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Explanation of Symbols

The chess board with its coordinates:

![Chess Board](image)

- King
- Queen
- Rook
- Bishop
- Knight

- White stands slightly better
- Black stands slightly better
- White stands better
- Black stands better
- White has a decisive advantage
- Black has a decisive advantage
- Balanced position
- ! good move
- !! excellent move
- ? bad move
- ?? blunder
- !? interesting move
?! dubious move
∞ unclear
# mate
Acknowledgements

After *Chess Strategy for Club Players*, a book that was later awarded a prize, was published by New In Chess in 2009, the head of that company, Allard Hoogland, asked me to think about writing a new book. I rather liked that idea, but due to certain circumstances it took rather a long time before I actually got around to working on a new topic.

Originally, the intention was to produce an improved version of my earlier book, which had appeared in Dutch as *De verdediging van de koning* (in English: ‘Defending the King’). In it, I had shown the reader different ways of defending against attacks by the opponent. But soon, my starting-point changed. Wouldn’t it be better if I took the side of the attacker, and, from his perspective, examine the ways in which attacks on the king might be successful? And then wouldn’t it be preferable to write a book that stood out from other books on the same subject by virtue of a slightly alternative view?

Together with my life partner FM Petra Schuurman, I have worked for years as a chess trainer with talented young players in our own training institute, *Schaakcentrum Sterk Spel* (in English: *Chess Centre for Strong Play*, www.sterkspel.nl). Since Petra has worked a lot with very young students, she formulated methods of ‘attack on the king’ quite intensively and in accordance with certain schemes. Over the years, she found many beautiful examples, analysed them, and provided them with instructive commentary. These examples were handed out to the students as ready-to-use courses, naturally furnished with the necessary exercise material. It is therefore no coincidence that many of her pupils subsequently blossomed as true attacking artists.

Although in my own training, strategic matters are prevalent, I am of course also frequently enchanted by the beauty of attacking motifs. And of course there was no getting round teaching our pupils a thing or two about the calculation of variations. The attack on the king turns out to be an especially attractive topic for many youth and club players – also because, by working on it, you can often achieve immediate success. And, last but not least, because it is quite simply an extremely attractive and creative topic!

When our son Tommy was born in February 2010, our work on the book unfortunately came virtually to a standstill. We did manage, however, to think of a good concept for the book. This concept developed into something highly elaborate, partly because we wanted to give the reader a ‘behind the scenes look’. We also wanted the book to include specific features that we use in our training sessions.

It is essential that we try not only to increase the knowledge of the chess student, but also, and to a greater extent, enhance their skills. From our work as chess trainers we know all too well that to achieve success it is not sufficient to increase knowledge. Without certain skills, such as, for instance, the ability to visualize positions, a player will soon reach his limit. That’s why we have decided to bring our approach to training on these matters out into the open. As a leitmotiv throughout this book, we will discuss various (partial) skills. At the same time we have tried to offer exercises that are as concrete as possible, to exercise these skills.

The secret of providing good training is having good sample positions at your disposal. For this book, Petra and I have gathered together many examples we had stored in our computers. We classified all the positions and games according to our formulated structure. Then we noticed that for certain subsidiary topics, we had to find better, clearer examples. It seems that as a trainer you have to stumble upon such examples. During my work for the Dutch website schaaksite.nl (as well as its little brother newsaboutchess.com, the English-language site), many recent games passed through my hands, which I provided with comments for the visitors of these sites. And, slowly but surely, we managed to fill in all the ‘gaps’ in our scheme. However, in the meantime Petra’s work as a chess trainer had become less intensive because she had retrained to be a mathematics teacher. Therefore I set about studying all the examples for this book once again, which explains why sometimes the term ‘we’ is used, and at other times ‘I’.

Nowadays chess engines are much stronger than in the days when we started collecting examples. Thus the new engines provided us with new insights, which have been channelled into variations, backed up by verbal explanations. In our
view, a chess student who plays through the examples is not greatly helped by variations if he doesn’t know what to look for in a position. Our intention is to provide useful orientation in each of the presented positions. Thus, the pupil can familiarize himself with the correct line of thought. We call these tools ‘search strategies’, which may be of help when a student tries to follow the right paths in a difficult position that requires a lot of calculation. The reader who plays through the fragments is advised to accept that with this subject we sometimes cannot avoid the occurrence of a multitude of variations. By way of compensation, he will encounter an abundance of unexpected and beautiful tactical motifs. In any case, we have tried not to indiscriminately adopt computer variations everywhere. We have ‘translated’ these into chunks that are understandable for the human mind. If the computer gives an outlandish mate in 3, while in another line a full queen can be won, you will understand that we opt for the latter.

Finally, we are very grateful to the Dutch women’s chess champion of 2014 and 2015 – our former pupil, Anne Haast, for editing the entire book and providing us with a few masterpieces from her own practice.

We wish the chess student lots of fun reading, playing through and practicing the material in this book!

Herman Grooten
Eindhoven, April 2016.
Introduction

From time to time we all find ourselves in a good position. However, in practical play, winning a good position proves to be not quite so easy. Of course, the question is: how can we find our way in a labyrinth of variations? And how can we work our way through them to attack the enemy king?

These are questions to which no simple answers can be given. There’s more to many chess positions than meets the eye. In this book, we will make an attempt to chart a number of aspects of the attack systematically.

We will opt for an approach that rather deviates from other instruction books in this field. Besides supplying ‘tools’ and ‘weapons’ that are useful in an attack on the king, we also hope to enhance the skills level of the chess student.

In our practice as chess trainers, we have established that competitive chess involves more than just relying on knowledge. Whereas a Dutch proverb has it that ‘knowledge is power’, in chess this will suffice only to a certain extent. Many chess players think that if they accumulate enough knowledge, they will automatically play better. If only that were true! Or, perhaps, it’s just as well that it isn’t true?

Knowledge has to be put into practice. And practice is much harder to grasp than many people think. Is it not frequently the case that during a game we think we know something, but in reality things are just a little bit different? So the question arises which skills a chess player should have in order to be labelled as a strong player.

Our training course is grafted onto the famous ‘Step-By-Step Method’ (www.stappenmethode.nl), developed by IM Cor van Wijgerden and the psychologist/pedagogue Rob Brunia. Especially Brunia, who unfortunately died at an early age, propagated the training of certain skills. His former associate is still passing on his ideas in this area, and has drastically expanded the method in recent years. From both these top Dutch trainers we have learned a lot.

In the course of an attack on the enemy king, tactical tricks have to be found which may sometimes be hidden under the surface. And the calculation of variations is inextricably bound up with this. Also, a player cannot do without visualizing the position that arises after a few calculated moves. This is where the shoe pinches with many chess players. Not everyone finds it easy to visualize clearly in his mind a position which will arise a few moves later. In our experience, what finds its way into most players’ minds is only a ‘blurred image’ of the position. And the more blurred it gets, the less chance there is of a good result. On the other hand: the sharper the image is, the easier it will be to find a good continuation. And this is only one of a whole range of skills that a chess player should learn. In this book, we hope to give the reader a helping hand in this area. When I visited the chess-playing Polgar sisters in Hungary in 1983, I was stunned by their abilities, especially in the area of blindfold chess. We will also have a thing or two to say about them in this book.

Before we devote ourselves to the main theme of this book – the attack on the king, it may be a good thing to make a comparison of our chess game with warfare. As we shall see further on, many parallels can be drawn between the two.

The game of chess is often used as a metaphor – it is seen as a kind of ‘peaceful wargame’. It is therefore wonderful to see how the popularity of this age-old game remains unabated to this very day. There are sources that assume that our game was invented by Buddhist monks. These monks developed a game which imitated a battle between two Indian armies. The aim was to show a struggle that offered diversity, and was devoid of all physical violence. This game agrees with the Buddhist way of thinking, and the pieces were designed by analogy with the Indian army, which was divided into foot-soldiers, cavalry, elephants, and war chariots. And so the foundation was laid for a game that would prove its worth through the ages. With the rise of the dynamic Norwegian Magnus Carlsen and his win of the World Championship in 2015, chess has acquired a fresh image that also appeals to young people. With Internet coverage, giving a good view of the players via live streams, and with commentators providing analyses and explanations, modern chess has wonderful means at its disposal to distinguish itself from other competitive games. Unfortunately, big sponsors are still disregarding our noble game, mostly misled by the idea that the greatest media exposure is obtained by means of an outdated medium like television. Let’s hope this will change soon. For today we know that chess,
among many other things, can promote learning skills and work performance for students at school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why playing chess benefits school performance</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Visualization</td>
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<td>• Thinking ahead</td>
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<td>• Structuralization, weighing up possibilities</td>
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<td>• Abstract thinking</td>
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<td>• Anticipating changing circumstances</td>
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<td>• Memory functions are improved</td>
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<td>• Multitasking</td>
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<td>• Mental aspects are addressed</td>
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Some chess players say that chess helps them in their daily life. Apart from the fact that it helps to develop certain skills that are also useful in other fields, playing chess may draw to your attention personal shortcomings of which you weren’t aware before. And by working on these purposefully within the context of chess study, a person may sometimes be able to make substantial mental progress. What more could you wish for?

N.B.

When making general considerations about attacking positions, in this book we often implicitly start from a position where Black has castled kingside. The attacking motifs we discuss are automatically called ‘the $\text{d}x\text{h}7$ sacrifice’, or ‘the exchange sacrifice on $f6$’. Obviously, we know in the back of our minds that the same things also apply to the $\text{d}x\text{h}2$ sacrifice, or the exchange sacrifice on $f3$, i.e. from Black’s perspective. Besides these, mirrored versions along the vertical axe can apply equally well, i.e. if the enemy king has entrenched itself on the queenside. So when we speak of an invasion on the seventh rank, keep in mind that from the black player’s viewpoint this may also apply to the second rank.

Herman Grooten
Eindhoven, April 2016
Chapter 1
Attacking motifs

1.1 Special mate patterns

As we indicated in the introduction, it is important to have a clear vision of your ultimate objectives. We can only ‘conjure up’ a combination on the board if we have already encountered it previously, in a simpler form. In our opinion, positions with few pieces, such as those seen in problem chess and endgame studies, are eminently suited for this purpose. Most of the time, the composer starts with the attractive final position and then ‘works his way back’ in order to attach a forced sequence of moves to it. The composer tries to hide the tactical motifs in such a way that the solver cannot easily find them. Sometimes, several pointed defences are also hidden beneath the surface. The solver often needs to have quite a bit of experience to be able to discover the motifs in a study. If you have seen a motif with few pieces (i.e. in its ‘pure form’), it will become easier to find it in a ‘more crowded position’. As this motif is, as it were, drummed into the reader’s memory, he may hope to find it in game positions too.

We, as trainers, have done something that most composers would loathe: we have removed entire sequences of beautiful preparatory moves in order to simplify a problem or an endgame study. In this way, we have tried to make them accessible for practical players. The latter mostly have only one goal: to win the game. We can tell you that this won’t bring universal happiness. Fortunately, many of our pupils were also able to recognize the beauty of our game. The wonderful wealth of ideas in endgame studies always appeals to a player’s creativity.

Words must be illustrated with pictures. Therefore, we would like to start by presenting the reader with a pair of nice endgame studies, in which we have made some cuts in the ‘foreplay’ here and there.

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Endgame composition
Sergey Kaminer 1929

White to move
White has lost all his pawns. Normally this should end in a draw, were it not for the fact that there is something special in the position.

1. \( \text{g4} \) \( \text{h7} \)

The only square where the knight won’t be lost. But this allows the ‘clean’ mate that we will see now.

If the knight moves to the other escape square with 1...\( \text{f7} \), then White continues strongly with 2.\( \text{g6+} \) \( \text{h7} \). (2...\( \text{g8} \) will lose a piece in the same way after 3.\( \text{e6!} \), pinning the knight and collecting it with his next move (\( \text{g6-e5} \)). The composer doesn’t have to worry whether he will be able to give mate with bishop and knight – we know it is possible)

3.\( \text{e5+} \) \( \text{g8} \) (3...\( \text{h6} \) 4.\( \text{xf7#} \)) 4.\( \text{e6} \) and White wins.

2. \( \text{g6+} \) \( \text{g8} \) 3.\( \text{e6#} \)

We will see more of this mate pattern with bishop and knight, where two of Black’s own pieces block the escape squares of the king!

In the next position we see a similar mate picture, but in order to find the moves leading up to it, the solver needs to be a little more inventive.

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**Endgame composition**

E. van Woelderen 1901

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**White to move**

At first sight, Black is doing fine. He has a pawn that is about to promote, and the white king isn’t exactly safe either. A closer look at the position teaches us that the black king is also under siege by virtually all of White’s armed forces. And due to the current somewhat unfortunate positioning of Black’s pieces, there is no way at the moment to create threats against the white king. Of course, White has to be quick, and so something special needs to be found.

1.\( \text{e8+!!} \)
A wonderful sacrifice, the point of which will become clear in just a moment. The a2-g8 diagonal has to be opened; we call this ‘clearance’.

In this position, some readers may get the idea of playing immediately 1.Qg6. But as it turns out, this doesn’t work:

1...Bxg6 2.Nxg6+ Kg8 (‘Now if that rook wasn’t there on e6, I know what I would have done’, one of my students once said. Indeed, then Black would be mated with 3.c4+) 3.e8+ f7 4.f8+ e6 and the king escapes to the freedom of an open board. Still, this variation is of great relevance for finding the real idea.

1.Be8+!! Bxe8 2.Qg6

The true intention of the previous move. White is threatening mate on two squares at once (h7 and e8), which is a particularly powerful weapon.

2...Bxg6

The threats of 3.Qxh7 and 3.Qxe8# cannot be met in any other way. Of course it doesn’t help if the king makes a run for it, e.g. 2...Kg8 3.Qxe8#.

3.Bxg6+ Qg8

We can observe the same unfortunate concurrence of circumstances for Black as in the previous example. On g7 and h7, two of his own pieces are getting in the way of his king, denying it all squares of escape.

4.c4+ Qd5 5.xd5#

The same beautiful checkmate that we also saw in the previous composition.

Now we have seen a beautiful mate pattern in its ‘pure form’ in two positions. Since this mate pattern has been, as it were, drummed into the reader’s memory, he can now hope to find the solutions to the following positions from practical play as well.

Goncalo Vasquez
Joao Matos
White to move

The black player has exposed his own king with ...g6-g5, and the white pieces have consequently taken up menacing positions. However, an immediate decision does not seem to be on the cards – or is it?

23.\(\texttt{Q}f5!!\)

Very spectacular, and by far the strongest move, even though there are also other moves that lead to a win for White. In the game Black, very sportingly, allowed the pretty mate.

23...exf5

It seems as if with 23...\(\texttt{Nd8}\) Black could cover all the entry squares of the white queen, but White still gets through with 24.\(\texttt{Ne7+ Kh8}\) 25.\(\texttt{Qg6}\) and the threat of 26.\(\texttt{Qe8+}\) can no longer be averted.

24.\(\texttt{Bxd5#}\)

Here is a second, slightly more difficult example, where the motif lies a little further beneath the surface.

\textbf{Evgeny Kuzminykh}  
\textbf{Mark Taimanov (analysis)}  
Leningrad 1950 (4)
White to move

In this training position, which we have presented to many of our students, a forced sequence of moves had to be found. We have frequently allowed various pupils to play on from this position against us at the same time, as if it were a simultaneous exhibition. The student would have White, and he had to try and beat us!

1.\textit{\textbf{Ng6}}!

A clever move, which is at the same time very forceful: White threatens to give mate in one! Many pupils tried 1.\textit{\textbf{Nxf7?!}}, which is also attractive, but after 1...\textit{\textbf{Bxh3}} (White’s sacrifice would be justified after 1...\textit{\textbf{Nxf7}}? 2.\textit{\textbf{Bxe6+\textit{\textbf{Qxe6 3.Nxe6}}}})

\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
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8 & 7 & 6 & 5 & 4 & 3 & 2 & 1 & \\
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\end{tabular}
4.d5+! cxd5 5.\textit{xe1+ d7 and now} 6.\textit{g5!} is very strong. White’s attacking pieces are working at full steam, and Black is already behind in material. 2.\textit{xd8 d7! and there are no moves left for the white knight.}

Quite a few enthusiastic attacking players were too quick, thinking that opening the long diagonal would have to do the trick. But they hadn’t seen correctly: to 1.d5 Black replies with the cool 1...\textit{h3, and White’s attack is gone.}

\textbf{1.\textit{g6}! \textit{h7}}

The only way to defend against the mate. After 1...fxg6 Black loses the queen without a fight, by 2.\textit{xe6+}.

\textbf{2.\textit{xe6}!}

Many students who were playing out this position came up with this strong sacrifice. But some of them hadn’t figured out how to continue after it.

Of course, 2.\textit{xe6} also gives White good chances. But the simul player would keep ploughing on: 2...fxe6. This is a difficult moment for White. Only one or two of the students found the winning third move: 3.\textit{g2}. White makes the h1-square available for the rook. As soon as that piece is also able to participate in the attack, there is not much left that Black can do, as his pieces on the queenside are quite dormant. Interesting, and also good, is 3.d5!? White gladly gives a pawn in order to get his bishop on b2 to participate in the kingside action: 3...cxd5.

But here White had to find 4.\textit{ac1}! \textit{d7 and now again} the quiet king move 5.\textit{g2}. Unfortunately for White, Black can struggle on with 5...\textit{f7, when the game isn’t decided yet.}

Premature is 4.\textit{e7+ xe7} 5.\textit{xe7 on account of either} 5...\textit{d7} (or 5...d4 6.\textit{xe6 d7, and Black stays afloat}) 6.\textit{xe6} and now there is the rather hidden defensive resource 6...\textit{a6!} (6...\textit{f8} 7.\textit{e1 e8} 8.\textit{xd7 xd7 9.\textit{xe8+ xe8} 10.d1 is a fraction better for White, but certainly not easily winning) 7.\textit{e5} (7.\textit{xd7 xd7} 8.\textit{xa6 bx a6 is no problem for Black) 7...d4 and Black has weathered all the storms.

Many of the students tried 3.\textit{e7+?! xe7} 4.\textit{xe7}, but after 4...\textit{e8} 5.\textit{h4 e8!} Black would hold.

\textbf{2...fxe6}
3. \( \text{Qxd8}+!! \)

Of course, a player of Taimanov’s calibre could be trusted to unearth a motif like this. For a player who has such a combinational motif at the back of his mind, this position is a piece of cake!

Some of the students continued with 3...\( \text{Re1} \) but after 3...\( \text{Re8} \) only discovered that there is no immediate decision on hand. On the contrary: Black has more or less saved himself here.

3...\( \text{Qxd8} \) 4. \( \text{Bxe6}\# 

Now we have come full circle. Taimanov, soon to become a world-class grandmaster, carried the mate pattern in his rucksack and had no difficulty in bringing it out when required.

1.2 Breaking open the position

At our club there is one player on whose face you can already see that chess is great fun for him. He has one important goal, and that is to go for the enemy king from move one! So, from the very start he targets his arrows at the opposing king. He often jokes that chess is easier than the game of ‘stratego’. (see picture)

In stratego, you don’t know the position of your opponent’s flag, which has to be conquered. In chess, admittedly, this ‘flag’ is mostly hidden behind its own pawns or behind other forces, but at least we always know exactly where it is!

We have already compared chess to a war game. If we relate this image to the Middle Ages in Europe, then we see that in those times castles were besieged by enemy armies. In order to force their way into the enemy fortress, the besieging army would frequently use a battering ram. Then, they would pound away on the gate until a breach was made. A detachment of hardened soldiers would be standing by, ready to charge through the breach and overcome any resistance from enemy defenders.

In this respect, chess does not differ very much from these scenes from the Middle Ages. If we want to threaten the king, then we will first have to seek out the men who protect him. Next, we have to make an opening somewhere in the enemy wall, whilst having a mate pattern firmly in mind.

An attractive type of mate, which occurs quite frequently, is given in the following position:
White has set his mind on a well-known mate pattern. For that purpose, he first has to find a way to open the fifth rank for his rook on d5.

1.\text{R}1xd4! exd4

If Black doesn’t take back, he will be a piece down without compensation.

2.\text{Q}xh7+

With this characteristic queen sacrifice White smashes his way through to the black king’s position.

2...\text{K}xh7 3.\text{R}h5#

This pretty mate pattern with rook plus knight occurs regularly in practice, and is called ‘Anastasia’s Mate’.

Sometimes it is much more complicated. Our orientation starts with an inventory of the attacking pieces. But that’s not the end of it. We will have to find the right way to put these pieces into position. For this, we make use of the attacking methods we have at our disposal (which will receive more extensive attention further on in this book).
White to move

The white pieces are occupying dangerous attacking positions. But Black has the most important square, g7, under control. How can White nevertheless force mate?

1.\textit{\texttt{N}}e7+!

Clearance of the fifth rank. It will soon become clear why this is necessary.

1...\textit{\texttt{Q}}xe7

Forced, as 1...\textit{\texttt{K}}h8 runs into 2.\textit{\texttt{Q}}xf8#.

2.\textit{\texttt{Q}}xh7+!

The stereotypical queen sacrifice that we often encounter in other settings too. The king’s position is blasted open, after which White’s other forces can enter.

2...\textit{\texttt{Q}}xh7 3.\textit{\texttt{R}}h5+

Now it becomes clear why the fifth rank had to be cleared. With the rook check, White makes use of the pin on the g6-pawn.

3...\textit{\texttt{Q}}g8 4.\textit{\texttt{R}}h8#

The triumph of a splendid cooperation between the white pieces.

One glance at the next diagram position teaches us that White has a large surplus of pieces to harass the enemy king. But how can he smoke the black king out of his sturdy fortress? That will take a lot of creativity, and White must not be afraid to invest some material.

\textit{Orelvis Perez Mitjans}
White to move

White has supremacy over the dark squares, and thanks to the weaknesses in Black’s king’s position White seizes the opportunity to home in on the black king by means of a combination:

28.\textit{\textbf{Rxf5!}}

The white knight is doing excellent service in this position, and therefore White sacrifices his rook for the black knight. The alternative 28.\textit{\textbf{Qf6+?!}} hardly yields anything. After 28...\textit{\textbf{Kh7}} 29.\textit{\textbf{Nxf5}} \textit{\textbf{exf5}} 30.\textit{\textbf{Qxa6 Rfd8}} Black is in trouble, but he still has a chance to hold the resulting rook ending.

28.\textit{\textbf{Rxf5! exf5}} 29.\textit{\textbf{e6!}}

Attaching the very foundations of Black’s castled position.

29...\textit{\textbf{fxe6}}

After a move with the queen, for example 29...\textit{\textbf{Qc7}}, White wins in the attack: 30.\textit{\textbf{Qxf5+ Kg8}} 31.\textit{\textbf{Qe7+ Kg7}} 32.\textit{\textbf{Qf3!}} and White breaks through.
30. \textit{Re6}

Now the g6-point cannot be defended properly.

30... \textit{Rf7}

Of course, 30...\textit{Qf7} fails to 31. \textit{Re7} \textit{Qxe7}.

31. \textit{Rxg6+ Kh8}

31... \textit{Kf8} 32. \textit{Rg8#}.

32. \textit{Ne6}

And Black surrendered.

After 32. \textit{Ne6} there is no sensible defence against the many threats. For example: 32...\textit{Rg8} 33. \textit{Rf6+ Kh7} 34. \textit{Qf6+ Kh8} 35. \textit{Rg6+} with mate.

1.3 Bringing your pieces into the attack

Allow us to refer once more to the comparison of our noble game with the art and science of war. In chess, the war is waged in a peaceful way, meaning: without bloodshed. The subject of creating a hole in the wall was discussed in the previous paragraph. But another question has to be answered: how can I get sufficient manpower through the hole into the enemy castle, in order to defeat the enemy forces? Sometimes an attack is simply not yet powerful enough. So, for this purpose sometimes several of our warriors have to be brought in from distant locations. The question will always be whether there is enough time to do this. In many cases, it becomes clear that an attack has a good chance of success if a few of the opponent’s pieces are more or less ‘tucked away’ on the other side of the board. We can see this theme in its full glory in the next fragment.
White to move

The black king is hidden behind a rather fragile barrier. Moreover, there are not that many helpers on hand to protect the threatened king. Consequently White found a way to make a breach in the black king’s position here:

1. \textit{Rx}f7+! \textit{Kxf7} 2. \textit{Rc7+ Be7}  

But new defenders are brought up to protect the king.

Certainly not 2.\textit{Kf6} in view of 3.\textit{Qe4}!.

3. \textit{Qe4! Be8} 4. \textit{Qe6+ f8}  

You might think that the king could run for it with 4.\textit{g7}. However, then White does not play the obvious 5.\textit{xe7+}, but instead 5.\textit{e4!} and mate cannot be parried. The queen and bishop cooperate excellently to close the mating net: 

5.\textit{xb7} 6.\textit{xg6+ f8} 7.\textit{h6+ g8} 8.\textit{h7+ f7} 9.\textit{g6+ f8} 10.\textit{g8#}.  

It seems as if the hole in the wall has been sealed up in time. But now another white piece rushes from the other side of the board to the aid of its comrades.

5. \textit{Be4}!

With this quiet move, White includes his last piece in the attack. Although Black is no less than a rook up, he cannot prevent the white queen and bishop collaborating to weave a mating net.

5... \textit{Rb7}

The only normal move, but it is a forced mate all the same.

6. \textit{Bxg6} \textit{Kg7} 7. \textit{f7}+ \textit{Kh6} 8. \textit{Qh7}+ \textit{Kh5} 9. \textit{f4}+ \textit{Kg4} 10. \textit{Qxh5#}

A playful way to bring pieces into the attack is shown in the next diagram.

\begin{center}
\textbf{Nafisa Muminova}
\textbf{Nana Dzagnidze}
Khanty-Mansiysk rapid 2014 (11)
\end{center}
White to move

In this position, White is an exchange and a pawn down, but the black king is in big trouble. It is, as it were, ‘choked’ by the strong white bishop and the pin by the queen on the e7. However, there is one piece that does not participate in the game: the d1.

39.\(B_f3\)?

Now Black was better, though Dzagnidze didn’t manage to convert the advantage.

With 39.\(R_d3\)! White could have brought the rook into the game. After this strong move the black player could have quit right away. The threat of 40.\(R_f3\) is lethal: 39...\(Q_xg4+\) 40.\(R_g3\) \(Q_f5\) 41.\(R_f3\) (by the way, White does not have to carry out the threat immediately. Relatively stronger is 41.\(Q_d6\)! because Black cannot move a muscle anyway: 41...\(R_c8\) 42.\(R_f3\) \(Qxf3+\) 43.\(Bxf3\), winning)
And White wins decisive material. True, she would still have had to show some technique: 41...\(\text{d8}\) 42.\(\text{xf5+}\) \(\text{gx}f5\) 43.\(\text{xa4!}\) and with queen and bishop firing away at such an exposed king, White wouldn’t have much trouble hauling in the win.

39.\(\text{h3?}\) is tempting, but then Black holds with 39...\(\text{f7!}\) 40.\(\text{h8+}\) \(\text{e7}\) 41.\(\text{e1+}\)

41...\(\text{d6!}\) 42.\(\text{xe8}\) \(\text{xf2+}\) and Black forces perpetual check: 43.\(\text{h3}\) \(\text{f3+}\) 44.\(\text{xf3}\) \(\text{xf3+}\) 45.\(\text{h4}\) \(\text{f2+}\) 46.\(\text{h3}\) (certainly not 46.\(\text{g5??}\) in view of 46...\(\text{f6#}\)).
39. \( \text{B}\text{f3}\) \( \text{Q}\text{g5}?! \)

After this move White is fully in the game again. With 39...\( \text{Qc4}! \) Dzagnidze could have played for a win, even though things are not at all easy.

40. \( \text{d5} \) \( \text{f6} \) 41. \( \text{d6} \) \( \text{g5} \) 42. \( \text{d5} \) \( \text{f4} \)

And eventually the point was shared.

Here is another example, which, in fact, consists of only one move. In this case the pieces are already lined up, but they do not yet seem to be effectively engaged in an attack. So we will have to find something special.

**Example Mate**
(breaking and entering)

![Chess Board Diagram](image)

*White to move*

The white pieces have taken up menacing positions, but there does not appear to be any decisive finishing blow. From the previous paragraph we know that White first has to find a way to force open the gate in the enemy castle, before being able to pay a visit to the enemy king. How can he do this?

1. \( \text{Qg5!} \)

Indeed a grandiose motif! White sacrifices the queen with a quiet move; mate in one is threatened.

A logical attempt is 1.\( \text{xg7}?! \), but it fails miserably: 1...\( \text{hxg7} \) 2.\( \text{h5+} \) \( \text{h7} \) 3.\( \text{f6+} \) \( \text{g6}! \) and there is no mate to be seen.

1. \( \text{Qg5!} \) \( \text{g8} \)

What else? 1...\( \text{hxg5} \) is of course met by 2.\( \text{h3#} \), and 1...\( \text{xf6} \) 2.\( \text{g7#} \) is mate, too.

2. \( \text{Qh6+!} \)
And now the tricks do work!

2...gxh6 3.\texttt{Exg8}\# 

This is called the Arabian Mate.

We have seen a few times already that an attack doesn’t have any chance of succeeding unless enough pieces are involved. The greater the number of men who can participate in the attack, the greater will be the chance of success. In a game it is important to organize well this bringing up of reserves.

Now we take a look at a complete game, in which the white player finds an original way to introduce a rook into the attack.

Matija Ostovic
Branko Rogulj
Zagreb 2012 (8)


It is more common to attack the centre at once by 7...c5, as the white king is still uncastled.

8.d3 b5 9.e2 b7 10.e5 e7

11.h4!?

The start of an interesting plan. White makes use of his space advantage on the kingside by bringing up his forces via this side of the board. The h1-rook will join the battle via h3.

11...d7 12.h3 c5 13.g3

In combination with the white queen on d2, the rook stands well here. White is ready for h6, attacking g7 and h7. It is clear that the rook is providing good service in this attack.
13...h8

Collecting a piece with 13...c4 fails to 14.Qh6!. Then, after 14...g6, 15.Qf4 cxd3 16.Qh5 wins, as a quick mate cannot be averted without heavy material losses.

Now that the queen cannot join the attack right away, White decides to first bring the knight near the enemy king.

14.Qf4 c4?!

The principled move. Better was the defensive move 14...g8, but after 15.Qg5 Qxg5 16.hxg5 the position (now with a half-open h-file as well) looks good for White.

Now White has a spectacular and decisive sacrifice:

15.Qxg7! cxd3

Taking the rook is not good: 15...Qxg7 16.Qh5+ Qg8 17.Qh6. Since mate is threatened on two squares, the position can no longer be saved.

16.Qxe6!

With this knight move, White kills two birds with one stone: the c1-h6 diagonal is vacated for the queen (clearance!), and the rook is now protected by the knight.

16.Qh5! was also strong.

16...Qg5

Or 16...fxe6 17.Qh6, after which h7 can no longer be defended.
17.\texttt{\textit{Qxd3}}

Ignoring Black’s piece sacrifice. Also, from d3 the queen is attacking h7. Now Black has no satisfactory defence. He did struggle on for a little longer, but then threw in the towel after...

17...\texttt{Qa5+ 18.b4 Qxb4+ 19.c3 1-0}

The activation of the rook with h2-h4 and \texttt{Rh1-h3} suddenly prompted me to think back on a game between the still young Garry Kasparov and my fellow countryman John van der Wiel. Please excuse me, but I can’t help recounting the following anecdote. This game was played during the World Championship for national teams under 27, held in the Austrian town of Graz, in 1981. Yours truly was also part of the Dutch team, which was holding its own quite nicely in the top of the rankings. With our modest Elo-ratings, at a certain point we had the honour of being paired against the supreme Soviet Union team, with the then 18-year-old Kasparov on first board. That was quite an experience. As there were hordes of (photo) journalists standing around the boards, and there was a cordon of security at hand, we almost felt like sporting heroes ourselves when we sat down at those tables. I managed to get a good position against the strong Evgeny Vladimirov, but unfortunately got caught with a childish trick, which abruptly ended our game (the final phase is given further on in this book).

The ‘advantage’ of this quick defeat was that I could now follow the other games. And my attention was especially drawn to the game on first board between Kasparov and Van der Wiel.

Our man had dug up a rather strange little move in the opening (6...\texttt{Qe7}), in a popular variation of the Queen’s Indian. Following Kasparov’s treatment of this system, it had become all the rage, and with his sixth move Van der Wiel wanted to take the sting out of his play. But the youngster from Baku had a terribly strong novelty up his sleeve, which messed up the entire black set-up. The two moves that formed the key to his ‘refutation’ (8.\texttt{Nc3!!} and 9.e4!) were flung on the board with a lot of ballyhoo.
1.d4 ²f6 2.c4 e6 3.²f3 b6 4.a3 c5 5.d5 ²a6 6.²c2

6...²e7?!

The idea behind this move will become clear in the variation given on move 8.

7.²g5 exd5 8.²c3!!

A strong novelty, which, combined with the next move, completely shakes up the black position.

The idea of Black’s curious sixth move becomes manifest after 8.cxd5?!. Then Black replies with 8...²e4, after which he gets a comfortable position.

8...²xc4
9.e4!

All this had been worked out by Kasparov. The game continued:

9...h6 10.\(\text{xf6} \quad \text{xf6} \quad \text{11.exd5} \)

Later, Kasparov indicated that he was very dissatisfied with his approach. He thought that here he should have played 11.\(\text{xc4}! \quad \text{dxc4} \quad 12.\text{d5} \quad \text{d8} \quad 13.\text{c3}!? \), after which the black pieces can hardly be developed. (Closer inspection suggests that 13.\(\text{xc4} \) may be even better.)

11...\(\text{xf1} \quad 12.\text{xf1} \quad \text{d6} \quad 13.\text{e1+} \quad \text{e7} \)
14.\textit{d}e4

Probably, 14.\textit{w}e2! was the way to upset the coordination between the black pieces.

14...\textit{w}g6 15.\textit{w}a4+ \textit{f}8

The conclusion to this fragment will be discussed a little further on.

Around this time, Kasparov started doing what he would become famous for later on: pulling faces in order to make an even greater impression with his play. He also didn’t forget to cast piercing looks at his opponent while making his moves. At first, Van der Wiel remained unperturbed by the psychological pressure Kasparov was exerting on him. He kept his head, and for quite some time continued to find ways to avoid getting overwhelmed. True, this did cost him oceans of time, but it was actually Kasparov himself who was the first to miss the strongest continuation, and a few more times besides. And at a certain point, the future World Champion was even two pawns down, with hardly any compensation in sight.

Around that moment I was standing near the board, eager to see how this spectacle would end. From the fierce look in Kasparov’s eye I saw that he wasn’t prepared to be led to the slaughter like a lamb. He pulled out all the stops to throw Van der Wiel off balance. The latter was also having major problems with the clock by now, and Kasparov gratefully exploited this circumstance to adjust a few pieces in Van der Wiel’s thinking time, accompanying this action with aplomb ‘J’adoube!’.

The Dutch grandmaster, who had played excellently up to that point, and had, quite stoically, ignored all his opponent’s antics, finally lost his concentration. Consequently, he repeatedly failed to find the best move. By now Van der Wiel was raging mad, especially at the arbiters, who didn’t dare to interfere.

On the fortieth move, the game was adjourned, and by then it was clear to us that the game couldn’t be saved. Van der Wiel did appear at the resumption, but he could no longer avert the defeat.

![Chessboard Diagram]

This is what happened on the board. Both players have lost their castling rights. White now has to find something forceful, which he does in an energetic way:

16.h4!
Van der Wiel was starting to get into time-trouble, and Kasparov now pulls out all the stops. With the text, he enables the rook on h1 to get into play. But Van der Wiel isn’t frightened so easily.

16...\(\text{Q}f5!\)

Again, the Dutchman defends himself very cleverly. His intention is to involve the b8-knight in the game, or, with ...\(\text{Q}d7\), to drive the white queen from its active post.

17.\(\text{Q}d1\)

Kasparov clearly didn’t fancy the simplifying 17.\(\text{N}xd6\) \(\text{Q}d7\).

17...\(\text{Q}a6\)

The knight is a little off-side here, but Black wants to leave the square d7 open for his queen.

18.\(\text{Q}g3?!\)

White is getting sidetracked a bit. This was the square he had vacated for his \(\text{R}h1\). Now, because of the text move, the rook remains inactive for a little longer.

18...\(\text{Q}d7\) 19.\(\text{R}e4\) \(\text{N}c7\) 20.\(\text{R}f4\)

With this other rook manoeuvre, Kasparov thinks he can still harass the black king. However, this won’t wash – rather, it is White who is about to be washed away...

20...\(\text{Q}b5+\)

Van der Wiel grabs his chance.

The alternative 20...\(\text{B}f6\) was also excellent for Black.

21.\(\text{K}g1\) \(\text{Qxb2}\)

Now Black is even two pawns up.

22.\(\text{Qf5}\)
22...\textit{\textbf{\textit{f6}}?!}

Unfortunately for the black player, this is not the strongest move. However, Van der Wiel was very short of time by now.

Far more logical was 22...\textit{\textbf{\textit{e8}}!}, after which White’s compensation would have disappeared like snow in summer. Black brings up a new piece for the defence, and then remains two pawns up without White having anything to show for it.

23.\textit{\textbf{\textit{xd6}}} 24.\textit{\textbf{\textit{c4}}} 24.\textit{\textbf{\textit{a1}}?!}

It is understandable that Black wants to trade the queens, certainly against a ferocious attacking player such as Kasparov was at the time. But objectively, 24...\textit{\textbf{\textit{c3}}} 25.d6 b5 was better, after which Black could still count on an advantage.

25.\textit{\textbf{\textit{xal}}} 26.\textit{\textbf{\textit{xa1}}} 26.\textit{\textbf{\textit{ce5}}} 27.\textit{\textbf{\textit{xe5}}} 27.\textit{\textbf{\textit{xd5}}} 28.\textit{\textbf{\textit{xf7}}} 28.\textit{\textbf{\textit{g8}}} 29.\textit{\textbf{\textit{h3}}}!

And finally, here comes the rook, which has had to wait so long to join the play. White now activates his entire army, and the tide seems to turn.

29...\textit{\textbf{\textit{e8}}}

29...\textit{\textbf{\textit{h7}}} 30.\textit{\textbf{\textit{g3}}} 30.\textit{\textbf{\textit{hg8}}} is no problem for Black.

30.\textit{\textbf{\textit{g3}}} 30.\textit{\textbf{\textit{g5}}}

A grave weakening, but it still appears to be within acceptable boundaries.

30...\textit{\textbf{\textit{h7}}} is a move you would rather not play as Black, because on h7 the rook will hardly be doing anything for quite some time.

31.\textit{\textbf{\textit{f5}}} 31.\textit{\textbf{\textit{f4}}}

Van der Wiel plays it all very adroitly.
There was no reason for White not to take the g-pawn with check. But perhaps Kasparov hoped to keep the position so complicated that Van der Wiel, in time trouble, would start making mistakes. 34.\texttt{Rxg5+ Rg7 35.Rxg7+ Kh7}, and the ensuing knight ending should be a draw.

\textbf{34...Nd5 35.Rd3 Qf6}

For the time being, Black keeps defending excellently.

\textbf{36.Rxg5+ Rg7 37.Qf5}

Kasparov prefers to keep as many pieces on the board as possible.

\textbf{37...Qe4 38.a4 Rxe7 39.f4}

Slowly but surely, it becomes clear that the advantage has been transferred to the other side of the board. White has two connected passed pawns that, later on, with support by the king, will start rolling forward like a tank.

\textbf{39...e6 40.Qg2 Rxe7}

Here the game was adjourned, and during the analysis it became clear to us that the position had become very difficult for Black. White’s two connected passed pawns on the kingside, supported by the king, rook and knight, will roll forward irresistibly. The black pawns can hardly be set in motion since they have no support.

\textbf{41.Qf3 Qd6 42.Qg5+ Qg7 43.Qxg7+ Kh7 44.g4 a6}

Not only is this action too late, but after it the black pawn formation will be more vulnerable to attack.

It doesn’t make sense for Black to start running with a pawn himself, if that pawn doesn’t get any ‘backing’: 44...c4 45.d4 c3 46.Qe2, and the c3-pawn is a marked man.

A wait-and-see approach with 44...Qg8 may have been best under the circumstances, but it is clear that Black won’t be able to save himself even in that case.
45.\text{d5}!

A very strong reply; in certain circumstances White will threaten to play a4-a5, after which the black pawn formation will come under attack.

45...\text{c8} 46.g5

I think that 46.\text{d7}! was even more convincing: 46...\text{f8} (46...\text{f6}?? 47.\text{f7#}; 46...\text{e7} 47.\text{d8} \text{a7} 48.\text{d6} \text{c8} 49.\text{e6} \text{e8} 50.a5!) 47.g5, and the white pieces dominate the board.

46...\text{e7} 47.\text{d7} \text{f8} 48.\text{d8}+ \text{g7}

49.\text{e4}!

Kasparov plays optimally.

49.\text{e8}!? also came into consideration, after which all of Black’s pieces are completely tied up. Black can still struggle on with 49...c4 50.\text{e4} c3, but after 51.f5! White would also win.

49...\text{e6} 50.\text{d7}+!

Another good one!

50...\text{f8}

Also after 50...\text{g8} White decides the battle with 51.\text{f5} \text{xe5} 52.fxe5 \text{e8} 53.e6.

The defence 50...\text{e7} also fails after 51.\text{xe7}+ \text{xe7} 52.f5.

51.\text{f5}

The king enters the black position, bringing death and destruction.
Back in the Netherlands, Van der Wiel denounced Kasparov’s behaviour as shameful in an article. When in that same year, Kasparov also came to our country to take part in the famous Interpolis tournament in Tilburg, which was to be his first trial of strength with the current world top, he was asked to comment on Van der Wiel’s criticism. His reaction was: ‘In Russia we have a proverb that says: bad dancers always have problems with their balls.’ That was one in the eye for John.
1.4 Weapons

One of our acquaintances is a convinced pacifist. He would like at least all the heavy weapons to disappear from the earth, and presumes that then the chances of peace on earth will improve. The turmoil all over the world is mostly caused by power-mad people who use weapons to add force to their authority. We think we are living in a civilized world, but are we really? Aren’t children made familiar with weapons and shooting games already at a young age?

Fortunately, in chess the war is waged in a peaceful way. But also here we have weapons with which we can harass the opponent’s king. They are of a somewhat more abstract nature than the weapons that are available everywhere we look today.

If you are an attacking player, it is useful to focus your search on characteristics in the position that may herald a combination. We will list a few of them:

Eliminating defenders

Pieces that defend the king can sometimes be eliminated. First, we will give a comparatively simple attacking idea.

Armin Bechtiger
Gyula Koronghy
Zürich 1981

Black to move

Three black pieces are aimed at the white king’s position. But can they disorganize the defence?
1...\text{\textsf{Exh}3}+!

Yes, they can! Because the queen on f3 and the pawn on g2 have two tasks, which they cannot fulfill at the same time. This is called ‘overburdening’ or ‘overloading’ in many chess books. The queen had to protect the h3-pawn and the \text{\textsf{Ed1}} at the same time. The g2-pawn had the task of protecting h3 and, at the same time, to keep the second rank closed. This turns out to be too much of a good thing. White could just as well resigned here in view of 2.\text{\textsf{Qg1}} (White gets mated after both 2.\text{\textsf{Qxh3} Qxd1#} and 2.\text{\textsf{gxh3 Qh2#}}) 2...\text{\textsf{Rxf3}} and Black wins a full queen.

In the second example we see a nice demonstration of elimination of enemy pieces, brought on the board by the Dutch champion of 2013, GM Dimitri Reinderman.

\begin{center}
\textbf{Dimitri Reinderman}\\
\textbf{Fred Slingerland}\\
Gouda rapid 2013
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.8\textwidth]{chess_diagram.png}
\end{center}

White to move

With the black pieces placed in this way – his king in the middle of the board and his pieces lacking coordination – it is not surprising that there is a combination in the position.

38.\text{\textsf{Exd8}}+!

Because the rook on d7 is pinned, Black has to take back with the king, which puts the latter in even greater danger.

38...\text{\textsf{Exd8}} 39.\text{\textsf{Ec8}}+

A wonderful decoy. The king is drawn to a square where it falls prey to the white queen.

39...\text{\textsf{Exc8}} 40.\text{\textsf{Ec6}}+

Now she pays a visit with gain of tempo.
40...\texttt{d8} 41.\texttt{a8#}

The final position shows nicely how well the white bishop controls the enemy king’s important escape squares.

**Magnet combination**

The sub-header above this paragraph already suggests it itself: by a sacrifice, the king is lured out of his ‘castle’, where it will be caught by the enemy pieces. One of the most famous types of combination (which is also seen in many other games) is the so-called ‘magnet attack’. The standard example is Ed.Lasker-Thomas (1912), but since that game is so extremely well known, we won’t give it here. We will show a much more complicated case, where the white player conjures up a number of lovely mate patterns.

**Discovered attack magnet**

![Chess Diagram]

*White to move*

A typical king hunt, where the king is lured forward from its ‘safe’ shelter. I have used this position regularly as an exercise in thinking ahead, and especially in visualization. The task is: calculate 1.\texttt{Qxh6+}.

1.\texttt{Qxh6+}!!

A lovely queen sacrifice, which leads to mate if White does everything right.

1...\texttt{Qxh6} 2.\texttt{Ne6+}!

This discovered check is essential; the knight not only takes square g7 under control, but it also cuts off the \texttt{Bc8} from possible defensive tasks.

2...\texttt{h5}
Essential here was $2...\text{Nf4}$, but then the easiest win for White is $3.\text{Rxf4 Kg6}$ ($3...\text{fxe6}$ only puts off the evil hour: $4.\text{Rxf8+ Qg5}$ $5.\text{Qxg5+ Nxg5}$ $6.\text{Qxc7}$) $4.\text{Rg4+ Kg5}$ $5.\text{Bg5+ Kh4}$ $6.\text{Nh4+ Kh3}$ $7.\text{g3+ Kh2}$ $8.\text{Nf4#}$.

$3.\text{Be2+}$

Here, $3.\text{Rf5+}$ leads to an equally swift checkmate after $3...\text{Kg4}$ ($3...\text{Kh4}$ $4.\text{Be2}$) $4.\text{Be2+ Kh4}$ $5.\text{Rf5#}$.

$3...\text{Kh4}$ $4.\text{g3+?!}$

All very straightforward.

For the perfectionists among us: the quiet move $4.\text{Rf5!!}$ leads to a quicker mate: $4...\text{Bxe6}$ $5.\text{Rf5#}$.

Wasn’t it Fischer who once gave himself a question mark for a checkmate in 3, when he could have given mate in 2? Apparently that is the kind of mentality a player needs to have to become World Champion!

$4...\text{Kh3}$

5.\text{Nf4+}

Curiously, there was also another quiet move, $5.\text{Rf4}$, which led to a different mate pattern. There is no remedy against $6.\text{Bf1}$.

5...\text{Bxf4} 6.\text{Bxf4#}

Mission accomplished!

**Double check**

A weapon that definitely has to be included in this collection is the so-called double check. This is a form of discovered check where the foremost and hindmost piece both give check at the same time. One thing is certain here: the opponent has to make a move with his king. From the usual ways to remove a check – capturing the piece that gives check,
interposing a piece, moving the king —, only the latter possibility is left to him. For the attacker, this motif may be an occasion to investigate if he can obtain an advantage.

**Example Double check**

1. \textit{Q}d7+!  
A charming queen sacrifice, with the intention to open the e-file. The \textit{R}e1 and the \textit{N}e4 are then ready to exert their collective power.

Also winning is 1. \textit{N}xf6+ \textit{K}f7 (1... \textit{Q}xf6 2. \textit{Q}d7#) and then 2. \textit{N}d7! \textit{K}g8 3. \textit{N}xf8, and in view of the mate threat on g7 and the vulnerable position of the \textit{B}e6, Black cannot take back on f8.

1. \textit{Q}d7+!  
2. \textit{N}d6+!  
The right square for the double check. The knight has to cover the escape square f7, driving the king to the exposed d-file.

Certainly not 2. \textit{N}xf6? \textit{K}f7 3. \textit{N}xd7+ \textit{K}g6, and White has nothing.

2... \textit{Q}d8 3. \textit{Q}f7+ \textit{K}c8  
And now there follows an elegant finish:

4. \textit{Q}e8+  
Again a defender is deflected: 4... \textit{Q}xe8 5. \textit{Q}d8 mate.
The white pieces are poised for a murderous initiative, while Black’s pieces are somewhat cluttered. Add to this the unsafe position of the black king, and we can conclude that the position is ripe for a combination. But a practical player must always be prepared to roll up his sleeves and start calculating variations.

I have used this position regularly in training sessions with my pupils, with the intention of calculating the variations after

1. \text{Qh5}+!

A beautiful queen sacrifice that serves to deflect the \text{Nf6} from the f-file and thus enable a double check with the pawn. The advantage of this variation is that it takes place with check, and is therefore forcing. A player can calculate very deeply, as long as everything is forced. However, on every move there are often little side variations that need to be considered.

I won’t deny that there are more moves that lead to a win for White. For example, 1.exf6 is also excellent: 1...\text{xf6} 2.\text{fxe6}+ \text{xe6} 3.\text{Qh5}+ \text{g8} 4.\text{xf6} ends in disaster for Black too: 4...\text{xb3} (on 4...\text{xb3}, 5.\text{e5}! is the strongest continuation, after which there is no longer a satisfactory defence to all the threats that White has created) 5.\text{hxh6}! \text{gxh6} 6.\text{g6}+ \text{h8} 7.\text{e5}#.

1. \text{Qh5}+! \text{Qxh5} 2.\text{fxe6}+

Here is the double check.

2...\text{g6}

Now the black king is forced to journey to unsafe regions.

3.\text{c2}+ \text{g5} 4.\text{xf5}+!
The only good move.

4...<$g6$

If the king moves forward, it will soon be mated: 4...<$g4$ and now the quickest mate is 5.<$h4$ (5...<$g3$ 6.<$xh5$ <$xe6$ 7.<$e3$+ <$f4$ 8.<$f3$#) 6.<$e4$+ <$f4$ (6...<$g3$ 7.<$g4$#) 7.<$xf4$+ <$g3$ 8.<$g4$#; 4...<$h4$ 5.<$e4$+ <$f4$ 6.<$xf4$#.

5.<$f6$+

Another double check!

5...<$g5$ 6.<$g6$+

Curiously, now the rook finds itself behind the black king, as a result of which the monarch has to trespass even further into the enemy lines.

6...<$h4$

As a rule, a king that is so far removed from its own ranks won’t hold out long.

If the king moves to the centre, this leads to a quicker mate: 6...<$f4$ 7.<$e4$+ <$f5$ 8.<$g4$#.

7.<$e4$+ <$f4$ 8.<$xf4$+ <$h5$ 9.<$g3$

9.<$g3$ <$e7$ 10.<$d1$# is also nice!

9...<$xe6$ 10.<$h4$#

Clearance

Sometimes you have to make a clean sweep. Some people get nervous because the rubbish is piling up in their home and clearing it out often provides a new perspective, allowing them to breathe more freely again. Also on the psychic level it may sometimes be helpful to throw some ‘ballast’ overboard, in order to empty your mind and face the day-to-day worries with a fresh head.

We can apply this analogy to a special theme which plays a role in some chess positions. In chess, too, sometimes something is standing in the way and has to be shoved aside. We call this ‘clearance’. The best-known concept within this theme is called ‘square clearance’. Here are a couple of not too difficult examples.

**Mate (square clearance)**
White to move

White clears the g7-square for the knight:

1. \textit{Qg6+!} hxg6 \textit{2. Ng7#}

\textbf{Mate (square clearance)}

White to move

White sees a checkmate with the knight on d7. Alas, at the moment his queen is standing in the way. Of course, this can
be solved quickly. With

1. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Q}c8+!}}

the queen is removed with tempo gain, and now:

1...\texttt{\textcolor{blue}{\texttt{R}xc8}} 2. \texttt{\textcolor{blue}{\texttt{N}d7#}}

We can clear a square, but we can also clear a ‘line’. By a ‘line’ we mean a file, a rank or a diagonal. The accepted term is ‘line clearance’, but strictly speaking we should classify this into ‘file clearance’, ‘rank clearance’ and ‘diagonal clearance’ – even though this doesn’t sound so good.

**Example clearance**

```

White to move

In this position, White has managed to push his f- and g-pawns very far forward. This example shows that pawns can be extremely dangerous on such squares. However, the motif of the combination is still quite hidden.

1. \texttt{\textcolor{blue}{\texttt{N}e6!?}}

A wonderful way to clear the c1-h6 diagonal. White is planning a queen sacrifice, and it looks as if Black will be forced to accept it. At the same time, the sixth rank is interrupted. Other knight moves do not lead to the desired result. After this surprising knight move, it looks as if Black is lost, but he has a formidable resource at his disposal!

White’s 1.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Q}h3}?} doesn’t work because Black can open the diagonal of the white king: 1...e3+

1.\texttt{\textcolor{blue}{\texttt{Q}d5}?} also clears the c1-h6 diagonal, but it allows Black’s bishop to participate in the defence: 1...\texttt{\textcolor{blue}{\texttt{Q}xd5}} 2.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Q}xh6+ gxh6}} 3.g7+ \texttt{\textcolor{blue}{\texttt{Kh7}}} and the g8-square has been provided with extra cover!

1. \texttt{\textcolor{blue}{\texttt{Q}e6!?}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Q}d2!!}}

A fantastic defence! The weak point h6 is protected indirectly, and at the same time White’s queen on e3 is deflected,
enabling Black to open his a8-h1 diagonal. With this move Black keeps White’s advantage to a minimum.

After 1...\textit{Q}d2 White still has 2.\textit{N}xf8 (accepting the queen sacrifice with 2.\textit{Q}xd2? is punished by 2...\textit{e}3+ 3.\textit{Q}g2 \textit{Q}xg2+ 4.\textit{Q}xg2 \textit{Q}xg6+ 5.\textit{Q}h3 \textit{Q}xe6, and Black wins) 2...\textit{Q}xe3 3.\textit{Q}xf6 \textit{Q}c5 4.\textit{Q}d7 \textit{e}3+ 5.\textit{Q}xe6 \textit{Q}xe6+ 6.\textit{Q}g2 \textit{Q}c1+ 7.\textit{Q}g1 \textit{Q}c6+ with move repetition.

These themes occur more often in practice than you would think. Sometimes they lie so deep beneath the surface that it is not easy to get the theme out in the open.

\textbf{Loek van Wely}  
\textbf{Robin van Kampen}  
Amsterdam ch-NED 2014 (1)

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

\textit{White to move}

Seven-time Dutch champion Loek van Wely managed to pull the wool over the eyes of the young grandmaster and coming man, Robin van Kampen, with a double clearance.

In a position from the Queen’s Gambit, White is controlling the open g-file. The h7-pawn is missing, which makes the black king less safe than ‘normal’. The white bishop on g6 seems to have lost its way a little, but all the same it fulfills a useful function because it somewhat upsets the coordination between Black’s pieces. Finally, Black is underdeveloped; his queenside pieces still have to be brought into play.

18.\textit{Q}e5!?

White is perfectly willing to give up a pawn to gain supremacy over the long a1-h8 diagonal. After that, his pieces will find gainful employment.

18...\textit{Q}xe5 19.dxe5 \textit{Q}xe5

Ignoring the e-pawn with 19...\textit{Q}h4 also wouldn’t help Black out of the wood. For example: 20.\textit{Q}g3 and White can further strengthen his position at leisure.
20.\textbf{c3 \textit{e4} 21.\textit{d2}}

Of course, Van Wely keeps the queens on. With this vicious little queen move he also intends a razor-sharp combination, which he will soon conjure up on the board.

21...\textbf{d7} 22.\textbf{f4 \textit{e8}}

23.f3!

Very well spotted. With a double pawn sacrifice White now breaks through the enemy lines.

23...\textbf{xf3}
23...\(\text{\textit{Q}}e7\) is met by a second clearance move: 24.e4!, threatening to plant the \(\text{\textit{Q}}f4\) somewhere.

**24.e4!**

Thus, White clears the c1-h6 diagonal, introducing the killing move \(\text{\textit{Q}}xh6\) in the position. At the same time, the black queen gets into trouble.

**24...d4**

After a move like 24...fxe4 Black would have to give up his queen: 25.\(\text{\textit{R}}d1\) (not the original idea 25.\(\text{\textit{Q}}e6\) in view of 25...e3) 25...e3 26.\(\text{\textit{Q}}d3\), winning.

**25.\(\text{\textit{B}}xd4\) \(\text{\textit{R}}d8\)**

25...\(\text{\textit{Q}}xe4\) is met by 26.\(\text{\textit{R}}de1\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}f3\) 27.\(\text{\textit{N}}h5\)! and the threats are lethal: 27...f4 28.\(\text{\textit{Q}}xg7\) \(\text{\textit{R}}xg7\) 29.\(\text{\textit{Q}}xg7+\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}xg7\) 30.\(\text{\textit{Q}}d4+\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}g8\) 31.\(\text{\textit{Q}}f7+\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}xf7\) 32.\(\text{\textit{Q}}g7\#\).

![Chess Diagram]

**26.\(\text{\textit{Q}}e6!\)**

With this clearance move White puts an end to all resistance.

After 26...\(\text{\textit{R}}d4\) (26...\(\text{\textit{Q}}xe6??\) obviously fails to 27.\(\text{\textit{Q}}xh6\#\)) 27.\(\text{\textit{Q}}xd4\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}xe4\) 28.\(\text{\textit{R}}de1\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}d5\) 29.\(\text{\textit{Q}}xe8\) Black will be a rook down.

**Making use of a pin**

When I joined the local chess club as a young whippersnapper, chess life was rather different from that in these modern times. People played in the backroom of a café, which was actually not such a good place for a 14-year-old lad, who had to stay there until late in the evening, in rooms with subdued light and smoking cigars and cigarettes — in those days you could still smoke everywhere. My father, an ardent chess player himself, took me there, and came to collect me at the end of the evening. At first, my mother wasn’t so happy with this routine, if only because she would have to put my
clothes in the washing machine right away, because of the smell of smoke and sweat...

In that same little back room, I – as an ambitious little player – got hardened to certain things, which stood me in good stead in later years, in the international chess arena. I remember, as if it was yesterday, that in that same little room I played a game with white against a strapping fellow, almost 7 feet tall, who had fearsome big round eyes. He was one of the ace players of our club, and he would lay down an entire collection of cigars and pipes beside the board. Just before he made a move, he would blow a big cloud of smoke over the board, as if he wanted to add power to his ideas. I will never forget how, out of the dark, a bishop that I hadn’t seen before suddenly appeared to capture my queen on f2. I really thought that bishop had been on b8...

In the same club there was another ace player, who had been the club champion many times. This friendly and highly amiable gentleman – who wore a big black beard – didn’t smoke, fortunately, but he did have the habit of starting a bit of a chat during the game. That wasn’t so unusual in those days, but sometimes he had an ulterior motive. For example, this gentleman, who was called Van Gelder, had a certain tactical trick in his arsenal which regularly brought him success. Unfortunately I have not been able to trace back any of his games, but in the following reconstruction I can show you the essence of what was reputed to be the ‘Van Gelder trick’ at our club, with which he used to get the laugh on his side.

The Van Gelder trick – Example

```
1. Bc2
```

White to move

In this type of position, Mr Van Gelder, being White, would play

```
1. Bc2
```

with the obvious threat of 2. Bxf6 and mate on h7. There are not many club players who fall for such childish tricks.

```
1...g6
```

Black parries the threat, after which Mr Van Gelder would casually play the bishop back to the square where it just came from. At the same time he shook his head, also looking to his left, giving his opponent the idea that he is thinking:
‘I’m not playing well, my threats are easily warded off. And oh, now I’m blundering my b4-pawn too...’ Sometimes he combined this with a friendly conversation with his opponent, even offering him a drink.

2.\texttt{b3}

Sneakily, White has pinned the f7-pawn, and with that the protection of g6 is gone. But it’s quite hard to keep this in mind when all these psychological factors are playing a role.

2...\texttt{axb4}??

And yes – how many players have already been fooled this way?

Of course, after 2...\texttt{Kg7} there is not a lot going on, although White is still better after a manoeuvre like 3.\texttt{Cc2} (threatening 4.\texttt{De6+}) 3...\texttt{e8} 4.\texttt{b2}.

Now there follows the triumphant

3.\texttt{Xg6+}!

... with a muted thump. The black player wouldn’t know what hit him! The game is immediately over. A possible continuation is:

3...\texttt{h8} 4.\texttt{Xh6+ g8} 5.\texttt{xf6 xf6} 6.\texttt{c2 e8}

And here we also get to see a nice mechanism (which falls under the category of ABC’s, further on in this book) with which White concludes this attack on the king.

7.\texttt{h7+ h8} 8.\texttt{g6+ g8} 9.\texttt{h7+ f8} 10.\texttt{xf7#}

Although I probably also fell for this trick once or twice, I think back with great pleasure on those times, when you could play a game of chess in a relaxed atmosphere. Smartphones, detection gates, etc., weren’t yet the order of the day.

We have now touched upon a theme which causes trouble to a lot of club players: the pin.

And not only club players. What are we to think of the next fragment, where two world top-class players each made a
Laszlo Szabo
Samuel Reshevsky
Zurich ct 1953 (18)

White to move

In this position, both strong grandmasters suffered from terrible chess blindness.

White stands very well, and he plays one of his trump cards:

1. Ng6+ fxg6??

A terrible blunder.
The only move is 1...Kh8, when, of course, White’s position is also excellent after 2.Qe4 (2.Bxd1 Qe7). But here he would still have quite a lot to prove.

2. Bxf6??
The white player doesn’t notice...
With 2.Qxg6+ he could have made optimal use of the pinned pawn on f7. It’s mate in two! 2...Kh8 3.Bxf6#.

2...Kh7
And later the game was even drawn. A poor show by both these gentlemen.

Interference

Now and then we have conferred with other trainers about ways a chess player can incorporate knowledge into his ‘system’. Gradually we came to realize that knowledge in itself is not sufficient here. It also needs to be put into use,
and for this, application skills are needed. An entire separate book could be written on this subject.

Once I gave lessons to a group of strong chess players. During one of the sessions I offered them a combinational motif that appeared to be rare. In competitive chess, but also in the world of endgame compositions, the generic term for this motif is ‘interference’. Endgame study composers even distinguish between various forms of interference. In their circles, ‘Novotny’, ‘Grimshaw’ and ‘Plachutta’ are common terms. With the first two of these, a piece is put on the intersection of a diagonal and a file (or rank). With a Novotny this is accompanied by a sacrifice, with a Grimshaw this doesn’t have to be the case. With a Plachutta, a piece is placed on the intersection of two diagonals.

The chess students took note of the characteristics of this type of combination, and I gave them some exercise material on the theme. And yes, the gremlins had been busy again – suddenly, in the next six months various players who had attended this training session, got the motif on the board! Such a thing can certainly not be regarded as a coincidence. If a certain motif is presented with good instruction and with the necessary exercise material, and people practice it further, then it simply has to happen that the motif will appear on the board in their games. We can see that this holds true even for apparently rare themes. By coincidence, I found out that in my own games I had also had the motif on the board before, but sometimes I had missed the chance to apply it! This is an important argument for practicing with as many types of combination as possible, but, even more so: a teacher has to hand these themes down systematically and in the right form.

In a weekend tournament in the Dutch town of Helmond, the following position appeared on the board in a game between two average club players.

![Chessboard](image)

**Paul van Asseldonk**

**Twan Kastelijn**

*Helmond 2007*

*White to move*

In this coffee-house game, the white king has taken a flight up the board. Curiously, material is still equal, but Black can win in different ways here. And yet, at first sight it looks as though there is no clear-cut decision for him.

If we combine Black’s two threats (...\texttt{g2+} and ...\texttt{h6+}), then we can conclude that there are two defenders,
respectively: the $\text{B}d5$ and the $\text{Q}d1$. They both have to prevent the opponent’s threats along the d5-g2 and d1-h5 diagonals. The threat 1...$\text{Q}h6+$ is averted by 2.$\text{Q}h5$,
and the intended mate by 1...$\text{Q}g2+$ fails for the moment due to 2.$\text{B}xg2$.

And now we get a brainwave! It’s almost like mathematics. The intersection of these diagonals is the square f3. And now that we know this, can we disrupt the range of one of the two white pieces by putting a piece on that square? The way they do it in the world of endgame studies? And yes, the black player had a bright moment here, and played the spectacular

1...$\text{R}f3$!!

Since the $\text{N}e1$ also – not entirely coincidentally – gives extra protection to the f3-square, White is now robbed of all his potential defences. A pure Plachutta, on the intersection of two diagonals. There followed:

2.$\text{B}xf3$

And now that the queen cannot move to h5, Black deflects the bishop from square g2.

After 2.$\text{Q}xf3$ Black can win the queen, but much better is, of course, 2...$\text{Q}g2+$! 3.$\text{Q}xg2$ $\text{Q}h6$#.

2...$\text{Q}h6+$ 3.$\text{B}h5$ $\text{Q}g2$#

A wonderful episode!

As I mentioned above, in my career I have missed several chances to win games with this very charming theme. Fortunately I managed to use it at least once in an important game.

Herman Grooten
Jan Voormans
Eindhoven ch-NED 1982 (7)
White has aimed two bishops at the enemy king, and his queen and knight are also involved in the attack. You would say that Black won’t be able to survive this for long. But in the meantime, both the white queen and the \( f1 \) are hanging. White will have to bite the bullet.

21. \( \text{Ng4!} \)

The correct continuation, which also introduces a beautiful, though very well-known, mate motif in the position.

Some of the people to whom I presented this position thought that White could win by sacrifices on \( g6 \). But they were disappointed! 21. \( \text{Nxg6? fxg6 22. Bxg6} \) and now, of course, Black is not obliged to accept the second sacrifice. He replies quite level-headedly with 22... \( \text{f6} \), organizing his forces, while White is going to lose even more material.

The knight sacrifice on \( f7 \), 21. \( \text{Nxf7 Rxf7} \) (not 21... \( \text{Kxf7} \) 22. \( \text{Qxh7+ Kf8} \) 23. \( \text{Qxg6+ Ke7} \) 24. \( \text{Qe5} \), winning) 22. \( \text{Nxf6} \), offers better prospects, but Black stays afloat with 22... \( \text{f6} \) and now the best chance is 23. \( d6! \) (not 23. \( \text{Nxf7}+ \text{Kxf7} \) 24. \( \text{Bxf6} \) \( \text{Bxf6} \) \( \text{Rxf6} \) and Black is doing fine) 23... \( \text{hxg6} \) 24. \( \text{Bxg6} \) \( \text{Bxf6} \). Then White can win with 25. \( \text{Qh7+ Kh8} \) 26. \( \text{Qxg6#} \).

Acceptance of the sacrifice leads to mate: 22... \( \text{hxg6} \) 23. \( \text{Qxg6+ Kh8} \) 24. \( \text{Qf3} \).

23. \( \text{h6+!} \)

I remember that here I was pondering for a long time how I could keep my attacking position intact, as Black was also ready to play ... \( \text{hxg6} \) and ... \( \text{g7} \).

Of course my eye also fell on 23. \( \text{d6!} \) \( \text{g7} \) (not 23... \( \text{hxg6?} \) in view of 24. \( \text{d5+ f7} \) 25. \( \text{h6+} \); 23... \( \text{b7} \) also fails to 24. \( \text{h6+} \) \( \text{h8} \) 25. \( \text{f5} \) – the same concept as in the game, as we will soon see) 24. \( \text{c2} \) \( \text{xf1} \) 25. \( \text{xf1} \) and because of the ‘hole’ that White has created on \( g6 \), Black cannot do anything against the simple manoeuvre \( \text{f1-f3-g3} \).

23... \( \text{h8} \) 24. \( \text{f5} \)
This is the position that White had envisaged. The knight covers two important squares on the seventh rank (and therefore Black doesn’t have the consolidating move ...\texttt{Qg7}). Moreover, White has woven a thematic combination into the position.

24...\texttt{Bxf1} 25.\texttt{d6!}

This is it. White creates a strong point on e7.

25...\texttt{Qb7} 26.\texttt{xf1}

You have to stay alert! Suddenly, Black was also threatening mate: ...\texttt{Qxg2}. After the text move, there is nothing left to be done against the interference motif with 27.\texttt{Ne7!}, when the mate on h7 can no longer be parried.

26...\texttt{Rg8}
27. \( \text{Ne7!} \)

Here, finally, I was able to exploit the interference square e7. One more merit of this combination is that the d8-f6 diagonal is obstructed as well, as a result of which the bishop on b2 now suddenly joins the attack. And this is quite important, as becomes clear in the game.

27...\( \text{Rxg6} \)

This way Black tries to save himself.

28. \( \text{Nxg6+!} \)

After this pretty final move Black conceded defeat. By the way, 28. \( \text{Nxg6}+ \) would also win for White after 28...\( \text{Kg7} \) 29. \( \text{Nh4} \).
Black is indeed mated after 28...\texttt{Rxf6} 29.\texttt{Qe8+ Kh7} 30.\texttt{Qg8+ Kh6} 31.\texttt{Qg5#}.

**More complex combinations**

‘Chess is a simple game’, was a statement by ex-World Champion Vassily Smyslov. With this, he meant above all that you shouldn’t make things too complicated for yourself, otherwise there is the very real danger you will lose track of the whole situation.

That our noble game is not so simple as Smyslov would have us believe, is something we all know; if only because we all have had to learn this by bitter experience. Nevertheless, it will be nice to focus on more complicated combinations now. We are pleased to be able to offer you a guideline to start such a complex thought process, and create some structure into a complex tree of variations.

For successful attacks on the king, as we will show below, it is useful to check out the following guidelines:

- Search for a weak point in the enemy position
- Direct your own pieces towards that weak point
- Deflect defenders, or eliminate them
- Bring up (more) pieces for the attack
- Don’t neglect your own defences.
White to move

This is a sharp position, where both players appear to have an attack against the enemy king. As regards pawn structure, Black is better: he possesses a passed pawn, while White’s queenside majority is restrained by the pawn on b4. Moreover, the white knight is standing offside. White, on the other hand, boasts a strong artillery: his rooks are extremely active. By means of

26. \textit{R}cxf6!

White could have weakened the black king’s position. I suspect the white player must surely have looked at this logical sacrifice. But probably he couldn’t figure out what use it would be to him.


Worthy of consideration was 26. \textit{D}b2, but after 26...\textit{D}d2 27. \textit{D}c8+ \textit{D}xc8 28. \textit{D}xc8+ \textit{D}e8 there is also no problem for Black.

26. \textit{D}cxf6! \textit{gx}f6 27. \textit{D}c6!

The first point. White attacks one of the enemy’s unprotected pieces, at the same time aiming the queen at f6, which is the other defect in Black’s position. In fact, White can now put the queen in front of the rook with gain of tempo, and this provides him with some extra attacking power. It is also essential that White combines attack with defence. For this purpose, he needs to maintain the control of the f-file by his major pieces.

One might think that 27. \textit{D}g4+ was the intention of the white combination. However, after 27...\textit{D}h8 28. \textit{D}h6 Black escapes to a draw by perpetual check: 28...\textit{D}xg2+ 29. \textit{D}xg2 \textit{D}e2+ 30. \textit{D}g1 \textit{D}e1+ 31. \textit{D}g2 \textit{D}e2+, etc. In this variation, we see what happens if White stakes all his money on the attack, and neglects his defence.

27...\textit{D}ae8
The only plausible move, but this also loses if White keeps playing accurately. 27...\texttt{Qa6}, in order to protect the \texttt{Ra8} and the f6-pawn at the same time, fails to 28.\texttt{Nb6! Ra8}, as after 29.\texttt{Qg4+ Kg8} 30.\texttt{Qd6+ Kg7} 31.\texttt{Qf7+ Kg6} 32.\texttt{Qh8#} Black is skillfully mated.

The problem with 27...\texttt{Rf8} is that the king no longer has an escape square after 28.\texttt{Qg4+}. In that case he will have to give up his queen with 28...\texttt{Qg6}.

\textbf{28.\texttt{Qxf6}}

The second point. White does not so much attack the weak point f7, but principally introduces the threat of 29.\texttt{Qe4+}. The merit of this move, again, is that Black cannot develop any counterplay with sacrifices on g2, since White always has something on the f-file that can be interposed.

\textbf{28...\texttt{Qg6}}

More or less the only move in order not to be mated right away, but it means that he will have to give up his queen for the rook.

If Black wants to defend with 28...\texttt{h5}, then there follows 29.\texttt{Qxf7+ Kg8} 30.\texttt{Qf5}, and also here he has to give up a lot of material in order to avoid being mated.

The attempt to bring a rook into the defence by 28...\texttt{Rc6} fails to 29.\texttt{Qxf7+ Kh8} and now 30.\texttt{Qg4}, and here we see that Black cannot protect the weak g7-square without suffering heavy material losses.

\textbf{29.\texttt{Qg4}}

White still has to reckon with a doubling of the black rooks on the second rank. Because his knight is still offside, this might still make the win difficult for him. However, after

29...\texttt{Rc8}
30.\text{\textit{f5}}!

is terribly strong. This is another one of those niceties, after which the technical phase is no longer difficult.

30...\text{\textit{ec2}} 31.\text{\textit{xe6+ hxg6}} 32.\text{\textit{xe6}}

Now the danger has also been warded off, and with his extra material White won’t have any trouble cashing in the point.
In the following game, one of my ex-pupils, grandmaster Jan Werle, won the brilliancy prize with an original execution of a kingside attack.

Jan Werle
Peter Wells
London 2008 (7)
White to move

When we orientate ourselves in this position, we are immediately struck by the slightly insecure position of the black king. Black’s pawn structure contains an ugly weakness. But for the moment, Black has managed to call up a few defenders to parry the primary threats.

In this position, obviously White wants to try and worry the black king. Closer inspection teaches us that the moves that first catch the eye do not offer White what he wants. Werle comes up with an outright surprise.

23.e5!?

The purpose of this pawn sacrifice is to create unrest in the black camp. He hopes to upset the coordination between the black pieces.

The second move that logically has to be taken into account, is, of course, 23...\texttt{Bx}e6, but it turns out that after 23...\texttt{Dc}5 24.\texttt{Df}5 \texttt{Dxe}4 Black regains the pawn on e4, after which there is not much left for him to worry about: 25.\texttt{Dxe}4 \texttt{Dxe}4.

The first checkmating attempt with 23.\texttt{Qh}6?? obviously fails to 23...\texttt{Rxf}7.

Retreating the bishop with 23.\texttt{Bh}5 is of course unattractive, especially after 23...\texttt{Bxe}4, with a large advantage to Black.

23.e5!? \texttt{Dxe}5!?

A perfectly logical reply, but perhaps the white player had been hoping for this. With this recapture, Black definitively gets himself into trouble. The knight had to be used for defence via c5 and e4, though this was devilishly hard to see.

With hindsight, 23...\texttt{Bxe}5 was the only move for Black to keep his head above water. Of course, White can still try a trick or two here. For example: 24.\texttt{Dg}6!! (also here, after 24.\texttt{Dxe}6 \texttt{Dc}5 25.\texttt{Df}5 \texttt{Dc}4 is sufficient for equality) 24...\texttt{Dxe}4! (not 24...\texttt{Dg}8? on account of 25.\texttt{Dh}6 \texttt{Df}8 (25...\texttt{Dg}7 26.\texttt{Df}5) and everything looks to be in order for Black, however... 26.\texttt{Df}7! and White emerges victorious, mainly because 26...\texttt{Bxe}3 fails to 27.\texttt{Bxf}8+ \texttt{Dg}8 28.\texttt{Dxg}8#) and Black holds.

He still has to find an answer to 25.\texttt{Dxe}4 \texttt{Dxe}4 26.\texttt{Dxe}3 \texttt{Dxd}4 27.\texttt{Dxe}6, as both his rook and knight are hanging. But as it turns out, there is something: 27...\texttt{Dh}1+ 28.\texttt{Df}2 \texttt{Dh}5+ 29.\texttt{f}3 (29.\texttt{Df}1 \texttt{Dc}8 30.\texttt{Dg}1 \texttt{Dc}5) 29...\texttt{Df}5+ (29...\texttt{Dg}8 30.\texttt{Dxd}7 \texttt{Dxe}2+ 31.\texttt{Dd}1 \texttt{Dg}1+ 32.\texttt{Dc}2 (32.\texttt{Df}1) 32...\texttt{Df}5+ 33.\texttt{Dd}3) – thus Black has protected the knight with tempo, so that after 30.\texttt{Df}2 he can bring his rook to safety, with an unclear position.
If 23...fxe5, 24.\textit{\textbf{Q}}g5 with inevitable mate.

\textbf{24.\textit{\textbf{Q}}xe6}

As said, now that the black knight is on e5, he does not have the simplifying manoeuvre ...\textit{\textbf{N}}d7-c5-e4 at his disposal. Now White can pursue the attack to his heart’s content.

\textbf{24...f5?}

This loses instantly – but in a beautiful way.

24...\textit{\textbf{Q}}e7 also wouldn’t save Black after 25.\textit{\textbf{Q}}h6 \textit{\textbf{Q}}e4 26.\textit{\textbf{Q}}f5 \textit{\textbf{Q}}xf5 27.\textit{\textbf{Q}}xf5 and the black king is too insecure.

He could also try 24...\textit{\textbf{Q}}f7, in order to keep the queen from h6, but then White has a beautiful trick with which he can maintain his advantage: 25.\textit{\textbf{R}}g7!.

Also logical is 24...\textit{\textbf{N}}f7, but here too, White gets a good position after 25.\textit{\textbf{Q}}h6 \textit{\textbf{Q}}e7 26.\textit{\textbf{Q}}f5 \textit{\textbf{Q}}xf5 27.\textit{\textbf{Q}}xf5, and we have the same position as in the above-mentioned variation.

\textbf{25.\textit{\textbf{R}}g7!}

A brilliant move, which must have come like a bolt from the blue! Curiously enough, it is also the only move that quickly brings White the full point.

With 25.\textit{\textbf{Q}}h6 there was nothing to be gained: 25...\textit{\textbf{Q}}g4!.

The alternative 25.\textit{\textbf{Q}}g5?! is even better for Black after 25...\textit{\textbf{Q}}g4!.

25.\textit{\textbf{Q}}f4 does give White chances, although Black can still escape to an endgame with 25...\textit{\textbf{Q}}f7: 26.\textit{\textbf{Q}}xd6 \textit{\textbf{Q}}xd6, and after 27.\textit{\textbf{R}}c3 this is also bad for Black, but White still has something to prove here.

\textbf{25...\textit{\textbf{Q}}e4}

After this there is a forced mate.

Of course, 25...\textit{\textbf{Q}}xg7 fails to 26.\textit{\textbf{Q}}xf5+ \textit{\textbf{Q}}xf5 27.\textit{\textbf{Q}}xd6, winning.
26.\textit{h6} f4 27.\textit{f6}!

Black resigned.

\textit{(The comments are based on annotations by Jan Werle)}

**Conclusions**

In the attack, it is good to pay attention to:
- special mate patterns
- breaking open the king’s position
- bringing up pieces for the attack

We have various weapons to achieve this:
- eliminating the defender
- magnet attack
- double check
- clearance
- pinning
- interference

1.5 Set of exercises

In order to train your ability to think ahead, practice is important. With the following examples, our advice is to set up the positions on the board, and then try to find the solutions without touching the pieces. This way, you will also test your ability to visualize positions that arise after a number of moves. The subject matter of this chapter, the magnet attack, is eminently suitable for practicing this skill.
How can Black turn his active position into a winning one?

Show/Hide the Solution

**Oscar Panno**

**Nahuel Hollemaert Diaz**

Buenos Aires 1990 (4)

Black converts his active position into a win by

1...\text{Qxg3}+!

With this queen sacrifice the white king is drawn out as if by a magnet, after which it falls prey to the black pieces.

2.\text{hxg3}

2.\text{g1 e5} and White can no longer defend himself against the threatened mate on h2.

2.\text{h1} also loses – to 2...\text{f2}! (strongest) 3.\text{xf2} (the senseless 3.\text{g1} doesn’t prevent the mate either: 3...\text{h4+} 4.\text{h3 xh3#}) 3...\text{xf2} and Black has secured decisive material gain.

The text move runs into an artful mate:

2...\text{e5#}

With which magnet attack can White besiege the black king? Try to come up with a plausible sequence of moves.

Show/Hide the Solution

**Zhaoqin Peng**

**Ekaterini Pavlidou**
The first move is

37.\textit{b}h6+!

Indeed, a beautiful magnet attack. Either the king is dragged forward, or it will get in trouble in another way.

37...\textit{h}8

After this Black does not get mated immediately, but White does have a beautiful attacking move in store. Moving forward with 37...\textit{xh}6 leads to mate: 38.\textit{f}5+ \textit{g}5 (38...\textit{h}5 39.\textit{g}4+ \textit{g}5 40.\textit{d}2#) 39.\textit{d}2+ \textit{h}5 40.\textit{g}4#.

38.\textit{xg}6!

This possibility had to have been included in the calculations.

38...\textit{g}8

The only move to avoid an immediate slaughter. A beautiful mate picture arises after 38...\textit{xg}6 39.\textit{xg}6#.

39.\textit{d}6

Peng prefers to keep the rooks on the board. She has ‘eaten her way through the black position’, as it were. Also strong is 39.\textit{xg}8+ \textit{g}8 40.\textit{f}5, followed by a manoeuvre with the \textit{d} so as to get to the enemy king. If Black wants to prevent the move \textit{d}2, she has to play 40...\textit{d}7, but then White has the elegant manoeuvre 41.\textit{a}1! \textit{e}8 42.\textit{a}7, and it’s almost time for Black to capitulate.

39...\textit{a}6

The knight makes an attempt to join the play.

40.\textit{b}2 \textit{e}8

40...\textit{xc}5 41.\textit{xe}5+ \textit{f}6 42.\textit{xc}5.

41.\textit{f}5 \textit{xc}5 42.\textit{g}7+ \textit{g}8 43.\textit{xe}5 \textit{f}6 44.\textit{xf}6 \textit{f}8 45.\textit{d}2 \textit{fe}6 46.\textit{e}3

46.\textit{h}6 \textit{h}7 47.\textit{e}7+ \textit{xe}7.

46...\textit{d}8 47.\textit{xd}8+ \textit{xd}8 48.\textit{h}6

Obviously Peng shows no mercy now.

48...\textit{g}5 49.\textit{h}8+ \textit{f}7 50.\textit{f}4

Talk about attractive mate pictures – here is another nice one: 50.\textit{h}7+ \textit{e}8 51.\textit{d}6+ \textit{d}8 52.\textit{a}5+ with mate on the next move: 52...\textit{c}7 53.\textit{xc}7#.

50...\textit{g}6 51.\textit{h}2 \textit{f}8 52.\textit{f}3 1-0
Black’s kingside pieces are rather offside while White has stationed quite a few of his pieces on the other side of the board. There has to be a decisive blow here. It may be a problem to find this in a practical game, and also calculate it from beginning to end. Now calculate the consequences of 1.\textit{Q}xb6+.

\textbf{Show/Hide the Solution}

1.\textit{Q}xb6+!!

A magnificent queen sacrifice, leading to several exceptionally picturesque checkmates.

1...\textit{Q}xb6 2.\textit{R}b3+ \textit{K}c5

Forward flight represents the most tenacious defence. It is instructive to observe how the king is driven into a mating net after 2...\textit{K}c7 3.d6+ \textit{Q}xd6 (3...\textit{Q}c8 4.\textit{R}a8# is quicker) 4.\textit{R}a7+ \textit{K}c8 5.\textit{N}xd6#. Beautiful cooperation!

3.\textit{R}a5+

The further the black king is chased forward, the more it finds itself in the crossfire of the white pieces.

3...\textit{Q}c4
But here it looks as if the machine stalls. White has a perpetual check with $Ra4+$ and back, but is there anything more in it for him? When calculating such a combination, a player first needs to have a clear picture of this position in his mind’s eye, as otherwise it will be downright impossible to conceive of the following brilliant move.

4.$b4+!!$

Now be honest: did you see that one coming? This is indeed the only way to force mate.

How can we find such moves? Please remember the forcing weapons we have in chess:

1) Check
2) Capture (sacrifice)
3) Mate threat.

If we consider that we would like to involve the $Bc1$ in the attack, and preferably with gain of tempo, this may induce us to consider this move. Other checks yield nothing. On the contrary – they all lose, with one exception:

A) 4.$d6+ \text{Q}xd6$ 5.$c3+ \text{K}d4$ and the king escapes;

B) As stated, 4.$a4+$ leads to a repetition of moves: 4...$c5$ 5.$a5+ c4$ 6.$a4+$;

C) There is no time for a quiet move like 4.$ba3$, as Black replies with 4...$c5$ and the king gets away.

4...$xb4$ 5.$d2+ c4$

Black can postpone the mate with 5...$c3$, but after 6.$xc3+$ $c4$ 7.$d6#$ the white pieces display fabulous cooperation.
6.b3#

A wonderful mate – all the white pieces and pawns are working together fantastically.

How can the black king be lured to unsafe territory?

Show/Hide the Solution

White starts a round-up with
1. $\text{Qh6+!!} \text{ xh6}$

If 1...$\text{Kh7}$, His Majesty is also mated by 2.$\text{Qf8+ Kh6} 3.\text{Qd6+ Kh5} 4.\text{Qd6#}$ or 3...$\text{Kh5} 4.\text{Qf6#}$.

2. $\text{Qf8+ Kh5} 3.\text{g4+}$

White has to keep giving checks, otherwise Black will have time to bring up defenders.

3...$\text{Kh4} 4.\text{Qe7+ Kh3} 5.\text{Qf2+}$

This move had to be seen in advance, just like the final move:

5...$\text{Kh2} 6.\text{Qd6#}$

Another wonderful checkmate pattern with $\text{f}+$.$\text{Nh}$.
Chapter 2
Cooperation between the pieces

2.1 Introduction

Cooperation between the pieces is extremely important. It is not so easy to indicate what exactly is meant by such cooperation between the pieces in chess literature. We can imagine a few things, though. There are different forms of cooperation, which will be discussed further on in this chapter.

We will single out two elementary phenomena:

Cooperation against one point

We only need to think of the ‘banal’ Scholar’s Mate in order to see that it can be important to be able to attack a weak point with two different pieces. If the opponent neglects its protection, the pieces, working together, will be able to achieve a certain result.

Here are two other, not too difficult examples:

White to move

1. \( \text{Qxg7#} \)
Black to move

Here the black queen, bishop and knight cooperate against the weak point c2.

1...\textit{Q}xc2+ 2.\textit{K}a1

And without the knight there wouldn’t be much for White to worry about, but now there is!

2...\textit{Q}b1+! 3.\textit{R}xb1 \textit{N}c2#

Smothered mate!

Control of squares

\textit{White gives mate in two (Grooten)}
White to move

Surprisingly, White can give mate in two:

1.\texttt{Nd4}!

Black is in zugzwang now:

1...\texttt{Nf5} 2.\texttt{Ne6#}

When I saw this position for the first time, I had to blink an eye because I couldn’t believe that the black king was mated! Together with the white king, the two knights control no less than six squares, and that is enough for this mate pattern.

\textit{White gives mate in two (Grooten)}
White to move

This position could have been taken from the ‘Polgar book’, but I have invented it myself, inspired by a mate pattern that I came across in one of Judit Polgar’s own games. More about that later!

1. \texttt{Qg8+!}

The only move that leads to the desired goal. Curiously, the enemy king is chased towards the centre, where it will have more squares at its disposal. But all the same it will be ‘victimized’ there.

Many (strong) players start with a quiet move like 1.\texttt{Qe7}, but then there is absolutely no mate on the next move after, for example, 1...\texttt{Kf5}.

1. \texttt{Qg8+! }\texttt{Kf5}

1...\texttt{Kh5} 2.\texttt{Qg4#}.

2. \texttt{Qg4#}
A highly picturesque mate, where the control of squares by the queen in collaboration with the knight is striking. The queen takes care of the lines (files, diagonals and ranks), while the knight deprives the black king of the ‘complementary squares’ (in this case, e5 and f6). We will encounter this mate pattern more often!

It’s time to look at a few examples from competitive practice.

If three white pieces, i.e. a rook, a bishop and a knight, can freely act against an unprotected black king, then in most cases a win is possible. Especially if there are a few black pawns standing in the way, the slaughter will not take long:

Igor Blekhtsin
Sauli Tiitta
Jyväskylä 2000 (5)
White to move

The three white pieces cooperate fabulously, starting with

**33.\( \textit{\&xe6} + \textit{\&h8} \)**

33...\( \textit{\&g7} \) is met by 34.\( \textit{\&f7} + \textit{\&h8} \) (moving the king ‘into’ a discovered check is mostly not a good idea: 34...\( \textit{\&g8} \). White can win a rook now, but obviously he goes for the mate. It is again attractive to see how the pieces manage to weave a mating net together: 35.\( \textit{\&e7} + \textit{\&f8} \) or 35...\( \textit{\&h8} \) 36.\( \textit{\&g6#} \) 35.\( \textit{\&g6} + \textit{\&g8} \) 36.\( \textit{\&xb7#} \) and again we get this typical mate picture on the board.

**34.\( \textit{\&f8} + \textit{\&g7} \)**

34...\( \textit{\&h7} \) 35.\( \textit{\&f7} + \textit{\&g8} \) (as well as 35...\( \textit{\&h8} \) 36.\( \textit{\&g6} + \textit{\&g8} \) 37.\( \textit{\&xb7#} \)) 36.\( \textit{\&e7+} \) also leads to mate.

**35.\( \textit{\&f7} + \textit{\&g8} \)**

The collaboration of the pieces works in the same way after 35...\( \textit{\&h8} \) 36.\( \textit{\&g6} + \textit{\&g8} \) 37.\( \textit{\&xb7#} \).

**36.\( \textit{\&e7+} \)**

The rook has to go to this square, if White wants to give mate right away.

**36...\( \textit{\&f8} \)**

36...\( \textit{\&h8} \) 37.\( \textit{\&g6#} \).

**37.\( \textit{\&g6#} \)**

Also here we saw a brotherly cooperation between the three white pieces.

I once had a game in which I already got a winning position soon after the opening. In his enthusiasm, my opponent had put some material on offer, and I had thankfully accepted. The most important concession was that my king had to stay in the middle of the board, but soon his compensation disappeared like snow in summer. In fact, in a higher sense the game was over when my opponent also hurled a queen at me. I accepted that sacrifice, too, and then wanted to finish off quickly, until, at the last moment, I saw the motif that he had woven into the position.

I haven’t been able to trace the game itself, and I haven’t managed to completely reconstruct it. Therefore I constructed the following position, in which the gist of the trick becomes visible.

**Mate combination (Grooten)**
White to move

White, to move, had envisaged some magnificent teamwork between three of his pieces, which he had manoeuvred into attacking positions. This teamwork develops as follows:

1. R\textsuperscript{d}7+

This is possible thanks to the pin on the N\textsuperscript{f}6 by the B\textsuperscript{g}5.

1... K\textsuperscript{f}8!

Fortunately, I took heart at the last moment, and managed to avert the calamity that I had almost brought down on my own head.

The king has to move into the check by the rook. I had almost played 1... K\textsuperscript{e}8?? here, and then White would have been able to close a perfect mating net with 2. B\textsuperscript{xf}7+! K\textsuperscript{f}8 3. N\textsuperscript{e}6# !

2. R\textsuperscript{xf}7+ K\textsuperscript{e}8

And now all the compensation is gone. Black is winning, for example after

3. B\textsuperscript{f}1 B\textsuperscript{f}8 4. B\textsuperscript{b}7 D\textsuperscript{d}5

and it’s all over.

Sometimes the value of the cooperation between pieces is so difficult to assess that even the strongest players lose track. In the fragment below, from a game between two former World Champions, it turned out that there were so many beautiful things hidden beneath the surface that we may count ourselves fortunate that the winner of this game divulged his findings to the wonderful New In Chess magazine. During the game, the white player did manage to find a win, but when he turned on the computer later, he saw that he had missed an exquisite combination.

What makes this combination so special is that White, although he is no less than a rook down, allows the exchange of queens, after which he drives the black king into a mating net with a quiet move. The splendid cooperation between the
Rustam Kasimdzhanov
Vladimir Kramnik
Tromsø ol 2014 (6)

white pieces is something we cannot withhold from future generations!

26. \texttt{\texttt{B\texttt{d7}}}

Kasimdzhanov gives an exclamation mark to this move in \textit{New In Chess} magazine, adding the following comment: ‘This is very strong and very clean, and I was rightly proud of it after the game. White did, however, have a win of preternatural beauty:’

Here the engine comes up with a formidable move: 26.\texttt{xf7}!! Kasimdzhanov: ‘I was not (yet) looking in this direction!’

26...\texttt{xf7} (quite worthless is 26...\texttt{xf7} in view of 27.\texttt{\texttt{d7+ g8}} 28.\texttt{xe8 xe8} and, aside from the fact that White is already material up, his pieces will also be able to join the attack soon. Just an example: 29.b3 \texttt{\texttt{e5}} 30.\texttt{e7 ab8} 31.\texttt{g3 g6} 32.\texttt{f4}, winning) 27.\texttt{\texttt{xh7+ f8}}
At first sight, White is simply a rook down now. But here he has a strong move: 28.\(\text{Qd4}\)! A difficult move to consider far in advance. The main threat is, of course, 29.\(\text{Rf1}\), after which the white pieces are positioned more effectively against the slightly exposed black king. 28...\(\text{Ke8}\) 29.\(\text{Rf1}\) \(\text{Qe7}\) Other queen moves, like 29...\(\text{Qe6}\), fail to 30.\(\text{Qxg7}\) \(\text{Qxe3+}\) 31.\(\text{h1}\) \(\text{Qe7}\) and now the wonderful move 32.\(\text{Qg8+!}\): 32...\(\text{Qxf8}\) (after 32...\(\text{Qd7}\) the strongest continuation is 33.\(\text{Qf5+!}\), since now Black not only has to give his queen, but he is also driven into a mating net in an ingenious way by the superbly cooperating white pieces: 33...\(\text{Qd6}\) 34.\(\text{Qf6+}\) \(\text{Qxf6}\) 35.\(\text{Qxf6+}\) \(\text{Qc5}\) 36.\(\text{Qe7+}\) \(\text{Qb6}\) 37.\(\text{Qxa5}\) 38.\(\text{Qb4+}\) \(\text{Qc7}\) 39.\(\text{Qxa5+}\) \(\text{Qd6}\) 40.\(\text{Qb4+}\) \(\text{Qe5}\) 41.\(\text{Qf4+}\) \(\text{Qf6}\) 42.\(\text{Qd6+}\) \(\text{Qxf5}\) 43.\(\text{Qg3+}\) \(\text{Qg4}\) 44.\(\text{h3+}\) \(\text{Qg5}\) 45.\(\text{h4+}\) \(\text{Qg4}\) (45...\(\text{Qh4}\) 46.\(\text{Qf4#}\) 46.\(\text{Qg6+}\) \(\text{Qf4}\) 47.\(\text{Qf5#}\)) 47.\(\text{Qg5#}\) 33.\(\text{Qg6+}\) \(\text{Qd8}\) 34.\(\text{Qxf8+}\) \(\text{Qc7}\) 35.\(\text{Qe7+}\) \(\text{Qb6}\) 36.\(\text{a5+}\) and White wins analogously to the variation given above.

At first sight, Black doesn’t seem to have too many problems here. After all, he has woven the move ...\(\text{Qxe3+}\), forcing the exchange of queens, into the position, after which you would expect the attack to lose momentum. But wonders will never cease...: 30.\(\text{Qg6+}\) \(\text{Qd8}\) 31.\(\text{Qf7!}\) Brilliant! White allows the queen trade, even with a rook less, and even though not all of his pieces appear to be participating in the attack. The white player wrote the quite honest comment: ‘When my computer showed me this, I didn’t believe my eyes for a second!’ 31...\(\text{Qxe3+}\) 32.\(\text{Qxe3}\) \(\text{Qxe3}\)
33. \textit{Q}d4!! The miracle has happened: the three white pieces are collectively creating mate patterns that cannot be parried. The black pieces are so clumsily placed that there is no way he can prevent all the different mates. This is certainly not an everyday game. 33...\textit{Q}e8 33...\textit{Q}e8 34.\textit{R}xg7+ \textit{K}d8 (34...\textit{Q}f8 35.\textit{Q}e6#) 35.\textit{Q}e6+ \textit{Q}c8 36.\textit{Q}c7#; 33...\textit{Q}c4 34.\textit{Q}e6+ \textit{Q}e8 (34...\textit{Q}e8 35.\textit{R}xb7#) 35.\textit{Q}c7#. 34.\textit{Q}c6+ \textit{Q}e8 35.\textit{R}e7+ \textit{Q}f8 36.\textit{Q}e8#

The game continuation was also quite interesting, but we will give it without further comment:

\textbf{26.\textit{Q}d7} \textit{Qf8} 27.\textit{b}3 b6 28.\textit{Q}f5! d4 29.\textit{Q}xf7! \textit{Q}xf7 30.\textit{Q}xh7+

And Black resigned.

\textbf{2.2 Cooperation between \textit{Q} + \textit{B}}

In the first paragraph, we saw how the pieces can cooperate. Attacking a certain point together is important, but the control of squares is essential. That was something Laszlo Polgar understood well when he made up exercises to teach his daughters to play chess. ‘Seeing’ the geometrical operation of the pieces is a skill that is enormously useful if you have to search for patterns in a complicated position. This is why practicing checkmate patterns is a good step towards the accumulation of variations when you are attacking the enemy king. This skill can be trained, and it will help us later when we calculate variations.

We start with a few typical checkmate patterns, after which we will look at a number of standard attacking ideas with \textit{Q} and \textit{B}. After that, we will focus on practical examples. We will conclude this paragraph with several attacking positions with opposite-coloured bishops.

\textbf{Checkmate patterns}

Since in chess it is crucial to put new knowledge into practice immediately, we would like to invite the reader to get to work with a small series of exercises in which checkmate patterns have to be conceptualized. To start with, we have two typical checkmates, which will return several times:
**TASK:** Place a white queen and bishop on the board in such a way that the black king is mated.

**SOLUTION:** A surprising mate picture...

In order to get a good picture of the different types of checkmate with $\text{Q} + \text{B}$, it is a good thing to think them through yourself. Therefore, it is useful to try to find mating motifs yourself on an empty board (with two bare kings).
**TASK**: Place a white queen and bishop on the board in such a way that the black king is mated.

**SOLUTION**: This is the only way to achieve this.

Find the mate with ♕+♗
TASK: Think of three different types of mate with ♕+♕ – mirrored and analogous solutions are regarded as one and the same type.

SOLUTION: Possibility 1.1
SOLUTION: Possibility 1.2

SOLUTION: Possibility 1.3
SOLUTION: Possibility 1.4

SOLUTION: Possibility 2
In virtually every branch of sports we can see that it is important to master a certain technique by means of endless repetition. In chess, this is a little bit different. Nevertheless, there is a certain logic that can be discovered, if a pattern emerges that can also be applied in a completely different situation.

Because chess is largely based on pattern recognition, it is important to practice frequently occurring tactics. Below we
will discuss a number of standard motifs that play a role in the attack with queen and bishop.

\[ \text{Black to move} \]

With no defenders close at hand, the white king does not stand a chance against the strong cooperation of the queen and bishop.

1...\text{Bxh2}+!

The right move. It is important to not allow the king to run away and to keep it in the corner. After 1...\text{Qxh2}+ 2.\text{Kf1}, 2...\text{Qe8} is another attempt to prevent the escape of the king (2...\text{Qh3}+ doesn’t achieve anything after 3.\text{Ke2} \text{Qe8}+ 4.\text{Kd1} \text{Qxe1}+ 5.\text{Kxe1} and the king has reached safety): 3.\text{e3} \text{Qf4} 4.\text{f5} and White has everything under control. He has to consider, however, what to play in reply to 4...\text{g6}. Then it turns out that 5.f3! staves off the attack. For example: 5...\text{Qh1}+ 6.\text{Ke2} \text{Qh3} 7.\text{Ke1} \text{Qxf3}+ 8.\text{Ke2} and White holds with ease.

1...\text{Bxh2}+! 2.\text{Kh1} \text{Qg3}+

With this discovered check, Black attacks the weak f2-square, which sets up the checkmate pattern.

3.\text{g1} \text{h2}+ 4.\text{f1} \text{xf2#}

Every chess player should know the type of mating attack given above. We move on to a slightly more complicated attacking method.

Garry Kasparov
Ilya Smirin
Moscow 1988 (12)
White to move

In contrast to the previous position, here Black does have a defender close at hand. However, the (opposite-coloured) bishop is no contest for the white pieces, which will soon penetrate the black position. White will play round the black bishop, as it were. After

39.\texttt{Rxh6! Bxh6}

the attack plays itself. This is a piece of cake for strong (grand-)masters. Therefore, after

40.\texttt{Be6+ Kh8 41.Qf6+}

Black called it a day. It may be less obvious to the reader, so let’s see how the attack continues: 41...\texttt{Kh7} (the other defence is 41...\texttt{Bg7}, but then things go wrong (even) more quickly: 42.\texttt{Qh4+ Kh6 43.Qxh6#}) 42.\texttt{Qf7+ Kg7} (42...\texttt{Kh8 runs into 43.Qg8#}) 43.\texttt{f5+ Kh8} (or 43...\texttt{h6 44.Qg6#}) 44.\texttt{h5+ Kg8 45.Qe6+ Kh8 46.Qf7#} and we have realized one of our mate patterns.

2.4 Breaking open the position

Around the enemy king it’s not always an ‘open house’; often a breach has to be created first. For this purpose, we reach for one of the weapons we defined earlier: breaking open the enemy king’s position.

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
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7 & & & & & & & & \\
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\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

Paul Keres
Laszlo Szabo
USSR vs Hungary m Budapest 1955
White to move

The black king is well hidden behind its pawns. But not for long...

1.\textit{Rxg7! Kg7}

Defending the f7-pawn with 1...\textit{Re7} doesn’t help: 2.\textit{Qxh6 Re8} 3.\textit{Qg5} and mate is inevitable. This set-up (queen behind the rook) is worth remembering. We will encounter it again!

2.\textit{Qf6+ Kg8}

After 2...\textit{Kf8} 3.\textit{Bg6} the battle is immediately decided: 3...\textit{Re7} (3...\textit{Kg8} 4.\textit{Qxf7+ Kh8} 5.\textit{Qh7#}) 4.\textit{Qh8#}.

3.\textit{Qxh6 Qxe5}

If 3...\textit{f5} 4.\textit{exf6}.

With the previous ABC in mind, this is no longer difficult...

4.\textit{Qh7+ Kh8} 5.\textit{g6+ Qg8} 6.\textit{Qh7+ Qf8} 7.\textit{Qxf7#}

\vspace{10pt}

Ivan Radulov
Berndt Söderborg
Helsinki tt 1961 (11)
White to move

With his queen, his rook on g3, and two bishops, White has a lot of attacking power. But first a breach has to be made in the black king’s position. This is done in the same violent way as in the previous fragment:

1. $\text{Rxg7! Kg7}$

Black has no time to go for an attack himself. For example: 1... $\text{Qa5}$ 2. $\text{Rxh7+! Kg8}$ 3. $\text{Qg4+}$ (a little joke to finish) 3... $\text{Nxg4}$ 4. $\text{Rh8#}$.

2. $\text{Qg4+!}$

White makes clever use of the pin on the knight.

Here Black resigned. There could follow: 2... $\text{Kh8}$ (not 2... $\text{Kh6}$ in view of 3. $\text{Qg5#}$) 3. $\text{Qh5!}$ (again, White exploits the pin. 3. $\text{Qe4}$ leads to the same result) 3... $\text{Qg8}$ and now only the defender of h7 has to be eliminated: 4. $\text{xf6 Qxf6}$ 5. $\text{Qh7#}$.

2.5 Typical mates in practice

Sometimes also top players have trouble spotting typical mates. This is illustrated in the following two examples.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levon Aronian</th>
<th>Sergey Karjakin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nice rapid 2010 (1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Black to move

Karjakin, who became the challenger of World Champion Magnus Carlsen in 2016, here played

39...a5?

With 39...Be8, to prevent White from entering on h8, the struggle could have been continued.

There followed:

39...a5? 40.Qh8+ Kg6 41.Qg7+

and now Black allowed White to checkmate him:

41...Kh5 is strongly met by 42.g4+ Kh4: 43.h2 and there is no remedy against the threats of f6+ or e5 and g3.

43.h6+ is also a forced mate: 43...xh3 44.xh6+ xg4 45.f4+ h5 46.g5# or 45...h3 46.g3#.

42.g4#

Here is the beautiful checkmate pattern that we already saw at the beginning of this section.

Curiously, in the same tournament another typical mate with Q+B came on the board. This example is by the player who was the world’s number one at the time, and is currently the World Champion: Magnus Carlsen.

Magnus Carlsen
Boris Gelfand
Nice blindfold 2010 (6)
White to move

48. $\text{Rxg7+!}$

The only defender has been removed. The black king is unable to deal with all the mayhem that White now pours over him. After

48... $\text{Kxg7}$ 49. $\text{Rg1+}$ $\text{Kf6}$

it is mate in two:

50. $\text{Qg6+}$ $\text{Ke5}$ 51. $\text{Bd6#}$

A ‘new’ mate pattern. Please note that the black pawns on d5 and d4 function as ‘helpers’.

2.6 Setting up a battery

In the previous examples, we have seen a number of typical checkmate patterns, where the queen and bishop complemented each other excellently. Now we will look at another powerful type of cooperation between the bishop and the queen.
Black to move

In this example, Black would like to put both attacking pieces on the same diagonal (b8-h2) to be able to give mate on h2. But we haven’t come this far yet – there are some preparations that need to be made. Winning is

1...b5!

The concept of 1...\text{Q}e5, with the idea ...\text{Q}d6, would have been spoiled by 2.d6+!.

1...b5! 2.\text{Q}xb5 \text{a}7

and the bishop will go to b8. The white king is not able to defend himself against the mate threat on h2. This instructive example was invented by the Dutch trainer Dolf Meijer.

Now it is time to move on to a slightly more strategic example. In order to get the queen and bishop to line up on the same diagonal, sometimes you have to find something clever.

Mikhail Botvinnik
Paul Keres
The Hague/Moscow 1948 (10)
White faces a difficult choice: how should he take back the pawn on d4?

14.e4!

White doesn’t take it back just yet! With this move Botvinnik prepares to take back on d4 with the queen. The bishop on b2 is a monster, which is going to decide this game.

Less good is 14.Qxd4 in view of 14...Nxa4, and now the bishop has to leave the beautiful diagonal: 15.Bc1 c5 and White has trouble setting up his pieces harmoniously.

14.e4! Be6 15.Rc1 Re7

A slightly curious move. The intention is to perhaps play ...f6-e8 at some point, followed by ...f7-f6. The normal continuation would be 15...Ec8, and then, for example: 16.Qxd4 Qa4 17.Ba1 c5. However, after 18.Rcd1 Black’s position will collapse due to the weakness of the pawn on d6.

16.Qxd4!

Now that the bishop can move to a1, it is time to set up the battery against g7.

16...Ec7

Now Black declined the idea of 16...Ec8 because he would also have major problems after 17.h5. For example: 17.f6 18.f4 f7 19.d5 and Black is under heavy pressure.

17.c5!

Thus, White resolves his (and Black’s!) weakness, avoiding the exchange of queens, and opening the position even further, which benefits his bishop pair.
17...dxc5 18.\textit{e}xe5 \textit{f}f4

With hindsight, 18...\textit{d}d8 would have been slightly better, although with 19.\textit{b}b4 White would also maintain plenty of winning chances.

19.\textit{c}c1

Botvinnik removes the bishop from the long diagonal, in order to prepare the manoeuvre of his rook to g5. Another, slightly curious but very strong move is 19.\textit{b}b5!. Its intention is to prevent ...\textit{d}d7 and at the same time clear the square e2 for the knight. As soon as the black queen is driven from f4, White can move his rook to g5, just as in the game: 19...\textit{b}d7 20.\textit{e}e2 \textit{b}b8 (with 20...\textit{h}4 the black queen would be sidetracked) 21.\textit{g}5.

19...\textit{b}8

The queen is moving to faraway regions, after which Black is doomed. However, 19...\textit{d}d7 wouldn’t have helped him back on his feet either: 20.\textit{a}1 \textit{d}6 21.\textit{e}3, avoiding the queen swap with 21...\textit{d}4+, after which White can build up an offensive with renewed vigour.

20.\textit{g}5!

As we predicted, g7 is the target.

20...\textit{b}d7

Now there follows a surprising execution. As we have seen before in this section, the g7-pawn is the ‘victim’.

20...\textit{e}8 doesn’t help either after 21.\textit{h}5 \textit{f}6 22.\textit{xf}6+.

21.\textit{x}g7+! \textit{x}g7 22.\textit{h}5+ \textit{g}6

Now Black will be mated by force. However, also after the relatively better 22...\textit{h}8 Black would have tasted defeat: 23.\textit{xf}6 \textit{e}5 24.\textit{b}2!, and the effect of the white pieces along the long diagonal is again decisive.

Or 22...\textit{g}8 23.\textit{xf}6+ \textit{xf}6 24.\textit{xf}6 with the threat of 25.\textit{b}2, and Black will not come out unscathed.
23.\textit{e3!}

The nice thing here is that the final blow is dealt on the c1-h6 diagonal, where the white queen and bishop have set up a new battery! Mate is inevitable, and therefore Black resigned.
2.7 Opening a diagonal

It goes without saying that bishops need open diagonals. That is why sometimes an opponent erects a ‘pawn block’ in order to reduce such a bishop to silence. For example, there are countless examples of fianchettoed bishops on b2 facing a ‘stone wall’ of pawns on e5-f6-g7. The bishop is, as we say, ‘biting on granite’.

In order to bring the bishop to life, such a pawn formation needs to be attacked. This can be done with actions like f2-f4, or g2-g4-g5xf6, or a combination of the two.

In the following example, the wall is pulverized with great violence. This example was already featured in my previous book, *Chess Strategy for Club Players*, but it is also excellently suited to illustrate our theme here.

Mark Hebden
Julian Hodgson
Guernsey 1985 (6)

\[
\begin{array}{c}
8 \\
7 \\
6 \\
5 \\
4 \\
3 \\
2 \\
1 \\
\end{array}
\]

Black to move

After White’s move b4xc5, the black player had planned something quite different than the simple recapture of this pawn:

18...g4!!

A fantastic move, with which Hodgson tries to ‘extend’ the long diagonal of his bishop on b7. At the same time he wants to open the g-file.
19. g1?

This looks like bitter necessity; apparently there was no longer an adequate defence against the approaching calamity. 19. f2 would have been met by 19... gxf3 20. gxf3 Bxe4!, winning a nice pawn, while creating more threats.

In fact, 19. c2!?, in order to protect square g2 indirectly and give the e4-pawn extra support, was the only move to stay in the game. After 19... gxf3 White has to take back with 20. xf3 (20. gxf3 g2#), but then Black stands excellently after 20... dxc5, and it looks as if White can’t save himself here.

The text move loses by force, but the following action was hard to anticipate:

19... gxf3 20. gxf3

20. xf3 Bxf3 21. gxf3 is met with the same phenomenal queen sacrifice as in the game: 21... xe4!!, winning.

![Chess board diagram]

20... xe4!!

The fabulous apotheosis of a wonderfully conducted strategy. The long diagonal (a8-h1) is now definitively opened, allowing the black queen and bishop to carry out an immaculate demolition job. It is curtains for White, and therefore he resigned after

21. xg8 xg8

White resigned.

22. f1 runs into the deadly 22... g4!.

In the next two examples, the question is whether White can afford to play 1. f6+, in order to open up the long diagonal. Of course, Black is ready to close the diagonal again with ...d5-d4. How strong is the battery of queen and bishop? Are the sacrifices White has to make worth all this?

The f6 sacrifice (analysis)
White to move

White tries to calculate a forced sequence of moves, starting with

1. \( \text{Nf6}^+ \text{gxf6} \) 2. \( \text{Qxf6} \)

With his queen and bishop, White has set up a nice battery against the black king.

2...d4

The direct 2...\( \text{Kh7} \) loses to 3. \( \text{Qh8}^+ \text{Kh6} \) 4. \( \text{Qg8}^+ \text{Kf5} \) After 4...\( \text{Kh5} \) 5.f3 Black will be quickly mated. For example: 5...\( \text{Qd7} \) 6.\( \text{Bf6} \) with the threat of g3-g4.
Now White has to find a problem move: 5.e4+!! The all-important breakthrough, in order to open lines against the black king. 5...\textsc{e}6

After 5...dxe4 6.\textsc{h}7, mate is forced:

6...\textsc{g}4 (the alternative 6...\textsc{g}5 is objectively better, but it doesn’t bring Black salvation either: 7.f4+ \textsc{g}4 (on 7...exf3 8.\textsc{g}8+ \textsc{f}5 (8...\textsc{h}5 9.g4+ \textsc{h}4 10.f6+ \textsc{h}3 11.xf3+ \textsc{g}3+ 12.xg3#) 9.xf3+ \textsc{e}4 10.\textsc{g}4+ the black king will be mated) 8.h3+ (the quiet move 8.\textsc{g}2! also wins) 8...\textsc{x}g3 9.\textsc{g}8+ \textsc{x}h3 10.\textsc{d}3+ exd3 11.\textsc{f}3+ \textsc{h}4 12.\textsc{f}6+ \textsc{h}5 13.\textsc{h}3#) 7.h3+! \textsc{g}5 (7...\textsc{x}h3 8.\textsc{f}5#) 8.\textsc{g}8+ \textsc{f}5 and here we have one of our typical checkmate patterns again!: 9.\textsc{g}4#.

Also losing is 5...\textsc{xe}4 6.f3 \textsc{b}4. The rook has to guard the g4-square, but this means that Black has to give up the e-file: 7.\textsc{de}1! d4 8.g4+ \textsc{f}6 9.f4 \textsc{d}5 10.g5+ \textsc{f}5 11.\textsc{e}5+ and it’s over. 6.exd5+ \textsc{d}6 7.\textsc{g}4 and White has a tremendous attack against the exposed black king.

With the text move, it looks as if Black can close the long diagonal, but...

3.\textsc{xd}4!

White even sacrifices his rook, because the queen and bishop battery is of crucial importance.

3...\textsc{cxd}4 4.\textsc{xd}4 \textsc{h}7
Black is a rook and a piece up now. Has White gone too far?

5.\textit{g4!!}

No, he hasn’t! White still had this brilliant move up his sleeve, constructing a beautiful checkmate picture.

It was essential to see that the black king was threatening to escape along the light squares. The text move prevents this.

White could still have badly overplayed his hand here with 5.\textit{Qh8+}. It’s quite deceptive that the other move order doesn’t work, as after 5...\textit{Qg6} 6.g4? Black has a brilliant defence: 6...\textit{Qxh2+!!} is the hidden trick! 7.\textit{Kxh2} \textit{Bd6+} 8.\textit{Kg2 Rxh8} and Black wins!

5...\textit{h5}

After other moves, like 5...\textit{Re6}, Black gets mated: 6.\textit{Qh8+ Kg6} 7.\textit{Qg8+ Kg7} 8.\textit{Qxg7#}.

The text move is the only way to avoid being mated in the above-mentioned way, but now a classic mate pattern comes on the board:

6.\textit{Qh8+ Kg6} 7.\textit{Qxh5#}

And here we have our familiar checkmate again.

Now we will give the promised example, in which the variations and motifs have a remarkable analogy with the previous one, particularly the brilliant idea from the first example can be used to solve this complicated case.

\begin{center}
\textbf{Mikhail Botvinnik}
\textbf{Bent Larsen}
Palma de Mallorca 1967 (14)
\end{center}
The big question, of course, is whether White can play

21.\( \mathcal{N}f6+ \)

here. This is a forcing move; if Black declines the sacrifice, he will lose the exchange without a fight.

In the game, Botvinnik played the ‘lazy’ 21.\( \mathcal{R}d7 \), winning only much later. We will give the moves of the game without commentary: 21...f5 22.\( \mathcal{N}d6 \) \( \mathcal{N}xd6 \) 23.\( \mathcal{R}xd6 \) \( \mathcal{N}d4 \) 24.\( \mathcal{R}xd4 \) \( \mathcal{N}xg2 \) 25.\( \mathcal{R}d7 \) \( \mathcal{N}h3 \) 26.\( \mathcal{F}f3 \) \( \mathcal{R}d8 \) 27.\( \mathcal{N}xg7+ \) \( \mathcal{K}f8 \) 28.\( \mathcal{R}h7 \) \( \mathcal{Q}d5 \) 29.\( \mathcal{Q}f2 \) \( \mathcal{R}d1 \) 30.\( \mathcal{N}h8+ \) \( \mathcal{N}f7 \) 31.\( \mathcal{R}xd8 \) \( \mathcal{R}xd8 \) 32.\( \mathcal{N}c2 \) \( \mathcal{R}d5 \) 33.\( \mathcal{Q}e8 \) 34.\( \mathcal{Q}b8+ \) \( \mathcal{Q}d7 \) 35.\( \mathcal{N}xa7+ \) \( \mathcal{K}c8 \) 36.\( \mathcal{Q}a6+ \) \( \mathcal{K}c7 \) 37.\( \mathcal{Q}c4+ \) \( \mathcal{Nxc4} \) 38.\( \mathcal{B}xh5 \) 39.\( \mathcal{Q}c6 \) 40.a4 \( \mathcal{Q}c7 \) 41.c5 bxc5 42.\( \mathcal{Q}xc5 \) \( \mathcal{Q}c6 \) 43.\( \mathcal{B}b4 \) \( \mathcal{B}b6 \) 44.g4 hgx4 45.\( \mathcal{Q}g3 \) e5 46.e4 fxe4 47.fxg4 1-0.

With 21.\( \mathcal{N}d6 \) White could have conquered the bishop pair. Then, after 21...\( \mathcal{N}xd6 \) (21...\( \mathcal{R}d8 \) 22.\( \mathcal{N}xb7 \) \( \mathcal{N}xd6 \)) he also has the advantage.

21.\( \mathcal{Q}f6+ \) \( \mathcal{Q}xg6 \) 22.\( \mathcal{Q}g4+ \) \( \mathcal{Q}h7 \)

This is an important moment. Here White has to calculate an entire analysis tree in order to check if his sacrifice is correct.
The direct approach with

23.\textit{e}4+!

wins by force. But it takes a lot of calculation.

Bringing up the rook also wins fairly easily: 23.\textit{d}7!? \textit{d}8 Protects the f7-square, but the knight has too many tasks here. 23..\textit{d}e7 was hopeless, since White simply wins back his piece with 24.\textit{xb}7 \textit{b}8 and then continues his attack with 25.\textit{xf}6; 23..\textit{e}7 looks reasonably principled, but it transposes to the note to Black’s 24th move in the main line, starting with 24.\textit{e}4+ \textit{f}5 25.\textit{xf}5+ \textit{exf}5 26.\textit{g}8 27.\textit{f}6 (27.\textit{g}4+ \textit{h}7) 27..\textit{h}7 28.\textit{xe}7! (elimination of the chief defender) 28..\textit{xe}7 29.\textit{xf}7+ and mate. 24.\textit{xb}7 White regains his piece, after which Black might as well stop the clock. 24..\textit{b}8 25.\textit{e}4+ \textit{f}5 26.\textit{xf}5+ \textit{exf}5
27. \textit{Rx}f7+! In this attractive way, the last remnants of the black king’s fortress are demolished. 27...\textit{Q}xf7 28.\textit{Q}f5+ \textit{g}8 29.\textit{Q}g6+ \textit{h}7 30.\textit{Q}xg7#

\textbf{23...f5 24.\textit{R}d7!}

Well timed. Now the last piece also takes part in the attack. With this important \textit{zwischenzug}, the attack gains decisive strength.

24.\textit{Q}xf5+ also ends in the same way.

\textbf{24...\textit{N}e7}

The mate would be quicker after 24...\textit{R}e7 25.\textit{B}xf5+ exf5 26.\textit{Q}xf5+ \textit{g}8 27.\textit{Q}f6 \textit{h}7 28.\textit{R}xe7 \textit{N}xe7 29.\textit{Q}xf7+.

\begin{center}
egin{tikzpicture}

% Chessboard diagram
% (Code for the diagram is not provided, but it's implied by the image.)

\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

\textbf{25.\textit{R}xe7!}

A beautiful sacrifice, which serves to prevent the interposing of the knight on the long diagonal. This is the strongest continuation, leading to a forced mate.

25...\textit{R}xe7 26.\textit{Q}xf5+ exf5 27.\textit{Q}xf5+ \textit{g}8 28.\textit{Q}f6 \textit{h}7
An enormously important position, which White had to visualize in advance. At this moment he is no less than a rook and a piece behind (against two pawns), and he has staked everything on his possession of the long diagonal. But is that enough? Can’t the king defend itself by taking flight?

29.\text{Q}h8+ doesn’t bring White anything special after 29...\text{K}g6, and this even loses for White after 30.\text{Q}g8+ \text{K}f5, when the king escapes via the light squares.

Light squares? As soon as we formulate it this way, White’s 29th move will be quickly found. In any case, the 11-year-old Loek van Wely, to whom I showed this position at the time, managed to find it.

29.g4!!

This brilliant, ‘quiet’ pawn move cuts off the passage of the black king through the centre. White is now ready for the scheme \text{Q}h8+, followed by \text{Q}g8+, after which the pawn on g4 covers the f5- and h5-squares, preventing the king’s escape.

29...h5

The only way to create ‘luft’ for the king; however, now it will be put to the sword anyway, in an artistic way.

After other moves, such as 29...\text{B}h1, White will carry out his plan: 30.\text{Q}h8+ \text{K}g6 31.\text{Q}g8+ \text{K}g7 32.\text{Q}xg7#.

30.\text{Q}h8+ \text{K}g6 31.\text{Q}xh5#
A famous mate picture, which should have crowned a sharply conducted attack on the king.

2.8 Attack with opposite-coloured bishops

We cannot stop here without showing a pair of examples of middlegame situations with opposite-coloured bishops. As we saw earlier, in the game Kasparov-Smirin, sometimes the bishop is not such a great help in the defence. The ‘problem’ with opposite-coloured bishops is that the defending bishop cannot protect the squares that are controlled by the attacking bishop. Because of this, a material advantage is often of secondary importance in such positions; piece play and initiative are all that counts. We will see this illustrated in the examples below.

Karl Kopetzky
Esteban Canal
Vienna 1951/52 (11)
In this position Black appears to stand badly: White is threatening to exchange queens, and then his material advantage will be decisive. However, Black has a killing move up his sleeve:

23...\text{N}f3+! 24.gxf3 \text{Q}xf3 25.\text{K}f1

Relatively best is 25.\text{Q}xd5, but understandably, that was not what White wanted.

25...\text{Q}h3+!

The king is sent into the ‘open field’. Please note that soon the white bishop will only be in the way: the king wants to hide on the dark squares, but that is hardly possible now.

26.\text{K}e2

26.\text{g}1? is met by an immediate mate: 26...\text{Q}g2#.

26...\text{c}4+ 27.\text{d}1 \text{b}3+ 28.\text{c}1 \text{d}3 29.\text{c}7
It seems that White has defended everything, but now the last piece comes into action:

29...\texttt{xa4}!

The decisive blow, after which White could just as well have resigned. Black threatens both 30...\texttt{xa1} and 30...\texttt{c4+}. White drained the poisoned cup with

30.\texttt{b4}  
30.\texttt{xa4} \texttt{b1#}.

30...\texttt{xa1}+ 31.\texttt{d2} \texttt{xb4+}
Black to move

Comments are based on notes by Ribli and Ftacnik in ChessBase MegaBase.

33...\textit{\texttt{N}}xd3?

Black would like to rid himself of the ‘strong’ bishop on d3, but this exchange is mistaken.

Ftacnik: ‘Only this illogical swap will catapult white’s rook to the third rank and send black’s chances for a fruitful defense to the land of dreams.’

Better was 33...bxc4 34.\textit{\texttt{B}}xc4 (34.\textit{\texttt{R}}xc4 is strongly met with 34...\textit{\texttt{N}}d5) 34...\textit{\texttt{N}}d5 and Black holds.

33...\textit{\texttt{N}}xd3? 34.\textit{\texttt{R}}xd3

White resigned
Now, 34...bxc4 35.Rg3 Re3 would also be good for White on account of 36.Rc3! with a wonderful position. 36...Qg6 already virtually loses: 37.Rxb3 cxb3 38.Qxe6!. For example: 38...Qg4+ (38...dxe6 39.Qxg6 hxg6 40.Qe5; 38...Qxe6 39.Qxe6+ dxex 40.Qxg7+ Qh8 41.Qe6+ with mate – a convincing triumph for the bishop on b2!) 39.hxg4 Qh6+ 40.Qg1 Qxe6 41.Qxe6+ dxex 42.gxf5 Qxf5 43.d7 Qd5 44.Rxb3! and White wins material.

35.Qg3 Qxg5 36.Qxg5 Re7 37.Qe5!

Thus, White makes optimal use of the long diagonal. It is clear that the Qb2 is playing a much more important role than the Qa8. White’s forces are directed at the enemy king’s position, while the black pieces are playing a purely passive role.
37...\textit{f8} 38.\textit{xb5}

Materially it’s equal, but it is clear that White is superior here. His pieces control the entire board, while Black’s pieces have to stand by and watch how White will increase his advantage. This will be done by combining the pressure along the long a1-h8 diagonal with the use of the passed pawn on b5.

\textbf{38...h6 39.\textit{g3} h7 40.\textit{d4}}

Now the main threat is 41.b6.

\textbf{40...\textit{d5} 41.b6}

White has two trumps: the long diagonal and the strong passed b-pawn.

\textbf{41...\textit{f6}}

The bishop cannot move to c6 because White then has a decisive combination: \textit{41...c6 42.\textit{xc6} dxc6 43.\textit{xe6 e8} 44.g6+ g8 45.xh6}, winning.

It is interesting to see how White gains the point if Black does ‘nothing’: \textit{41...e4 42.c7 d5 43.h4 e4} If Black does not want to allow the white pawn to go to h5 and plays 43...h5 himself, then follows 44.g5 g6 45.g1 and now: 45...h6 (45...b7 46.g4! f3 (46...hxg4 47.h5; 46...fxg4 47.xh5+) 47.gxh5 gxh5 48.b7 and the decisive blow cannot be averted) 46.g4 hxg4 (46...fxg4 47.xg6+ h7 48.g5+ h6 49.xh5+ h8 50.xf7+) 47.h5 gxh5 48.e1 followed by 49.h4. \textit{44.h5 d5 45.g6 e4 46.e3 h8 47.c3 g8 48.b5 c6 49.b2 b7 50.e5} Black has been manoeuvred into total zugzwang!

\textbf{42.c3}

Slowly but surely, Kasparov increases the pressure.

\textbf{42...f7 43.c7 e4 44.b3}
Now he turns to the queenside.

44...\texttt{\textit{d}5} 45.\texttt{\textit{b}5}

Threatening 46.\texttt{\textit{x}d5}, followed by 47.b7.

45...\texttt{\textit{b}7} 46.\texttt{\textit{a}5} 47.\texttt{\textit{a}7} \texttt{\textit{e}4}?

47...\texttt{\textit{d}5} was necessary, but then White would win with 48.\texttt{\textit{e}2} 49.g3 \texttt{\textit{d}8} 50.\texttt{\textit{b}5}.

48.\texttt{\textit{e}6}!

An elegant finish to a neatly played strategic game.

48...\texttt{\textit{h}4}

Acceptance of the queen sacrifice with 48...\texttt{\textit{x}e6} 49.\texttt{\textit{f}7} \texttt{\textit{g}8} 50.\texttt{\textit{x}g7+} \texttt{\textit{f}8} 51.\texttt{\textit{a}7+} \texttt{\textit{e}8} 52.\texttt{\textit{d}7+} would of course lose.

49.\texttt{\textit{x}f7} 50.\texttt{\textit{g}1}

There are no more checks, and therefore Vallejo lowered the flag.

Now for an example from my own practice, where the weakened light squares in the white camp play a crucial role.

Leon Pliester
Herman Grooten
Eindhoven ch-NED sf 1980 (2)
Black to move

This is a curious position, which has arisen from the Nimzo-Indian. White had hoped to obtain an attack on the black king, but had missed a couple of chances. Now he finds himself in a situation where his king is not safe, while his rooks have not yet come to life either. Another important trump card for Black is the strong pawn on g2.

25...\textbf{R}xb3!

At first sight, an illogical sacrifice. Black gives up a rook for White’s worst piece! I remember that during the game I really had to exert myself when deciding on this exchange sacrifice.

I could already hear the comments ringing in my ears: ‘This guy is giving up a rook for White’s bad bishop!’ But since my other rook can operate on the b-file, the sacrifice is more than justified!

26.\textbf{Q}xb3 \textbf{R}b8 27.\textbf{Q}d3

Now a position with opposite-coloured bishops has arisen. It is clear that Black will seek his chances on the light squares, while White hardly has anything to say on the dark squares.

Immediately losing would be 27.\textbf{Q}c2 in view of 27...\textbf{Q}a3 with the threefold threat of 28...\textbf{R}b2, 28...\textbf{Q}e3 and 28...\textbf{Q}xf3+.

27...\textbf{R}b2 28.\textbf{B}h4

Pliester tries to organize his defence. Black was ready for a new knight manoeuvre: ...\textbf{N}d7-b6-a4, etc.

28...\textbf{Q}b6

Here comes the knight. Even more accurate was 28...\textbf{Q}a4+ 29.\textbf{Q}c1 \textbf{Q}xa2 30.\textbf{Q}xa2 \textbf{W}xa2 with a decisive advantage to Black.

29.a4

Now Black finds an amusing way to bring the knight into the attack:
For a moment, it looks as if White has brought the black initiative to a halt. The knight is pinned, the rook is more or less hanging in the air (it certainly will be after $\text{Bc3}$), and it isn’t clear how Black can create any threats to the white king.

But now follows a move that I consider to be one of the most aesthetic I have ever played.

$$31...\text{Bc8!!}$$

It took me a while to realize that White is in a kind of positional zugzwang. Any move with a piece will have a major drawback. Because I want to move my knight in some variations, my queen has to be protected.
This is a pawn move, but White thereby weakens his position so much that he will inevitably be saddled with new problems. Moves with any other piece would have failed immediately, as the following variations demonstrate:

A) Bad is 32...b1 in view of 32...a2, and the a4-pawn falls, after which there is no defence;

B) On 32...c3 I had prepared 32...e2, with the point that after 33...d3 White will be confronted with the beautiful 33...e3! 34...xa6 axa6, which threatens 35...c2 followed by 36...d3. Here we see the tremendous power of the three black pieces on the light squares. All of White’s pieces are powerless in the face of this concentration of energy. 35...d2 is met quite artistically by 35...f1! 36...c3 d3 37...a5 c2+ 38...b1 e3

and the three black attacking pieces, in combination with the dangerous passed pawn, will provide the win.

C) I was very proud of the variation that arises after 32...c3.
Here I had planned 32...\textit{\texttt{e}}3!!! After this move everything seems to be hanging in Black’s position, but it all works like a charm! It took me a while before I saw this move, and had checked its correctness: 33.\texttt{Qxe}3 (33.\texttt{Qxa}6 runs into the \textit{zugzwang} 33...\texttt{Rc}2+ 34.\texttt{Kb}1 and after 34...\texttt{bxa}6,

32...\texttt{g}4!
Now that White has weakened his light squares, the bishop can enter from the other side. Again, Black’s operations are running along the light squares.

33.f5 g2 e2 34.g3

White tries to create some confusion with the threat of f5-f6, but the black attack is running at full steam.

34...b7!

The final hammer blow.

35.c3

The only move to prevent an immediate mate, but now he gets subjected to a ‘light-square massage’.

After 35.f6 White would even be mated with 35...c2+! 36.xc2 b2#.

35...b3 36.c2 d3

Here, Leon Pliester, who later unfortunately died at far too young an age, shook my hand, absolutely dizzy after this tornado had raged over him. During the analysis he was very friendly, informing me that he had rarely lost in such a beautiful way.
A possible continuation is $37.\text{a2 b2}$, after which the curtain falls for White.

This game was played in the second round of the semi-finals of the Dutch Championship. Later, partly thanks to this victory, I managed to qualify as a total outsider for the Dutch Championship in Leeuwarden, where I was to experience my first confrontation with the top national players.

**Conclusions**

With regard to the attacking combination of $Q+B$, we pay attention to the following:

- the cooperation between queen and bishop is best if they are standing on squares of different colours
- and if they are covering complementary squares in case of a diagonal checkmate

We know a number of attacking techniques – among others:

- a few elementary ‘ABC’s’
- breaking open the king’s position
- detecting typical checkmates
- setting up a battery
- opening diagonals
- attacking with opposite-coloured bishops

### 2.9 Set of Exercises
How can the most important black defender be deflected?

Show/Hide the Solution

Sergio Mariotti
Alexander Panchenko
Las Palmas 1978 (2)

The queen has to be deflected from the defence. This can be done with

48.\textit{b}6! 1-0

The queen is controlling the \textit{h}8-square, and as a result of the deflection White can now force a pretty mate after 48...\textit{xb}6 by 49.\textit{h}8+ \textit{g}6 50.\textit{h}5#. 
In this position White made a blatant mistake with 13.d3?.
How did Black exploit this, also making use of the cooperation between the queen and bishop?

Show/Hide the Solution

**J. Rodzynski**
**Alexander Alekhine**
Paris 1913

Necessary was 13.cxd4, which after 13...\(\text{Qxc1+ 14.Ke2 Qxh1}\) leads to a position where chances are equal.
The text move was met by the strong

**13.d3? Qxd3! 14.cxd4**
Thus, White thought he could win material, but he was in for a nasty surprise.

14...\textcolor{blue}{e7}!

Apparently he hadn’t reckoned with this little move.

15.\textcolor{red}{xh8}

15.\textcolor{red}{d2} \textcolor{red}{xa8}.

15...\textcolor{blue}{h4}\#

A well-known mate pattern of queen plus bishop against an unprotected king.
How can White menace the slightly exposed black king?

Show/Hide the Solution

At first sight, a complicated position. White has three active pieces, but note that his bishop on c4 is pinned. If we cast a glance at the black king, we see that it is not very well protected. So now let’s challenge the chief defender – the rook on f8.

26...\texttt{Re}8! 1-0

There could have followed:

26...\texttt{Kg}7

26...\texttt{Qb}4 makes no sense due to the pin: 27.\texttt{Qxf6#}; and obviously, 26...\texttt{Qxc}4 is not possible due to 27.\texttt{Qxf6+ Kg}8 28.\texttt{Qxf8#}.

27.\texttt{xf8}
Threatening mate in one by 28.\textit{Qxf6}.

\begin{array}{c}
27...\textit{Kxf8}
\end{array}

\begin{array}{c}
28.\textit{Qxf6+}
\end{array}

Now the king is delivered to the wolves! The white queen and bishop get free rein, and we can apply our first ‘ABC’.

\begin{array}{c}
28...\textit{Ke8}
\end{array}

\begin{array}{c}
29.\textit{Bf7+ Ke8}
\end{array}

Or 29...\textit{Kf8} 30.\textit{Bg6+ Kg8} 31.\textit{Qf7+ Kh8} 32.\textit{Qxh7#}.

\begin{array}{c}
30.\textit{Qe6+ Kd8}
\end{array}

\begin{array}{c}
31.\textit{Qe8#}
\end{array}
8

How does White round off his attack?

Show/Hide the Solution

Juan-Joel Arencibia
Jorge Armas
Camaguey 1987

The straightforward approach with

1.\textit{Qh8+} \textit{Kf7} 2.\textit{Rh7+}

is the quickest road to mate. Also strong is 2.\textit{Bh5+} \textit{Bg6} 3.\textit{Bxg6+} \textit{Kg6} 4.\textit{Rh6+} \textit{Bf5} 5.\textit{Rxf6+} \textit{Ke4} 6.\textit{Rf3}, after which the king cannot escape from the mating net (\textit{Bf3}): 6...\textit{Qxf6} 7.\textit{Qe3+} \textit{Kf5} 8.\textit{Qd3+} \textit{Bd4} 9.\textit{Qh3+} \textit{Kf4} 10.\textit{Qf3#}.

2...\textit{Bxh7}

Declining the exchange sacrifice won’t save Black either. The king will not make it out of the danger zone: 2...\textit{Bg6} 3.\textit{Rh6+} \textit{Bf5} (or 3...\textit{Bf7} 4.\textit{Rh5+} \textit{Bg6} 5.\textit{Bxg6#}) 4.\textit{Rxf6+} \textit{Bxf6} 5.\textit{Qxf6#}.

3.\textit{Qxh7+} \textit{Bf8} 4.\textit{Qh8+} \textit{Bf7} 5.\textit{Bh5#}

And again we get to see this pretty mate picture.
How can the last obstacle in front of the white king be eliminated?

_Show/Hide the Solution_

Johan van Mil  
Maarten Strijbos  
Netherlands tt 2002

With the following rook sacrifice, Black makes a forced entry to the white king, knowing that the black queen plus bishop (and let’s not forget the pawn on e4!) can deliver checkmate in a harmonious and cooperative fashion.

1...

He has to bring on the bishop.

3.\(g1\)

The most tenacious defence, but White still won’t escape his fate. 3.\(e3\) \(f4+\) 4.\(e2\) \(f2\) is mate immediately.

3.\(f1\) \(f3+\) 4.\(g1\) \(f2+\) 5.\(h1\) \(h2#\) is also quicker than the moves in the game.

3...

Black plays it optimally.

4.\(h2\)

4.\(f1\) \(f3+\) 5.\(g1\) \(f2+\) and 4.\(h1\) \(f3+\) 5.\(g1\) \(f2+\) transpose to the same variation as we gave above.

4...

5.\(h1\) \(f3+\)
And so Black forces the mate that was already mentioned in the other variations.

\[ \text{6.} \text{h2 g3+ 7.} \text{h3} \]

Now Strijbos finishes with a nice checkmate:

\[ \text{7...f4+ 8.} \text{h4 h5#} \]

With the white king so far advanced, there has to be something for Black here. What can it be?

**Show/Hide the Solution**

Black wove a mating net with

\[ \text{33...d6!} \]

Here I saw his seconds ticking away, and then suddenly his flag fell. A pity, as it would have been nice to get a mate with queen and bishop on the board: \[ \text{34.e5 (34.e1 g6#) 34...f3+ 35.g5 e7+ 36.f6 xf6#}. \]

**2.10 Cooperation between \[\text{Q+N}\]**

The queen and knight make an especially dangerous attacking combination. Since with this queen and knight tandem geometrical effects often play a role, we will start this paragraph with an inventory of checkmate patterns in which several ‘geometrical effects’ play a role. One can think of patterns where pieces are working from a great distance, but
also patterns where pieces are cooperating to control the important squares. For the computer, finding such patterns is not a problem at all, but for a human player it can be quite hard. In our capacity as chess trainers we often notice that the ‘horizontal effect’ and also the ‘backward effect’ of pieces in games (especially in variations!) are often missed. After concluding this episode, we will serve up a number of standard attacking motifs to the reader. Next, we will see how the various typical mates can be applied in practice. The last part of this section will be devoted to the cooperation of queen and knight versus the cooperation between queen and bishop.

**Cooperation of \( Q + N \) versus king**

Let’s start with a chess problem where the white queen and knight cooperate wonderfully well to establish different types of checkmate.

---

**Problem chess**

_Heinrich Leonhard Adolphi_

*(mate in two moves)*

White to move

1. \( \text{Na6} \text{Kb6} \)

1... \( \text{Ka8} \) 2. \( \text{Qc6#} \);
1... \( \text{Kc8} \) 2. \( \text{Qd7#} \).

2. \( \text{Qb5#} \)

As mentioned above, first we need to get into our head a ‘picture’ of how the enemy king is mated. What better way could there be to train this than by showing it on an almost empty board with only the essential pieces on it? As we already wrote in the previous section, in chess it is very important to apply new knowledge immediately. Therefore, we again invite the reader to get to work with a short series of exercises, in which checkmate patterns have to be found.
Place a white queen and knight on the board in such a way that Black is mated. Try to find as many mates as possible.

The solutions (of course they can be mirrored):

**SOLUTION:** Possibility No. 1
**SOLUTION:** Possibility No. 2. Of course the knight can also be on other squares where it protects the queen.

**SOLUTION:** Possibility No. 3
SOLUTION: Possibility No. 4

Now that we have gone through all the checkmate patterns on an empty board, obviously we also have to look how certain mate patterns can turn up in middlegame situations. And so we will continue for a little longer on this ‘tour’.

It’s useful to try and find out how mate positions can be realized with certain weaknesses in the enemy king’s position. Below you will find a mate pattern we have encountered before.

Find the mate with \( Q + N \) (two possibilities)

**TASK:** Place a white queen and knight on the board in such a way that the black king is mated. The solutions:
So there are two mate patterns where the knight can be on f6 as well as on e7. These are (in this type of position) the only two mate patterns with queen and knight. Please note that with the king on h8 (instead of g8) we get the same mate positions (plus another, trivial one: with the queen on h7, protected by the knight).

It is time for some more typical checkmates. We have encountered this mate pattern before, and, as we promised on that occasion, we will return to it later on in the game J.Polgar-Mitkov.
**TASK**: Place a white queen and knight on the board in such a way that the black king is mated.

**SOLUTION**: Because the king is not safe on the edge of the board, this mate pattern occurs less frequently than the previous ones.

Now that we have established a link with practice, we will continue on this path. In the position given below, in which the motif in question occurred in a game Graf-Georgiev, there are three possible mate patterns. Apart from the mirrored versions, checkmate is also possible with the knight protecting the queen.
**TASK:** Place a white queen and knight on the board in such a way that the black king is mated. There are three possible solutions. The solutions:

**SOLUTION:** Possibility No. 1
SOLUTION: Possibility No. 2

Below is an example of the mate pattern that is hardest to spot for most people. It also occurred in a game Ovetchkin-Eichner.

SOLUTION: Possibility No. 3

Find the mate with ♕+♕
TASK: Place a white queen and knight on the board in such a way that the black king is mated. The solution:

SOLUTION: A beautiful mate.

Further on in this chapter, we will see other examples with the above-mentioned mate patterns.

Please note that the queen and the knight often cooperate best if they are placed on squares of the same colour, which is also the case in three out of the four types of mate patterns we discussed.
2.11 ABC’s for the cooperation between $Q+N$

Analogously to the way we approached the attack with queen and bishop, we will now present a number of tactical motifs with queen and knight that occur quite often. Each club player ought to have these motifs in the back of his head, in order to be able to crown an attack with success.

**Cooperation of $Q+N$ versus a 0-0 position**

We start with the conclusion of an attack on a king castled kingside.

---

**Boris Malisov**  
**Nathan Birnboim**  
Jerusalem ch-ISR 1996

---

A topic that was discussed in the previous chapter also comes in handy here. It is necessary to use our weapon of the magnet combination:

36.$Rh8+!$

Decoying the king to a square where it is exposed to the powerful entrance of the white queen. After 36.$Qh5?? fxg5$ White has nothing but a few checks, and Black wins.

36.$Rh8+!$ $Kxh8$ 37.$Qh5+$

The rest speaks for itself.

37...$g8$ 38.$f7+ h8$ 39.$f8#
In the following fragment, White conducts the attack in a surprising and instructive way. I can imagine that the white player thought at some point that there was no more than a perpetual check in it...

**Cooperation of ♕+♘ after ♦xh7+**

After the standard sacrifice ♦xh7+, it is almost a matter of course that you get an attack with queen and knight. The example given below is characteristic.

Nina Shushpanova  
Elena Petrovskaya  
Albena 2009 (4)

White to move

All the conditions for a successful sacrifice are present. White has aimed a bishop at h7, the pawn on e5 keeps the d7-knight away from the defence, and thanks to the pawn on h4, in some cases the king can be harassed.

10. ♦xh7+ ♧xh7 11. ♧g5+ ♧g8

11...♘g6 also leads to Black’s quick demise: 12.h5+ (here we see how useful it is that this pawn is standing at the ready) 12...♗f5 (12...♗h6 loses the queen after 13.♕xe6+) 13.♕d3+ (the most efficient way to force the mate) 13...♗xf4 14.♕h3+ (14.♕g3+ ♗f5 also wins, but in a more difficult way) 14...♕e5 (14...♕e5 15.♕f3+ ♗h4 16.g3#) 15.♕g3+ ♗f5 (15...♗d4 16.♕f4#; 15...♗f6 16.♕g5#) 16.♕f4#. The cooperation between the queen, the knight and, in this case, the pawn on h5, is a pleasure to watch.

12.♕h5 ♗e8 13.♕xf7+

First the pawn on f7 is removed, and after that, mate is not far off. Tempting was 13.♕h7+?! ♗f8 14.♕h8+ ♗e7 15.♕xg7, but then Black can defend with 15...♗f8, although White still wins with 16.♕xf7! ♗xf7 17.♕g5+.
13...\text{\textit{h}}8 14.\text{\textit{h}}5+ \text{\textit{g}}8 15.\text{\textit{h}}7+ \text{\textit{f}}8 16.\text{\textit{h}}8+ \text{\textit{e}}7 17.\text{\textit{x}}g7#

**Smothered mate**

Although it is a universally known attack with $\text{\textit{Q}}+\text{\textit{N}}$, we cannot omit to mention it in this paragraph: the smothered mate! A slightly different variant of this common mate is shown below.

\begin{center}
Valery Salov  
Anatoly Karpov  
Alma Ata blitz 1995 (1)
\end{center}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chess_board.png}
\end{figure}

**Black to move**

White has two strong passed pawns on the queenside. On the other hand, Black can boast a dangerous attack on the kingside. Who will be first? Closer inspection teaches us that White will lose because he has (too) few defenders. To make matters worse, the knight is chased away from the king with

37...\text{\textit{g}}4! 38.b7

Under the circumstances, this looks like the most practical move. Also after 38.hxg4 hxg4 39.\text{\textit{g}}1 (if 39.\text{\textit{h}}4 \text{\textit{g}}3+ 40.\text{\textit{h}}1 \text{\textit{e}}1# or 40.\text{\textit{h}}3 \text{\textit{f}}2#) White will soon be mated. Here are a few nice variations: 39...\text{\textit{g}}3+ (39...\text{\textit{g}}3+ 40.\text{\textit{h}}3 (40.\text{\textit{h}}1 \text{\textit{f}}2#) 40...\text{\textit{f}}2+ 41.\text{\textit{h}}4 \text{\textit{f}}4+ 42.\text{\textit{h}}5 \text{\textit{h}}6#) 40.\text{\textit{h}}1 \text{\textit{f}}2#.

38.\text{\textit{g}}1 \text{\textit{g}}3+ 39.\text{\textit{h}}1 \text{\textit{f}}2#.

38...\text{\textit{g}}3+ 39.\text{\textit{h}}1

The following mate picture will be familiar to many of you:

39...\text{\textit{f}}2+ 40.\text{\textit{g}}1 \text{\textit{x}}h3+
And White resigned in view of 41.\(h1\)
(41.\(f1\) \(f2\#) 41...\(g1+\) 42.\(xg1\) \(f2\# – a funny smothered mate.

**Discovered attack**

Yury Balashov
Peter Biyiasas (analysis)
Manila 1976 (1)

![Chess Diagram](image)

**White to move**

The theme of this exercise is the discovered attack, but here the battery still has to be set up. An important tool while solving combinations is to look at forcing moves (i.e. captures, checks, threats).

1.\(xd7\) \(xd7\) 2.\(g4\)

Here is the battery (\(g4-f5-d7\). Not only mate on g7 is threatened...

2...\(g5\)

After 2...\(g6\) the finish is even quicker: 3.\(xg6+\) with mate on g7.

3.\(xh6+\)

White wins the queen.

3...\(h7\) 4.\(xd7\)

**Typical checkmates in practice**
As we have seen before, typical checkmates turn up regularly in the games of strong grandmasters.

Sergei Azarov  
Arkady Naiditsch (analysis)  
Plovdiv 2012 (7)

White to move

With an enemy pawn about to promote, you always have to watch your step. One thing is clear for White: everything has to be with check!

1. \( \texttt{Qd4+} \)

He has to keep the king within the danger zone.

1... \( \texttt{Kb5} \) 2. \( \texttt{a4+!} \)

This one caught the eye, of course, but the continuation was hard to see in advance.

2... \( \texttt{xa4} \)

Forced. But now what? A discovered check with the knight, obviously, but where should it go? Very pretty is the mating process after 2... \( \texttt{a5} \). White replies with 3. \( \texttt{c6+!} \) \( \texttt{bxc6} \) 4. \( \texttt{b4#} \).

3. \( \texttt{d3+} \)

Curiously, there are three knight moves, all leading to a forced mate in 6. 3. \( \texttt{d5+} \) and 3. \( \texttt{c6+} \) are analogous to the main line.

3... \( \texttt{a3} \)
3...b5 4.c5+ a4 5.b4#.

4.b4+ a2 5.a4+ b1 6.d1+ a2

White can always reach this position by force, and now it turns out that, wherever the knight was standing, there can always follow

7.b4+ a3 8.b3#

And the job is done.

That Judit Polgar is very adept at recognizing typical checkmates probably won’t surprise you, if you look at her father’s tactics book, which is crammed with them. Here are two superb examples from her games:

**Judit Polgar**
**Nikola Mitkov**
Moscow 1994 (4)

*White to move*

With attractive attacking play, Judit has caught her opponent unawares, and she has achieved a winning position. But as long as the opponent retains compensation, it is always important to keep playing the strongest continuation. Therefore, the Hungarian played

46.e5+!

here, in order to spare herself some difficult technical problems.

46...f5

If the knight is taken with 46...dxe5, then there follows 47.xe4+ f6 48.f3+! e7 49.b7+ and White picks up the b5-pawn, after which the technical problems have disappeared.
47. \( \text{Nd7} \)

The knight attacks the unprotected bishop on f8, whereupon the black player had a strange sensation: after 47... \( \text{Bg7} \) 48. \( \text{Qg4} \)#...

Voilà: there we have the mate pattern we discussed before!

Alexey Shirov  
Judit Polgar  
Buenos Aires 1994 (8)
Polgar has treated the opening energetically. She has even sacrificed two pawns in exchange for the possession of the nice square e5. Now, new reserves have to be brought up to make this daring concept succeed.

14...\textit{f5}!

A second knight appears in the centre.

15.\textit{f2}

Not so good is 15.\textit{f4} \textit{h4} 16.\textit{g3} \textit{h3}+ 17.\textit{d1} \textit{xe4}, and Black has the initiative.

The knight cannot be captured, as it would lose the queen: 15.exf5 \textit{gxg2}.

With her last knight move, Black has improved the activity of her pieces considerably. So it is logical that the position contains several tactical tricks now.

15...\textit{xg5}!

A tremendous hammer blow! Black seems to give up her queen. But with this tactic, she wins a nice pawn.

16.\textit{a5}?

Also possible was 16.\textit{ed4}, and then Black has the surprising 16...\textit{h4}! (16...\textit{xd4} 17.\textit{xd4} \textit{xh5\#}) 17.\textit{g5} \textit{h3}+ 18.\textit{d1} \textit{gxg5} with a large advantage.

The queen can be won back after 16.\textit{g5} with 16...\textit{f3}+ 17.\textit{d1} \textit{gxg5}, and after that the e4-pawn will also be lost. Please note that the knight on f5 is still taboo, because the h1-rook is also on the long diagonal.

16...\textit{e3}!

A clever zwischenzug that Shirov hadn’t seen coming.

17.\textit{g3}
Also nice is $17.\textit{Q}xe3 \textit{Q}xe3 18.\textit{Q}xb7 \textit{f}f3+ 19.\textit{Q}d1 \textit{Q}d2\#$.

And even prettier is the mate with two knights after $17.\textit{Q}xg5 \textit{Q}f3\#$.

**analysis diagram**

17...$\textit{Q}xg3$ 18.\textit{N}xg3 \textit{N}xc2+ 19.\textit{K}d1

On 19.\textit{K}d2, Black has 19...\textit{N}xa1 20.\textit{N}xb7 \textit{h}6+.

19...\textit{N}xa1 20.\textit{N}xb7 \textit{b}3!

Polgar had probably also seen this move in advance. The knight on a1 can escape from the corner. And with that, Black has definitively built up a decisive material advantage.

21.\textit{axb3}

Also after 21.a3 $\textit{h}6$ 22.\textit{N}xd6+ $\textit{d}7$ it is over.

21...$\textit{Q}xb3$ 22.\textit{Q}e2 $\textit{c}5$ 23.\textit{Q}xc5 $\textit{dxc}5$ 24.\textit{f}e1 $\textit{f}3$ 25.\textit{Q}c3 $\textit{d}4+$ 26.\textit{Q}d3 $\textit{d}6$ 27.\textit{g}2

You could consider 27.b4, in order to attack the knight on d4: 27...\textit{e}7 28.\textit{bxc}5 $\textit{xc}5$ 29.\textit{xd}4 $\textit{hd}8$ 30.\textit{e}2 $\textit{xd}4$ 31.\textit{xd}4 $\textit{e}5$, and Black regains the piece.

27...$\textit{e}5$ 28.\textit{c}4 $\textit{e}7$ 29.\textit{a}1 $\textit{c}6$

And here Shirov had seen enough. A possible continuation is 29...\textit{c}6 30.\textit{xc}5 $\textit{xc}3$ 31.\textit{bxc}3 $\textit{hc}8$ 32.\textit{c}4 $\textit{e}5+$ 33.\textit{d}4 f6 34.\textit{f}1 a5 and Black wins easily.

In the next game we see a common fianchetto structure. Without a bishop on g7, the dark squares are seriously weakened. That will become quite clear in the game.

Alexander Graf
White to move

White is the exchange down, but he already has two pawns for it. Besides, the dark squares in the opponent’s king’s position are seriously weakened.

36.\textit{\textbf{Qe5}}

With this move White starts an attack on the black king, since he now threatens to give a nasty discovered check (with 37.\textit{\textbf{Ng4+}}). True, Black can parry that threat, but then White will be able to calmly bring his rook into the attack before he gives a ‘suitable’ discovered check.

36...\textit{\textbf{Qd2}}

Not 36...\textit{\textbf{Ra2}}? in view of 37.\textit{\textbf{Ng4+}}. As soon as the rook has left the back rank, mate is inevitable.

After 36...\textit{\textbf{Qf8}} White can choose between the immediate 37.\textit{\textbf{Ng4}} and first depriving the king of the e7-square with 37.d6.

37.\textit{\textbf{Ec3}}

Also interesting was 37.\textit{\textbf{Ec8+?!}} or, even better, 37.\textit{\textbf{Ec6!}} \textit{\textbf{Qf8}} 38.\textit{\textbf{Dg4}} \textit{\textbf{Qg8}} 39.d6, after which White has woven the elegant threat of 40.\textit{\textbf{Ec2!}} (in order to deflect the queen from the protection of the h6-square) into the position.

37...\textit{\textbf{h5}}

On 37...\textit{\textbf{Qf8}} there are various winning continuations. Presumably, 38.d6 is the strongest. Play can continue as follows: 38...\textit{\textbf{Ed8}} 39.\textit{\textbf{Dh7+}} \textit{\textbf{Qg8}} 40.\textit{\textbf{Df6+}} \textit{\textbf{Qf8}} 41.\textit{\textbf{Dd5}} \textit{\textbf{Qh6}} 42.\textit{\textbf{Ec7}} \textit{\textbf{Qxc7}} 43.\textit{\textbf{Dxc7}} \textit{\textbf{Qc8}} 44.\textit{\textbf{Dd6+}} \textit{\textbf{Qg7}} 45.\textit{\textbf{Qf6+}} \textit{\textbf{Qh7}} 46.\textit{\textbf{Dxf7+}} \textit{\textbf{Qg7}} 47.\textit{\textbf{Qxg7+}} \textit{\textbf{Qxg7}} 48.\textit{\textbf{b4}} and the white passed pawns decide.

38.\textit{\textbf{De8+}}
The strongest by far.

38...\texttt{f8}

He cannot escape via 38...\texttt{h6} due to 39.\texttt{g7+ g5 40.g3+ f4 41.h6+}, winning the queen.

39.\texttt{d6 d7}

This leads to a quick mate. If the rook leaves the seventh rank, White wins as follows: 39...\texttt{bb8 40.c7 h6 41.e7+ g7 42.xf7+ h8 43.f6+ g8 44.e6+ h8 45.f7+}.

40.\texttt{c8+!}

White finishes with a flourish. After 40...\texttt{x}c8 (or 40...\texttt{d8 41.h8+ e7 42.xd8#) 41.h8+ e7 White had planned 42.dxc8#}. We’ve seen this mate picture before!

In the final grandmaster encounter of this section, we come across the ‘most difficult’ checkmate type (where the knight gives the final check).

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
8 & & & & & & & & \\
7 & & & & & & & & \\
6 & & & & & & & & \\
5 & & & & & & & & \\
4 & & & & & & & & \\
3 & & & & & & & & \\
2 & & & & & & & & \\
1 & & & & & & & & \\
\hline
a & b & c & d & e & f & g & h \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

\textit{White to move}

White has concentrated his pieces on the h-file, and is therefore threatening to move away his knight at any moment. But with his last move, 29...\texttt{c8-a6}, Black is also putting his oar in. The bishop on g6 is hanging, as well as the c4-pawn. However, White had a nice trick up his sleeve to keep the initiative.

30.\texttt{h7+! xh7}
Well, in any case Black allows White to play the most attractive version of the attack! The flight to the centre also wouldn’t help him: 30...\textit{\texttt{f7}} 31.\textit{\texttt{xg5+ e7}}, since after 32.\textit{\texttt{e2}} White maintains his (material) edge.

Moving to the corner with 30...\textit{\texttt{h8}} is answered with 31.\textit{\texttt{xg5 h6}} (31...\textit{\texttt{xc4+}} fails to 32.\textit{\texttt{d3+}}) 32.\textit{\texttt{e4}}, and also here White is winning.

\textbf{31.\textit{\texttt{xg5+ g6} 32.\textit{\texttt{h7+! f6}}}

If Black captures the knight, the two major pieces decide the battle: 32...\textit{\texttt{xg5}} 33.\textit{\texttt{xg7+ g6}} 34.\textit{\texttt{xe5+}} and now there is a crossroads. In both variations, the \textit{\texttt{+r}} cooperate wonderfully!

A) 34...\textit{\texttt{f5}} 35.\textit{\texttt{f4+ g4}} 36.\textit{\texttt{e2+ xg3}} 37.\textit{\texttt{f2+ g4}} 38.\textit{\texttt{h4#}};

B) 34...\textit{\texttt{f5}} 35.\textit{\texttt{g7+ g6}} 36.\textit{\texttt{f4+ f5}} 37.\textit{\texttt{e5+ g4}} 38.\textit{\texttt{h4+ xg3}} 39.\textit{\texttt{e1+ f3}} 40.\textit{\texttt{e2+ g3}} 41.\textit{\texttt{f2#}}.

It is clear that the white attack is raging at full force, but how can he finish off in a fitting way?

\textbf{33.\textit{\texttt{h6+!}}}

Well-spotted. In actual fact, White is opening the seventh rank with this move.

\textbf{33...\textit{\texttt{gxh6}}}

33...\textit{\texttt{xg5}} also leads to mate: 34.\textit{\texttt{xg7+ f5}} 35.\textit{\texttt{g4#}}.

33...\textit{\texttt{e7}} 34.\textit{\texttt{xg7+ e8}} 35.\textit{\texttt{xa6}} is of course finished as well.

\textbf{34.\textit{\texttt{e4#}}}

And here again we have the mate picture we have come to know so well.

We conclude this section with a beautiful fragment by one of our pupils, Joris Gerlagh, who was the Dutch U14 champion at the time.

\textbf{Joris Gerlagh}
White to move

Here Joris played the strong

27.g4! Qc2

The knight cannot be taken: 27...Qxf6 28.Bh6+ and White wins the queen.

Relatively best was 27...Qxb1 28.Rxb1 Kxf6. However, Black does not have sufficient material here, and his king is still not safe as well...

28.Bh6+!

Another powerful move!

28...Qxh6

Here, alas, Joris didn’t find the strongest continuation. With

29.Qh3+

he could have mated the black king by force. The game saw 29.Qg2?, after which Black could still have saved the game with 29...Qg7. However, Black continued with the logical 29...g5?. Now, again, mate patterns with queen and knight appear. 30.Qe8! would have been the strongest continuation. If the knight isn’t taken, White has a beautiful mate with queen and knight. 30...Qe7 After 30...Qxe8 we can apply the knowledge we have acquired before: 31.Qf6+ Qg6 (or 31...Qh7 32.Qh1+ g8 33.Qh8#) 32.Qh1#.
analysis diagram

31. \textcolor{red}{Q}h3+ \textcolor{blue}{g}g6 32. \textcolor{red}{Q}h5# and again we have our picturesque mate.

The game continuation was also winning for White: 30. \textcolor{blue}{R}bc1 \textcolor{red}{Q}g6 31. \textcolor{red}{R}h1+ \textcolor{blue}{k}g7 32. \textcolor{red}{R}h7+ \textcolor{blue}{Q}xh7 33. \textcolor{red}{N}xh7 \textcolor{blue}{B}e7, and White won quickly. The knight couldn’t be taken under penalty of mate: 33... \textcolor{blue}{K}xh7 34. \textcolor{red}{Q}xf7+ \textcolor{blue}{g}g7 35. \textcolor{red}{R}h1#.

29... \textcolor{blue}{g}g5

Joris had missed the fact that mate was unavoidable after 29... \textcolor{blue}{Q}g7 30. \textcolor{red}{g}5! (\textcolor{red}{Q}h6). So, after this game it was high time to work with him on the section ‘Cooperation between queen and knight’.

30. \textcolor{red}{N}h7+ \textcolor{blue}{f}f4 31. \textcolor{blue}{Q}g3#
A beautiful mate.

**Attack with ♕+♘ versus bare king**

In many of the mate patterns we have seen, we could establish that the queen and the knight control an enormous number of squares together. As we saw with the checkmate in the game J.Polgar-Mitkov, the knight ‘complements’ the queen, keeping those squares covered that the queen doesn’t.

Therefore, it is not surprising that the queen and knight are considered by grandmasters to be a dangerous attacking tandem – all the more so if the opponent hardly has any defenders in the vicinity of his king, i.e. when his king is exposed.

Yochanan Afek
Arthur Kogan
Nuremberg 2007 (5)
Black to move

In this quite open position, you might expect the bishop to be stronger than the knight. But White’s crippled pawn structure on the kingside gives Black excellent chances. The $Q+N$ tandem will soon be in full swing!

21...$Qf6$!

Black keeps the queens on the board, since the combination of queen and knight, especially with this weakened king’s position, is stronger than queen plus bishop. After the queen trade 21...$Wxd5$ 22.$\text{xd}5$, Black is only marginally better: 22...$Bxd8$ 23.$\text{xb}7$ $Bd2$ 24.$Ke1$ $Qd3$ 25.$Re8+$ $Kg7$ 26.$Rxa6$ $Bd1+$ (nothing is given by 26...$Bxb2$ after 27.$Re7$) 27.$Kg2$ $Qf4+$ 28.$Kh3$ $g5$ 29.$h4$ (White would be pulling the noose around his own neck with 29.$Kg4$??, for now the rook cooperates wonderfully with the knight: 29...$Qf6$! leads to a forced mate) 29...$Rg1+$ 30.$Kh2$ $Rg2+$ 31.$Kh1$ $Bxf2$ and Black is still pressing. With good play, White will be able to hold the draw.

21...$Qf6$! 22.$Qxb7$

Afek must have thought that the exchange of his frontal doubled pawn against its beautiful counterpart on b7 was a good deal. But in what follows, his king will be exposed. Probably it would have been safer not to give up the f3-pawn so easily, and to play 22.$Kg2$. 
22...\textit{\textit{\textbf{xf3+}}}

Perhaps the best move. Kogan himself indicated \textit{22...\textit{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Ed8}}}}!?} as better, but computers contradict this. In itself, Kogan’s idea is right, since Black thereby brings his last piece into the attack.

A) \textit{23.\textit{\textit{\textbf{Ed1}}}}?! is bad in view of \textit{23...\textit{\textit{\textbf{xf3+}}}} 24.\textit{\textit{\textbf{Wg2}}} 25.\textit{\textit{\textbf{d2}}}! and Black’s attack is running at full steam: \textit{25.\textit{\textit{\textbf{xa7}}} White keeps gobbling up pawns, but he neglects his defence on the other side. If 25.a4? 26.h3 \textit{\textit{\textbf{g5+}}} 27.\textit{\textit{\textbf{h2}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{f4+}}} 28.\textit{\textit{\textbf{g2}}} and now:}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{analysis.png}
\end{center}

\textit{analysis diagram}

\textit{28...\textit{\textit{\textbf{g7}}}!} is the strongest here. The black king hurries to safety, after which Black is ready to deliver the coup de grâce.
He will focus on the weak point f2. I will give a sample variation to show how the attack can be played: 29...\text{a}2 (to remove the threat of \ldots \text{b}4) 29...\text{e}4 30.\text{f}1 \text{e}2 31.\text{x}a7 \text{g}3+ 32.\text{h}1 \text{x}f2+ and Black wins. 25...\text{f}3+ 26.\text{g}1 \text{g}4+ 27.\text{h}1 \text{e}4+ 28.\text{f}3 Another attempt to disturb the cooperation between the queen and knight. Immediately losing is 28.\text{g}1 in view of 28...\text{f}3+. Now the mate combination is instructive: 29.\text{f}1 (29.\text{g}2 leads to an instructive mate: 29...\text{g}4+ 30.\text{f}1 \text{x}h2+ 31.\text{e}1 \text{f}1) 29...\text{x}h2+ 30.\text{g}1 \text{f}3+ 31.\text{f}1 and now Black wins a piece. He has to wriggle and squirm to achieve this, but actually it is not too difficult: 31...\text{x}d1+ 32.\text{x}d1 \text{e}1+ 33.\text{g}2 \text{h}4+ 34.\text{g}3 \text{f}5+ followed by 35...\text{x}d1. 28...\text{x}f3+ 29.\text{g}1 \text{g}4+ 30.\text{h}1 \text{e}4+ 31.\text{g}1, but now Black has a strong continuation: 31...\text{f}8! The knight is taboo (32.\text{x}d2? \text{e}1+), and now that Black’s only weakness (f7) is well protected, he has a free hand to continue his attack with queen plus knight. He should also keep his eyes open for a possible swap with ...\text{x}b3, since a major-piece ending can also be very favourable for him. Black is winning here; B) 23.\text{x}a7 seems rather careless, but there is hardly any credit to be gained for White anyway: 23...\text{x}f3+ 24.\text{g}2 24.\text{g}1 \text{f}4 25.\text{g}2 \text{~d}3 is a winning position for Black; and if 24.\text{f}1 \text{f}5! – as we have seen in the exercise material, the queen and knight cooperate optimally if they are standing on squares of the same colour: 25.\text{e}3 \text{~h}3+ 26.\text{e}2 \text{~d}4+ 27.\text{e}1 \text{x}h2 28.\text{c}1 \text{~h}1+ 29.\text{d}2 \text{x}b3+. 24...\text{h}4+ 25.\text{f}1 Of course not 25.\text{g}1 on account of 25...\text{g}5+, and this even leads to a forced mate: 26.\text{f}1 \text{g}2+ 27.\text{e}2 \text{g}4+ 28.\text{f}1 \text{~h}3+ 29.\text{e}2 \text{~d}3+ 30.\text{e}1 \text{f}3#; 25.\text{g}3 \text{~g}5+ 26.\text{h}3 \text{~d}3+ is also mate. 25...\text{f}3! 26.\text{c}1
\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\tikzset{board/.style={draw, minimum size=2cm, outer sep=0pt, inner sep=0pt, anchor=south west}}
\tikzset{piece/.style={inner sep=0pt, outer sep=0pt}}
\tikzset{king/.style={piece, draw, fill=white, shape=circle, minimum size=0.5cm, anchor=south west}}
\tikzset{queen/.style={piece, draw, fill=white, shape=circle, minimum size=0.5cm, anchor=south west}}
\tikzset{rook/.style={piece, draw, fill=white, shape=circle, minimum size=0.5cm, anchor=south west}}
\tikzset{bishop/.style={piece, draw, fill=white, shape=circle, minimum size=0.5cm, anchor=south west}}
\tikzset{knight/.style={piece, draw, fill=white, shape=circle, minimum size=0.5cm, anchor=south west}}
\tikzset{pawn/.style={piece, draw, fill=white, shape=circle, minimum size=0.5cm, anchor=south west}}
\tikzset{board/.style={draw, minimum size=2cm, outer sep=0pt, inner sep=0pt, anchor=south west}}
\tikzset{piece/.style={inner sep=0pt, outer sep=0pt}}
\tikzset{king/.style={piece, draw, fill=white, shape=circle, minimum size=0.5cm, anchor=south west}}
\tikzset{queen/.style={piece, draw, fill=white, shape=circle, minimum size=0.5cm, anchor=south west}}
\tikzset{rook/.style={piece, draw, fill=white, shape=circle, minimum size=0.5cm, anchor=south west}}
\tikzset{bishop/.style={piece, draw, fill=white, shape=circle, minimum size=0.5cm, anchor=south west}}
\tikzset{knight/.style={piece, draw, fill=white, shape=circle, minimum size=0.5cm, anchor=south west}}
\tikzset{pawn/.style={piece, draw, fill=white, shape=circle, minimum size=0.5cm, anchor=south west}}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}
Here again, the black pieces cooperate wonderfully:

26...\( \text{Qh3} + \) 27.\( \text{Ke1} \) \( \text{Qg2} + \) 28.\( \text{Ke1} \) \( \text{Qf4} + \) 29.\( \text{Ke1} \) \( \text{Re8} + \) 30.\( \text{Qd2} \) \( \text{Qd3#} \);

C) 23.\( \text{Bd5} \) \( \text{Nd3} \) \( \mu \) Once more the knight strives for the beautiful square f4, where it assists in creating threats against the white king;

D) Again, White should not abandon his f3-pawn too soon: 23.\( \text{Kg2!} \), but Black retains all the chances after 23...\( \text{Nd3!} \), after which he can continue to work steadily on pursuing an initiative against the white king.

23.\( \text{Kg2} \) \( \text{Nh4} + \) 24.\( \text{Kf1!} \)

White finds the best defence. The king is far worse placed on h1: 24.\( \text{Kh1?} \) \( \text{Qd8} \) and again, Black can do what he wants.
24...\text{\textit{f}}8!

Black has to move his rook, but he doesn’t want to allow piece exchanges. He needs the rook for a mating attack. However, Black’s plan is first to improve the positions of his queen and knight, and then bring his rook into the attack. Here we see that the thinking power of a grandmaster sometimes reaches further than that of the strongest engines. They do assess this move, but prefer another. On 24...\textit{d}8 follows 25...\textit{d}1, and after 24...\textit{e}8 comes 25...\textit{e}1.

25...\textit{d}1

25...\textit{f}5!
Black is going to chase the king onto an open board with ...\( \text{Q}h3+ \), in order to bring up the rook (possibly with gain of tempo), and does not want to be bothered by a rook exchange.

26.\( \text{Rd7} \)

After 26.\( \text{Rd7} \) \( \text{Qf3} \) 27.\( \text{Qd4} \) \( \text{Qg2+} \) 28.\( \text{Ke2} \) \( \text{Qxh2} \) the white king will also be sitting in a draught.

Snatching a pawn with 26.\( \text{Qxa7} \) is not good in view of 26...\( \text{Qh3+} \) 27.\( \text{Ke2} \) \( \text{Qf3+} \) 28.\( \text{Kd2} \) \( \text{Rc8} \) (Kogan), after which the black attack is very dangerous.

26...\( \text{Qf3} \) 27.\( \text{Qxa7} \)

27...\( \text{Qe5}! ? \)

Also good seems to be 27...\( \text{Kh8}! \), with the idea of freeing the rook from its defensive position: 28.\( \text{h4!} \) (in order to prevent the back-rank mate; 28.\( \text{xf7} \) \( \text{xf7}! \) 29.\( \text{xf7} \) \( \text{d3+} \) 30.\( \text{h4} \) \( \text{g2} \) \( \text{h4+} \) 31.\( \text{g1} \) \( \text{d1#} \); 28.\( \text{xf7} \) \( \text{d3+} \) 29.\( \text{g2} \) \( \text{h4+} \) 30.\( \text{g1} \) \( \text{b1}+) \) 28...\( \text{e8} \) 29.\( \text{e7} \) \( \text{b5+} \) 30.\( \text{g2} \) \( \text{Kh4+} \), and Black wins.

28.\( \text{Qd5} \)

Temporarily lifting the pressure from f7. So Black has a free hand for the moment.

28...\( \text{Qh3+} \) 29.\( \text{Ke2} \) \( \text{Qg4+} \) 30.\( \text{Qf1} \) \( \text{Qf3} \) 31.\( \text{Qe3} \) \( \text{Qxh2+} \) 32.\( \text{Ke1} \) \( \text{Qc8} \)

It is understandable that Black also wants to bring his rook into the attack, as with the united forces of the queen, rook and knight, his attack will be strong. Nevertheless, there are still a couple of beautiful moves that have to be found in order to convert this into a win.

In fact, objectively, 32...\( \text{g1+} \) 33.\( \text{Ke2} \) \( \text{b1} \) was a little stronger. For White it is annoying that the queen has already penetrated into his position.

33.\( \text{a3?} \)
This protects the b4-square, but that wasn’t really necessary. More resistance could have been offered by 33...\textit{Ec5}, when strangely there is nothing decisive for Black. Best seems to be 33...\textit{Ef3+} (33...\textit{Ee4+} 34.\textit{Ec3} \textit{Ed8}; 33...\textit{Ed8} 34.\textit{Ed5}; 33...\textit{Ed8} 34.\textit{Ed5}), which after 34.\textit{Ed2} \textit{Ee5+} 35.\textit{Ed2} \textit{Exe5} 36.\textit{Exe5} \textit{Ee5} leads to somewhat better chances. However, nothing would have been decided as yet.

\textbf{33...\textit{Eg1+}}

Now the queen, rook and knight are working at full force.

\textbf{34.\textit{Ec2} \textit{Ee1+} 35.\textit{Ed2} \textit{Eb1!}}

Well spotted by Kogan! 35...\textit{Ec1+} is, oddly enough, less convincing, because when the white king moves, a queen swap is threatened. After 36.\textit{Ed2} \textit{Exe2+} 37.\textit{Ed2} the black queen has to move again.

\textbf{36.\textit{Ed3?}}

White collapses under the pressure. Only with 36.\textit{Ec2} could he continue the game, but after 36...\textit{Ed4}! he would have lost anyway.

\textbf{36...\textit{Ee1+}}

Now, yes!

\textbf{37.\textit{Ee2} \textit{Eh8+}}

A memorable game for multiple Dutch champion Loek van Wely was the following. Van Wely managed to overcome the American champion, Hikaru Nakamura, in grand style, weaving several instructive motifs into the attack with \textit{\textit{Ee1+}}.

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|l|}
\hline
Hikaru Nakamura \\
Loek van Wely \\
Wijk aan Zee 2014 (7) \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}
With his last move, 38.\texttt{g}3-c7, Nakamura launches a vicious counterattack in an awkward position. 

\textbf{38...\texttt{b}1+!}

Van Wely had to see the consequences of this move far in advance. After 38...\texttt{xd}2? 39.\texttt{xf}7 Black has to force a draw by perpetual check, since the threat of 40.\texttt{g}8 mate cannot be parried. 

\textbf{38...\texttt{b}1+! 39.\texttt{c}1}

The nice point is that after 39.\texttt{h}2 \texttt{f}3+ 40.\texttt{g}2 \texttt{xd}2 Black can allow the capture on f7, as now he has a winning attack: 41.\texttt{xf}7 \texttt{xe}4+, when there are a few beautiful variations:
analysis diagram

A) 42.\texttt{g3} $\texttt{f1}+ 43.\texttt{h3} $\texttt{h1}#;

B) 42.\texttt{g1} $\texttt{f3}+ 43.\texttt{f1} $\texttt{d3}+ 44.\texttt{g2} $\texttt{xh4}+ 45.\texttt{g1} (45.\texttt{h2} $\texttt{f3}+ 46.\texttt{g2} $\texttt{xg5}) 45...$\texttt{f3}+ 46.\texttt{g2} $\texttt{xg5}$

analysis diagram

and Black has obtained an escape square on h6!;

C) 42.f3 is the most tenacious: 42...$\texttt{e2}+ 43.\texttt{h3} $\texttt{f1}+ 44.\texttt{g3} $\texttt{e4}+ 45.\texttt{f4} $\texttt{e5}+ 46.\texttt{xe4} $\texttt{e2}+ 47.\texttt{d5} $\texttt{a2}$+
With an X-ray attack.

39...\textit{f3+} 40.\textit{g2}

40.\textit{h1 d3}, with the threat of 41...\textit{f1} mate, forces White to play 41.\textit{g2} anyway, in less favourable circumstances.

40...\textit{xh4+} 41.\textit{h3}

Or 41.\textit{g3 xe4} 42.\textit{xf7 g4+} (42...\textit{g2+} 43.\textit{f4 f3#}) 43.\textit{h2 g2#}.

If 41.\textit{g1}, 41...\textit{xe4} also wins easily, of course.

41...\textit{xe4}
42. $\text{Qf4}$

Again, White cannot play for mate himself in view of 42. $\text{Qxf7 Qg2+}$ 43. $\text{Kxh4 Qg4#}$.

42... $\text{Qh1+}$ 43. $\text{Qh2}$

43. $\text{g3 f5+}$ wins the queen.

43... $\text{Qb7}$

Van Wely keeps playing optimally.

44. $\text{Qd8}$
44...\text{\textbf{e5}}!

And again he makes use of some tactics in the position. Nakamura drains the poisoned cup to the bottom...

45.f4 \text{\textbf{f3+}} 46.\text{\textbf{g3 h1+}} 47.\text{\textbf{h2 f3+}} 48.\text{\textbf{g3 h1+}} 49.\text{\textbf{h2 xc1}} 50.fxe5

50.xh4 would have allowed Black to play a nice cat-and-mouse game: 50...\text{xf4} 51.\text{g2 xg5+} 52.xg5 \text{h1+} 53.g3 \text{g1+} 54.f4 (54.h4 \text{h2#}) 54.c1+

\textit{analysis diagram}

and again the queen perishes due to an X-ray check.
$50 \ldots \text{Q}xg5 \ 51. \text{Q}f4$

The American likes a joke.

$51. \text{Q}xd8$

After $51. \text{Q}xf4 \ 52. \text{R}h8+! \ \text{K}g7 \ 53. \text{R}g8+$ he would still have achieved a draw with a rampant rook!

$52. \text{Q}xf7+ \text{h}6 \ 0-1$

What a wonderful game! After $53. \text{Q}f4+ \text{g}5$ it is indeed over.

I came across a very special case when, sitting in my easy chair at home, I was following a game from the open grandmaster tournament in Gibraltar online. I know this event, which always has a strong field, all too well, as I have played there twice, with my partner, Petra.

The game that had captured my attention was one by the young Dutch IM Stefan Kuipers, who was well on his way to scoring a grandmaster norm. In the end he did indeed achieve the norm with ease. In most of his games he had the wind in his sails, but in the following position he had got into big trouble against the strong Israeli GM, Michael Roiz.

After a highly tense phase, Kuipers had to give up his queen, but with his three remaining pieces he had woven a kind of mating net around the black king. A fascinating spectacle ensued:

**Stefan Kuipers**

**Michael Roiz**

Gibraltar 2015 (2)
Black to move

Here, Black has to start an initiative with queen and knight. White’s pieces are all protecting each other, and he is even threatening mate on h7.

So the question is: how can Black win, if at all? Roiz proves to be up to the task!

56...\textit{Q}h6+

For Black the main thing is to take care that he doesn’t get mated. If his queen has to protect h7, he can only win by pushing his d-pawn (after White has taken on d7). If he can protect h7 with his knight, things will be easier, because then the queen can move freely.

57.\textit{K}g3

57.\textit{g}4? would cost material: 57...\textit{e}5+ 58.\textit{f}5  \textit{x}f7.
57...\textit{\textit{\textbf{g5+}}}

It is a kind of ‘minefield’ the white king is entering here. At any move he may step on a ‘landmine’, after which something in his position will ‘explode’.

58.\textit{\textbf{h2}}

Again, the only move. 58.f3\textit{? \textit{\textbf{e5+}}, 58.h3\textit{? even runs into mate: 58...\textit{\textbf{f4+ 59.h2 g2#}}.}

58...\textit{\textbf{h4+ 59.g2}}

After 59.g1 \textit{\textbf{g3+ White is again mated: 60.h1 (60.f1 f2#) 60...f2#}.}
A step in the wrong direction. As we shall see further on, Black could have forced the win with 59...\(\text{\textit{Ne1+}}\!).

60.\(\text{\textit{Kh2}}\)

60.\(\text{\textit{f3? Ne5+}}\).

60.\(\text{\textit{f1?}}\) would have been a nice try: 60...\(\text{\textit{f4+}}\) and now:

A) 61.\(\text{\textit{f2}}\) even runs into a forced mate: 61...\(\text{\textit{e3+}}\) 62.\(\text{\textit{d1}}\) (62.\(\text{\textit{f1 f2#}}\)) 62...\(\text{\textit{e1+}}\) 63.\(\text{\textit{e2}}\) \(\text{\textit{f2+}}\) 64.\(\text{\textit{b3}}\) (64.\(\text{\textit{b1 b2#}}\)) 64...\(\text{\textit{c1+}}\) 65.\(\text{\textit{b4 b5#}}\);

B) 61.\(\text{\textit{g1 g3+}}\) 62.\(\text{\textit{h1 f2#}}\);

C) After 61.\(\text{\textit{g2!}}\) it remains to be seen how Black can force the win. For example: 61...\(\text{\textit{e1+}}\) 62.\(\text{\textit{g1 f3+}}\) 63.\(\text{\textit{g2 g5}}\)

\begin{center}
\begin{figure}
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{analysis_diagram.png}
\end{figure}
\end{center}

\textit{analysis diagram}

It looks as if Black has succeeded, but the queen is very unfortunately placed on f4, which White exploits as follows: 64.\(\text{\textit{f8+ g7}}\) 65.\(\text{\textit{f7+?!}}\) White applies a small nuance. 65.\(\text{\textit{h5+ xf8}}\) 66.\(\text{\textit{xf4 xe8}}\) results in a favourable, if not winning, knight ending for Black. Please note how well the black knight is positioned on g5. 65...\(\text{\textit{xf7}}\) 66.\(\text{\textit{h5+ f8}}\) 67.\(\text{\textit{xf4 xe8}}\)
Almost the same position as in the side variation, with the difference that the black knight is on f7. And that difference is quite significant: \[68. \text{Qd}3!\] Now the white king threatens to move via f3 to e4, after which the black pawns will be lost. The only move is \[68... \text{Ng}5!\], when it is still questionable whether Black can win. A few attempts:

C1) 69. \text{Qg}3 \text{e}6 and the pawns are supported by the black knight; Black wins;

C2) 69.a4! (as in other knight endings, the rook pawns must decide) 69... \text{h}5 70.a5 \text{d}d7 71.\text{c}5+ (71.\text{Qg}3 \text{e}6 72.\text{Qh}4 \text{d}6 73.a6 \text{c}5 74.a7 \text{c}7 and also here the two connected passed pawns decide the battle) 71...\text{e}7 72.\text{g}3 \text{b}8 73.\text{f}4 \text{h}4 74.\text{d}3 \text{e}6+ 75.\text{g}4 \text{c}5 76.\text{b}2! – here we have not been able to find a win for Black.

\[60... \text{Qf}4+?\]

Here he misses a direct win, which could be attained with \[60... \text{Qh}4+!\]. Further on, this position will reappear on the board.

\[61.\text{h}3\]

Again, \[61.\text{g}2\] came into consideration. Black’s chance, also here, seems to be \[61... \text{e}1+ 62.\text{g}1!\] (62.\text{h}3 \text{f}3+ 63.\text{h}4 \text{g}2+ 64.\text{g}5 \text{f}4+ 65.\text{h}5 \text{h}4+) \[62... \text{f}3+ 63.\text{g}2 \text{g}5, with a transfer to the above-mentioned knight ending.

Even \[61.\text{h}1\] seems possible: \[61... \text{f}1+ 62.\text{h}2 \text{e}2+ 63.\text{g}1 \text{e}1+ 64.\text{g}2 \text{f}2+ 65.\text{h}3 \text{f}4+ 66.\text{g}4\] and it seems as if White is holding.

\[61... \text{e}3+ 62.\text{h}2 \text{e}5+ 63.\text{h}1 \text{e}1+ 64.\text{h}2 \text{h}4+!\]

Finally we have the same position as on move 60.
65. \( \text{g}2 \text{c}1+! \)
And now he does find the win.

66. \( \text{f}1 \)

66. \( \text{g}1 \text{f}3+ \) and the knight is played to g5 with tempo, where it can protect h7, securing the win for Black.

66...\( \text{h}1+ \) 67. \( \text{e}2 \)

67. \( \text{f}2 \text{d}3+ \) and now:

A) The way in which White is mated after 68. \( \text{e}2 \) is instructive: 68...\( \text{f}4+ \) 69. \( \text{d}2 \) 69. \( \text{f}2 \text{g}2+ \) 70. \( \text{e}1 \text{e}2\#. \)
analysis diagram

Just look at the enormous amount of squares that are controlled by the queen, the knight, and the pawn on d4. Mate is not far off now: 69...\texttt{Qg2+} 70.\texttt{Ke1} 70.\texttt{Kd1} \texttt{Qe2+} 71.\texttt{Kc1} \texttt{Qd3+} 72.\texttt{Kb1} \texttt{Kb2#}. 70...\texttt{Qf1+} 71.\texttt{Ke2} 71.\texttt{Kd2} \texttt{Qe2+} 72.\texttt{Kc1} \texttt{Qd3+} 73.\texttt{Kb1} \texttt{Kb2#}. 71...\texttt{Qd3+} 72.\texttt{Kc1} 72.\texttt{Kb2} \texttt{Qe2+} 73.\texttt{Kb3} \texttt{Kc1+} 74.\texttt{Kb4} \texttt{Kb5#} – we’ve seen this mate before. 72...\texttt{Qd5+} 73.\texttt{Ke1} \texttt{Qe2+} 74.\texttt{Kd1} 74.\texttt{Kb2} \texttt{Qa4#} – the beautiful mate that we have seen before! 74...\texttt{Qd1+} 75.\texttt{Kb2} \texttt{Qa4#}.

B) 68.\texttt{Kg3} \texttt{Qg1+} 69.\texttt{Kh4} 69.\texttt{Kf3} \texttt{Qe5+}; 69.\texttt{Kf3} \texttt{Qh+} 70.\texttt{Kg4} \texttt{Qh1+} 71.\texttt{Qg5} \texttt{Qe4+} 72.\texttt{Qxe4} \texttt{Qxe4} and here also, the mate on h7 is gone, so Black is winning. 69...\texttt{Kh2+} 70.\texttt{Kg5} 70.\texttt{Kg4} \texttt{Qe5+}. 70...\texttt{Kh6+} We haven’t seen this little motif yet. White now loses as follows: 71.\texttt{Kf5} 71.\texttt{Kf5} 71.\texttt{Kg6} \texttt{Qe5+}. 71...\texttt{Qe5+} 72.\texttt{Kg4} 72.\texttt{Kg4} \texttt{Kg5#}. 72...\texttt{Qg5+} 73.\texttt{Kf3} 73.\texttt{Kf3} \texttt{Qf4+} 74.\texttt{Kh2} \texttt{Qg2#}. 73...\texttt{Qe5+} and it’s fixed again.

67...\texttt{d3+!}
Without the help of this pawn, Black cannot succeed, since at the moment the queen and knight are rather unfavourably placed.

68. \( \text{Ke3} \)

68. \( \text{d2} \) is met by 68... \( \text{Qh2}+ \) and now:

A) After 69. \( \text{e3} \) \( \text{e5}+ \) 70. \( \text{f2} \) (70. \( \text{d2} \) transposes to a position which we will also see later on) 70... \( \text{e2}+ \) 71. \( \text{g3} \) (71. \( \text{g1} \) \( \text{g2}# \)) 71... \( \text{f3}+ \) 72. \( \text{h4} \) (72. \( \text{h2} \) \( \text{g2}# \)) 72... \( \text{g2}+ \) 73. \( \text{g5} \) \( \text{f4}+ \) 74. \( \text{h5} \) \( \text{h4}# \);

B) 69. \( \text{xe1} \) \( \text{e2}# \) – and so the pawn turns out to be quite useful;

C) 69. \( \text{c3} \) – as it turns out, the flight to this side of the board does not help White either: 69... \( \text{c2}+ \) Simplest. Black can also force the win with 69... \( \text{d2} \), because the queen protects h7, and he is threatening to promote his pawn. But still, the winning variation is very hard to calculate over the board. After all, Black first has to ward off a modest white initiative. This can be done with 70. \( \text{f8}+ \) \( \text{g7} \) 71. \( \text{f7}+ \) \( \text{g6} \) 72. \( \text{f8}+ \) \( \text{g5} \), but now his proud pawn on d2 is lost: 73. \( \text{e4}+ \) \( \text{h4} \) 74. \( \text{xd2} \) Since the \( \text{f8} \) is now unprotected, Black wins after all: 74... \( \text{e5}+ \) 75. \( \text{b3} \) \( \text{b5}+ \) 76. \( \text{c3} \) \( \text{c5}+ \) followed by 77... \( \text{xf8} \).

70. \( \text{b4} \) \( \text{d2} \) From a distance, the queen keeps h7 covered, while the promotion of the d-pawn can no longer be prevented.

68... \( \text{h3}+ \) 69. \( \text{f4} \)

69. \( \text{d2} \) is met by 69... \( \text{h2}+ \), transposing to the variations given above.

On 69. \( \text{e4} \), 69... \( \text{d2} \) wins simply.

The same goes for 69. \( \text{d4} \) d2.

69... \( \text{h6}+ \)

69... \( \text{d2} \) was also sufficient.

70. \( \text{f5} \)
70...\( \text{Qf3} \)

Roiz wants to give his knight a part in the play. 70...d2 was another simple win.

71.\( \text{Rd7} \)

71.\( \text{Rxh7+} \) is of course impossible in view of 71...\( \text{Qxh7+} \) 72.\( \text{Nxh7 d2} \). Please note that in this type of variation, the \( \text{Be8} \) doesn’t manage to get control of the d1-square. The c6-pawn is in the way, and at this moment the black \( \text{Nf3} \) is, too.

71...\( \text{Qg5+} \) 72.\( \text{Ke6} \)

In order not to lose the knight, White voluntarily enters a mating net. Thus, he grants his opponent the honour of finding an ingenious route to the win.

72...\( \text{Qe5+} \) 73.\( \text{Qf7 Qg5+} \) 74.\( \text{Qf8 Qxf6+} \) 75.\( \text{Rf7 Qe6#} \)

**Combination of \( \text{Q+N} \) vs \( \text{Q+B} \)**

It is time to put the spotlight on the struggle between \( \text{Q+N} \) versus \( \text{Q+B} \). This example, from ex-World Champion Anand, clearly shows that the combination of \( \text{Q+Q} \) is (often) stronger than that of \( \text{Q+B} \) – especially if the bishop is not so strong, and is hindered by a pawn in the centre. A couple of beautiful typical checkmates turn up in this fragment as well.

Viswanathan Anand
Teimour Radjabov
Linares 2009 (1)
White to move

This is a typical position in which you have to determine whether the combination of $Q+N$ is stronger than $Q+B$. White possesses a queen and knight, Black has a queen and bishop. The bishop isn’t exactly the pride of Black’s position, since the e5-pawn is standing in the way of its defence of the king. On the other hand, the white knight stands like a ‘tower of strength’ on e4. We can notice that the white king is somewhat safer than the black king. Not only are there more pawns covering it, but the knight also participates in the defence. Anand flawlessly demonstrates that the knight can also be used in the attack.

42.g4!

Thus, White secures the f5-square for the knight. In this way he tries to create threats against the black king.

42...c6 43.g3 h7
44. \( \text{Qf5} \)

This also seemed like a good moment for 44. \( \text{Qd3}^+ \), when Black faces the problem that he has to hide his king somewhere: 44... \( \text{Qg6} \) and now:

A) 45. \( \text{Qxg6}^+ \text{Kxg6} \) 46. \( \text{Qe4} \) is good for White, but probably not winning because his king cannot enter Black’s position;

B) 45. \( \text{Qf5}! \) (now White threatens to penetrate with his queen via e4 or c2. Perhaps Anand underestimated this knight move, and thought it would allow Black to get out of trouble after 45...h5?! (45... \( \text{Kh8} \) 46. \( \text{Qe4} \text{Qf6} \) 47. \( \text{Qa8}^+ \text{Kh7} \) 48. \( \text{Qc8} \) and Black has big problems). But here White has the wonderful 46. \( \text{Qb1}! \).
And the threat of 47.\textit{Q}h1 just wins a valuable pawn, after which the position should be winning for White. 46...hxg4?? now fails to 47.\textit{Q}h1+ \textit{K}g8 48.\textit{N}e7+.

\textbf{44...\textit{B}b6 45.\textit{Q}d3 \textit{h}8 46.\textit{Q}e2 \textit{B}c7}

The bishop has managed to move behind the pawn, but here it is still bad.

\textbf{47.\textit{Q}d2!}

The white queen now makes use of a few threats to try and enter the black position.

\textbf{47...\textit{K}h7 48.\textit{N}e7}

With gain of tempo, the knight creates space and opens the b1-h7 diagonal.

\textbf{48...\textit{Q}c5?!}

An inaccuracy, which simplifies White’s winning process. However, after the slightly better 48...\textit{Q}d6 49.\textit{Q}c2+ \textit{K}h8 50.\textit{N}f5 \textit{B}b6 51.\textit{Q}e4 Black has not exactly solved all his problems either.

\textbf{49.\textit{Q}d3+ \textit{K}h8 50.\textit{Q}d7}
Now the beautiful threat is $51.\text{Qe8+ Kg7 52.Qg8+ Kf6 53.Nd5+}$, winning the queen since the black king has no squares left.

Here we see the important difference between the cooperation of $\text{Q+N}$ versus $\text{Q+B}$. The white attacking forces are superior because the black bishop cannot take part in the defence. Even worse: it comes under threat in all variations.

50...e4

A pawn sacrifice born out of necessity, but it won’t help Black.

51.Qe8+ Kg7

Now the same variation doesn’t yield White much, because the black king would have the e5-square to run to.

52.Qf5+

52.Qg8+ Kf6 53.Nd5+ Ke5.

52...Kf6 53.Qxe4

Naturally, for the moment Anand is satisfied with winning a pawn.

53...b6 54.h3

The difference in safety of both kings is still clearly visible.
54...h5?!

It is hard to criticize this move; in a bad position you get bad moves. This is also the case here; Black collapses quickly. The alternative 54...c7 was a little more tenacious, although White is probably also winning after 55.a8!.

55.g5+!

With this beautiful motif, Anand crowns his superb play in this game. In the coming tactical phase, a couple of magnificent motifs occur, all of which are definitely worth looking at.

55...xg5

Or 55...g6 56.d4+ f7 57.g6+! and Black can no longer prevent a knight fork: 57...f6 58.e6+ g7 59.f5+ h8 60.e8+.

Or also: 55...f7 56.g6+ xg6 After 56...f6 the passed pawn decides: 57.g7. 57.e6+ and the attacking machine of + is working at full steam: 57...g5 Or 57...h7 58.f7+ h8 59.g7#.
58.\textit{Ne7}!! With this quiet move White introduces the deadly threat of 59.\textit{Qg6+ Kf4 60.Qe4+ Kg5 61.Qh4+ Kh6 62.Qf6+ Kh7 63.Qg6+ Kh8 64.Qg8#}. If now 58...\textit{Qf2} 59.Qf5+ Kh6 60.Qg6#.

\textit{56.Ne7!}

Again the same concept. Anand has accurately assessed that on this square the knight will support the coming coup de grâce.

Of course, the above-mentioned threat (starting with 57.\textit{Bg6+}) is again topical.

\textit{56...f6 57.Nd5+ Qg7}

After 57...\textit{f7} the black king is driven back, and so White will conquer the unfortunate black bishop. For example: 58.Qf5+ e8 (58...\textit{g7} 59.Qf6+; 58...\textit{g8} 59.Qe6+) 59.Qf6+ d8 60.Qxb6 and Black doesn't even have a useful check.

\textit{58.Qe5+ Qh6 59.Qf6+ Qh7}

Anand could also take the bishop, but he is hunting for bigger game now.
60. \textit{Qf7}+! \textit{Kh6} 61. \textit{Ne7}!

The picturesque mates with \textit{Q} + \textit{N}, that played the starring role throughout this fragment, now become fatal for Black. He resigned here in view of 61... \textit{Qg1} (61... \textit{Qg5} 62. \textit{f4}+ \textit{Kh6} 63. \textit{Qg6}; 61... \textit{Qc2} 62. \textit{Qg8}+ \textit{Qg5} 63. \textit{Qf6#}) 62. \textit{Qg8}+ \textit{Qg5} 63. \textit{Qf6}...

\textit{analysis diagram}

And it’s mate.

\textbf{Combination of} \textit{Q} + \textit{N} \textit{vs} \textit{Q} + \textit{N}
My former pupil Jan Werle, with whom I have kept (ir-)regular contact, sent me a game in which, he was quite proud to say, he had managed to trounce a World Champion. I suppose that Rustam Kasimdzhanov has heard this phrase before, after other rare losses to lower-rated opponents... I thankfully make use of the annotations that Jan sent me.

Rustam Kasimdzhanov  
Jan Werle  
Vlissingen 2004 (7)

Black to move

This position looks completely balanced. The only thing that can be said about it is that it looks as if the black knight is positioned a little more effectively in the centre than its white counterpart. The young Dutch grandmaster has concocted an ingenious plan.

30...b5!!

A clever little move, with which Black opens the a7-g1 diagonal for the queen. This turns out to be quite useful, especially now that White has just played $\text{Ne}3$. The consequences turn out to be much graver for White than you would think at first sight.

31.$\text{Ne}3$

Stepping into a kind of ‘eternal pin’. White can only escape from it by entering a highly disadvantageous knight – or sometimes even pawn – ending.

If White takes a wait-and-see approach with 31.a3?, it already becomes clear how serious the situation is. Black can orchestrate a dangerous attack with 31...$\text{b6}+$ 32.$\text{g2}$ (32.e3 $\text{h5}$) 32...$\text{h5}$ 33.$\text{f2}$ $\text{e3}+$ 34.$\text{h3}$ (34.$\text{g1}$ is no good in view of 34...$\text{d1}$; 34.$\text{h1}$ fails to 34...$\text{c4}$) 34...$\text{e6}+$ 35.$\text{g4}$ $\text{hxg4}+$ 36.$\text{g3}$ $\text{g5}!$ and White can resign.

31...$\text{b6}$
Thus, Black introduces a kind of ‘eternal pin’ which is highly unpleasant for White.

32.\textbf{c3} \textbf{f7}!

No time for clichés! The king rushes to the scene of battle – the queenside.

The move 32...h5 looks logical, in order to maintain the knight on f5, but in that case White could break the pin with 33.\textbf{c5}.

33.\textbf{c5}

Forced, but this will cost him a pawn. The pawn ending after 33.g4 \textbf{xe3} 34.\textbf{xe3} loses for White after 34...\textbf{e6}! 35.\textbf{xb6+} axb6 36.\textbf{xe3} \textbf{d5}, and it is already almost time to resign. After, for example, 37.\textbf{d2} \textbf{c4} 38.a3 \textbf{f5}! (played in the knowledge that White can do nothing anyway. A human player would opt for 38...\textbf{b3} here, but then the counterplay with 39.\textbf{e3} f5 40.\textbf{gxf5} gxf5 41.\textbf{d4} would still have to be calculated to the end. By the way, Black also wins in this line after 41...\textbf{xa3} 42.\textbf{e5} \textbf{xb4} 43.\textbf{xf5} \textbf{a4}! 44.\textbf{e5} b4 45.f5 b3 46.f6 b2 47.f7 b1=\textbf{w} 48.f8=\textbf{w} and now 48...\textbf{b2+} 49.\textbf{xe4} \textbf{xe2+}, with a winning queen ending) 39.\textbf{gxf5} gxf5 40.\textbf{c2} \textbf{d4} 41.\textbf{d2} e3+ 42.\textbf{c2} \textbf{e4} 43.\textbf{c3} h6! 44.h3 \textbf{xf4}, the rest is easy.

33...\textbf{xe5} 34.bxc5

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

34...\textbf{e7}?

A bad mistake, which might have had grave consequences, because Black hereby endangers his own magnificent concept. The best move was 34...\textbf{e6}. After 35.\textbf{d1} b4! White would have had to give up a pawn.

35.\textbf{d1}?

Kasimdzhanov isn’t on his guard either. With 35.\textbf{d5+}! \textbf{f7} 36.\textbf{c3} White could have won a pawn, after which he would have been the one playing for the win!

35...b4!
Werle picks up the thread again.

36.c6?

It clearly wasn’t the former World Champion’s day. Now the end comes swiftly. After 36.g4 Nh6! 37.e3 (37.h3 f5 38.g5 Qf7 is very good for Black thanks to the weak white e-pawn) 37...d7 38.g5 fxg5 39.fxg5 Qf7 40.d5, a draw would have been the most probable outcome.

36...d6 37.g4 h6

Again, the optimal move.

38.h3 xc6

Black has won a pawn, and as so often this proves decisive in the knight ending.

39.e3 d5 40.d2 f7 41.c2 c4 42.e3+ d4

And White conceded defeat. A possible continuation is 42...d4 43.f1 d6 44.b3 c4! 45.xb4 e3 46.g3 d5+ 47.b5 xf4 48.a6 e3 and everything is crystal-clear!

**Conclusions**

With the attacking combination of Q+N we pay attention to the following:

• are the queen and knight standing on same-coloured squares? (as then their cooperation is optimal)
• the cooperation between Q+N versus a castled position
• the cooperation between Q+N after a Bxh7+ sacrifice
• smothered mate
• discovered attack

We know a number of attacking techniques, among others:

• quite a few ‘ABC’s’
• many typical checkmate patterns
• attack of Q+N versus a bare king
• in resulting endgames, generally the combination of Q+N is stronger than Q+B
2.12 Set of Exercises

The white player has sacrificed the exchange in order to gain control of the dark squares. How did she continue here?

Show/Hide the Solution

Anne Haast
Thorsten Werbeck
Netherlands tt 2014/15 (3)

White continued with

21.h5!?

in order to drive the black king further into the corner. Black replied with

21...f6

which seems to win a piece. How did White continue her operation?

22.Qxf6+

With this beautiful sacrifice, the black king is drawn forward as if by a magnet. The queen and knight are standing ready to carry out the execution.
22.\textit{h6}+ \textit{g8} 23.\textit{xf6} would also have given White an advantage, but after 23...\textit{d2} it’s not so simple.

\textbf{22...\textit{xf6}}

Declining the sacrifice with 22...\textit{g8} didn’t come into consideration. After 23.hxg6 hxg6 24.\textit{g4}, mate is forced.

\textbf{23.\textit{f3}+!}

Of course this move had to be calculated in advance.

\textbf{23...\textit{g7}}

The alternatives lose immediately: 23...\textit{xe5} 24.\textit{e1#}; 23...\textit{g5} 24.\textit{f7+ h4} 25.\textit{h3#}; and 23...\textit{e7} 24.\textit{f7#}.

\textbf{24.\textit{f7}+ \textit{h6}}

On 24...\textit{h8} White had planned 25.hxg6, again with a forced mate.

\textbf{25.\textit{f4}+}

Every move is with check.

\textbf{25...g5}

There is no way out now, so Black allows White an attractive mate. After 25...\textit{g7} the king also gets mated: 26.h6+ \textit{g8} (or 26...\textit{h8} 27.\textit{f6+ g8} 28.\textit{g7#}) 27.\textit{f7+ h8} 28.\textit{g7#}.

\textbf{26.\textit{f6+ xh5} 27.g4+ 1-0}

27...\textit{h4} 28.\textit{h6#}. 

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.8\textwidth]{chess_board.png}
\end{center}
How can Black involve his queen in the attack?

**Show/Hide the Solution**

Earlier in the game, Black sacrificed the exchange with ...\( \texttt{xf3} \). By way of compensation there is a hole in the white king’s position. We can see that it is not so easy for Black to bring up new pieces. The rook wants to go to \( f8 \), but that square is covered by the white bishop. Neither will Black’s dark-squared bishop be able to enter the fray any time soon.

As always, it is important to find a way for the black queen to join the battle. Both on \( g5 \) and on \( h3 \) the queen would be very well placed. Therefore, Black played:

**18...\( \texttt{g2!} \)**

Obviously, 19...\( \texttt{h3} \) is threatened now.

**19.\( \texttt{e3} \)**

A little trick. 19.f4 didn’t help either: 19...\( \texttt{f3+} \) 20.\( \texttt{xg2 \: g4+} \) 21.\( \texttt{f1 \: h2#} \) – again, a picturesque mate.

**19...\( \texttt{xf3+!} \)**

The right plan! Not immediately 19...\( \texttt{h3?} \) in view of 20.\( \texttt{e6+!} \), trading queens, and the danger for White is over.

**20.\( \texttt{xg2 \: g4+} \) 21.\( \texttt{f1} \)**

After 21.\( \texttt{h1 \: h3#} \) we have (a variant of) our first mate pattern.

**21...\( \texttt{h2#} \)**
After 44...Rxh3+ 45.Nxh3 Qxh3+ 46.Kg1 how can Black catch the white king in a mating net?

Show/Hide the Solution

Raoul van Ketel
Christian Richter
Leiden 2010/11 (5)

The first moves are obvious:

44...Rxh3+ 45.Nxh3 Qxh3+ 46.Kg1

How to continue? Black has to take care that the king doesn’t walk away via f2.

46...Qg3+

Certainly not 46...Ne2+? on account of 47.Kf2 Qh2+ 48.Ke1 and the king escapes. Here, the queen and knight do not work well together.

47.Kh1 Qh4+!

Black wants to include the knight in the final assault without allowing the king to walk away via f2.

48.Kg1 Ne2+

Fixed! Not 48...Nh3+?, as after 49.Kg2 Qxg4+ 50.h2 White has reached safety.
In this position, White blundered with

27.\textit{c2}??

How can Black now deflect an important defender? Give a few variations.

\textbf{Show/Hide the Solution}

\textbf{Boris Spassky
Robert Fischer
Reykjavik Wch m 1972 (5)}

White is a tad worse. The black pieces can find better employment than their white counterparts. In this closed position, the bishop pair isn’t worth much.

27.\textit{c2}??

It clearly was not a good day for Spassky. After he had taken a 2-0 lead in this match for the World Championship, a great commotion arose. Fischer had given away a bishop in the first game; then he hadn’t turned up for the second game, leaving the arbiter no choice but to declare the game lost for him by default. The reason for all this? Fischer didn’t want cameras in the playing hall, whereas the main sponsor of the event had stipulated that he would be allowed to film the games and broadcast them all over the world. Fischer departed from Reykjavik and flew back to the United States. But when the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Henry Kissinger, called him personally that it was of the utmost importance that, in those Cold War days, he appeared at the board to give the Soviets a lesson, Fischer took the flight back to Reykjavik. And a little later he was behind the board again, playing Black, and seemingly trailing hopelessly by 0-2. However, he had a big advantage psychologically, of course.
The third game was won by Fischer in grand style, the fourth game was drawn, and in this, the fifth, game he was also in command – despite a spectacular novelty unleashed by Spassky. Fischer reacted laconically, and caused the World Champion to waver.

These are all factors that may partly explain this blunder. Obviously, Spassky should have played 27.\textit{b1}, after which he still wouldn’t have great problems.

27.\textit{c2?? \textit{xa4!} }

Wonderful – the queen is deflected from the scene of battle (the centre and the kingside). The black \textit{\textit{Q}+\textit{N}} tandem has enormous potential, which is more than sufficient for the win.

Spassky resigned here. The justification of the sacrifice consists in 28.\textit{xa4} (of course, 28.\textit{d2} also loses simply after 28...\textit{xd1} 29.\textit{xd1} \textit{xe4} 30.\textit{d2} and Black can choose between several ways to deal with this situation. Probably, 30...a4! is the strongest continuation here) 28...\textit{xe4}

\textit{analysis diagram}

With the double threat of 29...\textit{xg2}# and 29...\textit{xe1}#. Now, 29.\textit{f2} is forced, but then we get to see an exceptionally beautiful mate picture which we already know from earlier examples: 29...\textit{d3+} 30.\textit{g3} \textit{h4+}! (surprisingly, this is the quickest and most efficient way to win) 31.\textit{f3} \textit{f4+} 32.\textit{e2} \textit{c1}#. 
2.13 Play with major pieces

In the previous paragraphs, we mainly looked at examples from middlegames. Now we will look at positions with a little less material, and concentrate on examples with major pieces. An endgame with major pieces is sometimes called the ‘fourth phase of the game’ (after the opening, the middlegame, and the endgame). In contrast to many other endgames, here it is best to safely tuck away your king: there are checkmate patterns lurking! Of course, we will start with several standard attacking motifs that are typical for positions with major pieces.

Back rank

We start with an amusing little technique that is shown in a study by Rossi. He found a highly original way for White to drive the black king into a mating net. In the Netherlands, this type of cooperation by the queen and rook is called ‘rolmatje’ (‘rolling mate’), because these major pieces are ‘rolling over each other’ so nicely, until they are able to give mate on the edge of the board.

Gianni Rossi
‘Rolling mate’, 1985
White to move

1.\textit{R}f4+ \textit{K}a3 2.\textit{R}f3+ \textit{K}a2 3.\textit{Q}b3+ \textit{K}a1

Now White would like to play 4.\textit{R}f1, were it not for the fact that his rook is pinned. So, the pin has to be broken first. This is achieved in an amusing way:

4.\textit{Q}d1+ \textit{K}b2 5.\textit{Q}e2+ \textit{K}b1 6.\textit{Q}f1+ \textit{K}c2 7.\textit{Q}g2+ \textit{K}b1

Mission accomplished. Now it’s the rook’s turn:

8.\textit{R}f1#
We continue with a simple example, where the defending rook on the back rank is rendered ineffective because it is deflected.

**Zenia Corrales Jimenez**  
**Sulennis Pina Vega**  
Panama 2011 (9)

![Chess Board](image)

*Black to move*

Black makes optimal use of White’s weak back rank. The rook on f1 is the only defender.

29...**Qxf2+**!

And now it is deflected.

30.**Rx f2** **Ra1+**

Followed by checkmate.

**Seventh rank**

Anyone who has gone beyond the novice stage, has been taught about the power of pieces standing on the seventh (or second) rank. Very often something can be gained on this rank, especially if the opponent is tempted to push his f-pawn forward in a position where he has castled kingside.

For less experienced players it is often hard to foresee that such weakening pawn moves can lead to accidents. (Grand-)masters are often on the look-out for such pawn moves, trying to provoke them, and then setting their sights on the weakened second (or seventh) rank. In particular, they focus on trying to find ways to penetrate with their pieces on this rank.

In order to show how weak the seventh (or second) rank can be, we have selected a few attractive examples.
Black to move

36...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{g}3}!!

This beautiful rook sacrifice forces White to open the second rank. After that, he will not be able to prevent mate on h2.

37.fxg3 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{a}2} + 38.\textcolor{blue}{\texttt{g}1} hxg3!

It’s quite striking how the white king can end up sitting in the ‘draught’ like that. This is an instructive fragment, which shows that with an attack by major pieces it is important to open up the seventh rank – with violence if necessary. If the adversary has no pieces to oppose us there, the game may be over quickly.

Pavel Tregubov
Arkady Rotshtein
Forni di Sopra 2012 (6)
In this sharp position, White manages to harass the black king:

35.\text{Re}8+ \text{Kg}7 36.\text{Qc}3+!

This forces a decisive weakening of the seventh rank.

36...f6

36...\text{Qf}6 fails to 37.\text{Rg}8+.

With a rook on the back rank, and a weakened seventh rank, there has to be something in it for White. And there is!
37.\textit{e6}

Quite sufficient for the win. However, White could have forced the entry of his queen into the black king’s position with the ingenious 37.g5!, which forces an opening of the h-file as well: 37...hxg5 and now White can also invade with the queen: 38.\textit{h}3 \textit{f}7 39.\textit{h}8. Mate cannot be parried. After 39.\textit{h}8 f5 there are many roads leading to Rome. But only with the artistic 40.\textit{g}8! could White enforce a quick checkmate: 40...\textit{xd}5 41.\textit{g}7+ \textit{e}6 42.\textit{e}8+ \textit{d}6 43.\textit{e}7+ \textit{c}6 44.\textit{c}7#. A wonderful epaulette mate, of the kind we have seen before.

37...\textit{f}4 38.\textit{e}7+ \textit{f}8 39.\textit{e}1

Here it becomes clear that the black king no longer enjoys any protection from its pawns.

39...\textit{b}8 40.\textit{h}7 \textit{g}8 41.\textit{a}7

Certainly not 41.\textit{e}7? as this allows Black to get off with perpetual check: 41...\textit{c}1+ 42.\textit{h}2 \textit{f}4+ 43.\textit{h}3 \textit{xb}3+ 44.g3 \textit{xg}3+ 45.fx\textit{g}3 \textit{f}1+ and it’s a draw.

41...\textit{e}5

Also after 41...\textit{h}8 42.g3 \textit{e}5 43.\textit{c}1 it would have been over.

42.\textit{c}1 \textit{g}5

Black has to concede more weaknesses with every move.

43.d6!

It is not a big problem for White to give up a pawn in order to open even more diagonals against the black king.

43...\textit{d}5

After 43...\textit{xd}6 44.\textit{c}4+ \textit{h}8, now the white queen reaches the seventh rank, since the black queen has been deflected
from the c1-f4 diagonal: 45.\textit{Qf7}.

\textbf{44.\textit{Qc2}}

Forcing another weakness.

\textbf{44...f5 45.gxf5 \textit{Qxd6}}

There was no longer any defence.

\textbf{46.\textit{Qc4+ \textit{Kh8} 47.\textit{Qf7} 1-0}

\textbf{Eliminating the defender}

Without defenders nearby, the king cannot compete against the attacking combination of queen and rook. So it is useful for the attacker to seek out the most important defender(-s) and harass them. Defenders can be eliminated in different ways. An important option is to lure them away (deflection). A lovely demonstration of this strategy was given by the man who was the undisputed number two in the world for some time: Levon Aronian.

\textbf{Levon Aronian}
\textbf{Andrey Volokitin}
\textbf{Kallithea tt 2008 (6)}

\textit{White to move}

This entire game is worth playing through, but we will limit ourselves to the beautiful finish featuring a king hunt. Despite his unusual position on the board, the black king seems to be quite safe, as the black knight is holding the position together. It would be nice if we could deflect this defender. And indeed, we can achieve this:

\textbf{28.\textit{Kh5}!!}
White threatens to give mate by taking on g5 with the queen or the rook. Because g5 cannot be satisfactorily protected, the rook has to be taken.

28...\texttt{Nxh5} 29.\texttt{Re5+ Kg4} 30.\texttt{Qxg5+ f3} 31.\texttt{Qh5+}

By now the black king has lost almost all of its protection, while it has been driven into the heart of White’s territory. In what comes next, the theme of the ‘rolling mate’ is quite useful!

32.\texttt{Qe2+}

Black resigned in view of 32.\texttt{Qe2+ Kg3} 33.\texttt{Qg5+ Kh4} 34.\texttt{Qh5#}.

Breaking open the position

We have seen clearly in the various examples that a ‘bare’ king doesn’t stand a chance against the attacking combination of \texttt{Q+R}. Therefore, with major pieces, breaking open the position is by far the most frequently used, and most important, tactic.

The next fragment shows another exposed king that gets victimized by two major pieces. The way in which the white player uses the queen and rook to cooperate optimally is highly instructive.
White to move

Black has all kinds of threats. First of all, mate on h2 is threatened, and moreover, the white queen is hanging. Should White defend or start a counterattack? With major pieces, the latter option is often best:

1. \texttt{\texttt{xB7}+!}

White makes a breach in the king’s position.

1... \texttt{\texttt{KB7}} 2. \texttt{\texttt{Qxc6+ KB8}}

An important moment. White can make a draw, but is there more in it for him? It’s important that 2... \texttt{\texttt{KB8}} loses to 3. \texttt{\texttt{Qb6+}} (3. \texttt{\texttt{Qd6+}} also leads to the desired goal: 3... \texttt{\texttt{Ka8}} 4. \texttt{\texttt{Qxa6+ Ka8}} 5. \texttt{\texttt{Qb6+ Ka8}} 6. \texttt{\texttt{Qa1#}}) 3... \texttt{\texttt{Ka8}} 4. \texttt{\texttt{Qxa6+ Kd8}} 5. \texttt{\texttt{Qb6+ Kb8}} 6. \texttt{\texttt{Qa1#}}.

3. \texttt{\texttt{Qd7+!}}

A strong move, clearing the path for the rook. Also good is 3. \texttt{\texttt{Qc5+ Kc7}} 4. \texttt{\texttt{Qd5+ Kb6}} 5. \texttt{\texttt{Qd6+ Ka8}} 6. \texttt{\texttt{Qb4}} 7. \texttt{\texttt{Qa3}} 8. \texttt{\texttt{Qa1#}}.

3... \texttt{\texttt{Ka8}}

After 3... \texttt{\texttt{kb6}} it is mate in two: 4. \texttt{\texttt{Qc7+ Ka5}} 5. \texttt{\texttt{Qa5#}}, and 3... \texttt{\texttt{kb8}} is analogous to the game.

4. \texttt{\texttt{Qd5+ Kc7}}

Or 4... \texttt{\texttt{Ka7}} 5. \texttt{\texttt{Qc7+ Kd8}} (5... \texttt{\texttt{kb6}} 6. \texttt{\texttt{Qb7#}}) 6. \texttt{\texttt{Qb7#}}.

5. \texttt{\texttt{Qd6+ Ka8}}

Or 5... \texttt{\texttt{kb7}} 6. \texttt{\texttt{Qc7+ Kd8}} 7. \texttt{\texttt{Qb6+ Ka8}} 8. \texttt{\texttt{Qa7#}}.
6. \texttt{\textbf{Qxa6+}}

Now that the last defender has been eliminated, the rest is child’s play.

6...\texttt{\textbf{b8}} 7.\texttt{\textbf{b6+ a8}} 8.\texttt{\textbf{a1#}}

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David Eggleston  
Christian Harstad  
Dublin 2012 (6)

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\textit{White to move}

Black seems to have the game in the bag here: he is threatening to capture on h2, and the white queen is hanging. However, White has prepared a surprise.

29.\texttt{\textbf{Rxc7+ dxc7}} 30.\texttt{\textbf{c1+ d7}} 31.\texttt{\textbf{b7+! e6}}

31...\texttt{\textbf{e8}} 32.\texttt{\textbf{e8#}}.

32.\texttt{\textbf{e1+}}

with mate next.

In the fragment below, the defensive wall has to be broken down again. This job is, as so often, done by violent means.

---

Arno Bezemer  
Christov Kleijn (analysis)  
Amsterdam 2010 (4)
Black to move

This position never actually appeared on the board, but it was composed after a game between two Dutch players. Black makes use of a beautiful motif to get to the white king:

1...\textbf{R}xf4!

Making a hole in the apparently solid wall surrounding the white king. Not 1...\textbf{Q}h3 in view of 2.\textbf{Q}f3.

1...\textbf{R}xf4! 2.\textbf{K}xg6

Trying to make his way forward. The rook may not be taken under penalty of mate: 2.gxf4 \textbf{Q}g1+.

2.\textbf{Q}xf4 is met by 2...\textbf{R}e4+ 3.\textbf{K}g5 (3.\textbf{Q}xe4 \textbf{Q}xe4+ 4.\textbf{Q}g5 \textbf{Q}g4#) 3...\textbf{R}g4#.

2...\textbf{Q}h3!
And the threat of 3...\texttt{Qg}4+ becomes fatal for White. Also after 2...\texttt{Qg}4+ 3.\texttt{Kxf}5 \texttt{Qh}3, Black wins.

3.\texttt{Qxe}3 \texttt{Qxg}3+ 4.\texttt{Kh}5 \texttt{Rxh}4#

2.14 Additional weapons and techniques

In Chapter 1 we listed a number of weapons that an attacker can dispose of, as soon as he has got the idea in his head to go for his opponent’s throat. By looking at a great number of examples we have tried to identify a number of laws which specifically apply to attacks with major pieces. Now we can make the following catalogue of regularly appearing tactical motifs and/or laws.

Detaining the king

What does a rabbit do if it is chased by a wolf or another beast of prey? It starts running and tries to use any hole in the ground, however small, to escape from its pursuers. But if the wolves are coming in a hungry pack, it will be hard for the poor little critter to escape its fate. Working together, the wolves will be able to block most of the escape routes.

In chess we can try to achieve something similar, if things have become too hot for the enemy king and he tries to run for it. This important technique of cutting off the king’s escape route is shown in the following example:

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\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
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\end{center}

Christophe Philippe
Jean-Rene Koch
Vandoeuvre 2011 (3)
Black to move

The white king is under threat via the a-file, but it can find shelter on d2, after which White can lock the d-file with $d3$. The king will then enjoy the protection of the doubled pawns. Black is a piece down, so he has to do something in order to thwart the escape of the king.

22...$d8!

Thus, Black occupies the d-file, with the immediate threat 23...$a3.

The direct check 22...$a3+ is not the solution – it leads to a win for White. Here is a possible variation: 23.$d2 $d8+ 24.$d3 $xd3+ (what else?) 25.$xd3 (not 25.cxd3?? in view of 25...$a2+ and Black wins) and the black attack comes...
to a standstill.

22...♖d8! 23. ♕d3

The only move to parry the mate threat. Of course, 23.♕b2 runs into 23...♕a3#. But now comes the beautiful

23...♕xd3!

The difference with the first variation is that now the white king cannot recapture on d3.

24.cxd3

So he is forced to retake with the pawn, but now the second rank is opened, which also means that his hiding place on d2 is exposed. We have already seen that major pieces can develop a relentless power along the second rank:

24...♕a3+!

White resigned. He will be mated after 25.♕c2 (25.♕d2 ♕a2+! and now the three pawns on c3, d3 and e3 turn out to be unwieldy obstacles!) 25...♕a2+ 26.♕d1 ♕a4+ 27.♕c1 ♕c2#.

The ‘Hook and the ladder trick’

Even top players sometimes miss a (simple) combination. Take a look at the following error by Levon Aronian in a game with Peter Svidler.

Levon Aronian
Peter Svidler
Moscow 2006 (3)
Even world class players can fall for horrible traps:

23.\texttt{Qxd3 cxd4 24.exd4??}

And now Black decided the game with

24...\texttt{Rxe1+!}

This example is used by the American chess teacher Dana McKenzie, to illustrate what he calls the ‘hook and the ladder trick’. He made a highly amusing short film of it, which shows a few examples. Dana explains how he came up with the name.

The d-file looks like a kind of ladder, with the queen on the top. The \texttt{Rd1} is at the bottom of the ladder – the rook is, as it were, holding up the white queen. With his move 24...\texttt{Rxe1+} it looks as if the black player pulls away the bottom rung of the ladder from underneath the queen with a hook. McKenzie claims that the image he has thus created makes it much easier to remember for many chess players. Another chess teacher might say that the rook on d1 is overburdened, as it has to protect the queen and the back rank at the same time. But by conjuring up this image you may hope that your chess student will sooner recognize this motif in his games. It simply sounds better!

In all honesty, both my co-author Petra Schuurman and myself missed this ‘hook and ladder’ motif once in our own games.

Elvira Berend
Petra Schuurman
Warsaw Ech-W 2001 (3)

\texttt{White to move}

Here White played the erroneous

31.\texttt{Qd3??}
which of course I (PS) should have exploited with

31...\texttt{e1}+!

In the game there followed 31...\texttt{xd3}, and it eventually ended in a draw.

32.\texttt{h2}

After 32.\texttt{xe1} the queen falls: 32...\texttt{xd3}.

32...\texttt{e5}+!

This zwischenzug finishes the game once and for all.

32...\texttt{xd3} 33.\texttt{xd3} \texttt{xc3} wins a piece, which would also decide the battle.

33.\texttt{g3} \texttt{xf2}\#
27.h3?? \textit{xd5!} 28.\textit{xd5} \textit{xd5} 29.\textit{xe1}+ 0-1

With the well-known hook, the ladder is pulled from under the queen’s feet...
Here the ‘hook and the ladder’ are used as a tool for setting up an attack:

\begin{center}
Maxim Dlugy
Friso Nijboer
Wijk aan Zee 1990 (5)
\end{center}

\begin{center}
White to move
\end{center}

The \textit{Qb4} is on the top of the ladder here. With

1.\textit{e8+}

White again tries to pull away the bottom. But Black doesn’t cooperate:

1...\textit{g7}

Of course, 1...\textit{xe8} runs into 2.\textit{xb4}, winning.

2.\textit{e5!}

With this move White attacks the rook for a second time, and besides he is also threatening the nasty discovered check 3.\textit{f6+}. Less convincing is 2.\textit{xg6+} 3.\textit{xg6} 4.\textit{xe8}, after which White still has a difficult technical job to do. It could easily be a fortress for Black.

2...\textit{b5}

A final attempt to complicate matters. However, also here Dlugy has a nice trick up his sleeve.
After 2...\textit{xe8} 3.\textit{f4+} 4.\textit{bx5} it’s completely over. Also 2...\textit{b5}, 3.\textit{fxe6+} 4.\textit{xe5} gives White a large
material advantage.

3.\textbf{\underline{x}g6+! }\textbf{\underline{x}g6} 4.\textbf{\underline{g}8+ }\textbf{\underline{h}6} 5.\textbf{\underline{g}7+ }\textbf{\underline{h}5} 6.\textbf{\underline{x}h7#}

Geometrical effects

Geometrical phenomena are very frequent in chess. A player has to continuously consider his own possibilities as well as his opponent’s. In our practice as chess trainers, we have come to notice that many players tend to think ‘forward’. Most of the time they do see their own possibilities, but they have difficulty discovering hidden possibilities for the opponent. A chess program is not at all troubled by this defect, but we creatures of flesh and blood certainly are! Let’s see which type of move is commonly qualified as ‘difficult’.

Long-range moves, or moves along a diagonal

These mostly turn out to be more unexpected than moves by pieces working along lines:

\begin{center}
\textbf{Yvalin Bruned  \\
Amir Bagheri  \\
Metz 2005 (3)}
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chessboard.png}
\end{center}

\textit{Black to move}

In this highly tense position, White has gained some material. However, he has to watch his step. His queen and knight are hanging, and there is also another threat. However, the white player missed a ‘small detail’...

34...\textbf{\underline{e}5} 35.\textbf{\underline{f}3??}

With the highly surprising, and also attractive, 35.\textbf{\underline{f}6!} White could probably have achieved a large advantage: 35...\textbf{\underline{g}7} (35...\textbf{\underline{x}d3} 36.\textbf{\underline{d}7+}, 35...\textbf{\underline{x}f6} fails to 36.\textbf{\underline{d}8+ }\textbf{\underline{g}7} 37.\textbf{\underline{x}f6+ }\textbf{\underline{x}f6}, and with two extra exchanges, White should
win) 36.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{h5+ gxh5 37.d2 and it looks as if White will get the upper hand here as well.}}}

Now White is busted with a trick that has already claimed many victims:

35...\textit{\texttt{h8+!}}

Backward queen moves along a diagonal still prove hard to anticipate for many players.

36.\textit{\texttt{g2 h3#}}

An abrupt finish.

**Moves along a rank**

How often do we blunder a piece because we don’t recognize the horizontal effect (also called the ‘lateral effect’)?

**Opening trap, horizontal effect**

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.\textit{\texttt{c3 f6 4.g5 \texttt{bd7 5.e3 c6 6.a5 \texttt{a5 7.f3 b4 8.d2 0-0 9.d3??}}}**

A horrible blunder that has already claimed many victims.

![Chess Board Diagram]

9...dxc4!

A double attack: the pawn attacks the \texttt{d3}, and the queen attacks the \texttt{g5}, which means that White must lose a piece.

**Backward moves**

This type of move is overlooked so often that we, as trainers, have built up an entire collection of them, in order to thoroughly teach young players about these geometrical effects.
We have searched for this difficult geometrical theme in positions where long queen moves were made, especially so that we can thoroughly our students in this type of move. Backward queen moves are sometimes even harder to foresee. Here are two examples.

Joseph Gallagher
Alexandre Vuilleumier
Lenk 2003 (4)

White to move

White has good control of the seventh rank, but since the rook on e7 is pinned, the situation still looks difficult. White has to find a way to bring the queen closer to the black king. With

38.\textit{Gg8}+!

White forced Black’s resignation here. This is a combination of eliminating a defender, magnet, and clearance. These are the weapons we presented in the first chapter of this book.

There might follow:

38...\textit{Xg8}

38...\textit{Xg8} 39.\textit{Hh7}#.

39.\textit{Gg3}+

A hard move to see in advance...

39...\textit{Ff8}

39...\textit{Hh8} 40.\textit{Gg7}#.
In the example given below, White already has a rook on the seventh rank, but it does not look easy to get the queen to join it. The Dutch grandmaster became the victim of an attractive final flurry by his Swedish opponent.

With his rook on the seventh rank and the black king in a vulnerable position, White is winning. However, delivering the coup de grâce proves far from easy.

Nils Grandelius
Ivan Sokolov
Malmö 2009 (2)

White to move

61.\( \text{Q}d3! \)

The queen now threatens to enter on the seventh rank as well. 61.\( \text{Q}a4 \) also looks attractive, but then Black can defend himself: 61...\( \text{R}e7 \) (61...\( \text{R}e8 \) also holds for Black: 62.\( \text{Q}b3+ \text{Kh8} \) 63.\( \text{Q}e5+ \text{Kh7} \) 64.\( \text{Qxe5}+ \text{Rxe5} \) with equality) 62.\( \text{Q}b3+ \text{Kg8} \) and there is nothing to be gained for White here.

After the text move, Sokolov resigned. There could follow:

61.\( \text{Q}d3! \text{f5} \)

The only move, otherwise he will have to throw in the towel right away. After 61...\( \text{Q}f8 \), 62.\( \text{Q}f3+ \text{f5} \) 63.\( \text{Q}a8+ \) leads to a forced mate.

62.\( \text{Q}b3+ \)

A queen switch along the third rank – everything with tempo.

62...\( \text{Kh8} \)
62...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{K}}f8} is of course impossible in view of 63.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{Q}}b8+}.

**63.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{Q}}b8+}**

Thus, White deflects the black rook from the fifth rank, as a result of which Black will not be able to interpose a piece on e5 later on.

Certainly not 63.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{Q}}b2+?} right away, as that would spoil everything. The endgame after 63...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{Q}}e5+} 64.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{Q}}xe5+ \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{R}}xe5}} is a draw.

**63...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{R}}f8}**

After 63...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{R}}f8} Black loses the queen with 64.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{R}}d8}.

![Chess board diagram](image)

**64.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{Q}}b2+}**

The key. With this backward queen move, White decides the game.

**64...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{K}}g8} 65.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{Q}}g7#}**
2.15 Manoeuvres with major pieces

Just as with an attack in a position with opposite-coloured bishops, the crucial question when only major pieces are left on the board is: which of the players has the initiative? The power of two or more major pieces in the attack is immense. Especially if the enemy king has little shelter and the major pieces are able to cooperate, the decision can be quick. In this section we have made an inventory of different types of manoeuvres.

Rook/queen switch

The rook switch is an important manoeuvre in attacks against the king. It appears in many forms. Below we show a delightful sample game in which White sacrifices a rook to open the seventh rank, and then decisively enters the sixth rank with his second rook. Surprisingly enough, the coup de grâce was not delivered in the game. As the further course of the game is not so interesting for this theme, we have left it out.

Maxime Vachier-Lagrave
Yannick Pelletier
Biel 2011 (14)

White to move

23. hxe6!

With this move, White demolishes the black king’s position, and the latter gets into trouble in spite of White having a
23...fxe6 24.\textit{g}6+ \textit{h}8 25.\textit{x}h6+ \textit{g}8 26.\textit{g}6+ \textit{h}8

\textbf{27.\textit{e}4!}

White prepares a rook switch along the fourth rank. After 27.\textit{e}x\textit{e}6, Black would defend with 27...\textit{g}5! 28.\textit{h}6+ \textit{g}8 29.\textit{xc}6, and this position looks winning for Black.

\textbf{27...f5 28.\textit{h}6+}

Now not 28.\textit{h}4+?? in view of 28...\textit{x}h4 29.gxh4 \textit{g}8.

\textbf{28...\textit{g}8}
29.\textit{Rxe6!}

Now that the black f-pawn has left f6, the sixth rank is open, and the white rook can quickly join the attack. On 29.\textit{Rh4}, Black would protect the seventh rank with 29...\textit{Rd7!}, after which there is no good way for the white rook to come closer.

Even less strong is 29.\textit{Qxe6+ Kg7} 30.\textit{Rh4 Qf6}, after which the white attack is gone.

29...\textit{Rd7} 30.\textit{Rg6+ Kg7}

An important moment. The black king threatens to run to the queenside via e8. Strongest here is

31.\textit{Wh5!}

after which the white queen controls the important light squares. The king cannot escape.

In the game, the Frenchman didn’t make the strongest move but played instead: 31.\textit{Rxc6?}. The black king remains insecure, but the question is whether this and the strong white centre pawns provide enough compensation for the rook. White did win after a long manoeuvring game, by the way.

31.\textit{Rc6} doesn’t win either, as with 31...\textit{g8} Black parries all the threats.

After the logical 31.\textit{Wh7+} White has no more than perpetual check: 31...\textit{e8} 32.\textit{e6+ e7} 33.\textit{g6+ f7} 34.\textit{g8+ f8} 35.\textit{g6+} with a draw.

Curiously, 31.d5 also still seems to win for White. This is because of the beautiful motif after 31...\textit{e8} 32.\textit{e6+ e7} and now 33.d6!.

31...\textit{e7}

If 31...\textit{e8} 32.\textit{e6#}.

If Black does nothing, he also gets mated: 31...c5 32.\textit{h6+ (32.\textit{xf5+ e8})} 32...\textit{g8 (32...e7}
33. \textit{Qe2+!} \textit{Kf7} 34. \textit{Qe6+} \textit{Kg7} 35. \textit{Qg6#} 33. \textit{Rh8+} \textit{Kg7} 34. \textit{Rh7+} \textit{Kg8} 35. \textit{Qg6+} with mate.

Or 31... \textit{Rh8} 32. \textit{Rh6+} \textit{Ke7} 33. \textit{Qg5+} \textit{Kf7} 34. \textit{Qg6+} \textit{Ke7} 35. \textit{Qf6+} \textit{Ke8} 36. \textit{Rxh8#}.

Back to the main line:

32. \textit{Qe2+!}

Another backward queen move which was hard to anticipate. But now it is immediately over.

32... \textit{Qf7} 33. \textit{Qe6#}
We continue with a fragment by one of our pupils, former Dutch U14 champion Joris Gerlagh. He managed to overpower another talented youth with frivolous play. Along the way, he missed a particularly instructive possibility, which we would like to save from oblivion.

Robin Lecomte
Joris Gerlagh
Netherlands jr 2014 (3)

Here,

32...d5!?

is a nice way to give the attack a new impulse, as the black queen can make a nice switch along the sixth rank, and can then harass the white king either via the a-file or via the first rank.

The game saw the less strong 32...Ra3, even though Black still had an excellent position after that, and eventually also managed to win.

Incidentally, 32...Qe6!? was also a strong move.

32...d5!? 33.Rxd5

White has to react.

After 33.exd5 follows 33...Qxf4 and now the rook acts as a stumbling-block for White on the f-file. For instance: 34.Qd3 Qf3 35.Qd4 (35.c2 xc3) 35...Qf5+ and the problems are mounting for White.

33...Ra1+ 34.Kc2
34...\textit{a6}!

Here is the queen switch! The queen can now also intervene from the side.

35.\textit{d4}

After 35.\textit{d2} Black maintains the initiative in an amusing way: 35...\textit{f1} 36.\textit{e2} \textit{a1} and with a few giant steps, the black queen now joins the attack via White’s back rank.

35...\textit{e1}

The king is harassed from two sides.

36.\textit{d2}

Other moves are worse. After 36.\textit{d2} \textit{a4+} 37.\textit{b3} \textit{a1}! it is immediately over.

36...\textit{a1}

And so the queen has reached the white king with two giant steps.

37.\textit{c2} \textit{e8} 38.\textit{h3} \textit{h1} 39.\textit{e2} \textit{g1}
and this would be a good time for White to call it a day.

And now we present a kind of ‘one-mover’. In this example, too, the correct move was missed in time trouble. It is also a game by a former pupil of ours, Lisa Hortensius, who is currently a medical student, and has also participated in the Dutch women’s championship a few times.

**Lisa Hortensius**  
**Naomi Snikkers**  
Haarlem ch-NED jr 2010

*White to move*
After a superbly played middlegame, White has obtained a winning position. However, in time trouble she fails to crown her work. Immediately winning was

25.\textit{Rh4}!

with the very annoying threat of 26.\textit{Rf4}. White played 25.e5 and later allowed the game to peter out to a draw.

25.\textit{Rh4}! e5

Now White rips open the position with

26.\textit{f4}!

And if 26...\textit{Qxc3} 27.fxe5+ \textit{K}\textit{e7} 28.\textit{Rf7+ d8} 29.\textit{Rd6+ c8} 30.\textit{Rd7+ b8} 31.\textit{Rb7#}.

We conclude this series with a quiz. You may want to cover the text with a piece of cardboard, to try to answer the questions by predicting the correct next move(-s).

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{l}
\textbf{Angelique Osinga} \\
\textbf{Sophia Thoma} \\
\textbf{Netherlands 2010 (4)}
\end{tabular}
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\begin{center}
\textit{White to move}
\end{center}

\textbf{QUESTION 1: What is the strongest continuation?}

In the game there followed:

34.\textit{Qe6}?  

Winning was 34.\textit{Qe8+}! \textit{h7} 35.h5 (with a decisive advantage: incidentally, Black threatened 35...\textit{Rxb2} 36.\textit{Rxb2} \textit{Rxa3} 37.\textit{Rc2} \textit{Rd1+} 38.\textit{Rf2} \textit{Rxb2}+ 39.\textit{Qc3} \textit{Rxc3+} 40.\textit{Rc4} \textit{Rd4+}, winning) 35...\textit{g5} (35...\textit{b8} doesn’t help either: 36.hxg6+ \textit{h6} 37.\textit{Rc1+} \textit{g5} 38.\textit{h5+} \textit{xg4} 39.\textit{Qe2+} \textit{f4} and clearly the king cannot survive in this position. By the way, the
mate variation is not that simple: 40.\texttt{Qe6+ Kg8} 41.\texttt{Qg4} 42.\texttt{Qh3+ Kh8} 43.\texttt{Qe4} 44.\texttt{Re2#} 36.\texttt{Qg6+ Kg8} 37.\texttt{Re8+}. 

\textbf{34.\texttt{Qe6? Kb8!}}

Well defended!

QUESTION 2: And now, how can White resume the attack all the same?

\textbf{35.\texttt{Qf7!}}

A good attacking move. 35.g5 also looks strong, but it’s too slow: 35...\texttt{Rxb2}! 36.\texttt{Rxb2 Qxa3} 37.\texttt{Re2 Qa1+}.

\textbf{35...\texttt{Qb5?}}

QUESTION 3: White should be able to make use of Black’s mistake. But how does she do this?

Black should have made the best of a bad job by offering a queen trade: 35...\texttt{Qf8} 36.\texttt{Qxg6 d4} 37.\texttt{Qh5+ Kg8} 38.\texttt{Qd5+ Kh8} after which White has at least perpetual check.

35...\texttt{Rxb2?} 36.\texttt{Re8+!} does win for White.

\textbf{36.\texttt{Ree2?}}

White’s mindset is too defensive.

After the more active 36.\texttt{Re7! Kg8} 37.\texttt{Qxg6 d4} 38.g5! Black cannot prevent the mate.

\textbf{36...d4!}

Black has spotted the threat.

\textbf{37.\texttt{Re7!}}

Now yes...

\textbf{37...\texttt{Qg8}}
QUESTION 4: A difficult moment in the game. Should White take the pawn on d4, or is there something else with which she can drive his opponent into a corner?

38.cxd4?!

Now the tables have turned, and suddenly Black has the initiative.

38.g5? is not the best option. For example: 38...h7 39.gxf6 dxc3 and after 40.xc3 (after 40.fxg7? cxb2+! Black takes over the attack: 41.b1 c3 and Black wins) 40...xb2 41.xc4 the game will end in a draw.

38.xg6 also looks dangerous, but after 38...d5 39.f3 (39.e2 dxc3 40.e5 cxb2+; 39.d2 h1+ 40.d1) 39...dxc3 the position is unclear.

Only by activating her second rook by 38.e2!, with the threat of 39.e8, could White have generated any dangerous threats: 38...xc3 39.e8 e8 (39...cxb2+ 40.b1) 40.e8+ and now Black has to give up the queen, as otherwise she will be mated: 40.h7 41.g8+ h6 42.h#. 38...c3!

Not 38...d6? on account of 39.d5.

39.ee2?

Here, 39.bxc3 was the lesser evil, although Black already has the upper hand.

QUESTION 5: How did Black take over the initiative, to win the game?

39...cxb2+!

Attagirl!

40.xb2

40.b1 fails to 40...d3.
40...£c8+ 41.£ec2

41.£b1 £d3+ also leads to mate.

41...£fl+ 42.£d2 £d3#

Combination of attack + passed pawn in the centre

If, in a position with major pieces, you possess a far-advanced passed pawn, it is necessary to make optimal use of the space behind this pawn for your major pieces. While the opponent’s major pieces are tied to the passed pawn, it is easier for the attacking pieces to manoeuvre freely.

And so, the policy is to combine the threats generated by the passed pawn with an attack on the king. In his analyses, Kasparov pointed out this phenomenon, and there are several examples on this theme to be seen in his games. Two classic examples of the strategy are shown below.

Leinier Dominguez Perez
Elshan Moradiabadi
Khanty-Mansiysk 2011 (1)

White to move

Materially the position is equal, but White has excellent winning chances thanks to his exceptionally strong passed pawn on d5.

The basic rule is: as soon as you can, push the pawn!

29.d6! £e6 30.d7 £d8

The further this pawn gets, the more Black will be tied down by it. The black pieces have to keep a close watch on the pawn, which restricts them in their activity.
31. b4
A clever little move, fixing Black’s pawn majority.

31...\(\text{Q}e5\)
Black adopts a wait-and-see policy.

32.\(\text{Q}c3 \text{ h7} 33.\text{Q}c5\)
White can work with these little moves, because exchanges would favour him.

33...\(\text{Q}e6\)
33...\(\text{Q}xc5??\) loses immediately after 34.\(\text{bxc5}\) and the c-pawn marches on.

34.\(\text{Q}c7 \text{ e7}\)
Thus, the black player is severely restricted in what he can do. But how can White make progress now? He will have to set up a little attack on the black king.

35. h4

35...g6
Stopping h4-h5 with 35...h5? would provoke immediate reprisals: 36.\(\text{Q}c5!\), and White wins.

It is interesting to try and find out how White would make progress if Black took a wait-and-see stance. Let’s look at a possible continuation: 35...\(\text{g8}\) 36.\(\text{Q}c6 \text{ h7}\) 37.\(h5 \text{ e6}\) 38.\(\text{Q}e7 \text{ e7}\) 39.\(c8 \text{ f6}\) 40.\(c2 + g6\) (40...\(\text{g8}??\) would backfire immediately, in view of 41.\(\text{e4!}\), and 42.\(\text{e8+}\) cannot be prevented) 41.\(\text{hxg6+ fxg6}\) 42.\(\text{Q}c7 \text{ e7}\) 43.\(\text{d3!}\) with the intention \(\text{e3}\). Then, 43...\(\text{e4+ 44.f3}\) \(\text{e7}\) 45.\(\text{e3}\) \(\text{f6}\) 46.\(\text{e8}\) loses by force.
36.\textit{h5}

Attacking the black king’s position.

36...\textit{gxh5} 37.\textit{\texttt{Qf4}}

37.\textit{\texttt{c5 f6}} 38.\textit{\texttt{d6 g5}} 39.\textit{\texttt{c6}} would also fall short eventually.

37...\textit{\texttt{g7}}

37...\textit{\texttt{xd7??}} is of course impossible in view of 38.\textit{\texttt{f5+}}.

38.\textit{\texttt{d6}}

Thus, slowly but surely, White sneaks up on Black’s king. The latter has to further weaken his position.

38...\textit{f6} 39.\textit{\texttt{d4}}

White can be satisfied here. Black is still tied down, and his king’s position is severely weakened.

39...\textit{\texttt{e5}}

Black takes refuge in a rook ending where he doesn’t have the slightest chance. After 39...\textit{\texttt{f7}} White would still have had to demonstrate some technique.

40.\textit{\texttt{xe5 fxe5}} 41.\textit{\texttt{f3 f7}} 42.\textit{\texttt{e4 e7}} 43.\textit{\texttt{xe5 f8}} 44.\textit{\texttt{d8=+ xd8}} 45.\textit{\texttt{xd8!}}

The easiest road to the win.

45...\textit{\texttt{xd8}} 46.\textit{\texttt{f4 e7}} 47.\textit{\texttt{f5}}

In spite of his minus pawn, White is winning, which is why Black threw in the towel here. A possible conclusion might be: 47...\textit{\texttt{f7}} 48.\textit{\texttt{f6 f8}} 49.\textit{\texttt{e6 e8}} 50.\textit{\texttt{f7+ f8}} 51.\textit{\texttt{f6}} (zugzwang!) 51...\textit{\texttt{h4}} 52.\textit{\texttt{g4h4 h5}} 53.\textit{\texttt{g6}} and the f-pawn decides.

\begin{tabular}{|l|}
\hline
\textbf{Ruslan Ponomariov} \\
\textbf{Peter Svidler} \\
Sofia 2006 (7) \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
Black to move

This is a typical position, in which White possesses two important strategic advantages. He has a passed pawn in the centre, and, at the same time, attacking chances against the black king.

41...f5?!

In his pursuit of counterplay, Black gives up a pawn. 41...Ra7? was indicated by GM Marin, in order to create counterchances, but unfortunately he is way off the mark here. White gets a decisive advantage with 42.d6! Ra3+ (42...d7 loses at once after 43.c7 xc7 44.xc7) and now White has to find the brave move 43.e4!, in order to deal with Black’s last checks: 43...f5+ 44.d5 f7+ 45.c6 and, curiously, the king stands excellently here. White’s calculations would have to take into account the fact that the last check with 45...a6+ can be met by 46.xb5, and White wins.

For the moment, 41...b7 looks like the only move for Black to stay in the game, although it is clear that he will remain passive.

41...f5?! 42.xb5 f4+ 43.f2 e4

This was Black’s intention, but its effect will be that of a boomerang.
44.\textit{fxe4 fxg3} + 45.\textit{hxg3} \textit{Qf6} + 46.\textit{g2} \textit{Qb2} + 47.\textit{h3}

Funnily enough, the white king enjoys sufficient protection here, while Black’s king will soon be surrounded now.

47...\textit{Rf7} 48.\textit{Qd3}

Black’s counterplay has been nipped in the bud, White has a mighty pawn centre, while he has also set his sights on the weak g6-square.

48...\textit{Qxb4}

This allows a queen trade, after which the resulting rook ending is a simple win for White.

49.\textit{Qc3} + \textit{Qxc3} 50.\textit{Exc3} \textit{Exe7} 51.\textit{Ec4} \textit{Ef6} 52.\textit{Eh4} \textit{Ee5}
53.\text{\textit{\textbackslash e}6!}\text{\textendash}\!

A clever move, finally hauling in the full point after all. The pawn on e4 cannot be taken in view of the rook check on e6, and this means the game is definitively over, because Black can no longer prevent the threat of 54.\textipa{\textit{\textbackslash g}5. (analyses based on those by GM Marin)

A much more tactical, and even more impressive, example is the following fragment, where World Champion Magnus Carlsen chases the king of his American opponent, the ‘rebel’ Hikaru Nakamura, over half the board. The Norwegian demonstrates flawlessly that the insecurity of the black king is worth a rook.

\textbf{Magnus Carlsen}

\textbf{Hikaru Nakamura}

Monaco rapid 2011 (1)
White to move

White has invested a piece for an initiative prompted by the position of the black king, stuck in the centre. Also, White has a particularly strong passed pawn on e6, which guarantees a dangerous attack for him. Curiously, however, the black king can hide behind this giant pawn for the moment. In the meantime, all of Black’s pieces (except for the Ra8) are taking part in a counterattack. White is more or less forced to surrender even more material.

Carlsen has assessed quite correctly that he can create sufficient threats against Black’s monarch to compensate for being a rook down (albeit for four pawns).

27.\texttt{Rxc6}!

Carlsen must have based this sacrifice on pure intuition, as this was a rapid game.

27...\texttt{bxc6} 28.\texttt{Qe4}!
The first powerful move is a purely centralizing queen move. To begin with, White attacks the pawn on c6, and at the same time he has created a pin (along the b1-h7 diagonal). Moreover, not unimportantly, the move provides extra protection of an important weakness in his own king’s position (g2).

28...\textit{Q}g7

There is no adequate answer for Black. For example, after 28...\textit{R}c8 White would continue 29.\textit{R}g5! \textit{g}7 30.\textit{Q}xh7 \textit{R}xh7 31.\textit{R}g8+, after which he has regained more than enough material.

28...\textit{K}e7 also meets with an attractive refutation: 29.\textit{Q}xc6 \textit{R}a7 30.\textit{Q}c5+ \textit{K}f6 and now White would have to find something special:

\textit{analysis diagram}
31. $\text{Q}d4!!$. A tremendous move, with which White creates a whole series of deadly threats with which the black player cannot cope: $31...\text{Q}g7$ 32. $\text{Q}e4+ \text{K}f5$ 33. $\text{g}4+ \text{K}g5$ 34. $\text{Q}d8+!$ (a beautiful zwischenzug, to block a possible escape route via e7) 34...$\text{Q}e7$ 35. $\text{Q}d2+ \text{K}h4$ (35...$\text{Q}f6$ 36. $\text{Qf}4#$) 36. $\text{g}5+ \text{K}h5$ and the finish is attractive too: 37. $\text{Qh}4+ \text{Q}xh4$ 38. $\text{Qf}4+ \text{Q}h5$ 39. $\text{Qg}4#$.

29. $\text{Q}xc6+ \text{K}e7$

White cannot just take back the black rook, as his own rook on e5 is still hanging.

30. $\text{Q}c5+$

We can hardly blame the white player for choosing this logical check. And it doesn’t endanger the win at all – yet. He could have calmly put the rook on a protected square with 30. $\text{R}e3$, after which, again, the position contains too many threats for Black. We will give a plausible (and ‘human’) variation to illustrate this: 30...$\text{R}g8$ 31. $\text{Q}d7+$ Any player would evaluate this as the first move, and it actually does win, but the computer thinks that 31. $\text{g}3$ is stronger... 31...$\text{Q}f6$ 32. $\text{R}f3+ \text{Q}g5$ 32...$\text{Q}e5$

30...$\text{Q}e8$ 31. $\text{Q}c6+ \text{K}e7$

33. $\text{e}7$!. The threats against g2 are not serious. The white king will walk to the safe centre: 33...$\text{Q}xg2+ 34. \text{K}f1 \text{Q}xf2+$ (34...$\text{Q}g1+$ 35. $\text{Q}e2$ and it’s over) 35. $\text{Qxf2} \text{Q}g1+ 36. \text{Q}e2$ – of course White had to have seen in advance that there are no more checks here.

Now it looks as if the king will escape, but that certainly doesn’t mean that Black can escape defeat: 33. $\text{e}7 \text{K}h6$ 34. $\text{g}4!$ and White is winning. The double threats of 35. $\text{e}8=$ and 35. $\text{Q}f5-h5$ cannot be staved off by normal means.

30...$\text{Q}e8$ 31. $\text{Q}c6+ \text{Q}e7$
32. $\text{Re3}$!

By now, Carlsen has also worked out how he can give new impulse to the attack. The rook is withdrawn to a square where it is protected, and where it can agitate along the third rank too.

32... $\text{Ra7}$

Black is running out of alternatives. Again it is worthwhile to look at the crude counterattack, but 32... $\text{Rg8}$ 33. $\text{Qd7+}$ $\text{Kf6}$ 34. $\text{Rf3+}$ amounts to the same thing as we have seen above.

Another important line is 32... $\text{Rd8}$ 33. $\text{Qb7+}$ $\text{Ke8}$ and now White has 34. $\text{e7}$!, winning.

33. $\text{Qc5+}$

Any flesh-and-blood player would play this move. Carlsen is trying to find out how he can win from this position. Here, engines come up with the extremely hard-to-find, but immediately winning 33. $\text{b6!!}$.

33... $\text{Kxe8}$ 34. $\text{Qc6+}$ $\text{Ke7}$ 35. $\text{b6!!}$
It’s quite impressive how Carlsen, in highly complicated positions, keeps finding moves that are also preferred by the engines. After one move repetition, he managed to find this fantastic possibility. The $\text{Ra7}$ no longer has any escape squares, and therefore has to perish. ‘Coincidentally’, the white queen also protects the $\text{b2}$-pawn, nipping Black’s counterattack in the bud.

35...$\text{R}xg2+$ 36. $\text{K}f1$ $\text{R}g1+$ 37. $\text{K}e2$

Now it’s all over.

37...$\text{R}a8$ 38. $\text{Q}b7+$ $\text{d}6$

After 38...$\text{f}8$ the rook is removed with check: 39.$\text{xa8}$+.
But also after 38...$\text{f}6$ White thankfully regains the material with 39.$\text{xa8}$.

39.$\text{d}3+$

Now the attack continues with full force. Otherwise, Black could have created some chaos with ...$\text{xb2}$+.

39...$\text{xe}6$

Funny – now that the e6-pawn has perished, White’s major pieces get the opportunity to strike at the black king. 39...$\text{c}5$ is met by 40.$\text{b}4+$ $\text{c}4$ 41.$\text{e}4+$ $\text{d}4$ 42.$\text{xd}4$#.

And after 39...$\text{e}5$ the threat of ...$\text{xb2}$+ is gone: 40.$\text{xa8}$.

40.$\text{c}6+$

As we said before, an unprotected king is no match for two major pieces. A possible winning line is 40...$\text{f}5$ 41.$\text{d}5+$ $\text{e}5+$ (41...$\text{f}4$ 42.$\text{c}4+$) 42.$\text{xe}5+$ $\text{xe}5$ 43.$\text{xa}8$ and it’s over.

Finally, here is a masterpiece by one of the greatest strategists of recent decades. Here we see him in the role of attacking player! And the renowned attacker, Judit Polgar, is forced to defend.
White to move

15.\textit{g5}+!

White does not take back on c3, but comes up with this beautiful zwischenzug, rendering the bishop on g7 inactive, while at the same time inducing a weakening of the e6-square.

15...\textit{f6}

Forced.

16.\textit{e3}

White has sacrificed a pawn, but he has wonderful compensation for it. The black king is contained in the centre, and it is anything but safe there!

16...\textit{a6}

Obviously, Judit wants to get rid of the annoying bishop. But this plays into White’s hands: White’s strategy is to exchange the active pieces, and leave Black with passive pieces only. Since the black king is so vulnerable, and it is very hard to bring the black rooks into play, the white initiative will rage on for a while.

After 16...\textit{cxb2} 17.\textit{xb2 \textit{e7}}, above all White has 18.\textit{d4}!, after which the problems are starting to mount for Black. For example, 18...\textit{f5}, in order to free the bishop, immediately fails to 19.\textit{e6}+! \textit{xe6} 20.\textit{xg7} and it is immediately over.

17.\textit{xd7}!

Less clear is 17.\textit{d3} in view of 17...\textit{e5}! 18.\textit{xe5 fxe5}, even though after 19.bxc3 White still has the upper hand.
17...\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}xd7

Of course, 17...\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}xd7? is met by 18.\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}xb6+ \textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}c8, and then 19.\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}c2 is strong: 19...\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}c6 20.\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}d4, and White is on the verge of winning.

18.\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}d4

Kramnik continues energetically. 18.bxc3 was logical, after which there could follow: 18...\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}e4 (18...\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}xc3 19.\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}fc1 \textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}a5 20.\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}d4 \textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}e4 21.\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}h5 wins for White) 19.\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}d2! (19.\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}d4) 19...\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}h4 20.g3 \textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}a4 21.\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}h5, again with a decisive advantage for White, as indicated by Ftacnik.

18...\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}e4

The materialistic 18...\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}xb2 is punished by 19.\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}g4+! \textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}d8 20.\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}ab1 \textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}c8 21.\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}h5 and because there are too many threats, it’s almost time for Black to stop the clock.

19.bxc3 \textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}e5?!

Also after the better move 19...\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}ae8 20.\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}h5 \textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}d8 21.\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}fb1! White is doing extremely well.

\textbf{20.\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}fb1!? b5}

No solution is promised by 20...\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}c7 21.\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}f5 \textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}f8 22.\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}h5, winning.

\textbf{21.a4}

And now the black queenside structure is also sabotaged.

\textbf{21...\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}h6}

21...\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}c6? 22.axb5 axb5 23.\textit{\texttt{\textbullet}}xc6 loses material.
22.axb5 a5

Thus, Judit manages to keep the lines closed for the time being, but White is even ahead in material now. It was important to calculate 22...\(\text{a}x\text{e}3\) 23.\(\text{f}x\text{e}3\) \(\text{a}x\text{e}3\) 24.\(\text{y}g4^+\) f5 25.\(\text{h}x\text{f}5\) \(\text{f}e4\) 26.\(\text{h}3^!\), and White holds all the trumps.

23.\(\text{f}3\)

White could also preserve the pawn with 23.\(\text{e}1\), but of course there are quite different things going on in this position!

23...\(\text{a}x\text{e}3\) 24.\(\text{f}x\text{e}3\) \(\text{g}8\)

Or 24...\(\text{a}x\text{e}3\) 25.\(\text{g}4^+\) \(\text{d}8\) 26.\(\text{g}8^+\) \(\text{e}8\) 27.\(\text{x}h7\) and Black could call it a day.

25.\(\text{h}3^+\) \(\text{x}g4\)

On 25...\(\text{e}8\), 26.\(\text{f}1\) may be even better than the greedy 26.\(\text{x}h7\).

26.\(\text{a}x\text{a}5\) \(\text{d}6\)

26...\(\text{e}8\) 27.\(\text{b}2\) is fine for White.

27.\(\text{a}2\) \(\text{c}8\)

And after 27...\(\text{e}4\) 28.\(\text{f}1\) \(\text{c}8\) 29.\(\text{f}3\) Black would also have to throw in the towel.

28.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{h}4\)

The alternative 28...\(\text{e}4\) also brings Black nothing after, for example, 29.\(\text{f}1\).

29.\(\text{g}3\) \(\text{e}4\) 30.\(\text{b}6\) \(\text{a}x\text{e}3\)

31.\(\text{b}7!\)
Kramnik is obviously quite in his element here. The black king’s shelter is pulled apart from all sides.

31...\textbf{e}1+

On 31...\textbf{xf}3 White has a forced checkmate: 32.\textbf{b}8+= \textbf{c}7 33.\textbf{a}7+ \textbf{d}7 34.\textbf{x}d7+ \textbf{x}d7 35.\textbf{b}7+ and mate follows.

31...\textbf{xb}7 32.\textbf{xb}7 \textbf{xf}3 would also have led to a pretty mate after 33.\textbf{a}6+ \textbf{e}5 34.\textbf{c}6#.

32.\textbf{xe}1 \textbf{xe}1+ 33.\textbf{g}2

Please observe the difference between the two kings. White’s is reasonably well protected, also by its own pieces, whereas Black’s king is being bombarded from all sides.

33...\textbf{xb}7 34.\textbf{xf}6+ \textbf{c}5

Or 34...\textbf{d}7 35.\textbf{f}7+.

35.\textbf{e}2

White is winning – that much is clear. You cannot blame a human player for missing a forced mate sometimes, certainly not in a rapid game. Computers are ruthless in that respect. It is mate in 7, as the engines coldly indicate: 35.\textbf{b}3+

\begin{center}
\textit{analysis diagram}
\end{center}

35...\textbf{b}5 (35...\textbf{c}4 36.\textbf{a}5+ \textbf{b}5 (36...\textbf{d}3 37.\textbf{d}4#) 37.\textbf{b}2+ \textbf{a}4 38.\textbf{d}4+ \textbf{x}a5 39.\textbf{b}4+ \textbf{a}6 40.\textbf{b}6#) 36.\textbf{a}5+ \textbf{c}4 37.\textbf{d}4+ \textbf{xb}3 38.\textbf{b}4+ \textbf{c}2 39.\textbf{a}2+ \textbf{c}1 40.\textbf{b}2+ \textbf{d}1 41.\textbf{c}2#.

35...\textbf{b}1

There is no sensible idea left for Black. All her pieces are scattered over the board – they don’t cooperate at all.

35...\textbf{xc}3 runs into 36.\textbf{c}2.

36.\textbf{e}6+ \textbf{b}5 37.\textbf{f}7 \textbf{a}5 38.\textbf{c}7+
Black resigned. After 38...\textit{a}6 (38...\textit{a}4 39.\textit{c}5+ \textit{a}3 40.\textit{a}5#) 39.\textit{c}5+ \textit{a}7 40.\textit{b}7+– everything collapses.

\textbf{Conclusions}

With the attacking combination of \textit{Q}+\textit{R} we pay attention to the following:
- back-rank motifs
- penetration on the seventh rank
- elimination of defenders
- breaking open the position

Additional weapons and techniques:
- keeping the king under control
- the ‘hook and ladder’ trick
- geometrical effects
- rook/queen switch
- combination of attack with passed pawn

\section*{2.16 Set of Exercises}

How can White round off the attack?

\textbf{Show/Hide the Solution}

\begin{center}
Zhaoqin Peng
Elisabeth Pähtz
Porto Carras Ech-tt 2011 (2)
\end{center}
Here also, there is only one defender on the back rank – the rook on g8. So, the motto is: eliminate it!

38.\textit{Rd8}  \textit{Wh4}

Please note that the black queen is very unfavourably placed on h6, depriving Black of \textit{luf}t for her king.

39.\textit{Rxg8+}  \textit{Kxg8}  40.\textit{We8#}

All the white pieces have hurled themselves at the black king. It looks as if there should be a decisive blow for White here. Do you see it?

\textbf{Show/Hide the Solution}

\textbf{Dieter Knödler}
\textbf{Elias Giesinger}
\textit{Bodensee 2015 (1)}

White dealt the decisive blow with:

33.\textit{Rxg7!}  \textit{f5}

After 33...\textit{\textbf{xg7}} Black gets mated: 34.\textit{\textbf{g4+}}  \textit{h7}  35.\textit{\textbf{g6+}}  \textit{h8}  36.\textit{\textbf{xh6#}}.

34.\textit{\textbf{g6}}  1-0
Black struck with

20...\textbf{xf3}! 21.gxf3 \textbf{g5}+ 22.\textbf{h1} \textbf{f4}

and already there was no defence against the many threats.
White has just played 25.a3?. How can the black pieces carry out an invasion of his position?

**Show/Hide the Solution**

**John van der Wiel**
**Jan Timman**
Wijk aan Zee 1985 (5)

White has just played 25.a3?. We know by now that in the opening or the middlegame a king on an open board (nearly) always gets mated. So Timman played:

25...\(\text{Re}1\) 26.\(\text{Rx}e1\) \(\text{Rx}e1\) + 27.\(\text{Kg}2\) \(\text{Qf}1\) + 28.\(\text{Kf}3\) \(\text{Qh}1\) + 29.\(\text{Kg}4\)

29.\(\text{Kf}4\) \(\text{Qe}4\)#.
29...f5+!

Also after 29...h5+, White gets tangled up in a mating net: 30.\(\text{Kh}5\) \(\text{Qxh}2+\) 31.\(\text{Kg}4\) \(\text{f}5+\) 32.\(\text{Kf}5\) \(\text{Qh}5+\) 33.\(\text{Ke}4\) \(\text{g}5+\) 34.\(\text{Kf}5\) \(\text{Qf}3+\) 35.\(\text{Kxg}5\) \(\text{Ke}5+\) 36.\(\text{Kf}6\) \(\text{Qg}5#\), but the game continuation is faster.

Of course not 29...\(\text{Re}4+\)? 30.\(\text{f}4\).

30.\(\text{Kh}3\)

30.\(\text{Kh}4\) \(\text{Qxh}2#\); 30.\(\text{Kf}5\) \(\text{Qe}4#\); 30.\(\text{Kf}4\) \(\text{Qe}4#\); 30.\(\text{Kh}5\) \(\text{Qf}3+\) 31.\(\text{Ke}6\) \(\text{Qg}4#\) or 31...\(\text{Re}6#\).

30...\(\text{Qf}1+\)

And White resigned. The rest is forced: 31.\(\text{Kh}4\) \(\text{g}5+\) 32.\(\text{Kf}5\) \(\text{Qh}3+\) 33.\(\text{Kg}6\) \(\text{Qe}6#\).
A couple of pieces are poised for the attack. But how can White make a breach in the black position? Calculate a few variations.

Show/Hide the Solution

Vladislav Kovalev
Igor Lutsko
Minsk ch-BLR 2014 (8)

White struck with

40. \(\textit{Rx}g7! \textit{x}g7 \)

Neither did 40... \(\textit{R}xc2 41. \textit{x}c2 \textit{R}xc2 \) help, as was played in the game. After 42. \(\textit{Q}d8+\) Black resigned. He is checkmated by 42... \(\textit{K}xg7 43. \textit{Q}e7+ \textit{K}g8 44. \textit{R}g4+ \textit{K}h8 45. \textit{Q}g7\#.

41. \(\textit{Q}h6+ \textit{K}f7\)

41... \(\textit{Q}g8\) obviously loses immediately: 42. \(\textit{Q}h8+ \textit{K}f7 43. \textit{Q}h7\#.

42. \(\textit{Q}h8!\)

A quiet move. But the threat of 43. \(\textit{Q}h7+\) is terrible for Black.

Not 42. \(\textit{Q}h7+\) \(\textit{K}e8\).

42... \(\textit{Q}g8 43. \textit{Q}g4!\)

This move also had to be seen in advance. Winning the queen after 43. \(\textit{Q}h7+ \textit{K}f8 44. \textit{R}xc7 \textit{R}xc7\) also yields White a virtually winning position, but the victory is far from evident. The queen is temporarily offside, Black still has an a-pawn that can become annoying, and when the two rooks start cooperating things won’t be easy at all.
43...e7
Forced, but now it is clear what the finish will be like.

44.g7+
After White has taken the queen off the board, the black knight will also fall.

The black king seems to be quite decently protected, whereas White’s king’s position does not have any natural protection. Nevertheless how did White still rip Black’s fortress open?

Show/Hide the Solution

In this position, from a game by my ex-pupil Tycho Dijkhuis, White made good use of his mighty pawn centre:

26.e6! fxe6
The greedy 26...xb2 is refuted as follows: 27.exf7+ xf7 28.xf7 xf7 29.f3+, winning the queen.

27.xe6+ h8
28.\text{R}d3!  
White abandons the d-pawn, and puts his money on the opponent’s weak back rank.

28...\text{Q}c5  
After 28...\text{R}xf3 29.\text{B}xg7+ \text{K}xg7 30.\text{Q}e7+!

\textit{analysis diagram}

the computer dryly gives 10 – meaning: mate in 10 moves.
29. \( \text{Bxg7} + \text{Bxg7} \) 30. \( \text{Rf7} + \)

Black resigned. He is going to be mated: 30...\( \text{Kh8} \) (30...\( \text{Kg8} \) 31.\( \text{Rxf8} + \) with mate) 31.\( \text{Qf6} + \text{Kg8} \) 32.\( \text{Qg7} # \).

*(based on notes by Tycho Dijkhuis)*

---

The hunt for the black king is on! How did the white pieces hurl themselves at the black monarch like hungry wolves?

**Show/Hide the Solution**

Maxim Rodshtein  
Sergey Tiviakov  
Tromsø ol 2014 (4)

White won quite instructively with

44.\( \text{Rh5} + \text{g6} \)

44...\( \text{gxh8} \) runs into 45.e5, with an immediate win.
Now what?

45. $\texttt{h}8$!

The white pieces cooperate nicely.

45... $\texttt{e}6$ 46. $\texttt{h}5+$ $\texttt{f}6$ 47. $\texttt{x}h4+$

White already has an extra pawn, but that wasn’t what this was about.

47... $\texttt{e}5$

47... $\texttt{g}5$ 48. $\texttt{h}6+$ loses the queen with check!: 48... $\texttt{e}7$ 49. $\texttt{x}e6+$.

48. $\texttt{g}3+$

48. $\texttt{d}8$ was a good one too.

48... $\texttt{f}6$

If 48... $\texttt{x}e4$ 49. $\texttt{h}4+$ $\texttt{d}5$ 50. $\texttt{d}3+$ $\texttt{e}5$ 51. $\texttt{e}4+$, again winning the queen.
49.e5+!
A nice finish to an excellently-played final phase.

49...#e7

49...#xe5 runs into a double attack with 50.#f3+.

50.#g5+

Black resigned. If 50...f6 (50...#d7 51.#d8#) 51.#xg7+ #f7 52.exf6+ #xf6 53.#g5 and with two plus pawns and an unabated attack for White, there is indeed nothing left for Black.
Black has many pieces in the attack, but there are also many white defenders. How can Black crash through all the same?

Show/Hide the Solution

Jan Timman
Anne Haast
Wijk aan Zee 2015 (3)

The Dutch women’s champion defeated the former world-class player by tearing his kingside to shreds with

26...Nxf2!

Also virtually winning is 26...Nf4+, but then after 27.g1 Black would have had to find the strong move 27.c6!. Thus, the b7-bishop is cut off from the scene of battle, and with that the black attack runs quite smoothly. All the same, it is not so easy to recognize that Black is winning after, for example, 28.xg4 (28.xd2 ed8 29.c2 f3+ 30.xf3 xf3 31.gxf4 g4+ 32.h2 xh4+ 33.g2 g4+ 34.h2 d6) 28.xg4 29.xe8+ xe8 30.b3 h3+ 31.g2 hxf2 32.xd2 e2 33.c4. However, after 33...e2 it turns out that White has insurmountable problems after all.

26...xf2! 27.xd2

Timman clears away that dangerous passed pawn on d2, but now his king gets smoked out. On 27.xf2, 27...d4! is the decisive move. There is no longer a good defence to all the threats.

Both players also saw that 27.xg4 fails to 27...fxg4! 28.e4 c4! and the fork on e3 will have grave consequences.

27...h3+ 28.g1 eg4

Watch out: certainly not 28...h1+??, as the bishop on b7 may be far away, but it’s still working: 29.xh1.

29.xe8+ xe8 30.xf2 xg3+
Here the Dutch chess legend resigned. He had just lost to a young lady, 21 years of age...

31.\text{R}g2 (31.\text{K}f1 \text{Ne}3+ 32.\text{R}e2 \text{c}4+; 31.\text{h}1 \text{xf}2+) 31...\text{R}e1+ 32.\text{Q}xe1 \text{Qxe}1#.

---

Black is an exchange and a few pawns down. But White is totally undeveloped, and his king’s position is completely open. With Black’s next move, 23...\text{Rh}2 his rook is paying a visit. There followed 24.\text{Q}f3 \text{Nd}4 25.cxd4 \text{Qxd}4+ 26.\text{Be}3. But now it seems as if White has freed himself. What aesthetic possibility does Black have here, which immediately yields him a winning position?

Show/Hide the Solution

Ladislav Kotan  
Martin Mrva  
Piestany 2004 (11)

Black had seen a little further than the end of his nose and played:

26...\text{Qh}8!

From the corner square, the queen participates fully in the battle. The main threat is 27...\text{Rh}3, in order to chase away the white queen, and then, by means of the clearance check 28...\text{Rg}3+, invade with the queen by way of the h-file.
Moreover, in some cases the black bishops will be able to intervene from the queenside, if the white king is chased to the centre.

27.\text{Qf}1

Now White is threatening something himself. If he ignores all the threats with, for instance, 27.exd5, there follows 27...\text{Rh}3 28.\text{Qe}4 (28.\text{Qg}2 \text{Qg}3) 28...\text{Rg}3+ 29.\text{Qf}1 (29.\text{Qf}2 \text{Wh}2+) 29...\text{b}5+ 30.\text{Qe}2 \text{Wg}3+ 31.\text{Qe}1 \text{Xg}4, and if the queen retreats with 32.\text{Qc}2, Black finishes the job with 32...\text{b}4+ 33.\text{Qd}1 \text{Qf}1+. 
The way Black wins after 27.a4 (in order to prevent ...\textit{b}5+) is instructive: 27...\textit{h}3 28.\textit{d}1 \textit{h}1+ 29.\textit{f}2 \textit{h}2+ 30.\textit{g}1 and now the queen penetrates decisively along the h-file: 30...\textit{h}3! 31.\textit{e}2 \textit{h}1+ 32.\textit{f}2 \textit{g}3#.

27...\textit{f}5 28.e5

After other moves, for example 28.exf5, Black again makes good use of his idea with 28...\textit{h}3.

28...\textit{xe}5 29.\textit{f}2

This looks plausible, as it defends the g3-square, but now Black gets free play against the king.

29...\textit{h}3 30.\textit{g}2 \textit{h}2+ 31.\textit{h}1 \textit{g}3+ 32.\textit{g}1

32...\textit{f}4!

Cleverly played: with this pawn move Black protects the \textit{g}3, enables, under the right circumstances, ...\textit{g}3, and introduces ...\textit{f}4-f3 into the position.

33.\textit{b}6

33.\textit{e}1 loses to 33...\textit{xe}1 34.\textit{axe}1 \textit{g}3.

After a ‘non-move’ like 33.a4, Black wins with 33...\textit{h}2+ 34.\textit{h}1 \textit{f}3!.

33...\textit{h}2 34.\textit{f}3 \textit{xb}2 0-1

After 34...\textit{xb}2, 35.\textit{h}1 doesn’t help: 35...\textit{h}2+ with mate on the next move.
After Black’s last move, 30...Ec7-h7, dark clouds are hanging above the white king’s head. However, he kept seeing the sunny side of things and unsuspectingly played 31.Ee1!. What had White missed?

Show/Hide the Solution

Ray Robson
Wen Yang
Ningbo CHN-USA rapid 2013 (8)

31.Ee1?
After this mistake, Black found a pretty backward queen move, which gave him a winning attack. After 31.Eb2 White wouldn’t have great problems.

31...Wh8! 32.Ef1
Eliminating the knight is no good at all: 32.Exe4 fxe4 with an unstoppable mate threat.

32...Wh1+ 33.Ee2 Ee8
Black doesn’t relieve the tension. However, even stronger would have been 33...Exe1+ 34.Exe1 Ee8 because then Black would be able to threaten the white king along the e-file as well as the h-file.

34.Ec1 Exe5+
Thus, Black wins the queen. Curiously, moving the queen back to the centre with 34...Ee5! was the strongest move. Now there is absolutely nothing to be found against the many threats, of which 35...Ec5 is the most important.

35.Ed2 Exe1 36.bxc5 Exc1 37.Exc1 Ea1! 0-1
With this nice long queen move Black concludes a superbly played final phase. After 38.\texttt{Qc}4 Black simply liquidates to a winning endgame with 38...\texttt{Qxa5+} 39.\texttt{Kc2} \texttt{Qxc5}.
Chapter 3
Making use of open lines

3.1 Introduction

It is universally known that an attack on the king has chances of success if there are one or more open files on the side of the attacked king. The various ways in which they can be opened will be the subject of the next chapter. It is logical that open lines are of great importance, as they allow the major pieces to intervene effectively. And once the major pieces start to cooperate with other pieces, this can lead to attractive attacking motifs.

3.2 Attack on the king along the (half-)open h-file

In this section, we will show how attractive a half-open or open file can be for an attack on the king.

Arsenal of weapons

Before we start discussing attacking games, we will show which weapons are required to round off an attack successfully. Below we have collected a number of weapons that are often used in positions with an open h-file.

Eliminating defenders

There follows a stereotypical example of the way open lines can be used for an attack against the enemy king.

The bishop on g7 is the last defender that keeps the black player alive here. So if it can be deflected, Black will be done for.

Alexander Goloschapov
Ralph Harich
Le Touquet 2003 (1)
White to move

30. $\textit{Rxh8}+$!

Eliminating the bishop with 30. $\textit{xg7}$ also wins for White: 30... $\textit{Rxg7}$ 31. $\textit{Rh1+ Kh7}$ 32. $\textit{Qh3#}$.

30. $\textit{Rxh8}+$! $\textit{Bxh8}$ 31. $\textit{Eg8#}$

The magnet combination

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
8 & 7 & 6 & 5 & 4 & 3 & 2 & 1 & \\
\hline
 &   &   &   &   &   &   &   & \\
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 &   &   &   &   &   &   &   & \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

\textbf{Constructed position}

(Chess Training Pocket Book)
Black to move

With an open file in the vicinity of the enemy king, often a tactical motif can be found:

1...<br>h1+!

This is known as the ‘magnet motif’. The king is, as it were, drawn to the fatal square h1. After 1...<br>h2+ the king would walk away, and Black would have nothing special.

2.<br>xh1<br>h2#

Breaking open the king’s position
White to move

Both players are attacking. It’s a matter of time, and he who comes first will win. If Black were to move, he would decide the game in his favour with 1...\textit{Q}b6+ followed by 2...\textit{Q}b2#. On the other side, White’s chances seem to be a little harder to detect. Unless you happen to know the following motif!

\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{1.\textit{Q}xh7+!}
\end{itemize}

In this way, White breaks open his opponent’s safe king’s position. We have seen this motif with rook plus knight earlier on in this book.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{1...\textit{Q}xh7 2.\textit{R}h1#}
\end{itemize}

As we already know: it’s Anastasia’s Mate!

\textbf{Double check}

In the following chaotic position, where a number of pieces are ‘hanging’.

\textit{Constructed position – Mate in two}
White to move

White has an especially powerful weapon at his disposal: double check. Each player should actually check at some time during his game whether he has the possibility of a double check, and whether it will yield him something. One thing is certain: after a double check, the enemy king is forced to make a move. Here this leads to a wonderful mate picture.

\[1. \text{g}6+!\]

As stated above, the king has to make a move now.

\[1...\text{xg}6\]

\[1...\text{g}8 2.\text{h}8#\]

\[2.\text{h}8#\]

A gorgeous mate!

Games with an attack along the h-file

In the chess circuit you can often see players talking to each other. Although this is in fact illegal, you will see that even at top level jokes are being made during games. If in the Netherlands a player controls an open file against the enemy king, in the corridors the expression ‘I’m going to h-file him today’ is sometimes used, meaning something like: ‘I’m going to crush him down the h-file’. Of course, we will show a few practical examples.
White to move

In this rapid game, which was played during the semifinals for the Dutch women’s championship in 2008, the young white player has invested quite a lot of material in an attack against the black king. But is it enough?

22.\textbf{B}xb7+!

There’s no way back, she has to bite the bullet – and that’s just what she does.

22...\textbf{K}xb7

This leads to a forced mate, but the alternatives do not help Black either. Declining the sacrifice is no solution:

A) 22...\textbf{K}d7 23.\textbf{R}d1+ \textbf{Q}e7 24.\textbf{Q}g5+ f6 (24...\textbf{K}f8 25.\textbf{Q}xe5) 25.\textbf{Q}xe5 and it’s over;

B) After 22...\textbf{K}b8 White’s attack also runs smoothly: 23.\textbf{B}xb6! axb6 24.\textbf{R}a8+ \textbf{K}c7 (24...\textbf{K}xb7 – there’s an Australian indie rock band called ‘No Escape for the King’. That’s exactly what applies here: 25.\textbf{Q}a6+ \textbf{Q}c7 26.\textbf{Q}a7+ \textbf{Q}d6 27.\textbf{Q}xd8+ \textbf{Q}d7 28.\textbf{Q}xd7#) 25.\textbf{Q}xb6+! (everything with check) 25...\textbf{Q}xb6 26.\textbf{Q}xe5 and White will be a boxful of material up.

23.\textbf{Q}xa7+!

Yes – Anne could be trusted to find this.

23...\textbf{Q}c8

On 23...\textbf{Q}xa7 White wins at least a queen: 24.\textbf{Q}xb6+ \textbf{Q}b7 25.\textbf{Q}xe5.

24.\textbf{Q}a6+ \textbf{Q}b8

The black player, sympathetic as always, grants her youthful opponent the honour of giving mate.

25.\textbf{Q}xb6#
Another piece barges in – all in the spirit of this well-conducted attack.

Black to move

The black pieces are poised for a decisive assault. Black’s main task is to open lines against the white king. He can do this with 1...hxg2+, but in that case he would also activate the two white rooks on the second rank. So, Black has to resort to violent means. He has a formidable move at his disposal:

1...Qg3!!

All of a sudden, threatening 2...Qxh2+. 1...hxg2+ 2.Rxg2 Qg3! is also pretty good for Black, but then the game still wouldn’t be decided.

1...Qg3!! 2.hxg3

After a move like 2.Re2, Black seizes his chance with the queen sacrifice indicated above: 2...Qxh2+ 3.Qxh2 hxg2+ 4.Qg1 Qh1+ 5.Qf2 g1=Q+ (the queen has returned to the board, and mate is not far off now!) 6.Qe1 Qxf1+ 7.Qd2 Qxd1#.

2...hxg2+

With this double check, the h-file is opened.

3.Qg1
3...Rxg2Rxg3#

3...Rh1+ 4...Rxg2 Rgh8 5.gxf4 exf4

It’s incredible. White is a full queen up, but he cannot parry the mate threat.

Suni
Orri Alivirta
Helsinki 1957

Black to move

White is a piece up, and he threatens to win the black queen with 2.Ba7+. However, it’s Black’s turn to move. He can put two major pieces on the h-file (1...Qh7), but that would give the white king a chance to escape. Here also, ‘strong measures’ are used to hunt down the king with tempo. The essence of the attack is that the black player searches for a suitable way to fire his battery (Qe5/Qd6). It is obvious that he should do something with the open h-file. However, the winning method is not only ingenious, but highly surprising as well.

1...Rh1+!

Any attacking player would look at such moves, but sometimes it isn’t so easy to see what they can bring you in specific cases like this.

The discovered check with 1...Qf3+ is useless after 2.Rxf3, when the king obtains an escape square on f2.

1...Rh1+ 2.Qxh1 Qh7+!

The backward queen move! Now the queen can enter along the open h-file.

3.Qg1

And now follows the apotheosis of the entire operation:
3...*h2+!!

A dazzling queen sacrifice. The king is decoyed to the fatal square h2. Thus, Black makes use of the aforementioned weapon of the ‘magnet’. This was what had been on the black player’s mind all the time, since with the white king on h2 he can finally fire his battery with double check!

Wrong is 3...*h8? in view of 4..*f3 and again the white king will reach safety.

4..*xh2 *f3+

Finally the battery is put into operation.

5..*h1

5..*h3 *h8#.

5...*h8#

And now it is time to have a look at a beautiful attacking game by one of the true masters of our game: Bobby Fischer. The way in which he manages to beat his tenaciously defending opponent is impressive.

The diagram position has arisen from a King’s Indian Attack, a system that Fischer liked to play for some time. We selected this example because, quite strikingly – just like in a several other of his games –, Fischer conducts all operations via the square e4.

Robert Fischer
Lhamsuren Myagmarsuren
Sousse izt 1967 (3)
White to move

White has an attack on the black king, but Black is not without counterplay, and it seems that he can defend successfully.

27.h5

A logical move. White not only wants to damage the black king’s position, he also vacates the square h4 for the rook, so that it will be able to operate along the h-file. It was too early for 27.Qh6 in view of 27...Qf8, and White has nothing.

27.h5 cxd3

Black is looking for counterplay through the centre, but Fischer doesn’t seem to care.

28.Rh4 Ra7

This is the hidden defence Black had set his mind on. He hopes to be able to use his rook to defend along the seventh rank. If Black ignores the threat with 28...dxc2, he will get a sound beating, as follows: 29.hxg6 fxg6 30.Rxh7! (White breaks through. Certainly not 30.Qh6 in view of 30...a7! and Black keeps all the weak points in his position well covered; not 30...Qf7?? on account of 31.Qxe6) 30...Rhxh7 31.Qh4+ Kg8 32.Qh8+ Kf7 33.Qg7#.

The attentive reader may ask – especially in view of what is coming – why Black didn’t have a better defence with 28...c7. We will have a look at that later. It is advisable to first play through the main variation before we come back to this position.

29.Qg2!

He ignores the potential new queen. The bishop plans to intervene via the e4-square. Black’s idea was that after 29.hxg6 he could take back with the f-pawn, after which his rook would protect the h7-pawn along the seventh rank: 29...fxg6. In that case White would not have a decisive attack, for example: 30.Qxh7 Qxh7 31.Qxe6+ Qxe6 32.Qxg6+ Kf8 33.Qxh7 dxc2.

However, Fischer has a fantastic idea in mind!
29...dxc2

If Black wants to keep the white bishop out, the seventh rank will be obstructed. And that means that now there is a combination in the position: 29...\textit{b}7 30.hxg6 fxg6 31.\textit{x}h7! (where have we seen that sacrifice before?) 31...\textit{x}h7 (31...\textit{x}g2 32.\textit{x}a7, and also here Black will be mated) 32.\textit{h}4+ \textit{g}8 33.\textit{h}8+ \textit{f}7 34.\textit{g}7#.

After 29...\textit{f}8 White brings on the bishop right away: 30.\textit{e}4 dxc2 (30...\textit{c}c7 31.hxg6 fxg6 32.\textit{x}g6 hxg6 33.\textit{h}8+ \textit{f}7 34.\textit{x}f8+ \textit{xf}8 35.\textit{h}6+ also wins for White; 30...\textit{b}7 31.hxg6 fxg6 32.\textit{x}g6 and it’s over) 31.hxg6 fxg6 32.\textit{b}7.

30.\textit{h}6

White is acting dumb.

30...\textit{f}8

Thus Black thinks he has defended everything. If 30...c1=\textit{f}+ 31.\textit{x}c1 \textit{xc}1+ 32.\textit{h}2, also here the mate cannot be prevented. It is the same mating process that we see in the game:

31.\textit{x}h7+!!

The apotheosis of the entire scheme.

31...\textit{x}h7 32.\textit{x}g6+ \textit{x}g6 33.\textit{e}4#

The bishop has the last word. A beautiful mate picture.

Now let’s go back to the position after the 28th move. What would White have played after 28...\textit{c}c7? Here is the answer.
In the game, it is essential for White to involve his light-squared bishop in the attack. And since \( \text{B}^g2 \) can always be met by \( \text{B}^b7 \), and in this situation the rook will not be obstructed along the seventh rank by the bishop on b7, the question arises if White can win at all. The answer is very hard to find, but it is of great beauty. Would Fischer have found it in the game? He was after all a genius!

29. \( \text{B}^g4!! \) At this moment, it is a mystery what the bishop is doing on this square. Black cannot take any measures on the queenside, and so he has to continue with a move like 29...dxc2 (after 29...\( \text{b}^b7 \) White wins with 30.\( \text{Q}^h6 \) \( \text{Q}^f8 \) 31.\( \text{Q}^xh7+ \) \( \text{x}^h7 \) 32.\( \text{x}^g6+ \) \( \text{x}^g6 \) 33.\( \text{h}^h5+ \) \( \text{h}^h7 \) 34.\( \text{e}^e2+ \) \( \text{g}^g6 \) 35.\( \text{x}^d3+ \) with mate on the next move), but now White can play his trump cards: 30.\( \text{h}^h6 \) \( \text{f}^f8 \) There is no salvation in 30...c1=\( \text{Q}^+ \) on account of 31.\( \text{xc}^c1 \) \( \text{xc}^c1+ \) 32.\( \text{h}^h2 \) \( \text{f}^f8 \) 33.\( \text{x}^h7+ \) \( \text{x}^h7 \) 34.\( \text{x}^g6+ \) \( \text{x}^g6 \) and then analogous to the main line. 31.\( \text{h}^h7+ \) Here is the thematic queen sacrifice again. But how can the light-squared bishop join the struggle? 31...\( \text{x}^h7 \) 32.\( \text{hx}^g6+ \) \( \text{e}^g6 \) 33.\( \text{h}^h5+ \) Here is the answer. 33...\( \text{h}^h7 \) The bishop and rook have formed a battery together, and, depending whether the black bishop is on a6 or b7, with a discovered check White puts his bishop on a square that is not covered by a black piece. If 33...\( \text{f}^c5 \) 34.e4#. 34.\( \text{f}^f3+ \) \( \text{g}^g6 \) 34...\( \text{x}^h6 \) 35.e4+ \( \text{g}^g8 \) 36.\( \text{x}^h6 \) with a mate threat that cannot be parried. 35.e4#

The next position, a typical one for the Sicilian, is even more complicated. Both players are attacking; in such cases the degree of inventiveness of the players will determine who runs off with the full point.
White to move

Black is attacking on the long diagonal (thanks to his bishop on h8), White – along the h-file. What matters is: who comes first?

22.\textbf{Rxh7}!

A brilliant rook sacrifice, clearing a path through to the black king. After the h-file is opened, White’s pieces can get to the enemy king more easily. 22.\textbf{Rfh1} seems too slow. Now:

A) Wrong is 22...\textbf{Nc4} in view of 23.\textbf{Rxh7}! 23.bxc4 \textbf{Bxc3} and Black has (more than) enough counterplay. 23...\textbf{Bf6} The only ‘safe’ square for the bishop, where it does not give the opponent the opportunity to sacrifice.

If Black takes the queen, he will be mated in an instructive way:

• 23...\textbf{Nxh2} 24.\textbf{Rxh2}+ \textbf{Bg7} 25.\textbf{Rh1}+ \textbf{Kf6} 26.\textbf{Nd5#}.
• 23...\textbf{g7}, but now, obviously, White also destroys the chief defender – the bishop on g7: 24.\textbf{Rxg7}+ \textbf{Bxg7}, and he simply removes some important material with 25.bxc4;
• 23...\textbf{d4}
24. \( \text{Qd4} \) cxd4 25. \( \text{Rh8+} \) \( \text{Kg7} \) 26. \( \text{Rh1+} \) \( \text{f6} \) 27. \( \text{d5} \);

- 23...\( \text{Bxc3} \) 24. \( \text{Qd5} \) \( \text{Re7} \) 25. \( \text{fxg6} \).

Unfortunately for Black, White has another powerful move here: 24. \( \text{d5} \)! There is no remedy against the attack on \( f7 \). An attractive variation is the following: 24...\( \text{e7} \) 25. \( \text{fxg6} \) \( \text{xc3} \) Black now also threatens to give mate from all sides, but he is too late. 26. \( \text{gf7+} \) \( \text{f8} \) 27. \( \text{h6+} \) \( \text{g7} \) 28. \( \text{h8#} \)

B) But after 22...\( h5 \) White still has the better chances: 23. \( \text{fxg6} \) \( \text{xc6} \) (23...\( \text{fxg6} \) 24. \( \text{d5+} \) \( \text{f7} \) 25. \( \text{e2} \) 24. \( \text{d5} \) and the white position deserves preference.

22. \( \text{h7}! \) \( \text{h7} \)

The offer can hardly be refused. Petursson analyses 22...\( \text{a3+} \) here: 23. \( \text{b1} \) \( \text{h7} \) 24. \( \text{h1+} \) \( \text{g7} \) 25. \( \text{f6+}! \) \( \text{xf6} \) 26. \( \text{xd6+} \) \( \text{e6} \) (26...\( \text{g7} \) 27. \( \text{xe5+} \) 27. \( \text{xe5+} \) \( \text{g5} \) 28. \( \text{d2#} \).
23. \textit{h1+}

23.\textit{h2+} comes to the same thing: on 23...\textit{g8} (after 23...\textit{g7} 24.\textit{f6+} \textit{g8} (if 24...\textit{xf6} 25.\textit{d5+}) 25.\textit{h1} \textit{xf6} 26.\textit{d5} \textit{d4} 27.\textit{h7+} \textit{f8} 28.\textit{h6+} \textit{g7} 29.\textit{xg7#} the job is also done) 24.\textit{h1} \textit{g7} 25.\textit{f6!} is the killer move.

23...\textit{g8}

After 23...\textit{g7} the attack runs smoothly too: 24.\textit{f6+} There are even more ways leading to Rome here, but this is the shortest one. 24...\textit{xf6} 24...\textit{g8} 25.\textit{h8+} \textit{h8} 26.\textit{h2+} \textit{g8} 27.\textit{h6} and the mate on \textit{g7} cannot be parried. The desperate sacrifice 27...\textit{d3+} is, of course, declined by White: 28.\textit{b1}, and Black gets mated. 25.\textit{xd6+} \textit{g7} 26.\textit{xe5+} \textit{xe5} 27.\textit{xe5+} \textit{f6} 28.\textit{e7+} \textit{g8} 29.\textit{h6} It’s nice to see the rook doing such an important job on the h-file. 29...\textit{g7} 30.\textit{xg6} \textit{a3+} 31.\textit{b1} and Black has run out of moves.
24.\textit{Rxh8}+!

A second rook sacrifice to eliminate the chief defender. After 24.\textit{Rxh8}+ Black resigned in view of 24...\textit{Kxh8} (also here, Petursson looked at an alternative: 24...\textit{Kg7} 25.\textit{f6}+ \textit{Kxf6} 26.\textit{Qxd6}+ \textit{Qg7} and White rounds off his attack with the elegant 27.\textit{h6}+! \textit{Qxh8} 28.\textit{Qf6}+ \textit{Qg8} 29.\textit{Qg7}#) 25.\textit{axe5}+ (the c1-h6 diagonal is cleared for the queen, which allows her to intervene decisively. Certainly not 25.\textit{Qxd6}?? on account of 25...\textit{Bxc3} 26.\textit{Qf6}+ \textit{Qg8} 27.\textit{h6} \textit{Qd3}+ and Black wins) 25...\textit{dxe5} (25...\textit{Kg8} 26.\textit{Qh6} and 25...\textit{Rxe5} 26.\textit{Qh6}+ \textit{Qg8} 27.\textit{f6} both win for White) 26.\textit{Qh6}+ \textit{Qg8} 27.\textit{f6}. Again, mate on g7 is unavoidable.

Petursson indicates that 24.\textit{Qh2} doesn’t bring White anything in view of the simple 24...\textit{Qg7}, but here he is mistaken. White also wins after 25.\textit{f6}! \textit{Qxf6} 26.\textit{Qd5} \textit{Qg7} 27.\textit{Qc7}+ \textit{Qf8} 28.\textit{Qh6} \textit{Qxh6}+ 29.\textit{Qxh6}+ \textit{Qg8} 30.\textit{Qh8}#.

From Dutch soil, here is a heart-rending fight between two Dutch grandmasters who are known for their original brainwaves. Our former pupil Wouter Spoelman draws the long end of the stick in the end after a cleverly conducted attack on the king.

\begin{center}
\textbf{Wouter Spoelman} \\
\textbf{Sipke Ernst} \\
Amsterdam ch-NED 2014 (6)
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
  &  &  &  &  &  &  &  &  \\
\hline
1.d4 & d5 & 2.c4 & c6 & 3.\textit{c3} & \textit{d5} & 4.e3 & \textit{f6} & 5.\textit{f3} & \textit{f5} & 6.\textit{h4} & \textit{e4} & 7.\textit{f3} & \textit{g6} & 8.\textit{b3} & \textit{c7} & 9.\textit{d2} & \textit{e7} & 10.\textit{xg6} & \textit{hxg6} & 11.0-0 & 0-0 & \textit{bd7} & 12.\textit{h1} & \textit{dxc4} & 13.\textit{xc4} & \textit{b6} & 14.\textit{g3} & a5 & 15.\textit{e2} & a4 & 16.\textit{e2} & a3 & 17.b3 & \textit{bd5} & 18.e4 & \textit{b4} & 19.\textit{c1} & 0-0 & 20.\textit{g4} & \textit{d7} \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

Black’s best continuation here is 20...\textit{Qfd8} 21.\textit{e3}.

\textbf{21.h4 e5}
22.h5!

Giving the signal for the attack.

22...gxh5 23.\texttt{hxh5} g6 24.\texttt{h6} exd4

An important moment. White controls the open h-file, and of course he would like to put it to use as quickly as possible. But sometimes in such situations it is wise to take a step back to see if any more pieces can be brought up to join the attack.

25.\texttt{dh1}
This is the kind of move any chess player would play without thinking. And indeed, it is sufficient to obtain a decisive advantage.

Can we reproach Wouter for not finding a stronger, but very hidden, direct winning continuation? Well, he is a strong grandmaster and an excellent calculator, but all of the variations and tactical shots are so hard to assemble in a thinking process, that we can hardly blame him.

A terribly strong continuation was 25.\textit{c4}! with the immediate threat 26.\textit{xg6+}. 25...\textit{g7}

Now 25...\textit{e5} loses in an original way: 26.\textit{b5!} \textit{a5} 27.\textit{xb4} \textit{xb4} (on 27...\textit{xb4}, 28.\textit{g5} wins easily) and now, a formidable move:

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw[gray!30,thick] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw[step=0.5,gray!30,thick] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\node at (0,0) [below left] {$1$};
\node at (0,1) [below left] {$2$};
\node at (0,2) [below left] {$3$};
\node at (0,3) [below left] {$4$};
\node at (0,4) [below left] {$5$};
\node at (0,5) [below left] {$6$};
\node at (0,6) [below left] {$7$};
\node at (0,7) [below left] {$8$};
\node at (1,0) [below left] {$a$};
\node at (2,0) [below left] {$b$};
\node at (3,0) [below left] {$c$};
\node at (4,0) [below left] {$d$};
\node at (5,0) [below left] {$e$};
\node at (6,0) [below left] {$f$};
\node at (7,0) [below left] {$g$};
\node at (8,0) [below left] {$h$};
\draw[thick] (1,1) -- (3,3) -- (5,5) -- (7,7);
\draw[thick] (3,1) -- (1,3) -- (5,5) -- (7,3);
\draw[thick] (5,1) -- (3,3) -- (1,5) -- (3,7);
\draw[thick] (7,1) -- (5,3) -- (3,5) -- (1,7);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

\textit{analysis diagram}

28.\textit{h8+!!} \textit{xh8} 29.\textit{h6+} \textit{g8} 30.\textit{h1} and the fight is over. 26.\textit{e2} \textit{h8} 26..\textit{b5} 27.\textit{dh1}. 27.\textit{xd4} \textit{h6} Here again, White has an especially clever move at his disposal:
28.\textit{\textbf{Q}}e6+!! The black king’s position is torn to pieces! 28...\textit{\textbf{fxe6}} 29.\textit{\textbf{B}}xh6+ \textit{\textbf{K}}f7 30.\textit{\textbf{Bxe6+}}! The king is given no rest now. 30...\textit{\textbf{Kxe6}} 31.\textit{\textbf{Qc4+}} \textit{\textbf{Kf6}} 32.\textit{\textbf{g5+}}\textit{\textbf{Qe5}} 33.\textit{\textbf{f4+}}\textit{\textbf{Qxf4}} 34.\textit{\textbf{e5+}}\textit{\textbf{Qxe5}} 35.\textit{\textbf{Re1+}}\textit{\textbf{Qd6}} 36.\textit{\textbf{Re6#}}. 31.\textit{\textbf{Qxd7+}}\textit{\textbf{Qxd7}} 32.\textit{\textbf{Qxd7}} And, with his large material advantage, White won’t have any more difficulty in winning.

25...\textit{\textbf{xf6}}

At first sight, it looks as if Black can hold. But again, the position contains a few hidden tricks for White. Also after 25...\textit{\textbf{Qe5}}
Bc4! Qg7 27. Ne2 White’s advantage is of a decisive nature. After, for example, 27...b5, White can again strike:

28. Bxb4 Bxb4 29. Rh8+ Qxh8 30. Rxb8+ Qxb8 31. Qg8 32. Qxg6+ Qh8 33. Qh6+ Qg8 and now the knight has the last word: 34. Nd4! bxc4 35. f5 with inescapable mate.

26.g5?

Objectively speaking, this move gives away the advantage, but during the game both players probably thought that it gave White the most dangerous chances.

For example, the consequences of 26. Nb5!, a move that Wouter was doubtlessly considering, are hard to assess. After 26... Qa5 a tornado rages over the black king’s position:

```
analysis diagram
```

27. Rxb8+!! fxg6 28. c4+ Qf7 (28... Qg7 29. h6+ Qh8 30. xf8 with mate) 29. xf7+ Qg7 (29... Qf7 30. c4+ Qf8 (30... Qg7 31. h6+ Qh7 32. f8+ and mate) 31. xb4+, winning the queen) 30. d6! Qf8 (the king makes a run for it, but it won’t do Black any good: 30... h8 31. h6+ Qh7 32. f8+ also ends badly for Black, in the same way) 31. Qh7 Qd3
In this position too, there are many beautiful things to discover: 32...c4! dxc1 33.h6+ g7 34.xg7, and mate cannot be prevented.

26...g7 27.h7 e5 28.f4 e5

With 28...e7 the black player should have withdrawn the queen to its own ranks, although White has a decisive advantage also here. He can win with the logical 29.h1! followed by a lethal tripling on the h-file.

29.e1!
Here Wouter shows what an excellent attacking player he is.

29...dxc3

30.\textit{Rxg7+}!

Definitely not 30.\textit{Qh4?? c2+ 31.Kc1 b2}, and Black is the one to give mate!

30...\textit{Rxg7 31.Qc3+ f6}

32.\textit{c4!}
A fantastic move, preventing the escape of the black king.

32...\textit{d5}

Desperately trying to block the lightsquared diagonal, but Wouter knows how to deal with this. He had envisaged a beautiful mate after 32...b5: 33.\textit{h7+ xh7 34.h4+ g7 35.h6#}.

The defence 32...\textit{h8} doesn’t work either, in view of 33.gxf6+ xf6 34.xf6+ xf6 35.c3+ e7 36.g7+ d6 37.e5+ and Black gets mated.

33.exd5 cxd5 34.gxf6+ xf6

34...xf6 35.h4 also leads to mate by force.

35.e6! d8 36.xd5

The bishops are still dominating the battle scene.

36...b5

Of course, 36...xc3 doesn’t help in view of 37.e7+ f7 38.xf7#.

After 36...f8 I presume White would continue 37.e3 h8 38.g4 f8 39.g5, and here too, Black can throw in the towel.

37.xf6+ 1-0

Sipke had allowed his opponent to deliver checkmate by 37.f7#, but Wouter didn’t want to say goodbye to this beautiful position just yet.

A wonderful attacking game!

\textbf{Conclusions}
We can approach the enemy king in the following ways:
• luring away (deflecting) a defender (Weapon 1)
• luring the king to a fatal square (decoy) (Weapons 2 and 3)
• making a breach in the enemy pawn structure (Weapon 4)

Additional weapons and techniques:
• bringing up other pieces
• creating checkmate patterns

3.3 Set of exercises

![Chess Board Diagram]

In this position, Black has concentrated his major pieces on the kingside. He still has to find a way to really threaten the white king. How can he do that?

Show/Hide the Solution

Black struck hard with

23...Kh3!
A hammer blow that White won’t survive. Black’s main threat is 24...Rxg2+ 25.Kxg2 Qxh3+ 26.Kg1 Kg4+ 27.Kh2 Kh3#.

24.g3

After 24.gxf3 Rh6 mate is inevitable.

24...Rxg3

A logical follow-up.

25.fxg3 Qxg3+ 26.Kh1 Kh3+ 27.Kh2

The only way to avoid getting mated, but now Black wins the material back and is left with a won endgame. 27.Kg1 is impossible on account of 27...Qg3+ 28.Kf2 Qg2+ 29.Ke1 Qxc2 and Black wins.

27...Qf1+ 28.Qxf1 Qxf1+ 29.Kg1 Qxg1+ 30.Kxg1 Nxc5

White resigned after a few more moves.
In this simplified position, Black controls the open h-file. But what can he actually do with it?

Show/Hide the Solution

Black makes clever use of the open h-file and the unfortunate position of the white pieces with

20...g5! 21.\textit{x}g5

21.e2 g4 is even worse.

21...\textit{x}h2+ 22.\textit{h}1 \textit{f}4+ 23.\textit{h}3

The knight has to move back to this bad square and – very unpleasant for White – he now gets to face the same type of pawn move for a second time!

23...g5! 24.g3

Trying to make something out of nothing – but this is a vain hope. To 24.\textit{g}1 Black would reply with 24...\textit{d}2!, after which the threat of 25...g4 also wins material.

24...\textit{c}7

Since Black threatens 25...\textit{h}xh3 as well as 25...g4 (with a fork and a pin!), White loses a piece.
The black pieces have taken up menacing positions in front of the white king. But the latter is still entrenched behind its pawns. How did Black rip open the king’s position?

Show/Hide the Solution

Bart von Meijenfeldt
Nico Zwirs
Dieren 2014 (6)

Black lashed out with:

19...\textsf{Nc3}+! 20.bxc3

Challenging Black to prove the correctness of his sacrifice.

20...\textsf{Kc1} would lose more than the exchange after 20...\textsf{Bxf3}!.

On 20...\textsf{a1} too, 20...\textsf{xf3} is the strongest move.

20...\textsf{bxc3} 21.\textsf{Qe3}

21...\textsf{c1} is met by 21...\textsf{xa3}.

21...\textsf{xa3} 22.\textsf{b6} \textsf{b4}!

And mate on b2 cannot be parried.
White has fixed his attention on the black king. Black thought he could get away with

26...f5

but as it turned out, that didn’t work. What had he missed?

Show/Hide the Solution

Michael Adams
Viktor Laznicka
Baku 2015 (2)

Black had missed that after

26...f5 27.hxg6!

(also good is 27.exf6, but 27...xf6 28.hxg6 h6! is less clear than the game continuation)

27...hxg6 28.Qh7+ Kf7
White pays a visit not only with the queen, but also with the rook. Perhaps he had thought beforehand that this position was playable. In that case, White’s following move must have been a rude awakening...

29. Rh6!

Often it turns out to be quite difficult to see such a ‘horizontal pin’ in advance. Laznicka had doubtlessly missed it. He might as well have resigned immediately now, since after 29... Rh8 30. Qxg6+ Kg8 31. Qxe6 Black’s entire bastion collapses.
Chapter 4
Exploiting weaknesses

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter we discussed how an attack on the king achieves full power if your pieces are able to draw close to the enemy king. An open file, along which the major pieces can be brought on to join the battle, is virtually indispensable. In this chapter we will see how a path can be cleared to exploit open lines on the flank of the enemy king. A lot depends on the pawn structure here. In the following paragraphs, we will look at different types of targets in the pawn formation of the defence, and how, as the attacker, you can exploit certain weaknesses.

4.2 The weakening ...g7-g6

With regard to the attack against the weakness created by the move ...g7-g6 (or g2-g3 in the white position), many factors can play a role. We can attack the enemy pawn structure either with our own pawns or with our pieces.

Attacking the pawn structure with one’s own pawns can be done in two different ways:

- The push h4-h5 (or ...h5-h4)
- The push f4-f5 (or ... f5-f4)

Sometimes these pawn pushes can be combined.

Analogously, the opportunities for an attack conducted with pieces depend on where the enemy pieces are placed. Here, a very important question is whether there is a bishop on g7 (or g2). Therefore, in our scheme, we have decided to make a division:

- Manoeuvring without a \( B \) on g7 (or g2)
- Manoeuvring with a \( B \) on g7 (or g2)

The h4-h5 push

We have already seen a number of examples where the weakening move ...g7-g6 led to the creation of an open h-file. Once the h-file has been opened, it is important to direct your major pieces there.

The game given below is an illustrative example of the way the major pieces should be posted on the h-file: the rook is put in front, to enable possible sacrifices on g7 or h8. The queen is brought over via the second rank, a transfer that is prepared by g2-g4. Obviously, speed is of the essence here; otherwise, before you know it, you will be mated yourself...

Eduard Valeanu
Pasi Korhonen
Dublin 2012 (1)
White to move

A typical position from the Dragon Variation of the Sicilian. The fact that the players have castled on opposite sides means that speed is of the essence.

17.h5!

White sacrifices a pawn in order to open the h-file as soon as possible.

17...Rc8

Accepting the pawn with 17...Nxh5 would lead to the elimination of Black’s most important defending piece, the bishop on g7. A possible continuation is: 18.Bxg7 Kxg7 19.g4 (the ‘standard sacrifice’ 19.Rxh5?! would be too impetuous here: 19...gxh5 20.Bg5+ h8 21.h1, since after 21...g8 22.xh5 g7 the white attack is brought to a halt) 19...f6 20.h6+ h8 (20...g8? loses immediately after 21.g5 Nh5 22.Rxh5 gxh5 23.h1, and now Black cannot cover the weak h7-square in time) 21.d4 and White has sufficient compensation for the pawn.

18.hxg6 hxg6

Sometimes it can be wise to ‘capture away from the centre’, in this case with 18...fxg6!? Black also gets the f7-square, which he can possibly occupy with a defender. Here, after 19.g4 f7 20.g5 Nh5 21.xg7 Rxg7 22.f4 White would get the upper hand anyway.

19.g4!

With this move, White not only prepares g4-g5, but he also opens the second rank to make possible the transfer of the queen to the kingside.

19...a6
Black’s counterplay is slow to get going.

20. $\text{Rh3}$!

The rook frequently has to be in front, in order to be able to work with sacrifices like $\text{Rxh5}$ or $\text{Rxg7}$. The idea 20.$\text{g5 Nh5}$ 21.$\text{Nxg7hxg7}$ was also possible, but far less direct.

20...$\text{b5}$ 21.$\text{Rdh1}$ $\text{b4}$

Too slow – White’s attack is already at full steam! Black’s only hope lay in the elimination of White’s strong bishop on d4, so as to make a run for it with the king. But that wouldn’t help him after 21...$\text{Rxh5}$ 22.$\text{Nd4 b4}$ (22...$\text{d7}$? 23.$\text{Qh2 f8}$ 24.$\text{d5}$ and White wins) 23.$\text{Qxe6 fxe6}$ 24.$\text{Qe2}$ and thanks to his material advantage White wins here too.

22.$\text{Qh2 Nh5}$

Running away with the king doesn’t work: 22...$\text{f8}$ 23.$\text{h8+ hxh8}$ 24.$\text{Qh8+ g8}$ 25.$\text{Qxg8+}$! (a beautiful attacking point) 25...$\text{hxg8}$ 26.$\text{h8#}$. 
23.\textit{hxh5}

The stereotypical sacrifice, as has been played in so many Dragon Variations already. White could also have achieved the elimination of all black defenders with 23.\textit{gxg7 \textit{hxg7}}, and only now 24.\textit{hxh5!}, but this would amount to the same as what happens in the game.

23...\textit{gxh5} 24.\textit{gxg7 \textit{hxg7}} 25.\textit{hxh5 f6}

It is instructive to observe how the attack develops further.

26.\textit{h7+ \textit{f8}} 27.\textit{g6!}
A well-known manoeuvre. On the one hand, the queen prevents the king from escaping to the queenside via e8; on the other hand, White vacates the h-file for his rook. Also winning was 27.\textit{\textipa{Q}h8}\textit{\textipa{B}g8} 28.\textit{\textipa{N}d5} \textit{\textipa{Q}d7} 29.\textit{\textipa{R}h7}.

\textbf{27...\textit{\textipa{Q}g8} 28.\textit{\textipa{R}h8} \textit{\textipa{B}xc3}}

Or 28...\textit{\textipa{e}6} 29.\textit{\textipa{R}xg8}\textit{\textipa{K}e7} 30.\textit{\textipa{Q}g7\#}.

\textbf{29.\textit{\textipa{R}xg8\#}}

\begin{table}[h]
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\begin{tabular}{|c|c|}
\hline
Julian Hodgson & Dragan Paunovic \\
London-Belgrade telex match 1976 & \\
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\end{tabular}
\end{table}

\textbf{1.e4 \textit{\textipa{c}5} 2.\textit{\textipa{f}3} \textit{\textipa{d}6} 3.d4 \textit{\textipa{cxd}4} 4.\textit{\textipa{xd}4} \textit{\textipa{f}6} 5.\textit{\textipa{c}3} \textit{\textipa{g}6} 6.\textit{\textipa{e}3} \textit{\textipa{g}7}}

6...\textit{\textipa{g}4} 7.\textit{\textipa{b}5}+ \textit{\textipa{d}7} 8.\textit{\textipa{Q}xg4}.

\textbf{7.f3 0-0 8.\textit{\textipa{d}2} \textit{\textipa{c}6} 9.\textit{\textipa{e}4} \textit{\textipa{d}7} 10.0-0-0 \textit{\textipa{b}8}}

This move was popular at the time. The idea is to have the option ...\textit{\textipa{Q}xd4} followed by a quick ...\textit{\textipa{b}7-b5}, after which there is no stopping the black attack on the queenside.

The old main line ran as follows: 10...\textit{\textipa{Q}a5} 11.\textit{\textipa{h}4} \textit{\textipa{f}c8} 12.\textit{\textipa{b}3} \textit{\textipa{e}5} 13.\textit{\textipa{h}5} \textit{\textipa{Q}xh5} 14.\textit{\textipa{g}4} \textit{\textipa{f}6} 15.\textit{\textipa{h}6}.

Another important branch is 10...\textit{\textipa{R}c8}.

\textbf{11.\textit{\textipa{h}4} \textit{\textipa{e}8} 12.\textit{\textipa{b}3}}

The hasty 12.\textit{\textipa{h}5}\? would cost a piece after 12...\textit{\textipa{Q}xd4} 13.\textit{\textipa{Q}xd4} \textit{\textipa{g}4} 14.\textit{\textipa{d}3} \textit{\textipa{e}3} 15.\textit{\textipa{Q}xe3} \textit{\textipa{R}c4}.

\textbf{12...\textit{\textipa{a}5} 13.\textit{\textipa{h}5}\! 14.\textit{\textipa{Q}xd4} a4 15.\textit{\textipa{d}5} \textit{\textipa{e}6}}

At first sight, White seems to be in trouble, as his bishop is incarcerated in the middle of the board. But if we look at the activity of the white pieces, then we see that the black queen on \textit{\textipa{b}8} and the rook on \textit{\textipa{a}8} cannot help on the kingside. The white pieces, on the other hand, can quickly intervene on the other side of the board.

\textbf{16.\textit{\textipa{h}xg6} \textit{\textipa{h}xg6}}

Now, 16...\textit{\textipa{e}xd5} 17.\textit{\textipa{Q}xd5} \textit{\textipa{Q}xd5} would also be hopeless for Black. White replies strongly with 18.\textit{\textipa{g}xh7+} \textit{\textipa{Q}f8} (18...\textit{\textipa{f}8} 19.\textit{\textipa{Q}xg7+} \textit{\textipa{Q}xg7} 20.\textit{\textipa{h}8=} 21.\textit{\textipa{g}5+} \textit{\textipa{Q}f8} 22.\textit{\textipa{Q}xh8\#}) 19.\textit{\textipa{h}8=} 20.\textit{\textipa{Q}h8+} \textit{\textipa{Q}e7} 21.\textit{\textipa{Q}g5+} \textit{\textipa{f}6} 22.\textit{\textipa{Q}g7+} and Black will be mated.

\textbf{17.\textit{\textipa{Q}g5}!}

The key move to break down Black’s defences. There is only one way for Black to save the knight on \textit{\textipa{f}6}.

\textbf{17...\textit{\textipa{e}5}}

After this move, the incarcerated white bishop suddenly comes to life again. Here is a variation Hodgson was hoping for: 17...\textit{\textipa{e}xd5} 18.\textit{\textipa{Q}xf6}! \textit{\textipa{Q}xf6} 19.\textit{\textipa{Q}e6} with inescapable mate.

17...\textit{\textipa{e}8} would be met by the strong 18.\textit{\textipa{Q}xg7} \textit{\textipa{Q}xg7} and now the move that Hodgson had seen during the game: 19.\textit{\textipa{Q}h4}! White simply prepares the doubling of his major pieces. After 19...\textit{\textipa{e}xd5} follows 20.\textit{\textipa{Q}dh1} and Black cannot
18. \textit{\textbf{R}}h8+!!

Hodgson: ‘I was very proud that I found this move, but I have to confess that the idea was not completely new to me. A few years earlier, the “Great” Mikhail Tal had used an analogous rook sacrifice in a simultaneous game against me – I was on the black side of a Dragon then. The move itself forces immediate resignation by the black player, as the following variations show:’ 18. \textit{\textbf{R}}h8+ \textit{\textbf{B}}xh8 (on 18... \textit{\textbf{K}}xh8, 19. \textit{\textbf{B}}xf7 is a killer move. The king is condemned to the edge of the board: 19...exd4 20. \textit{\textbf{R}}h1+ \textit{\textbf{N}}h7 21. \textit{\textbf{Q}}xg6 and mate follows) 19. \textit{\textbf{Q}}xg6+ (now White enters the black position with check thanks to the ‘Van Gelder trick’) 19...\textit{\textbf{B}}g7 20. \textit{\textbf{Q}}xf7+ \textit{\textbf{K}}h8 21. \textit{\textbf{R}}h1+ \textit{\textbf{N}}h7 22. \textit{\textbf{Q}}g6 and again there is no defence to the threatened mate.

The f4-f5 push

While the h2-h4-h5 push occurs more often when White has castled queenside himself (in which case the rook is already conveniently placed on h1), the f2-f4-f5 push occurs more frequently when White castles kingside (in which case the rook on f1 immediately joins the action).
White to move

Since Black has weakened his own position with ...g7-g6, and White has already carried out the thrust f4-f5, mate patterns appear.

18.\textit{Q}h4!

Threatening 19.f6 and 20.\textit{Q}h6.

18...\textit{R}d8?

Black would like to vacate the f8-square for his bishop. But this is drastically punished.

After 18...\textit{gxf5} White sacrifices the exchange: 19.\textit{xf5}! In this case, keeping the bishop is more important than keeping the rook! 19...\textit{d6} An important zwischenzug; things get completely out of hand after 19...\textit{xf5} 20.\textit{xf5} and mate cannot be prevented. 20.\textit{c4 \xf5} 20...\textit{g6} 21.\textit{xe5}; Black will weather the storm with 20...\textit{e6} because he can meet any rook move with ...\textit{h3} or ...\textit{g4+}. However, after 21.\textit{d1!}, with the idea \textit{xd7}, he will have insurmountable problems all the same. 21.\textit{xf5} \textit{h6} There is nothing else.
22. \textit{Qg4!} This was hard to see in advance. The queen gets out of the pin, and now 23.gxh6+ is threatened. \textbf{22...Bxg5} 22...hxg5 again loses to 23.h5; on 22...h8, White first drives the black queen from its defensive post with 23.Rd1 c7 and then returns to the h-file: 24.h5, winning. \textbf{23.h4}, winning a piece.

18...h5 is no solution on account of 19.fxg6 fxg6 20.Bxg6 and the h5-pawn will also fall, after which the entire black king position is exposed.

\textbf{19.fxg6}

After the text move, White opens the f-file. Black would have got his way after 19.f6 f8.

Somewhat slow is 19.Rf3 f6.

\textbf{19...hxg6}

Or 19...fxg6 20.c4+! with a decisive advantage.
20. $\text{Rxf7}$!
This sacrifice had to come, of course. The entire black king’s position is demolished.

20... $\text{Kxf7}$ 21. $\text{Qh7+}$
First this in-between check, to prevent the king getting into safety.

21... $\text{Ke6}$
If 21... $\text{Ke8}$ Black is also mated by 22. $\text{Bxg6+ Kg8}$ 23. $\text{Qf7#}$.

22. $\text{Qxg6+ Dd5}$ 23. $\text{c4#}$
A pretty final position.
Against the Benoni Defence, the f4-f5 push is often preceded by the pawn sacrifice e4-e5. Here are two instructive examples.

Vladimir Tukmakov
David Norwood
Reykjavik 1990 (2)
White to move

All the white pieces are already in play, whereas Black’s queenside is still undeveloped. White exploits this with a famous type of breakthrough in the centre.

16.e5! dxe5 17.f5

The idea behind White’s pawn sacrifice e4-e5 is that both e5 (the ideal square for the knight on d7) and the h8-a1 diagonal will be inaccessible for Black.

17...b6

17...e4 looks thematic. Still, after 18.\texttt{\texttt{B}}xe4 \texttt{\texttt{K}}h8 19.\texttt{Q}g3 White also has pleasant prospects.

18.d6 \texttt{\texttt{B}}b8 19.\texttt{Q}d5

Often, e4 is the best square for the knight (mainly to avoid the pawn sacrifice ...e5-e4). However, the game move is better here, since the knight is on its way to e7.

19...\texttt{\texttt{B}}b7 20.fxg6
20...fxg6

On 20...hxg6? follows 21.e7+ h8 22.g3, with a nasty mate threat. Here is a possible continuation: 22...f6 23.h4+ h7 (or 23...h5 24.f5! and White will have a field day on the h-file) 24.xg6 fxg6 25.xg6+ g8 26.c4+ f7 27.xf7#.

21.e7+ h8

Or 21...xe7 22.dxe7 xf3 23.c4+ h8 24.gxf3, and since White will be able to defend the pawn on e7, he is winning.

22.E3 f6

After 22...f6, there is a very powerful mating attack: 23.xg6+! hxg6 24.xg6 e4 25.h5+ g7 (25...g8 26.c4+ g7 27.h6#) 26.h6+ g8 27.c4+.

23.h4!

The strongest continuation!

But the combination starting with 23.xg6+ wins as well: 23...hxg6 24.xg6 e4 25.xf6 xf6 26.h5+ g8 27.c4+.

23...xd6 24.xg6+ g8 25.c4+
25...\textit{f7}

A dismal position for Black. Tukmakov now finishes off effectively.

Also insufficient are the alternatives 25...\textit{d5} 26.\textit{x}f8 \textit{xf8} 27.\textit{xe}f8+ \textit{xe}f8 28.\textit{d}d1 or 25...\textit{d}d5 26.\textit{x}f8 \textit{xf8} 27.\textit{d}d1 \textit{e}6 28.\textit{xe}d5 \textit{xe}d5 29.\textit{d}d1 and here too, Black has to give up a piece.

26.\textit{x}f7+ \textit{xf7} 27.\textit{d}d1 \textit{c}7 28.\textit{d}d7+

There were various ways for White to force resignation, but this is indeed a nice one! A possible continuation is 28...\textit{xe}d7 29.\textit{xe}5+ \textit{e}7 30.\textit{xe}d7 \textit{xe}d7 31.\textit{g}3 \textit{g}8 32.\textit{xf}6.

\textbf{Utut Adianto}
\textbf{Ruben Gunawan}
Jakarta 1996 (5)
White to move

At first sight Black doesn’t seem to have any problems, but the white player has a different opinion!

15.\textit{xf6}!?  
A new idea at the time. White gives up his proud bishop, but in doing so he gains time, and gets a strong attack.

15...\textit{xf6} 16.f4 \textit{d7} 17.e5! dxe5 18.d6

18...\textit{d8} 19.\textit{e4} \textit{g7}
Possibly better was 19...exf4 20.Qxf6+ Kxf6 21.Qxf4 Qg5 22.Qf1, after which White has ample compensation for the pawn in his active piece play and passed d-pawn.

20.f5

This position is characteristic for the thematic f4-f5 push. The knight is overwhelming on e4 (and Black will hardly be able to evict it), while the black pieces cannot develop any activity.

20...gxf5 21.Rxf5 Nf8 22.Raf1!?

A pretty exchange sacrifice. The idea behind it is that without the light-squared bishop the king’s position is not easy to defend.

Objectively, 22.Rh5! may be better, but I can imagine perfectly well that the white player was prepared to give the exchange for domination on the light squares.

22...gxf5 23.Rxf5 Ne6

After 23...f6 comes 24.Nd5 Nd7 25.Rh5 with the ideaBg4-f5. Black doesn’t have much to counter this. If 23...c8? 24.Bh5.

24.Bd5 Qd4?!

A slight mistake in an already dubious position.

Also after 24...f8? 25.Qd6+ Qxf6 26.Qxf6+ Qg7 27.Qc4! it seems as if the curtain will be lowered.

The defence with 24...h8 doesn’t work so well after 25.h5 Qf8 26.Qg4, and White increases the pressure. 24...f4 looks to be the most tenacious defence, but after 25.c4 h8 26.Qg5 White is still calling the shots.
25. \texttt{N}d6+! \texttt{Kh8}

Or 25...\texttt{xf6} 26.\texttt{xf6}+ \texttt{g7} 27.\texttt{g5}+ \texttt{h8} 28.\texttt{h6} with mate to follow.

25...\texttt{f8} also fails: 26.\texttt{xf6}+ \texttt{g8} 27.\texttt{ef6}+ \texttt{h8} 28.\texttt{h5} \texttt{xe2}+ 29.\texttt{h1} \texttt{f4} 30.\texttt{g5}+! \texttt{xh5} 31.\texttt{xf7}. An amusing mate!

26.\texttt{h5} \texttt{xe2}+

The alternative 26...\texttt{xf6} is answered by 27.\texttt{h6} \texttt{xe2}+ 28.\texttt{h1} \texttt{g8} 29.\texttt{xf6}+.

27.\texttt{f1}!

Not good is 27.\texttt{xe2} \texttt{xf6}, and it won't be easy to involve the white queen in the attack.

27...\texttt{xf6}

27...\texttt{xf6}+ also fails after 28.\texttt{xf6} \texttt{xf6} 29.\texttt{h6} \texttt{g8} 30.\texttt{h7}+! \texttt{f8} 31.\texttt{g5}!, winning.

27...h6 28.\texttt{xh6}+.

28.\texttt{h6}

Black resigned in view of 28.\texttt{h6} \texttt{g8} 29.\texttt{h7}+ (29.\texttt{xf6}+ is also quite sufficient) 29...\texttt{f8} 30.\texttt{g5}! \texttt{xd6} (30...\texttt{xg5} 31.\texttt{h8}+) 31.\texttt{xd6} \texttt{e7} 32.\texttt{xf7} \texttt{g5} 33.\texttt{g5}+ \texttt{d8} 34.\texttt{xe2} and White is winning.

**King position without a \texttt{B} on g7**

If there is no dark-squared bishop on g7, the dark squares around the black king will be severely weakened. It goes without saying that then danger can arise on the a1-h8 diagonal.

Below we give a short fragment, in which the weakness of the diagonal is exposed. White makes use of the powerful weapon of the double check, which was discussed in the previous chapter.
Almost all the pieces on both sides are hanging. But with such an insecure position of the black king, it is not very surprising that there is something in it for White.

He decides the game with a wonderful queen sacrifice:

1. \textbf{Qg7+!!} \textbf{Kxg7} 2. \textbf{Nf5+} \\

Double check!

2... \textbf{Kg8} 3. \textbf{Nh6#} \\

A magnificent mate with knight and bishop, enabled by the pin on the \textbf{f8}.

Further on in this chapter we will return to this checkmate pattern with bishop and knight, which occurs more often than you would expect.

**Mate pawn on f6 (or f3)**

If a bishop is missing from g7, the squares f6 and h6 are weakened. You can often exploit this by manoeuvring your pieces towards these squares. Important assistance here is provided by what we would like to call the ‘mate pawn’. The following example is an attractive demonstration of this dark-square strategy.
White to move

There is still a bishop on g7, but one move from now it will be gone...

20.\(\text{Nf6+}\) \(\text{Bxf6}\)!

20...\(\text{Nxf6}\) 21.\(\text{exf6}\) \(\text{Bh8}\) is obviously no picnic either: the bishop is locked up forever, even though Black will not be mated any time soon.

21.\(\text{exf6}\) \(\text{e5}\)

Now White has to find a route for his queen.

22.\(\text{Qg3}\) \(\text{a5}\)

22...\(\text{Re8}\) 23.\(\text{Qg5}\) \(\text{Kh8}\) 24.\(\text{h6}\) \(\text{g8}\) is a loss of time.

23.\(\text{Qg5}\) \(\text{Kh8}\)

If Black attacks the ‘mate pawn’ on f6 with 23...\(\text{Ra6}\), White needs to eliminate the chief defender by 24.\(\text{Rx}d7!\) \(\text{Bxd7}\) after which he decides the issue with 25.\(\text{Qc5}\) (or 25.\(\text{Qh6}\) \(\text{xf6}\) 26.\(\text{xf6}\) with a decisive advantage) 25...\(\text{b5}\) 26.\(\text{e1}\) \(\text{e2}\) 27.\(\text{xa6}\) \(\text{xa6}\) 28.\(\text{h6}\), winning.

24.\(\text{Nd2}\)

The immediate 24.\(\text{Qh6}\) comes to the same thing.

24...\(\text{xa2}\)

The alternative 24...\(\text{c6}\) doesn’t work either: 25.\(\text{h6}\). The ‘misfortune’ for Black lies in the fact that he cannot play ...\(\text{xf6}\), as then the \(\text{f8}\) will be hanging: 25...\(\text{g8}\) 26.\(\text{f3!}\) \(\text{xf6}\) (26...\(\text{xf6}\) 27.\(\text{g5}\)) 27.\(\text{g5}\) \(\text{g7}\) 28.\(\text{xf7}\), winning.
24...\textit{\texttt{c6}} amounts to the same thing as the variation after 24...\textit{\texttt{c6}}.

25.\textit{\texttt{d4}} \textit{\texttt{e8}} 26.\textit{\texttt{h6}} \textit{\texttt{b3}}

Or 26...\textit{\texttt{f8}} 27.\textit{\texttt{d8}} \textit{\texttt{f5}} 28.\textit{\texttt{xf8}} \textit{\texttt{axf8}} 29.\textit{\texttt{g5}} with inevitable mate.

27.\textit{\texttt{h2}}!

In order to prepare \textit{\texttt{g5}}.

27...\textit{\texttt{f8}} 28.\textit{\texttt{d8}}

Of course, that knight also has to be challenged!

28...\textit{\texttt{xh3}} 29.\textit{\texttt{xf8}}

Black resigned in view of 29...\textit{\texttt{xf8}} 30.\textit{\texttt{g5}} \textit{\texttt{xe3}} 31.\textit{\texttt{hxe3}}.

\textbf{Checkmate pattern with bishop and knight}

If White has a bishop on the \textit{\texttt{a1-h8}} diagonal, then the weakening move ...\textit{\texttt{g7-g6}} is really ugly if Black doesn’t have his own bishop on the same diagonal.

Below we give a miniature where, just like in the game Misto-Kloza, a mate pattern with bishop and knight plays the main role. This time, by the way, it was White who drew the short end of the stick.

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.8\textwidth]{chessboard.png}
\end{center}

\textit{Black to move}

\begin{center}
\textit{Sebastian Morell Gonzalez  
Miguel Fernandez Juan  
Valencia 1995}
\end{center}
Various black pieces are already taking up menacing positions. Since White has weakened his king’s position by g2-g3, the position now contains a couple of beautiful attacking ideas.

12...\( \text{Qh4} \)!

The queen cannot be taken.

13.\( \text{Nf3} \)

The only move to avoid immediate mate. 13.gxh4 runs into 13...\( \text{Qg6+} \) 14.\( \text{h1\ Ngxf2#} \). Again, the power of a double check!

13...\( \text{g5} \)!

We could see that coming.

14.gxh4

14.\( \text{fxg5} \) \( \text{Nxf2#} \); 14.\( \text{Nxf5} \) \( \text{Qxh2#} \).

14...\( \text{Nxf3+} \) 15.\( \text{Kg2} \)

Not the best move objectively, but Black still has to prove something after this. The game Yanofsky-Gentes, Edmonton 1985, continued with 15.\( \text{h1\ Nh4} \) 16.\( \text{h3\ Qd4+} \) 17.\( \text{h2\ Qxc2} \) 18.\( \text{Qxc2\ Bh6} \) and Black was a few pawns to the good. There followed 19.\( \text{Qb2\ Bh4} \) 20.\( \text{Qg1\ Bh6} \) 21.\( \text{ad1\ d6} \) 22.\( \text{b3\ Qd7} \) 23.\( \text{Qg5\ Qc5} \) 24.\( \text{a2\ f3} \) 25.\( \text{dg1\ g4} \) and White had had enough.

15...\( \text{e1+} \)

Again, the double check is a powerful attacking weapon! Less convincing is 15...\( \text{Qg6+} \), although here too, Black could obtain a virtually decisive advantage after 16.\( \text{h3\ Qxd4} \) 17.\( \text{f3\ Qxc2} \).

16.\( \text{g3} \)

Also after 16.\( \text{h3} \) pretty mate patterns appear: 16...\( \text{g2+} \) 17.\( \text{g3\ Bh6} \) 18.\( \text{f4\ Bh4+} \) 19.\( \text{e5\ Qc6#} \).

16...\( \text{g6+} \)

Here White resigned. After 17.\( \text{f4} \) it is mate in two: 17...\( \text{g2+} \) (17...\( \text{Qh4+} \) 18.\( \text{e5\ Qc6#} \)) 18.\( \text{e5\ d6#} \).

**Attacking the h7-weakness**

Strangely enough, during our quest for attractive examples we didn’t find many games where checkmate was delivered on the dark squares. This sounds quite paradoxical, but in fact the final blow is often dealt on the light squares. This is because the queen seeks out the square h6, and a knight will go to g5, and/or a rook is brought to the h-file via the third or fourth rank. Then the vulnerable pawn on h7 is hard to defend, as we saw in the above game Hector-Salmensuu. In the following example, the author had to swallow a bitter pill...

Han Janssen
Herman Grooten
Netherlands tt 1980
White to move

Out of necessity, Black has had to allow a weakening of the dark squares around his king. He will deeply regret this:

1. \textit{Qh4}

The queen is on its way to h6. Another problem is that the knight cannot move to h5, because the bishop on e7 is hanging.

1...\textit{Qd8} 2. \textit{Qh6}

The threat is 3. \textit{Ng5}.

2...\textit{Nh5}?! 

On 2...\textit{Re8} White continues with 3. \textit{exf5 Nh5}, and now 4. \textit{g4}! is strongest (after 4. fxg6 fxg6 5. \textit{Re1} \textit{f8} 6. \textit{xe8 xe8} 7. \textit{d2} Black has managed to drive back the dangerous queen, although White still retains excellent chances). For example: 4...\textit{f8} and now the highly surprising 5. \textit{g5}!. White even exchanges the queens! The idea is that as soon as the black knight has to leave its post on h5, White wins immediately with \textit{Nd5}!. 5...\textit{xg5} 6. \textit{hxg5 Nh6} With a couple of in-between moves, Black tries to limit the damage. As just mentioned, after a knight move, for example 6...\textit{g7}, follows the lethal 7. \textit{d5}!. 7. \textit{h3} \textit{e3+} 8. \textit{xex3} \textit{xe3} 9. \textit{g5} and now Black has to give up the piece, after which he can resign, since if 9...\textit{g7}, 10. \textit{d5} also wins immediately.

3. \textit{Nd5}

White is going to tickle the defender on h5...

Very attractive was 3. \textit{exf5 xf5} 4. \textit{Re1}. 
3...\text{e}6?

After this ugly mistake it is immediately over. It was high time to play 3...\text{e}8!, which would allow Black to continue the struggle for some time.

4.\text{f}4! \text{f}6 5.\text{g}5!

A queen on h6 and a knight on g5 make the ideal set-up.

5...\text{e}8

Black is too late with creating an escape route for his king: now that the rook has left the f-file, the final blow lands on f7.

6.\text{x}f6 \text{x}f6 7.\text{x}h7+ \text{f}8 8.\text{fx}e6+ \text{xe}6 9.\text{f}7#

\textbf{Breaking open the position}

Without the bishop on g7, the seventh rank is extra vulnerable, and as a consequence sacrifices will have a greater chance of success. In the game Fritzsche-May we already saw the sacrifice on f7; in the following fragments we will show successful sacrifices on g6 and h7.

\textbf{Peter Dely}
\textbf{Eduard Glass}
Reggio Emilia 1996/61
White to move

As we have seen, in many cases the enemy king’s position has to be demolished. Sometimes you can afford to use violent means to achieve this.

21. ♗xg6!

An immediate 21. ♗g7? doesn’t give White anything after 21...♗xg5.

Also, 21. ♖xe6? fails to 21...fxe6 22. ♖xe6+ ♖h8 23. ♗f7 ♖f8.

21. ♗xg6! hxg6

Thus Black keeps his pawn structure intact, but he has no defence against the following invasion by the white pieces.

After 21...fxg6 22. ♖xe6+ ♖h8 Black is stripped completely bare with a ‘Zwickmühle’: 23. ♖f7+ (23. ♖f7? ♖f8!) 23...♖g8 24. ♖xd8+ ♖h8 25. ♖f7+ ♖g8 26. ♖d6+ ♖h8 27. ♖xe8.

21...♗xg5 is met by 22. ♖xh7+ ♖xh7 23. ♖xg5+ ♖g8 (23...♖g7 24. ♖h6+ ♖g8 25. ♖f6 ♖xf6 26. ♖xf6) and now White brings up new reserves in an original way: 24. ♖e3! (certainly not 24. ♖f6? in view of 24...♖xf6 25. ♖xf6 ♖f4! and White’s important pawn on f6 will fall; but 24. ♖h6 does win, e.g. 24...f5 25. ♖xf6 ♖h7 26. ♖f7+! ♖xf7 27. ♖xd8 ♖xd8 28. ♖g5+) 24...f6 (Black had to do something against the threat of 25. ♖g3. 24...♖xe3 was not possible here in view of 25. ♖f6 and Black gets mated) 25. ♖xf6 ♖xf6 26. ♖g3+ ♖f7 27. ♖h6!. 
A beautiful, quiet attacking move. White is threatening both 28.\textsf{Rg7}+ and 28.\textsf{Qxf6}. Black could stop the clock here.

22.\textsf{Bg7}! \textsf{Kxg7}

22...\textsf{xg5} 23.\textsf{Qh8#}.

23.\textsf{Qh7+} \textsf{f8} 24.\textsf{xf7#}/\textsf{h8#}
White to move

The white pieces have already entered the black fortress, but still some creativity is needed to force a decision.

1.\textit{Rxh7!}

White makes a breach. After the other logical attacking continuation 1.\textit{Ng5?} follows 1...\textit{Qc7}!! and now the white attack comes to nothing, since after 2.\textit{Rxh7} (Black takes over the initiative after 2.\textit{Nh7} \textit{Bxg2+}! 3.\textit{Kxg2} \textit{Qc2+} 4.\textit{Kf3} \textit{Rf3+} 5.\textit{Kh3} \textit{Qf3+} 6.\textit{Kf4} \textit{Rf1+} 7.\textit{Kf5} \textit{Qf5+} 8.\textit{Kf6} \textit{Qf6+} 9.\textit{Kg7} \textit{Qg7+} 10.\textit{Kg8} \textit{Qg8+} 11.\textit{Kh7} Black is a healthy pawn up in the ending)

1.\textit{Rxh7!} \textit{Rxh7}

Now on 1...\textit{Qc7} follows 2.\textit{Qg7+} \textit{Kxh8} 3.\textit{Qxg6#}.

2.\textit{Ng5+} \textit{Kh6}

Forced. Going back doesn’t work either: 2...\textit{Bg8} 3.\textit{Qxf7+} \textit{Kh7} 4.\textit{Qh7#}.

3.\textit{Qh4+} \textit{Kh7}

Again the only move. It is mate after 3...\textit{Qxe4} 4.\textit{Qh4#}, as after 3...\textit{Qe7} there follows 4.\textit{Qg7+} \textit{Kh7} (4...\textit{Qh5} 5.\textit{g4#})

5.\textit{Qg5+} \textit{Qg8} 6.\textit{Qxf7#}.
4...g8 5.f6#.

5.f6+ xh8 6.xh6#

This final position aptly illustrates the weakness of the dark squares after the move ...g7-g6!

**King position with a bishop on g7**

There are players who are ‘in love’ with their bishop on g7. GM Eduard Gufeld repeatedly sang the praises of this bishop in his writings. And yes, there are plenty of opening systems where this bishop plays an important role in the middlegame.

**Conquering the bishop on g7**

Now that we have made clear how important it is to have this defending bishop near the king, you will also realize that it may be worthwhile to make an effort to give it a hard time. The following example shows that sometimes heavy artillery may be used for this purpose.

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**Alexander Beliavsky**

**Eric Brondum**

*Copenhagen 2002 (2)*

White to move

White’s plan is to work with f6+. Then, after ...xf6 xf6, White threatens h4 followed by h8#, while after ...f8 he threatens both xe8+ and, again, h4-h7-g8 and mate.

30.e5!!

With this smart exchange sacrifice White aims to exploit further Black’s weakened dark squares. To that end, he first
has to rule out Black’s most important defensive move, ...\texttt{c8-f5}. The immediate 30.\texttt{f6+} doesn’t offer White much after 30...\texttt{xf6} 31.\texttt{xf6} \texttt{f5}! 32.\texttt{h4} \texttt{h5}, and nothing is decided yet.

### 30.\texttt{e5}!! \texttt{xe5}

Relatively best. The game continued with 30...\texttt{d7} 31.\texttt{f6+} \texttt{f8} 32.\texttt{e1}!

\textit{analysis diagram}

and Black resigned in view of the threat of 33.\texttt{d6}.

Instead, after 30...\texttt{b7} 31.\texttt{f6+} \texttt{f8} 32.\texttt{h4}

\textit{analysis diagram}
the threat of $33.\text{Q}h7-g8$ cannot be averted.

### 31.dxe5

But now that all the dark squares have been weakened, the white attack runs smoothly. At this point, White is threatening $32.\text{B}f6$ followed by $33.\text{Q}h6$, with mate on $h8$ or $g7$. We can see that the open $h$-file favours White, since otherwise Black would have the defence ...$\text{Q}c8-f8$.

### 31...f5

A radical way of doing something about the invasion on the dark squares, but it’s the only reasonable solution. $31...\text{B}d7$ doesn’t avert the threat. Black will be mated after $32.\text{N}h6+ \text{K}h8$ $33.\text{Q}h6+ \text{K}h7$ $34.\text{Q}f6+ \text{K}h8$ $35.\text{B}f6#$.

### 32.exf6 $\text{Q}e6$

Also after $32...\text{Ra}7$ $33.f7+! \text{B}xf7$ $34.\text{B}f6+ \text{K}f8$ $35.\text{Q}e5!$ the weakness of the dark squares is exposed. Mate is inevitable: $35...\text{Q}g7$ $36.\text{Q}e7+! \text{B}xe7$ $37.\text{Q}h8#$.

White’s pieces are now optimally placed to launch the final offensive. All operations run along the dark squares.

With this nasty trick White exposes the dark squares all over again.

### 33.f7+!

$33...\text{B}xf7$ $34.\text{B}f6+ \text{K}f8$

$34...\text{g}5$ $35.\text{Q}xg5+ \text{e}8$ $36.\text{g}7+ \text{e}8$ $37.\text{h}8+$ wins material in a similar way to the main line: $37...\text{g}8$ $38.\text{h}6$.

### 35.\text{h}6+ \text{e}8 $36.\text{h}8+ \text{g}8$ $37.\text{h}6 \text{d}7$ $38.\text{g}7+ \text{e}8$ $39.\text{e}5 \text{d}7$ $40.\text{x}g8+$

And Black loses too much material.
Knight to f6

The defending bishop is usually so important that manoeuvring a knight to f6 (preferably with a pawn backing it up on e5, to control the square) is often fatal.

Vadim Zviagintsev
Sergey Slugin
Moscow 2008 (1)

White has a substantial edge in development in return for the sacrificed pawn. Now he has to transform this into something more tangible.

14.e5! \(N\)g4 15.h3 \(N\)h6

Not a pleasant square for the knight. 15...\(\text{xe5}\) would be asking too much in view of 16.\(\text{xe5}\) \(\text{xe5}\) 17.\(\text{xe5}\) \(\text{xe5}\), as now White dismantles the black king’s position with 18.\(\text{xf7+}\) \(\text{h8}\) (18...\(\text{xf7}\) is no good on account of 19.\(\text{d8+}\) \(\text{g7}\) 20.\(\text{xf7+}\) \(\text{xf7}\) 21.\(\text{xc8}\)) 19.\(\text{be1}\) \(\text{g7}\) 20.\(\text{b3}\) and White is on the verge of winning, because Black’s backward development now becomes a big problem for him.

Better was 15...b5, although after 16.\(\text{e4}\)! bxc4 17.\(\text{c5}\) \(\text{d8}\) 18.\(\text{xf8}\) \(\text{xd2}\) 19.\(\text{fxd2}\) \(\text{xf8}\) 20.\(\text{hxg4}\) White has also amassed a huge advantage.

16.\(\text{e4}\)

First of all, threatening 17.\(\text{c5}\).

16...b6
17...b3!? 17...f6+ Kg8 18.g5 was a little too early, even though White would also have good prospects in that case.

Curiously, White could also have posed his opponent great problems by 17.e6!?. Since White has played his pawn to e5 in order to exploit the strongpoints on f6 and d6, this does not seem very logical. However, Black’s dark squares will be weakened because the important g7-bishop is traded off. And this will also have grave consequences after 17...fxe6 18.xg7 xg7 (recapturing with the queen also turns out badly for Black after 18...xg7 19.fg5 fg5 20.xe6+ h8 21.xc8 xc8 22.g4 and it is all over) 19.c3+ g8 20.fg5, and the infiltration of the dark squares has been realized.

17...f5 18.g5 c7 19.g4!

First, the only active black piece, the knight on f5, has to be kicked away. There is no hurry to play 19.f6+ xf6 20.exf6, since 20.d6 still looks playable for Black.

19...e7

Now finally White can reap the fruits of his strategy.
20. \texttt{Nf6+ Kh8}

After 20...\texttt{exf6} 21.\texttt{xf6} the threat of 22.\texttt{Qh6} can no longer be parried.

21. \texttt{Qf2}

The queen wants to go to h4.

21... \texttt{Ng8}

21...h6 22.\texttt{Qh4}.

22. \texttt{Nxh7!}

The knight now eats its way through the black king’s position. Also good was the immediate 22.\texttt{Qh4}.

22... \texttt{Nhx7} 23.\texttt{Wh4+ Kh6} 24.\texttt{Nxh6} \texttt{Nh6} 25.\texttt{g5}

Also strong was 25.\texttt{Ng5+ Kh7} 26.\texttt{xf7+! Kh7} 27.\texttt{xf7} \texttt{e3+} 28.\texttt{Ng2} and there is no good way to parry the threat of 29.\texttt{Wh8}.

25... \texttt{xf5}

On 25...\texttt{Wh8}, 26.\texttt{Wh6+ Kg8} 27.\texttt{xg6+ Kf8} 28.\texttt{h4} wins, as the weakness of the f7-square proves fatal for Black.

26. \texttt{Wh6+ Kg8} 27.\texttt{bd1}

White allows himself some time to bring his last piece into the attack. The rook is heading for h4.

27.\texttt{Nh4 xc2} (after 27...\texttt{xe5} Black also gets more than he bargained for: 28.\texttt{xf5! gxf5} 29.\texttt{g6 Wh3+} (29...\texttt{d4+} 30.\texttt{Kh1 Wh4+} 31.\texttt{g2}) 30.\texttt{g2}, and Black cannot cope with the mate threat) would have led to a mating attack as well: 28.\texttt{xg6! xg6} 29.\texttt{xg6+ Kh8} 30.\texttt{Wh6+ Kg8} 31.\texttt{g6}.
27...\textit{e7}

White’s plan is to occupy the h-file with two major pieces: 27...\textit{d7} 28.\textit{d4} \textit{xe5} 29.\textit{h4} \textit{xf3+} 30.\textit{xf3}

\textit{analysis diagram}

with 31.\textit{h7} or 31.\textit{h8} mate to follow.

If Black wants to stave off the main threat with 27...\textit{d8}, then there follows 28.\textit{h4} \textit{xd1} (after the logical 28...\textit{d7}, there are many good moves – we will opt for the quickest: 29.\textit{xf7+} \textit{xf7} 30.\textit{g6+}) 29.\textit{xd1} \textit{d7} 30.\textit{xf5} \textit{xf5} 31.\textit{g6+} \textit{h8} 32.\textit{xf7}
and there is nothing to be done against 33.\textit{\texttt{Q}}h6#.

\textbf{28.\textit{\texttt{R}}d6}

28.\textit{\texttt{R}}d4 would also have been decisive: 28...\textit{\texttt{Q}}c5 29.\textit{\texttt{Q}}h2 with the threat of 30.\textit{\texttt{R}}h4.

\textbf{28...\textit{\texttt{R}}d8}

The idea behind 28.\textit{\texttt{R}}d6 was to meet 28...\textit{\texttt{N}}d7 with 29.\textit{\texttt{R}}xg6+ \textit{\texttt{B}}xg6 30.\textit{\texttt{Q}}xg6+ \textit{\texttt{K}}h8 31.\textit{\texttt{Q}}h6+ \textit{\texttt{K}}g8 32.g6 with an inescapable mate threat on h7.

\textbf{29.\textit{\texttt{B}}xf7+}

Also here, 29.\textit{\texttt{R}}xg6+ was fine.

\textbf{29...\textit{\texttt{B}}xf7 30.\textit{\texttt{R}}h7+ \textit{\texttt{B}}f8 31.\textit{\texttt{R}}h8+ \textit{\texttt{B}}f7 32.\textit{\texttt{R}}f6+}

And Black gave up all further resistance.

\textbf{Conclusions}

- if you double or triple on an open h-file, it is often best to put a \textbf{rook in front}
- an important theme is moving the \textbf{queen to the h-file}
- if there is no black bishop on g7, often \textbf{h6} is the ideal square for the \textbf{queen}
- if Black does have a defending bishop on g7, then you have to eliminate it. This can be done by exchanging it, or by planting a \textbf{bishop or knight on f6} (supported by a pawn on e5).
In the previous paragraph, we discussed the fianchetto structure. Here we will investigate ‘luft’, i.e. the ‘airhole’ created by the pawn move to h6/h3. The term ‘airhole’ in this context was coined by Siegbert Tarrasch, who once exclaimed ‘Was ist ein Mensch ohne Ventil?’. But what amateurs sometimes see as a ‘safe’ little move, can have grave consequences for the middlegame. Especially in cases of opposite castling, little pawn moves like this may give the opponent exactly the target he needs to organize an attack.

Practice teaches us that in most cases the weakness created by the advance of the rook’s pawn is a lesser evil. The pawn on h6 often prevents a white piece coming to the g5-square, and it provides the king with luft, an escape square that may be necessary to prevent a back-rank mate. Nevertheless, this pawn move might provide the opponent with a target for an attack on the king.

Let’s distinguish between several different types of attack:

- The pawn march g2-g4-g5. White then threatens to open one or more files.
- A piece sacrifice on the vulnerable h6-square.
- The b1-h7 diagonal has been weakened by the push of the h-pawn. By setting up a battery with the queen and bishop on the b1-h7 diagonal, you provoke the move ...g7-g6. Then you can exploit this second weakening (think of piece sacrifices on g6).
- Putting a knight on f5 is often strong. This is because chasing away the knight with ...g7-g6 often isn’t possible (as then White takes on h6 with the knight).
- The ‘dog’s ear’ on h6 can be made even more vulnerable by:
  - Sacrificing the exchange on f6;
  - Planting a piece on f6;
  - Sacrificing a piece on g7.
- The light squares, especially that on g6, can be made even more vulnerable by sacrifices on e6, f7, or g6.

Below we show illustrations of each of the above-mentioned types of attack.

### The action g4-g5

Black can react to the attempted breakthrough by g4-g5 in different ways. He can either capture, or allow White to capture, or keep the position closed with ...h6-h5.

We will start with an attractive attacking game, in which Black opens the h-file by capturing on g5.

---

### Garry Kasparov

Arne Dür

Graz 1981
White to move

White has just accepted a pawn sacrifice on the queenside. But he is not averse to returning this pawn in exchange for an open file.

14.g5!

Of course, White doesn’t hang about: he opens a file on the kingside to start the attack.

14...hxg5 15.hxg5 hxg5 16.Nxg5 Qxg5 17.f4!

Another good move. The second rank is opened with gain of tempo, allowing the white queen to go to the h-file. In
addition, the centre is fixed.

17...f6 18.h2 g6

An important moment. Black has just managed to weather the first storm. How can White add new vigour to his attack?

19.f5!

This move is, in a higher sense, the coup de grâce. An important point is that the h2-b8 diagonal is opened for the white queen, which introduces tactical tricks into the position.

19...g7

After 19...gxf5 20.gxg6+ fxg6 21.Qh6+ Kg7 22.Qh5 Qg7 23.Qh7# 24.Qh6+ Qg8 25.Qg8#. 

20.fxe6 fxe6 21.Ed1

Now that the pawn on g6 has been seriously weakened, White quickly increases the pressure on this point. It is instructive to see how Kasparov immediately takes aim at every new target.

21...f8 22.d3 Ed6 23.e4! e5

Panic, but there was already no defence. On 23...dxe4 White had planned 24.Qxe4 Ed7 25.Qg6 Qf6 26.Qh8#.

24.Qxd5 Ed7
25.\texttt{hxg6! 1-0}

It’s always nice to see a player ‘crushed down the h-file’.

Below we see an example where White doesn’t take back on g5 with the h-pawn, but with a piece. Thus it is that the g-file is opened.

\textbf{Valery Salov}
\textbf{Vladimir Raicevic}
Moscow 1986 (8)
White to move

21.g5! hxg5 22.\textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{x}}}}g5 \textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{d}}}}6

Black wants to be able to protect the g7-pawn with ...\textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{f}}}}8. Or 22...\textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{d}}}}6 23.\textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{g}}}}1 \textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e}}}}8 24.\textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{h}}}}5 f5 25.\textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{g}}}}6 and White wins.

23.\textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{g}}}}1 \textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e}}}}8 24.dxc5!

Now 24.\textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{h}}}}6 is no good in view of the defence 24...\textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{f}}}}5!.

Though 24.\textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{h}}}}4 does look good, the game continuation is strongest.

24...\textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{c}}}}7

The queen has to protect the seventh rank. 24...\textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{x}}}c5 is met by 25.\textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{h}}}}6 g6 26.\textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{x}}}g6 fxg6 27.\textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{x}}}g6+ \textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{g}}}}7 28.\textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{x}}}g7#.}

25.\textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{h}}}}6!

After this powerful move, Black resigned. Please note that on h6 (as opposed to h5 or h4) the queen keeps an eye on e6, which makes the defence ...\textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{f}}}}7-f5 futile. Here is a possible continuation: 25...g6 26.\textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{x}}}g6 fxg6 27.\textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{x}}}g6+ \textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{g}}}}7 (27...\textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{g}}}}7 28.\textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{x}}}c6+}) 28.\textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{h}}}}7+ \textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{f}}}}7 29.\textbf{\textit{\hfill\textcolor{red}{\texttt{h}}}g7+ and Black loses the house.

Now we come to a case where the black player tries to keep the position closed by answering g4-g5 with ...h6-h5. The downside to this approach is that the black pawn on h5 often becomes a target, all the more so because this pawn is hard to defend.

However, if Black does manage to protect the h5-pawn, then new weaknesses may appear (the f6-square!). The following fragment shows how Judit Polgar handled such a situation in flawless fashion.

\textbf{Judit Polgar}
\textbf{Christophe Philippe}
Aix-les-Bains 2011 (2)
White to move

White starts her operations with

20.g5

in an attempt to open lines against the enemy king’s position.

20...h5 21.Ne5

The thematic 21.g6 also looks good, e.g. 21...f6 22.Bd3, after which the queen targets the h5-pawn with h2 and e2.

21...Nh5

Keeping the files closed with 21...g6 doesn’t work either. White replies strongly with 22.f5 e8 23.d3 d6 24.f6 d8 and then breaks open the position with 25.xh5! gxh5 26.g5 fxg5 27.xg5+ xg5 28.xg5+ h8 29.g7#.

22.Bxc4!

White gives up a good bishop in order to quickly bring the queen into the attack.

22...dxc4 23.Qe2 Qe8

After 23...g6 comes, analogous to the game, 24.xc6 xc6 25.e5 and the battle is decided. For example: 25...f6 26.xf6 xf6 (26...xf6 27.xh5) 27.xg5+ f7 28.xh5 and Black can pack it in.

24.xc6! xc6 25.e5! f6

A forced weakening of the light squares.

If 25...g6 26.f5.

26.d5+ h8 27.g6! f5 28.f3
And Black has to give up the queen to avoid being mated.

In order to prevent a closure of the kingside, White can put a pawn on h5 himself before he pushes g4-g5. In the main line of the Caro-Kann, there is already a white pawn on h5.

**Evgeny Vorobiov**
**Artur Gabrielian**
Ulan Ude 2009 (3)

White to move

As usual in this variation of the Caro-Kann, White has fixed the h6-pawn by putting his own pawn on h5. This means that, in principle, everything is ready for the pawn march g2-g4-g5, since it’s impossible for Black to reply ...h6-h5. Because of this, somebody once came up with the weird idea of the following knight manoeuvre, to a square where it cannot easily be traded off. In recent years, the move

14.\(\text{xf1}\)!

(first played by the Polish woman player Dworakowska) has become popular. The idea is simple: to carry through g2-g4-g5 without losing time. This turns out to be a powerful weapon, which has proved to be hard to handle for many black players.

14...c5 15.g4

Why not play it right away?

15...cxd4

Black could now play the prophylactic 15...\(\text{h7}\) in order to slow down the push g4-g5, but this would mean conceding quite a bit of activity.
16.\textit{g5 hxg5} 17.\textit{xg5}

White has managed to open the g-file.

17...\textit{a5} 18.\textit{b1} \textit{c5}

18...\textit{e5} has also been tried here. In that case, White returns his knight to the attack with 19.\textit{g3} and later \textit{f5}.

19.\textit{h6} \textit{fd8} 20.\textit{hxg7} \textit{b6} 21.\textit{e5}!

With this powerful move, White brings a knight into the attack, and opens the e2-h5 diagonal for the queen.

21...\textit{a4}!

An annoying little move... Black threatens to give mate on b2, or to win the queen with 22...\textit{c3+}. But White has calculated precisely. With a forced sequence of moves (there’s no other way...) he finishes the game with a flash.

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
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\end{center}

22.\textit{h8+! xg7} 23.\textit{xf6+ xf6}

Here is another beautiful example where queen and knight cooperate excellently in the attack: 23...\textit{xf6} 24.\textit{g4+! xh8} 25.\textit{h5+ g7} 26.\textit{xf7+ h8} (26...\textit{h6} 27.\textit{g6#}) 27.\textit{g6#}.

24.\textit{h6+ g7} 25.\textit{h7+!}

And once again we see the power of the queen and knight combination in the attack. After 25.\textit{g4+? xh6}, Black wins, because later White’s queen will not be able to take on f7 with check.

25...\textit{f8}

Again, the rook cannot be taken: 25...\textit{xh7} 26.\textit{h5+ g7} 27.\textit{xf7+} and Black is mated on the next move.

26.\textit{h8+}
For the second time a rook lands on this square, and now Black immediately resigned, as after 26.\texttt{Rh}8+ \texttt{Kh}7 27.\texttt{Qg}4+ \texttt{Kf}6 (we’ve seen the mate variation after 27...\texttt{Rxh}8 28.\texttt{Qh}5+ before) he is again mated in an attractive way: 28.\texttt{Qf}4+ \texttt{Kg}7 29.\texttt{Qh}6#.

**Sacrifice on h6**

Another way to open the king position is by means of a piece sacrifice on the vulnerable point h6. The most frequently seen sacrifice of this type is \texttt{Bxh}6. Often this leads to the opening of two files, and if White has a few other pieces on hand, mate may follow quickly. In the following example we again see an attacking pattern that we discussed earlier.

\begin{center}
\textbf{Alexey Korotylev}
\textbf{Wouter Spoelman}
\textbf{Wijk aan Zee 2005 (13)}
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}[scale=0.5]
\begin{scope}
\clip (1,1) rectangle (8,8);
\fill [lightgray] (0,0) rectangle (8,8);
\fill [lightgray] (0,8) rectangle (8,16);
\fill [lightgray] (8,0) rectangle (16,8);
\fill [lightgray] (8,8) rectangle (16,16);
\end{scope}
\draw (0,1) -- (15,1);
\draw (0,2) -- (15,2);
\draw (0,3) -- (15,3);
\draw (0,4) -- (15,4);
\draw (0,5) -- (15,5);
\draw (0,6) -- (15,6);
\draw (0,7) -- (15,7);
\draw (0,8) -- (15,8);
\draw (1,0) -- (1,15);
\draw (2,0) -- (2,15);
\draw (3,0) -- (3,15);
\draw (4,0) -- (4,15);
\draw (5,0) -- (5,15);
\draw (6,0) -- (6,15);
\draw (7,0) -- (7,15);
\draw (8,0) -- (8,15);
\draw (9,0) -- (9,15);
\draw (10,0) -- (10,15);
\draw (11,0) -- (11,15);
\draw (12,0) -- (12,15);
\draw (13,0) -- (13,15);
\draw (14,0) -- (14,15);
\draw (15,0) -- (15,15);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

*White to move*

In this game, during his first performance in the C-group of the Corus (currently, Tata Steel) tournament in Wijk aan Zee, the young Wouter Spoelman was confronted with

23.\texttt{Bxh}6! \texttt{gxh}6 24.\texttt{Qe}3!

As we have seen before, it is important to involve the queen in the attack. Far less strong is 24.\texttt{Rxh}6+ because after 24...\texttt{Kg}7 the rook is hanging, and after 25.\texttt{Rh}3 Black gets time to oppose on the h-file with 25...\texttt{Rh}8. Here White does not have sufficient attack for the piece, but it is still not time for despair.

24.\texttt{Qd}2 amounts to the same as the game move.

24...\texttt{Qg}8 25.\texttt{Bg}4

Now that White takes aim at the h6-weakness for the third time, the position can no longer be held.
25...g7 26.hxg6 f6

The king takes a stroll and threatens to reach safety via e7.

27.g3!

The key move. With this double attack (on the mate square g5 and the insufficiently protected knight on g8) White decides the game.

27.g3! also wins, analogously to the game: 27.e7 (of 27...hxg6 28.h4+ g7 29.xh6+ g8 30.h8#)
28.xg8+.

27.e7 28.xg8+

White has regained the piece, and remains with a technically easily winning position.

28.d7 29.h6 e7 30.xe7 xe7
It is instructive how the grandmaster quickly converts this major piece ending:

31.d5!

Right! Opening the position is the way to go.

31...exd5 32.exd5+ Kd7 33.Rge3 Re8 34.Rxe8 Rxe8 35.Qc6+!

White decides the game with an amusing tactic, and Black saw no alternative but to resign. After 35...Qxc6 36.dxc6+ d8 37.c7+ d7 38.xe8 White wins a rook thanks to the pawn’s powers of deflection.

The b1-h7 diagonal

An important effect of the move ...h7-h6 is that the b1-h7 diagonal becomes more vulnerable. Especially with a white pawn on e5 (which keeps a black knight from f6), a ‘battery’ with bishop and queen (with the queen in front) may lead to a new weakening. If Black also has to play ...g7-g6, his entire bastion becomes weak, and various piece sacrifices (on f7 or g6) are made possible. This strategy is illustrated in the next game.

Baadur Jobava  
Yakup Erturan  
Ankara 2002 (3)
White to move

With the presence of opposite-coloured bishops, Jobava conceived the plan of placing his queen in front of the bishop on the b1-h7 diagonal.

16.\textbf{Qe}2!

One might wonder if this could have been done in a different way, with 16.\textbf{B}b1. We will soon see the difference.

16.\textbf{Qe}2! \textbf{Nd}7 17.a3 \textbf{Qa}5

On d6 the queen is not so well placed: 17...\textbf{Q}d6 18.\textbf{Q}e4 g6 19.\textbf{Q}c6.

18.\textbf{Q}e4 g6 19.\textbf{Q}g4
That was the idea. The queen is able to switch via the centre straight to the kingside. The most tenacious defence seems to be

19...\textit{\textipa{ad}8}

But now White can destroy the black king’s position.

In the game Black immediately gave material with 19...\textit{\textipa{xd}5}. After 20.\textit{\textipa{e}4} \textit{\textipa{d}6} White played the strong 21.\textit{\textipa{c}6}! \textit{\textipa{e}7} 22.\textit{\textipa{x}g}6 \textit{\textipa{e}5} (22...\textit{\textipa{f}x}g6 23.\textit{\textipa{x}e}7) 23.\textit{\textipa{f}x}f7+ (double check!) 23...\textit{\textipa{x}f}7 24.\textit{\textipa{xe}5+} \textit{\textipa{xe}5} 25.\textit{\textipa{g}6#}.

20.\textit{\textipa{x}g}6! \textit{\textipa{x}g}6 21.\textit{\textipa{x}g}6+ \textit{\textipa{h}8}

On 21...\textit{\textipa{g}7}, 22.\textit{\textipa{e}7} decides.

22.\textit{\textipa{x}h}6+ \textit{\textipa{g}8}

How can White continue the attack now? The bishop on f6 is an excellent defender, which prevents the white rook occupying the seventh rank.

23.\textit{\textipa{g}6+} \textit{\textipa{h}8} 24.\textit{\textipa{h}5+} \textit{\textipa{g}8}

After a few clever checks, taking control of the f7-square, White now continues with

25.\textit{\textipa{g}5}

thus forcing Black to give up his bishop.

25...\textit{\textipa{x}g}5 26.\textit{\textipa{x}g}5+

Now he can recapture the bishop with check.

26...\textit{\textipa{h}8} 27.\textit{\textipa{e}7} \textit{\textipa{g}8} 28.\textit{\textipa{h}6#}
Knight on f5

With a weak pawn on h6, the power of a white knight on f5 increases. It is difficult to chase away the knight with \ldots g7-g6, because then h6 is hanging.

\begin{center}
\textbf{Garry Kasparov}
\textbf{Claudia Amura}
Buenos Aires simul 1992
\end{center}

White to move

Kasparov has noticed that the white knight will stand beautifully on f5, and so he makes a circumventing manoeuvre, with gain of tempo.

19. $\text{Ne3! Be5}$

A little more resistance would have been offered by 19...$\text{Ne5}$, although after 20.$\text{Bd5}$ (20.$\text{f5}!?$ would be answered by 20...$\text{c8}$ 21.$\text{xd6}$ $\text{xf3+}$ 22.$\text{g2}$ $\text{h4+}!$) 20...$\text{c8}$ 21.$\text{e4}$ White has nothing to complain about either.

20. $\text{f5}$

The knight has arrived on the beautiful square, and immediately all kinds of threats emerge.

20...$\text{c8}$

In order to be able to defend the knight, but this allows a combination.
21. \texttt{gxh6+}!

Not so hard for a World Champion.

21... \texttt{gxh6} 22. \texttt{Qg6+ Kh8} 23. \texttt{Qxh6+ Kg8} 24. \texttt{Qg6+}

It is understandable that Kasparov opts for convenience in a simultaneous display. 24. \texttt{Bd3 Nf6} 25. \texttt{Kg2!}, with the idea 26. \texttt{Rh1}, was also sufficient.

24... \texttt{Kh8} 25. \texttt{Qh5+ Kg7} 26. \texttt{Qg4+ Kh6} 27. \texttt{Rxd7 Qe8} 28. \texttt{Qg2} 1-0

**Exchange sacrifices on f6/f3**

Besides the above-mentioned piece sacrifices on h6, it is also possible to sacrifice on f6. For instance, \texttt{Rxf6} is an exchange sacrifice that occurs regularly. Another theme is that of ‘planting’ a piece on f6. The attacker puts a piece on the f6-square, which can then simply be captured. However, after White has taken back with the g-pawn, the idea is that the white pieces can enter the black position via the f4- and/or h4-squares. Moreover, in many cases White will be able to capture on h6. Then the black king is virtually unprotected, with dire consequences.

Marcin Szymanski
Petr Kiriakov
Internet Section 2004 (3)
Black to move

This is a typical position that ‘is begging for’ an exchange sacrifice. Certainly in a blitz game!

19...\texttt{Rxf3}! 20.gxf3 \texttt{Nf4}

The main threat is obviously 21...\texttt{Qg5+}.

21.\texttt{Rfd1 Qh4}

Possibly even stronger was 21...\texttt{Qg5}+ 22.\texttt{Kf1 b8}! (activating the rook, and in some cases there will be ...\texttt{Rxb2} niceties in the position. White cannot conveniently protect b2 with a rook, as after, for example, 22...\texttt{Qg2}+ 23.\texttt{Ke1 Qg1}+ 24.\texttt{d2 Rf2}+ is already quite reasonable for Black) 23.\texttt{Ke1} (here 23.ab1 doesn’t work since after 23...\texttt{Qg2}+ 24.\texttt{e1 Qg1}+ 25.\texttt{d2 Rf2}+ 26.\texttt{c1} the king no longer has an escape square: 26...\texttt{e3}+) 23...\texttt{Nxf3}, and there is no way White can defend this.

22.\texttt{Kf1 Bf3}+ 23.\texttt{Ke1 Qf3} 24.\texttt{b5 Bb6}

24...\texttt{e3}! would be even quicker, threatening mate in one with 25...\texttt{Qh1}:
analysis diagram

25.fxe3 $\textit{Qxe3+} 26.\textit{Kf1} \textit{Rf8}$ and White will soon be mated, for example: $27.\textit{Rd2} \textit{Nxe2+} 28.\textit{Ke1} \textit{Qf2+} 29.\textit{Kd1} \textit{Qf1#}$.

25.$\textit{Na3}$

White is absolutely powerless in the face of an invasion by the black pieces.

25...$\textit{Ng2+} 26.\textit{Kd2}$

26.$\textit{Kf1}$ fails to $26...\textit{Qe3+} 27.\textit{Ke1} \textit{Qxc2+}$.
26...♗e3+!
A beautiful move to give new impulse to the attack.

27.♕c3
27.fxe3 ♖xe3#.

27...♗d4+ 28.♔c4
After 28.♖d2 ♖f4+ 29.♕d3 ♖b8 things would rapidly go downhill for White. For example: 30.♖b1 ♖f3+ 31.♕d2 ♖xf2+ 32.♕c1 ♖e3+ and since the king can no longer move to b1, the game is over.

28...♖b8

White resigned, as now both 29...♖b4
and 29...d5 30.exd5 exd5# are threatened.

The g6-Square

With sacrifices on e6 and f7, we can expose the weakness of the g6-square. We will give an example by the Dutch star Anish Giri. Incidentally, this game, played early in his career in Reggio Emilia, proved decisive in clinching his most important tournament victory up to that time.
Black to move

With the surprising

25...\texttt{xf2}!

Black made a breach in White’s king position. 25...\texttt{g3}+?! looked attractive too, but it turns out not to work after 26.fxg3 fxg3 27.\texttt{c3}! and Black has nothing.

25...\texttt{xf2}! 26.\texttt{xf2} \texttt{xf3}

Black eliminates an important defender.

27.gxf3

After 27.\texttt{xf3} it is even a forced mate: 27...\texttt{h4}+ 28.\texttt{f1} \texttt{xe1}+ 29.\texttt{xe1} \texttt{xe1}#. And, in principle, 27.\texttt{xf3} is not worth looking at, in such cases. There is indeed a simple win after this move: after 27...\texttt{h4}! the white king is cut off, and the mate cannot be parried.

27...\texttt{h4}+
28.\textit{gf1}

On 28.\textit{g1},

A) 28...\textit{g3+} 29.\textit{f1} also wins:

A1) By the way, not with 29...\textit{xe2}? 30.\textit{xe2} \textit{xf3+} 31.\textit{e1} (31.\textit{f2} \textit{h1#}) 31...\textit{h1+} 32.\textit{d2} \textit{d8+?} (there was still a draw by perpetual check after 32...\textit{xe2+} 33.\textit{xe2} \textit{g2+} 34.\textit{d3} \textit{d5+}) 33.\textit{c3} \textit{xd1} and now White has the so-called ‘hook and ladder trick’: 34.\textit{e8+!}, winning;

A2) But 29...\textit{xh3+} wins: 30.\textit{f2} \textit{e3!} 31.\textit{c4} \textit{h2+} 32.\textit{f1} and by 32...\textit{e5} Black, with gain of tempo, brings a new piece into the attack, which decides immediately.

B) Or 28...\textit{e5!}, and the rook will soon pay a decisive visit with check.

28...\textit{xh3+} 29.\textit{f2} \textit{g3+}

Even more powerful was 29...\textit{e3!}.

30.\textit{f1} \textit{e5!}

Again the rook is utilized to besiege the insecure white king. The rook will encroach on the king via h5. Since there is no remedy against this, White now resigned.

Incidentally, also here 30...\textit{xe2}? was not good due to 31.\textit{xe2} \textit{xf3+} 32.\textit{e1}, and the attack grinds to a halt.
4.4 Weakened seventh/second rank

Already at an early stage of our chess development, we learn that an invasion on the seventh (or second) rank can be decisive in many positions. This is not so surprising: usually, quite a few of the opponent’s pieces are placed on this rank, and they can become vulnerable. Many computer programs give bonus points in their evaluation of a position if a piece enters on this rank.

The following fragment is from a game between two of my former pupils (GMs Benjamin Bok and Wouter Spoelman), the youngest of whom emerges victorious after a brilliant combination. For the black player this defeat was especially bitter, since in this edition of the Dutch Championship he had good prospects to win the title. At the time of this game, Spoelman was a medical student in Amsterdam, and couldn’t spend too much time on chess. But once at the board, he proved he could still play a mean game! Earlier on in this tournament, we had witnessed a magnificent victory by Spoelman over Sipke Ernst (also included in this book). For Bok, this tournament also had special significance as it was the second occasion for him to compete with the top Dutch players.

Benjamin Bok
Wouter Spoelman
Amsterdam ch-NED 2014 (7)

1.e4 c5 2.\textit{N}f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.\textit{N}xd4 \textit{N}c6 5.\textit{N}c3 \textit{Q}c7 6.\textit{B}e2 \textit{N}f6 7.\textit{B}e3 \textit{Q}e7 8.f4 d6 9.\textit{d}d2 a6 10.0-0-0 \textit{N}a5 11.g4 b5

11...\textit{N}c4 is known from the game Svidler-Maksimenko, Yugoslavia tt 1995.

12.g5 \textit{Q}d7

This position had occurred in two games by little-known players, both, by the way, won by Black. Benjamin spots a similarity with the Velimirovic Attack in the Rauzer Variation, and now comes up with a complete surprise.

13.\textit{N}f5!?
A very interesting, and probably also correct, piece sacrifice.

13...exf5 14.\(\text{d5}\) \(\text{d8}\) 15.exf5

He’s going for the stereotypical attack. White would have had a small advantage after 15.\(\text{xe7}\) \(\text{xe7}\) (15...\(\text{xe7}\)?? 16.\(\text{xd6+}\) \(\text{e8}\) 17.exf5 and White wins) 16.\(\text{xa5}\).

15...\(\text{b7}\) 16.\(\text{xe7}\) \(\text{xe7}\) 17.\(\text{he1}\) 0-0 18.\(\text{g1}\)

18...\(\text{d8}\)!

A logical retreat: the knight has to be saved. But it is clear that Black’s minor pieces are not cooperating here. Probably it would have been better to give back the knight with 18...\(\text{e4}\) (more or less the only move to stay in the game) 19.\(\text{xa5}\) \(\text{xf4+}\) 20.\(\text{d2}\) \(\text{xf5}\). After 21.\(\text{d3}\) a position arises where White has ample compensation for his sacrificed pawn – but not more than that.

19.\(\text{xd6}\) \(\text{c6}\)
20.f6!

Strongly played by Benjamin. He wants not only to weaken the opponent’s king position, but also to introduce a new threat with e2-g4. An ugly move is 20.b4?!, with which White, admittedly, wins back his piece, but also weakens his king’s position. After 20...Rc8 21.bxa5 Qxa5, unclear complications arise.

20...Re8!

Excellent defence by Wouter too. Absolutely out of the question was 20...gxf6? on account of 21.Bg4!.

21.Bg4

There was also something to be said for 21.fxg7!.

21...Rxe1

With 21...Rf8 22.Rxe8 Qxe8 23.fxg7 Ke6 Black could have remained on his feet. Of course, White still has wonderful compensation.

22.Rxe1
22...c8?

It’s always annoying when a ‘normal’ move is flawed. Strangely enough, it was possible to play 22...gxf6 now. It is unclear how things would develop in this chaotic position.

The idea of driving away the white queen with 22...f8? utterly fails due to 23.e7! and White wins.

But probably he would achieve this by 22...b8!? in order after 23.d4 to continue with 23...f8 24.fxg7 g6 25.f5 f4+ 26.xf4 xf4, and again, an unclear position has arisen.

23.e7!

Logical, and also very strong. With 23.d1 White could have made use of the pins on the d-file and the c8-h3 diagonal. After this move, several hidden resources come to the surface: 23...b7 24.e7! e7
And now he has an exceptionally nasty way to exploit the pin on the f7-pawn: 25.\texttt{Be6}!! Wrong is 25.\texttt{Bxd7} on account of 25...\texttt{Nxd7} and since now suddenly mate on c2 is threatened, Black releases himself from the opponent’s clutches.

25...\texttt{Nxf6} Now, 25...\texttt{f8} leads to a forced mate: 26.\texttt{Bxf7+ Kh8} 27.\texttt{fxg7+ Kg8} 28.\texttt{Qf6#}. 25...\texttt{f8} 26.\texttt{Bxf7} simply loses a piece. 26.\texttt{Bxf7+ Kh8} 27.\texttt{gxf6} and White has most of his material back, after which a favourable ending awaits. For example: 27...\texttt{Qxf4+} 28.\texttt{Bxe3} \texttt{Qxf6} 29.\texttt{Qxf6 gxf6} 30.\texttt{Bd4} and the bishop pair is killing.

23...\texttt{Nc4} After 23...\texttt{f8} 24.\texttt{Qxd8 Rxd8} 25.\texttt{Bb6} the unfortunate knight on \texttt{a5} will perish after all.
For a moment, it seems as if Black can save himself: the bad knight has returned into play. Perhaps Wouter had hoped to escape from this hornets’ nest in this way. But now Benjamin displays his special quality: finding hidden resources. The next move is brilliant!

24...e6!!

A stunning sacrifice, which the black player probably hadn’t anticipated. White threatens to enter via the seventh rank.

24...f8

Absolutely the only move, but it will be of no avail. 24...fxe6 25.xe6+ f8 (25...h8 26.fxg7#) 26.f7+ e8 (26...g8 27.xd7+ f8 28.fxg7+ e8 29.g8=##) 27.fxg7 and g7-g8=+ can no longer be prevented.

25.fxg7 xg7

26.d4!

One killing move after the other. You would think that Benjamin, by analysing so much with the computer, has installed a strong engine in his own head!

26...f8

It has to be said that Wouter defends inventively, too. On 26...fxe6 27.xg7+ f8, 28.xe6 d8 29.f6! wins, because White has claimed supremacy of the seventh rank: 29...e8 (bitter necessity, and now White can snatch an important pawn with tempo. 29...xf6 30.gxf6 leads to mate, of course) 30.e7+ f8 31.h7 e8 32.h8+ f8 33.g6 and the white pawn can no longer be stopped. A fitting finish would then be: 33...e3 34.f8+ f8 35.g7+ e8 36.g8=##

After 26...g6 White regains all his material with interest: 27.xg6+ hgx6 28.xd7, winning.

It is clear that Black gets mated if he takes the bishop with 26...xd4: 27.xf7+ h8 28.xh7#.

27.xc4!
But Benjamin also puts his oar in! After this desperado, the win is almost within his grasp.

27...\textit{d7}

The last attempt to create confusion. No solace is offered by 27...bxc4 28.\textit{xg7  \textit{g6} (28...\textit{g7 29.\textit{xc8}) 29.\textit{e1  a8 30.\textit{e5 and White remains two pawns up.}}}

28.\textit{d3}

Benjamin has had enough of all the brilliances... You would expect a new desperado here with 28.\textit{xc8}, which also wins – even after 28...\textit{xd4 29.\textit{d7  xf4+ 30.\textit{d2, and White remains a rook up.}}}

28...\textit{g6 29.\textit{g6+ hgx6 30.\textit{xd7 d8}}}

The pinning move 30...\textit{c7 is met with a counter-pin: 31.\textit{e8  xd7 32.\textit{c5.}}}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\begin{scope}[scale=0.5]
\node at (a1) {$\text{a}$};
\node at (b1) {$\text{b}$};
\node at (c1) {$\text{c}$};
\node at (d1) {$\text{d}$};
\node at (e1) {$\text{e}$};
\node at (f1) {$\text{f}$};
\node at (g1) {$\text{g}$};
\node at (h1) {$\text{h}$};
\node at (a8) {$\text{a}$};
\node at (b8) {$\text{b}$};
\node at (c8) {$\text{c}$};
\node at (d8) {$\text{d}$};
\node at (e8) {$\text{e}$};
\node at (f8) {$\text{f}$};
\node at (g8) {$\text{g}$};
\node at (h8) {$\text{h}$};
\end{scope}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

31.\textit{e8!}

And again, the same motif emerges. Wouter resigned. After 31...\textit{xd7, White wins a piece with 32.\textit{c5. What a grandiose game by Benjamin, and how tragic it was for Wouter that, at one of the most important moments in his chess career, he should fall victim to such brilliant play by an inspired opponent!}

The following position occurred in a blitz game in a chess café in Amsterdam. The white player became known for the fact that as a ‘simple IM’ he inflicted the only loss on the then World Champion Garry Kasparov in a top-level blitz tournament in Wijk aan Zee. Bosboom was allowed to play there as a substitute because Alexey Shirov had withdrawn due to a toothache. Bosboom had been regarded as the best Dutch blitz player for years, and thanks to his reputation he got the invitation.

Bosboom’s play also distinguishes itself by the alternative paths he tends to follow in the opening. For example, he has a predilection for trying to confuse the opponent with a quick g2-g4.

Bosboom combines an excellent strategic understanding with great tactical abilities.
White to move

In this position, the Dutch master cooked up the following fantastic concept:

17. \texttt{Rx}b7!!

An incredible sacrifice, which is inextricably bound up with a second incredible sacrifice.

17... \texttt{Qxb7}
18. $\text{Rxg7}!!$

Quite a bit of imagination is needed to find two such rook sacrifices, and in a blitz game at that. In the following, one variation is even more beautiful than the other.

18... $\text{b4}$ +

Considering the fact that it was a blitz game, this doesn’t look so bad. However, Black will go down quickly anyway, even though the queens are exchanged.

A) Declining the second sacrifice would lead to a new attacking wave: 18... $\text{b6}$ 19. $\text{xf6}$ + $\text{d8}$ 20. $\text{d7}$ + $\text{c8}$ and now 21. $\text{d5}$! is the strongest continuation:

A1) Here, 21... $\text{xd7}$ loses after 22. $\text{xb6}$ + $\text{xb6}$ 23. $\text{xe5}$+ (definitely not 23. $\text{xa8}$?? in view of 23... $\text{b4}$ + 24. $\text{xb4}$ $\text{xa8}$) 23... $\text{d6}$ 24. $\text{xc6}$ + $\text{xe5}$ and now White realizes a wonderful queen-and-bishop team effort with 25. $\text{g5}$!. New mate patterns are looming!
For example, there is the immediate threat of $26.\textcolor{red}{Q}f6\#$. Interestingly, both of Black’s rooks are invulnerable due to a discovered check on b4.

25...\textcolor{red}{K}f5 26.\textcolor{red}{Q}f6+ \textcolor{red}{K}f6 27.\textcolor{red}{Q}h5 27...\textcolor{red}{h}3 leads more quickly to mate: 28.\textcolor{red}{Q}f5+ \textcolor{red}{K}f2 29.\textcolor{red}{Q}d6 30.\textcolor{red}{Q}f4+ \textcolor{red}{Q}xf4 31.\textcolor{red}{Q}h5#. 28.\textcolor{red}{d}2 \textcolor{red}{g}8 29.\textcolor{red}{f}6+ \textcolor{red}{h}4 30.\textcolor{red}{f}1! With the lethal threat of 31.\textcolor{red}{e}1+. 30...\textcolor{red}{d}6 30...\textcolor{red}{g}3 fails to 31.\textcolor{red}{x}h7+; and 30...\textcolor{red}{h}5 doesn’t help either on account of 31.\textcolor{red}{e}1+ \textcolor{red}{g}3 32.\textcolor{red}{Q}f4+ \textcolor{red}{h}3 33.\textcolor{red}{x}g3#. 31.\textcolor{red}{f}6+ \textcolor{red}{h}3 32.\textcolor{red}{h}6+ \textcolor{red}{g}3 33.\textcolor{red}{e}1#

A2) 21...\textcolor{red}{a}5+ 22.\textcolor{red}{x}a5 \textcolor{red}{x}a5 23.\textcolor{red}{e}7+ \textcolor{red}{b}8 23...\textcolor{red}{d}8 24.\textcolor{red}{g}5. 24.\textcolor{red}{x}e5 and the mate on d7 cannot be staved off in a satisfactory way.

B) To 18...\textcolor{red}{x}g7 White obviously replies with 19.\textcolor{red}{x}c6+, and now: 19...\textcolor{red}{d}7 19...\textcolor{red}{e}7 20.\textcolor{red}{d}6+ \textcolor{red}{e}8 (20...\textcolor{red}{f}7 21.\textcolor{red}{x}c5+ \textcolor{red}{e}8 22.\textcolor{red}{x}f6+ and White wins) 21.\textcolor{red}{x}f6+ \textcolor{red}{f}7 22.\textcolor{red}{x}e5#. 20.\textcolor{red}{x}a8+ \textcolor{red}{e}7 The king is very miserably placed here, but in any case, he cannot allow White to bring a knight into the attack with check; 20...\textcolor{red}{f}7 21.\textcolor{red}{g}5+ \textcolor{red}{e}7 (21...\textcolor{red}{g}8 22.\textcolor{red}{d}5+; 21...\textcolor{red}{g}6) 22.\textcolor{red}{d}2 and the bishop decisively intervenes. 21.\textcolor{red}{g}5+ \textcolor{red}{e}6 22.\textcolor{red}{d}5+ \textcolor{red}{f}5 23.\textcolor{red}{h}4+ \textcolor{red}{g}4 24.\textcolor{red}{x}e6+ \textcolor{red}{h}5 25.\textcolor{red}{g}3+ \textcolor{red}{x}g5 26.\textcolor{red}{x}f5+ \textcolor{red}{x}h4 27.\textcolor{red}{h}5#;

C) 18...\textcolor{red}{x}g7 19.\textcolor{red}{d}6+ \textcolor{red}{e}7 20.\textcolor{red}{x}b7 \textcolor{red}{h}c8 would still be feasible for Black, materially, but in this position the cooperation between the white pieces is fantastic.
With $21.\text{b5} \text{b8} 22.\text{c5+} \text{g8} 23.\text{d6}$ the black position is disrupted. For example: $23...\text{f8} 24.\text{xe5} \text{xe5} 25.\text{xe5} \text{xd6} 26.\text{xd6}$ and nothing remains of Black’s once so proud pawn centre.

19.axb4 $\text{xb4}+ 20.\text{xb4} \text{xb4} 21.\text{xf6+} \text{f8}$

Also after $21...\text{d8} 22.\text{xe5}$ Black cannot escape defeat. For example: $22...\text{b8} 23.\text{e4!}$ (threatening $24.\text{d7+} \text{e8} (24...\text{c8} 25.\text{d6}) 25.\text{f6+} \text{f8} 26.\text{f7#}$)
23...\text{b}6 and now White takes a full rook off the board: 24.\text{f}7+ \text{d}7 25.\text{x}h8+, winning.

\quad \text{22.}\text{h}6

And here the black player gave up all resistance.

What a brilliant combination!

\textbf{4.5 Unweakened king position}

In principle, it is most difficult to launch an effective attack against a castled king position that does not contain any weaknesses. In many Sicilian positions you can see that White needs a lot of time to break open Black’s unweakened king position. A pawn storm may serve this purpose, but even this is no guarantee of success.

I once had a pupil who used to answer 1.e4 with 1...e5. Well, there’s nothing wrong with that, but in order to broaden this student’s horizons a bit, I suggested that he play 1...c5 for a while – not only because I think that every player should try the Sicilian at least once in his life, but also because it is advisable to familiarize yourself with positions of a variety of different types, and find your way in them.

At first this pupil had his ups and downs. He would startle if he had castled kingside and the white player immediately pushed g2-g4 and h2-h4. And he would be terror-stricken when g4-g5 and h4-h5 followed, thinking he was already on the brink of being checkmated!

I taught him that this pawn march didn’t by any means have to be the end of the world. Even if White plays g5-g6, there are still no immediate mates. In order to curb his fears, we played a few casual games where I was Black. In a kind of Scheveningen Sicilian I allowed him to play a number of extra moves, pushing the white pawns as described above. We started a game where White could already play g5-g6, and I would calmly reply ...\text{e}7-f6. I showed my pupil that it is anything but easy for White to open lines against the black king’s position. But above all I tried to make clear that, psychologically, the moves g2-g4 and h2-h4 didn’t have to be immediately associated with ‘checkmate’ and red alert. In the fragment given below these aspects are demonstrated.

\textbf{Constructed position}

![Chessboard Image]

```
Black to move

Let’s take this position as a starting-point. White has been allowed to make five or six extra moves, and now he may try to demolish the black position. With his last move, g5-g6, he threatens to force the opening of several files. However, I coolly answered with

1...\textit{B}f6!

Black should definitely not react to the white pawn moves, as then the badly-needed line opening would be realized. Bad would be 1...fxg6? in view of 2.hxg6 h6 3.\textit{B}xh6 and suddenly it’s a wipe-out.

1...\textit{B}f6! 2.\textit{R}g1

A preparatory move, to be able to do something on the g-file eventually. Capturing one of the pawns does not immediately lead to an open file that White could make use of. The black king will hide behind the enemy pawn: 2.gxh7+?! \textit{Kh}8 3.h6 (by the way, more dangerous is 3.\textit{Bg}5, even though 3...\textit{B}e5 is still playable for Black) 3...g6 and Black has managed to keep the most important file (the h-file) hermetically sealed. The black king can hide behind the doubled white h-pawn, and thus has little to fear.

2.h6 looks to be the only possibility to open the h-file – by any means (i.e., at the cost of a pawn). Now Black has to react adequately. He can play 2...fxg6! 3.hxg7 \textit{Rf}7! and now 4.\textit{Qh}2 can be answered with the solid 4...\textit{R}xg7. In this position, too, Black doesn’t have much to fear. His weakest point, h7, is well protected, and there are not many other possibilities for White to get through.

2.gxf7+ doesn’t bring White much either. After 2...\textit{Rxf}7, the seventh rank is neatly protected. Then, 3.h6 is met with 3...g6, and no files will be opened against the black king for some time. Please note that Black prefers to recapture on f7 with the rook in this position, but, to be able to do that, e6 has to be sufficiently protected.

2...\textit{B}b7

Although the bishop is sometimes needed to give the e6-pawn extra cover, at this moment it is sensible to connect the rooks. Under certain circumstances, it will be necessary to provide protection for the d6-pawn, and then there should be no back-rank perils for Black. White will be wise to wait with capturing on f7 or h7, or with playing h5-h6, as long as it doesn’t bring him any concrete benefits. and in this sharp position, White’s chances should be rated slightly higher.

After a move like 2...b4 it is still very hard for White to launch any action against the black king’s fortress. Depending on circumstances, Black may counter with 2...\textit{Cc}5-a4-c3+. However, it turns out that there is another factor which promises White an advantage in this position: he can play 3.\textit{Cb}3!. For the time being, White doesn’t completely focus on an attack on the black king, but he shifts his attention to the weak pawn on d6. 3...\textit{Da}4 (3...\textit{Dd}8 is not so pleasant in view of 4.gxf7+ \textit{Dxf}7 5.\textit{Dg}5! and now White’s play on the g-file is starting to take shape) and in this sharp position, White’s chances should be rated slightly higher.

3.\textit{Dh}3

By shifting his attention to other vulnerable points in Black’s position, White hopes to create disharmony in the black ranks.

3...\textit{Dbe}8

For the time being, Black is holding the position. The struggle now takes place across the entire board, and not so much on the kingside, as you might expect with White’s far advanced pawns there.

This example is an excellent illustration of the fact that an intact king position is very hard to dismantle in practice!
4.\text{\textit{Ne2 d5}}

And the struggle is in full swing!

Having discussed these situations in training sessions, I never imagined that I would ever have to keep my head above water in this type of position against a strong grandmaster. Once I found myself in such a situation against the Swedish GM Tiger Hillarp Person.

In my preparation for this very amiable player, I had expected 1.d4, but in this tournament in Hoogeveen (2007) he resorted to 1.e4. In order to ‘surprise him’, I replied with a Scheveningen set-up, where I played an early ...\text{\textit{Rb8}}. Later it turned out that he was used to playing this entire variation with black himself – and so was not in the least surprised! Only my ...\text{\textit{Rb8}} started him thinking. It turned out he had a better command of the line than me, for I landed in trouble in no time. My only hope was my enormous edge on the clock. When the complications started, he had only a few minutes left (without increment).

\begin{center}
\textbf{Tiger Hillarp Persson} \\
\textbf{Herman Grooten} \\
Hoogeveen 2007 (5)
\end{center}

Here we have the discussed type of position in practice. I’d just made an ugly \textit{fingerfehler} by playing ...\text{\textit{Rfd8}}, as this rook was best placed on f8. The white player immediately took advantage:

19.g6!

As things are looking now, White’s initiative comes first.

19...\text{\textit{xf6}} 20.\text{\textit{gxf7+}} \text{\textit{xf7}}

Instead of recapturing with the rook, now it is obligatory to take back with the king, but as a consequence it will feel


21.\textbf{\textit{e}}g1 \textit{\textbf{d}}a4

Black has no choice – he is going for an all-or-nothing attack on the other side. He intends to blast the white king’s position open with a sacrifice on c3. This position was used as a subject of discussion in Jacob Aagaard’s ‘Game of the Month’ column in the British magazine \textit{Chess} and was extensively discussed in his book \textit{Attacking Manual 1} (page 21 ff.).

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=15cm]{chess-board.png}
\end{center}

22.\textbf{\textit{h}}3?!

Indeed, White has to take aim at the weak point e6. But it would have been much better to do this from the ‘other side’ because then it would work both ways. Thus, much better would have been 22.\textbf{\textit{c}}4!. On this square, the bishop fulfils a double function. On the one hand, it attacks the weak point e6, and on the other hand it helps with the defence of its own king’s position. By the way, it is not as simple as Wallace’s YouTube video would have you believe. Perhaps the white player feared the push 22...d5, which was in fact Black’s idea. But then he had to have seen that Black has nothing special: 23.\textbf{\textit{b}}3! (not 23.exd5?! in view of 23...\textit{\textbf{x}}d5 24.\textit{\textbf{e}}e2 (certainly not 24.\textit{\textbf{x}}d5??, when Black wins with 24...\textbf{\textit{c}}3+! 25.bxc3 bxc3+) and now Black has 24...\textit{\textbf{x}}b2!? with unclear complications, for example: 25.\textbf{\textit{b}}xb2 \textbf{\textit{c}}xc4 26.\textit{\textbf{c}}a3+ 27.\textbf{\textit{b}}b1 \textit{\textbf{x}}xe3) and Black has no good follow-up, since on 23...\textit{\textbf{d}}xe4 24.fxe4 \textit{\textbf{x}}xe4 follows the strong 25.\textit{\textbf{f}}2 \textbf{\textit{c}}5 26.\textit{\textbf{f}}df1 and the position of the black king becomes untenable.

22...\textbf{\textit{c}}3+!?

Black does not see the point of defending passively, and seizes his chance.

23.bxc3 bxc3 24.\textbf{\textit{b}}3
The white player had foreseen all of this. He wants to close the b-file with the knight. Certainly not 24.\texttt{Qc1??} in view of 24...\texttt{d5+ 25.\texttt{b3 xb3 26.cxb3 \texttt{xb3+! 27.axb3 c2+!}}, which is a theme we will also encounter further on.}

24...\texttt{xe4}!?

There’s no way back; Black has to go for it. The queen exchange 24...\texttt{cxd2 25.\texttt{xa5 xe4+ 26.b3 xf3 27.xd2 xh5} does yield Black three pawns for the piece, but still White’s chances should be rated more highly.

25.\texttt{c1}

Obviously, the bishop couldn’t be taken, as suddenly White’s queen was hanging. Because the b-file has been opened, White’s counterattack against the black queen is for the present ineffective.
Now we have arrived at an important moment in the game. I had oceans of time, whereas my opponent was suffering from acute time shortage. With so many pieces in the attack, I saw the opportunity for a combination. While I started calculating the variations, I felt the adrenaline rushing in my blood. Was I actually going to beat a strong grandmaster with a series of sacrifices? I thought for about 20 minutes, and couldn’t find a way for White to defend against the sacrifices I had planned. Then I plucked up my courage: with my opponent in time trouble, I went for it!

25...\texttt{Rxh3}+?! 

With hindsight, it turns out that this move doesn’t yield the expected fruits, but subjectively this was the continuation that offered the best chances.

25...\texttt{Rxh3}?! also turns out not to be the solution for Black. After 26.\texttt{Rdf1} \texttt{Qxh5} 27.\texttt{Rd5} 28.\texttt{g5}! his weak king position will haunt him.

Relatively best was 25...\texttt{Bd5}, threatening to play the same combination as in the game. However, with the cool 26.\texttt{d4} White can restrict Black’s strong bishop on f6.

26.\texttt{axb3} \texttt{b8}

Threatening to take on b3 immediately, with mate. The bishop on e4 has introduced a pin into the position. Thanks to this, White falls for the trap.

27.fxe4??

In raging time trouble, he makes a horrible mistake. There was a miraculous defence, of which I had seen the first move, but I hadn’t seen the significance of it.

The computer immediately finds that 27.\texttt{Bxe6}+! is absolutely the only move. The bishop has to be taken, because it protects the pawn on b3. After 27...\texttt{Qxe6} the second counter-sacrifice follows: 28.\texttt{Rxd6+}, again with check. The first point is that the d1-square is cleared, giving the white king an escape square, as we will see later in the game. However, more importantly, the bishop on f6 fulfils a main role in the black attack, and White would threaten to eliminate it if Black declined the sacrifice. After 28...\texttt{fxd6} 29.\texttt{f4+}, White’s intention becomes clear. Black has to give up his important bishop in order not to lose a rook. In the resulting position, after 29...\texttt{e5} 30.\texttt{fxe5} \texttt{c6} 31.\texttt{xe5} \texttt{xe5}, White
is clearly better, because the black king, not the white king, is not safe. Very nasty!

After the text move Black can bring the game to a beautiful finish:

27...\textit{Rxb3}+!

The slugfest continues: here is the second rook sacrifice.

28.\textit{cx b3} c2+!

I’m going to deliver mate with my last two pieces, after sacrificing two minor pieces and two rooks. Afterwards, Hillarp Persson told me in all honesty that he hadn’t seen this pawn sacrifice coming.

29.\textit{xc2} \textit{c3+}

And while his flag was falling, White resigned. Of course, 30.\textit{b1} is met by 30...\textit{xb3}+ with mate. An acquaintance of mine, who was following the game live on the Internet, thought that I would have gone for the perpetual check with 30...\textit{a1+}. Not bad, he thought, a draw against a strong grandmaster...

Afterwards, the Dutch chess journalist Peter Doggers (who works for Chess.com today) immediately led me to a table with a chessboard. Before the camera, Peter questioned me about the game, and I proudly demonstrated it. It’s not every day that you get to sacrifice two rooks and a bishop and go on to beat a better-than-average grandmaster. But that night, when I turned on my computer in order to look at the game with an engine, I was rudely awakened: halfway through the combination there was a ‘hole’ which was immediately exposed by the computer. What the film doesn’t show is that at the moment supreme my opponent only had a few seconds left...

Much later I saw a second film about this fragment appearing on the Internet, which had originally been included in Aagaard’s ‘Game of the Month’ column in \textit{Chess}. The Scotsman Bruce Wallace uses this column as a basis for a YouTube film, which he has compiled from these fragments.

If you are interested, here are the links to the interview on YouTube:

(in Dutch) watch?v=9VT71eyScj8.

(in English): watch?v=ch4LaYfkHTc

**Presence of a pawn on e5 (sacrifices on h7 or f6)**

Entire volumes have been written about sacrifices on certain squares. The squares f7, g7, h7, and sometimes h6 and f6, are mentioned as places where a white piece can be put en prise.

The most famous sacrifice, the bishop sacrifice on h7, often turns up if certain specific conditions are fulfilled for a successful implementation. One of the arguments in favour of a bishop sacrifice on h7 is the presence of a white pawn on e5. There are two reasons for this:

• The pawn has chased away a defender (mostly a knight on f6);

• With this pawn, a move like ...f7-f5 can sometimes be answered with the en passant capture exf6;

• The pawn covers a possible escape square for the enemy king, if it tries to escape to the centre.

Here is a lovely example by former World Champion Garry Kasparov.

\[ \text{Garry Kasparov} \]
\[ \text{Nigel Short} \]
\[ \text{London rapid m 1993 (3)} \]
White to move

The black king’s position has been rather abandoned by his pieces. The white pieces are able to quickly gang up on the enemy monarch, and with this, most of the required factors are present for a successful hit-and-run operation.

20. **\( \text{B}xh7+! \)**  **\( \text{K}xh7 \)**

Declining the sacrifice is not much use: 20...**\( \text{K}h8 \)** is met by 21.**\( \text{N}g5 \text{Bxc3} \)** 22.**\( \text{Qxc3} \)** and there is hardly any remedy against the threat of 23.**\( \text{Qh3} \)**.

21. **\( \text{N}g5+ \text{Kg8} \)**

Also hopeless was 21...**\( \text{Kg6} \)** 22.**\( \text{Rg3 Qd7} \)** (in order not to lose the queen) 23.**\( \text{Nxe6+ Kf5} \)** 24.**\( \text{Nxf6+ Ke5} \)** 25.**\( \text{Qd3#} \)**.

22. **\( \text{Rh3} \)**

With the lethal threat of 23.**\( \text{Rh8+} \)** followed by 24.**\( \text{Wh3+} \)** and mate.

22...**\( \text{Re8} \)** 23.**\( \text{Qf3} \)**

Still more accurate was 23.**\( \text{Qd3} \)**, but Black won’t escape his fate anyway.

23.**\( \text{Qd7} \)** 24.**\( \text{Wh5 Qf8} \)** 25.**\( \text{h7+} \)**

Thus White vacates the g5-square for the bishop. With this check, the black king is deprived of a safe refuge.

25...**\( \text{Ke7} \)**

25...**\( \text{g8} \)** 26.**\( \text{f6+ f8} \)**, and now 27.**\( \text{g5!} \)** is strongest!

26.**\( \text{g5+ f6} \)** 27.**\( \text{xf6} \)**
and Short considered he had seen enough violence for one day.

Piece sacrifices on f6 are quite common in many attacks on the king. With the pawn on e5, after a possible ...gxf6 White can take back with exf6, introducing mate patterns. Here we have an example, again by a former (FIDE) World Champion.

Ruslan Ponomariov  
Daniel Sadzikowski  
Warsaw Ech rapid 2010 (8)

White to move

Clearly White will be conducting his operations on the kingside, and Black will play in the centre.

27.\textit{N}f6+!

Time is of the essence, and so this sacrifice had to be considered.

27...gxf6

Also after 27...\textit{B}xf6 28.exf6 \textit{Q}d8 Black wouldn’t be able to defend himself. White replies with the strong 29.fxg7 \textit{Q}xg7 and now, curiously, White temporarily turns to the other side of the board. The queen on d8 is performing several important defensive tasks, but after the vicious move 30.a3! she has too much on her plate. For example: 30...\textit{K}h7 31.axb4 axb4 32.\textit{R}xa8 \textit{Q}xa8 33.\textit{B}e5 and in view of the threat of 34.\textit{Q}g5 Black has to give up another pawn: 33...\textit{Q}d8 34.\textit{R}xc3 bxc3 35.\textit{R}xc3 d2 36.\textit{R}d1 \textit{R}d3 37.\textit{Q}e5 and White is on the verge of winning.

28.exf6 \textit{Q}d6?

This move loses due to an especially nasty \textit{zwischenzug}. Returning the piece with 28...\textit{Q}d8! was the only chance to survive: 29.fxe7 \textit{Q}xe7. But again there follows 30.a3! \textit{Q}e2 31.axb4 \textit{Q}xf4+ 32.gxf4 \textit{Q}h7 33.\textit{R}xa5 and White’s material advantage is starting to assume significant proportions.
29. ¿xd6 ¿xd6

And the black player immediately resigned, because now he suddenly saw the threat hanging over his head: after 30. ¿g5+ ¿f8

analysis diagram

White has the tricky move 31.c5!. The black queen had been preparing to interpose on f8, but after this zwischenzug that possibility is gone! 31...¿d5 32. ¿g7+ ¿e8 33. ¿g8#.

Making a breach, provoking a weakening

In many positions, the pawns that protect the king are still standing neatly in a row. But sometimes such safety is merely an illusion. With certain arrangements of the pieces, it is sometimes possible to make a breach in this apparently so solid fortress. In the diagram below, the white pieces are ready to make use of the hole that can be created.

Adrian Mikhalchishin
Kovalenko
Soviet Union 1980’s (shown by the white player during a training session in the Netherlands, 1990s)
White to move

White has manoeuvred several pieces into promising positions. It is also clear that there are not very many defenders in the vicinity of the black king. Does this already provide the conditions for a successful combination?

1. hxg7!

Yes, the white player thought, as he blew a hole right in the heart of the black king’s position.

1... hxg7 2. Bxd4+

The move order is very intricate. For example, 2. Qh6+?! looks even more attractive, but after 2... Kh8 3. Bxd4 Black has 3... f8 (not 3... f6?? in view of 4. xf6 and it is immediately over) 4. Qf6, as now there is the defence 4... Re8!, keeping him on his feet: 5. Bxe5 Qxe5 6. Qxe5 dxe5 results in an ending where the two bishops are much stronger than the rook.

2... Kg8
3.g6!!

A hard move to find. The pawn cannot be taken, and this means the end of all resistance for Black.
Again, 3.\textit{h6}? doesn’t work in view of the above-mentioned variation.

3...fxg6 4.\textit{e6}+

Black resigned. He will be mated after 4.\textit{e6}+ \textit{f8} 5.\textit{h1}+.

Creating a breach in the enemy king’s position is not something you do every day. It’s not easy to spot the conditions for a successful attack during a game. In any case, Boris Gelfand, who cannot exactly be called a weak player, was horribly surprised by Vugar Gashimov in the example we give below. It contains a remarkable series of beautiful attacking waves.

Vugar Gashimov  
Boris Gelfand  
Spain tt 2009 (3)

1.e4 e5 2.\textit{f3} \textit{f6} 3.d4 \textit{xe4} 4.dxe5 d5 5.\textit{bd2} \textit{c5} 6.\textit{b3} \textit{e6} 7.\textit{bd4} \textit{xd4} 8.\textit{xd4} \textit{e7} 9.\textit{d3} c5 10.\textit{f5}

Black’s opening wasn’t quite up to scratch.

10...0-0

And the talented Azeri, who unfortunately died far too young, knows how to take advantage of this.
11.\textit{\textbf{x}}g7!

Making a breach in the black king’s position, with grave consequences.

11...\textit{\textbf{x}}g7?

It clearly wasn’t Gelfand’s day. After the acceptance of the knight sacrifice his game quickly goes downhill. Without a doubt, Black should have tried 11...c4 here. After 12.\textit{\textbf{f}}5! (threatening 13.\textit{\textbf{g}}4+ with mate) 12...\textit{\textbf{h}}8 13.\textit{\textbf{x}}e7 \textit{\textbf{xe}}7 14.\textit{\textbf{e}}2 \textit{\textbf{xe}}5

\textit{analysis diagram}
Black has his pawn back, but White possesses a strong bishop pair, while Black is still saddled with the consequences of the hole in his king’s position.

12.\(\text{Qh}5\) \(\text{Kh}8\)

In order to protect h7, but now the rook is locked up ‘permanently’ on h8. Perhaps he had thought he could defend with 12...f5. As it turns out, he couldn’t: 13.exf6+ \(\text{Kxf}6\) (on 13...\(\text{xf}6\), 14.\(\text{xf}4!\) is the simplest win, for example: 14...\(\text{c}6\) 15.\(\text{h}6+\) \(\text{f}7\) 16.\(\text{xh}7+\) \(\text{e}6\); 16...\(\text{e}8\) 17.\(\text{g}6+\) \(\text{d}7\) 18.\(\text{h}3+\) with mate) 14.\(\text{xh}7+\) \(\text{f}8\) 15.\(\text{g}6\) \(\text{Exg}6\) 16.\(\text{Exg}6\) and the threat of 17.\(\text{h}6+\) is lethal. An illustrative variation runs as follows: 16...\(\text{f}6\) 17.0-0! followed by putting a rook on e1, and there is no way to defend the black king: 17...\(\text{g}7\) 18.\(\text{e}1\) \(\text{c}6\) 19.\(\text{h}6\) \(\text{xh}6\) 20.\(\text{xh}6+\) \(\text{f}7\) 21.\(\text{h}5+\) \(\text{g}7\) 22.\(\text{e}3\). The black king doesn’t have a trace of protection left, and now it will face the fury of White’s major pieces.

13.\(\text{h}6+\) \(\text{g}8\)

An important moment. Gashimov had prepared a wonderful surprise here.

14.e6! fxe6

But now the white queen is allowed to enter via the g-file, as the black king’s position is completely bare. If 14...\(\text{xe}6\), 15.\(\text{e}5\) wins, as after 15...\(\text{f}6\) (15...\(\text{f}6\) 16.\(\text{xe}6\#) 16.\(\text{g}3+\) Black can throw in the towel.

15.\(\text{g}4+\) \(\text{f}7\) 16.\(\text{g}7+\)

Already winning back at least a rook, and that was enough for Gelfand. Only rarely will he have lost so quickly... After 16...\(\text{e}8\) 17.\(\text{hxh}8+\) it is indeed completely over.

Opening lines

In many examples we have already seen that the opening of lines in the direction of the enemy king is an essential condition for an attack to have a good chance to be successful. We have also argued that an unweakened king position is the most difficult barrier to overcome. Often there is no other way than to march forward with the g- and h-pawns,
and finally with the move g5-g6 to make contact with the ‘wall’ that the enemy king has erected before him. And, as we have seen in the earlier examples, knocking down the last defensive lines can still be quite a tough job. In that case, some creativity is needed in order to force an entry into the opposing king’s position.

Here is an original and attractive example.

Jan Smeets
Jan Werle
Groningen 2002 (1)

White to move

Black has just played 16...\texttt{Rfd8}? in order to be able to play ...d6-d5 soon. But this plan is clearly too slow, apart from the fact that the rook is needed on the f-file, as we will see later.

17.g6!

Again, White tries to open lines against the black king as soon as possible.

17...\texttt{Bf6}

Black moves the bishop in order to give extra protection to f7 with the queen. This was also possible with the much more passive 17...\texttt{Bf8}, but after a move like 18.\texttt{Kb1} the white position deserves the preference too.

18.\texttt{Bd3}

After 18.gxf7+ Black takes the pawn back with the queen: 18...\texttt{Qxf7}.

The prophylactic 18.\texttt{ Kb1} also deserved consideration again.

18...\texttt{Rb8}
In itself this is not a bad plan, but Black misses a strong reply.

To Ftacnik’s 18...fxg6 White responds with 19.hxg6 h6 20.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textup{\texttt{Q}}}}e2, and the knight will soon appear on the kingside.

On the active 18...\textcolor{blue}{\textit{\texttt{b}}\texttt{b}4, White’s best reply is 19.gxf7+ \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{Q}}}xf7 20.h6 g6 21.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{Q}}}e2 and after that he will set his sights on the black king.

19.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{e}}}5!

Ftacnik: ‘With this typical square clearance, Smeets tries to prove that the black bishop on f6 isn’t exactly stable.’

19...dxe5 20.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{e}}}4

20.gxh7+ \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{K}}}h8.

20...\textcolor{blue}{\textit{\texttt{B}}}e7

The bishop has to move back. After, for example, 20...exf4 21.\textcolor{blue}{\textit{\texttt{Q}}}xf6+ gxf6 22.gxh7+, the g-file is opened, and White will get free play against the black king. White’s chief threat is to put his rook and queen on the g-file, after which mate is threatened on the g7- and g8-squares. In view of the weakness of the back rank, Black has no adequate response to this plan. Here is a stereotypical example of how things might go: 22...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{Q}}}h8 23.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{R}}}hg1 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{Q}}}e7 (23...fxe3 24.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{Q}}}g2) 24.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{Q}}}g2 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{Q}}}f8 25.h6!.
Black’s back rank is in mortal danger, and this is demonstrated by the following variation: 25...f5 (25...\texttt{Q}xh6 26.\texttt{Q}g8+) 26.\texttt{Q}xf5! exf5 27.\texttt{R}xd8 \texttt{N}xd8 28.\texttt{Q}g8+ \texttt{Q}xg8 29.hxg8=\texttt{Q}#.

21.gxf7+

Now it becomes clear why the rook should have stayed on f8.

21...\texttt{Kh}8

He leaves the pawn untouched, which later will become the basis for a delightful motif!

After 21...\texttt{Q}xf7 22.\texttt{Q}g2 White has strong attacking chances.

22.\texttt{Q}g2

The idea behind this move is highly original. Also interesting was 22.h6!? g6 23.\texttt{R}f1 exf4 24.\texttt{Q}xf4 e5 25.\texttt{Q}c3 \texttt{b}b7 (25...\texttt{Q}b4 26.\texttt{Q}xe6! \texttt{Q}xe6 27.\texttt{Q}xe5+) 26.\texttt{Q}g3 and White maintains a strong initiative.

22...\texttt{Q}b7

A critical moment in the game. On 22...exf4!? White would have to ‘plough on’ with 23.\texttt{Q}f6!, which amounts to the same as the game continuation.
23.\textit{g6}!!

Ftacnik: ‘A wonderful move, which shows the nature of an attacking player. White does not hide the fact that he has big plans against the enemy king.’

23...\textit{b4}

There are a few possibilities that had to be calculated here:
23...hxg6? 24.hxg6+ \textit{h4} 25.\textit{xh4}#.
23...\textit{xd3} looks logical, in order to eliminate the dangerous bishop on d3. But White just ignores this, and replies with 24.\textit{dg1} \textit{d1}+ (24...\textit{f8} 25.\textit{f6}) 25.\textit{xd1} \textit{d8}+ 26.\textit{c1} \textit{f8} 27.\textit{c5}! after which the threat of 28.\textit{g5} cannot be met without heavy material loss: 27...\textit{xc5} (27...\textit{d8} 28.\textit{xe7} \textit{xe7} 29.\textit{f6}) 28.\textit{f6} gxf6 29.\textit{xf6}+ \textit{g7} 30.\textit{xg7}#.

24.\textit{dg1}!

Smeets is not afraid to give another piece.

24...\textit{f8}

After 24...\textit{xd3}+ 25.\textit{b1} \textit{g8}, first White calmly takes back: 26.cxd3, and only then does he take the rook.
25.\texttt{\textsf{\textsf{\textsf{f6}}}!}

Not difficult but, all the same, no less elegant. 25.\texttt{\textsf{g5}} was also possible.

25...\texttt{\textsf{\textsf{\textsf{d3}}}+} 26.\texttt{\textsf{b1}}

Werle now made a sporting gesture: he granted his opponent the honour of giving mate as a fitting end to this splendid game.

26...\texttt{\textsf{hxg6}} 27.\texttt{\textsf{hxg6+ \textsf{\textsf{xh1}}} 28.\texttt{\textsf{xh1}}\#
4.6 Predominance of pieces vs the king

Again, a comparison with medieval castles thrusts itself upon us, and we will discuss here how ‘man-to-man’ fights came about. It was a popular method to smash the castle gate with a battering ram. This wouldn’t be very effective if the attacker had not mobilized enough men who could fight their way through the breach in the wall. So, an entire army would be standing there waiting, and itching to jump in.

There is a striking analogy with chess here that turns out to be completely valid. Certain sacrifices designed to breach the enemy ‘castle wall’ won’t have any chance of success if the attacker has not put enough attacking pieces in position to justify the sacrifices.

In many examples, we see that a predominance of pieces near the king is almost always decisive, as long as the opponent cannot bring up enough defenders.

Mikhail Tal
John van der Wiel
Moscow izt 1982 (4)

White to move

Black has just played 13...gxf5, and this gave Tal the opportunity to throw a piece into the fray!

14.\texttt{xf5}!

A beautiful sacrifice.
14...\textit{Be7} 

It was better to force White to prove the correctness of his piece sacrifice. After 14...exf5 White would have had to find 15.\textit{Wh5}! (this is better than 15.\textit{We2}+, with the possible continuation 15...\textit{We7} 16.\textit{Wae1} \textit{Wg8} 17.\textit{Wxe7} \textit{Wxg2}+ 18.\textit{Wxg2} \textit{Wxg2} 19.\textit{Wh4}+ \textit{We4} 20.\textit{Wxe4} fxe4 21.\textit{Wxe4}+, indicated by Tal in his analysis; White gets enough for the exchange, but probably not more than that: 21...\textit{We7} 22.\textit{Wxe7}+ \textit{Wd8} 23.\textit{Wfxf7} \textit{Wc7} 24.\textit{Wg3}+ \textit{Wc6} 25.\textit{Wh7} with a tense position) 15...\textit{We7} 16.\textit{Wae1} \textit{Wc6} 17.\textit{Wd5} and now Black has to give back the piece on e7, after which White is doing splendidly.

15.\textit{Wh5} 

Here Tal plays this move too, so perhaps he would have chosen it in the previous variation as well.

15...\textit{Wxg5} 

Not 15...exf5 in view of 16.\textit{Wae1} \textit{Wd8} 17.\textit{Wd5}, winning.

16.\textit{Wxg5} \textit{We7} 

The black position is starting to crack. 16...exf5 runs into a forced mating line, starting with 17.\textit{Wae1}+ \textit{Wf8} 18.\textit{Wh6}+ \textit{Wg8} 19.\textit{Wd5}.

A better defence is 16...\textit{Wd8}, but after 17.\textit{Wg7} \textit{Wf8} 18.\textit{Wb5}! White keeps an advantage.

17.\textit{We4}! 

With the idea 18.\textit{Wb5}.

17...\textit{Wxe4} 

Now Black’s position goes downhill fast. But also after 17...\textit{Wc6} 18.\textit{Wd5}! exd5 19.cxd5 there would be nothing left to hope for.

18.\textit{Wxe4}
Apart from the a1, all White’s pieces are involved in the attacking initiative on the kingside.

18...c6

19.f7!

Trust Tal to make such a sacrifice!

19...xf7 20.f6+ g8 21.xe7

He has invested only an exchange in this attack. Black’s queen and rook on h8 in particular do not take part in the defence.

21.f8 22.f1!
A beautiful final move, which, by the way, is much better than the alternative.

Clearly less strong was 22.\textbf{N}f6+?! \textbf{Rx}xf6 23.\textbf{R}xf6 \textbf{Q}d6 24.\textbf{Q}f1 \textbf{d}d4+, and Black retains prospects of salvation.

After 22.\textbf{R}f1, the protection of the f6-square has to be abandoned: 22...\textbf{Rx}f1+ 23.\textbf{K}xf1 and the threat of 24.\textbf{N}f6+ costs at least a queen.

\begin{table}[h]
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Daniele Vocaturo} & \textbf{Sipke Ernst} & \textbf{Wijk aan Zee 2012 (9)}
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

\textit{White to move}
Clearly, something has gone wrong with the coordination of Black’s pieces in this position. Almost all of them are dislocated, and quite clumsily placed on the queenside. And so, it wasn’t very hard for the white player to find the following sacrifice:

22.\texttt{Nh5}!

Spectacular, elegant, and... entirely correct. A picturesque mate is threatened with 23.\texttt{Nf6+} and 24.\texttt{Bg7}.

22...\texttt{Bxf5}

After 22...\texttt{gxh5} 23.\texttt{Qxh5} there is no defence for Black.

23.\texttt{exf5 Qxc3}

Desperately trying to involve the queen in the defence, but it is already too late. On 23...\texttt{Rxd5}, 24.\texttt{Nf6+ Kh8} 25.\texttt{Nxd5} wins.

24.\texttt{fxg6 hxg6} 25.\texttt{f3 h7}

Well, what can you do in such a situation. On 25...\texttt{Rxd5}, 26.\texttt{f6+ Kh8} 27.\texttt{xd5} would also break all resistance.
26.\textit{xf7+}

Now the white player ‘grubs’ his way through the rice pudding...

26...\textit{xh6 27.g7+ xh5}

27...\textit{g5} would also have ended in mate after 28.h4+ \textit{xc4 29.f6 d2 30.h7+ g5 31.e4+ f5 32.h3+ f4 33.f3#}.

28.f3+

Black resigned. He will be mated after 28...\textit{g5 29.h4+ xc4 (29...\textit{f5 30.f7#}) 30.h6#}.

\textbf{Herman Grooten}
\textbf{Gennady Timoschenko}
\textbf{Cappelle-la-Grande 1998 (9)}
Black to move

White has sacrificed a pawn in order to obtain a protected passed pawn on e6. This pawn hinders the cooperation between the black pieces. It is as if it were splitting the black camp into two parts. Two of Black’s minor pieces are somewhat dislocated on the queenside.

Therefore, White conceived the plan to try and orchestrate an initiative on the kingside. He already has a great number of pieces aimed at Black’s vulnerable king’s position.

38...\( \text{Nc}4? \)

Whatever the cost, he wants to bring the knight into the game, but in this position it turns out to be a mistake. He could have made an attempt at counterplay with 38...\( \text{Nxd}5! \). After 39.\( \text{Bxd}5 \) (39.\( \text{Rg}4!? \)?) 39...\( \text{Nxd}5 \) 40.\( \text{Rx}e6 \) follows, and Black wins back his piece on the e-file.

However, after 41.\( \text{Rg}4 \) \( \text{Qf}6 \) 40.\( \text{Bf}2! \) This threatens 41.\( \text{Bh}4 \), and at the same time clears the second rank for the white queen. White no longer worries about pawns at all. He considers it to be his task to concentrate a large number of pieces on the kingside as quickly as possible, tightening the thumbscrews on the black king.

White could also play differently: 40.\( \text{Ac}1 \), when 40...\( \text{Nxb}2 \) meets a strong response in 41.\( \text{Rd}g1!! \).

40...\( \text{Qxb}2 \) 41.\( \text{d}3 \)

Obviously, no question of swapping queens now!
41...b6 42.h4 c4

This move drives the white queen to a position where it participates actively in the initiative against the black king. But there already was no remedy against all this torment. Obviously, 42...f6? failed to 43.b1!

And 42...de8 43.xe7 xe7 would also turn out badly for Black after 44.xg6.

43.f3 de8

44.xg6!

Clearing the path for the queen to h5, and for the light-squared bishop to h7.

44...xd5

He saw the storm clouds gathering already. With the bishop on e4, it won’t take long before mate patterns emerge. An example: 44...b3 45.h5+ g8 46.dg1 and now, to illustrate the threats: 46...a5 47.xg7+ xg7 48.xg7+ xg7 49.h7+ f8 50.h8#.

45.xd5

Almost every logical move wins for White here. Objectively, 45.h5+ was better, with the possible continuation 45.g8 46.xd5 x5 47.xe7 x7 48.xg7+ x7 49.g1+ f6 50.f7#.

45.xe6

45...xd5 46.h5+ g8 47.xd5 and there is no remedy against all the attacking possibilities that White has woven into the position.

46.h5+ g8 47.xe6 xe6
48.\textit{f5}!

The optimal move. The rook cuts off the black king and introduces the threat of 49.\textit{f7+}.

48...\textit{h6}

After 48...\textit{xe4} Black gets mated: 49.\textit{f7+ h8} 50.\textit{h5+ h6} 51.\textit{xh6#}.

49.\textit{f7+ h8} 50.\textit{xe6 xe2+} 51.\textit{g1 d1+} 52.\textit{g2}

And here Black surrendered. After 52...\textit{e2+} 53.\textit{f2}, all the annoying counter-checks are eliminated, and Black no longer has a defence against the supremacy of the white pieces.

\begin{verbatim}
Lena Miladinovic
Anne Haast
Porto Carras Wch-jr U18 w 2010 (5)
\end{verbatim}
Black to move

Here Anne decided to invest a piece as well as an exchange:

17...\textit{\texttt{Nxa4}}! 18.\textit{\texttt{bx}}a4 \textit{\texttt{Rx}}b2 19.\textit{\texttt{Kxb2}}

19...\textit{\texttt{Bxe5+}}

Black has a nice bishop pair in an open position, and she controls the open b-file. Also, all her pieces can quickly have a go at the white king, whereas half of White’s pieces are watching idly on the other side of the board.

Black had a fantastic plan here, which was very hard to find over the board. Obviously, any black player will always
take a look at the check on the b-file: 19...\texttt{b8}+ 20.\texttt{a2}.

\textit{analysis diagram}

And now you would wonder how to continue. For example, 20...\texttt{b4}?! is met with 21.\texttt{a3} when White is better; but, incidentally, 20...\texttt{xe5} is still winning for Black, e.g. 21.\texttt{a3} \texttt{f6} and White loses the queen.

But it turns out that there is a fantastic solution to the problem in the position: 20...\texttt{d3}!!. A fabulous interference move. First of all, Black now threatens 21...\texttt{b4}, with a forced checkmate. And if White wants to keep the possibility to defend with \texttt{a3}, she will have to allow Black to set up a battery with queen and bishop, which is also immediately decisive. 21.\texttt{xd3} is met by 21...\texttt{xe5}, and on 21.\texttt{xd3} follows 21...\texttt{b4}.

\textbf{20.\texttt{a2}}

Black is still a rook down, so there is no time to hesitate. 20.\texttt{c1} now runs into 20...\texttt{b2}+! 21.\texttt{xb2} \texttt{xe3}.

\textbf{20...\texttt{b8}}

The correct order. Certainly not 20...\texttt{b4}?! in view of 21.\texttt{b3}, and White averts the attack.

\textbf{21.\texttt{a3}}

Thus, it looks as if White can fend off the attack. In any case, the intrusion by the black queen is prevented (for the time being).

On 21.\texttt{b3}, 21...\texttt{b4} wins, and 21.c5 is met with 21...\texttt{b2}+ 22.\texttt{a3}, and now 22...\texttt{xd2} 23.\texttt{xd2} (23.\texttt{xd2} \texttt{b2}+ 24.\texttt{xb2} \texttt{xe3}+) 23...\texttt{xe5}+ 24.\texttt{a2} \texttt{e6}+ 25.\texttt{b1} \texttt{a3}! is an appealing demonstration of the power of the bishop pair against an unprotected king.

\textbf{21...\texttt{d7}?!}

This looks very strong. First of all, the beautiful threat is 22...\texttt{xd2}+ and 23...\texttt{b1} mate! Moreover, the queen can join the attack via d4.
However, stronger was 21...\textit{f6}, intending 22...\textit{b2} followed by the original 23...\textit{c1}.

But 21...\textit{b4} was also a move worth considering. Here too, there is no remedy against the threat of 22...\textit{b2}.

\begin{center}
\textbf{22.\textit{e2} \textit{d4} 23.\textit{b3} \textit{c3}}
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\textbf{\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
8 & 8 & 8 & 8 & 8 & 8 & 8 & 8 & 8 \\
7 & 7 & 7 & 7 & 7 & 7 & 7 & 7 & 7 \\
6 & 6 & 6 & 6 & 6 & 6 & 6 & 6 & 6 \\
5 & 5 & 5 & 5 & 5 & 5 & 5 & 5 & 5 \\
4 & 4 & 4 & 4 & 4 & 4 & 4 & 4 & 4 \\
3 & 3 & 3 & 3 & 3 & 3 & 3 & 3 & 3 \\
2 & 2 & 2 & 2 & 2 & 2 & 2 & 2 & 2 \\
1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\
a & a & b & c & d & e & f & g & h \\
\hline
\end{tabular}}
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\textbf{24.\textit{d2}?}
\end{center}

Up to here, White has been putting up quite a decent defence in this precarious situation. But now she caves in. The only move was 24.\textit{d4}?!. Try to find that one over the board... 24...\textit{xd4} 25.\textit{xc3} \textit{xc3} 26.\textit{d3} \textit{b2}+ 27.\textit{a3} \textit{e6}, after which Black has (more than) sufficient compensation for the sacrificed material. But the white position still looks defensible.

24...\textit{c1} looks logical, but after 24...\textit{e3} 25.\textit{he1} (25.\textit{f3} \textit{f2}+) 25...\textit{g3} the situation becomes hopeless for White.

\begin{center}
\textbf{24...\textit{c2}!}
\end{center}

Completely dismantling the cooperation between the white pieces.

\begin{center}
\textbf{25.\textit{d1}}
\end{center}

Of course, this doesn’t help at all, but there was no longer a decent move left. Now Anne can crown her work.

\begin{center}
\textbf{25...\textit{a1}!}
\end{center}

An elegant queen sacrifice by ChessQueen Anne! If 26.\textit{xal} \textit{b1}#.

\section*{4.7 Attack and counterattack}

Not all the threats in a position are real threats. This somewhat cryptic sentence says something about hidden twists that at times remain under the surface, if we do not delve deeply enough into the problems of the position. When we do delve more deeply, sometimes a wealth of possibilities emerges that remains completely invisible to the unwary
In the 1980s, the most important Dutch player who was capable of making a bid for the world title was Jan Timman. He had already proved his worth on many occasions, but in the late 1970s it was finally time for him to try his luck in the World Championship cycle. In anticipation of the Interzonal tournament in Rio de Janeiro, where he could qualify for the Candidates’ matches, the insurance company Interpolis lent him a helping hand. In complete secrecy, Timman was enabled to play a match over eight games with another World Championship candidate, the Russian player Lev Polugaevsky.

The contestants were playing behind closed doors, in order to test their latest ideas. Only a few players were allowed to witness this big event from close by. One of them was grandmaster Jan Hein Donner, who was then a correspondent of the national daily newspaper *de Volkskrant*.

Donner took his task as a journalist very seriously. He meticulously wrote down all the moves the players put on the board, but since it had been agreed beforehand that the moves of the games were not to be published before the tournament in Rio de Janeiro had ended, everybody assumed that nothing would appear in the papers. Imagine the surprise of the members of the organization committee when they saw the moves of one of the games entirely written out in *de Volkskrant* on 11 August, 1979 – in nineteenth-century Dutch.

Of course, many people in our country had a good snigger about it, and, as I understand it, Timman was also able to appreciate the joke. The ever rebellious Donner could be expected to come up with a prank like that.

It is said that Polugaevsky was ‘not amused’ when he heard about this, but there wasn’t a lot he could do about it at that point. Fortunately, Donner had selected a rather boring draw to publish, and I think that the typesetter of the paper wouldn’t have been very happy if he had to print a game of around 60 moves in this way.

The first game from this ‘secret match’ was much more interesting. It is a striking example of hidden motifs that might have never come to the surface if we hadn’t submitted the game to a thorough analysis.

Jan Timman  
Lev Polugaevsky  
Breda m 1979 (1)

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.a3 Bb7 5.Nc3 d5 6.cxd5 Nxd5 7.e3 Be7

Today we know that Black’s alternatives are a little more practical: 7...g6; 7...Nbd7.

8.Bb5+ c6 9.d3 0-0 10.e4 Nc3 11.bxc3 c5

This is an extremely well-known position in the Queen’s Indian. White relies on his attacking chances on the kingside, and in the long term Black will try to exploit his majority on the queenside.

12.h4!?

According to the motto: if I have to go on the attack, then why not right away?

12...cxd4 13.cxd4 c6 14.e5
This was the idea. Suddenly White threatens to win with the ‘standard sacrifice’ $\textit{B}xh7+$, since the $\textit{R}h1$ can be involved in the battle. Polugaevsky now went into the think tank for a long time. And to the surprise of friend and foe alike, he simply allowed the sacrifice:

14...$\textit{Na5}!$

What’s going on here? Didn’t he see it? That seemed impossible, as the Soviet player was famous for his fantastic calculating abilities. So why, all of a sudden, doesn’t the sacrifice win here? What did the black player see that is apparently hidden so deep below the surface that it cannot be seen with the ‘naked eye’? Let’s see what Polugaevsky had worked out behind the board.

15.$\textit{Bxh7}+$?

Timman also discovered that the sacrifice didn’t work and played something else in the game: 15.$\textit{Be3}$. In fact this means that his little plan had failed, but the Dutchman, who belonged to the absolute world top in these days, was not to be confused. He stubbornly carried on and won this game, after both players had taken turns in failing to exploit a number of opportunities. Because the rest of the game is outside the scope of our theme, we will give it without comment: 15...g6 16.h5 $\textit{Ec8}$ 17.$\textit{Bb1}$ g5 18.$\textit{Bxh7}$+ $\textit{Kh8}$ 19.$\textit{Be4}$ $\textit{Ja6}$ 20.$\textit{Jd3}$ $\textit{Cc4}$ 21.0-0 g4 22.$\textit{Kh2}$ $\textit{Gg8}$ 23.$\textit{g3}$ $\textit{Gg5}$ 24.$\textit{Xg5}$ $\textit{Wxg5}$ 25.$\textit{Bb4}$ $\textit{Wh5}$ 26.$\textit{We7}$ $\textit{Gg7}$ 27.$\textit{f3}$ $\textit{Kh8}$ 28.$\textit{Ja2}$ $\textit{Gxf3}$ 29.$\textit{Jxe5}$ $\textit{Dxe5}$ 30.$\textit{Je6}+$ $\textit{>f8}$ 31.$\textit{Je5}$ $\textit{Cc1}+$ 32.$\textit{Efl}$ $\textit{Efl}$+ 33.$\textit{xf1}$ $\textit{xf1}$ 34.$\textit{Whxh5}$ $\textit{Exh5}$ 35.$\textit{Exf1}$ $\textit{Ea5}$ 36.$\textit{Jf2}$ b5 37.$\textit{Exb2}$ $\textit{Ea3}$ 38.$\textit{Eb5}$ a5 39.$\textit{Je3}$ a4 40.$\textit{Ja5}$ $\textit{Ja1}$ 41.$\textit{Je2}$ $\textit{Je7}$ 42.$\textit{Ja6}$ $\textit{Ja2}+$ 43.$\textit{Je3}$ $\textit{Ja1}$ 44.d5 exd5 45.$\textit{Exd5}$ a3 46.$\textit{Je3}$ and Black resigned.

15...$\textit{Gxh7}$ 16.$\textit{Jg5}+$ $\textit{Gg8}$
The only move. In many cases, the white player who has partaken of the $h7+$ sacrifice also has to consider the move ...
$g6$. Here, this does not come into consideration, because it would lose immediately.

Obviously, the capture 16...$xg5??$ is still impossible. Black will be mated after 17.hxg5+ $g8$ 18.$h5 f5$ 19.$g6$.

Now White has two possibilities to continue his attack.

17.$h5$

17.$d3$ also looks logical, upon which the reply is forced: 17...$g6$ and now:

A) It looks as if White’s attack wins after 18.$xe6$, but he is in for a disappointment: 18...$d5!$ is the sobering reply, when Black is winning (but not 18...$xe6??$, which does win for White: 19.$xg6+ h8$ 20.$h6+ g8$ 21.$h3$ and Black won’t survive this):
After 19.\textit{xf8} Black calmly recaptures, and then he has two minor pieces for a rook and two pawns. Materially this is equal, but since the black pieces are controlling half the board and White is saddled with nothing but passive pieces, there is no hope for White. Here is a plausible variation to illustrate this: 19...\textit{xf8} 20.f3 Otherwise there follows 20...\textit{xg2}; if 20.\textit{h3} \textit{c4} 21.\textit{g3} \textit{xe5}!. 20...\textit{b3} 21.\textit{b1} \textit{xd4} and the white skyscraper collapses;

B) After the game, Polugaevsky revealed that after 18.h5 he had calculated the formidable 18...\textit{a6}!! here. A deeply hidden resource, with which Black lures the queen out of the centre, in order to take over the attack there (in our modern age we can quickly conclude that Black also beats off the assault with 18...\textit{xg5} 19.hxg6 \textit{h4}!, putting an end to White’s attacking chances along the h-file). 19.\textit{g3} 19.\textit{xa6} is met by 19...\textit{xd4} and, apart from the fact that the \textit{a1} is hanging, the white pieces do not cooperate. 19...\textit{xg5} This looks risky, but still it is Black’s best possibility. 20.\textit{xg5} After 20.hxg6 \textit{fg6} 21.\textit{h3} Black again has 21...\textit{h4} and White will be too much material down: 22.\textit{xe6+} \textit{g7}. 20...\textit{xd4}
Also here, nothing is left of White’s attacking play, while Black’s counterattack is in full swing. After 21.\texttt{Rd1} \texttt{Qe4+}
22.\texttt{Be3} \texttt{Rfd8} White can resign.

\textbf{17...Be4 18.Nxe4 Qxd4 19.Ng5 Qxe5+ 20.Kf1 Qf5}

Black has averted the mate threats, and now White is in bad shape.

\textbf{Conclusions}

Themes connected with the weakening \ldots g7-g6:
- the h2-h4-h5 push
- the f2-f4-f5 push
- king’s position without the \texttt{B} on g7
- king’s position with the \texttt{B} on g7

Themes connected with the weakening \ldots h7-h6:
- the g2-g4-g5 push
- piece sacrifices on h6
- \texttt{Q+B} battery on the b1-h7 diagonal
- knight to f5
- various sacrifices

Themes connected with a weakened seventh rank:
- breaking through to the seventh rank
- provoking a weakening

Themes connected with an unweakened king’s position:
- with a pawn on e5 (sacrifices on h7 and f6)
4.8 Set of exercises

How can White convert this promising position into a win?

**Show/Hide the Solution**

Sergei Zhigalko
Pavel Maletin
Khanty-Mansiysk 2011 (3)

White considered the position was ripe for a combination:

17.\(\text{f6}+\) \(\text{gxf6}\)

On 17...\(\text{x}f6\) White also strikes with 18.\(\text{exf6}\) \(\text{gf}6\) (18...\(\text{f}4\), in order to prevent 19.\(\text{g}4+\), costs a piece after 19.\(\text{h}5\) \(\text{g}6\) 20.\(\text{x}a5\)) 19.\(\text{g}4+\) \(\text{h}8\) 20.\(\text{h}4\) \(\text{f5}\) and now White uses violent means to introduce another piece to the attack: 21.\(\text{x}f5\) \(\text{exf5}\) 22.\(\text{d}5\) \(\text{d}8\) 23.\(\text{f}6\) and White wins.

18.\(\text{g}4+\) \(\text{h}8\) 19.\(\text{exf6}\)

This move is important, as now Black is not able to cut off the bishop on c2 from the attack with ...\(\text{f}7-\text{f5}\).

19...\(\text{g}8\)

19...\(\text{x}f6\) runs into 20.\(\text{h}5\) with unstoppable mate.
20. \textit{h}4

And here also, mate can only be averted at the cost of material loss.

---

30

White has an abundance of pieces in the attack, whereas Black does not have many defenders with which to confront them. What is the best way for White to go about this? Give a few variations.

Show/Hide the Solution

\textbf{Alexander Koblents}

\textbf{Wood}

\textit{Margate 1936}

With such a large concentration of white pieces on the kingside, it can’t be long before disaster will strike for Black.

1. \textit{x}h6!

The motto is: break open the position!

1...\textit{gx}h6 2. \textit{w}xh6
Now the threat is $3.\text{ Nh7+}$ followed by $4.\text{ Nh8}$. Black has two ways to arm himself against this threat.

2...$\text{ Bf6}$

After 2...$\text{ Nf6}$ 3. $\text{ Ng5}$ it is hard for Black to defend against the many threats, for example: 3...$\text{ d8}$ 4. $\text{ h7+! Nh7}$ 5. $\text{ Nh7+ Nh8}$

6.$\text{ Ng6+!}$. This pretty trick puts an end to all resistance. 6...$\text{ fxg6}$ 7. $\text{ xe6#}$. 

3.$\text{ h7+ Nh8}$ 4. $\text{ xf7+!}$
A beautiful move! White lures a black piece to this square, after which the well-known mechanism suddenly does work. After 4.\textbf{Bg6+ Kg8} 5.\textbf{Qh7+ f8} there is no immediate mate.

4...\textbf{xf7} 5.\textbf{g6+ g8} 6.\textbf{h7+ f8} 7.\textbf{xf7#}

31

With so few defenders, there has to be something for White here. But what exactly is it?

Show/Hide the Solution

Garry Kasparov
Comp Mephisto Exclusive S
Hamburg computer sim 1985

The king is hiding behind its pawns, but White demolishes this structure:

17.\textbf{Nf6+}!

This knight sacrifice decides the issue.

17...\textbf{gxf6} 18.\textbf{exf6}

Threatening 19.\textbf{Qg5+} with mate.

18...\textbf{h8} 19.\textbf{e4}

Now that this bishop enters the fray, it is all over.

19...\textbf{h6} 20.\textbf{xh6+ g8} 21.\textbf{g7#}
Black has invested quite a bit of material, but now the time has come for him to show some muscle. How did he do that?

Show/Hide the Solution

Diyan Dimov
Boris Chatalbashev
Pleven ch-BUL 2015 (9)

Black has lost some material, but he sees possibilities of disturbing the white king, playing:

23...\text{N}f3+! 24.\text{K}h1

After 24.gxf3, of course, it is mate in two: 24...\text{Q}g5+ 25.\text{K}h1 \text{B}xf3#.

24...\text{Q}h4

Naturally, Black brings up new reserves. 24...\text{N}xe1? would allow White to win with 25.\text{R}xe1 exd3 26.\text{N}e6, and although Black is a rook up, it isn’t enough.

25.\text{h}3 \text{Q}f4 26.\text{g}3

26.gxf3 again leads to a quick mate: 26...\text{Q}xf3+ 27.\text{K}g1 \text{Q}g5+ 28.\text{K}h2 \text{Q}g2#.

26...\text{Q}f5

Black keeps attacking weak squares.

27.\text{g}2

27.g4 fails to 27...\text{Q}f4, and now h2 cannot be protected.
27...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\texttt{Ng5}}}}

This is actually the best move. The game went 27...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\texttt{\texttt{Nxe1+}}}}} 28.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\texttt{Rx}}}}1, which was also more than sufficient for the win: 28...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\texttt{Qf3+}}}} 29.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\texttt{Kg1}}}} \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\texttt{Bd4}}}} 30.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\texttt{Qc4+}}}} \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\texttt{Kxf8}}}} and White resigned.

28.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\texttt{Nh1}}}}

While this defends h3, he still cannot prevent mate. After 28.g4 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\texttt{Qf3+}}}} 29.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\texttt{g1}}}} \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\texttt{Nh3+}}}} 30.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\texttt{Kh2}}}} \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\texttt{Be5#}}}}, again the collective intervention of almost all the black pieces is decisive.

28...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\texttt{Qf3+}}}} 29.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\texttt{g1}}}} \textit{\texttt{e3}}

Further damaging the king’s position.

30.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\texttt{Qc4+}}}} \textit{\texttt{d5}} 31.\textit{\texttt{Qf4}}

White has brought his queen over to the defence, but now Black follows up with a beautiful finish:

31...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\texttt{Nh3+!}}}}

Incidentally, 31...exf2+ 32.\textit{\texttt{h2}} \textit{\texttt{Qxf4}} 33.gxf4 \textit{\texttt{f3+}} 34.\textit{\texttt{g2}} fxe1=\textit{\texttt{Q}} wasn’t bad either.

32.\textit{\texttt{Qxh3}}

32.\textit{\texttt{h2}} \textit{\texttt{Qxf4}}.

32...\textit{\texttt{exf2+}} 33.\textit{\texttt{h2}} fxe1=\textit{\texttt{Q}}

and it is all over.
The black pieces are rather far removed from their own king, while White has occupied the light squares on the kingside. How can he put this to concrete use?

Show/Hide the Solution

**Anatoly Karpov**  
**Alexey Shirov**  
Biel 1992 (13)

The black pieces are rather off-side, while White strongly dominates the light squares around the black king. He makes clever use of this with

30.\textit{Rxb7!}

An attractive exchange sacrifice. Less good is 30.\textit{Rxa8+ Qxa8}, even though White also retains attacking chances here, for example with 31.\textit{Nf5}.

30.\textit{Rxb7! Rxb7 31.Qe6+ Rh8 32.e4}

By now Shirov had seen enough. Indeed, the white pieces now have free rein on the kingside. A sample line: 32...\textit{Qa7 33.g6+ Rh7 34.e7+ Rh8 35.f5 Qa1+ 36.b1} and Black can only prevent mate by giving up the queen.

Instead, 36.h2 \textit{Wc5}+ 37.Wxe5 fxe5 38.Qxa8 would have taken a little longer.
White’s strategy to weaken the dark squares around the enemy king has taken shape nicely. Is there already something in the air?

Show/Hide the Solution

Andrey Orlov
Walter Wengenroth
Germany tt 2007/08 (8)

White started a tremendous offensive with

16.\textit{\(\text{f}6+\)!}

A correct knight sacrifice, which offers White good winning chances. After 16.\textit{\(\text{xf7}\)} \textit{\(\text{xf7}\)} Black could defend successfully, for example: 17.\textit{\(\text{g5}\)} \textit{\(\text{g4}\)}; or 17...\textit{\(\text{f5}\)} 18.\textit{\(\text{h4}\)} h6.

Or 16.h3 \textit{\(\text{f5}\)} 17.\textit{\(\text{h4}\)} \textit{\(\text{xf6}\)} 18.\textit{\(\text{xf6}\)} \textit{\(\text{xe5}\)} followed by ...\textit{\(\text{g7}\)}.

16.\textit{\(\text{f6+!}\)} \textit{\(\text{xf6}\)}

16...\textit{\(\text{xf6}\)} was not attractive, but nevertheless it was his only fighting chance: 17.\textit{\(\text{xf8}\)} \textit{\(\text{h8}\)} 18.\textit{\(\text{h6}\)}. However, here White has simply grabbed the exchange, and Black doesn’t have much compensation for it.

17.\textit{\(\text{xf7}\)!}

This is the right moment to trade. Curiously, 17.\textit{\(\text{xf6}\)} \textit{\(\text{h8}\)} 18.\textit{\(\text{xf8}\)} \textit{\(\text{xf8}\)} does not offer White as much as you would think at first sight. He can still gain the advantage, by the way, with 19.\textit{\(\text{e7}\)} \textit{\(\text{d8}\)} 20.\textit{\(\text{ae1}\)} \textit{\(\text{f5}\)} 21.\textit{\(\text{g4}\)} \textit{\(\text{xf6}\)} 22.\textit{\(\text{e8+}\)} \textit{\(\text{xe8}\)} 23.\textit{\(\text{xe8+}\)} \textit{\(\text{xe8}\)} 24.\textit{\(\text{xf5}\)} \textit{\(\text{g7}\)}.

17...\textit{\(\text{xf7}\)}
The zwischenzug 17...fxe5 had to be calculated too: after 18.Qh6 f6 19.Qxf8 Black doesn’t seem to have enough. 19...b7 20.Qxc5 bxc5 gives White an advantage, even though he will still have to put in some effort.

18.exf6+Kh8 19.Qh6 Kg8 20.Qe7!

Black resigned. On 20...Qd5 follows the strong 21.Qe8, when 21...Qxg2+ (21...Qb7 22.Qg7#) is met by 22.Qxg2 Qb7+ 23.Qe4 and Black doesn’t have enough.

White’s pieces have taken up menacing positions, but how can he convert this into an attack?

Show/Hide the Solution

Vugar Gashimov
Aleksander Czerwonski
Warsaw 2010 (3)

The Qd3/Bc2 battery is already in position, but now it has to be activated.

26.Nd4!

White clears the (crowded) b1-h7 diagonal.

26...Qf7

The counter-thrust 26...Bxe4 turns out badly for Black after 27.Qg3!, although that wasn’t so easy to calculate. 27...Qd5 is met by 28.Qxh6+ Bh8 29.Qxe4 Qxe4 30.Qf5 c5 31.Qg6! cxd4 32.Qxh7 when the threat of 33.Qh8+ is lethal.

27.e5!

Obviously.
It seems as if Black has saved everything, but now White decides the game with:

28.e6! \( \text{ex}e6 \)

Or 28...\( \text{ex}e6 \) 29.\( \text{h}7+ \) \( \text{f}8 \) 30.\( \text{xe}6! \) \( \text{xe}6 \) 31.\( \text{h}8+ \) \( \text{e}7 \) (31...\( \text{g}8 \) 32.\( \text{xe}6+ \) ) 32.\( \text{f}5# \) – a beautiful mate with queen and knight.

29.\( \text{xe}6 \) \( \text{xe}6 \) 30.\( \text{h}7+ \)

Black resigned. He will lose even more material after 30...\( \text{f}8 \) 31.\( \text{h}8+ \) \( \text{e}7 \) 32.\( \text{f}5 \) \( \text{d}5 \) 33.\( \text{xe}6 \) \( \text{xe}6 \) 34.\( \text{f}5 \), which is indeed decisive.
The downside to the move h2-h3 is that square g3 can become weak. As \( \text{Nxf2} \) is also looming, Black might be able to make use of this g3-square. How can Black make these ideas work? Work out a few variations.

**Show/Hide the Solution**

**Rainer Pappenheim**

**Alexandre Dgebraudze**

Leinzell 2011 (2)

The black player had some creative inspiration here:

**16...\text{Bh2}+!**

The direct capture on f2 is not as strong. After 16...\text{Nxf2} 17.\text{Kxf2} \text{Bg3+} 18.\text{Kg1} \text{Bxe1} 19.\text{Qxe1}, White has the better play.

16...\text{Bh2}+! 17.\text{Kf1} \text{Nxf2}!

Now, yes.

**18.\text{Qd2}**

If White takes the knight, the black queen will invade on g3: 18.\text{Qxf2} \text{Qg3+}. This is the difference with the previous variations. The white king cannot move back to g1. Now all king moves lose:

A) 19.\text{e2} \text{Nxd4+}! 20.\text{Bxd4} (or 20.\text{Qd2} \text{Qxg2+}) 20...\text{Rf2#};

B) After 19.\text{f1} \text{Qxg5} Black has gained a pawn, and has also made a breach in the black king’s position;

C) The most tenacious seems to be 19.\text{e3}, but after 19...\text{Qxg2} Black will soon regain material with ...\text{Nxf3} and ...\text{Qxg5}, while the attack continues unabated. Incidentally, the direct 19...\text{Qf3+} is also strong.
18...\textit{d}xd3 19.\textit{x}xd3 \textit{g}3 20.\textit{d}d2 \textit{xf}3+! 21.\textit{g}xf3

21.\textit{xf}3 is also answered by 21...\textit{f}8.

\textbf{21...\textit{f}8 22.\textit{e}e3 \textit{b}b4!}

The decisive blow. The f3-pawn cannot be sufficiently defended. After

\textbf{23.\textit{e}e2}

it is mate:

\textbf{23...\textit{g}1#}

\paragraph{4.9 From the gates of hell}

In the 1980s, I played a lot of tournaments in England. The British island was miles ahead of the continent in those years, because it had included in its calendar an impressive series of weekend tournaments as well as open and round-robin grandmaster competitions. The rich prize funds attracted many strong players, and the creation of a Grand Prix even led to many top players from England joining in. In my recollections, the tournaments in Ramsgate, an English spa, were quite special. From Europe, several ambitious players would cross the Channel in order to cross swords in a typical British hotel. The hotelier made his hotel available in the winter. If I am correctly informed, he was able to manage the flood of chess players by organizing language courses for students from Southern Europe, who could attend their classes for a cheap price, provided they worked in service at the hotel. This led to the funny situation where, after lunch, the tables had to be quickly cleared in order to make room for the chess sets. The same thing took place before dinner. The chess sets had to make way for plates, so that dinner could be served.

It was the time when games were still adjourned. I remember the Dutch master Rob Hartoch sitting in the middle of the room, thinking about his sealed move, while all around him the chess tables were being transformed into dinner tables. Although his position was winning, he could no longer concentrate, so he went looking for his opponent to ask him if he would mind accepting a draw...

In the 1984 edition of the tournament I stumbled upon the ace English player Keith Arkell, who was busy wiping me off the board after a failed opening experiment. My position was so bad that I was seriously considering resigning. But, as the saying goes: ‘Nobody has ever won a game by resigning’, so in my desperation I decided to play on and see how he would finish me off. To my surprise he went into the ‘think tank’ for a very long time, and as a result he even started to get into time trouble and failed to find the correct series of moves in the maze of variations. Even worse – with a venomous counter I managed to turn the tables and even to win the game later on!

But later I achieved what I personally thought was an even better result. During the analysis, with four or five English grandmasters, I also managed to show great persistence. Even against this huge collective Elo force I succeeded in staying on my feet in this lost position during most of the post-mortem.

After all those years I have looked at this game again with the modern-day engines, Stockfish and Houdini. With the computer, every analysis is easy, but during a game it’s an entirely different matter to find the right path. Therefore I will give you the opportunity to test yourself, too. I have turned this game into a quiz. You can cover the moves with a piece of card, and then play through the game. You will be posed ten questions, where you can try and find the right continuation. For each correct answer there are 10 points to be won.

Enjoy!
1.d4 f6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 c5 4.f3 cxd4 5.xd4 a5+ 6.c3 b4 7.d2 c5 8.e3

8...e5?!

Highly ambitious, and perhaps this is asking too much from the position. 8...c6 is the normal move, and it looks perfectly okay here.

9.c2 c6?
QUESTION 1: How can White try to profit from Black’s mistake?

ANSWER TO QUESTION 1: Black tries to exploit the fact that White has played g2-g3 as well as e2-e3. But the white player is only too willing to sacrifice the exchange for an advantage in development and control of the d5-square:

10. \( \text{N} \text{xb4!} \)

An excellent exchange sacrifice.

10...\( \text{Qxh1} \) 11. \( \text{N} \text{bd5} \) \( \text{N} \text{xd5} \) 12. \( \text{N} \text{xd5} \) \( \text{a}6 \) 13. \( \text{g4} \) 0-0 14. 0-0-0 \( \text{d}6 \) 15. \( \text{f}6+ \) \( \text{h}8 \) 16. \( \text{h}4 \) \( \text{f}5 \)

Clearly, the capture 16...gxf6? fails to 17. \( \text{d}3 \).

QUESTION 2: How can White maintain his initiative?
ANSWER TO QUESTION 2:

17.g4!

Quite right! Not only is White going to challenge Black’s chief defender, but he also makes possible the opening of the g-file.

17...gxf6

Black already has nothing to lose at this point.

QUESTION 3: Why would 17...Bg6? lose now?

ANSWER TO QUESTION 3: White would go for the Bg6 with 18.Bd3! Qf3 19.Qxh7! (clearly the strongest. 19.Qxg6 is also winning, although after 19...h6 Black can struggle on for a while) 19...g8 20.Qxg6 fxg6 21.Qg5 and either Black gets mated or he loses the queen.

18.Qxf6+ Kg8

QUESTION 4: White has five attractive continuations here. One of them is clearly the best. Choose from the following moves:

A) 19.gxf5;
B) 19.Qh3;
C) 19.e4;
D) 19.Qxf5;
E) 19.Qe2.

In this position, my opponent took a lot of time trying to find the win. During that period, I also tried to delve into the secrets of the position as deeply as I could. I already knew that my position was bad, if not lost. But I also saw that in this chaotic position, with its potpourri of variations, things are not quite so straightforward for White. One by one, hidden defensive resources and tactical counterchances started entering my head.
ANSWER TO QUESTION 4:

19. $\textit{h}3$?!

This was how the game proceeded, but it was certainly not the most promising continuation. There are no less than four better-looking alternatives. One of them even turns out to win convincingly for White.

A) 19.gxf5 looks logical, after which Black is more or less forced to continue with 19...$\textit{g}1$, and now 20.e4! is the right way to organize the attack. 20.xd6 hardly gives White anything after 20...ad8 21.e7 h6!, after which I fail to see how White can make progress.

analysis diagram

Here are two sample lines: 22.c5 $\textit{g}5$ 23.xb7 $\textit{xc}5$ and Black's problems are over; or 22.xb7? $\textit{xd}2$! and Black even wins.

Also quite promising is 20.e2!? $\textit{g}7$ 21.h4 f6 (otherwise White plays f5-f6 himself). At this moment, 22.e4! is again White's best chance (less convincing is 22.f3 $\textit{h}8$ 23.d5, and for the time being at least Black seems to hold) 22...h8 (Black has to give back material) 23.h6 $\textit{e}7$ 24.xf8 $\textit{xf}8$; however, even though White is a pawn up, there is no need at all for Black to despair here;

D) 19.xf5 yields little: 19...$\textit{x}h2$! The correct defence. Wrong is 19...fc8? 20.c3! $\textit{c}5$ 21.g5+ $\textit{f}8$ 22.h6+ $\textit{g}8$ 23.e2 $\textit{g}2$ 24.xd6, and the threats on the long diagonal will seal Black's fate. 20.d3 $\textit{h}6$ 21.e4 $\textit{c}5$ 22.h1 $\textit{g}6$ and Black has repulsed the attack;

E) 19.e2 certainly comes into consideration, but after 19...$\textit{g}2$ 20.xf5 $\textit{g}7$ Black defends analogously to the variations already given elsewhere;

C) The most convincing path to victory is by means of a clearance of the c1-h6 diagonal: 19.e4!!
19...Qxe4 20. gxf5 Qc5 21. h6 Qg4 the queen will be harassed until she leaves the g-file, thereby abandoning the protection of the g7-square: 22. h3 Qe4 23. Qe7 Qxh3 (23... Fe8 24. Qxe8+ Qxe8 25. Qxg4+←) 24. Qg1+ Nh8 25. Qg7+ Qg8 26. Qf6+ and Black has to give too much material to prevent mate. 20. Bh6 Mate on g7 is what White is after. 20... Ne8 21. Qxf5! The most convincing continuation of the attack. White introduces the banal but inescapable threat of Qf5-g5+ followed by Bxf8, winning a rook. Also winning is 21. e7 Qg7 22. exf5 (after 22. gxf5?! Black can play on: 22... Qxh2 23. Qf6 Qh5 24. Qg5+ Nh8) 22... Nh8 23. f6 Qe6 24. Qxf8 Qxf8 25. Qd3 Qh2 26. Qf5 and Black cannot keep his position together. 21... f6 The only way to eliminate the above-mentioned threat (21... Qxh2 22. Qg5+ Nh8 23. Qxf8), but this entails a deadly weakening of the a2-g8 diagonal. A second clearance sacrifice by White will ruin Black: 22. c5!! A second pawn sacrifice, to open the diagonal of the other bishop. 22... Qg7 This amounts to capitulation. The knight move not only costs Black the queen, it leads to mate as well. After 22... Qxh2 23. c4+ f7 24. xf7+ Qf7 25. Qxh7+ wins; and 22... d5 doesn’t really help either after 23. c4! Qxd1+ 24. Qxd1 dxc4 25. Qxf8 Qxf8 26. Qxh7, with a similarly hopeless position. 23. c4+ f7 23... Nh8 24. Qxg7+ Qxg7 25. Qxh1. 24. Qf7+ Qf7 25. Qd7+ and it’s game over.

19... Qxh2 20. Qxf5
QUESTION 5: What is Black’s most tenacious defence in this position?

20...\textit{Rfc8}?

A logical move, which, however, should have lost right away.

QUESTION 6: How can White force a convincing win here?

ANSWER TO QUESTION 5: Black should have defended himself with 20...\textit{Nc7} 21.e4 \textit{Nd8} and it looks as if this is still playable.

21...\textit{Nh6}?

White returns the favour.

ANSWER TO QUESTION 6: White had to find a surprising move here: 21...\textit{c3!} would have been winning. For example: 21...\textit{Exc4} 22.\textit{Eg5+}, and now: 22...\textit{Nh8} There is no escape along the other side either: 22...\textit{f8} 23.f6 and the white attack develops smoothly after 23...\textit{Exh3} 24.\textit{Eg7+} \textit{Ee8} 25.\textit{Eg8+} \textit{Ed7} 26.\textit{Exf7+} \textit{Ec6} 27.\textit{Exc4+} \textit{Ec5} 28.\textit{Ed5+} (the computer gives a variation with a forced mate which I have provided with a few ‘human traits’. Actually, Black could also resign after 28.b4, winning a piece) 28...\textit{b6} 29.\textit{Exd6+} \textit{b5} 30.a4+! \textit{xa4} 31.\textit{Ed5+} \textit{c4} 32.b3+! \textit{xb3} (32...\textit{Exc3} 33.\textit{Ed3#}) 33.\textit{b4+} \textit{a2} 34.\textit{xa4#}. 23.\textit{Ng1} and Black has to give the queen in order not to get mated. Only not 21.\textit{Exd6}?, as in that case Black will escape to an equal position: 21...\textit{Exc4+} 22.\textit{Ec3} (22.\textit{b1}? \textit{Exh3} 23.\textit{Eg1+} \textit{g4}) 22...\textit{Exh3} 23.\textit{g1+} \textit{g4} 24.\textit{xg4+} \textit{gxg4} 25.\textit{Exe5} \textit{f8} and White can force a repetition of moves.

21...\textit{Exc4+} 22.\textit{Ec1}?

White has a total blackout. Necessary was 22.\textit{c3!}, after which Black has to bring his knight to the battle scene quickly: 22...\textit{c7}! (certainly not 22...\textit{Ec8}? in view of 23.\textit{g5+} \textit{f8} 24.f6 and White’s threats have become overwhelming).
QUESTION 7: With which surprising move can Black now parry the main threats?

ANSWER TO QUESTION 7:

22...\textit{g4}!

This had been missed by the white player. Now Black has everything under control.

23.e4?

Far too late. Black takes over the initiative.

QUESTION 8: With what move can Black even try for a win now?

23...\textit{g1}

This not only trades off one of White’s attacking pieces but is also a prelude to smoking out the white king.

ANSWER TO QUESTION 8: Indeed, the rook exchange benefits Black.

24.\textit{xg1+ xg1+ 25.e2 c8+ 26.d3 c5+}

All the black pieces now come into action.

27.e3 c6

The safest move to win. Computer programs think that other moves, like 27...\textit{xe4} or 27...f6, are stronger.

28.f6 g6 29.h4 h6 30.f3

QUESTION 9: Black has everything under control, and he is ahead in material. How can he quickly end all resistance?

ANSWER TO QUESTION 9:

30...d5! 31.f5 dxe4+
And White’s attack has vanished.
Chapter 5
Stereotypical motifs in opening variations

5.1 Introduction

If a player wants to study an opening, generally he will first familiarize himself with the structure of the variations. Next, he will logically look at the specific plans that are connected with the different variations. However, people often forget to study the characteristic combinations in openings. On the one hand, this is because these are not provided by opening books; on the other hand there are also few trainers who take the trouble to provide their pupils with the necessary material. Of course, not every opening or opening variation contains such combinations, but all the same, it is worth the trouble to dabble with tactics a little.

In the sections below we have selected a number of opening variations and listed a number of tactics for you. First we offer you two instructive examples, and then you get four as an exercise. Some of the solutions for these contain quite extensive analysis, in order to make you familiar with the ideas of the system in question. We give the first moves of the games in all the examples, in order to indicate from which opening and which variation they arise.

5.2 Open positions arising from 1.e4 e5

The Scotch Game

The Scotch Game (1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4) is a sharp opening system which was very popular at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. Later, the Ruy Lopez became predominant. When Garry Kasparov suddenly used the Scotch in one of his matches for the world title with Anatoly Karpov, it experienced a revival. Today, many top players use it now and then, in order to get away from the long and sometimes slightly tedious positions in the Spanish.

Parimarjan Negi
Jha Sriram
Aurangabad ch-IND 2011 (1)

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4 4.Qxd4 Qf6 5.Qxc6

One of the most promising options.

5...bxc6 6.e5

Trying to disturb Black’s development.

6...Qe7
In turn, Black tries to tempt White into making ‘unnatural’ moves.

7. \( \text{e2} \) \( \text{d5} \) 8. \( \text{c4} \) \( \text{b6} \)

8...\( \text{a6} \) is a popular alternative.

9. \( \text{c3} \)

Many other moves have been tried here.

9...\( \text{b7} \) 10. \( \text{d2} \) \( \text{g6} \)

One problem in this variation is that White has saddled himself with a vulnerable pawn on e5, which Black tries to besiege as soon as possible. In the meantime, White hopes to create enough piece play by means of rapid development. Especially the black \( \text{b6} \) is a problem child. This knight stands badly, and it will be hard to find a way to activate it. Black does have at his disposal the plan to attack the strong white pawn on c4 with ...d7-d5.

11.h4!?

Negi does not lose any time – he immediately tries to put pressure on the black position. 11.0-0-0 is the most common move here.

11...\( \text{g7} \) 12. 0-0-0 0-0

12...\( \text{xe5} \)? 13.\( \text{xe5}+ \) \( \text{xe5} \) fails to 14.\( \text{e1} \) d6 15.f4, winning a piece.

12...\( \text{xe5} \)? is not possible either, for the same reason – the pin on the e-file: 13.\( \text{e1} \) d6 14.f4 \( \text{f6} \) 15.\( \text{f2} \) and White wins material.

13.h5 \( \text{xe5} \)

Now, Black can take, but White’s kingside attack is already starting to take shape.
A logical move, which, however, turns out to have a few drawbacks. Perhaps Black should have activated his bishop with 14...c5, if only to prevent White from ever bringing his knight into the attack.

15.hxg6 hxg6 16.c5!

With this move White temporarily deactivated the \$b7.

16...\$c4

16...\$c8 is far too slow on account of 17.\$e1 \$f6 (17...\$f5 18.\$g3!) 18.\$g5 \$xf2 19.\$d3 and the white pieces dominate the kingside. Black is unable to organize a defence against this. For example: 19...\$f5 20.\$h3 $h7 21.\$h2! and the queen will invade decisively via c7. Another nice example of a ‘backward queen move’, which was discussed earlier in Chapter 2.

17.\$xc4 dxc4 18.\$de1

Slightly more accurate, in order to forestall ...\$e5-h5, was 18.\$g5!.

18.\$d4

A queen exchange would benefit Black, but of course Negi doesn’t go for this. Black could try to hold with 18...\$c8 19.\$h4 \$h5. Then, White keeps an advantage with 20.\$g3!.

19.\$h3 \$fe8 20.\$h7+ \$f8 21.\$h6

Thereby removing the black king’s chief defender.

21...\$xe1+ 22.\$xe1 \$xh6+

Forced, since 23.\$h8+ was threatened.
23. \texttt{Qxh6+ Kg8}

On 23... \texttt{g7} White would continue with 24. \texttt{Qf4}.

24. \texttt{Qe4}

23. \texttt{Qxh6+ Kg8}

On 23... \texttt{g7} White would continue with 24. \texttt{Qf4}.

24. \texttt{Qe4}

This has been the white player’s intention all along. He is bombarding the black king’s position with two major pieces and a knight. The \texttt{Ra8} and \texttt{Bb7} will end this game as spectators.

24... \texttt{d8}

To 24... \texttt{f8} White would have to reply 25. \texttt{g5}! and here too, the black player is on the ropes. Less clear is 25. \texttt{g4} on account of 25... \texttt{g7}.

25. \texttt{g4!}

Well-spotted by the Indian. White tries to fix the f6-square, so that the knight can nestle there. Perhaps the black player was hoping for 25. \texttt{g5}?!; when after 25... \texttt{c8}! 26. \texttt{f6}+ \texttt{g7} 27. \texttt{e8}+ \texttt{g8} White has nothing special.

25... \texttt{c8}

Also after 25... \texttt{h8} 26. \texttt{g5} Black might as well call it a day.

26. \texttt{g5} \texttt{g7} 27. \texttt{f6}+ \texttt{f8}
28.\text{\textit{h2}}!

And after this nasty final move, Black threw in the towel, There is nothing sensible to be found against the threat of 29.\text{\textit{xc7}}.

\text{\textbf{Evgeny Naer}}
\text{\textbf{Sarunas Sulskis}}
Pardubice 2004 (8)

1.e4 e5 2.\text{\textit{f3}} \text{\textit{c6}} 3.d4 exd4 4.\text{\textit{xd4}} \text{\textit{f6}} 5.\text{\textit{xc6}} bxc6 6.e5 \text{\textit{e7}} 7.\text{\textit{e2}} \text{\textit{d5}} 8.c4 \text{\textit{a6}} 9.d2 0-0-0

This approach is often seen. Black removes his king from the centre and then starts to besiege the e5-pawn as soon as possible.
10. b3 g5

This move serves to develop his bishop to g7, and to render f2-f4 as good as impossible.

11. Bb2 Bg7 12. 0-0-0 Re8

By the looks of it, Black’s strategy has succeeded, but as it turns out, White also has a few more strings to his bow.

13. h4!? gxh4

13... f4 is possible, even though White can enter a very favourable endgame after 14. Qe3 xe5 15. xe5 xe5 16. xe5 xe5 17. hxg5.

14. Qg4

Now that the white queen has stepped out of the pin with tempo, suddenly two of Black’s pieces are hanging.

14... f5

Thus Black tries to stay in the game, but now the blow suddenly falls on the queenside, as happens so often in the Scotch.

14... xe5 simply costs a piece after 15. cxd5 c5+ 16. b1 xf1 17. xf1.
15.\textit{\text{\textsf{Q}d4}}!?

White goes on the attack, but it is doubtful whether this was his best option. The positional approach was 15.\textit{\textsf{Qxh4 \textsf{Nb6}} 16.f4, after which all Black’s pieces are condemned to passivity.

15...\textit{\textsf{b4}} 16.\textit{\textsf{Qxa7 \textsf{Bb7}}} 17.\textit{\textsf{a3 \textsf{a6}}} 18.\textit{\textsf{b4}}

Now White threatens c4-c5.

18...\textit{\textsf{c5}}
19. ♖b3!

White continues attacking the vulnerable black queenside. The threat is 20. ♖a5.

19... ♗xe5

In desperation, Black tries to have a go at the white king. If he wanted to save his bishop, he would have had to play 19... ♗e6, but that leaves him no prospects whatsoever after 20.b5 ♖b8 21. ♖xc5 ♗b6 22. ♖xb7+ ♖xb7 23. ♖xb7 ♖xb7 24.f4.

20.b5!

The best move.

20... ♔f6

After 20... ♖b8 21.f3! is the strongest move, when White threatens 22. ♖xc5 or 22. ♖a5.

21. ♖xe5 ♖xe5

Now Black is threatening 22... ♔c3+, and White’s next move parries that threat.

22. ♖h3?!

Funnily enough, this logical move is not entirely adequate. After 22. ♖c2! ♔e4+ 23. ♖d3 White would still have been pulling the strings. For example: 23... ♖b8 24. ♖xh4 ♖xg2 25. ♖xc5 and with an extra pawn in a superior position, White would probably have gone on to win.

22... ♖b8?

If a player is under pressure, he is more likely to make mistakes than in other circumstances. Black could have stayed on his feet with 22... ♖f4+ 23. ♖b1 ♔e6!. Then, 24.bxa6 doesn’t work so well in view of 24... ♖e4+ (24... ♖xa6? 25. ♖xe5
wins for White) 25.\(a1\) \(b6\) and, for the time being, the white queen does not take part in the struggle, while Black has a free hand on the other side of the board.

\[23.\text{\(wxc5\)}\]

This is good enough for a large advantage. But actually, there was nothing against taking the c5-pawn with the knight, after which the game is immediately over: 23.\(\text{\(\text{Nxc5!}\)}\) \(\text{\(\text{Qxa1+ (23...\text{\(e4\)} 24.\text{\(\text{d3!}\)}) 24.\text{\(c2\)} \text{\(a2+\)} 25.\text{\(c3\) wins for White.}}\)}\]

\[23...\text{\(Qf4+\)} 24.\text{\(Kb2\)} \text{\(Re5\)}\]

Also after 24...\(d5\) White would obtain a decisive advantage with, for example, 25.\(\text{\(d4\)}\). Due to his many weak pawns, the remaining endgame is hopeless for Black.

\[25.\text{\(d4\)} \text{\(e4\)} 26.\text{\(a7\)} \text{\(de8?\)}\]

After this mistake, things go quickly downhill. But 26...\(\text{\(e6\)} 27.\(\text{\(a5\)} \text{\(b6\)} 28.\(\text{\(xb7\)} \text{\(xb7\)} 29.\(\text{\(d4\) would also have led to a winning position for White.}}\)

\[27.\text{\(a5\)} \text{\(e2+\)} 28.\text{\(b3!\) \(xg2\)} 29.\(\text{\(xg2\)} \text{\(xf2\)} 30.\text{\(b7+\)}\]

And Black resigned.

**EXERCISES**

**Bernd-Michael Werner**

**Erlingur Thorsteinsson**

Reykjavik 1996 (3)

\[1.e4 \text{\(e5\)} 2.\text{\(\text{\(f3\)} \text{\(c6\)} \text{\(d4\)} \text{\(exd4\)} 4.\text{\(\text{\(xd4\)} \text{\(f6\)} 5.\text{\(\text{\(xc6\)} bxc6\)} 6.\(\text{\(d3\)} d6\) 7.0-0 \text{\(e7\)} 8.c4 0-0 9.\text{\(c3\) a5} 10.f4 \text{\(e8\)} 11.\text{\(c2\)} \text{\(f8\)} 12.d2\]

Here Black opened the position with

\[12...\text{\(d5!?\)} \text{\(13.cxd5\)}\]

Certainly not 13.h3 with the idea of preventing ...\(g4\): 13...\(dxe4\) 14.\(\text{\(xe4\)} \text{\(xe4\)} 15.\(\text{\(xe4\)} \text{\(d4+\) and Black wins a piece.

\[13...\text{\(c5\) + 14.\(h1\) \(g4\)}\]
White wants to remove the threat of 15...\texttt{Qf2+} and therefore played

\textbf{15.\texttt{Nd1??}}

EXERCISE: Why is this a horrible blunder?

\textit{Show/Hide the Solution}

\textbf{Bernd-Michael Werner}

\textbf{Erlingur Thorsteinsson}

Reykjavik 1996 (3)

The game saw

\textbf{15.\texttt{Nd1??}}

which was a horrible blunder, as now the black queen was able to quickly join the attack.

With 15.\texttt{Be1}, White could in any case have prevented 15...\texttt{Qh4}; all the same, Black would have stood better after 15...\texttt{Ne3}.

With 15.h3 White could allow Black to win the exchange by 15...\texttt{Qf2+} 16.\texttt{Rxf2 Qxf2}, as after 17.dxc6 White certainly has compensation.

Necessary was 15.g3!, but this is not such a pretty move after Black’s reply 15...\texttt{b7}, and in the long run White will experience problems on the long diagonal.

\textbf{15.\texttt{Nd1??} 16.\texttt{h3 Qg3!}}

And White resigned. He cannot parry the mate threat: 17.hxg4 \texttt{Qh4#}. 
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4 4.Nxd4 Sc5 5.b3 b6 6.a4 a6 7.0-0 d6 8.c3 c6 9.e3 a7 10.xe3 f6 11.d3 0-0 12.0-0 exe8 13.f3 e6 14.c4 a5 15.b2 d7 16.f4 f6 17.e2 b4 18.b1 e7 19.d4 c5 20.a3 d7 21.xf5 e8 22.g3 g6 23.h5 xe4?

EXERCISE: How can White exploit this mistake? Calculate a few variations.

Show/Hide the Solution

23...xe4?

Neither would 23...e6?! have helped. As in the game, there would follow 24.xg6+! hxg6 25.xg6+ g7 (25...h8 26.h5+ g8 27.h6+ h8 28.g4+ g8 29.e5–+) 26.e5! xf5 27.xf5 and White wins.

However, 23...h8 24.xg6 f7! was better: White is then forced to exchange queens with 25.h6 (White can maintain the tension with 25.h4?, but after 25.xe4 26.xe4 (26.e2! xc4 and suddenly Black stands well) 26.xe4 27.h6 the position is highly unclear) even though this only gives him a small advantage: 25.xh5 26.xh5 xe4 and the chances are approximately equal.

White exploited Black’s mistake with

23...xe4? 24.xg6+!

This handsome rook sacrifice works because more white pieces will join the attack:
24...hxg6 25.Qxg6+ Kxg6 26.Qh5+ Kg8 27.Qe2!

The rook threatens to intervene along the third rank via e3. White quite correctly takes the time to make this powerful manoeuvre. 27.Qxe4 Qxe4 doesn’t give White anything.

27...hxg6

Allowing a fantastic knight on f5. 27...Qf7? obviously runs into 28.Qh6+, and 27...d5 is strongly met by 28.Qe3! and White wins.

Neither does 27...e7 solve Black’s problems in view of 28.Qxe7+ Qxe7 29.Qxe4.

28.Qxf5 Qc5

This makes the win fairly easy. There were alternatives that would have made White’s task more difficult.

For example, 28.d5 obviously had to be considered, in order to involve the queen in a counterattack via the square c5. But then the rook lift would again be winning: 29.Qe3! Not 29.Qxe4? on account of 29.Qxe4 (29...dxe4?? 30.Qg6+ Qh8 31.Qe3 and White wins) 30.Qg6+ Qh8 31.Qh5+ with a draw by repetition of moves. 29.Qg5 The only way to keep the g-file closed for the moment. Neither did 29.Qe7 help on account of 30.Qe7+ Qxe7 31.Qxe4 and now 31.dxe4 32.Qxe3 Qxe3 or 31.Qc5 32.Qg6+ Qh8 33.Qxh6+ Qg8 34.Qxe6+ Qg7 (34...Qf8 35.Qg6+–) 35.Qh1 Qxe3 36.Qe7+ Qg8 37.Qh7+. 30.Qh6+ This opens the diagonal to h7. The simpler 30.fxg5 would also have brought White the win: 30...Qxe3 31.Qh6+ Qxh6 32.gxh6 Qf8 (32...Qh8 33.Qf7 Qe1+ 34.Qf2+–) 33.h7 Qe7 34.h8=Q Qxh8 35.Qxh8+-.

30...Qxh6 30...Qh8 even leads to mate: 31.fxg5 Qxe3 32.Qf7+ Qg8 33.Qh7#. 31.Qxe8+ and White wins.

29.Qg6+ Qh8 30.Qxd6!

White has a pleasant choice here. First of all, he threatens to give mate on h7.

30...Qg8

30...Qf5 31.Qxf5 Qe7 (31...Qxf5 32.Qxe8+ Qxe8 33.Qxe8++) 32.Qxe7 Qxe7 33.Qf7+ Qxf7 34.Qxf7 and mate cannot be averted.

31.Qh6+ 1-0
EXERCISE: How can White exploit Black’s mistake? Calculate a few variations.

Show/Hide the Solution

Michele Godena
Davor Rogic
Bükfürdo 1995 (5)

White exploited Black’s mistake as follows:

15.\texttt{Rxe7!}

Well spotted! With this exchange sacrifice White damages the black king’s position, and mainly thanks to his control of the f5-square he will obtain an attack.

15...\texttt{Rxe7} 16.\texttt{Bxf6} \texttt{gxf6} 17.\texttt{Qh5}
17...f5

The king cannot make a run for it with 17...f8, as that would be answered with 18.Qh7 e5 19.f3, and already Black has to return material if he doesn’t want to bring even greater troubles upon himself.

Returning the exchange with 17...e4 18.xe4 dxe4 leads to a positional advantage for White after 19.b3!.

After 17...e5 18.xh7+ f8, 19.f3 is again the indicated move. By the way, Blatny’s idea 19.b4 also deserves attention.

18.Qg5+ f8 19.Qh6+?! 

White fails to pose his opponent further problems. Slightly more appropriate was 19.xf5 e5 (19...xb2 is impossible on account of 20.h6+ e8 21.xd7+; and after 19.d6 20.xh7 e8 21.f4! is the strongest move) 20.h6+ e8 (20.g7 21.d6!) 21.xd7+, and White wins.

19...e8?

Black returns the favour. He could have defended with 19...g8! But here White could again have continued with 20.g5+ and then 21.xf5, as indicated above.

20.xf5!

Obviously, White wants to exchange the bishops and keep the knight. In this position, the combination of Q+B is stronger than Q+B.

20...b7

20...xb2 would meet with a quick disaster: 21.xd7+ d8 (or 21...xd7 22.e1+ d8 23.f6+ c7 24.xc6+; 21...xd7 22.xc6+ d8 23.xa8+, and White wins) 22.f1, and White wins.
Again, strongly played.

21...\(\text{xe6}\) 22.\(\text{e1}\)

Also winning was 22.\(\text{xe6 fxe6}\) 23.\(\text{xe6 e6+}\) 24.\(\text{xe6}\), after which the rook decisively joins the attack by way of the e-file.

22...\(\text{xf5}\)

He has to do something, but this doesn’t help. After 22...\(\text{d7}\) 23.\(\text{xe6 fxe6}\), 24.\(\text{xe6+}\) finishes off right away.

23.\(\text{xe7+}\) 24.\(\text{xc6+}\)

Because the rook is swept from the board with check, the game is decided. There followed:

24...\(\text{d7}\) 25.\(\text{xa8+}\) 26.\(\text{xf5+}\) 27.\(\text{xf5}\) 28.\(\text{b8+}\) 29.\(\text{g7}\) 30.\(\text{b8+}\) 31.\(\text{h3}\) 32.\(\text{h2}\) 33.\(\text{h4}\) 34.\(\text{d6+}\) 35.\(\text{e5}\) 36.\(\text{b4}\) 37.\(\text{e3+}\) 38.\(\text{xe3}\) 39.\(\text{e4}\) 40.\(\text{c4}\) 41.\(\text{g3}\) 1-0

EXERCISE: In this position, the black king appears to be relatively safe, but appearances turn out to be deceptive.

EXERCISE: In this position, the black king appears to be relatively safe, but appearances turn out to be deceptive.
White has to watch out, since Black threatens to trap his queen with 23...Rxh5. How did White solve this problem in an attractive way?

Show/Hide the Solution

Alexander Alekhine
Lev Rosanov
Moscow 1907

23.Re6!

Of course! This is what the future World Champion had envisaged.

23...Rxh6 24.Rxe6 Bxf4 (24...Rxh2? meets with the attractive reply 25.f6+ Kg8 26.xg6 Rxg6 27.xg6, with a virtually decisive advantage) follows 25.e7+ Kg8 26.xc7 xg5 27.xg7+ Kh8 28.h3 Rxh2 (28...e3+ 29.xe3 xe3 30.c7 is also winning) 29.xf6 Kxf6 30.e7, and White has simplified into a very favourable ending.

24.xg6+ Kd7 25.xf5+ Kd8 26.xg4

For the exchange, White has obtained two pawns, while the black king is still unsafe. Now, Alekhine manages to further disorganize Black’s game with a new wave of attack.

26...f8 27.e1 d7 28.g5+ c7 29.e3 b7 30.a4 e8 31.b3+ a8 32.g3 h6 33.d3 he6?!

And now Black loses the thread.

34.e5 c5 35.b5 e8

35...c6 is met by 36.b6!
36.c4! a6?

Now things go quickly awry for Black.

37.\texttt{N}b6+ \texttt{N}xb6 38.\texttt{N}xb6 \texttt{N}a7 39.\texttt{g}6 \texttt{Q}a4 40.\texttt{b}3 \texttt{c}6 41.\texttt{f}7+ \texttt{a}8 42.\texttt{c}xd5 1-0

Black will be mated by force.

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The Evans Gambit

The Evans Gambit (1.e4 e5 2.\texttt{N}f3 \texttt{N}c6 3.\texttt{B}c4 \texttt{B}c5 4.b4) was named after a seafaring captain from Wales, William Davies Evans, who introduced the gambit in London in 1827. Many people started to play this adventurous gambit, attracted by the many beautiful motifs that revealed themselves. The later World Champion Bobby Fischer used it, and among the more modern grandmasters, the Englishman Nigel Short and our fellow countryman Jan Timman have played it on and off. In the 1990s, the then World Champion Garry Kasparov surprised friend and foe by beating grandmasters Jeroen Piket and Viswanathan Anand with this gambit.

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\textbf{Solomon Globus Gross}  
\textit{Riga 1844}

1.e4 e5 2.\texttt{f}3 \texttt{c}6 3.\texttt{c}4 \texttt{c}5 4.b4!?

The Evans Gambit. The idea behind the pawn sacrifice is for White to gain time for the development of his pieces.

4...\texttt{B}xb4 5.c3

This enables White to play, for example, \texttt{b}3, attacking the weak point f7.

5...\texttt{a}5
Nowadays, 5...e7 is preferred.

6.d4
White wants to build up a nice centre right away.

6...exd4
With each pawn move Black makes, he is not developing any pieces.

7.0-0
This all fits into the concept.

7...d6
Declining the pawn sacrifice with 7...Ge7 is preferable, so as after 8.cxd4 to break up White’s nice pawn duo in the centre with 8...d5.

Very dangerous for Black is 7...dxc3?! in view of 8.Qb3.

8.cxd4 h6?
Far too passive. Black was afraid of a knight sortie to g5, but this move will have dire consequences.

9.Qb3 e7?
Less disastrous was 9...d7, although this too wouldn’t solve Black’s problem of how to further his development.

10.c3?!
In itself this is the right idea, but there was something simpler. White could just win a piece with 10.d5!, since if Black moves the knight, 11.Qb5+ follows.

10...xe3 11.Qxc3 d7?!
Now the position is ripe for drastic measures. Of course, White would meet 11...\( \text{Nf6} \) with 12.e5! in order to open the position: 12...\( \text{Ne4} \) 13.\( \text{Qe3} \) \( \text{Ng5} \) 14.\( \text{Nxg5} \) \( \text{hxg5} \) 15.exd6 cxd6 16.\( \text{Qg3} \) is very good for White.

12.e5!

Naturally, White tries to break open the centre for his pieces. As Black’s king is still stuck in the middle, he will have some major problems now.

12...\( \text{dxe5} \) 13.\( \text{Ba3} \)

Also worthy of consideration is 13.\( \text{Nx e5} \).

13...\( \text{exd4} \) 14.\( \text{Qxd4} \) \( \text{Qf6} \)

Here, of course, 14...\( \text{Qxd4} \) is impossible due to 15.\( \text{Qxe7} \) and there is no knight fork on e2, since White is covering that square.

15.\( \text{Rfe1+} \)

White has prepared a wonderful idea. 15.\( \text{Qe3+} \) looked logical, in order to step out of the pin himself, and reinforcing the pin along the e-file. Then 15...\( \text{Qe7} \) 16.\( \text{ad1} \).

15...\( \text{Qe7} \)
16. $\texttt{Nxc6!}$
A splendid queen sacrifice.

16... $\texttt{Qxc3}$ 17. $\texttt{Rxe7+}$ $\texttt{Kf8}$ 18. $\texttt{Rxf7+}$ $\texttt{Kg8}$ 19. $\texttt{Nf7+}$ $\texttt{Kh7}$

\[ 
\]

20. $\texttt{b2!}$
And after this wonderful move, it is immediately over.

20... $\texttt{be8}$
20...\(\text{Qxb2}\) runs into 21.\(\text{d3}\) + \(\text{Qf5}\) 22.\(\text{xf5}\)#, and, just as in the game, 20...\(\text{Qxc4}\) would lead to an epaulette mate by 21.\(\text{Exg7}\)#.

**21.\(\text{d3}\) + \(\text{Qxd3}\) 22.\(\text{Exg7}\)#**

Again, the beautiful epaulette mate.

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Robert Fischer
Reuben Fine
New York 1963

1.e4 \(\text{e5}\) 2.\(\text{Nf3}\) \(\text{Nc6}\) 3.\(\text{Bc4}\) \(\text{Bc5}\) 4.b4!? \(\text{Bxb4}\) 5.c3 \(\text{Ba5}\) 6.d4 exd4 7.0-0 dxc3

Black is being greedy. However, after 7...\(\text{b6}\) White builds a nice pawn centre with 8.cxd4 d6.

**8.\(\text{Qb3}\)**

This is one of the important advantages of the Evans Gambit. By means of the pawn sacrifice on the fourth move, the queen can quickly go to b3, to harass the weak f7-square, while \(\text{c1-a3}\) has also become possible.

8...\(\text{Qe7}\)

Also to be considered is 8...\(\text{Qf6}\).

9.\(\text{xc3}\)

White continues speedily developing.

9...\(\text{f6}\)?

An invitation to some nice tactics. Necessary was 9...\(\text{xc3}\), but this is also no picnic for Black after 10.\(\text{xc3}\) \(\text{f6}\) (10...\(\text{f6}\) 11.\(\text{a3}\) \(\text{d6}\) 12.e5 \(\text{e4}\) 13.\(\text{b2}\) \(\text{xe5}\) 14.\(\text{xe5}\) \(\text{xe5}\) 15.\(\text{fe1}\), and White wins), and now 11.\(\text{f4}\)! looks like
the strongest continuation to me, after which White has almost completed his development, whereas hardly any of Black’s pieces are in play. Also attractive is 11.a3 d6 12.d5! since now 12...d7? is an outright blunder in view of 13.e1!.

9...b4? was wrong as well, on account of 10.xf7+ d8, and now White can even exchange the queens with 11.d5!, since after 11...xb3 12.axb3 b4 13.b2 Black is experiencing serious problems.

10.d5!

Fischer finds the strongest move.

10...xd5

On 10...xe4, 11.g5 is winning.

11.exd5 e5

Or 11...d8 12.a3 d6 (moving the queen from the e-file is not an option: White first inserts the clever 12.f6 13.b5, and after 13...b6 plays 14.a1+! xe1 15.xe1+ e6 16.dxe6, after which Black can resign in view of the pin on the a4-e8 diagonal) 13.b5+, winning a piece.

12.xe5 xe5 13.b2

White is still two pawns down, but all his pieces have come to life. Black has not yet been able to bring his king to safety, and this will be his undoing.

13.g5

14.h4!

The queen is deflected from its protection of g7, and the loss of that pawn will be disastrous for Black.
14...\( \text{Q}xh4 \)

There is no longer a defence. 14...\( \text{Q}h6 \) is met by 15.\( \text{Q}a3 \), with the idea 16.\( \text{R}fe1+ \).

14...\( \text{Q}g4 \) also loses after 15.\( \text{Q}e3+ \text{K}d8 \) 16.\( \text{R}fe1 \) \( \text{Q}b4 \) 17.d6!! \( \text{R}xd6 \) 18.\( \text{Q}xf7 \), since the attempt to escape via c7 ends in disaster for Black: 18...\( \text{c}6 \) 19.\( \text{a}d1 \) and now, for example, 19...\( \text{f}4 \) 20.\( \text{e}7+ \text{c}7 \) 21.\( \text{e}5+ \text{e}5 \) 22.\( \text{xe}5+ \text{d}8 \) 23.\( \text{R}d4 \), and the black queen is caught.

15.\( \text{Q}xg7 \text{R}g8 \) 16.\( \text{R}fe1+ \text{K}d8 \)

16...\( \text{Q}xe1 \) 17.\( \text{R}xe1+ \) amounts to the same thing.

17.\( \text{Q}g3! \)

A beautiful final move. After 17...\( \text{Q}xg3 \) 18.\( \text{f}6 \) it is mate.

EXERCISE: White has a solid initiative, but at the moment two of his pieces are hanging. How does he solve this problem, while maintaining his attack?

Show/Hide the Solution
White played the quite clever

16.\(\text{Nc4!}\) \(\text{Qe6!}\)

Black defends as tenaciously as he can. After 16...\text{cxb5} 17.\(\text{Nd6+}\) the black king would come under fire: 17...\(\text{Kd8}\) 18.\(\text{Rd1}\) \(\text{d7}\) 19.\(\text{Nxb7}\oplus\) \(\text{Kc8}\) 20.\(\text{Nd6+}\) \(\text{d8}\) 21.\(\text{Rd4!}\) (with steely composure, White brings his second rook into play)

21...\(\text{Ne5}\) 22.\(\text{Rd1}\) \(\text{Nc7}\) (22...\text{gc5} 23.\(\text{Nd5}\) \(\text{e8}\) 24.\(\text{Qxe5!}\) \(\text{Qxe5}\) 25.\(\text{Rxd7}\oplus\) \(\text{e8}\) (25...\text{Kc8} 26.\(\text{Qe7+}\), winning the queen) 26.\(\text{Rxe7}\oplus\) \(\text{Qxe7}\) 27.\(\text{Qg7}\#) 23.\(\text{f4}\) \(\text{g4}\) 24.\(\text{h3}\) \(\text{g6}\) 25.\(\text{f5}\) \(\text{b6}\)

\text{analysis diagram}

and now there are various possibilities to besiege the black king. Very strong is 26.\(\text{c4!}\), after which the monarch starts to feel the draught. For example: 26...\text{a6} 27.\(\text{c5}\oplus\) \(\text{Qa7}\) 28.\(\text{Nxb5}\oplus\) \(\text{xb5}\) 29.\(\text{Rd7}\oplus\) \(\text{Qxd7}\) 30.\(\text{Qc7}\#).

17.\(\text{Rd1}\) \text{cxb5}

Now 17...\text{d7} would fail to 18.\(\text{Nd6+}\) \(\text{e7}\) 19.\(\text{Qc4}\).

18.\(\text{Qc7}\) \(\text{d7}\) 19.\(\text{Qd6}\oplus\) \(\text{e7}\)
20. \( \text{Nf5}^+! \)

Another attractive sacrifice. The e-file has to be opened!

20... \( \text{gxf5} \)

20... \( \text{Ke8} \) runs into a knight fork: 21. \( \text{Ng7}^+ \). And 20... \( \text{f6} \) loses to 21. \( \text{d6 gxf5} \) 22. \( \text{Qxd7} \).

21. \( \text{exf5} \) \( \text{ac8} \)

21... \( \text{Qxf5} \) 22. \( \text{Qd6+ Ke8} \) (22... \( \text{e8} \) 23. \( \text{fe1+ e6} \) 24. \( \text{d7#} \)) 23. \( \text{xf8}^+ c7 \) 24. \( \text{xa8} \).
22.\textit{xd7+!}

Each of Fischer’s moves is as powerful as the other.

22...\textit{xd7} 23.\textit{f6+!}

This splendid zwischenzug ends all resistance. Square f6 is rendered inaccessible for the king.

23.\textit{e1+ \textit{e5} 24.\textit{xe5+ \textit{f6} 25.\textit{xd7 \textit{xe5} would also have given White an advantage after 26.\textit{xb5+}, even though this is still far from easy.

23...\textit{xf6}

23...\textit{e8? 24.\textit{e1+ \textit{e6 25.\textit{xc8#; 23...\textit{xf6 24.\textit{xd7.}

24.\textit{e1+ \textit{e4 25.\textit{xe4+ \textit{f6 26.\textit{xd7 \textit{fd8 27.\textit{g4}

Since the d1-square is defended, Black resigned here. Incidentally, 27.\textit{e7+ would have led to a quick mate: 27...\textit{g6 (27...\textit{f5 28.\textit{e5+ \textit{g6 29.\textit{g4+ \textit{h6 30.\textit{g5#) 28.\textit{g4+ \textit{f5 29.\textit{g5+ \textit{f4 30.\textit{e3#.}

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\begin{center}
\textbf{Mikhail Chigorin} \\
\textbf{Wilhelm Steinitz} \\
Havana Wch m 1892 (1)
\end{center}

\textbf{EXERCISE: With active play, White has managed to prevent Black from castling. This means that the \textit{h8 won’t be}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}
able to take part in the battle for a while. After Black’s last move, White gets a unique chance to strike. What is this chance?

Show/Hide the Solution

Mikhail Chigorin
Wilhelm Steinitz
Havana Wch m 1892 (1)

With the beautiful knight sacrifice

19.\textit{xf7}!!?

White started an attack on the black king. The sacrifice is quite sound, but he could have played more accurately! Almost decisive was 19.a5! \textit{xa5} (19...\textit{c7} 20.\textit{xb7}; 19...\textit{d8} 20.\textit{xb7} \textit{e6} 21.\textit{g5} is immediately game over) 20.\textit{xb7}, as already indicated by Lasker at the time.

19...\textit{xf7} 20.\textit{e6+}

Nicely spotted. Because of the forks – 20...\textit{xe6}? 21.\textit{g5}+-, the black king has to move forward.

20...\textit{xe6} 21.\textit{e5}?!?

Chigorin has the right idea, but in a wrong version. The correct order was first 21.\textit{e1+ \textit{f6} 22.\textit{xe7+ \textit{xe7}}, and only now 23.\textit{e5}, after which the white queen can intervene decisively. Then, 23...\textit{f5} fails to 24.\textit{g4 \textit{f4} 25.\textit{d3}! \textit{d6} (25...\textit{h6} 26.\textit{f3+ and White wins) 26.\textit{f3+ \textit{g6} 27.\textit{e5+}, and White wins.

21...\textit{c8}?

Though he was famous for his excellent defensive skills, Steinitz goes wrong here. 21...\textit{c7} 22.\textit{e1 \textit{f6} was less disastrous.

22.\textit{e1 \textit{f6} 23.\textit{h5}!}
White has two mate threats: 24.\textit{Ng4}# or 24.\textit{Qf7}#.

\textbf{23...g6}

On 23...\textit{Ng6}, 24.g4, with the threat of g4-g5, wins.

\textbf{24.\textit{Bxe7}+}

An easier win was 24.\textit{Ng4+! Kf7 25.Rxe7+! Ne7 26.Nh6+ Ke8 27.Qe5}.

\textbf{24...\textit{Kxe7}}

On 24...\textit{Ng6}, 25.\textit{Qh4+} would have been fatal for Black: 25...\textit{g5 26.Ng4+ f7 27.Rxe7+! with mate.}

\textbf{25.\textit{Ng6}+}

Again, the attack is in full swing.

\textbf{25...\textit{f6} 26.\textit{Nh8} \textit{xh4}}

Desperation. After 26...\textit{Nh8} 27.\textit{Nd3} 28.\textit{c6} 29.\textit{g4} Black collapses, just as after 26...\textit{d7} 27.\textit{Nd3! Nh8} 28.\textit{Ng3} \textit{Nh4} 29.\textit{h6+! Nh6} 30.\textit{Nh8+ Nh7} 31.\textit{Nh5+}.

\textbf{27.\textit{Nh3}}

27.g4! was also not half bad.

\textbf{27...\textit{d7} 28.\textit{Nh3} \textit{xh8} 29.\textit{g4} \textit{Nh8} 30.\textit{Nh6+ Kg6} 31.\textit{xf5+}}

Black resigned.

After 31...\textit{xf5} 32.\textit{f8+ Kg5} 33.\textit{xf5+} he is, of course, completely busted.
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 c5 4.b4 Bxb4 5.c3 Bc5 6.d4 exd4 7.0-0 d3 8.g5 h6 9.e5 Nxe5?! 10.Re1 Qe7 11.f4! Bb6+ 12.Kh1 Nh4 13.h3! d6 14.axd3 0-0 15.fxe5 Qxe5 16.f4 c6 17.d2 g5?! 18.Qh5 f5?

**EXERCISE:** After his last, slightly ‘over-active’ pawn move, Black’s fortress will soon collapse. How does White go about this?

Show/Hide the Solution

White made clever use of the open king’s position with

19.Qc4+! Kg7

After the bishop check, Black’s task is in fact unachievable. 19...d5 is met with the strong 20.Qxd5! cxd5 21.Qxd5+ Kh8, and now the particularly nasty 22.Bb2!, after which the bishop will intervene decisively on the long diagonal.

On 19...Kh8, 20.Qxe5! would be winning.

20.Nxe5!

With tempo, White activates his queenside pieces, and this allows him to bring up several reserves quickly.

20...h6
Losing by force. But all the alternatives end in a winning position for White as well.

The position after 20...Qf6 21.Qxe5! dxe5 22.Qxe5 gxf4 (22...Qxe5 23.Qxg5+ Kh8 24.Qg6+ hgx6 25.Qh6#) 23.Qxf4 is indefensible.

20...d8 21.Qxg5 Qxg5 22.Qe6+ Qxe6 23.Qxg5 is also over and out.

On 20...gxf4 21.Qxf4 Qc7 22.Qxe5 dxe5, White again wins with the beautiful rook sacrifice:

21.Nxe5

A little more accurate, and also more attractive, was 21.Qxe5! dxe5 22.Qg6+ Kh8 23.Qxh6+ Qh7 24.Qg6#.

21...Qf6
Obviously, this doesn’t help either, and it allows a beautiful finish. Recapturing with 21...dxe5 leads to mate: 22.\(\text{Q}g6+ \text{\#}h8 23.\text{Q}xh6+ \text{\#}h7 24.\text{Q}g6\). Or 21...gxh4 22.\(\text{Q}g6+ \text{\#}h8 23.\text{Q}xh6+ \text{\#}h7 24.\text{Q}g6\).

**22.\text{Q}g4!**

Well-spotted.

**22...fxg4**

If Black takes the other knight with 22...gxf4, there follows 23.\(\text{R}e7+! \text{\#}h8 (23...\text{Q}xe7 24.\text{Q}xh6\#) 24.\text{N}xf6 \text{R}xf6 25.\text{Q}e8+.**

**23.\text{R}e7+!**

Another beautiful move, after which Black surrendered. And rightly so – if 23...\text{h}h8 24.\text{Q}g6+ \text{Q}xg6 25.\text{Q}xg6.

---

**Alexey Shirov**  
**Jan Timman**  
**Biel 1995 (7)**

1.e4 e5 2.\text{f}f3 \text{c}c6 3.\text{c}c4 \text{c}c5 4.b4!? \text{b}xb4 5.c3 \text{e}e7 6.d4 \text{a}a5 7.\text{e}e2 exd4 8.\text{x}xd4 d6 9.\text{x}g7 \text{f}f6 10.\text{g}g3 \text{e}e7 11.0-0?! \text{d}d7?! 12.\text{d}d6! 0-0-0 13.\text{d}d2 \text{c}c6 14.\text{e}e3 h5 15.\text{b}b1 \text{h}h6 16.\text{d}d3!? \text{b}b6 17.a4! \text{b}b8 18.a5 \text{x}xa5 19.\text{a}a6 \text{a}a8?
EXERCISE: How can White employ the maximum number of pieces to pursue his initiative on the queenside?

Show/Hide the Solution

Alexey Shirov
Jan Timman
Biel 1995 (7)

With the sharp pawn sacrifice

20.e5!

White opens the h1-a8 diagonal in order to allow his light-squared bishop to join the attack on the black king.

20...Qxe5

On 20...dx5 follows 21.f3+, which is embarrassing for Black: 21...c6 (21...b8 22.xa5 exd4 23.xa7+ xa7 24.a1+ leads to mate; 21...e4 22.xe4+ c6 23.xb6), and now 22.a3! is an attractive follow-up: 22...c8 (22...xa3? 23.b5!) 23.xa5! b7 (on 23...xa5 24.xe7 wins) 24.a4 is no longer tenable for Black.

Another attempt to stay in the game is 20...xe5 21.f3+ d5 (21...c6 22.xb6 is disastrous for Black) 22.xd5+ e6 and now White has to be creative: 23.c4! xc4 and now 24.a1! e8 25.xc6+ b8 26.xe8 xd4 27.cxd4 hx8 28.xc4 and White is virtually winning due to the exposed black king.

21.f3+ d5
22. \textit{N}c4! \textit{B}c8

After 22...\textit{N}xc4 White would again have to find 23.\textit{R}a1!. Now Black’s reply 23...\textit{N}a5 is refuted by 24.\textit{R}xa5 \textit{b}xa5 25.\textit{N}c6 \textit{B}xc6 26.\textit{Q}e3 \textit{W}xe3 27.\textit{W}xc6+ \textit{K}b8 28.fxe3 and White has won more than enough material, while he still retains attacking chances too.

23.\textit{W}xa5!

Well-spotted by Shirov.

23...\textit{W}xd4

23...\textit{b}xa5? 24.\textit{N}xe5 \textit{B}xe5 25.\textit{Q}c6 wins material.

24.\textit{Q}a2

Probably, 24.\textit{Q}a4! was slightly more accurate.

24...\textit{W}xc3

24...\textit{W}d3 runs into 25.\textit{Q}f4!.

And 24...\textit{W}h4 is answered by 25.\textit{Q}xb6+ \textit{c}xb6 26.\textit{Q}xb6 \textit{Q}e6 27.\textit{Q}e3, and Black won’t come out of this unscathed. White would meet the alternative 24...\textit{Q}c5 with the violent 25.\textit{Q}e3! \textit{Q}c6 26.\textit{Q}xb6+ \textit{c}xb6 27.\textit{Q}xb6, winning.
25.\textit{\textsf{Be3!}}

White focuses on the most important target in Black’s position: b6.

25...\textit{\textsf{b7}}

White has concentrated quite a few pieces on the flank where the black king resides. Nor can moving the king from the long diagonal prevent its downfall: 25...\textit{\textsf{Kb8}} (Donev) 26.\textit{\textsf{Nxb6! cxb6 27.Nxb6 axb6 28.Rxb6+ b7 29.Bxd5}} and White wins.

26.\textit{\textsf{Bxb6!}}

This was bound to happen.

26...\textit{\textsf{cxb6}}

On 26...a6, 27.\textit{\textsf{Rfc1}} is sufficient.

27.\textit{\textsf{Nx b6+ b8 28.Nxd5}}

After such a violent storm had raged over his head, Timman gave up the struggle. The counter-sacrifice 28...\textit{\textsf{Qxf3}} would also be useless: 29.gxf3 \textit{\textsf{Rg8+ 30.h1 d4 31.c4 d7 32.xd4}}, and White is simply too much material up.

\textbf{The Greco Gambit}

The Greco Gambit is actually a gambit that ought not to be played in high-level competition. Of course, there have been grandmasters who embarked on this adventure, but that didn’t always end well – or they would end up in a losing position but would save themselves. Nevertheless, the gambit offers many tactical chances, which, especially at club level, may lead to a quick collapse.
The following sample games show that White is going all out for the attack, for which, quite frankly, he ought to be punished. All the same, many white players end up winning their games, because the black player loses his way in the myriad of complications...

**Analysis by Gioacchino Greco**

approx. 1625

1.e4 e5 2.\(\text{Nf3}\) \(\text{c6}\) 3.\(\text{c4}\) \(\text{c5}\) 4.c3 \(\text{f6}\) 5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4 \(\text{b4+}\) 7.\(\text{c3}\) \(\text{xe4}\) 8.0-0

This second pawn sacrifice characterizes the Greco Gambit.

**8...\(\text{xc3}\)**

This is how black players took up the gauntlet in those days. There is a long theoretical variation, in which White attempts to bust the black position. This variation runs as follows: 8...\(\text{xc3}\) 9.d5 \(\text{f6}\) 10.\(\text{e1}\) \(\text{e7}\) 11.\(\text{xe4}\) d6 12.\(\text{g5}\) \(\text{xg5}\) 13.\(\text{xg5}\) h6 14.\(\text{e2}\) hxg5 15.\(\text{e1}\) \(\text{e6}\) 16.dxe6 f6. About this position, opinions differed. White has a giant passed pawn on e6, but on the other hand, none of his pieces are functioning well – partly because of that pawn. If Black can get his king out of the centre, he can boast of a highly superior pawn structure and almost any endgame will favour him.

**9.bxc3 \(\text{xc3}\)?!**

Accepting this second pawn is too risky for Black.

![Chess Diagram]

**10.\(\text{b3}\)**

Greco’s idea in this gambit was that he would be able to get his pieces into play quickly and efficiently. The text move shows that this is indeed the case – White even puts a rook en prise!

**10...\(\text{xa1}\)?**
Black carries on with his gluttony. The acceptance of the rook is going to cost him dearly. To make something out of this position, he had to play 10...d5!. Then the best reply is 11...xd5 0-0 12...xf7+ h8 13...xc3 xf7 with slightly better play for White, but in any case, Black will be able to bring his pieces to life too.

11...xf7+

If nothing else, preventing Black’s castling.

11...f8 12.g5 e7

Of course Black had to consider the zwischenzug 12...xd4, but it fails to 13...a3+! xf7 14.xd8 and White remains ahead in material.

13.e5

Again, the most active possibility. White is going for mate! The recapture of the bishop on a1 with 13.xa1 would also have yielded White a decisive advantage.

13...xd4

‘If I have to die, then with a full stomach’, a member of my former chess club once said. Black is grabbing as much material as possible, while White is going for a mating attack.

14.g6

The most sensitive square in the black camp is f7, and with this move it is well and truly exposed.

14...d5

Continuing to fight on for a little longer.

15.f3+
Black is not mated immediately, but it won’t be long now...

15...\texttt{xf5} 16.\texttt{xf5} \texttt{xe5} 17.\texttt{e6+} \texttt{f6} 18.\texttt{xf6} \texttt{e8}

Or 18...\texttt{gxf6} 19.\texttt{xf6+} \texttt{e8} 20.\texttt{f7} mate.

19.\texttt{g7}

The bishops have triumphed! Black will have to give up half the board in order not to get mated.

Bartha
D. Berman
New York 1924

1.e4 e5 2.\texttt{f3} \texttt{c6} 3.\texttt{c4} \texttt{c5} 4.\texttt{c3} \texttt{f6} 5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4 \texttt{b4+} 7.d3 \texttt{xe4} 8.0-0 \texttt{xc3} 9.d5 \texttt{f6} 10.\texttt{e1} \texttt{e7} 11.\texttt{xe4} d6 12.\texttt{g5} \texttt{xg5} 13.\texttt{d5} \texttt{0-0} 14.\texttt{d5}

Nowadays we know that 13...\texttt{h6} is the best continuation.

14.\texttt{xh7}

Objectively this sacrifice is not entirely sound. But it offers lots of practical chances, so why not try it once?

14...\texttt{xh7} 15.\texttt{h5+} \texttt{g8} 16.\texttt{h4} \texttt{f5}

This is indeed the right way to meet White’s attack. 16...\texttt{f6} is met by 17.g4!, preparing \texttt{d3}. 

```plaintext

Nowadays we know that 13...\texttt{h6} is the best continuation.

14.\texttt{xh7}

Objectively this sacrifice is not entirely sound. But it offers lots of practical chances, so why not try it once?

14...\texttt{xh7} 15.\texttt{h5+} \texttt{g8} 16.\texttt{h4} \texttt{f5}

This is indeed the right way to meet White’s attack. 16...\texttt{f6} is met by 17.g4!, preparing \texttt{d3}. 

```
17.\textit{\textcolor{red}{e1}}?

The wrong move order. White should have continued 17.\textit{\textcolor{red}{h7+ f7}} 18.\textit{\textcolor{red}{g6}} 19.\textit{\textcolor{red}{e1}} and even though there is still no immediate threat, Black cannot do anything.

17...\textit{\textcolor{red}{g6}}!

Well-spotted by the black player. Now things are getting slightly out of hand for White.

18.\textit{\textcolor{red}{h3}}

Here, 18.\textit{\textcolor{red}{h7+ f7}} 19.\textit{\textcolor{red}{h6}} would fail to 19...\textit{\textcolor{red}{g5}}!.

18...\textit{\textcolor{red}{f6}}

For the time being, Black is defending excellently.

19.\textit{\textcolor{red}{h7+ f7}} 20.\textit{\textcolor{red}{e6}}!?

White tries to force things – after all he has to try something...
20...d7?

And lo and behold – with success! After 20...f8! 21.h5+ g6 White could have forgotten all about his attack.

It was extremely hard to see that Black could also have played 20...xe6. After 21.dxe6+ f8 22.e7+ xe7 23.xg7+ it looks as if it’s game over, but after the sobering reply 23...e8 it turns out that Black controls all the crucial squares: 24.e3+ e5 25.f4 e7 26.fxe5 dxe5! (not 26...xg7?? in view of 27.exf6+) and after 27.g8+ f8 28.g6+ d7 29.d3+ e8 the black king has actually reached safety.

21.h6

21.g3!? was interesting too.

21...e8?
Black thinks he is playing a brilliant move, but in reality this blunders away the game.

22. $\text{Rxg6!}$

After this unexpected blow, Black has to resign. After 22...$\text{Rxg8}$? he would have more or less got his way: 22...$\text{Rxg8}$, and because of the threat of 23...$\text{Rh8}$ most of his troubles are over.

22...$\text{Rxg6}$ (22...$\text{Bxg6}$ 23.$\text{Qxg6+ Kg7}$) 23.$\text{Qxg6+ Kg8}$ 24.$\text{Rxg6}$+ does lose the queen now.

1.e4 e5 2.$\text{Nf3}$ $\text{c6}$ 3.$\text{Bb5}$ $\text{c5}$ 4.$\text{c3}$ $\text{Nf6}$ 5.d4 exd4 6.$\text{cxd4}$ $\text{Bc5}$ 7.$\text{Bxc5}$ $\text{dxc5}$ 8.$\text{e5}$ $\text{Nf6}$ 9.$\text{dxc5}$ $\text{e5}$ 10.$\text{Bxc5}$ $\text{Qe7}$ 11.$\text{Bb5}$ $\text{h6}$ 12.$\text{Qf4}$ $\text{h5}$ 13.$\text{Qg5}$ $\text{Qe8}$ 14.$\text{Qf3}$ $\text{Qe7}$
EXERCISE: White has invested quite a bit of material in a kingside attack. The black king has already been driven into the corner, but as yet not all of White’s pieces are taking part in the battle. How can White force his opponent to resign quickly?

Show/Hide the Solution

The killer move was

15.\textit{g5}!!

With this awesome move, White wins material and then soon mates: 15...\textit{xg5} 16.\textit{g}8# or 15...hxg5 16.\textit{h}5#.

\begin{table}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Clarence Howell} & \\
\hline
\textbf{Reginald Michell} & \\
\hline
\textbf{ENG-USA cable m 1907 (9)} & \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

1.e4 e5 2.\textit{\textit{f}}3 \textit{\textit{c}}6 3.\textit{\textit{c}}4 \textit{\textit{c}}5 4.c3 \textit{\textit{f}}6 5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4 \textit{\textit{b}}4+ 7.\textit{\textit{c}}3 \textit{\textit{x}}e4 8.0-0 \textit{\textit{x}}c3 9.d5! \textit{\textit{f}}6 10.e1 \textit{\textit{e}}7 11.\textit{\textit{x}}e4 d6 12.\textit{\textit{g}}5 \textit{\textit{x}}g5 13.\textit{\textit{x}}g5 \textit{\textit{f}}5 14.\textit{\textit{f}}3! \textit{\textit{d}}7
EXERCISE: Black seems to have everything under control. Unfortunately for him, however, the position contains a combination. What is it?

Show/Hide the Solution

Clarence Howell
Reginald Michell
ENG-USA cable m 1907 (9)

With the strong move

15.\textbf{b5}!

White draws the black queen out of the defence, after which his attack will reach gale force.

15...\textbf{xb5}

After 15...c6 16.dxc6 bxc6 17.\textbf{xc6}! White also has a few motifs he can use: 17...\textbf{xc6} 18.\textbf{xe7+}, winning.

16.\textbf{xf5}

Now the main threats are 17.\textbf{xf7+} and 17.\textbf{ae1}.

16...\textbf{f6} 17.\textbf{ae1}

Black has to allow the rooks to enter his position – with gruesome consequences.

17...\textbf{fxg5} 18.\textbf{xe7+} \textbf{d8} 19.\textbf{xe5}

Even more precise was 19.\textbf{f7}. 

```
19...c8 20.\texttt{gxg}4+

20.xg7 was no small matter either.

20...d8

20...b8 is met, analogously to the game, by 21.a4, after which Black cannot keep control of square e8.

21.a4!

And after this nice final move, Black had seen enough.

\begin{quote}
Jonathan Mestel  
D.A. Winter  
Rhyl ch-BCF U14 1969
\end{quote}

1.e4 e5 2.f3 c6 3.c4 c5 4.c3 f6 5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4 b4+ 7.c3 xe4 8.0-0 xc3 9.bxc3 d5

9...xc3 was the most popular move in Greco’s day – see the analysis above.

10.cxb4 dxc4 11.e1+ e7 12.g5 f6 13.e2?!

A speculative sacrifice. Objectively, it may not be entirely correct. The main idea is to keep the black king imprisoned in the centre, and this poses problems for Black.

13...fxg5 14.xc4 h6?!

Black had to defend himself with 14...f8, but the consequences of such a move are not so easy to calculate in a practical game.

15.e3 f8 16.ae1

White has activated all his pieces in no time at all, whereas Black’s queenside pieces are still occupying their starting positions.

16...f7 17.e5 f6
Here Mestel could already have reaped the fruits of his courageous play.

18.e2?!  

With 18.g6! White could have already achieved a great deal: 18...xg6 19.g8+ d7 20.c6 21.xe7 d6 22.xc7+! and White has a large advantage.

18...f8 19.h4?  

White is playing too impetuously for a win. Strangely enough, he should have retreated another piece: 19.d3, when the game would have ended in a draw by repetition of moves after 19...f7 20.e5 f6 21.d3.

19...gxh4?
19...\textit{f5} was the most accurate defence, and here it seems that White has too little compensation for the sacrificed pieces – even after 20.hxg5 hxg5 21.\textit{h5} \textit{g8}!.

\textbf{20.\textit{f3} \textit{f7} 21.\textit{xh4}?}

Again, too optimistic. Here too, 21.\textit{e5} was the best move.

\textbf{21...\textit{d7}?}

\begin{center}
\begin{figure}
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chess_diagram.png}
\end{figure}
\end{center}

\textit{EXERCISE:} The players merrily keep making mistake after mistake. After the text move, White has an attractive combination, with which he can suddenly achieve a winning game. What is this combination?

\textit{Show/Hide the Solution}

\begin{quote}
Jonathan Mestel
D.A. Winter
Rhyl BCF-ch U14 1969
\end{quote}

White made use of a tactical motif:

\textbf{22.\textit{xe7}!}

Now this suddenly does win for White.

\textbf{22...\textit{xe7} 23.\textit{g6}+ \textit{f7}}

Slightly better was 23...\textit{g8}, although after 24.\textit{xe7}+ \textit{h8} 25.\textit{h5} White would also emerge victorious.

\textbf{24.\textit{xe7} \textit{g6} 25.\textit{e4} \textit{f5} 26.\textit{xf5} \textit{gxf5} 27.\textit{xf5}+}
The black king is totally exposed, and now the intervention of White’s major pieces is decisive.

27...\textit{g7} 28.\textit{e3} 29.\textit{e6} 30.\textit{e7+}

EXERCISE: With Black’s king still in the middle, White has to take measures to strike immediately.

Show/Hide the Solution

White started a beautiful combination with

14.\textit{xc6!}

The first blow is half the battle! Nothing special is 14.\textit{xc6+} bxc6 15.\textit{xc6+} \textit{d7} and White certainly has no advantage.

14...\textit{d7}

Trying to limit the damage. White had to include this reply in his calculations. Taking back with 14...bxc6 would simply cost a piece: 15.\textit{xc6+} and 16.\textit{xa8}. 

Wolfgang Stadler
T. Erler
Zirndorf ch-sen 1985

1.e4 e5 2.\textit{f3} \textit{c6} 3.\textit{c4} \textit{c5} 4.\textit{f6} 5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4 \textit{b4+} 7.\textit{c3} \textit{xe4} 8.0-0 \textit{xc3} 9.bxc3 \textit{xc3} 10.\textit{a3} d6 11.\textit{e1} \textit{a5} 12.\textit{a4} a6 13.\textit{d5} \textit{b6}
15.\texttt{R\textbf{e}1+ ♘f8}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chess_board.png}
\end{figure}

16.\texttt{R\textbf{x}d6!}

But here comes the next one!

16...\texttt{cxd6}

16...\texttt{B\textbf{x}a4??} 17.\texttt{R\textbf{x}d8\texttt{#}.}

17.\texttt{B\textbf{x}d6+ ♘g8} 18.\texttt{Q\textbf{x}f7+!}

Continuing the slugfest. The king is drawn into a mating net.

18...\texttt{K\textbf{xf}7} 19.\texttt{Q\textbf{e}5+ ♘f6}

19...\texttt{Kg8} 20.\texttt{Q\textbf{c}4+ ♘c6} 21.\texttt{Q\textbf{x}e6\texttt{#}.}

20.\texttt{N\textbf{xd}7+ ♘g6}

If the king voluntarily moves forward, he will be drawn even further towards the open board, as if by a magnet:
20...\texttt{g5} 21.\texttt{f4+! ♘xf4} 22.\texttt{Q\textbf{e}5} and mate is unstoppable due to the threat of d4-d5.

21.\texttt{Q\textbf{c}2+ ♘h6}
22. \textit{\texttt{Ne5}}

The king can no longer find a safe shelter. With 22.\textit{\texttt{f4+ g5}} 23.\textit{\texttt{e6+ g7}} 24.\textit{\texttt{e5+ g8}} 25.\textit{\texttt{c4}} White could have finished off more quickly.

22...\textit{\texttt{Rf8}} 23.\textit{\texttt{Qd2+}}

23.\textit{\texttt{Ng4+ Kg5}} 24.\textit{\texttt{Re5+ Kxg4}} 25.\textit{\texttt{h3+ h4}} 26.\textit{\texttt{Wh7#}} was a little more direct.

23...\textit{\texttt{g5}}

On 23...\textit{\texttt{Qg5}}, 24.\textit{\texttt{Re3}} would have been lethal.

24.\textit{\texttt{h4?!}}

This is quite sufficient for the win, but White will have to follow up correctly. Also nice is 24.\textit{\texttt{Be7 Wxe7}} 25.\textit{\texttt{g4+ g6}} 26.\textit{\texttt{Be7}}.

24...\textit{\texttt{xf5}} 25.\textit{\texttt{e7??}}

I certainly hope that White didn’t really play this move in the game, as it more or less throws away the win. However, apparently the black player was so dumbfounded that he resigned here! In view of the fact that he could have saved himself with 25...\textit{\texttt{Wxd4!}}, this wasn’t very wise.

25.\textit{\texttt{c4+ g7}} 26.\textit{\texttt{e7+ h8}} 27.\textit{\texttt{b2!}} would have ended all counterplay. The threat of d4-d5+ cannot be met in a satisfactory way: 27...\textit{\texttt{f8}} (so as after d5+ \textit{\texttt{g8}} to prevent \textit{\texttt{h6+}}) loses to 28.\textit{\texttt{xb6}}, when the threat of 29.\textit{\texttt{e5+}} decides.
5.3 Positions from the Sicilian

The Sicilian Defence is one of the most appealing of all chess openings. From move one, both players are fighting for the initiative. White usually has to rely on freer piece play, whereas Black relies on his superior pawn structure. The battle usually develops across the entire board. With the presence of queens, White can play for an attack, for which he has several stereotypical piece sacrifices at his disposal.

In the next three sections you will find a number of well-known types of piece sacrifice, such as \( \text{Nx}e6, \text{Bxe6}, \text{Nd}5, \text{Nf}5, \text{Bxg7} \), as well as a couple of more rather special ones.

**Standard sacrifices: \( \text{Nx}e6/\text{Bxe6} \)**

When I played the Sicilian for the first time myself, it only took a few games before one of my opponents started sacrificing on e6. Nowadays, every chess player knows that at times something can be gained on this vulnerable square. We will give a few attractive examples.

**Judit Polgar**

**Hans Ree**

**Amsterdam 1989 (1)**

This game was played between the then 13-year-old Judit Polgar and the 45-year-old Dutch grandmaster Hans Ree.

1.e4 c5 2.\( \text{Nf}3 \) e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.\( \text{Nxd}4 \) \( \text{f6} \) 5.\( \text{c3} \) d6 6.\( \text{e2} \) e7 7.0-0 0-0 8.\( \text{e3} \) a6 9.f4 \( \text{c7} \)
10. g4
Judit is already playing for an attack at this early stage.

10... $\text{e8}$
Nowadays we know that Black has to play 10... $\text{c6}$ here, as Judit herself played many years later.

11. g5 $\text{f}d7$ 12. $\text{h}5$ g6 13. $\text{g}4$
This position also occurred several times after this game. Black has to be very careful.

13... $\text{c6}$

Very carelessly played. 13... $\text{f}8$ is necessary, a move which appeared on the board in a game Shirov-Anand, Buenos Aires 1994.

14. $\text{xe6}$!
Judit never let such an opportunity pass by. She sacrifices a knight, in exchange for two pawns, a powerful d5-square for the knight, and an attack against the black king.

14... $\text{xe6}$+ 15. $\text{h}8$ 16. $\text{d}5$ $\text{b}8$ 17. $\text{f}7$
Even stronger, and actually a little more logical, was 17. $\text{d}4+$: 17... $\text{de}5$ (17... $\text{xd}4$ 18. $\text{xd}4+$ $\text{e}5$ 19. $\text{f}7$ (19. $\text{xc}8$ $\text{x}c8$ 20. $\text{xe}5$ $\text{c}5$ 21. $\text{xc}5$ $\text{dx}5$ 22. $\text{c}7$) 19... $\text{f}8$ 20. $\text{xe}7$ (20.$\text{xe}5$ $\text{dxe}5$) 20... $\text{xf}7$ 21.$\text{xe}5$) and now 18. $\text{f}7$! is the strongest move, since 18... $\text{f}8$ fails miserably to 19. $\text{xe}7$ $\text{xf}7$ 20.$\text{xe}5$, and Black can resign.

17... $\text{f}8$ 18. $\text{d}4+$
The black king is horribly vulnerable.

18...\textit{\textbf{N}}d5

Ree decides to give back the piece immediately.

The alternative 18...\textit{\textbf{N}}xd4 19.\textit{\textbf{Q}}xd4+ \textit{\textbf{B}}f6 20.\textit{\textbf{Q}}xf6 was no bed of roses for Black either: 20...\textit{\textbf{R}}xf7 (in order not to be mated, Black has to play 20...\textit{\textbf{Q}}a7, but then the situation is obviously hopeless for him after 21.\textit{\textbf{Q}}xa7 \textit{\textbf{R}}xa7 22.\textit{\textbf{N}}xd7 \textit{\textbf{B}}d7 23.\textit{\textbf{B}}d5, analysis diagram because White is no less than two pawns ahead) 21.\textit{\textbf{Q}}xd7+ \textit{\textbf{K}}g8 22.\textit{\textbf{Q}}xb8, winning the queen.
19. \texttt{Nxe7}

The knight on e5 won’t run away, so Judit first trades on e7.

19... \texttt{Nxe7}

Of course she had prepared something attractive in reply to 19... \texttt{xf7}. After 20.\texttt{fxe5} \texttt{xf1}+ 21.\texttt{xf1}, mate is threatened on two squares, so that Black has no time to take back the piece. Importantly, there is an attractive mate after 21... \texttt{Nxe7} 22.\texttt{f8}+ \texttt{g8} 23.exd6# (see diagram!).

\textit{analysis diagram}

20.\texttt{fxe5}

Thus, Polgar regains her sacrificed piece, and at the same time protects her beautiful bishop on f7.

20... \texttt{dxe5} 21.\texttt{c5}
By now, White is a pawn ahead, but what's worse for Black is that his pieces are not coordinated. And there are many different threats.

21...\textit{g7}

There is no way out. Black tries to chase away the annoying bishop on f7. For example, 21...\textit{c7}, to protect the knight, fails to 22.\textit{d6} \textit{b6}+ 23.\textit{h1}

\textit{analysis diagram}

and there is no remedy against the threats of 24.\textit{xe5} (with mate) and 24.\textit{xe7}, without loss of material. Of course, 23...\textit{c6} fails to 24.\textit{xf8}. 
22. \textit{\texttt{Bxe7 a7+}}

Trying to create some confusion. On 22...\texttt{Bxf7}, 23.\texttt{f6+} would be decisive. For example: 23...\texttt{Bg8} 24.\texttt{Qd8+ f8} 25.\texttt{Qd5+ f7} 26.\texttt{xe5 a7+} 27.\texttt{h1 b5} – in order to provide additional protection to the rook on f7, but now follows mate: 28.\texttt{Qd8+ f8} 29.\texttt{xf8#}.

23. \textit{\texttt{h1}}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

23...\texttt{h3}

Now Ree also saw that 23...\texttt{xf7} fails to 24.\texttt{d8!}, and the main threat, 25.\texttt{f6+}, can no longer be parried: 24...\texttt{h3} 25.\texttt{f6+}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

analysis diagram

25...\( \text{Rxf6} \) 26.\( \text{Qe7+ Kh8} \) (26...\( \text{g8} \) 27.\( \text{gxf6} \)) 27.\( \text{xf6} \).

24.\( \text{Qf3} \)

Black has to lose the house in order not to get mated. The finish with 24...\( \text{xf1} \) 25.\( \text{xf6} \# \) would have been nice:

Vasilios Kotronias
Veselin Topalov
Kavala tt 1990 (4)

1.e4 c5 2.\( \text{Nf3} \) d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.\( \text{Nx} \text{d4} \) \( \text{Nf6} \) 5.\( \text{c3} \) a6 6.\( \text{e3} \) e6 7.g4 b5 8.g5 \( \text{Nd7} \) 9.a3 \( \text{b7} \) 10.h4 \( \text{b6} \) 11.h5 \( \text{Nd7} \) 12.\( \text{Nh3} \) \( \text{e7} \) 13.g6 \( \text{f6} \) 14.\( \text{g4} \) \( \text{e7} \) 15.f4 \( \text{c4} \) 16.\( \text{xc4} \) bxc4 17.0-0-0 \( \text{c8} \) 18.\( \text{gxf7} \) + \( \text{xf7} \)
19.e5!
The intention behind this pawn sacrifice will soon become clear.

19...dxe5 20.Nxe6!
The sequel to the previous move. Black is getting hit at the most sensitive point in his position.

20...Bc6
It is essential that now 20...Qxe6? fails immediately in view of the capture 21.Rxd7+, with X-ray protection. So that was the idea behind the pawn sacrifice with e4-e5, d6xe5: the d-file is opened, making this tactic possible. After 21...Qe7 22.Qxe6+ Qxe6 23.Rxb7 White has made decisive material gain.

Also immediately losing is 20...Nf8 21.Nxf8 Qxf8 22.Rd7.

21.f5
Thus, the knight is consolidated, and it will be able to fulfil an undermining role.
21...e4

Nothing can help Black now, but he wanted to do something about the threat of 22.\textit{xc}4. After a normal continuation like 21...\textit{he}8, to prepare ‘artificial castling’, there would follow the devastating 22.\textit{xc}4.

22.\textit{d}4

Another strong continuation. White would like to trade off the defending bishop on f6.

22...\textit{hg}8 23.\textit{xe}4

With each move, more white pieces are involved in the play. This increase in fire-power soon becomes too much for Black.

23...\textit{xe}4

23...\textit{xd}4 24.\textit{g}5+ \textit{e}8 25.\textit{xd}4, and because of the deadly threat of 26.\textit{e}3 Black might as well throw in the towel.

24.\textit{xe}4 c3 25.b4 1-0

Nor was there much objection to 25.\textit{d}5, after which a discovered check relieves Black of his suffering.
EXERCISE: It’s a blitz game, but this move is immediately refuted. How?

Show/Hide the Solution

Teimour Radjabov
Viswanathan Anand
Rishon-le-Ziyon Wch blitz 2006 (5)

In this blitz game White lashed out with

15.\text{\textit{N}}xe6! g5

It appears as if Black can keep out the h4-bishop for the time being with this move. But now the blow falls somewhere else.

If 15...fxe6, 16.\textit{B}h5+ g6 17.\textit{B}xg6#.

16.\text{\textit{N}}f6+!

And Black immediately resigned. On 16...\textit{N}xf6 (16...\textit{K}e7 17.\textit{Q}d6#) follows 17.\textit{N}c7+ \textit{K}e7 18.\textit{Q}d6#.

Garry Kasparov
Loek van Wely
Wijk aan Zee 2000 (3)

1.e4 c5 2.\textit{f}3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.\textit{N}xd4 \textit{f}6 5.\textit{c}3 a6 6.\textit{e}3 \textit{e}6 7.f3 b5 8.g4 \textit{h}6 9.\textit{d}2 \textit{bd}7 10.0-0-0 \textit{b}7 11.h4 \textit{b}4 12.a4 d5 13.\textit{h}3 g5 14.g2 gxh4 15.\textit{x}h4 dxe4 16.g5 \textit{d}5 17.\textit{x}e4 hxg5 18.\textit{x}g5 \textit{a}5 19.f4 \textit{h}2
EXERCISE: With the black king in the middle, it seems logical to try to tear Black’s position apart. How did White do this, and what were the consequences? Give a few variations.

Show/Hide the Solution

Garry Kasparov
Loek van Wely
Wijk aan Zee 2000 (3)

White opted for the tempting

20. Ngxe6!

but this required quite a bit of calculation.

20...fxe6

20...e7 is met by 21.g7+ f8 22.xe7+ xg7 23.f5, after which the queen joins the attack via g5.

21.xe6+ f7

White also had to find a way to continue the attack after 21...e7. But that is easy to work out: 22.xe7+ f8 (22...xe7 23.xd7+ f8 24.xe7+ g8 25.d7, winning) 23.xd7 and it’s game over.
The black king is really feeling the draught, but how can White continue the bombardment?

22.\texttt{Qd3}!

Kasparov had to have seen this pretty move in advance.

22...\texttt{Bg7}

The king tries to hide behind the bishop.

Clearly, 22...\texttt{Kxe6} fails to 23.\texttt{Bxd5+ Bxd5} 24.\texttt{Qg6+ f6} 25.\texttt{Qxf6+ d7} 26.\texttt{Qxd5+ Qxd5} 27.\texttt{Nxd6+}, winning.

22...\texttt{Kg8} runs into 23.\texttt{Qg6+ h8} (it’s not so easy to see that 23...\texttt{Bg7} doesn’t help either: 24.\texttt{Bxd5} \texttt{Bxd5} 25.\texttt{Bxe7 Bh7} 26.\texttt{Qh6+ f8} 27.\texttt{Qxe1} and Black is finished)
and now there are various ways to win. 24.\textit{f}e2! is the strongest. The threat of \textit{x}d5 \textit{xe}2, \textit{h}1+ with mate cannot be parried. 24...\textit{xf}4 is met by 25.\textit{xf}4 \textit{xf}2 (25...\textit{h}5 26.\textit{x}h5+ \textit{x}h5 27.\textit{xb}7) 26.\textit{xb}2 and the game is finished.

\textbf{23.\textit{f}5+}

Slightly more accurate was 23.\textit{g}6+ \textit{g}8 24.\textit{xd}5 \textit{xd}5 25.\textit{e}7.

\textbf{23...\textit{g}8 24.\textit{xd}5 \textit{xa}4 25.\textit{e}7}

And the black player had seen enough. He would be butchered after 25...\textit{h}8 (25...\textit{f}8 26.\textit{g}6 \textit{h}7 27.\textit{h}6) 26.\textit{exd}7! due to the threat of 27.\textit{g}7.

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Ruslan Ponomariov} & & & & & & & \\
\textbf{Francisco Vallejo Pons} & & & & & & & \\
\textbf{Bilbao 2014 (3)} & & & & & & & \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

\textbf{1.e4 c5 2.\textit{f}3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.\textit{xd}4 \textit{f}6 5.\textit{c}3 a6}

The Najdorf Variation of the Sicilian, which is still alive and kicking, in spite of the many blows it has taken over several decades.

\textbf{6.h3}

This innocent-looking little move is the latest trend. In fact it is enjoying a revival, since Bobby Fischer had already adopted it in the early 1960s.

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{6...e6}
\end{tabular}
\end{center}
A matter of taste. 6...e5 has also been played a lot.

7.g4 \$e7

Vallejo Pons goes for the ‘normal’ Scheveningen set-up. The principled continuation 7...d5, which was originally regarded as an ‘attempt at a refutation’, is a worthy alternative.

8.\$g2 \$fd7

All still as played by the ‘big boys’ (Carlsen, Anand, Topalov, among others).

9.\$ce2!?

Ponomariov already uncorks a novelty. One of the ideas behind it becomes clear on the next move.

9.\$e3 is the most popular continuation here.

9...\$c6 10.c3

Endeavouring to maintain his knight on d4, as after this pawn move the exchange on d4 is unattractive for Black. At the same time, the e2-knight can be manoeuvred to g3, where it will be well placed.

10...h5

If he doesn’t play it now, he will never be able to play it. All the same, it is doubtful whether this was wise. Vallejo rejects kingside castling, and now his king won’t have a safe shelter anywhere any time soon.

11.gxh5 \$xh5

With this unsuspecting pawn recapture, the black rook will get into trouble. More logical seems 11...\$a5, although also then, after 12.\$g3 \$xd4 13.\$xd4 \$f6 14.\$e3, White has the better prospects.
12. \texttt{\texttt{xc6}! bxc6 13. d4 \texttt{c5}}

Otherwise, \texttt{xc6} and \texttt{xe7} is very unpleasant.

14. \texttt{b4!}

Ponomariov doesn’t waste any time: he is forcing the rook to declare itself.

14...\texttt{xc3} 15. \texttt{b2}

White has managed to mobilize a large part of his army, while many of Black’s pieces have to sit and watch passively. Moreover, the black rook remains a target.
EXERCISE: After all of these preparations, White finally managed to do what he had been intending to do all along. What was that?

Show/Hide the Solution

Ruslan Ponomariov  
Francisco Vallejo Pons  
Bilbao 2014 (3)

After a series of preparatory moves, White can now go for it!

16..cx6!

That was bound to happen.

16...b6

The justification of this sacrifice lies in the following mate variation: 16...fxe6 17.h5+ f8 18.h8+ f7 19.xg7+ e8 20.g6+ f8 21.g7+ g8 22.h6+ h8 23.g7#.

17.xg7+ f8

White has laid his hands on a beautiful pawn, while his opponent’s pieces still don’t cooperate optimally.

18.0-0

White could also simply build on his material plus with 18.a3. After 18...f6, 19.c1! xc1 20.xc1 is possible, thanks to 20.xg7 21.g5+ f8 22.xf6 with a decisive advantage for White.
18...\(\text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}e5\)

Black is fighting back, but White isn’t prepared to make things easy for him.

19.\(\text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}h5\) \(\text{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}xb4\) 20.\(\text{\textit{\textbf{R}}}b1\) \(\text{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}c5\)

21.\(\text{\textit{\textbf{K}}}h1!\)

With simple means, Ponomariov has built up an awesome attacking position. The black king stands badly, White has several active pieces (\(\text{\textit{\textbf{b}}}_{2}, \text{\textit{\textbf{h}}}_5\)), and he is ready to kick the black knight with f2-f4, and also to bring up more of his own pieces.

21...\(\text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}g6?!\)

Anticipating the threat, but this allows White’s following strong move. Perhaps, 21...\(\text{\textit{\textbf{R}}}b8?!\) was still playable.

22.\(\text{\textit{\textbf{f}}}f6!\) \(\text{\textit{\textbf{b}}}_8\)

22...\(\text{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}xf6\) 23.\(\text{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}xf6\).
23.\textit{\texttt{\textsubscript{d}2}}

We cannot blame ‘Pono’ for playing this attractive move. But there was a better one! Sometimes accidents can easily happen. With 23.\texttt{\textsubscript{c}1}!! the game could actually have been decided right away: 23...\texttt{\textsubscript{b}1} 24.\texttt{\textsubscript{h}6}# is an exceptionally picturesque mate,

\textit{\textsubscript{analysis diagram}}

Also 23...\texttt{\textsubscript{x}f6} 24.\texttt{\textsubscript{x}b8} \texttt{\textsubscript{e}7} 25.\texttt{\textsubscript{f}4} is hopeless, while 23...\texttt{\textsubscript{c}1} 24.\texttt{\textsubscript{d}7}+! \texttt{\textsubscript{e}8} 25.\texttt{\textsubscript{c}1} \texttt{\textsubscript{b}5} 26.\texttt{\textsubscript{x}b8} \texttt{\textsubscript{x}b8} 27.\texttt{\textsubscript{c}6} is, of course, hopeless too.

\texttt{\textsubscript{x}f6} 24.\texttt{\textsubscript{x}f6} \texttt{\textsubscript{b}5} 25.\texttt{\textsubscript{b}d1} \texttt{d5}
Now that the black pieces are rather displaced on the queenside, White starts a round-up on the other side of the board.

26.\textit{Qh6+ Ke8} 27.\textit{exd5}

Of course, the e-file also has to be opened to get to the black king.

27...\textit{cxd5} 28.\textit{Rfe1+ Kd7}

29.\textit{Qg7}

He even spurns 29.\textit{Rxd5+ Qxd5} 30.\textit{Rxd5} 31.\textit{Qg7}, which would also be totally crushing.

29...\textit{Qf8} 30.\textit{Bxd5}

What White does come up with is no mean thing either.

30...\textit{Rxd5} 31.\textit{Rxd5+ Qc7} 32.\textit{Qe5+ Qc6}

This loses even more material. Relatively better was 32...\textit{Qb7}, but it loses after 33.\textit{Rb1+ Rb4} (33...\textit{a8} 34.\textit{b8+ a7} 35.\textit{f6}) 34.\textit{xb4+ xb4} 35.\textit{xf7+ e7} 36.\textit{h2}.

If 32...\textit{xe5} 33.\textit{xf8}.
And Black resigned. After 33...\texttt{Qxf8} 34.\texttt{Bd8}, another piece is lost.

\textbf{John Emms}  
\textbf{Alexander Flaata}  
\textit{Copenhagen 1994 (2)}

\begin{center}
1.e4 c5 2.\texttt{Nf3} d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.\texttt{Qxd4} \texttt{Nf6} 5.\texttt{c3} a6 6.\texttt{c4} e6 7.b3 b5 8.0-0 \texttt{Ab7} 9.\texttt{Be1} \texttt{Be7}?
\end{center}
EXERCISE: White sees his chance to embarrass Black. How did he do that?

Show/Hide the Solution

John Emms
Alexander Flaata
Copenhagen 1994 (2)

With Black’s last move, 9...e7, he has left the g7-pawn undefended. That is a signal for the white player to sacrifice a piece for three pawns.

10.xe6! fxe6 11.xe6 c8 12.xg7+ f7 13.f5

Apart from the three pawns, White also has play against the black king, as its defensive line has been blown away.

13...c6?

After this move, disaster strikes very swiftly. Upon a move like 13...e8, 14.f4 is probably the strongest reply.

14.d5

Obviously White increases the pressure.

14...xd5?

Now it is even over at once. 14...f8 15.xf6 xf6 16.h5 would also have led to a devastating attack on the king.

15.h5+!

White finds the strongest continuation, after which the black player had seen enough. After 15.e6 (15.g8 16.h6+ g7 17.f7#) 16.exd5+ d7 17.dxc6+, not only has White regained all his material, but he will also win a lot more.
Standard sacrifices: \( \text{\textit{d}}5, \text{\textit{f}}5 \)

When I was a junior player, my ‘trainer’ (who went to the same school, and was only two years older than me) thought that the Najdorf Sicilian was a wonderful opening. At the time he would never have suspected that even in the 21st century this opening would still be alive and kicking, and be regarded as one of the most popular systems by top players. Real attacking artists, like Dragoljub Velimirovic, knew very well how to handle the Najdorf set-ups. Sacrifices on the squares d5 and f5 (preferably both!) often produce fantastic games. Here are two sparkling examples.

Dragoljub Velimirovic
Ljubomir Ljubojevic
Umag ch-YUG 1972 (6)

1.e4 c5 2.\textit{f}3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.\textit{x}d4 \textit{f}6 5.c3 a6 6.g5 e6 7.f4

In the set-up Black has chosen, with ...\textit{bd}7, ...\textit{c}7, ...b7-b5 and ...\textit{b}7, it is wise to postpone the bishop move ...\textit{f}8-e7 for as long as possible. The main reason is that after the standard sacrifice \( \text{\textit{d}}5 \), the e-file will be opened, after which White can work with \( \text{\textit{d}}4-f5 \). In most of these lines, the e7-bishop has to retreat.

7...\textit{e}7

After 7...\textit{bd}7 8.\textit{f}3 \textit{c}7 9.0-0-0 b5 10.\textit{d}3 \textit{b}7 11.\textit{he}1, Black would obtain the same position as in the main game if he opted for 11...\textit{e}7. And here we see the difference: current opening theory prescribes 11...\textit{b}6 here. A sample game is Shirov-Anand, Morelia/Linares 2008, and there is also another game, which we will encounter later on in the Exercises section.

8.\textit{f}3 \textit{c}7 9.0-0-0 \textit{bd}7 10.\textit{d}3 \textit{b}5 11.\textit{he}1 \textit{b}7

12.\textit{d}5!?
Even nowadays, with strong computer programs, it turns out that this sacrifice is at least playable. Accepting the piece is mortally dangerous for Black.

12...\textit{\underline{\text{Q}}xd5}

An example: 12...\textit{\underline{\text{exd5}}}. 13...\textit{\underline{\text{dxe4}}}. 14...\textit{\underline{\text{xe4}}}. 15...\textit{\underline{\text{xe4}}}. 15...0-0 16...\textit{\underline{\text{xh8}}}. 17...\textit{\underline{\text{d5}}}, and White stands better. 16...\textit{\underline{\text{exh8}}}. 17...\textit{\underline{\text{e7+}}}. 18...\textit{\underline{\text{d3}}}. Thus White includes a new piece in the attack, and suddenly threatens 19...\textit{\underline{\text{xh7+}}}. 20...\textit{\underline{\text{xh7}}}. 18...\textit{\underline{\text{g6}}}. 18...\textit{\underline{\text{h6}}}. 19...\textit{\underline{\text{g6}}}. 19...\textit{\underline{\text{h6}}}. 20...\textit{\underline{\text{xg6+}}}. 21...\textit{\underline{\text{h6+}}}. 22...\textit{\underline{\text{fxg6}}}. 23...\textit{\underline{\text{d5+}}}. 24...\textit{\underline{\text{e7}}}. 25...\textit{\underline{\text{xf8}}}. 19...\textit{\underline{\text{fxg6}}}. Thus White includes a new piece in the attack, and suddenly threatens 19...\textit{\underline{\text{xh7+}}}. 20...\textit{\underline{\text{xh7}}}. 18...\textit{\underline{\text{g6}}}. 18...\textit{\underline{\text{h6}}}. 19...\textit{\underline{\text{g6}}}. 19...\textit{\underline{\text{h6}}}. 20...\textit{\underline{\text{xg6+}}}. 21...\textit{\underline{\text{h6+}}}. 22...\textit{\underline{\text{fxg6}}}. 23...\textit{\underline{\text{d5+}}}. 24...\textit{\underline{\text{e7}}}. 25...\textit{\underline{\text{xf8}}}. 19...\textit{\underline{\text{fxg6}}}. Thus White includes a new piece in the attack, and suddenly threatens 19...\textit{\underline{\text{xh7+}}}. 20...\textit{\underline{\text{xh7}}}. 18...\textit{\underline{\text{g6}}}. 18...\textit{\underline{\text{h6}}}. 19...\textit{\underline{\text{g6}}}. 19...\textit{\underline{\text{h6}}}. 20...\textit{\underline{\text{xg6+}}}. 21...\textit{\underline{\text{h6+}}}. 22...\textit{\underline{\text{fxg6}}}. 23...\textit{\underline{\text{d5+}}}. 24...\textit{\underline{\text{e7}}}. 25...\textit{\underline{\text{xf8}}}. and White wins.

13...\textit{\underline{\text{exd5} xg5}}


14...\textit{\underline{\text{xe6+}}}!

Velimirovic was not a guy to be trifled with!

14...\textit{\underline{\text{fxe6}}} 15...\textit{\underline{\text{xe6}}} \textit{\underline{\text{a5?}}}

With hindsight, 15...\textit{\underline{\text{b6!}}}. turns out to be quite good for Black.

16...\textit{\underline{\text{h5+}}} \textit{\underline{\text{g6}}} 17...\textit{\underline{\text{g5}}} \textit{\underline{\text{g8}}} 18...\textit{\underline{\text{d2}}}

Now that virtually every white piece is active, White wants to bring one last piece – the rook – into the game. 18...\textit{\underline{\text{c3!}}}. was an excellent option. Then, 18...\textit{\underline{\text{f7!}}}. doesn’t help due to 19...\textit{\underline{\text{e1!}}}.

18...\textit{\underline{\text{f8?}}}

A mistake, but it is a known fact that players under pressure make mistakes. Only with 18...\textit{\underline{\text{f7}}} 19...\textit{\underline{\text{e2}}} \textit{\underline{\text{f6}}} could Black maintain the equilibrium.
19. \textit{Qxf8} \textit{d8} 20. \textit{Nh7} \\

We might think it remarkable that White can just exchange the queens here. However, the pawn mass he is building up on the kingside will crush the black position like a steamroller.

20...\textit{Qxg5} 21.\textit{fxg5} \textit{d6} 22.\textit{Nh6} \textit{f8} 23.\textit{g3} \textit{c8} 24.\textit{h4} \textit{f5} 25.\textit{Nh5} \textit{e8} 26.\textit{h5} \textit{e7} 27.\textit{f2} \\

Black resigned, as he didn’t fancy getting buried under that steamroller.

\begin{center}
\textbf{Albin Planinc} \\
\textbf{Miguel Najdorf} \\
Wijk aan Zee 1973 (3)
\end{center}

1.e4 \textit{c5} 2.\textit{Nf3} \textit{d6} 3.d4 \textit{cxd4} 4.\textit{Nxd4} \textit{Nf6} 5.\textit{c3} \textit{a6} 6.\textit{Bg5} \textit{Nbd7} 7.f4 \textit{e6} 8.\textit{Qf3} \textit{Be7} 9.0-0-0 \textit{Qc7} 10.\textit{d3} \textit{h6} 11.\textit{Nh3} \\

On 11.\textit{Nh4}, 11...\textit{g5} 12.\textit{fxg5} \textit{e5} 13.\textit{Qf2} \textit{g4} is a well-known variation.

11...\textit{Nc5} \\

11...\textit{b6} is considered to be better.

12.\textit{Rhe1} \textit{g8} \\

An alternative is 12...\textit{e5} 13.\textit{f5} \textit{g6}, but then 14.\textit{Nh4}! wins for White. Now White starts a tremendous initiative.

13.e5! \textit{dxe5} \\

Not good is 13...\textit{hxg5} 14.\textit{exf6} \textit{gxf6} in view of 15.\textit{d5}! \textit{d8} 16.\textit{Qf8} \textit{h8} 17.\textit{xe7} \textit{xe7} 18.\textit{d5}.

14.\textit{fxe5} \textit{hxg5}
Not good is 14...\( \text{Qd5} \) 15...\( \text{Qxe7} \): 15...\( \text{Qxe7} \) (15...\( \text{Wxe7} \) 16.\( \text{Qe4} \), and White gets the upper hand. Planinc himself gave the following variation: 16.\( \text{Qh7} \)!? \( \text{Zh8} \) 17.\( \text{Qf5} \) \text{exf5} (relatively better is 17...\( \text{Qg5+} \) 18.\( \text{Qd2} \) \text{Qxh7} \), but then 19.\( \text{Qd6+} \) \text{Kf8} 20.\( \text{Qxd5} \) \text{exd5} 21.\( \text{Qxc8} \) is quite advantageous for White anyway) 18.\( \text{Qxd5} \) and White wins and now 16.\( \text{Qb5+} \)! is virtually winning.

15.\( \text{exf6} \) \( \text{Qxf6} \)?!

Black overplays his hand. Necessary was 15...\( \text{gxf6} \), although after 16.\( \text{Kb1} \)! White’s prospects would still be rosy.

16.\( \text{Qd5} \) \( \text{Qd8} \) 17.\( \text{Qh7} \)?!

This move is intended to ‘uncover’ the \( \text{Qd1} \). But there is a defence for Black. With hindsight, it turns out that 17.\( \text{Qxf6+} \)! was indicated here, in order after 17...\( \text{Qxf6} \) to play 18.\( \text{Qc4} \).

17...\( \text{Qh8} \)

Now Black’s best option would have been the following liquidation: 17...\( \text{Qxd5} \) 18.\( \text{Qxg8} \) \( \text{Qxa2} \)!? and the position is completely unclear.

18.\( \text{Qf5} \)!!

A magnificent move. The knight strikes several squares behind enemy lines.

18...\( \text{g4} \)

Played after a long think. There is no satisfactory solution to the problem. 18...\( \text{Qf8} \) runs into the winning 19.\( \text{Qxf6} \) \( \text{Qxf6} \) 20.\( \text{Qc3} \), making Black feel the weakness of his back rank: 20...\( \text{Qd7} \) (20...\( \text{Qxc3} \) 21.\( \text{Qd8#} \); 20...\( \text{Qxh7} \) 21.\( \text{Qxf6} \) \text{gxf6} 22.\( \text{Qd8#} \) 21.\( \text{Qb4+} \) \( \text{Qe8} \)
and now the spectacular 22...\textit{\texttt{R}xe6}!! \textit{\texttt{fxe6}} (22...\textit{\texttt{Q}xe6} 23.\textit{\texttt{N}xg7+}) 23.\textit{\texttt{N}xg7+} \textit{\texttt{d8}} 24.\textit{\texttt{Q}b6#} or 23...\textit{\texttt{Q}xg6} 24.\textit{\texttt{Q}e7#}. A wonderful final position.

\textbf{19.\textit{\texttt{Q}g3}}

This is more than sufficient for the win. But probably 19.\textit{\texttt{Q}e3} was more accurate.

\textbf{19...\textit{\texttt{K}f8}}

Now things go rapidly downhill.

On 19...\textit{\texttt{Rxh7}}, 20.\textit{\texttt{N}c7+}, winning the queen, would end the game immediately.

Relatively best was 19...\textit{\texttt{B}d7}, but after 20.\textit{\texttt{N}c7+} \textit{\texttt{K}f8} 21.\textit{\texttt{N}xa8} Black would also be lost.

\textbf{20.\textit{\texttt{N}xf6}}

And Black resigned. A possible finish is 20...\textit{\texttt{Qxf6}} 21.\textit{\texttt{Qd6+}} \textit{\texttt{Ke8}} 22.\textit{\texttt{Qxg7+}} \textit{\texttt{Qxg7}} 23.\textit{\texttt{Qd8#}}.

\textbf{Yacov Geller}\n
\textbf{Dmitry Afanasiev}\n
\textbf{Samara 2012 (1)}

1.e4 c5 2.\textit{\texttt{f3}} e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.\textit{\texttt{Qxd4}} \textit{\texttt{c6}} 5.\textit{\texttt{Qc3}} \textit{\texttt{c7}} 6.\textit{\texttt{e3}} a6 7.\textit{\texttt{e2}} \textit{\texttt{f6}} 8.0-0 \textit{\texttt{e7}} 9.f4 \textit{\texttt{d6}} 10.\textit{\texttt{h1}} 0-0 11.\textit{\texttt{e1}} \textit{\texttt{e8}} 12.\textit{\texttt{G3}} \textit{\texttt{a5}} 13.e5 dxe5 14.\textit{\texttt{fxe5}} \textit{\texttt{d7}}
EXERCISE: Black is underdeveloped, but does White have possibilities to quickly exploit this?

Show/Hide the Solution

Yacov Geller
Dmitry Afanasiev
Samara 2012 (1)

In this position, White has a beautiful tactical motif at his disposal:

15.\textit{Nd5!}

Most probably Black didn’t expect that.

15...\textit{Qxe5}

15...\textit{exd5} now fails to the fabulous move 16.e6! (a discovered attack) 16...\textit{Qxg3} 17.\textit{exf7+ Kf8} 18.\textit{Ne6#}.

16.\textit{Nc7}

and Black gave up all resistance. He will lose too much material.

Wesley So
Mark Paragua
Tagaytay City 2013 (3)

1.e4 c5 2.\textit{f3} d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.\textit{cxd4} \textit{f6} 5.\textit{c3} a6 6.\textit{g5} e6 7.f4 \textit{bd7} 8.\textit{f3} \textit{c7} 9.0-0-0 \textit{b5} 10.\textit{d3} \textit{b7} 11.\textit{he1} \textit{b6}
EXERCISE: For a long time, people thought that Black had parried the threat of the standard sacrifice with his last move. But as it turns out, that isn’t the case. But what trick does White have up his sleeve after

12.\textit{\texttt{d5}}! exd5?

Show/Hide the Solution

Wesley So  
Mark Paragua  
Tagaytay City 2013 (3)

In this widely known position, White has a shocking sacrifice:

12.\textit{\texttt{d5}}! exd5

12...\textit{\texttt{xd5}} 13.exd5 e5 loses to 14.\textit{\texttt{c6}}.

We have known for a few decades that ...\textit{\texttt{xd4}} is also playable for Black. This was played, among others, in a game Nakamura-Gelfand, which was won by Black. But already in 1982, Krum Georgiev had ventured into the lion’s den in a game with Mnatsakanian.

After Black takes the piece, White has to have something special, and here it is:

13.\textit{\texttt{c6}}!!

This is the beautiful point. By placing the knight on this ‘impossible square’, White prevents Black’s castling. The story goes that this move had been found by Efim Geller and Eduard Gufeld after the former’s playoff game against Lev Polugaevsky, Portoroz interzonal 1973, where ‘Polu’ had launched the novelty 11...\textit{\texttt{b6}}!??. In 1980, Gufeld was Maia Chiburdanidze’s trainer, and when they were preparing this line against Semen Dvoirys, Gufeld didn’t want to reveal the secret and ‘betray’ his friend Geller. He only said there was a tactical win for White on move 12, whereupon Chiburdanidze found everything out herself! She beat Dvoirys in a game that became known as the ‘Tallinn Pearl’.
Paragua apparently did not know about this.

13...dxe4?! 

The critical move is 13...dxe4, which after 14...xe4? c5! (14...xe4? 15...xe4+ e5 16...xe5! leads to complete disaster) 15...xf6 gxf6 16...h3 leads to complications that appear to favour White, but there is certainly no need for Black to despair after a move like, for instance, 16...e6. Incidentally, White has the original move 17...g6 here, after which his initiative just continues.

14.exd5+ e7 15.dxc6 

White has recovered one of his two sacrificed pieces, while his attack continues.

15...c5 16...xf6 

Of course, the pawn structure is destroyed along the way.

16...gxf6 

The intermediate snatching of White’s strong bishop with 16...xd3+ would backfire on Black: 17...xd3 gxf6 18...xe7+ xe7 19...xd6+ e8 20...e1+ with mate.

17...f5! 

Thus, Black can castle neither queenside nor kingside, and his king remains stuck in the centre.
17...d8?

Proving the known fact that players are often unable to keep a cool head in difficult situations. The only move to stay in the game was 17...a7, which occurred in a game Genba-Gergel (2008). 18.xd6 and now:

A) On 18...e6? follows 19.c7! xc7 20.e6 b8 21.xe6 fxe6 22.xe6 when Black can struggle on with 22...f8 (22...f8? 23.e3 c7 24.d4! is almost winning for White);

B) 18...a5 is met by the strong 19.f2!. The virtually forced follow-up with 19...b4 20.d5 f8 21.xe7! xe7 22.xc5 is no picnic for Black;

C) 18...f8 19.c7 xc7 20.xc6 is also winning for White.

At the time, Dvoirys played 17.c7 18.e6 19.h5 g7 but went down after 20.d7+!

18.b4?  

Simply doubling with 18.e2 was also lethal.

18...a4

Now this knight can no longer participate in the defence. After 18...e6 19.xe6 fxe6 20.xe6 White also controls all the light squares, and after 20...f8 21.de1 e8 22.c3 (threatening 23.xf6+) 22...f7 23.c7 b7 24.b3! they are completely exposed.

19.e4 c7
20. \texttt{d7+!}

Now White can start making combinations.

20...\texttt{Rxd7} 21.\texttt{cxd7+ Qxd7} 22.\texttt{Qa8+ Qd8} 23.\texttt{Qxe7+!}

That was the idea. White wins the house after 23...\texttt{Kxe7} 24.\texttt{Re1+ Kd7} 25.\texttt{Rb7+ c7} 26.\texttt{Re7+}.

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\textbf{Dragoljub Velimirovic}

\textbf{Jovan Sofrevski}

Titograd ch-YUG 1965 (7)

\[1.e4\ c5\ 2.\texttt{Nf3} \texttt{Nc6} 3.d4 \texttt{cxd4} 4.\texttt{Nxd4} \texttt{e6} 5.\texttt{Nc3} \texttt{d6} 6.\texttt{Be3} \texttt{Nf6} 7.e4 \texttt{e7} 8.\texttt{Qe2} \texttt{a6} 9.0-0-0 \texttt{Qc7} 10.\texttt{b3} \texttt{a5} 11.g4 \texttt{b5} 12.g5 \texttt{Qxb3+} 13.axb3 \texttt{Qd7}\]
EXERCISE: In this position, Velimirovic comes up with the type of piece sacrifice he could well have patented!

14.\(\text{Nf5}!\) exf5 15.\(\text{Nd5} Qd8\) 16.exf5

Now

16...0-0?! is a mistake that causes insurmountable problems for Black. How does White exploit it?

Show/Hide the Solution

Dragoljub Velimirovic
Jovan Sofrevski
Titograd ch-YUG 1965 (7)

Another widely known position, where White sacrifices the knight with

14.\(\text{Nf5}!\)

Velimirovic seemed to have a patent on this move.

14...exf5 15.\(\text{Nd5} Wd8\) 16.exf5 0-0?!

Probably a mistake, after which Black’s problems become insurmountable. 16...\(b7\) deserved the preference, in order to eliminate the strong knight on d5, as was played in a game Andreikin-Benidze, Gaziantep Wch jr 2008.
17.f6!

White tries to demolish the enemy king’s position.

17...gxf6 18.d4

A logical attacking move. Also interesting was 18.gxf6  xf6 19.xf6+ xf6 20.f4! with the double intention of e2-g2+ and also d4, without Black being able to interpose a knight on e5.

18...e5

Far worse is 18...e8 19.gxf6 xf6 20.g1+ h8 (20...f8 21.h5) on account of 21.xe8+! xe8 22.xf6, winning.

19.xf6 xf6 20.g1+ g7

After this move things go downhill fast. Slightly more stubborn was 20...h8, although White will also haul in the full point after 21.h5! b8 (21...e6 22.b6!) 22.h6.

21.xe5

Remarkable – White gives up his good bishop, but actually this wins quite easily.

If 21.xg7+ xg7 22.g1+ h8 23.f4 h4 24.e3.

21...dxe5 22.xe5 f6 23.e7+
23...f7

An elegant finish was 23...h8 24.\textit{xd8 fxe5 25.\textit{xf8+ xf8 26.g8\#.}

24.\textit{h5+}

Thus, White saves his own queen with check, and wins the enemy queen. Black resigned here. There could follow:

24...xe7 25.xg7+ (25.ge1+ e6) 25...e6 26.e2+ f5 27.g4+ e5 28.f4+ e4 29.f5+ e5 (or 29...e3 30.e1+ f2 31.e2\#) 30.e2+ xf5 31.f1\#.

\textbf{Petar Popovic}

\textbf{Ognjen Cvitan}

Novi Sad ch-YUG 1985 (6)

1.e4 c5 2.f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.\textit{xd4 f6 5.c3 a6 6.g3 e6 7.g2 e7 8.0-0 c7 9.g4 c6 10.g5 d7 11.h1 0-0 12.f4 \textit{xd4 13.\textit{xd4 b5 14.f5 e8 15.f2! e5 16.a3 b7 17.f4 f8 18.ad1 c6?! 19.e5 dxe5 20.fxe6 fxe6 21.d3 b4?! 22.g6! hxg6? 23.h3 g5}
EXERCISE: White has great attacking chances, but how should he go about it?

**Show/Hide the Solution**

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### Petar Popovic
### Ognjen Cvitan
### Novi Sad ch-YUG 1985 (6)

24. **N**d5!

With this move White posed his opponent unsolvable problems. Another idea was to go for an attack by trying to put his queen on h5. This was also a good possibility, since after 24. **Q**f3 g6 he can again make the sacrifice 25. **N**d5! (instead, 25. **Q**f6? **Q**g7 would be better for Black): 25...exd5 (25... **B**xd5 26.exd5 **R**ad8 27.dxe6 is also very bad for Black, for example: 27... **R**xe6 28. **Q**b3) 26. **Q**f6 **g**7 27. **Q**xc6 wins as well.

24... **Q**b7

This allows a forced mate. After 24...exd5 the queen would join the attack very quickly: 25. **Q**f5 g6 26. **Q**xg6+ **Q**g7 and now a piece is en prise: 27. **Q**xc6, and Black has no defence against all the threats along the light squares.

25. **Q**f3! **h**b5

25...exd5 26. **Wh**5 leads to an unstoppable mate.

25...g6 26. **Q**f6+ **f**7 27. **Q**xe8+ would end in a massacre.

26. **Wh**5 **xf1** 27. **Wh**7+

Black resigned: 27... **h**f7 28. **f**3#. 
Other attacking motifs

We know that in the Sicilian the battle takes place on two wings. The struggle becomes more intense if White castles queenside, and Black – kingside. Then it becomes a fight to the death, where the players often do not shun using heavy weaponry. Below we give two stereotypical examples.

Ildiko Madl
Daniel Summermatter
Geneva 1988

1.e4 c5 2.\(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{N}f3}}\) e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.\(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{N}f6}}\) e4 5.\(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}c3}}\) d6 6.\(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}e3}}\) a6 7.g4 \(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}e7}}\) 8.g5 \(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{f}d7}}\) 9.h4 \(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}c6}}\) 10.\(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{h}h5}}\) 0-0 11.0-0-0 \(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}xd4}}\) 12.\(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}xd4}}\) b5 13.\(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}d3}}\) \(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}e8}}}\)?

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\begin{table}[h]
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Black clears the f8-square for his knight in order to be able to protect h7. But it’s too late already!

14.\(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{h}h6}}}\)!

First White makes a breach in the enemy king’s position, before he focuses on the other weak point – h7. After, for example, 14.e5, Black could have more or less defended himself with 14...g6 15.\(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{f}f3}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{b}b8}}, even though after 16.exd6 \(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}xd6}}\) 17.\(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}e4}}\ he would also be facing a difficult defensive task.

14...\(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}e7}}}\)

Black decides to take up the challenge. There were two options to prevent e4-e5: one is 14...\(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}e5}}\), but this loses to 15.\(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{x}xe5}}}\ dxe5 16.\(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{x}xb5}}\.

14...e5 is also losing in view of 15.\(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{h}h6}}}\ \text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{f}f8}}\) 16.\(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{x}xf8}}}\ \text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xf8}}}\ 17.\(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}d5}}\, and Black could already pack it in, although the white attack is still quite slow. For example: 17...\(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{h}h8}}\) 18.\(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{f}f6}}}\ \text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}e7}}\ 19.f4 \text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{b}b7}}\ 20.f5 b4 21.\(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{h}h1}}}\ \text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}e8}}\ 22.\(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}df1}}}\ a5 23.\(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{h}h5}}}\ f6 24.gxf6 and now it’s really over.

15.\(\text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{h}h6+}}}\ \text{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{h}h8}}}
Even more horrible was 15...\( \text{g}8 \) 16.e5 \( \text{f}8 \) 17.e4 with the idea 18.f6+.

16.e5 \( \text{f}8 \)

17.e4!

Now the knight also participates in the attack, and with this Black’s fate is sealed.

17...g6 18.f6 xf6 19.gxf6!

With the g-pawn! – in order to open the g-file, since in this way Black’s chief defender will be traded off.

19...g8 20.h5 f8
Allowing a beautiful finish. As we predicted, 20...\textit{Q}f8 is met by 21.\textit{R}dg1, after which mate on g7 can no longer be prevented.

21.\textit{R}xh7+! 1-0

21...\textit{K}xh7 22.hxg6#.

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\textbf{Andras Adorjan}
\textbf{Zoltan Ribli}
\textbf{Budapest 1979 (4)}

1.e4 c5 2.\textit{N}f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.\textit{N}xd4 \textit{Q}f6 5.\textit{c}c3 a6 6.\textit{e}e3 \textit{e}5 7.\textit{b}b3 \textit{e}6 8.\textit{d}d2 \textit{bd}7 9.\textit{f}3 \textit{e}e8 10.\textit{g}4 \textit{e}7 11.0-0-0 \textit{b}b6?! 12.\textit{h}4 0-0 13.\textit{h}5! \textit{c}c4 14.\textit{xc}c4 \textit{xc}4 15.\textit{g}5 \textit{d}7 16.\textit{R}dg1

Presumably, 16.g6 is even more direct.

16...\textit{Q}c7?!

Bad was 16...\textit{f}5?! in view of 17.g6!, and even though Black can cut off the \textit{c}e3 from the attack with 17...\textit{f}4, he cannot stop White blasting his kingside open with 18.h6!, and it doesn’t look as if Black will come out of this unharmed.

17.g6!
A good moment to open the king’s position.

17...\texttt{Ec8}

It wouldn’t help to bring the knight over to the defence: 17...\texttt{Bf6} 18.\texttt{Bh6}! \texttt{Ec8} 19.\texttt{Xg7}! \texttt{Xg7} (19...\texttt{Xg7} 20.\texttt{h6}+–) 20.\texttt{h6}+ \texttt{Xg8} 21.\texttt{g7} and White wins; this variation was indicated by Adorjan himself.

Adorjan claims that on 17...\texttt{f6}, 18.\texttt{h6}! also wins. But that is not quite so certain after 18...\texttt{xc3} 19.bxc3 \texttt{Ec8}.

17...\texttt{f5} is impossible in view of 18.\texttt{h6}.

After 17...\texttt{fxg6} the h-file will be opened: 18.\texttt{hxg6} hxg6, and now 19.\texttt{d5} is strongest.

17...\texttt{h6} fails to 18.\texttt{exh6}!.

18.\texttt{h6}!

It is quite exceptional that White can rip open the black king’s position in this way. The standard method is 18.h6! hxg6 (in reply to 18...\texttt{fxg6} White has an attractive combination in store: 19.\texttt{hxg7} \texttt{Xg7}
20.\textit{hxh7+}! (demolishing the last remnants of Black’s castled position) 20...\textit{gxh7} 21.\textit{hxh2+ \textit{gxh8} 22.\textit{hxg6+ \textit{fxg6} 23.\textit{hxh7+ \textit{fxg6} 24.\textit{hxg6, and White wins}) 19.\textit{hxg7 \textit{hxg7} 20.\textit{hxe6 \textit{fxg6} 21.\textit{hxe6+ \textit{gxh6}}.}

\textit{analysis diagram}

For a moment, it seems as if Black can protect everything, but then again, 22.\textit{hxg6+!} is not so hard to find here: 22...\textit{fxg6} 23.\textit{txg6+ \textit{fxg6} 24.\textit{hxh7 also leads to mate) 24.\textit{hxg6+ \textit{fxg6} 25.\textit{hxh6 and after this trade-off of the last defender, Black’s downfall is inevitable.

18...\textit{xf6}
Black thinks that he can save his skin this way, but he’s in for a nasty surprise! Disastrous was 18...gxh6 19.\textit{Q}xh6 fxg6 20.hxg6 \textit{B}f6 21.\textit{Q}xh7+ \textit{K}f8 22.g7+ and there is no saving Black.

But 18...fxg6!? has to be calculated. Here White still has to find a creative solution:

\textit{Analysis Diagram}

19.hxg6 (and not the very creative 19.\textit{B}xg7?! \textit{B}xg7 20.hxg6, as after the ultra-cool 20...\textit{Q}f6! it looks as if Black holds, for example: 21.\textit{Q}xh7+ \textit{K}f8!) 19...\textit{B}f6 20.gxh7+ \textit{B}h8 and now there follows an instructive mating process:

\textit{Analysis Diagram}
21. \( \text{Rxg7}^+ ! \text{Rxg7} \) 22. \( \text{Rxg7} \) \( \text{Rxg7} \) 23. \( \text{Qg5}^+ \) \( \text{Qf7} \) (23...\( \text{Kh8} \) 24. \( \text{Qg1} \) and mate is inevitable) 24. \( \text{Rh6} \) and everything is settled. Here is a sample line, ending in a wonderful mate: 24...\( \text{Kh8} \) 25. \( \text{Rxh6} \) \( \text{Qxe6} \) 26. \( \text{Qg8}^+ \) \( \text{Rxg8} \) 27. \( \text{hxg8=Q} \) \( \text{Qxe7} \) 28. \( \text{Qd5#} \).

With 18...\( \text{Rxh6} \) Black can try to do something in return, but it isn’t enough: 19. \( \text{Rxh7}^+ \) \( \text{Kh7} \) 20. \( \text{Qxg7}^+ \) \( \text{Kh8} \) 21. \( \text{bxc3} \) leads to a winning position for White.

18...\( \text{hxg6} \) is also in vain: 19. \( \text{hxg6} \) \( \text{Rxh6} \) \( \text{Qxc3} \) (what else? 19...\( \text{fxg6} \) 20. \( \text{Rxg6} \) \( \text{Bf8} \) 21. \( \text{Rxg7} \) \( \text{Bxg7} \) 22. \( \text{Rxg7}^+ \) \( \text{Qxg7} \) 23. \( \text{Qg5}^+ \) \( \text{Qf7} \) 24. \( \text{Qh7}^+ \) \( \text{Qf8} \) 25. \( \text{Qg7}^+ \) \( \text{Qe8} \) 26. \( \text{Qh8}^+ \) leads to a familiar mate) 20. \( \text{gxf7}^+ \) \( \text{Qxf7} \) 21. \( \text{Qxg7}^+ \) \( \text{Qe8} \) 22. \( \text{bxc3} \) and White is virtually winning.

19. \( \text{gxh7}^+ \) \( \text{Qxh7} \)

On 19...\( \text{Kh8} \) there is also a forced mate: 20. \( \text{Rxg7}^+ \) \( \text{Rxg7} \) 21. \( \text{Qg5} \) \( \text{Qf6} \) 22. \( \text{Qg8}^+ \).

Now follows a combination of great beauty:

\[ 20. \text{Rxg7}! \text{Rxg7} \ 21. \text{h6}!! \text{Qf6} \]

21...\( \text{f8} \) makes no difference: 22. \( \text{Qg5} \) \( \text{f6} \) 23. \( \text{Qg6}^+ \) \( \text{Kh8} \) 24. \( \text{h7} \) and 25. \( \text{Qg8}^+ \) cannot be prevented.

22. \( \text{Qg2}! \)
The fantastic threat is 23.\textit{W}g7+!! \textit{B}xg7 24.hxg7+ \textit{K}g8 25.\textit{R}h8#, and there is no remedy against that. Therefore Black resigned.

\textbf{Emil Szalanczy}  
\textbf{Viktor Gavrikov}  
Debrecen 1988 (9)  

1.e4 c5 2.\textit{N}f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.\textit{N}xd4 \textit{f}6 5.\textit{c}c3 e6 6.\textit{e}e3 a6 7.g4 \textit{e}e7 8.g5 \textit{d}7 9.h4 \textit{e}e7 10.\textit{h}h5 0-0 11.0-0-0 \textit{x}d4 12.\textit{x}d4 b5 13.\textit{d}3 b4
EXERCISE: White dropped a bombshell here with

14.\textbf{Nd5}!

so that after

14...\textbf{exd5}?

he could continue with another pretty move. What was it?

Show/Hide the Solution

\underline{Emil Szalanczy  
Viktor Gavrikov  
Debrecen 1988 (9)}

We all like to sacrifice pieces. But after

14.\textbf{Nd5! exd5}?

it is vital that you have seen the next sacrifice too. Clearly, Black didn’t see it coming in this game. Probably, 14...\textbf{Ne5} is the only move that does not lose immediately. White can continue with 15.\textbf{Nxe7+ Qxe7} 16.\textbf{Be2}, after which he has won the bishop pair.

15.\textbf{Bxg7}!

A strong sacrifice, with which White rips open the black king’s position.

15...\textbf{Qe8}

Black hopes to be able to defend himself with ...f7-f5. But White puts a stop to that!

White wins after 15...\textbf{Qxg7} 16.\textbf{Qh6+ Kf8} (16...\textbf{Qg8} 17.exd5) 17.e5 (17.exd5? is wrong here on account of 17...\textbf{f5} 18.g6, and here Black has the defence 18...\textbf{Nf6}) 17...\textbf{f5} 18.g6, even though Black can struggle on for a bit with 18...\textbf{Rf7} 19.\textbf{gx}f7 \textbf{Qf8}. 


16. $\text{xf6}$!

Now the mate on h7 can no longer be parried, and so the black player threw in the towel: 16... $\text{xf6}$ (16... $\text{xf6}$ 17.e5 ends in tears for Black in the same way) 17.gxf6 $\text{xf6}$ 18.e5 leads to mate.

This allows a combination of peerless beauty:

16. $\text{f5}$ $\text{c4}$

Very unattractive is 16... $\text{xb3}$ 17.cxb3, because on c4 White will place a monster bishop on the chronically weakened light squares.

17. $\text{xc4}$ $\text{xc4}$
EXERCISE: In this position, White considered the stereotypical attacking idea

18.f6

with the more or less forced continuation

18...\text{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}f6}} 19.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{R}xf6} gxf6 20.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Q}g4+} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{K}h8} 21.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Q}h4} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Q}e6}

Was he forced to conclude that this was all just a mirage, or is there still something for him here?

Show/Hide the Solution

Gennady Kuzmin
Attila Groszpeter

Kusadasi 1990 (5)

If we study this position thoroughly, we should be able to find

18.f6!!

which is a brilliant continuation. This type of sacrifice is of course well-known, but not until much later does it become clear how strong it really is.

18...\text{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}f6}}?!

You cannot blame Black for letting his opponent sacrifice an exchange... If the black player had known what was hanging over his head, he might have played the unattractive 18...\text{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}xf6}}: 19.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Q}h6} (19.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{N}d2} is good for White as well) 19...\text{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}e4}} 20.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{R}f3}! (20.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}f8} is also better for White, but the text move is much stronger) 20...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{h}8} 21.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}f8} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}f8} 22.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{R}xf6}, and with an exchange up (for a pawn) and Black’s open king position, White’s chances are to be preferred. For example, 22...d5? already loses to 23.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Q}h5} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}8} 24.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{R}af1}, and f7 falls.
19.\texttt{xf6 gxf6}

To the naked eye, White's sacrifices look slightly premature. It is hard to see how his pieces can be included in the attack.

20.\texttt{g4+}

This zwischenzug is important – its point will soon become clear. To 20.\texttt{h6} Black can reply with the strong 20...\texttt{xe4}.

20...\texttt{h8 21.h4! e6}

The only move not to get mated right away. Kuzmin must have calculated this sequence of moves, and concluded that he had a formidable continuation here.

22.\texttt{d4!!}

Bringing the knight into the attack with tempo. Over the board it wasn’t easy to foresee that the knight could join the play via this ‘forbidden’ square. Not 22.\texttt{f1?} on account of 22...\texttt{g8! 23.xf6 g4} and Black liquidates into an endgame where he has a material plus.

22...\texttt{e7}

22...\texttt{exd4} is met by 23.\texttt{xd4}, when Black is forced to give up his queen for the bishop, as becomes clear after 23...\texttt{g8 24.xf6+ g7 25.g5 xf6 26.xf6}, and the win is no longer difficult. This is partly because the black pieces are not exactly active.

23.\texttt{f5}

Thus, the knight reaches the desired square.

23...\texttt{e6 24.f1}

White calmly brings his last piece into play. The threat of \texttt{f1-f3-h3} is hard to meet!
24...d5

Black hopes to start some sort of counteraction along the d-file. If the white rook leaves the back rank, he will get counterplay. But White immediately exposes the downside to this move. The blow will soon be dealt on the c5-f8 diagonal!

25. Ng7!

Again, clearly the strongest continuation; the white player keeps playing brilliantly.

25...Qe7

Now 25...Kxg7 would be answered by 26.h6+ h8 27.xf8, when the threat of 28.h6 cannot be staved off by normal means: 27...f5 28.exf5 c6 and now there are various ways to decide the issue. The strongest is 29.f3.

26. c5!

The way the white player manages to overwhelm his opponent is amazing.

26...xc5 27.h5

Groszpeter had his full share, and resigned here. After 27...d6 28.xf6 xf6 29.xf6+ g8 30.f3 it will indeed be the end: 30...c8 31.xf7+ h8 32.f6+ g8 33.g3#.

E. Lidon
J. Romero
Spain tt 1990
19.f5
A well-known type of breakthrough.

19...dxe5?
Black makes a mistake. He could have held with 19...exf5 20.Nxf5!? Bf8!, after which the position is unclear. But definitely not 20...gxf5?? in view of 21.Bxf5.

20.fxg6 hxg6

EXERCISE: Now the black king is ripe for the slaughter, but with what combination can White finish the job?

Show/Hide the Solution

E. Lidon
J. Romero
Spain tt 1990

In the game Black took back on g6 with the h-pawn:

20...hxg6
Also after 20...fxg6 Black would have to cash in his chips following 21.Qxe6! (on 21.Rf7, Black defends with 21...Qg7!) 21...Qxe6 (21...Qd7 22.Qf7! Qxf7 23.Qc4 Qxe6 24.Qxh7+ Qh8 25.Qf1+ Qe8 26.Qg6#) 22.Qxe6+ Qh8 and now 23.Rf7 and White wins the piece back with interest, as 23...Qd7? is impossible in view of 24.Qxh7+ Qxh7 25.Qxg6+ Qh8 26.Qh7#.

21.Qf7!
A splendid sacrifice, dismantling the protective layer around the black king.
21...\textit{xf7} 22.\textit{h7+}

The human move. 22.\textit{xg6+}! leads to a quicker mate: 22...\textit{xf6} 23.\textit{h6+} \textit{f7} 24.\textit{g6+} \textit{g8} 25.\textit{h7+} \textit{f8} 26.\textit{h8#}.

22...\textit{g7}

Also after 22...\textit{f8} White can finish the game: 23.\textit{h8+} \textit{f7} 24.\textit{xg6+}, transferring to the mate variation in one of the lines mentioned above.

23.\textit{xg6+}

And Black resigned in view of 23...\textit{f8} 24.\textit{h8#}.

\hline

\textbf{EXERCISE:} This game illustrates that the text move loses. What is White’s strongest continuation? Give a few variations and ideas to confirm your answer.

\textbf{Show/Hide the Solution}
14. \texttt{\textit{Bxg7}}!

We saw this motif before in the game Madl-Summermatter, Geneva 1988. The pawn on g7 is eliminated in order to prevent Black’s reply ...g7-g6 to e4-e5. 14.\texttt{\textit{d5}}! isn’t bad either, but Black can stay afloat with 14...\texttt{\textit{e5}}. Not 14...exd5? in view of 15.\texttt{\textit{Bxg7}}! \texttt{\textit{Qe8}} 16.\texttt{\textit{f6}}! 1-0, as occurred in Szalanczy-Gavrikov, Debrecen 1988.

14...\texttt{\textit{d5}}

Other moves lose as well: 14...\texttt{\textit{e5}} 15.\texttt{\textit{xe5 dxe5}} 16.\texttt{\textit{d5 h8}} 17.\texttt{\textit{hg1}} with analogous variations to those in the game: 14...\texttt{\textit{Bxg7}} 15.\texttt{\textit{h6+ g8}} 16.e5 f5 17.gxf6 and White wins.

14...\texttt{\textit{bxc3}} 15.e5 cxb2+ 16.\texttt{\textit{b1}} f5 17.gxf6 immediately leads to mate.

15.\texttt{\textit{h6}}!

A very strong move, preparing \texttt{\textit{g7-f6}}.

15...\texttt{\textit{e8}}

\begin{center}
\begin{figure}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chess_board.png}
\end{figure}
\end{center}

16.\texttt{\textit{e2}}!

The knight wants to go to h5, where it will give the attack a decisive impulse.

16...e5 17.\texttt{\textit{g3 g4}}

The only way to keep the white knight from the f5- and h5-squares.

18.\texttt{\textit{c4 e6}}

On 18...\texttt{\textit{xd1}}, 19.g6!– is immediately decisive.

19.\texttt{\textit{x e6 fxe6}}
After 19...\texttt{\textit{\textchi}}e6 the knight can jump inside Black’s position, with grave consequences: 20.\texttt{\textit{\textchipt}}h5 \texttt{\textit{\textchib}}g4 21.\texttt{\textit{\textchipt}}f6+ \texttt{\textit{\textchib}}xf6 22.\texttt{\textit{\textchipt}}xf6 and White wins.

\textbf{20.g6!}

Black surrendered. It is clear that he cannot prevent mate after 20.g6 hxg6 21.\texttt{\textit{\textchipt}}xg6.
5.4 Closed positions

It is a truism that in closed positions, the laws that apply are quite different from those applicable in open positions. For example, ‘fist fights’ such as we have seen in the above fragments mostly don’t take place until later in the game. In the French Defence, we see that both players are trying to manoeuvre their pieces to good squares on both sides of a pawn chain. When the position is suddenly opened, often it will become clear who has done the best manoeuvring job. The player who has positioned his pieces better is usually the one who can start an offensive.

Studying games with this opening is always worthwhile, so as to find out what is the best way to play this preparatory phase.

The French Defence

Alexander Shabalov
Alexey Shirov
Edmonton 2005 (8)

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.c3 c6 5.Nf3 Bd7 6.Be2

Nowadays, 6.a3 is preferred.

6...Ne7 7.Na3 cxd4 8.cxd4 Nf5 9.Nc2 Qb6 10.0-0 Na5

Black is planning to exchange his bad bishop for White’s good one.

11.g4 Ne7 12.Ne1 b5 13.Nd3 h5!

Thus Black damages the white pawn structure; his aim is to acquire the f5-square for his knight.

14.gxh5

White could also maintain a pawn on g4 with 14.h3, but after 14...hxg4 15.hxg4 Ec8 Black’s position is already quite pleasant.

14...f5 15.Ne3 c6!

The best square for the knight is probably c6, from where it attacks White’s biggest weakness: the pawn on d4. 15...Ec4 was played in Sveshnikov-Dolmatov, Nabereznii Chelny 1988.

15...Ec8 has been played too (Pioch-Elwert, Norway 1994), and so has 15...Ed8, S.Horvat-Pecnik, Pula 1999.

16.a4 Ec4 17.b4
Now that there isn’t much that he can do on the queenside, Black manoeuvres his queen to the kingside. This is principally motivated by the fact that the white king has become slightly exposed after 14.gxh5.

18...\texttt{Qg}4 19...\texttt{Qxe}3 20...\texttt{Qg}5 21...\texttt{Qf}3

Black has won his pawn back, and it is clear that his position is to be preferred. But still it is quite surprising that he wins this position within only 10 moves.
21...0-0-0! 22.\textit{xf7?}

White doesn’t understand that he is in danger. Necessary was 22.\textit{ad1}, to which 22...\textit{h6} is probably a good reply.

22...\textit{xh3}

This removes the protection from under the \textit{g4}’s feet.

23.\textit{xe6+}

23.\textit{f2} is met by 23...\textit{g3+} 24.\textit{h2} \textit{h4+} 25.\textit{h3} \textit{xf1} 26.\textit{xe6+} \textit{b8} 27.\textit{xf1} \textit{f3} 28.\textit{g1} \textit{g5+} 29.\textit{h2} \textit{xb4} and Black wins.

23...\textit{b8}

Suddenly Black is threatening both 24...\textit{g3+} and 24...\textit{xd3}. White had probably placed his hopes on the following combination, but it contains a gaping hole.

24.\textit{xf8} \textit{g3+}

The refutation. White would be proved right after 24...\textit{xf8?} 25.\textit{d6+} \textit{a8} 26.\textit{xf8++}, because 26...\textit{d8} 27.\textit{f4!} is fine for him.

25.\textit{f2} \textit{gxg4}

Now the white king is helpless.

26.\textit{d6+}

After 26.\textit{xd8+} \textit{xd8} 27.\textit{d6+} \textit{a8} 28.\textit{f4} White is mated by 28...\textit{h4+} 29.\textit{f3} \textit{g3#}.

26...\textit{a8} 27.\textit{xd8+} \textit{xd8} 28.\textit{d7}
Now the black attack runs very smoothly. 28.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{N}}} e1 would turn out badly after 28...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}xd3 29.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{N}}} xd3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{R}}}g2+ 30.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{K}}} f1 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{R}}}g1+ 31.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{N}}} e2 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{R}}}xa1.

28...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{R}}}g2+ 29.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{K}}} e1 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Q}}}g3+ 30.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}}d1 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Q}}}f3+

And Shabalov had seen enough. After 30...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Q}}}f3+ 31.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{K}}} c1 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Q}}}xc2+ 32.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{K}}} c2 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Q}}}xa1 33.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Q}}}f8, mate is forced, starting with 38...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Q}}}e1+ 39.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}}}a1 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Q}}}xe3+ 40.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}}}a2 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Q}}}xc3#.

**Alexander Chistiakov**

**Tigran Petrosian**

Moscow-ch 1956

\textbf{1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{N}}}c3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}b4 4.e5 b6}

This continuation isn’t played very often.

5.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Q}}}g4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}}}f8

Vintage Petrosian. He puts a piece he has just developed back on its starting square. However, in such closed positions, loss of time is not calamitous. Black has no weaknesses, and so White won’t be able to find any targets.

\textbf{6.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}}}f3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}}d7}

Another typical Petrosian move. The idea is to prepare \ldots0-0-0 at some point.

\textbf{7.a3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}}}c6}

Not an everyday move either. Black’s play is based on the \ldotsc7-c5 push, with which he can attack the white centre. But Petrosian first aims to develop his queenside, play the knight to a5, and then, at some point, throw in \ldotsc7-c5. One of the ideas of Black’s system is the exchange of his bad bishop for White’s good one: 7...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}a6 8.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}xa6 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Q}}}xa6. But the knight isn’t best placed on a6.

\textbf{8.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}}e3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}}b7 9.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}}b5?!}

The bishop isn’t great here. 9.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}}d3 is normal, also to justify a2-a3.

\textbf{9...0-0-0 10.0-0 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Q}}}ge7 11.b4?!}

White thinks he will be able to achieve something on the queenside, but that proves to be an illusion. 11.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}}e2 looks like a better game plan to me, in order to enable c2-c3 and then, when possible, work on the f2-f4-f5 push.

\textbf{11...f6!}

Petrosian attacks the head of the white pawn centre instead of the base.

\textbf{12.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{R}}}fe1 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}}}f5 13.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Q}}}h3 h5 14.g3}

If he had planned 14.g4?, the white player may have now realized that Black had woven a \textit{petite combinaison} into the position: 14...hxg4! 15.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Q}}}xh8 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Q}}}xb4 and Black wins.

\textbf{14...a6 15.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}}}a4?}
There is no future for the bishop here. It belongs on d3, even though after 15...d3 Qxe3 16.fxe3 (16.Qxe3 g5!) 16...g5! 17.Qg2 g4 18.Qh4 fxe5 Black would have obtained splendid prospects.

Giving up this bishop for the knight with 15.Bxc6 hardly comes into consideration, as Black would stand very well after 15...Qxc6 16.Bd2 g5.

15...g5!

You can bet your life that the black player would seize this chance.

16.g4

More or less forced, but now Petrosian can indulge in his favourite hobby: sacrificing the exchange. After 16.Qf1 g4 17.d2 fxe5 White loses an important centre pawn.

16...hxg4! 17.Qh8 gxf3!

Now 17...Qxb4 is also possible, although White wouldn’t be so badly off after 18.Qxf6 Qxc3 19.Qxg5.

18.Qh5

On 18.Qxf6 Black can even burn a few bridges behind him with 18...Qh7! 19.Qxe6+ Qb8, and the threat of 20.Qh3 cannot be parried in a satisfactory way.

18...b5
19.\textit{\textbf{Nx}}b5

This loses, but the white player prefers to go down with a bang, rather than die a slow death after the alternative – understandably, he didn’t fancy 19.\textit{\textbf{B}}b3 fxe5, for what can he do here?

19...\textit{\textbf{axb5}} 20.\textit{\textbf{Bxb5}} fxe5 21.\textit{\textbf{K}}h1 \textit{\textbf{Qg7}}

Breaking the pin, and exerting pressure on the centre.

22.\textit{\textbf{Bxc6}} \textit{\textbf{Bxc6}} 23.\textit{\textbf{dxe5}} \textit{\textbf{Bxe7}} 24.\textit{\textbf{b5}} \textit{\textbf{Bb7}} 25.\textit{\textbf{Qg4}} \textit{\textbf{Rh8}}

All of White’s pieces are badly placed, and with two pieces for a rook the battle is decided.

26.\textit{\textbf{Qg1}} d4 27.\textit{\textbf{Bd2}} g4 28.\textit{\textbf{xf4}}

If he had hoped to avoid Black’s following pawn push with this move, he was in for a surprise...
28...g3! 29.\textit{xg3} \textit{\textit{xg3}}+

And White resigned.

\begin{center}
\textbf{B. Hopley}
\textbf{Nigel Holloway}
Oxford ch-BCF U18 1967 (1)
\end{center}

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.\textit{Nc3} \textit{Bb4} 4.e5 c5 5.a3 \textit{Bxc3}+ 6.bxc3 \textit{e7} 7.f4

Rather unusual. White ‘forgets’ to develop his pieces.

7...\textit{Qa5} 8.d2 \textit{d7}

The knight actually belongs on c6, but on this square it has a future too. 8...\textit{Qa4} 9.f3 \textit{bc6} was also possible.

9.\textit{g4} g6 10.f3 \textit{f5} 11.a4?
EXERCISE: This type of move is played quite often, but here it is a downright blunder. How does Black win material?

Show/Hide the Solution

B. Hopley  
Nigel Holloway  
Oxford ch-BCF U18 1967 (1)

11...\textit{\textit{Q}}e3!

An unexpected possibility presents itself!

12.c4

This does not help. 12.\textit{\textit{B}}xe3 \textit{Q}xc3+ also loses immediately.

12...\textit{\textit{Q}}xd2+!

But this way White loses a piece as well.

13.\textit{\textit{Q}}xd2 \textit{\textit{Q}}xg4

Peter Svidler  
Alexey Shirov  
Leon rapid 2004 (2)

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5
The Advance Variation remains an important choice even today.

3...c5 4.c3 \(\text{\textit{\textit{b}}}_6\) 5.\(\text{\textit{d}}_f3\) \(\text{\textit{d}}_7\) 6.\(\text{\textit{e}}_2\) \(\text{\textit{b}}_5\)

The exchange of the light-squared bishops is a standard plan. This can also be done after first exchanging on d4:

6...cxd4!? 7.cxd4 \(\text{\textit{b}}_5\) 8.\(\text{\textit{c}}_3\) \(\text{\textit{e}}_2\) 9.\(\text{\textit{e}}_2\) with interesting play.

7.\(\text{\textit{d}}_c5\)

A new idea. 7.0-0 is too tame, because now Black is able to carry out his plan: 7...\(\text{\textit{e}}_2\) 8.\(\text{\textit{x}}_e2\) \(\text{\textit{a}}_6\)!

In order to thwart Black’s plan, White can play 7.c4. After 7...\(\text{\textit{x}}_c4\) 8.\(\text{\textit{x}}_c4\) \(\text{\textit{b}}_4\) 9.\(\text{\textit{d}}_d2\) dxc4 10.0-0 it is completely unclear.

7...\(\text{\textit{e}}_5\) 8.\(\text{\textit{b}}_4\)!

Provoking the opponent to enter obscure complications. The normal move is 8.0-0, but after 8...\(\text{\textit{e}}_2\) 9.\(\text{\textit{x}}_e2\) \(\text{\textit{a}}_6\) Black stands quite comfortably.

8...\(\text{\textit{x}}_f2\+)

Black takes up the gauntlet. 8...\(\text{\textit{e}}_7\) was played in A.Wolf-Salewski, Dresden 2002. If 8...\(\text{\textit{f}}_8\) 9.0-0 \(\text{\textit{e}}_2\) 10.\(\text{\textit{x}}_e2\), and White is a tad better.

9.\(\text{\textit{f}}_1\)

True, White has lost a pawn and also his castling rights, but Black’s bishop on f2 is in a rather tight spot.

9...\(\text{\textit{d}}_7\)

At the time a novelty. Clearly, 9...\(\text{\textit{e}}_2\)+ loses a piece after 10.\(\text{\textit{x}}_e2\).

One option is 9...\(\text{\textit{c}}_6\), when a possible continuation is 10.\(\text{\textit{d}}_3\) (to prevent 10...\(\text{\textit{e}}_3\)) 10...a6 11.a4 \(\text{\textit{e}}_7\) 12.\(\text{\textit{a}}_2\) \(\text{\textit{f}}_5\) 13.\(\text{\textit{h}}_4\) (13...\(\text{\textit{e}}_3\)?) 14.a5 \(\text{\textit{a}}_7\) 15.\(\text{\textit{x}}_h4\) \(\text{\textit{x}}_h4\) 16.\(\text{\textit{e}}_3\) b6 17.\(\text{\textit{x}}_b6\) \(\text{\textit{b}}_7\) 18.\(\text{\textit{d}}_4\) \(\text{\textit{f}}_6\)!, as occurred in Kristjansson-Thorsson, Iceland tt 1998. White’s insecure king caused him some trouble in that game.

10.\(\text{\textit{d}}_2\)!

This is what Svidler had been planning. He prevents 10...\(\text{\textit{e}}_3\) and now threatens to win the black bishop with 11.\(\text{\textit{d}}_3\).

10...\(\text{\textit{h}}_6\)
11.\textit{d}3?

Based on a miscalculation. Good or bad, Svidler had to go for 11.c4 with huge complications.

11...\textit{g}4

Thus Black still gains control of the e3-square.

12.\textit{g}5?

White already had problems, but now he definitely gets bamboozled.

12.h3 is met by 12...\textit{e}3+, winning, and if 12.\textit{f}4!? f5! 13.h3 (13.exf6 \textit{xf}6 14.\textit{e}2 0-0 and Black wins) 13...\textit{e}3
14.\textbf{\texttt{Bxe3}}  \texttt{\textbf{B}}xe3+ 15.\textbf{\texttt{Ke2}}  \texttt{\textbf{Xg2}} 16.\texttt{\textbf{g5}} (16.\texttt{\textbf{d2}} f4 17.\texttt{\textbf{g1}}  \textbf{\texttt{h4}}!) 16...f4!, Black is already winning.

12...\textbf{\texttt{b5}}!

With this excellent move, Black definitely takes over. 12...\texttt{g1} or 12...\texttt{e1}!? would have won as well.

13.c4

EXERCISE: With his last move, White thought he could do something in return. But he was in for a nasty surprise.

With which move did the black player force his opponent to resign?

Show/Hide the Solution

Peter Svidler
Alexey Shirov
Leon rapid 2004 (2)

Black had prepared a cute little move:

13...\textbf{\texttt{g3}}!

And, disillusioned, Svidler resigned. It cannot have happened often that he lost a game in 13 moves!

13...\texttt{e1}! was winning too: 14.c5 (14.\texttt{\textbf{xe1}} \texttt{f2+} 15.\texttt{\textbf{d1}} \texttt{a4+} 16.\texttt{c2} xc2#) 14...\texttt{xd3}+-- 15.\texttt{xe1} \texttt{xb4}+ and Black wins.

After 13...\texttt{g3} 14.\texttt{d2} dxe4 15.hxg3 cxd3 White can forget it.

Giorgio Coppini
Bela Vigh

With this strong move, Black seizes the initiative.

16.dxe5?

EXERCISE: This move loses. How?

Show/Hide the Solution

Giorgio Coppini
Bela Vigh
Budapest 1995 (3)

White hasn’t realized that his queen is in trouble.

Black encircled it with

16...Qd7!

There is no escape for the queen.

17.Qb4

After 17.Qb3 Qa4 18.Qb4 a5 the queen is also pocketed.

17...a5 18.Qxb6
White could also have resigned here. 18.\textit{b}3 \textit{a}4 would be merely a transposition.

18...\textit{x}b6 19.\textit{x}b6 \textit{d}xe5 20.\textit{x}e5 \textit{w}xb6 21.\textit{d}xe7 \textit{w}xf2+ 22.\textit{d}d1 \textit{e}e8

And Black won.

---

Helgi Ziska
Teimour Radjabov
Istanbul ol 2012 (3)

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.c3 \textit{c}6 5.\textit{f}3 \textit{b}d7 6.a3 \textit{c}8 7.\textit{d}d3 cxd4 8.cxd4 \textit{w}b6 9.\textit{c}2

EXERCISE: Now the black player decided to try to bend the game to his will with

9...\textit{d}xd4 10.\textit{d}xd4 \textit{c}5

Here White faced the choice whether to defend with 10.\textit{f}3 or 10.\textit{b}3. Which move would you choose?

Show/Hide the Solution

Helgi Ziska
Teimour Radjabov
Istanbul ol 2012 (3)

Black made use of the awkward positioning of several of White’s pieces:

9...\textit{d}xd4?!

With this thematic sacrifice, Black systematically weakens the white pawn centre, and now he can also besiege the
black king. However, it is questionable whether the move is objectively correct.

10. \( \text{Nxd4} \)

10.\( \text{Nxd4?! Rxe2} \) is obviously excellent for Black.

10...\( \text{c5} \) 11.\( \text{b3?} \)

After this move, the sacrifice is definitely sound. White had to defend with 11.\( \text{f3! Bxf2+} \) 12.\( \text{e2} \) and then White would have had the advantage.

For example, the drastic 12...\( \text{g5} \) doesn’t work in view of 13.\( \text{a4!} \).

Also after 12...\( \text{b5+} \) 13.\( \text{d3} \) Black has no decent follow-up.

Best, under the circumstances, seems 12...\( \text{e7?!} \) in order to involve his knight in the battle as soon as possible. However, after 13.\( \text{c3} \) White’s position deserves the preference.

11...\( \text{xf2+} \) 12.\( \text{Ke2} \) \( \text{Nh6!} \) 13.\( \text{c3} \) \( \text{g4} \) 14.\( \text{a4} \)

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.8\textwidth]{chess_board.png}
\end{center}

14...\( \text{g3} \)

We know this move from the game Svidler-Shirov – see Exercise 60. 14...\( \text{c7!} \) was probably better: 15.\( \text{f1} \) (15.h3 is met by 15...\( \text{xe5+} \) 16.\( \text{f1} \) \( \text{e3+} \) 17.\( \text{xe3} \) \( \text{xe3} \)) 15...\( \text{e3+} \) 16.\( \text{xe3} \) \( \text{xe3} \), followed by 17...\( \text{xe5} \), and Black has wonderful play.

15.\( \text{d4} \) \( \text{xd4} \) 16.\( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{xe5} \)

Thus Black has obtained a third pawn for the piece, as well as control of the centre.

17.\( \text{f3} \) \( \text{d6} \) 18.\( \text{b3} \) 0-0 19.\( \text{h3} \) \( \text{f6} \) 20.\( \text{e3} \) a6 21.\( \text{ac1} \)
21...b5!

Disturbing the cooperation between the white pieces.

22.axb5 axb5 23.Bg5 Nh5 24.Kd2 g3 25.he1?

Now things go from bad to worse for White. 25.hd1 b4 26.e2 e4+ gives Black an advantage.

25...b4 26.e2 e4+ 27.d1 c5 28.c e5

Black has a mighty pawn centre, and the white pieces are gasping for air.

29.d2?

White caves in, and now Black ends the game efficiently.

29.b3 f5 also ends in a total fiasco for White.

29...a4 30.b1
30...\textit{xc}2! 31.b3

31.\textit{xc}2 \textit{xf}5+ 32.b3 (32.c1 \textit{c}8+) 32...\textit{c}5+ 33.\textit{xb}4 \textit{b}8+, winning.

31...\textit{cc}8 0-1

If 32.bxa4 \textit{xa}4+ 33.b3 \textit{xb}3#.

\textbf{The King's Indian Defence}

In a certain sense, the introductory remarks in the previous section, on the French, also apply to the King’s Indian. Also here we see a pawn chain in many variations, and both players manoeuvre their pieces to certain squares on both sides of the chain. In the main lines, we see that Black hurls forward the pawns in front of his own king, in an attempt to attack the opponent’s king. The white player directs his attention to the queenside, where he can often carry out a brutal massacre. If Black burns all his bridges behind him on that wing, he will have no choice but to strike on the other side.

Also here we encounter specific sacrificial motifs in games by great masters, where they managed to profit from their superior set-up. The fact that in this opening, the game is often hanging by a thread makes it all the more exciting!

\textbf{Gata Kamsky}
\textbf{Garry Kasparov}
Paris 1992 (3)

1.d4 \textit{f}6 2.c4 g6 3.\textit{c}3 \textit{g}7 4.e4 d6 5.\textit{f}3 0-0 6.\textit{e}2 e5 7.0-0 \textit{c}6 8.d5 \textit{e}7 9.d2 \textit{e}8 10.b1?! f5 11.b4 \textit{f}6 12.f3 f4 13.c5 g5 14.\textit{c}4 \textit{g}6 15.a4 \textit{f}7 16.\textit{a}3 \textit{f}8 17.a5 \textit{g}7 18.b5 b6! 19.cxd6 cxd6 20.\textit{a}2 g4! 21.fxg4 \textit{h}4! 22.\textit{b}3 \textit{x}g4 23.\textit{f}3 bxa5 24.\textit{d}2 a4 25.\textit{c}3 \textit{d}7 26.\textit{b}1 \textit{c}8 27.\textit{h}1

This position contains a hidden, beautiful combination.
27...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{N}}xh2}!

Black can also turn the moves around: 27...\texttt{\texttt{R}}xc4 28.\texttt{\texttt{R}}xc4 \texttt{\texttt{N}}xh2 wins as well.

28.\texttt{\texttt{R}}xh2 \texttt{\texttt{R}}xc4

The point.

29.\texttt{\texttt{R}}bc1

Since 29.\texttt{\texttt{R}}xc4 is met by 29...\texttt{\texttt{N}}xf3+ 30.gxf3 \texttt{\texttt{Q}}h4#.

29...\texttt{\texttt{N}}xf3+ 30.\texttt{\texttt{Q}}xf3 \texttt{\texttt{Q}}h4+ 31.\texttt{\texttt{K}}g1 \texttt{\texttt{R}}xe4
Black has won a few important pawns. Due to the major pieces and the black bishop pair, it’s a one-sided fight from here on.

32.\textit{Qf2} \textit{Qh5} 33.\textit{Rc7} \textit{Re1+}!

Well spotted.

34.\textit{Qxe1} \textit{Qxf3} 35.\textit{d2} \textit{g4} 36.\textit{c3} \textit{f3} 37.\textit{xa7} \textit{h3} 0-1

Frantisek Zita
David Bronstein
Moscow-Prague 1946 (6)

1.c4 e5 2.\textit{c3} \textit{d6} 3.\textit{f3} d6 4.d4 \textit{bd7} 5.g3 \textit{g6} 6.\textit{g2} \textit{g7} 7.0-0 0-0 8.b3 \textit{e8} 9.b2 \textit{c6} 10.e4 exd4 11.\textit{xd4} \textit{b6} 12.\textit{d2} \textit{c5} 13.\textit{fe1} a5 14.\textit{ab1} a4 15.a1 axb3 16.axb3 \textit{g4} 17.h3
Black’s pieces display great activity, but since his knight threatens to be kicked back from g4, he needs to react sharply here. Bronstein dashed off a sparkling combination:

17...\textit{Rxa1}!

This bishop was essential to protect the dark squares, and so Black is more than willing to give up the exchange to remove it from the board!

18.\textit{Rx a1}

18.hxg4 \textit{Rxb1} 19.\textit{Rx b1} \textit{Rxg4} would have yielded Black a valuable pawn and the bishop pair without a fight.
18...\textit{xf2}!

Of course he had to have seen this continuation too. Not 18...\textit{xb3}? 19.\textit{xb3} \textit{xb3} in view of the beautiful counter 20.e5!, and suddenly great problems are looming for Black: 20...\textit{xe5} (the knight retreat 20...\textit{h6} fails to 21.exd6! \textit{d8} 22.\textit{e4} \textit{xa1} 23.\textit{xa1} and White is winning) 21.f4 and White wins material.

19.\textit{xe3}

19.\textit{xf2} is met by 19...\textit{d3} 20.\textit{a4} \textit{xd4} 21.\textit{xb6} \textit{xf2}+ 22.\textit{f1} \textit{xb6}, and Black wins.

19.\textit{xf2} also meets with a powerful reply: 19...\textit{xb3}.

19...\textit{xd3}+ 20.\textit{h2} \textit{f2} 21.\textit{f3} \textit{cxe4} 22.\textit{f4} \textit{g4}+ 23.\textit{h1} \textit{f5}

Marginally stronger was 23...\textit{f2}+ 24.\textit{xf2} \textit{xf2}+ 25.\textit{xf2} \textit{d4}.

24.\textit{xe4} \textit{xe4} 25.\textit{xd6} \textit{xd4} 26.\textit{b8} \textit{d8} 27.\textit{a8} \textit{e5} 28.\textit{a7} \textit{b4}! 29.\textit{a2} \textit{f8}! 30.\textit{h3} \textit{h6}

\begin{center}
Alejandro Hoffman
Fabian Fiorito
Buenos Aires 1998 (4)
\end{center}

1.d4 \textit{f6} 2.c4 \textit{g6} 3.\textit{c3} \textit{g7} 4.e4 \textit{d6} 5.\textit{f3} 0-0 6.\textit{e2} \textit{e5} 7.0-0 \textit{c6} 8.d5 \textit{e7} 9.\textit{g5} \textit{e8} 10.\textit{d2} \textit{h6} 11.\textit{e3} \textit{f5} 12.f3 \textit{f4} 13.\textit{f2} \textit{h5} 14.a4 \textit{g5} 15.\textit{f6} \textit{f6} 16.a5 \textit{g6} 17.cxd6 cxd6 18.\textit{b5} \textit{d7} 19.\textit{xa7} \textit{c8} 20.\textit{xe8} \textit{exe8} 21.\textit{b3} \textit{g4} 22.\textit{h1}

22...\textit{g3}! 23.\textit{a7}

After this move, White’s game goes rapidly downhill, but there is no useful alternative: 23.\textit{g1} loses on account of 23...\textit{g5} and there is nothing to be found against the mating attack: 24.h3 \textit{h3} 25.gxh3 \textit{g2}+ 26.\textit{h2} \textit{g3}#.
And on 23.\textit{Whx}7 \textit{Wh}4 24.\textit{Wh}g1 follows 24...\textit{Wh}3! 25.gxh3 \textit{g}2#.

\textbf{23...\textit{Wh}4 24.\textit{Wh}g1}

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\textbf{EXERCISE:} It’s always a bare-fisted fight in this opening. How did Black decide the struggle in his favour?

Show/Hide the Solution

\textbf{Alejandro Hoffman}
\textbf{Fabian Fiorito}
Buenos Aires 1998 (4)

\textbf{24...\textit{Wh}h3! 0-1}

Black wins in all lines: 25.gxh3 (25.hxg3 \textit{Wh}xg2+ 26.\textit{Kh}xg2 \textit{Wh}xg3+ 27.\textit{Kh}f2 \textit{Wh}g6#; 25.\textit{Wh}xh7 \textit{Wh}xg2+ 26.\textit{Kh}xg2 gxh2+ 27.\textit{Kh}h1 hxg1=\textit{R}#) 25...\textit{g}2#.

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\textbf{Burkhard Malich}
\textbf{Dragoljub Janosevic}
Budapest 1965 (15)

1.d4 \textit{Wh}f6 2.c4 \textit{g}6 3.\textit{Wh}c3 \textit{Wh}g7 4.\textit{Wh}f3 0-0 5.e4 \textit{d}6 6.\textit{Wh}e2 \textit{e}5 7.0-0 \textit{Wh}c6 8.d5 \textit{Wh}e7 9.\textit{Wh}e1 \textit{d}7 10.\textit{Wh}e3 \textit{f}5 11.\textit{f}3 \textit{f}4 12.\textit{Wh}f2 \textit{g}5 13.b4 \textit{Wh}f6 14.c5 \textit{Wh}g6 15.cxd6 cxd6 16.\textit{c}1 \textit{Wh}f7 17.\textit{Wh}c2 \textit{h}5 18.\textit{Wh}a3 \textit{g}4 19.\textit{Wh}b5 a6 20.\textit{Wh}c3 b5 21.\textit{Wh}ab1 \textit{d}7 22.a4 \textit{Wh}f8 23.\textit{Wh}a3 \textit{Wh}g7 24.\textit{Wh}h1
24...g3! 25.e1

If White accepts the pawn sacrifice with 25.hxg3, Black gets magnificent attacking play: 25...fxg3 26.xg3 h4 27.f2 (27.h2 h5! and there is not much White can do against the invasion of the black knights after 28.f2 g3+ 29.g1 f4) 27...h5, followed by attacking moves like ...g5, ...gf4, and it becomes clear that Black’s initiative will reach hurricane force.

25...bxa4 26.xa4?
EXERCISE: As so often in the main-line King’s Indian, Black has managed to get a pawn on g3. But what would be a fitting conclusion if White underestimates the danger?

Show/Hide the Solution

Burkhard Malich
Dragoljub Janosevic
Budapest 1965 (15)

Here Black decided to make a beautiful piece sacrifice:

26...\(\text{Nxe4!!} \) 0-1

A well-known motif, but it had to be played at the right moment. After 27.fxe4 \(\text{Qh4} \) 28.h3 \(\text{Bxh3} \) Black will break through the lines.

Margareta Muresan
Zorica Nikolin
Jajce W 1984

1.\(\text{Nf3} \) \(\text{Nf6} \) 2.\(\text{c4} \) \(\text{g6} \) 3.\(\text{Nc3} \) \(\text{Bg7} \) 4.\(\text{e4} \) d6 5.d4 0-0 6.\(\text{e2} \) e5 7.0-0 \(\text{Nc6} \) 8.d5 \(\text{e7} \) 9.\(\text{e1} \) \(\text{d7} \) 10.\(\text{d3} \) f5 11.\(\text{f3} \) \(\text{f6} \) 12.\(\text{e3} \) f4 13.\(\text{f2} \) g5 14.\(\text{c5} \) \(\text{g6} \) 15.\(\text{Ec1} \) \(\text{f7} \) 16.\(\text{b4} \) h5 17.\(\text{b5} \) \(\text{f8} \) 18.\(\text{b3} \) a6 19.\(\text{bxa6} \) bxa6 20.\(\text{b4} \) g4 21.\(\text{c6} \) \(\text{d7} \) 22.\(\text{a4} \) g3 23.\(\text{hxg3} \) fxg3 24.\(\text{xg3} \) \(\text{h6} \) 25.\(\text{a1} \) h4 26.\(\text{h2} \) \(\text{e3}+ \) 27.\(\text{h1} \) \(\text{h5} \) 28.\(\text{d1} \)

EXERCISE: White was already in trouble, but now Black can finish off immediately. How did she do that?

Show/Hide the Solution
Margareta Muresan
Zorica Nikolin
Jajce (w) 1984

Black trampled her opponent underfoot with

28...\texttt{Qg3}+! 29.\texttt{Nxg3 hXg3} 30.\texttt{Qxe3 Qh7+} 31.\texttt{Qg1 Bh1}+!

A well-known pattern. White resigned here, since after 32.\texttt{Kh1 Qh7+} 33.\texttt{Qg1 Qh2} it’s Damiano’s mate.

Ludek Pachman
David Bronstein
Moscow-Prague 1946 (2)

1.d4 \texttt{Nf6} 2.c4 \texttt{d6} 3.\texttt{c3 e5} 4.\texttt{f3 Bd7} 5.g3 \texttt{g6} 6.\texttt{Nf3 g7} 7.0-0 0-0 8.b3 \texttt{Be8} 9.e4 \texttt{exd4} 10.\texttt{Nxd4 c5} 11.\texttt{Be1 a5} 12.\texttt{b2 a4} 13.\texttt{c1 c6} 14.\texttt{a1 axb3} 15.\texttt{xb3 b6} 16.h3 \texttt{Qd7} 17.\texttt{b1 f8} 18.\texttt{h2 h5} 19.\texttt{e2 h4} 20.\texttt{d2}

EXERCISE: How can Black profit from the slightly shaky deployment of the white pieces?

Show/Hide the Solution

Ludek Pachman
David Bronstein
Moscow-Prague 1946 (2)

In this position, as so often, Bronstein couldn’t help himself: he sacrificed the exchange in order to weaken the dark squares in the white camp.
20...\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}xa1!} 21.\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}xa1} \textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}xd4} 22.\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}xd4} \textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}xb3} 23.\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}xd6}

\begin{center}
\textbf{Diagram}
\end{center}

23...\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}xf2!}

Black is happy to take this pawn. The acute Bronstein has seen that the knight on b3 is inviolable. If Black wanted to regain the exchange on a1, he would have been in for a nasty surprise: 23...\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}xa1} 24.\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}d5!} followed by 25.\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}f6+} and 26.\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}xe8}.

24.\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}a2}

On 24.\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}xb3}, almost any move wins for Black. The strongest is 24...hxg3+! (regaining the material with 24...\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}xg3+} was obviously also okay) 25.\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}h1} and now the lethal blow 25...\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}xh3} 26.\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}g1} \textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}xg2}+ 27.\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}g2} \textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}f1}+ 28.\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}g1} \textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}h3#}.

24...\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}xg3}+ 25.\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}h1} \textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}xc3} 26.\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}a3}

Thus, White regains the knight, but in the meantime he is losing a boxful of pawns. Not 26.\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}d3} as then Black saves his piece in a comical way with 26...\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}c1}!.

26...\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}xh3} 27.\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}xb3} \textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}xg2}+ 28.\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}xg2} \textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}xc4} 29.\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}d4} \textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}e6} 30.\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}xb7} \textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}a8}

With three pawns for the exchange, but, mainly in view of the unsafe position of the white king, the game is obviously over. White went down quickly, especially after his next move:

31.\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}e2}?

Also after 31.\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}f3}, 31...\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}a2}+ 32.\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}f1} h3 would pilot the ship into the safe port.

31...h3+

Not the most accurate move, but the white player had seen enough now. With 31...\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}e5}! 32.\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}db4} \textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}g3}+ 33.\textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}h1} \textsf{\textbf{\textnumero}a3}! Black could have finished in style.
5.5 ‘Accidents’ in the opening

Once I played at a club that had found accommodation for its competitions in a café. The weekend matches against other clubs were also organized here. The café owner had made a room available, but on the condition that the players in the club would help with moving the tables and chairs before they started playing their games.

However, not every member of the club adhered to this protocol. On one occasion, a teammate had already grabbed a table, and found his newly arrived opponent, who was willing to start the clock. While the room was still in utter chaos (people were walking to and fro with tables, chairs, chessboards, pieces and clocks), here, in a little corner, the following moves came on the board.

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.c3 Nf6 4.Bg2

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4...Nx e4?? 5.Qa4+ 1-0

The match had hardly begun, and we were already trailing 1-0! Our team mate, obviously feeling quite guilty, did do the courtesy of bringing us drinks for the rest of the afternoon...

Not every game is lost in such a clumsy way. Sometimes it can be over quickly, but this may also be the result of brilliant play. Like in the following game, between two aged celebrities.

\[
\text{Miso Cebalo} \\
\text{Evgeny Vasyukov} \\
\text{Sibenik Ech sr tt 2014 (6)}
\]

1.d4 f5 2.Bg5

This sharp move is especially interesting as a surprise weapon. White intends to steer the game into unfamiliar channels.

2...g6
2...h6 3.\texttt{h}4 g5 doesn’t win a piece, as White has 4.\texttt{g}3, when 4...f4 is wrong in view of 5.e3. Starting from this position, a second accident is by no means unimaginable: 5...h5 6.\texttt{d}3 \texttt{h}6?? 7.\texttt{x}h5+ \texttt{x}h5 8.\texttt{g}6#, as occurred in a game Teed-Delmar, New York 1896.

3.e3

3.\texttt{c}3 and 3.h4 are sharper alternatives.

3...\texttt{h}6

This set-up contains a clear idea: by putting the knight on f7, Black wants to challenge the bishop on g5, and additionally, he wants to prepare the ...e7-e5 push at some point.

3...\texttt{g}7 4.\texttt{f}3 \texttt{f}6 is more often played.

4.h4 \texttt{f}7 5.\texttt{f}4 d6 6.\texttt{f}3

In a game Kopylova-Renner, Nuremberg 2007, there followed 6.\texttt{c}4.

6...\texttt{d}7 7.\texttt{c}4!

White develops his pieces as actively as possible. At the same time he is incorporating a nice trick into the position.

7...\texttt{g}7?

This loses right away, but the refutation is not so easy to find. It was necessary first to move the knight from d7, to take care that the e6-square does not remain fatally vulnerable: 7...\texttt{b}6 or 7...\texttt{f}6.

8.\texttt{x}f7+! \texttt{x}f7 9.\texttt{g}5+ \texttt{f}6

When you realize everything else loses, you turn to moves like this. Of course he saw that 9...\texttt{g}8 10.\texttt{e}6 \texttt{e}8 11.\texttt{xc}7 was hopeless for him.
10. \( \text{dxc3} \) \( \text{c6} \)

The d5-square had to be defended as well, but this makes matters worse. Also after 10...e6 11.d5! e5 12.\( \text{dxe6} \) \( \text{g8} \) 13.\( \text{g5+} \) \( \text{f7} \) 14.h5! Black does not stand the slightest chance.

11.\( \text{f3!} \)

Cebalo throws his strongest piece into the fray, creating beautiful threats.

11...\( \text{e5} \)

Relatively better, but also without prospects, was 11...\( \text{a5} \) 12.0-0-0 when Black also would not survive. One of White’s ideas reveals itself after 11...h6 12.\( \text{e5+} \) (12.\( \text{ce4+} \) fxe4 13.\( \text{e5#} \)) 12...dxe5 13.\( \text{ce4#} \).

Probably Black had missed White’s next move, which is fortunate for us, as now White achieved immortality with the following spectacular move:

12.\( \text{d5!!} \)

A wonderful queen sacrifice that leads to immediate mate.

12...\( \text{e7} \)

12...cxd5 13.\( \text{xd5#} \).

13.\( \text{xh7+!} \)

And Black resigned, as 13...\( \text{xh7} \) 14.\( \text{g5#} \) is another beautiful mate.
1.\( \text{\texttt{d}f3} \) \( \text{\texttt{c}5} \) 2.\( \text{\texttt{c}4} \) \( \text{\texttt{c}6} \) 3.\( \text{\texttt{d}x\texttt{d}4} \) \( \text{\texttt{g}6} \) 4.\( \text{\texttt{c}xd4} \) \( \text{\texttt{g}7} \) 5.\( \text{\texttt{b}3} \) \( \text{\texttt{g}7} \) 6.\( \text{\texttt{b}2}? \)

**EXERCISE:** Somewhat surprisingly, this is a mistake. Why?

**Show/Hide the Solution**

**Johan Henriksson**
**Allan Rasmussen**
**Stockholm 2012 (8)**

Black won material with the surprising move

**6...\( \text{\texttt{c}xd4}! \)**

White resigned here. After 7.\( \text{\texttt{c}xd4} \) Black has the strong 7...\( \text{\texttt{a}5+!} \) 8.\( \text{\texttt{c}3} \) \( \text{\texttt{w}xc3+} \) 9.\( \text{\texttt{c}xc3} \) \( \text{\texttt{w}xc3+} \) 10.\( \text{\texttt{d}2} \) \( \text{\texttt{c}xd2+} \) 11.\( \text{\texttt{d}xd2} \), after which he has gained a piece.

**Milan Matulovic**
**Joseph Feller**
**Siegen ol 1970 (4)**

1.\( \text{\texttt{e}4} \) \( \text{\texttt{e}5} \) 2.\( \text{\texttt{f}3} \) \( \text{\texttt{c}6} \) 3.\( \text{\texttt{b}5} \) \( \text{\texttt{a}6} \) 4.\( \text{\texttt{a}4} \) \( \text{\texttt{f}6} \) 5.0-0 \( \text{\texttt{b}5} \) 6.\( \text{\texttt{b}3} \) \( \text{\texttt{c}5} \) 7.\( \text{\texttt{c}3} \) \( \text{\texttt{a}xe4} \) 8.\( \text{\texttt{w}e2} \) \( \text{\texttt{d}5} \) 9.\( \text{\texttt{d}3} \) \( \text{\texttt{w}6} \) 10.\( \text{\texttt{d}4} \) \( \text{\texttt{e}7} \) 11.\( \text{\texttt{d}xe5} \) \( \text{\texttt{e}4} \) 12.\( \text{\texttt{d}1} \) \( \text{\texttt{e}6} \) 13.\( \text{\texttt{c}4!} \) \( \text{\texttt{b}xc4}? \)
EXERCISE: Black now suffers heavy material loss. How?

Show/Hide the Solution

Milan Matulovic
Joseph Feller
Siegen ol 1970 (4)


Sustaining heavy material loss.
The only way to stay in the game was 13...c5, although White retains plenty of winning chances with 14.Bf6! (not 14.cxd5 on account of 14...Nxf2 and Black is still alive).

14.Ba4!

And Black resigned.

After 14...d7 (on 14...Qd7, White has 15.d4) White follows up with 15.Re5 and the double threat of 16.Qxe4 and 16.c6 seals the deal.

Renato Naranja
Lajos Portisch
Siegen ol 1970 (9)

1.c4 g6 2.d4 g6 3.e4 c3 d5 4.exd5 Qxd5 5.e4 Qxc3 6.bxc3 Qg7 7.e4 c5 8.e2 Qe6 9.Qe3 0-0 10.h4 cxd4 11.cxd4 Qd6 12.Qc1 Qd8 13.d5 Qe5 14.b3 Qd7 15.f3?
EXERCISE: This careless move is elegantly refuted. Do you see how?

Show/Hide the Solution

Renato Naranja
Lajos Portisch
Siegen ol 1970 (9)

1.c4 \( \text{c6} \) 2.d4 \( \text{g6} \) 3.e3 \( \text{d5} \) 4.cxd5 \( \text{\text{xd5}} \) 5.e4 \( \text{\text{xc3}} \) 6.bxc3 \( \text{Bb7} \) 7.Bc4 \( \text{c5} \) 8.e2 \( \text{e6} \) 9.e3 0-0 10.h4 \( \text{cxd4} \) 11.cxd4 \( \text{Qd6} \) 12.Rc1 \( \text{Rd8} \) 13.d5 \( \text{\text{Ne5}} \) 14.Qb3 \( \text{Bd7} \) 15.f3? \( \text{b5}! \) 16.Bd3 \( \text{Bxb5} \) 17.Bxb5 \( \text{Ra8} \) 18.Qa5 \( \text{\text{d3+}} \) loses. The text makes things worse after Black’s next hammer blow.

16...\( \text{b4+!} \) 0-1

Indeed, Black will win a whole piece after 17.eb4 (17.efl doesn’t work either after 17...eb3 18.axb3 \( \text{\text{d3}} \) 17...\( \text{\text{xd3+}} \) 18.d2 \( \text{eb4} \).

Tigran Petrosian
Hans Ree
Wijk aan Zee 1971 (12)

1.e4 \( \text{e5} \) 2.e3 \( \text{c6} \) 3.d4 \( \text{c6} \) 4.d5 \( \text{\text{xe4}} \) 5.Qa4 \( \text{\text{xd5}} \) 6.cxd5 \( \text{e4?} \)

This is based on a miscalculation. After 6...\( \text{\text{d4}} \) Black would still be alright: in fact, 7.dxe5? is not even very good in that case because of 7...Qe7 8.f4 (8.d3?? d\( \text{f3} \)?) 8...d6 9.e3 (9.d3? Qe4!) 9...dx5 10.exd4 exf4+. 
EXERCISE: Black thought that this was still okay. Unfortunately for him, the position contains a nasty little trick. What is it?

Show/Hide the Solution

Tigran V Petrosian
Hans Ree
Wijk aan Zee 1971 (12)
8. $\text{b3!}$

After this subtle little move, Black resigned already. He loses a piece. After 8... $\text{e7}$ 9. a3 $\text{fxe2}$ 10. $\text{xe2}$ $\text{c5}$ 11. $\text{xb7}$ $\text{xb7}$ 12. $\text{xb7}$ all is wrong for Black.
Chapter 6
Training skills

6.1 Introduction

In the introduction to this book we already mentioned the well-known adage ‘knowledge is power’. We hastened to add that in chess more is needed for a player to make progress. Let’s take as an example a player who knows a great deal about openings. He studies them on a daily basis, he watches and analyses games. His good memory helps him with this. But still his Elo rating never rises above 2100. Often he is beaten by players who don’t know even a fraction of what he does. How can this be? The opening expert has devoted time to tactics and endgames as well. So then why is he hitting a ‘glass ceiling’ again and again?

It is the classic dispute between knowledge and skill. You can ‘know’ something, and still not be able to apply it correctly in practice. Talented chess players, who sometimes have much less basic knowledge than theoreticians, are often more successful because they possess the flexibility to adapt to ‘varying circumstances’.

It is hard to divide the game of chess up into ‘compartments’. It is known that players who have a talent for the game can orientate themselves quite quickly in a position, and are able to make the right decision, even though this may sometimes ‘run against all logic’. Apparently they possess certain skills that are of important relevance for achieving success. In chess, quite a lot of skills are needed that eventually determine whether a player can reach world top level or not. As far as I know, the entire gamut of skills that are needed to become a good player has not been charted (yet), although there are some who have made attempts in that direction.

On the Internet I came across the story of a ‘desperate chess player’, who had worked through ‘tons of books’ and yet had made no progress for quite a while. Then he arrived at the conclusion that there were certain skills he still lacked. He started investigating which skills a good player might have, and ended up listing nine skills that are needed to play ‘effective chess’. He even added the following:

‘They fit together like building blocks to a puzzle. If one piece is missing the picture as a whole is left distorted. Strong players have at least some degree of mastery of all these skills.’

From the various sources I have consulted, I have compiled the following list, which appears to be used by many chess trainers:

- Pattern recognition
- Calculation of variations (thinking ahead tactically):
  - Elimination of variations (‘pruning’)
  - Visualization of positions
- Planning (thinking ahead strategically)
- Evaluation of positions

Some of these aspects are often considered separately from the others – I have immediately classified several of these, like the visualization of positions. Sometimes also other skills are listed, which I would like to call ‘non-chess-
technical’ related skills, for example:
• Concentration (not getting distracted, focussing on a game)
• Coping with setback(s) during a game (or during a tournament)
• Prophylactic thinking (finding out what your opponent is planning to do)
• Planning your thinking time
• Logical thinking

Most probably there will be other skills that can be added to both these lists. In the introduction we already gave another list, which mainly contains skills that can be applied to non-chess fields. It is doubtful whether it is at all possible to make a complete list. We will limit ourselves to a few aspects which we have noticed to be potentially important. We will examine a few of them. Most will be familiar to the reader.

Sticking to the theme of this book: let’s take a nice attacking position and try to calculate as many variations as possible, as quickly and efficiently as possible. What does this entail?

Grigory Ravinsky
Georgy Ilivitsky
Riga 1952 (6)

White to move

White has three pieces on the kingside, but the black pieces are also occupying active squares. Therefore, at first sight, Black doesn’t seem to have great problems.

How does White find a plan? Can he dismantle the black kingside? Which candidate moves does he have? How should he go about it?

A lot of questions, which cannot be answered so easily. Let’s try to unravel the thinking process that we need to go through when facing a tactical position.

• In the orientation phase, we look at the characteristics of a position
• We look for targets in the enemy position
• A combination-idea is taking shape
• Then, certain moves enter our head, which we can examine more closely
• Candidate moves are determined
• Defensive resources by the opponent have to be charted
• Forced moves have to be traced
• The position that arises after a certain number of moves has to be visualized
• The variation has to be cut off ('pruned') at the right moment
• The position always has to be assessed at the end of the variation
• It is important to have an overview of the junctions in the tree of variations
• At the right moment, a (correct) conclusion must be drawn
• We must not forget the last check, before we actually make the move.

In the above diagram position, we could start calculating the move 18...\text{N}xg7, if we have concluded that g7 is a weak point in the enemy king’s position. But it isn’t at all easy to see how to continue the attack after this sacrifice. Of course, you’re free to try it yourself! At the end of this chapter, we will give a fully worked-out variation tree.

All the variations should preferably be worked out into an analysis tree as systematically and efficiently as possible. When we have drawn the right conclusion from these variations, we can finally play the intended move, which should lead to a winning position.

There are more aspects that play a role if you want to successfully sacrifice your way through the enemy king’s position! But the above list already shows that the calculation of variations is a complex process, which has to be supported by a great number of sub-skills in order to bring the job to a good conclusion. With many of these aspects, a role is played by memory functions, which may be trained separately as these skills require a completely different type of training.

We will try to help the reader on his way by presenting a number of sub-skills, which are needed to successfully calculate a complex of variations.

6.2 Visualization

Seeing ahead, or, using a more elegant term, ‘visualization’ in chess, is one of the most important skills a player has to have in order to achieve something in a game.

With visualization, we mean seeing ahead a position that will occur after a certain number of moves. Actually ‘seeing’ a position several moves in advance is terribly difficult for many (club) players. In chess, it is very important to get a clear picture in your head of the position that arises after a couple of calculated moves. You can compare it with taking a photo. The sharper the picture you have, the better you will be able to calculate the variations. Club players often tell me that they only see ‘fragments’ of the position, but almost never the entire board. Then why can a grandmaster like Loek van Wely reproduce an entire position faultlessly after looking at it for no more than a few seconds? Even putting the pawn on h6 instead of h7?

There are several processes that take place in our heads. One of them is a memory function, which serves to store in our mind the pieces in the position in a structured way. How this works exactly is something we should ask scientists who are specialized in the field of memory.

In chess, variations have to be calculated. The pieces have to be moved, and have to end up on other squares – in your head. The new position which occurs after a few moves again has to be stored in your memory, as a ‘picture’. Also, you
have to have a kind of ‘counter’ running along, which keeps count of the material on both sides. This is especially
difficult when a variation involves a lot of captures on both sides.

Different variations are calculated simultaneously. We call this a ‘variation tree’ or an ‘analysis tree’ (as discussed
elsewhere in this book). With each branching, where the branches join, the player has to have a clear picture of the
position in his mind’s eye. In practice this turns out to be very difficult, especially if it is hardly, or never, exercised. In
variation A), a forced move sequence is generated, and after that, variation B) has to be calculated. But in which
position did that second variation start? Does the player have this position ready in his head? Are all the pieces standing
in the right places in his mind’s eye? For strong players, this complex process appears to be not at all difficult. But we
shouldn’t forget that these players have mastered this skill by practicing it endlessly.

Here is a nice example to practice this skill. I was given this exercise myself during a chess instructor’s course,
somewhere in the 1980s. It was presented by one of my teachers, Tom de Ruiter, who was a league player at the time.

**Thinking ahead**
Black to move

Black is a pawn up, but White’s pieces are far more active. The presence of opposite-coloured bishops is noteworthy. This gives rise to the following question: can Black take on d4? If he wins a second pawn and manages to activate his pieces at the same time, then the game will be decided in his favour. I have often presented this position to my pupils, and mostly they came up with a few good ideas, but many times they proved unable to unveil all the secrets of this position. Of course you can try yourself first. The question is whether Black can play 1...\textit{\underline{R}}xd4.

1...\textit{\underline{R}}xd4?

We will see later on that the conclusion should be that he can’t!

2.\textit{\underline{R}}xd4 \textit{\underline{a}}7

White has no choice now – he has to throw in another pawn.

3.c5!

The only way to activate the bishop. Black is a rook down, so he has to maintain the pin. 3.\textit{\underline{R}}fd3 \textit{\underline{d}}8 would offer Black great winning chances.

3...\textit{\underline{x}}c5 4.\textit{\underline{B}}xf7+ \textit{\underline{K}}f8

The mate after 4...\textit{\underline{K}}h7 5.\textit{\underline{R}}h3# can be found by anybody, so the text move is forced.

But now White has a difficult problem. He can give a discovered check with the bishop, but where to put it?

5.\textit{\underline{B}}b3+!

It is very difficult to recognize that the bishop has to be moved a little further back. This is mainly connected with the activity of the pinned rook, which is actually quite important. 5.\textit{\underline{d}}5+ is proposed all the time during our sessions. There can follow: 5...\textit{\underline{e}}7 6.\textit{\underline{f}}d3 Here the difference with putting the bishop on another square (as in the main line) becomes clear. The check 6.\textit{\underline{e}}3+ doesn’t bring White anything after 6...\textit{\underline{d}}6 7.\textit{\underline{e}}6+ \textit{\underline{c}}7 and only Black has made
progress here. 6...d8 Now, 7.f1 d4 8.xd4 f6 9.d2 b5 9...e5? is bad in view of 10.e2+ f6 (10...xd5?? 11.d2+ 11.xb7 and White wins) results in an endgame which is better for White, but very hard to win. White has only one pawn left, and Black’s two connected passed pawns on the queenside are of crucial importance. In the various games I played against my pupils from this analysis position, Black often held the draw.

Nothing is given by 5.g6+ either. True, White can retrace his steps after 5...g8 6.f7+ f8 in that case.

5...e7

The only way to make things difficult for White. After 5...e8 Black is elegantly mated by unpinning the foremost rook: 6.e3+ f8 7.f4#.

6.e3+

The right move. Again the rook is freed from the pin, and this produces some surprising possibilities.

Many players continue with 6.f7+, only to find that after 6...e8 White has nothing better than 7.d7 b5 8.f1 xd4 9.exd4, after which Black continues the march of his pawns with 9...a5. Also here, the technical job is far from easy for White.

6...f6 7.e6+

In the next two moves we will see why this check is important. Not 7.f4+, a move which many people are inclined to play. After 7...g5, again two rooks are hanging – and again, the above-mentioned ending of piece versus two pawns will come on the board.

7...f5

Voluntarily moving your king into a discovered check is hardly ever a good advice: here, 7...f7 fails to 8.e6+ e7 9.xc5.

Up to here several of my students managed to find the moves. But then the machine stalled. Still, the win is here for the taking!
8.g4+

The pinned rook on d4 is doing an excellent job: it protects g4, and thus the black king is driven to a fatal square.

8...\textit{K}g5 9.\textit{R}e5+

Here is the crux of the matter! The bishop on c5 will be lost.

But now we see why many players do not manage to detect this trick. In their minds, the bishop is still on a7! This is a quite common type of visualization mistake. And that is why it’s oh-so-important to recognize that the skill of picturing future positions in your mind should be trained extensively. Great talents, like Benjamin Bok, whom I have had under my wing for a while (and who is a grandmaster today), toss off entire variations like this effortlessly. They automatically reap the fruits of doing so many blindfold exercises at an early age.

When this position was tested in training sessions I gave later, it turned out that especially the fifth move, the withdrawal of the bishop to a2 or b3, was hard to find for many students. It’s hard to realize that the line of the pinned rook on d4 is actually important, to prevent the black king hiding behind the bishop on d5 later. A second complication is that in the minds of some of the pupils, the black bishop was still on a7 instead of c5 (where it had been decoyed by the pawn sacrifice c4-c5). Here again it turns out to be very hard to get a clear picture of the position in your mind’s eye. The key move at the end, 8.g2-g4+, is closely connected to the fact that after the forced reply 8...\textit{K}g5 Black is exposed to a check on the fifth rank, after which the bishop on c5 will be lost. A delightful example.

6.3 Visualization exercises

Some of the skills we have mentioned in the first paragraph, can be practiced in a concrete way. On the Internet, various kinds of programs and apps can be found nowadays, which can be used to train these skills. We will offer you a few methods. In the set of exercises in § 6.5 you can practice with a few more examples for each phenomenon. With the following set of training methods, it is important to get a clear image of the position in your head. We call this ‘punching in’ a position.

Any less experienced player can put an empty board before him, and try to solve the exercises from the paper. More experienced players will probably be able to do it entirely by heart.

Placing pieces

The exercise is always to make an image of the given position in your head, and then add a piece to realize checkmate.

1. Place a queen on the board in such a way that Black is checkmated

There are two solutions, write both of them down.
There are two solutions, write down both of them.

2. Place a knight on the board in such a way that Black is checkmated

Short games from the starting position

Visualize the starting position and try to play in your mind the moves given below, and then try to answer the accompanying questions. Every example includes a big blunder, and the solver may try to find the winning continuation from memory.

EXERCISE 73
1. d4 d6 2. ∆f3 ∆g4 3. ∆f4 ∆d7 4. e3 e5

Now answer the following two questions:

a) What does Black play after 5. ∆g3?

b) What does Black play after 5. ∆g5?

Show/Hide the Solution

A) 5. ∆g3 e4! 6. h3 ∆h5

B) 5. ∆g5 ∆xf3! 6. ∆xd8 ∆xd1 and Black wins a piece.

EXERCISE 74

1. f4 e5 2. fxe5 d6 3. exd6 ∆xd6 4. c3??
Black won with the elementary 4...\textit{h}4 5.g3 \textit{x}g3 (5...\textit{x}g3+ 6.hxg3 \textit{x}g3#) 6.hxg3 \textit{x}g3#.

\textbf{Checkmate in one or two moves}

When in the 1980s, a Dutch junior champion was given, by his trainer, blindfold exercise positions where the white player had an extra queen and piece, and where he had to find checkmate in two or three moves, he shoved the exercise sheet aside with a disgusted look on his face. ‘What am I supposed to do with this?’, was his reaction. ‘White wins anyway, doesn’t he?’

He was right in that, but he was wrong to refuse doing the exercises. Finding typical checkmate patterns in certain positions is (as we have seen elsewhere in this book!) of vital importance for improving your visualization and, at the same time, your geometric insight. The aforementioned book by Polgar, which offers no less than 5,333+1 positions of this type, proves that it actually is worth the effort to work on this. In order to get some practice in blindfold chess, the positions preferably shouldn’t be presented with diagrams, but in their algebraic versions, as we have done below.

\textbf{EXERCISE 75}
Give checkmate in one.

Show/Hide the Solution

**Mate in one** ♘+♗

1. ♘d5#.

**EXERCISE 76**
Give checkmate in one. There are two solutions.

**Show/Hide the Solution**

**Mate in one ♕+♘**

White gave mate in one with 1.♕d5# (1.f4#).

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**EXERCISE 77**

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Give checkmate in two.

**Show/Hide the Solution**

**Mate in two**

1.♗e5+ ♘xe5 (1...♕d8 2.♖c8#) 2.♖d6#.

---

**EXERCISE 78**
Give checkmate in two. Find all the variations.

**Show/Hide the Solution**

**Mate in two**

1. \( \text{R}h6 \) e6 (1... \( \text{K}e5 \) 2. \( \text{Rh}5\#\); 1...e5 2. \( \text{Rf}6\#\) 2. \( \text{Rh}5\#\).

**Navigation**

This procedure, which is commonly used by Dutch trainers, is as follows: on the board, only the white player makes moves, while Black’s pieces remain in place (or vice versa). So you don’t take turns making moves, but White makes a great number of moves in a row. The task is to capture a piece which is indicated beforehand, or give check to the opponent’s king, with an indicated white piece, in as few moves as possible. You have to move the white piece in your head, but this piece may not stand on the so-called ‘forbidden squares’, i.e., squares where the piece can be captured. In most cases, the piece can achieve the desired aim by taking a ‘small detour’.

**EXERCISE 79**
A) Knight captures queen
B) Knight captures bishop

Show/Hide the Solution

Navigation – Knight takes queen/Knight takes bishop

A) 1...\( \text{Ne5} \) 2...\( \text{Nd3} \) 3...\( \text{Nxf2} \);
B) 1...\( \text{Nd8} \) 2...\( \text{Nxe6} \).

EXERCISE 80
Capture the queen (two solutions)

Show/Hide the Solution

Navigation – Knight takes queen/ Knight takes bishop

B) 1. Nh4 2. Nxf5

EXERCISE 81
81

Eat all the pieces (in as few moves as possible, without getting ‘eaten’ yourself)

Show/Hide the Solution

**Pacman – eat everything**

1. b2 2. xb5 (or 1. e5 2. xb5) 3. xc4 4. xc8 5. d7 6. xe7 7. xg5.

---

**EXERCISE 82**
The black bishop should capture the unprotected rook in as few moves as possible.

Show/Hide the Solution

Navigation – Bishop takes unprotected rook as quickly as possible

1...\textit{f}4 2...\textit{h}2 3...\textit{g}1 4...\textit{c}5 5...\textit{xb}4.

Endgame study conclusions

By analogy with the third procedure given above (mate in one, two), the conclusion of an endgame study is a nice exercise to train your ability to ‘see ahead’. These should preferably be endgame studies that have been ‘adapted’ by the trainer. To the horror of many composers, the trainer cuts off the introduction, which is often lengthy and complicated, offering the practical player a position that is ‘clean’. The solver has to find a move sequence without making the moves on the board.

In my practice, I often went looking for positions that were as natural for the practical player as possible – no ‘artificial monstrosities’ of the kind composers like so much. Often, the difficulty is that a hidden motif has to be found, but the defence is often ingenious as well.

Just like with the other exercises, the positions should preferably be presented in algebraic form, triggering the memory functions optimally. However, the final two exercises of this section are so difficult that you may put the pieces on the board there.

You can allot yourself a maximum of 30 minutes on the clock and write down as many variations as possible. Later, you can check how much you have seen.

EXERCISE 83
White to play and win.

Show/Hide the Solution

Richard Réti
Bohemia 1923

This is the finish of an endgame study by Réti. White is a rook and bishop up, but he still must try to stop the two black pawns.

1.\textit{B}f1! e1=\textit{Q}

In the technical endgame arising after 1...exf1=\textit{Q} White still has to find a way to stop the troublesome f-pawn: 2.\textit{R}xf1 \textit{K}e3. He manages this with 3.\textit{c}c2 f3 4.\textit{e}e1+ (4.\textit{d}d1? is a draw!: 4...f2 5.\textit{h}h1 \textit{e}f3 6.\textit{f}f1 \textit{e}e3) 4...\textit{f}f2 5.\textit{d}d2 and the black king is driven to the other side of the pawn, after which White wins simply. A thematic example: 5...\textit{g}2 6.\textit{e}e8 \textit{f}2 (6...\textit{f}f2 7.\textit{f}f8 \textit{g}g2 8.\textit{e}e3) 7.\textit{g}g8+ \textit{h}2 8.\textit{f}f8 \textit{g}g2 9.\textit{e}e2.

Nor does the under-promotion 1...e1=\textit{N} help, on account of 2.\textit{R}xf4 and White should manage with his extra rook.

2.\textit{d}d3#

EXERCISE 84

White to play and win.

Show/Hide the Solution

Harold Lommer
Basler Nationalzeitung 1935
Black threatens to trade off the white pawn, after which the position is a draw. So White has to put all his money on his passed pawn:

1. d7! Nf6+

Black has to eliminate the pawn, as otherwise White will simply promote it to a queen.

2. Kg5 Nd7

But now Black is disillusioned by:

3. Bb3#

EXERCISE 85

White to play and win.

85

Show/Hide the Solution

Henri Rinck
Rigaer Tageblatt 1907

White is a knight and bishop up, but the pawn on a2 cannot be stopped from queening. So White has to play forced moves, as there is nothing else.

1. f6+ e5

The king has to keep guarding the d4-square, as otherwise White can stop both pawns with d4, forcing a technically won position. Now White has no choice either:
2. \textit{\underline{d}7+ \underline{d}5} 3. \textit{\underline{b}6+}

The knight has jumped full circle, and now ends up on b6.

3...\textit{\underline{e}5}

Black persists in guarding the d4-square. The significance of all this is still hard to discern.

4. \textit{\underline{h}6!}

Thus, the bishop threatens to reach the long diagonal.

4...\textit{\underline{f}6}

Again, forced. Now White has run out of forced moves. It’s time for a creative idea. We know that Black will be able to play ...a2-a1=\textsf{Q} next. We have to use our imagination to find a combinational idea.

5. \textit{\underline{d}2! a1=\textsf{Q}}

Otherwise the bishop will reach the long diagonal.

6. \textit{\underline{c}3+!}

Now we see why the knight is so conveniently placed on b6!

6...\textit{\underline{c}3} 7. \textit{\underline{d}5+}

Winning.

\textbf{EXERCISE 86}
White to play and win.

Show/Hide the Solution

Mikhail and Vasily Platov
Shakhmaty 1925

White faces the problem that the black h-pawn is threatening to march on. He has to find a way to activate his pieces. The best way to do this is with

1.\text{Kc2}!

We will see later why the king had to go to precisely this square.

1...h2

Black has no choice, otherwise White stops the pawn with 2.\text{Be5} and wins.

2.\text{Be5}!

Attacking the pawn, so the reply is forced.

2...h1=\text{Q}

2...\text{xa3} is met by 3.\text{c3}!.

3.\text{c3}+ \text{xa3}

We see a second picturesque mate after 3...\text{a5} 4.\text{c7}#.

4.\text{d6}#
And now it becomes clear why White had to start with 1.\(\textit{c}2\). 1.\(\textit{c}4\) wouldn’t have worked: 1...h2 2.\(\textit{e}5\) h1=\(\textit{q}\) 3.\(\textit{c}3+\) \(\textit{xa}3\) and there is no mate.

**Problem chess – analysis tree**

Sometimes the key moves in problem chess are so hard to find that they are a puzzle in themselves. You may ask: what use is it to a practical player to find a bizarre, often ‘illogical’, first move? But as the key move sometimes introduces a great number of branches, this again makes it interesting. That is why we have selected a number of problem positions that offer a nice number of different mate patterns. And of course, we stimulate our pupils to try and find them!

So this is how this exercise looks:

**EXERCISE 87**

The key move is 1.\(\textit{f}7\). Now give mate in all variations:

A) On 1...g5 follows: _________
B) On 1...h5 follows: _________
C) On 1...f5 follows: _________

**Show/Hide the Solution**

Eduard Adamsky
1984

1.\(\textit{f}7\) \(\textit{f}5\)
EXERCISE 88

The key move is 1.\textit{Q}c4. Now give mate in all variations:

A) On 1...c1=\textit{Q} follows: _________

B) On 1...c1=\textit{N} follows: _________

C) On 1...\textit{K}c1 follows: _________

Show/Hide the Solution

Leonid Kubbel
Novoe vremya 1908

1.\textit{Q}c4 c1=\textit{Q}+

1...c1=\textit{Q} 2.\textit{N}c2#.
1...\textit{K}c1 2.\textit{Q}xc2#
1...c1=\textit{Q}+ 2.\textit{Q}g4#.

2.\textit{Q}g4#
The key move is 1.\textsf{B}c4. Now give mate in all variations:

A) On 1...d1=\textsf{Q}+ follows: _________
B) On 1...d1=\textsf{R} follows: _________
C) On 1...d1=\textsf{B}+ follows: _________
D) On 1...\textsf{K}d1 follows: _________

Show/Hide the Solution

Leonid Kubbel
Rezec 1939

1.\textsf{B}c4 d1=\textsf{Q}+

1...d1=\textsf{Q} 2.\textsf{B}c2# (2.\textsf{B}b2#; 2.\textsf{B}a2#; 2.\textsf{B}g2#; 2.\textsf{B}h2#).
1...\textsf{K}d1 2.\textsf{R}f1#.
1...d1=\textsf{K}+ 2.\textsf{B}c2#.

2.\textsf{B}c2#

EXERCISE 90
The key move is 1.\textit{e}3. Now give mate in all variations:

A) On 1...a4 follows: _________

B) On 1...c4 follows: _________

C) On 1...\textit{a}4 follows: _________

D) On 1...\textit{c}4 follows: _________

Show/Hide the Solution

\textbf{Leonid Kubbel}

\textit{Izbranny zadachi 1941}

1.\textit{e}3 a4

1...\textit{a}4 2.\textit{b}3#.

1...c4 2.\textit{e}8#.

1...\textit{c}4 2.\textit{xc}5#

2.\textit{xc}5#

\textbf{EXERCISE 91}
The key move is 1.\textit{Q}g3. Now give mate in all variations:

A) On 1...\textit{K}xd1 follows: _________
B) On 1...f1=\textit{Q} follows: _________
C) On 1...f1=\textit{R} follows: _________
D) On 1...f1=\textit{B} follows: _________
E) On 1...f1=\textit{N} follows: _________

\textbf{Show/Hide the Solution}

\textbf{Leonid Kubbel}
\textit{Izbranny zadachi 1941}

1.\textit{Q}g3 \textit{K}xd1

1...f1=\textit{Q} 2.\textit{Q}d2#.
1...f1=\textit{K} 2.\textit{Q}e1# (2.\textit{Q}d2#).
1...f1=\textit{B} 2.\textit{Q}e1#.
1...f1=\textit{N} 2.\textit{Q}d2#.

2.\textit{Q}g4#

\textbf{EXERCISE 92}
The key move is 1.\textit{Q}a7. Now give mate in all variations:

A) On 1...\textit{K}b3 follows: 

B) On 1...\textit{K}c4 follows: 

C) On 1...\textit{b}5 follows: 

Show/Hide the Solution

\textbf{Leonid Kubbel}

\textit{Izbranny zadachi 1940}

1.\textit{Q}a7! \textit{K}b3

1...\textit{c}4 2.\textit{Q}a4#;

1...\textit{b}5 2.\textit{R}d4#.

2.\textit{R}b5#
6.4 Systematics

A lot has already been said about working your way through analysis trees. In his book *Think like a Grandmaster*, Alexander Kotov discusses how he thinks an analysis tree should be solved systematically. After determining the candidate moves (lateral analysis), the variations are worked out branch by branch (the analysis goes in depth). One of Kotov’s rules is that each variation should be worked out only once, as otherwise ‘chaos will reign’ in the player’s head. He also argues that during a game a player doesn’t have the time to go through variations twice. Precisely this switching between different variations is, in Kotov’s opinion, disastrous for the systematic approach.

Later this statement found criticism. Several chess authors preached that it should not be ‘prohibited’ to return to an earlier variation. If you have found an idea in Variation C, you may be able to use it in Variation A. And if you didn’t see a certain motif earlier on, but you did in a later variation, obviously this may turn the assessment of an earlier variation on its head. Of course, they are right in this. However, in these criticasters’ writings, I haven’t seen any clear advice how to deal with the ‘chaos inside the head’.

In my work with students, I have noticed that it is not feasible to go through all the variations that present themselves. Mostly, it is about detecting the essence of a position, and, above all, finding a number of winning lines. In a game, this doesn’t necessarily mean that it has to be the optimal continuation, as long as a winning position is found.

When they are working with intricate variation complexes, I often notice that chess students ‘go in-depth’ too quickly, and fail to think ‘laterally’. They see an interesting move and immediately start calculating it deeply. During the process, they are often working so fast (many chess players are fast thinkers!) that not only do they miss tenacious defences left, right and centre, but they also miss simple winning moves. They keep on ‘running’ until they stumble upon a hitch. Then ‘logic’ abandons them and the process stagnates. This can lead to frustration, and consequently the inclination of the player to solve problems on the board may falter. Suddenly he sits there staring at the board, no longer ‘seeing’ anything. In such cases, the trainer has to remove the deadlock for his pupil. But during a game no such help is available! The player himself has to muster up the discipline to follow the right systematics.

In the course of time I have encountered many points of attention and (booby) traps, which I have listed below.

• The consideration of candidate moves has to be stimulated. First ‘laterally’, and only then ‘in-depth’.

• It is of great importance to get a picture of the position in your head on another level. The speed with which some players think they can calculate a variation is the cause of many (strange) mistakes in visualization and calculation. Slowing down the pace by scouring the moves more leisurely can prevent such mistakes.

• The elimination of ‘nonsense’ keeps the tree from expanding too much. Of course, it is always difficult to determine what is nonsense and what isn’t, but practice makes perfect here.

• Formulating general and position-specific principles can reduce the analysis tree considerably. For example, if the king is chased by a queen and bishop, it is wise to evaluate moves by which the queen is played to a different colour than that of the bishop. This keeps the number of relevant variations limited.

• Stopping at the right moment with the calculation of a variation by making as correct an assessment as possible of the resulting position. This can range from ‘White’s dominance is so great that mate cannot be avoided’ to ‘White has sufficient compensation for the sacrificed exchange’.

• Spotting (hidden) defences. Many players always want to find magnificent sacrifices for themselves, and do not take the opponent’s possibilities into account at all. Especially if these possibilities remain under the surface, they will not
be included in the list of candidates ‘for the sake of convenience’.

In my experience, solving endgame studies can be an extremely useful tool for practicing the drawing up of an analysis tree. If the study position is put on the board, a game situation is immediately simulated if you take, for instance, 20 minutes on the clock. In those 20 minutes, you have to find as many variations as possible, write them down, and check them later.

Many studies contain a lot of beautiful tactical ideas. More importantly, composers often think it is a nice challenge to try to fool the solver with hidden defensive resources. So these have to be discovered, and often this is not as easy as one would think. As I wrote earlier, as a trainer I tend to look for endgame studies with a ‘natural’ character.

What matters is that we draw up an analysis tree in our minds. When we do this, we are actually training three aspects:

• The visualization of positions
• Finding tactical tricks and hidden defences
• Systematics

This is one of the reasons why a considerable number of endgame studies can be found in this book. We will add a few more here, to enable you to thoroughly practice the analysis tree one more time.

White to play and win.

Show/Hide the Solution

David Gurgenidze
‘Probleemblad’ #160 2004

1.f7+ ♔f8

It is wise to put the king in front of the pawn. After 1...♔g7 2.♔b3 the white king comes rushing over: 2...h5 3.♖c4 h4 4.♗d5 h3 5.♗e6 h2 (5...♗f8 6.♖f6 h2 7.♖g6#) 6.♖g6! h1=♔ (6...♖xg6 amounts to the same) 7.f8=♔+ ♔xg6 8.♕g8+ ♔h5 9.♕h7+ with an X-ray check.
2.\textbf{b3} h5 3.\textbf{c4} h4 4.\textbf{d5} \textbf{e7}

In order to keep the white king at bay, but now the latter reaches the square of the pawn. After 4...h3 5.\textbf{e6} h2 6.\textbf{f6} Black is mated sooner.

5.\textbf{e4} h3 6.\textbf{f3} h2 7.\textbf{g2} and 1-0

White to play and win.

Show/Hide the Solution

\textbf{Jarl Ulrichsen}

The Problemist #886 2004

How to stop Black’s f-pawn?

1.\textbf{f7+} \textbf{g4}

The best square in order to pose White problems. After 1...\textbf{h6}, the knight saves the game with 2.\textbf{f5+} \textbf{h7} 3.\textbf{e3}. After 1...\textbf{g5}, Black’s crown pawn is even lost. But White still has to establish a blockade in order to keep the other black pawn under control, which he manages with 2.\textbf{e4+} \textbf{f4} 3.\textbf{x f2} \textbf{g3} 4.\textbf{h3} \textbf{xg2} 5.\textbf{e6}, and now White can concentrate on the task of checkmating with bishop and knight.

2.\textbf{e4}!

The pawn promotion to a queen now loses to a knight fork.

2...\textbf{f4}
The critical move.
2...f1=Q seems to offer Black good chances of a draw. But White is able to preserve his g-pawn after 3.\textit{Be6+ Kg3 4.h3}, after which he has a technical win. At a certain point, the black knight will have to be sacrificed for White’s g-pawn, after which White can again go on to checkmate the black king with bishop and knight.

2...f1=Q 3.\textit{Ne3+}.

\textbf{3.d2 e3}

This is the continuation that causes White the most headaches. On 3...\textit{Kg3 4.d4 xg2 5.e4} White stops the f-pawn anyway. After that, he still has to keep the h-pawn under control. He does so with 5...h3 6.f1+\textit{g3 7.e3 h2} 8.e4+\textit{h4} 9.xf2, winning.

\textbf{4.f1+ e2 5.g3+!}

A brilliant knight sacrifice. Now, 5.h2? would lead to a draw after 5...f1=Q 6.h5+ f2 7.xf1 xf1 8.f3 f2 9.e4 g3, and ...h4-h3 cannot be prevented.

5...hxg3

Forced. White has a simple win after 5...e1 6.e4 f1=Q 7.xf1 xf1 8.f3 f2 9.e4 g3. 9.e6.

\textbf{6.e4 f1=Q 7.c4+ f2 8.xf1 xf1 9.f3}

White wins the g3-pawn, and is left with a winning pawn ending.
1. \(\text{Nf5}\)!

With this knight check, White puts his opponent on the spot: where should he move his king? Promotion to a queen doesn’t yield anything after 1.\(d8=Q\) \(b1=Q\) 2.\(h8+\) \(g6\) 3.\(g8+\) \(h6\).

1. \(\text{Nf5}\)! \(\text{g6}\)

The most tenacious defence. On 1...\(h7\) 2.\(d8=Q\) \(b1=Q\) 3.\(e7+\) \(g6\) 4.\(g7+\) \(xf5\) 5.\(h7+\) he also loses the queen by force.

2.\(d8=Q\) \(b1=Q\) 3.\(g8+\) \(f6\)

Capturing the knight always runs into an X-ray check: 3...\(xf5\) 4.\(h7+\).

Of course, we also have to check what happens if the king voluntarily moves to the edge. There follows: 3...\(h5\) 4.\(h7+\) \(g5\) (on 4...\(g4\), 5.\(e3+\) wins the queen) 5.\(h6+\) \(xf5\) (5...\(g4\) 6.\(e3\)\#) 6.\(h7+\), and this X-ray check wins again.

4.\(g7+\)

The hunt is on!

4...\(e6\) 5.\(e7+\) \(d5\) 6.\(d6+\)

6...\(e4\)

Again, the most tenacious defence. After 6...\(e4\) the knight takes a ‘walk around the block’: 7.\(g3+\) \(e3\) 8.\(f1+\) \(e4\) (8...\(e2\) 9.\(d2\)#) 9.\(d2+\).
7. Ne3+ Ke3

After the alternative move, Black will be counted out as well: 7... Kb3 8. b6+ a2 9. a5+ b2.

This is a difficult moment.

In training sessions, it turned out that for our pupils, finding White’s next move is not so easy as it looks. They are more inclined to play with the queen.

![Analysis Diagram](image)

10. Nc4+! (10. Qb4+? Nb3; 10. e5+ a2 11. a5+ b2 leads once more to the winning position) 10... Kb3 (10... Kb2 11. d2+ and White wins the queen.

8. Qc5+ Kb3

After this move, White still needs to discover an exquisite mate pattern. Going to the other side also loses, but again this takes quite a bit of calculation: 8... d2
9. \( \text{c4}+! \) (again this fabulous knight check) 9...\( \text{d1} \) (9...\( \text{e2} \) 10.\( \text{e3}+ \) \( \text{d1} \) 11.\( \text{d2}# \); 9...\( \text{c3} \) 10.\( \text{a3}+ \); 9...\( \text{d3} \) 10.\( \text{f5}+ \) 10.\( \text{g1}+ \) (10.\( \text{h5}+ \) is also good, as one of my pupils has indicated. After 10...\( \text{c2} \), he won the queen with 11.\( \text{h7}+ \) 10...\( \text{c2} \) (10...\( \text{e2} \) 11.\( \text{f1}# \) 11.\( \text{a3}+ \).

9. \( \text{b5}+ \) \( \text{a2} \) 10.\( \text{a4}+ \) \( \text{b2} \) 11.\( \text{d1}# \)

And this mate deserves a diagram:
White to play and win.

Show/Hide the Solution

Yury Bazlov
Zadachy & Etiudy 2004

A highly explosive position. White is two pawns up, but Black threatens to win his b-pawn. Moreover, Black has a discovered check with the king that may be annoying for White.

1. $\heartsuit e4!!$

A wonderful move, which forces the strong black queen to declare its intentions.

After 1... $\heartsuit e3??$ in view of 2. $\heartsuit b1+ \heartsuit c6 3. $\heartsuit x b6+$ and the pawn promotes) 2. $\heartsuit b1+$ (White should definitely refrain from the winning attempt 2. $\heartsuit g2??$ since then he will be mated in an ingenious manner: 2... $\heartsuit c5+ 3. \heartsuit d3 \heartsuit c4#; 3. $\heartsuit d1 \heartsuit c1#; 3. $\heartsuit b3 \heartsuit c4+ 4. $\heartsuit b2 \heartsuit e5+ 5. $\heartsuit b1 \heartsuit b3+ 6. \heartsuit c1 \heartsuit f4+ 7.e3 \heartsuit xe3#) 3... $\heartsuit c1+ 4. $\heartsuit b3 \heartsuit c4+ 5. $\heartsuit b2 \heartsuit e5+ 6. $\heartsuit b1 \heartsuit b3+ 7. $\heartsuit c1 \heartsuit f4+ 8.e3 \heartsuit xe3#) 2... $\heartsuit a6 3. $\heartsuit x b6+$ $\heartsuit x b6$ with a draw.

1. $\heartsuit e4!! \heartsuit e3!$

An ingenious resource, which introduces a stalemate motif. After 1... $\heartsuit x g1 2.b8=\heartsuit + \heartsuit c6 3. $\heartsuit x d2$, the rest is simple. White remains a piece and a pawn up.

2. $\heartsuit x e3$
Certainly not 2.b8=Q? on account of 2...xg1 and White can’t win.

2...a4+!

The crux.

2...xe3 could now be met by 3.b8=Q+ and White wins easily: 3...c4 4.c7+ d4 5.c3 or g3.

3.c2

Not 3.xb6? – stalemate!

3...xe3

Black has to take, as after other moves he simply doesn’t stand a chance.

4.c3+ a3

An ultimate attempt to escape.

If 4...b4 5.d5+. And going to a5 is no use: 4...a5 5.b8=Q.
5.b8=♕!

The only winning promotion! First of all, mate is threatened by 6.♕d6+.

It would again be stalemate after 5.b8=♕? (or 5.b8=♖) 5...♕d2+ 6.♔xd2.

5...♖c5

This is a way to defend the d6-square, but it doesn’t help him.

Unfortunately for Black, his king cannot escape via b4 because of the knight fork: 5...♗b4 6.♘d5+.

6.♘d6 ♖xd6 7.♘b5+

The end of a wonderful spectacle, with play and counterplay alternating.
At first sight, this is a highly chaotic position. So we have to orientate ourselves first. White is a piece up, but his knight is hanging, and it has to maintain the protection of the $B_f5$.

1.e8=\text{N}+!

Promotion to a knight! This way, White keeps the initiative. Promotion to a queen (1.e8=\text{Q}) would relieve Black of his worries after the clever 1...g1=\text{Q}+! 2.Kxg1 Bxe8 3.Nxe8+ Kxf5 and, as we shall soon see, there is no win for White: 4.Qxd6+ g4 5.g2 Be6 with a draw.

1.e8=\text{Q}+! Bxe8

After 1...Kxe5 White is two pieces up, and he can save all of them with a move like 2.c2.

2.Bxe8+ Bxf5 3.Qxd6+ g4

The only move. After 3...Bf4 White also wins thanks to a knight check: 4.a4+ g5 5.f7+.

Going back to the sixth rank is not an option: 3...g6 4.f7+.

4.a4+ h3
Now the king threatens to escape via the edge. Again, 4...\textit{g}5 was not good in view of 5.\textit{f}7+.

5.\textit{f}5!

A quiet move, threatening mate on h4.

5...\textit{g}1=\textit{f}+

An ultimate attempt to parry the mate threat.

6.\textit{x}g1 \textit{g}6+ 7.\textit{h}1 \textit{g}4

But now Black is mated in another way:

8.\textit{a}3+ \textit{g}3 9.\textit{x}g3#
The struggle of $B+N$ versus $Q$ is always interesting. On this relatively ‘empty’ board, at first sight it won’t be easy to get the white pieces to cooperate optimally. In any case, White has to work with forced moves, as otherwise he will even be in great danger of losing.

1. $\text{N}e4$!

Attacking the queen, and at the same time making use of the knight fork motif. Remarkably, the queen has only one square where it is not immediately lost.

1...$\text{Q}h4$

Black realizes that he has to give up the queen, but he still has a way to try to save himself.

If 1...$\text{Q}xg4$ 2.$\text{N}f2+$; 1...$\text{Q}d5$ or 1...$\text{Q}b5$ 2.$\text{N}c3+$.

Now White has to find some moves that pose threats.

2. $\text{Bg3}$

Attacking the queen, which, again, has precious few squares.

2...$\text{Q}xg4$

Black realizes that he has to give up the queen, but he still has a way to try to save himself.

If 2...$\text{Q}h1$ or 2...$\text{Q}h3$ 3.$\text{N}f2+$.
3. \( \text{Nf}2+ \text{Ke}2! \) 4. \( \text{Nxg}4 \) \( \text{Kf}3 \)

Attacking both white pieces. White had to take this trick into account: which piece should he save? And how does he end up in a winning position after that?

5. \( \text{Be}5! \)

The simplest way to force a technically easy win.

5... \( \text{hxg}4 \) 6. \( \text{Kh}6 \) \( \text{Kf}5 \) 7. \( d4 \)

The bishop is unassailable on the beautiful square e5, where it prevents the march of Black’s pawn.

And now, of course, we have to make a link with practical chess. Therefore we will now give two exercises from games, where White has to calculate a quite intricate complex of variations as quickly and efficiently as possible.
White to play and win. Make an analysis tree.

Show/Hide the Solution

Mate in many / Analysis tree
2006

With the help of an engine, it is easy to find the quickest road to the win. But for us humans, it is important to formulate a way to find the (strongest) moves.

1. \texttt{Qd8+}

In any case, it is useful to give as many checks at possible, in order not to give Black any chances to do something with his pieces. What are the things we should we pay attention to in such a struggle, where the queen and bishop – in combination with the pawns, and also the own king – have free play against the bare enemy king?

• In principle, the queen will approach the king on squares of a different colour than the bishop.

• The cooperation between the queen and bishop also depends on the fact that the bishop covers squares from a distance, which can be used by the queen in her hunt on the black king.

• One way or another, the bishop will have to be brought ‘closer’ in order to close the mating net.

• The queen will preferably drive the enemy king forward from Black’s back rank, which is the area where White controls the most squares. Hence the first move.

The game continued with \texttt{1.g5+}, which is not the most logical continuation. The fact that the pawn controlled several light squares came in handy. \texttt{1...\texttt{g6}}

Nevertheless, this also wins for White: \texttt{2.Qg8+ \texttt{h5}} This leads to a quick mate. Slightly more tenacious was \texttt{2...\texttt{f5}} – however, this would also lead to a quick mate after \texttt{3.f7+ \texttt{e4} (3...\texttt{xg5} 4.h4+ \texttt{xh4} (4...\texttt{g4} 5.f3+ \texttt{xh4} 6.e7#}}
... is an instructive mate pattern) 5.\textit{\texttt{Be7+}} (the queen and bishop have to keep cooperating all the time) 5...\textit{\texttt{Kg3}} (5...\textit{\texttt{g4}} 6.\textit{\texttt{f3#}}) 6.\textit{\texttt{f3+}} \textit{\texttt{h2}} 7.\textit{\texttt{d6+}} \textit{\texttt{g1}} 8.\textit{\texttt{f2+}} \textit{\texttt{h1}} 9.\textit{\texttt{h2#}}) 4.\textit{\texttt{c7+}} \textit{\texttt{f5}} (4...\textit{\texttt{d5}} 5.\textit{\texttt{c4+}} \textit{\texttt{d4}} 6.\textit{\texttt{e3+}} \textit{\texttt{xc4}} 7.\textit{\texttt{c5#}}) and now the quiet move 5.\textit{\texttt{d6!}} decides the issue.

\textbf{analysis diagram}

There is no remedy against the threatened mate with 6.\textit{\texttt{f6}} \textit{\texttt{c4}} 7.\textit{\texttt{e5}}. 3.\textit{\texttt{h7+}} In the game there followed 3.\textit{\texttt{f7+}} \textit{\texttt{h4}} 4.\textit{\texttt{e1+}} \textit{\texttt{g5}} 5.\textit{\texttt{d2+}} \textit{\texttt{h4}} 6.\textit{\texttt{f4+}} \textit{\texttt{xf3}} 7.\textit{\texttt{f2}} \textit{\texttt{g1+}} 8.\textit{\texttt{xf3}} \textit{\texttt{d7}} 9.\textit{\texttt{h6+}} \textit{\texttt{g3}} 10.\textit{\texttt{d6+}}, winning. 3...\textit{\texttt{g5}} 4.\textit{\texttt{e7+}} \textit{\texttt{f4}} 5.\textit{\texttt{d6+}} \textit{\texttt{g5}} 6.\textit{\texttt{g7+}} \textit{\texttt{h5}} 6...\textit{\texttt{f5}} 7.\textit{\texttt{f7+}} \textit{\texttt{e4}} 8.\textit{\texttt{f3+}} \textit{\texttt{d4}} 9.\textit{\texttt{d3#}}. 7.\textit{\texttt{f4}} and the mate on \textit{\texttt{g5}} cannot be parried.
1. \text{Q}d8+! \text{\#f7}

This reply looks logical. Let’s have a look at all the alternatives:

A) 1...\text{e}e6 2.\text{e}e7+ \text{d}d5 3.c4+! (with this pawn sacrifice, the king is lured further forward) 3...\text{d}d4 (3...\text{x}c4 4.\text{c}c5# and 3...\text{c}c6 4.\text{d}d6# are both immediate mates) 4.\text{c}c5+ \text{e}e4 5.\text{c}c3#, and here we see that the pawn on g4 (which controls a light square) is also of use;

B) 1...\text{g}g6 2.\text{e}e8+ \text{g}g5

\textbf{analysis diagram}

3.\text{e}e7+! (this is the best way to utilize the bishop. It prevents the king from moving back, and drives it further forward. 3.\text{d}d2+ is also attractive, but it would take a little longer) 3...\text{f}f4 4.\text{d}d6+ \text{g}g5 5.\text{f}f4+! (that is a move that needed to be found) 5...\text{f}f6 (5...\text{x}f4 6.\text{e}e3#) 6.\text{e}e5+ \text{g}g5 7.\text{e}e5#.
A beautiful mate with queen and bishop;
C) 1...g7 2.\textit{f}8+ (again, moving along the ‘bottom’ of the board) 2...g6 (2...h7 3.\textit{f}7+ h6 4.d2#) 3.e8+!.

Finally the queen takes care of the light squares. 3...g5 (3...f6 4.c3+ g5 5.h5+ f4 6.e5#) 4.e7+ (this method of involving the bishop in the play we have also seen in other variations) 4...f4 5.d6+ g5 6.f4+! f6 (6.xf4 7.e3#) 7.e5+ g5 8.h5#.
2...\textcolor{red}{\text{e}6} 3.\textcolor{red}{\text{f}5}\#. A beautiful typical queen/bishop mate such as we have seen before:

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw[black, very thick] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw[black, very thick] (0,1) -- (8,1);
\draw[black, very thick] (1,0) -- (1,8);
\draw[black, very thick] (2,2) -- (2,6);
\draw[black, very thick] (4,4) -- (4,8);
\draw[black, very thick] (6,6) -- (6,0);
\draw[black, very thick] (7,7) -- (7,1);
\draw[black, very thick] (0,4) circle (0.5 cm);
\draw[black, very thick] (2,2) circle (0.5 cm);
\draw[black, very thick] (6,6) circle (0.5 cm);
\draw[black, very thick] (1,1) circle (0.5 cm);
\draw[black, very thick] (5,5) circle (0.5 cm);
\draw[black, very thick] (3,3) circle (0.5 cm);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

\textit{analysis diagram}

3.\textcolor{red}{\text{e}8}+!

Again, the light squares!

3...\textcolor{blue}{\text{g}5}

Black is mated more quickly after 3...\textcolor{blue}{\text{f}6} 4.\textcolor{blue}{\text{c}3}+ \textcolor{blue}{\text{g}5} 5.\textcolor{blue}{\text{h}5}+ \textcolor{blue}{\text{f}4} 6.\textcolor{blue}{\text{e}5}\# or 3...\textcolor{blue}{\text{h}6} 4.\textcolor{blue}{\text{f}8}+ \textcolor{blue}{\text{g}5} 5.\textcolor{blue}{\text{e}7}+ \textcolor{blue}{\text{f}4} (5...\textcolor{blue}{\text{g}6} 6.\textcolor{blue}{\text{g}7}\#) 6.\textcolor{blue}{\text{e}3}\#.

4.\textcolor{red}{\text{e}7}+

And again this motif.

4...\textcolor{blue}{\text{f}4}

4...\textcolor{blue}{\text{h}6} 5.\textcolor{blue}{\text{g}5}+ (now that the white queen controls the light squares, the pawn can 'seize' some dark squares) 5...\textcolor{blue}{\text{g}7} 6.\textcolor{blue}{\text{f}6}+ \textcolor{blue}{\text{h}7} 7.\textcolor{blue}{\text{f}7}\#.

5.\textcolor{red}{\text{d}6}+ \textcolor{red}{\text{g}5} 6.\textcolor{red}{\text{f}4}+!

White says goodbye to his bishop. Now if 6...\textcolor{red}{\text{xf}4} 7.\textcolor{red}{\text{e}3}\#.

6...\textcolor{blue}{\text{f}6} 7.\textcolor{blue}{\text{e}5}+ \textcolor{blue}{\text{g}5} 8.\textcolor{blue}{\text{h}5}\#
After White’s queen check on g5, Black replied with

60 ... ♕f7

How can White force the win? Work out an analysis tree.

Show/Hide the Solution
Here the 60th move had been reached, and Carlsen assumed that he would now get 15 minutes extra on the clock, according to the old time limit. But the rules had changed, as the arbiter had pointed out at the start of this first round of the event. However, Carlsen had not been present at the commencement of the game, and because he also wasn’t aware of the change in the regulations, he now exceeded the time limit in a totally winning position. To the World Champion’s utter dismay, two arbiters came to his board to bring to his attention the fact that he had lost through time forfeit. Unbelievable, but true.

This incident gave Topalov wings, and he went on to win the tournament. Carlsen, on the other hand, suffered one of the worst tournament results of his career.

The position is a forced win, since the white queen and bishop cooperate splendidly in this position, where the black king won’t find any shelter. In the main variation, the black king is driven forward, until, at a certain point, it ends up on the a7-g1 diagonal. Then White wins the queen with an X-ray check. The following complex analysis shows what this looks like in variations.

One winning variation, with an optimal cooperation between the queen and bishop, would run as follows: 61.\texttt{Bc4+ Ke8} 61...\texttt{Kf8} leads to immediate mate after 62.\texttt{Qf6+ Ke8} 63.\texttt{Bb5#}. 62.\texttt{Bb5+ Kf7} 63.\texttt{Qf5+} and now:

A) Moving the king to the centre won’t help. White wins in an analogous way to the other variations, for example: 63...\texttt{Ke7} 64.\texttt{Qd7+ Kf6} 65.\texttt{Qd8+}
This clever check is always the way for White to make progress. The black king can never escape via the e5-square, as then the bishop on b8 would be lost with check.

A1) 65...\textit{g}7 66.\textit{e}7+ \textit{h}6 67.\textit{f}6+ \textit{h}7 68.\textit{d}3+, with mate;

A2) If the king moves to the other side, the win is achieved, for example, like this: 65...\textit{e}6 66.\textit{c}4+ \textit{f}5 67.\textit{g}4+ (a useful resource for White!) 67...\textit{g}6 68.\textit{e}8+ \textit{f}6 69.\textit{e}6+

Now the mate is forced: 69...\textit{g}5 70.\textit{f}5+ \textit{h}6 71.\textit{g}5+ \textit{g}7 72.\textit{f}7+ \textit{h}8 73.\textit{g}8#;
A3) 65...g6 66.d3+ f7 67.c4+ g6 68.g8+ f6 69.f8+ g5 70.g7+ f5 71.g4+ e4 72.g6+ f3 73.c6+ The win looks more or less like this in almost all the variations.

73...e3 74.e5+ f3 75.d5+ e3 76.d3#

B) 63.g7 64.d7+ f6 65.d8+!

There is this vicious check again (see the analysis diagram in line A!). With the queen on dark squares and the bishop on light ones, White deprives his opponent of a lot of squares. 65.g7 66.e6+ h6 67.f6+ h7 68.d3+ g8 69.c4+ h7 70.f5+ h6 71.f8+ g5 72.g7+ f5 73.g4+
Now the black monarch takes a forward flight, but it won’t help him: 73...♜e4 74.♕g6+!

This is not so easy to see for a human player. It is essential that the king cannot escape via d4 (since then White’s bishop would be hanging). 74...♚f3 74...♚e5 75.♗e6+ ☜d4 76.♗b6+; and again, 74...♚d4 runs into the crucial X-ray check, 75.♗b6+. 75.♗c6+ ☜e3 76.♗c5+ ☜f3

The only way not to lose the queen, but now follows an ingenious epaulette mate! 77.♗d5+ ☜e3 78.♗d3# – see line A3!

As stated, visualization is an important constituent part of the calculation of variations. And so it can happen that a player calculates a forced sequence of moves, and after just a few moves the variation branches out. This means that he will have to get a clear picture of this exact position in his head, in order to compile an analysis tree from there. We can say that this tree starts on a different junction, since the first condition – ‘seeing ahead’ a position that will arise on the board after a number of moves – makes this even more complicated. For you to get accustomed with this, we will give two elaborate examples. With each exercise, from the diagram position you have to play a variation in your head, and only after that, on another junction, you need to compile an analysis tree. The reader is allowed some time for this. We advise you to write down the variations on paper, so that later you can check what you found and what you (possibly) missed.

Borge Andersen
Ingi Johannsson
1964 (place unknown)
The white player believes he will be able to give Black a hard time on the light squares.

Try to visualize the following variation in your head. After the given sequence of moves, try to make a new analysis tree from that point on.

1...\textbf{K}xg6 2.\textbf{Q}g8+ \textbf{K}h6 3.\textbf{Q}h8+ \textbf{K}g6 4.\textbf{B}f3 \textbf{Q}d8

**OTHER LEVEL – How does White continue?**

Show/Hide the Solution

**Borge Andersen**

**Inge Johannsson**

Nordic Championship 1964

1.\textbf{xg6}+!!

With this move the white player showed that he believed he could give Black a beating on the light squares.

Please play through the following moves in your head, and, at the end of the move sequence, consider which variations you have to calculate. 1.\textbf{xg6}+ \textbf{xg6} 2.\textbf{g8}+ \textbf{h6} 3.\textbf{h8}+ \textbf{g6} 4.\textbf{f3} \textbf{d8}

**OTHER JUNCTION – How does White continue?**

1...\textbf{xg6}

 Forced, as other moves lose more quickly. For example: 1...\textbf{f5} 2.\textbf{e4}; 1...\textbf{fxg6} 2.\textbf{h8}+ \textbf{f5} 3.\textbf{e4}+ \textbf{g4} (3...\textbf{g5} 4.\textbf{h4}+ \textbf{g4} 5.\textbf{f3}); 4.\textbf{f3}+ \textbf{g5} 5.\textbf{h4}.

2.\textbf{g8}+ \textbf{h6}
Again, the most tenacious defence. Black will be mated more quickly after the following two alternatives: 2...\(\text{Kf6}\) 3.\(\text{Qxf7+ Kg5}\) 4.\(\text{Qg7+ Kg5}\) 5.e4#; or 2...\(\text{Kf5}\) 3.e4+ \(\text{Qxf6}\) 4.\(\text{Qxf7+ Kg5}\) 5.\(\text{Qg7#}\).

3.\(\text{Qh8+ Kg6}\)

Or 3...\(\text{Qg5}\) 4.\(\text{Qg7+Qf5}\) 5.e4#.

4.\(\text{Qf3}\)

The white player has in mind the mate pattern with queen plus bishop that we discussed before.

Even stronger was 4.\(\text{Qe4+}\) with the possible continuation 4...\(\text{f5}\) (4...\(\text{Kg5}\) 5.\(\text{Qg7#}\)) 5.\(\text{Qf3}\). Now, in the face of the threat 6.\(\text{Qxh5+Qg5}\) and 7.e4 mate, Black can only sacrifice his queen with 5...\(\text{Qb7}\) 6.\(\text{Qxh5+Qf6}\) 7.\(\text{Qxb7}\) \(\text{Qxb7}\) 8.\(\text{Qf3}\) \(\text{Qb4}\) 9.e4 and after this the technical phase is easy.

4...\(\text{Qd8}\)

After 4...\(\text{Qf5}\) 5.e4 a little technique would still be needed, but there is no doubt that White wins also here.

Now it’s a forced mate. How does White continue?

5.\(\text{Qxh5+Qf5}\)

White would still have to show some ingenuity in the variation 5...\(\text{Qg5}\) 6.f4+ exf4 7.exf4+ \(\text{Qf5}\). Now the magnet combination, already familiar to us, leads to a quick win: 8.\(\text{Qg4+! Qg6}\) (8...\(\text{Qxg4}\) 9.\(\text{Qh3#}\)) 9.f5+ \(\text{Qg5}\) 10.\(\text{Qh4#}\) and once again – perfect cooperation!

6.\(\text{Qh6!}\)

With this quiet move White catches the black king.

6...\(\text{Qf6}\)
7. $g4+!!$

Here is the magnet motif again.

7... $xg4$ 8.e4!

Another quiet move – this time to prevent the retreat to f5.

8... $a2$ 9.h3#
EXERCISE: Try to visualize the following variation in your head. After the given sequence of moves, try to make a new analysis tree from that point on.

25.\textit{Rf5!!} exf5 26.\textit{Nxf5+ Kf6} 27.\textit{Rd6+ Kxf5}

This is a new junction. Now make a new analysis tree.

Show/Hide the Solution

Alexander Kotov
Mikhail Yudovich
Moscow ch-URS 1939 (9)

With the black king in the middle, it is logical that White will search for a way to besiege it. For the time being, the king has found shelter behind two little pawns (e6 and f7), and the \textit{Qc5} and the \textit{Re4} are preventing a swift collapse.

In this position, Kotov, the man who provided us with a system to find our way through intricate variations, finds a way to ‘strip’ the king with a formidable sacrifice. Even today’s engines have trouble turning out the first move:

25.\textit{Rf5!!}

A marvellous rook sacrifice, which renders the fifth rank inaccessible for the black queen.

25...\textit{exf5}

The principled move; of course, this had to be calculated accurately.

25...\textit{Qd6} is not a solution on account of 26.\textit{Rxf7+! Kxf7} 27.\textit{Qf5+ exf5} 28.\textit{Qxd6+ Ke8} 29.\textit{Qa4+! Qxa4} 30.\textit{Qd7+}, and White wins.

You might think that 25...\textit{Qxd4} was still more or less playable, but after 26.\textit{Qxd4} \textit{Qxd4} 27.\textit{Qg5+ Qd7} 28.\textit{Qf1} White won’t have much trouble vanquishing the uncoordinated black troops.
26. \textit{\texttt{Nxf5+ \texttt{Kf6}}}

26...\textit{\texttt{Qxf5??}} 27. \textit{\texttt{Qd6#}}.  
26...\textit{\texttt{Ke6}} amounts to the same thing.

27. \textit{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{Rd6+ \texttt{Kxf5}}}}}

Objectively, Black had to play 27...\textit{\texttt{Qxd6}}, but it is clear that he will lose too much material after 28. \textit{\texttt{Nd6}}.

\textbf{PLATFORM:} How should White continue?

As soon as the first move is found, this position flows naturally from it. But now we again have to find the best way for the white pieces to cooperate. This goal is best served by

28. \textit{\texttt{Qf3+!}}

Not 28. \textit{\texttt{Qh3+?}} in view of 28...\textit{\texttt{Ke5}} 29. \textit{\texttt{Rd1 Ke3}}, and Black escapes.

28. \textit{\texttt{Bc2?}} also ends in disaster after 28...\textit{\texttt{Qxd6!}} 29. \textit{\texttt{Qxd6 Rxc4}}, and Black has more than enough pieces for the queen.

28...\textit{\texttt{Rf4}}

The most tenacious defence.

If 28...\textit{\texttt{Ke5}} 29. \textit{\texttt{Qf6#}}; and 28...\textit{\texttt{Qg5}} loses quickly after 29. \textit{\texttt{Qf6+ Kh5}} (29...\textit{\texttt{Qg4}} 30. \textit{\texttt{Qd1+ Re2}} 31. \textit{\texttt{Qxe2#}}) 30. \textit{\texttt{Qd1+ Kg4}} 31. \textit{\texttt{Qh6#}}.

29. \textit{\texttt{Qh5+ Ke4}} 30. \textit{\texttt{Qc2+ Ke3}} 31. \textit{\texttt{Qd3+ Qf2}}

So far it’s all quite attractive and clear. Obviously, after 31...\textit{\texttt{Qe4}} White can achieve victory with a discovered check.  
Best then is 32. \textit{\texttt{Qd2+ Ke3}} 33. \textit{\texttt{Qe2#}}.

But now Black is also mated, on e3 or e1:
EXERCISE: Try to visualize the following variation in your head. After the given sequence of moves, try to make a new analysis tree from that point on.
32. \( \text{R}x\text{c}5! \) 33. \( \text{N}x\text{c}5 \) 34. \( \text{B}x\text{c}5+ \) 35. \( \text{Q}x\text{g}7+ \) 36. \( \text{Q}x\text{f}8 \)

This is a new junction. Now make a new analysis tree.

Show/Hide the Solution

Borislav Ivkov
Levente Lengyel
Beverwijk 1964 (5)

White calculates in his head the following forced variation:

32. \( \text{R}x\text{c}5! \) 33. \( \text{B}b4 \) 34. \( \text{Q}c7 \)

Here, 33... \( \text{R}c8 \) fails to 34. \( \text{N}d6 \).

34. \( \text{B}x\text{c}5+ \) 35. \( \text{Q}x\text{g}7+ \) 36. \( \text{Q}g8+ \)

Now he has to visualize a clear picture of this new position, in order to build an analysis tree from here.

QUESTION: Visualization on a different level. What is the strongest way for White to continue from this position?

37. \( \text{N}g7+! \)

This move, which does not look very self-evident at first sight, is the key to success. Less convincing is 37. \( \text{Q}e6+ \) 38. \( \text{Q}d5+ \) (it is noteworthy that 38. \( \text{Q}b6+ \) 39. \( \text{Q}c6+ \) \( \text{Q}b8 \) does not yield anything special either. Here, 40. \( \text{Q}d6 \) is answered by 40... \( \text{R}a7 \) 41. \( \text{Q}b6+ \) \( \text{Q}a8 \). Although White doesn’t have much to fear, there is no concrete way for him to make progress either) 38... \( \text{Q}c7 \). The king is relatively safe here; Black has defended all the important squares. Also here, there is no forced way to make progress.

37... \( \text{K}d7 \)

38. \( \text{Q}d5+ \) 39. \( \text{Q}e7 \) 38... \( \text{Q}e7 \) 39. \( \text{Q}f5+ \) \( \text{Q}e8 \) 40. \( \text{Q}x\text{a}8+ \) 40. \( \text{Q}e6+ \).

39. \( \text{Q}b7+ \)

The only move, but now all will be over quickly. The knight is much better placed now, since 38... \( \text{Q}c7 \) fails to 39. \( \text{Q}e6+ \).

Going back with the king also doesn’t work: 38... \( \text{Q}c8 \) 39. \( \text{Q}x\text{a}8+ \).

39... \( \text{Q}d8 \) 40. \( \text{Q}x\text{a}8+ \) 41. \( \text{Q}b7+ \) 42. \( \text{Q}d8 \) 42. \( \text{Q}b8+ \) \( \text{Q}e7 \) 43. \( \text{Q}c7 \#

6.5 Calculation/thinking ahead

Calculating variations cannot be trained often enough. In an incredibly high percentage of games, one of the players fails to win due to (unnecessary) mistakes in calculation. In this area, man is inferior to the computer, which can
calculate long forced sequences of moves faultlessly in almost every position. All the same, it turns out that also here the proverb ‘practice makes perfect’ applies.

The following diagram position may look familiar to you. In the introduction to this chapter, we already announced that there is a combination for White here – an astonishing sacrifice, in fact, in this theoretically known position. After the bewildered black player accepts the piece, White demonstrates that he has calculated very deeply.

Grigory Ravinsky
Vasily Panov
Moscow 1943

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EXERCISE: Try to visualize the following variation in your head. After the given sequence of moves, try to make a new analysis tree from that point on.

26.\textit{Rxe7+! Kxe7} 27.\textit{Bg5+ Kd6}

This is a new junction. Now make a new analysis tree.

Show/Hide the Solution

Grigory Ravinsky
Vasily Panov
Moscow 1943

White’s pieces are excellently placed, and so there has to be a decisive continuation here. Rawinsky decides to remove the last remains of the black king’s protection with

26.\textit{Rxe7+! Kxe7} 27.\textit{g5+ d6}

and then he fires his bishops at the king:
Now he has to try and picture this new position as clearly as possible in his mind, and build an analysis tree from here.

**QUESTION:** Visualization on a different level. What is the strongest continuation for White in this position?

Going back to the starting square is not an option. White wins with 27...\(\text{\$}e8\) 28.\(\text{\$}e2+\) (the backward queen move!)

28...\(\text{\$}f7\) 29.\(\text{\$}d5+\) \(\text{\$}g6\) 30.\(\text{\$}e4+\) (the \(\text{\$}g5\) can be sacrificed now) 30...\(\text{\$}xg5\) 31.\(\text{\$}f4+\) \(\text{\$}h5\) 32.\(\text{\$}f7+\) \(g6\) 33.\(\text{\$}h4\#\).

There is no escape with 27...\(\text{\$}f7\) either on account of 28.\(\text{\$}d5++\)– with a quick mate after 28...\(\text{\$}e8\) 29.\(\text{\$}e2+\).

**28.\(\text{\$}d1+\)!**

Once again, this backward queen move is the strongest. However, we could not really call 28.\(\text{\$}f4\) a mistake. White wins material after 28...\(\text{\$}e5\) 29.\(\text{\$}e6\) 30.\(\text{\$}h3+\) \(\text{\$}d5\) 31.\(\text{\$}f3+\) \(\text{\$}e4\) 32.\(\text{\$}f7+\)! \(\text{\$}d4\) (32...\(\text{\$}c6\) 33.\(\text{\$}g2\)) 33.\(\text{\$}g7+\) \(\text{\$}c4\) 34.\(\text{\$}f1+\) \(\text{\$}d5\), and finally the black queen ends up in a pin after all: 35.\(\text{\$}g2\).

28...\(\text{\$}c7\)

28...\(\text{\$}e6\) 29.\(\text{\$}d5\) is a pretty mate pattern we know all too well by now.

**29.\(\text{\$}f4\) \(\text{\$}b6\) 30.\(\text{\$}d6\) \(\text{\$}a7\)**

30...\(\text{\$}c6\) runs into an immediate mate: 31.\(\text{\$}b8\#\).

**31.\(\text{\$}e7\) \(\text{\$}c7\)**

And Black resigned a little later. After 31...\(\text{\$}c7\) White can, of course, snatch the rook, as in the game, but the mate attack with 32.\(\text{\$}e3+\) \(\text{\$}b8\) (32...\(\text{\$}xe3\) 33.\(\text{\$}xc7\#\)) 33.\(\text{\$}d8+\) \(\text{\$}c8\) 34.\(\text{\$}b6\#\) is more efficient.

And 31...\(\text{\$}b6\) obviously runs into 32.\(\text{\$}b7\#\).

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**Grigory Ravinsky**

**Georgy Ilivitsky**

**Riga 1952 (6)**

1.e4 c5 2.\(\text{\$}f3\) d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.\(\text{\$}xd4\) \(\text{\$}f6\) 5.\(\text{\$}c3\) a6 6.f4 \(\text{\$}c7\) 7.d3 e5 8.f3 \(\text{\$}bd7\) 9.0-0 b5 10.a3 \(\text{\$}e7\) 11.\(\text{\$}h1\) 0-0 12.fxe5 dxe5 13.\(\text{\$}h4\) \(\text{\$}d8\) 14.\(\text{\$}e1\) \(\text{\$}c5\) 15.\(\text{\$}g5\) \(\text{\$}e6\) 16.\(\text{\$}f5\) \(\text{\$}h5\) 17.\(\text{\$}h4\) \(\text{\$}f4\)
Up to here this variation had been played before. The game Averbakh-Bronstein, Moscow ch-URS 1951, continued 18.g3.

18.\textit{\texttt{xg7!}}

Because of this incredible sacrifice, thought up by Ravinsky, the evaluation of this variation had to be adjusted. At first sight it looks impossible to play such sacrifices so early in the game.

18...\textit{\texttt{xg7?}}

Black doesn’t see how White can continue his attack, and accepts the gift. Now he is butchered in a brilliant way.

Crucial was what would have happened if Black had first eliminated White’s most important attacking piece, the bishop on d3, with 18...\textit{\texttt{cxd3!}}. It looks as if White doesn’t have a winning attack here. Best is 19.\textit{\texttt{g3}} (19.cxd3? \textit{\texttt{g7}} doesn’t give White an attack; also not great is 19.\textit{\texttt{xe6?!}} in view of 19...\textit{\texttt{fxe6 20.xd8 g8}} 21.\textit{\texttt{xd8 x8}} 22.cxd3 \textit{\texttt{xd3 and Black is clearly better}) 19...\textit{\texttt{g5}} 20.\textit{\texttt{g5 h8}} (20...\textit{\texttt{f6 21.xe6+ fxe6 22.xc7 b8 23.xa6 (23.cxd3 x7 24.ad1) 23...xb2 24.b5 xc2 25.b4 is approximately balanced) 21.cxd3 g8 22.xe6 fxe6 23.f6+ g7}} 24.xg7+ xg7 25.d4 is approximately balanced too.

19.\textit{\texttt{xf4! exf4}}

Now it was too late for 19...\textit{\texttt{xd3!}} on account of 20.\textit{\texttt{d5! f2+ (20...\textit{\texttt{xd5? immediately leads to mate after 21.f6+ xf6 22.xf6+ g8 23.g4#}) 21.xf2 (21.xf2 xd5 22.f6+ xf6 23.xf6+ g8 24.exd5 d8 25.xe5 is also very good for White) 21...xd5 (21...xg5 22.xc7 is finished) 22.f6+ xf6 23.g4+ h8 24.xf6#}}.

20.\textit{\texttt{h6+ g8}}
21. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{f6}}!

This blockade motif, known from a famous game Fischer-Benko, is what it's all about.

21... \texttt{\textcolor{red}{xf6}} 22. \texttt{\textcolor{blue}{e5}}!

Now that the move ...f7-f5 has been ruled out, Black cannot involve his queen in the defence.

22... \texttt{\textcolor{blue}{xd3}}

Forced. 22... \texttt{\textcolor{blue}{fd8}} does not help either in view of 23.\texttt{exf6} and the mate on g7 cannot be parried.

23. \texttt{exf6}

White has created an inescapable mate threat on g7, but he still needs to reduce Black’s counterplay to nil. The path to victory turns out to be narrow...
23...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{blue}{N}}}}f2} + 24.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{g}}}}1 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textcolor{blue}{h}}}}3+

For Black it is clear: he has to keep giving checks, otherwise he will be mated.

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{25.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{f}}}}1!}
\end{array}
\]

White declines the knight sacrifice, but now his king has to set off for unsafe territory. After 25.gxh3 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textcolor{blue}{c}}}}5+ 26.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{h}}}}1 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textcolor{blue}{d}}}}5+ 27.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{x}}}}xd5 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textcolor{blue}{x}}}}xd5+ 28.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{g}}}}1 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textcolor{blue}{d}}}}4+ it ends in a repetition of moves, since the white king cannot escape from the checks without getting into danger himself.

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{25...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textcolor{blue}{e}}}}4+ 26.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{e}}}}2}
\end{array}
\]
Now, certainly not 26.\textit{e}1?? in view of 26...\textit{e}5+ and Black takes over the attack: 27.\textit{d}1 \textit{fd}8+ 28.\textit{e}1 \textit{e}1+ 29.\textit{d}1 \textit{fxd}1#.

Black resigned here. There could have followed: 26...\textit{x}e2+ 27.\textit{e}1! (the culmination of what went before: White hides his king behind the enemy bishop, and so Black’s major pieces cannot intervene) 27...\textit{a}5+ 28.b4 and mate cannot be prevented.

As a young player, I used to have problems with calculating complicated positions. Although I did have an eye for ‘tactics’, this remained limited to combinations for myself. Searching for beautiful moves for my opponents wasn’t my cup of tea. As a result, more often than I cared for, I fell prey to tactical finesses that opponents had woven into the position. And so I started to avoid complications more and more, selling myself short. After all, aren’t there many good positions that should be converted with a dashing tactical ‘raid’?

During my journeys through countless tournaments, it became more and more clear to me that I had to work on this evident weakness in my play. And suddenly there was someone who saw something in me, and he unexpectedly found a sponsor for me.

While following a course for chess instructors, I was sitting next to a person who was a celebrity in Dutch volleyball. Pierre Mathieu, who unfortunately has now passed away, but then was the national coach of the Dutch women’s volleyball team, as well as being an ardent chess fan. As a great variety of small exercises were being slid across to us during the course evenings, he was impressed by my solving abilities. Now, in my view, this wasn’t so impressive, but if a 2300+ player looks at a position, he will get more out of it than a player with approximately 1800 Elo.

I didn’t say ‘no’ to his offer to train with him, although I was a little sceptical due to the difference in our chess levels. But this inspired man, who wanted to project his vision from a different branch of sport onto chess, tried to help me on my way to becoming a better chess player. After a few preparatory conversations, in which I tried to make clear where my bottlenecks were, he set to work.

In the meantime, we had selected a tournament for me where all the expenses would be covered by the sponsor. The only thing I had to do in return was play every day in a shirt that carried the name of the sponsor.

By way of preparation, among others, I set to work with Kotov’s books in order to learn how to calculate. With Mathieu I did many visualization exercises. I remember well one of those, even though I’ve never quite understood the use of it to this day. He had worked out the following exercise for me: he would read the moves of a game aloud, from the starting position, and when he announced White’s third move, I had to play White’s first move on the board. When he read aloud Black’s third move, I had to make Black’s first move. And so on. That wasn’t at all easy in the beginning! Just try it yourself, with a sparring partner.

About two months later, the tournament started, but it turned out to be a great disillusionment. I ended on around 50%, which was significantly lower than would have been expected from my Elo rating. What I had been afraid of, happened. If you start training in chess, you cannot expect to reap the rewards right away. This does often happen in other sports, but our game is not very well suited for this. It can even take years before you reap the rewards of the training work you put in as a chess player. Many players do not get around to this, and consequently, they will quit competitive chess. It’s a question of keeping going for a long period of time, and intrinsic motivation may well be the most important factor that determines whether a player will make progress or not. Love for the game, steady work, playing tournaments, trial and error, it’s all part of the job.

In the end, my sponsor wasn’t prepared to continue, and so the training sessions with Mathieu were stopped. But quite some time after this, in 1981, I managed to cause quite a stir by suddenly qualifying for the Dutch championship, as a complete outsider. In the previous year, among others, I had shared first place in the Open Italian Championship. This was partly thanks to the fact that the skill of calculation, which I had practiced so vehemently, finally began to have a concrete and positive effect on my play.

Nevertheless, it took a lot of time before I finally came home with a victory against a grandmaster with an Elo rating that was much higher than mine at the time. This was in an open tournament, in the German city of Hamburg in 1984,
against Gerald Hertneck. And it wasn’t just an ordinary victory either – no, I out-calculated him in an extremely complex attacking position, where I had first sacrificed several pawns and then two pieces.

Now, after all these years, I have taken another look at this game. And alas, I have to acknowledge that I missed quite a lot back then. But that is a quite natural conclusion in the presence of modern-day engines, and, fortunately for me, my strong opponent had also gone off the track.

Finally I can say that with his books, Alexander Kotov has helped me to find my way in a swamp which I otherwise wouldn’t have entered. And actually, I can say that, thanks in part to Pierre Mathieu’s input, I managed to bring this game to a happy conclusion. Alas, this happened much later than he – as a coach who wanted results – had hoped for. For the sake of completeness, I have to add that Hertneck took his revenge in a big way when we crossed swords again many years later.

Here is this memorable game, which, incidentally, also had an elegant finish.

Herman Grooten
Gerald Hertneck
Hamburg 1984

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.bc3 cf6 4.fb3 bb4 5.cxd5 exd5 6.g5 bd7 7.e3 c5 8.b5 a5 9.0-0
9...xd7+ xd7 10.0-0 xc3 11.bxc3 c4 12.c2 is the line recommended by theory.

9...xc3 10.xd7+ xd7 11.bxc3 xc3

Black takes up the gauntlet: he is going for the win of a pawn. As far as I know, this had never been played before or since.

11...c4 12.c2 would boil down to a transposition to the above-mentioned theoretical continuation.

12.c1 a3 13.dxc5 xa2

He who has said ‘A’ should also say ‘B’.

Absolutely out of the question was the capture 13...xc5 in view of the devastating reply 14.xd5.

14.e2 a4
15.e4!?

A second pawn sacrifice, which seemed to offer good chances of obtaining the initiative over the board. After 15.\textit{d}d4 White would have had sufficient compensation for the pawn, but I decided to try to turn the thumbscrews on my opponent.

15...d4

He doesn’t trust it, and gives back the pawn. As it turns out, this was the correct decision. The justification of the pawn sacrifice can be found, among others, in the following variation: 15...\textit{d}xe4 16.\textit{d}d6 I had intended to play 16.c6 myself, with the possible continuation 16...\textit{b}xc6, and now 17.\textit{d}d6 turns out to be the strongest move. The black king remains imprisoned in the centre: 17...\textit{f}6 18.\textit{c}xc6 \textit{fxg}5 19.\textit{g}xg5 and White wins. 16...\textit{f}6 Obviously, White would already get the upper hand after 16...\textit{f}6 17.\textit{x}xf6 \textit{gxf6} 18.\textit{d}d4. 17.\textit{e}6+
analysis diagram

17...\textbf{f8} 17...\textbf{d8} 18.\textbf{e5}! \textbf{xe5} 19.\textbf{xf6+ gxf6} 20.\textbf{xf6+ e8} (20...\textbf{c7} 21.\textbf{d6#}; 20...\textbf{d7} 21.\textbf{d2+ d3} 22.\textbf{xd3+ exd3} 23.\textbf{d6+ e8} 24.\textbf{e1+ f7} 25.\textbf{e7+ f8} 26.\textbf{d8+}) 21.\textbf{h8+ f7} 22.\textbf{e2 e8} 23.\textbf{h7+ f8} 24.\textbf{e1} and the mass of white pieces aimed at the black king is decisive.

For a moment it seems as if Black can get away with the text move, since no less than three white pieces are hanging. But White has an extremely strong move at his disposal: \textbf{Rd2!} White saves his rook, and at the same time he has a wonderful threat up his sleeve, namely 19.\textbf{e5}!. There is only one defence against this: \textbf{Qa6} Both taking the knight with 18...\textbf{exf3 19.e1} and taking the bishop with 18...\textbf{fxg5} leads to mate – here, with 19.\textbf{xg5}. 19.\textbf{d6 a5} In order to cover the d8-square, but now White decides the battle with 20.\textbf{fd1}. This position is a striking example of the fatal effects of underdevelopment.

\textbf{16.xd4 h6}

Playing with fire. It was high time to castle 16...0-0, but the black player wanted first to chase away the ‘irritating’ bishop on g5.

\textbf{17.c6}!?

Played in the style of the previous moves. With hindsight, the prosaic 17.\textbf{f4} would have been much better.

\textbf{17...bxc6}
18.\texttt{\textdagger}\textbullet\textdagger?!\n
This piece sacrifice was the actual idea behind my previous play, and during the game I was very happy with my discovery. The point lies in 17...hxg5 18.cxb7 Bxb7 19.Rc8+ Rc8 20.Qxa4, winning the queen.

Now, many years later, and in the possession of several engines, I regretfully have to accept that the text move was not the best at all, and there was a much stronger and much more beautiful move.

18.Qd2!! was a magnificent way to convert the attack into a win; the idea is that after 18...hxg5 (upon 18...Qa6 my piece sacrifice would have worked: 19.Nf5! hxg5 20.Qd6 \textdagger\textdagger 21.Rxc6

\texttt{analysis diagram}
and the double mate threat of 22.\text{\textit{c7}#} and 22.\text{\textit{e7}#} guarantees the win for White) the queen is surrounded in the middle of the board: 19.\text{\textit{a2 c4}} 20.\text{\textit{c1}}. An exceptionally beautiful queen-trapping idea!

\textbf{18...hxg5 19.\text{\textit{d6}}}

With hindsight, I should have settled for 19.\text{\textit{d6+ e7}} 20.\text{\textit{d2}}. White could have kept the initiative going in that case.

\textbf{19...\text{\textit{xe4}}}

The only move to prevent the threatened mate.

\textbf{20.\text{\textit{cc1!}}}

Up to here I had calculated everything.

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\textbf{20...\text{\textit{xf5}}}

Black takes a second piece off the board. The most tenacious defence was 20...\text{\textit{d8!}}, after which it is hard to say whether White’s attack will crash through. A plausible continuation is 21.\text{\textit{fd1!}} (not 21.\text{\textit{fe1!}} in view of 21...\text{\textit{f4!}}, and on 21.\text{\textit{xc6}}, Black has 21...\text{\textit{e5!}}) and now:

A) After 21...\text{\textit{f4}} White can continue with 22.\text{\textit{xc6}} (22.\text{\textit{e7+}}? is wrong due to 22...\text{\textit{c7}}) 22...\text{\textit{h2+}} 23.\text{\textit{f1}} and here 23...\text{\textit{b8!}} turns out to be the only move for Black in order not to lose (on 23...\text{\textit{b8}} 24.\text{\textit{g3!}} cuts off the queen from the scene of battle, and also introduces the threat of 25.\text{\textit{xd7+}} followed by 26.\text{\textit{c7+}} and 27.\text{\textit{xb8}});

B) 21...\text{\textit{e6}} 22.\text{\textit{d3}} and Black won’t be able to disentangle himself. Here, 22...\text{\textit{d5}} (22...\text{\textit{h4}} runs into 23.\text{\textit{d6}}, with a large advantage) is met by 23.\text{\textit{c3!}}, which turns out to be the right way to obtain an advantage (23.\text{\textit{c2 e5}} 24.\text{\textit{xc6=}}): 23...\text{\textit{xf5}} 24.\text{\textit{xc6}} and Black won’t get out of this unscathed.

\textbf{21.\text{\textit{fe1+}}}

21...\textbf{Q}e5?

During the game, both players thought that Black had to give up the queen immediately, but that is a delusion. The only move was 21...\textbf{K}d8, and only after 22.\textbf{R}xc6 should Black give up the queen with 22...\textbf{Q}e6!. Incidentally, this position was the justification of the double piece sacrifice: the two mate threats on c7 and e7 will cost Black material. 23.\textbf{Q}c7+ \textbf{K}e7 24.\textbf{R}xe6+ fxe6 25.\textbf{Q}d6+ \textbf{K}d8 and probably both sides will have to settle for a repetition of moves.

Giving up the queen on another square is also no good at this moment: 21...\textbf{Q}e6 22.\textbf{R}xe6+ fxe6 23.\textbf{Q}xc6 \textbf{R}b8 24.\textbf{Q}xc8+! \textbf{Q}e7 (24...\textbf{R}xc8 25.\textbf{Q}xc8+ \textbf{Q}e7 26.\textbf{Q}xh8, and in the resulting endgame, the rook is much stronger than the knight) 25.\textbf{Q}c3 and the remaining technical work isn’t too difficult.

\textbf{22.\textbf{R}xe5+ \textbf{Q}xe5 23.\textbf{Q}xe5+ \textbf{K}f8}

He could not play 23...\textbf{Q}e6, since with 24.\textbf{Q}xg7 0-0-0 25.\textbf{Q}xg5 White snatches two crucial pawns, and ends up with a passed h-pawn.

Black hopes to build some kind of fortress, with a rook and bishop for the queen, and all the pawns on one wing. But the text move allows an amusing finish.

\textbf{24.\textbf{Q}d6+ \textbf{K}g8}
Now we get to see a nice ‘queen ladder’, known from endgame studies.

25. $\text{Qxc6}$ $\text{Rb8}$ 26. $\text{Qd6}$ $\text{Ra8}$ 27. $\text{Qd5}$ $\text{Rb8}$ 28. $\text{Qe5}$ $\text{Ra8}$ 29. $\text{Qe8+}$ $\text{Kh7}$ 30. $\text{Qe4+}$

and this final double attack with the queen decides the issue. White wins.

The practicing of tactics and the calculation of analysis trees cannot be trained often enough, as we said before. In this book, we have already presented many exercises where we showed various aspects of these skills. Here are two more examples.
Black has just exchanged a piece on c3. Now calculate 32.\textit{Q}h6.

\textbf{Show/Hide the Solution}

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\textbf{Isaac Sanders}
\textbf{Jacob Aagaard}
\textit{England tt 2014/15 (10)}

\textbf{32.\textit{Q}h6}

Suddenly threatening mate in one. If White recaptures the bishop, he will have too little compensation for his minus pawns. After 32.\textit{Q}xc3 \textit{Q}d7!, Black is clearly better.

\textbf{32.\textit{Q}h6 \textit{K}f8 33.\textit{Q}g5}

Of course. Again, the threat is mate in one.

\textbf{33...\textit{K}g8}
If the king tries to escape in the other direction, White has to involve his last piece in the attack. He manages to do this with 33...e8 34.h8+ f8 It would clearly be over after 34...d7 35.g4+. 35.h5! This move is the key to the win. White also abandons the h8. 35..d7 Again, the black king doesn’t find a safe shelter. After 35...xh8 36.xg7+ f8 (36...xh5 37.xh5+ f8 38.h8#) 37.f6+ the job is done. 36.xg7+ The computer gives a forced mate in 8 after 36.c5, but that is not a human move. 36.d6 37.h6+ c5 38.e3+! In order to cover the f2-square in view of the counterattack with ...f2+. White has to leave the black queen untouched for the time being, as he would make things very hard for himself by capturing: 38.xc7?! f2+ 39.g1 g2+ 40.xg2 hxg2 and it is quite questionable whether White can win here. 38.d4 39.a3+ xc4 40.c1+ Now that the back rank is protected, White has no longer anything to fear. 40.b5 41.xc7 And now White takes the queen. The black counterattack is merely a tempest in a teapot: 41.f2+ 42.h1 and Black has nothing.

34.h4!
This is a standard manoeuvre that we have seen before: the queen is placed behind her own rook, again preparing 35.\(\text{R}h8\)#. At the same time the queen keeps an eye on e7, preventing the king’s escape by way of that square. Not good would have been 34.\(\text{R}gh6\) in view of 34...\(\text{R}xf3\)! (Black creates an escape square for the king on f7, and at the same time eliminates an important attacking piece) 35.\(\text{R}h8+\) \(\text{K}f7\) and the attack is halted: 36.\(\text{Q}xd8\) \(\text{R}f2+\) 37.\(\text{K}h1\) \(\text{Q}xd8\), and Black is winning.

34...\(\text{R}xf3\)

Again Black counters with the exchange sacrifice, but now it turns out to be ineffective. The difference immediately becomes clear.

35.\(\text{R}h8+\) \(\text{K}f7\) 36.\(\text{Exg7+}\!\)

Demolishing the last remains of the black king’s shelter.

36...\(\text{Exg7}\)

36...\(\text{Qe6}\) 37.\(\text{Rh6+}\) \(\text{Kf6}\) 38.\(\text{Qxf6#}\).

37.\(\text{Rh7+}\) \(\text{Kg6}\)

Relatively better was 37...\(\text{Qg8}\), but then 38.\(\text{Exc7}\) would still put an end to all resistance.

38.\(\text{Qh6#}\)
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Calculate 15.\text{N}xf7!.

Show/Hide the Solution

Mikhail Ulibin
Jorge Cabrera Trujillo
Cappelle-la-Grande 2008 (2)

15.\text{N}xf7!

Less clear is 15.\text{Q}xd5  \text{Q}xd5 16.\text{N}c7+  \text{K}f8 17.\text{Q}xd5 exd5.

15.\text{N}xf7!  \text{Q}xf7 16.\text{N}d6+  \text{K}g8

16...\text{Q}e7 17.\text{Qxb7} (after 17.\text{Q}xd5  \text{Q}e5 18.\text{Q}xe5  \text{Q}xd6 White also has an advantage, but it is less clear than the main line) 17...\text{Q}d7 18.\text{Q}c5, after which White captures on e6 or d5.

17.\text{Q}xe6  \text{Q}xf4

17...\text{Q}ce7 is met by 18.\text{Q}xe7  \text{Q}xe7 19.\text{Q}b3+ and mate is inevitable, while after 17...\text{Q}de7 18.\text{Q}g5 h6 19.\text{Q}xe7  \text{Q}xe7 20.\text{Q}f7+  \text{Q}h7 21.\text{Q}xe7 brings White victory.

18.\text{Q}b3!

Not 18.\text{Q}xf4? in view of 18...\text{Q}c7, and for the time being White cannot make progress.

Even worse is 18.\text{Q}e8+? on account of 18...\text{Q}xe8 19.\text{Q}xe8  \text{Q}xe8 20.\text{Q}xf4  \text{Q}e5 and with a rook and two pieces for the queen, Black can try for a win.

18...h5
Not 18...\(\text{a5}\) in view of 19.\(\text{e8}\#\).

The most tenacious is 18...\(\text{f8}\), but after 19.\(\text{xb7}\) \(\text{e5}\) 20.\(\text{xe5}\) \(\text{xd6}\) 21.\(\text{xa8+}\) \(\text{f7}\) 22.\(\text{xa7+}\) \(\text{f6}\) 23.\(\text{ae1}\) White has a decisive material advantage.

\[
19.\text{g6! h7 20.g7! xg7 21.f7+ g6 22.f6+}
\]

And Black resigned in view of 22...\(\text{g5}\) 23.\(\text{h4}\) \(\text{g4}\) 24.f3#!.
Chapter 7
Attacking games by ace players

7.1 Introduction

We can learn from ace players how to play the game. Precisely the approach of a strong player can provide a lot of insight into the tricks of the trade. And to this end, it is preferable to study games by players who mop up weaker opponents in crystal-clear style.

7.2 Julian Hodgson

In the days when I toured international tournaments all over Europe, I regularly encountered the British player, Julian Hodgson. In England he had been known as a prodigy, and even if he was no longer a prodigy, it quickly became clear to me that he had a special talent for the game. He had become an International Master at an early age, and the grandmaster title was in the line of expectations when we met. We played quite a lot of tournaments together.

Hodgson projected his light-hearted look on life also on chess. It was always a delight to join him when he was looking at a game he had just played. The originality and abundance of sparkle in several of his games show that he has always been a great lover of the game. His love for chess kept him going, even when his results were not too good for a while.

However, the life of a professional chess player is no bed of roses. You have to make money to be able to lead a ‘normal’ life, and probably that was the reason why at one point he said goodbye to competitive chess, as it offered him too little financial stability.

Therefore I was pleased when many years later two books by him appeared, entitled Attack with Julian Hodgson 1 and 2. When I perused these booklets, it struck me how great his intrinsic motivation for the game had remained. Many of his own games that he shows in these books indicate that he has never renounced his predilection for dashing attacks on the enemy king. And, oddly enough, he does win games in which he invests a lot of material, without calculating too much or too deeply. Here his talent manifests itself; he is able to achieve many things just by intuition. I can still hear him say during the post-mortem: ‘All the pieces active, half of the opponent’s pieces hanging, an unsafe king – that should be enough’. And then the combinations jump into his eye as a matter of course. Time and again he showed the inventiveness required to conjure up sometimes hidden, and often beautiful, motifs on the board.

Let’s have a look at his game against Romanian grandmaster Mihai Suba. I have made summary use of the annotations from his book – of which some, alas, haven’t stood the test of time. The difference between the engine he used at the time to check his variations (Fritz 4) and present-day engines is huge. But the sparkle in his play has remained!

Julian Hodgson
Mihai Suba
Blackpool zt 1990

1.e4 c5 2.d4 d6 3.c3 d6 4.e2 e5 5.d4 cxd4 6.cxd4 Nb4 7.d5 Qa5+

7...Qb6 is impossible in view of 8.0-0 b4, as after 9.a3 a6 Black will lose a piece after all: 10.Qa4+.

8.Qc3 Qxc3 9.bxc3
9...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{\textcolor{red}{N}}}}}d8

This passive retreat looks suspect, but there is an idea behind it.

Certainly not 9...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{\textcolor{red}{Q}}}}}xc3+? on account of 10.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{\textcolor{red}{B}}}}}d2 and the knight on c6 is lost.

9...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{\textcolor{red}{N}}}}}e5 is played more often, with the possible continuation 10.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{\textcolor{red}{N}}}}}xe5 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{\textcolor{red}{Q}}}}}xc3+ 11.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{\textcolor{red}{B}}}}}d2 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{\textcolor{red}{Q}}}}}xe5 12.0-0 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{\textcolor{red}{Q}}}}}xd5, and Black has won no less than three pawns, but White’s enormous advantage in development provides ample compensation for this. This was illustrated in the game Basman-Stean, Hastings 1973/74, and, more recently, in Looshnikov-Paramonov, St. Petersburg 2002.

10.0-0 e5

Thus, he hopes to close the position, in order then to rely on his plus pawn and his positional advantages.

11.dxe6

Obviously White has to keep the position open.

11...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{\textcolor{red}{N}}}}}xe6

The knight is quite decently placed here. Now the black player hopes to be able to bring his king to safety with a quick \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{\textcolor{red}{B}}}}}e7 followed by ...0-0.

12.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{\textcolor{red}{N}}}}}d4 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{\textcolor{red}{B}}}}}e7

After 12...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{\textcolor{red}{N}}}}}xd4, 13.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{\textcolor{red}{Q}}}}}xd4 further disturbs Black’s development.
13. \textit{b}5+

White is a pawn down, and c3 is also not a pretty pawn, so here he has to come up with something special in the way of compensation. With this ‘disturbing move’ he prevents Black from castling – otherwise his compensation would indeed be quite minimal.

13... \textit{f}8

Suba decides to move aside with the king. In practice this means that his rook will remain out of play for quite a while. At the same time, the black queenside is underdeveloped, giving White’s pieces free play for the time being.

After 13... \textit{d}7 14. \textit{x}d7+ \textit{x}d7, 15. \textit{f}3 is good for White.

14. \textit{b}1!

With this move White protects the \textit{b}5 one more time (as 14... \textit{x}d4 was threatened), and, in addition, brings another piece into the struggle.

14... \textit{a}6

Suba wants to force the \textit{b}5 to declare its intentions, mainly so as to be able to prepare ... \textit{d}7. Hodgson is not in the least troubled by the fact that he now has to give yet another pawn.

After 14... \textit{x}a2 15. \textit{e}3 White retains good prospects.

Unappetising was 14... \textit{x}c3?! in view of 15. \textit{f}5 and Black has serious problems.

15. \textit{c}4
15...\textit{c}7

Of course it was too early for 15...\textit{d}7? in view of 16.\textit{xb}7.

Again, grabbing a pawn had great drawbacks: 15...\textit{xc}3 16.\textit{xe}6+ (16.\textit{xe}6 \textit{fxe}6 17.\textit{b}2 \textit{c}4 18.\textit{f}3+ \textit{f}e8 19.\textit{bc}1 \textit{xa}2 20.\textit{a}1) 16...\textit{fxe}6 (16...\textit{xe}6 17.\textit{xe}6 \textit{fxe}6 18.\textit{e}1 is very good for White) and now the tricky 17.\textit{b}3! is White’s best chance. White will be able to develop his other bishop on a beautiful diagonal with \textit{c}1-a3, and under certain circumstances he will also threaten \textit{c}1-b2.

Nor is 15...\textit{d}5 any help for Black. After 16.\textit{b}3 (not very clever is 16.\textit{h}5 \textit{xc}3 17.\textit{xe}6+ \textit{xe}6 18.\textit{xd}5 on account of 18...\textit{a}5) 16...\textit{c}7 17.\textit{xd}5, White has an excellent game.

16.\textit{xe}6

In order not to lose any time, Hodgson gives up his beautiful bishop. Also worthy of attention was 16.\textit{d}5!?, after which Black cannot move a muscle.

16...\textit{fxe}6

Black still cannot complete his development, since 16...\textit{xe}6? fails to 17.\textit{xe}6+ \textit{fxe}6 18.\textit{f}3+ \textit{f}6 19.\textit{xb}7, and now 19...\textit{xc}3 falls short in view of 20.\textit{h}5 \textit{g}6 21.\textit{h}6+ \textit{g}8 22.\textit{g}4 \textit{e}8 23.\textit{a}4! and White’s pieces enter the black position decisively.

17.\textit{e}1

In the style of Paul Morphy, White brings into play his last piece, which still wasn’t doing anything. He waits a while with the development of the \textit{c}1, because at this point he isn’t sure where he wants to put it.

Also worthy of consideration was 17.\textit{f}3+, and also here, after 17...\textit{e}8 White has the advantage. If 17...\textit{f}6 18.\textit{a}3!, since now d6 has become a weakness: 18...\textit{g}8 19.\textit{fe}1 and also here all of White’s pieces are in play, while Black’s pieces remain hard to activate.

17...e5 18.\textit{f}3+ \textit{f}6 19.\textit{a}3
A strong continuation. Not 19...h6 in view of 19...f7.

19...exd4

Suba takes up the gauntlet. Declining the sacrifice with, for instance, 19...g8 would also lead to good play for White after 20.c4!? h6 21.f5 xf5 22.xf5.

20.d5

Not 20.e4? in view of 20...c6! (20...e7? 21.xd6 xd6 22.e8#) and Black has everything under control: 21.xd6+ f7 and the attack is brought to a halt.

20...e7

A necessary evil, and Hodgson wouldn’t be Hodgson if at this point he didn’t opt for the most aggressive way to keep the initiative.

21.xe7!

The offering is extended to a rook. 21.xd4, with the threat of 22.xe7!, was also very unpleasant for Black.

21...xe7

21...xe7 would rapidly end in disaster: 22.xd6 xd6 23.xd6+ f7 24.c7+ g6 (24...g8 25.d8+ f7 26.xh8) 25.b6+ and Black will be mated.

22.e1+ f6 23.xd6 d7!

Suba finds the only defence. On 23...c6 the attack crashes through: 24.e5+ g6 25.g3+! f6 26.e5+. 
24. \textit{Re5}!

With this wonderful move, White completes a kind of super-centralization! The most important idea behind it is to rule out the defence ...\textit{Qf5}. Other options do not offer White what he wants.

I ‘suspect’ that Hodgson hadn’t calculated everything – instead, he must have trusted the fact that with such superior activity he would not be in any danger, and would only be looking for winning lines.

24...\textit{Re8}?

Who wouldn’t play this move? The black player takes the first opportunity that presents itself to bring his passive rook into play. But it is precisely this move that gives White the chance to forge ahead at full speed. It was very hard to see that only 24...\textit{h6!} offered Black a chance to save himself.

25. \textit{Qf3+ Kg6 26. Qh5+ Kf6 27. Qf3+ Kg6 28. Qh5+ Kf6}
29. \textit{\texttt{Rxe8!}}

After repeating moves a few times, Hodgson finds the way to increase his advantage.

29... \textit{\texttt{Qxd6 30.cxd4}}

He had to take back this pawn, as otherwise Black would have obtained a dangerous passed pawn. The most important reason that White maintains his advantage is that the \textit{\texttt{Bc8}} is pinned, and so Black still cannot utilize all his pieces. On the other hand, White can even quite calmly bring up new reinforcements, as we shall see.

30... \textit{\texttt{h6}}

The ‘joke’ 30... \textit{\texttt{Bg4}}? is refuted by a ‘counter-joke’: 31. \textit{\texttt{Qe5+! Qxe5 32.dxe5+ Kg5 33.Rxa8.}}

And 30... \textit{\texttt{Qxd6}}? loses immediately in view of 31. \textit{\texttt{Qf8+ Kg5 32.Qf7+ Bd6 33.Qd8+.}}

Another idea was 30... \textit{\texttt{Rb8}}, to put the rook on a protected square, but also then White would take control with 31.h4!.

\textbf{31.h4!}

Again a strong move: White makes \textit{\texttt{luf}}t for the king, and at the same time introduces some nasty threats (for instance, g2-g4).

31.g4 also came into strong consideration: 31... \textit{\texttt{Rb8 32.h4 b5 33.g5+ hxg5 34.hxg5+ Kh5 35.g6+ Kg5 36.Qe5 and mate on g5 cannot be prevented by normal means.}}

\textbf{31... \textit{\texttt{a5}}}

Black doesn’t see a way out, and in fact there isn’t one. 31... \textit{\texttt{Rb8}} doesn’t help in the least either: 32.g4 \textit{\texttt{Qd7}} (32... \textit{\texttt{Qxg4 33.Qe5+ Qxe5 34.dxe5+ Kh5 35.Rxb8}}) 33.g5+ hxg5 34.hxg5+ Kh5 35.Qe5+ Kg4 36.Qh4+ Kh3 37.Qg3#.

\textbf{32. \textit{\texttt{Qf3+ Kg6 33.h5+ Kg5}}}

Nor could the king hide on h7: 33...<br/>
Kh7 34.<br/>
Qf7! – the most precise way to win. Also winning is 34.<br/>
Qe4+.

34.<br/>
e5+<br/>
Qxe5

After 34...<br/>
Kh4, 35.<br/>
Qg3# is mate.

35.<br/>
dxe5<br/>
Qe6

Finally Black has managed to develop his queenside. However, White has regained more than enough material now.

36.<br/>
xb7<br/>
eg8 37.<br/>
e7+<br/>
f5 38.<br/>
e5 39.<br/>
f4+<br/>
xf4

On 39...<br/>
h5 40.<br/>
f5<br/>
c8, 41.<br/>
f7+ wins.

40.<br/>
xe6<br/>
ed8 41.<br/>
f7+

And Black gave up the fight.

In my opinion, Hodgson is especially strong in increasing the activity of his own pieces while at the same time preventing the activity of his opponent’s men. He achieves this in an inimitable way, based purely on visual aspects. In his book, Hodgson uses what he calls ‘attack statistics boxes’. In these boxes, he adds up all the pieces that participate directly or indirectly in the attack. Then he compares this number with the number of pieces that can be directly or indirectly involved in the defence. This is an interesting approach, which is very insightful for chess students. Whenever I present this method during training sessions, I always illustrate it with colours on my computer screen.

7.3 Garry Kasparov

One of the greatest attacking players in the world is, of course, Garry Kasparov. I saw him for the first time in the flesh when I represented the Netherlands in Graz 1981, as a participant in the World Championship for Junior teams (U26). This tournament was also known as the ‘Student Olympiad’.

After the splendid attacking game by the then 18-year-old Kasparov against the Austrian master Dür (discussed earlier on in this book), I had the privilege to witness the post-mortem close hand. The variations, but, perhaps even more, the unbridled energy that this young man from Baku released upon his poor opponent, made a deep impression on the spectators.

The anecdote about his game from the same tournament against our first-board player, GM John van der Wiel, also illustrates that the word ‘losing’ was not in Kasparov’s vocabulary (see the example in paragraph 1.3). The man who would hold the world title five years later already made his presence very much felt on that occasion. In this book you will find a few magnificent examples of his attacking skills.

The following game has its own story. Kasparov is surprised in the opening by his opponent, Yasser Seirawan, and loses an exchange and a pawn. In this precarious situation he starts looking for counterplay, and like a real magician he manages to pull a rabbit out of his hat. In the press room, everybody had a quite different perception of what was going on. People thought that this was another of Kasparov’s unfathomable novelties, and that he had concocted his brilliant counter-plan already in his study.

Not only in the game itself did it become apparent that this attack was very hard to contend with. Also in the analysis room, where grandmaster Ljubomir Ljubojevic was dominating the conversation, Black was trounced over and over again. I don’t remember all the people who were present at this animated analysis session, but I do know that they weren’t the weakest of players, and that they, too, got buried under truckloads of attacking tricks.
This went on, until a little man entered the pressroom and sat down behind the black pieces: the Swede Ulf Andersson. He was also highly placed in the world rankings, but his style was the opposite of Ljubojevic’s. He was a man of little positional nuances, tenacious defence in difficult positions, and prophylaxis.

Suddenly the white attack didn’t run as smoothly as it had done all afternoon. Suddenly, the ‘super-attacker’ was facing the ‘master defender’. With ‘little moves’, suddenly Black started successfully warding off all the assaults on his king. Even though the verbal violence of the ‘super-attacker’ kept increasing, while the ‘master defender’ restricted himself to a few loose remarks, most of the white attempts failed. I wasn’t the only one who had the privilege to watch this scene, with growing amazement. Here, a colossal confrontation was taking place between two playing styles.

While these two were squabbling with great gusto about this position from the Kasparov-Seirawan game, the real game continued. But there, in the end, the attacker turned out to be too strong for the defender. Although Seirawan defended well for a long time, eventually he had to bow to the World Champion’s brilliant attacking play.

Next, the latter also entered the pressroom to look at the critical moments of the game with his opponent. All attention immediately turned to this analysis board. To the question of one of the bystanders whether Kasparov had prepared all this at home, came the staggering answer that he had made a terrible mistake in the opening and that he had been seriously worried after he had lost the exchange and the pawn. So he had immediately gone into ‘swindling mode’, as it’s called in the corridors! Nevertheless, he had put so much pressure on the black position that in the end the American could no longer cope with all the complications.

When Ljubojevic and Andersson also joined the post-mortem, of course the question came up whether the Swede would also be able to hold his own against ‘The Boss’ (Kasparov’s nickname). But although Andersson proved to be a dogged defender, he also had to knuckle down before the man who had just won this game so dashingly. And now, of course, Ljubojevic was the laughing third party, as he had maintained throughout that White had been winning all the time.

I have held this game against the light here, checking the commentaries of that time with strong engines. This produced so many beautiful variations that I didn’t want to withhold this analysis from you.

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**Garry Kasparov**

**Yasser Seirawan**

Amsterdam 1996 (5)

1.d4 \f6 2.c4 e6 3.\f3 d5 4.\c3 bd7 5.\f2 dxe4 6.e4 c5 7.dxc5 xc5 8.xc4 a6 9.a4 c7 10.0-0
A sharp continuation, which immediately poses a problem to White. Even 10...\texttt{\texttt{gx}}f2+ was possible, but after 11.\texttt{Qxf2}! \texttt{Qxc4} 12.e5 \texttt{Qg4} 13.\texttt{Qd2} \texttt{Qc5}! 14.\texttt{Qxc5} \texttt{Qxe5} 15.\texttt{Qc4} Black is in trouble. Even 15...f6!, indicated as a strong move by Ftacnik, cannot change this. White continues with the strong 16.\texttt{Qb6} \texttt{Qb8} 17.exf6 gxf6 (17...\texttt{Qxf6}? 18.\texttt{Bf4}) 18.h3 followed by 18...\texttt{Qe5} 19.\texttt{Qe3}! \texttt{Qcd7}

11.h3?!
Probably Kasparov is taking far too much risk here. After the game, Seirawan indicated that 11...e2 d6!? 12.h3 ge5 13.xe5 xe5 was necessary, but clearly Black obtains an equal game after 14.b3 xc2 15.xc2.

11...xf2

Black is going for material gain. Afterwards, Seirawan gave the interesting alternative 11...h5!?, after which there can follow 12.b3? (the improvement would be 12.e2, when White is a tad better) 12...g3 13.a3? de5, and Black wins.

12.xf2 xf2+ 13.xf2 xc4

Black has gained the exchange and a pawn. As stated, Kasparov had been completely surprised by Black’s counterplay in the opening, and had felt compelled to sacrifice the material, which certainly had not been his intention beforehand!

14.g3

White starts searching for counterplay. Clearly, he does have some compensation. White has developed three pieces, and the black pieces are not exactly harmoniously placed. In addition, the black king is a target, and, last but not least, the presence of opposite-coloured bishops is working in White’s favour. He is superior on the dark squares, while Black has to do his utmost to start some counter-action on the light squares. It must have been somewhere around this move that Seirawan went into the ‘think tank’.

In the meantime, the ‘Kibitzers’ in the press room could give full rein to their creativity in this position. One of the grandmasters who stepped in was the dangerous tactician Ljubomir Ljubojevic. The Yugoslav was more than just an attacking player; he had reached a high place on the world rankings with his sparkling play. Also, it was always quite an experience to witness an analysis with him. Not only could he conjure up a large amount of beautiful tricks, but he would also sprinkle them with comical comments. His mouth would not stop moving, and even though some took exception to his frequently sarcastic remarks, the majority of those present had to laugh at the buffoonery of this big talker.

14...f6
An original way to defend. This is a terribly difficult position to play for Black. And with the help of the current engines, the old analyses do not hold up either – there are a lot of beautiful lines below the surface, which remained hidden at the time.

A) Returning the exchange may be one of Black’s best options, but also in that case, after 14...0-0 15...h6 g6:

A1) White will play for an attack with 16...d1, as Seirawan indicated, which seems like a good option. Then, in my opinion, 16...b4 is Black’s best chance, after which the position is unclear. Not 16...d8?! in view of 17.e5! b6 18...d4 c7 19...h4 and the threat of 20...xd7 followed by 21...xf6 cannot be averted in a satisfactory way;

A2) Also after 16...xf8 2xf8 17.e5, Black is in for a rough ride. The weakened dark squares will keep troubling him in the rest of the middlegame.

B) Ftacnik has suggested 14...c5+, with the possible continuation 15...h1 f8. Here the Czech grandmaster loses the thread. He gives 16...f4! a question mark, but today we turn this into an exclamation mark. 16...f6 and now:

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\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{center}
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Analysis diagram

In this position White can play a spectacular piece sacrifice: 17.d5! exd5 18.d6 g8 (18...f7? 19.exd5 with a decisive advantage for White. For example: 19...xd5 20.e1+ e5 (20...f7 21.e7+ g8 22.xg7#; 20...d8 21.c7#) 21.xe5 fxe5 22.xe5+) 19.exd5 f7 20.e1 and the white attack is in full swing. It is clear that although Black is a full rook ahead, he is in big trouble. The threat of 21.e7+ can only be warded off by 20...d8 21.e7+ xe7 22.xe7=, but this won’t bring the black player much joy.

\begin{center}
15.xg7 c5+ 16.h1 f8 17.g4 f7
\end{center}
It’s time to take stock. White has regained one pawn, the black king remains in the centre, and the dark squares are working to White’s advantage. But White’s queenside pieces (the \(Ra1\) and the \(Bc1\)) still have to find employment, and it remains to be seen how White can create threats against the black king.

18.e5

Kasparov had a good nose for such moves: the dark squares must be attacked.

18...\(\text{g}8\)

Also hardly worthy of attention is 18...\(\text{xe5}\) in view of 19.\(\text{xe5}\) fxe5 20.\(\text{e4}\) \(\text{g6}\) 20...\(\text{f1+}\) 21.\(\text{h2}\) \(\text{f8}\) 22.\(\text{h5+}\) \(\text{d7}\) 23.\(\text{xe5}\) \(\text{f5}\) 24.\(\text{d6+}\) \(\text{e8}\) 25.\(\text{g5}\) \(\text{f7}\),
and now the beautiful move 26.g4! Qxe4 27.Rf1+ Kg6 28.Rxf8, and White wins. 21.Nd6+ Kg8 21...d7 22.g5! Qc7 (22...Qg8 23.Rd1; 22...Qxd6 23.Rb4+ Qc7 24.Qc5+ and White’s domination on the dark squares is obvious) 23.Rc1+ b8 24.Rb4, winning.

22.Nh6+!! Another fabulous motif. 22...Qxh6 If 22...Qe7 23.Qb4!, analogous to the main line. 23.Rf1+ Ke7 and now the quiet move 24.Qb4! Kd7 24...f8 25.Qf5+ Kf6 26.Qh6+. 25.Qf7+ Ke6

analysis diagram
26.\textit{c3+!} The hunt is on! 26...\textit{xd6} 26...\textit{b6} 27.\textit{c7+} \textit{a7} 28.\textit{xc8+ axc8} 29.\textit{xb7#}. 27.\textit{b4} \textit{b6} 28.\textit{d3+} \textit{c6} 29.b5+ axb5 30.axb5+ \textit{c5} 31.c7+ \textit{b4} 32.e4+ \textit{xb5} 33.b3+ \textit{a6} 34.a4+ \textit{b7} 35.c6+ \textit{a7} 36.a4+ \textit{a6} 37.c7#

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{analysis_diagram.png}
\end{center}

\textit{analysis diagram}

A gorgeous epaulette mate!

Perhaps Black should have played the immediate 18...f5 here. After 19.d4 0-0, the black king can escape to the corner. One thing is clear also here: White has (more than) enough compensation.

19.\textit{c4}

From here on, Kasparov keeps finding the optimal continuation on each move. The main threat is \textit{c3-e4}, after which the knight will be able to jump into the black position via d6.

19...f5

Not 19...\textit{xe5}? on account of 20.e5 fxe5 21.e4 g6 22.g5 and the white attack crashes through.
20. $\text{Bg5}$

The white pieces have taken up menacing positions, but for the time being Seirawan defends excellently.

20... $\text{h6}$

The attempt to develop by 20...$\text{Nf8}$ is tackled with 21.$\text{Rd1}$, after which 21...$\text{Rxg5}$ is more or less forced. Here too, White gets the upper hand with 22. $\text{Nxg5}$ $\text{Qh5}$ 23. $\text{Qf4}$.

21. $\text{Bh4}$

Kasparov declines the offer of the pawn. But also after 21.$\text{Bxh6}$ $\text{Qg6}$ 22.$\text{Bg5}$ $\text{Nx5}$, Black’s problems would be immense: 23.$\text{Qc5!}$ $\text{Qg7}$ (not 23...$\text{Qc6}$? on account of the extremely strong 24.$\text{Rd1}$, and the attack reaches hurricane force) 24.$\text{Rd1}$ $\text{Qc6}$ 25.$\text{Rd6!}$ and it looks as if Black will not be able to defend this.

21...$\text{Qg6}$?!

It is logical that Seirawan also wants to be the one to pose a threat for once. 21...$\text{Qf8}$? was indicated by Kasparov after the game, but now 22.$\text{Rd1}$ (22.$\text{wb4}$) 22...$\text{Qd7}$ 23.$\text{Rd6}$ does look better for White. Certainly not 23.$\text{Qc7}$? as after 23...$\text{Qg7}$! (23...$\text{Qg6}$? 24.$\text{Qf6!}$) 24.$\text{Rd2}$ $\text{Qc6}$ Black liquidates to a winning position.

The only way out seems to be 21...$\text{Qf8}$, but also in that case White will be in command after 22.$\text{Qd4!}$ (not 22.$\text{Qe2}$ $\text{Qg7}$ 23.$\text{Qf4}$ $\text{Qf8}$ 24.$\text{Rd1}$ $\text{b5}$ 25.$\text{axb5}$ axb5 26.$\text{Qxb5}$, as here Black has saved himself) 22...$\text{Qg6}$ 23.$\text{Qe2}$ and White sets his sights on the weak e6-square.

22. $\text{Rg1}$
22...\textit{\texttt{N}}f8?! 

The American wants to try and finally develop his queenside, but on this square the knight is particularly placed. More tenacious was 22...\textit{\texttt{R}}g7!?, which, however, would also have led to big problems for Black after 23.a5! \textit{\texttt{N}}f8 24.\textit{\texttt{B}}f6 (Ftacnik’s 24.\textit{\texttt{N}}a4 also seems to be quite advantageous for White: 24...\textit{\texttt{B}}d7 25.\textit{\texttt{B}}b6 \textit{\texttt{B}}c6, but then White would have to find 26.\textit{\texttt{N}}d4! here, after which he obtains a virtually winning advantage: 26...\textit{\texttt{B}}xg2+ 27.\textit{\texttt{K}}h2 \textit{\texttt{R}}b8 28.\textit{\texttt{N}}e2) 24...\textit{\texttt{R}}d7 25.\textit{\texttt{N}}a4.

No escape is offered by 22...b5? in view of 23.\textit{\texttt{Q}}c6 \textit{\texttt{R}}b8 24.\textit{\texttt{N}}d5! exd5 25.e6 and White is winning.

23.\textit{\texttt{Q}}b4?! 

Now Kasparov misses a big chance to decide the game right away with 23.\textit{\texttt{Q}}c7! and now:

A) 23...\textit{\texttt{B}}d7 24.\textit{\texttt{Q}}xb7 \textit{\texttt{R}}c8 25.\textit{\texttt{B}}xa6 and White has a winning position;

B) 23...\textit{\texttt{G}}g7 24.\textit{\texttt{Q}}d8+ \textit{\texttt{K}}f7 25.\textit{\texttt{N}}f6 \textit{\texttt{H}}h7, and if I may believe the computer, White now breaks open the position successfully by 26.\textit{\texttt{H}}h4 \textit{\texttt{G}}g3
27. **Nxe4!!**. A brilliant sacrifice, ripping open the f-file. After the immediate 27. **Be7??** Black could still escape with the surprising move 27... **d7**!. **27...fxe4** If Black refuses to open the f-file, he will be driven into a mating net in a magnificent way: 27... **Qe3** 28. **Qe7+ Kg8** and now the brilliant 29. **Bg7!!**

28. **Be7** and it is over.

**23...Rg7 24. De2**
A beautiful knight manoeuvre. The knight will find employment on the kingside.

24...b5

A violent try to break loose. Developing had many drawbacks: 24...d7 25.xb7 c8 26.f4! f7 27.d1, and White wins.

25.axb5

Even stronger was 25.f4! f7 26.f6 g8 27.axb5 and there is nothing left for Black to hope for.

25...d7 26.f4 f7

On 26...g8, obviously 27.h5 is highly unpleasant.

27.e1

Even more convincing was 27.bxa6! xa6 (27...xa6 28.c1 b7 29.b5!) 28.a1.

27...b7

Not 27...axb5 in view of the surprising reply
28.\texttt{a5! b8 29.\texttt{xb5! a8 30.c7}, and White wins.}

Perhaps Black could have tried to stay on his feet with 27...\texttt{c7}. White would prefer not to exchange rooks, and after 28.\texttt{d1 d7 29.d4!} he would still have the better play.

After the text move, Black has finally managed to bring his bishop into play. Unfortunately, it turns out to be too late...

\textbf{28.bxa6} \texttt{x}f3

Giving his bishop for the knight, but after this Black’s position collapses once and for all.

However, 28...\texttt{x}a6 didn’t help either at this stage: 29.\texttt{b5 a8 30.d4} wins for White, as Black won’t be able to cope with the many threats.

Neither did 28...\texttt{x}a6 offer any solace. After 29.\texttt{a1 b7 30.d6 b6 31.f2} Black’s position is hopeless.

\textbf{29.gxf3} \texttt{xa7}
30...Rxg1!

Here is the proof that Kasparov was a great artist of the attack. The rook is involved in the attack via the g-file. Incidentally, other moves were also possible.

30...Rxg1

Good advice doesn’t come cheap here. After 30...Qd7 31.Nh5 Qc6 32.f6+ Qf7 33.Qf4 g6 34.Qg3 Black also might as well put the pieces back in the box.

31.Nh5!

This was one of the white player’s points.

31...Qc7

31...Qxh5? 32.Qe7#.

32.Qg7 a1+ 33.Qg2 Qc2+
34.\texttt{f2}

Now the white threats have become so immense that there is no longer any defence to be found. For example: 34...\texttt{a7} 35.\texttt{f6+} \texttt{d8} 36.\texttt{x8#}.

Therefore, Black resigned.

7.4 Alexander Areschenko

In Chapter 5, we have seen that there are stereotypical combinations in certain openings. Studying games by grandmasters, in which these sacrifices are made, will enhance your insight into the possibilities that are on offer in specific positions. As so often in chess, any chances that arise should immediately be seized! If not, then they may not arise again.

A great expert in combating the Sicilian is the Ukrainian, Alexander Areschenko. In this department, we can learn a lot from him – if anything, that you shouldn’t be afraid to throw in a piece now and again. A special feature of the following game is that Areshchenko twice offers a piece on the same square – \texttt{d5}. The way in which he chases the black king over half the board is worth seeing.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chess_board.png}
\caption{Chess board with moves indicated.}
\end{figure}

\begin{enumerate}
\item \texttt{e4} \texttt{c5} 2.\texttt{f3} \texttt{d6} 3.\texttt{d4} \texttt{cxd4} 4.\texttt{xd4} \texttt{f6} 5.\texttt{c3} \texttt{a6} 6.\texttt{c4} \texttt{e6} 7.0-0 \texttt{b5} 8.\texttt{b3} \texttt{b7} 9.\texttt{e1} \texttt{bd7} 10.\texttt{g5} \texttt{c5}
\end{enumerate}

Here, 10...\texttt{e7} doesn’t work on account of 11.\texttt{xe6} \texttt{fxe6} 12.\texttt{x6} \texttt{b6} 13.\texttt{g7+}, and with three pawns for the piece, plus an attack, White is doing well.
11. \textit{\textbf{d5!}}

White starts with a bishop sacrifice on the familiar square.

11... \textit{\textbf{b4}}

Accepting the sacrifice does not end well for Black: 11...exd5 12.exd5+ \textit{\textbf{d7}} (now 12...\textit{\textbf{e7}} is not possible in view of 13.\textit{\textbf{xf6}} gxf6 14.\textit{\textbf{f5}}, and White recovers his piece with interest) 13.b4 (now this knight has no natural retreat) 13...\textit{\textbf{a4}} 14.\textit{\textbf{xa4}} bxa4 15.c4 \textit{\textbf{c7}} 16.\textit{\textbf{xa4}} and White’s compensation is almost sufficient for a win (as was demonstrated in a game Beliavsky-Marjanovic, Yerevan 1971).

12. \textit{\textbf{xb7}} \textit{\textbf{xb7}}
13. \( \text{d5} \)!

The second sacrifice on this square! And this time Black can hardly decline it – it would mean strategic bankruptcy. The main threat is 14. \( \text{xf6} \) \( \text{gxf6} \) followed by 15. \( \text{c6} \), winning the queen or giving mate! – as would become clear after the ‘non-move’ 13...\( \text{a5} \) 14. \( \text{xf6} \) \( \text{gxf6} \) 15. \( \text{c6} \) \( \text{c8} \) 16. \( \text{xf6} \# \).

13...\( \text{exd5} \)

13...\( \text{ec8} \) is an attempt to eliminate the threat of 14. \( \text{c6} \), but then White has the terribly strong move 14. \( \text{f3} \)!. Now the threat is 15. \( \text{xf6}+ \) \( \text{gxf6} \) 16. \( \text{xf6} \), and so 14...\( \text{e7} \) is forced: 15. \( \text{xe7} \) \( \text{xe7} \). This still looks playable, but... 16. \( \text{f5} \)! and now everything falls apart for Black: 16...\( \text{f8} \) 17. \( \text{e5} \)! 17. \( \text{xg7}+ \) wasn’t bad either. 17...\( \text{d5} \) Today we can quickly find out with the help of Deep Fritz 11 how Black is brought down here: 18. \( \text{e7}!! \) \( \text{xe7} \) (18...\( \text{g8} \) 19.\( \text{exd6} \) 19. \( \text{xb7} \).

14. \( \text{exd5+} \) \( \text{d7} \) 15. \( \text{c3} \)

Here, 15. \( \text{c6} \) was quite reasonable too.

15...\( \text{a5} \)

Black wants to eliminate the threat of \( \text{d1-a4} \), but now he is confronted with a new wave of attack.

16. \( \text{xf6} \) \( \text{xf6} \) 17. \( \text{xb4} \)
17...\textit{Qxd5} 

After 17...\textit{Qxb4} White also pulls out all the stops with 18.\textit{c1} (18.\textit{g4+ }\textit{Kc7} 19.\textit{e6+}) 18...\textit{c5} 19.\textit{g4+ f5} (19...\textit{e6+}, followed by 21.\textit{xb4}) 20.\textit{xf5+ }\textit{e7} 21.\textit{c6 }\textit{xb2} 22.\textit{xf7+} resulting in a complete disaster for Black.

18.\textit{Qa4+ }\textit{Kc7} 19.\textit{Qac1+ }\textit{Nc5} 

This is tantamount to capitulation, but the alternatives bring no solace: On 19...\textit{Kb8}, 20.\textit{c6+ }\textit{Kc7} 21.\textit{e7+} wins, and 19...\textit{b6} is met by 20.\textit{c6+ }\textit{a7} 21.\textit{xa6+ }\textit{b8} 22.\textit{e8+}.

20.\textit{bxc5 dxc5} 21.\textit{ed1 }\textit{g8} 22.\textit{g3 }\textit{b6} 23.\textit{b3 }\textit{h5} 24.\textit{d7 }\textit{c8} 25.\textit{a5+ }\textit{c6} 26.\textit{cd1 }\textit{e2} 27.\textit{d4+ cxd4} 28.\textit{d5+ }\textit{b6} 29.\textit{b7# }1-0 

A beautiful attacking game.

7.5 Wei Yi 

No collection of attacking games should fail to include the following game, which was lavished with praise right after it was played in 2015. People chanted that this was ‘the game of the century’, which seems a bit premature since we are just at the beginning of this century. All the same, the fantastic magnet combination that Wei Yi displayed on the board here is enchantingly beautiful. Particularly noteworthy are the three quiet queen moves the 16-year-old Chinese superstar found.

The victory is especially impressive because his opponent, Lazaro Bruzon from Cuba (once a junior World Champion), keeps finding the optimal defence on almost every move, forcing his opponent to give his all. A memorable game by a player from whom we can expect a lot more in the future.
White to move

We pick up the thread in a well-known theoretical position from the Scheveningen Variation of the Sicilian. The young Chinese star comes up with an interesting novelty here, which turns out to be quite strong (it was voted the Yearbook Novelty of the Year 2015):

21.\textit{Nd5}


21.\textit{Nd5 Nxd5?!}

This turns out to be losing already, but could Bruzon realistically have foreseen what was in store for him over the next few moves? Capturing on d5 with the bishop didn’t look particularly appealing: 21...\textit{Bxd5 22.exd5} and now:

A) 22...\textit{Nf6} fails to 23.\textit{Rxf7!! Qxf7 24.h6+ e6 25.g6 Exf8 26.h3+ f6 27.e4} and Black is overwhelmed in a violent attack. For example: 27...\textit{h8} (27...\textit{f4 28.xf4 exf4 29.g7+ g8 30.h6+ h7 31.g7#}) 28.f5+ g7 29.g6+ f8 30.h6+ Exh6 31.xh6+ f7 32.xd5+ e8 33.g6+ f8 34.g8#;

B) After 22...\textit{b7 23.f3} Black cannot move a muscle either.

22.\textit{Rxf7!!}

An unbelievable rook sacrifice, which had to be calculated very accurately. Even present-day engines have trouble finding the mate variations, as they are incredibly deep.

22...\textit{xf7}

Declining the sacrifice by 22...\textit{f6} had to be considered as well, since Black will then for the time being have a piece
against a pawn. White replies with 23.\textit{Q}e6!, threatening to regain the piece in various ways: 23...\textit{Q}h8 24.\textit{Q}g5 (thus, the important knight is eliminated, and a quick mate looms) 24...\textit{R}f8 (if 24...\textit{N}h5 25.\textit{Q}xg6, followed by mate) 25.\textit{Q}xf6+ \textit{xf6} 26.\textit{Exd7} and Black will lose too much material.

\textbf{23.\textit{Q}h7+ \textit{Ke6}}

23...\textit{Q}f8 24.\textit{Q}h6#.

\textbf{24.\textit{Exd5}+ \textit{Qxd5}}

Taking back with the bishop loses after 24...\textit{Qxd5} 25.\textit{Q}xg6, and despite the fact that Black now has a ‘free move’, he won’t be able to save his skin.

A) 25...\textit{Qf6} 26.\textit{Qf5}#;

B) 25...\textit{Rf8} 26.\textit{Qh3}+ \textit{Kf6}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}

\end{center}

\textit{analysis diagram}

27.\textit{Rf1}+! \textit{Qxg6} (27...\textit{Qg7} 28.\textit{Qh7}#) 28.\textit{Qh6}#;

C) Giving back material in order to prepare an escape route for the king with 25...\textit{Qxg2}+ 26.\textit{Qxg2} d5 doesn’t help either: 27.\textit{Qf7}+ \textit{Qd6} and now: 28.\textit{Qh6}+ (only on this square! 28.\textit{Qg6}+ \textit{Qf6} is not clear, for example: 28...\textit{Qc7} 29.\textit{Qb6}+ \textit{Qb7} 30.\textit{Qxc8}; or 29.\textit{Qxe8}? \textit{Rg7}, and Black even wins) 28...\textit{Qf6} 29.\textit{Qxe8} and White wins.

\textbf{25.\textit{Qe4}+!}

A vintage magnet combination.

\textbf{25...\textit{Qxe4}}

Going back is not an option: 25...\textit{Qe6} 26.\textit{Qxg6+ \textit{Qf6} 27.\textit{Qf5}+ \textit{Qe7} 28.\textit{Qh7}+, and now:

A) 28...\textit{Qe6} 29.\textit{Qf5}+ \textit{Qd5} 30.\textit{Qxd7} and not only has White recovered his material, but he also threatens mate in one! 30...\textit{e4} (parries the first mate, but in the end Black will nevertheless succumb to the attack: 30...\textit{Qe7} 31.\textit{Qd3}#) 31.\textit{Qd1}+...
26. \textit{\textcolor{red}{Qf7}}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.9\textwidth]{chess_board.png}
\end{center}

The first of a magnificent series of ‘quiet moves’. Not only does the queen cut off the king (from the square d5), but it again threatens to give mate in one with 27. \textit{\textcolor{red}{Qf3}}.

From this move we can conclude that Wei Yi probably calculated most of the variations over the board, as he could have delivered a forced mate with a crazy ‘computer move’ here: 26. \textit{\textcolor{red}{c4!!} \textit{\textcolor{red}{d3}}} The idea behind the pawn sacrifice is that the c4-square becomes available for a white piece in various lines: 26...bxc4 27. \textit{\textcolor{red}{xg6+}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{d5}} 28. \textit{\textcolor{red}{f7+}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{e4}} (28...\textit{\textcolor{red}{c6}} 29. \textit{\textcolor{red}{xc4#}}) 29. \textit{\textcolor{red}{xc4+}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{f5}} 30. \textit{\textcolor{red}{f1+}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{g6}} 31. \textit{\textcolor{red}{f7#}}. 27. \textit{\textcolor{red}{xg6+}}
27...\textit{e}4 27...\textit{xc}4 28.\textit{c}1+ \textit{b}3 (28...\textit{d}5 29.\textit{d}1+ \textit{c}4 30.\textit{d}3# or 29...\textit{c}6 30.\textit{c}2#) 29.\textit{c}2+ \textit{a}2 30.\textit{b}4+ \textit{xa}3 31.\textit{c}3+ \textit{a}2 32.\textit{a}1#. 28.\textit{d}1+ \textit{c}2 29.\textit{xe}4+ \textit{b}3 30.\textit{d}3+ \textit{a}2 31.\textit{b}4 with mate to follow.

26...\textit{f}6

Ruling out 27.\textit{f}3. There is also an exquisite mate after 26...\textit{f}8 27.\textit{g}1#.

27.\textit{d}2+ \textit{d}4 28.\textit{e}3+ \textit{e}4

After a repetition of moves to gain time, Wei Yi now goes for the winning continuation.
29. **Qb3!**

The second ‘quiet move’, which once again threatens mate in one.

29... **Kf5** 30. **Rf1+ Kg4**

![Chess Diagram](image)

31. **Qd3!**

And here it is – the third ‘quiet queen move’, which seals the fate of the black king. Now the threat is 32. **Qe2+ Kh4** 33. **Qxf3** 34. **Qxf3**, when mate on h2 cannot be parried.

31... **Bxg2+**

Black gives up material, in order to enable his queen at least to do something. Protecting g6 with 31... **Rg7** didn’t help after 32. **Qe2+ Kh4** 33. **h3! Qd7** 34. **Qh2! Bxg2** 35. **Qxg2**, and Black is forced to give up the queen. ‘No Escape for the King’ is what that band was called, as you may recall: 35... **Kh5** 36. **Qf3+ Kh4** 37. **Qxf6+ Kh5** 38. **Qg5#**.

32. **Qxg2** 33. **Qa8+ Kh1**

Again, the protection of g6 wouldn’t have helped Black’s case: 33... **Rg7** 34. **Qxf6** 35. **Qc8**
$35. \text{h3}+!$ (the round-up just continues) $35... \text{h5}$ ($35... \text{xh3} 36. \text{f2}+ \text{g4} 37. \text{g3}+ \text{h5} 38. \text{h4}#$) $36. \text{h2} \text{e4} 37. \text{e2}+ \text{h4} 38. \text{f4}+ \text{g5} 39. \text{g2}+ \text{h5} 40. \text{h4}+ \text{xe4} 41. \text{g5}#$.

It looks like this provides a shelter for the black king, but...

$34. \text{e2}+ \text{h4} 35. \text{f2}+ \text{h3}$

$36. \text{e1}!$

After this fourth and last quiet move, the game is really over.
36...f8

Not 36...e4 to prevent 37.f3+, as then 37.g2# is mate.

37.d3+

He keeps chasing the king. 37.xf8 was a slightly shorter road to victory.

37...g4

Bruzon has been brought to his knees, but like a real gentleman he allows his opponent to carry out the mate.

Black could have defended more tenaciously with 37...f3, but of course this wouldn’t allow him to escape defeat: 38.xf3+ g4 39.g3+ and now: 39...h4 (39...f4 40.d2#; 39...h5 40.h3+ g4 41.xg6! a7+ (41...xh3 42.f5#) 42.f2 xf2+ 43.xf2 h3 44.xg5 is also game over) 40.g2+ h5 41.h3+ h4 42.xh4#.

38.g3+ h5 39.h3+ h4 40.xh4#

What a fantastic game!

7.6 Magnus Carlsen

From the reigning World Champion at the time of writing this book, Magnus Carlsen, we have already shown several fragments where he proved to be a brilliant exponent of the art of attack. Although the Norwegian is mainly praised for his unfathomable positional play and formidable endgame technique, he is in fact a superb all-round player. In earlier chapters, quite a few examples have featured the attacking tandem of +. Nevertheless, sometimes it proves very difficult to make these two pieces cooperate in the right way. In the following game, the World Champion creates a masterpiece against the World Champion he dethroned:

Magnus Carlsen
Viswanathan Anand
San Paulo/Bilbao 2012 (9)
White to move

White has sacrificed a pawn with e5-e6, cutting the black camp into two, as it were. The latter’s major pieces are on the queenside at the moment, whereas White’s are directed towards the kingside. Besides, the black king’s position looks somewhat abandoned. Only the knight on g7 (which at this moment has the protection of the pawn on e6 as its only defensive task) and the rook on a8 are able to lend a hand.

But for the moment it is not clear how White should bring his pieces into the attack. Carlsen comes up with an adequate answer to this question.

25. \( \text{Nh3} \)!!

This retreat to the edge of the board already poses Black insurmountable problems. The knight clears the path to h6 for the queen, and then the threat of \( \text{Ng5} \) emerges.

‘Finished’, was Carlsen’s post-game comment about this surprising and strong move.

25... \( \text{Ne8} \)

The knight will have to defend h7, and with that the lack of coordination in the black camp becomes even more glaringly apparent. Slowly but surely, the contours of White’s coming kingside attack are becoming visible. The \( \text{Qh6} + \text{Ng5} \) combination causes Black headaches.

Giving back the pawn with 25...e5 wouldn’t turn out well for Black either. After 26.\( \text{Qh6} \) \( \text{Qe6} \) 27.\( \text{Qxe5} \) \( \text{Qf8} \) 28.\( \text{Qf1} \) wins because the threat of \( \text{Ng5} \) cannot be eliminated. An example: 28...\( \text{a6} \) 29.\( \text{Ng5}! \) \( \text{Qxg5} \) 30.\( \text{Qxe7} \) \( \text{Qf7} \) 31.\( \text{Qxf7}! \) and Black gets mated.

26.\( \text{Qh6} \) \( \text{Qf6} \) 27.\( \text{Ng5} \)

White’s attacking plan has worked out splendidly. There is nothing to be found for Black against the threat of 28.\( \text{Qe1-e5} \) followed by 29.\( \text{Qxh7!} \) \( \text{Qxh7} \) 30.\( \text{Qxg6+} \) \( \text{Qh8} \) and 31.\( \text{Qe5-h5} \).

27...d3
This doesn’t help at all. Here is a sample line: 27...f8 28.e5 a6 (28...b8 29.xh7! f7 30.xg6+ g7 31.xf6+ exf6 32.xf6 wins as well) 29.xh7! (the defences are crushed) 29...h7 30.xg6+ h8 31.h5.

28.e5 h8 29.d1

Now the sacrifice 29.xh7?! xh7 30.xg6 doesn’t work on account of the defence 30...g8.

29...a6 30.a4 1-0
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Some of the analyses have been published in another form on Schaaksite.nl.
Analyses are sometimes based on annotations by various grandmasters in ChessBase Megabase.
About the Author

Herman Grooten is an international master who has worked as a chess trainer for more than 30 years. In this capacity, he has trained many young Dutch talents, privately or on behalf of the Dutch chess federation KNSB. For this federation he is also charged with the education of new trainers. Besides this, he gives chess lessons, lectures and clinics at chess clubs on a private basis.

Grooten has also been active in the area of chess journalism. For seventeen years he wrote the weekly chess column for the national Dutch newspaper Trouw, and for eight years he wrote a chess column in the regional newspaper Het Eindhovens Dagblad.

Although nowadays less active as a player, Grooten achieved a grandmaster norm in the Leeuwarden Open, 1995.