

Emmanuel Bricard

Strategic Chess Exercises

Find the Right Way to Outplay Your Opponent

New In Chess 2018

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Introduction

What is strategy?

Strategy includes the knowledge of themes, the development of plans, the evaluation of positions and differentiating between what has to be calculated and what is optional. By contrast, tactics involves the calculation of variations.

Who is this book aimed at?

To players familiar with some basic strategic themes such as ‘passed pawn’, ‘opposite-coloured bishops’, ‘blockade’, etc.

It contains exercises of varying difficulty. Some are relatively easy to solve, while others are more complex and can be considered to be food for thought. Strong players may understand such positions better than less strong players, but the challenge is not just to find the solution. Therefore the study of each suggested position will benefit players of different levels.

How to use this book?

Each exercise is linked to one or more questions. They are not restrictive and if I suggest you find a plan for White, it is also useful to see what Black can do and to understand the position in general.

Just as the games are not grouped into thematic chapters, the questions do not give any indication of the actual themes or plans. In fact, your first task is to discover them yourself and decide on their importance. I would prefer to only write ‘White to move’ under each exercise, but in this case experience shows that the search often loses steam before reaching a tangible result. This is why I give some guidance on the judgement of the position or what to look for. There is an index of the topics addressed at the end of the book.

If you work as a pair or are a chess teacher, it is a good idea, in my opinion, to first indicate who is to move and only then give the clues which you feel are necessary to your partner or to your students. In the text you will also find many other possible exercises to propose on top of the ones I’ve chosen.

By the way, the method of working which is ‘imposed’ to come as closely as possible to simulating an actual game situation is to give no information whatsoever.

The material

In this book you will find 90 exercises taken from 80 games or fragments, and one study. They are presented in two parts: 'middlegame' and 'endgame'. I listed as 'endgames' those positions without queens or with the queens and, at most, a minor piece for each side.

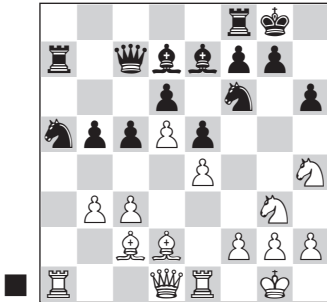
The exercises have a clear strategic content, but are not necessarily bereft of tactics. While themes and plans have an objective reality, the evaluation of a position remains a matter of opinion, even if it is refined as progress is made. There will be no 'demonstration', therefore, but the games are chosen so that the 'solutions' to the exercises appear as consensual as possible. To enhance the reader's understanding of the position, I give some analysis of possible alternatives first, before presenting the moves played in the game. I also give the moves leading up to the exercise diagram every time, as I think this may help the solver to discover certain themes and motifs.

The choice of exercises is based on my teaching practice. I have presented them at the courses I have taught during the past fifteen years. This experience was a great help in writing the book.

Good reading!

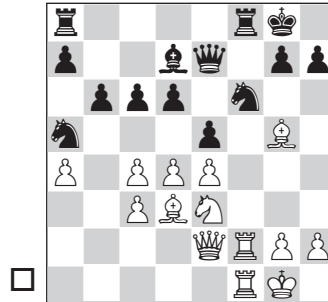
Emmanuel Bricard
Montpellier, France,
June 2016

Exercise 41



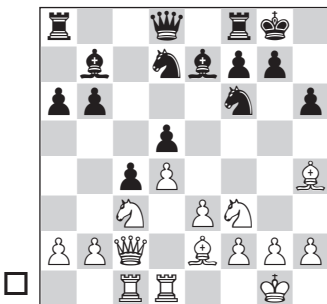
What do you think of 20...♖fa8 and 20...♘xd5 ?
(Solution on page 99)

Exercise 42



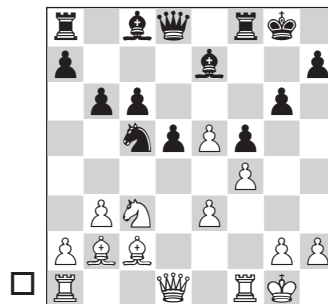
Find two distinct plans that lead to a very large white advantage.
(Solution on page 101)

Exercise 43



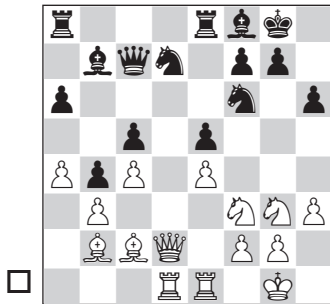
What do you think of the b7-bishop? How can White gain a large advantage?
(Solution on page 103)

Exercise 44



Which plan gives White an advantage? Can you consider the ramifications depending on Black's various replies?
(Solution on page 105)

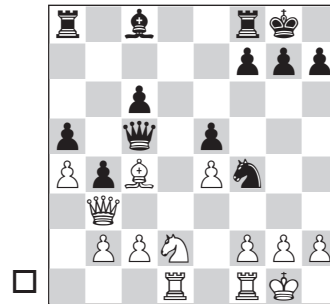
Exercise 45



Which plan gives White the advantage? How can you implement it?

(Solution on page 108)

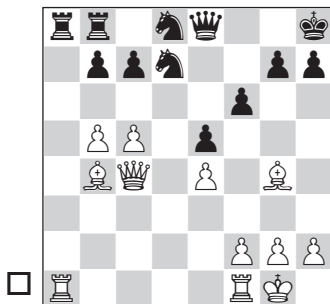
Exercise 46



What plan gives White good prospects and how should Black react to it?

(Solution on page 110)

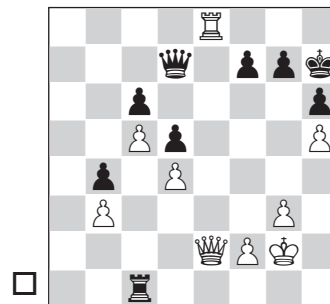
Exercise 47



How can White gain a very large advantage?

(Solution on page 112)

Exercise 48



What do you think of this position, and the moves 50. ♖e5, 50. ♜b8, 50. ♜f8 and 50. ♚d3+ ?

Some calculation is necessary to supplement the understanding.

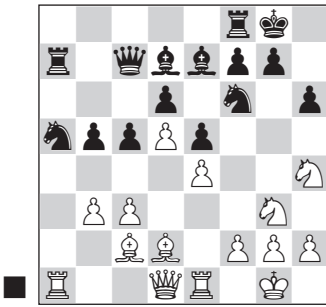
(Solution on page 114)

Solution 41

Carl Schlechter**Friedrich Köhnlein**

Hamburg 1910 (10)

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 a6 4.♙a4
 ♘f6 5.0-0 ♙e7 6.♞e1 b5 7.♙b3
 d6 8.c3 ♘a5 9.♙c2 c5 10.d4 ♖c7
 11.♘bd2 ♘c6 12.a4 ♞b8 13.axb5
 axb5 14.d5 ♘a5 15.♘f1 0-0 16.♙g5
 ♙d7 17.b3 h6 18.♙d2 ♞a8 19.♘g3
 ♞a7 20.♘h4



White intends to place a knight on f5 and attack the black king. From this point of view, having played ...h7-h6 proves to be weakening and Black will have trouble preparing ...g7-g6.

A) 20...♘xe4? 21.♞xe4 f5 22.♘g6 fxe4 23.♘xe7+ ♖f7 24.♘ef5 is hopeless;

B) 20...♘h7!? 21.♘hf5 ♙g5 is a reasonable idea that allows the exchange of dark-squared bishops, but it does not dispute control of the f5-square and does not equalize;

C) The best plan is 20...♞fa8! 21.♘hf5 ♙f8 with the intention of playing ...♖g8-h7 followed by ...g7-g6, to control the f5-square, and if the white queen then abandons

control of the b3-square, ...c5-c4 with the idea of responding to b3-b4 by ...♘a5-b3 gives good counterplay (with the queen on d1 this would involve a pawn sacrifice, but remains possible in certain cases). On the other hand, ...♘a5-b7 reduces the knight's prospects and by playing it Black will have to evaluate the consequences of b3-b4, which prevents its return; this move may, however, help initiate play on the a-file.

Let us see some variations:

C1) 22.♞f3 (threatening 23.♘xh6+) 22...♞d8 followed by ...♖g8-h7 and ...g7-g6 brings White nothing;

C2) 22.f4?! allows 22...c4! 23.b4 ♘b3! 24.♞xa7 ♞xa7+ as the check avoids the loss of a pawn on b3;

C3) 22.♙e3 ♖h7 23.f4?! (a critical move to hope to gain the initiative, but it does not work very well; after 23.♘h5 ♘g8! – 23...♘xh5 24.♞xh5 g6 25.♞h4! is dangerous – followed by ...g7-g6 the dark squares around the king are sufficiently defended) 23...g6! (and not 23...exf4?! 24.♙xf4 g6 25.e5!) 24.fxe5 dxe5 25.♘h4 ♘g4! and Black is doing very well;

C4) 22.♘h5! (in order to exchange one of the black king's defenders and increase the queen's prospects) 22...♞d8! (22...♘xh5 23.♞xh5 allows sacrifices on h6; 22...♘e8 and 22...♘h7 are risky – the ideal square for a knight retreat being g8, to support the h6-pawn, but this is unavailable at the moment) 23.♘xf6+ ♞xf6 – Black suffers a

little from a lack of space, but is not in any immediate danger and is only slightly worse.

20... ♖xd5?!

A risky idea for the king, but winning a pawn does enrich Black's defensive possibilities by enabling him to sacrifice material back later on.

21. ♖hf5 ♙xf5 22. ♖xf5 ♖f6



The white knight is comfortably posted on f5 as it can be neither exchanged nor expelled, and the black king is in danger.

23. ♖e3

With the idea of 24. ♖g3 to threaten the pawns on g7 and h6. 24. ♖f3 is another good move and 24... ♖fa8! 25. ♖g3 g6 is then the best defence, offering the h6-pawn in order to keep reasonable pawn cover in front of the king. The absence of the d5-pawn allows a possible return of the a5-knight to the centre when Black has good resources, even though it is clear that he is worse.

23... ♖h7?

23... ♖fa8! 24. ♖g3 g6 25. ♖xh6+ ♖f8 is again the best continuation. The g3-rook is well placed for an

attack on the king but otherwise it is offside and meanwhile Black will try to gain the initiative on the queenside. Let us see two possible continuations:

A) 26. ♖g4?! ♖xc4 27. ♖xg4 c4! and now the position is complicated after 28. bxc4 ♖xc4, but on the other hand, 28. b4 ♖b3! gives the initiative to Black as he avoids losing a pawn on b3 because of the weakness of the back rank;

B) 26. h4! gives the king an escape square and prepares 27. h5! and if 27... ♖xh5?, then 28. ♖xh5! and the queen can't be captured because of the mate on g8. White is better.

24. ♖h3!

Now the h6-pawn is the target as the black king is exposed on the h-file. After 24. ♖g3 ♖g8 followed by 25... ♙f8 the game continues.

24... ♖g8 25. ♖xh6!

25. ♖xg7! was also decisive.

25... g6 26. ♙xh6

Black resigned. 26... ♖xh6 27. ♖h5 is hopeless.

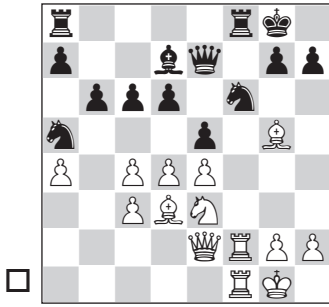
Solution 42

Efim Geller

Haije Kramer

Helsinki ol 1952 (4)

1. d4 ♖f6 2. c4 e6 3. ♖f3 b6 4. ♖c3 ♙b7 5. e3 ♙b4 6. ♙d3 ♖e4 7. 0-0 ♙xc3 8. bxc3 0-0 9. ♖e1 f5 10. f3 ♖f6 11. a4 ♖c6 12. ♖a2 ♖a5 13. ♖af2 ♖e7 14. ♖e2 d6 15. e4 fxe4 16. fxe4 e5 17. ♙g5 ♙c6 18. ♖c2 ♙d7 19. ♖e3 c6



White has a damaged pawn structure, but it does give him a strong presence in the centre. His pieces are active and he has the pair of bishops. The f6-knight is pinned and under strong pressure, which leaves the e4-pawn safe. The e3-knight controls the g4-, f5- and d5-squares (which stops the c6-pawn from moving) and defends the c4-pawn, often a sensitive point in this pawn structure, which accentuates the offside position of the a5-knight.

As for Black, he has a passive and cramped position. One idea to get rid of the pin on the f6-knight is to play ...h7-h6; depending on circumstances the bishop can then either exchange on f6 or else retreat to h4, then g3 after an eventual ...g7-g5, and in both cases the black pawn structure will be severely weakened.

The strongest plan is probably 20.d5! c5 (it is necessary to keep the position closed as after 20...♗h8 21.dxc6 ♘xc6 22.♘d5 or 21...♙xc6 22.♘g4 it's all over) 21.♚e1! with the idea of ♙d3-e2-g4 to exchange the light-squared

bishops so as to obtain the f5- and g4-squares for the knight. Defending the a4-pawn is pointless as the d7-bishop has to guard these two squares and so the queen is placed according to its kingside prospects (that said, 21.♚d1 is also good). Now:

A) 21...♖f7 22.♙e2 ♗af8 is what Black wishes to play in order to consolidate the f6-square, but this does not hold and in particular there is a direct win by 23.♙h5! g6 24.♙g4;

B) 21...h6 22.♙xf6 ♖xf6 23.♖xf6 gxf6 24.♚h4 (capturing the f6-pawn would bring the rook into play) 24...♖f8 25.♙e2! (25.♚hx6? ♚g7 halts the attack) 25...♚g7!? (an ingenious attempt to defuse the decisive arrival of the white bishop on g4: 26.♙g4? ♘xc4! allows resistance) 26.♖f3 ♗h7 27.♖g3 ♚e7 28.♙g4 and White wins.

20.c5!

With the idea of blocking the c6-pawn to then play d4-d5 and gain control of the d5-square. This is an unusual plan because in this kind of structure the c4-c5 breakthrough generally intends to attack the opposing dark-squared pawn chain.

20...bxc5

A) After 20...♗h8?, 21.d5 is strong, as in the game, but there is also a direct win: 21.cxd6 ♚xd6 22.♘f5 ♙xf5 23.dxe5! (23.♖xf5 ♘d7 allows Black to hold the e5-point and resist) 23...♚xe5

24. ♖xf5 ♗xc3 25.e5 and the advance of the passed pawn combined with threats to the king decides matters;

B) 20...dxc5 21.d5! with a choice:

B1) 21...♗d6 (unpinning the knight, but the queen will be exposed) 22.dxc6 ♘xc6 (22...♙xc6 23.♘f5 ♗d7 24.♘g7 and 22...♗xc6 23.♙xf6 ♖xf6 24.♖xf6 gxf6 25.♘d5 are both losing) 23.♙c4+ ♖h8 24.♖d1! (the queen must abandon its ideal post) 24...♗e7 (or 24...♗c7 25.♗f1 with the idea of 26.♘d5) 25.♘d5 and White wins;

B2) 21...c4! (Black returns the pawn to exchange the a5-knight) 22.♙xc4 ♘xc4 23.♗xc4 (threatening 24.dxc6+) 23...♗c5! (the point of the black defensive plan initiated by 20...dxc5; going into the endgame allows the game to continue, even if Black's prospects are poor) 24.♗xc5 bxc5 25.♙xf6 ♖xf6 26.♖xf6 gxf6 27.d6! (27.♖xf6 cxd5 seems less promising) 27...♖f7 (after 27...♖b8 28.♖xf6 the e5-pawn is exposed to a knight attack and Black is much worse) 28.♖b1! ♖e6 29.♘f5 and in spite of the material balance we can consider that White has a pawn more given the doubled and isolated pawns on c5 and c6. He has a big advantage.

21.d5! c4!

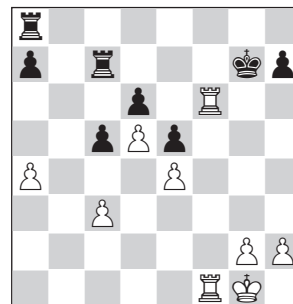
Both to exchange the a5-knight and to unblock the c6-pawn in order to stop the white knight from getting to the d5-square.

22.♙xc4 ♘xc4 23.♗xc4 c5



The white knight's invasion squares on f5 and g4 are permanently controlled and White is unable to obtain anything important through the f-file alone. Nevertheless, the black queenside is now porous and simultaneous pressure on both wings should bear fruit.

24.♗a6 ♙c8 25.♗c6 ♙d7 26.♗c7 ♖fc8 27.♙xf6 gxf6 28.♘f5 ♖xc7 29.♘xe7+ ♖f7 30.♘f5 ♙xf5 31.♖xf5 ♖g7 32.♖xf6



Black is a pawn down and has difficulty finding counterplay due to the weakness of the d6-pawn. He is probably lost.

32...♖d7 33.♖e6 ♖b8 34.h4 h5 35.♖f5 ♖b3 36.♖g5+ ♖h7 37.♖xh5+ ♖g7 38.♖g5+ ♖h7 39.♖gg6 ♖xc3 40.h5 ♖c4 41.♖h6+ ♖g8 42.♖eg6+ ♖g7 43.♖xd6 ♖xa4 44.♖d8+ ♖f7

45. ♖hd6 ♗g4 46. ♖6d7+ ♔f6 47. ♗f8+
 ♕g5 48. ♗g7+ ♔h4 49. h6 ♖a1+
 50. ♔h2 ♖a6 51. h7 1-0

Solution 43

Vlastimil Hort

2575

Anatoly Karpov

2690

Amsterdam 1981

1. d4 ♘f6 2. ♘f3 e6 3. c4 d5 4. ♘c3
 ♕e7 5. ♕g5 h6 6. ♕h4 0-0 7. e3 b6
 8. ♖c1 ♘b7 9. cxd5 exd5 10. ♕e2

The seemingly modest development of the bishop on e2, rather than d3, is designed to leave the d-file free and to consequently take an interest in the d5-pawn.

10... ♘bd7 11. 0-0 c5 12. ♖c2



The value of the black position depends on the strength of the central d5-pawn which controls the e4-square. From this point of view the b7-bishop is extremely important, and even if its own scope is limited by the d5-pawn it does defend it effectively and the other pieces can only be active because of this.

12... a6?!

Preparing the typical plan of ...c5-c4 followed by ...b6-b5 to mobilize

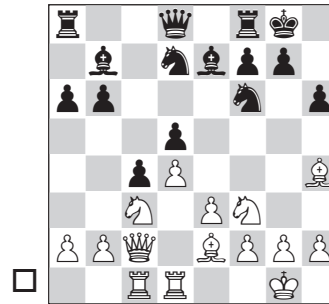
the black majority, but this is not yet feasible under good conditions. 12... ♖c8 13. ♗fd1 ♘e4, for example, keeps Black's position solid.

13. ♗fd1

The rook puts pressure on the d5-pawn, which will allow ♘f3-e5 to be played without worrying about the knight being exchanged.

13... c4?!

Here again, 13... ♖c8 was safer.



14. a4!

By preventing the c4-pawn from being supported by ...b6-b5 Hort prepares the b2-b3 lever to favourably open the queenside. Exerting central pressure by ♘f3-e5, possibly followed by ♖c2-f5 and ♕e2-f3, is another promising plan. After 14. ♘e5 b5 Black has achieved his aim and has a good position.

14... ♕c6?!

A consistent move, and the only one that perseveres with the preparation of ...b6-b5, but it has a big flaw...

15. ♘e5!

With the intention of exchanging the bishop that we said was essential for the protection of the black centre.

15... ♖c7

15... ♗xe5? 16.dxe5 loses the d5-pawn.

16. ♗xc6!

16. ♖f5! is also strong, with a very big advantage.

16... ♖xc6 17. ♕f3!



Black has got what he wanted and will finally play ...b6-b5 and keep a pawn on c4, but due to the disappearance of the c6-bishop it is now on d5 that the position will crack. The bishop pair also plays its role in the complications that follow.

A) The white threat is seen after, for example, 17... ♖ac8: 18. ♗xd5! ♗xd5 19. ♕xe7 and the d5-knight, which is pinned, cannot recapture on e7;

B) 17... ♖fe8 is interesting, to support the e7-bishop. Let us see two possibilities:

B1) 18. ♕xf6 ♗xf6 19.e4 dxe4 20. ♗xe4 (the d5-pawn has been exchanged rather than lost but the c4-pawn will be lost while the queen on c6 and the rook on a8 are badly placed on the f3-bishop's diagonal) 20... ♖ac8 (20... ♗d5? 21. ♗c3 does not close the light-squared diagonal) 21. ♗xf6+ ♖xf6 22. ♕b7 ♖cd8 and White

will have an extra pawn after 23. ♖xc4 or 23. ♕xa6 ♖xd4 24. ♕xc4. Nevertheless, the bishops are of opposite colours without a clear initiative for White and the black position is probably defensible;

B2) 18. ♗xd5 ♗xd5 19. ♖f5! (and not 19. ♕xe7? ♖xe7 20. ♖f5 ♗7f6) 19... ♕xh4 (after 19... ♗7f6? 20. ♕xf6 the d5-knight is lost) 20. ♕xd5 ♖f6 21. ♖xf6 ♕xf6 22. ♕xa8 ♖xa8 23. ♖xc4 – with a rook and two pawns for two minor pieces White has a material advantage equivalent to about a pawn, as we are in the endgame.

Moreover he also has an excellent central position which, all told, gives him a significant advantage.

C) 17... ♖ae8 defends the e7-bishop while removing the rook from the f3-bishop's diagonal so that there is no longer any effective combination for White at the moment: 18.b3! b5 19.axb5 axb5 20.bxc4 bxc4 21. ♖b1! (the Black rooks are passive and the threat is 22. ♖b5, winning the d5-pawn) and now:

C1) 21... ♖b8 again allows the combination 22. ♗xd5! ♗xd5 23. ♕xe7;

C2) 21...g5 22. ♕g3 g4 23. ♕e2 maintains the central pawns, but the weakening of the kingside is important and White has a large advantage.

17... ♕b4

Karpov wants to exchange on c3 to secure the light squares.

18. ♗xd5! ♗xd5 19. ♖f5

A sequence that we have already seen.

19... ♖xa4

19...♖7f6 20.♗xf6 does not defend anything.

20.♗xd5 ♖ac8



21.b3!

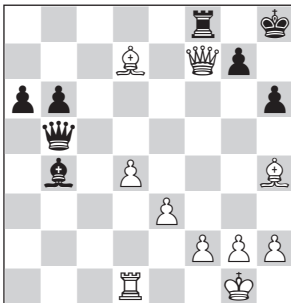
21.♗xc4? allows 21...♖xc4! and the c1-rook cannot recapture as it defends its colleague on d1.

21...cxb3

21...♗xb3 abandons the defence of the d7-knight.

22.♖xc8 ♖xc8 23.♗xf7+ ♔h8

24.♗xb3 ♗b5 25.♗e6 ♖f8 26.♗xd7



Black resigned.

Two variations are possible:

A) 26...♗e2 (both the white queen and rook are attacked) 27.♗b3 ♗e1 (attacking and pinning the f2-pawn) 28.♗d3 ♗xf2+ 29.♗xf2 ♗xf2+ 30.♔h1 and there is no back-rank mate;

B) 26...♖xf7 27.♗xb5 axb5 28.♖b1 ♖c7 (indirectly defending the

b4-bishop) 29.g4 ♖c4 30.♗d8 and a second pawn will drop.

Solution 44

Vladimir Makogonov

Mikhail Yudovich

Leningrad ch-URS 1939 (7)

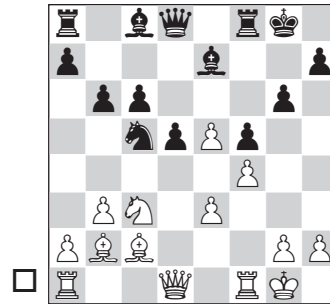
1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♖c3 c6 4.e3 ♖f6

5.♖f3 ♖bd7 6.♖e5 ♖xe5 7.dxe5

♖d7 8.f4 ♗e7 9.cxd5 exd5 10.♗d3

0-0 11.0-0 ♖c5 12.♗c2 f5 13.b3 g6

14.♗b2 b6



Various formations are possible for each of the two sides, with a tendency towards a slight white advantage. Only one plan, to be played right away, can really hinder Black: the advance of the b3-pawn to b5 to take advantage of the vulnerability of the d5-pawn.

15.b4! ♖e4

Or else 15...♖e6 (with the idea of playing ...d5-d4) 16.b5 with a choice:

A) 16...♗b7? (passive without being solid) 17.bxc6 ♗xc6 18.♗b3 ♖c7 and White has the choice between playing for an attack by 19.e4!? fxe4 20.♖xe4 with ideas of going to d6 or f6, or of attacking the centre by 19.♗f3 ♗d7 20.♖ad1 ♖ad8 21.♖d2 followed by 22.♖fd1;

B) 16...d4! 17.♘e2! (to get a pawn on c6; 17.exd4 ♖xd4+ 18.♔h1 ♖xd1 19.♜fxd1 c5 20.♙b3 ♘f7 is a little better for White) 17...dxe3 18.bxc6 ♙c5 19.♙b3 – Black is struggling in this complex situation. The c8-bishop is tied to the defence of the knight and a good answer to 19...♖c7 is 20.♗d5, securely defending the c6-pawn.

16. ♙xe4!

One important idea behind the 15...♘e4 move is to secure the d5-pawn by exchanging the c3-knight, which White therefore decides to keep at the cost of the bishop pair.

16...dxe4

16...fxe4 17.b5! leads to a white advantage due to the pressure on the d5-pawn and the permanent threat of opening the long diagonal:

A) 17...♙b7? 18.bxc6 ♙xc6 19.♖b3 ♖d7 and now 20.♘xe4? is met by 20...♙a4! but it can be prepared by 20.a4!, and if 20...♔h8 then 21.♘xe4 anyway (21...dxe4? 22.e6+);

B) 17...♙e6 18.bxc6 ♙c5 19.♗d2 ♖e8 (19...♖c8? allows 20.♘xd5 and if 20...♜d8 then 21.♘f6+) 20.♘b5 (20.♘xd5? ♜d8) 20...♖xc6 21.a4 when, depending on the circumstances, White will play ♘b5-d6 without fear of losing a pawn or ♙b2-a3 to exchange the dark-squared bishops.

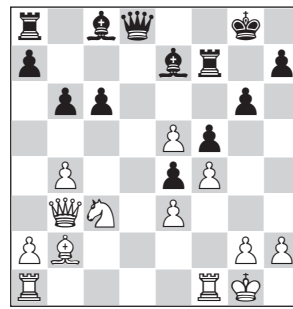
17. ♖b3+!

To prevent the blockading move 17...♙e6.

17...♜f7

After 17...♔g7 the king is exposed on the long diagonal. One possible

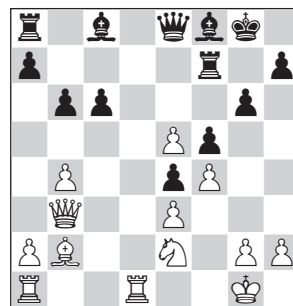
continuation is 18.♜ad1 ♖c7 (or else 18...♖e8 19.e6 ♙f6 20.♜d6 when the e6-pawn is defended and White is winning) 19.♖c4! (the threat of going to b5 or d5 with the knight deflects the black queen from its control of the d6-square; 19.♜d6!?, in the spirit of the game, is also strong but not decisive) 19...♖b7 20.e6 and now neither 20...♙f6 21.♜d6 nor 20...♔h6 21.g4 fxe4 22.♘xe4 leave Black any hope.



18. ♜fd1?

A clear win is obtained by 18.e6! ♜f6 (he must try to eliminate the e6-pawn) 19.♘xe4! fxe4 (19...♜xe6 20.♖c3) 20.♙xf6 ♙xf6 21.e7+.

18... ♖e8 19. ♘e2 ♙f8



The exchange sacrifice ♜d1-d6, played now or later, is a key element to progress. It can be prepared by

20. ♖c3 (the queen takes its place on the long diagonal and eyes the c6-pawn) 20... ♙e6 with a choice:

A) 21. ♜d6 puts pressure on c6 and e6. Black cannot capture the rook for now and must defend accurately:

A1) 21... ♙d5? 22. e6 ♜g7 23. ♜d7 is hopeless;

A2) 21... ♜c8?! 22. ♘d4 ♙d5 (this is better than on the previous move because the d4-knight blocks the queen/bishop battery, but it offers White the opportunity for a combination) 23. e6 ♜g7 24. e7! – the g7-rook cannot move and the f8-bishop must continue to protect it, which only leaves 24... ♖xe7 but this allows 25. ♜xd5 with a large white advantage;

A3) 21... c5! 22. bxc5 bxc5 the c5-pawn takes the d4-square from the white knight, but its capture would give the black rooks a lot of activity and in many cases the possibility of taking the d-rook under favourable conditions. Let us see a typical illustrative variation: 23. ♖xc5 (23. ♘c1!? followed by 24. ♘b3 is unclear) 23... ♜c8 24. ♖d4?! ♖b5! 25. ♜e1 (25. ♜xe6? ♖xe2 is losing because of the threat of 26... ♜c2) 25... ♜c4 26. ♖d2 ♙xd6! 27. exd6 ♖d5 – Black has repulsed the enemy pieces before taking the exchange and he is better.

B) 21. ♘d4, again with pressure on c6 and e6, is also dangerous:

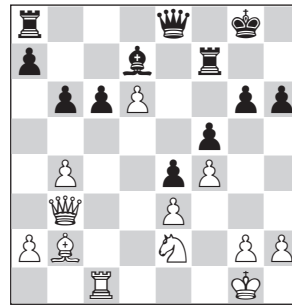
B1) 21... c5? 22. ♘xe6 ♖xe6 23. ♜d6! cxb4 24. ♖d4 ♙xd6 25. exd6 ♜d7 26. ♖h8+ wins the a8-rook;

B2) 21... ♙xb4! 22. ♖xb4 c5 23. ♖a3 cxd4 24. ♜xd4 ♜c8 – Black has kept the position closed and his rooks have reasonable prospects. Chances are level.

20. ♜d6!?

The c8-bishop cannot go to e6 and Black is more or less obliged to accept the sacrifice, however the queen/bishop battery is not yet set up.

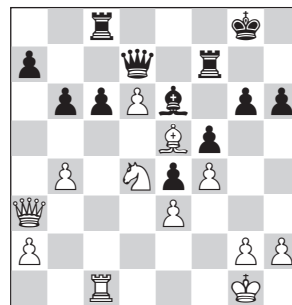
20... ♙xd6 21. exd6 h6 22. ♜c1 ♙d7



23. ♙e5

23. ♖c3 ♘h7 gives nothing concrete so Makogonov chooses to establish a good central position and to solidly defend the d6-pawn.

23... ♜c8 24. ♖a3 ♙e6 25. ♘d4 ♖d7



The two white minor pieces can play on the dark squares but the black bishop cannot. When

such a material distribution can be obtained after an exchange sacrifice, this tends to increase the compensation.

In our game White cannot make any progress but locks the dark squares so well that he has nothing to fear, taking into account the d6-pawn and the insecurity of the black king.

26.b5?!

The desire to win often makes it possible to avoid a draw, one way or the other.

26...cxb5?

After 26...c5! 27.♘c6 Black can return the exchange for a pawn by 27...♙xc6 28.bxc6 ♖xc6 or 27...♙d5 28.♘e7+ ♙xe7 29.dxe7 ♖xe7. In both cases he is a bit better.

27.♙c7!

Initiating the decisive combination.

27...♙xc7

On 27...♖e8 28.♘xe6 ♖xe6 29.♖b3! wins.

28.dxc7 a5 29.♘xe6 ♖xe6 30.♖d6! ♖c4

After 30...♖c8 the simplest is to take a lot of pawns: 31.♖xg6+ ♔f8

32.♖xh6+ ♔e8 33.♖xb6

31. ♖xg6+ ♔f8 32. ♙d6+ ♔e8

33. ♖g8+ ♔d7 34. ♖d8+

Black resigned.

Solution 45

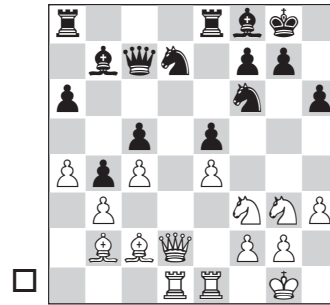
Efim Geller

Svetozar Gligoric

Belgrade tt 1970 (1)

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 a6 4.♙a4 ♘f6 5.0-0 ♙e7 6.♙e1 b5 7.♙b3 d6

8.c3 0-0 9.h3 h6 10.d4 ♙e8 11.♘bd2 ♙f8 12.♘f1 ♙b7 13.♘g3 ♘a5 14.♙c2 ♘c4 15.b3 ♘b6 16.♙b2 ♘bd7 17.♖d2 c5 18.♙ad1 ♖a5 19.dxc5 dxc5 20.c4 b4 21.a4 ♖c7



The symmetrical central pawn structure indicates that the installation of a knight on d4 or d5 is an important plan for both sides. Until this is achieved the open d-file plays a big role. The white pressure on the e5-pawn cannot be exploited directly, but it interferes with Black's manoeuvring. This is also true, to a lesser extent, for the black pressure on the e4-pawn.

22.♘f5!

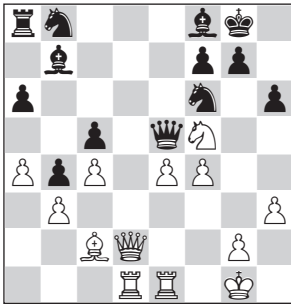
This prepares 23.♘e3, as then 23...♘xe4? would lose the d7-knight, as well as the sacrifice on e5 in answer to 22...♘b8, which we will see in detail.

22.♘f1?!, with the same idea, is too timid and after 22...♘b8! (better than 22...♙ad8 23.♖c1 as now 23...♘b8? is no good because of 24.♙xd8 ♖xd8 25.♘xe5) 23.♘e3! ♘c6! (23...♘xe4? 24.♘d5! ♘xd2 25.♘xc7 is losing) 24.♘d5 ♖d8 Black has a solid position and is not necessarily in a hurry to play ...♘c6-d4.

22... ♖b8?

After 22... ♖ad8 23. ♖c1! (but not 23. ♗e3? ♗xe4 nor 23. ♗d6?! ♗xd6 24. ♖xd6 ♖a5! – threatening to win the queen – 25. ♖d2 ♗b8 and in both cases Black is better), White prepares to play ♖c1-b1, to strengthen the e4-pawn, followed by ♗f5-e3-d5. Due to the pressure on the e5-pawn Black cannot easily counter this, or install his knight on d4, and so he is worse. The white queen may also go to a1 in certain variations.

23. ♗xe5! ♗xe5 24. ♗xe5 ♖xe5 25. f4



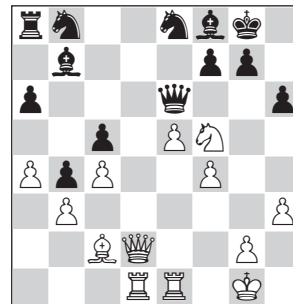
White has sacrificed two pieces for a rook and pawn, which in a middlegame approximately corresponds to the sacrifice of a pawn. In exchange he has obtained a central majority that advances with gain of time on the black pieces and which will give him a large space advantage and an attack on the king. In addition, the black queenside is still undeveloped.

25... ♖e6

After 25... ♖c3 26. ♖c1! (threatening 27. ♖d3) 26... ♗fd7 27. e5! the queen's retreat has been cut off and it will soon be lost.

26. e5 ♗e8

After 26... ♗e4, to try to exchange the knights, let us see a decisive follow-up for White: 27. ♗xe4 ♗xe4 28. ♗d6! (28. ♖xe4? ♖xf5 shows the idea of 26... ♗e4; 28. ♗xg7 ♗xg7 29. ♖xe4 ♗c6 leaves Black some saving chances) 28... ♗xd6 29. ♖xd6 ♖xd6 30. ♖xd6 ♗b7 (keeping the rook defended; after 30... ♗c2 31. ♖d8+ ♗h7 32. ♖e3 the pin on the knight is decisive) 31. ♖d8+ ♗h7 32. ♖f8 ♗c6 (or 32... ♗g6 33. f5+ ♗xf5 34. ♖xf7+) 33. ♖xf7 – White has a rook and two well-advanced pawns for the two black minor pieces and he will prevail.



27. ♗h4!

Leaving the way open for the f4-pawn and freeing the b1-h7 diagonal.

27. ♗d6 ♗xd6 28. exd6 is also good, with a strong passed pawn and threats to the king.

27... ♗c6 28. ♖d3!

A thematic move to force a weakness before opening lines. The immediate advance 28. f5? ♖c8 29. e6 (or 29. f6 ♗d4) 29... ♗f6 is not convincing.

28... ♗g6 29. f5! gx5 30. ♗xf5



The queen/bishop battery now has an open diagonal and White is winning. One threat is 31. ♖e7+ ♙xe7 32. ♖h7+ ♚f8 33. ♖h8#.

30... ♖g6 31. ♖e2

31. ♖d7? is tempting, with the ideas 32. ♖xb7 and 32. ♖e7+, but this allows 31... ♙c8! 32. ♖xe8 ♙xf5 33. ♖xa8 ♙xc2 with complications.

31... ♖g5?

After 31... ♖e6 32. ♖e4 ♖g6 there is a clear win by 33. ♖e3 ♖d8 34. ♖d5 (34. ♖d3? ♖xg2# is to be avoided) 34... ♖e6 35. ♖g3 ♖g5 36. ♖f4.

32.h4

The black queen is trapped.

32... ♖f4 33.g3 ♖xe5 34. ♖g4+ ♖g7 35. ♖xg7 ♖f6 36. ♖f4 ♙xg7 37. ♖c7 ♖b8 38. ♖d6 ♖g4 39. ♖xc6 ♙d4+ 40. ♙f1 1-0

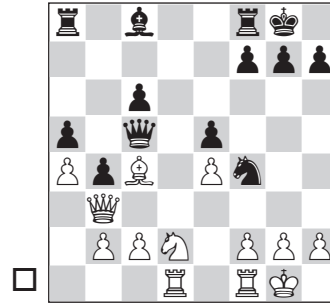
Solution 46

Ratmir Kholmov

Alexey Suetin

Leningrad ch-URS 1963 (8)

1.e4 c5 2. ♖f3 ♖c6 3.d4 cxd4 4. ♖xd4 e6 5. ♖c3 ♖c7 6. ♙e2 a6 7.a3 b5 8. ♖xc6 dxc6 9.0-0 e5 10. ♖d3 ♖e7 11.a4 b4 12. ♖b1 ♖g6 13. ♖b3 ♙c5 14. ♙c4 0-0 15. ♙e3 ♖e7 16. ♖d2 a5 17. ♖ad1 ♖f4 18. ♙xc5 ♖xc5



Black has advanced his queenside pawns a lot, which can either give him a big space advantage or else many squares to cover. This double aspect will be abundantly illustrated in this game.

The f4-knight is well placed and represents a danger to the white king.

White's plan is to try to exploit the black queenside weaknesses while ensuring the safety of his king.

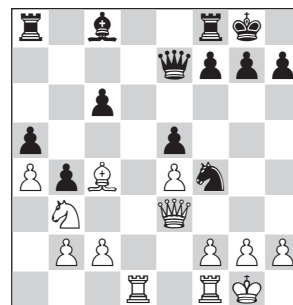
19. ♖e3!

Freeing the b3-square for the knight, from where it will control a5 and c5.

19... ♖e7!

After 19... ♖xe3? 20.fxe3 ♖g6 (20... ♖e6 21. ♖f3!) 21. ♖b3 White threatens 22. ♖d6 and enjoys a significant advantage.

20. ♖b3



20...♙e6

By exchanging bishops Black reduces pressure on the white king so as to strengthen his queenside.

A) On 20...♖g5 21.♖g3 ♗e7!?

White does not really have anything better than repeating moves by 22.♗e3 to return to the main plan. Instead of 21.♖g3, 21.g3 leads to a good game for Black after 21...♗h3+ 22.♖h1 ♗xe3 23.fxe3 ♙g4 24.♙d6 ♗g5 with the ideas 25...♗xe4 and 25...♙f3+, winning the exchange;

B) 20...♙g4!? is interesting, with two possibilities:

B1) 21.f3? ♙h3! 22.♙f2 (and not 22.gxh3? ♗g5+ 23.♖f2 ♗g2+ 24.♖e1 ♗xc2) 22...♗g5 23.g3 (23.♙f1? loses the queen after 23...♙xg2 24.♙xg2 ♗h3+) 23...♙e6! (menacing 24...♗h3+) 24.♖h1! ♙xc4 25.gxf4 exf4 is in Black's favour;

B2) 21.♙d2! ♗g5 (threatening 22...♙e6) with a new crossroads:

B2a) 22.♗g3 ♗h5 23.♗e3 ♗xe3! (23...♗f4 repeats the position) 24.fxe3 ♗f6 is unclear;

B2b) 22.♙e1! ♙e6! (after 22...♙e2?! 23.♗g3 ♗xg3 24.♙xf7+ ♙xf7 25.hxg3 ♙c4 26.gxf4 Black is worse, whether he exchanges on b3 or lets the knight go to c5) 23.♙f1 leads to a complex position.

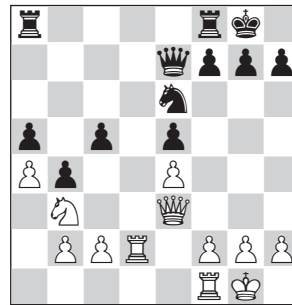
21.♙xe6 ♗xe6

The knight notably controls the sensitive c5-square.

22.♙d2 c5

The pressure on the a5-pawn hinders Black from challenging

for control of the d-file, but exchanging a pair of rooks before advancing the c-pawn gives him a good game, for example: 22...♙fd8! 23.♙fd1 ♙xd2 24.♙xd2 c5! 25.♙d5! (the attack on the black queenside remains the main theme) 25...c4! and now 26.♗d2! ♗c7 maintains the balance, but not 26.♗xa5? ♗c7! nor 26.♗c5?! ♗f4! with the idea of 27.♙d7? ♙d8! (the exchange of rooks has weakened White's back rank) 28.♙xd8+ (or 28.♗d2 ♙xd7 29.♗xd7 ♗g5! with the threats of 30...♗xg2 mate and 30...♗h3+, winning the queen) 28...♗xd8 (threatening 29...♗d1+) 29.♗e1 ♗d4 30.♗b7 ♗xb2 (30...♗b6? allows 31.♗d2!) and Black wins.

**23.♙d5!**

This avoids the expulsion of the knight that would occur after 23.♙fd1?! c4! (23...♗d4 is enough for a comfortable game) as 24.♙d7? allows 24...♙fd8! 25.♙xd8+ ♙xd8 26.♙xd8+ ♗xd8 27.♗d2 ♗d7! when the c4-pawn is taboo and Black exploits this to take an interest in the a4-pawn, which cannot be defended without serious concessions. One instructive

continuation is 28.♖e2 c3! 29.bxc3 ♖xa4 30.cxb4 ♖xb4 and the passed a-pawn decides the game.

23...c4 24.♘c5

White has managed to take advantage of the weakness of the black queenside and has a slight advantage.

24...♙fc8

A) 24...♘f4 25.♙d7 ♖g5 26.g3 ♙ac8 gives some counterplay. The c5-knight requires defending and Black can sometimes sacrifice the exchange to deflect the white queen, for instance in the variation 27.♖h1 ♙xc5 28.♖xc5 ♖g4 (attacking the d7-rook and threatening mate in 2 moves) 29.gxf4 ♖f3+ with a perpetual check. Instead of 27.♖h1, 27.♙fd1 maintains the pressure, but the position remains complicated;

B) 24...♘xc5 is also interesting:

B1) 25.♖xc5 ♖xc5 26.♙xc5 c3! 27.bxc3 (27.b3 ♙fd8 gives Black enough counterplay) 27...♙fc8 28.cxb4 axb4 29.♙xc8+ ♙xc8 30.♙b1 ♙xc2 31.♖f1 ♙c4 32.a5 ♖f8 (32...♙c5? 33.♙xb4, threatening mate) 33.a6 ♙c6! 34.♙a1 ♙c8! with the idea of ...b4-b3-b2; the exchange of the a- and b-pawns is inevitable and the game is drawn;

B2) 25.♙xc5! ♙fc8 26.♙d5 (26.♙b5 c3! 27.b3 ♙d8) is the most promising, even if after 26...♖e8!? 27.♙a1 the a1-rook is tied to the defence of the a4-pawn for a while. (continuation and solution 60 on page 141)

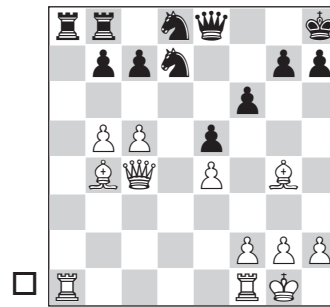
Solution 47

Gedeon Barcza

Alexandar Tsvetkov

Marianske Lazne zt 1951 (13)

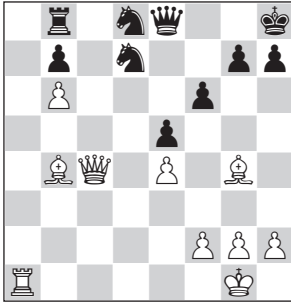
1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d3 ♘f6 4.c3 d5 5.♖c2 ♙e7 6.♙e2 0-0 7.0-0 ♘e8 8.♘bd2 ♙e6 9.b4 ♘d6 10.a3 a6 11.♙b2 dxe4 12.dxe4 ♙g5 13.c4 ♙xd2 14.♘xd2 f6 15.♙c3 ♖e7 16.a4 ♘f7 17.b5 ♘b8 18.♙b2 ♙c8 19.♙a3 ♖e8 20.c5 axb5 21.axb5 ♘d7 22.♙b4 ♘d8 23.♘c4 ♙xc4 24.♖xc4+ ♖h8 25.♙g4 ♙cb8



White has a big space advantage on the queenside and a powerful bishop pair. He is clearly better and will remain so if he chooses a quiet continuation. Nevertheless, Black's position is solid and in particular he can regroup by ...♘d7-f8 followed by ...♘d8-e6 with an eye on the d4-square.

A) 26.c6? is no good, as after 26...bxc6 27.bxc6 ♘b6 the c6-pawn is attacked and will be lost;

B) 26.b6?! is better, but after, for example, 26...♙xa1 27.♙xa1 cxb6! (27...c6?! is solid, but misses a chance to equalize) 28.cxb6



analysis diagram

28...♖c6! (and not 28...♘xb6?

29.♚c7!) with a choice:

B1) 29.♙d6 ♘xb6 30.♚b5 ♖a8! and the attack on the a1-rook saves the knight, which would still be safe after 31.♖xa8?! ♚xa8! because of the back-rank mate; White will probably win the b7-pawn but the disappearance of all the pawns on the queenside makes it unlikely that he will be able to exploit his advantage;

B2) 29.♚b5 ♖d8 allows White to keep his b6-pawn, but the black pieces are now much better placed than before and the b7-pawn is hard to attack. After 30.♙d6 there would follow 30...♘xb6! 31.♙c7 ♖a8!, as seen previously, and if 32.♖xa8 then 32...♘xa8!, winning a tempo on the bishop, is fine, but not now 32...♚xa8? 33.♙xb6! as there is no longer a back-rank mate.

26.♙a5!

There is no good way to defend the c7-pawn and Black is lost. This move cannot wait, because after, for example, 26.h4 ♘f8! 27.♙a5 Black can play 27...♘de6 and avoid weakening his position.

26...b6

A) After 26...♖c8 the d7-knight is pinned and 27.♖fd1 wins;

B) 26...c6 27.♙c7 ♖c8 28.b6 leads to the same decisive pin.

27.cxb6 cxb6

After 27...♘xb6 28.♙xb6! cxb6

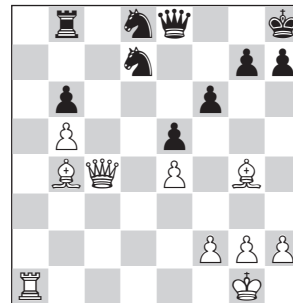
29.♖a6! White puts pressure on the b6-pawn and prepares to double rooks on the a-file, taking advantage of the fact that 29...♖xa6 30.bxa6

gives him a decisive passed pawn. The attempt to install the knight on a5 or c5 by 29...♘b7 allows 30.♖xb6.

28.♙b4

The bishop has fulfilled its mission to weaken the opposing pawn structure and returns to its post.

28...♖xa1 29.♖xa1



Now we have the same position as in the previous diagram, with the only difference being that the queenside pawns are located one rank lower down. The general rule saying that it is undesirable to move pawns in an area where we are under pressure is confirmed here: the b6-pawn is more exposed than it was on b7 and the c5-square is not easily accessible to a black knight whereas the c6-square was.

29... ♖b7

More resistant was 29... ♖c5 (threatening to strengthen the position by 30... ♖db7) 30. ♕xc5 bxc5, but after 31. ♖d1! the b5-pawn is defended by the attack on the knight and White is getting ready to play ♕g4-d7, ♖d1-d7 or even ♖d1-d5 if necessary. After the fall of the c5-pawn the win will be obtained thanks to the strength of the b5-pawn added to the exposed situation of the black king.

Instead of 31. ♖d1!, 31. ♖xc5 is less clear because 31... ♖xb5 (and not 31... ♖xb5?? 32. ♖f8#) 32. ♖c8 ♖b4! 33. g3 ♖d4 keeps Black in the game.

30. ♖c6

The d7-knight is too unstable for the position to be held.

30... ♖bc5 31. ♖a7 ♖f8

Or else 31... ♖d8 32. g3 (winning the b6-pawn is not urgent because Black cannot undertake anything) 32... h6 33. ♕xc5 ♖xc5 34. ♖xb6 ♖xe4 and now 35. ♖c7 ♖f8 36. b6 would be normal and sufficient, but 35. ♖b7! ♖g6 36. ♕f5! is stronger, winning the knight.

32. ♕xc5 ♖xc6

After 32. bxc5 the shortest is 33. ♖c7!.

33. bxc6 bxc5 34. h3 f5 35. c7 1-0

Solution 48

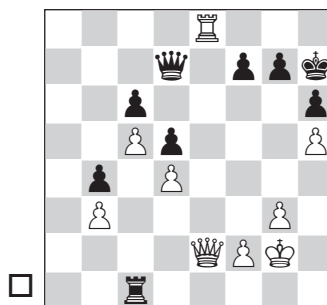
Lev Polugaevsky

Alexander Zaitsev

Vladimir ch-URS m 1969 (4)

1. c4 e6 2. g3 d5 3. ♕g2 ♖f6 4. ♖f3 ♕e7 5. 0-0 0-0 6. d4 c6 7. ♖c2 ♖bd7 8. b3 b6 9. ♕b2 ♕b7 10. ♖c3 ♖c8

11. ♖ad1 b5 12. c5 b4 13. ♖b1 a5 14. ♖bd2 ♖a8 15. e4 ♖xe4 16. ♖xe4 dxe4 17. ♖xe4 ♖f6 18. ♖c2 ♖d5 19. ♖e5 ♕f6 20. ♖c4 ♕a6 21. ♖fe1 ♕b5 22. ♖d6 ♖b8 23. ♕c1 ♕a6 24. ♕xd5 exd5 25. ♕f4 ♖d8 26. ♕e5 ♕c8 27. ♖d3 ♕e6 28. ♖de3 ♕e7 29. ♖f5 ♕f6 30. h4 ♕xe5 31. ♖xe5 ♕xf5 32. ♖xf5 a4 33. ♖g2 axb3 34. axb3 ♖a3 35. ♖1e3 ♖a7 36. h5 h6 37. ♖h3 ♖a8 38. ♖f3 ♖c8+ 39. ♖g2 ♖a2 40. ♖e7 ♖d2 41. ♖f4 ♖b8 42. ♖3e5 ♖a2 43. ♖e3 ♖a8 44. ♖e2 ♖c8 45. ♖f3 ♖a1 46. ♖e2 ♖c1 47. ♖e8 ♖d7 48. ♖5e7 ♖xe8 49. ♖xe8+ ♖h7



In positions with only major pieces the attack on the king is often an important theme, and this is clearly the case here where the black king is both exposed and confined. The b4-pawn is defenceless and the c6- and f7-pawns are also vulnerable, especially since the black queen may have to move in search of counterplay.

An important idea for Black is to play ... ♖d7-f5. The queen could then possibly go to b1, highlighting the fact that the white king is not safe either, but it would also prevent checks on the diagonal and monitor

the h5-pawn, whose capture would give the king an escape square as well as threatening a check on h1. The vulnerability of the b3- and d4-pawns may play a role, especially in the case of a transposition into an endgame.

A) 50.♖e5? takes the f5-square from the black queen and threatens 51.♖b8, but it allows 50...♔g4! with pressure on the h5- and d4-pawns. Now 51.♖b8? ♕xh5 loses, as well as 51.f3? ♖c2+. Better is 51.♖f8, which nevertheless leaves Black in the game after, for example, 51...♖d1 ♖xf7 52.♖xd4;

B) 50.♖b8 ♖f5! is not convincing:

B1) 51.♖e8? ♕xh5 loses;

B2) 51.♖xb4 ♖b1! and White cannot avoid a draw by perpetual check: 52.♖b7 ♖g1+ 53.♔h3 (53.♔f3? ♖e1 54.♖d2 ♖e4#) 53...♖h1+ 54.♔g4? (54.♔g2 draws) 54...f5+ 55.♔f4 ♖e1 and Black wins;

B3) 51.♖b7! keeps an eye on the b4- and f7-pawns, and now:

B3a) 51...♖e4+? 52.♖xe4 dxe4 53.♖xb4 when White will capture the c6-pawn and have two connected passed pawns;

B3b) 51...♖c3 52.♖xb4! Black's counterplay on the first rank takes too long to set up;

B3c) 51...♖a1 52.g4! ♖b1 (the queen is in front of the rook and by giving check will have to abandon the b1-h7 diagonal on which it would have had prospects, as we have seen) 53.♖f3! ♖h1+ 54.♔g3 – Black must still not exchange queens and is in trouble;

B3d) 51...♖b1! 52.♖xf7 ♖g1+ 53.♔h3 ♖d1! (this time going into the endgame is correct as the white pawns will be captured; 53...♖h1+ 54.♔g4 is worse) 54.♖xd1 ♖xd1 55.♖c7 ♖xd4 56.♖xc6 ♖d3 57.♔g4 ♖xb3 when Black is worse, but still has chances to save himself.

C) 50.♖f8!?, with the threat of 51.♖d3+ g6 52.♖e3 (gaining a tempo on the rook) 52...♖c3 53.♖e5, is an interesting idea:

C1) 50...♖f5?, the normal move, is refuted by 51.♖e8! ♕xh5 52.♖h8+ ♔g6 53.♖xc6+ f6 54.♖e8+; we saw this arrangement with the queen behind the rook for Black and here it is employed by White;

C2) 50...♖c3 51.♖b8! – abandoning the back rank invites an attack on the b4-pawn; Black is much worse, as 51...♖xb3? 52.♖c2+ loses the rook;

C3) 50...♖e6! seems to be the best defence, to play a rook ending a pawn down after 51.♖xe6 fxe6 52.♖b8.

50. ♖d3+!

The best move, forcing a weakening of the kingside and preventing the black queen from going to f5.

50...f5 51. ♖e3!

