector, the queen at e7, are vital to the defence. So, the queen must be deflected both from e5 and the king.

Now if Black accepts the lavish present, there is mate in six — 4 ... ♕xb4 5 ♗xe5+ ♔xh7 6 ♖h3+ ♔g6 7 ♖g3+ ♔h7 8 ♖f7+ ♔h6 9 ♗f4+ ♔h5 10 ♖h7 mate. Having made himself aware of White's cunning plot Black protects the queen trying to hold his pawn on e5.

4 ... ♖8c5

Exploiting the weakness of the eighth rank, White inflicts another deflecting blow:

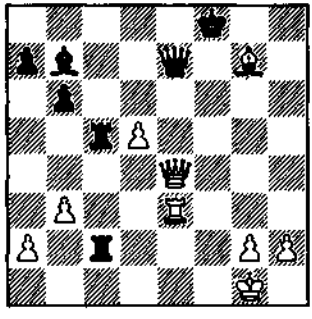
5 ♖f8+!!

This present cannot be accepted either — 5 ... ♕xf8 would be met by 6 ♗xe5+ ♔xh7 7 ♕xe4+ with a forced mate to follow.

5 ... ♔xh7
6 ♕xe4+ ♔g7
7 ♗xe5+! ♔xf8

Black still hopes to evacuate the king to the queenside. But now comes the last combinational blow:

8 ♗g7+!



If now 8 ... ♕xg7? Black's queen blocks the king's retreat and allows mate on e8. So, **Black resigned.**

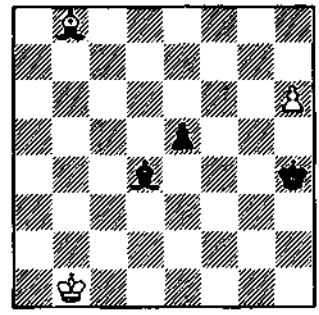
In our next lesson we shall complete our introduction to the principles of combinational play.

Lesson 16: The Endgame

Many lovers of chess look with disdain on the endgame, the final stage of the game, as a boring area which does not require any combinational imagination. Later on we shall examine playing the endgame, and you will see that this stage of the game is extremely complex and abundant in original ideas. However, we are now going to make an attempt at convincing the readers that combinational abilities and skills are quite essential for success in the endgame.

During a combination in the middlegame or in the opening most of the pawns and pieces are just passive observers. An endgame combination, however, requires the participation of practically all pieces, and the king is the most active piece. Let us see a very simple example:

see following diagram



White is to move, and the first impulse is to advance the h-pawn but after 1 h7 e4! there isn't any likelihood of promoting the White pawn since all the squares on the long diagonal are controlled by the Black bishop.

So, before advancing the pawn White should either drive away the Bishop from the long diagonal or block the advance of the e-pawn. Let's try the first variant.

1 ♗a7!

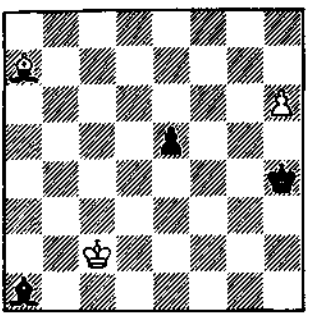
A well-known combinational motif called 'deflection'. The bishop cannot be captured because of the h6-

pawn queening, and 1 ... ♔g5 is met by 2 h7 when 2 ... e4 allows the White bishop to take on d4. There is only one reply left:

1 ... ♗c3
2 ♔c2

Black has no choice:

2 ... ♗a1



At first glance, White has extracted the maximum from the position, but still he cannot prevent the e-pawn from advancing. Nevertheless, the bishop sacrifice was not a chance or naive trick, but the beginning of a beautiful combination:

3 ♗d4!!

Utterly stunning and unexpected. It is easy to see that after 3 ... ed comes 4 ♔d3! when White blocks the pawn. The Black bishop on a1 cannot prevent the White pawn from queening. But it is possible to capture bishop with bishop.

3 ... ♗xd4
4 ♔d3!

Everything is now clear. The e-pawn, protecting the bishop, cannot now move. After

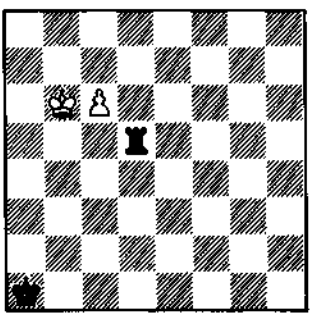
4 ... ♗b2

White plays

5 ♔e4!

blocking the e5-pawn and ensuring the promotion for his h6-pawn.

A charming masterpiece, isn't it? There were only six actors, but each has played his part to the best of his ability. No less subtle was the theatrical performance in the classical miniature published in a Glasgow newspaper in 1895.



1 c7

This is quite obvious. Now Black has two possibilities: either to allow the queening of the White pawn or to give a check which seems quite pointless.

1 ... ♖d6+

This is not as simple as it might seem. 2 ♔b7 can be met by 2 ... ♖d7, and after 2 ♔c5 Black draws immediately, playing 2 ... ♖d1 3 ♔b6 ♖c1.

2 ♔b5! ♖d5+
3 ♔b4 ♖d4+
4 ♔b3 ♖d3+
5 ♔c2!

Now there are no more checks and the rook cannot get to c1. But the struggle is far from being over:

5 ... ♖d4!

A cunning trap! Now 6 c8♕ is met by 6 ... ♖c4+! 7 ♕xc4 Stalemate! Is it really a draw? That's what the newspaper columnist intended!

F. Saavedra wrote in with the correction:

6 c8♖!

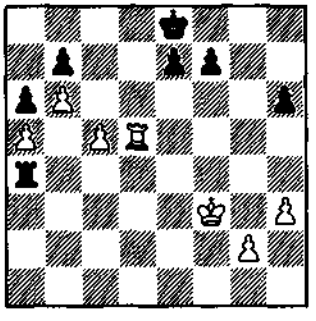
White carries out a unique mating attack with minimal forces and the active participation of the king.

6 ... ♖a4
7 ♔b3!

This is the end. To avoid mate, Black has to give up his rook.

This example amply shows the important pecularities of endgame combinations:
the active role of the king and the ever increasing value of passed pawns.

Here is another example:



White seems to be having a hard time since it is difficult to protect the a5-pawn. The pawn sacrifice undertaken by White looks like an act of desperation.

1 c6 bc

Now the natural 2 ♖c5 would be followed by 2 ... ♔d7. After this the Black rook gets to b5 via b4 and White would be in a difficult position. Is it possible to cut off the Black rook from the b6-pawn?

2 ♖b5!!

This typical idea is called 'overlapping'.

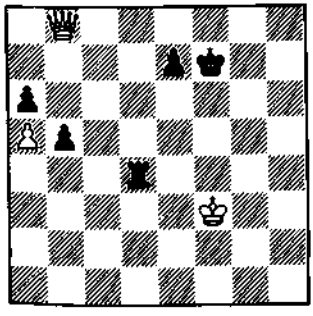
2 ... ab
3 b7

The situation has drastically changed. Now Black is on the edge of a precipice since the appearance of a White queen is imminent.

3 ... ♖xa5
4 b8♕+ ♔d7
5 ♕h8

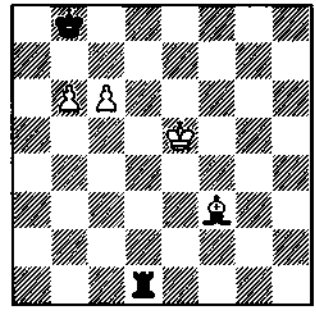
Black loses the h6-pawn and with it his last hopes for salvation. The White queen will make short work of Black's queenside pawns, but Black is unable to stop White's h-pawn.

Incidentally, if it were not for Black's f7-pawn and White's g2-pawn, Black could have saved the game by building up an impenetrable fortress after 1 c6 bc 2 ♖b5! cb! 3 b7 ♖d4 4 b8♕ ♔f7



placing the rook on d6 and eventually dancing back and forth between f6 and d6. You can set up White's pieces anywhere but all your attempts to penetrate will be futile.

Knowing this astonishing feature of the endgame, Black is able to extricate himself from the following quandary:



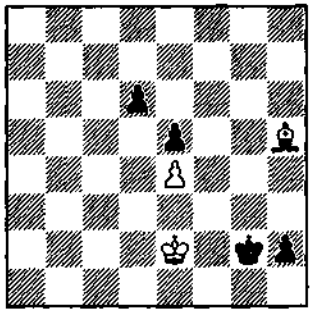
Black seems to be in danger. For instance, 1 ... ♖c1 2 ♔d6 ♔c8 3 c7 ♖xc7! 4 ♗g4+! (but not 4 bc — stalemate!). Stalemate proves to be the only drawing idea.

1 ... ♖d7!!
2 ♗d5 ♖b7!!

Now White has a choice. He can either make a draw after the dull 3 ♔d6 ♖xb6 4 ♗e6 ♖a6 or gain a big material advantage and a half-point

after 3 cb with a stalemate.

However, the stalemate position of the king does not always save the defending side. It is precisely this position that very often turns out to be a trap for the king.



In spite of the material advantage, White should be very careful; if the h2-pawn queens, Black will win the game. But White manages to lure the king into a stalemate cage by means of a tricky sacrifice.

1 ♗f3+ ♔g1
2 ♗h1!! ♔xh1
3 ♔f1!

Incredible! Black has **two** extra pawns, but his king, having captured the bishop, is doomed to immobility, and only one of Black's three pawns can now move.

3 ... d5
4 ed e4
5 d6 e3
6 d7 e2+

At last Black has freed the king.

7 ♔xe2 ♔g2
8 d8♕ h1♕

Black has done his best, but now the passive position of his queen, unable to help the king, brings about his downfall.

9 ♕g5+ ♔h3
10 ♕h5+ ♔g2
11 ♕g4+ ♔h2
12 ♔f2!

Black must resign: there is no defence against ♕h4 or ♕h5 mate.

So you have seen that the endgame, which many chess fans consider to be the most boring stage of the game, provides broad vistas for combinations.

Lesson 17: Methods of Attack

Every chess player, regardless of his qualification (there are millions of amateur players), feel an upsurge of inspiration when a position is reached in which he can launch an attack against the enemy king. But to organise an attack, one must acquire the skills of positional play and the knowledge of combinational blows covered in our previous lessons.

In most games, one side, by gradually accumulating minor positional pluses, obtains a so-called positional advantage which has to be converted into some real material advantage. In such situations the best way is to proceed from slow and purposeful manoeuvres to energetic actions characterised by offensive operations and constant concrete tactical blows.

This method of chess strategy is called the attack. There are many types of attacks, for instance, lightning attacks, requiring two or three moves to decide the game, or multi-stage attacks, sometimes ten or moves long. Most often the enemy king is the target of the attack. The attacking pieces try all possible means to crush the king even at the expense of heavy material losses. In such cases the end, as a rule, justifies the means.

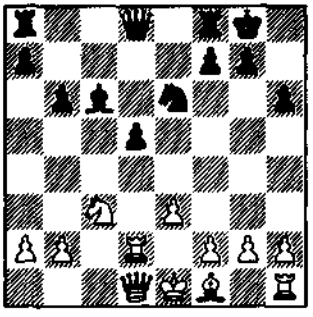
To illustrate such attacks, I should like to analyse two games. First, let us look at one of my games.

E.Magerramov-G.Kasparov
Baku 1977

The opening was quite tranquil.

1	**♘f3**	**♘f6**
2	**d4**	**e6**
3	**c4**	**d5**
4	**♘c3**	**♗e7**
5	**♗g5**	**h6**
6	**♗h4**	**0-0**
7	**e3**	**b6**
8	**♕b3**	**♗b7**
9	**♗xf6**	**♗xf6**

10	**cd**	**ed**
11	**♖d1**	**c5**
12	**dc**	**♘d7**
13	**c6**	**♗xc6**
14	**♘d4?**	**♗xd4!**
15	**♖xd4**	**♘c5**
16	**♕d1**	**♘e6**
17	**♖d2**	



As a result of the incorrect manoeuvre of White's knight to d4, White's king has become stuck in the centre, and his kingside pieces have not yet been developed. Therefore, the first stage of the attack lies in a pawn sacrifice, opening the long diagonal for the bishop and the central file for the rook.

17	**...**	**d4!**
18	**ed**	**♖e8**
19	**f3**	

An interesting plan of defence. Now 19 ... ♘xd4+ would be refuted by 20 ♔f2! However, there is one essential drawback to White's plan: he lags behind in development.

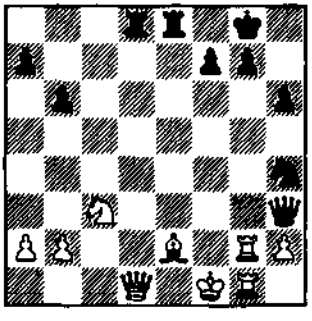
19	**...**	**♗xf3!!**

A timely and highly effective tactical blow. Since 20 ♕xf3 is met by 20 ... ♘xd4+, Black has completely destroyed the pawn cover of White's king, preventing his escape from the centre. Moreover, White's pieces have become unco-ordinated. All this is sufficient compensation for the sacrificed bishop. Nevertheless, Black should be very energetic while conducting the attack.

20	**gf**	**♕h4+**
21	**♖f2**	

21 ♔e2 ♘f4 mate would have lost at once.

21	**...**	**♘xd4+**
22	**♗e2**	**♘xf3+**
24	**♔f1**	**♕h3+**
24	**♖g2**	**♘h4**
25	**♖hg1**	**♖ad8!**



Another stage of the attack is over. Black has deployed all his pieces and paralysed the opponent's forces. Now he could have re-established the material equilibrum by capturing the rook. However, Black is in no hurry for this, seeing that White's pieces surrounding their own king block his escape from the centre.

26 ♕e1?

The natural desire to keep the queen closer to the theatre of operations brings White to the precipice and deprives his king of manoeuvrability. The only defensive resource was to transfer the queen to g4. By playing 26 ♕a4! White could have avoided immediate defeat, though after 26 ... ♘xg2 27 ♖xg2 ♖e5 28 ♕g4 ♕xg4 29 ♗xg4 f5 30 ♗f3 g5 it was still difficult for White to defend.

After 26 ♕e1? White has to withstand another wave of attack, both the king and queen becoming targets.

26 ... ♖d3!

The rook is untouchable since after 27 ♗xd3 ♖xe1+ 28 ♔xe1 the rook on g2 would be unprotected.

27 ♕f2

The threat was 27 ... ♖f3+!

27 ... ♘f3!

Now White cannot find any energetic or useful moves. For example, the rook still cannot be captured because of 28 ... ♘xh2 mate! White would have been mated if the knight had retreated. e.g., 28 ♘b1 ♖d1+ 29 ♗xd1 ♘xh2 mate! The attempt to remove the queen would have failed too, e.g., 28 ♕g3 ♘d2+. So, White has to move his rook from g1 to h1 and back.

28 ♖h1 ♖de3
29 ♖hg1 ♔h8
30 ♖h1 b5!

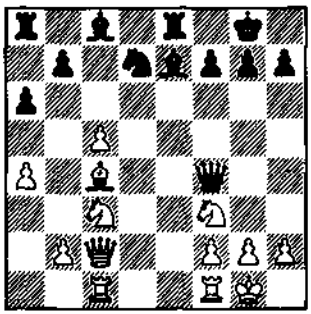
After the obvious 31 a3 a5! there is no defence against the decisive advance b5-b4; therefore White resigned.

However, an attack does not necessarily lead to a complete rout of the enemy as the following game shows.

A.Alekhine-A.Rubinstein
Carlsbad 1923

1	**d4**	**d5**
2	**c4**	**e6**
3	**♘f3**	**♘f6**
4	**♘c3**	**♗e7**
5	**♗g5**	**♘bd7**

6	e3	0-0
7	♖c1	c6
8	♕c2	a6
9	a4	♖e8
10	♗d3	dc
11	♗xc4	♘d5
12	♗f4	♘xf4
13	ef	c5
14	dc	♕c7
15	0-0	♕xf4



White's positional advantage is determined by his pawn superiority on the queenside and, what is more, by Black's inferior development in that sector. However, Alekhine notices another pecularity of this position — the insufficient protection of Black's kingside, which enables him to launch an attack against the king. But before attacking, it is necessary to weaken the opponent's defensive lines. Just look at Alekhine's superb technique.

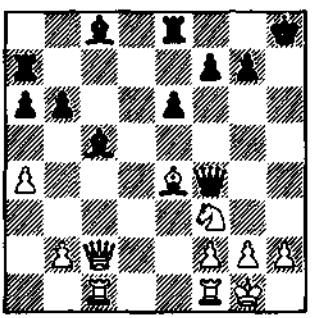
16 ♘e4! ♘xc5

The continuation 16 ... ♗xc5 17 ♘eg5! g6 (17 ... ♘f8 18 ♗d3! threatening both h7 and c5) 18 ♖fe1 ♘f8 19 g3 ♕f6 looks passive, but it probably is the best defence.

17 ♘xc5 ♗xc5
18 ♗d3 b6
19 ♗xh7+ ♔h8
20 ♗e4

The first aim has been achieved. In the pawn formation defending Black's king there is a gaping hole — the pawn on h7 has disappeared and White can place his heavy pieces on the h-file. But White must play energetically, or Black's bishop will be brought to b7 in two moves, and the attack will be neutralised.

20 ... ♖a7?



21 b4!

This is the beginning of an effective deflecting manoeuvre aimed at pinning down Black's pieces, thereby depriving him of mobility and creating appreciable pressure on the kingside.

21 ... ♗f8
22 ♕c6! ♖d7
23 g3 ♕b8

If now 23 ... ♕d6 Alekhine suggested 24 ♕c4! ♕e7 (or 24 ... ♔g8 25 ♗c6 ♖c7 26 ♖fd1 ♕e7 27 ♕d3!) 25 ♘e5 ♖d6 26 ♗g6! winning material. By placing his queen on b8 (to shield the b6-pawn) Black leaves his king virtually unprotected, and this is precisely what Alekhine has been aiming for. Now he quickly creates direct threats against the enemy king. White's pieces are instantaneously transferred to the other half of the chessboard.

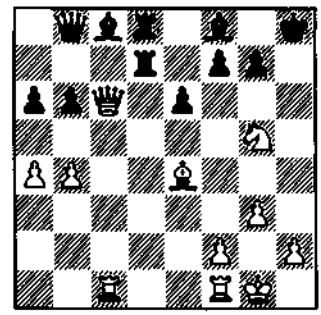
24 ♘g5! ♖ed8

The threat was 25 ♘xf7+ ♖xf7 26 ♕xe8.

see following diagram

25 ♗g6!!

A very strong and unexpected blow. Black cannot defend f7 and White's



queen gets to h4. For example, 25 ... ♗b7 26 ♕c4! or 25 ... fg 26 ♕e4! ♗xb4 27 ♕h4+ ♔g8 28 ♕h7+ ♔f8 29 ♕h8+ ♔e7 30 ♕xg7+ ♔e8 31 ♕g8+ ♗f8 32 ♕xg6+ ♔e7 33 ♕xe6 mate. Black has to give up the exchange, but he still cannot get rid of the defects in his position. The rest is routine.

25 ... ♕e5
26 ♘xf7+ ♖xf7
27 ♗xf7 ♕f5
28 ♖fd1! ♖xd1+
29 ♖xd1 ♕xf7
30 ♕xc8 ♔h7
31 ♕xa6 ♕f3
32 ♕d3+

Black resigned

We hope that the above games will help you acquire skill in organising and conducting offensive operations.

Lesson 18: Attack or Defence?

Which is more important — attack or defence? In present day chess this question is extremely topical, and every chess player tackles it his own way. Impetuous and inexperienced players are usually keen on clinching the issue by a direct attack. Lured by the lustre of combinations, they persistently look for beautiful and unexpected tactical blows. Most experienced chess players prefer strongly protected formations capable of repelling any attack.

Chess fans know that the attacking or the so-called romantic style was predominant in the 19th century. At that time intricate methods of defence were non-existent. If your opponent sacrificed a pawn or a piece, you were supposed to accept the sacrifice and fight back afterwards. It was only at the close of the century, when the great chess philosopher Wilhelm Steinitz formulated his theory of positional play and world champion Emanuel Lasker achieved outstanding results, that defence came to be appreciated and new chess masters extremely skilful in the art of defence appeared in the chess arena.

How is this problem viewed today? The answer is clear: both the shield and the sword are equally important. It is obvious today that one cannot become a strong player without being a skilful defender.

Some 20 years ago intuitive sacrifices in order to seize the initiative were common practice in international tournaments. Nowadays defensive technique has enhanced to such an extent that even a minor pawn sacrifice should be based on concrete variations, otherwise the defence will take the upper hand.

Why do we look back into history? The answer is quite simple: any chess player

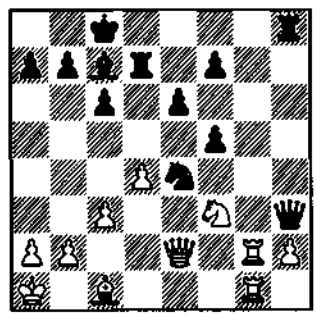
wishing to improve his skills has to accumulate the experience of previous generations. Our forerunners, lacking in chess knowledge, used the trial and error method and left us their chess wisdom in their games and books. What took them decades of laborious work is now acquired by a young chess player within a year.

So, how does one learn to set up a good defence? There are many ways and methods. We shall get acquainted with them in our lessons.

Let us begin with bad positions. Lasker used to say that any position could be defended and everyone knows the popular chess proverb: 'It's never too late to resign'. Experience has shown that no matter how hopeless a position is some chance always crops up for putting up stubborn resistance. You must find such a chance. When your opponent, anticipating an easy win, encounters new problems and difficulties, he may, owing to fatigue, make a mistake and victory will slip away from him. Of course, if both sides play well in this situation, a bad position, whatever the defence, will still remain bad.

But you should do your best and play to the bitter end. Just look how Lasker did it.

Em.Lasker-A.Nimzowitsch
St. Petersburg 1914



Black has an extra pawn, a well positioned knight in the centre and a strong pawn structure. Very few could have put up a stubborn defence here. But the great Lasker, noticing that Black's knight could be exchanged and the extra pawn was still doubled, realised that Black's advantage, although it was obvious, was not yet decisive. Black still has to figure out how to improve his position, so White should wait quietly and play non-committally.

27 a3 a6
28 ♗e3 ♖hd8
29 ♔a2 ♖h8
30 ♔a1 ♖hd8

White's first success — Nimzowitsch shows by moving his rook along the back rank that he does not know how to exploit his advantage. And this is a good incentive for strengthening White's resistance.

31 ♔a2 ♖e8
32 ♖g8 ♖xg8
33 ♖xg8+ ♖d8
34 ♖g7 ♖d7
35 ♖g8+ ♖d8
36 ♖g7 ♖f8

White has put new obstacles in Black's path to victory. An exchange of rooks has taken the pressure off the h2-pawn. Besides, White's rook is positioned more actively than its Black counterpart, but it should be supported, or Black's queen may oust the rook.

37 c4

Lasker prepares d5.

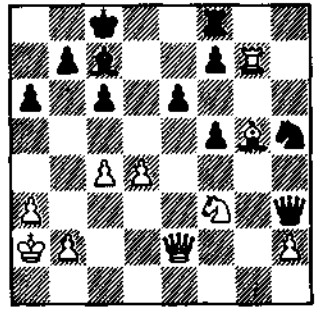
37 ... ♘f6?

The first mistake. Having encountered stubborn resistance, Black is at a loss and seeks defence against White's activity. Black should have ousted White's rook by 37 ... ♕h8!

38 ♗g5 ♘h5?

Misfortunes never come singly, and one mistake is often followed by another. Unable to exploit his advantage, Black resorts to tactical manoeuvres. Now he is banking on an easy win after 39 ♖h7 ♘f4! 40 ♖xh3 ♘xe2 41 or 39 ♗e7 ♘xg7 40 ♗xf8 ♘h5.

After the game it was found that Black still had winning chances after 38 ... ♘e4 39 ♗e7 ♖e8 40 ♖xf7 ♕g4! 41 ♗h4! ♕g6 42 ♖e7 ♖h8! But post-mortem and actual play are two different things. Nimzowitsch misses the win and, exhausted by the hard struggle, finally loses his advantage.



39 ♖xf7 ♖xf7
40 ♕xe6+ ♖d7

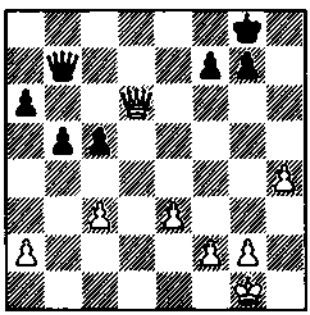
41 ♘e5! ♗xe5
42 ♕e8+! ♔c7
43 ♕xe5+

Despite the extra rook, Black cannot avoid perpetual check. So the game was agreed drawn here.

Lasker often extricated himself from difficult situations due to his fierce and skilful defence.

The great Cuban chess player Jose Raoul Capablanca lost very few games throughout his chess career. He was an excellent defender.

A.Rubinstein-J.Capablanca
St. Petersburg 1914

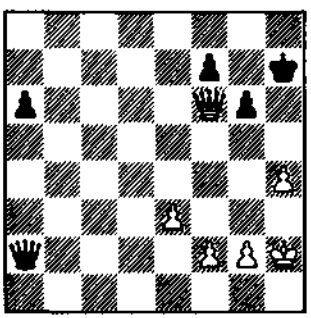


It seems that White has a tremendous advantage in the endgame, having an extra pawn and a well positioned queen. 27 ... c4 looks natural, but after 28 f3 ♕c8 29 e4 Black's queen is absolutely immobile and his loss is inevitable. Capablanca tries to bring his queen into play and to get a passed pawn.

27 ... b4

Now after 28 cb ♕xb4 29 ♕xa6 c4! the passed c-pawn saves Black. There is only one road to success for White: 28 c4! ♕c8 29 ♕b6! (preventing 29 ... a5) ♕f5! 30 ♕xa6 ♔h7!! 31 ♕a7 ♕e5 32 ♕xf7 ♕a1+ 33 ♔h2 ♕xa2. Rubinstein, however, chooses another plan.

28 ♕xc5 bc
29 ♕xc3 ♕b1+
30 ♔h2 ♕xa2
31 ♕c8+ ♔h7
32 ♕f5+ g6
33 ♕f6



The situation has become clear. White's formidable kingside superiority is

counter balanced by Black's apparently modest but extremely powerful a-pawn.

33 ... a5
34 g4 a4
35 h5 gh
36 ♕f5+

Admitting Capablanca's superiority as an endgame virtuoso. 36 gh ♕e6! was too risky for White.

36 ... ♔g7
37 ♕g5+ ♔h7
38 ♕xh5+ ♔g7

The game was drawn here. Capablanca defended his inferior position with astonishing ease, testifying to his superb virtuosity.

Appreciate defence. Learn to defend — a good shield can withstand the blow of any sword.

Our next lesson will be devoted to the study of the present-day basic methods of defence.

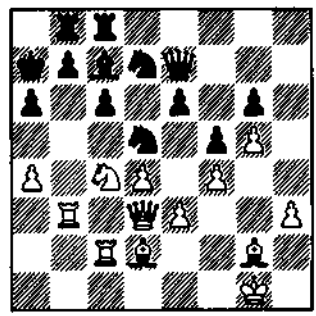
Lesson 19: Counterattack

In our previous lesson we covered methods of defence based on extreme and scrupulous efforts to improve the co-ordination of the pieces. But chess today has become more intricate and dynamic than it used to be, say, 50 years ago. The art of attack has become more versatile and subtle. And, this, in its turn, has caused a reciprocal reaction; in other words, the sharpening of the sword has gone hand in hand with the strengthening of the shield.

To begin with, the role of active defence aimed at creating counter threats has considerably increased.

I was lucky to meet on many occasions Tigran Petrosian whose death was tragically premature. He lavishly shared his invaluable experience with me, and the chess encounters with this phenomenal master of defence were extremely useful for me. For instance, it took me a long time to understand why my seemingly irresistible attack had been frustrated in our game at the super-tournament in Tilburg in 1981.

G.Kasparov-T.Petrosian
Tilburg 1981



Having sacrificed a pawn in the opening, I managed to cramp Black's pieces. Besides, it's obvious that Black's king is actually misplaced. The threat is a4-a5, and it's not clear how to repel ♖cb2 and ♕b1. The cramped position of Black's pieces makes his defence passive and absolutely

unpromising and therefore Petrosian resorts to a desperate move.

30 ... b5
31 ab cb
32 ♖a2!

The impression is that Black is on the edge of the precipice, the destruction of his queenside down the open files seems inevitable. However, from now on Tigran Petrosian finds moves that turn the whole game into a display of magic.

32 ... ♔b7!

Most masters would have preferred 32 ... ♗d6, giving up the pawn with an inferior position — 33 ♖xb5 ♖xb5 34 ♘xd6 ♕xd6 35 ♕xb5 — but avoiding a catastrophe.

Escaping from one pin, Black falls under another two pins. I really don't know how my highly esteemed opponent determined that his king would be safe on b7, but his decision had an unexpected psychological effect on me. I could still appreciate the attacking power of my pieces, but after this unexpected move I really became muddled.

33 ♗b4?

Strange as it may seem, this apparently natural and supercharged move turns out to be a serious error. I was perfectly aware that d5 was Black's foothold, but I didn't see any way of gaining it. Having returned to Moscow, I found the winning line — 33 ♘a3! ♗b6 34 ♘c2! ♖a8 35 ♘b4 ♕d6 36 e4! fe 37 ♕xe4 ♖a7 38 ♕xg6 ♗xd4+ 39 ♔h1 ♘7b6 40 f5! As you see, the win was far from easy, and it required a lot of time; I had to penetrate deeply into the secrets of the position.

33 ... ♕e8!

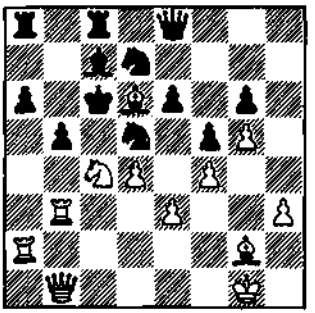
The only move: the b5-pawn must be strongly protected. After 33 ... ♕d8 the continuation 34 e4 fe 35 ♕xe4 ♕e8 36 ♕xd5+! ed 37 ♗xd5+ ♔a7 38 ♖xa6+! ♔xa6 39 ♖a3+ ♗a5 40 ♖xa5 mate would be decisive.

34 ♗d6 ♖a8
35 ♕b1

Here, for the first time in this game, I experienced vague fears over the outcome of the attack, and I decided just to develop my pieces occupying vantage points and hoping to inflict a serious combinational blow on the enemy. However, the former world champion's next move caught me

completely unawares.

35 ... ♔c6!!



Fantastic!! The king, leaving the pawn cover, marches towards White's army. This is not recklessness, but an example of precise calculation. Now White has to find a way of saving his muddled pieces without material losses. There was salvation here, but, alas, being astounded by the fantastically resourceful defence of my opponent, I failed to find the best continuation and lost the game in a few moves.

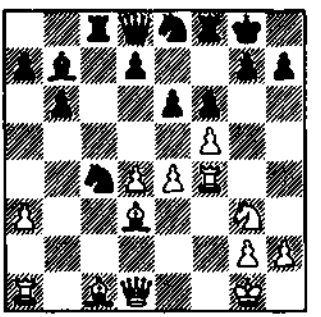
36 ♖ba3? bc
37 ♖xa6+ ♖xa6
38 ♖xa6+ ♗b6
39 ♗c5 ♕d8
40 ♕a1 ♘xc5
41 dc ♔xc5!
White resigned

So, the king not only defended himself, he led his army to victory.

Analysing this game, you should draw the most important conclusion: you should be cold-blooded and clear-headed when attacked by your opponent. Then you will be able to repel the attack successfully and choose the appropriate moment for launching a counterattack which, in the final analysis, is the most efficient method of defence.

Now let's analyse the classical example of counter-attack in a brilliant game between two chess giants.

Y.Geller-M.Euwe
Zurich 1953



White's attack looks threatening. In a couple of

moves he can bring his queen and rook to the h-file, so that practically all his pieces (except the rook on a1) will participate in the onslaught against the Black king's fortress. But former world champion Euwe had played over 70 games against the greatest magician of attack, Alexander Alekhine, so it was not easy to embarrass him.

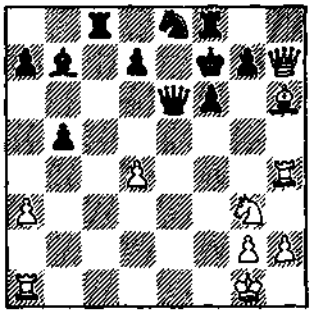
16 ... b5

This isn't a waste of time, but the beginning of a remarkable plan. The passive defence of the king's fortress is unpromising for Black, since his pieces have little, if any, scope for manoeuvre and half of them will not be able to protect the king. In view of this, Euwe decides to react, as soon as possible, with strong counterplay in the centre, where his pieces are no worse posted than White's.

17 ♖h4 ♕b6
18 e5 ♘xe5
19 fe ♘xd3
20 ♕xd3

Black has exchanged the dangerous light-squared bishop and opened up the long diagonal for his bishop controlling the vitally important g2-square. Nevertheless, it seems that White is obviously better: his queen will soon be in the midst of the enemy camp.

21 ... ♕xe6
21 ♕xh7+ ♔f7
22 ♗h6



Black's position looks critical. If White brings his rook from a1 to f1, there will be immediate threats to the Black king. But it is at this juncture that Euwe finds a stunning tactical blow based on 'deflection' and carries out a lightning counterattack.

22 ... ♖h8!!
23 ♕xh8 ♖c2!

The situation has suddenly and drastically changed. Now the threat is 24 ... ♖xg2+ 25 ♔f1 ♕c4+ etc. When the tournament ended, the grandmasters, after exhaust-

ive analysis, arrived at the conclusion that White could have been saved, if he had found some subtle and well-hidden moves. This is one of the variations: 24 d5! ♕b6+ 25 ♔h1 ♕f2 26 ♖g1 ♗xd5 27 ♖e4 ♗xe4 28 ♘xe4 ♕h4 29 ♗xg7 ♕xe4 30 ♕f8+ etc.

Exhausted by the struggle, Geller did not find the right continuation, and the game ended very quickly.

24 ♖c1? ♖xg2+
25 ♔f1 ♕b3!
26 ♔e1 ♕f3!
White resigned

Why was White's apparently threatening attack frustrated? White wanted to use all his striking power, but actually it was only his queen that bothered Black's king; the other pieces were merely observers. On the other hand several of Black's pieces participated in the counter-attack against g2. Euwe was successful because he defended with a minimum of forces. It was this type of 'economical' defence which the great Lasker found to be the surest sign of a top-class chess player.

So, when on the defensive, maintain your poise. When you spot the enemy's threat, don't rush all your pieces into defence, use your pieces economically and choose the right moment for counter-attack.

Lesson 20: The Opposition

For most enthusiasts chess is primarily a game with a multitude of possibilities for carrying out unexpected and beautiful combinations. They believe that the fewer pieces that remain on the chessboard, the less interesting the game. And to most of them the endgame is reminiscent of a gloomy, barren wilderness. What an illusion!

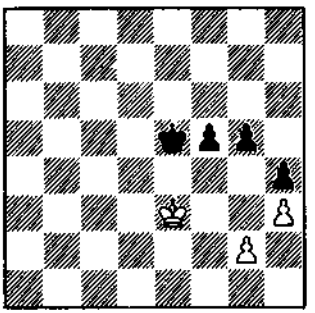
The endgame, the final part of the game of chess, is inexhaustibly rich for chess players endowed with creative, original thinking and capable of carrying out profound, 'long-range' ideas. This phase of the game requires clockwork precision. If you are not happy about the opening, you can improve your position in the middlegame; if you have made some mistakes in the middlegame, you may hope to correct them in the ending. But endgame errors, like a goalkeeper's mistake in football, are, as a rule, terminal. Remember: unless you can play the endgame, you will never be a strong chess player.

It is not by chance that all the world champions were always willing to transpose the game into the ending and they could play this stage of the game with great strength and artistry. Emanuel Lasker, Jose Raoul Capablanca and Mikhail Botvinnik were endgame virtuosi.

I cannot overestimate the value of lessons on the endgame technique given to me by the former world champion Mikhail Botvinnik. Ten years ago he convinced me of the necessity to study typical endgame positions and methods.

The great Capablanca advised starting with the most elementary pawn endings. Why? It seems that there is very little chance of arriving at such positions. If I had shown such naive pragmatism in 1978

at the Daugavpils qualifying tournament at the national championship, I would have come to grief. At the end of the tournament, in my game against Alburt (I was Black) the following position was reached after White's 45th move:

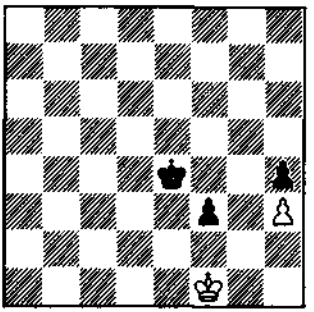


At this moment many spectators argued whether Black could win this game. Sitting at the chessboard, I was checking the well-known winning method. First of all, Black must get a passed pawn by threatening to get around White's king from the flank:

45 ... ♔d5
46 ♔d3 ♔c5!
47 ♔c3

White has no choice.

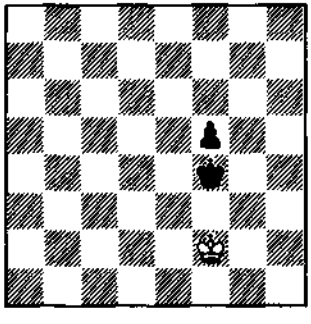
47 ... g4!
48 ♔d3 gh
49 gh ♔d5
50 ♔e3 ♔e5
51 ♔f3 f4
52 ♔f2 ♔e4
53 ♔e2 f3+
54 ♔f1



At first glance it seems that Black's king cannot make headway because of stalemate after 54 ... ♔f4 55 ♔f2 ♔e4 56 ♔f1 ♔e3 57 ♔e1 f2+ 58 ♔g1 ♔f3. But I knew that this was not so. In this position it is necessary to concede the move to White, so as to create a 'zugzwang', a position with no useful moves. This is achieved by the distant opposition of the kings. Now it's time to explain what the term 'opposition' means and how it can be practically used.

Success in a pawn ending depends on the activity of the king. The king must strive to gain as much space as

possible, driving back the enemy king. Therefore, the king must advance in front of the pawns. In the fight for space on the chessboard one should be able to exploit the opposition of the kings. The most effective method is the so-called close opposition. Let us consider an elementary example.



Both kings are in opposition. The one who has made the last move profits by the opposition. If White is to move now, he cannot stop the passed pawn: 1 ♔g2 ♔e3! 2 ♔f1 f4 3 ♔e1 f3 4 ♔f1 f2 5 ♔g2 ♔e2 etc. If Black is to move now, he cannot oust the White king and has to reconcile himself to a draw after 1 ... ♔e4 2 ♔e2! f4 3 ♔f2 f3 4 ♔f1! ♔e3 5 ♔e1 f2+ 6 ♔f1 ♔f3 stalemate.

The distant opposition, when the kings are separated by three ranks, is a subtle method leading, in the final analysis, to a close or direct opposition.

Let us return to my 1978 ending after 54 ♔f1

54 ... ♔f5
55 ♔g1

After 55 ♔f2 ♔f4 Black seizes the close opposition taking White's last pawn after 56 ♔g1 ♔g3.

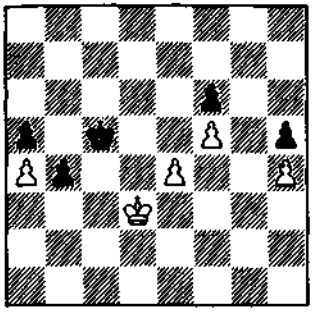
55 ... ♔e5
56 ♔f1 ♔e4!

Now White's king cannot get to e2, and if 57 ♔f2 ♔f4 58 ♔f1 ♔g3, or 57 ♔e1 ♔e3 58 ♔f1 f2 59 ♔g2 ♔e2, so resistance is useless.

It is interesting that five years later at the international tournament in the Yugoslav town of Niksić I happened to win a game using a similar method.

Y.Seirawan-G.Kasparov

It is clear that Black's king can advance to the kingside pawns: 47 ... b3 48 ♔c3 b2 49 ♔xb2 ♔d4 50 ♔b3 ♔xe4 51 ♔c4 ♔xf5 52 ♔b5 ♔g4 but the queen ending with Black's



h-pawn is drawish. However, I spotted the chance of exploiting a distant opposition, conceding the move to the opponent, thus reaching a zugzwang.

47 ... ♔c6
48 ♔c4 ♔c7
49 ♔d3 ♔d7!

Having triangulated, Black's king is now ready for a victorious march to c5.

50 ♔e3 ♔c6
51 ♔d3 ♔c5

White's king has to give way.

52 ♔e3 b3!

The only move. The 'natural' 52 ... ♔c4 would lead to a draw after 53 e5! ♔d5 54 e6! ♔d6.

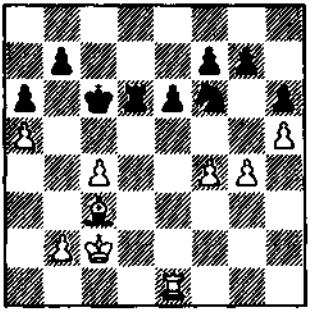
53 ♔d3 ♔b4
54 e5 ♔a3!

Again the only good move! After 54 ... b2 55 ♔c2 ♔a3 56 ♔b1 White wins. Now the game reached its logical end:

55 ef b2
56 ♔c2 ♔a2
57 f7 b1♕+

One tempo too late, so **White resigned.**

For the third time, my knowledge of typical pawn endgame positions saved me the trouble of playing a long ending against Milan Vukić (Yugoslavia) at the European Team Championship in 1980. My opponent was playing Black.



White has a positional advantage; the powerful bishop and the strong pawn formation keep Black cramped on both flanks. As a rule, the exploitation of positional advantages requires a lot of time. But in this case, the game comes to an abrupt end. First,

White exchanges the strong bishop

36 ♗xf6 gf

and then the rook.

37 ♖d1

Black has to resign because the pawn ending after

37 ... ♖xd1
38 ♔xd1 ♔d6
39 g5!

is easily won for White. Well, Black has a pawn advantage on the kingside, but on account of the defects of the pawn structure (pawns e6, f7, f6 and h6) he cannot prevent White from organising a passed pawn. Black's king can catch the passed pawn after

39 ... fg
40 fg ♔e7
41 gh ♔f8

but then White will liven up the other side of the board:

42 b4 ♔g8
43 b5

The second passed pawn is irresistible.

Please forgive me for having cited examples from my own experience. I have done this to show how one can benefit from a concrete knowledge of this particular type of chess ending.

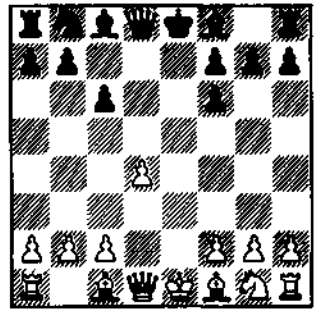
I advise you to study the endgame thoroughly; it will be extremely useful for you. You should also read some specialist books.

Lesson 21: Attack in the Endgame

In our previous lesson we made a thorough study of the basic principles and methods of endgame technique. I would like to remind the readers of one of the most important rules chess players should be guided by in pawn endings. The king must strive to conquer as much space as possible, driving the opponent's king back from the centre.

Now that we have a great number of endgame manuals and reference books, all we need is the desire and time to study chess endings. Opening positions have been studied so profoundly and systematically that even in the opening one should foresee all the peculiarities of possible endgame positions.

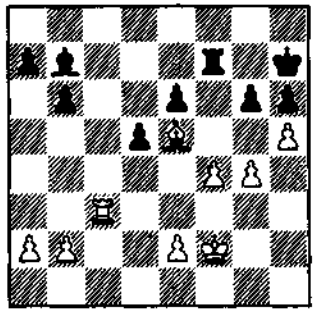
The most elementary example can be drawn from the Caro-Kann Defence: 1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ed 4 ♘xe4 ♘f6 5 ♘xf6+ ef when in return for the open central files and the strengthening of the shelter around his king Black risks an inferior ending.



In this lesson we shall consider the methods employed in endings with opposite-coloured bishops. Games with opposite coloured bishops quite frequently end in a draw, even though one of the sides may have two extra pawns. The situation is different, however, when, in addition to the opposite coloured bishops, rooks remain on the board. If that is the case, an important advantage can be secured by positioning the pieces more

actively.

G.Kasparov-F.Gheorghiu
Moscow 1981



Black's position is really quite difficult. His king is, figuratively speaking, in a cage, hemmed in by White's bishop and pawn on h5. Black's rook has to remain on the seventh rank guarding c7. After 39 ♔e3! gh 40 gh I could have avoided unnecessary adventures in a time scramble and I would have probably found an easy win in my analysis at home.

Now I can think how I could have won this game, how Black's position could have been penetrated. Black's rook controls c7. Black's bishop keeps an eye on c8 and the b6-pawn guards c5. This pawn should be done away with by all means. To achieve this, White places his pawns on a4 and b5 and his king goes to d4. After the rook exchange the bishop captures the pawn on b6. The whole operation would be crowned by the White king's penetration into the queenside and the b5-pawn queening. But I found this solution easily at home when, upset by the draw, I sat down to analyse the game.

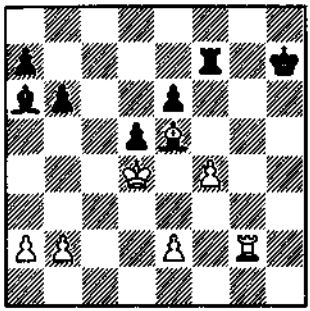
39 hg+? ♔xg6
40 ♖a3 ♗c6

Here I offered a draw. — Of course my opponent was surprised and glad, but I did not want to continue the game since I had been brought up to believe in the axiom; endings with opposite coloured bishops end in draws.

Now, even in the final position I could have played to win by exploiting the passivity of Black's pieces. For example:

41 ♖c3 ♗b7
42 ♔e3 h5
43 gh+ ♔xh5
44 ♖c1 ♔g6
45 ♖g1+ ♔h7
46 ♔d4 ♗a6
47 ♖g2!

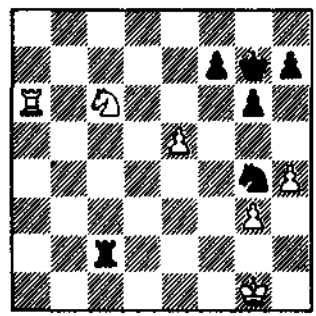
This last move cuts off Black's bishop from the



kingside; after 47 e3 Black would have played 47 ... ♗e2! Now White would have played e3, b3 and a4, and the outcome of the game would have depended on whether White's rook could penetrate the Black position.

It is common knowledge that chess players learn from their mistakes. I would like to add a few words to this undoubtedly correct statement. Apart from studying the reasons you lost, you should study the situations in which you could have improved your position, but missed the best continuation. These missed opportunities in drawish or winning positions should be regarded as your losses. Therefore, it is necessary to analyse your mistakes over and over again regardless of the outcome of the encounter. Having analysed the game against Florin Gheorghiu I got rid of my naivete in assessing endgame positions.

One year later, playing against the Danish Grandmaster Bent Larsen (I was playing Black) I got a better ending with few pieces left on the chessboard.



At first glance it would seem that Black has no problems in winning. His rook is on the seventh rank. White's pawns e5 and g3 are very weak. But there are very few pieces left on the chessboard. Larsen made a strong move

41 h5!

causing further exchanges.

But, as is well known, only mating moves are devoid of drawbacks. White achieves simplification but permits

Black to bring his king into play. The king is now ready to attack his opponent! Of course! One can easily come under attack even in the endgame.

41 ... ♔h6!

The game could easily have been a draw after 41 ... gh 42 ♘d4 ♖f2 43 e6 or 41 ... ♘e3 42 hg hg 43 e6! fe 44 ♘d4 ♖g2+ 45 ♔h1 e5 46 ♘e6+! ♔h6 47 ♖a4! g5 48 ♖e4 ♖e2! 49 ♔g1!

42 hg hg
43 ♖a4 ♔g5
44 ♘d4! ♖c3!

Black wants nothing but attack. The pawn-snatching 44 ... ♖c1+ 45 ♔g2 ♘xe5 46 ♘f3+ would result in a drawish rook ending.

45 e6

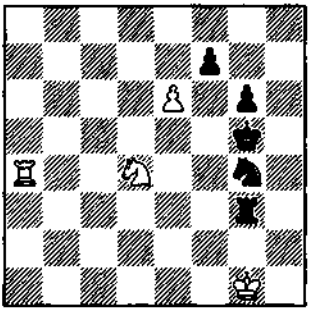
After 45 ♔g2 ♘xe5 Black wins a pawn, avoiding the knight exchange, and though White's drawing chances are quite appreciable, there is no clear-cut draw.

45 ... ♖xg3+

see following diagram

46 ♔h1?

Quite a thorny way to draw; now White is in danger of coming under a mating attack.



More exact was 46 ♔f1! f5 47 e7 ♖e3 48 ♘c6! ♘f6 49 ♖a8 ♖e6 50 ♖f8! f4 51 ♔f2 and since Black cannot improve his position, the draw is inevitable.

46 ... f5
47 e7 ♖e3
48 ♘c6 f4!

Now White has to defend himself against a serious threat. For example: 49 ♖a8 ♖e1+ 50 ♔g2 ♖e2+ 51 ♔f1 f3! 52 e8♕ ♘h2+ 53 ♔g1 f2+. The idea could almost have been taken from a chess problem. 49 e5 ♖xe5 50 ♖a5! does not rid White of his difficulties because of 50 ... ♖xa5 51 e8♕ ♖f5. White was walking on thin ice and the only salvation was the paradoxical 49 ♘d4!! Control over f3 is the key to the position, for instance: 49 ...

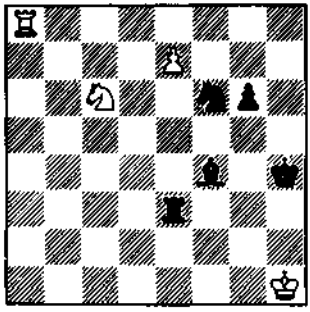
♖xe7 50 ♘f3+ ♔f5 51 ♘h4+, or 49 ... ♔h4 50 ♔g2! Both armies would have been exhausted after 49 ... ♘f6! 50 ♖a6! ♖xe7 51 ♘e6+ ♔g4 52 ♘xf4. But it's almost impossible to find such moves as 49 ♘d4!! over the board.

49 ♖a5+ ♔h4
50 ♖a8

50 ♘e5 would have lead to a spectacular loss after 50 ... ♘xe5 51 e8♕ ♖e1+ 52 ♔g2 f3+ 53 ♔f2 ♘d3+ winning White's new queen.

50 ... ♘f6!

Black is temporarily playing with fire. After 51 ♖f8 ♔g3! the king takes a decisive role in the attack.



51 ♔g2 f3+
52 ♔f1 ♔g3
53 ♘d4 ♘g4!

Now 54 e8♕ is met by 54 ... ♘h2+ 55 ♔g1 f2+. White has to give up his knight.

54 ♘xf3 ♖xf3+
55 ♔g1 ♘h2!
56 ♖f8 ♖c3

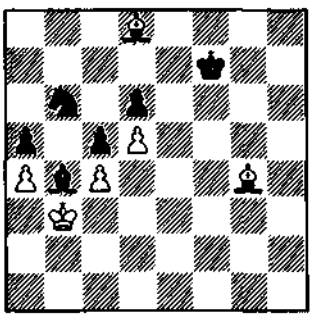
White resigned because after 57 ♖f1 ♖e3 there was no hope of surviving.

In our previous lesson we dwelt upon the necessity of studying the principles of endgame technique and perfecting these skills in practical endings. By giving you examples from games I've played I tried to convince you to look for chances in any ending. After analysing concrete examples with me, a chess enthusiast will agree that even in case of material equality and with very few pieces left on the board, it is quite possible to create an irresistible attack.

Study the endgame, and you won't be afraid of it. Make friends with the endgame, and it will become your reliable ally.

Lesson 22: Fortresses on the Chessboard

One method of defence in the endgame consists of building up unassailable fortresses, pawn chains being the basic building blocks for them. Let us analyse the ending of the game played in Georgia's Women's Championship between masters Tsiuri Kobaidze and Mzia Tseretei.



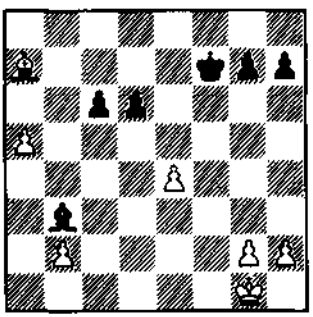
Black's knight is doomed. The 'natural' 1 ... ♘a8 is refuted by 2 ♗h5+, and White's king travels to the queenside, capturing all of Black's pieces. It took Black only two moves to draw the game. Two brilliant moves!

1 ... ♔e8!!

2 ♗xb6 ♔e7!!

That's it! It is impossible to drive away Black's king from e7. As to the bishop, it can safely manoeuvre along the a5-e1 diagonal. Since all the events are centred around the black squares, one of White's bishops is absolutely useless whereas the other bishop is in permanent captivity.

Another brilliant fortress could have been built up in the game between the ex-world champion Max Euwe (White) and the Canadian Daniel Yanofsky at the big international tournament at Groningen in 1946.



After 1 ... c5 2 a6 ♗a4 3 e5 ♔e6 Black could have drawn without difficulty, but, thinking that all roads lead to Rome, Black played the straightforward and careless

1 ... ♗c2?
2 ♗c5!

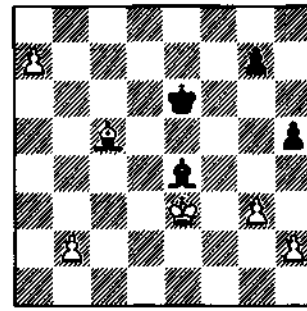
Black now had to lose a pawn to prevent the a5-pawn from queening.

2 ... ♗d3
3 ♗xd6 ♗xe4
4 a6 c5
5 ♗xc5

So White has two extra pawns, but endings with opposite-coloured bishops are quite peculiar (we encountered one in our previous lesson) and sometimes a material advantage does not ensure victory. Black embarks on building up a fortress and he is quite successful at first.

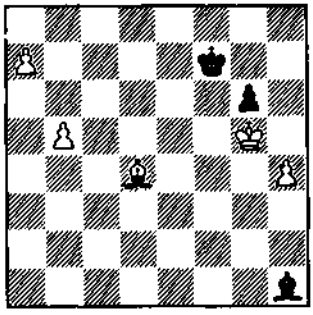
5 ... h5
6 ♔f2 ♗d3!
7 a7 ♗e4
8 g3 ♔e6
9 ♔e3

Actually, the fortress has been built, but it is necessary to know its exact dimensions. Black's idea is quite simple: White's queenside pawns cannot advance without the



White king's assistance. Occupying b6, White's king will not be able to move forward if Black's king is on d7. If, however, White's king occupies c5, then Black's king must be posted on e6. And if White's king stays in place, what is the best square for Black's king? Those who have followed our analysis attentively will undoubtedly answer: 'On f5!'. No doubt the Canadian master saw 9 ... ♔f5! ensuring a draw after 10 ♗f8 g6 11 ♔d4 ♗a8 12 ♔c5 ♔e6 13 b4 ♗h1 14 b5 ♗a8 15 ♔b6 ♔d7 16 ♔a6 ♗h1 17 b6 ♔c8 etc. However, Yanofsky decided that the king should not necessarily move to the kingside because White was unable to organise a pawn breakthrough there. This was his fatal mistake!

9	**...**	**♗g2?**
10	**♔f4!**	**g6**
11	**g4!**	**hg**
12	**♔xg4**	**♗h1**
13	**♔g5**	**♔f7**
14	**♗d4**	**♗g2**
15	**h4**	**♗h1**
16	**b4**	**♗g2**
17	**b5**	**♗h1**



At first glance, White has not improved his position, and after 18 b6 ♗a8 his king cannot make headway to the queenside.

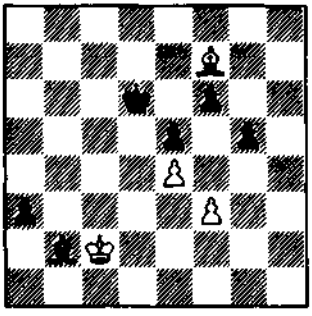
18 ♗f6

Now it has become clear that the apparently beautiful fortress is going to pieces as a result of the careless 9 ... ♗g2. The ending is really spectacular!

18	**...**	**♗g2**
19	**h5!**	**gh**
20	**♔f5!!**	

Black resigned, since the march of the White's king to a8 is inevitable: 20 ... ♗d5 21 ♔e5 ♗h1 22 ♗h4 ♔e8 23 ♔d6 etc. But could Black have prevented White's king from getting to f5 by playing 18 ... ♗e4? Alas, after 19 h5 gh 20 ♔f4! ♗h1 21 ♔e5 ♔e8 22 ♔d6 etc the king gets to c7.

Let us analyse another ending with opposite-coloured bishops. In such positions the superior side should try to create passed pawns on both flanks. If it is possible, the king will assist one of the pawns, and victory will be ensured. Let us consider an elementary example illustrating another method of destroying chess fortresses.



Black has two extra pawns, but he cannot make headway on the queenside: if Black's king moves to the kingside,

White's king, his guard, will also move there. Nevertheless, there is no trace of a fortress here, you need only make three moves:

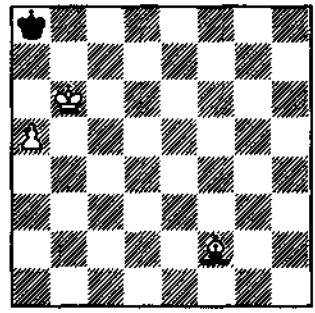
1 ... f5!
2 ef e4!
3 fe ♔e5

Now that both sides are equal in material, White is definitely lost since his king is absolutely helpless. The rest is clear

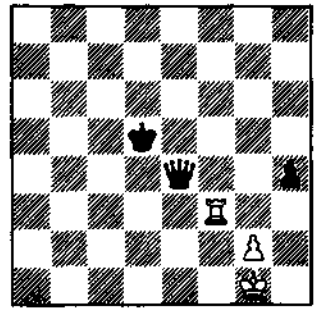
4 ♔d3 ♔f4
5 ♗d5 ♔g3
6 ♔e2 g4
7 ♔f1 ♔h2

Black wins.

So we have become acquainted with some methods of defence in the endgame. There is one more method of defence consisting of building up micro-fortresses of between two and five pieces. Put Black's king on a8, White's king on b6, and White's pawn on the 'a-file'. You will easily see that Black's king is comfortably posted on a8 and there is no chance of queening. The most amazing fact is that even with White's black-squared bishop, it is still a draw.

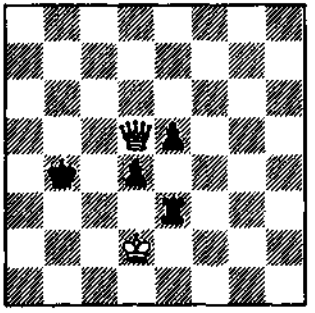


Another, no less spectacular bastion can be built if the opponents, in addition to the kings, have queen and pawn vs rook and pawn. It is common knowledge that the queen is much stronger than the rook, but there are some positions where this axiom does not hold true. Here is one classical fortress with the king in the corner of the chessboard.



Black has a big material advantage but the most he can

achieve is to exchange the queen for the rook and the pawn securing a token advantage (the h-pawn is quite redundant). To prove the inviolability of his defences, White should not resort to any tricky manoeuvres. His rook moves from f3 to h3 and back, and the king performs a triangular manoeuvre g1-h1-h2. Look at another example of queen vs rook in which the Soviet Master Victor Khenkin found a win for the superior side.



It is easy to see that Black's pieces safely protect each other. But this is a temporary factor. If you deprive Black's king of moves, then Black's pawns will fall. The only way to achieve this is to stalemate the king. Look how it is done.

1 ... ♔a4
2 ♕c4+ ♔a5
3 ♕c5+ ♔a4!

3 ... ♔a6 4 ♕b4 and the king is easily stalemated.

4 ♕b6 ♔a3
5 ♕b5 ♔a2
6 ♕b4 ♔a1

The first difficulty: the b3-square is controlled by the rook, preventing the queen from getting to c2 owing to the bad position of White's king. Therefore, the king travels to the other half of the board:

7 ♔c1 ♖c3+
8 ♔d1 ♖d3+
9 ♔e1 ♖e3+
10 ♔f2 ♔a2
11 ♔f1 ♖f3+
12 ♔g2 ♖e3
13 ♔f2

The micro-task has been solved.

13 ... ♔a1
14 ♕d2! ♔b1
15 ♔g2 ♔a1
16 ♕c2 ♖a3
17 ♕d1+ ♔b2
18 ♕e2+ ♔c3
19 ♕xe5

Winning the pawn. Now White's king moves to d2, winning the d-pawn in the same way.

Our next example is bishop vs knight and rook's pawn.

White's position seems hopeless because it is impossible to prevent 1 ... h2, 2 ... ♔g1, 3 ... ♘g2 and 4 ... h1♕. All the more paradoxical are White's two moves assisting the opponent to carry out his plan.

1 ♗d7 h2
2 ♗c6+ ♔g1
3 ♗h1!! ♘g2+
4 ♔e2! ♔xh1

If you take the knight off the board, White can draw either by 5 ♔f1 or 5 ♔f2. It transpires that the knight's presence makes the draw a bit more difficult. After 5 ♔f1 ♘e3+ 6 ♔f2 ♘g4+ 7 ♔f1 the knight can reach any square on the board, but cannot gain the necessary tempo to help free the imprisoned king.

So, when defending in the end-game, don't forget about the possibilities and methods of building up tiny fortresses. But it is much better not to make serious errors and not to get bad endings!

Lesson 23: The Beauty of Chess

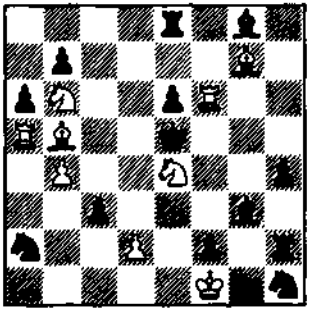
This lesson will be devoted to chess composition, the most beautiful and mysterious aspect of the art of chess. The definition of chess composition as an art is by no means an exaggeration since problems and studies inspired by imagination give hours of enjoyment to millions of chess fans.

Chess composition is guided by its own laws. Chess players remember and value highly brilliant games and combinations, no matter how many slight and hardly noticable mistakes they contain. Chess composers, however, mercilessly throw away the compositions, whatever awards they have won, if these compositions contain a small error or a dual solution.

Chess frequently has situations in which one or several pieces are out of play. In chess composition this is utterly impossible. The chess composer invariably assigns a certain job to every piece on the chessboard.

I am fond of solving chess problems and, particularly, chess studies. The time I take to solve compositions tests my sporting form and sometimes I use many similar ideas in practical play.

Chess problems are full of paradoxes and original ideas. Let us consider, for example, one of the problems composed by Samuel Loyd, the famous 19th century American chess composer.

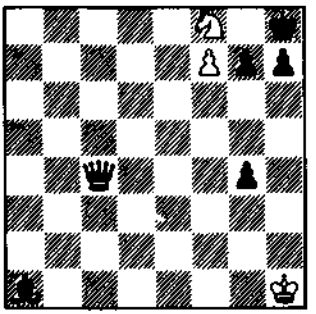


White to play and mate in three moves

There is incredible pandemonium on the chessboard. Black's f-pawn is also poised to queen.

1 ♔e2!! f1♕++
2 ♔e3!!

Amazing! Black can now give ten checks, but each check is repulsed by mate. If you are capable of solving such a problem, you can find original non-standard continuations. Let us see another miniature by Samuel Loyd.



White to play and mate in three moves

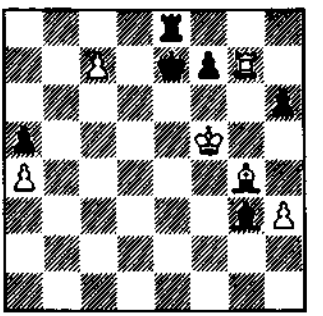
The main variation is based on the queen manoeuvres across the chessboard:

1 ♕f1! h6
2 ♕b1!

followed by 2 ... g6 3 ♕xa1 mate or 2 ... g3 3 ♕h7 mate. 1 ... g3 2 ♘g6+! hg and 3 ♕h3 mate is another variation.

Undoubtedly problem-solving stimulates the development of non-standard thinking. But studies are also helpful for the chess player, enabling him to improve his game in another way. In a composition the author's idea is usually expressed most economically. Solving miniatures helps the chess player to use the maximum capacity of each piece in practical games.

Let us see a study composed by Abram Gurvich, a well-known Sovier chess composer.



White to play and win

How can White win? His pawn on c7 is doomed. His bishop's future is unclear, but his king is active.

1 ♗h5! ♗xc7
2 ♖xf7+ ♔d8

Black has no choice. For

instance, 2 ... ♔d6 would be met by 3 ♖f6+.

3 ♖xc7 ♖g8!!

If you, having calculated a long variation, can foresee and properly evaluate such a defence on the 3rd move, then you have certainly achieved a high level of proficiency.

4 ♖c4!!

A splendid idea which is the *leitmotif* of this study.

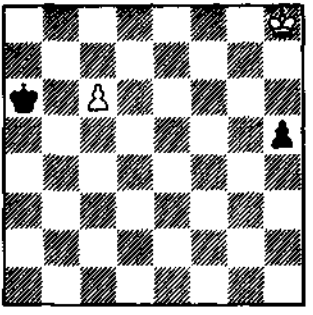
4 ... ♖g5+
5 ♔e6! ♖xh5
6 h4!

In spite of material equality, Black is in zugzwang, and loss is immediate. After solving such studies, one can fully understand all the subtleties of domination on the chessboard.

In chess books we often come across the words 'the geomentry of the chessboard'. What is the essence of this 'geometry'? In my opinion, to answer this question one should examine the brilliant study composed by the famous Czech Grandmaster Richard Reti.

see following diagram

The task seems absolutely



White to play and draw

impossible. Black's pawn is far advanced, and White's king can see the c6-pawn only through powerful binoculars. Therefore, the first moves appear to prove that White's resistance is to no avail.

1 ♔g7 h4
2 ♔f6

White's king is still far from both pawns, so Black can capture White's pawn.

2 ... ♔b6
3 ♔e5!

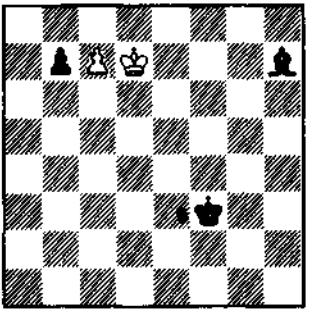
The situation has suddenly changed. If now 3 ... ♔xc6 White stops Black's pawn by 4 ♔f4. So, Black has to advance his pawn, and, in the meantime, White's king gives a helping hand to his pawn.

3 ... h3
4 ♔d6 h2
5 c7 ♔b7

6 ♔d7

The best example of geometry of the chessboard: the diagonal movement of the king was the shortest way to the goal.

This study excites the imagination of chess fans even today, giving inspiration to budding composers. In 1929 Alexander and Kirill Sarychev from Baku published an unforgettable miniature which added a bishop to the material in Reti's original study.



White's position seems to be quite hopeless. Queening is useless, and 1 ♔e6 is repulsed by 1 ... ♔e4. White's first two moves look absurd.

1 ♔c8! b5
2 ♔d7! b4

White is a bishop down, and apparently he invites Black's pawn to queen as soon as possible, but ...

3 ♔d6 ♗f5

Preventing White from queening. Now remember Reti's study.

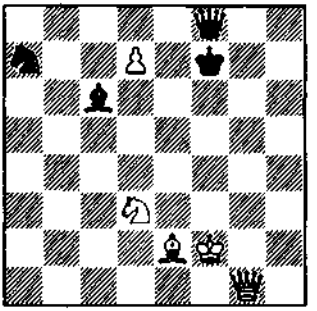
4 ♔e5! ♗c8
5 ♔d4!

It's a well-known idea, isn't it!

5 ... b3
6 ♔c3 ♗e6
7 c8♕ ♗xc8
8 ♔xb3

with a draw.

There are some studies which I like to play through again and again. For example, Alexander Seletsky's study composed in 1933.



White to play and win

A typical middlegame study. White has no material advantage since his pawn is doomed. But Black needs

some time to capture this pawn. Meanwhile, White increases the activity of his pieces.

1 ♕g5! ♔e6+

If 1 ... ♗xd7 2 ♘f4 threatening 3 ♗h5 mate.

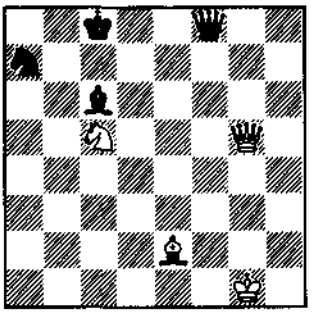
2 ♔g1 ♔xd7

So, Black has reached absolute material equality, but now White starts a mating attack.

3 ♘c5+ ♔c8

The reader can find White's best continuations in reply to 3 ... ♔c7 or 3 ... ♔d6. Retreating to c8, the king saves the queen but perishes himself.

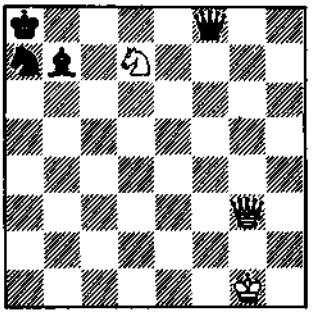
4 ♗a6+ ♔b8
5 ♕g3+ ♔a8
6 ♗b7+! ♗xb7
7 ♘d7!!



A crushing blow!

7 ... ♕d8

The only response, but, alas, there is no defence against the mating combination.



8 ♕b8+!! ♕xb8
9 ♘b6 mate!

Fantastic! As if some mysterious force had piled up Black's pieces in the corner of the chessboard, so that White's knight triumphs over Black's armada.

There may come a time when you have a chance to play such combinations. Let the gems of chess poetry remain in your memory. Having looked at chess problems and studies, you will once again encounter genuine beauty created by man's fantasy.

Lesson 24: Don't Begrudge the Time

We now come to the last lesson. This course of lessons, first published in *Sport in the USSR* is the first which I have ever produced but I hope that I have succeeded to some extent in coping with the task. True enough, on re-reading the published material I've come to the conclusion that in some lessons certain ideas should have been expanded in greater detail whereas in others more examples should have been added.

Chess is a remarkable game. After being around for fifteen centuries the wooden pieces have not only kept their charm but have become even more engrossing. The continuous march of human culture and thought has influenced our game.

For millions of amateurs chess is really only a pleasantly acceptable pastime. They have no great sporting ambitions but simply play in tournaments and sometimes analyse games or solve problems or studies. However there are a few people for whom chess is their life. For them the 64-square board is a battlefield and the game of chess itself a mysterious and alluring art form. Through their rivalry masterpieces are created which will long excite interest and characters are hardened or broken.

So then why do we, Caissa's disciples, love chess; what does it do for us? I, like many others, see in chess a remarkably accurate model of human life with its daily struggles and ups and downs. At the chessboard we get the chance to control events. We can devise plans and then try consistently to bring them to their logical conclusions — but surely isn't that analogous with what we do every day? You can't be successful anywhere and in anything unless you foster in yourself persistence, industriousness

and the ability to evaluate objectively your opportunities. You must be able to set yourself realistic goals and strive for them logically, energetically and resolutely.

How do the real lovers of chess, Caissa's willing slaves, get noticed? Probably the same way as in other sports. I remember my grandfather taking me to the Chess Club at the 'Baku Palace of Pioneers'. There were lots of children there who wanted to learn to play well. But after only a short while half of them had stopped going to the lessons or playing in tournaments. The first defeats and naturally, to start with, there are more of these than victories, had weeded out the irresolute. There remained only those who had from childhood been good in competitions. Thanks to chess, this ability to deal with any situation was reinforced, the will strengthened, and the character hardened.

Before parting with the reader I should like to give some advice to those who wish to further improve their chess:

First and foremost you must learn to analyse your own games, looking for mistakes by either party and seeking to find the correct continuations. As a rule middlegame positions don't recur exactly but similar positions arise very often and after such analysis one should know the correct course of action. You should also become accustomed to analysing other people's games, constantly asking the questions 'Why did he play that?' and 'Why wouldn't it have been better to play ...?' As a result, the number of familiar positions will grow and this will help you to orientate yourself better and more confidently during the course of a game. One's mastery of chess is greatly helped by studying leading players' annotations of their own games; this should be done more and more attentively and thoughtfully. This work will help you to understand how the real masters solve specific problems and which factors they consider paramount in particular positions. At first, many of the annotations will be incomprehensible to you.

Then there will be a period when it all seems incontrovertible. But finally there will come a time when you will start to have questions for the annotator: 'But why do you consider this necessary and not ... ' That will mean that your playing strength has increased. I worked on the annotations of such colossi as Alekhine, Capablanca, Botvinnik and Keres. Even now I feel deep gratitude to them for their priceless lessons.

Of course by carefully working through, say, about a hundred of Capablanca's games you won't start to play exactly like him; indeed you will 'only' learn to apply the great Cuban chessplayer's methods in certain positions. But that is already a great deal, well worth more than a dozen hours' work.

There is a huge volume of information already collected in thousands of text books, game collections, books on top players and encyclopedias of both openings and endgames. It simply isn't possible to memorise all the information but you ought to know it all the same. However, there is a single saving clause — the positional method of play. You couldn't, for example, memorise all the variations of the Scheveningen system in the Sicilian Defence, and learn up all the games. But in the course of 30-40 hours' work with the best opening monographs on that system, you can learn the main lines. These variations and dozens of illustrative games should have been written down in your exercise book. And as a result you would understand how to play typical positions in this system. A master's opening repertoire consists not of one but of dozens of systems. Their study and understanding of the right way of playing them requires a great deal of time. But for a master, and also for anybody who wants to become one that is indispensible.

In conclusion if you want to unravel the multitude of secrets of chess then don't begrudge the time. I wish you success!

Index of Games and Positions