



Modern Chess

Issue 19

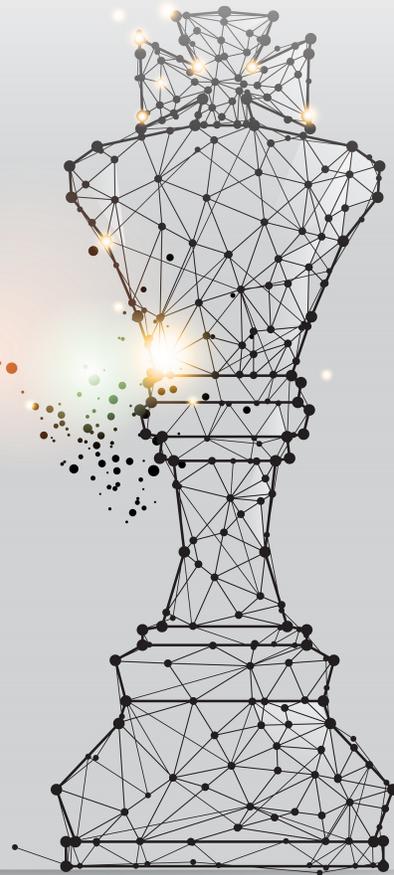
Magazine

Understand the French Isolani

The Power of the Quiet Moves

Brilliant Missed Opportunities

Overlooking perpetual check



Typical Structures
after 1.d4 d5

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Opposite-colored Bishops
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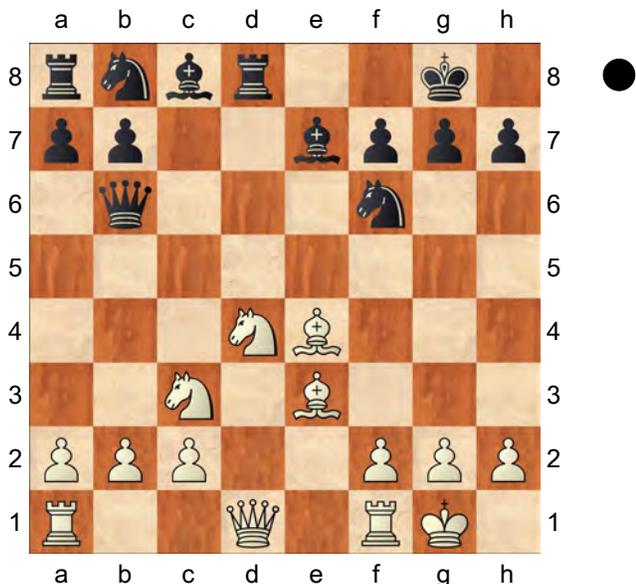
The Power of the Quiet Moves



GM Pavel Eljanov

If you have not seen Ivanchuk's interview after the 9th round of the Gibraltar-2018 tournament then I strongly recommend to find it in YouTube (enough to google: "Ivanchuk Gibraltar r9")!

Ivanchuk, Vassily **2726**
 Lei, Tingjie **2531**
 Gibraltar Masters 16th (9) 31.01.2018

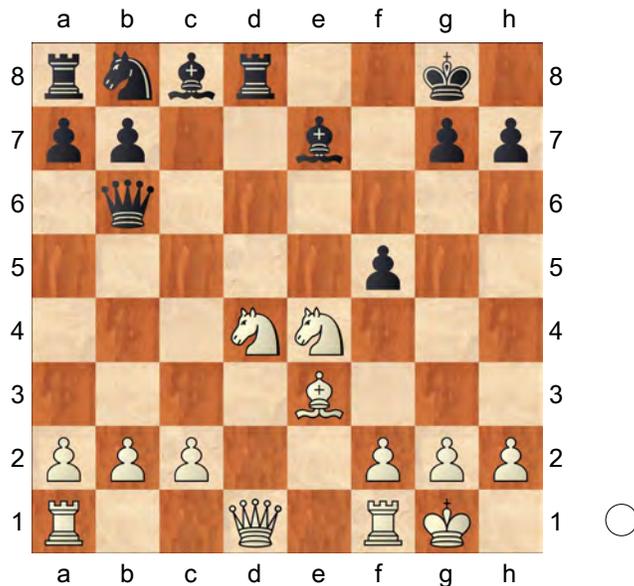


Vassily blindfolded and in a very entertaining way tells about his calculations in the game against Lei Tingjie. One of his thoughts interested me especially. Vasily said that "according to his experience the most difficult thing in chess is to see the moves with knights back". Let's see what he had in mind **14...Nxe4** was the critical move according to Vassily's calculations

[The game went 14...Qxb2 15.Qd3 Na6 16.Rab1 Qa3 17.Bf3 Nb4 18.Qc4 Bd7 19.Ncb5 Qa5 20.Bf4

Bxb5 21.Nxb5 Nbd5 22.Bg3 Rac8 23.Qb3 a6 24.Na7 Rc3 25.Qxb7 Qc5 26.a4 h6 27.Qxa6± and Vassily successfully converted his advantage later]

15.Nxe4 f5



16.Nd2! Vassily was very happy and proud after finding this move and having in mind another quiet and decisive move after the obvious question: what if rook takes?!

[16.Nxf5 Bxf5 17.Bxb6 Rxd1
 18.Raxd1 it's a bit better way for white
 comparing to what Vassily saw during
 the game. But black is fine anyway
 (18.Rfxd1 axb6 19.c3 Bxe4 20.Re1
 Bxg2 $\bar{7}$) 18...axb6 19.Rfe1 Nc6 ∞]
 [16.Ng3!? leads to a complicated play
 and with some edge for white f4!
 17.Ndf5 Qf6! 18.Bd4 Rxd4
 19.Nxe7+ Qxe7 20.Qxd4 fxc3
 21.Rfe1 Be6 22.hxc3 Nc6 23.Qe4
 Re8 24.Rad1 \pm]

16...Rxd4?

[better is 16...Qf6! here white has
 only slight advantage 17.c3
 (17.N2f3!? f4 18.Bc1 Nc6 19.c3
 Qf7 20.Re1 \pm) 17...f4 18.Ne4 Qg6
 19.Bd2 Nc6 20.Re1 Nxd4 21.cxd4
 Rxd4 22.Qb3+ Qf7 (22...Be6
 23.Nf6+) 23.Qxf7+ Kxf7 24.Bxf4 Bf5
 25.Ng5+ Kf8 26.g3 \pm]
 [16...Qxb2 17.N2f3 Qb4 18.c3 Qc4
 19.Re1 \uparrow]
 [16...f4 17.Nf5! fxe3 18.Nxe7+ Kh8
 19.Nxc8 exf2+ 20.Rxf2 Rxc8
 21.c3 \pm]

17.Qe1!! that's the point. In my opinion
 this one is even tougher to find. Black is
 unable to save a whole rook.

[17.Qe2? Qe6]

17...Nc6

[17...Qf6 18.Bxd4 Qxd4
 19.Qxe7+-]

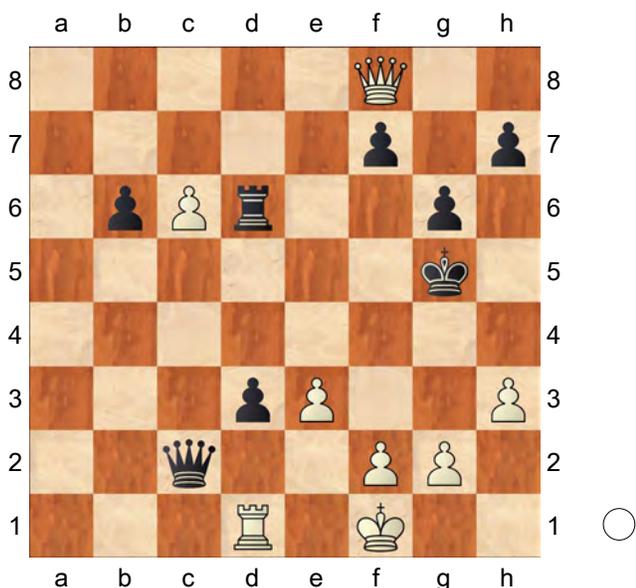
18.c3+- Vassily's thoughts are always
 very original and deep, and I decided to
 think over what he meant. In general,
 chess is a more tactical game where a
 clean and short calculation of moves is
 the most important skill from my point of
 view. But often, there are situations
 when a straight-line play doesn't lead to

a goal where the usual patterns do not
 work, and the chess player must look
 more for quiet and subtle moves in
 order to implement his plans or
 neutralize the opponent's plans. Based
 on my personal experience - very often
 the unexpected and quiet moves with
 the king (as well as knights moves back)
 in the middlegame fall out of sight!
 Apparently, since instinctively we are
 inclined to use other pieces in the
 middlegame, we often do not consider
 moves with the king before the
 endgame. Of course, the quiet moves of
 other pieces could be powerful and
 unexpected as well, but this article is
 devoted more to the knight and the king!
 In general, it's a special skill (and even a
 gift) to see all the hidden possibilities of
 pieces maneuvers. But in any case, a
 knowledge of common ideas helps a lot
 here. Because better knowledge of
 standard plans, I believe, gives you a
 better chance to intuitively find those
 positions when it is necessary to look for
 exceptions to the rules. I also believe
 that resolving chess studies also helps
 a lot in this and many other cases. It
 develops an ability of finding non-
 standard solutions and imagination
 overall. There a few not so difficult
 studies I propose to solve. But in
 general, it's easy to find much more in
 chess books and different chess online
 services. I like especially such
 composers like Kasparian, Pervakov,
 Bazlov, and Afek. But it's not the
 complete list of composers whom I
 admire.

1-0

Khismatullin, Denis Rimovich **2653**

Eljanov, Pavel **2727**
 EU-ch 16th Jerusalem (10) 06.03.2015



This position became famous! I'm not sad at all that I'm just co-author of such a masterpiece. I consider myself as worthy co-author as it was penultimate round of European Championship and we both tried hard to win this game to preserve chances in fighting for the podium. I could force a draw a lot of times before but all in all, there is nothing to regret. **44.Kg1!!**

Objectively, this move leads to just a slightly better endgame for White in case of best play. But who cares as it's practically impossible to perform for Black.

[44.f4+ Kh4 45.Qxd6 Qxd1+ 46.Kf2 Qe2+ 47.Kg1 Qxe3+ 48.Kh2 Qg3+ 49.Kg1=]

44...Qxd1+? Black should have rejected the gift.

[44...Qxc6 45.Qxf7 Rf6 46.Qe7 Kh6 47.Rxd3+- should be winning for White.]

[44...Rd5!! absolutely inhuman move. It turns out that one tempo and possibility to keep an eye on "c" passer is much more important than the rook! 45.Kh2! (45.Qxf7 Qxd1+ 46.Kh2 Rf5 47.Qe7+ Kh6 48.c7 Qc2 49.Qh4+ Kg7=; 45.Qe7+ Kh6 46.c7 Kg7!= and again the only way but enough for a draw) 45...Kf6!!

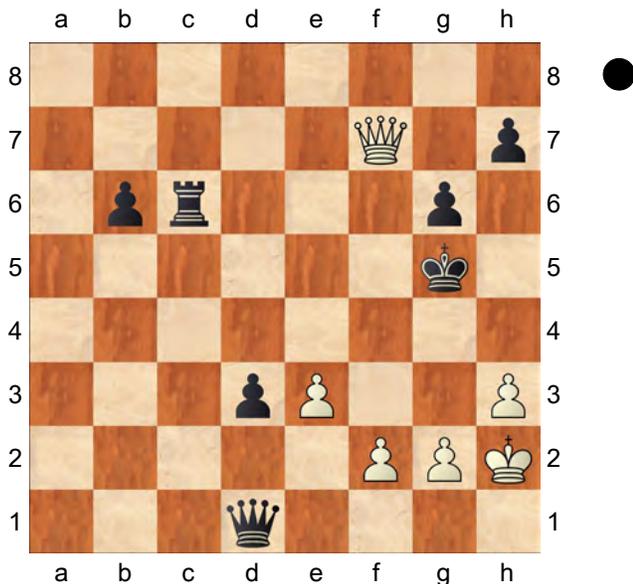
Another king retreat and clearly the only path to save the game (45...Qxd1? 46.c7; 45...Qxc6? 46.Qg7!!) 46.e4 (46.Qh8+ Ke7 47.e4 Rd6 48.Qe5+ Re6 49.Qc7+ Kf6 50.Qd8+ Kg7 51.c7 Rc6=) 46...Rc5 47.Qd6+ (47.e5+ Kxe5 48.Re1+ Kd4 49.c7 d2 50.Qd6+ Kc4 51.Ra1 Kb5=) 47...Kg7 48.Rxd3 Rxc6 49.Qe5+ Rf6 50.Rf3 Qc6 51.g3 h6 52.h4 b5! 53.Qb2 g5 54.h5 b4 55.g4 (55.Kg2 g4! 56.Rf4 Qc3=) 55...b3 56.Kh3 Qe6 57.Rf5 Qb6 58.Kg2 Qe6 59.f3 Qb6 60.Rxf6 Qxf6 61.Qxb3 Qd4= This is a clearly drawish endgame despite the extra pawn.]

[44...Rxc6 45.Qd8+ (45.Qxf7!) 45...Kh5 46.Rxd3+-]

45.Kh2 There is no rescue for Black now. **45...Rxc6**

[45...d2 46.Qxd6 Kh6 47.c7 Qc2 48.Qf8+ Kg5 49.f4+ Kf6 50.Qh8+ Ke7 51.Qd8+ Ke6 52.c8Q+-]
 [45...Rd5 too late 46.c7 Qc2 47.c8Q Qxc8 48.Qxc8 d2 49.f4+ Kf6 50.Qc6+-]

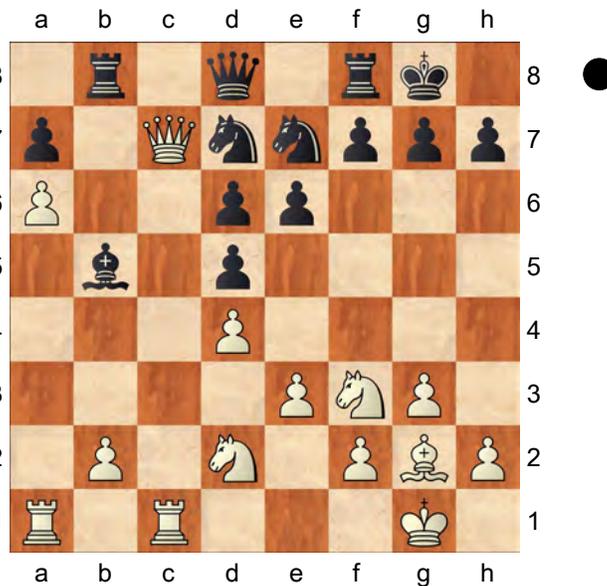
46.Qe7+ Kh6 47.Qf8+ Kg5 48.Qxf7!



After the game Denis told me that only here he realized that's it was winning for White. At the beginning, he saw only perpetual. It does not detract his achievement of course as we are not engines and from a practical point of view his decision was brilliant in any case. **48...Rf6**

[48...Kh6 49.Qf8+ Kh5 50.g4+-]
49.f4+ Kh6 50.Qxf6 Qe2 51.Qf8+ Kh5 52.Qg7 h6 53.Qe5+ Kh4 54.Qf6+ Kh5 55.f5 gxf5 56.Qxf5+ Kh4 57.Qg6 1-0

□ **Meier,Georg** **2650**
 ■ **Eljanov,Pavel** **2711**
 Wch Rapid Riadh (9) 27.12.2017.



17...Rb6!?

[17...Nb6!? was also interesting, but I had in mind`a different setup]

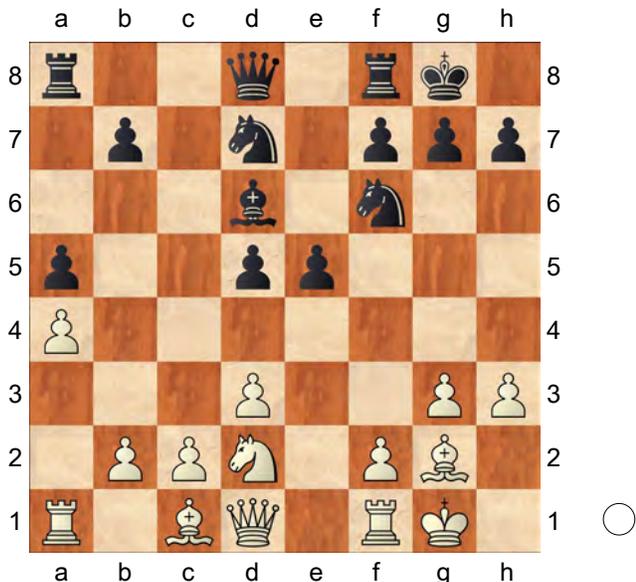
18.Bf1

[18.Qxd8 – was most precise way Rxd8 19.Rc7 Nc6 but Black's position is still to be preferred.]

18...Bxf1 19.Kxf1 Nb8!± was totally unexpected for my opponent. There is no way to save the a6-pawn, and my knights are building up a strong teamwork. **20.Qxd8 Rxd8 21.Rc7 Nbc6 22.b3 Kf8 23.Rb7 Rxb7 24.axb7 Rb8 25.Ne1 Rxb7 26.Ke2 Ke8 27.Nc2 a5-+** Gradually, my position become technically winning, but I was unable to convert it in time trouble (time control was 15+10 sec). **1/2**

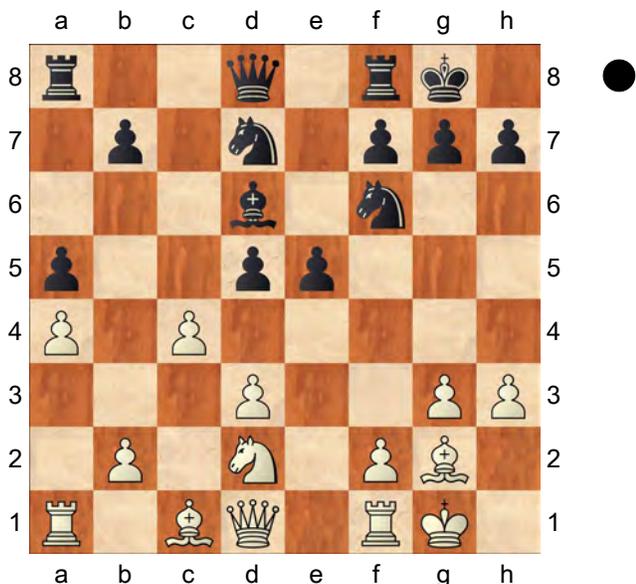
Eljanov,Pavel
 Shirov,Alexei
 Douglas IoM op (6)

2741
2679
 06.10.2016



Black's position looks OK at first sight. He is even leading in development with a good control of the central squares. **13.Nb1!** but it turns out that after such a modest knight retreat it's not easy for Black at all to hold the center.

[and it's really important to note that the "typical" 13.c4?



is a positional mistake here d4! Black can sac a pawn 14.Bxb7 Rb8 15.Bg2 Nc5 and I would prefer black here as in return for the pawn he has a great control of dark squares and much more space.]

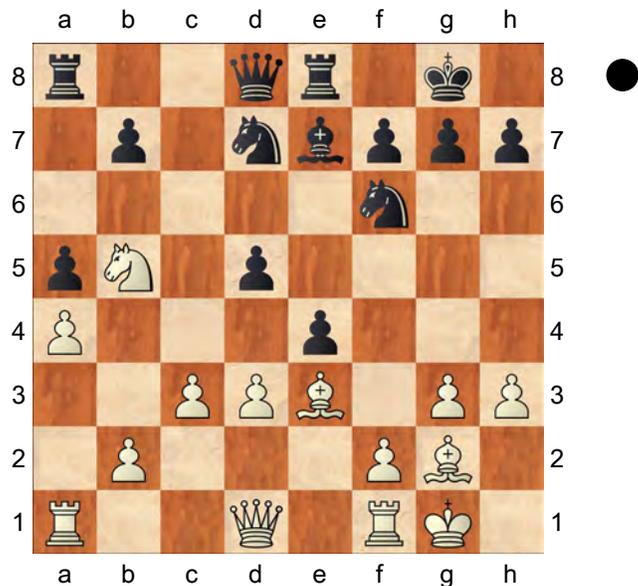
13...Bb4 This looks artificial but I was unable to find a decent way how to neutralize White's play without many concessions.

[13...d4 14.Bxb7 Rb8 15.Bg2 Re8 16.Na3±]

[probably the lesser evil was 13...Nc5 14.Nc3 d4 15.Nb5 Re8 16.c3↑ but black under serious pressure anyway]

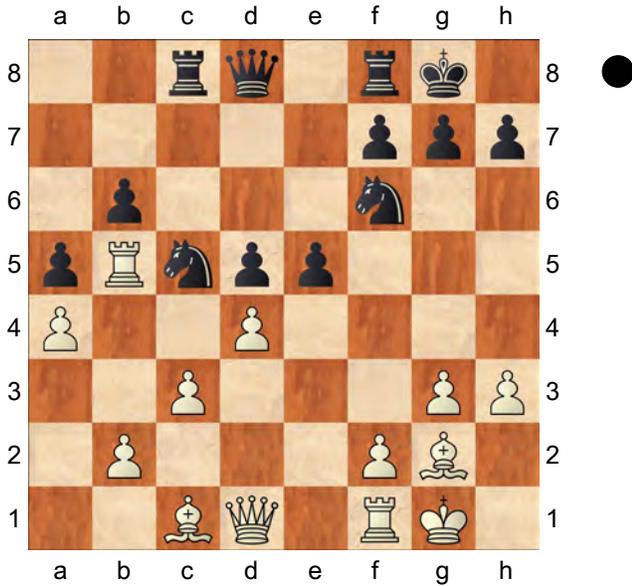
14.c3 Bd6

[14...Be7 15.Na3 Re8 16.Nb5 e4 17.Be3±]



[14...Bc5 15.Na3 Re8 16.Nb5 h6 17.Re1 Qb6 18.Re2±]

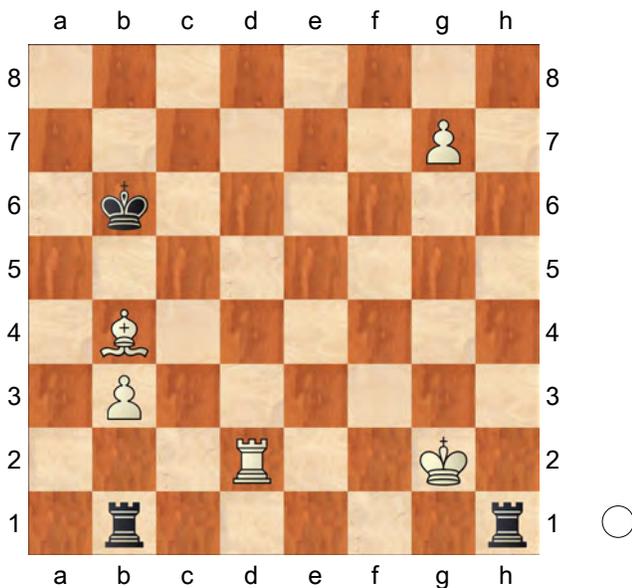
15.Na3 Bxa3 16.Rxa3 Rc8 17.Rb3 b6
18.Rb5 Nc5 19.d4±



I won the game eventually without many troubles.

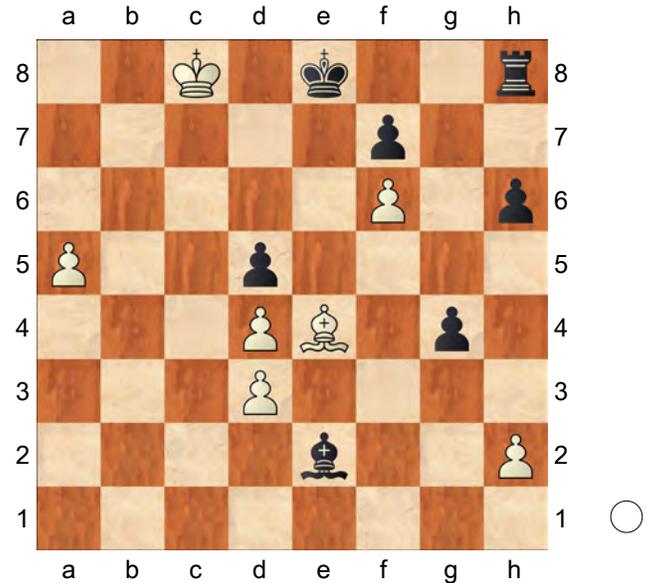
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Votava



1.Kg3! Rxb3+ 2.Kg2! it's important to clear "b" file first 2...Rbb1 3.Ba5+! Ka6
[3...Kxa5 4.Ra2+ Kb5 5.Rb2+-]
4.Bb6! Kxb6 5.Rb2+-

Pervakov



1.Bh7!! g3!

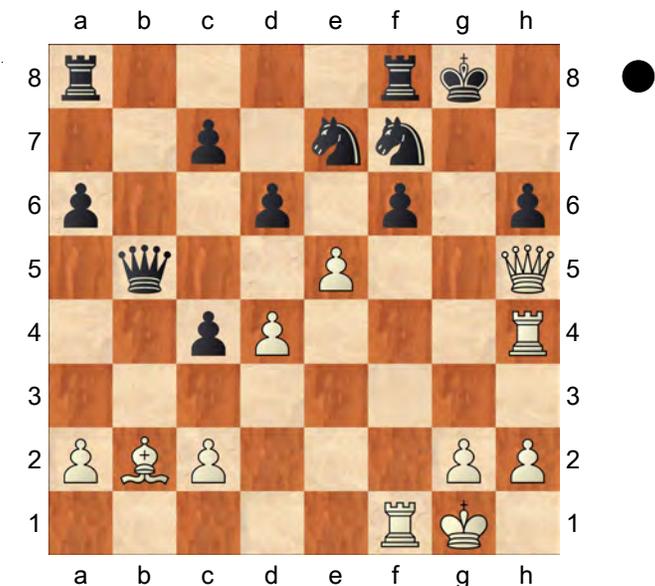
[1...Bxd3 2.Bxd3 0-0+ 3.Kb7+-]

2.hxg3 Bh5 3.a6 Bg6 4.Bg8!! Kf8

[4...Rxc8 5.a7+-]

5.Bh7!! Bxh7 6.a7!+-

□ Harikrishna,Pentala 2763
 ■ Eljanov,Pavel 2765
 Gashimov Memorial (5) 30.05.2016



22...Kh8! The only, but sufficient defence.

[22...Qxb2? 23.exf6 Qc3 24.Qg4+ Ng5 25.Rxh6 Qe3+ 26.Kh1 Nd5 27.h4+-]

[22...fxe5? 23.Rf6! Qxb2 24.Rg4+-]

23.Bc1 Ng8! 24.Qg6

[24.a4 Qxa4 25.Qg6 dxe5 26.Rxf6 Qa1 27.Rf1 Nd6 28.Rxh6+ Nxh6 29.Qxh6+ Kg8 30.Qg6+=]

24...dxe5 25.Rxf6 Once again, Pentala chooses the most tricky continuation.

[25.Bxh6 Nfxh6 26.Rxh6+ Nxh6 27.Qxh6+ Kg8 28.Qg6+ Kh8=]

25...Qb1 26.Rf1 Nd6!

[Unfortunately, I made a decisive mistake 26...exd4? 27.Bxh6 Qxf1+ 28.Kxf1 Nfxh6+ 29.Kg1 The exposed king doesn't allow Black to advance the kingside pawns. Rab8 (29...Rad8 30.Rxh6+ Nxh6 31.Qxh6+ Kg8 32.Qxa6 c3 33.Qc4+ Kh8 34.Qxc7+-) 30.Rxh6+ Nxh6 31.Qxh6+ Kg8 32.Qg6+ Kh8 33.h3 d3 34.Qh6+ Kg8 35.Qxa6

A) 35...Rf7 offered equally little hope: 36.cxd3 (Only not 36.Qxc4? d2 37.Qg4+ Kf8--) 36...c3 37.Qc4+-;

B) 35...dxc2 36.Qxc4+ Kh8 37.Qc3+ Kg8 38.Qxc2+-]

27.Rxh6+ Nxh6 28.Qxh6+ Kg8=

Great example with a king and knight moves at the same time!

1-0

□ **Carlsen,Magnus**

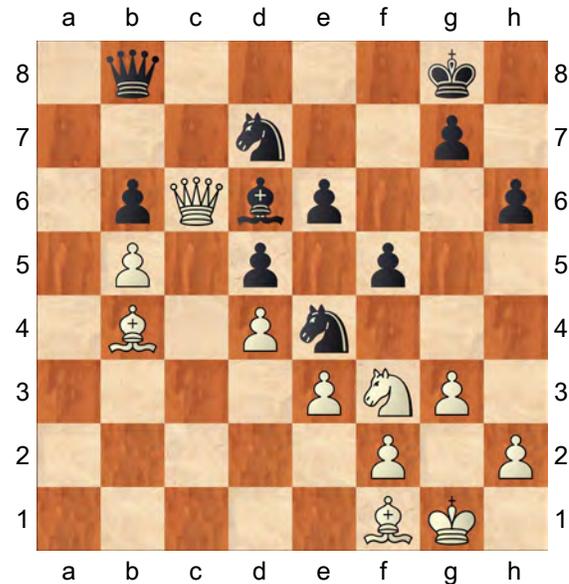
2851

■ **Eljanov,Pavel**

2765

Norway Chess 4th (9)

29.04.2016



I was under pressure in this game but here I wasted a chance to save the game. **27...Qa7!** no time for knight or king retreats here :)

[27...Ndf6? 28.Bxd6 Qxd6 (28...Nxd6 29.Ne5±) 29.Qc8+ Kh7 30.Ne5 Qe7 (Black needs to control f7 as after 30...Nd2 31.Bd3 Nde4 White gets a decisive attack with 32.Nf7 Qe7 33.Qh8+ Kg6 34.Ne5+ Kh5 35.Be2+-) 31.Qc6±]

[27...Nf8? which is a second line of my engine but equally bad 28.Bxd6 Nxd6 29.Ne5± black is struggling]

28.Bxd6

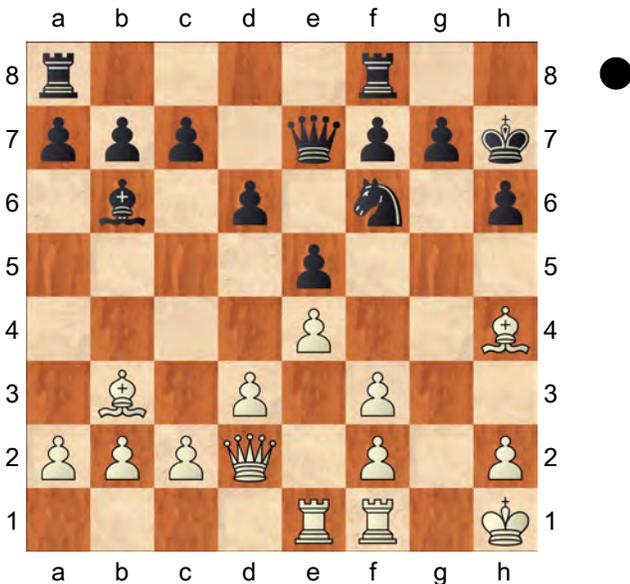
[28.Be1 Kf7 29.Nd2 Ke7]
[28.Bd3 Bxb4 29.Qxe6+ Kh8 30.Qxd5 Nd6=]

28...Qa2!= 29.Bg2 Qa1+!

[29...Qb1+!]

30.Bf1 Qb2
 [30...Qa2]
 31.Kh1 Nxf2+
 [31...Qxf2? 32.Bg2+-]
 32.Kg2 Ne4+ 33.Kh3?! Ng5+ 34.Nxg5
 hxg5 35.g4
 [35.Qxd7 g4+ 36.Kh4 Qxh2+
 37.Kg5 Qh6#]
 35...Qf2↑
 1-0

□ Maze,Sebastien 2615
 ■ Rambaldi,Francesco 2556
 FRA-chT Top 12 (3.7) 28.05.2018



I was witnessing this game as I played for Nice Alekhine chess club as well as my teammate Francesko Rambaldi. Very important moment because an evaluation of this position depends on the possibility to execute g7-g5-advance. **16...Kh8!!** great move and the only possibility to prepare g5. As we know

from the classical game Winter-Capablanca, 1919, this kind of structure with a trapped bishop on g3 are very strategically dangerous. In this particular case there is no exception. White is doomed to joyless defence

[Francesko ruled out this continuation as he felt that it could be dangerous. He was partially right. White has compensation but it's only sufficient for a draw 16...g5!? 17.Bxg5 hxg5 18.Qxg5 Rg8! 19.Qh4+ Kg7 20.Rg1+ Kf8 21.Qh6+ Ke8 22.Rxg8+ Nxg8 23.Qh8 Kd7 24.Qh3+! Ke8 (24...Kc6?? 25.Ba4 + Kc5 26.f4+-) 25.Qh8 Qf8 26.Rg1 Ne7 (26...Nh6 27.Qf6! white threatening 28.Rg7 and there is no better way but comeback Ng8; 26...Ke7 27.Rg7 d5 28.exd5) 27.Bxf7+! key point Kd7 (27...Kxf7 28.Qh5+ Ke6 29.Qh3+=) 28.Qf6 Bxf2 29.Rg2 Be3 30.Qe6+ Kd8 31.Qf6=]
 [Francesko made a wrong choice. Although he made a draw, his position was clearly worse later 16...Qd7?17.Bxf6 Qh3 18.Qe2 gxf6 19.Rg1±][another way to prepare g5 has a drawback 16...Rg8 17.f4! that's the drawback: black is unable to make a "fork" due to king's position on h7 g5!(17...exf4? 18.Qxf4 g5 19.Qf5+±)

18.fxg5 hxg5 19.Bxg5 Nxe4
 20.Rxe4 Qxg5 21.Qxg5 Rxg5
 22.Bxf7=]

17.Rg1

[17.c3 g5 18.Bg3 (18.Bxg5 hxg5
 19.Qxg5 Rae8!-+) 18...Nh5⚡]

17...Rg8! now it's fine and just in time

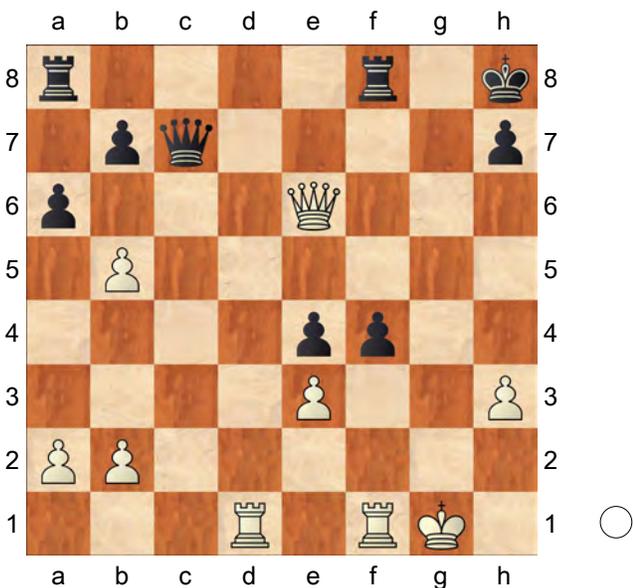
18.c3

[18.f4 exf4 19.Bxf6 (19.Qxf4 g5
 20.e5 dxe5 21.Rxe5 Qd6-+)
 19...Qxf6 20.c3 g5⚡]

18...g5 19.Bg3 Nh5⚡

1/2

□ **Eljanov,Pavel** **2681**
 ■ **Malakhatko,Vadim** **2558**
 Chigorin Memorial 20th (7) 02.11.2012



29.Rd7!

[no king retreats yet 29.Kh1? Rae8⚡]

29...Qc5 30.Kh2!! but now it's just in time! Unfortunately I was calculating

only forced lines and failed to find a win

[The game went 30.Qxe4?

I won later but it's objectively drawish

Qxe3+ 31.Qxe3 fxe3=]

[30.Kh1 Qh5]

[30.Qh6 Rg8+ 31.Kh1 Qf5⚡]

30...Qg5

[30...Qf5 31.Qe7 Rg8 32.Rxf4+-]

31.Rg1 Rae8 32.Qd6+-

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Endgame Series 19

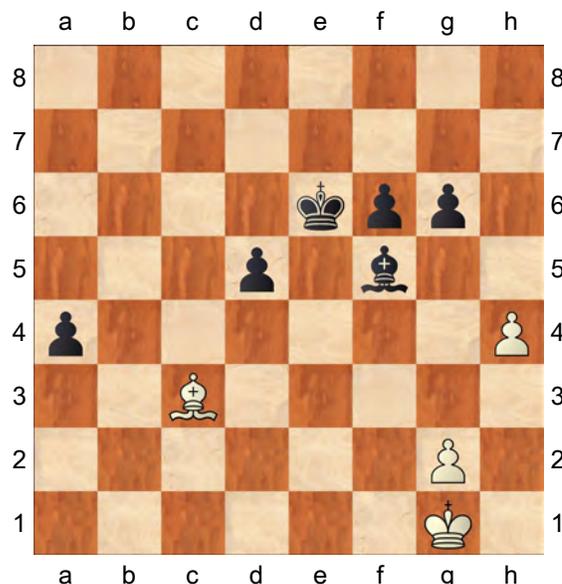
Opposite-colored Bishops: Part 2



Hello, Dear chess friends! You might remember that in the previous issue of Endgame Series we laid down the groundwork for a discussion of opposite-colored bishops endgames. In the current issue, we will examine somewhat more complex examples of such endgames. It may not be a bad idea to refresh your memory with the basic guidelines that we listed in the previous issue as you go through the new examples. I have mostly picked examples where the stronger side tries to win based on the principle of two weaknesses. In other words, it already has an outside passed pawn (the first weakness), but in order to win, it has to create and take advantage of the second weakness, usually a weak pawn on the other flank. Penetration of the king is often the guiding idea for the stronger side, and the defender does everything in his power to prevent it. In some of these examples, you will see

that it can be difficult for the weaker side to calculate or judge which pawns to exchange and which to leave on the board; whether to defend passively or actively, etc. Despite their drawish tendencies, it is not easy to defend endgames with opposite-colored bishops accurately in practice. For a start, I will let you marvel at one of the most beautiful endgame moves ever from the game Topalov–Shirov, 1998.

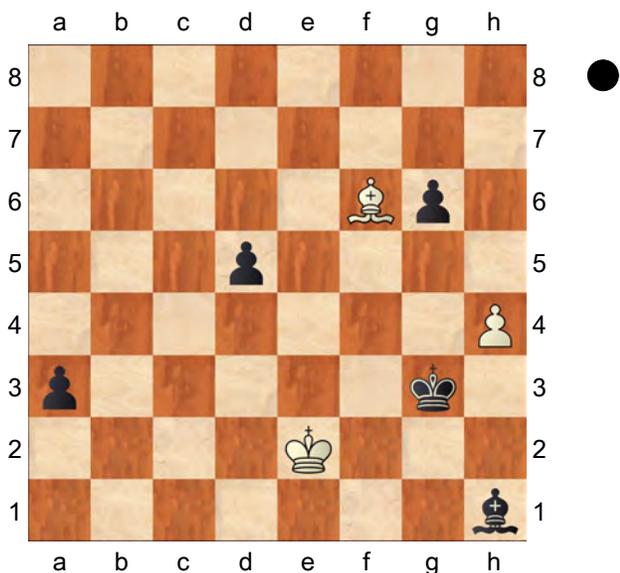
□	Topalov, Veselin	2740
■	Shirov, Alexei	2710
	Linares 15th (10)	04.03.1998



Shirov's brilliance is both instructive and aesthetically pleasing. Shirov is up two pawns in this opposite-colored bishops endgame, but, as we know, sometimes this is not enough to win the game. In this case, the white bishop can control both passed pawns on the same diagonal (a1–h8). Another thing white has going for him is that these pawns are only 2 files apart, increasing his drawing odds. Therefore, black needs to

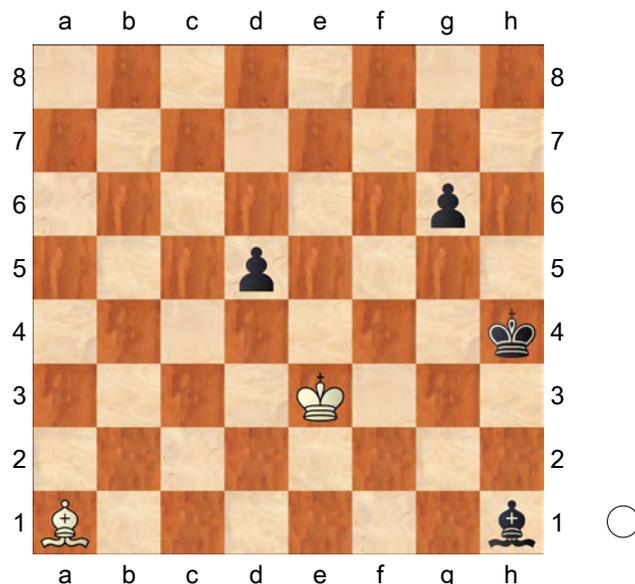
to penetrate with his king quickly. After analyzing the alternatives, Shirov comes up with an ingenious idea, which is also the only winning move: **47...Bh3!!** There are two points to this move: firstly – it opens up the route for the king: f5–e4–d3, etc. and secondly, it wins the crucial tempo by creating contact with the g2 pawn, so that white king is not in time to reach the critical e3 square. The difficulty with this move is that it requires a lot of imagination to come up with it in the first place, because how often do you put a piece on a square where it can directly be taken, without any "obvious" threat?

[Quieter alternatives miss the win by a tempo. GM Karsten Mueller analyzed king's breakthrough toward the kingside, starting with: 47...Be4 48.g3 Kf5 49.Kf2 a3 50.Ba1 Bh1 51.Ke3 Kg4 52.Bxf6 Kxg3 53.Ke2

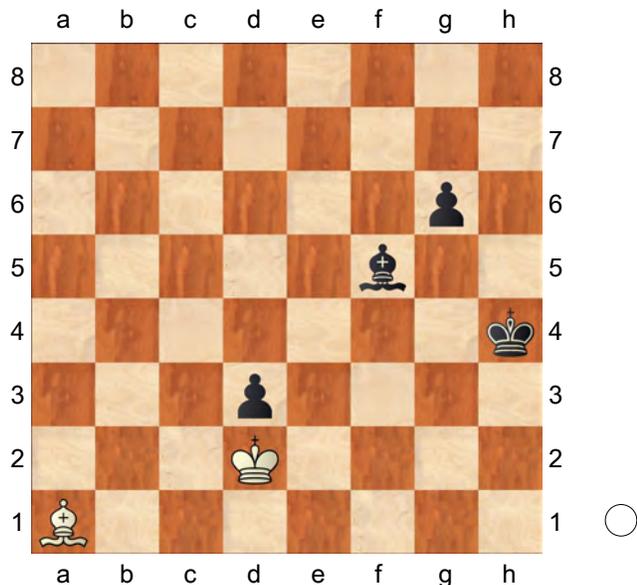


and now White can not successfully trade any of his passed pawns for White's h–pawn: a2 (53...d4

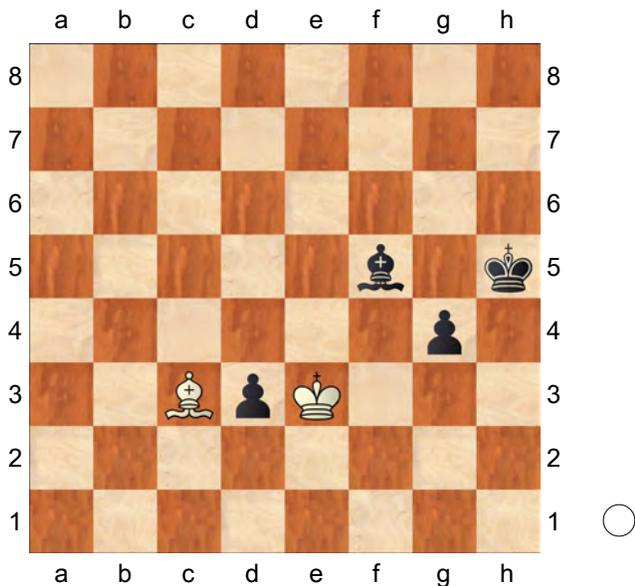
54.Bxd4 Kxh4 55.Bf6+ g5 56.Kd2= This would be winning for Black if his bishop was of the opposite color...) 54.Ke3 Kg4 (54...a1Q 55.Bxa1 Kxh4



Black's pawns are only two files apart, the White king is positioned well, and it is not difficult for him to hold a draw. For example: 56.Bf6+ g5 57.Kd4 Kg4 58.Ke5 Kh5 59.Be7 g4 60.Bf6 g3 61.Kf4 g2 62.Bd4 Kh4 63.Bg1=) 55.Ke2 Kf5 56.Ba1 Ke4 57.Kd2 d4 58.Bb2 Bf3 59.Ba1 d3 60.Bf6 Both passed pawns are safely blocked and Black's last attempt is to give up the a–pawn for White's h–pawn. First, he secures the d–pawn with bishop maneuver: Bg4 61.Ba1 Bf5 62.Bb2 Kf4 Now he proceeds with the plan. 63.Bc3 Kg4 64.Bf6 a1Q 65.Bxa1 Kxh4

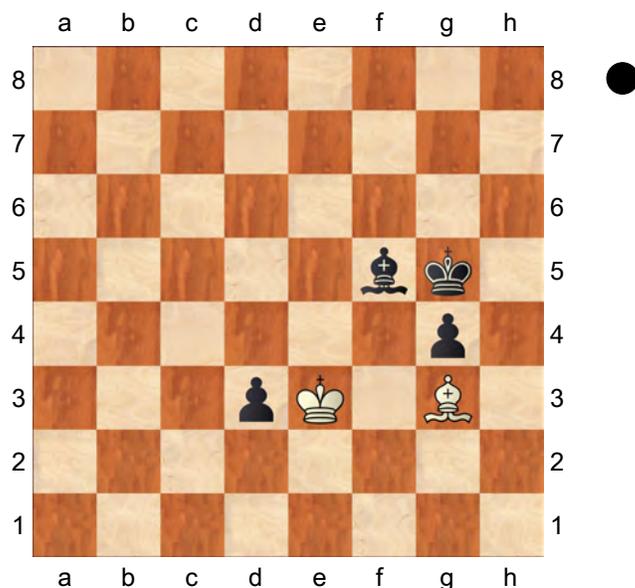


We saw that a similar endgame with the Black pawn on d5 is easily drawn. Naturally, with the same pawn on d3, white has to be more careful. GM Mueller shows how White holds this endgame with precise moves: 66.Bf6+ g5 67.Ke3 Kh5 68.Bc3 g4



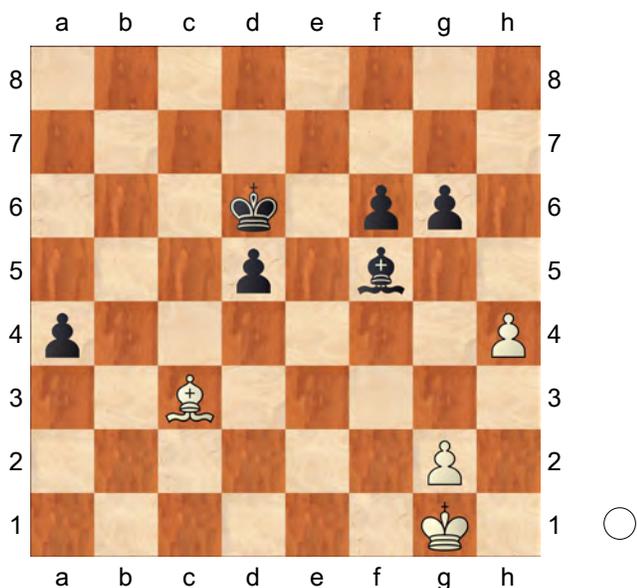
A) It would be a mistake to play 69.Kf4? instead, because of Kh4! 70.Be1+ (70.Kxf5 g3 71.Be1 Kh3 72.Ke4 g2 73.Bf2 d2-+) 70...Kh3 and g4-g3 can not be stopped. 71.Ke3 g3 72.Kf3 g2 73.Bf2 Kh2-+;

B) 69.Be1! Blocking both the pawn and Black king. 69...Kg5 70.Bg3

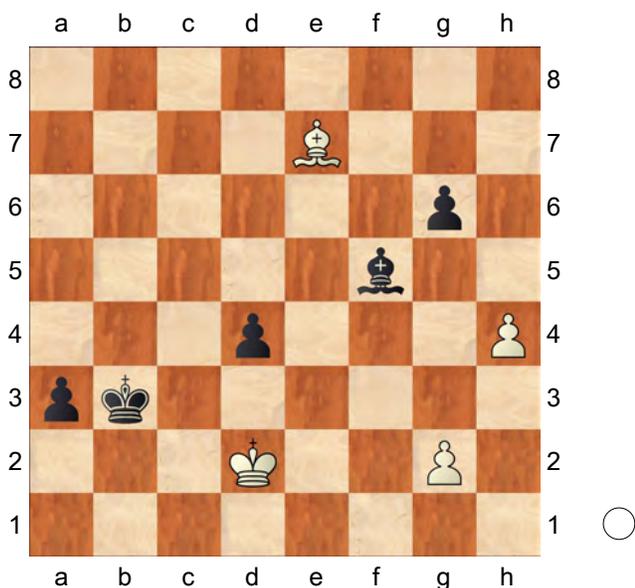


and this is a theoretical draw as we discussed in the previous issue. Black king can not break through when his pawns are only 2 files apart from each other, as the following variation illustrates: Kf6 71.Bh2 Ke6 72.Bg3 Kd5 73.Bf2 Kc4 74.Be1 Bc8 75.Ba5 Bb7 76.Kf4 Bf3 77.Ke3 Bg2 78.Kf4 Bh3 79.Ke3 g3 80.Kd2 Kd4 81.Bc7 g2 82.Bb6+ Ke4 83.Bg1= (Karsten Mueller)]

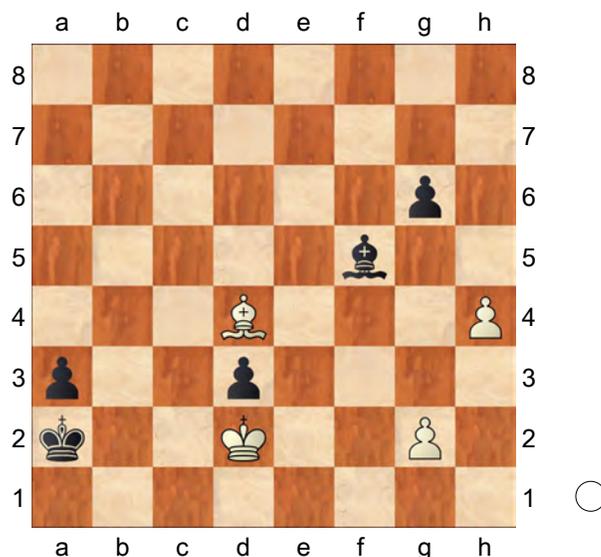
[Another attempt for Black is to penetrate via queenside: 47...Kd6



48.Bxf6 Kc5 49.Kf2 d4 Cutting of White bishop. 50.Ke2 Kc4 (50...a3? is not good because of 51.Be7+) 51.Be7 Kb3 (or 51...Kc3 52.Kd1!) 52.Kd2 a3



53.Bc5! Only this move draws, keeping an eye on both pawns. (53.Bf6? loses because of Kc4 54.Kc1 Kc3 and a-pawn can not be stopped.) 53...d3 54.Bd4 Ka2

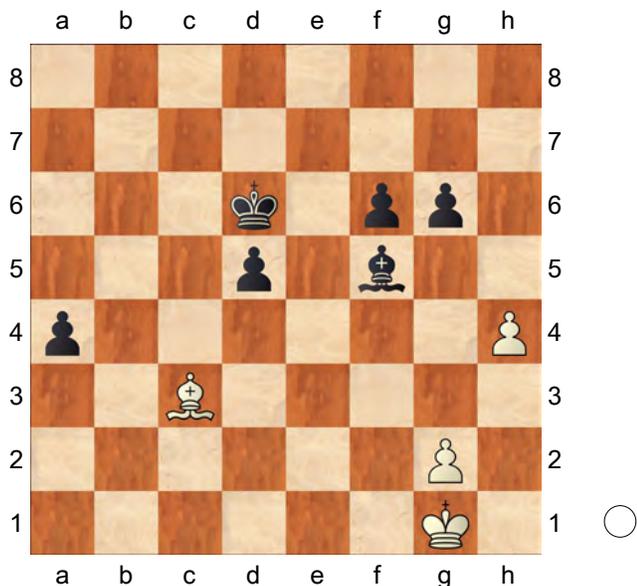


and now 55.Kc1! sets up the typical blockade. Compared to the game, we can see how Black's bishop is basically a useless piece as it can not help any of its passed pawns move forward. (White can not afford to get clever with 55.Bc5? because wins with a nice triangulation: Kb2 56.Bd4+ Kb1!+- stopping Kc1.) The last thing Black can try is 55...d2+ 56.Kxd2 Kb1 57.Ke3 a2 when he does win the bishop but will have insufficient remaining material to win. 58.Kf4=]

48.gxh3 A significant detail about the bishop sacrifice is that after accepting it, White has doubled pawns, which means that he can not create a passed pawn of his own anymore!

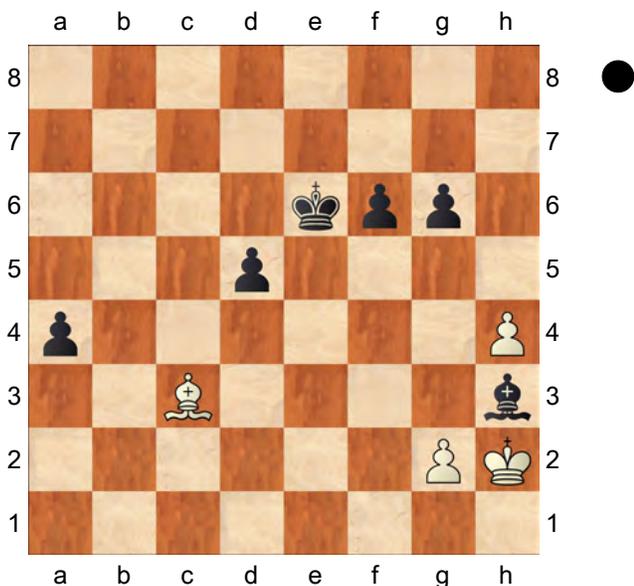
[Unfortunately for White, he can not bring his king to the center in time:

48.Kf2 Kf5 49.Kf3

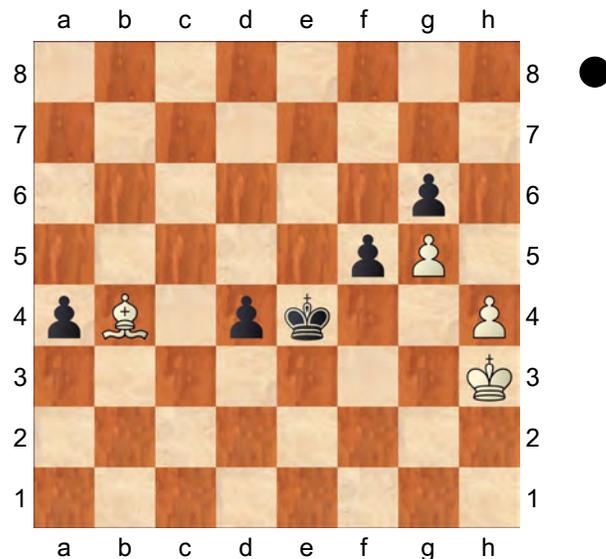


48.Bxf6 Kc5 49.Kf2 d4 Cutting of White bishop. 50.Ke2 Kc4 (50...a3? is not good because of 51.Be7+) 51.Be7 Kb3 (or 51...Kc3 52.Kd1!) 52.Kd2 a3

because of Bxg2+! which is one of the points of Shirov's combination. 50.Kxg2 Ke4-- (Shirov,A) and we can see how Black wins after: 51.Bxf6 d4 52.Be7 Kd3 53.Bc5 Kc3 54.Kf2 d3 55.Ke1 Kc2 56.Bb4 a3--+] [There is one more possibility that is worth analyzing: 48.Kh2

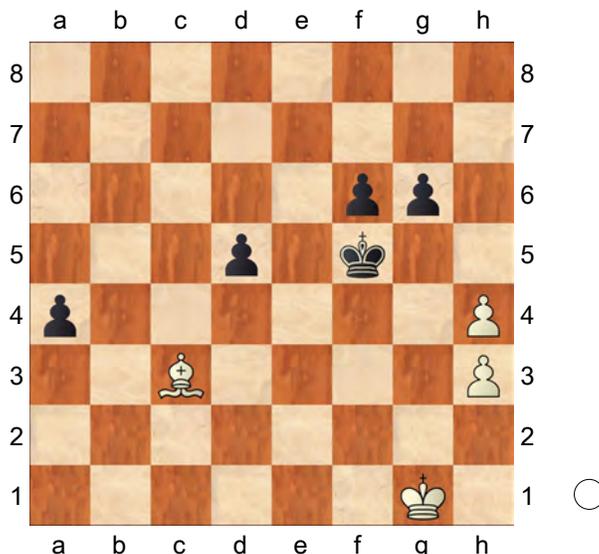


Bg4! "Wasting" a tempo with the bishop like this was worth it because now White king is one file further away from the center. (because now 48...Kf5 might does not work due to 49.Kxh3 Ke4 50.g4! d4 51.Bb4 f5 52.g5! ↯



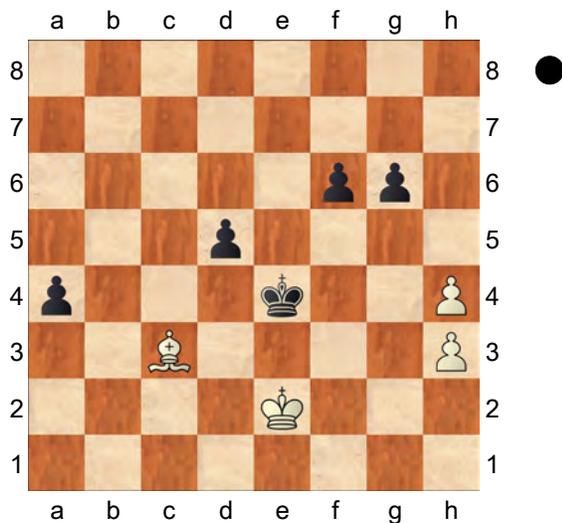
and White suddenly obtains counterplay with h4-h5 and g5-g5 pawn breakthrough.) 49.Kg3 Kf5 50.Kf2 Ke4! and Black king reaches the critical squares first. 51.Bxf6 (51.Ke1 Kd3--+) 51...a3 52.Ba1 d4 53.Ke1 Ke3--+]

48...Kf5



Black king is headed toward the c2 square. If he could reach it, there would be nothing that White could do to stop Black's passed pawns. **49.Kf2 Ke4 50.Bxf6** White might as well take the pawn,

[since the endgame with 3 passed pawns against the bishop is absolutely hopeless for him: **50.Ke2**

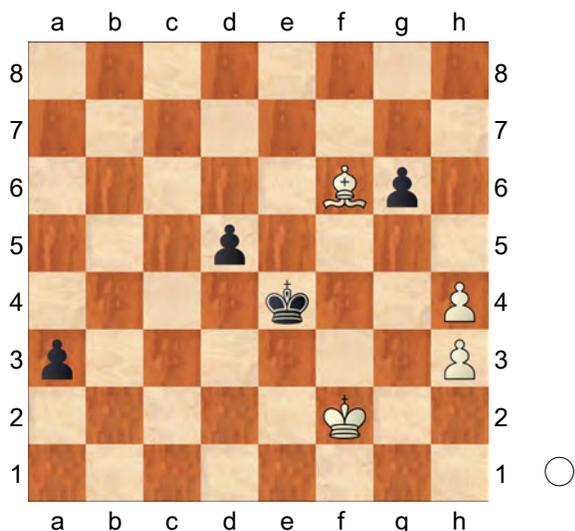


f5–+ (Shirov,A)]

[or **50.Bb4 Kd3 51.Ba3 d4 52.Bb2 f5 53.Kf3 Kc4! 54.Ke2 d3+ 55.Kd2 f4 56.Be5 f3 57.Ke3 f2 58.Kxf2 Kb3–+]**

50...d4! Naturally, we should cut off the bishop first.

[**50...a3?**



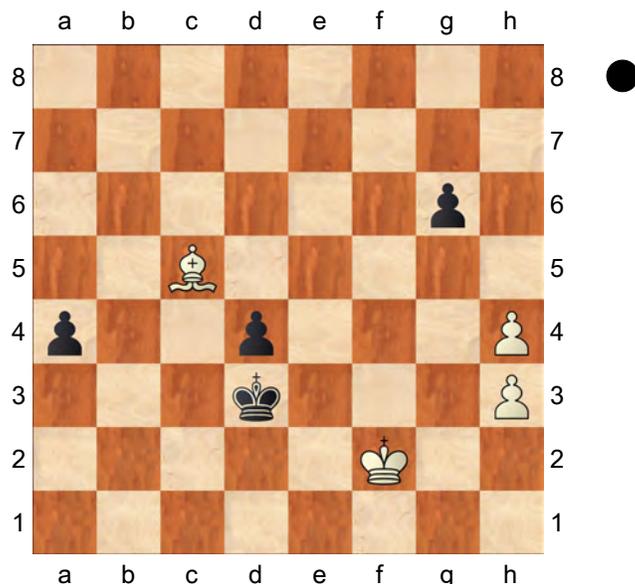
would allow White to set up the blockade after **51.Ba1 Kd3 52.Ke1 d4 53.Kd1 Ke3 54.Ke1 d3 55.Bc3 a2 56.Be5 d2+ 57.Kd1=]**

51.Be7

[Alternatively, **51.Bg5** is still met by **Kd3! 52.Ke1 Kc2–+]**

51...Kd3 52.Bc5

[**52.Ke1 Kc2–+]**

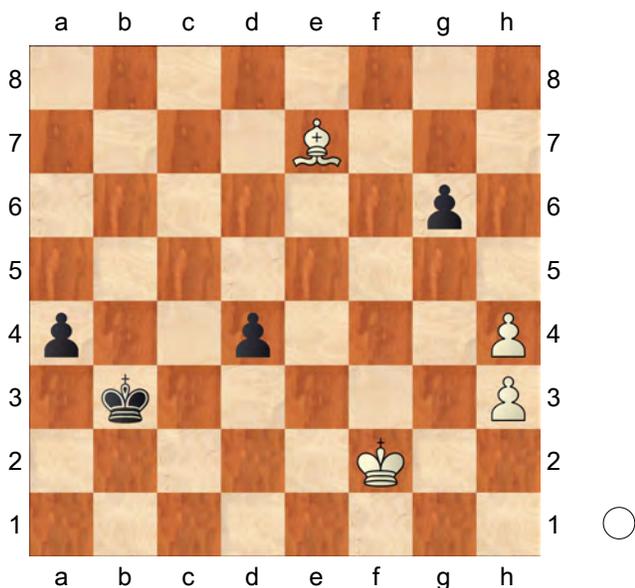


52...Kc4! All of this must have been foreseen by Shirov before he played **47... Bh3**. With this small detour, Black chases away White's bishop, so that his d–pawn is not hanging when he reaches for the c2 square.

[**52...Kc3?** would be giving up the precious tempo and after **53.Ke2** black could even lose if he plays **d3+?** (**53...Kc4** is still a draw. **54.Bd6 Kc3=) 54.Kd1+–]**

53.Be7 Kb3 and Topalov resigned, Shirov has shown how sometimes the bishop can be successfully sacrificed in such endgames and that pawns supported by an active king can win the fight against the bishop.

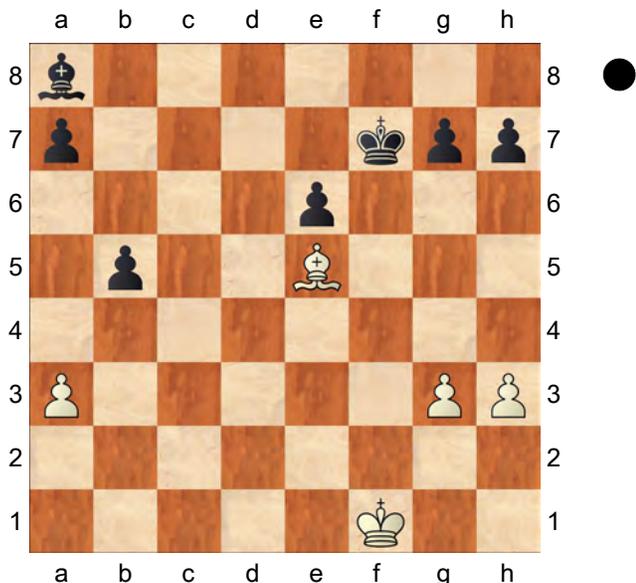
[53...Kb3



as after 54.Bc5 (54.Ke2 Kc2!-+)
 54...d3 55.Ke3 Black king reaches c2
 square and the pawns can not be
 blocked any more: Kc2 56.Bb4 a3-+]

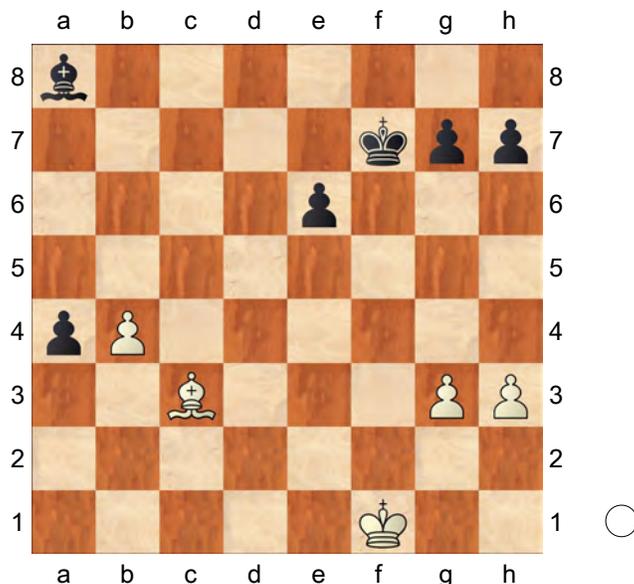
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Volkov,Sergey 2612
 Tomashevsky,Evgeny 2701
 EU-ch 11th Rijeka (6) 11.03.2010

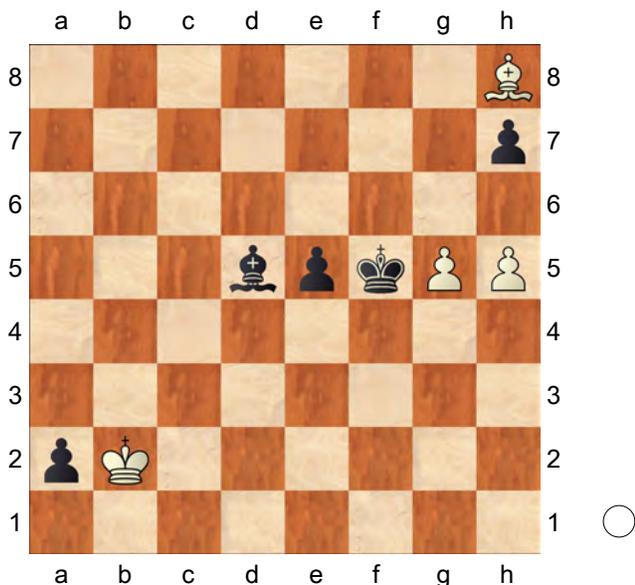


Now, let us take a look at several more "mundane" examples, which are nevertheless quite instructive. We start with the endgame from Volkov–Tomashevsky, 2010. in which White was also two pawns down, but not without drawing chances. Can Black capitalize on his two extra pawns in this endgame? Everything depends on whether White can maintain the blockade on the dark squares and avoid further weaknesses. If his king manages to keep the Black king away from his pawns, he should be able to hold. Tomashevsky played **37...g5** preparing to break via the g6–f5 route.

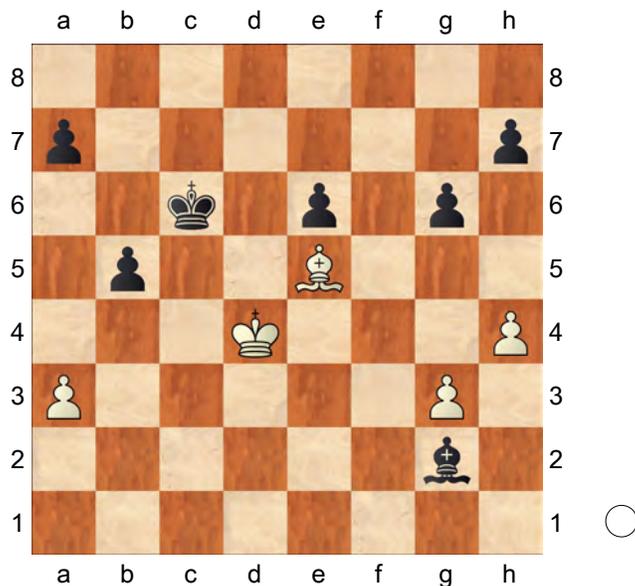
[I also looked at two alternatives. Firstly: 37...a5 intending to create a passed pawn on the queenside. However, after 38.Bc3 b4 39.axb4 a4



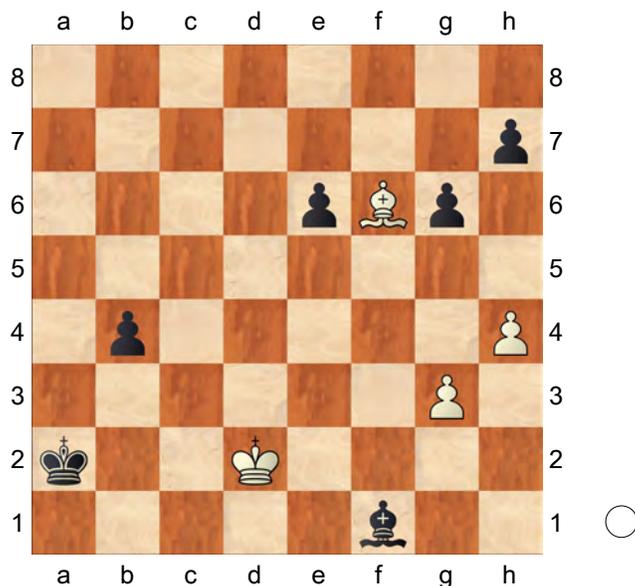
white gets a passed pawn of his own 40.b5 that ties down Black bishop as well. White should have sufficient counterplay for a draw. Below is a sample line: a3 41.Ke2 g5 42.b6 Bd5 43.Ke3 Kg6 44.g4 Kf7 45.Kd2 Ke8 46.Bf6 a2 47.Kc1 Kd7 48.Kb2 Kc6 49.Bxg5 Kxb6 50.Bf6 Kc5 51.h4 Kd6 52.g5 e5 53.h5 Ke6 54.Bh8 Kf5



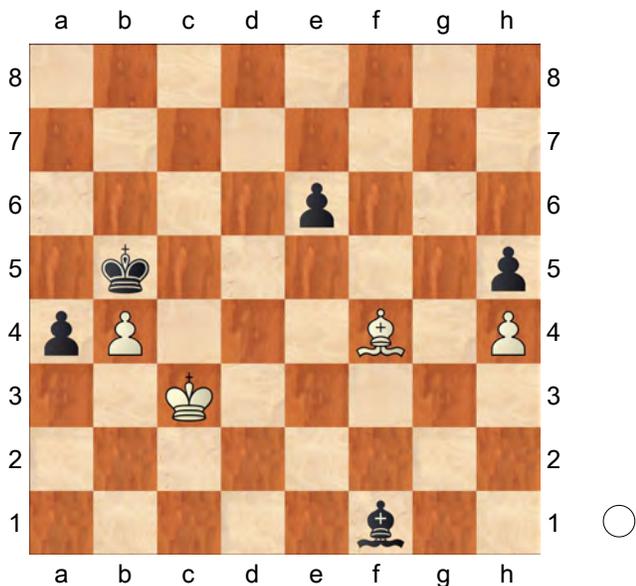
55.g6 hxg6 56.hxg6 e4 57.Bd4=] [Secondly, there is a more modest move with the g-pawn: 37...g6!? Black does not want to leave the pawn exposed on g5 and plans to swing his king over to the queenside to support his pawns. White should, naturally, centralize his king as well: 38.Kf2 Ke7 39.Ke3 Kd7 40.Kd4 Bg2 (40...Kc6 41.Bf4 Kb6 42.h4 a5 43.Be5 is similar.) 41.h4 Kc6



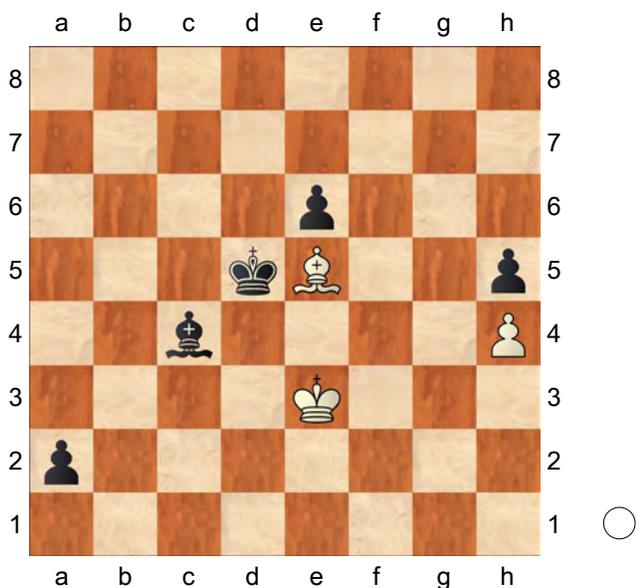
and now White should hold the defensive setup with full control over e5 square: 42.Bf4! The point is that this endgame is drawn even when black creates a passed pawn on the queenside, as we will see shortly. a5 43.Kc3 Bf1 44.Kd4 b4 45.axb4 a4 (Black also gets nowhere with 45...axb4 46.Be5 Kb5 47.Bf6 Ka4 48.Ke3 Kb3 49.Kd2 Ka2



50.Kc1= and White holds the blockade.) 46.g4 Kb5 47.Kc3 h5 48.gxh5 gxh5

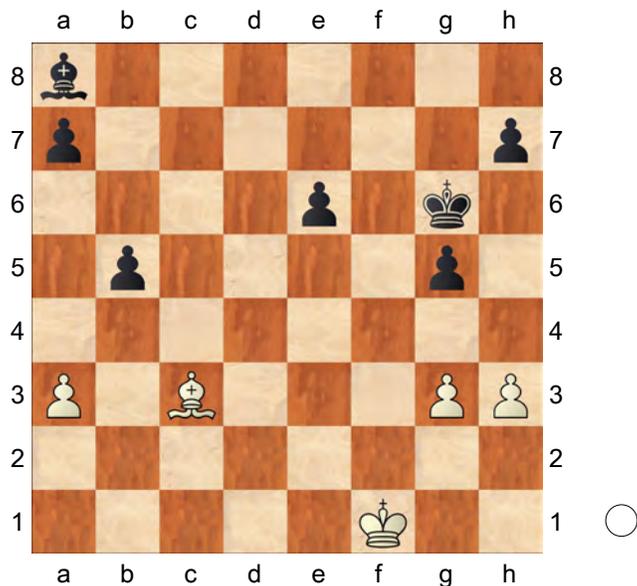


49.Be5! only like this can Black hold a draw. (49.Bc1? e5 should gradually lose as Black stretches White's defenses with the e-pawn.) 49...Bc4 50.Bf4 a3 51.Be5 a2 52.Kc2 Kxb4 Black won the pawn back, and he is two pawns up again. He also has a passed pawn on the second rank, but to no avail – Black holds the blockade comfortably: 53.Kd2 Kc5 54.Ke3! Kd5



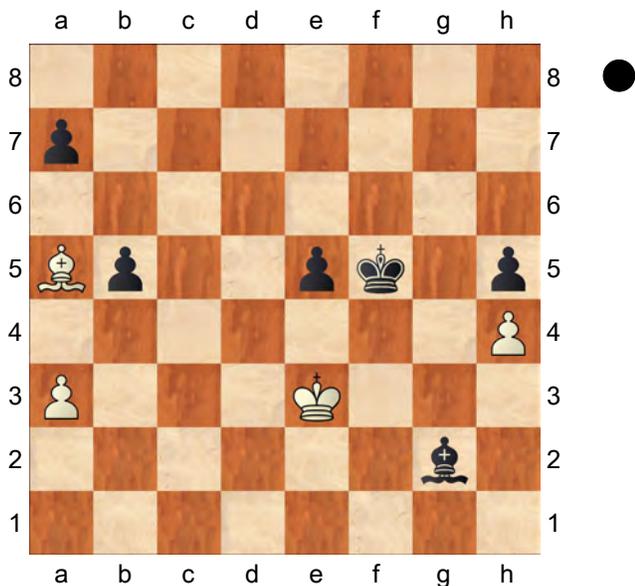
55.Kf4!= Black king "shall not pass". This is an important position to remember because the pawns are 3 files apart, which is normally winning. The problem for the stronger side is not only that there is only one defensive diagonal (a1–h8), but also that one of his passed pawns is on rook's file, which makes it impossible for the king to support it from the side.]

38.Bc3 Kg6



39.g4! In principle, the weaker side should avoid putting his pawns on the color of opponent's bishop. However, in this case, Volkov correctly judges that it would be more dangerous to let Black king penetrate via f5.

[In case of 39.Kf2 Kf5 40.Ke3 Black can first clarify the situation on the kingside with Bg2! 41.h4 gxh4 42.gxh4 h5 43.Be1 e5 44.Ba5

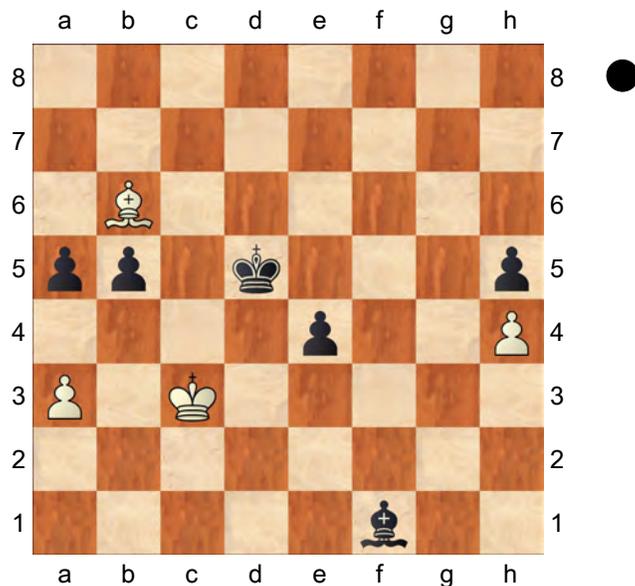


and then he wins by sending his king to the queenside: Ke6! 45.Bc7 Kd5 46.Kd3 Stopping Kc4, but not for too long. Bh3! This simple move puts white in a sort of a zugzwang. Both his king and bishop are on ideal squares and now one of them has to move.

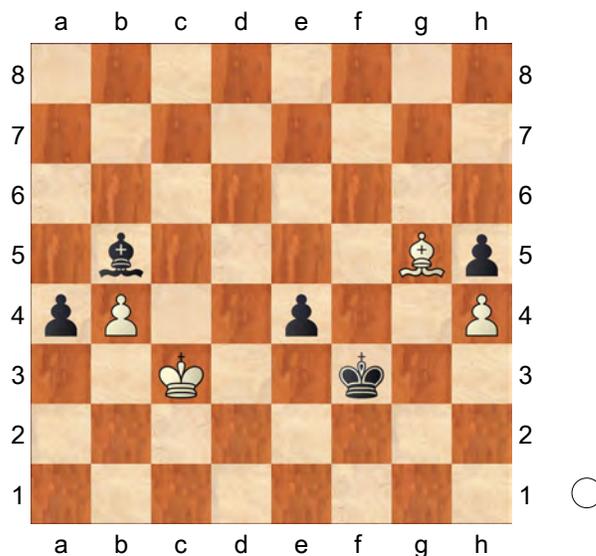
A) or 47.Ke3 Bf5 48.Bb8 (while

48.Bd8 allows Kc4-+) Now Black can move forward: 48...a5 49.Bc7 b4-+;

B) 47.Kc3 e4! Using white king's position on c3. Now e-pawn has to be blocked by the bishop: 48.Bf4 Bf1 49.Be3 (49.Bc7 e3-+) 49...a5 50.Bb6 (Similar is 50.Kb3 Bc4+ 51.Kc3 b4+ 52.axb4 a4-+)



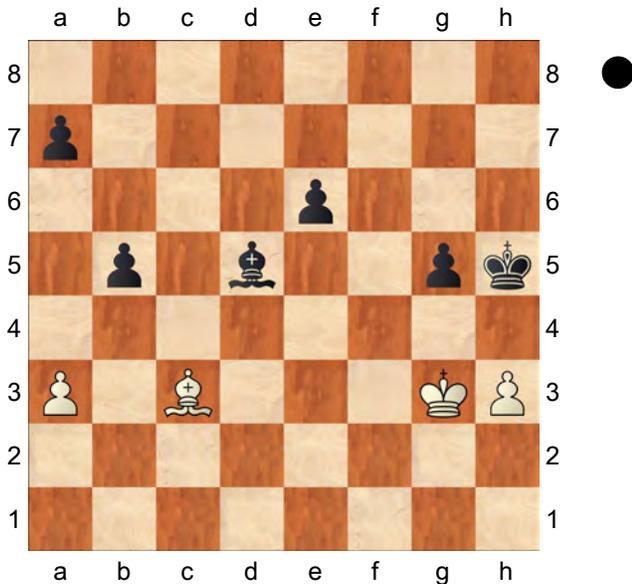
and now Black obtains another passed pawn with a typical breakthrough sacrifice: 50...b4+! 51.axb4 a4 Black's b-pawn is safely guarded by the bishop and Black wins technically by bringing his king to the kingside: 52.Bd4 Bb5 53.Bc5 Ke5 54.Be3 Kf5 55.Bd2 Kg4 56.Bg5 Kf3-+



39...Bd5 40.Kf2 h5 Logically, this pawn should be pushed while the king is still on g6. **41.Bd4?!** It is tempting just to play "pass" moves as it seems that Black can not improve his position without the

help of his king.

[However, I see nothing wrong with 41.gxh5+ Kxh5 42.Kg3



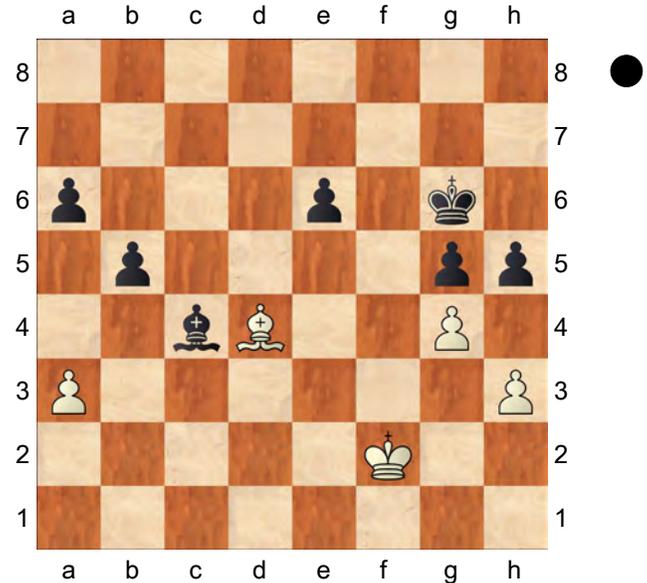
when it is hard to suggest a convincing way forward for white. Due to the weakness of g5 pawn, he can not bring his king to the queenside so easily. A sample line is: Kg6 43.Kf2 Kf5 44.Bd2 e5 45.Kg3 e4 46.Kf2 Be6 47.Ke3 Kf6 48.Bc3+ Kg6 49.Kxe4 Bxh3 50.Ke5 Bf5 51.Ba5 g4 52.Kf4 Bd7 53.Bc3 Kh5 54.Bd4 a6 55.Bf2 a5 56.Be1 b4 57.axb4 a4 58.Kg3=]

41...a6 Tomashevsky follows the golden endgame rule: "Do not hurry."

[Instead, 41...a5?! immediately would allow 42.Bc3 b4 43.axb4 a4 44.b5 with counterplay.]

42.Bc3 Bc4!? A cunning move, as we will see shortly. **43.Bd4?**

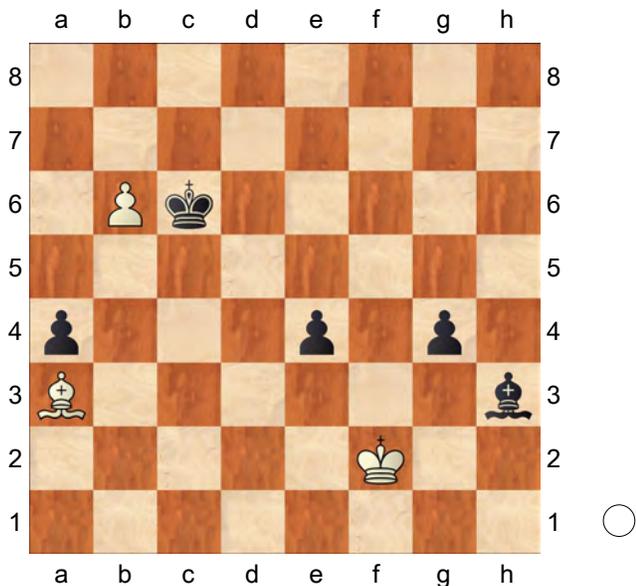
[Again, there was nothing wrong with the exchange on h5: 43.gxh5+ Kxh5 44.Kg2 Kg6 45.Kf2 Kf5 46.Bd2 e5 47.Kg3 with draw as the most likely result. The weakness of his g5 pawn handicaps Black.]



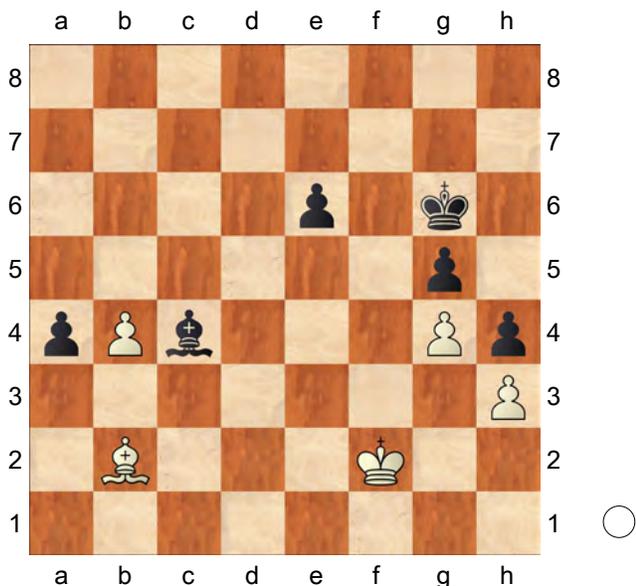
Tomashevsky's patient strategy has paid off. Volkov let down his guard for a second, thinking Black could not improve his position. **43...a5!** This is the right time for the long-awaited pawn break. **44.Bc3 b4 45.axb4 a4** This was the point of 42... Bc4 – the b-pawn is blocked. Black has definitely benefited from the pawn breakthrough as the passed pawn on the a-file will be a headache for White. **46.Bb2?**

A decisive mistake.

[Grandmaster Krasenkov analyzed in depth the drawing continuation 46.gxh5+ below: Kxh5 47.Bb2 , e.g. Kg6 (47...Kh4 48.Bc1 e5 49.Kf3 Bf1 50.Ke4 Bxh3 51.Kxe5 g4 52.Kd4 g3 53.Kc3 g2 54.Be3=) 48.Kg3 Kf5 49.Kf3 Bf1! 50.Kg3 e5 (50...Ke4 51.Kg4 Kd5 52.Bc1 Kc4 53.Bxg5=) 51.Bc1! e4 52.Kf2 Bxh3 53.b5 Kf6 54.Bb2+! Ke6 (54...Ke7 55.Bc1) 55.b6 Kd7 56.Bc1 g4 57.Ba3 with a curious position, in which the white king paralyses the black bishop and two pawns! Kc6

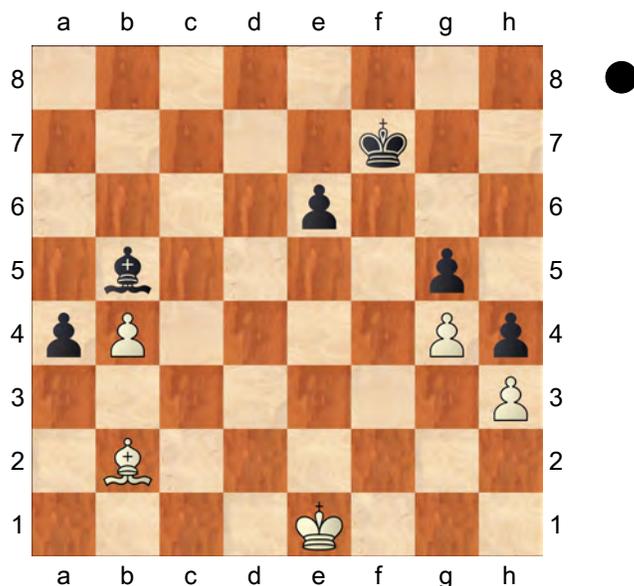


58.Bc5!= is now a reciprocal zugzwang! (M.Krasenkow)]
46...h4!



This is the point. Black fixes two white pawns on the light squares which gives him a great new target. I think that white underestimated this position as it seems like he always has sufficient counterplay

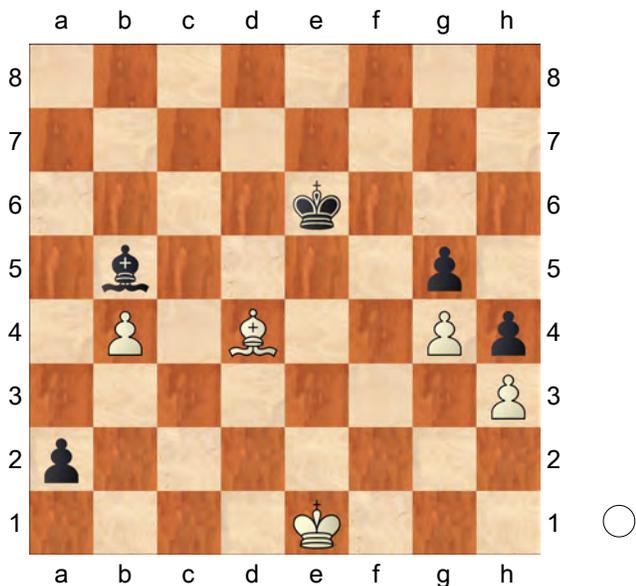
against g5 and h4 pawns. But more mutual weaknesses usually favor the attacker and we will see how Tomashevsky proves this point right.
47.Ke1 Kf7 48.Kf2 Bb5 49.Ke1



One of the problems for white is that he can not leave the f1 square undefended due to Bf1-Bxh3, etc. Black, on the other hand, needs to figure out how to break forward with his king.

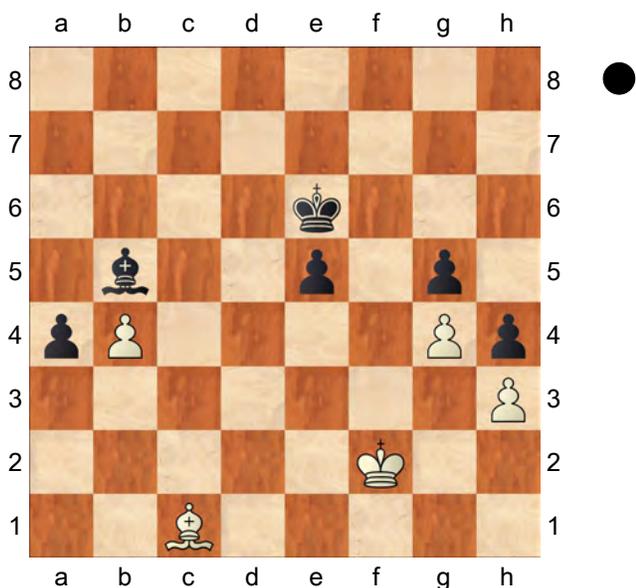
Tomashevsky's solution is very elegant: **49...e5!** Another pawn sacrifice. **50.Bc1** This is the most stubborn defense. White will keep his bishop on c1 and king on e1, forcing black to sacrifice the g5-pawn.

[Accepting the sacrifice 50.Bxe5 would allow black to push his a-pawn all the way to a2: a3 51.Bh8 (It is too late to bring the king: 51.Kd2 Ke6 52.Bd4 Bf1 53.Kc2 Bxh3 54.Be3 and Black king is perfectly placed: Kf6-+) 51...a2 52.Bd4 Ke6



This endgame is trivially winning for Black as white king is tied to the defense of f1 square. Black simply marches his king forward and picks up everything in his way. 53.Bh8 Kd5 54.Kd2 Bf1 55.Kc1 Bxh3 56.Kb2 Bxg4-+]

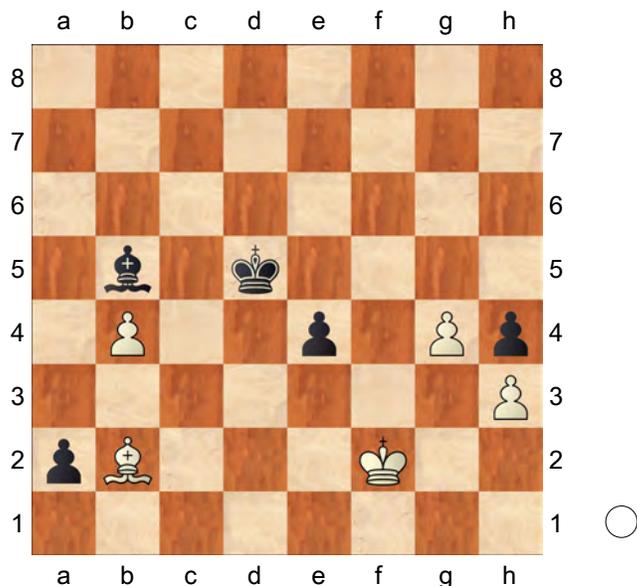
50...Kg6 51.Kf2 Kf6 52.Bb2 Ke6 53.Bc1



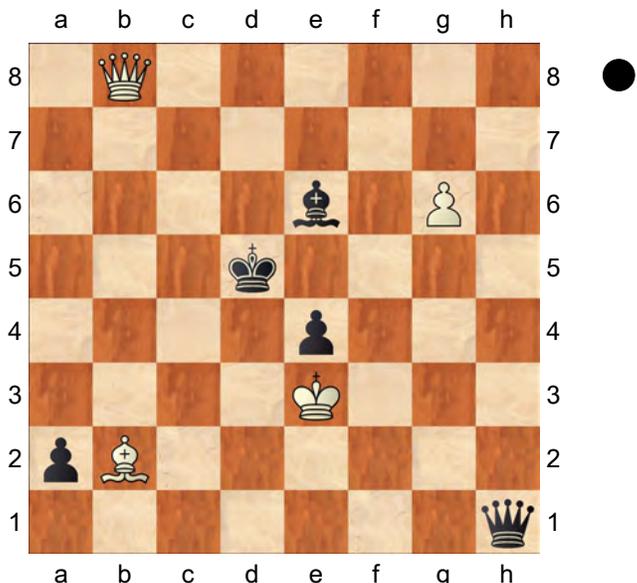
Kd5!? Tomashevsky's move is natural, [although the most convincing way to victory was 53...e4! which we will actually analyze in the variation 55. Kf2! Kd5!]

54.Ke1

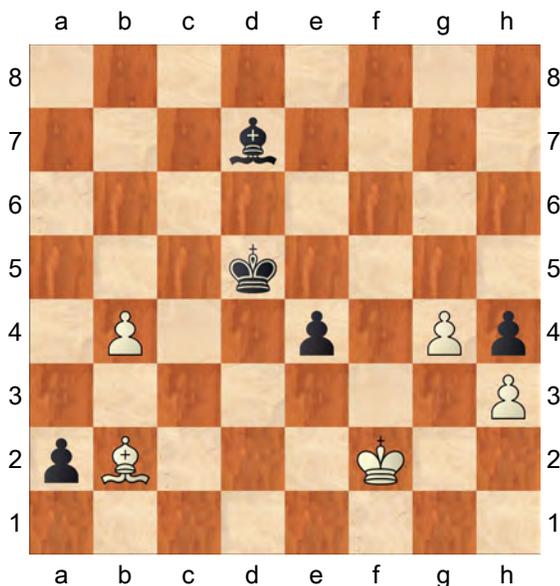
[This time, the g5 pawn is the poisoned one. 54.Bxg5 Again, Black continues a3 55.Bc1 a2 56.Bb2 but here we have a new motive: e4!]



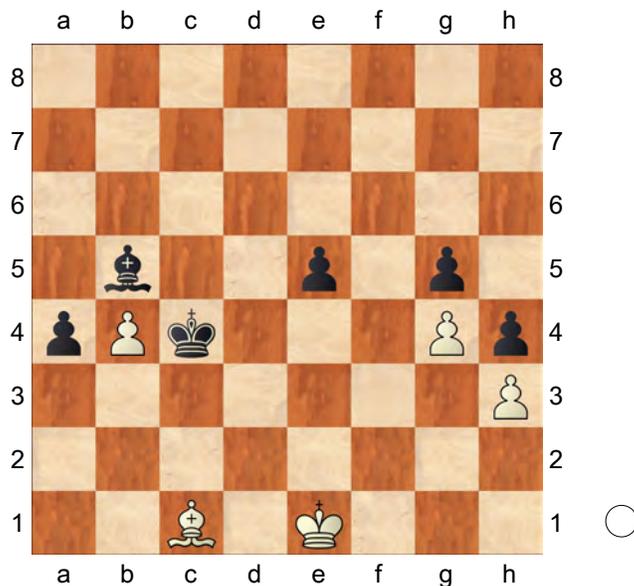
A) 57.Ke3 would allow Bf1 and Black wins the pawn race after: 58.g5 Bxh3 59.g6 Be6 60.b5 h3 61.b6 h2 62.b7 h1Q 63.b8Q



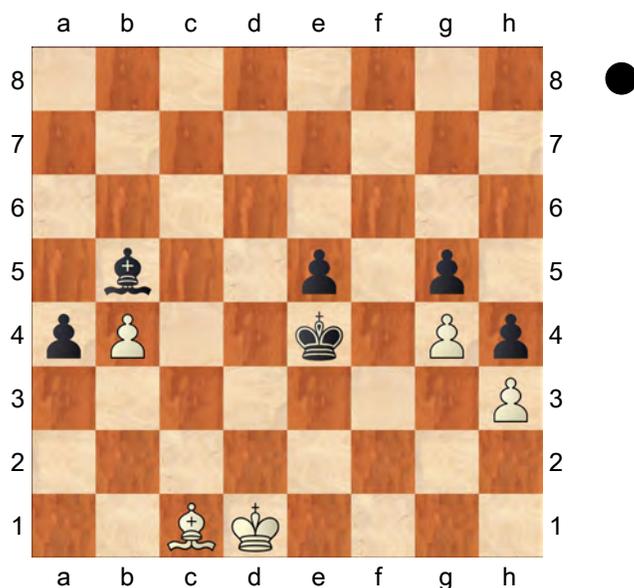
White king will find himself in the mating net after $Qf3+$ 64.Kd2 $Qf2+$ 65.Kc1 $Qc5+$! 66.Kd2 $e3+$ etc.; **B)** White can not use his passed pawn successfully, as we can see in the line: 57.g5 $Bd7!$ 58.g6 (or 58.Kg2 $Bf5$ 59.b5 $Kc5$ --+) 58... $Bxh3$ 59.g7 $Be6$ --+; **C)** 57.Ba1 and here Black has a great winning motive, somewhat reminiscent of $Bh3!$ in Topalov-Shirov: 57... $Bd7$ 58.Bb2



$Bxg4!$ 59.hxg4 $h3$ --+ and black's pawns are unstoppable.]
54...Ke4! Tomashevsky chooses the most flexible route with his king, which testifies about his high class in the endgame.
 [It would be wrong to play the tempting 54... $Kc4$?



because it blocks the bishop's diagonal ($Bb5$ --f1) and White gets an opportunity to "switch the workload" among his pieces with: 55.Kd1! $Kxb4$ (55... $Kb3$ 56. $Bxg5$ $a3$ 57. $Bf6$ =) 56. $Bxg5$ $a3$ 57. $Kc1$ =]
55.Bxg5 White goes down fairly easily after this move.
 [55.Kd1



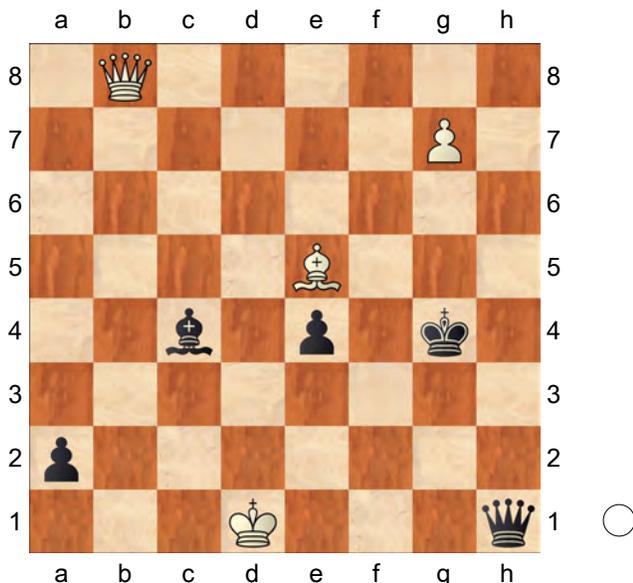
also does not work for White as Black can penetrate with his king: Kf3!

56.Bxg5 Kg3 57.Bf6 e4!

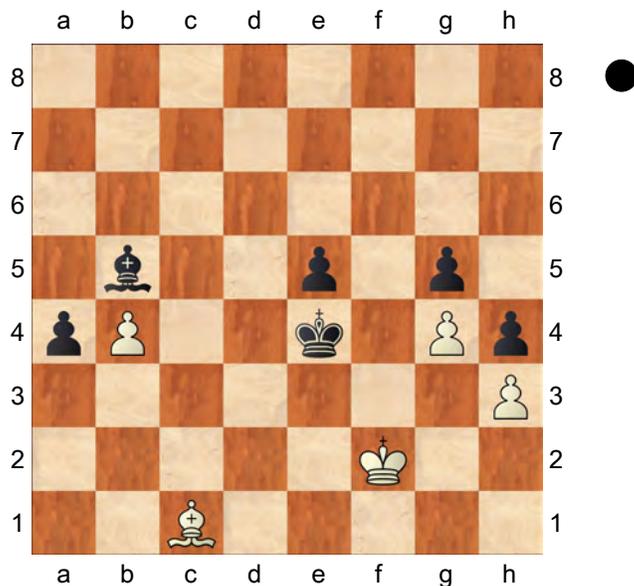
Black should, of course, keep as many pawns on the board as possible. 58.g5 Kxh3 59.g6 Kg4 60.g7 Bc4 and the pawn race, similar to one of the lines above, is won by black:

61.b5 h3 62.Be5 a3!-+ 63.b6 a2

64.b7 h2 65.b8Q h1Q+

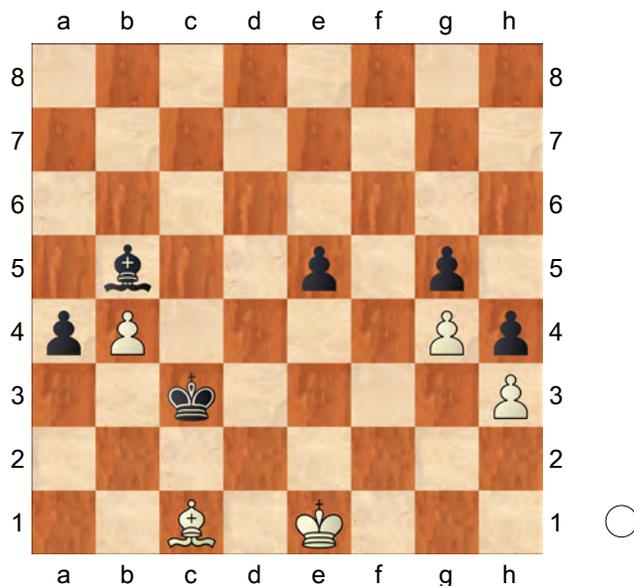


66.Kc2 Qg2+ 67.Kc1 Qf1+ 68.Kc2 Qe2+ 69.Kc1 a1Q+ 70.Bxa1 Qe1+ 71.Kb2 Qd2+ 72.Ka3 Qa2+ 73.Kb4 Qb3+ wins the queen and the game.]
[However, a far more stubborn defense was 55.Kf2!

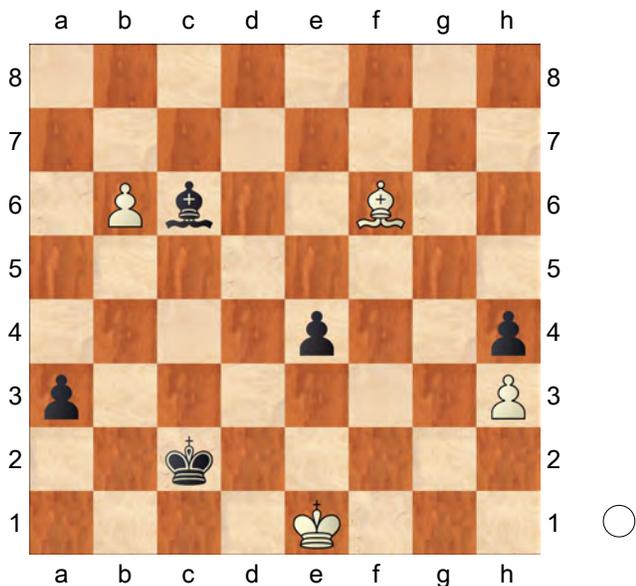


when, in fact, Black would need to "admit the mistake" and retreat with his king to e6! I will explain shortly why this paradoxical retreat is the only way forward for Black. Kd5!

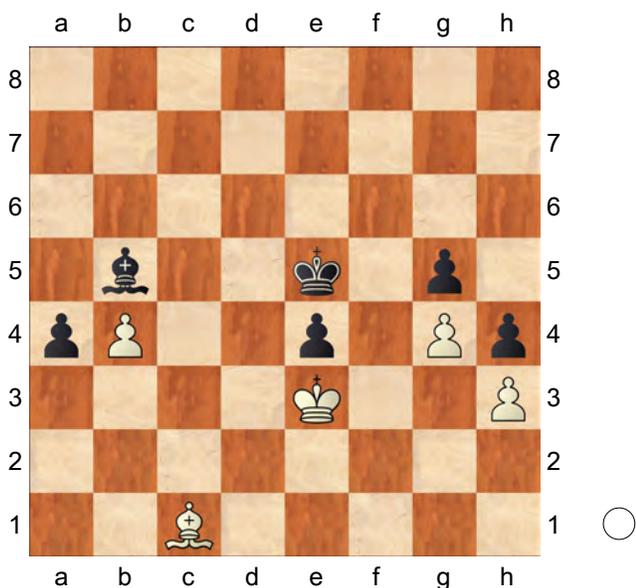
(Instead, the "natural" 55...Kd3 56.Ke1 Kc3



leads nowhere after 57.Bd2+! and if Kc2 then Black can finally take on g5: 58.Bxg5 a3 59.Bf6 e4 60.g5 Be8 61.g6 Bxg6 62.b5 Be8 63.b6 Bc6

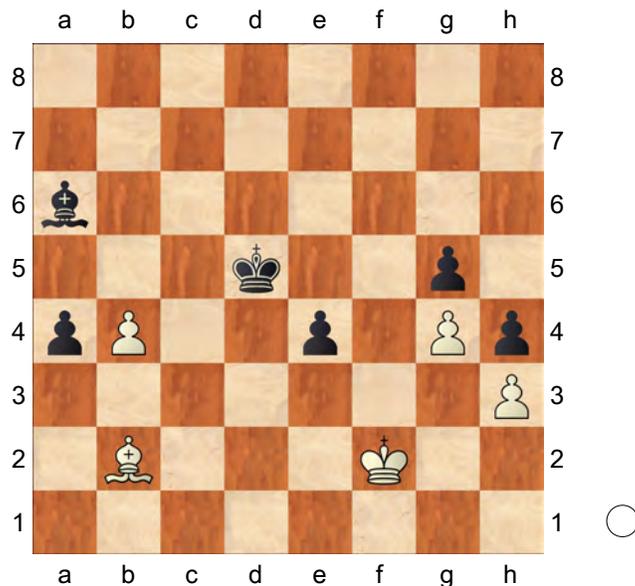


64.Bxh4!= and everything works out perfectly for the defender.) 56.Ke1 Ke6! 57.Kf2 (We have seen in the analysis to 54.Bxg5 why 57.Bxg5 does not work: a3 58.Bc1 a2 59.Bb2 Kd5 60.Kf2 e4!-+ etc.) 57...e4 58.Ke3 (In case of 58.Ke1 Black has a nice winning idea e3! 59.Bxe3 a3 60.Bd4 a2-+ with a well-known winning position.) 58...Ke5! (58...Kd5 59.Kd2)

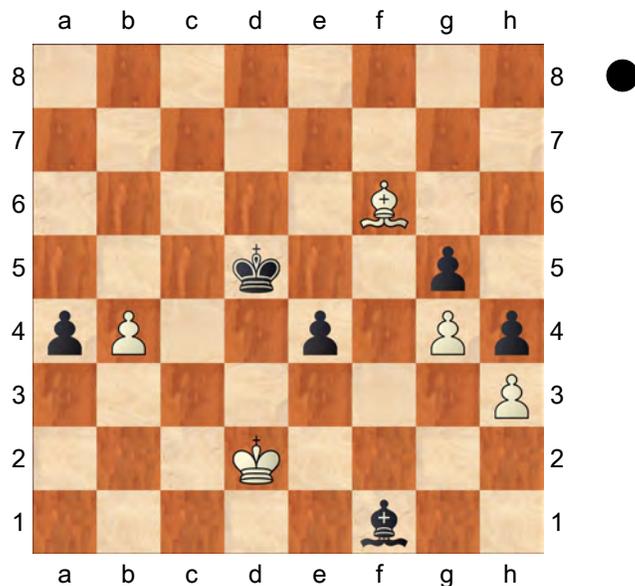


A precise move, keeping options open for the king. 59.Bb2+ (59.Kd2

Kf4!-+ is the point.) 59...Kd5 60.Kd2 (60.Kf2 Ba6!

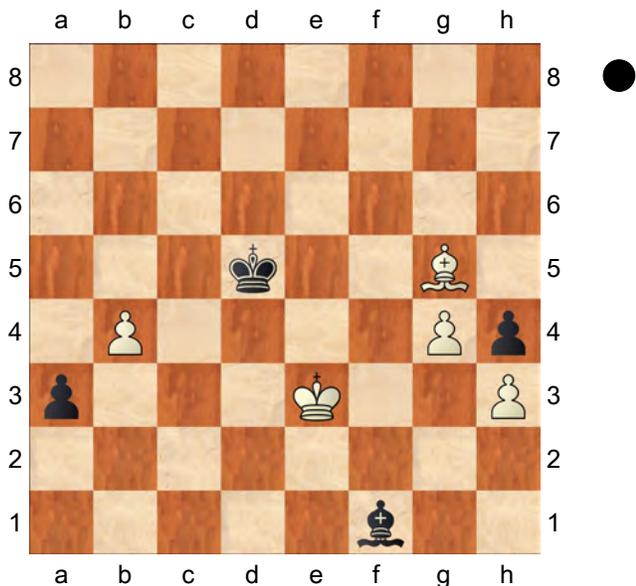


puts white in zugzwang. He can not keep control of all 4 squares: f1, e3, d4, and e3!) 60...Bf1 White king was finally out-maneuvred and black gets his bishop on the juicy f1 square. 61.Bf6



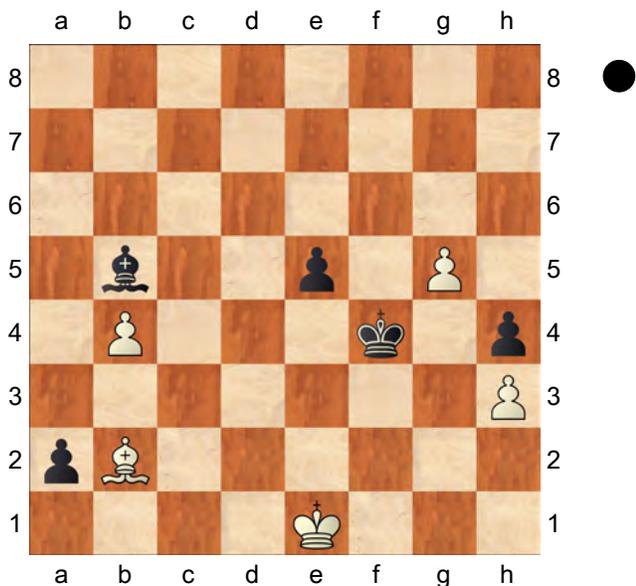
Now Black wins with a pretty combination with some study-like

motives: e3+! (61...Bxh3? 62.Bxg5 Bxg4 63.Bxh4 a3 64.Kc2=) 62.Kxe3 a3 63.Bxg5 (White is one move too slow with 63.Kd2 a2 64.Kc2 Ke6! 65.Bd4 Bxh3 66.Kb2 Bxg4--+)



and now, behold: 63...Ke6!! 64.Bh6 Kf6!-+ and a-pawn can not be stopped.]

55...a3 56.Bc1 a2 57.Bb2 Kf4 58.g5



Be8! This is the ultimate precision that was required from Black.

[58...Kxg5? would throw away all of the good work from before: 59.Bxe5 Bd7 60.b5! Bxb5 (60...Bxh3 61.b6 Bg2 62.Kf2 Bb7 63.Kg1=) 61.Kd1 Bd7 62.Kc2 Bxh3 63.Kb2= and white draws thanks to the wrong-colored bishop.]

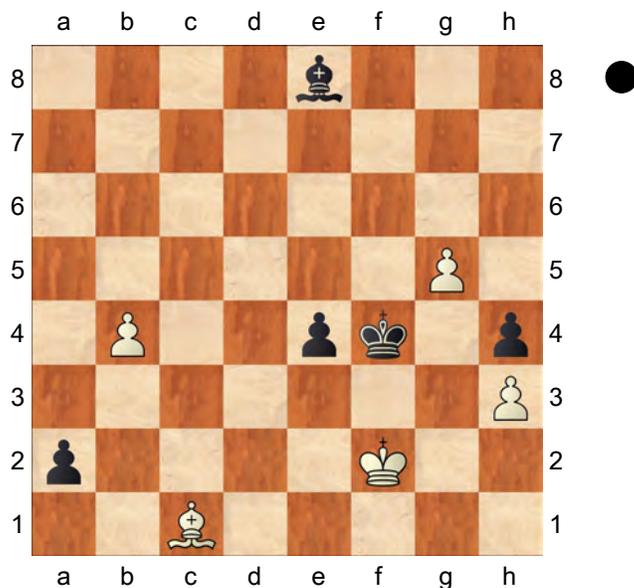
59.Kf2

[Now the sacrifice 59.b5 does not work. Black keeps his e-pawn alive and after Bxb5 60.g6 e4 61.g7 Bc4!he wins easily.]

59...e4 The g5 pawn is hanging, practically forcing...

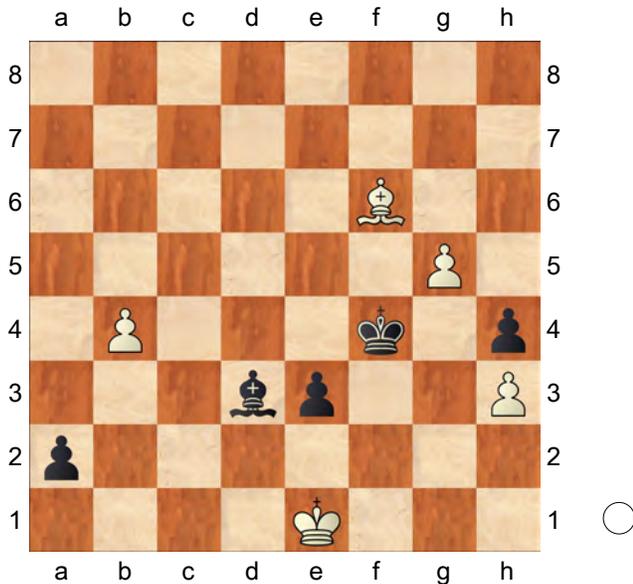
60.Bf6

[60.Bc1+



e3+! 61.Bxe3+ Ke4--+]

60...e3+ 61.Ke2 Bb5+ 62.Ke1 Bd3!



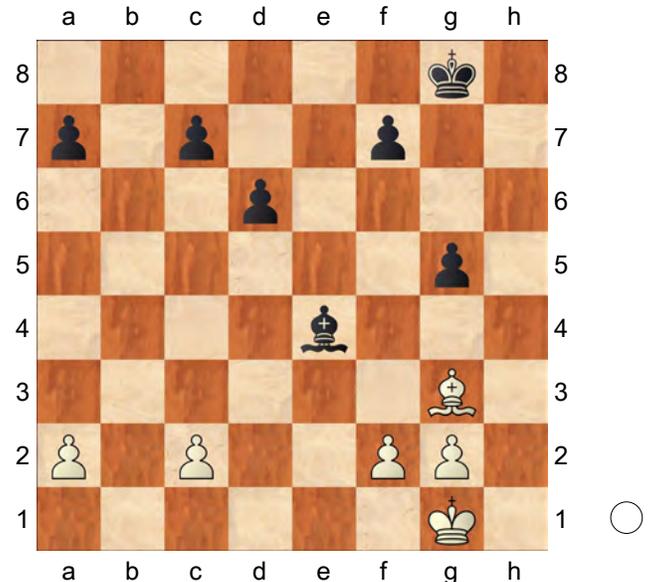
A nice maneuver to improve the bishop's position. White's position is hopeless. **63.Bd4 Kg3**

[63...Bf5 64.Ke2 Bxh3 was winning, too.]

64.g6 Bxg6 65.Ke2 Kxh3 Black will play Kg2 next, shielding the h-pawn and white will not be in time to hold both passed pawns. **66.b5 Be8 67.Kxe3 Kg2 68.b6 Bc6** White resigned. I think that the most useful takeaway from the previous example is the role that pawn sacrifices have in creating winning chances in opposite-colored bishops endgames. Tomashevsky sacrificed a pawn three times in the game and every time he did, his position improved. This is also a fundamental idea to have in mind when you are the weaker side in these endgames. Then, you can anticipate your opponent's most dangerous winning attempts and deal with them appropriately.

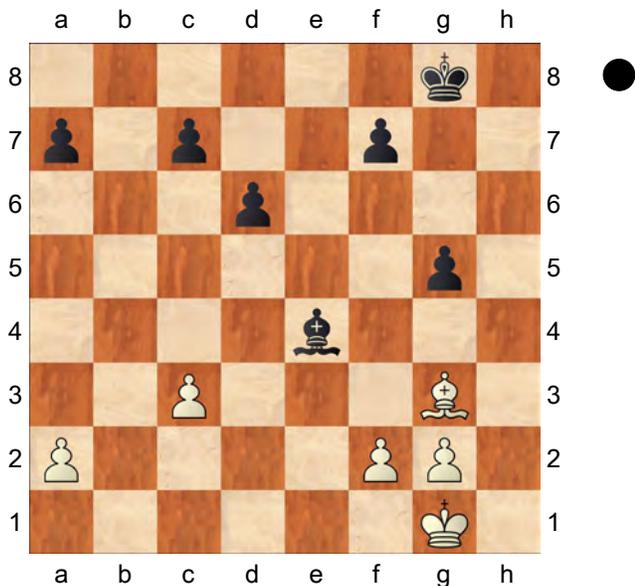
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□ Andreikin,D.. 2723
 ■ Malakhov,V.. 2702
 TCh-RUS Blitz 2015 (8.1) 10.05.2015

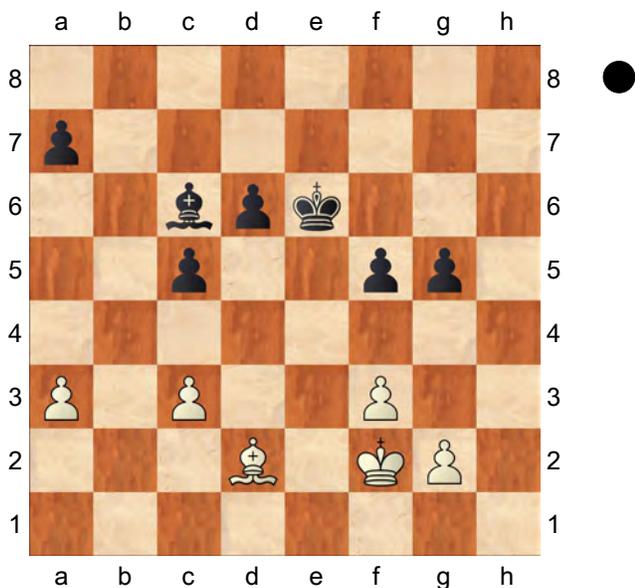


In the next example, we will see an endgame in which the defender made a similar principled mistake as Volkov did in the previous game, leaving a weak pawn on the color of opponent's bishop. If he had arranged his pawns on the color of his bishop instead, he would have held a draw easily. Black's advantage is minimal – only a pawn in a fairly symmetrical opposite-colored bishops endgame. If this was a classical or even rapid game, we would probably not have even talked about it as a strong player like Grandmaster Andreikin should be able to hold this position easily. However, this being a blitz game, he made a big principled mistake, but also an instructive one for our purposes. **25.c4** Not a bad move in itself – in fact it makes sense to trade a pair of pawns with the next c4-c5.

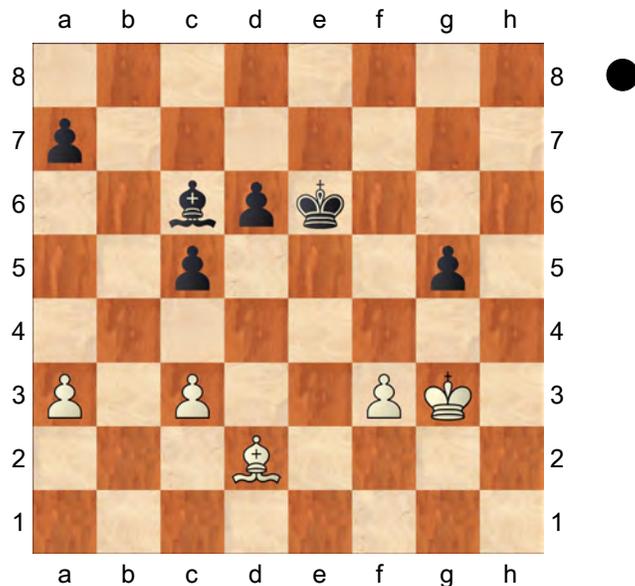
[Even simple passive defense would work here: 25.c3



f5 26.f3 Bd5 27.a3 Kf7 28.Bf2 c5
29.Be1 Ke6 30.Kf2 Bc6 Clearing the
route for black king: d5–c4–b3 etc.
31.Bd2!

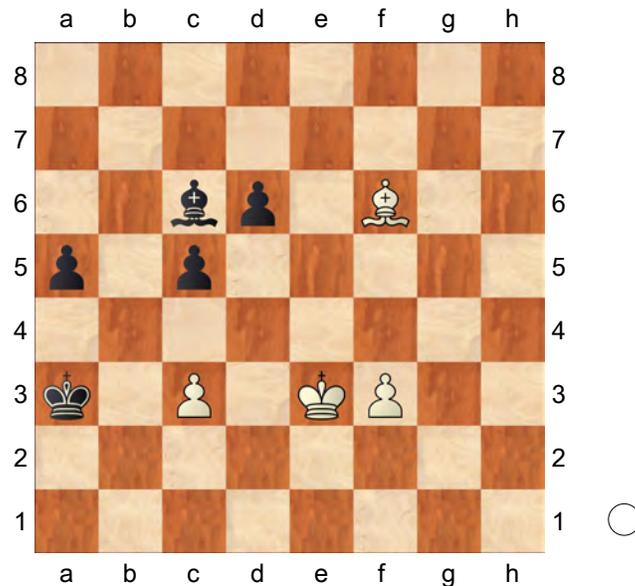


White is signaling that it is not going
to be easy for Black to get his king to
the queenside. f4 (31...g4 32.fxc4
fxg4 33.Bf4 Kd5 34.g3 Ba4
35.Ke3=) 32.g3 fxg3+ (32...Ke5
33.gxf4+ gxf4 34.Bc1=) 33.Kxg3

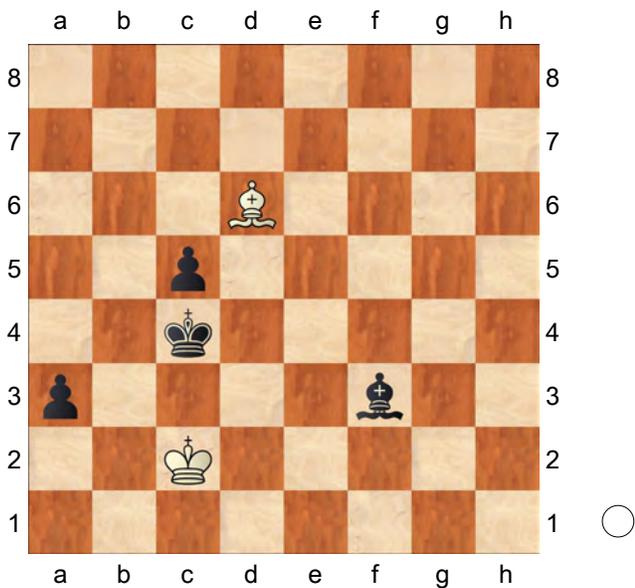


and similarly to Volkov–Tomashevsky,
black has a g5 pawn to worry about.
The last winning attempt, inspired by
Tomashevsky's non-materialistic play
in the previous game is Kd5!?

34.Bxg5 Kc4 35.Bf6 a5 Still, White
draws by bringing his king back:
36.Kf4 Kb3 37.Ke3 Kxa3 (or 37...d5
38.Be7 d4+ 39.cxd4 c4 40.Bd8 a4
41.Kd2 c3+ 42.Kc1 Bxf3 43.Ba5=)

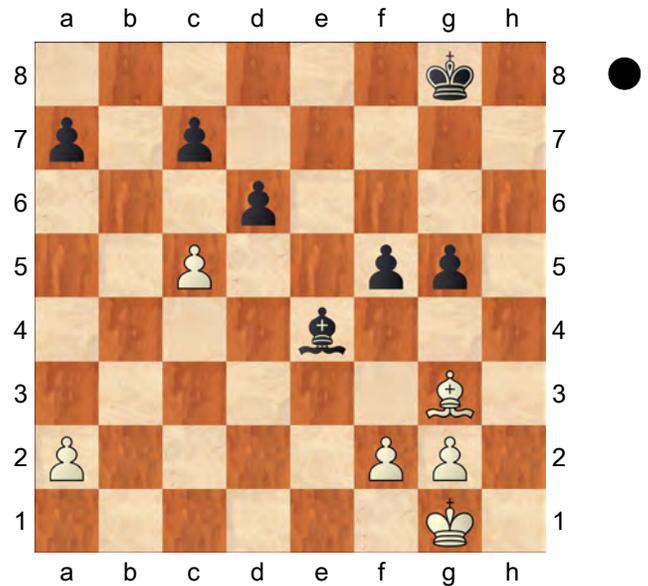


and now the precise move is 38.c4! fixing the pawn on d6. White can afford to lose both his remaining pawns if he wins the one on d6 as the resulting endgame is drawn: a4 (38...d5 39.cxd5 Bxd5 40.Be7 Kb4 41.Kd2 a4 42.Kc2=) 39.Be7 Kb4 40.Kd3 a3 41.Kc2 Kxc4 42.Bxd6 Bxf3

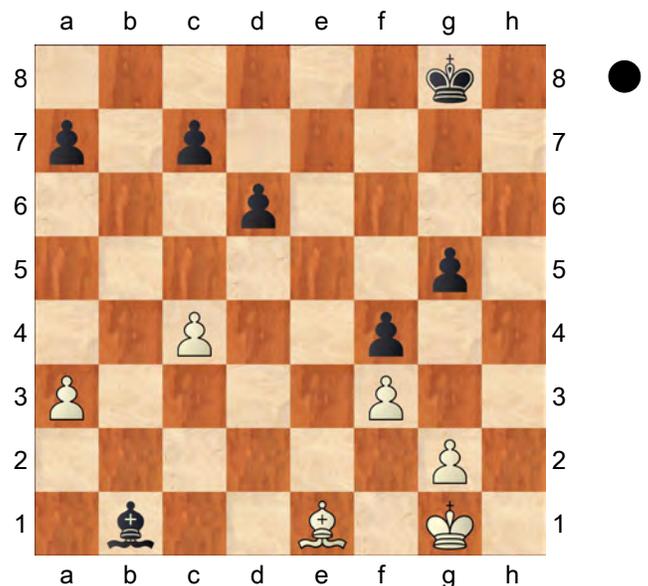


43.Kb1=]
25...f5 26.f3? This is the real mistake. It looks like an automatic move, especially for a blitz game, but it allows black to fix his c-pawn on the light-square by force. In the previous example, white had similar problems with his pawns fixed on h3 and g4.

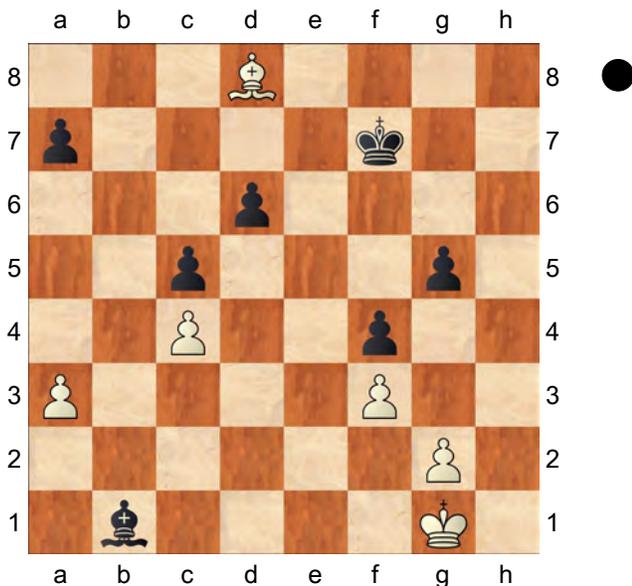
[Instead, White should have completed his liquidation idea:
 26.c5



since after f4 he has the intermediate move 27.cxd6! cxd6 (27...fxg3?? 28.d7+-) 28.Bh2 Now, the bishop does look ridiculous on h2, but this is only temporary as it will get out in about 2 or 3 moves. Kf7 29.f3 Bd5 30.a3 Ke6 31.Kf1 followed by Bg1, should be an easy draw.]
26...Bb1 27.a3 f4 28.Be1

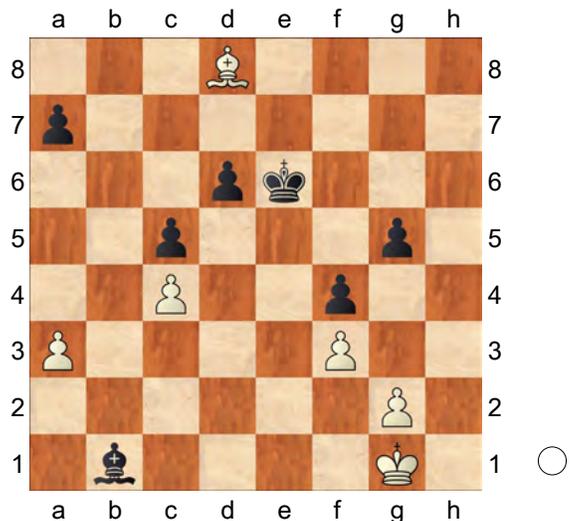


c5! A strong move that was maybe missed by white. Three of White's four pawns are fixed on the color of a Black bishop. Same is true for Black pawns with regard to a White bishop, but, as we explained in the previous example, this favors the attacking side. **29.Ba5 Kf7 30.Bd8**



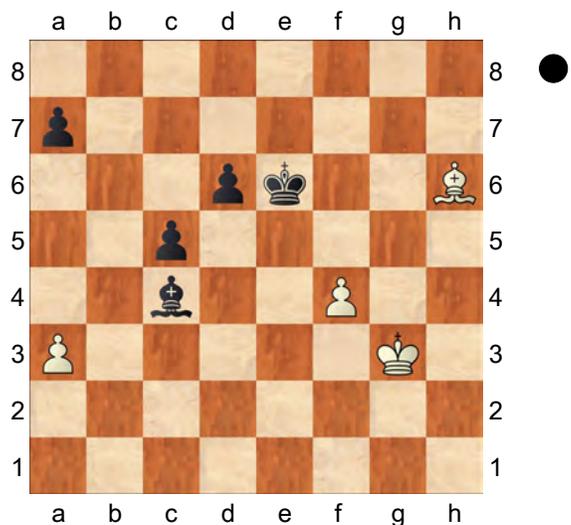
g4?! A high-class idea by strong endgame player Vladimir Malakhov, only it does not fully work. We will come to the "why" part in just a second, but for now, it is important to understand that black can not defend all his pawns, so Malakhov decided to give up one of them in such a way that it doubles white's pawns. However, there was a stronger alternative.

[30...Ke6!



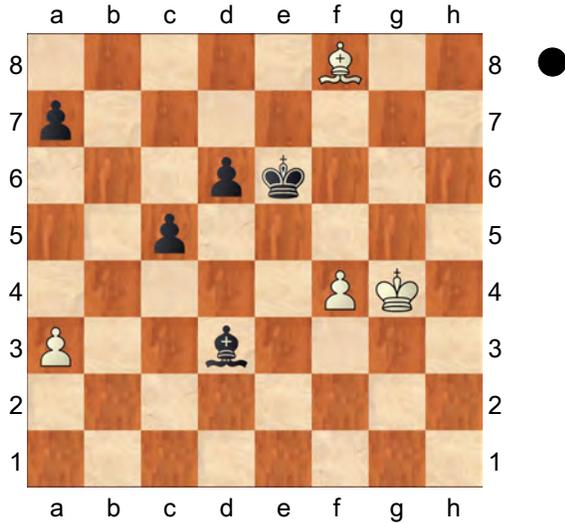
Somewhat surprisingly, black obtains a winning position by giving up both g5 and f4 pawns! The point is that his connected pawns in the center will be stronger than white's kingside duo. Let us see how: **31.Bxg5 Ke5**

A) An interesting attempt to establish a blockade is **32.Kf2!?**
Ba2 33.g3 fxg3+ 34.Kxg3 Bxc4 35.f4+ Ke6 36.Bh6!



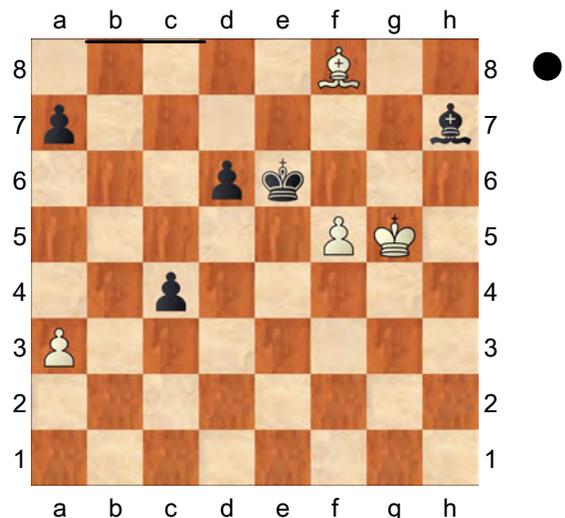
White is hoping to slow down black pawns by attacking them from behind. While black gets his pawns moving, white will bring his king to the center and stop them by

threatening to sacrifice the bishop, leaving black only with the rook pawn and the wrong-colored bishop (read: draw). Still, black can win with precise play: Bb5 37.Bf8 Bd3 38.Kg4



Bh7! The best diagonal for the bishop and White is in a small zugzwang.

A1) If the king goes forward 39.Kg5 then c4! threatens to promote. White can try to get back with the king by sacrificing a pawn: 40.f5+ (40.Bg7 is hopeless due to Kd5--+ followed by Ke4, d5-d4 etc.)



which is met by 40...Ke5!! Not allowing Kg5-f4-e3.

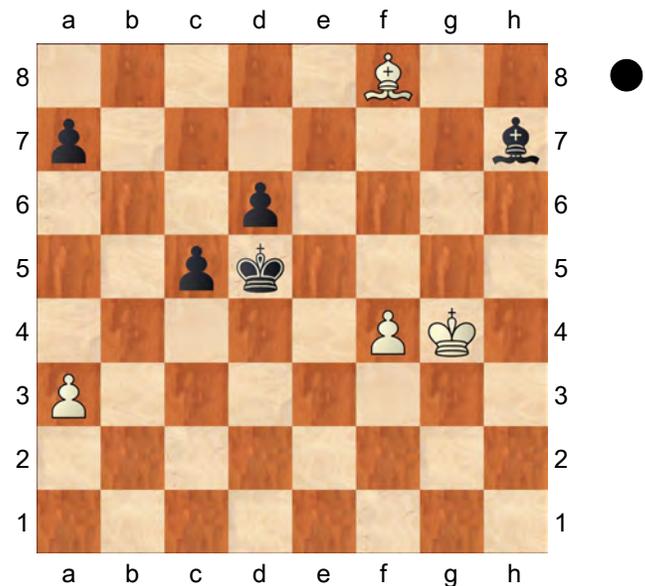
(Instead, greedy 40...Bxf5?

41.Bg7 Bh7 allows White king to get back 42.Kf4=) 41.Bg7+ Ke4

42.f6 Bg8-+ and Black pawns will prevail.;

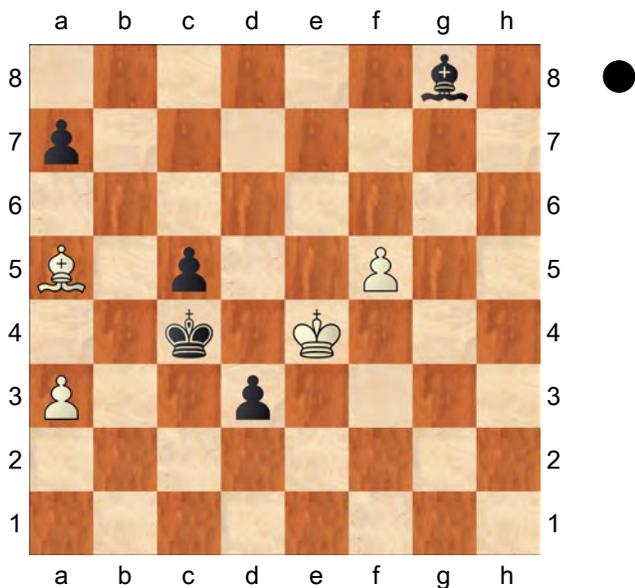
A2) 39.Kf3 on the other hand is too passive and loses eventually after Bf5 40.Ke3 Kd5 41.Be7 Kc6!-+ similar to the mainline.; **A3)** 39.Bg7 Kd5 40.Bf8

(There is no use for 40.f5 Kc4 41.f6 Bg6 42.Kg5 Bf7-+)

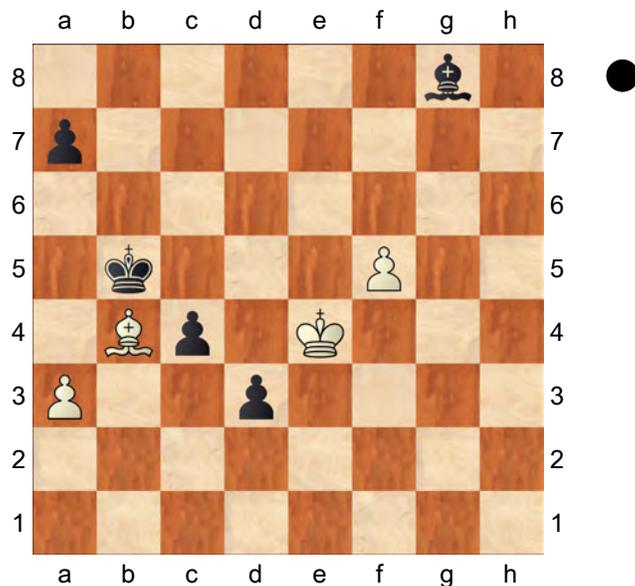


and here is an important maneuver worth remembering: 40...Kc6! Only like this can Black

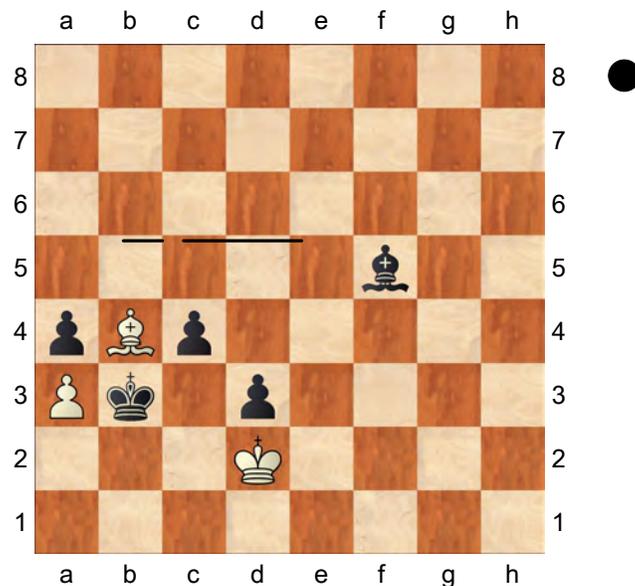
start moving his pawns. 41.f5 d5 42.Kf4 d4 43.Ke4 Kb5 44.Bd6 (44.a4+ is also a possibility but does not change anything after Kc4 45.a5 a6 46.Be7 Bg8 47.Bf8 Bd5+ 48.Kf4 Bc6 49.f6 Be8 50.Ke4 Bg6+! kicking the king out of e4. 51.Kf4 Kd5-- followed by c5-c4, etc.) 44...Kc4 45.Be7 It seems like White has achieved another annoying defensive setup. But Black can break it with the help of some nice tactical motifs. Firstly, he takes d5 square under control: Bg8 46.Bd8 (If white stays put with 46.f6 Bf7 47.Bf8 Black demonstrates a strong idea: a5! 48.Be7 d3 49.Ke3 Kc3! 50.Bxc5 d2-- and here we see the point of 47...a5 - there is no check on b4!) 46...d3 47.Ba5



White played the only move, but it allows Black to win the crucial tempo with Kb5! 48.Bd2 c4 49.Bb4



Now, White does hold the blockade on the dark squares, but he has another weakness on a3 and if black wins that pawn, he will have a winning position. Please note how White's passed pawn is virtually useless. Ka4 50.Ke3 a5 Again, this move is very important for Black. 51.Be7 Kb3 52.Kd2 and here Black finally seals the deal with Bh7! 53.Bd8 (53.f6 c3+) 53...a4 54.Ba5 Bxf5 55.Bb4

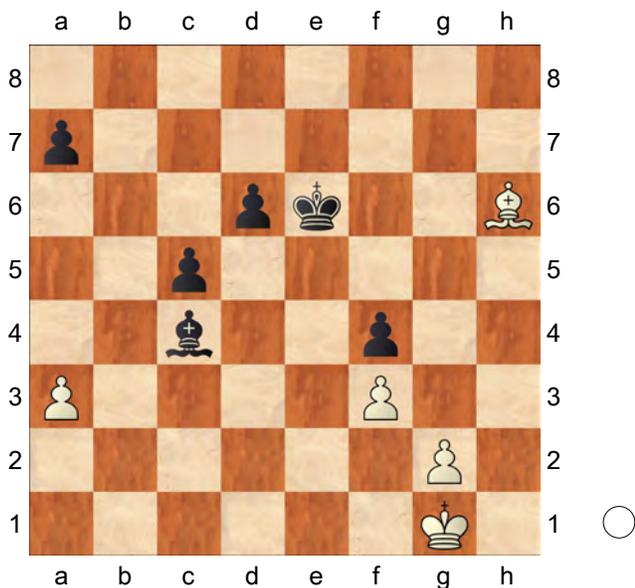


Bg6! White is in zugzwang, and he loses the a-pawn as well.

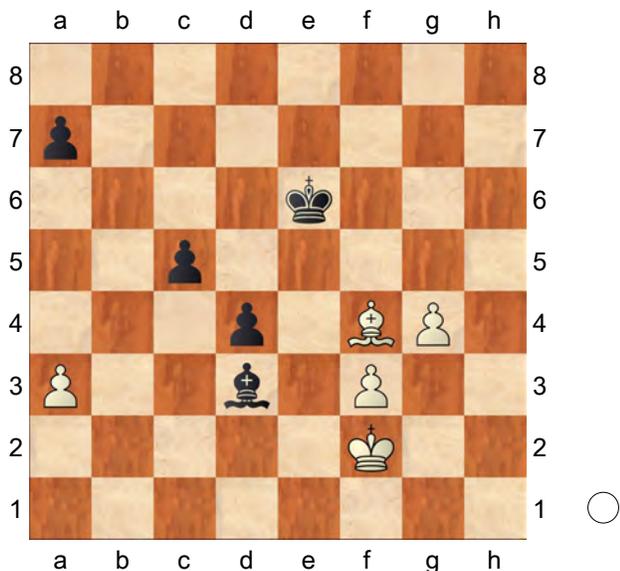
56.Ba5 Kxa3 57.Kc3

The blockade does not help anymore. One of these pawns will queen. Ka2 58.Kxc4 a3-+;

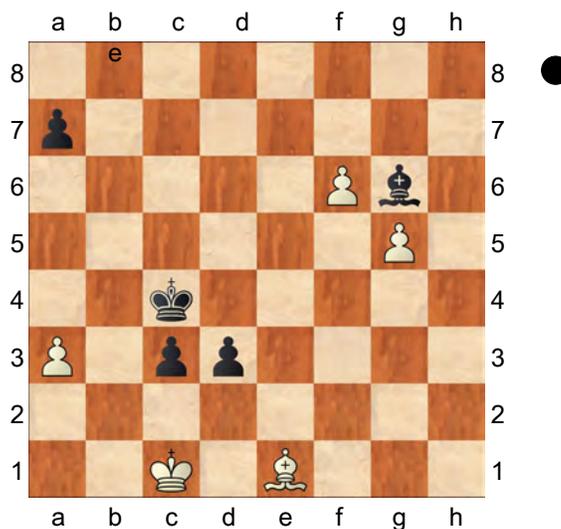
B) 32.Bh6 Ba2 33.Bg7+ Ke6 (33...Kf5 34.Bf8) 34.Bh6 Bxc4



B1) Taking immediately 35.Bxf4 speeds up Black's pawns. After d5 36.Kf2 d4 37.g4 Bd3



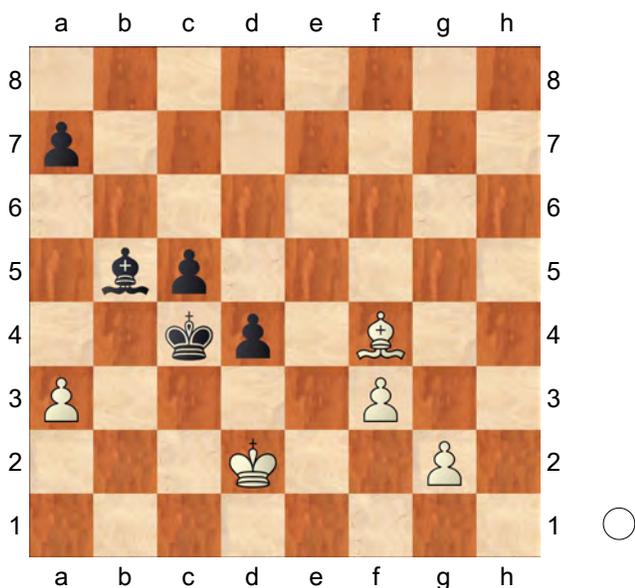
we have a pawn race of sorts, but Black is clearly ahead. The following variation confirms that Black's connected pawns are stronger: 38.Ke1 c4 39.Kd2 Bg6 40.Kc1 c3 41.Bg3 Kd5 42.Be1 Kc4 43.f4 Be4 44.f5 d3 45.f6 Bg6 46.g5



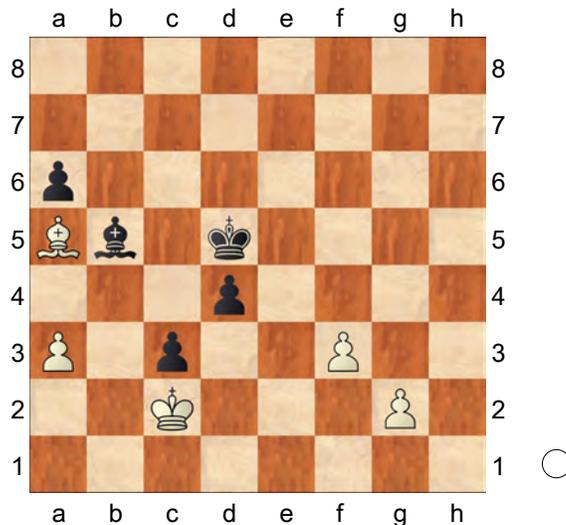
Kb3! puts White in zugzwang. (Just not 46...d2+? 47.Bxd2 cxd2+ 48.Kxd2 Kb3 49.Kc1 Kxa3 50.f7 Bxf7 51.Kb1=) 47.a4 a5-+;

B2) 35.Kf2!?! Probably the most

accurate move. 35...Bb5
 (35...d5?? 36.Bf8= is the
 point, of course.) 36.Ke1 Ke5
 (36...d5? is still premature.
 White establishes the blockade
 with 37.Bf8 c4 38.Bg7=)
 37.Bg7+ Kd5 38.Bh6 Kc4!
 No more beating around the
 bush – Black needs to go
 forward. 39.Bxf4 d5 40.Kd2
 d4

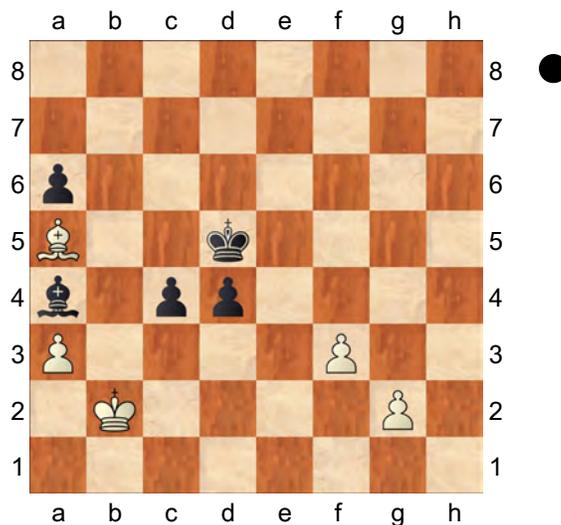


compared to the similar position
 in 35. Bxf4 variation, here
 White's king is placed better,
 and he can try to meet Black's
 pawn avalanche with an
 attempt to sac the bishop on
 c3. Thus, 41.Bb8 a6 42.Bc7
 Kd5 43.Ba5 c4 44.Kc2 Ba4+
 (44...c3?



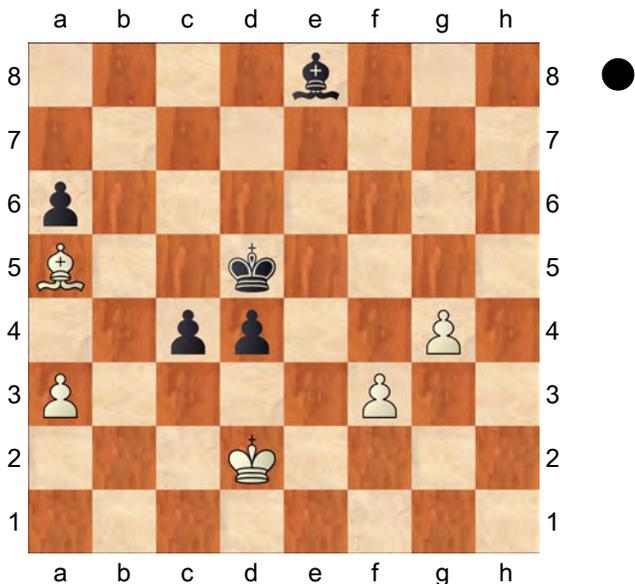
45.Bxc3 dxc3 46.Kxc3=
 is obviously White's
 idea.)

B2a) 45.Kb2

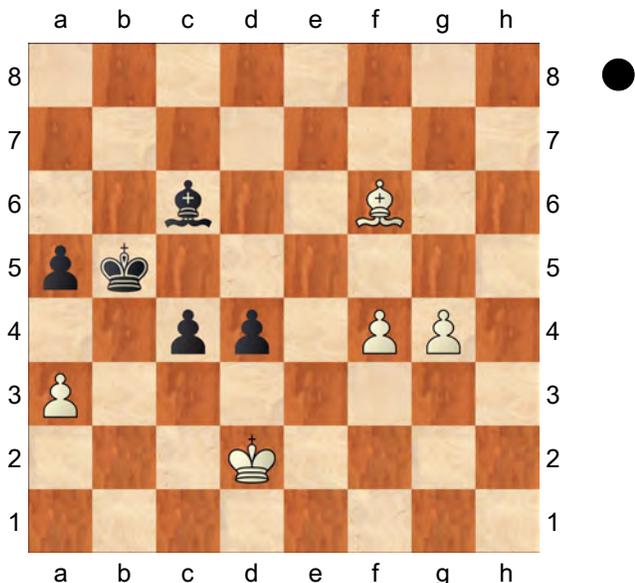


is also possible, taking away
 the b3 square from Black king
 while keeping c3 under control.
 However, Black can create
 another route for his king: Bd1!
 46.Be1 Be2 47.Ba5 Bf1
 48.g3 Bg2 49.f4 Bh3
 By provoking White pawns to
 move one rank forward, Black
 cleared the e4 square for his

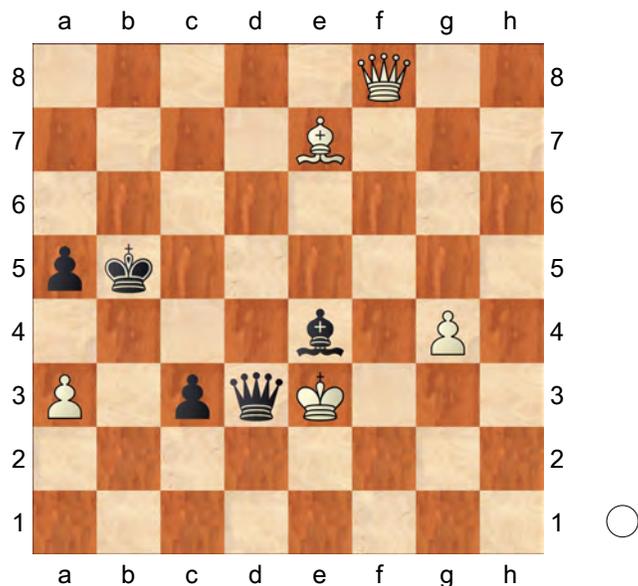
king. 50.Kc2 Bf5+ 51.Kb2
 (or 51.Kd2 Kc5--+
 as in the main line.)
 51...Ke4--+;
B2b) 45.Kd2 Be8 46.g4



It was high time for white to mobilize his kingside capital. But Black is just faster: Kc5! 47.f4 Kb5 48.Bb4 a5 49.Be7 Bc6! A precise and strong move. Black bishop will be placed excellently on e4; defending and attacking at the same time. 50.f5 (50.Bf6



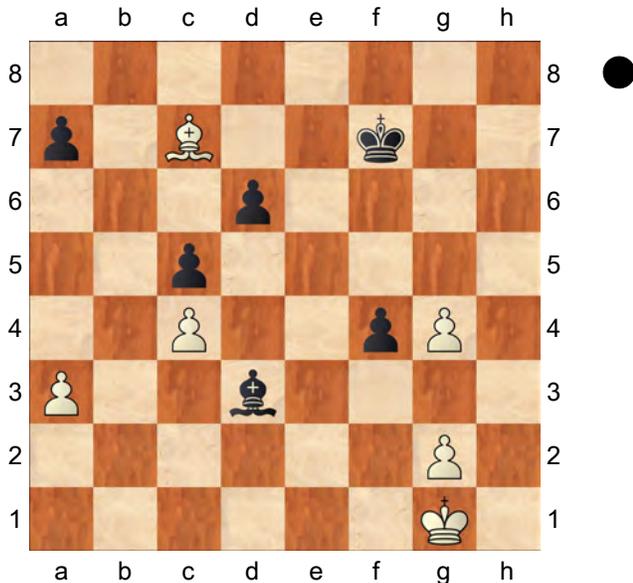
c3+ 51.Kd3 Be4+!
 52.Kxe4 c2--+ is the tactical point.) 50...Be4 51.f6 This is White's only hope, but Black will get a winning queen's endgame after c3+ 52.Ke2 d3+ 53.Ke3 d2 54.f7 d1Q 55.f8Q Qd3+--+



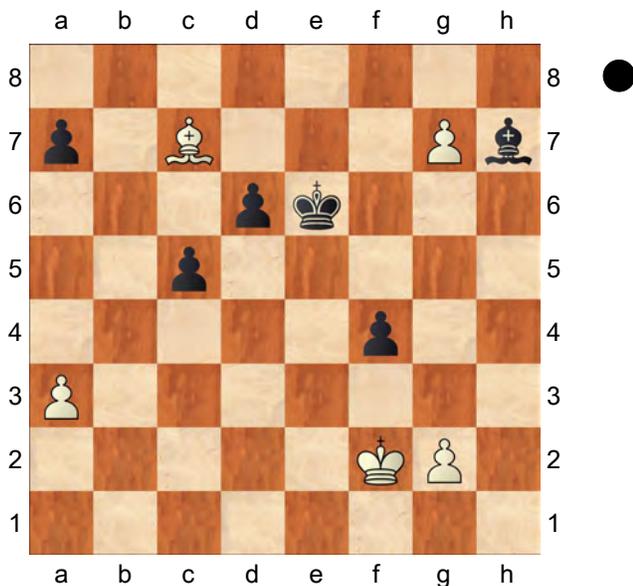
followed by some checks and c3-c2 at the right moment.]

31.fxg4 Bd3 32.Kf2? Trying to snatch the f4 pawn, but this loses quickly.

[In fact, White still had a way to save the game, with an incredibly strong resource: 32.Bc7!]

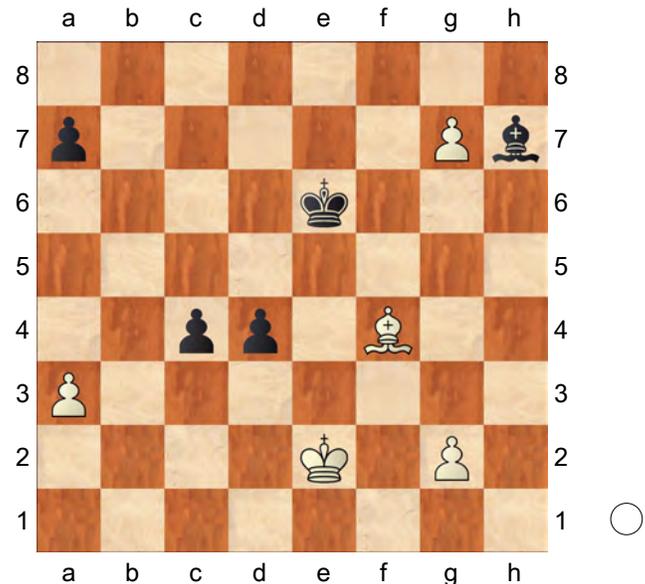


Ke6 33.g5! It is crucial that White can push this pawn all the way to g7 in order to tie down Black bishop. Bxc4 34.g6 Bd3 35.g7 Bh7 36.Kf2



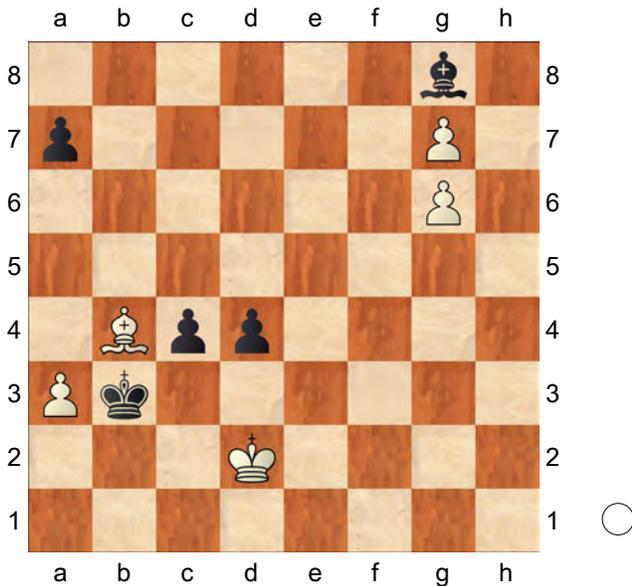
and now it becomes clear why White did not have to go for the f4 pawn on the 32nd move. With the bishop on c7, the "x-ray" attacks it through the d6 pawn. Black has to play d5 (Otherwise, it is simply drawn: 36...c4

37.Ke2 c3 38.Ba5 c2 39.Kd2 Kf7 40.Bc3 Be4 41.Bd4 Bxg2 42.Kxc2=; or 36...Kd7 37.Bb8 a6 38.Ke2=) 37.Bxf4 The material balance has been re-established, but just as in the game, Black's connected passed pawns are much more potent than White's doubled pawns. Here, however, White save the game thanks to an important tactical detail that will be revealed soon: d4 38.Ke2 c4



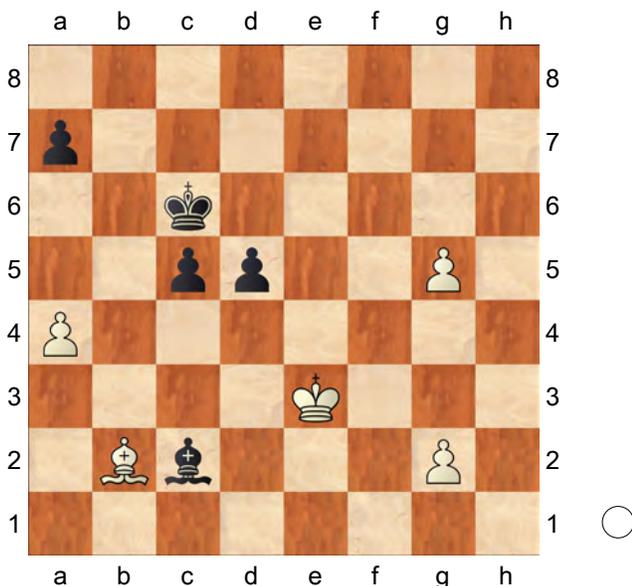
39.Bd2!= This move is the key! Black can not move his pawns forward because White can sacrifice the bishop and deflect Black's bishop with g8Q, entering the drawn endgame with the wrong-colored bishop. Here are some variations for illustration: Kd5 (39...c3 40.g8Q+! Bxg8 41.Bxc3 dxc3 42.Kd3=) 40.Bb4 Kc6 41.g4 Kb5 42.g5 Ka4 43.g6 Bg8 44.Kd2 Kb3

45.Bd6! c3+ 46.Kd3 c2 47.Bf4=]



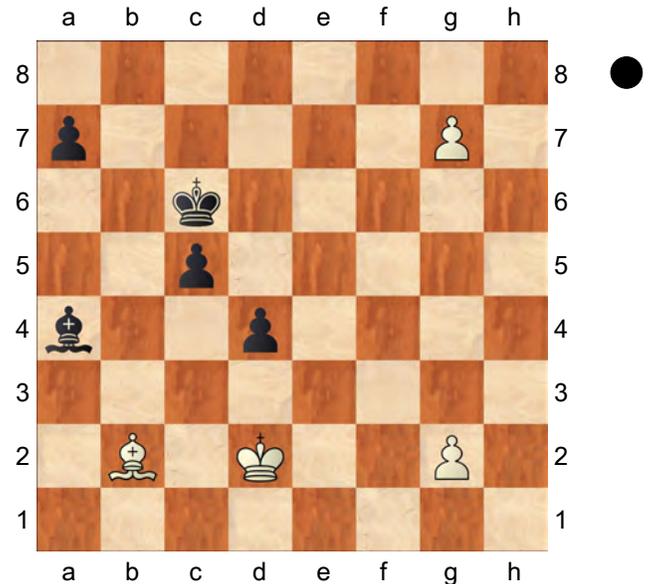
32...Bxc4 33.Kf3 Ke6 34.Kxf4 d5
35.Bc7 A pretty useless move.

[Somewhat better was 35.g5
although after Bd3 36.Ke3 Bg6
37.Bf6 Kd6 38.Bb2 Kc6 39.a4 Bc2

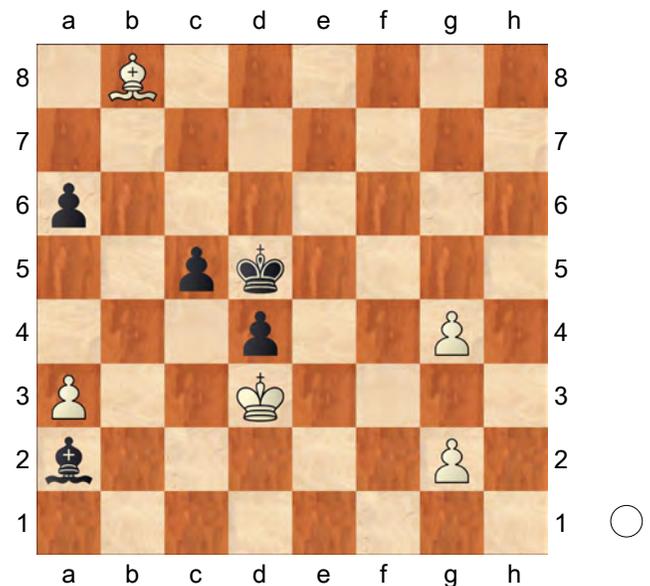


the result would be the same. For
example: 40.Kd2 (40.g6 Bxg6
41.Kf4 Bc2 42.a5 Kb5 43.Ke5 Bb3
44.Bc3 Kc4 45.Bd2 d4-+; 40.a5 Kb5
41.Bc3 Kc4 42.Be5 a6-+) 40...Bxa4

41.g6 d4 42.g7

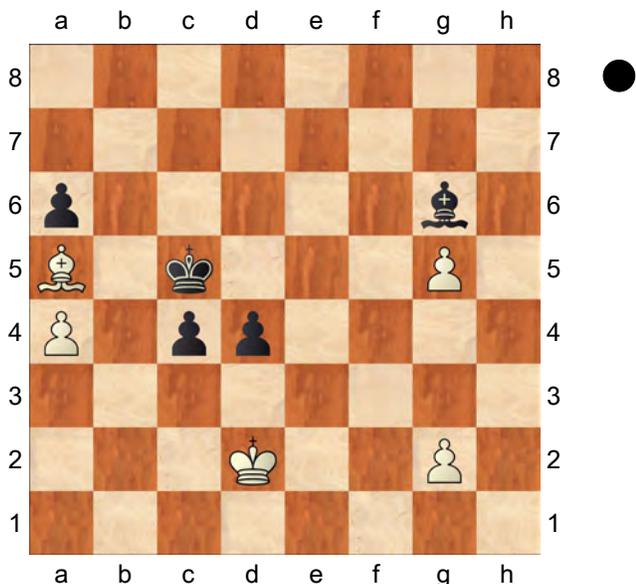


Bb3-+]
35...d4 36.Bb8 a6 37.Ke4 Ba2
38.Kd3 Kd5-+



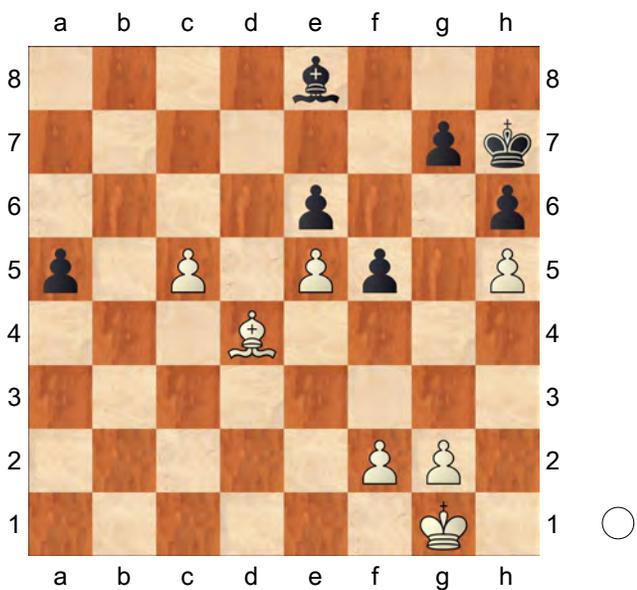
and the rest is a matter of technique.
Black just needs to make sure that
he does not allow white to give up
the bishop for two central pawns.

39.Kc2 Kc6 40.Be5 Bf7 41.g5 Kd5
42.Bc7 Bg6+ 43.Kd2 c4 44.Ba5
Kc5 45.a4



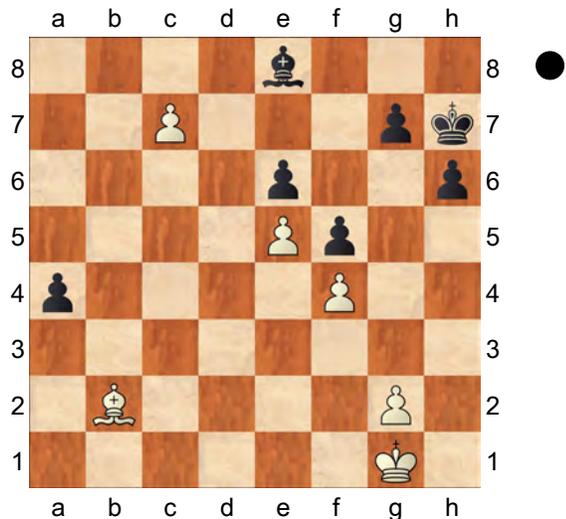
Bh7! Zugzwang. Nice. 46.Bd8 c3+
47.Kc1 d3 and White resigned.
0-1

□ Anand, Viswanathan 2770
■ Karpov, Anatoly 2735
FIDE-Wch k.o. f (8.4) 06.01.1998

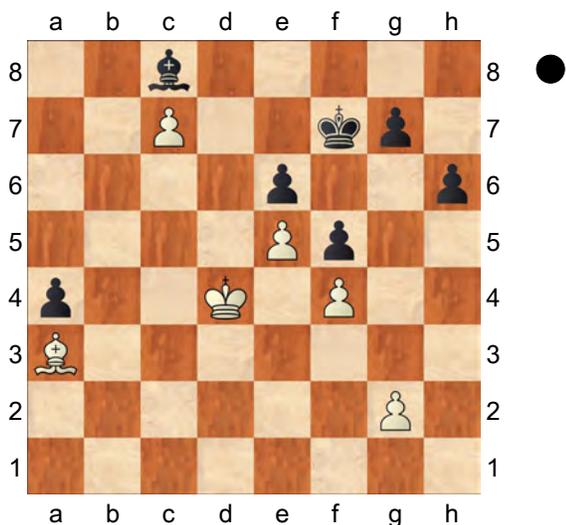


Finally, let us take a look at an instructive endgame from the game between two ex-world champions: Anand and Karpov. Karpov has been recognized as one of the greatest masters of opposite-colored bishops endgames (a classic game of his that comes to mind is an "impossible" win against Kurajica with Black pieces). In this game, he also demonstrated a perfect technique. In Anand's defense, the endgame was probably lost even with the best defense. Black's outside passed pawn on the a-file is a tremendous asset, but it is not enough to win the game itself. Black is planning to win the h5 pawn, which would give him a potential to create another passed pawn (second weakness for White) on the other side of the board. However, Anand did not want to allow this and decided to sacrifice the c-pawn instead: 39.c6 Grandmaster Ftacnik awarded this move a question mark. Although it does make Black's job easier, the alternatives would probably not be enough to hold the position anyway.

[Firstly, 39.f4 a4 40.Bb2 Bxh5 41.c6 Be8 42.c7

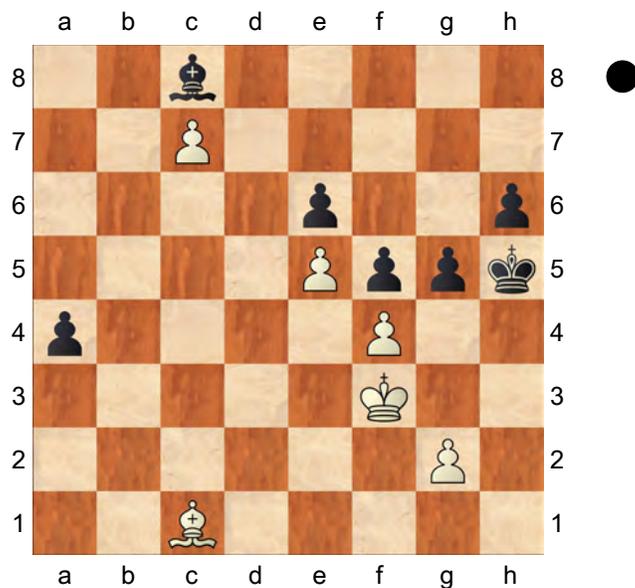


The point of this defense is that Black bishop will be passive as it has to control c8 square at all times. Bd7 43.Kf2 Kg6 44.Ba3 Bc8 45.Ke3 Kf7 46.Kd4

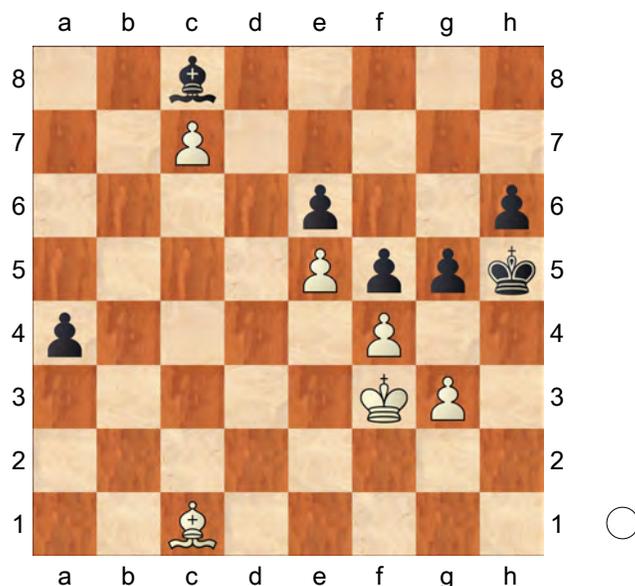


is given as "slightly better for Black" by Ftacnik. In my opinion, this is an inappropriate assessment for a type of endgame that can be analyzed almost until the end. I looked a bit deeper and could not hold White's position. Before sending his king to the queenside, Black will create the second weakness on the kingside with: g5!

A) In case of 47.Bc1 Kg6 48.Ke3 Kh5 threatening to penetrate to g4. 49.Kf3



Kh4! is very strong. 50.g3+ (50.Ba3 g4+ 51.Kf2 g3+ 52.Kf3 Bb7+ 53.Ke3 Kg4+- and Black wins by pushing his h-pawn.) 50...Kh5!



After provoking g2-g3, black king retreats. White does not have the

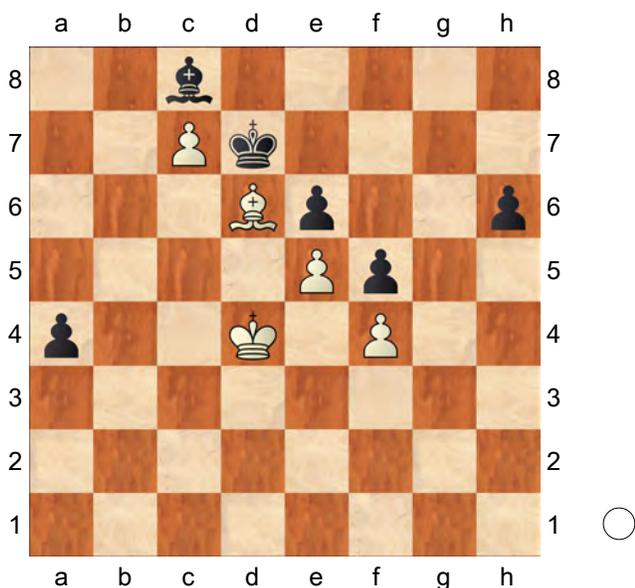
g3 square for his king anymore, so he has to allow 51.Ba3 Bb7+ 52.Ke3 Kg4-+;

B) It should also be noted that White can not win black bishop with 47.Kc5 Kg6 48.Kd6 because black pawns are stronger: h5 49.Ke7 h4 50.fxg5 h3 51.gxh3 f4-+;

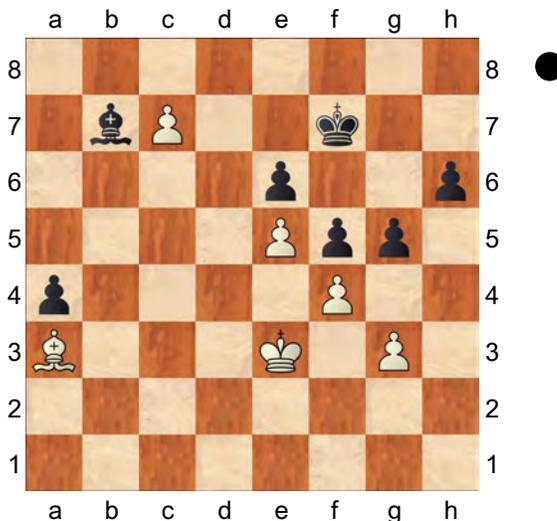
C) 47.g3 Bb7! Accurate.

(The immediate exchange 47...gxf4

48.gxf4 opens up a corridor for White king: Ke8 49.Bd6 Kd7



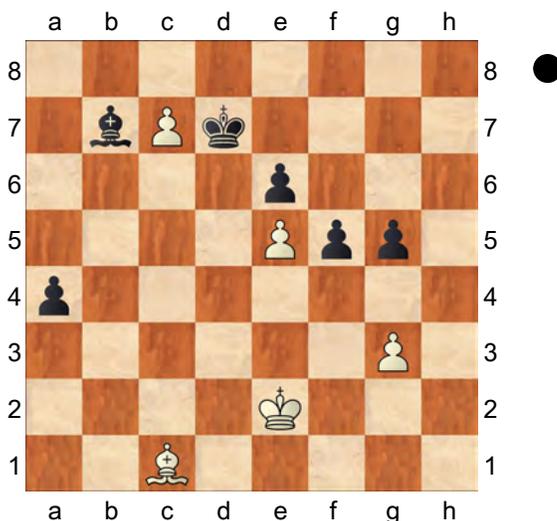
50.Ke3! and White draws by a single tempo: Kc6 51.Kf2 Kd5 52.Kg3 Kc4 53.Kh4 Kb3 54.Kh5 a3 55.Bc5 a2 56.Bd4 Kc4 57.Ba1 Kd5 58.Kxh6 Ke4 59.Kg5!=) 48.Ke3



Now, only after the second weakness has been created, Black king approaches queenside: Ke8! 49.Ke2 (White is too slow to block black king in the center now:

49.Kd4 gxf4 50.gxf4 Kd7 51.Bd6 Kc6 52.Ke3 Kd5-+) 49...Kd7

C1) The other attempt is 50.fxg5 hxg5 51.Bc1

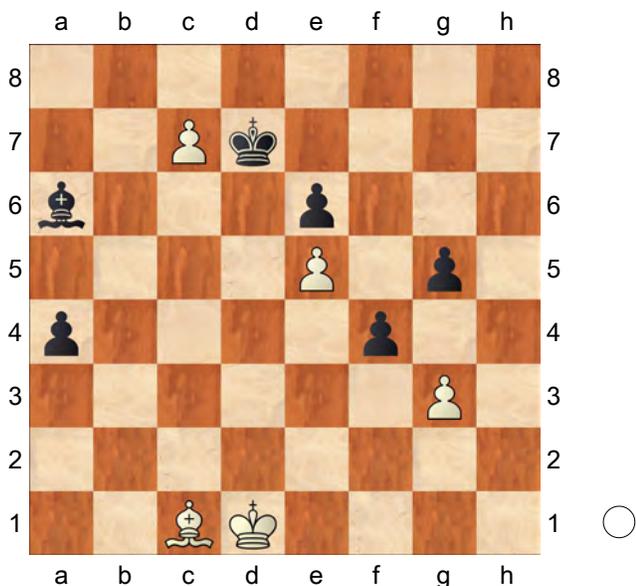


However, it does not save White after Ba6+!

C1a) or 52.Kf2 Kxc7 53.Bxg5 Kc6 54.Be7 Kd5 55.Ke3 (55.Bd6 Kc4 56.Ke1 Kb3-+) 55...Kxe5-+ and Black should

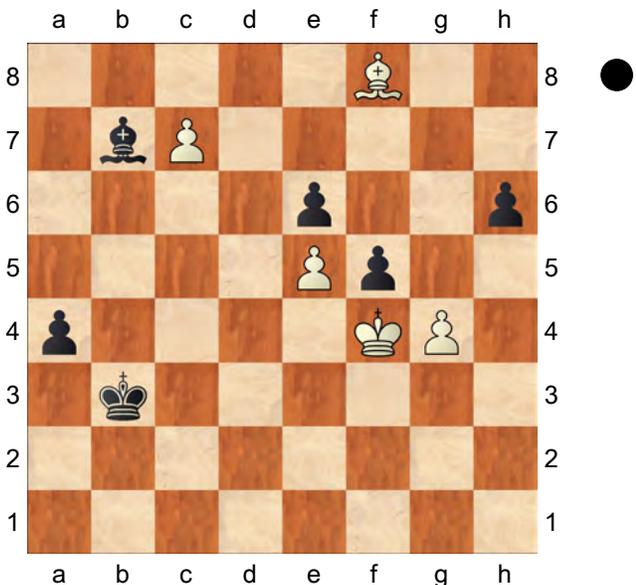
gradually convert his 2 extra pawns.;

C1b) 52.Kd1 f4!



A typical pawn breakthrough to create the second outside passed pawn (as in Volkov-Tomashevsky). 53.gxf4 g4+;

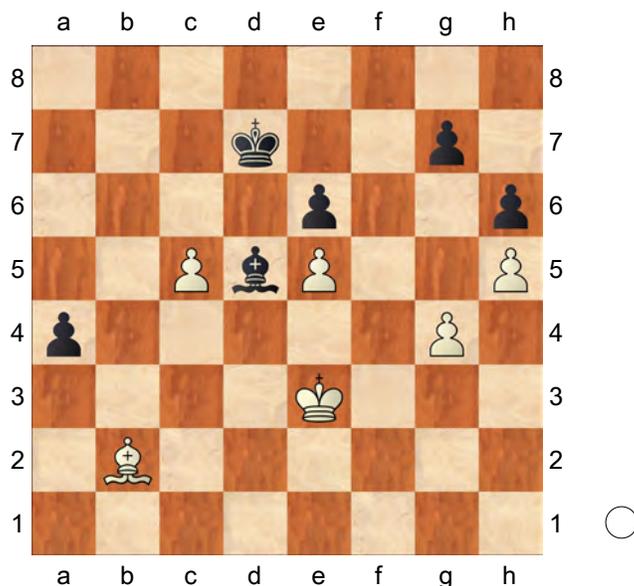
C2) 50.Bd6 Kc6 51.Ke3 Kd5 52.Ba3 Kc4 Now White has the last attempt to achieve a draw: 53.Bf8 Kb3 54.g4! but this is met with gxf4+ 55.Kxf4



Bc8! An extremely strong idea worth remembering. As we explained in the previous issue, the bishop should be placed on the diagonal on which it simultaneously blocks opponent's passed pawn(s) and protects its own pawn(s). (It would be wrong to play 55...fxg4? 56.Kxg4 a3 57.Bc5 a2 58.Bd4= followed by Kh5, etc.) 56.gxf5 exf5 57.Bxh6 a3-+]

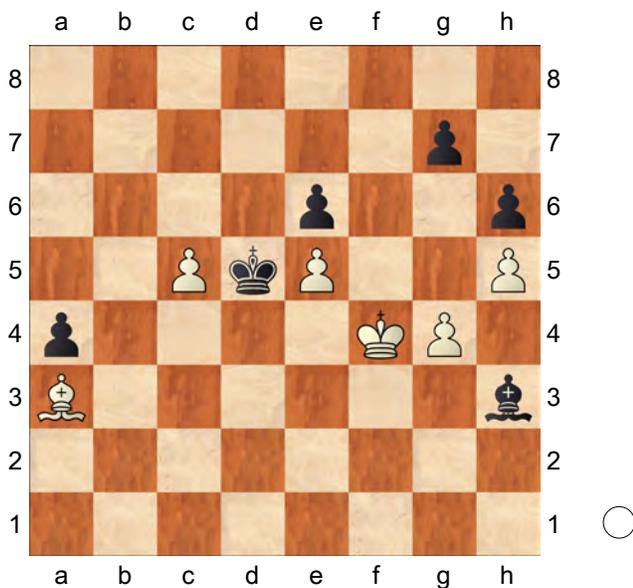
[The other, more flexible defensive possibility is 39.f3 preparing g2-g4.

A) It would be wrong not to take the pawn. After 39...Kg8 40.g4 fxg4 41.fxg4 a4 42.Bb2 Bc6 43.Kf2 Kf7 44.Ke3 Ke7 45.Kf2 Kd7 46.Ke3 Bd5



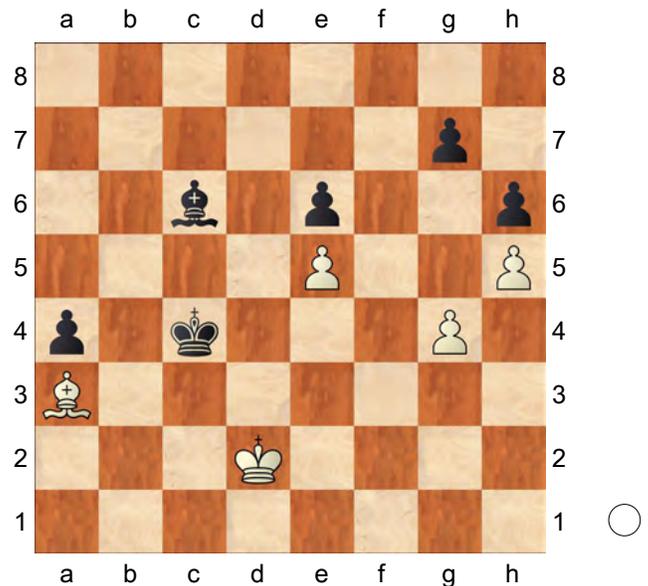
it might seem like Black is winning with Kc6–b5–c4, etc. since there is a second weakness on the kingside and White king can not leave f3 square. However, White is not the only one with weaknesses, as the next move shows: 47.Ba3!

White is ready to give up the c–pawn at the right moment and pick up kingside pawns with Bf8. Kc6 48.Ke2 Kb5 (The alternative is 48...Bc4+ 49.Ke3 Bb5 50.Kd2 Bf1 51.Ke3 Bh3 in order to lure White king as far away from a–pawn as possible: 52.Kf4 Still, after Kd5



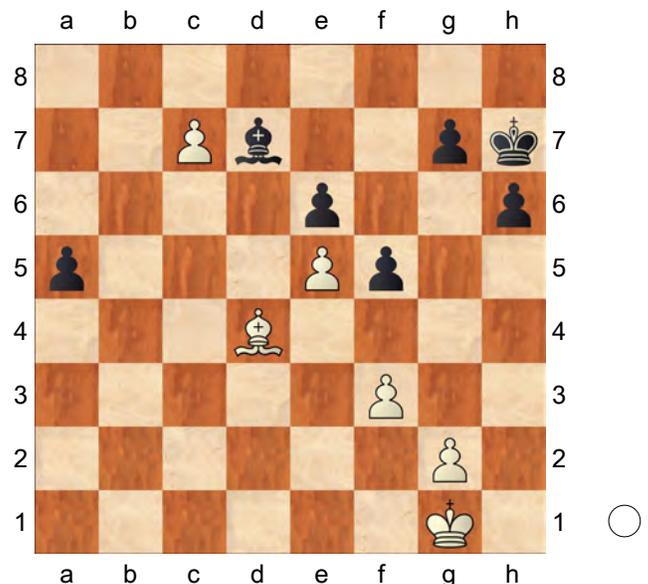
White is still in time with his idea: 53.c6! Kxc6 54.Bf8 Kb5 thanks to the well-known diagonal movement of the king: 55.Ke3 Kc4 56.Kd2 Kb3 57.Kc1 a3 58.Kb1=) 49.Kd2! The king needs to stay close to the a–pawn. (It would be a mistake to guard kingside pawns with 49.Ke3 Kc4 as 50.c6 does not work now due to Bxc6 51.Bf8 Kb3–+) 49...Kc4 50.c6

Bxc6



now White draws with 51.Kc2! Bf3 52.Bf8 Bxg4 53.Kb2 Bxh5 54.Bxg7 Kd5 55.Bxh6 Kxe5 and he can just give up his bishop for the e–pawn.;

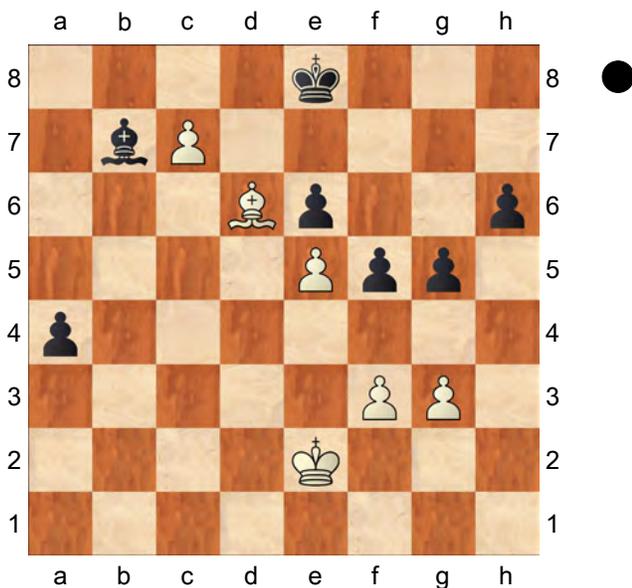
B) 39...Bxh5 40.c6 Be8 41.c7 Bd7



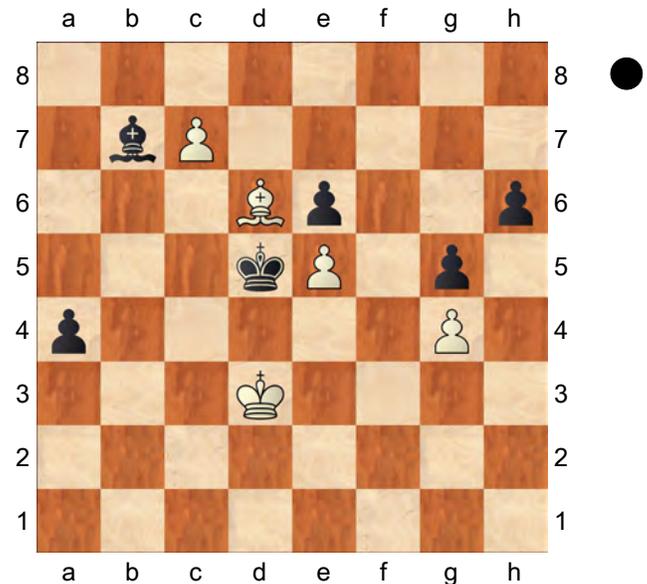
Here White has several defensive setups, but I do not think that any of

them can hold against the mix of plans: Kg6-f7-e8-d7-c6 and g7-g5 (-f5-f4).

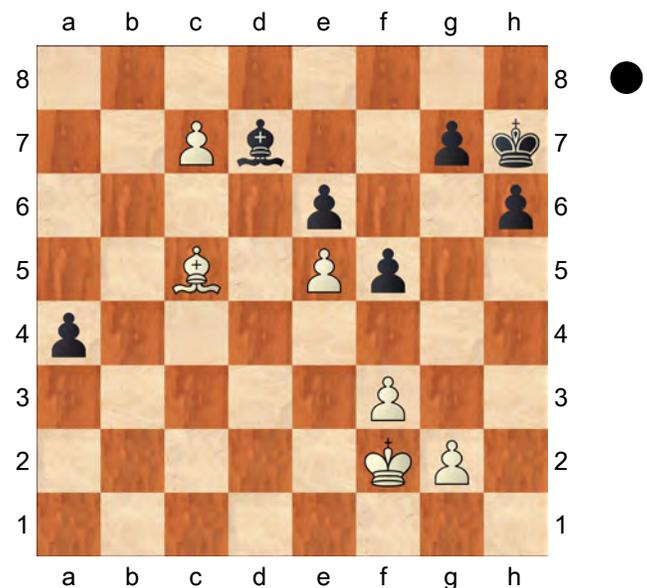
B1) 42.g3 takes away penetration squares from Black king, but it is not a stable pawn structure. a4 43.Bc5 Kg6 44.Kf2 Kf7 45.Ke3 Bc8 46.Kd2 g5 47.Bd6 Bb7 48.Ke3 Ke8 49.Ke2



If white wants to keep his pawns like this, his king will remain passive. Kd7 50.Ke3 Kc6 and now after 51.g4 (In case of 51.f4 Kd5 52.Be7 gxf4+ 53.Kxf4 Kc4 54.g4 we have the well-known motive Bc8!-+ from 39.f4 line.; 51.Kd4 h5-+) 51...fxg4 52.fxg4 Kd5 53.Kd3

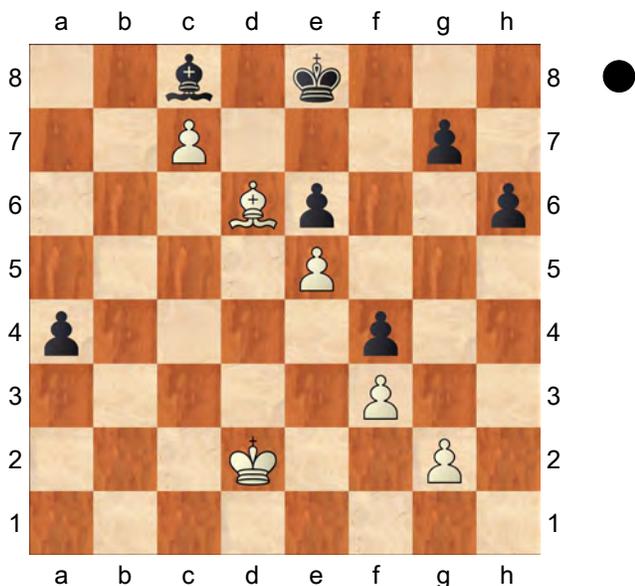


Bc8-+ white is in zugzwang as Black king breaks in.;
B2) 42.f4 would lead to variations similar to analysis of 39. f4.;
B3) 42.Kf2 White does not touch his kingside pawns and accepts passive defense. 42...a4 43.Bc5

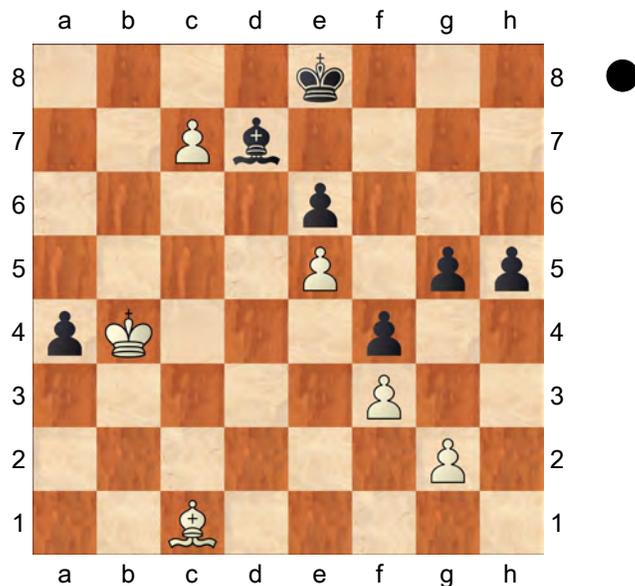


but now black can use Karpov's idea from the game: f4! fixing white pawns on the light squares, as well as isolating the e5 pawn. This must be winning, just going by intuition. The

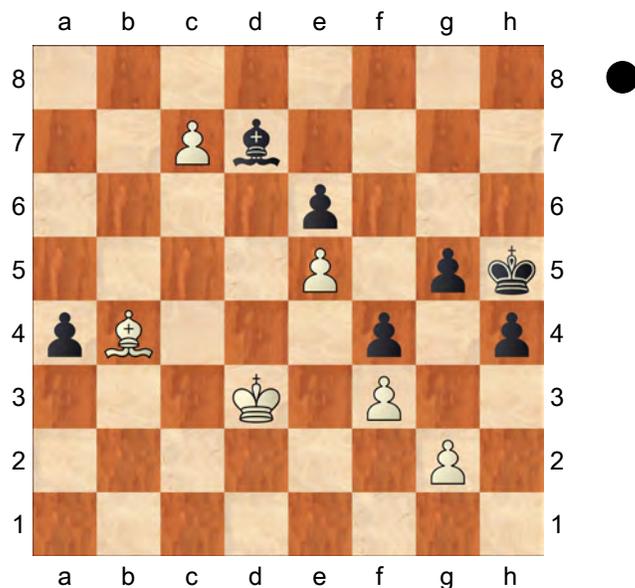
following variation confirms it:
 44.Ke2 Kg6 45.Kd2 Kf7
 46.Ba3 Bc8 47.Kc3 (Passive
 defense
 47.Bc5 Ke8 48.Bd6



fails to h5 49.Bc5 g5 50.Bd6
 Kd7 51.Ke1 Bb7 52.Ke2 g4
 53.Kf2 g3+ 54.Kf1 h4 55.Ke2
 Ba6+ 56.Ke1 Kc8 57.Be7
 Kxc7 58.Bxh4 a3--+) 47...Ke8
 48.Kb4 The most active
 defense, which prevents the
 Black king from penetrating via
 d7 and c6. However, it should
 not be sufficient after Bd7
 49.Bc1 g5 50.Bd2 h5 51.Bc1

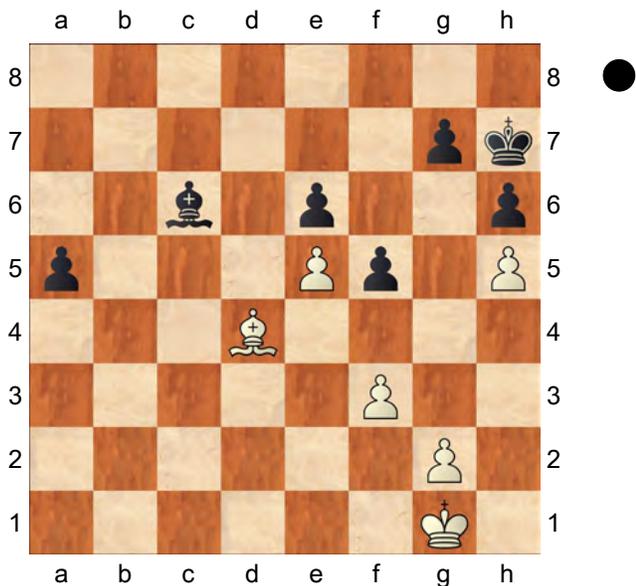


h4! a strong move, preparing one
 of the breaks on the kingside. The
 game could continue 52.Bd2 Kf7
 53.Kc3 Kg6 54.Kd3 Kh5 55.Bb4



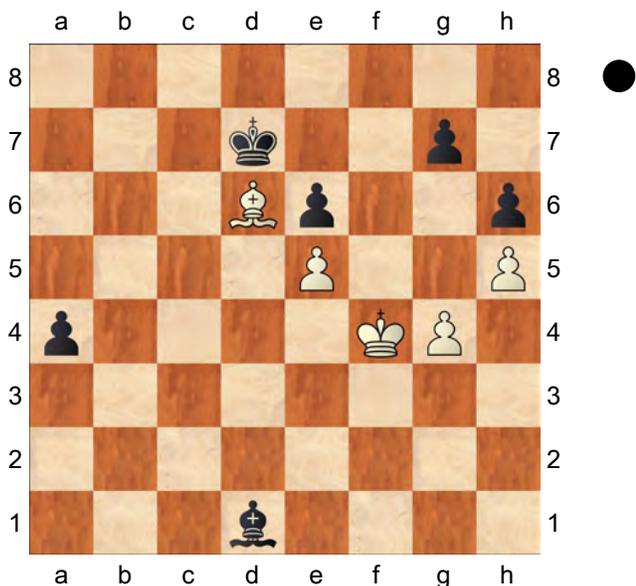
h3! The final breakthrough.
 56.gxh3 Kh4 57.Be7 Kxh3
 58.Bxg5 Kg3 59.Ke4
 and Black wins with Bc6+
 60.Kd4 Bb7!--+]

39...Bxc6 40.f3



f4! Excellent judgement by Karpov. He realizes that the exchange of f-pawn for White's h-pawn will yield him a winning endgame.

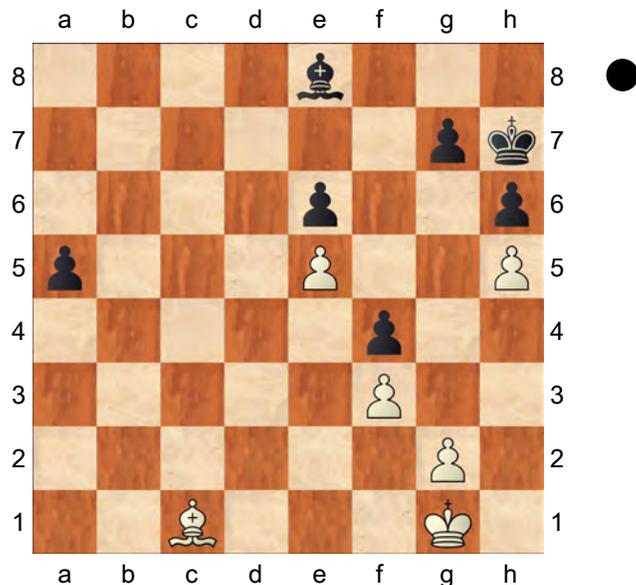
[The alternative 40...Be8 41.g4 fxg4 42.fxg4 Ba4 43.Kg2 Bd1 44.Kg3 a4 45.Bc5 Kg8 looks like it is winning, but after 46.Kh4 Kf7 47.Bd6 Ke8 48.Kg3 Kd7 49.Kf4!



it turns out that Black can not make progress as Kc6 is met by 50.Bf8

Kd5 51.Ke3!= with a drawing idea we have already seen.]

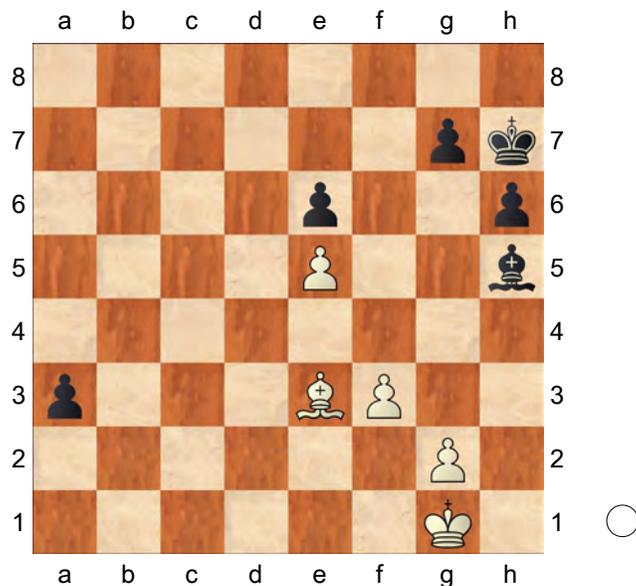
41.Bb2 Be8 42.Bc1



a4! A precise intermezzo.

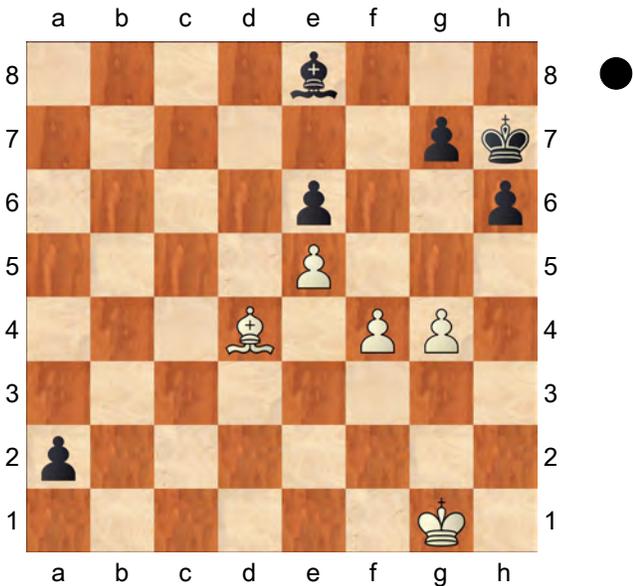
[The immediate 42...Bxh5?! 43.Bxf4 a4 44.Bc1 would put Black's winning chances in jeopardy as his passed pawn would be stopped on the fourth rank.]

43.Bxf4 a3 44.Be3 Bxh5



Black pawn will reach the second rank. After that, Black will combine the familiar idea of king's penetration with the possibility of creating another passed pawn on the kingside, which would lure White king away from the center. **45.Kf2**

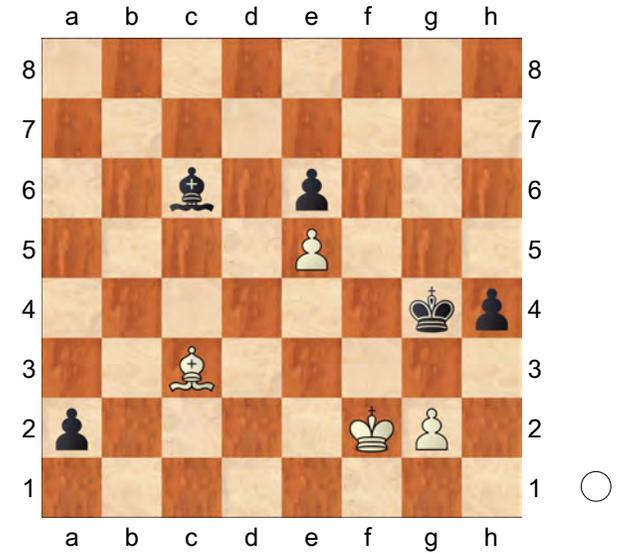
[In case of the aggressive 45.g4 a2 46.Bd4 Be8 47.f4



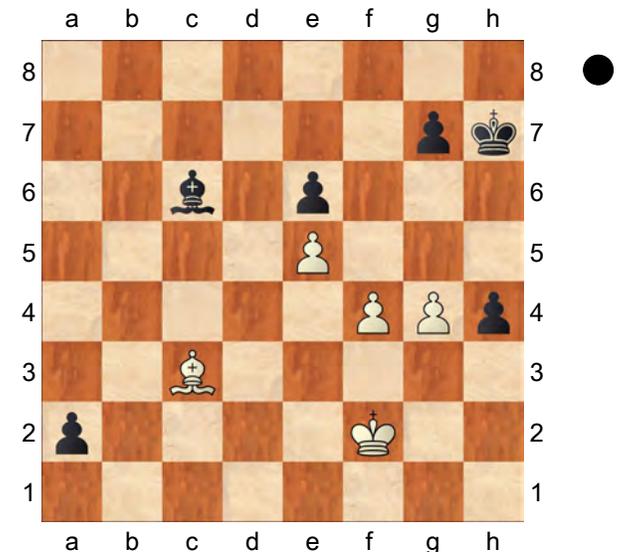
black proceeds to create the h-passer: g6! 48.Kf2 h5 49.Kg3 Ba4 50.Kh4 Kh6 51.Bc3 Bd1! 52.gxh5 gxh5-- followed by king's march toward the center.]

45...Be8 46.Bd4 Bc6 47.Bc3 a2 48.g3

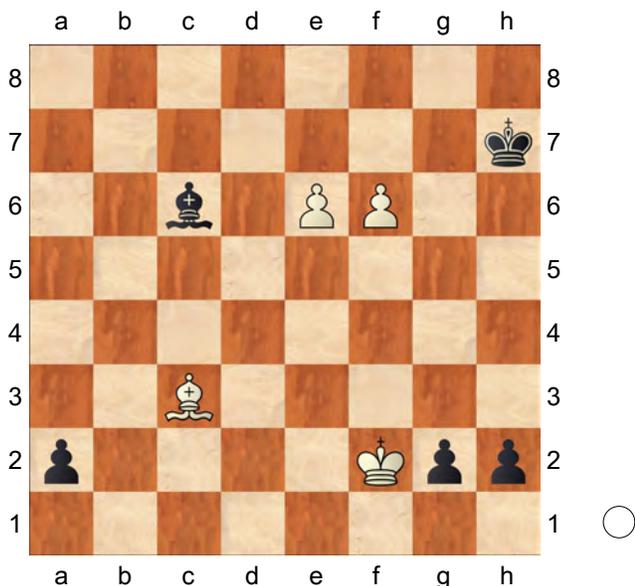
[Completely passive defense: 48.Ke3 g5 49.Bd4 Kg6 50.Bc3 is broken simply with: h5 51.Bb2 h4 52.Kf2 Kh5 53.Bc3 g4 54.fxg4+ Kxg4--



and Black king breaks in.] **48...h5 49.g4**
 [Alternatives are no better: 49.Kg2 g5 50.Kf2 Kg6 51.Ke3 h4 52.Kf2 h3--+]
 [or 49.f4 Kg6 50.Ke3 Kf5 51.Bb2 Kg4 52.Kf2 h4 53.gxh4 Kxf4--+]
49...h4! and White resigned
 [49...h4 due to 50.f4



g5! The most convincing. 51.f5 (51.fxg5 Kg6 52.Ba1 Kxg5--+) 51...exf5 52.gxf5 g4--+ and Black's connected passers are faster: 53.e6 g3+ 54.Ke3 h3 55.f6 g2 56.Kf2 h2



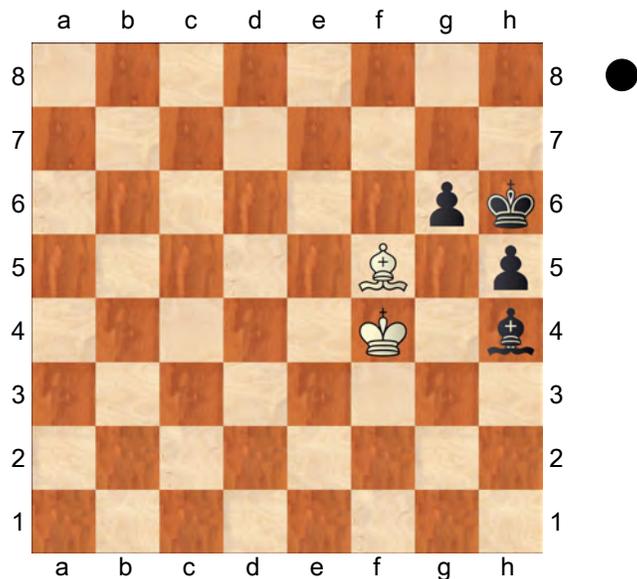
and Black promote on the next move. We have just scratched the surface of this interesting and practically important type of endgame. I hope that the analysis provided in the last two issues of Endgame Series will be useful in improvement of your understanding of opposite-colored bishops endgames, and endgames in general. In addition, I would encourage you to solve practice exercises below. As usual, we will make several conclusions and rules of thumb, based on the presented material. They could guide you when you get such endgames in your own practice.

Conclusions: 1. King's penetration is a crucial strategy for the stronger side and for that purpose he has to be ready to sacrifice pawns or even the bishop. 2. It is often difficult to win based on one weakness only (such as an outside passed pawn), so it may be necessary to create the second weakness, usually on the opposite flank. 3. Defender's chances increase if his bishop can block two passed pawns on a single diagonal. 4. Defender's chances improve if his king can prevent penetration of

opponent's king by moving diagonally, rather than vertically or horizontally. 5. "Two-on-one" pawn breakthrough sacrifice is a standard maneuver to create a passed pawn and improve winning chances. 6. In principle, the defender should avoid putting his pawns on the color of the opponent's bishop (there are exceptions, sometimes). 7. Mutual weaknesses and asymmetrical pawn structure usually favor the stronger side. 8. When the stronger side has a passed pawn on rook's file and a wrong-colored bishop, the defender should look for a way to get his king in the square of that pawn and try to liquidate into a B + 2p vs B endgame, which is drawn because the bishop can always be sacrificed for the second pawn.]

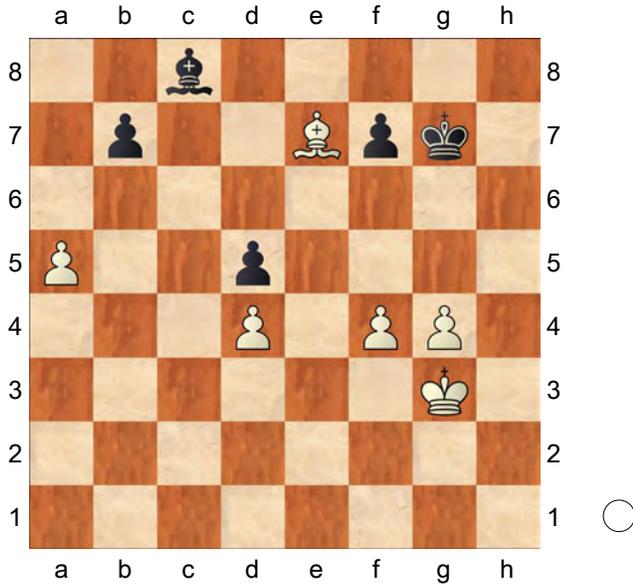
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Exercise 1
Anand - Karpov



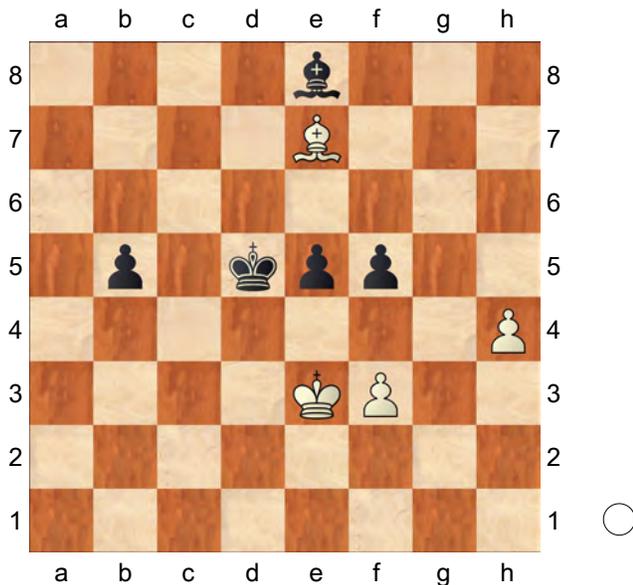
In a drawn position Anand played 70.Kf4 Bxh4 71.Bf5 with an apparent draw due to the wrong-colored bishop. Was his calculation correct? Black to move. Find the answer in the PGN and website versions of Modern Chess Magazine.

Exercise 2
Tomashevsky – Franco Alonso



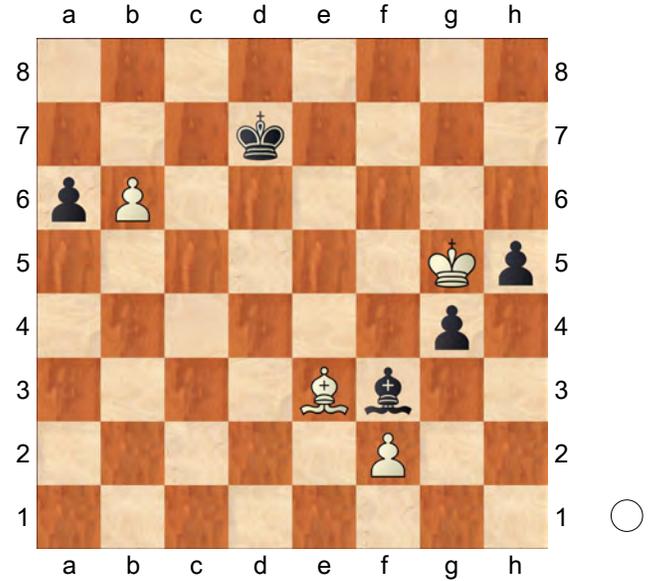
White to move and win.
Find the answer in the PGN and website versions of Modern Chess Magazine.

Exercise 3
Lampert – Kasimdzhanov



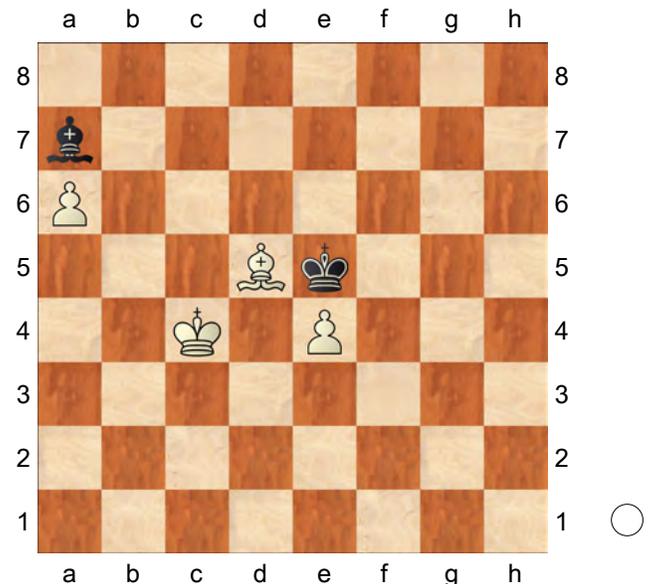
White to move and draw.

Exercise 4
Martinovic – Stevic



White to move and draw?
Find the answer in the PGN and website versions of Modern Chess Magazine.

Exercise 5
A. Cheron



White to move and win.

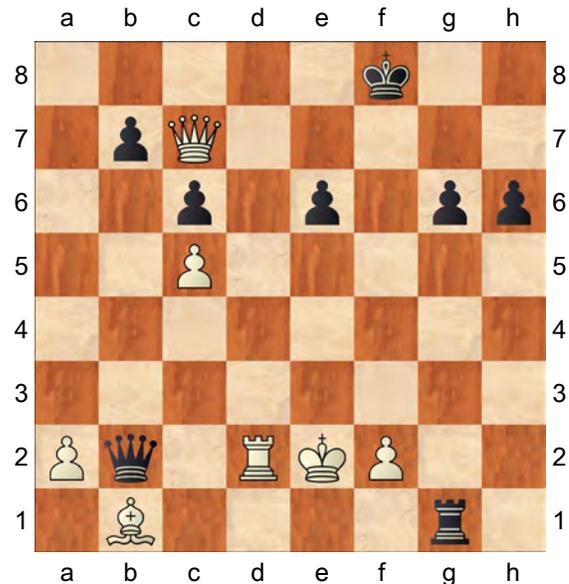
Brilliant Missed Opportunities. Overlooking Perpetual Check



Move repetition is a common fashion of positional draw, preventing the stronger side from converting his material or evident positional advantage. Perpetual check is a particular case of a positional draw. The enemy king is chased by repeating checks from which he can find no hiding. The most frequent piece to inflict perpetual check is naturally the stronger one, the queen, as capable of covering, often on her own, a large part of the board. Nevertheless, the other pieces, except for the King and the pawn, have also starred in numerous combinations ending up in perpetual check. The perpetual check is a common defensive device that may be seen in two main forms: The much more common direct chase of the enemy king or alternatively the less common and more sophisticated one: Forcing the opponent to settle for a perpetual check as the only defence against one's threat(s).

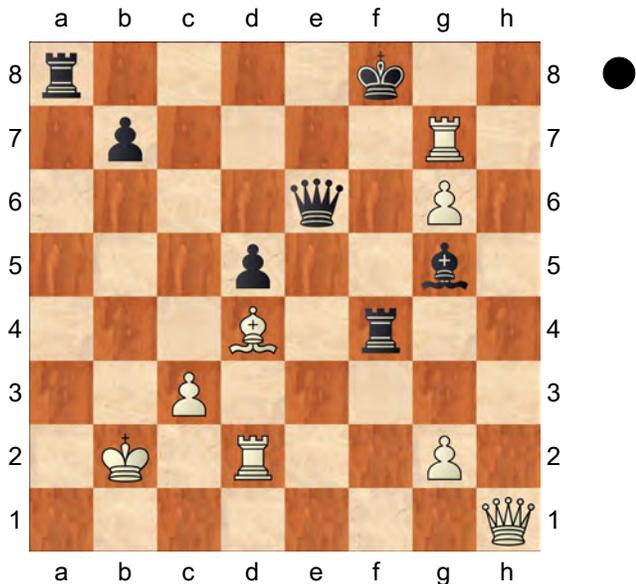
Though a pretty common practice perpetual check has occasionally been overlooked, in the heat of the battle, even by experienced masters and grandmasters. Here we present 14 a selection of competitive episodes in which brilliant opportunities to employ a perpetual check were missed. It's your task to improve on the masters! White, presumably in horrible time pressure, continued here:

Braun, Arik 2475
 Siebrecht, Sebastian 2487
 Introduction + Question 1



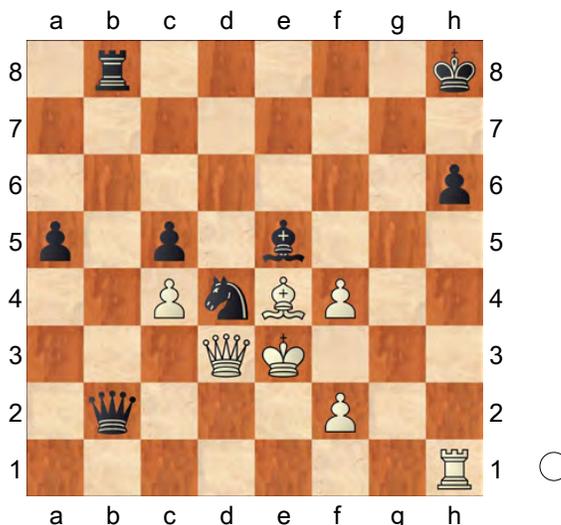
38...Qb5+?? 39.Kf3 Qxb1 40.Rd8#
 In fact he had a narrow tactical escape which most of you would probably not have missed. Do you see it?
1-0

Shirov,Alexei
 Spraggett,Kevin
 Question 2



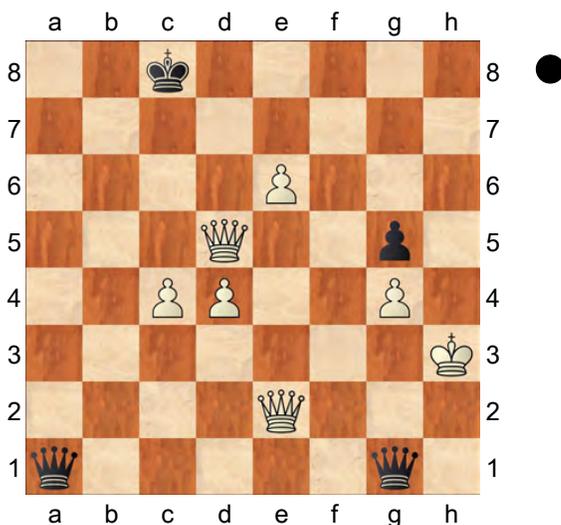
White has created an immediate mating threat against which black comes up with the most direct defence. 33...Rh4? The black king is exposed to deadly threats on more than one open file: 34.Rf2+ Ke8 35.Qf1 Rf4 36.Rxf4 Bxf4 37.Qb5+ Kf8 38.Rf7+ Kg8 39.Rg7+ Kf8 40.Rf7+ Kg8 41.Rxf4 The time pressure is over and Black, a piece down and no counterplay whatsoever threw in the towel. Can you improve on the Canadian grandmaster? **1-0**

2580 Steinitz,William
 2540 Janowski,Dawid Markelowicz
 Question 3



The first world champion was already far from his peak. In the following position, he saw a check: **42.Rxh6+** just to find out that after **42...Kg7** [42...Kg8 is equally good)] **43.Rh7+ Kf8 44.fxe5 Qc1+ 45.Qd2 Rb3+ 46.Bd3 Nf5+ 47.Ke2 Rb2** It's game over. What did he miss? **0-1**

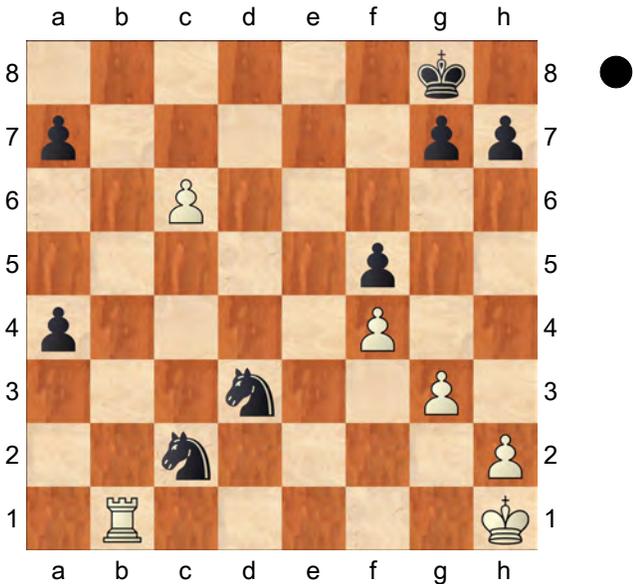
Burn,Amos
 Chajes,Oscar
 Question 4



In this rare ending of 4 queens black tried to hold by 88...Qa3+? 89.Qdf3 Qh1+ 90.Kg3 Qd6+ 91.Qe5 Qe1+ 92.Kh3 but now had to settle for queen exchanges and as expected eventually lost. Could you suggest him a more promising saving option?

1-0

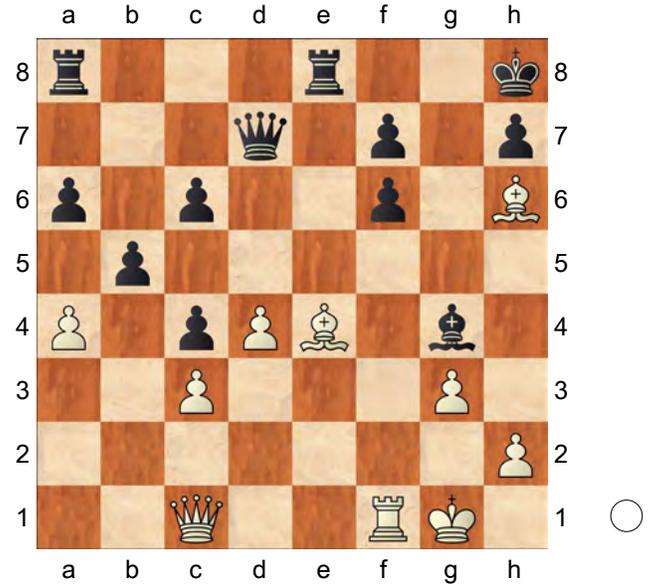
Henrichs,Thomas **2463**
 Op den Dries,Johan **2118**
 Question 5



The knight pair seems helpless against the advanced passed pawn. Black went for the natural 38...Nf2+ 39.Kg2 Ne4 40.c7 Nd6 but had to lay his arms following 41.Rb8+ Kf7 42.Rd8 Was the situation indeed that hopeless?

1-0

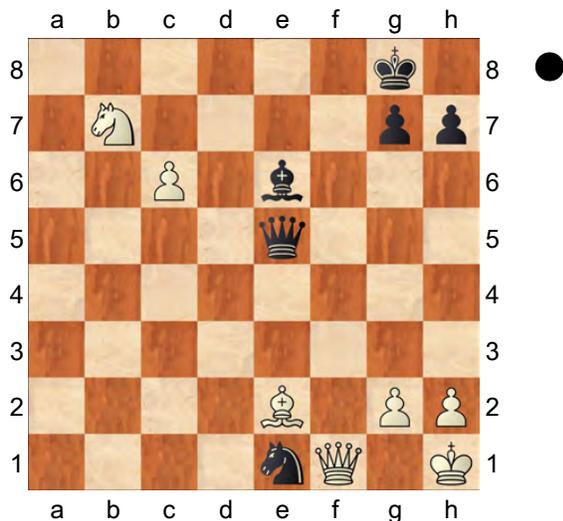
Torbin,Kirill **2337**
 Yevseev,Denis **2540**
 Question 6



White, materially far behind, tries to take advantage of Black's weakened kingside's pawn formation. The game continued: 27.Qf4? Qe6 28.d5 cxd5 29.Bxd5 Qb6+ 30.Kh1 Bh3 31.Bxa8 Bxf1 32.Be4 Bh3 33.Qh4 Qe6 White's efforts meet a dead end, and he resigned. Was it indeed his best defensive attempt?

0-1

□ Leko, Peter
 ■ Krasenkow, Michal
 Question 7



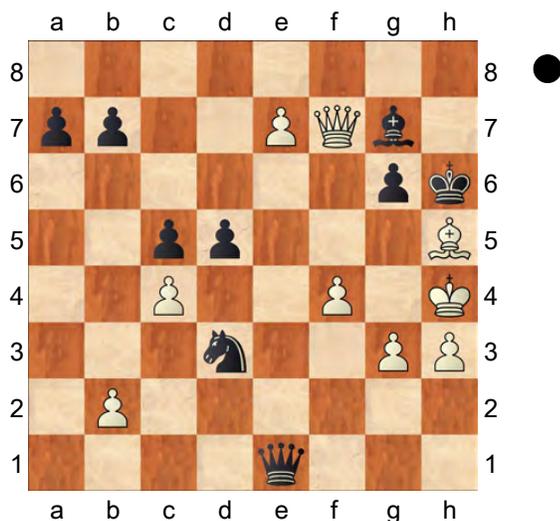
The attacked knight should choose its flight **34...Nc2?** The wrong choice.

35.Bc4+- Ne3

[Or 35...Nd4 36.Nd8! h6 (36...Bxc4 37.Qxc4+ Kh8) 37.Nxe6 Nxe6 38.c7!]

36.Bxe6+ Qxe6 37.Qf4 h6 38.Nc5 Qe8 39.Nd3 Kh7 40.c7 Qe6 41.Qe5 Qc6 1-0

□ Sagalchik, Gennadij
 ■ Kovalev, Andrei
 Question 8



2707 Black faces a double lethal threat: mate or pawn promotion. Black went for the tricky pin: **36...Qe4 37.Bxg6**

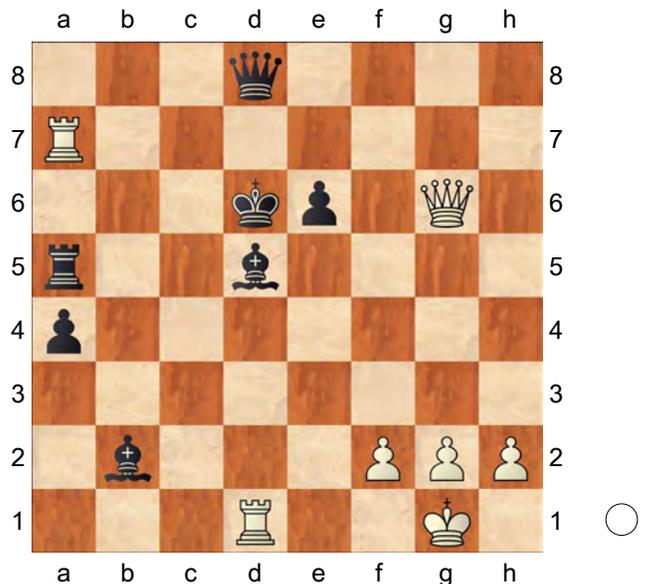
2641

[Attention! Not 37.e8Q? g5+ 38.Kg4 Nf2#]

37...Qd4 38.e8Q Bf6+ 39.Kg4 Ne5+ 40.Qxe5 Qd1+ 41.Kf5 Black resigned. Could you spot a better saving chance for him?

1-0

□ Gagunashvili, Merab **2580**
 ■ Zelcic, Robert **2540**
 Question 9



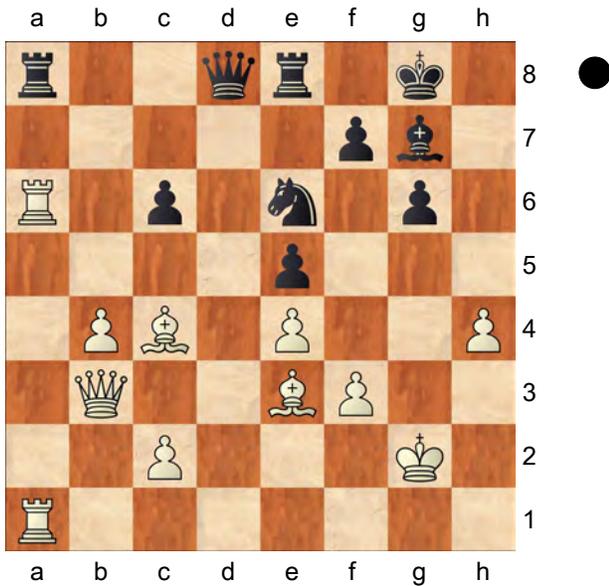
White is materially in an inferior position, and his continuous attempts to trouble the black king led him to a lost position even if he eventually miraculously was saved. **38.Qg3+ Kc6 39.Rh7 a3 40.Qd3 Qb6 41.Qc2+ Qc5 42.Qd2 Ra7 43.Rxa7 Qxa7** Black has obtained an overwhelming advantage but later spoiled it into a drawing fortress position of a rook & 2 pawns vs. a queen and & a

pawn drawing on move 103. How could white save a lot of suffering and force a draw in the first place? .

1/2

□ Ivanchuk, Vassily
 ■ Kramnik, Vladimir
 Question 10

2757
 2810



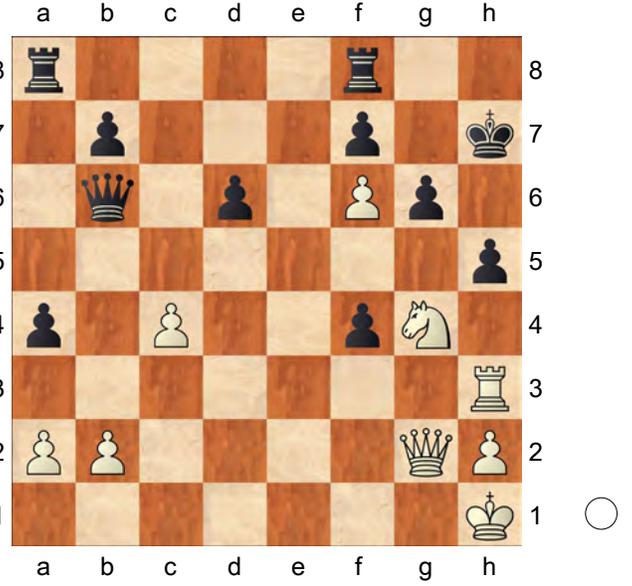
The former world champion, a pawn down and positionally inferior rushed to protect another attacked pawn but after **35...Rc8? 36.Rh1+-** He is clearly worse. With a pair of bishops, superior rooks and space advantage on both sides of the board his opponent won the game in a dozen or more moves. And yet in the diagrammed position black could actively impose a forced draw! How? **36...Rc7 37.Bxe6 Rxe6 38.b5! Rb7 39.b6 c5 40.Rb1 Bf8 41.Qd5! Qb8 42.Rba1! Rd6 43.Ra8 Rxd5 44.Rxb8 Rxb8 45.exd5 Bd6**
 [45...Rxb6 loses to 46.Ra8 Kg7 47.Rxf8 Kxf8 48.Bxc5+-]

46.Ra6 Rb7 47.Kf1 Can you propose Black a more active defensive resource in the initial difficult position?

1-0

□ Hamdouchi, Hicham
 ■ Tiviakov, Sergei
 Question 11

2588
 2600



White, an exchange down, seeks counterplay against the enemy king by an intuitive sacrifice. **26.Rxh5+? gxh5** Several lines are open to allow white attacking chances, however, those lines are open against his own king too. **27.Qe4+ Kg8**
 [Naturally not 27...Kh8?? 28.Qxf4 Qc6+ 29.Kg1 Qe4 30.Qxe4 Rg8 31.Qxb7 Rxg4+ 32.Kf2 Rf8 33.Qe7 Kg8 34.b3 And white should win.]
28.Ne3
 [Or 28.Qxf4 Qc6+ 29.Kg1 Qc5+ 30.Kf1 Ra5+- And black 's kingside is under good control.]

28...Qxb2

[The last hope 28...Qxe3? 29.Qg2+ has faded away. What did white wrong? How could improve on his own idea to save his day?]

0-1

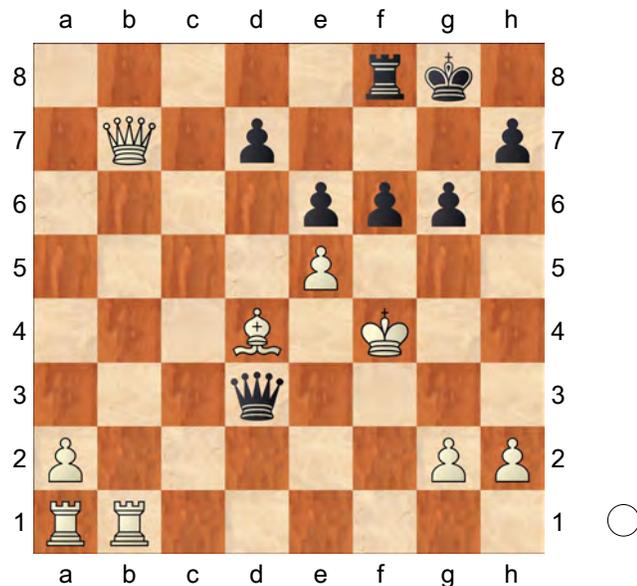
□ **Barczay,Laszlo**

2415

■ **Pokojowczyk,Jerzy**

2390

Question 12



Black last move 23...f6!! has shocked white to such extent that he fell for the trap replying **24.Rd1?? g5+ 25.Kg4 h5+! 26.Kxh5 Qh7+ 27.Kg4 fxe5!** This "quiet" move opens up the last key file to avoid any king flight. **28.g3**

[No defence against the multiple mate threats, for instance 28.Bf2 Rf4+ 29.Kxg5 Rf5+ 30.Kg4 Qh5+ 31.Kg3 Rg5#]

28...Qf5+ 29.Kh5 Qh3+ 30.Kg6 Qh7+

[White resigned, or else it's mate in two. 30...Qh7+ 31.Kxg5 Rf5+ 32.Kg4 Qh5# How should have white done better?]

0-1

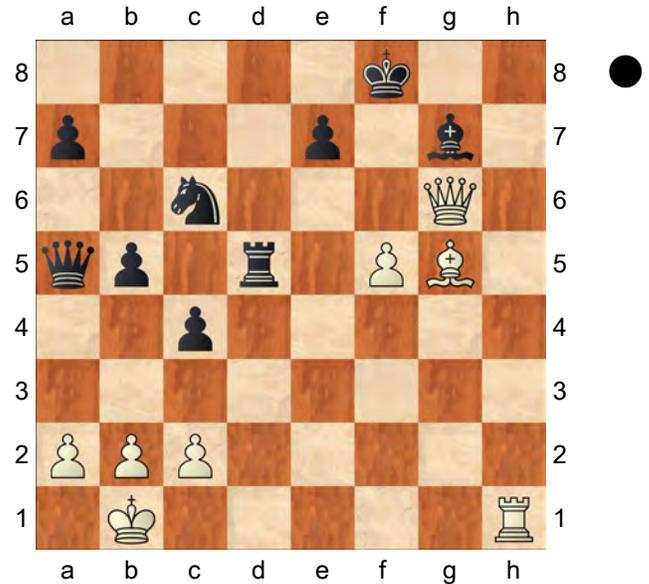
□ **Palac,Mladen**

2495

■ **Afek,Yochanan**

2325

Question 13



To conclude with here are 2 brilliant opportunities to force a superior opponent to inflict his own perpetual check. Sadly they were both missed in the moment of truth and yet I find them original and instructive. White's last move 30.Bxg5 threatens the terminating 31.Rh8+! Bxh8 32.Bh6+ etc. Horrified I delivered a desperate check 30...Rd1+?? 31.Rxd1 Qc7 32.Bh6 Bxh6 33.Qxh6+ Facing a mate in a few more moves I resigned here blowing away an IM norm I would have gained if I drew this last round game. Could I force that draw had I not panicked in the initial position?

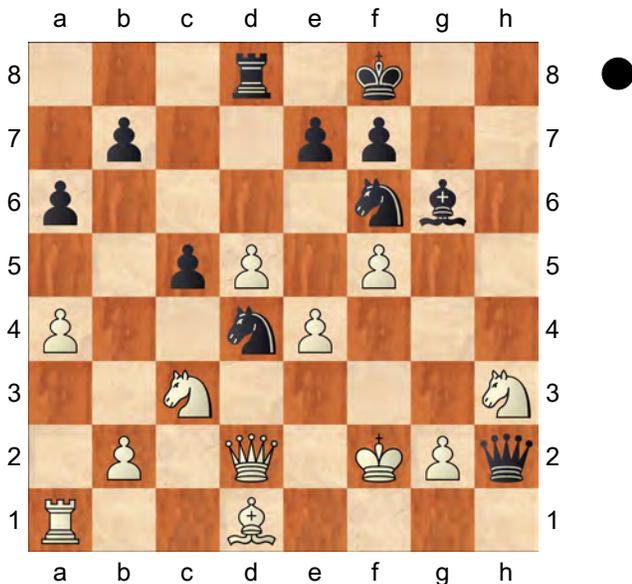
1-0

Giri,Anish
 Afek,Yochanan
 Question 14

2523
2294

Braun,Arik
 Siebrecht,Sebastian
 Test 1

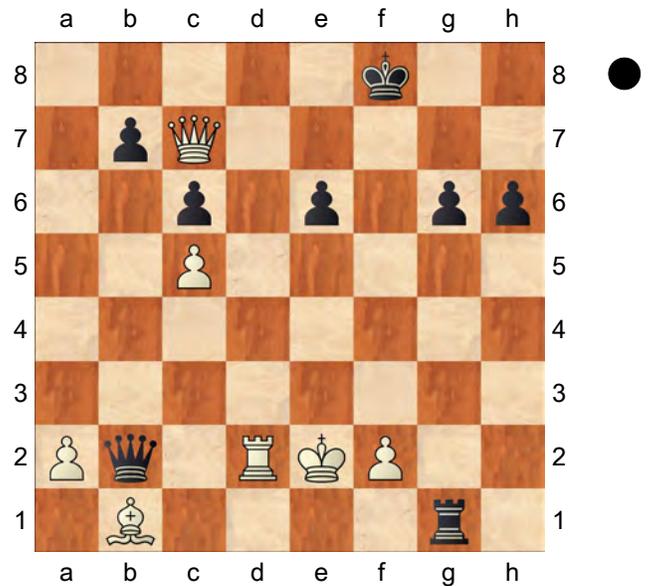
2475
2487



To conclude this test here is the critical position from my game against the would be Netherland's No.1 player. White's last move was 28. f5 and I saw no better than the unfortunate retreat: 28...Bh7?? after which I could not recover and even was mated in just 10 more moves:

29.Qf4 Qxf4+ 30.Nxf4 Nd7 31.Nce2 Nxe2 32.Bxe2 Rb8 33.g4 f6 34.g5 fxg5 35.Ne6+ Kf7 36.Rh1 Bg8 37.Rh6 b5 (?) Resignation was stronger, but that is how one surrender in the Netherlands sometimes. 38.Bh5# Not a very pleasant experience especially in view of the incredible alternative which was left behind the scenes. Would you look out for it ?

1-0

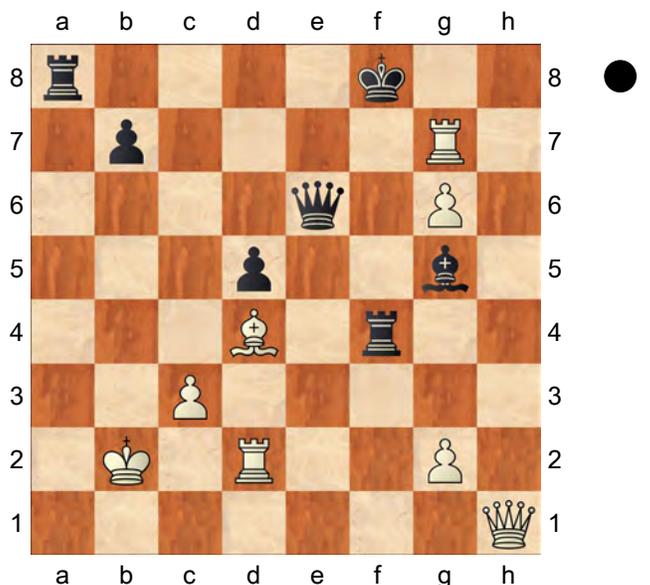


Can you find how Black could save the game? 38...Re1+!! 39.Kxe1 Qxb1+ 40.Rd1 Qe4+ 41.Kd2 Qd4+ forces perpetual check on the entire lower half of the board.

1-0

Shirov,Alexei
 Spraggett,Kevin
 Test 2

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2540

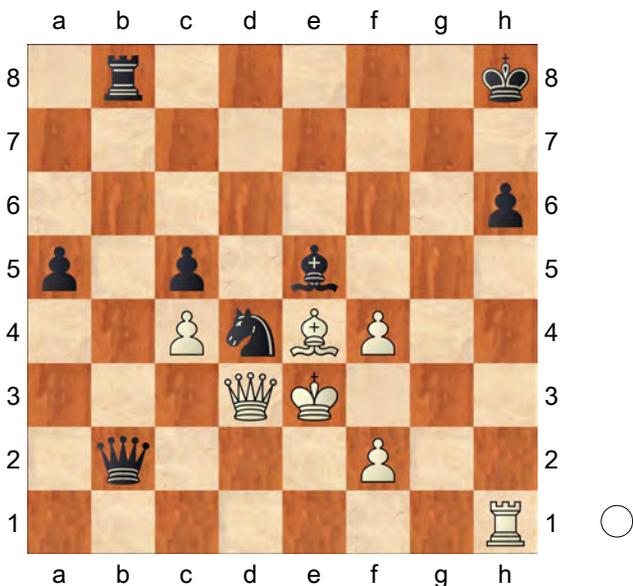


Can you find how Black could save the game? 33...Ra2+! The Canadian GM overlooked this 34.Kxa2 Qa6+ 35.Kb2 Qb5+ where the white king cannot escape the annoying checks since moving to the back rank would be met by Rf1+ for instance: 36.Kc2 Qa4+ 37.Kb1 Qb5+! 38.Ka2 Qa6+! etc.

1-0

□ Steinitz, William
 ■ Janowski, Dawid Markelowicz

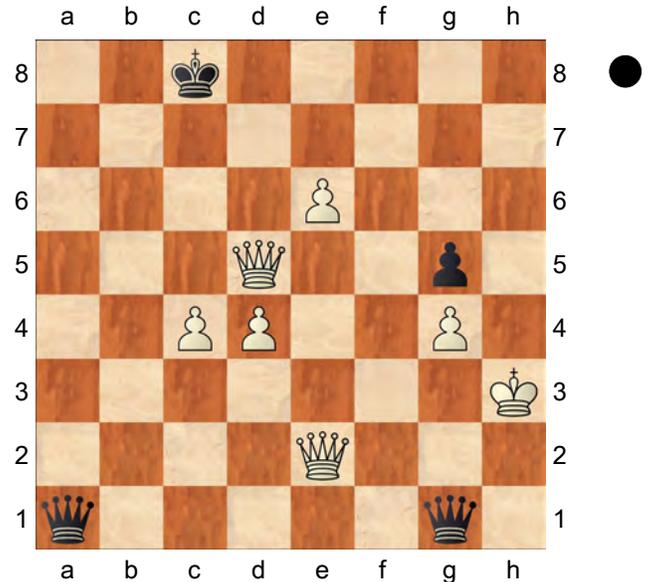
Test 3



Can you find how White should continue? 4.fxe5!! This was the correct order of moves. Now the square c1 is temporarily covered! 42...Rb3 43.Rxh6+! Kg7 44.Rh7+ Kf8 45.Rh8+ Ke7 46.Rh7+ Ke6 47.Rh6+ It's perpetual check as by now 47...Kxe5?? is met by 48.f4#!

0-1

□ Burn, Amos
 ■ Chajes, Oscar
 Test 4



Can you find how Black could save the game? 88...Qc3+!

89.Qdf3

[89.Qef3? would be the wrong piece to the right square owing to: Qh1+ 90.Kg3 Qce1+ 91.Qf2 Qh4 + 92.Kf3 Qhxf2#]

89...Qh1+ 90.Kg3 Qg1+ 91.Kh3 Qh1+ and black draws despite his evident material inferiority.

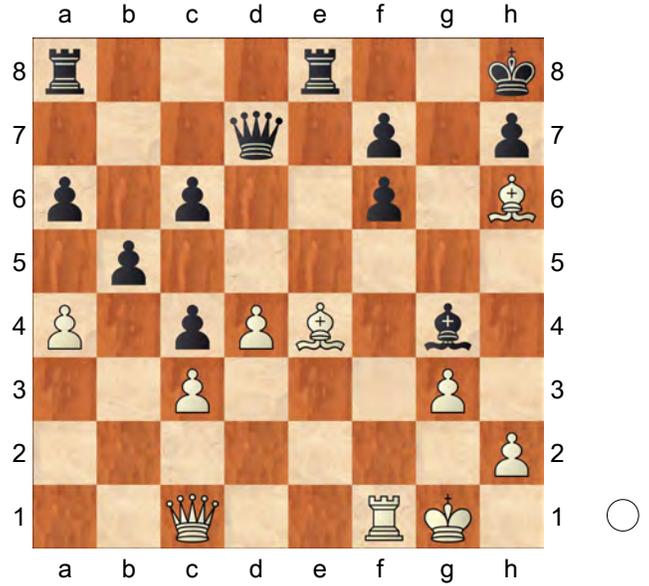
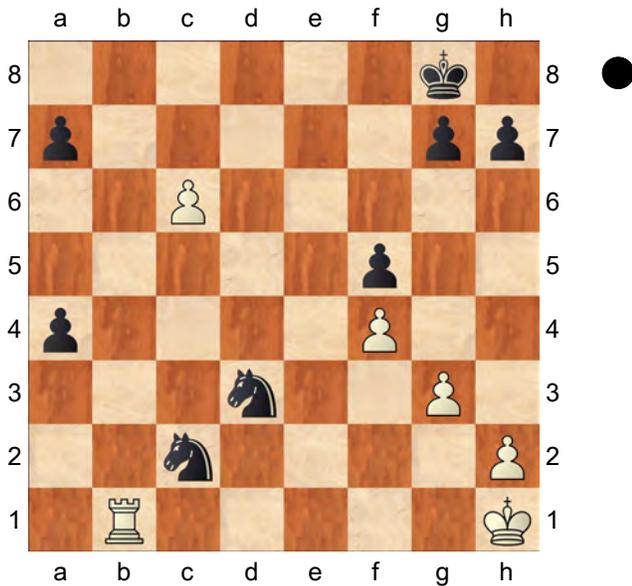
1-0

Henrichs,Thomas
 Op den Dries,Johan
 Test 5

2463
2118

Torbin,Kirill
 Yevseev,Denis
 Test 6

2337
2540



Can you find how Black could save the game? **38...Ne3!** The only way to insert harmony in the knight pair **39.c7**

[Or 39.Kg1 Nd5 40.c7 Nxc7
 41.Rb8+ Kf7 42.Rb7 Ke6
 43.Rxc7 a5 44.Rc4 Nb2 45.Rc5
 Kd6
 46.Rxa5 Kc6 47.Kf2 Kb6 48.Ra8
 Kb7 Positional draw!]

39...Nf2+ 40.Kg1 Nh3+ 41.Kh1 Nf2
 + with perpetual check
1-0

27.Bf8!! The amazing move does the trick thanks to the threat 28. Qh6 mating. **27...Rxf8**

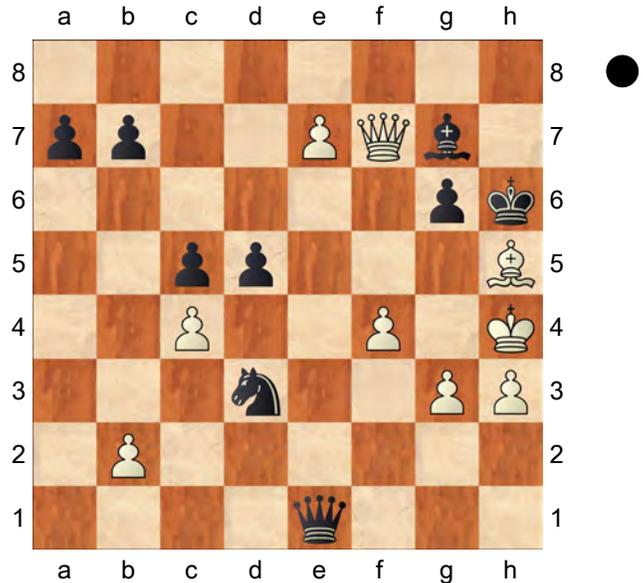
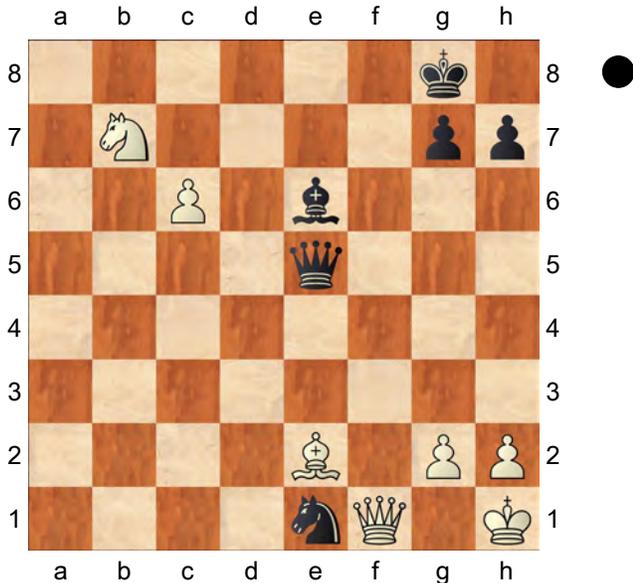
[The only move to avoid losing:
 27...Rxe4 still fails to 28.Qh6
 Rxf8 29.Qxf8#]

28.Qh6 f5 29.Qf6+ Kg8 30.Qg5
 + Mission accomplished!
0-1

□ Leko, Peter
 ■ Krasenkow, Michal
 Test 7

2707
 2641

□ Sagalchik, Gennadij
 ■ Kovalev, Andrei
 Test 8
 2400



The only way to save the day is sacrificial **34...Nxf2!! 35.Kxf2 Bd5+ 36.Bf3**

[Black is not worse after 36.Kf2 Bxc6 with a double threat on both knight and White's last pawn.]

36...Qg5+ 37.Kf2 Bxf3 38.Kxf3 Qf5+ with perpetual check: **39.Ke2 Qe5+ 40.Kd2 Qb2+ 41.Ke3 Qe5+= 1-0**

Can you find how Black could save the game? **36...Nxf4!! 37.Qxf4+ Kh7**

38.Bxf6+!

[38.Qf7 Qe4+ 39.Bg4 d4 40.e8Q (The alternative 40.Qe6 Qxe6

41.Bxe6 Bf6+ 42.Kg4 Bxe7 even leaves black with a pawn up.)

40...Qxe8 41.Qxe8 Bf6#]

38...Kxf6 39.Qg5+ Kf7 40.Qxd5+ Kxe7 41.Qxc5+ Kf7 42.Qh5+!

with a variety of repeated checks along the fifth rank!

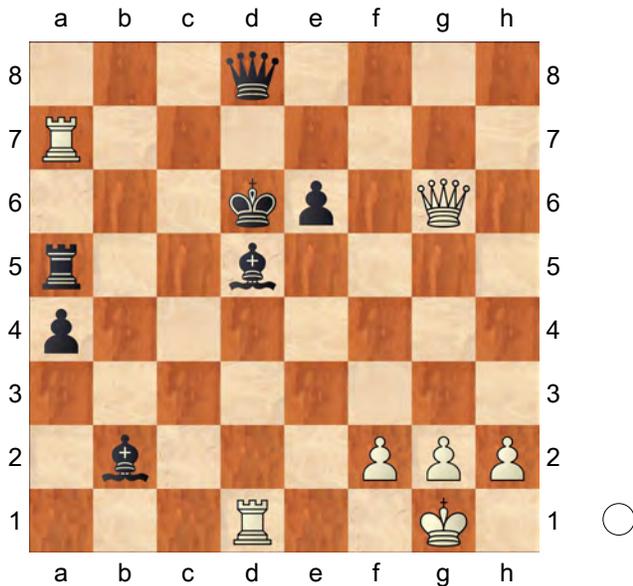
1-0

☐ Gagunashvili, Merab
 ■ Zelic, Robert
 Test 9

2580
 2540

☐ Ivanchuk, Vassily
 ■ Kramnik, Vladimir
 Test 10

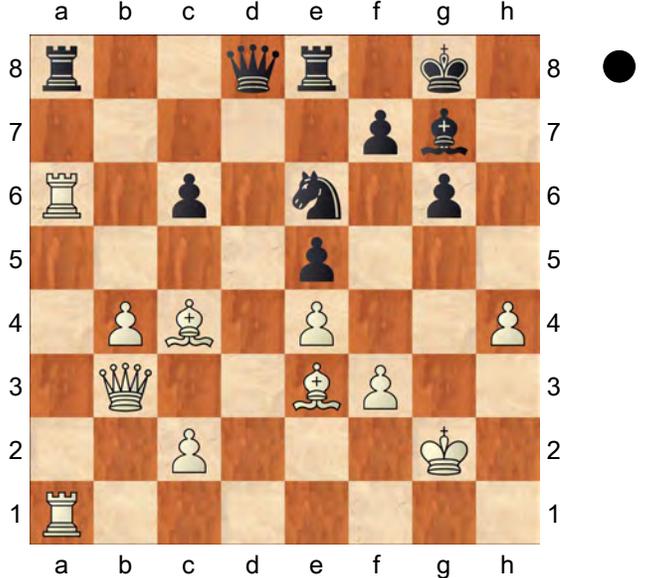
2757
 2810



Can you find how White could force a draw? **38.Rxd5+!** White could force the draw with no need for any miracles by **38...Kxd5**

[The alternative is: 38...Rxd5 39.Ra6+ Ke7 40.Ra7+ Rd7 41.Qh7 + Kd6 42.Qd3+ Ke7 43.Qh7+ with perpetual check.]

39.Qg5+!! Deflecting the queen to the fifth rank **39...Qxg5** to allow the skewer **40.Rxa5+** And White draws a few moves later without too much trouble.
1/2



Try to find how Black could save the game? **35...Rxa6!** Kramnik could have forced a marvelous draw **36.Rxa6 Nf4+!! 37.Bxf4 exf4 38.Bxf7+ Kh8!**

39.Qd3!

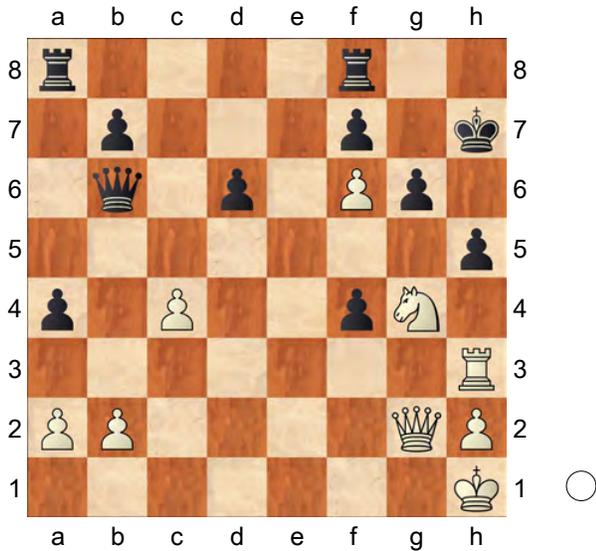
[The careless 39.Bxe8?? Qd2+ is even winning for Black: 40.Kf1 Bd4]

39...Qxh4! 40.Bxe8 Qg3+ 41.Kf1 Qh3+ with perpetual check.
1-0

□ Hamdouchi, Hicham
 ■ Tiviakov, Sergei
 Test 11

2588
 2600

How White could save the game?
 24.exf6! is the correct move 24...Qxd4+
 25.Kg3 and black has no better than
 repeating checks by, for example,
 25...Qe5+ 26.Kh3 Qh5+ etc.
0-1



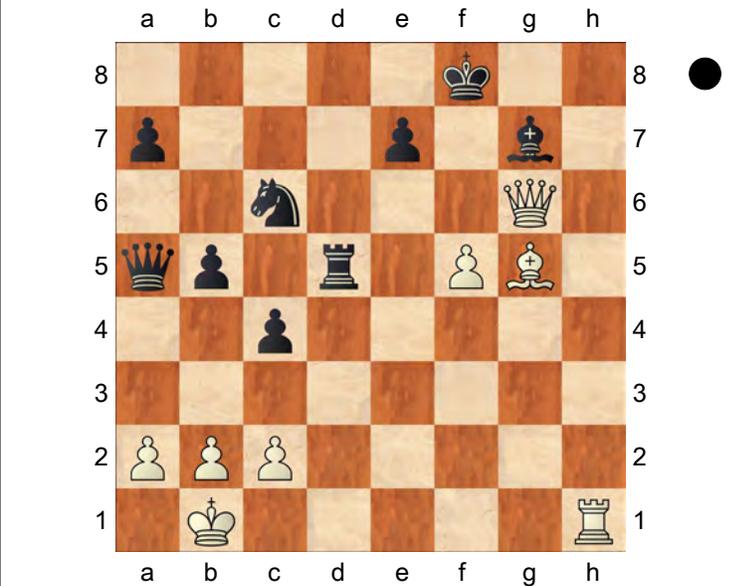
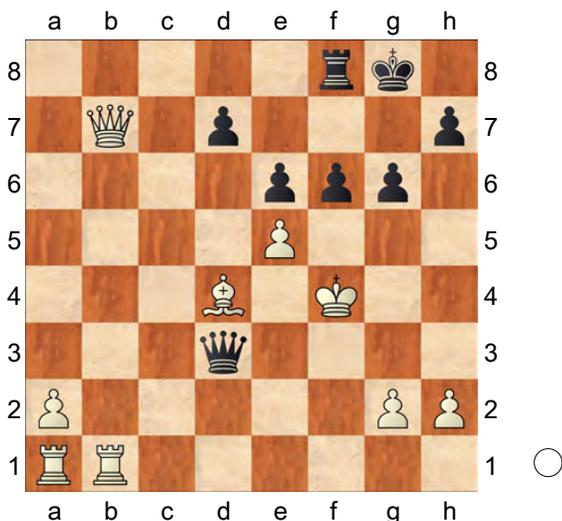
Can you find how White could save the game? 26.Ne5!! The more subtle way to carry out the rook sacrifice is to introduce it by the preliminary quiet sacrifice 26...dxe5 27.Rxh5+! Kg8 28.Qg5 forcing black to his own perpetual check against white's threat of mate in three.
0-1

□ Barczay, Laszlo
 ■ Pokojowczyk, Jerzy
 Test 12

2415
 2390

□ Palac, Mladen
 ■ Afek, Yochanan
 Test 13

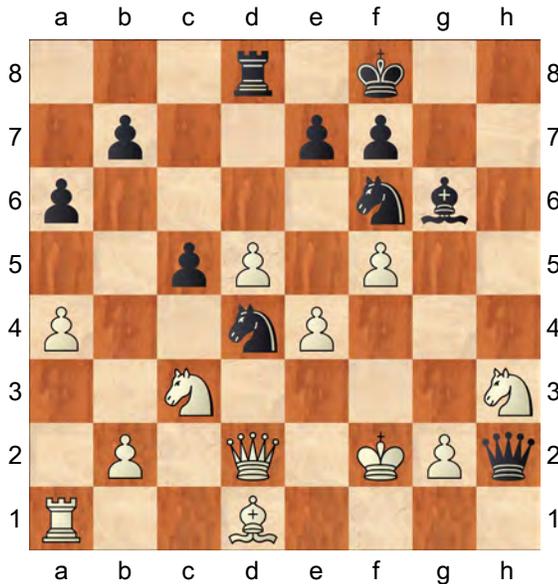
2495
 2325



Can you find how Black could save the game? **30...Rd6!** Had I not panicked in view of the threat I might have noticed this saviour. Persuading White to force a perpetual check by: **31.Rh8+ Bxh8 32.Bh6+ Bg7 33.Bxg7+** [33.Qxg7+ Obviously leads the black king to safety following Ke8 34.Qg8+ Kd7-+] **33...Kg8 34.Bf6+ Kf8 35.Bg7+ Kg8** Positional draw by repeated checks!
1-0

Giri, Anish
 Afek, Yochanan
 Test 14 + Conclusion

2523
2294



Missing it may be minimized by adopting the regular practice which might be applied to all tactics: A constant scan of all forced elements in the position notably captures in general and exchanges in particular, attacking enemy pieces and checking his king in particular. Scanning and then calculating candidate options.]

1-0

Can you find how Black could save the game? **28...Bxf5!!** I could have forced the next brilliant positional draw **29.exf5 Rxd5!!** The deadly threat **30...Rxf5+** forces white's response: **30.Qh6+**
 [Since 30.Nxd5? loses to Ne4+]
30...Kg8 31.Qg5+

[And now 31.Nxd5? is met by Ne4 + 32.Ke3 Nxf5+]

31...Kf8 32.Qh6+ Draw.

[Again! 32.Nxd5? Ne4+ Positional draw is owing to 3 different forks. What a shame to miss such a wonder! Conclusion: Perpetual check is one of the basic tactical motives and thus also a highly common defensive weapon.

Understand the French Isolani

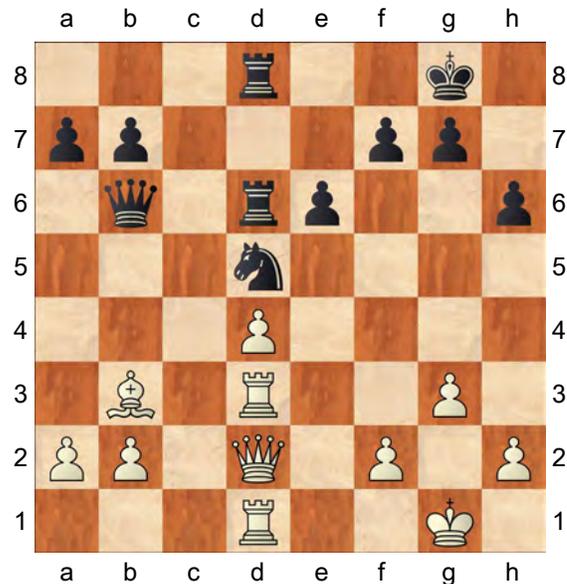


GM Mihail Marin

The French Isolani is one of the structures that have intrigued me most since my early teenage years back in the '70s. I used to play 1.e4 and meet the French with 3.Nd2, when 3...c5 4. exd5 exd5 frequently gave me headaches and had Kortschnoj, a specialist of this line, as my greatest hero. Later, when I switched to 1.d4 I found the Queen's Gambit Isolani much easier to play against. Since I never again switched back to 1.e4, I did not ask myself whether this was due to my already better strategic skills or to specific differences between the two similar structures. At the moment of writing these lines, I believe that, while the former may have played a part, the latter is doubtlessly true. Since the French Isolani structure is an important part of the repertoire I built up in the theoretical databases, I find it useful to prove that even when things go relatively badly for Black, his Isolani is safer than in the closely related Queen's Gambit

structures. For illustrating how the minor differences change the evaluation from close to losing to equal I have chosen two games played between the same players featuring the same material. The first game became a classical model of how to exploit the relative weakness of the Isolani.

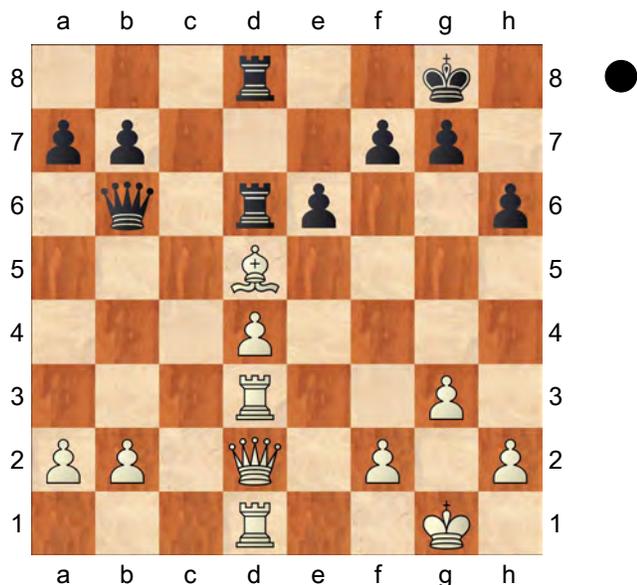
- ◻ Kortschnoj, Viktor
- ◼ Karpov, Anatoly



Caught by surprise in the opening, Kortschnoj allowed (actually even provoked) the exchange of almost all the minor pieces, which is precisely what the player with an Isolani should avoid. The next move, considered by Karpov a mistake, completed this unfavourable process, but as shown below it was hard to give Black a good advice already. **27.Bxd5**

[Karpov recommends 27.a3, preventing Black from winning a pawn with ...Nb4. But Kortschnoj probably felt that this would doom the d-pawn quicker than in the game:

Ne7 28.Ba2 Nc6 29.d5 Ne5
 30.Re3 The rook needs to defend f3,
 thus the abandoning of the defence of
 the d-pawn. By the way, had White
 played 28.Kg2 instead of 28.Ba2,
 30.Rd4 would still not have been
 possible in the current position as the
 bishop would be hanging. Ng4
 31.Rd3 Nf6 Black wins the d-pawn.]



27...Rxd5 This is the dream position when playing against the Isolani. All minor pieces are off the board offering the major pieces the comfort of pinning and attacking the weak pawn at the same time. The aspect referring to the pin is essential because Black has the permanent threat of ...e6-e5. **28.Rb3** Kortschnoj tries to distract Black's attention from the weak pawn by a queenside diversion.

[White could have kept the actual piece placement with 28.f4, preventing ...e6-e5. Although this is only a temporary solution in view of Qd6 29.Kg2 Qd7 30.Kg1 f6,]

it makes some sense to play in this way because Black would at least weaken his king a bit, too, offering White some practical surviving chances.]

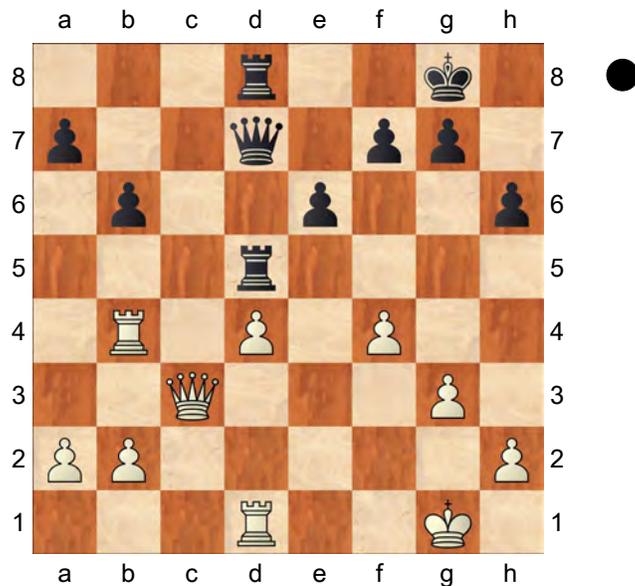
28...Qc6 29.Qc3 Qd7 30.f4

White cannot do without this move, which seriously weakens the king.

30...b6!? Very typical for Karpov. He tries to avoid any shadow of white counterplay.

[Of course, 30...f6 would have won the pawn soon, but Karpov prefers to refrain from such weakening moves.]

31.Rb4



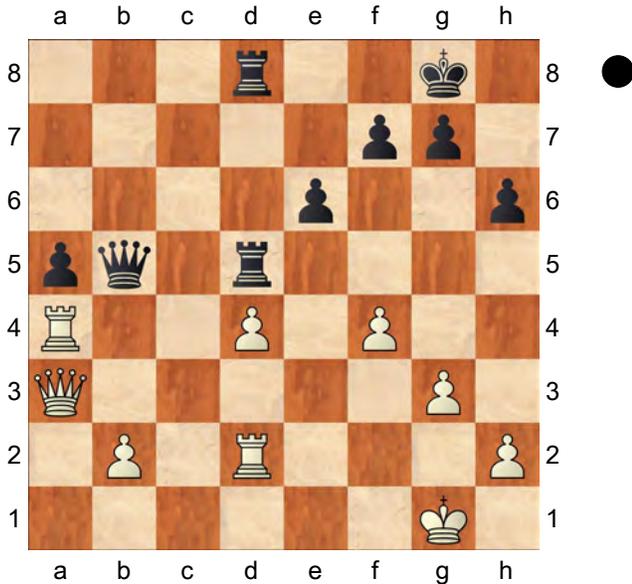
b5! Continuing the same policy, but this time also objectively the best move.

[The point is that after 31...f6?! 32.Rc4! White's counterplay might become real.]

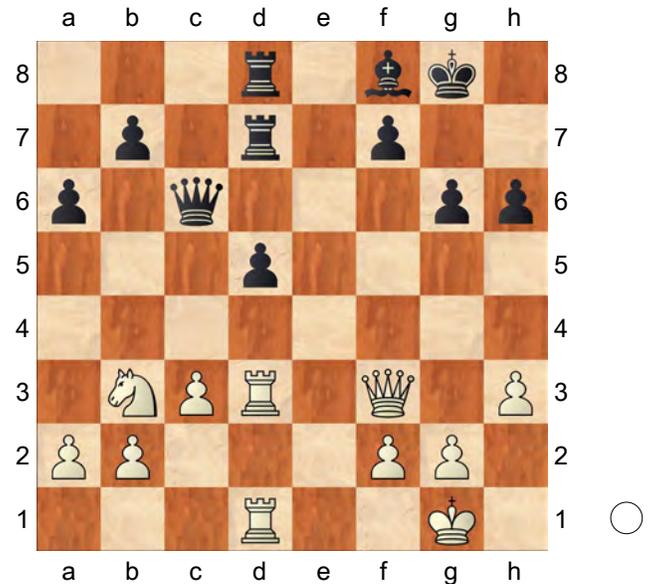
32.a4 Kortschnoj tries to maintain the actual setup.

[The alternative was 32.Qd2 a5 33.Rb3 b4 34.Rd3 f6. With respect to the similar lines above, Black has made considerable queenside progress, which may count in a rook ending with an extra pawn.]

32...bxa4 33.Qa3 a5 34.Rxa4 Qb5
35.Rd2



Rad8 19.Rad1 Rd7 20.Nf5 Nxf5
21.Qxf5 Rfd8 22.Re3 g6 23.Qf3 Bf8
24.Red3 Qc6



White seems to have defended, but his coordination is awful, allowing Black to start an attack without inserting ...f7-f6.

35...e5! 36.fxe5 Rxe5 37.Qa1 Qe8!

Black has decisive threats against the weakened king and won quickly:

38.dxe5 Rxd2 39.Rxa5 Qc6 40.Ra8+

Kh7 41.Qb1+ g6 42.Qf1 Qc5+

43.Kh1 Qd5+ Time has come to compare with a very similar game, played during the first official match between the same players, in which Kortschnoj had no problems defending his French Isolani.

0-1

□ Karpov, Anatoly

■ Kortschnoj, Viktor

Moscow (m/18)

1974

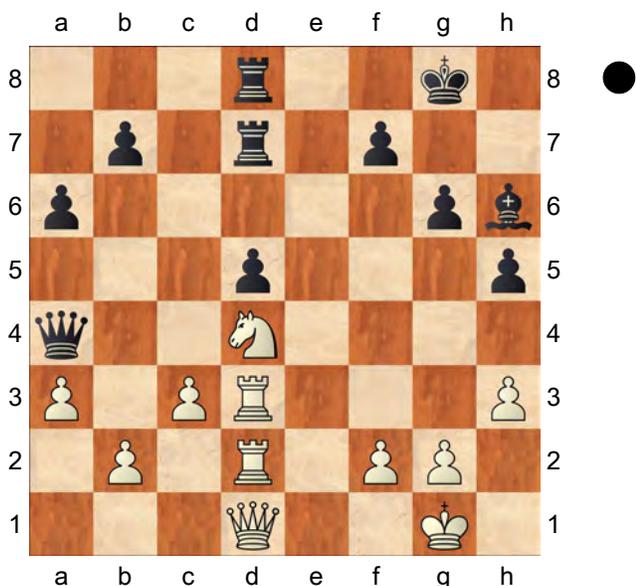
1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 c5 4.exd5
exd5 5.Ngf3 Nc6 6.Bb5 Bd6 7.0-0
Nge7 8.dxc5 Bxc5 9.Nb3 Bd6
10.Bg5 0-0 11.Re1 Qc7 12.c3 Bg4
13.h3 Bh5 14.Be2 h6 15.Bxe7 Nxe7
16.Nfd4 Bxe2 17.Qxe2 a6 18.Qf3

We have an identical material situation as in the previous game. The only important difference is that White has a pawn on c3 instead of e3. This implies a series of consequences: First of all, after the desirable minor piece exchange the Isolani undermining plan will be based on c3-c4. This allows Black to defend with ...b7-b5 which, unlike ...f7-f5 (similar to f2-f4 in the previous game) does not weaken the king. Secondly, the e-file is open, meaning that Black could get counterplay closer to the enemy king (unlike his hypothetical play along the c-file). Besides, a similar rook lift to the fifth rank with Rb4 above would be safer, as White would hardly consider weakening his king with f2-f4. Finally, after a2-a3 provoked by Black's next move, the queenside weakening will be more significant than with the pawn on e3. 25.Nd4 Qa4 26.a3 h5 27.R1d2 Bh6 With the actual material, we notice

a further positive aspect: the bishop can fight against the major pieces' tripling on the d-file. In the Queen's Gambit Isolani structure this would not be available.

28.Qd1

[In view of the next comment, 28.Re2 may be more consistent, even though White would have to work harder to reach the game position without minor pieces: Qc4 29.Rd1 Bg7 30.g3 b5 31.h4]



28...Qc4

[Botvinnik evaluates the position after 28...Qxd1+ 29.Rxd1 as slightly better for White. But actually exchanging major pieces is part of Black's defensive plan. The following analysis suggests the position is just equal.

Rd6 30.Kf1 Rb6 31.b4

(Another effect of the bishop's activity as there is no other reasonable way of defending b2. 31.Rb1

is too passive, of course.) 31...Re8! (31...a5 is premature due to 32.Nb3 axb4 33.cxb4!? keeping some

tension.; 31...Rbd6?! 32.Nb3 planning Nc5 leads to a position where the absence of the queen can be felt. If on the board, she could defend both d5 and b7 from c6. After the suggested move, White cannot approach with his king and has no effective plan against the Isolani as c3 is also weak.) 32.Nb3 (32.Ne2 runs into Rbe6; Or if 32.h4 Bg7 33.Ne2 Rc6 the mutual weaknesses compensate for each other.) 32...Rc8 33.h4 Bf8 34.Na5 Rc7 35.g3 Re6]

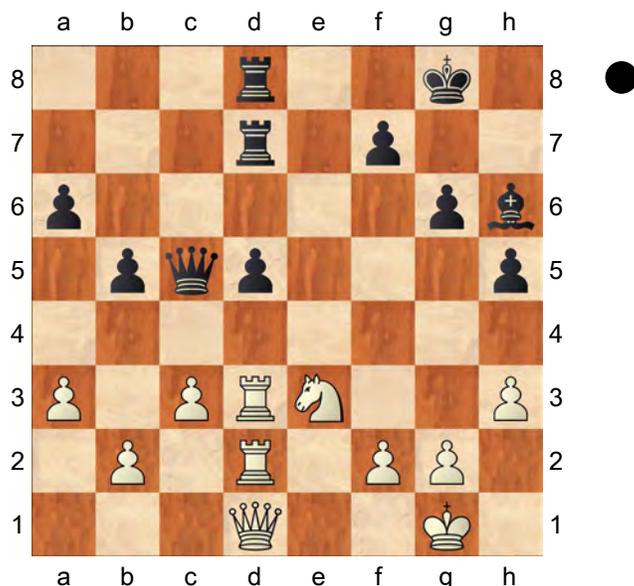
29.Re2 Qc7 30.Nc2 b5

Taking measures against White's thematic c3-c4. 31.Ne3

[White does not achieve much with 31.Nb4 trying to prove the knight's superiority over the bishop. Qb7 32.Re5 Otherwise ..a6-a5. d4!

(But now 32...a5? is met with 33.Rexd5!) 33.cxd4 Bg7 with preferable play already. We can notice that the bishop is very active, actually.]

31...Qc5 32.Red2



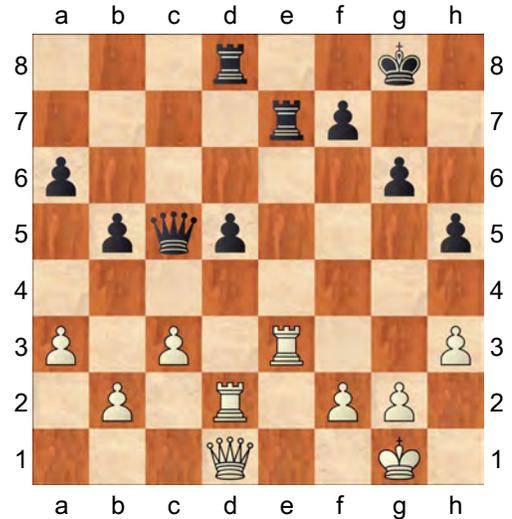
Black cannot avoid the minor pieces' exchange anymore. 32...Bxe3
33.Rxe3 Re7! Kortschnoj chooses a similar plan as in the previous example, intending to place one rook on the fifth rank. This is the most effective method now, as the e-file is closer to the enemy king.

[33...d4? would lose a pawn to 34.Red3±]

[But it is instructive to check what would happen if Black defends passively as in some cases he might not be in time to fight for the e-file: 33...Kg7 34.g3 Rd6!?

35.Red3

(The point behind Black's previous move is revealed after 35.h4 d4! 36.Red3 dxc3 37.Rxd6 Rxd6 38.Rxd6 c2= In this line it is essential that the d6-rook is hanging. This tactical operation would not work with the rook on d7.) 35...R8d7 36.Rd4 Qc6 37.h4 Qc5 38.a4 This reduces the number of queenside pawns and Black's worries in general, but otherwise b2-b3 would not be possible. Qc6 39.axb5 axb5 40.R2d3 Qc5 41.Qd2 (41.b3 Re6! possibly followed by ...Qe7 would allow Kortschnoj's game regrouping.) 41...Qc6 42.b3 Ra7 43.Rxd5 (White also needs to be careful. If 43.c4? Ra1+ 44.Kh2 dxc4-+) 43...Ra1+ 44.Kh2 Rf1 45.Kg2 Rc1!=]



34.Rxe7

[34.Red3 Re5 does not pose problems either: 35.g3 (Only not 35.h4? Qe7 attacking h4 and threatening ...Re1+.) 35...Qe7 36.Kg2 Kg7 37.Rd4 Qe6 38.h4 Rd7 39.a4 Rd8 40.axb5 axb5 41.b3 Rc8! 42.R2d3 (42.Rxd5 Rxc3= is drawish.) 42...Rd8!? 43.c4 (What else? If 43.Qf3 Re4= or 43...Rf5 and else Black could think of using the e-file with ...Re1 and if Qf3 then ...Re4.) 43...bxc4 44.bxc4 dxc4= with an obvious draw.]

34...Qxe7 35.g3

[In the QG Isolani structure 35.Rxd5 would win a pawn but here Rxd5 36.Qxd5 Qe1+! 37.Kh2 Qxf2= retrieves it at once.]

35...Qe6 36.h4 Kg7 37.Kg2 Qe4+ 38.Kh2 Qf5 39.Kg2 Qe4+ 40.Qf3=

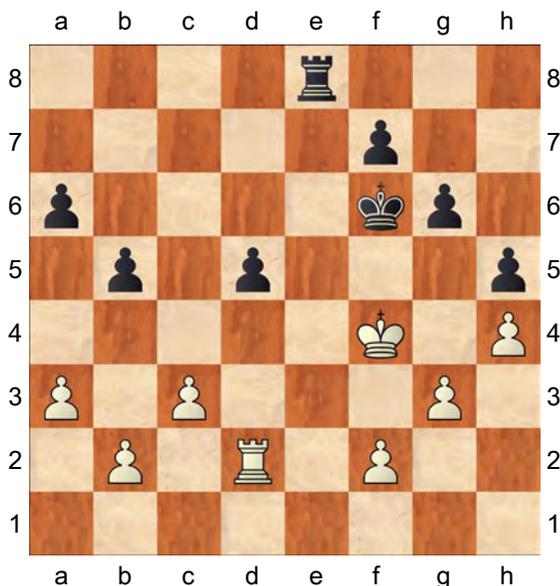
[Botvinnik recommends 40.Kg1! giving the following line: Qe6 41.Rd4 Qc6 42.Qd2 Rd7 43.a4 Rd8 (43...bxa4 44.c4±) 44.axb5 axb5 45.b3 Rc8 46.Rxd5 Qxc3 47.Qxc3+ Rxc3 48.Rxb5±]

[40.Kg1 But Black can avoid reaching this worse (even though most likely drawn) ending with: Re8! 41.Rxd5

(41.Kh2 Re5= consolidates the pawn avoiding any further pin.)
 41...Qe1+ Once again we notice that the control of the e-file is very useful.
 42.Qxe1 (42.Kg2 Qxd1 43.Rxd1 Re2 44.Rb1 Rc2= does not offer White any winning chances either.)
 42...Rxe1+ 43.Kg2 Re2 44.Rd6 (44.b4 Ra2=) 44...Rxb2 45.Rxa6 Rb3=
 with an obvious draw.]

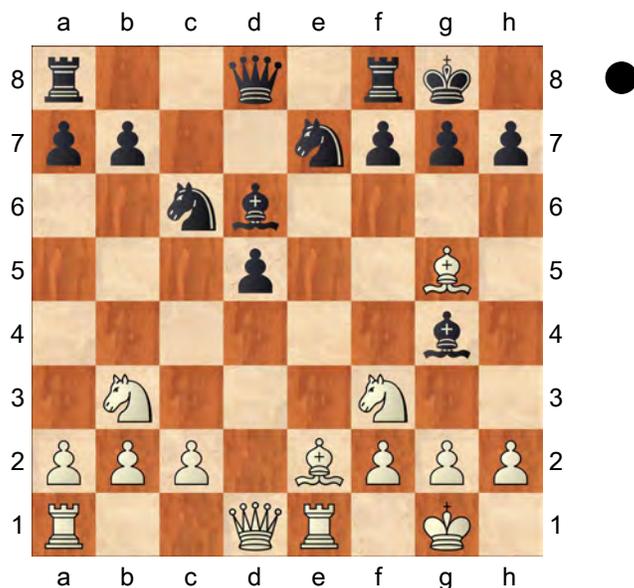
40...Qxf3+ 41.Kxf3 Kf6 42.Kf4 Re8!

[42...Re8 The simplest. In view of 43.Rxd5 Re2 44.Rd6+ Ke7 45.Rxa6 Rxf2+ 46.Ke3 Rxb2= the players agreed to a draw.]



□	Suetin,Alexey S	2400
■	Uhlmann,Wolfgang	2525
	Barcza mem Debrecen (4)	1987

The control over the open e-file can be useful not only for defensive or counterattacking purposes as in the previous example but also for launching the own initiative. Here is an illustrative example of another great classical expert of this structure: **1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 c5 4.Ngf3 Nc6 5.exd5 exd5 6.Bb5 Bd6 7.0-0 Nge7 8.dxc5 Bxc5 9.Nb3 Bd6 10.Bg5 0-0 11.Re1 Bg4** A typical way of starting the fight against the blockade on d4. **12.Be2**

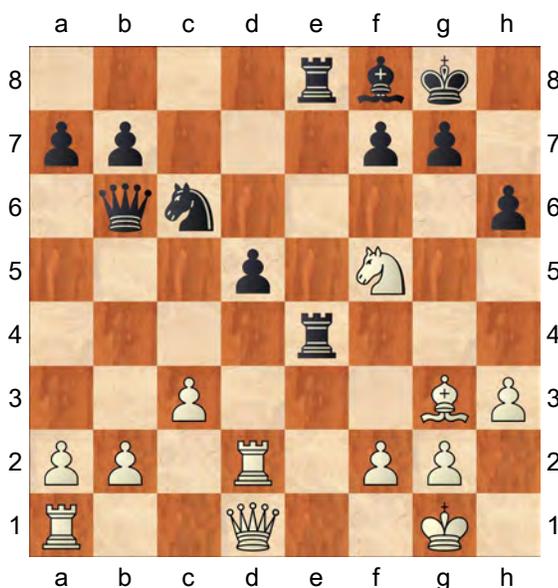


Re8 To non-specialists this may look mysterious, as for the time being the knight blocks the e-file. But Black has several possible plans for his knight, depending on the ulterior course of the game so starting with the game move is the most flexible move order. **13.Nfd4 Bxe2 14.Rxe2 h6 15.Bh4 Qb6 16.c3**

Nxd4 17.Nxd4 Nc6! Everything becomes clear now. White cannot defend d4, b2 and the e-file simultaneously. **18.Nf5 Bf8 19.Rd2** Against the QG Isolani such a regrouping would be very effective. But in the French Defence, it allows Black to activate his rooks along the e-file, while the d5-pawn is basically taboo as ... Qxb2 would leave White with an annoying weakness on c3 (once again typical only for the French).

[White could have reached a draw by force with 19.Rxe8 Rxe8 20.Nxh6+ (20.Qd2 offers Black active play after Qa6 planning ...Re2. 21.Qxd5?! Re5 22.Qf3 Qb5 followed by ...Qxb2.) 20...gxh6 21.Qg4+ Kh7 22.Qf5+ with a draw by perpetual. But an attacking player like Suetin probably thought it would be below his dignity level to play for a draw so soon.]

19...Re4 20.Bg3 Rae8 21.h3



d4! Black's overall activity allows him to carry out the thematic Isolani break, thus not only solving all his problems

but also achieving at least some symbolic advantage. **22.Qf3**

[22.cxd4 Bb4 wins the exchange as moving with the rook loses to ...Re1.]
 [Or if 22.Nxd4 Nxd4 23.Rxd4 (23.cxd4 Bb4 is less deadly now due to 24.f3 defending e1, but Black still retains a large advantage after Bxd2 25.fxe4 Be3+ 26.Kh2 Bxd4) 23...Qxb2 with the better structure and active play.]

22...dxc3 23.bxc3 Re1+ 24.Rxe1 Rxe1+ 25.Kh2 Qb1 26.Bc7 Qe4 27.Qxe4 Rxe4 Black has converted his initiative into a slightly better ending due to his better queenside structure and eventually won on move 60. **28.Bd6 Bxd6+ 29.Nxd6 Re7 30.c4 b6 31.Nb5 Kh7 32.Kg3 Na5 33.Rc2 a6 34.Nd6 Rc7 35.Kf4 Rc5 36.Ke4 Kg6 37.Kd3 f5 38.g4 fxg4 39.hxg4 Rc7 40.Ne4 Nc6 41.a3 Ne5+ 42.Kd4 Nxd4 43.Rb2 Rd7+ 44.Kc3 Kf5 45.f3 Ne5 46.Rxb6 Rd3+ 47.Kc2 Rxf3 48.Nd6+ Kf4 49.Rxa6 h5 50.c5 h4 51.Ra4+ Kg5 52.Re4 Nc6 53.a4 h3 54.Re1 Kh4 55.Ne4 g5 56.Nd2 Rf2 57.Kd3 h2 58.Ke3 Rxd2 59.Kxd2 g4 60.Re6 Kg5 0-1**

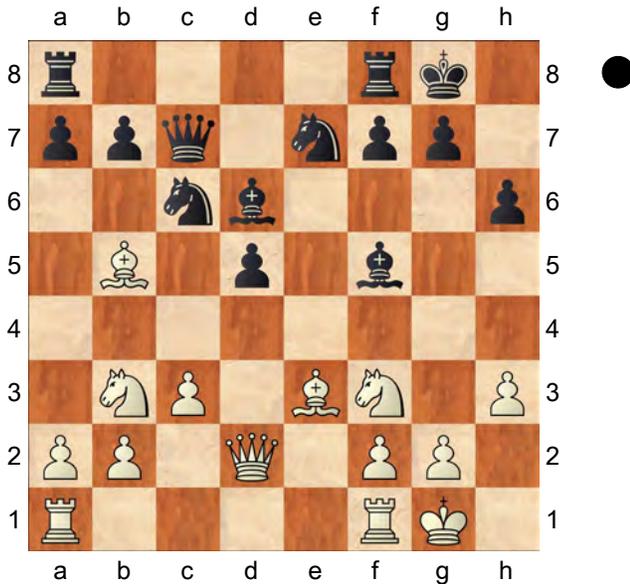
□ Pogats, Jozsef

■ Portisch, Lajos

HUN-ch 14th Budapest (16) 19.12.1958

In the normal Isolani structure one of Black's main resources is placing a minor piece on e4, using the central pawn for supporting it. In the French

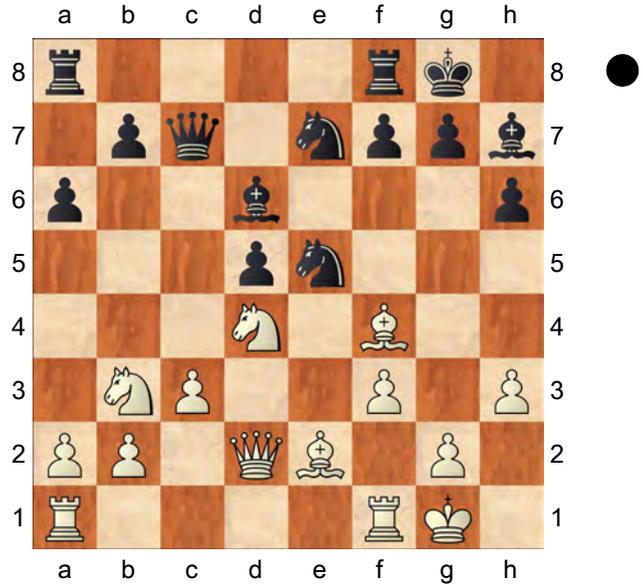
Defence this remains valid, but Black has an additional square on c4, as controlling it with b2–b3 would weaken the c3–pawn. Here is an example where Black made good use of both outposts: **1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 c5 4.exd5 exd5 5.Ngf3 Nc6 6.Bb5 Bd6 7.0–0 Nge7 8.dxc5 Bxc5 9.Nb3 Bd6 10.Bg5 0–0 11.Qd2 Qc7 12.h3 h6 13.Be3 Bf5 14.c3**



Be4 Black's pieces are quite active and apart from the obvious threat ...Bxf3 he may consider ...Nf5 and ...Ng6. This leaves White little choice. **15.Nfd4** [Both 15.Be2 Nf5 16.Bc5 Bf4] [and 15.Nbd4 Ng6 followed by ...Nf4 offers Black the initiative. But the game move, preventing ...Ng6 in view of f2–f3 trapping the bishop, opens new horizons for the other knight.] **15...a6 16.Be2 Ne5!** The knight is en route to c4. **17.f3** Consistent with the previous move, even though it weakens e3. The bishop is forced into passiveness but only temporarily. [17.Bf4 would not have changed

much: **N7g6 18.Bg3 Nc4 19.Bxd6 Qxd6 20.Bxc4 dxc4 21.Ne2!?** The only way of avoiding being pushed back completely. **Qc6 22.Nbd4 Qd5 23.f3 Bd3**]

17...Bh7 18.Bf4



N7g6 19.Bh2

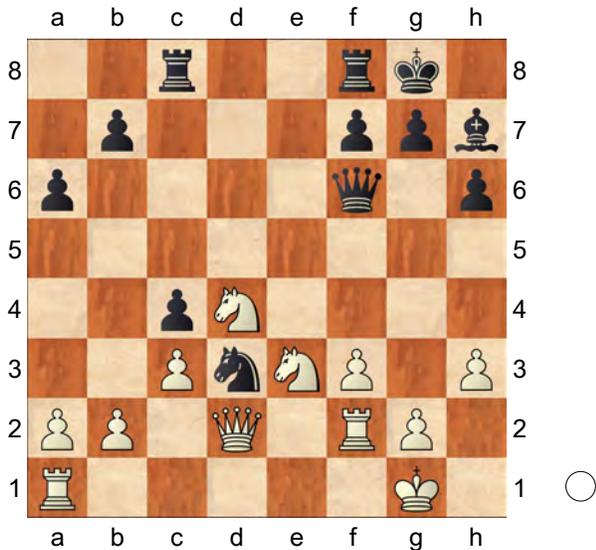
[More or less forced. With the kingside dark squares weak exchanging on e5 makes little sense, while 19.Bg3 Nxf3+ is good for Black, too. After the game move the similar trick does not work due to Nxf3 defending the bishop.]

19...Rac8 20.Rf2 Nc4 21.Bxd6 Qxd6 22.Bxc4

[This yields Black a space advantage and conceals him the d3–square entirely, but after 22.Qc1 Nf4 Black's pressure would be overwhelming.]

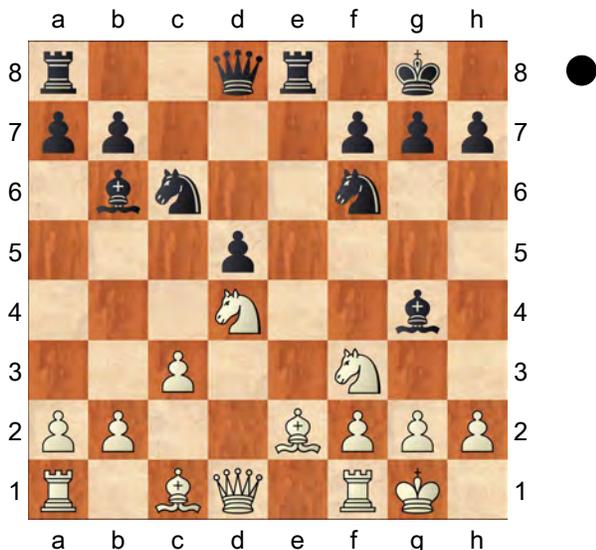
22...dxc4 23.Nf5 Qf6 24.Nbd4

Unfortunately for him, White's initiative is only superficial as his f5–knight is unstable. **24...Ne5 25.Ne3 Nd3**]



Black is completely dominating and the d4-knight cannot compensate for the passivity of the rest of the army. **26.Ng4 Qb6 27.Re2 Rfe8 28.b4 Rxe2 29.Qxe2 Nxb4 30.Re1 Bd3 31.Qe7 Nc2 32.Qd7 Rd8 33.Re8+ Rxe8 34.Qxe8+ Kh7 35.Qxf7 Nxd4 36.cxd4 Qxd4+ 37.Kh2 c3 38.f4 c2 39.Qc7 Bc4 40.Nf6+ Qxf6 41.Qxc4 Qc6 42.Qd3+ Kg8 43.Qb3+ Kh8 0-1**

Baches Garcia,Guillermo **2389**
 Marin,Mihail **2548**
 Andorra Erts (154) 24.07.2012



Black is very active and thought this was a good moment to exchange in the centre with 12...Nxd4 White did not like the prospect of defending a slightly worse symmetrical position after 13.cxd4 Qd6 and went for the principled 13.Nxd4 Was this a good decision?

***No, it was not! 13...Rxe2! wins more or less by force. 14.Nxe2

[The intermediate 14.f3 does not work: Qe7 15.fxg4 Qe4 16.Rf2 Re1+]

14...Qe7 15.Re1

[A better practical chance would have been 15.Be3 Bxe3 16.fxe3 Qxe3+ 17.Rf2 Ne4 18.Qd4 Qxf2+ 19.Qxf2 Nxf2 20.Kxf2 Bxe2 21.Kxe2 f6± even though Black has every reason to count on winning.]

15...Re8 16.Kf1

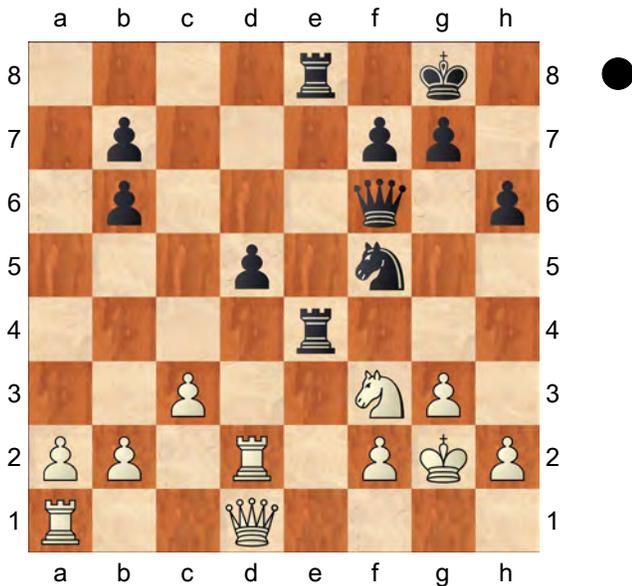
[I was slightly worried by 16.Bg5 Bxe2 17.Qd2 but it appears that after Qe4 18.Bxf6 (18.Rac1 Ng4-+; 18.h3 Re5-+) 18...gxf6 White is not in time to use the pin along the e-file while Black can start an attack along the g-file. 19.Rac1 Kh8 20.Rc2 (20.Qh6 Rg8 21.Qxf6+ Rg7 22.g3 Kg8 followed by ...Rg6-+) 20...Rg8 21.g3

Bxf2+! 22.Kxf2 Qf3+ 23.Kg1 Rxc3+
24.hxg3 Qxc3+ 25.Kh1 Bf3+ 26.Qg2
Qxe1+ wins.]

**16...Ne4 17.Be3 Bxe3 18.fxe3 Qf6+
19.Kg1 Qf2+ 20.Kh1 Qxe3 21.Qd4
Nf2+ 22.Kg1 Nd3+ 23.Qxe3 Rxe3
24.Red1 Bxe2 25.Rd2 h5 26.a4 Bg4
27.a5 a6 28.Kf1 h4
0-1**

□ **Salazar Jacob,Hernan**
■ **Campora,Daniel Hugo**
Santiago Santiago de Chile

2315
2415
1980



Black has done everything right, doubling rooks on the e-file and controlling the blocking square on d4. But he still needs a plan to increase his pressure. **23...g5!** A multi-purpose move, continuing the fight for the d4-square and aiming at clearing the f-file to create threats against f2. **24.h3**

[24.Rxd5 Re2]
24...h5 25.Nh2?! This is too passive to be good.

[25.Nd4?! is premature: Nxd4 26.cxd4 (26.Rxd4 Re2) 26...g4 27.h4 (White needs to keep the kingside blocked as after 27.hxg4 hxg4 followed by ...Kg7 and ...Rh8 Black's attack would be unstoppable.) 27...Re2! 28.Rxe2 Qf3+ 29.Kg1 Rxe2 30.Qf1 Rxb2-+]

[A neutral move such as 25.Rc1 fails to keep troubles away: g4 26.Nd4 Nxd4 27.Rxd4? Re1! 28.Qxe1 Qf3+ 29.Kg1 Rxe1+ 30.Rxe1 gxh3-+]

[The only surviving chance was 25.Kg1! removing the king from the exposed square. g4 26.Nd4 Nxd4 27.Rxd4 Rxd4 (The point is that 27...Re2 runs into 28.Rf4±) 28.Qxd4 Qxd4 29.cxd4 Re2 30.Rc1 with every chance to hold the rook ending.]

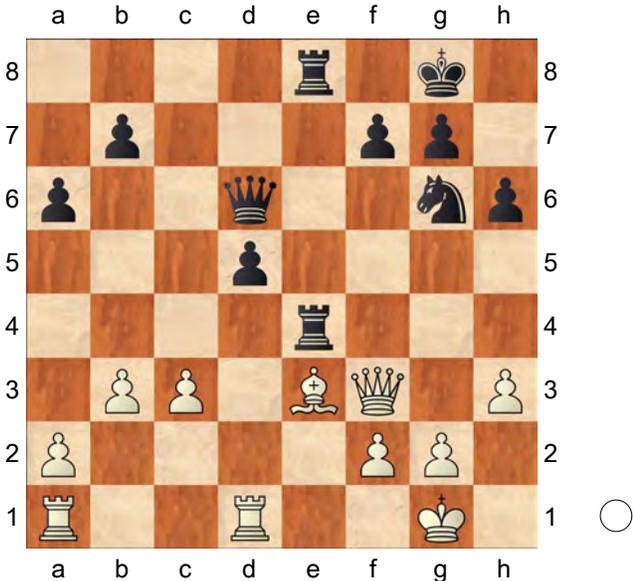
25...g4 26.hxg4 hxg4 27.Kg1

[27.Nxg4 Qg5 28.Nh2 Re1! wins material as the rooks are hanging. The only way to limit the damage is 29.Qg4 Qxg4 30.Nxg4 Rxa1 31.Nf6+ Kf8 32.Nxe8 Kxe8 33.Rxd5]

**27...d4-+ 28.Nxg4 Qg5 29.Rd3 Rxc4
30.cxd4 Nxg3
0-1**

Gayson, Peter

Botterill, George Steven **2365**
 BCF-ch Swansea **1987**

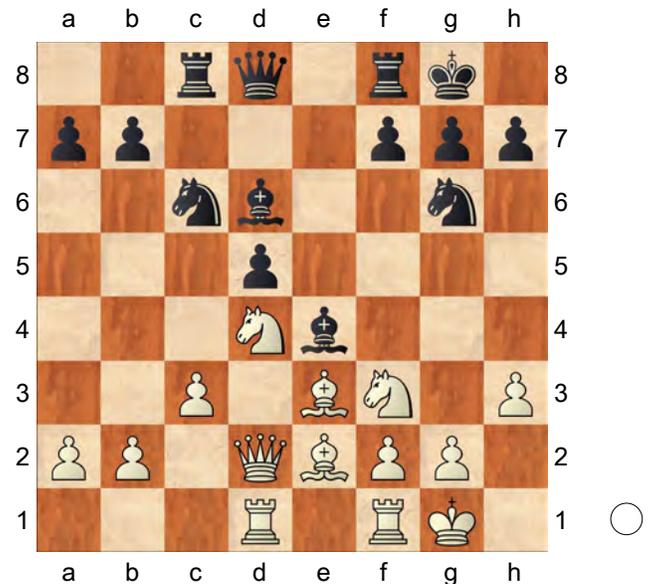


White tried to reduce Black's pressure with **28.Rd4** Was this a good idea?
 ***Not quite as the queen and bishop are exposed: **28...Nh4! 29.Qg3**
 [29.Qe2 Qg6 offers Black a winning attack: 30.g4 (30.Qf1 Nf3+; 30.g3 Rxe3 31.fxe3 Qxg3+ 32.Kh1 Qxh3+ 33.Qh2 Qf3+ 34.Kg1 Re6) 30...Rxd4 31.cxd4 Qe4-+]
 [29.Qh5 R8e5 forces the queen back anyway, gaining an attacking tempo for Black.]
29...Qxg3 30.fxg3 Rxe3 31.gxh4 Rxc3 32.Rad1
 [32.Rxd5 Re2♣ followed by ...Rcc2 is hopeless.]
32...Re2 33.h5 Rg3 and Black won.
34.Kf1 Rgxg2 35.Rxd5 Ref2+ 36.Ke1 Rxa2 37.Rd8+ Kh7 38.Kf1 Raf2+

39.Ke1 Rb2 40.Kf1 Rh2 41.Kg1 Rxh3
42.R8d7 Rg3+ 43.Kh1 Rxb3 44.Rxf7 Rg4 45.Rd8 Rh3#
0-1

Tomczak, Rafal **2339**

Jussupow, Artur **2570**
 Warsaw AIG Life rapid 8th (6) 20.12.08



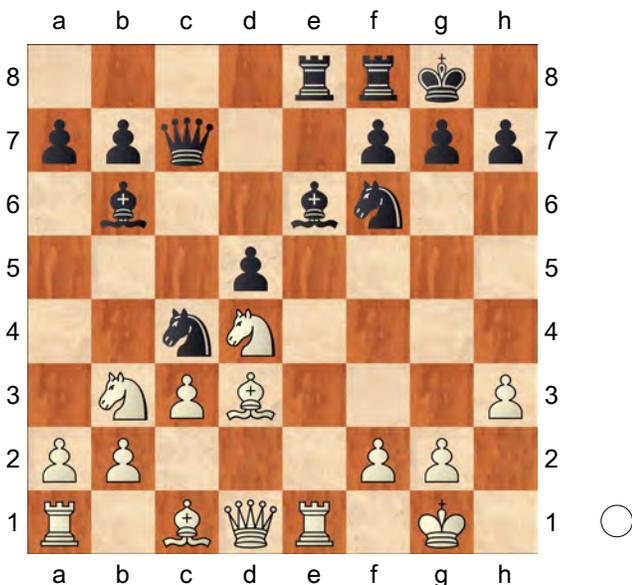
White tried questioning Black's stability in the centre with **16.Ng5** when Black correctly answered with **16...Nxd4**, the only move avoiding trouble. How should White deal with the tensioned situation? **17.Qxd4?** This loses material.
 [17.cxd4 Rc2♣ would also be unsatisfactory after the forced 18.Qe1]
 [The only move to keep White in the game was 17.Bg4!! Bxg2!?
 (The most interesting continuation.

17...Nc6? leaves Black hanging:
 18.Nxe4 dxe4 19.Bxc8+-; 17...f5
 leads to simplifications and a probable
 draw: 18.Nxe4 dxe4 19.Qxd4 fxg4
 20.Qxd6=) 18.Kxg2 Nf5 19.Qxd5
 (19.Bxf5 Nh4+ retrieves the knight
 with an advantage.) 19...Rc5
 20.Qxc5! (20.Qd2 Nxe3+
 followed by ...Rxc5 is bad the same
 as; 20.Bxc5 Nf4+) 20...Bxc5 21.Rxd8
 Nxe3+ 22.fxe3 Rxd8 23.Nxf7 Rd2+
 with interesting play and even
 chances.]

**17...Bc5 18.Qd2 Bxe3 19.Qxe3
 Bxg2!±** A small trick winning at least a
 pawn. **20.Kxg2? Re8 21.Nxf7**
 [21.Qd2 Rxe2--+]
**21...Rxe3 22.Nxd8 Nf4+ 23.Kg1
 Rxe2--+**
0-1

□ Panov, Vasily N
 ■ Bondarevsky, Igor
 URS-ch10 Tbilisi

1937



Black is very active but the voluntary
 retreat **16.Ne2?** made things worse.
 Why? **16...Bxh3!** With the g1-a7
 diagonal available to the other bishop
 this sacrifice wins. **17.Bf4**

[17.gxh3 Rxe2! (17...Bxf2+
 is also strong since 18.Kxf2 Qh2+
 19.Kf1 Re3 or 19.Kf3 Re3!+ 20.Bxe3
 Ne5#.) 18.Rxe2 (18.Bxe2
 does not change much: Qg3+ 19.Kh1
 Qxh3+ 20.Kg1 Bxf2+ 21.Kxf2 Ne4+
 22.Kg1 Qg3+ 23.Kh1 Nf2#)
 18...Qg3+ 19.Kh1 Qxh3+ 20.Kg1
 Ng4 21.Bf4 g5!-+]

17...Qd7±

[This is strong enough but the
 spectacular 17...Rxe2!! is even more
 convincing: 18.Bxc7 Bxf2+ 19.Kh2
 Rxe1 Now or on the next move White
 has to return the queen, as 20.Qc2
 Ne3 21.Qd2 allows Bxg2 threatening
 ...Nfg4#.]

18.gxh3

[18.Bxc4 dxc4 19.gxh3 Qxh3
 20.Nbd4 Re4 also offers a decisive
 attack.]

**18...Qxh3 (Δ...Nxb2) 19.Bxc4 Qg4+
 20.Kf1**

[20.Bg3 Rxe2!]

20...Bxf2

[20...Qf3! is even stronger: 21.Nbd4
 Bxd4 22.Qxd4 Rxe2 23.Bg3
 (23.Rxe2??? Qh1#) 23...Rxb2
 White has no time to save the c4-
 bishop due to the threat ...Qh1#.]

**21.Kxf2 Ne4+ 22.Kf1 Qf3+ 23.Kg1
 Qf2+ 24.Kh1 Re6 25.Bxd5 Qf3+
 26.Kh2 Rg6 27.Bxf7+ Rxf7 28.Qd8+
 Rf8 29.Qd5+ Kh8 30.Ng3 Qf2+
 0-1**

Typical Structures after 1.d4 d5

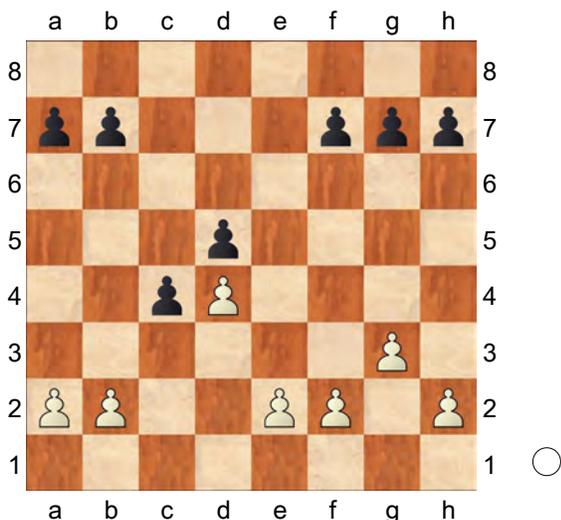


Dear Reader,
 In this article, I deal with some of the most important structures which arise after 1.d4 d5. In particular, I examine the following openings: Tarrasch Defense, Semi-Tarrasch Defense, Chigorin Defense, Albin Counter-Gambit, and Baltic Defense. Every structure is presented in the following way:

- Explanation of the main plans and ideas
- Model game
- Test

Below, you can take a look at the coverage of the following structure:

Structure 1



This is a typical structure arising from the Tarrasch Defense in which White refrained from taking on c5 by dxc5, and Black did not take on d4 with cxd4 which would have both led to classical isolated queen pawn positions. Black tried to close the center with c5-c4 in order to keep the d5-pawn safe and in the hope to reach an endgame in which Black's queenside majority would be useful. White's has two different plans in this structure: 1) Play Ne5, since Black cannot trade knights in the center as the d5-pawn would be under too much pressure. Then next Nxc6 which only helps Black to improve his structure by means of bxc6 which overprotects d5 and opens the b-file. But the point comes in the next step; 2) Right after the exchange on c6, White continues with b2-b3! This practically forces Black to play cxb3. In this way, White opens the important c-file to put pressure on the newly created weakness on c6. White can recapture with the a-pawn and, despite the pawn being slightly exposed on b3, White also has the semi-open a-file at his disposal to exert pressure on the a-pawn. For White, it is useful to keep at least one rook on the board to put pressure on the queenside pawns. Minor pieces exchanges are welcome, especially of the dark-squared bishops, as the Black one is very important to protect c5, a sensible square in such structures. This is another advantage behind axb3 as White can now trade the dark-squared bishops with Ba3. The last operation would be to bring one knight to c5, from where it protects b3 and exerts an annoying pressure against Black's queenside, providing a pleasant and long-lasting advantage for White.

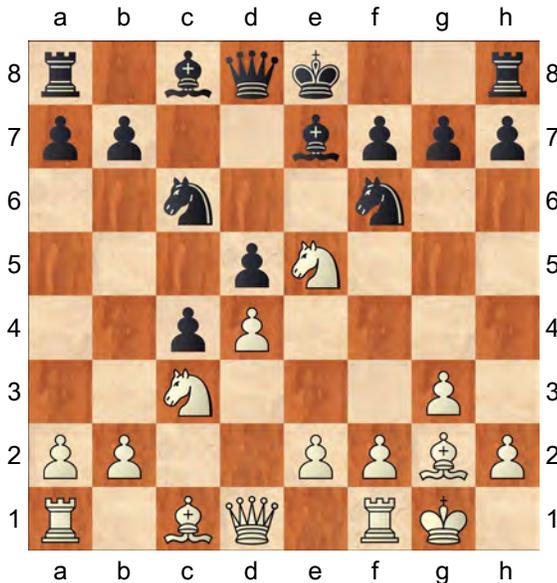
□ Svane,Rasmus 2445
 ■ Zieher,Hartmut 2300
 GER-ch 84th Saarbruecken (3) 08.09.13

1.Nf3 d5 2.c4 e6 3.d4 Nf6 4.Nc3 c5
 5.cxd5 exd5 6.g3 Nc6 7.Bg2 c4

If Black wants to play this move it should be done as soon as possible as otherwise White can prevent this resource.

[for example 7...Be7 8.0-0 0-0
 9.dxc5]

8.0-0 Be7 9.Ne5!



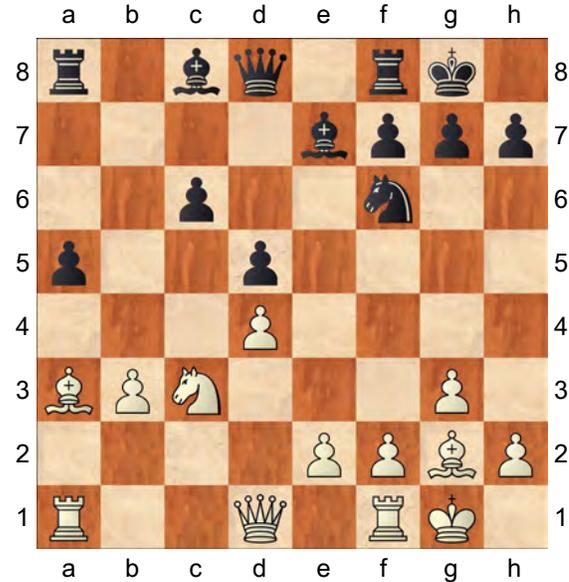
As after c5-c4 it is harder to create pressure against the d5-pawn, White changes the structure in order to have new targets in Black's camp. 9...0-0 10.b3!? I like the move order chosen by White in this game.

[10.Bg5 would transpose to the main lines]

10...cxb3

[10...Qa5 11.Bb2 Bb4 12.Rc1 cxb3 13.axb3 Be6 14.Nxc6 bxc6 15.Na4± ;Khenkin,I (2638)-Vilar Lopez,M (2145) Andorra op 21st 2003 (1) 1-0 also gave a typical edge for White in]

11.Nxc6! bxc6 12.axb3 Now White can play against the c6 and a7 pawns. 12...a5 13.Ba3!



A very important positional operation for White. After this exchange he get rid of Black's good bishop and can use the important c5-square which gives him a small but pleasant advantage. 13...Re8 14.Qc2 Ba6 15.Rfc1

[even simpler was 15.Bxe7! preventing the idea that Black tried in the game Rxe7 (15...Qxe7? 16.Rxa5 Bd3 17.Qa2! Rxa5 18.Qxa5± Bxe2? 19.Re1) 16.Rfc1 White can continue with e3 and Na4-c5, with easier play and a pleasant advantage. Black faces a difficult choice: the passive defense will be long and unpleasant, but active measures don't work either, for example Rc8 17.e3 c5 18.Bh3! Rc6 (18...Rcc7 19.Qd2 cxd4 20.Qxd4±) 19.Na4! c4 20.Nc5 Bc8 21.Bf1!cxb3 22.Qxb3± and Black only succeeded to make things easier for White. The knight has achieved its excellent outpost on c5 and the pawns on d5

and a5 remain weak. It is likely that the a5-pawn will be lost in some moves, leaving Black suffering.]

15...Bb4! Getting rid of the knight is the best chance for Black. **16.e3**
[16.Bxb4 axb4 17.Na4 Rxe2 18.Qxc6 Re6 19.Qc5 Rb8 seems ok for Black]

16...Bxc3 17.Qxc3 Bb5
The bad bishop protects a good pawn!
18.Bc5 a4! Black managed to deal with his queenside problems.

[18...Ne4 was an interesting option too 19.Qc2 Ra6 Black can mobilize his forces on the queenside and prepare to push a5-a4 under better circumstances.]

19.bxa4 Rxa4 20.Rxa4 Bxa4
With only one weakness remaining, and well protected by the bishop, Black is probably able to equalize. **21.Ra1**

[21.Bf1 Ne4 22.Qb4 Qf6! 23.f4 (23.Qxa4? Qxf2+ 24.Kh1 Qf3+ 25.Bg2 Nf2+ 26.Kg1 Qxe3--) 23...Nxc5 24.Rxc5 Qe7! 25.Qxa4 (25.Qc3 Rb8≠) 25...Qxe3+ 26.Kg2 Qe4+=]

21...Bb5 22.Qc2 g6?! A strange move which creates unnecessary weaknesses on the dark squares on the kingside.
[22...Ne4 would be good, initiating a good defensive maneuver 23.Bb4 h6 24.f3 Ng5! covering c5]

23.Ra7 Kg7 24.Qa2! h5 25.Qa3!
White makes excellent use of the open lines. In addition to the a-file, he can also use the weakened dark-squares.
25...Qc8 26.Bd6 Qf5 27.Qb2!
Attentive.

[27.Be5?? Qb1+ and White is mated]

27...h4? Maybe Black misevaluated this move and the arising position.

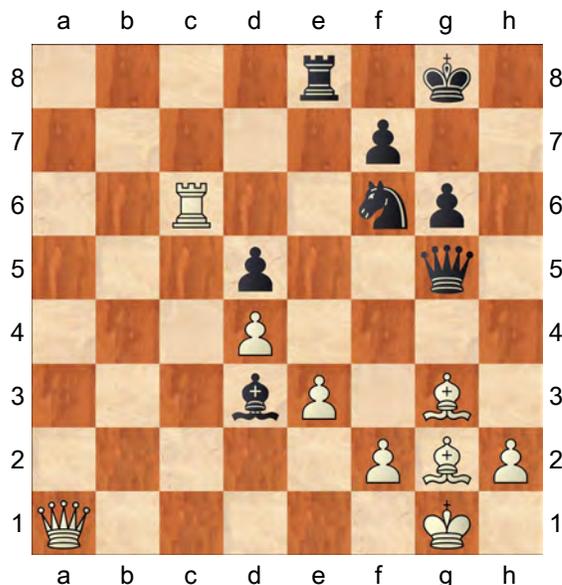
[27...g5! 28.Be5 Kg6! was still totally playable]

28.gxh4 Qg4 29.Qa1! Qxh4 30.Be5±
The main problem for Black is that he is almost paralyzed now. **30...Bd3?!**

[30...Qg5 31.Qd1 Qf5 32.h3! (32.Qf3? Qb1+) 32...g5 33.Qf3! Qxf3 34.Bxf3 Kg6 35.Bd1! and Black is still under heavy pressure]

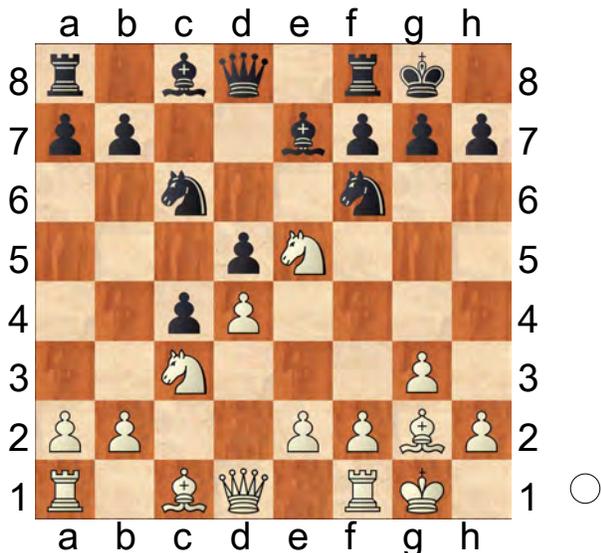
31.Rc7! Kg8
[31...Bb5 32.Qa7 Rf8 33.h3! Kg8 34.Qb7+-]

32.Bg3 Qg5 33.Rxc6±



The rest is simple technique. **33...Ne4 34.Qa4 Rd8 35.Qa5 Nxc3 36.hxc3 Rb8 37.Rb6 Rc8 38.Qxd5 Rc1+ 39.Kh2 Qh6+ 40.Bh3 Bf5 41.Rb8+**

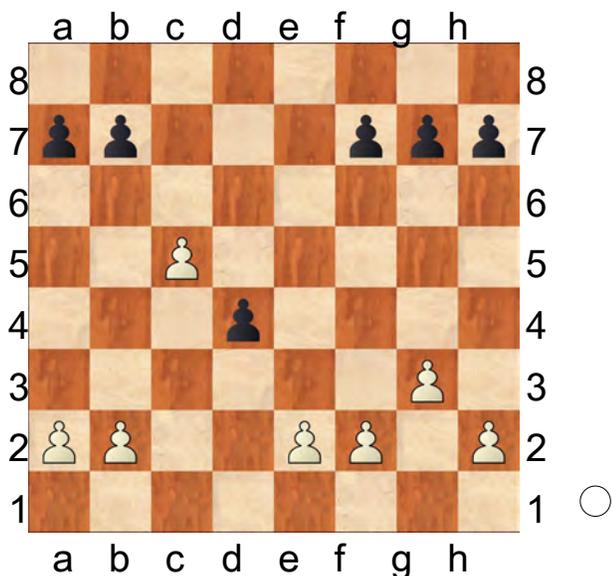
Exercise 1



How can White obtain a favourable structure?

Find the answer in the PGN and website versions of Modern Chess Magazine.

Position 2



This unbalanced structure arises from variations in which after a quick $dxc5$, Black opts for $d4!$? instead of $Bxc5$, allowing White to keep the pawn with $Na4$. The position is not so harmless, though: Black sacrifices the pawn to have more freedom for his pieces and more space in the center, leaving White with the misplaced $Na4$ and not allowing the typical plans that would give an advantage for White against the Isolani. In the end, White should be better, but it is important to be careful to avoid trouble. Black looks for full centralization of his forces, with $Bf5$ – $Ne4$ – $Bf6$ or $Bf5$ – $Be4$ – $Qd5$ and to bring the rooks to the central files with an active position. If White doesn't manage to develop his pieces or keep the pawn, Black achieves enough compensation for the pawn, or even more. With some care (and active play, when required) White can solve his development problems while keeping the material advantage at the same time. One important advice here is to NOT PLAY $e2$ – $e3$, as after $d4$ – $d3!$ Black would create a dangerous passed pawn. He could follow up with $Ne4$ – $Bf6$, for example. White would face terrible problems to continue developing the pieces on the queenside leading to a lack in development of all of his pieces. The first step for White is to protect the pawn with $a2$ – $a3$ and $b2$ – $b4$. After this, White has good plans against both of

Black's set-ups: 1) Ne4–Bf6 looks attractive for Black now because White weakened the c3–square. However, White has Bb2 with the threat of b4–b5, after which the d4–pawn is hanging, or Rc1 is increasing the control over c3. It is important to note that even when Black manages to play Nc3, the passed pawn that arises is easily blocked and attacked, and also exchange sacrifice ideas come in consideration, as White obtains material compensation and a strong queenside majority, supported by the Bg2.2) If Black chooses the centralization by means of Be4–Qd5, then both squares which would be used by the knight to reach c3 are occupied, and White can continue with Bf4 (or d2) and bring the knight back to the game with Nb2–d3, with a good position. It is important for White to take some care and pay attention to how Black is going to develop the pieces, but in the end, I don't believe this sacrifice is entirely sound, and White is better with correct play.

□ **Kovalyov, Anton** **2617**
 ■ **Shabalov, Alexander** **2529**
 Foxwoods op Mashantucket (6) 25.01.14

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 c5 4.Bg2 Nc6
5.0–0 d5 6.cxd5 exd5 7.d4 Be7 8.Nc3
0–0 9.dxc5 d4!? 10.Na4 Bf5 11.a3!?

This is safe and reliable, White intends to protect the pawn first and only then to solve the development problem.

[11.b4 d3! creates some complications, exactly what Black is looking for]

[11.e3? is not only bad but it is actually losing: dxe3 12.Qxd8 (12.Bxe3 Qxd1 13.Rfxd1 Bc2–+) 12...exf2+ 13.Rxf2 Raxd8⚡]

11...Be4 Aiming for quick centralization. [the direct 11...b5 12.cxb6 axb6 13.b4!N gives better chances for White]

[11...d3? is also a direct approach, but after 12.Re1! White is better again dxe2 13.Qxe2 Qa5 14.Qc4 Be6 (14...Rad8 15.Bd2! Rxd2? 16.Nxd2 Qxd2 17.Bxc6+–) 15.Rxe6! now the initiative passes to White's hands fxe6 16.Bd2 Qd8 17.Qxe6+ Kh8 Demir,G (2239)–Adams,N (2205) Budapest FS12 IM 2008 (5) 1/2 18.Be3± White is a pawn up on both sides, he has good pieces and the opponent's king is weak, which is more than enough compensation for the exchange]

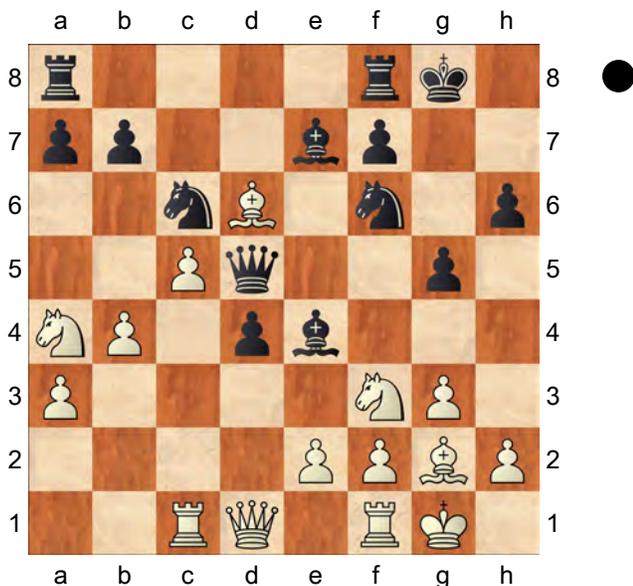
[11...Ne4 is another possible set-up for Black, winning time by attacking c5 12.b4 and now Bf6 Black pieces are looking very active, but White is in time to keep the control (12...Nc3N actually is an improved version only for White 13.Nxc3 dxc3 14.Qb3 Bf6 15.Be3 The c3–pawn is simply harmless for White, even if the game follows the line a6 16.Rac1 Re8 17.Rxc3! Bxc3 18.Qxc3 again, White has pawns up on both sides and the queenside majority supported by the Bg2 is very strong, for example Be4 19.Qa1! Qe7 20.Bf4 Rad8 21.Bd6 Qf6 22.Qxf6 gxf6 23.Rc1±) 13.Bb2 Nc3□ 14.Bxc3 dxc3 15.Qb3 Black is forced to advance the pawn c2 16.Rac1 Re8 White can consider exchange sacrifice ideas, but there's even an easier and very forcing path to the advantage 17.Nc3! a5 (17...Bxc3? 18.Qxc3 Rxe2 19.b5+–) 18.b5 a4 (18...Nd4

19.Nxd4 Qxd4 20.e4!±) 19.Qd5!very precise Ne7 20.Qxd8 Rxd8 21.e4! White eliminates the pawn and keeps the material advantage Rac8 22.exf5 Bxc3 23.Rxc2 Rxc5 24.Rfc1 Rdc8 25.Ne1!± L'Ami,E (2627) – Berelowitsch,A (2565) NED–chT 1213 2012 (7.1) 1–0]

12.b4 Qd5 Black has centralized the pieces, but now the knight has no access points to reach c3, so White can simply continue developing the pieces onto good squares. **13.Bf4! h6?** Too slow.

[The direct 13...g5!? looks like Black's best attempt, but is still bad 14.Bd2! Nd7 15.Nb2 Nce5 16.Nd3! Nc4 Benjamin,J (2255)–Todorovic,G (2410) London Peace 1987 1/2 (16...Nxd3 17.exd3 Bxd3 18.Nxg5+–) 17.Qb3! and White manages to develop the remaining pieces with an excellent position Rfd8 (17...g4? 18.Nf4! Nxd2 19.Nxd2+–) 18.Rfd1 Bf6 19.Rac1±] [13...Rfe8 14.Rc1]

14.Rc1 g5 15.Bd6!±



Having the rook on c1 makes all the difference, now White is much better. **15...b5**

[15...Bxd6 16.cxd6 Qxd6 (16...b6 17.Rxc6! Qxc6 18.Qxd4 ±) 17.Nc5 and White is going to have a material advantage again.]

16.Bxe7 Nxe7 17.Nb2

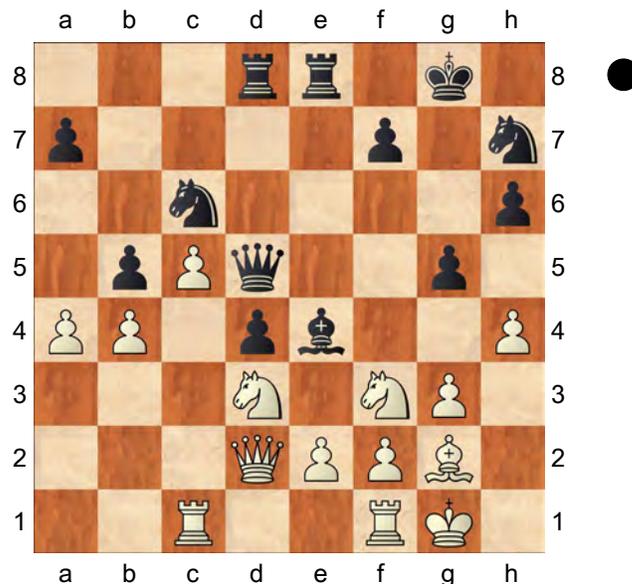
Nc6 [17...Qa2 18.Qxd4+–]

18.Nd3 Rfe8 19.Qd2 Already from this point we can call White's position winning: He is up a healthy passed pawn and has nice squares for the pieces. Black can put some resistance, as he did, but objectively speaking, White should convert his advantage.

19...Rad8 20.h4!Nh7

[20...g4 21.Nfe1]

21.a4!

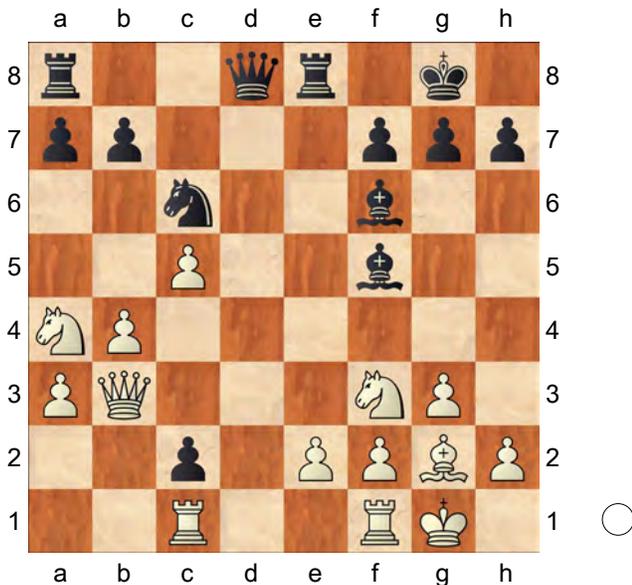


White's use of both rook pawns to improve the position is very instructive.

21...a6 22.axb5 axb5 23.Ra1 Re6
 24.Ra6 Qf5 25.Rb6+- Bd5 26.Ra1
 Rde8 27.Re1 Qg6 28.hxg5 hxg5
 29.Rxb5 Bxf3 30.Bxf3 g4 31.Nf4 Qh6
 32.Bxc6 Rxc6 33.Kg2 Ng5 34.Rh1
 Qg7 35.Rb6 Rxb6 36.cxb6 Qf6 37.b7
 Ne4 38.Qc2

1-0

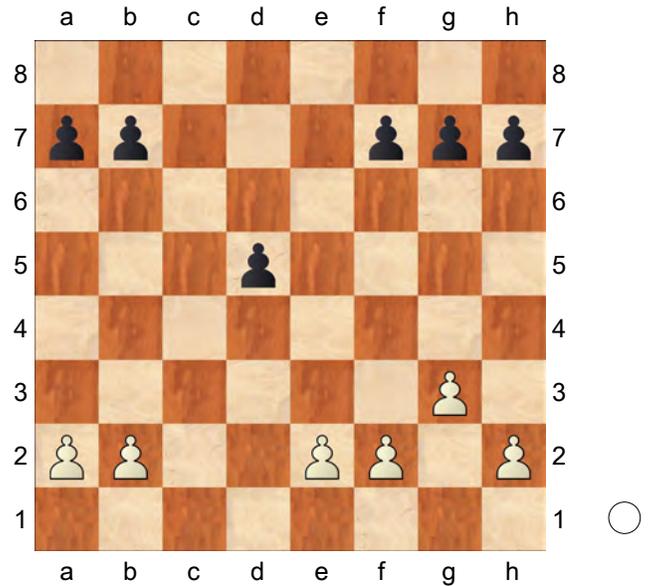
Exercise 2



In this position, Black sacrificed a pawn to activate his pieces. How can White solve his problem and keep an advantage?

Find the answer in the PGN and website versions of Modern Chess Magazine.

Structure 3



This is a classical structure with the isolani on d5. The best version for White is with the bishop on g2 as from there it exerts constant pressure on the d5-pawn. There are already a lot of books and Modern Chess articles that explain how to play this structure for both sides, but it is always good to remember the common ideas: Black should actively develop his pieces, as in return for the Isolani he has two open files for the rooks, space and more freedom to develop the pieces. It is advisable for Black to avoid exchanges and play for centralization or to look for initiative on the kingside. White, on the other hand, should have a more static and technical approach. It is essential to take control of the d4-square, which is a key square in such structures, especially for the knight, that becomes very strong there. White can also fight for the c-file.

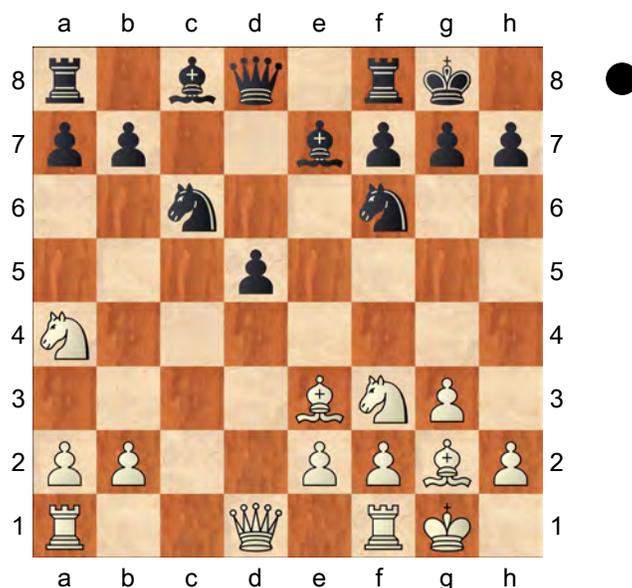
A good strategy is also to try to provoke new weaknesses in Black's camp. For this reason, other squares around the pawn can also be useful for the pieces: f4, c5 and e5, mainly the last two, as the idea is to provoke further commitments in Black's structure with b7-b6 or f7-f6. In that case, White would have more entry points available for the pieces, and Black's position would become unpleasant. As a general rule, exchanges are welcome for the first player, who is looking for endgames in which the isolani would leave Black in a passive defense, although with accurate play Black should be ok in many of them, White would retain reasonable chances. Also here, the dark-squared bishop is very important for Black. White can make great use of the knights in the endgames, but it is also possible to get an advantage with the bishop pair, due to the weaknesses on the dark squares. Usually, White can trade queens as this would decrease Black's chances of counterplay, but if Black makes unnecessary pawn moves to create weak squares, the queen could be useful to take advantage of them.

Nogueiras Santiago, Jesus **2556**
 Pozo Vera, Sandro **2457**
 CUB-ch KO 5th-6th (3.2) 11.04.2006

1.c4 e6 2.Nf3 d5 3.d4 c5 With the other knight still on b1, this move order gives more options for White. **4.cxd5 exd5 5.g3 Nc6 6.Bg2 Nf6 7.0-0 Be7 8.Nc3**

[Another interesting set-up would be 8.dxc5 Bxc5 9.Nbd2 establishing a quick blockade on d4.]

8...0-0 9.dxc5! Bxc5 10.Na4 Be7 11.Be3



White's plan is clear and easy to understand. He wants to obtain as much control over the very important d4- and c5-squares. The first one is an important blockading square. For White it would be nice to land a knight on c5

from where it would put further pressure on Black's position. **11...Bg4 12.Rc1 Re8** Black continues to develop the pieces actively. **13.Nc5!?** White tries to force Black to give the important dark-squared bishop. **13...Bxc5**

[13...Qb6!/? is an option to avoid that exchange for now. White would answer with 14.Nb3 keeping Nd4 and Nc5 at his disposal.]

14.Bxc5 Although the knight was useful on c5, the bishop pair also gives White a nice position. **14...Qd7 15.Re1** The next step is to prepare Nd4.

15...Bh3

[15...Rac8 looks good to prevent Nd4, but White can still fight for an advantage 16.Bd4!/?

A) 16...Nxd4 17.Qxd4! Rxc1 18.Rxc1 Rc8 (18...Rxe2? 19.Ne5+-) 19.Rxc8+ Qxc8 20.h3! Bxh3 21.Bxh3 Qxh3 22.Qxa7± White keeps the better position, besides the isolani he can work with the queenside majority now;

B) 16...Ne4 17.Be3 after spending a tempo on Bd4-e3, White is finally ready for Nd4. h5!/? Pigusov,E (2455)-Lputian,S (2530) Chigorin Memorial-19 1985 1/2 18.Qa4 Bh3 19.Bxh3 Qxh3 20.Qb3 Qd7 21.Red1 Red8 22.Kg2±]

16.Bh1! Keeping this bishop also looks like a correct decision. **16...Ne4 17.Be3 Rad8 18.Nd4**

[18.Qa4!/? is not only interesting but also provocative as it tempts Black to push d4? when he would suddenly find himself in a lost position after 19.Nxd4! Nxd4 20.Qxd7 Rxd7 21.Bxe4± Mindlin,A (2450)-Novik,M (2482) Maccabiah GM-B 2017 (4)

1-0 due to the back rank ideas White is a pawn up.]

18...Ne5 19.Bf4 White is still looking for exchanges. **19...Qe7**

[19...Nc4 doesn't changes much after 20.b3]

20.Bxe5! Now White has a practical advantage with no risks. In general, this is what White players should look for when fighting against an isolated pawn.

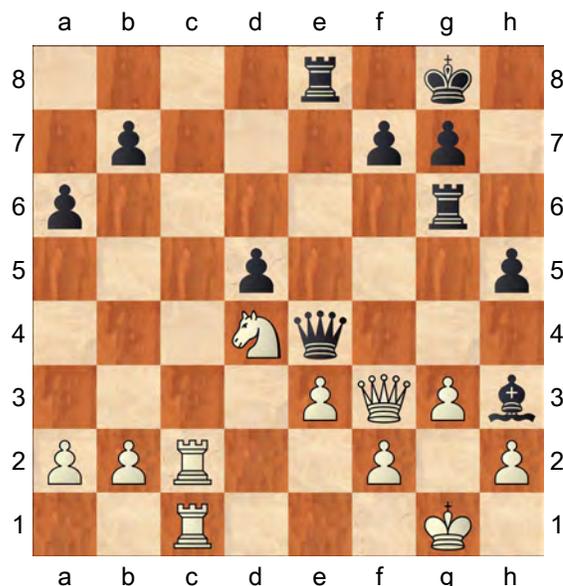
20...Qxe5 21.e3 Rd6!/? Black is looking for a play on the kingside. **22.Rc2!**

Nice prophylaxis by the Cuban GM. He protects the second rank and prepares to double rooks on the c-file. **22...Rg6**

23.Qe2 a6 24.Rec1 h5 Apparently, Black is doing well and has a dangerous initiative coming on the kingside, but now White made a very instructive decision: **25.Bxe4! Qxe4**

[25...dxe4? 26.Rc5]

26.Qf3!



This leaves Black with a difficult choice.

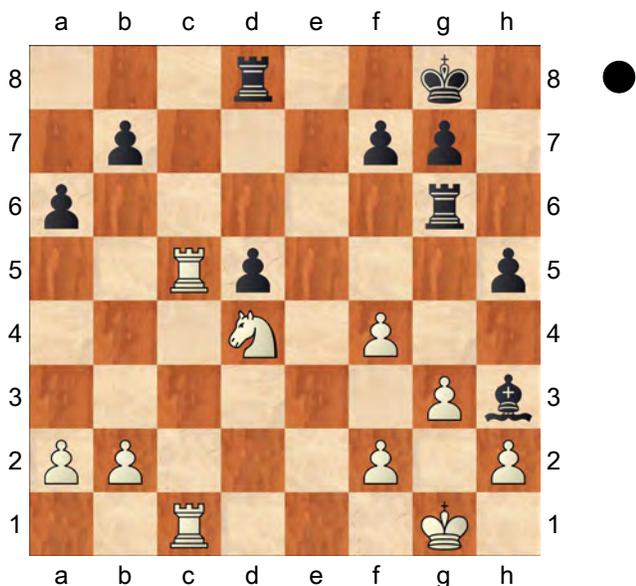
26...Qe5?!

[26...Rf6 was possibly the best option, with an almost forced sequence

27.Qxe4 dxe4 28.Rc7 (28.Rc5!?)
 28...b5 29.R1c6! Rxc6 30.Rxc6 Rc8!
 31.Rxc8+ Bxc8 32.Kf1

with an endgame that usually should be unpleasant for Black due to his many weaknesses on the dark squares, but there are chances to hold. But going into such an endgame is a difficult decision to make during a game.]

27.Rc5 Rd8 28.Qf4! This is a model game on how well-timed, correct exchanges can yield an advantage. The arising endgame is notably easier to play as White. **28...Qxf4 29.exf4±**



White has the open c-file under control, he can bring the king to the game using f3-Kf2, and the Nd4 is a monster, protecting the important e2-square. Black's position is unpleasant which often leads to further mistakes in such endgames. **29...Rb6**

[29...h4? doesn't prevent White's plan 30.f3! hxg3 31.hxg3 and now g4 is a serious threat Rxg3+? 32.Kh2+-]

30.b3 g6 31.f3 Rbd6 32.b4

Slowly but steadily, White improves his position. **32...Kf8 33.a3 Bf5 34.R1c3 Ke7 35.Kf2 Kf6 36.Rc7 R8d7 37.Ke3 Rxc7 38.Rxc7 Rd7 39.Rc5!**

It is often good to trade one pair of rooks, but now White should avoid it because his rook is better than Black's one, which is passively placed. **39...Be6 40.a4 Ke7 41.a5** Fixing the pawns on the same square as the bishop is an advisable strategy, but White had an idea that was stronger.

[It was 41.Nc2! Kd6 42.Kd4! with a nice regrouped to press the d5-pawn. A nice concept to remember is that the d4-square is good for the knight for the most part of the game, especially during the middlegame. But the fewer pieces are left on the board in the endgame, the more likely it will be that the king should be on that square.]

41...Kd6 42.Rc3

[42.f5!/?]

42...Re7 43.Kd2 In the end White lost the chance to improve his set-up, and Black is holding. But as a rule of thumb, such endgames always provide practical chances for the first player, and the defense is a difficult and tiring job. **43...Bd7 44.Re3 Be6 45.Rc3 Bd7**

46.Rc1 Re8 47.Rc5 Rb8 48.h4 Re8

[48...b6!? 49.axb6 Rxb6 50.Kc3 Be6 would give drawing chances for Black]

49.Rc3 f6 50.Nb3 After shuffling around for a while, White tries something. **50...Rg8?!** As it was said, the defence requires a lot of attention in such cases.

[50...Re7 was a safer option 51.Nc5 Bc6 52.Re3 Rxe3 53.Kxe3 d4+!=]

51.Nc5 Bc8

[51...Rb8 52.g4!? hxg4 53.Nxd7 Kxd7 54.fxg4 and White has some chances in this rook endgame]

52.Re3 g5!? Black should try something active, or White would just play Ke3-d4 with an already clear advantage.

[52...Rd8 53.Kc3 Kc6 54.Re2! Black is in a sort of zugzwang. d4+ (54...Kb5 55.Nb3! Kc6 56.Re7±) 55.Kc4 Bf5 56.Ne6 winning the pawn]

53.fxg5 fxxg5 54.hxxg5 Rxxg5 55.f4 Rg8 56.Re5!?

[56.Kc3 Rf8!]

56...Rxxg3 57.Rxxh5 Rf3 58.Rh6+ Kc7

59.Rf6 Black's position seems still a bit unpleasant, as the Bc8 is not playing much, due to the pressure on b7, but with correct play he should be able to hold. **59...d4 60.Nd3 Bh3 61.Rf7+ Kc8?** The decisive mistake.

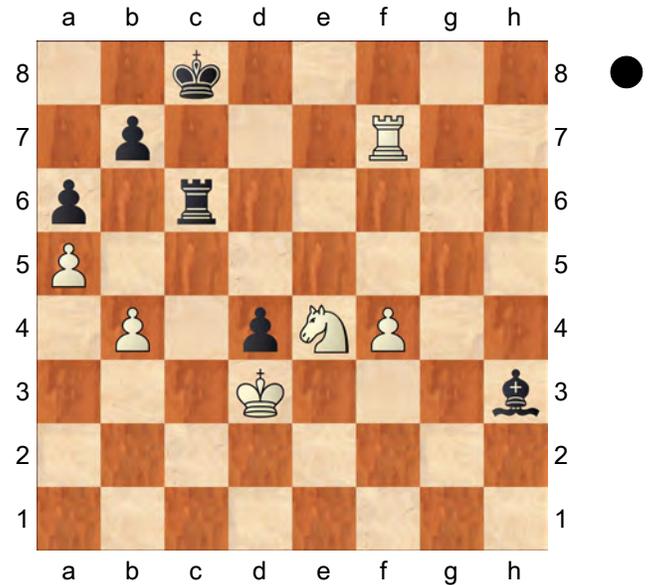
[It was important for Black to play actively with 61...Kd6! 62.Rxb7 Bf5! taking advantage of his better coordinated pieces and the passed pawn 63.Nc5 Kd5! 64.Nxa6 Rf2+ 65.Ke1 Ra2 66.Nc5 Ra1+ 67.Kf2 Ra2+± because of the passed pawn on d4, the White king cannot go so far, and the result should be a draw already]

[61...Kb8 would be better too]

62.Nc5 Rc3 63.Ne4! Now Black's position becomes really difficult.

[63.Nxb7 was also good]

63...Rc6 64.Kd3+-

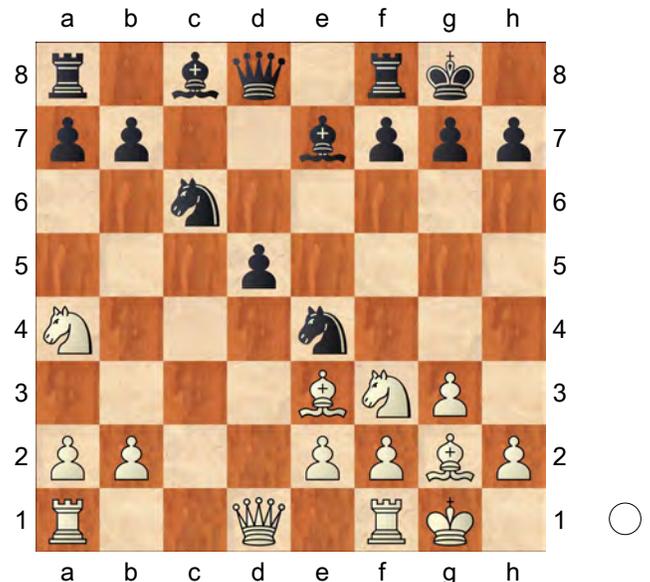


The pawn is lost, the king comes to the game, basically it is over. **64...Bf1+**

[64...Bg2 wouldn't be better 65.Kxd4 Bxe4 66.Kxe4 Rc4+ 67.Ke5 Rxb4 68.f5 Rb5+ 69.Kd6 Kb8 70.f6 Rxa5 71.Rg7 Rf5 72.f7 Ka7 73.Ke6 Rf2 74.Rg5!+-]

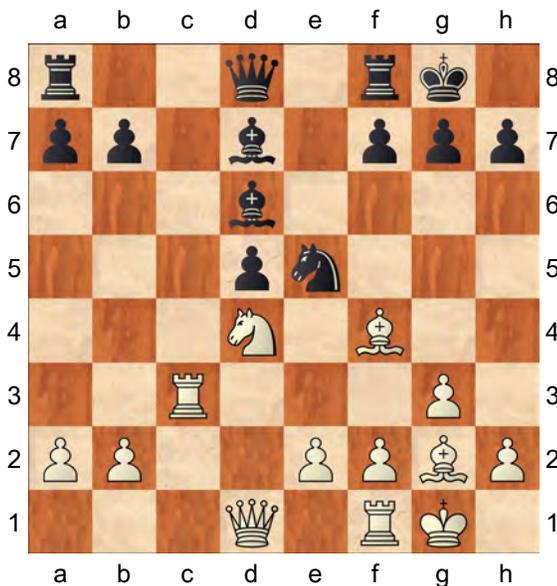
65.Kxd4 Rc4+ 66.Kd5 Rxb4 67.Nd6+ Kb8 68.f5 Bg2+ 69.Ke6 Bc6 70.Rf8+ 1-0

Exercise 3

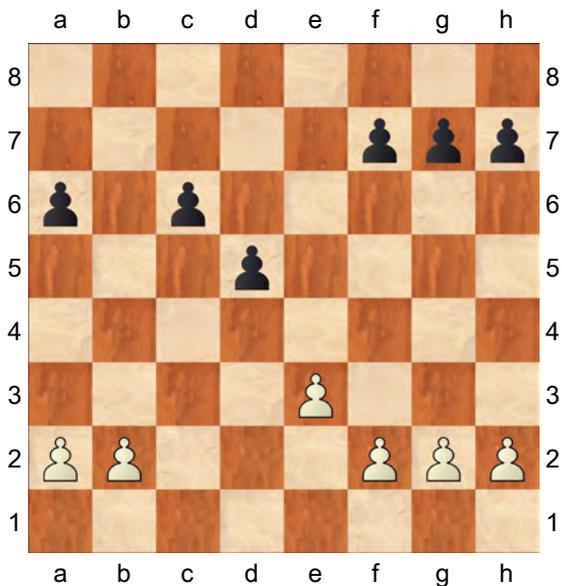


Black just played Ne4 to control the c5-square and preparing Bf6 to improve the pieces, how should White play?

Find the answer in the PGN and website versions of Modern Chess Magazine.



Structure 4



A similar structure to the Position 3, but this one arises from openings with the Isolated Pawn in which White develops the light-squared bishop on the diagonal f1-a6 instead of h1-a8. In that case, the bishop is not putting pressure on d5, but it gives the additional option of playing Bb5xc6 for White, and we reach this typical structure. In this particular case White waited for a7-a6 before taking on c6, but even without that move the exchange is a good idea. White's goal in such positions is to establish a firm control over d4 and c5, as well as to build a long-term pressure against the pawns. As Black has some vulnerable squares in his camp, the ideal plan for White is to keep both knights on the board, while exchanging at least one of Black's. Generally, the configuration NN x NB usually gives better chances to White, as the only Black bishop is not able to protect c6 and c5, and the knights can continuously change the point of pressure.

Giri, Anish **2714**
 Wang, Yue **2697**
 Beijing Sportaccord blitz (14) 13.12.11

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 d5 4.Nc3 c5
5.cxd5 cxd4!? 6.Qxd4 exd5 7.Bg5
 [7.e4!? promises a small advantage for White]

7...Be7

[7...Nc6? is bad due to 8.Bxf6]

8.e3 0-0

[8...Nc6 seems a more precise move order 9.Qa4 0-0 10.Rd1 transposes to the game]

9.Rd1 White's development aims to keep d5 under pressure since the very first moves

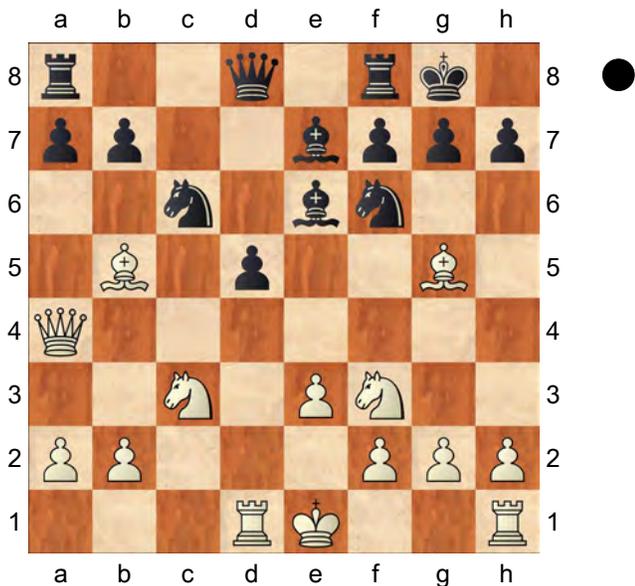
[9.Bd3!? is a very interesting move, played by Nisipeanu]

9...Nc6 10.Qa4 Be6

[10...Qb6 11.Qb5 leads to some equal endgames, with some small chances for White]

11.Bb5!?

[11.Be2 is the main move]



Played only twice, but a very logical move, as after the exchange on c6 the arising structure is well known as slightly favourable for White.

11...Qb6

[11...Na5 is the only way to prevent Bxc6 12.0-0 a6 13.Bd3 Rc8 Najer,E (2522)-Pinkas,K (2362) Swidnica op 1999 (5) 1-0 14.Qc2 h6 15.Bh4 Nc6 16.Qb1 still offers some ideas for White]

12.0-0 a6?! Forcing matters, but probably not a good idea.

[better was to keep developing with 12...Rfd8 13.Rd2 Rac8 14.Rfd1 with a lot of play ahead, but the important thing for Black is to keep as many pieces as possible on the board as he can then look for active and dynamic ideas and avoid the unpleasant endgames.]

13.Bxc6 bxc6 14.Qc2! After the exchange, White regroups his pieces in order to fight for the important squares d4 and c5. **14...Rfd8?! This natural move is the beginning of Black's problems.**

[Black should have played actively with 14...Bg4! 15.Rd2!? Bxf3 16.gxf3 Rfd8 17.Rfd1 Rac8 and the position looks dynamically balanced as White's weaknesses on

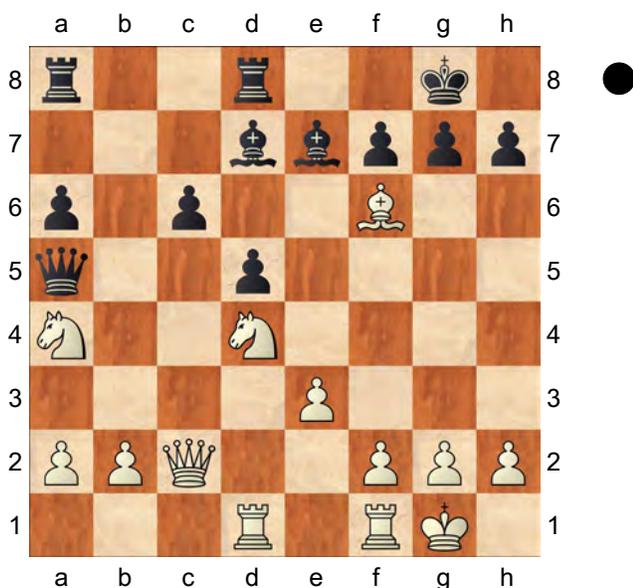
the kingside prevent him from exploiting Black's queenside in an easy way.]

15.Na4 Qa5 16.Nd4 Things are already looking unpleasant for Black. **16...Bd7**

[after 16...Rac8 White has the interesting idea 17.e4!? that works well because in the end Black still has a weakness to worry about Qc7 (17...dxe4 18.Bxf6 Bxf6 19.Nxe6 fxe6 20.Qxe4±) 18.exd5 Bxd5 (18...cxd5 19.Qxc7 Rxc7 20.Rfe1↑) 19.Nf5± and Black's position is unpleasant]

17.Bxf6!

[as this was a blitz game, White probably didn't like the position after 17.Nxc6 Bxc6 18.Qxc6 Rac8 as Black gets counterplay, but 19.Qb7! is still better for White Qxa4 20.Qxe7 Re8 21.Qa7! Ne4 22.Rxd5±]



Another good exchange, this time winning the c5-square. **17...Bxf6 18.Nc5** This gives Black a chance, but

still White has a nice position due to the beautifully placed knights.

[18.Rd3! would be more precise]

18...Qb6? Now Black is doomed to a passive defense.

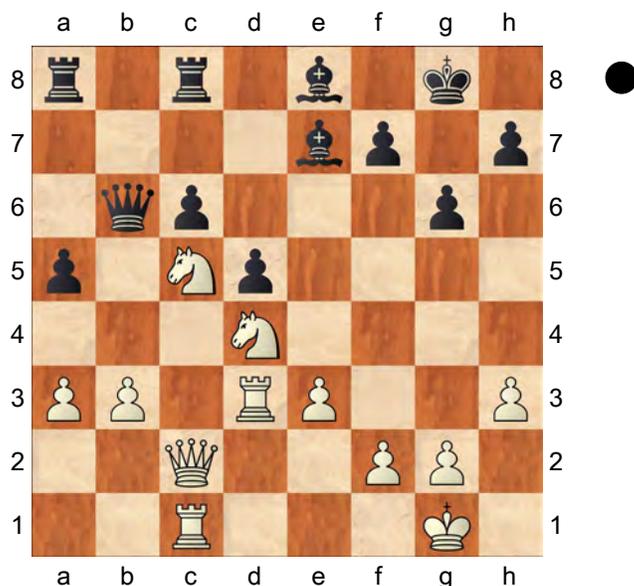
[18...Qxa2! was the only chance to keep fighting. 19.Nxd7 Rxd7

20.Qxc6 Rdd8 21.Rd2 Rab8±]

19.a3?! We shouldn't forget that this was a blitz game; so instead of concrete and forcing variations, White started to consolidate his positional advantage by playing strong and practical moves.

[but winning material was already possible 19.Nxd7 Rxd7 20.Qxc6 Qxc6 21.Nxc6 Bxb2 22.Rxd5!±]

19...Be8! At least Black is not losing material anymore. **20.Na4 Qb7 21.Rc1 Rdc8 22.Rfd1 g6 23.h3 a5 24.b3 Be7 25.Nc5 Qb6 26.Rd3!**



Slowly increasing the pressure on the queenside. After this, there was a series of moves in which nothing really happened and both sides just moved around. Despite White keeping a small advantage, Black is solid now. The

position should be objectively equal.

26...Ra7 27.Rc3 Rac7 28.Rb1 Qa7
 29.Re1 Bf8 30.Rc1 Qb6 31.Na4 Qa6
 32.Nc5 Qb6 33.Qd2 Qa7 34.R3c2
 Qb6 35.Qd3 Ra8 36.Qd1 Rac8
 37.Qg4 Rb8 38.Qf4 Rd8 39.Rc3 Bd6
 40.Qf6 Be7 41.Qf3 Rcc8 42.g3 Qa7
 43.Kg2 Qb6 44.Qf4 Qb8 45.Qf3 Qb6
 46.Qd1

[46.h4 h5 47.g4!→]

46...Qa7 47.Qd2

[47.b4! ?]

47...Rb8 48.Qc2 Rbc8 49.Re1 Bf6

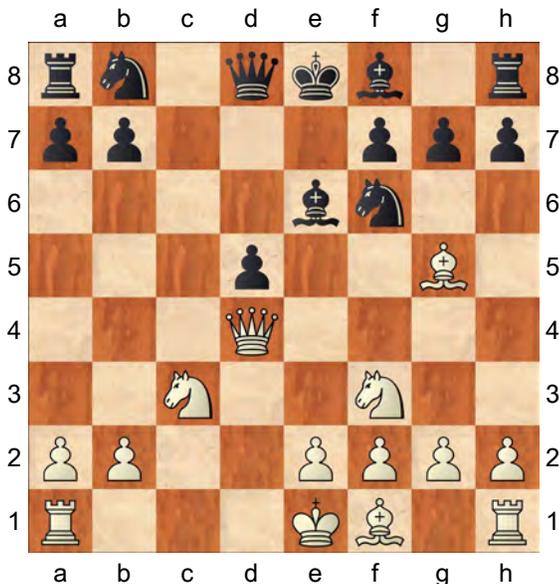
50.Rd1 Qb6 51.Qd2 Rb8 52.Rdc1 Be7

53.Na4 Qb7 54.Qb2 Rbc8 55.Nc5

Rb8?? Very strange, but apparently in this equal position, Wang Yue blundered his queen.

1-0

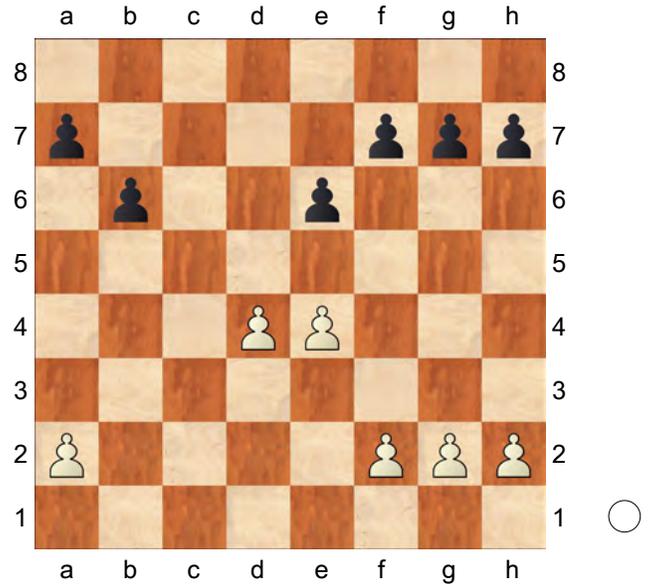
Exercise 4



How can White take advantage of his better development?

Find the answer in the PGN and website versions of Modern Chess Magazine

Structure 5



This structure is very fashionable nowadays, as the Semi-Tarrasch became very popular in the last few years. Black's strategy is similar to other openings such as the Grünfeld or the Queen's Indian (Petrosian Variation): giving the center to White in return for a quick development and chances of counterplay against the central pawns in the future. White's plans are: 1) He enjoys a bit more space due the central pair e4/d4, and has two main plans involving pawn breaks, either with a4-a5-xb6, looking to create a weakness in Black's camp, or d4-d5, opening lines in the center, activating the pieces and creating a dangerous passed pawn on the d-file. Usually, when White goes for the first plan, he abdicates of the d4-d5

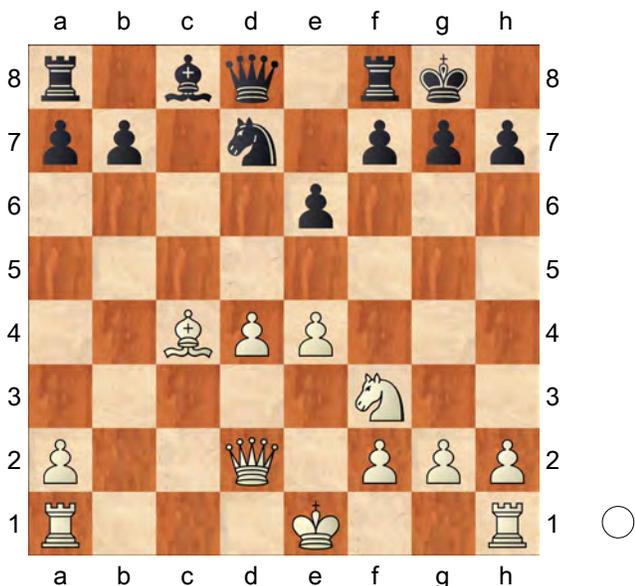
advance and the best way to proceed is Ne5 followed by f2-f3, securing the center and restricting both Black's minor pieces, with a small but pleasant advantage. If instead he opts to create a passed pawn with d4-d5, then it is important to be sure that the advance d5-d6 is also possible, when the pawn would become very dangerous and Black would have problems. Another possibility, with the pawn still on d5, is Nd4-c6, with some pressure for White in the endgame. 2) Another common and more aggressive idea for White is the thematic pawn sacrifice with d4-d5 and after exd5 by Black, White answers with e4-e5, preparing the maneuver Nd4-f5 and thereby creating attacking ideas with moves like Qd2-f4 and e5-e6. This plan is exceptionally strong when Black places the knight on c6. A typical way to support the kingside attack is advancing the h-pawn with h2-h4-h5, which gives White many tactical possibilities. For Black: 1) Despite having less space, Black manages to exchange a pair of pieces in the very first moves. Then he continues with quick development and places all his remaining pieces on good squares which is an indication that his position is not really cramped. Against the positional plan of a4-a5, recent

games show that the best way for Black is to take on a5 and develop pressure against the e4/d4 pawns, as this prevents White from consolidating his position in the centre and exploit the a7-pawn. 2) Regarding the d5-break, Black should place the rooks on the c and e-files, waiting for d4-d5, when his centralized pieces will have nice squares and become active. An adequate way of preventing the ideas associated with h4-h5, is to play the prophylactic h7-h6, protecting g5 and preventing some sacrifices on h7.3) In the long-term, Black should not forget about his queenside majority which is his biggest trump. If White does not manage to exploit his pluses, often Black keeps improving the pieces and at some point starts to move the pawns, with better chances in the endgame. Also, if White advances or attacks in the wrong way, often Black pieces gain life by occupying the weakened squares in the center or in White's camp.

□	Tregubov,Pavel V	2586
■	Sychev,Klementy	2445
	RUS-chT rapid (5.5)	05.10.2016

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Nf3 c5
5.cxd5 Nxd5 6.e4 Nxc3 7.bxc3 cxd4
8.cxd4 Bb4+ 9.Bd2 Bxd2+ 10.Qxd2
0-0 11.Bc4 Nd7**

[There's a famous game which illustrates White's attacking chances pretty well: 11...Nc6 12.0-0 b6 13.Rad1 Bb7 14.Rfe1 Na5 (14...Rc8 15.d5 Na5 16.Bd3! transposes to the text.) 15.Bd3 Rc8 16.d5! exd5 17.e5! This typical pawn sacrifice gives very good attacking prospects to White. He has ideas like Nd4-f5 or Ng5; even e5-e6 would leave Black's king more exposed. Black tried to force exchanges with Nc4 18.Qf4 Nb2? but then 19.Bxh7+! Kxh7 20.Ng5+ Kg6 21.h4!! Polugaevsky,L-Tal,M URS-ch37 Final 1969 (2) 1-0 gave White a powerful attack in Nxd1? loses to 22.h5+! Kxh5 23.g4+ Kg6 24.Qf5+ Kh6 25.Qh7+! Kxg5 26.Qh5+ Kf4 27.Qf5#]



The most solid variation. **12.0-0 b6 13.Rad1 Bb7 14.d5!?** White tries to break in the center immediately and avoids giving Black time to develop the pieces.

[14.Rfe1 Rc8 15.Bb3 Re8 has been the main option on a top level.]

14...exd5 15.Bxd5 White hopes to keep some pressure in the center with this bishop, and, after an eventual exchange, to have a strong passed pawn on the d-file.

[15.exd5 seems harmless for Black after Rc8 16.Bb3 Nc5= and the d-pawn is not dangerous here]

15...Nc5

[of course 15...Bxd5? is bad because after 16.exd5 Black is not able to prevent the advance d5-d6, then the pawn becomes very annoying in Black's camp. A nice classic example of this is the famous game Spassky-Petrosian from the 1969 World Championship Match]

16.Qf4! The d6-square is very important in such positions, as after an exchange on d5, White would be able to advance the pawn one step ahead. There's also the threat of Bxf7+. **16...Qe7** This move looks pretty natural, but it leads to a slightly unpleasant endgame for Black.

[16...Qb8! fighting for the d6-square should be better.]

17.Nd4! A move that puts some problems for Black.

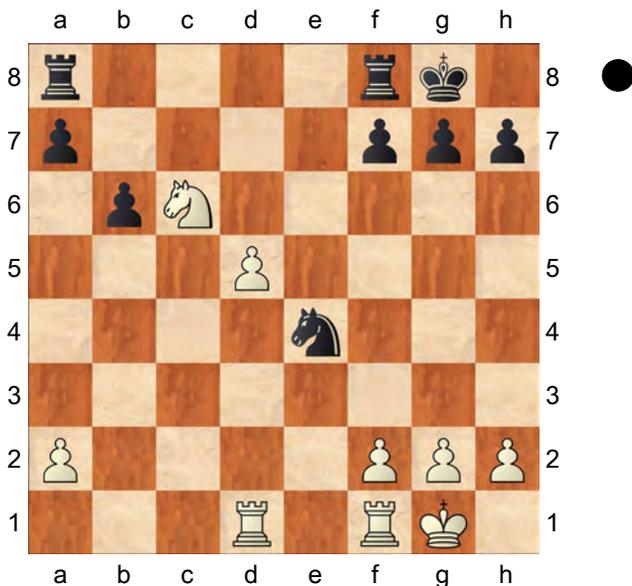
[17.Rfe1 Also gave a tiny advantage for White in a rapid game Rad8 18.h4 Bxd5 (18...Rfe8) 19.exd5 Qd6 20.Qe3 Nd7 21.Ng5 Nf6 22.Ne4 Nxe4 23.Qxe4± ;Le Quang Liem (2737)-Kravtsov,M (2672) World Rapid 2017 (13.10) 1-0]

17...Bxd5 Simplifying into an endgame in which White has a small advantage.

[17...g6N was another option, but after, for example 18.Rfe1 Rad8

19.Nf3 Rfe8 20.h4!? White has some ideas on the kingside. Probably Black is fine, but practice will have to show how good White's position really is.]

18.exd5 Qe4 Now, after **19.Qxe4 Nxe4 20.Nc6!**



The team d5+Nc6 considerably restricts Black's position, thus giving White some advantage in this endgame. **20...Nd6 21.f3!** Bringing the king to the action. **21...Rfe8 22.Kf2 Kf8 23.Rd3 b5?!** Black tries to make use of his queenside majority. **24.a4!** But this gives White a good chance of creating some pressure and open lines there. **24...a6 25.Ra1 Rec8 26.g4!** Since Black's position is a bit paralyzed White takes time to make improvements and seize some space on the kingside too. **26...g6 27.Ke3!?** Now White threatens to make serious improvements as his idea is to activate the king by invading Black's queenside. This practically forces Black to seize the only resource available.

[Instead, 27.Ra2! would have prevented this idea, with good prospects]

27...Nc4+ 28.Kd4 Nb2 White still kept some advantage thanks to a tactical idea: **29.axb5! Nxd3 30.b6! Rab8** □

[30...Nf4 31.b7 Re8 32.Kc5! Rab8 33.Nxb8 Rxb8 34.Kb6 Nxd5+ 35.Ka7+-]

[30...Rcb8 31.Rxa6! Rxa6 32.Nxb8 Ra1 (32...Ra8 33.Nc6) 33.b7 Rb1 34.Nd7+ Ke7 35.b8Q Rxb8 36.Nxb8±]

31.Nxb8 Rxb8 32.Kxd3? White missed a nice alternative.

[32.Rb1! was very annoying for Black Nf2 (32...Nc1 33.Kc5!; 32...Nf4 33.Ke5 Nd3+ 34.Kd6) 33.Kc5! Nd3+ 34.Kd6 Rd8+ 35.Kc7 Ke7 36.b7 Rd7+ 37.Kb6 Rd8 38.Ka7± White should be winning]

32...Rxb6 33.Kc4± White still has some chances, but objectively Black should hold the endgame with precise play.

33...Ke7 34.Kc5?! A bit inaccurate.

[34.Ra3! would be prophylactical and good, if Kd6 35.g5! and Black will be always in a sort of Zugzwang, allowing White to make further improvements Kc7 36.Kc5 Rb5+ 37.Kd4 Rb6 38.Ke5±]

34...Rf6? Too passive, after this Black has problems again.

[34...Rb3! was the right way, as in rook endgames it is very important get the rook as active as possible 35.f4 Rc3+! forcing the White king to go back 36.Kd4 Rc2 37.Rxa6 Rd2+! 38.Kc5 Rc2+! 39.Kb5 Rb2+ 40.Kc6 Rc2+ and it is a draw thanks to the rook activity]

35.Ra3 Kd7?

[35...g5! was needed, preserving the rook in its ideal position]

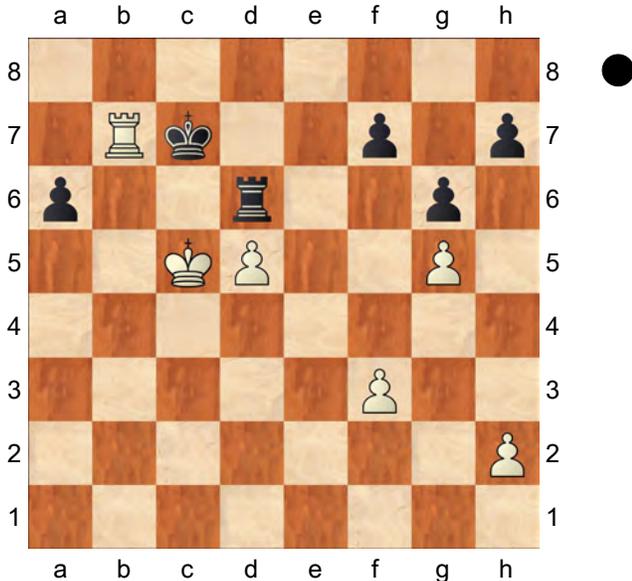
36.g5± Rd6

[36...Rf5 37.Rxa6 Rxf3 38.Ra7+ Ke8 39.Kd6 and White is winning]

37.Rb3 Kc7? When the pressure came, Black defended pretty badly.

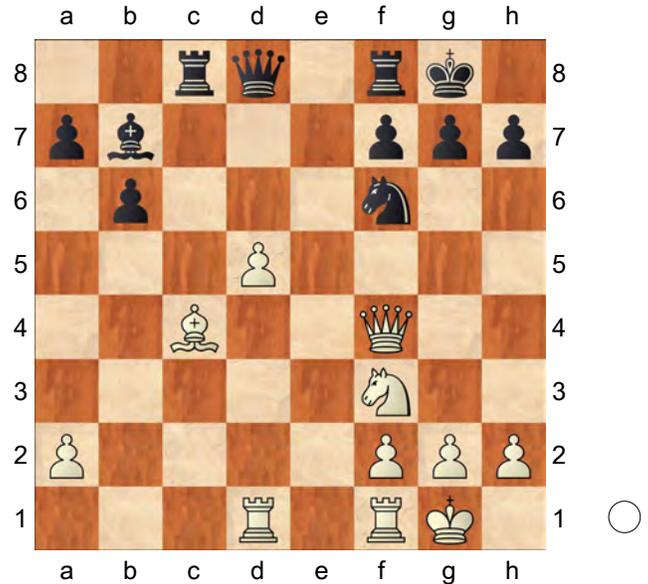
[37...Ke7 38.Ra3 Kd7 39.f4 Ke7 40.Re3+ Kd7 41.Rh3+-]

38.Rb7+!



White found a nice way to convert his positional advantage by forcing a winning queen endgame. **38...Kxb7 39.Kxd6+- a5 40.Ke7 a4 41.d6 a3 42.d7 a2 43.d8Q a1Q** Both sides promote their pawns, but White is the first one to give the checks, and his king is also very active, winning Black pawns one by one. **44.Qd5+ Kb6 45.Qd6+ Kb7 46.Kxf7 Qc3 47.Qd5+ Kb6 48.Kg8 Qc7 49.h4 Qe7 50.Qf7 Qe1 51.Kxh7 1-0**

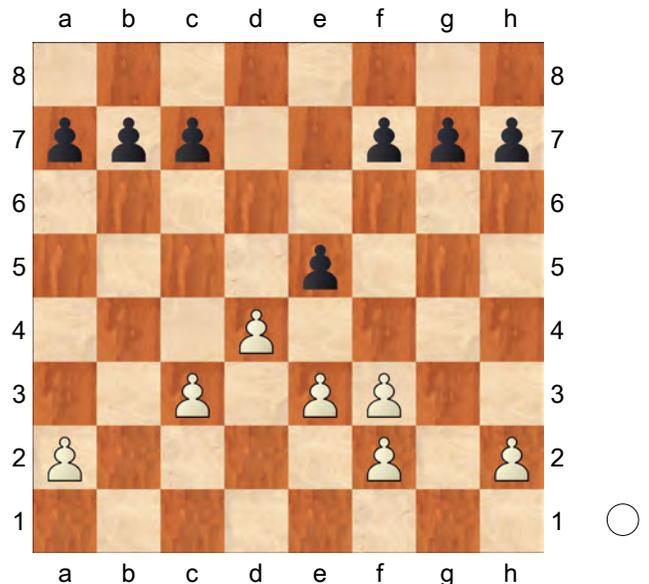
Exercise 5



Is there some way to fight for an advantage as White?

Find the answer in the PGN and website versions of Modern Chess Magazine.

Structure 6



This structure arises from the main line of the Chigorin Defense in which Black gives up the bishop pair in return for quick development and pressure against White's center. This opening represents a complex strategic battle in which some critical points should be considered: 1) White has the bishop pair which means that he should look for ways of opening the position. However, it is important to note that if he carelessly advances the central pawns, this will result in weak squares that Black will love to occupy with his knights who would lead in a pleasant and reliable position. A common idea for White is the sequence f3–f4 exf4 e3–e4! capturing on f4 with the bishop and keeping a healthy and mobile pawn centre. 2) With the bishop pair and a strong center White's position may look perfect at first sight. But he has a slightly damaged pawn structure and is usually behind in development. Having this in mind, naturally, he should look for active play in the first place, using the bishop pair to create attacking threats, and then open files for the rooks. Often White is ready to sacrifice the a2–pawn, for example, to finish the development as soon as possible and to take the initiative. Even going into some endgames with a pawn down, White is able to regain the material due to the pressure of his pieces against Black's forces. If Black manages to stop White's initiative, then he should be fine, but as the games show, it is not an easy task.

Wacker, Peter **2312**
 Stenzel, Thomas **2112**
 Regionalliga Mittelrhein 1213 (9.1)
 14.4.13

1.d4 d5 2.c4 Nc6!? **3.Nf3 Bg4**
4.cxd5 Bxf3 5.gxf3 Qxd5 6.e3 e5!
 In the Chigorin Defense, Black goes for immediate pressure against the center.
7.Nc3 Bb4 Black should part with the bishop pair to continue with fast development and to keep the position active. **8.Bd2 Bxc3 9.bxc3**
 This position is one of the taboos of this opening, and much depends on the strategy adopted by both sides from now. White's position, at first sight, looks great and easy to play, with a mass of central pawns, supported by the bishop pair, and open lines for his pieces. But appearances can be deceptive, and White should be cautious: He is still behind in development, and any wrong advances by the pawns would leave weak squares in his camp which Black would be more than glad to occupy with the knights. **9...Qd6!** Anticipating c4–d5 ideas.

[9...exd4?! Is the second most played, but to be honest I don't like this approach as I think that keeping the central tension is in Black's interest.]

[9...Qd7 was played recently by Rapport, but after 10.Rb1 0–0–0 11.Bg2 Nge7 Nakamura, H (2785)–Rapport, R (2692) Sharjah FIDE GP 2017 (3) 1–0 12.f4! exf4 13.0–0! ♞ White has excellent compensation by the pawn sacrifice]

[9...Nge7? is simply bad as after 10.c4! Qd6 11.d5! Nb8 12.Rb1↑

White becomes very active]
 [9...Nf6?! is similar to 9...Nge7 10.c4!
 Qd6 11.d5! Ne7 12.Rb1↑]

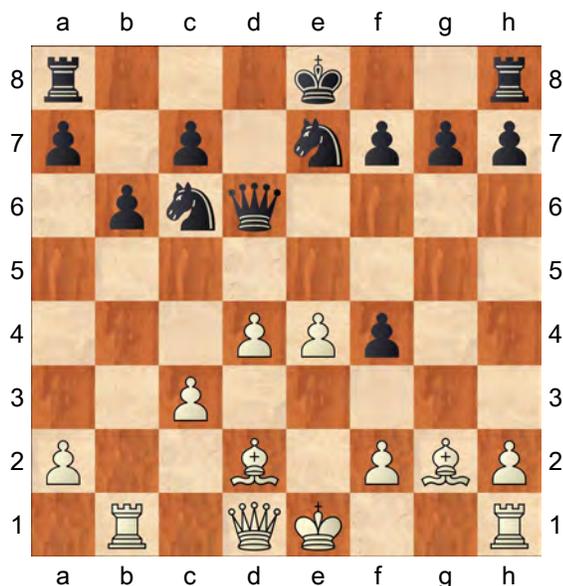
10.Bg2

[the move order 10.Rb1 b6 11.f4!
 exf4 12.e4! is most often seen, and
 probably most precise. After Nge7
 13.Qf3 0-0 (13...Ng6 14.h4! Rd8
 15.h5 Nge5 16.Qxf4+-) 14.Bxf4
 Qa3 15.Bg2 we reach the same
 position as in the game, without
 giving active chances for Black]

10...Nge7 11.Rb1 Usually this is a good
 move as it forces some commitments in
 Black's position. **11...b6**

[11...0-0-0 12.f4! exf4 13.0-0↑]
 The following idea is very nice and
 should be remembered: **12.f4! exf4**
13.e4!

[13.0-0!? was also interesting]



This is the right plan to put White's
 pawns in movement, without leaving
 weak squares in his camp. Now, the
 position seems to offer a great potential
 to White's bishop pair, but it is important

to remember that White is still behind in
 development. **13...0-0 14.Qf3 Qa3!?**
 Black's attempt of counterplay on the
 queenside is useless, as White is more
 than fine finishing the development by
 sacrificing the a2-pawn.

[better was 14...Ng6 15.h4 (15.e5?
 Ncxe5! 16.dxe5 Nxe5 17.Qxa8 Rxa8
 18.Bxa8 Qd3!-+) 15...Rad8!∞ 16.h5?
 Nge5! this is the sort of problems that
 White can face being behind in
 development.]

15.Bxf4 Ng6

[15...Qxa2 wins the pawn, but the
 queen is misplaced now 16.0-0 Ng6
 17.Bg3! (17.Bxc7 Nh4!) 17...Na5
 18.h4! c6 19.h5 Ne7 20.h6!↑
 gives a pleasant initiative for White on
 the kingside.]

[15...f5 16.0-0 Kh8?! (16...Ng6?
 17.exf5 Nxf4 18.Qxf4 Qxc3 19.Rbc1
 Nxd4 20.Rxc3 Ne2+ 21.Kh1 Nxf4
 22.Bxa8 Rxa8 23.Rxc7+-) 17.d5!
 Ng6 (17...Na5 18.Bxc7+-)
 18.Bc1!+- Gershon,A (2562)-Pirrot,D
 (2421) Bayern-chl Bank Hofmann 6th
 2002 (5) 1-0 Qxa2 19.Rb2 Qc4
 20.dxc6 with a technically won
 position]

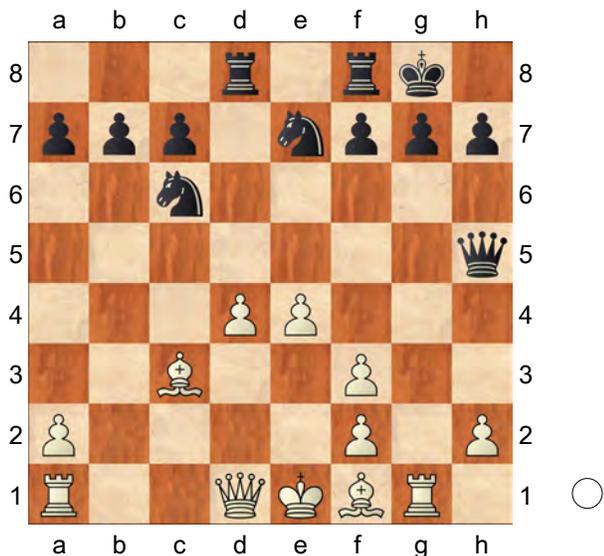
16.Bg3 Preventing Nh4. 16...f5!?

Black should play as actively as he can
 and try to make use of his development
 lead. Otherwise, White's advantage
 would become evident. Despite this, the
 position looks a bit scary for White, but
 he can obtain an advantage with the nice
 move: **17.Qd3!**

[Instead, 17.exf5? played the initiative
 into Black's hands after Rae8+ 18.Kf1
 Nce7 19.Bh3 Qxa2↑ Tomczak,M
 (2395)-Lalith,B (2530) Warsaw
 Najdorf Memorial op-A 15th 2017 (7)

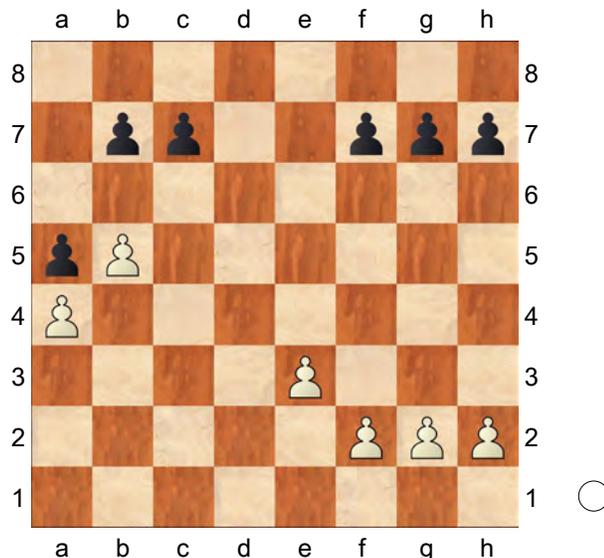
h3+ 56.Kh2 Ke3 57.Rd7 Ke2 58.Rd8 Rd3 59.Re8+ Kd2 60.Ree1 Kc3 0-1

Exercise 6



This position arises from the Chigorin Defense and is the second most often played line for Black against the main variation. Find the best idea for White. Find the answer in the PGN and website versions of Modern Chess Magazine.

Structure 7



This structure is characteristic of the Albin's Counter-Gambit. Black has tried to create some weaknesses in White's queenside by means of a7-a5. But this is actually in favour for the first player, as the presence of the pawn on b5 cramps Black's position and allows to attack the c7-pawn as well the a5 one potentially. Another important point is that there is always a White bishop on d4, exerting pressure over on sides and making Black's position unpleasant, especially the kingside. Besides these advantages, White also has the kingside majority that can be useful to seize space in the center in some positions. Black has no real compensation for all of these White advantages. His best option is to look for active play, but often he has no real chance as White can force some endgames, and Black ends up in a passive and unpleasant defence. Objectively it is fair to say that White's play is more natural and he has an advantage.

Nikolov, Momchil **2559**
 Henris, Luc **2149**
 Lille Luce op 7th (7) 13.04.2016

1.d4 d5 2.Nf3
 [the common move order is 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 d4 4.Nf3 Nc6 5.a3!]
2...Nc6 3.c4 e5!?
 [3...Bg4 is the Chigorin Defense]
4.dxe5 d4 5.a3! A move that not just prevents the check on b4, but also prepares to follow with b4-b5, weakening the d4-pawn.

[5.e3 would be perfect if Black did not have Bb4+ 6.Bd2 dxe3! with already an easier game]

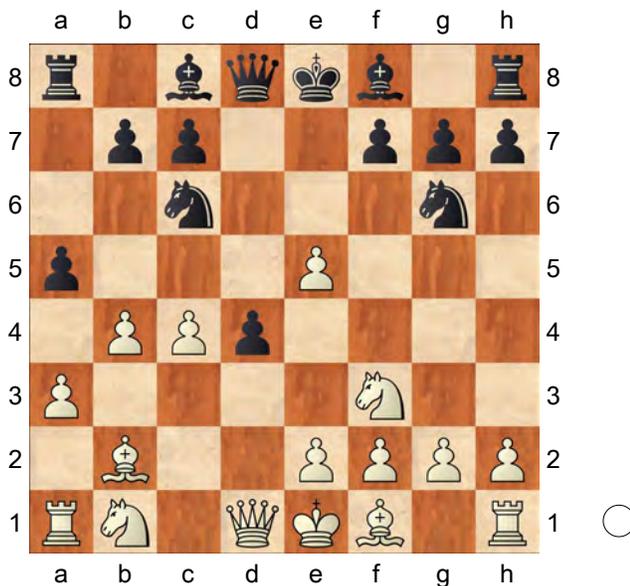
5...Nge7

[5...a5 There's no time to stop White's expansion on the queenside: 6.e3! since the check was prevented now]

6.b4 Ng6 7.Bb2 a5!

[anyway, after 7...Ncxe5 8.Nxe5 Nxe5 9.e3! Be6 10.Bxd4 Nxc4 11.Qc2 Nd6 12.Bd3

White's advantage is also very pleasant]



This is played to force some advances in White's position, but although it is a more precise way to play before taking on e5, it is not enough to equalize. **8.b5 Ncxe5 9.Qxd4!?** Despite not being the most played option, I think the endgames that arise by force are much easier for White, with a good pressure against Black's queenside and no risk.

[9.Nxe5 is the main move Nxe5 10.e3 Be6 11.Bxd4 Nxc4 12.Qc2 Nd6 is similar to the game, but here Black managed to get rid of the misplaced Ng6, and some games show that with queens on board Black

can dream of counterplay chances. Of course, White is still ahead, but I think the endgame provides a free of risk advantage and is very easy to work]

9...Qxd4 10.Bxd4 Nxc4 11.e3 Nd6

[11...Be6 12.Ng5! is unpleasant for Black]

12.Nbd2 White has more than one way to create problems for Black here, but the main issue is that such positions are not the sort of play that Albin's players are looking for. **12...Bd7**

[12...a4? seems natural, fixing White's queenside pawns, but wastes some precious time 13.Rc1 Kd8 (13...Nf5 14.Bb2+-) 14.h4!

White makes an instructive use of his strategical plusses h5 15.Bd3 Bf5 16.Bxf5 Nxf5 17.Ng5! Nh6 (17...Bxa3 18.Nxf7+ Kd7 19.Nxh8 Bxc1 20.Nxg6+-) 18.Nc4 Ke8 19.Bb2± Bluebaum,M (2643)–Trent,L (2435) Bundesliga 2017–18 (11.4) 1–0 Black is very cramped on the kingside, and White had a comfortable advantage in]

[12...Nf5 13.Bb2±]

13.a4 Nf5 Black has also tried another option here, although none of them managed to solve his problems.

[13...b6? seems simply bad, fixing the c7–pawn as a permanent target 14.Bd3 f6 15.0–0 Be7 16.Rfc1 Rc8 17.Rc2! 0–0 18.Rac1 Bd8 19.Bb2!± ; Macedo,M (2357)–Albuquerque,W (2168) Joao Pessoa Fischer Memorial 8th 2017 (6) 1–0 and Black is in big trouble –]

[13...c6!? seems also natural, getting rid of the c7–pawn 14.bxc6 Bxc6 15.Bc3!? preventing b7–b5 f6 16.Be2

Be7 17.0-0 0-0 Scott,G (2198)-Larsen,A (1976) Hastings Masters op 92nd 2016 (5) 1/2 White would have preserved an advantage now through 18.Nc4! Nxc4 19.Bxc4+ Kh8

20.Be6!±]

[13...f6 14.Be2 Ne7?

this manoeuvre was too slow 15.0-0 Nd5 16.Rfc1 c6 17.bxc6 Bxc6

18.Bc5 Nf5 19.Nb3 Nb4 20.Bb6+-;Peralta,F (2574)-Perez Candelario,M (2496) Iberoamerican-ch GpC 1st 2006 (5) 1-0]

14.Bc3 Bb4?! There's no easy way to continue Black's development.

[14...f6 15.Bd3 Bd6 16.Be4! c6 17.Nc4 Bc7 18.Rd1! and Black is under annoying pressure]

15.Bxb4 axb4 16.Bd3 Black has serious problems with the b4-pawn Now, and after the forced c7-c5, he is also creating weaknesses on the queenside.

16...Nd6

[16...0-0 17.0-0 c5 Rodriguez Lopez,R (2244)-Revilla Rio,F (2127) ESP-chT CECLUB Div1 Final Permanencia 2012 (1.4) 1-0 18.bxc6 bxc6 19.Nb3 White establishes a firm blockade against Black's queenside pawns, with a stable advantage Nd6 20.Rfc1 Rfd8 21.Nc5 Bf5 22.Bxf5 Nxf5 23.a5±]

[16...Ke7 is an option 17.Ke2 c5 18.bxc6 bxc6 19.Bxf5! a very well-timed exchange, as White keeps the two knights to exploit the weak dark-squares on Black's queenside, and the bishop will be useless in this fight Bxf5 20.Nd4 Bd7 21.Rhc1 Rhc8 22.N2b3 White has a very nice advantage here, and it seems unlikely the Black will be able to withstand the increasing pressure.]

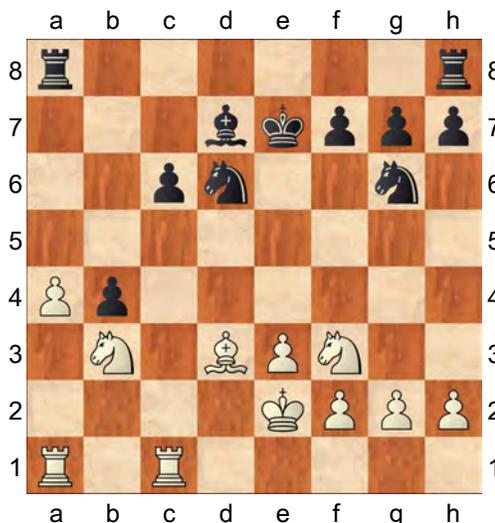
17.Ke2 c5

[17...Ne7! was a better move 18.Nc4! (18.Rhb1 Nd5) 18...Nd5 19.Nxd6+ cxd6 20.Kd2 Nc3 21.Nd4 and White keeps the advantage Rxa4 (21...0-0 22.a5±) 22.Rxa4 Nxa4 23.Ra1 Nb6 24.Ra7 Bc8 25.Kc2 With some pressure for White, although it seems that with correct play Black should hold (25.Nc2 Kd8 26.Nxb4 Kc7 27.Ra1)]

18.bxc6 bxc6

[♠18...Bxc6 19.Rhb1 Rxa4 20.Rxa4 Bxa4 21.Rxb4 Bc6 22.Nd4! Bxg2 23.f3↑]

19.Nb3 Ke7 20.Rhc1±



Once that this position is reached, it is clear that White is better: He is not only blocking but also soon exerting pressure against Black's queenside pawns, and the distant passed pawn is also a worthy advantage. Black's defense is very unpleasant and difficult from now.

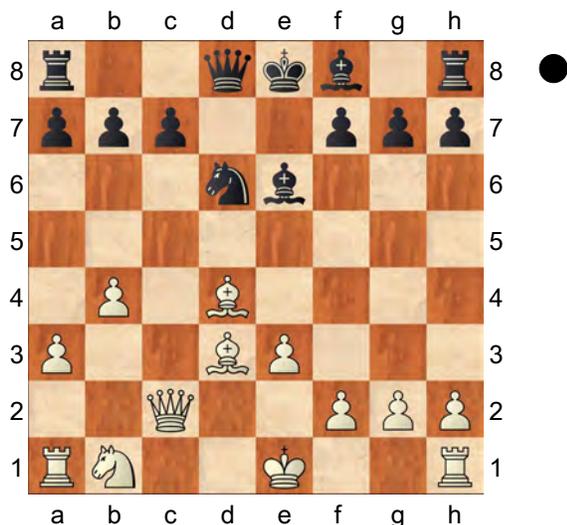
20...Rhc8 21.Nc5 Bf5 22.Nd4! Bxd3+ 23.Nxd3 The last exchange left the c6-pawn unprotected. **23...Kd7 24.Rab1 Rab8**

[24...Rxa4?? 25.Nc5+]

25.Nc5+ Ke8 26.Nc2 The pawn is lost and also is the game. **26...Nb7 27.Nxb7**

Rxb7 28.Rxb4 Rxb4 29.Nxb4+- Ra8
 30.Ra1 Ne7 31.e4 Ra5 32.Kd3 Kd7
 33.Kc3 Nc8 34.Nd3 c5 35.Ne5+ Ke6
 36.Nc4 Ra6 37.a5 Ne7 38.Rb1 f5
 39.f3 fxe4 40.fxe4 Nc6 41.Rb5 Ne5
 42.Rxc5
 1-0

Exercise 7



In this position from the Albin's Counter Gambit, Black did not force White to commit his structure with 7...a5. Now, he tried it 12...a5 but White replied with the simple 13.0-0 and the game went 13...axb4 14.axb4 Rxa1 15.Bxa1 c6 16.Nd2 Qg5?! Black wants at the same time create ideas like Bh3, and prepare to develop the Bf8. But he is behind in development, and White has a nice way to take advantage of it. How?

Find the answer in the PGN and website versions of Modern Chess Magazine.