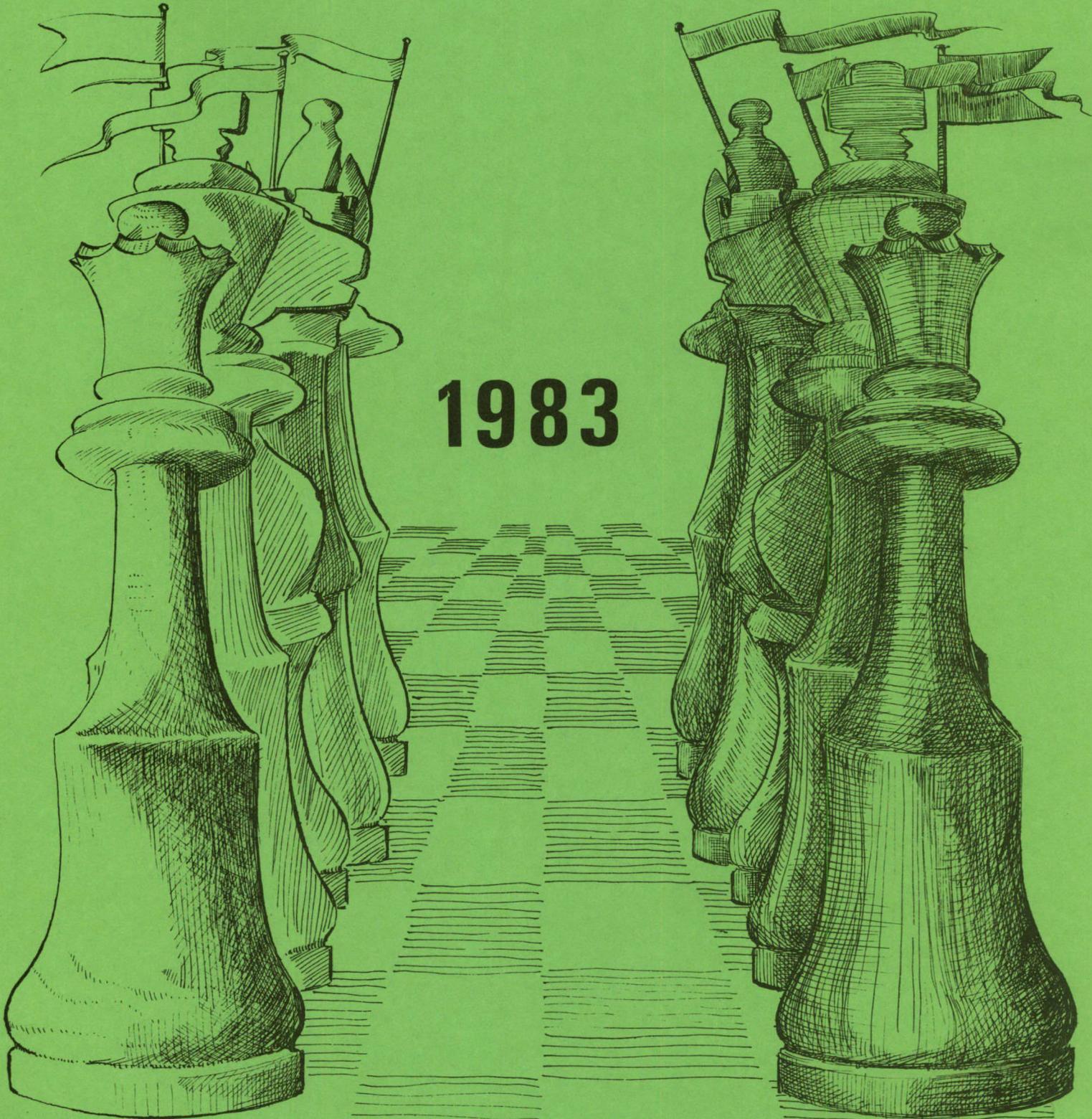


POPULAR CHESS

No. 4



BOOKWORK

by K.T. Rose

1. Starting a Library

The topic of this article is chess books. If you are anything like me, you will have a shelf - or several shelves - full of books on chess, most of them unread. What I would like to do is guide the ambitious club player to a small number of excellent books which would form the nucleus of a really useful library. I have in mind the player of 110 to 145 strength who cannot afford to spend hours every day on chess, but still hopes to improve.

Are books necessary at all? I spoke with John Littlewood about this at a recent junior training tournament. He thinks that it is possible to be a very successful club player simply by playing enough chess, but that by careful reading one can acquire skills, methods and knowledge that cannot be picked up through practical experience.

Furthermore, he points out that shortage of time should not prevent you from studying. As little as fifteen minutes per day will allow you to read a vast amount in the course of a year or two.

Which books then should a player study?

I have been fortunate enough to collect the opinions of many strong players on this question and they all agree that the single most important thing is to study complete master games. Jeff Horner recommended spending about half an hour on a game of average length, thus the approach is neither too superficial (merely playing over the bare moves) nor excessively detailed.

There has been a move recently towards using games between relatively weak players as teaching material. Although this is interesting it is not really good for your chess. By studying master games or master v amateur games you subconsciously assimilate correct plans and methods of deploying the pieces. It is true that much of the play may be too subtle for you or that you are unaware of the difficult tactical lines that might have happened, but this is outweighed by the value of the good model that the games present.

You should of course study your own games so as to root out your mistakes but studying the games of other weak players is not the best recipe for long term progress - you could even pick up their errors.

It follows then that the heart of your collection must be one or several books of master games. The choice will be largely determined by the quality of the annotations.

A book which this magazine has recommended highly is 'Logical Chess, Move by Move' by Chernev. There are certainly many fine games in this book. They cover a wide variety of typical plans and are quite clearly explained. Nevertheless, I don't think it is very helpful to one's development as a chess player and this is why. The reason is nothing to do with any specific points on which I might disagree with Chernev, but rather concerns his general attitude.

Chernev thinks very highly of the great masters of the game and praises them accordingly. Yet he does this in such a way as to make the reader feel that he himself has no hope of ever playing so well. So although Chernev seems to be explaining how to play good chess he is at the same time undermining your belief that you ever could.

I remember reading this book when I was about 120 grade and it was only years later when I looked at it again that I realised how much Chernev's oversimplifications and gushing praise for his heroes had hindered my development.

At the other extreme to this is Timman's 'The Art of Chess Analysis' Timman takes 'analysis' to be synonymous with 'calculation of variations' and proceeds to calculate them, often very deeply, in 24 modern masterpieces. Jon Speelman says that it is a magnificent book, and I am sure it is - for the 190+ grade player. I find the reams of variations mind-boggling.

A different kind of book entirely is the collection of games by one player. If you buy such books then go first of all for collections with notes by the player himself. For example, I bought Capablanca's best games with notes by Golombek on the basis of a recommendation in one of Ray Keen e's articles and was very disappointed by the annotations.

Fischer's 'My 60 Memorable Games' caused a great stir when it was published and is generally agreed to be the best collections of it's kind. Obviously, you can gain many insights into chess from one of the best ever players, yet I wouldn't recommend this book as central to your collection either!

As with all one-player collections you see only one man's style of play and it may not suit you, but Fischer's book contains yet another flaw.

Despite all his candour and honesty you can never really tell how many of the wonderful variations Fischer saw at the board and how much of the tactical illustration is post facto justification of lines which he played instinctively. Hence, you don't learn how much you need to see at the board during the contest itself.

All this is very negative. What do I recommend? Your editor would, I suspect disagree with my choice on the grounds that the book is too difficult but I say dig deep into your pockets and buy Bronstein's "The Chess Struggle in Practice."

It contains all 210 games of 1953 candidate's tournament, so if you studied one game a day you could read through it in seven months!

1. All the games are between very fine players
2. They exemplify a wide range of openings
3. The players exhibit a wide range of attitudes and approaches to the games
4. Bronstein knows what he is talking about but he neither preaches nor talks down to the reader - unlike Chernev.
5. The notes strike a good balance between description, verbal explanation and calculations
6. The full range of typical middlegame plans up to that time is illustrated
7. There is consideration of the psychology of the struggle (The difficulty of carrying out a mental task under pressure, a factor that makes many amateurs perform at a much poorer level than would be expected from their knowledge and understanding of the game).
8. Bronstein never oversimplifies or makes didactic statements

You may find to begin with that some of the terminology used is confusing but you can work most new terms out from the context in which they are used without needing to have them defined explicitly. For example you can easily work out what is meant by 'isolated pawn', 'blockading square' etc. by seeing one or two examples discussed.

Next Issue: Books about endings, openings, tactics and middlegame play.

(Bronstein's book is available from Batford at £12.50 and entitled 'The Chess Struggle in Practice'. It is also available in Dover books (10 Orange Street, London WC2) at £4.50 entitled 'Zurich International Chess Tournament 1953'.).

SPECIAL DISCOUNTED CASSETTE SALE

We have a lot of chess cassettes which do not sell well usually because they are not about openings or how to win in 5 moves against any defence. However, they are all good instructive tapes and we are offering them at a clearance price of £1.10 each, or £5.00 for 5, post free.

Choose from the selection below, many deleted items which will probably never see the light of day again!

1. Nimzovich - Keene
2. French Classical Variation - Taulbut
3. Introductory Cassette - Descriptive Notation
4. Hastings Interviews 1976
5. Moscow Team Tournament 1976 - Goodman
6. Brilliant Brevities I - Basman
7. Brilliant Brevities II - Basman
8. French Rubinstein Variation - Taulbut
9. Alekhine - Neat
10. - 13.
Get the GM Norm - Tester Cassettes
(Four separate tapes)
14. The Royal Game (a selection of quotes on chess) - Kerr.

COMPETITIUM

A centurion from the Roman army of occupation met a druid in a forest glade in Britain. It was obvious that one would have to take the other prisoner, but as the druid had a healthy respect for the Roman's skill with the sword and as the centurion felt that the druid's magic was a bit of an unknown quantity, they decided to settle the issue by a game of chess. But before the game could start they had to settle upon a form of notation that would be mutually acceptable.

Picking up a piece from the corner of the board the Roman asked, "What shall we call this mile-tower?" "In time to come", said the druid, "buildings like this will be known as castles, so we can refer to this piece with the letter 'C' "

"This proud horse is symbolic of a centurion", replied the Roman, "so we can refer to it with the letter 'C' "

The druid pointed to the next piece. "That is a representation of a Christian dignitary, so 'C' for Christian. But what about these nobles in the middle of the rank?"

"That's easy - Ceasar and Cleopatra."

"I 'C'", said the druid, "In that case the footsoldiers will have to be named after the most efficient ground combat troops I've ever seen."

"You mean 'R' for Roman?" "No! I mean 'C' for Celt."

As white was the druid's sacred colour he naturally took the white pieces and the game was recorded as shown below.

I. C-CIV	C-CIV	VIII. CxC	CxCC
II. C-CCIII	C-CCIII	IX. CxC+	C-CII
III. C-CV	C-CCIII	X. C-CV	O-O
IV. C-CIV	C-CIII	XI. CxC+	C-CI
V. O-O	CxC	XII. C-CV	C-CIII
VI. C-CI	C-CIV	XIII. CxC+	CxC
VII. C-CIII	CxC	XIV. C-CV++	

"Sic transit gloria mundi (which roughly translated means : Blow this for a lark), the centurion shouted as he prepared to fall upon his sword.

"Don't do that", said the druid, "Dead people miss a lot of fun. Nobody invites them anywhere. Come home with me and I'll get you fixed up with a cushy job teaching Latin at the Druids' Academy."

So he did, and he did. (I love a happy ending!)

There is a £5 note for the first person to send the score of the above game correctly translated into English Descriptive Notation.

The score is NOT Druid 1 Centurion 0

George Armstrong was largely responsible for this article.

ELECTRIC THOUGHT

This issue computers are conspicuous by their absence. We planned a review of the computers available under £70, as well as a big King Kong match between the Novag Constellation, Elite A/S board, Sensory 9 and Mephisto. However, sheer weight of material would have forced all the other articles out of the magazine. Therefore, we shall be releasing

THE POPCHESS COMPUTER SPECIAL

in November covering the latest developments in the computer world. If you have any plans to buy a computer this Christmas, then order a copy of our special report - only 90p post free from:

Audio Chess, 7 Billockby Close, Chessington, Surrey KT9 2ED

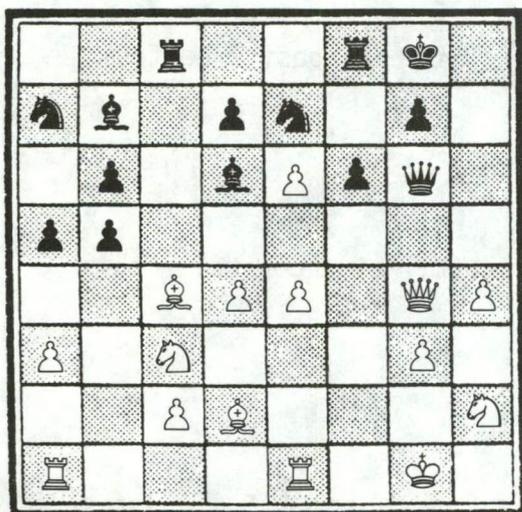
ADVANCED COMPUTACHESS

I'm selling this new mini-chess computer as it looks a good buy, offering 8 levels of play, a save button if you have to interrupt the game, a take back button and at least 100 hours battery life on a few penlights.

What about playing strength? Positional play is rather rudimentary, but tactics are quite good and it gave me a tough game on level 4. I reckon it looks like 110 grade. Witness the following game.

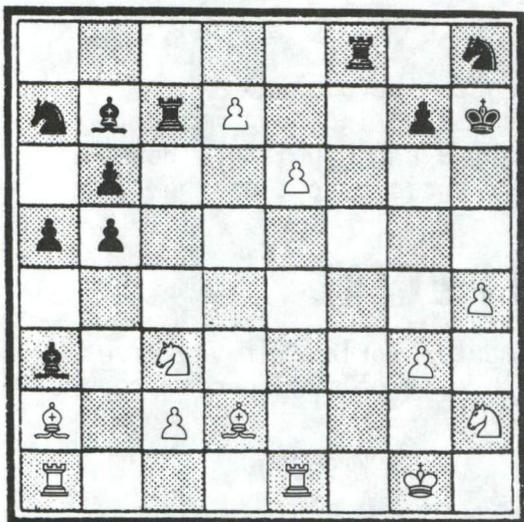
Basman v Advanced Sensory Computachess

1 e4 e6 2 Nc3 Bd6? (exposure - see article 'Blueprint' in this issue) 3 d4 Nc6
 4 Nf3 Nge7 5 a3 (a little trap to test the computer's tactical vision; white threatens 6 e5 trapping the bishop) 5...f6! (saw it!) 6 Bc4 0-0 7 0-0 b6 8 Re1
 (another little trap to test the computer; the threat is 9 e5 fxe5 10 dxe5 Bc5
 11 b4 once again ensnaring the exposed bishop.) 8...Ng6! (avoided that one too).
 9 b4 Bb7 10 h4 h5? (another positional error as the pawn and the kingside becomes exposed) 11 g3 a5? (this does not help black to break out of his position; white closes up the queen side and drives the enemy knight back) 12 b5 Na7 13 Nh2 Qe8
 (black cannot save the h pawn) 14 Qxh5 Qxh5 Qf7 15 Bd2? (this might be a bit slow)
 15 ...Rac8 16 f4 (white threatens the advance f5 before black can break out down the c file) 16...c6! 17 f5 Ne7 18 Qg4! (now black is hard pressed to defend the e6 square) cxb5! 19 fxe6 Qg6!



(Black finds the best defence which forces queens off and breaks the attack) 20 Qxg6 Nxc6 (I now wanted to win the exchange with 21 e7 dis.ch Rxc4, but then decided that black would have too much counterplay. So I refused the material to stay a pawn or so ahead) 21 Ba2! Kh7 22 exd7 Rc7 23 h5 Nh8 24 e5!?

(White goes for the throat, being aware that computers tend to underestimate passed pawns) 24...fxe5 25 dxe5 Bxa3 26 e6



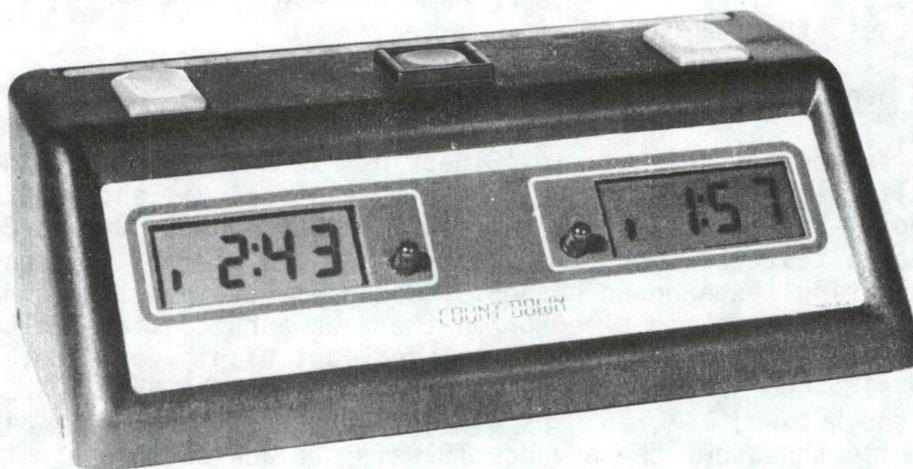
(Here Advanced Computachess missed an interesting tactical chance in 26...Rxc3! 27 Bxc3 Bc5ch and a mate in two; I thought that in the event of 26...Rxc3 I would play 27 Re3 Bc5 28 e7 Rxe3 29 exf8=Nch which is one of the variations) 26...Bc5 ch? (after this the pawns go through easily).

27 Be3 Bxe3 ch 28 Rxe3 b4 29 e7 Rb8 30 e8=Q Rxe8 31 dxe8=Q Rxc3 white mates in 4.

The computer is available from:
Audio Chess, 7 Billockby Close,
Chessington, Surrey KT9 2ED

at £35 plus £1 postage and packing.

COUNT-DOWN



(Made in UK)

Count Down chess clocks are now reduced in price - only £41 post free from:

Audio Chess,
7 Billockby Close,
Chessington,
Surrey KT9 2ED

No more guess work needed as you come up to that vital time control - this clock tells you to the second!

JOSEPHS IS BACK!

Hello fellow 'Popular Chess Players' - most of the games you lose are because you neglect my fabulous Golden Rule. For those of you who forgot it or are newly converted readers, I'll repeat it again.

"Write down P.F.C.C. on your score sheet - (the letters stand for Pins (including skewers), Forks, Checks and Captures) - write down your move but DO NOT MAKE IT until you have checked all possible P.F.C.C.s (a) for yourself and (b) for your opponent assuming you make the move you have written down. If all is O.K. then make the move but NOT before.

If, however, like me you get impatient in the end game and begin to skip the process - get up from the table and walk round the room for five minutes (assuming you have time) until you have 'cooled down'!

My first tournament this year was in July in France - a bit rusty? Anyway, here is an instructive game I played in Nice. What a lot you can learn from players like me (around 139 rating) especially if you are below 100 - I am really like you but not quite if you get the meaning ... I make the same mistakes as you but less often!

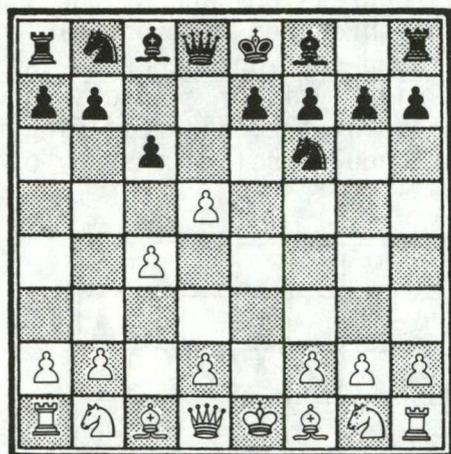
Lava v Josephs

14.7.83 BASTILLE DAY!

1 P-K4 P-Q4

a favourite when I'm black, the centre counter.

2 PxP N-KB3
3 P-QB4 P-QB3



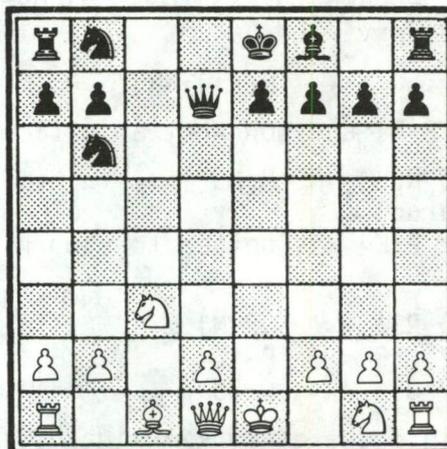
4 N-QB3

White does not accept this gambit as he would lose out on central control, have a backward queen pawn and be worse developed after 4 PxP NxP 5 N-KB3 P-K4 6 P-Q3 B-QB4.

4 ... PxP
5 PxP

We have wandered into a variation of the Caro Kann now; usually white does not make this second capture at Q5 but plays 5 P-Q4 himself.

5 ... NxQP
6 B-QB4 N-N3
7 B-QN5ch B-Q2
8 BxBch QxB



This last exchange only helps black to develop his pieces (he's "almost" cleared the back rank for the rooks) so 7 B-QN3 would have been more sensible for white.

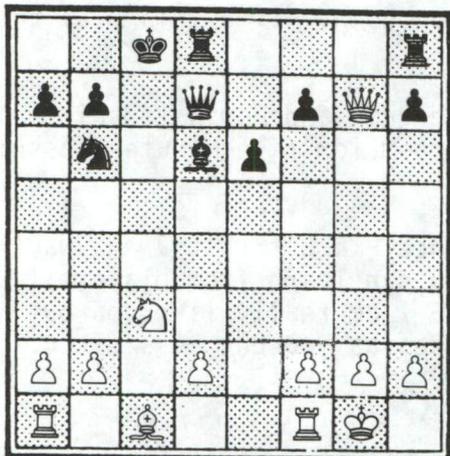
9 N-KB3 N-QB3
10 0-0 0-0-0

He looked 'timid' so I thought a smash and bash game would put him off. Play the man not the board says I!

11 Q-K2 P-K3
 12 N-K5 NxN
 13 QxN B-Q3

Was this a brilliant sacrifice? I thought it was worth it to open the file ...

14 QxNP



(In this position with black almost fully developed and white's queen side still at home, black looks to have good attacking chances down the KN file. As the game goes, however, white is able to play P-KN3 soon and the further opening of the file is hard to achieve. The natural move is to play ... R-QN1, but perhaps more accurate is ... P-KR4! This prevents the retreat of the white queen via R6 and also threatens to advance the pawn to KR5 to exchange at KN3 if necessary - Ed.)

14 ... R(R1)-KN1

If 15 QxRP R-R1 and WOW what an attack!

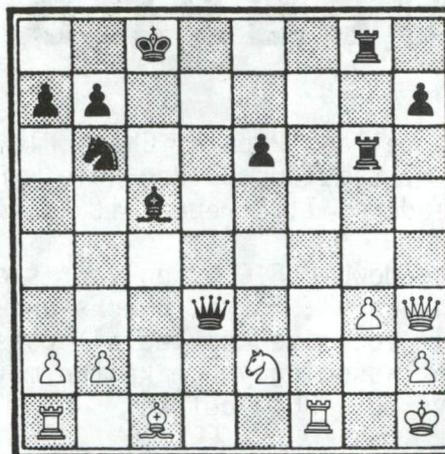
15 Q-R6 R-N3
 (Scared)

Maybe 15... P-K4 was better to stop his next move.

16 Q-R3! QR-N1
 17 P-KN3 P-KB4
 18 P-Q3 P-B5

Ploughing into the enemy kingside.

19 N-K2 PxP
 20 BPxP B-B4ch
 21 K-R1 QxP



Wins the pawn back but the attack disappears. Maybe 19... N-Q4 was better than ...B-B4ch.

22 N-B4!

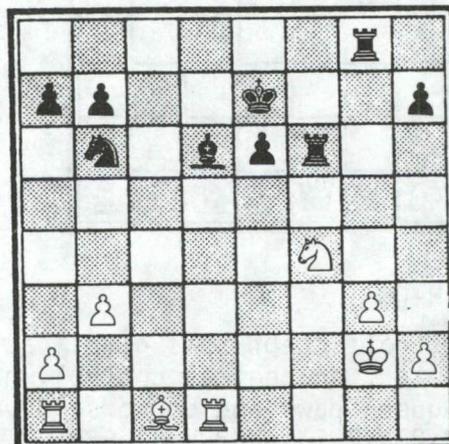
This fork forces off the queens into an equal ending - I might even be worse!

22 ... Q-K5ch
 23 Q-N2 QxQch
 24 KxQ R-B3

Where's my attack gone?

25 R-K1 K-Q2
 26 P-QN3 B-Q3
 27 R-Q1 K-K2

(Note the clever way the future pin comes. The white knight moves away to an innocuous post (thus lulling the suspicions of the opponent and also by its passive appearance, feeding his aggression) and at the same time uncovers the threat of a bishop pin at KN5. The piece moved does not generate the actual threat. An analysis of blunders should not stop at recording them and resolving to do better, but should include a study of how they occur. - Ed.)



28 N-R3 R-QB1

Must get on the seventh rank.

29 B-KN5 R-QB7ch

But was it really worth the exchange?

30 K-R1 N-Q4

31 BxRch KxB

Black has a well placed army - what's left of it. But so have white's rooks got open files to work on.

32 R-KB1ch K-K2

33 N-KN5 N-B3

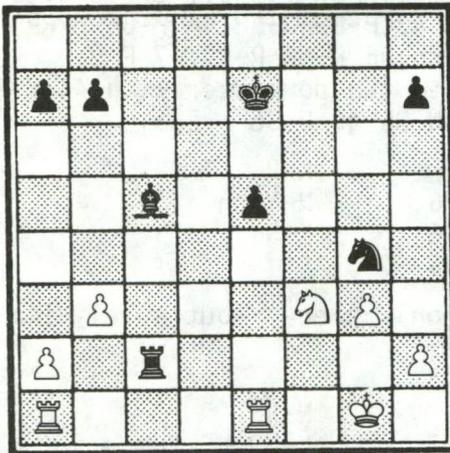
34 R(B1)-K1 P-K4

35 N-B3? N-N5

36 K-N1?

Lets me in at last

36 ... B-B4ch



37 K-B1??

At least 37 K-R1 would have avoided the see saw.

37 ... R-KB7ch

38 K-N1 RxKRP dis.ch.

Let's get this one first!

39 K-B1 R-B7ch

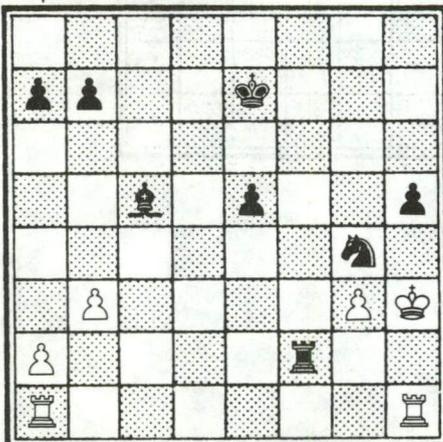
40 K-N1 RxN dis.ch

41 K-N2 R-B7ch

42 K-R3 P-KR4

43 R-R1

To stop mate at KR2



43 ... K-B2?

44 QR-Q1 N-KB3

Has to retreat to stop 45 R-Q7ch

45 QR-K1 P-K5

46 KR-B1 P-K6

47 R-QB1 N-K5

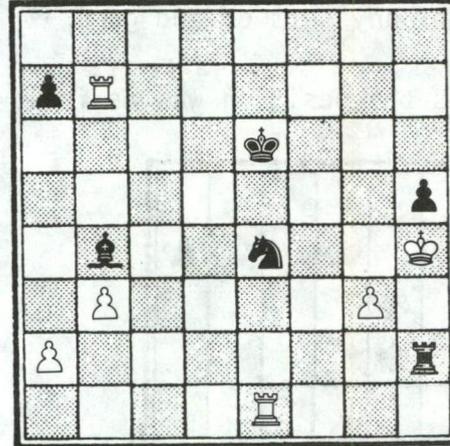
48 K-R4 P-K7

49 R-KR1 B-N5

50 R-B7ch K-K3

51 RxNP P-K8=Q

52 RxQ R-R7 MATE



(Neat eh?)

This game shows the importance of the rook on the 7th rank and the importance of pushing passed pawns and of course the importance of NOT opening a file opposite your castled king even if you gain a pawn ...

Now in case you think I am being too smug about this little brilliancy, I have a small confession to make ...

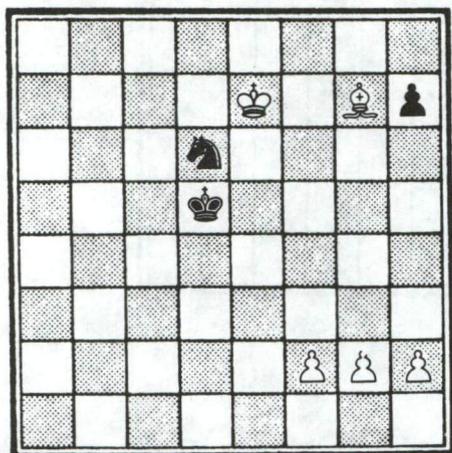
On move 28, when I went R-QB1 it was not repeat NOT a brilliant sacrifice of the exchange - I just 'forgot' to do my P.F.C.C. exercise and never saw he could pin my rook with his bishop until too late. However, he who LAVAS (my opponent) last laughs best and the 'good' triumphed in the end as was only just ...

Now for a not so brilliant but nevertheless instructive end game in the same 'NICE' tournament.

After 26 moves a piece in the epic game of JOSEPHS v BARBAUDY I had through sheer brilliance reduced my hitherto undefeated opponent to a hopeless position 2 pawns down in the end game and the rest was (or should have been!) sheer technique ...

Perhaps my smash and crash opening had ill prepared me for any sort of end game - who knows?

After 36 moves the position was as follows.

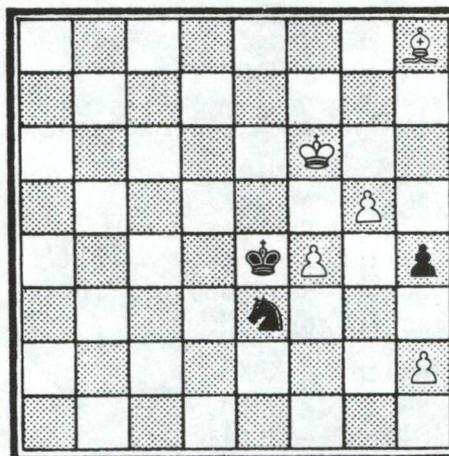


(Though white is two pawns up black can draw if he can exchange one of the pawns and sacrifice the knight for the other two, because king and bishop cannot mate against king. Black has some chances because white's pieces are too far advanced, leaving his pawns in the lurch. Also black's men could hardly be better centralised ... Ed.)

- | | |
|----------|--------|
| 37 P-B4 | N-B4ch |
| 38 K-B6 | K-K5 |
| 39 P-N3 | P-R4 |
| 40 B-R8? | |

Last move left before time control, but obviously bad to shut in my own bishop.

- | | |
|-----------|------|
| 40 ... | P-R5 |
| 41 P-N4 | N-K6 |
| 42 P-N5?? | |



Why give him a pawn when 42 K-N5 holds all? I reckoned he'd never stop the knight pawn but intuition is sometimes not enough.

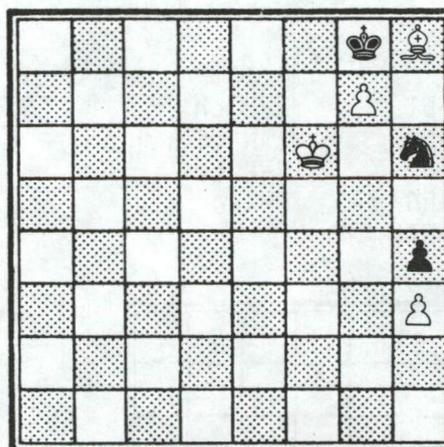
(Even 42 K-N5 is not totally clear after 42 ...P-R6! 43 P-B5 N-B8 44 P-B6 NxRP 45 P-B7 N-B6ch 46 K-N6 P-R7 47 P=Q; however, white can do better with 44 K-R4! NxRP 45 KxP N-B6 46 P-B6 - Ed.)

- | | |
|---------|--------|
| 42... | KxP |
| 43 P-N6 | N-N5ch |
| 44 K-K6 | K-N4 |
| 45 P-N7 | |

Shuts in my only piece - but surely I'm 'home' now!?

- | | |
|---------|--------|
| 45 ... | N-R3 |
| 46 K-K7 | K-N3 |
| 47 K-B8 | K-R2 |
| 48 P-R3 | N-N1 |
| 49 K-B7 | N-R3ch |
| 50 K-B6 | K-N1 |

I can't believe all this!

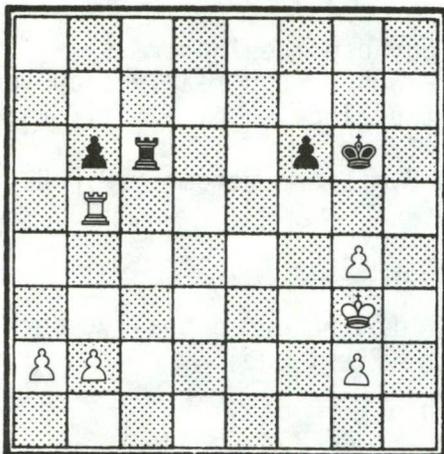


51 K-N5 N-B2ch
 52 KxP NxB!
 53 PxN=Qch KxQ

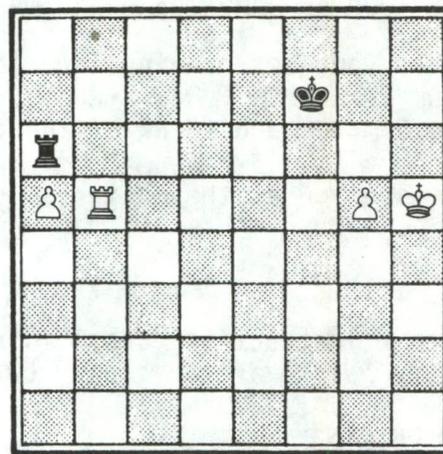
(45 ... R-B7 46 K-N3 R-R7 - rook behind passed pawn has more mobility - Ed.)

and its a DRAW!!!

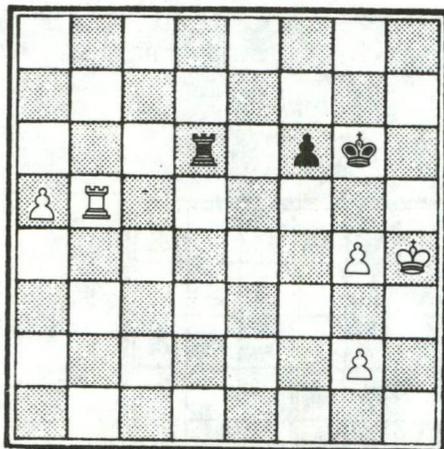
Next day in the same tournament at NICE I resolved to do better - but was drawn against an opponent around 195. I played a superb game PITRA v JOSEPHS but by move 40 (time control) I had reached a hopeless position. Due to curious amazing strokes of 'luck' my opponent was 2 pawns up in this end game and I was looking for swindles. The position on move 41 was this:



41 P-QN4 R-B6ch
 42 K-R4 R-B3
 43 P-R4 R-Q3
 44 P-R5 PxP
 45 PxP



46 P-N3 K-N2
 47 P-N5 PxP ch
 48 KxP R-N3ch
 49 K-B4 R-B3ch
 50 K-N4 R-QR3
 51 K-B3 R-B3ch
 52 K-N2 R-QR3
 53 P-N4 K-N 3
 54 K-N3 K-N2
 55 P-N5 K-B2
 56 K-N4 K-N2
 57 K-R5 K-B2



45 ... R-R3?

I hoped he would play 58 P-N6ch and lose his pawn and he played 58 P-N6ch and I realised that if I play 58 ... RxNP he plays 59 R-N7ch and wins my rook. So reluctantly I refused the sacrifice and played 58 ... K-N2 59 K-N5??? (59 R-N7ch K-N1 60 K-R6 is an easy win as if 60...RxBP 61 R-N8 is mate - Ed.)

Tired, demoralised and STOOPIID I again refused to take his pawn although it was quite obvious that I would take it with CHECK this time and then return to QR3 to stop the other pawn and draw the game. So I played like a ninny

59 ... K-B1
 60 K-R6 R-R2
 61 P-N7ch K-N1

Will he play 62 K-N6 and give me a second chance??

NO - he plays 62 R-N8ch and I resign. Thus 2 pawns down, I still could draw but I LOSE yet the previous game -2 pawns up, an easy win but I DRAW. MORAL: spend as much time on moves in the end game as in the openings - INTUITION DOES NOT WORK IN ENDGAMES!

I'll be playing in another French tournament (also in Nice) next week so if I am still in the same "sparkling" form I'll publish some most instructive games - omitting only those where he forks my queen with his knight (check) etc.

Meanwhile DON'T forget P.F.C.C. - Pins, Forks, Checks and Captures - plus if you move a pawn (or he moves one) look and see if it produces doubled pawns (BAD), Isolated pawns (BAD), Passed Pawns or pawns (V.Good) or a potential OUT POST (Squares where you can park a piece that can no longer be attacked by pawns (V.Good for you if you can get one - V.Bad if your opponent does it to you).

Rooks on open files and then onto the seventh rank, but unlike me if you have to sacrifice to get them in place do it KNOWINGLY not because you didn't see it loses the exchange (1st game) or a piece.

Avoid P-R3 or N-R3 (either side of the board) unless there is an obvious benefit to you, and whenever you find your Queen on the same file as his rook or diagonal as his bishop MOVE it away even if there are lots of pieces in between - it won't be safe until you do and you may thank me later.

Stick to your set openings and if you don't know any use the 'Fortress' - (see previous issues) - P-Q3, P-KN3, B-KN2. N-KB3, O-O - Nobody can really stop you making these 5 moves and think of the time you save on the clock!

Well - see you at the Master's Tournament, future G.M.s and remember P.F.C.C.

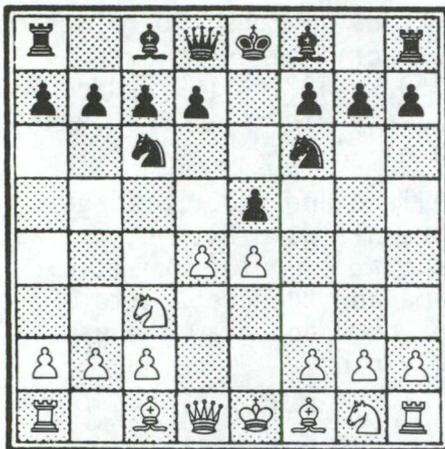
Ian Josephs

P.S. Another instructive 'Loss' (I did get 50% in the tournament actually, but all my 'wins' are abysmally boring except for the first one).

Josephs v Pelajo

1 e4 Nf6
2 Nc3 Nc6
3 d4 e5

4 ... Ne7
5 Bc4

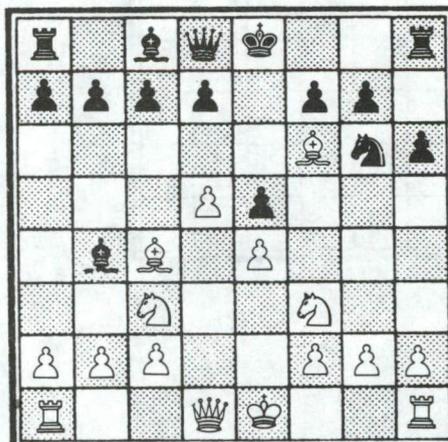


Better 5Bd3 protecting the base of the pawn chain.

5... Ng6
6 Nf3

Maybe 5 Nge2 is better and then f3.

6... Bb4
7 Bg5 h6
8 Bxf6

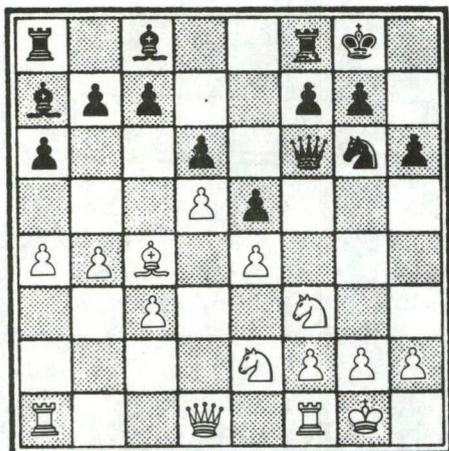


4 d5?

(Why not 5 dxe5 Nxe5 6 f4 Ng6 (or c6) 7 e5 when black's knight at f6 has to go back to base? This is a case where black's provocative opening can be refuted. The move played drives the knight back but black still retains a central pawn, and will be able to develop his bishop to c5. - Ed.)

(This is one of those materially equal exchanges which however lose positional 'points', that we have spoken about in recent issues. (Popular Chess No. 3/R.R.21) White parts with his better bishop, the one not hampered by the central pawns, and also develops black's queen to a good square - Ed.)

8 ...	Qxf6
9 0-0	a6
10 Ne2	0-0
11 c3	Bc5
12 b4	Ba7
13 a4	d6



White is worse but by no means beaten. Black has two bishops and better space but no real attack.

14 h3???

Horrors - what about P.F.C.C.?

14 ... Bxh3!

Of course if 15 gxh3 Qxf3 and black is a pawn up and white's king is wide open.

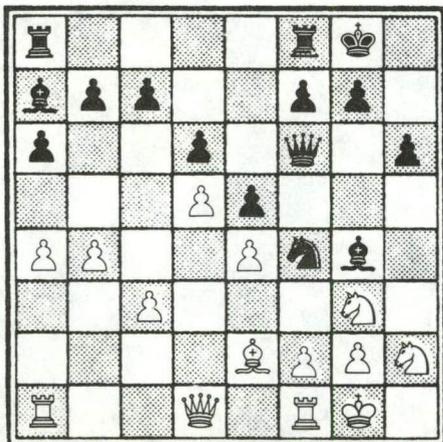
15 Ng3

To plug the gap

15 ... Bg4

a pawn for nowt.

16 Be2 Nf4
17 Nh2



(with all those black bits around the white king it looks like a possible K.O. could be in the offing. Readers might care to consider the outcome of 17...Qh4 - threat ...Qxg3 - here.)

17 ... Nxe2ch
18 Nxe2 Bh5

(Black clings out to his technical advantage of the two bishops, however, in this blocked position their range can be diminished, particularly the one at h5.)

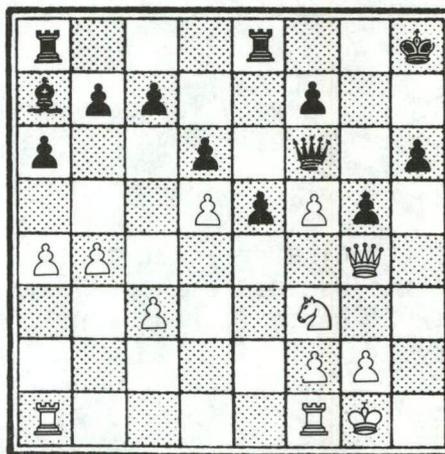
19 Qd3 Bg6
20 Ng3 Qh4
21 Nf5 Qg5
22 Nf3 Qf6
23 Nf3 h4 Bh7

(must keep my liddle bishop!)

24 Qg3 g5

Must weaken his pawns and let me in.
(I disagree - Ed.)

25 Qg4 Kh8
26 Nh4 f3 Bxf5
27 exf5 Rfe8



(Oh, Oh much too slow. Black consistently fails to activate his rooks in this game. Why not 27...e4! 28 Qxe4 Qxc3, an equal exchange of material, but a positional gain for black who needs the open 'e' file for his rooks. As it is white sets up a permanent blockade at e4 and shuts the black army out.)

28 Nd2 Qg7
29 Ne4!

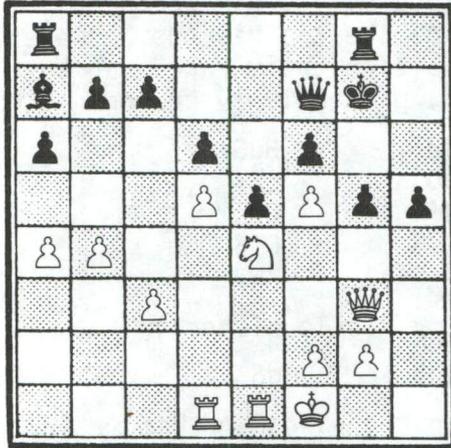
To block the passed pawn.

(The pawn was not passed. White now has a beautiful out post for his knight and probably stands better if he continues with g3, Kg2, Rh1, Rh5, Rahl etc.)

29 ... f6
 30 Rad1? Qf7
 31 Rfe1

(Still playing in his automatic mode - 'rooks to the central files'.)

31 ... Kg7
 32 Kf1 h5
 33 Qg3 Rg8



At this point black is only a pawn up but no longer has two bishops and will find it difficult to win - white may draw with a bit of luck....

BUT - HORRORS - trying for counter play on the queen side I play

34 c4??

A stupid positional error that gives black's hitherto useless bishop a magnificent OUTPOST on d4 in the heart of white country.

34 ... Bd4!

(I disagree that c4 is really a mistake. White has footled around so far but still retains the skeleton of his advantage with the knight out post at e4. To increase its power white needs to play c5 and create a weak pawn on d6 which will also enable his rooks to attack down the c file. White should prepare for this advance even if it should mean the loss of the pawn at d5. The bishop at d4 is stronger than it was at a7, but not much. Basically there are no black forces to back her up, and the pawn structure makes here something of a 'bad' bishop.)

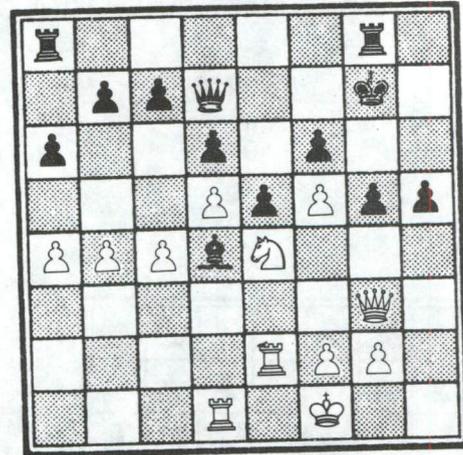
One error is often followed by another so I should have left the table for 5 minutes cooling down period BUT overcome by my stupidity I think I'd better try doubling up rooks 'somewhere' and perhaps later Nxd4 fxd4 Qxd4 could be a perpetual check - so I move too hastily

35 Re2??

leaving my R on d1 loose and also pawns at a4 and f5 - Oh dear. So

35 ... Qd7

Forking (did I forget P.F.C.C. again?) and after the capture at a4 the rook at d1 will be threatened too.



(Maybe white still has some combo here,. I looked at 36 Rxd4 exd4 37 Nxd5, but this is no good after 37...Kh8. Also 36 Qh3 Qxh4 37 Rxd4 exd4 38 Qxh5 but this fails to 38...Qd1ch. However, 36 Qh3 Qxa4 (36... Rh8 37 Nxd5 fxd5 38 f6+ Kxf6 39 Qxd7) 37 Rd3! Rh8 38 Nxd5 fxd5 39 f6+ Kf8 40 Rxd4 Qa1+ 41 Re1 Qxd4 42 Qd7 looks quite good, but not if black plays 40...exd4 instead of 40...Qa1+. - Ed.)

36 Qh3 Qxa4

and I have to move my rook to protect it so I am another pawn down, 2 pawns down is too much again and I lose on move 50 after unavoidable exchanges. I hope you learn more from my mistakes than I do!!

(Ian's general advice is directed at the grade 100 and below player; higher graded players should concentrate more on the bracketed notes which emphasise positional factors more deeply - Ed.)

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Quotes on Conchess

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Here are just some of the 'quotes' that we have received together with extracts from reviews both here and abroad. We also reproduce a complete game played and won by CONCHESS against International Master Julian Hodgson, who it should be said was in a slightly lighthearted and experimental mood at the time. Annotation is by Julian Hodgson.

- "Good looking, sensitive and intelligent... we're talking about the CONCHESS range of machines under investigation this month... it has one feature which all other machines I've looked at lack - and that is a built in timer for lightning chess. This is absolutely murderous. You have three minutes to play the whole game and when time's up the machine beeps and refuses to play on. There's no appeal. It concentrates the mind wonderfully". Tony Harrington, micro chess writer, Personal Computer World, March 1983.
- "CONCHESS can be placed among the best current chess computers. CONCHESS offers a chess computer of aesthetically pleasing appearance (the two top models with well designed rosewood or mahogany inlaid finishes and pieces also in wood) together with an attractive system for moving pieces, allowing one to forget the 'computer' aspect all secured by a high standard program". TILT, Le Magazine des Jeux Electroniques, Jan/Feb 1983.
- "So far, to use a slightly theatrical expression, CONCHESS has exceeded my wildest expectations... congratulations to all concerned. You certainly have a winner". J D McM, East Barnet, Herts.
- "Congratulations on producing a truly good computer. I'm certainly enjoying it". C L P, Hemel Hempstead, Herts.
- "CONCHESS is the first chess computer which appeals not only to the chess player because of its performance and facilities but also to the 'other half' because of its outstanding design". Leading Games Shop Buyer.
- "CONCHESS is not just a chess computer it is a striking item of furniture which would make a very attractive centrepiece and talking point for any home". Roger Picton, Promotion and Media Consultant.
- "Just when you think you know all your options for chess playing computers something new comes along. In the case of the three new models by CONCHESS something new means something welcome: an auto response machine that claims to be completely updatable and sells at a fraction of other auto-response boards... Even at practice levels its sharp tactics keep players under 1800 on their toes". Frank Elley, Editor of Chess Life magazine (USA) January 1983.
- "The CONCHESS range is reckoned to be the bees knees of chess computers... all three models have two main features which excited the cognoscenti. They are 'touch sensitive' and updatable". Evening Standard, May 25th 1983.
- "But the trouble with most chess computers is that they cannot be upgraded to take advantage of new programs that take a more intelligent approach, or look more moves ahead. This problem has now been solved with a new machine called CONCHESS. The secret is to have just two ingredients: a chess board and a specially designed replaceable cartridge which contains both the software, or chess program, and the microprocessor. In this way the chess board can be always upgraded with more powerful cartridges so that, in theory at least, it need never be replaced". Computer Weekly, June 9th 1983.
- "You owe it to yourself to own CONCHESS. It plays a most human like game. It is the best machine for learners I have ever seen and I have got first hand experience of that from my four younger brothers and sisters aged seven and upwards. It is also very good at sharpening up even my own game on occasion. At its highest levels it has a nasty habit of picking up any weakness or looseness in play which makes it an ideal sparring partner for players possibly right up to BCF 200". Julian Hodgson, International Master.
- "The facility to show the player all the legal moves available is most helpful to young beginners. In fact one could actually learn to play chess on a desert island with no other assistance than CONCHESS. It would certainly be my Desert Island Discs choice". E R, Bedford, retired Headmaster.
- "I hope you had a successful Fair. Certainly we were most impressed with the CONCHESS range and I know some of your competitors were most envious". Ian Waters, Adventure.

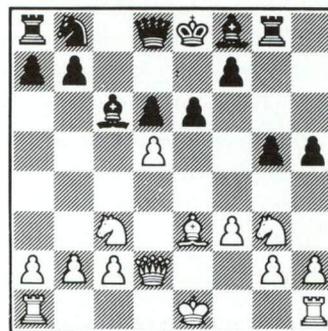
- "Where's the computer?" Graham Hook, computer systems analyst.
- "The writer met your representatives at the Sutton Chess Congress and was most impressed with your computers". Peter Harris, Secretary, London Chess Association.
- "I am writing to say how pleased I am with the CONCHESS Ambassador chess computer. It has provided excellent entertainment since I bought it last Saturday and its features, displays, etc. are surprisingly easy to remember and use. I anticipate it being a superb teaching medium for my children who learn how to play better chess whilst not 'losing face' when the computer wins!" A F O, Cotham, Bristol.
- "Clever Computer. After trying a few moves of your February 'How good is your chess' article and finding it rather above me, I decided to test my new CONCHESS chess computer against it and was astounded by the result!
It scored a total of 71 points, which rates it at 'high club standard!' Looking back through the score of its game, I found that it chose the same move as Karpov 22 out of 37 times - almost 60% of the time!
I was particularly impressed by the speed with which it found such strong moves as 14 N - Q5, 19 P - KB4! and 33 Q - B4!".
Readers letter in Chess Magazine, May 1983.
- "CONCHESS is one of the best computers I have come across in all respects... it is very easy to use, and the five practice and five tournament levels give it more scope than many of its competitors". Susan Walker (English Under-18 Girls Champion) writing in Next Magazine Aug. '83.

GAME BETWEEN CONCHESS AND JULIAN HODGSON INTERNATIONAL MASTER

White : CONCHESS
Black : Hodgson

One area where chess computers can help even the strongest player, is the home-testing of new ideas in the opening. In the following game, I tried a very unusual move in Alekhine's defence.

- 1. P - K4 N - KB3 2. P - K5 N - K5?! 3. P - KB3 P - K3 4. N - K2!?**
CONCHESS had a long think before playing this move. 4 P x N runs into trouble after 4... Q - R5ch. The plan CONCHESS comes up with is very interesting.
4... N - B4 5. P - Q4 N - R5 6. N - N3 P - Q3 7. B - QN5ch B - Q2
8. B x N B x B
The computer now proceeds to outplay me.
9. N - B3 B - B3 10. B - B4 P - KN4?! 11. B - K3 P - KR4
12. P x P P x P 13. Q - Q2 R - N1 14. P - Q5!



A fine move which completely wrecks Black's position.

- 14... P x P 15. N x P**
White has a clear advantage.
15... B - K2 16. N - K4 P - B4 17. N x B Q x N 18. N x QPch
Now CONCHESS is winning.
18... K - B1 19. N x BP Q - K4 20. Q - Q8ch B - K1 21. Q Q6ch!
Transposing into a winning endgame.
21... Q x Q 22. N x Q N - B3
CONCHESS now does what all chess computers enjoy; pawn grabbing.
23. N x P R - N1 24. N - B5 R x NP 25. N - K6ch K - K2
26. N x PR x BP 27. O - O N - K4 28. P - B4 B - B3 29. R - B2! R x R 30. B x R N - Q6 31. B - K3 P - R5 32. R - KB1 P - R6
33. P x P R - QN1 34. R - Q1 N - N7 35. B - B5ch K - K1
36. R - K1ch K - Q1
I decided to resign in order to challenge CONCHESS to another game.

TRAINING FROM MASTER GAMES

Continuing our series of master test games, we present an offering of World Champion super tactician Alekhine from St. Petersburg 1913. This comes from his book 'My Best Games of Chess 1908-1923', published by Bell, and now out of print but not doubt available from any library or antiquarian chess book seller (see Caissa Ad. in this issue).

You should play white - cover up the moves, trying to decide upon your move before revealing the one played. Use a piece of card with a notch in it, so you cover the black move, but not the white. In this article we have dispensed with the points system, so you can get down to the real work of comparing your decisions with those of the master. After having played through the game in this way, then you should try to get hold of the book to read Alekhine's own notes to the game.

Some readers have objected to the format of these test games, as being less informative than say, the articles in 'Chess' called 'How good is your chess', when points are given for moves played and for alternatives, as well as keeping a running commentary on the game. However, the object of the Popular Chess articles is to develop your own self reliance, to enable you to make judgements of your own, without constant assistance from any outside source. Secondly, having a commentary as the game is in progress may bias your thinking; when you actually play a tournament game, everything is silent; you only have the post mortem at the end.

A full book of thirty test games, all taken from Alekhine's book 'My Best Games 1908-1923' is available from Audio Chess at £1.25 post free. An easier selection of 33 test games, taken from Chernev's 'Logical Chess, Move by Move', is also available at £1.10 post free.

<u>WHITE</u>	<u>BLACK</u>	<u>YOUR MOVE</u>
1 P-K4	P-K4	
2 N-KB3	N-QB3	
3 B-N5	P-QR3	
4 B-R4	N-B3	
5 Q-K2	P-QN4	
6 B-N3	B-B4	_____
7 P-QR4	R-QN1	_____
8 PxP	PxP	_____
9 P-Q3	P-Q3	_____
10 B-K3	B-KN5	_____
11 P-R3	B-R4	_____
12 QN-Q2	O-O	_____
13 O-O	N-Q5	_____
14 BxN	BxN	_____
15 NxB	PxB	_____
16 P-K5	Q-K2	_____
17 KR-K1	QR-K1	_____
18 Q-Q2	PxP	_____
19 RxP	Q-Q3	_____
20 Q-N5	RxR	_____
21 NxR	Q-N3	_____
22 P-N4	B-Q3	_____
23 NxP	RxN	_____
24 Q-B5	P-N3	_____
25 Q-K6	K-N2	_____
26 QxRch	K-R3	_____
27 B-K6	Resigns	_____

GAME 2

This game occurred between M. Basman (I.M.) and Sensory 9 level 6. Once again you are white and you should cover up the black move and work it out yourself.

At the end of the game, turn over and you will find points given to moves chosen as well as a brief analysis of the major points of the game. The opening is the legendary St. George, available on Audio Chess Cassette and also in Pergamon paperback.

<u>WHITE</u>	<u>BLACK</u>	<u>YOUR MOVE</u>
1 b4	d5	
2 a3	e5	
3 Bb2	Nd7	
4 e3	Nf6	
5 c4	dx4	_____
6 Bxc4	Be7	_____
7 Nf3	e4	_____
8 Ng5	O-O	_____
9 Qb3	Qe8	_____
10 Nc3	Bd6	_____
11 Nd5	c6	_____
12 Nxf6+	Nxf6	_____
13 Qc3	h6	_____
14 h4	Bg4	_____
15 f3	hxg5	_____
16 hxg5	exf3	_____
17 O-O-O	fxg2	_____
18 Qxf6	gxf6	_____
19 Bxf6	gxh1=Q	_____
20 Rxh1	Bh2	_____
21 Rxh2	Bh5	_____
22 Rxh5	Qe4	_____
23 Rh8++		_____

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It runs Pyramid 3 player tournaments, Endgame and informal games and is always ready to welcome new members of any strength below 135 grade. Write to Francis at the address above.

Notes to Basman v Sensory 9

(figures in brackets indicate points for each move)

5 c4 (2) 5 Nf3 (2)
6 Bxc4 (1)
7 Nf3 (2) 7 Nc3 (1) 7 Qb3 (1) 7 Qc2 (1)
8 Ng5 (3) 8 Nd4 (2) 8 Ne5 (1)

8 Nd4 would be answered by 8 ...Ne5, attacking the bishop at c4; 8 Ng5 is not usually good, because eventually the knight gets driven back, but here black's faulty sixth move, ... Be7 gives white a chance for attack.

9 Qb3 (3) 9 Qc2(3)

9 Qb3 ties black to the defence of f7, but 9 Qc2, which virtually wins the e pawn is also strong.

10 Nc3 (2) 10 d3 (1)
11 Nd5 (2) 11 Qc2 (2) 11 d3 (1)

Once again white chose to go for the attack rather than win the pawn at e4.

12 Nxf6+ (1)
13 Qc3 (3) 13 f3 (2) 13 Bxf6 (1)

13 Bxf6 looks the obvious move, to weaken black's king side, but then white is faced with the need to retreat his knight at g5.

14 h4 (4) 14 Nh3(1) white's sacrifice is based on the variations 14...hgx
15 hxg nH7 16 Qxg7 mate; or 15...Be7 16 gxf Bxf6 17 Qxf6 gxf6 18 Bxf6 and mates.

15 f3 (3) 15 Nh3 (1) 15 Nxf7 (0) after 15 f3, if ...Bg3+ then 16 Ke2.
16 hxg5 16 ffxg4 (0) because of 16 ...Bg3+ 17 Ke2 Bxh4 suppressing the attack.
17 0-0-0 (5) bringing both rooks into the attack; note how one can develop and attack at the same time.

17 gxf6 (1) -17 ...Bg3+ 18 Kf1 ffxg2+
19 Kxg2 Qe4 +
17 gxf3 (1) Bxf3 stops white castling
17 Qxf6 (0) because of 17...gxf6 18 Bxf6 Bg3+ 19 Kf1 Ffxg2+ 20 Kxg2 Qe4+ and Qh7 wins.
18 Qxf6 (5) 18 Rhg1 (1) 18 gxf6 (1) gxh1 =Q 19 Rxh1 g6 is good for black.
19 Bxf6 (1) mate is now inevitable

Now add up your points

35-40	180+ grade
30-34	160+ grade
25-29	140+ grade
20-24	120+ grade
15-19	110+ grade
10-15	80+ grade
5- 9	60+ grade
0- 4	30+ grade

POPULAR CHESS is an instructional magazine for the improving player. It is published six times a year, at a subscription of £5. Specimen copies and back issues are 90p each. Editor is International Master Michael Basman.

NEWSHOUND

The last decade has seen an unprecedented rise in the strength of British chess which now boasts six grandmasters, many more international masters and a legion of young talents. It would be unfair to credit any single event with this rise, though the 1972 Fischer - Spassky match was certainly an important catalyst in producing the necessary sponsorship and enthusiasm amongst organisers.

Many of Britain's young talents first became interested in the game under the influence of this match and have since developed into players of international repute. Many of them have already gained the international master title whilst the strongest of them seem likely future candidates for grandmastership. Mark Hebden has narrowly missed the grandmaster norm on several occasions and Nigel Short made his first grandmaster norm in Amsterdam last year.

The "Common Market" tournament, incorporating the Paris Championship and held early in May, provided the setting for a tremendous result for the 23 year old international master Harold James Plaskett. From the nine rounds of competition Jim scored a remarkable eight points, which included draws with grandmasters Ree and Nunn and wins over grandmaster Lobron and international masters Johansen, Skembris, Todorcevic and Haik. The score exceeded the grandmaster norm by a whole point and in terms of ELO rating represented the best result ever by an Englishman.

Plaskett's forceful and aggressive style of play rarely fails to produce chessboard drama. The following game is exemplary:-

Plaskett - Lobron

Paris - 1983

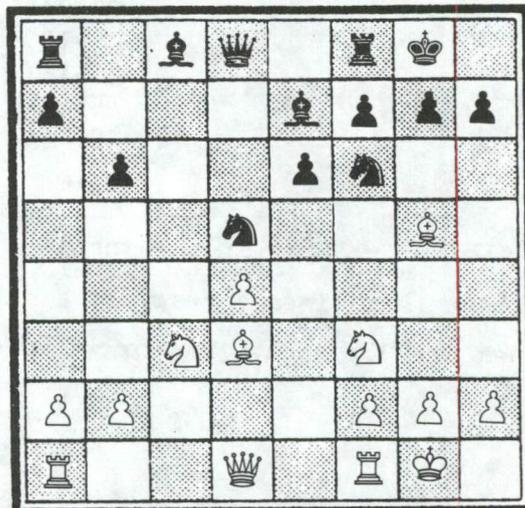
1 P-Q4 P-Q4
2 N-KB3 P-K3
3 B-B4

I can't help but think that this quiet system is hardly suitable for a man with Plaskett's violent tendencies. In fairness white does manage to infuse life into the proceedings with some energetic early middle-game play, but only after allowing Black a very comfortable game.

3... N-KB3
4 P-K3 QN-Q2
5 P-QB4

Moving this pawn forward two squares doesn't look like a good idea in this particular position. 5 QN-Q2 is more in keeping with his third move.

5... B-N5 ch
6 N-B3 P-B4
7 B-Q3 PxQP
8 KPxP PxP
9 BxBP N-N3
10 B-Q3 QN-Q4
11 B-Q2 O-O
12 O-O B-K2
13 B-KN5 P-QN3

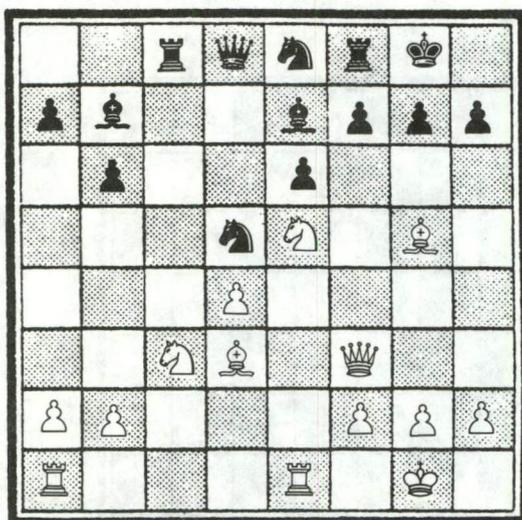


A fairly typical isolated queen's pawn position has been reached. White hopes that his greater mobility will compensate for black's outpost on Q4.

Over the next few moves white more than makes up for his earlier insipid play, marshalling his forces to attack the black monarch.

14 N-K5 B-N2
15 Q-B3 R-B1
16 KR-K1 N-K1?!

This extravagant manoeuvre allows white the opportunity to sacrifice a piece, thus bringing chaos to the chess board. 16...P-N3! is the consistent continuation when black has a sound and resilient position (see diagram),



17 BxPch!? KxB
18 NxP KRxN

In this orgy of violence the young West German grandmaster chooses a move which gives the position a small measure of clarity. White wins in the variation 18...Q-Q2? 19 Q-R3ch K-N1 20 N-K5 Q-Q3 21 N-K4 Q-N5 22 QxPch, but both 18...BxB 19 Q-K4ch P-N3 20 NxQRxKN 21 P-R4! and 18...Q-B2 were intriguing alternatives.

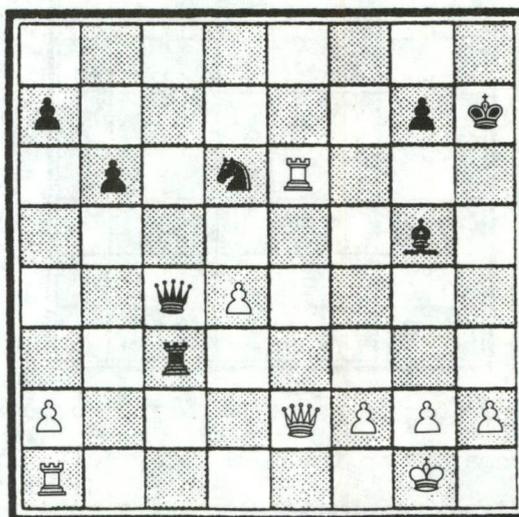
19 QxR BxB

Another interesting possibility was 19...NxN 20 BxB Q-Q4, yet again with a position which defies analysis.

20 QxB N-Q3
21 Q-R6

and not 21 QxRP R-R1, when white loses his queen.

21 ... NxN
22 PxN RxP
23 RxP Q-B1!
24 Q-K2 Q-B5!



Brilliant rearguard action. It seems as if black will save the day though in such positions a great many mistakes lie waiting in the undergrowth.

25 Q-K5 B-B5??

Black finds one of them after which his position collapses. The less spectacular 25...B-B3 was in order.

26 Q-R5ch B-R3

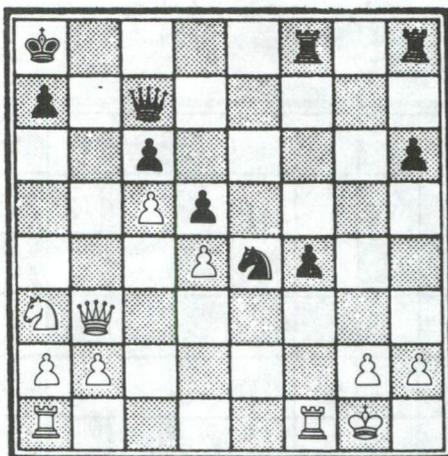
Presumably Lobron intended to meet this with 26...K-N1, but realised too late that 27 R-K8ch NxR 28 QxNch K-R2 29 Q-K4ch and 30 QxB was possible. The move played allows white's pieces to converge decisively on the black king.

27 Q-N6ch K-R1
28 P-KN3 R-B8 ch
29 RxR QxRch
30 K-N2 Q-B3ch
31 P-B3 Black resigned.

It remains to be seen to what dizzy heights the chess youth of Britain will progress, though the prospects certainly seem very rosy indeed. It would come as little surprise to me if Britain were to have ten grandmasters within the next couple of years and fifteen by the end of the decade.

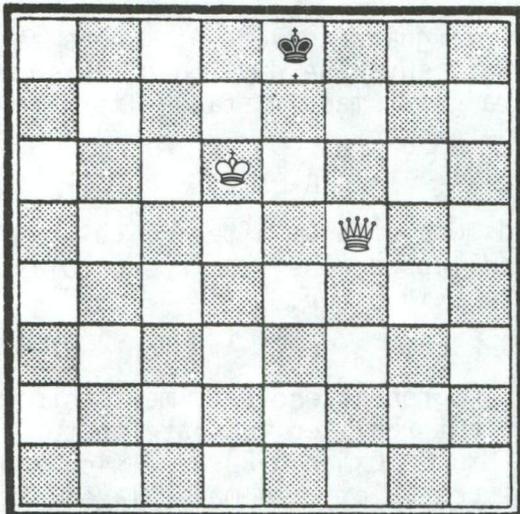
Plaskett's most recent success came in the Benedictine International Tournament where he made another G.M. Norm, using the blossoming Polish Defence to inflict a heavy defeat on Russian emigre Gutman.

LE COMPETITION

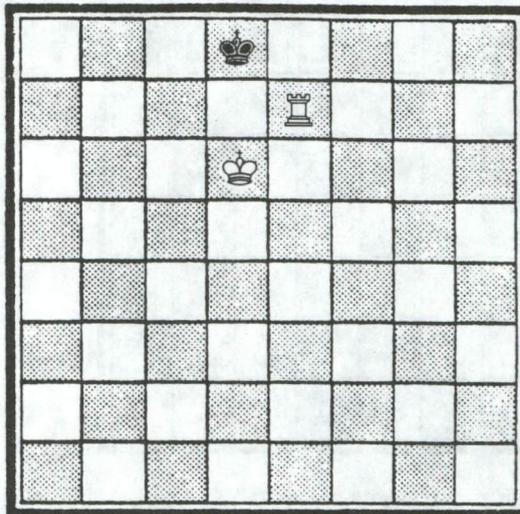


Winner of the Shaun Taulbut cassette on the Bishop's Opening was J. Blaikie, who correctly pointed out that 1 Nb5 only helps white if black captures the piece. If ... cxb5 2 Qxd5ch Qb7 3 c6 is good for white, so instead black should play 1...Qg7, with threats of ...Rhg8 and ...f3, and white cannot move the knight away from b5 without leaving the d pawn hanging.

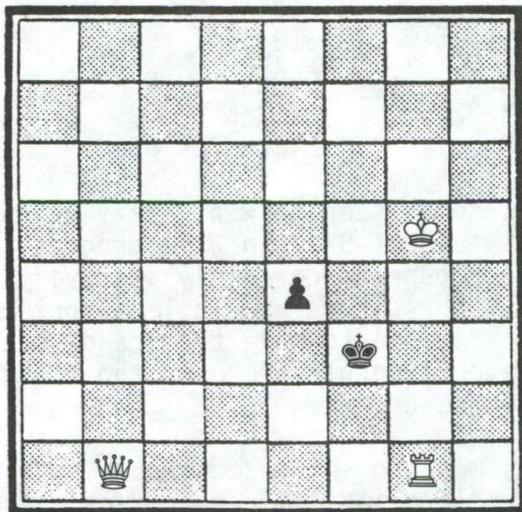
This issue we offer four problems, and the cassette, AT THE BRITISH 1980 by M. Basman, for the first correct solutions in the draw. All are miniature mates, the first two quite easy, the next two less so.



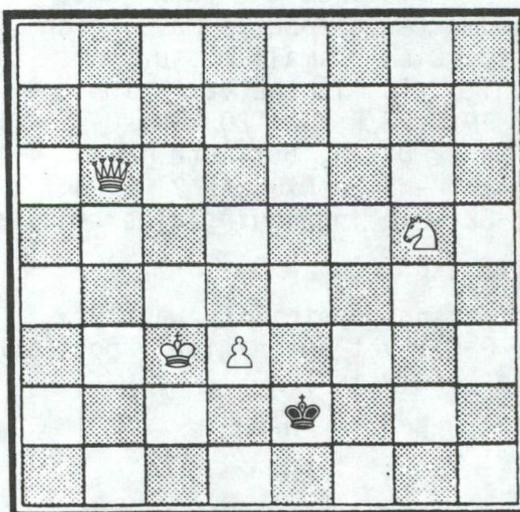
White mates in two



White mates in three



White mates in two



White mates in three.

BLUEPRINT

OF POSITIONAL PLAY

by Michael Basman

In the opening the themes will be mobilization of forces, control of centre and safety of king; in the middle game it is enhancement of piece placing, central control, attack upon enemy weaknesses and king. In the endgame the features are similar to the middle game, except that attack on the king is more unlikely and the king becomes like other pieces in his need for centralisation and enhancement. Secondly, the aim of the endgame is usually the capture of enemy pawns and the queening of one's own pawns.

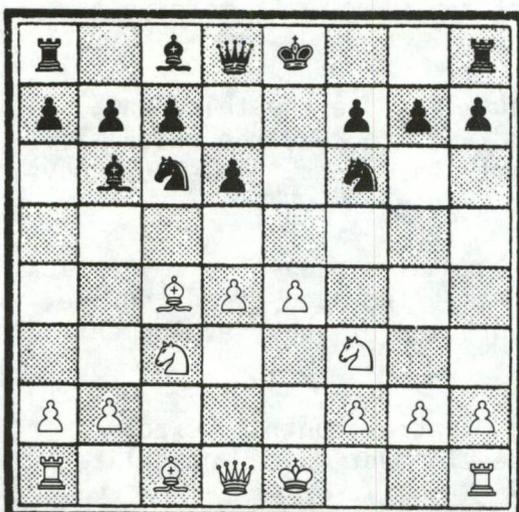
OPENING

The feature of the opening is mobilization and a rush of forces to the centre line. But mobilization is for all the forces, so it follows that to move one piece several times will not help the remainder of the army; also mobilization takes precedence over early attack; in fact early attacks are frequently faulty and time wasting, as the rest of the forces cannot back up. Mobilization refers to the pieces, the active units, rather than the pawns, which have limited power, so several pawn moves in the opening are unwise, unless they free the pieces or enhance control of the centre.

The way in which the centre is controlled is interesting. A few experiments show that pieces in general work better in the centre than on the edge. They control more squares, they can reach other parts of the board more quickly, especially in the case of the king and the knight. Yet the occupation of the centre has to be undertaken with caution. Why? The reason is the different values of the pieces. If we rush into the centre with our major pieces, the queen and the rooks, we will soon find ourselves under attack from the lesser value pieces, the pawns, knights and bishops, who will drive us out of the middle. In fact every higher value piece is vulnerable to a lower value piece, the queens to the rooks, knights, bishops and pawns and so on down to the knight who is vulnerable only to pawns.

As a result it is the pawns that are moved into the centre first, they are the only ones who can be safe there. They have the effect of keeping the enemy forces out of the middle and providing security for our own men to come to the centre.

Have a look at the diagram.

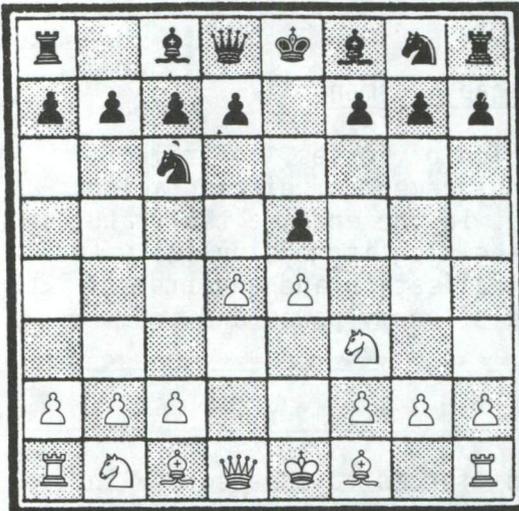


The two pawn centre, pawns unchallenged at d4 and e4, is a prime positional objective. Enemy pieces cannot settle at c5, d5, e5 and f5 and even the pieces that might place themselves at c6, d6, e6 or f6, a file further back, feel rather uncomfortable, as they may be driven away by later pawn thrusts. On the other hand, the pawns give protection to our own pieces to move up along side and behind them, taking up central posts without suffering exposure to enemy pawns.

The concept of exposure, which decides how the centre is occupied in the early stages, even more crucially affects the early placing of queens and rooks. These are the strongest pieces and most subject to attack by weaker units. The queens and rooks have a unique movement; they can work on files; no other pieces can imitate this.

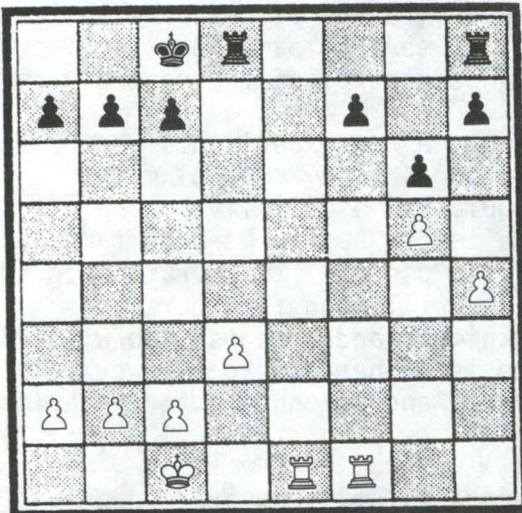
At the beginning of the game all the files are closed; they can be opened by the exchange or capture of pawns. So here we have a third reason for moving pawns, besides letting pieces out and controlling the centre - to open files.

In the next diagram we see that white has just played d2-d4.



With this move he frees his bishop at c1, places another pawn in the centre, attacks the enemy foot hold at e5 and also offers to open a file. Black's pawn at e5 is a stopped pawn, and so cannot avoid the exchange if his opponent wishes; as a result a file will be opened, and by placing his rooks and queens at one end of the file, white will be able to strike all the way to the enemy position without any chance of being attacked by the enemy pieces.

When we talk of an open file, the strict definition is of a file with no pawns on it; yet a half open file can be equally useful for our pieces. In fact, there are some specific advantages in a half open file.



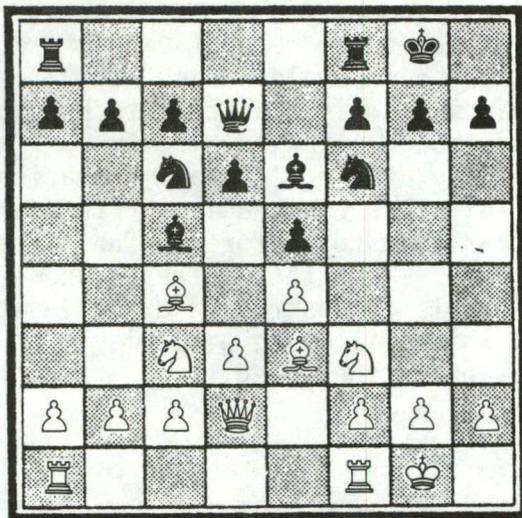
Looking at the next diagram, the rook at e1 is well placed, striking along the open file, though there is a slight problem that black can challenge white's control of the file by playing Re8 himself. On the other hand, the rook at f1 is placed on a half open file, and will not be challenged; it even has a sitting target in a pawn at f7. The use of half open files is particularly important for the queen, since she may suffer exposure to enemy rooks if placed on an open file; so generally she works better on a file with one enemy pawn on it.

Using files for our major pieces requires another criteria to be satisfied - that the queens and rooks can reach these files. Given that central files are more valuable than wing files, there is generally no difficulty in bringing the queen to a centre file. But for the rooks, placed on the edge, there is half an army between them and any possible central file. Thus arises the concept of clearing the back rank, which states that, even if you can not fully centralise the pieces, you should at least lift them off the back rank, to give the rooks room.

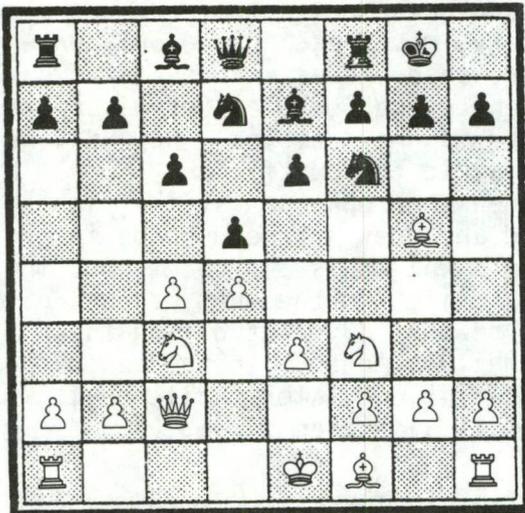
In accordance with the idea of exposure, the knights usually go to the third row, the bishops can find themselves anywhere between the 2nd and 5th row, the queen will usually go to the second row, and that just leaves us with the kings. He should move up to the second row, but here we need to consider king safety.

A king advanced to the centre of bereft of pawn cover soon falls prey to enemy attack. If pawns are advanced the king is exposed; as a result, castling is a useful device, and the king is put on the edge. This also solves the problem of rook development, as the king is no longer in the way.

All these major features of opening play - mobilization, central control, exposure and king safety - combine to give us a general picture of development which looks like this. (see next diagram)



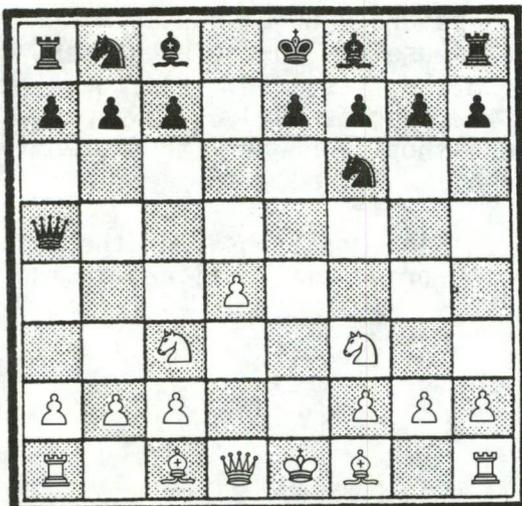
The diagram shows an example from the Giuoco Pianissimo opening. Both sides have almost identical development, kings are safe, pawn control of the centre is equal; the back rank is almost clear, but so far no files have been opened and no files look like getting opened, unless one side or the other can force d3-d4 or d6-d5.



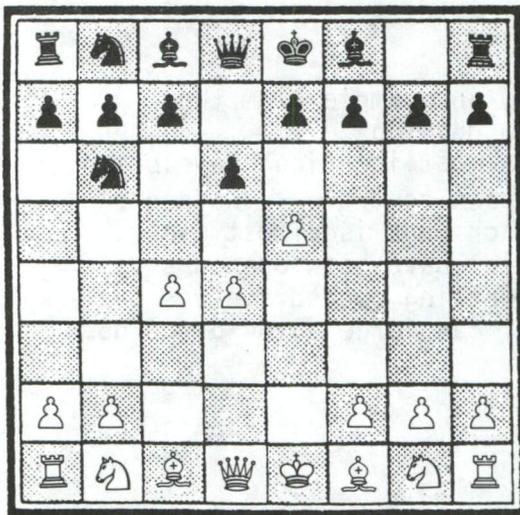
This diagram shows a form of development from the Queen's Gambit, where white has made obvious positional gains in comparison with the previous example. The key to his advantage is the placing of the white pawn at c4, which gives him more central pawns, pressure against the enemy centre, the option of opening the c file for his rook, as well as the effective post at c2 for his queen. Black has managed to castle, but in general has preferred to maintain a defensive pyramid in the centre rather than develop his pieces rapidly. His bishop at c8 will find difficulty lifting off the back, which hampers the rook development.

There are hundreds of different openings, and many of the popular formations seem to contradict one of the three fundamental rules. However, closer examination usually shows that they modify and extend the basics rather than rejecting them.

Let us take a few examples.

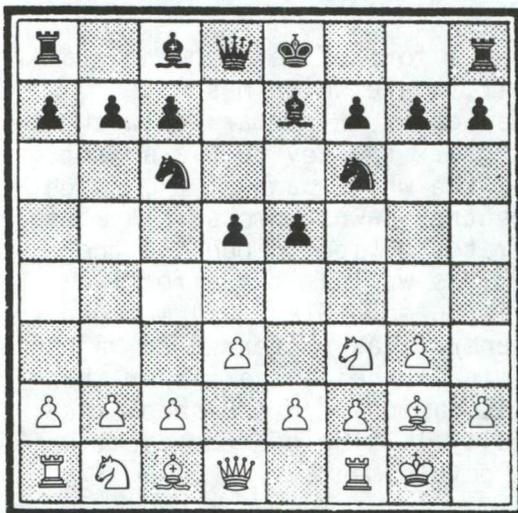


The Centre Counter: 1 e4 d5 2 exd5 Qxd5 3 Nc3 Qa5. Black has moved his queen twice, but at least he did not keep the queen in the centre after it was attacked by Nc3, but moved it to a less exposed spot at a5. His plan in playing this opening was to knock out one of white's centre pawns, which will thus enable black's pieces to find central positions. He has also opened a file for himself, and vacated d8 for a rook. It is a finely balanced question whether such factors compensate for the loss of time and possible future exposure of the queen, which in an open position such as this could be serious.



Alekhine's Defence: 1 e4 Nf6 2 e5 Nd5
3 d4 d6 4 c4 Nb6

This seems to contradict the rule of exposure - the knight only has been developed and its centralisation was short lived after attack by the white pawns. Though Alekhine's Defence is a difficult one to play, the positional motivation is interesting. Black is encouraging white to bring his pawns far forward, before the units behind have been mobilized. With the centre advanced black hopes to be able to destroy it or at least exchange it off, which will then give his piece the central posts they need.



Kings Fianchetto Opening: What principle has white followed and which neglected? He has placed his king in safety, moved each piece only once moved pawns to release pieces. He seems to have neglected the centre, we would expect his pieces to become exposed if they develop. However, he has been careful to avoid this pitfall. His bishop, like queen and rook, can strike right across the board and does not need to be in the centre. His king's knight is a problem, but in order to safeguard it from the enemy thrus e5-e4, he has placed a pawn at d3, controlling this vital square. White's modesty in the centre does not mean that he will not later challenge it, with e4 or c4, which will also open files.

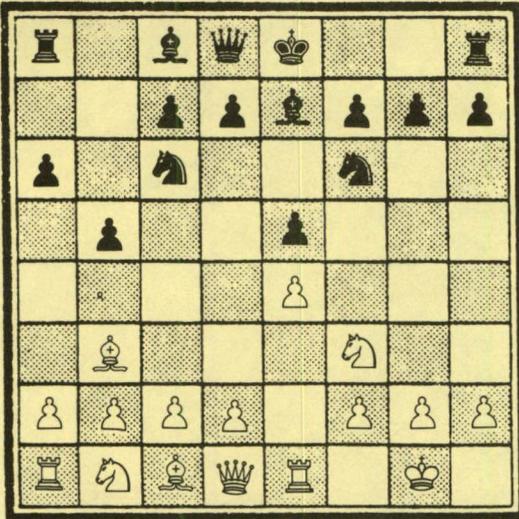
These examples show that 'principles' of the opening should not be followed too rigidly; a lot of the problems amateurs face are due to not being prepared to look behind a concept to understand the cases where it applies and where it doesn't; thus ideas such as 'doubled pawns' or 'don't bring out your queen too early' are erected into enormous 'don'ts' which the player follows because he likes a clear direction; however, they become definitely harmful because he tries to apply them in all situations.

The maxim that is given to beginners - develop knights before your bishops - has good general sense because the knights, slow movers, are useless on the back rank, whereas a bishop can still function fairly well even on the first row; and there are other reasons which we could discover for developing the knights early. However, there are many openings where they come out after the bishops, or where the queen is moved before the minor pieces are developed.

I'd like to close this section with some examples of opening positions, and the reader can decide for himself how they correspond to the principles outlined in the early part of the article.

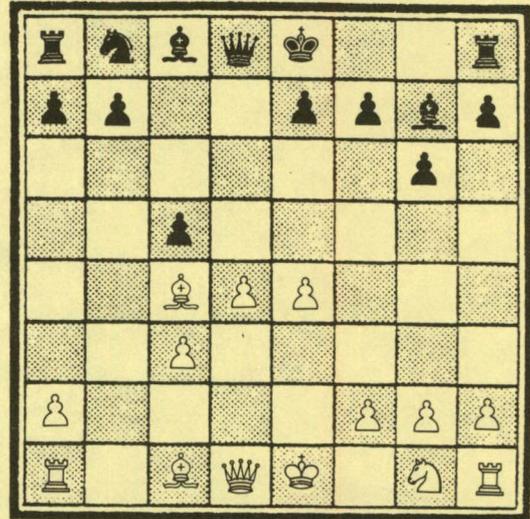
RUY LOPEZ

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 Nf6
5 O-O Be7 6 Re1 b5 7 Bb3



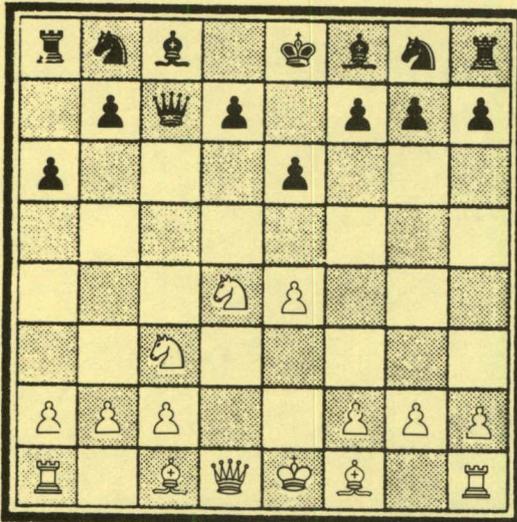
GRUNFELD

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nc3 d5 4 cxd5 Nxd5
5 e4 Nxc3 6 bxc3 Bg7 7 Bc4 c5



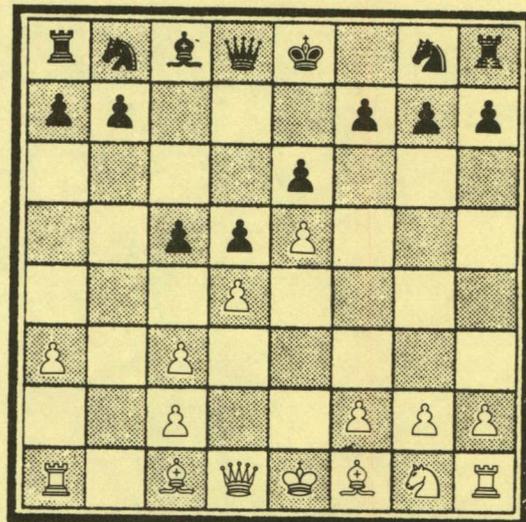
SICILIAN KAN

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4
a6 5 Nc3 Qc7



FRENCH WANAVER

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 e5 c5
5 a3 Bxc3+ 6 bxc3



The only known example of the extremely rare, coal-fired, chess computer.

