

Judit Polgar and Andras Toth

Master Your Chess with Judit Polgar

**Inspirational Lessons from the
All-Time Best Female Chess Player**

This book is also available as an online MoveTrainer and
Video course at Chessable.com

New In Chess 2022

Contents

Preface by Judit Polgar	7
Explanation of symbols	8
Part I Opening Disasters	9
Chapter 1 Materialism.....	13
Chapter 2 Poor Development.....	29
Chapter 3 Lack of Central Control.....	47
Part II Calculation	59
Chapter 4 CCTV – ‘Checks, Captures and Threats’ Variations ..	63
Chapter 5 Pattern Recognition.....	85
Part III Positional Concepts.....	93
Chapter 6 Weak Squares and Outposts.....	97
Chapter 7 Misplaced Piece.....	109
Chapter 8 Good Knight vs Bad Bishop.....	119
Part IV Strategy.....	129
Chapter 9 Weakness of a Color Complex	133
Chapter 10 Opposite-Colored Bishops.....	155
Part V Positional Sacrifices.....	177
Chapter 11 Positional Pawn Sacrifices	181
Chapter 12 Positional Piece Sacrifices.....	203
Chapter 13 Positional Exchange Sacrifices.....	219
Chapter 14 Positional Queen Sacrifices	231
Part VI Tactics	239
Chapter 15 Various Scenarios.....	243
Chapter 16 Removing the Defender	257
Chapter 17 Unexpected Tactics	269

Part VII	The Initiative	287
Chapter 18	Queenside Castling Scenarios	291
Chapter 19	Pawn Breaks	301
Chapter 20	Material Sacrifices	311
Chapter 21	Openings that Thrive on Initiative	323
Part VIII	The Attack	341
Chapter 22	Uncastled King	345
Chapter 23	Pawn Storm	361
Chapter 24	Same-Side Castling	383
Part IX	The Endgame	397
Chapter 25	Rook Endgames	401
Chapter 26	Opposite-Colored Bishops Endings	415
Chapter 27	Same-Colored Bishops Endings	431
Chapter 28	Complex Endgames	443
Chapter 29	Weak Color Complexes in the Endgame	463
Chapter 30	Endgame Techniques and Studies	473
Part X	Puzzles	493
Chapter 31	Tactical and Positional Tests	494
Index of names		505

Master Your Chess with Judit Polgar!

Throughout my chess education, I was taught chess through a very unique pedagogical system that meant exposure to the game for extended hours on a day-to-day basis from as early as age 5.

Obviously, such dedication is almost impossible in our modern world where one has a job and perhaps a family, and thus limited time for one's most cherished passion: chess. Accordingly, in this book, my co-author Andras Toth and I offer you a concentrated, yet thoroughly efficient, starter kit that aims to set your chess on the right path: upwards!

This book is based on the online MoveTrainer and Video course of the same name we have published with Chessable.com. As an attempt to provide a rock-solid foundation to your game, we are going to cover all aspects of the game from the opening to the endgame. Again, we will do this in a unique and very focused fashion. Instead of wading through masses of opening theory, we are going to examine the main culprits that allow positions to break down early.

We are going to look at the foundations of tactical play and will begin to delve into the most common positional themes. Last but not least, we are going to learn about endgame techniques and use endgame studies, not only to establish solid theoretical knowledge but to greatly enhance our calculation skills!

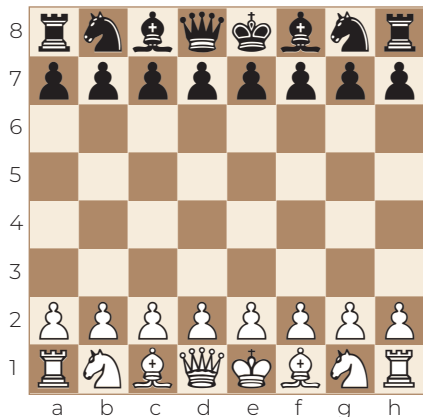
All this is going to be presented to you through a selection of games played by me and other leading experts of our royal game.

Let me be your guide to chess mastery!

*Judit Polgar,
Budapest, February 2022*

Explanation of symbols




The chessboard with its coordinates:



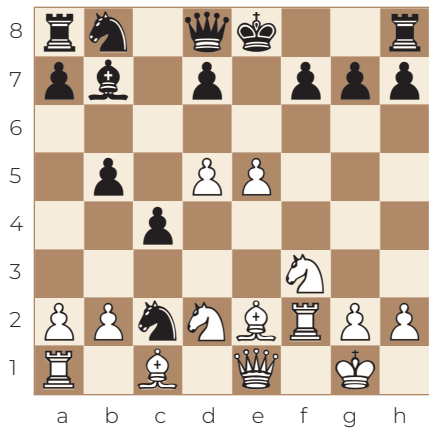
-  White to move
-  Black to move
-  King
-  Queen
-  Rook
-  Bishop
-  Knight

- \pm White stands slightly better
- \mp Black stands slightly better
- \pm White stands better
- \mp Black stands better
- \pm White has a decisive advantage
- \mp Black has a decisive advantage
- $=$ balanced position
- ! good move
- !! excellent move
- ? bad move
- ?? blunder
- !?! interesting move
- ?! dubious move
- # mate
- ch championship
- zt zonal tournament
- izt interzonal tournament
- ct candidates tournament
- tt team tournament
- ol olympiad
- m match

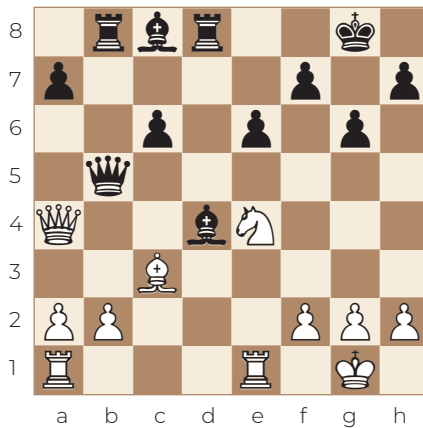
Explanation of colored features in diagrams:

-  *Green*: good move, structure, plan or square
-  *Blue*: options, ideas, possibilities
-  *Red*: the piece or square is threatened or weak

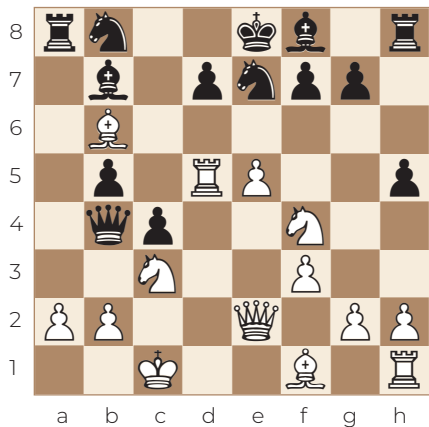
Exercises Chapter 14 – **Positional Queen Sacrifices**



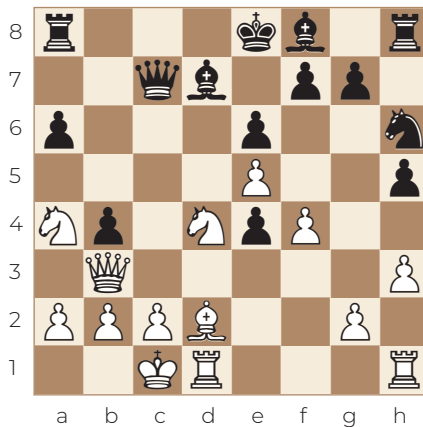
White to move



White to move

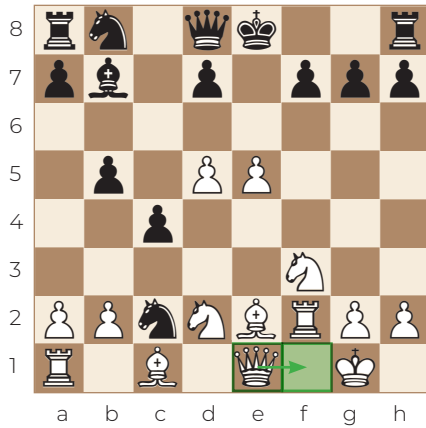


Black to move

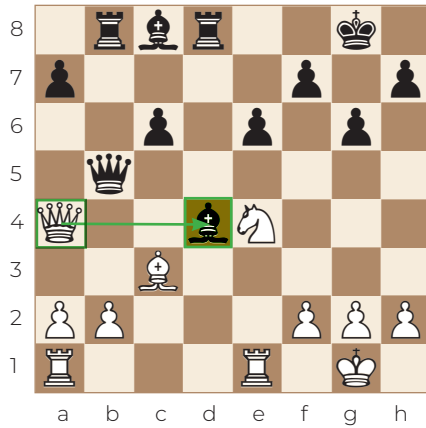


White to move

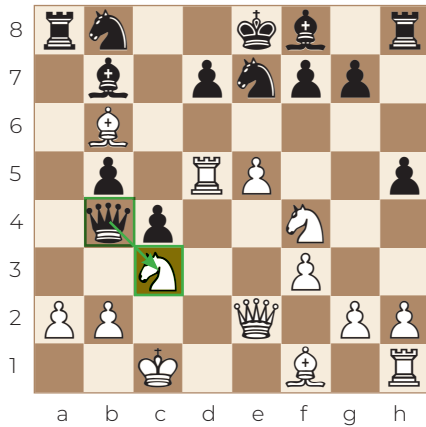
Answers Chapter 14 – Positional Queen Sacrifices



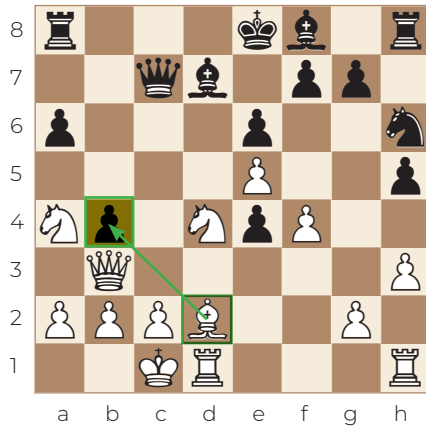
13. ♔f4!



21. ♔xd4!!



15... ♔xc3+!



18. ♕xb4!

CHAPTER 14

Positional Queen Sacrifices

When sacrificing a queen, the respective mobility of the armies is often the most important factor to consider first!

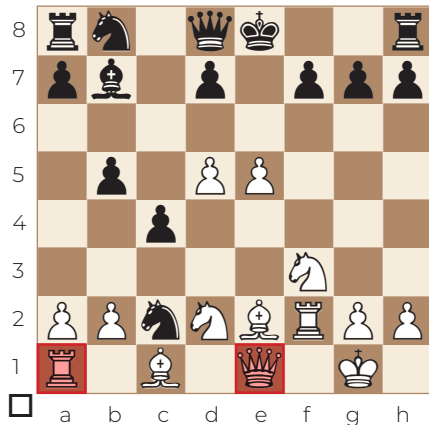
Game 104 Benko Gambit

Andrey Shariyazdanov 2530

Beat Züger 2425

Elista ol 1998

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5 4.♗f3 ♕b7 5.♗bd2 e6 6.e4 exd5 7.cxd5 c4 8.♙e2 ♙c5 9.0-0 ♘g4 10.e5 ♙xf2+ 11.♖xf2 ♗e3 12.♚e1 ♘c2



Züger is hoping to seal the deal with a perpetual attack on the white queen, but White has a different plan.

How would you play for a win here?

13.♚f1! ♗e3

This move is essentially forced as 13...♗xa1 14.♗e4! 0-0 15.♙g5 is altogether unplayable for Black.

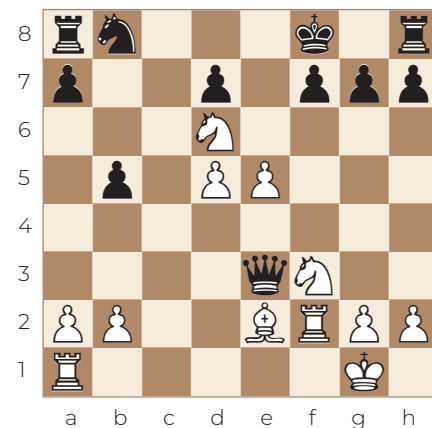
14.♗xc4!!

Showtime! White decides to part with the queen in order to enter a position where piece coordination and king safety will prove to be more valuable than the extra material.

14...♗xf1 15.♗d6+ ♚f8 16.♗xb7

It is important to take on b7 as the bishop falls with tempo and it was also a better piece than the f1-knight.

16...♚b6 17.♗d6 ♗e3 18.♙xe3 ♚xe3



Time to take stock. For the queen White has two minor

pieces and a very awkwardly placed black king. Additionally, deploying either black rook looks like a mission impossible and so White is already clearly better! When the initiative is on our side, it is important to keep up the pressure and disallow the opponent to consolidate.

How should White proceed?

19. ♖xb5!

This is an important move, again, not because of the material gain but because it denies the knight access to the a6-square!

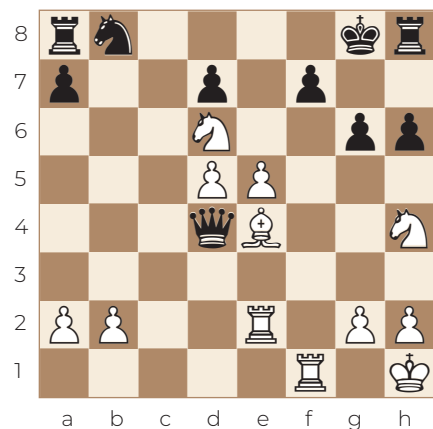
19...h6

This is a very sad move, an indication of how helpless Black is... 19...a6 20. ♖c4 is just a worse version of the game.

20. ♖af1! ♔g8 21. ♔h1!

And now White is ready to finish the attack on the kingside!

21... ♔h7 22. ♖e2 ♖b6 23. ♖d3+ ♔g8 24. ♖h4 ♖d4 25. ♖e4 g6



The rest of the game featured many inaccuracies (no serious mistakes though!), here Shariyazdanov missed a nice, forcing sequence, leading to a won endgame.

How?

26. ♖xf7

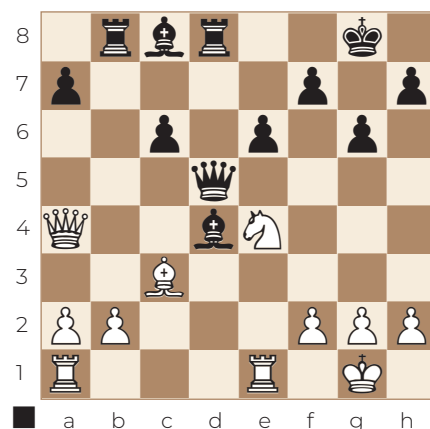
Even stronger was 26. ♖ef2 ♖xe5 27. ♖xf7!! ♖xd6 28. ♖xg6 ♖a6 29. ♖e7+ ♖xe7 30. ♖xe7 and White is completely winning. Shariyazdanov did manage to beat Züger but in a different fashion:

26... ♖h7 27.e6 dxe6 28.dxe6 ♖c4 29. ♖e1 ♖c6 30. ♖xg6 ♖e8 31. ♖d6 ♖xf1+ 32. ♖xf1 ♖xe6 33. ♖d5 1-0

Game 105

Alexander Grischuk 2772
Eltaj Safarli 2639

Riyadh 2017 (13)



Grischuk has sacrificed a pawn on d4 in order to be able to trade the dark-squared bishops. If this plan were to succeed, White would gain sufficient compensation.

20... ♖b5

Safarli follows the logic of the position and initiates a queen trade.

How should we respond?

21. ♕xd4!!

This awesome queen sacrifice allows White to play a very imbalanced position.

21... ♖xd4 22. ♗xd4

The landscape of the position has changed dramatically. In turn for parting with the queen, White has virtually everlasting play on the dark squares and the black king is certainly not feeling safe anymore!

22... f5

Black can't possibly allow the knight to f6 without giving himself some breathing room. Instead, 22...e5 23. ♖f6+ ♕f8 24. ♗xe5 ♖b7 25. ♖ad1 with an overwhelming attack!

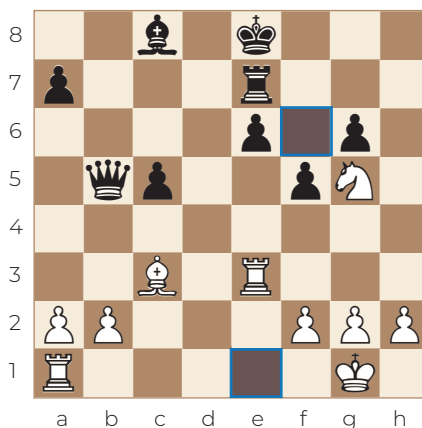
23. ♖f6+ ♕f7 24. ♖xh7

White is gradually reclaiming the lost material too and the black king is still utterly exposed to the mercy of the white pieces!

24... c5 25. ♗c3 ♖b7 26. ♖e3 ♖e7

27. ♖g5+ ♕e8

27... ♕g8 28. ♗f6 ♖d7 29. ♖h3 ♖g7 30. ♖d1.



The crucial point in the game.

How could Grischuk best exploit the weakness of the dark squares?

28. ♖ae1

The move that was missed by the Russian GM was 28. ♗f6! f4! 29. ♖e4 and Black will have to give up the rook in order to avoid bigger problems. A lovely example of the power of the 'smaller' pieces, e.g. 29... ♗b7 (29... ♖d7 30. ♖xe6+ ♕f8 31. ♖ae1+–) 30. ♖e5 ♗d5 31. ♗xe7 ♕xe7 32. b3 and White wins.

28... e5 29. ♗xe5 ♗b7 30. a3 ♖d7 31. f3 ♕c8 32. ♖h3 ♖a4 33. b4 c4 34. ♖f2 g5 35. h3 f4 36. ♖c3 ♗d5 37. ♖g4 ♕b7 38. ♕h2 ♖c6 39. ♖d1 ♖e6 40. ♗f6 ♖d7 41. ♗xg5 ♗c6 42. ♖xd7+ ♗xd7 43. ♗xf4 ♗a4 44. ♖e3 ♖d7 45. ♗e5 ♗c2 46. ♗c3 ♕a6 47. ♖e5 ♖f5 48. ♕g1 ♕b5 49. ♕f2 ♖g5 50. g3 ♖f5 51. ♕g2 ♗d3 52. h4 ♕a4 53. h5 ♕b3 54. ♗d4 ♕c2 55. h6 ♖h7 56. ♖g4

♔d2 57. ♖e6 ♙f5 58. ♙e3+ ♔d3
 59. ♗f2+ ♔c2 60. ♖c6 ♔b3 61. g4
 ♚d7 62. ♖a6 ♙b1 63. ♖xa7 ♚e6
 64. ♙f4 c3 65. h7 ♚f6 66. ♔g3
 ♚h8 67. b5 ♙xh7 68. b6 c2 69. b7
 ♔a2 70. ♖a8 ♚a1 71. ♔g2 1-0

Game 106

Vladimir Kramnik 2710

Garry Kasparov 2815

Munich 1994



We are still in King's Indian theory and here the most popular move is the thematic 12... ♚e8. Kasparov decided to give a dramatically new character to the position.

What did he do?

12... ♗fxe4

A super-exciting idea that allows Black plenty of play for the sacrificed material!

13. ♙xd8

White has no alternative, the queen must be captured.

13... ♗xc3 14. ♚e1 ♖fxd8

There is no need to take on e2 yet, the white army is poorly organized and so Black should aim to feast on the chaos as long as possible. 14... ♖axd8 was also a good move here.

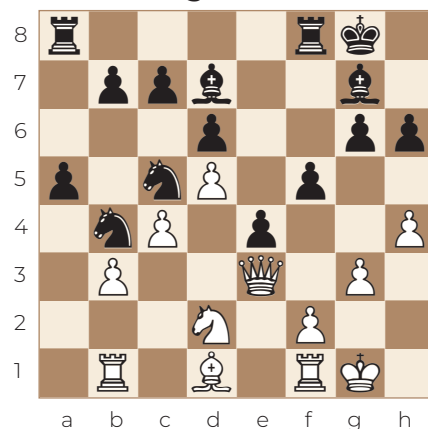
15. ♖c1

This is where things begin to spiral out of control. When playing with the extra material, especially when having a queen for minor pieces, it is important to reduce the activity of the pieces as much as possible. Incredibly, this was best achieved by the 'ridiculous' 15. ♗b1! ♗xe2+ 16. ♚xe2 e4 17. ♗d2 ♙xa1 18. ♖xa1 and Black has regained some material but also his initiative is rapidly dying out!

15... ♗xa2 16. ♖a1 ♗b4

Black now has a fantastic position. All his minor pieces are well placed and the extra pawns also weigh heavily in the evaluation

17. ♙d1 e4 18. ♖b1 ♖e8 19. ♚e3 f5 20. h4 ♖f8 21. g3



Kramnik is struggling to find a plan other than fending off Kasparov's threats, whilst Black's position seems to be playing itself.

How would you play the position?

21... ♖ae8!

Black deploys all his forces before the ...f5-f4 breakthrough.

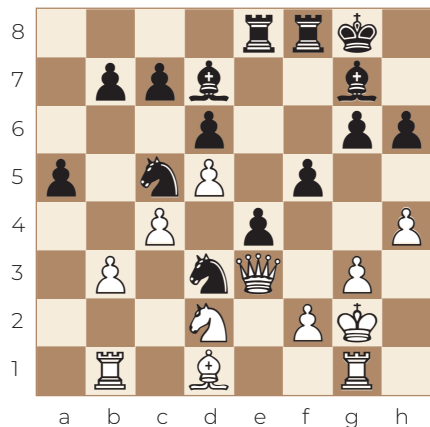
22. ♔g2?!

22.f4! would have offered a better defense but even here White is very clearly out of his depth and struggling badly. 22... c6! 23.dxc6 ♕xc6 ♝.

22... ♖bd3

It is a sight to behold how beautifully the black pieces coordinate. When observing such games, one has the impression that Black is actually materially ahead, due to the excellent coordination and harmony among the pieces.

23. ♖g1



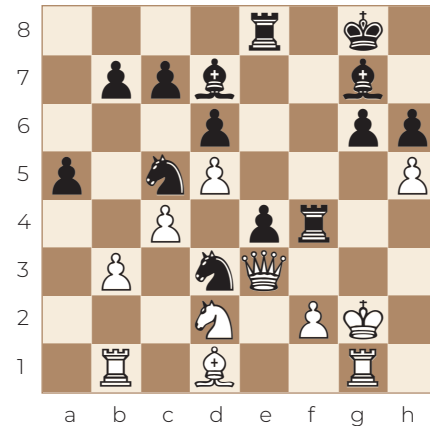
23...f4!

The position is ready for the breakthrough!

24.gxf4 ♖xf4

The right piece. Now Kramnik has to deal with the hanging h4-pawn and also the f2-pawn is becoming a concern too!

25.h5



Kramnik's position is falling apart. Here Kasparov opted for the 'safe' win, going for the positionally perfect...

25...g5.

However, the position was ready for dynamic action.

How?

Stronger was 25... ♖e5!. Black is now creating some very serious threats! 26. ♕c2 (26. hxg6 ♖g5+ 27. ♔f1 ♕h3+!! – a testament to the fabulous cooperation among the black pieces!) 28. ♖xh3 (28. ♔e2 ♖xg1) 28... ♖xf2#) 26... ♖xh5 (White is getting overwhelmed by Black's

numerous threats) 27. ♖xd3 ♜xd3 28. ♜xe4 ♙f5! (White must give up his queen to survive the attack) 29. f3 ♙xe4 30. ♖xe4 (30. fxe4 ♖g5+) 30... ♖xe4 31. fxe4 ♙e5 with an easy win for Black!

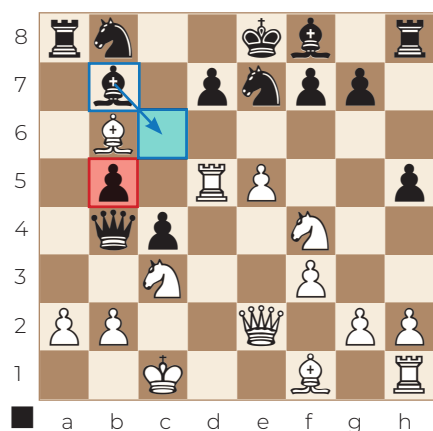
26. ♖f1 ♖h4 27. ♖h1 ♖f4 28. ♖f1 ♖ef8 29. f3 ♖h4 30. fxe4 ♜f4+ 31. ♙g1 ♜cd3 32. e5 ♜xe5 33. ♖c1 ♖h3 34. ♜f3 g4 35. ♜xe5 ♖xe3 36. ♜xd7 ♜h3+ 37. ♙g2 ♖xf1 38. ♙xf1 g3 39. ♙g2 ♜f4+ 0-1

Game 107

Bogdan Lalic 2585

Alexander Khalifman 2650

Linares 1997 (10)



This position is absolutely bonkers! From the starting move, both players were keen to commit to unorthodox measures and as a result we are now looking at this incredible mess where it is tricky to even identify who is ahead! What is certain is that b5 is hanging and 15... ♙c6 is a very logical way to deal with it.

Khalifman, however, wanted to continue the trend and keep the game irrationally complex.

What did he do?

15... ♖xc3+!

The reason why this move deserves at least one exclamation is that now Black will gain the initiative for the queen. Changing the trend of a game is a great psychological weapon that is often overlooked, especially in our era when the computer's evaluation rules it all!

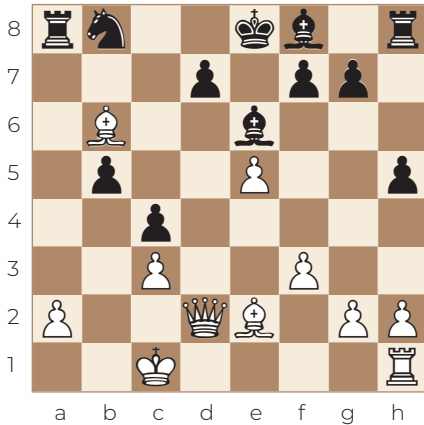
16. bxc3 ♜xd5 17. ♜xd5?

This is actually a poor reaction, a testament to the above-mentioned concept. A changing trend often triggers poor decisions. White has not come to terms with the fact that he will have to defend and instantly plays an inaccurate move. 17. ♖e4 ♙a3+ 18. ♙d2 ♜xb6 19. ♖xb7 ♙c5 20. ♜d5 ♖xa2+ (White's main issue is that his king is way too vulnerable) 21. ♙d1 ♜c6!! 22. ♜xb6 ♙xb6 23. ♖xb6 0-0 and Black has very annoying pressure still, despite having only a rook for the queen! Fantastic chess!

17... ♙xd5 18. ♖d2 ♙e6

Black has got a seemingly unbreachable position with a fair number of obvious moves to come. This more than warrants the material investment!

19. ♙e2



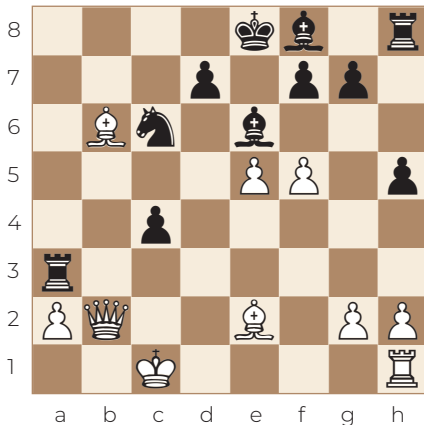
White is trying to mobilize but these developing moves don't seem to have any influence on the events of the queenside.

Your move!

19...♠c6 20.f4 b4!

Instead of a timid, half-developing move like 20...♗e7, Black further exposes the white king and hopes to find the best square for this bishop after the pawn trades – likely it will be b4.

21.f5 bxc3 22.♖xc3 ♜a3 23.♗b2



Having failed to come up with some tough defending moves, Lalic is already on the back foot.

How would you continue?

23...c3!

Not only is it a juicy tempo on the queen but also the first step in weaving a mating net!

24.♗b5 ♗xf5 25.♜f1

25.♗d3 ♗xd3 26.♖xd3 ♜xa2–+

Black threatens 27...♜a1+ and if White tries to prevent that by 27.♖xc3 then 27...♗b4 28.♖g3 0-0 and White's king is under the weather given Black's harmonious coordination.

25.e6!! was the best defense, but after 25...♗xe6! (25...fxe6 26.♗d3 ♗xd3 27.♖xd3 ♜xa2 28.♖g6+! is the clever point of 25.e6) 26.♗c4 ♗e7 Black wins too.

25...♜xa2 26.♜xf5?? ♠b4!

It is now all over; either it is mate or the queen is gone!

27.♖a5 g6 0-1

A fantastic finish! Black does not even bother taking the queen, but instead introduces two more threats. Lalic had had enough...

Game 108 Sicilian Defense

Ian Nepomniachtchi 2789

Alan Pichot 2630

Magnus Carlsen Invitational 2021 (15.7)

1.e4 c5 2.♠f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4

4.♠xd4 ♠c6 5.♠c3 ♖c7 6.♗e3

a6 7.♖f3 ♠e5 8.♖g3 b5 9.0-0-0

CHAPTER 24

Same-Side Castling

Same-side-castling scenarios were left for last, and for a reason. Usually, conducting a successful attack when the kings are on the same side is significantly more difficult and also these setups often allow a great variety of different strategies that may fit the position better. In our first example, what allows the spectacular attack against the king is an already severely weakened kingside, combined with some poorly placed pieces. Another scenario that can offer us a promising attack on the king is when we have a significant piece majority in the area of the opponent's king. In this case, a weakened defense is not even necessary for us to succeed!

Game 206

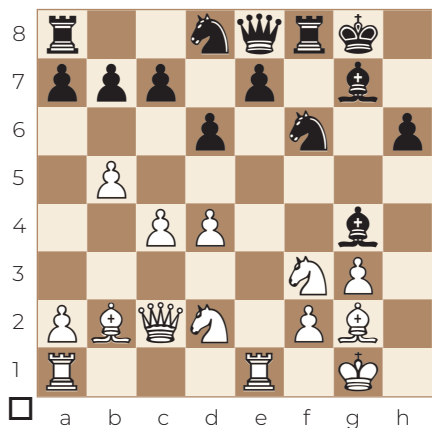
Loek van Wely

2670

Sarhan Guliev

2528

Ohrid 2001 (1)



How did Van Wely regroup his cavalry to optimize his attacking chances?

16. ♖h4

A very logical move that covers both the weak squares g6 and f5.

16... ♜d7

Black tries to abandon passivity and improve his piece placement, but he is a touch too late.

17. ♘f1!

An excellent maneuver that will allow White to take control of both g6 and f5!

17... ♜f7

Black is struggling to find the right squares for his pieces, it feels as if they are constantly treading on each other's toes.

18. ♘e3!

White, in contrast, is improving his pieces at an alarming rate.

18... ♜h3

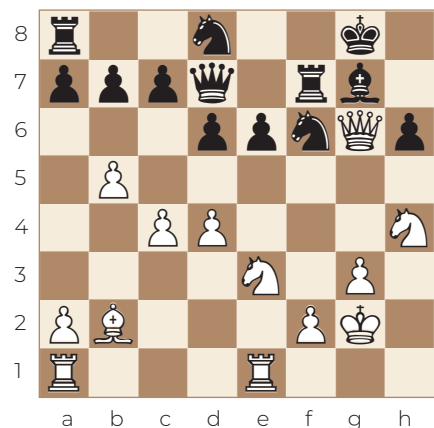
This move is somewhat forced, but still we need to mention

that the exchange of the light-squared bishops is a terrible concept from Black's point of view. After the trade, he will have nothing to cover the already weakened light-square complex.

19. ♖g6!

And thus, the build-up phase of the attack is over. White is now threatening to play 20. ♘ef5 with dire consequences!

19... ♗xg2 20. ♕xg2 e6



Black feels that he has accomplished at least one thing: the 7th rank is strongly fortified. These assessments, however, are not based on calculated lines but purely on diagnostic assumptions. As such, they are almost always misleading!

How would you continue the aggression?

21.d5

Bringing in yet another extremely powerful attacker,

while also challenging the center. Black is bleeding out each and every wound...

21... ♘h7

Hoping to get 22... ♘f8 in but, as usual for Black in this game, this is also just a tad too late...

22. ♘g4!



Simply picture perfect! White has amassed a massive army near the black king and the pieces are cooperating fabulously well!

22... ♗f8

White's win is elementary now. This move rains on White's parade, but what Van Wely could not do in the game, you get to enjoy next.

How would you win after 22... ♗h8 ?

23. ♖xg7+!.. Kaboom! A breathtakingly beautiful queen sac followed by a lovely checkmate: 23... ♖xg7 24. ♘g6+ ♗g8 25. ♘xh6#. This motif will

also be thoroughly covered in Chapter 30 in relation to my game against Shirov and also in the related study by Gurvich! Repetition is the mother of learning!

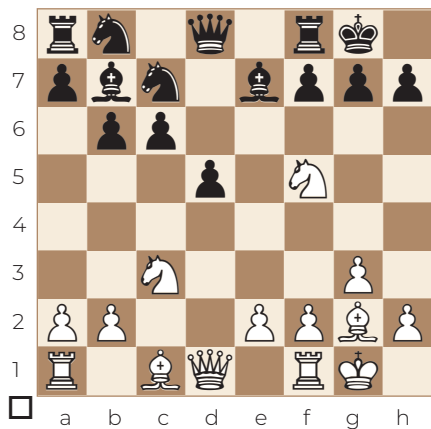
23. ♖xh7 ♕xb2 24. ♘g6+ 1-0

Checkmate is unstoppable. It was a magnificent example from Van Wely about how to attack against a poorly defended king!

Game 207

Garry Kasparov 2595
Slavoljub Marjanovic 2505

Valletta ol 1980 (4)



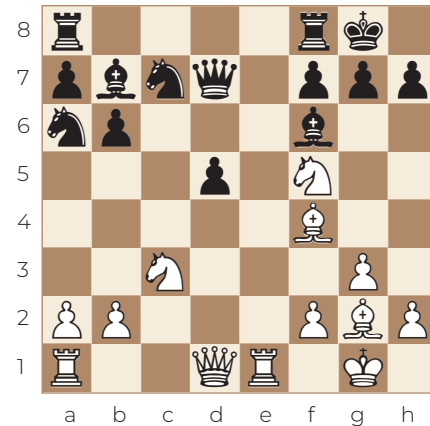
In this theoretical position in the Queen's Indian Defence, Black needs to tread very carefully as his minor pieces are mostly tucked away on the queenside in a rather passive fashion.

How shall White proceed?

12.e4!

As we know, chess is played well when we play in the center! This move introduces the queen into the attack and encourages Black to take on e4, allowing us to reroute even more pieces towards the king.

12... ♕f6 13.exd5 cxd5 14. ♕f4 ♖ba6 15. ♖e1 ♗d7



Black is busy trying to catch up in development but his queenside minor pieces are mere spectators of the main events.

How did Kasparov carry on with his attack?

16. ♕h3!

While improving another piece, this is already a deadly threat Black can't ignore.

16... ♖h8

This is a rather clumsy way to handle the threat, but who would have the taste for the apparently best 16... ♗d8?! (for example, 17. ♘d6 ♕c6 18. ♖c1 ♘c5

19.b4, with compensation for the pawn)?

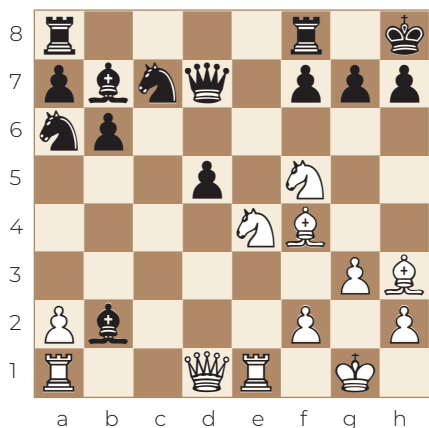
Now Kasparov made it very clear that he really wanted to decide this game in a very aggressive fashion!

17. ♖e4!

The pile-up of White's pieces in the center and on the kingside is more than frightening.

According to the engine Black is already beyond saving!

17... ♙xb2



Although this move appears to be extremely greedy, the reality is that the bishop had nowhere to go! White now can easily go in for the 'kill' on the kingside, the black royalty is utterly helpless!

17... ♙d8 18. ♖ed6 ♙c6 19. ♖h5, with an overwhelming attack against the black king. A sample line: 19... ♖e6 20. ♖h6!! gxh6 21. ♖xh6 ♖g8 22. ♖xe6!! fxe6 23. ♙e5+ ♖g7 24. ♙xe6 ♖c7 25. ♙f7 ♙f6 26. ♙xf6 ♖ag8 27. ♙g6!! followed by 28. ♖xh7#.

18. ♖g5!

The sheer number of white attackers on the kingside is rather frightening, even if the black king's defense is intact, without any weakening moves!

18... ♖c6

A nice attempt to throw a spanner in the works, Black is hoping to create his own counterthreats along the long diagonal. Kasparov shatters all hopes rather crudely:

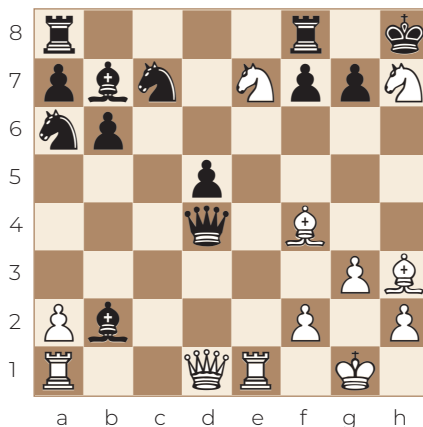
19. ♖e7

The knight kicks out the pesky queen and also takes away the important g8-square from the king. Therefore, a standard mate pattern is also threatened now!

19... ♖f6 20. ♖xh7!

The white knights are having a field day, causing all kinds of troubles around the black king!

20... ♖d4



All White needs now is a few accurate moves and Black should not be able to avoid getting mated!

21. ♖h5

The attack is playing itself, the coordination among the white pieces is picture perfect.

21...g6 22. ♖h4

The better move, as 22. ♖h6 would have run into 22... ♗g7!

22... ♗xa1 23. ♘f6

Mate is forced and Marjanovic called it a day: 23... ♖g7 24. ♖h6+ ♗xf6 25. ♗g5#.

Game 208

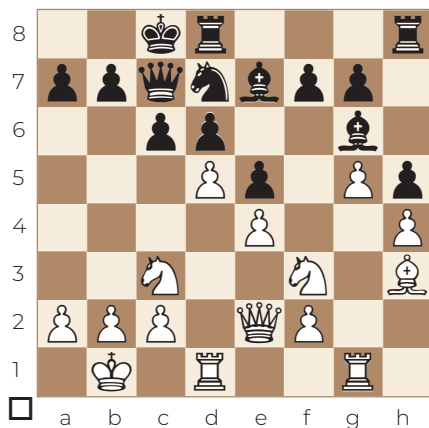
Ian Rogers

2550

Gilberto Milos

2515

Manila ol 1992 (10)



After a somewhat unorthodox opening, Milos decided to castle queenside here, seeking safety on the side where Rogers has his own king. The Australian No. 1, however, is quick to respond to the needs of the new situation.

What did he play?

17. ♘d2!

A very natural positional concept. White is rerouting the knight towards the queenside. The c4-square is an excellent springboard for the knight, and having the opponent's king in the crosshairs just adds to the value of this move.

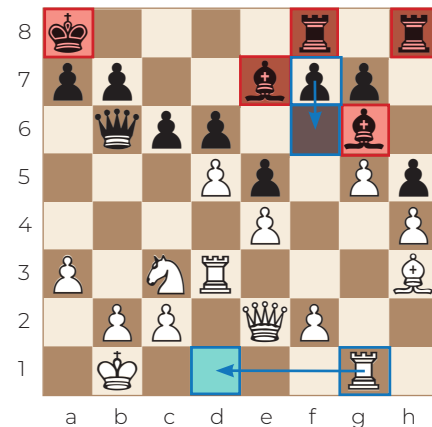
17... ♖b8

Milos plays very logically; the annoying pin needed immediate resolution. It is important to note here that Rogers has shaped the position perfectly well for his knights, who are far more effective than the black bishops in this closed structure.

18. ♘c4

Easy does it, the knight continues its glorious journey.

18... ♗b6 19. ♘xb6 ♗xb6 20. ♖d3 ♖a8 21. a3 ♖df8



This is a crucially important part of the game. We should always be aware of the safety of both kings on the board. One can't help but notice that the entire black army is stationed miles

away from the king... this always attracts attention. At the same time, the logical 22.♖gd1 would be met with the very annoying 22...f6 break.

Considering these factors, how should we proceed?

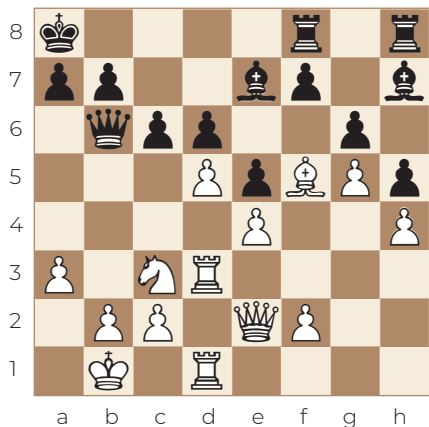
22.♙f5!

A textbook patient move that kills the counterplay of the opponent before we carry out our own intentions. The bishop trade would lead to a tragically hopeless good knight vs bad bishop scenario, which I extensively covered in Chapter 8. In lieu of the trade, Black only has bad and passive alternatives.

22...♙h7

This is just painful to watch but there is not much to offer instead. The engine prefers to defend with 22...♙xf5 23.exf5 f6 24.g6, but for a human, this is just plain torture.

23.♖gd1 g6



This is the moment when a good tactician would shift gears and go 'OK, this has to be punished'. The black army is crudely separated from the queenside and so it would almost be unjust if we did not have something here. White has multiple promising choices but Rogers' is clearly the best:

24.dxc6!

No need for preparatory measures! The bishop is taboo as taking it would lead to the immediate demise of the queenside.

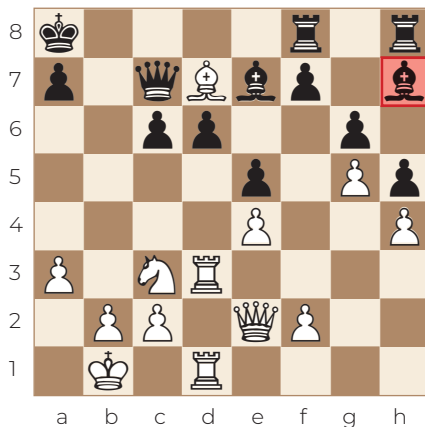
24...bxc6

24...gxf5 25.♘d5 ♖xc6 26.♖c3! ♖a4 27.♘xe7 fxe4 28.♖c4 ♖a5 29.♖xd6, and White dominates the board.

25.♙d7!

Finding the Achilles heel of the position! Black is very vulnerable on the light squares, especially now that the h7-bishop is in self-imposed eternal confinement!

25...♖c7



Once again, it does feel a lot like we should be able to ‘pull the trigger here’ due to the overwhelming white army in the center/on the queenside.

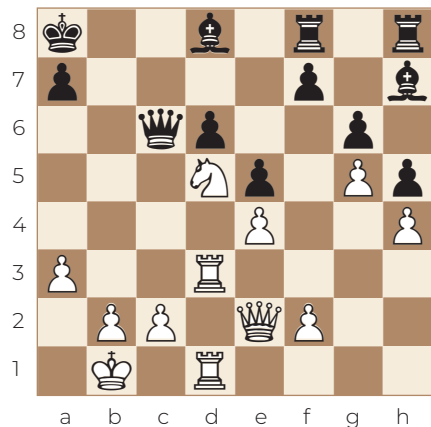
26. ♖xc6+!!

This move shatters the defense and opens up the floodgates for the rest of White’s army!

26... ♜xc6 27. ♘d5

As if on cue, the knight gets to join with a juicy tempo.

27... ♙d8



The bishop successfully covers from here the vitally important c7-square but also shuts out the rest of the army from the defense! The attack is literally playing itself:

28. ♖c3!

Tempo after tempo, White is getting closer to his main target – the black king.

28... ♜b7

Although the queen is a crucially important piece in the defense, it is also a very clumsy defender in this situation as it can’t find a

safe heaven from the invading white pieces. Keep attacking!

29. ♖b3! ♜c6

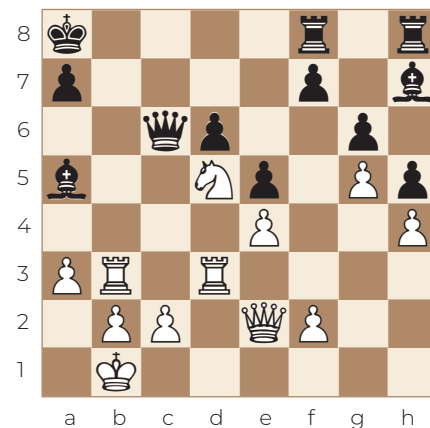
29... ♙b6 30. ♘xb6+ axb6 31. ♖xd6 and White crushes through with the heavy artillery: 31... ♖b8 32. ♖b4!! and the game is over: 32... b5 33. ♖a4+ bxa4 34. ♖a6+ ♜xa6 35. ♜xa6#.

Now the final touch is needed to crown the masterpiece:

30. ♖dd3!

All the boys need to come to the party! Just like in the above variation, the ‘big boys’ invade with decisive effect.

30... ♙a5



Time to shine. Channel your inner Tal/Shirov/Kasparov/Judit Polgar!

31. ♖dc3!!

The bishop is simply overworked and this tactic exploits it in the most spectacular fashion!

31... ♙xc3 32. ♜a6!! 1-0

What a finish! The Australian legend proved himself to be a

fearsome attacker and deadly tactician!

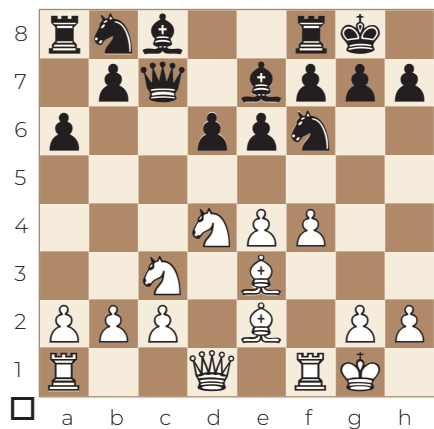
If 32...♖c8 (32...♙xa6 33.♘c7#)
33.♘b6+ ♕b8 34.♘xc8+ ♕c7
35.♙xa7+ ♕d8 36.♘e7 ♖d7
37.♖b7 is the end.

In the upcoming scenarios, we are going to examine rather complex cases where the attack is actually far harder to engineer and in fact the attacker will have to work hard and/or take smaller risks to make the attack happen.

Game 209

Judit Polgar 2555
Hans Ree 2460

Amsterdam 1989 (1)



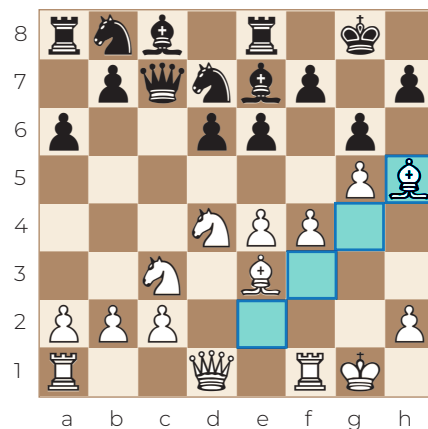
In this position from the Sicilian Scheveningen, apart from the more positional a2-a4 (with the intention to stop the standard ...b7-b5 expansion), White has a very aggressive approach which, of course, suited my style and intentions far better.

What is the move?

10.g4!

'The die has been cast', I have made my intentions more than clear: attack at all cost. Although the move weakens my king somewhat, it is impossible for Black to take advantage of that before fending off my attack first!

10...♖e8 11.g5 ♘fd7 12.♗h5 g6



Having provoked the weakening ...g7-g6, the bishop now needs to pull back.

But where exactly?

13.♗g4!

This move strengthens the f4-f5 push and adds pressure on e6.

13...♘c6?

This very natural-looking move is in fact a losing mistake! This is how quickly things can explode when a player is under pressure! 13...♗f8 14.h4 would have led to insane complications.

14. ♖xe6!

This sacrifice destroys Black's defense, allowing my pieces to flood in.

14... fxe6 15. ♕xe6+ ♖h8

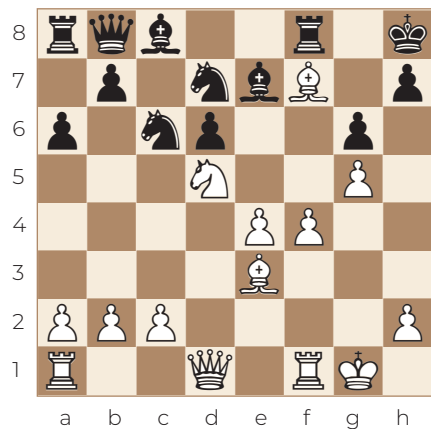
Black is already on the verge of losing and White has many ways to continue the onslaught.

What is your preferred way?

16. ♖d5!

The centralized knight is extremely powerful and to add insult to injury, most of White's pieces enter the attack with tempi!

16... ♖b8 17. ♕f7 ♖f8



18. ♕d4+

The black king is way too exposed on the diagonals and it is only natural that the attack is led by the bishops.

18... ♖de5

Black is beyond saving but it is worthy of mentioning that he had a better practical chance: 18... ♖xd4 19. ♖xd4+ ♕f6!! 20. ♖xf6

♖a7 21. ♖xa7 ♖xa7 22. ♖xd7 ♕xd7 23. ♕d5 and White is easily winning but at least Black is not mated.

19. ♖xe7!

Even here, accuracy was required! The careless 19.fxe5 would have complicated matters unnecessarily: 19... ♖xd4!

19... ♖xe7 20. fxe5

And Black is dead lost as after patching one diagonal, he collapses on another.

20... dxe5 21. ♕c5 ♖g7

After 21... ♖c7 22. ♕d6 ♖b6+ 23. ♖h1, Black has too many weaknesses to defend at once.

22. ♕xe7 ♖a7+ 23. ♖h1 ♕h3

24. ♖f3 1-0

Black is left with no resources to put up resistance against the 25. ♖f6# and 25. ♖xh3 threats.

Game 210

Ivan Sokolov
Judit Polgar

2670
2710

Hoogeveen 2006 (4)

