Opening Preparation

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Preface

Mark Dvoretsky

When embarking on any serious project, you always try to draw up a good, precise plan of it. And if the ‘blueprint’ is sound, things usually proceed successfully.

Through detailed discussions, Grandmaster Yusupov and I evolved the policy and working guidelines of a school for gifted young chessplayers which we intended to organise. I can now state with gratification that our basic ideas have stood the test of time. The successes of the school’s pupils bear witness to this. Already many of them are players of no mean strength, gaining victories and prizes in junior championships at national, European and world level. In 1992 alone, no fewer than four of our students – Ilakha Kadyanova, Inna Gaponenko, Aleksei Aleksandrov and Vadim Zviagintsev – won European or World Championships.

Our chief principle was above reproach because we had earlier tested it by our own experience. We clearly understood that our task was not simply to equip our students with specific chess knowledge; in two ten-day sessions per year, little can be done in that respect, while in any case the main point of chess training lies elsewhere. Far more important aims are:

a) to acquaint the students with general ideas, methods and procedures for conducting the chess struggle – for these are of universal significance;

b) to impart rational methods of studying chess – procedures both for appropriating overall ideas and for acquiring essential concrete information;

c) to analyse the defects in the students’ play and help to eradicate them.

Another idea that has proved justified is that of conducting sessions on a particular topic or theme. Each of our lessons is devoted to some specific branch of chess study. This intensive treatment of the topic – through lectures, practical activity and supplementary material that supply to the students – gives a powerful stimulus towards attaining mastery in the given field.

We should like to help any chessplayer who wishes to play more strongly and is ready to pursue this end by working seriously at self-improvement. But our school has a limited number of places. For that...
reason, right from the start, we aimed to prepare teaching manuals incorporating the lessons given at the school, together with the most interesting published articles on the subject.

The first such book, based on material from the first session of the school, appeared at the end of 1991 (published as Training for the Tournament Player in 1993 by Batsford). It deals with the most general questions of chess learning - the detection and elimination of weak points in one's play, the technique of analysing one's own and other players' games and deriving instruction from them, the role of the classical chess heritage, and so on.

Our second book is the one you have before you. It is devoted to the opening in chess. What can we offer that is new in this field? It is worth dwelling a little on this question.

The truth is that a good half of all chess books are monographs analysing this or that concrete opening variation - all of them together. These are essentially reference works, to be consulted from time to time; but it is extremely difficult to assimilate opening theory with their help alone. The sheer bulk of data in them is too large, and by far the greater part of it is quite unnecessary; there is too little explanation of the general ideas underlying the variations analysed. Furthermore, opening monographs very quickly become outdated.

For chess enthusiasts wishing to learn some particular opening quickly, there are suitable books which analyse no more than the necessary minimum of variations. Such books are very handy, of course. Yet by merely utilising ready-made recipes, you cannot attain true mastery in conducting the opening stage of the game. What is essential is to study the methods of opening preparation as a whole, to ponder typical problems that have confronted other players, and to devote independent analysis to opening systems that attract you.

Our book will assist you in that task. It is designed for players (especially young ones) who seriously wish to deepen their understanding of chess in general and the opening phase in particular, and who want to learn how to work on the openings independently.

Part One of the book discusses what kind of problems we encounter when playing an opening, and what is needed to solve them directly over-the-board. Lectures by the World Championship candidates Artur Yusupov and Serge Dolmatov occupy the central place here. (Dolmatov, by the way, participates actively in our work at the school.) I find it exceptionally interesting to follow the trail of thought of top grandmasters who candidly reveal what they think about during play, how they find the best 'moves and why they occasionally go wrong.

But acquaintance with 'theory' is not in itself sufficient to teach you to make the right decisions. Practical training is also required. At each session of the school we invariably organise a variety of tests and competitions. One such training session is described in the first part of the book.

Part Two is devoted to the processes of building an opening repertoire, of preparing for contests and individual opponents.

This theme is continued in Part Three, which deals with independent analysis of opening positions and the technique of devising innovations.

Part Four traces the link between the opening and other phases of the game, and demonstrates the continuity of chess ideas. It particularly stresses the central theme running through the whole book: the key to success lies not in mechanically memorizing opening data but in assimilating the riches of chess thought, in broadening your chess mind.

However, even though this was not our chief aim, the reader will actually find a good deal of useful specific information here: opening novelties (some of which have yet to be tried in practice), recommendations for handling the most varied positions, and surveys of a number of opening systems (King's Indian Attack, Closed Spanish, Queen's Gambit Accepted and others).

Finally, we have made it our policy to end the book with some samples of achievements by pupils of the school, equipped with notes by Grandmaster Yusupov. Here you will find some typical cases of full-scale opening clash on a very high level, and examples of instructive opening errors.

In annotating the games by our students, Yusupov concentrates on those overall problems of opening play which are discussed in his lecture at the beginning of the book. When studying this lecture, you will probably do well to look up the final chapter at the same time, and examine the two chapters in parallel.

This book is the work of a team of authors. In addition to the writer of these lines and Grandmasters Yusupov and Dolmatov, contributions were made by Grandmaster Yuri Razuvaev and three other masters: Boris Zlotnik, Aleksei Kosikov and Vladimir Vulison. I am greatly indebted to all of them. It will, I hope, be of interest to the reader to compare the attitudes of different specialists to the same problems; such (so to speak) is the polyphonic quality of the book.

If our work causes the reader to ponder the difficult but engaging problems of opening preparation and suggests to him some new ideas in this field, the authors will consider their task accomplished.
1 General Principles of Opening Play

Artur Yusupov

Let us ask what constitutes the strategy of the opening struggle in chess. If you examine the games of strong masters, you will see that both sides aim above all to mobilise their forces with the greatest speed. This is easily explained; the more pieces in play, the more attacking possibilities you have. Fast development is the basis of opening play.

Here is a second important factor: from the very first moves, a battle for the centre is fought. The centre may be called the commanding summit of chess strategy; whoever gains control of it will afterwards have the better prospects. It is natural for the central squares e4, e5, d4 and d5 to be the object of constant attention by both sides from the very outset. As a rule, chessplayers endeavour either to seize the centre with pawns or to exert pressure on it with pieces.

At the same time, both opponents are trying to frustrate each other's plans. It makes sense to play a move which hampers the opponent's development; if this 'loses a tempo', it is likely to be justified later. It is well worth spending a tempo to prevent the opponent (say) from castling - in this way you will increase your own lead in development. Thus, the third principle of opening play is to counteract the opponent's intentions with a view to holding up his development and stopping him from gaining control of the centre.

You will ask which is more important: pursuing one's own development or hindering that of the opponent. Of course it is ideal if both can be combined. If the choice must be made, it will depend on the particular circumstances of each single case; there is no universal precept. That said, it is better not to forget about developing your own position.

What else matters to a chessplayer in the opening? Of course, he gives attention to his pawn structure. It may already be possible at an early stage to provoke a weakening of your opponent's pawn position - to wreck his pawns, as they say. Remember that a great deal may depend on whether you obtain a good pawn structure or a bad one.

And, finally: from the very first moves, a struggle for the initiative is under way, and this perhaps is the very essence of opening play. In our day, can we imagine a game in which the players spend some time simply bringing out their pieces and then look round to see where they stand
and what they should be doing next? Of course not. It is natural that White, as the 'first player', should generally try to keep ahead of his opponent in development, to seize the centre and to create the first threats.

Before passing to specific examples, I would draw your attention to one more important point: Modern opening structures are firmly linked to a middlegame plan of action (and sometimes you even have to take the eventual endgame structure into account!). These days it is hard to draw a clear line between the opening and the middlegame, especially since all the principles of opening strategy that I have mentioned can be applied to the middlegame too, though in rather different ways.

Let us now look a little more closely at the first of the opening maxims (fast mobilisation of the forces). Some simple rules may be called to mind:

1) Don't move the same piece twice (without serious justification).
2) Don't waste time on prophylactic moves with the rook's pawns; developing the pieces faster is more important.
3) Don't bring the queen out too early; choosing the right place for it is a crucial task, since the nature of the subsequent struggle is in many ways dependent on where the queen is placed.
4) Don't be rushed into a premature, unprepared attack.

5) Don't go in for pawn-hunting, especially in open positions where a lead in development makes an immense difference. Remember that a tempo in the opening is sometimes more important than a pawn.

We will now examine a game of mine against Grandmaster Gulko. I think that the principles of mobilization and general opening play will be clarified by this example.

Yusupov-Gulko
Reykjavik 1990
King's Indian

1 d4 Qf6
2 c4 g6
3 Qf3 Qg7
4 g3 0-0
5 Qg2 d6
6 0-0 Qc6

We see how new forces are entering the game with each move. White seizes the centre with his pawns; Black prepares to exert pressure on it with his pieces.

7 Qe3 Qf5

A move that is rarely seen but perfectly playable. Black develops his bishop and establishes control over the central square e4, preparing to play 8...Qe4.

8 d5

There are other continuations here, for example 8 Qe1, 8 b3 or 8 Qe1. The move played is also logical enough: with gain of tempo, White makes good his conquest of space in the centre.

8...Qa5 (1)

Black moves the same piece twice in the opening, but here he is justified in doing so. For one thing a knight move is actually forced, but secondly the move 8...Qa5 creates a counter-threat against the pawn on c4.

What should White play here? In the game, I continued...

9 d2??

But this move has definite snags. The knight on d2 blocks the bishop on c1. I was hoping that the threat of 10 b4 would force my opponent to close the queenside with ...c7-c5. White would then gain a tempo by pushing his pawn to e4 and afterwards complete his development with Qc2, b2-b3, Qb2 etc. Unfortunately, events took a very different turn.

A more natural and logical move seems to be 9 Qd4! The bishop on f5 is attacked, and the c-pawn is defended indirectly: 9...Qxc4? would be met by 10 Qxf5 gf 11 Qd3, whereupon White recovers his pawn while obtaining the better pawn structure. After 9...Qd7 10 Qd3, his position is highly promising.

9...e6!

Having gained a certain lead in development, my opponent resolutely opens the position up. I am now faced with a new problem – that of damping down Black's incipient initiative. I failed to solve this problem and landed in trouble.

The logical sequel to 9 Qd2 would be the energetic 10 b4?! The basic idea, which I overlooked during the game, is that after 10...Qxd2 11 cd Qxc3 White has 12 e4! (I only considered 12 Qa3? Qxd2). White will probably manage to acquire two pieces for a rook, but Black will have some pawns as compensation. Assessing such a position is very difficult; quite possibly it is a case of dynamic equilibrium.

In the game, White played the stereotyped...

10 e4?!

To which the answer was:

10...Qg4!?

With this cunning move, a new weakness is provoked: either f2-f3, giving Black tactical possibilities based on ...Qb6+; or else Qc2, when after the opening of the c-file the queen will be exposed to awkward pressure from a rook on c8.

11 Qc2 cd
12 cd

Taking with the e-pawn would be even worse – Black's bishop would obtain the excellent square f5.

12...Qc8
Observe the logic with which Gulko brings fresh forces into the game while gradually increasing the pressure. Taking advantage of White's conventional play and consequent backward development, Black has already seized the initiative. He now has to follow a very important rule formulated long ago by Steinitz: when you have the advantage, you must attack, or risk losing it!

13...e6!!

14 h3

Yes, White endeavours to co-ordinate his pieces somehow or other. He prepares to continue developing with 14 Qf1, and at the same time prevents the black bishop from transfiguring itself via e2 to a6, from where it would exert dangerous pressure.

13...b5

There were other possibilities here too, for example 13...b6. It was also worth considering 13...d7, freeing the g4 square for the knight on its way to e5, while planning to meet 14 Qf1 with 14...Qc4.

14 a3 (2)

Again Black could continue 14...Qd7!? 15 Qf1 Qc4 16 Qe3 Qg4. But Gulko has found a much more interesting line based on the same overall assessment of the position as before: Black is ahead in development, so opening up the game will benefit him.

14...ed!

A pawn exchange on d5, the bishop obtains the f5 square, which is extremely unpleasant for White. If instead 15 h3??, there follows 15...ed 16 hg d4, and my pawn position will be hopelessly spoilt. In other words, Black will convert one type of advantage—his lead in development—into another: the better pawn structure.

White has to adopt a defensive approach which could be stated more or less like this: 'When everything is going badly, it's too late to be afraid!'

15 Wd3

Well, what is White to do? Already I realize that completing my development is impossible by normal means, and so I am trying anything to complicate the struggle. Such tactics can sometimes give quite good practical results, though with correct play from the opponent they are likely to be punished. At any rate, the quiet 15 Qf1 (15...ed 16 ed) was objectively the lesser evil.

15...ed

16 Qxb5

Whereas for White the opening is not yet over, Black of course is well into the middlegame. At this point he could have played 16...Wb6?!, enabling his bishop to retreat to d7. The exposed bishop on g4 is perhaps the only defect in Black's position—in some lines it can be cut off from the rest of his forces.

However, from the point of view of fighting for the initiative, Gulko played what is probably the most effective move:

16...He8!!

One more black piece enters the game...

From this point onwards, balancing on the edge of a precipice, I managed time and again to unearth resources for prolonging the fight. Fortunately for me, the position proved sufficiently complex, so that at this stage it was too early to say how it would all end.

17 h3 Qf5!

A tempting move. An alternative was 17...e6, when there would follow: 18 ed Qf5 19 He8+ He8 20 Wf1. White has an extra pawn, though of course Black has powerful counterplay.

18 g4

The only move. Albeit at the cost of a pawn, White succeeds in finishing his development.

18...Qxe4

19 Qxe4

At last this knight has left d2! 19...Qxe4

With White's development still backward, winning the pawn back with 20 Qxe4?? would be tantamount to surrender: 20...de 21 Wxh6 Wh4! Also 20 Wxh5? would be bad in view of the very strong reply 20...He5!!

20...Qxa7??

In this game White breaks all the rules, and should have been punished by accurate play from his opponent. But I had to come to the conclusion that the 'normal' course of events was a hopeless prospect.

18...He8

If 21 Wxh5?!, the tactical stroke 21...Qxh2!!! looks tempting, for instance: 22 Qxe8+ Wxe8 23 Qxh2 Qb3 24 Qc6 with unclear play. But the interposition of 21...He5!! would set White problems that appear insuperable; his pieces are disunited, and the same fearsome blow against f2 is still threatened (22 Qd3 Qxf2 23 Qxf2 Wh4+). Naturally White must take the opportunity to mobilise his bishop which has remained idle so far:

21 He3

There now followed:

21...Qxb2

22 Hxb1

On 22 Hxd1, the reply 22...Qc3 is unpleasant, for example: 23 Hf2 d4 24 Qxb2 Qxb2 25 Whd4 Qc2+ 26 Qxe2 Qxe2, and if 27 Qh6 then simply 27...Qe5, blocking the dangerous diagonal and emerging with a big material plus.

22...He3

Gulko continues purposefully and finds a concrete method of increasing his advantage.
23 \( \text{Wxd5} \)

White would lose quickly with 23 \( \text{Wxc6} \) \( \text{Qxc6} \) 25 \( \text{Wxc6} \) \( \text{Qc8} \).

23 ... \( \text{Qc3} \) (3)

We have here an interesting problem of calculation. Which continuation promises White the best practical chances? Basically there are three possibilities:

(a) 24 \( \text{Wxb3} \) \( \text{Qxb3} \) 25 \( \text{Wxb2} \) \( \text{Qc5} \).

I think Black has the advantage here (though surrendering material like this does sometimes help to repair the situation).

(b) 24 \( \text{Qc6} \) – objectively, this counter-stroke may be strongest. Yet after 24 ... \( \text{Wxd5} \) 25 \( \text{Wxc6} \) \( \text{Qxe3} \) Black of course has a clear plus (for example 26 \( \text{Wxe3} \) \( \text{Qxe3} \) 27 \( \text{Wxe3} \)).

(c) The move actually played, on which my hopes rested, was:

24 \( \text{Qg5} \)

Black now has to solve one more complicated problem, after which he should score his deserved point.

The correct reply is 24 ... \( \text{Wxd7} \). But Gulko didn’t notice that after 25 \( \text{Wxa5} \) \( \text{Qxb1} \) 26 \( \text{Qxb1} \) Black has the deadly 26 ... \( \text{Qc3} \). White would have to carry on confusing the issue with 26 \( \text{Qc6} \) (26 \( \text{Qxe8} \) \( \text{Wxe8} \) 27 \( \text{Wb8} \) is no better), but this would not last long: 26 ... \( \text{Qxe1+} \) 27 \( \text{Wxe1} \) \( \text{Wxa7} \) 28 \( \text{Wxe8+} \) \( \text{Qg7} \) 29 \( \text{Qe7} \) \( \text{Wb8} \), and Black wins.

Fortunately for me, Gulko was tempted by a queen sacrifice:

24 ... \( \text{Qxb1} \) ?
25 \( \text{Wxd8} \) \( \text{Qxe1+} \)
26 \( \text{Qf1} \)

...which results in a wholly unclear position where the mutual threats appear balanced.

26 ... \( \text{Qc3} \)
27 \( \text{Wd2} \)!

It is important to take control of \( f4 \). Bad alternatives are 27 \( \text{Wb8?} \) \( \text{Qe2+} \) 28 \( \text{Wg2} \) \( \text{Qf4+} \) and 27 \( \text{Wxa5?} \) \( \text{Qe2+} \) 28 \( \text{Wg2} \) \( \text{Qf4+} \) 29 \( \text{Wg1} \) \( \text{Qxh3+} \) \( \text{Qg2} \) \( \text{Qf4+} \) 31 \( \text{Wg1} \) \( \text{Qc3} \).

27 ... \( \text{Qe2+} \)
28 \( \text{Wg2} \) \( \text{Qc3} \)
29 \( \text{Wb6} \) \( \text{Qe4} \)

Black could have drawn with 29 ... \( \text{Qg7} \) 30 \( \text{Wd2} \) \( \text{Qc3} \).
30 \( \text{Qc6} \) \( \text{Qg7} \)
31 \( \text{Qf7+} \) \( \text{Qf8} \)

A mistake. The correct line was 31 ... \( \text{Qb1} \) 32 \( \text{Qg6+!} \) \( \text{g3} \) 33 \( \text{Qf6} ! \) \( \text{g6} \) 34 \( \text{Qxe2} \) \( \text{Qxe2} \) 35 \( \text{Qxg7+} \) \( \text{Qxg7} \).

36 \( \text{Wf4} \) with equal chances.

32 \( \text{Wxh7} \) \( \text{Qf4} \)
33 \( \text{Qxh2} \) \( \text{Qe8} \)
34 \( \text{Qg8+!} \)

Not 34 ... \( \text{Qxg7?} \) \( \text{Qxf1} \) followed by ...

34 ... \( \text{Qf8} \) (4)

Nor can he save himself with 34 ... \( \text{Qd7} \) 35 \( \text{Wxf7} \) \( \text{xf1} \) 36 \( \text{Qc6+} \) \( \text{Qxc6} \) 37 \( \text{Qxc4}+ \) \( \text{Qd7} \) 38 \( \text{Qxb3} \).

The way from victory to defeat has proved very short. After this stroke, Black’s position is already indefensible (35 ... \( \text{Qg6} \) met by the simple 36 \( \text{Qxc4} \)).

35 ... \( \text{f5} \)
36 \( \text{Wxc4} \) \( \text{Qxf1} \)
37 \( \text{Wxf4} \)!
37 ... \( \text{Qxb3} \) \( \text{Qxd8} \) 38 \( \text{Wc4} \) \( \text{Qxd2+} \) 39 \( \text{Qg3} \) \( \text{Qxh3} \) is also in White’s favour.

39 ... \( \text{Qf5} \)
38 ... \( \text{Qxa3} \)
37 ... \( \text{Qh4} \)
38 ... \( \text{Qf6} \), controlling \( a1 \), was more precise.

38 ... \( \text{Qa1} \)
39 \( \text{Qe4}+ \)

The consequences of 39 \( \text{Qf6} \) are unclear: 39 ... \( \text{Qh1+} \) 40 \( \text{Qg2} \) \( \text{Qag1+} \) (or 40 ... \( \text{Qh1+} \) 41 \( \text{Qf3} \) \( \text{Qxh3} \) 42 \( \text{Qe2} \) (42 \( \text{Qg3?} \) \( \text{Qxh3}+ \) 42 \( \text{Qg7} \)) 43 ... \( \text{Qd7} \).

40 \( \text{Qf3}+ \) \( \text{Qg8} \)
41 \( \text{Qd5+} \) \( \text{Qg7} \)

Better is 46 ... \( \text{Qe6} \).

47 \( \text{Qf4} \) \( \text{d5} \)
48 \( \text{Qf2} \) \( \text{Qd6} \)
49 \( \text{Qf3} \) \( \text{Qe6} \)
50 \( \text{Qd4} \) \( \text{Qe7} \)
51 \( \text{Qg3} \) \( \text{Qb4} \)
52 \( \text{h4} \) \( \text{Qe1+} \)
53 \( \text{Qg3} \) \( \text{Qd2} \)
54 \( \text{Qg3} \) \( \text{Qe1+} \)
55 \( \text{Qf2} \) \( \text{Qc3} \)
56 \( \text{Qf3} \) \( \text{Qg7} \)

A more stubborn defence was 56 ... \( \text{Qf6} ! \) 57 \( \text{h5} \) \( \text{g8} \) 58 \( \text{f5}+ \) \( \text{Qf7} \) 59 \( \text{g} \), but even then the Black position could definitely not have been held. White would play \( \text{Qe3} \), \( \text{Qg4} \), \( \text{Qg5} \), and then \( \text{f3-c2-d3-c2-b3-a4} \), when the black pawn falls.

57 \( \text{Qe1} \) ?!
57 ... \( \text{Qb6} \), preparing \( \text{Qe3} \) and \( \text{Qd4} \), was also good.

57 ... \( \text{Qf8} \)
58 ... \( \text{Qf6} \)
59 ... \( \text{Qf5} \) \( \text{g1} \)
60 ... \( \text{Qg5} \)

Black resigned in view of 60 ... \( \text{Qh8} \) 61 ... \( \text{Qg7} \) 62 ... \( \text{Qf4} \).

I would like to draw your attention once again to Gulko’s highly consistent play in this game, right up to his fateful error on move 24. He began fighting for the initiative right
from the opening, and after gaining a lead in development he concentrated on increasing it, bringing more and more pieces into the fray and not shrinking from temporary sacrifices. The moves 14...e6! and 16...\(\text{c}6\)! may be singled out in this connection.

As regards White's play, after offending against one of the cardinal opening principles (mobilisation at maximum speed) and conceding the initiative, he ought to have lost. However, what makes this game notable is that it shows the importance of carrying on the fight whatever the circumstances. True, White had the worse position. Yet he never lost heart, he strove to work up counterplay and regain the initiative. Eventually he managed to set his opponent some quite difficult practical problems, and the latter lost his way.

The next example is perhaps simpler. In contrast to the game with Gulko, I had properly prepared myself to meet Spassky.

**Spassky-Yusupov**  
**Linares 1990**  
**Ruy Lopez**

1 e4 \(\text{e}5\)  
2 \(\text{\text{c}}3\) \(\text{\text{c}}6\)  
3 \(\text{\text{b}}5\) a6  
4 \(\text{\text{a}}4\) \(\text{\text{f}}6\)  
5 \(\text{\text{c}}3\)

Spassky often adopts this antiquated variation, which at one time was virtually considered the main line of the Ruy Lopez but later almost disappeared from use.

From a common-sense point of view there is nothing wrong with White's last move. It brings a piece towards the centre. But anyone who has studied the Ruy Lopez knows that 5 0-0 is nonetheless better, aiming to set up a pawn centre with c2-c3 and d2-d4 (which the knight on c3 hinders).

5 \(\text{b}5\)  
5...\(\text{c}5\)! is also playable.  
6 \(\text{\text{b}}3\) \(\text{\text{e}}7\)  
7 \(\text{d}3\) \(\text{d}6\)  
8 \(\text{\text{d}}5\)

Of course it looks attractive to strengthen White's control of the important diagonal and particularly the central square d5. However, 8 \(\text{\text{d}}5\) leads to simplification and a roughly equal game.

8 ... \(\text{\text{a}}5\)  
9 \(\text{\text{e}}6\) ... \(\text{\text{e}}7\)  
10 0-0 0-0

This natural move is an innovation, strange though it may seem. Usually 10...c5 is played.

11 \(\text{\text{d}}2\)

Not a very active move, but Spassky had played it before.

11 ... \(\text{\text{b}}3\)

Let us have a think about the diagram position. How would you go about solving Black's opening problems?

With 12...c5 maybe? This move is perfectly playable, increasing Black's central control. What other suggestions are there?

Perhaps 12...\(\text{d}7\), preparing ...\(\text{f}7\)-\(\text{f}5\). This is a good idea.

What about developing the bishop on b7? Yes, this move features in Black's plans. But I didn't want to play it at once because of the strong reply 13 \(\text{\text{h}}4\). The pieces need to be developed in the most accurate way, taking account of the opponent's resources.

To sum up: undermining the white e-pawn with ...\(\text{f}7\)-\(\text{f}5\) does seem the obvious course. It simply follows from the structure of the position. If Black managed to play ...\(\text{\text{b}}7\), ...\(\text{d}7\) and ...\(\text{f}7\)-\(\text{f}5\), the game would turn in his favour. But he needs to act in such a way as to prevent White's awkward knight sortie to h4. Therefore, in preparing for the game, I had decided to begin this manoeuvre by retreating my knight.

12 ... \(\text{\text{d}}7\)!

Black has successfully solved his opening problems, without wasting time on ...\(\text{c}7\)-\(\text{c}5\) - a move which is useful in a general sense but is not the first priority. White should now have played cautiously and prepared for his opponent's operations in the centre. But Spassky didn't sense the danger in time; indeed, right now it is rather hard to imagine that the scene can abruptly change within literally just a few moves.

13 \(\text{\text{e}}1\)!

As the ex-World Champion later pointed out, 13 \(\text{\text{a}}5\) c5 14 \(\text{\text{d}}2\) would result in equality.

13 ... \(\text{\text{b}}7\)

Everything is ready for ...\(\text{f}7\)-\(\text{f}5\). It is time for White to give some thought to defence, but to his cost he decided to fuel the fire of his own accord.

14 d4?

Better 14 \(\text{\text{g}}5\) f6 15 \(\text{\text{h}}4\), with the idea of 16 \(\text{\text{d}}2\); Black then has no more than a slight edge.

14 ... \(\text{f}5\)!

White could have now taken on e5, but the variations work out in Black's favour, for instance: 15 de \(\text{w}7\)! 17 \(\text{\text{c}}3\) \(\text{\text{e}}8\) 18 \(\text{\text{g}}5\) \(\text{w}x\text{f}2\)+ 19 \(\text{\text{h}}1\) e3 20 \(\text{w}4\) h5 21 \(\text{w}3\) cd with advantage.

After much thought, Spassky played differently:

15 ef \(\text{xxf}5\)  
16 de (6) \(\text{xxf}3!\)

A thematic stroke. Of course the exchange is not too great a price to pay to activate the bishop on b7. The unsubtle 16...\(\text{\text{f}}3\) would have had unclear consequences: 17 gf \(\text{xxe}5\) (not 17...\(\text{\text{e}}5\) 18 f4 \(\text{w}4\) 19 fe
with constant attention to the opponent’s similar activities, helps to solve a good many opening problems. Another vital point is that the concrete plans of both players were determined by the pawn structure from quite an early stage.

In developing your pieces, try to envisage what you will be undertaking in a few moves’ time and what direction the game is going to follow. This should not, of course, be understood over-literally to mean that in the very opening you should be expounding a plan that will lead by a direct process to a win in the endgame stage. The kind of planning I have in mind involves fairly short operations, say three or four moves deep, aimed at improving your position and warning that of your opponent. In essence, the entire game is an aggregate of mini-operations united by a general strategic idea that has its basis in the opening you have chosen.

The way such short operations are planned can be seen from the following game.

Yusupov-Ljubojević
Tilburg 1987
Queen’s Gambit

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<td>d5</td>
<td>c3</td>
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A position well known to theory. Ljubojević chooses a continuation that has been studied less than the customary 6...c5.

6  ... b6

A natural move which facilitates development and conforms to the idea of fighting for the centre. The character of the coming struggle will largely depend on the decision White takes now.

What are the candidate moves? They are 7 cd, 7 a2 and 7 e1.

7  e1

I didn’t want to take on d5 as long as Black could recapture with his knight. When you hold the initiative, it is best to avoid simplification – every exchange has to have a particular reason, it has to bring some positional or tactical dividends. But now, after 7...b7 8 cd, the recapture with the knight is dubious since the pawn on e7 would fall. This linking of 7 e1 to the potential 8 cd is the first 'mini-operation' undertaken in this game by White.

7  ... c5 (7)

The tension in the pawn position which now results is characteristic of many modern openings. In such situations you have to come to a decision as to what pawn structure you are aiming for.

8  dc!

Of course this move is no great revelation to chess theory, even though Informator designates it as a novelty (the usual move is 8 cd). The result of the capture on c5 is that Black soon has hanging pawns on c5 and d5.

8  ... bc

If Black recaptures with his bishop, he will be left with an isolated pawn. White would have no objection to that position either. (The move ...b7-b6 would then lose much of its point.)

9  e2  b7
10  0-0 b4d7

Basically we can say that the opening is over. According to some ancient handbooks, it is here that the players should set about devising their plans. In actual fact I had made my choice much earlier, determining the course of the game with 7 e1. It is clear that the struggle is going to revolve round attacking and defending the hanging pawns.

11  cd  ed

It was certainly worth considering 11...xd5?, leaving White with only a small plus.

Now how can White increase the pressure on his opponent’s pawn centre? First, it would not be a bad
idea to attack the d-pawn by means of a short concrete operation: $\text{Qe}5$ and $\text{f}3$.

12 $\text{Qe}5$

In this case White does not avoid a possible exchange, since his move has a specific idea behind it.

For one thing the knight has vacated $\text{f}3$, from where the bishop will bear down on the black d-pawn. Secondly, in the event of 12...$\text{Qxe}5$ 13 $\text{Qxe}5$, White's other bishop will be aiming at the knight on $\text{f}6$—by which the d-pawn is guarded. This will in a sense be a gain of tempo. Black will have to withdraw his knight to $\text{d}7$ and then perhaps even bring it to $\text{b}6$, leaving the initiative in White's hands.

12 ... $\text{Qb}6$

What would you play for White now? 13 $\text{Cc}2$, and then 14 $\text{Qd}2$ perhaps?

Well, that is quite a good manoeuvre. But what I actually meant was: "What would you do as a specific reaction to Black's last move? Remember a standard precept in this kind of position: by pushing the a-pawn, you underline the insecure position of the knight on $\text{b}6$.

13 a4!

Black is now faced with a complex dilemma: on the one hand he doesn't want his knight to be driven away, but on the other hand after 14...$\text{a}7$-$\text{a}5$ White would obtain the b5 square. What should Black do?

Would 13...$\text{d}4$ be your suggestion? Let us see: 14 $\text{cd}$ $\text{cd}$ 15 $\text{Qb}5$ $\text{Qd}5$ 16 $\text{Qg}3$, and the pawn on $\text{d}4$ is hard to defend. But the idea in itself is interesting. With this kind of pawn structure White always has to be alert to a possible break with $\ldots\text{d}5$-$\text{d}4$. On occasion this may prove quite troublesome.

13 ... $\text{a}5$

White's first major achievement. At this point he could immediately invade $\text{b}5$ with his knight, trying to utilise the bishop-and-knight configuration ($\text{Qb}5$, $\text{Qf}4$) to operate against $\text{d}6$ and $\text{c}7$. But after considering it, I decided I would not yet deviate from my original plan but would exert more pressure on the $\text{d}5$ pawn.

14 $\text{Qf}3$ $\text{He}8$

If instead 14...$\text{Qc}8$, I probably would have considered the manoeuvre 15 $\text{Cc}2$ and 16 $\text{Qd}2$, to increase the pressure against $\text{d}5$. But after the move Black actually played, I could no longer resist utilising the $\text{b}5$ square.

15 $\text{Qb}5$!

The play becomes tactical. White has created the unpleasant threat of 16 $\text{Qxf}7$ and 17 $\text{Qc}7$, and to avert this Black has to put his rook in rather an awkward position.

At the same time, 15 $\text{Qb}5$ is a prophylactic move as well as an attacking one. Black was intending 15...$\text{Qd}6$, driving my pieces from the centre.

15 ... $\text{Ha}6$ (8)

On 15...$\text{Qc}8$, White has 16 $\text{Qa}7$!, with the clear idea of exploiting the weakness of $\text{c}6$. This, by the way, is quite a typical operation when a knight is on $\text{e}5$.

![Diagram](image)

Have a think what you would play here. Is it worth going into action at once, or would you rather wait and improve your position first, depriving the opponent of counterplay? This is one of the most complicated problems when realising a positional advantage.

In this game I failed to solve it properly. I hastened to start concrete operations which proved futile. Instead, White had the fine move 16 $\text{b}3$! at his disposal, solidly fixing his opponent’s pawn structure and making it possible to increase the pressure without hindrance.

16 $\text{Qd}3$?

White’s choice was based on a miscalculation in one of the variations. It is quite obvious that Black will reply by pushing his c-pawn, which is just what 16 $\text{b}3$! would have prevented.

16 ... $\text{c}4$

17 $\text{Qc}7$

After 17 $\text{Qc}7$ $\text{cd}$ 18 $\text{Qxa}6$ $\text{xa}6$

19 $\text{Qc}7$ $\text{Qd}7$ 20 $\text{Qxb}6$ $\text{Qb}4$! Black would obtain good compensation for the exchange.

17 ... $\text{Qd}7$!

Unexpectedly, White’s pieces—his knight on $\text{b}5$ and bishop on $\text{c}7$—turn out to be precariously placed. For instance, 18 $\text{Qf}4$ is met by the tactical stroke 18...$\text{Qxa}4$!

18 $\text{Qe}5$ $\text{Wc}8$

19 $\text{b}3$?!

An equal game would result from 19 $\text{Qxb}6$ $\text{Qxb}6$ 20 $\text{Qc}4$.

19 ... $\text{Qa}8$!

20 $\text{bc}$ $\text{Qc}7$

Instead 20...$\text{d}4$?! is dubious on account of 21 $\text{Qd}5$! $\text{Qf}8$ 22 $\text{Qd}3$.

21 $\text{cd}$ $\text{Qd}6$?

22 $\text{Qc}4$!

Black would have an obvious advantage after 22 $\text{Qc}6$ $\text{Qd}7$! (intending 23...$\text{Qxd}5$) 23 $\text{e}4$ $\text{Qe}4$ 24 $\text{Qxe}4$ $\text{Qxe}4$ 25 $\text{Qb}8$ $\text{Wc}7$ 26 $\text{Qxa}6$ $\text{Qxa}6$.

After 22 $\text{Qc}4$, Black has various possibilities. One is to try simplifying the position with the counter-sacrifice of a piece: 22...$\text{Qxa}2$ 23 $\text{Qb}2$ $\text{Qxd}5$. However, after 24 $\text{Qg}1$, intending 25 $\text{Qd}6$ or 25 $\text{Qd}4$, the advantage is with White. Perhaps Black’s best move is 22...$\text{Qb}4$, placing his bishop on a protected square. White could reply 23 $\text{d}6$? or 23 $\text{e}4$? (23...$\text{Qxe}4$ 24 $\text{d}6$, with the threat of 25 $\text{d}7$).

In the game, Ljubojević made a tactical mistake which led to defeat.

22 ... $\text{Qc}5$?
place we see that the struggle in the centre led to the formation of a specific pawn structure (hanging pawns) which significantly influenced the further plans of both players. Such pawn structures constitute an individual topic that calls for serious study. This aspect of chess possesses its own rules and its own exceptions to them; it includes some features that are common to all structures of a given type and others that are characteristic only of certain specific positions; and it embraces some standard plans of campaign, one of which White attempted to follow in the above game.

Here is the second thing which it is, I think, important to bring to your attention. When White exchanged his central pawns, it looked as if he was abandoning the centre in the very opening. In return, however, he organised powerful pressure with his pieces against his opponent’s central pawns and made them into a real weakness. The game thus compels us to think about the problem of the transformation of a pawn centre. The pawn centre may be replaced by a piece centre, or on occasion it simply makes sense to abandon it. In general, a pawn centre is a good thing not in itself but in its usefulness for concrete ends — such as driving the enemy pieces back (remember we looked closely at Black’s ...d5–d4), or holding up his development; or securing convenient posts for your own pieces under cover of the pawns. If the centre does not fulfil these functions (as it did not in the game we have been examining), it can easily become vulnerable and turn into an object of attack.

Of course, the problems of the pawn centre are by no means exhausted by what has just been said. For example, a very important problem is that of the tension between pawns (between c4 and d5, d4 and c5, etc.). A whole range of questions arises here. When should the tension be maintained, and when not? What are the means for maintaining these dynamic tensions? What is the right moment to convert them into more static structures? Some of these questions are also in a measure answered by the above game.

The next example will certainly delight adherents of the Dutch Defence. It is a game I played against Grandmaster Beliavsky, in which the plans of both sides were dictated by the complex pawn structure that is so characteristic of this opening.

Beliavsky-Yusupov
USSR Championship (Top League), Minsk 1987
Dutch Defence

1. \(d4\) f5
2. c4 \(e6\)
3. g3 \(g6\)
4. \(e2\) d5

Black heads for a ‘Stonewall’ formation. His goal is clear — to establish as much control as possible over the e4 square; indeed, any firmer control is hard to imagine. The price of this achievement, however, is a major weakening of the entire dark-square complex. The e5 square is already deprived of pawn protection, and the outcome of the game largely depends on how Black can resist his opponent’s plans to occupy this square.

5. \(d3\) c6
6. 0-0 \(a6\)

At one time the Stonewall was usually played with the bishop on e7. To me it seems that d6 is a more logical place for it. Seeing that the dark squares have been weakened, Black wants to guard them with his pieces as far as possible.

Why did players shy away from 6... \(d6\) in the past? They thought that after 7 \(e4\) and a bishop exchange, White would strengthen his grip on e5 and acquire a noticeable plus. But it turned out that even then Black can put up plenty of fight. In answer to 7 \(e4\) I recommend exchanging bishops at once, slightly weakening the opponent’s kingside. Otherwise White will play \(e2\)-\(e3\), after which an exchange on \(f4\) is extremely dangerous for Black — the reply is \(e3xf4\), and White works up pressure in the e-file. It is useful to bear this stratagem in mind.

7. \(b3\)

Obviously pointing to the possibility of exchanging the dark-squared bishops from a3 — quite a favourable operation for White.
7 ... \( \text{We7} \)

I don’t mind the bishop exchange as long as White has to insert a2-a4. Why? Because in that case the disparity in value between the two moves preceding the exchange would make itself felt; the developing move of the queen would be more useful than the advance of the rook’s pawn. While White was taking time to move his knight from a3 to a more active post, Black would succeed in preparing ...e6-e5.

8 \( \text{Ah2} \) 0-0

A natural developing move, but it is not to my own liking. A much better set-up is the one introduced by Tigran Petrosian: White develops the knight on d2 and subsequently aims to control e5 with both knights (\( \text{Qf3-e5-d3} \) and \( \text{Qd2-f2} \)).

Incidentally, in the Dutch Defence White should be cautious about occupying e5. If an exchange of pieces results in a pawn arriving there, Black will no longer have a weakness on this square, and as a rule he will be rid of his opening difficulties.

I now have to solve the problem of developing my queenside. In particular, this means ‘relocating’ the light-squared bishop — which tends to be the chief cause of Black’s headaches in the Dutch. Two radically different plans are feasible. The first is to fianchetto the bishop, hoping to carry out an eventual ...e6-e5. But with his knight on c3, White is well prepared for that. I therefore selected the other plan of transferring the bishop from this square too it will participate in the fight.

9 ... \( \text{Qd7}?! \)

10 \( \text{Qe5} \) \( \text{Qe8} \)

11 \( \text{Qd3} \)

Not having very much experience of the Dutch, Beliavsky fails to find an effective plan. The time lost in transferring the knight from f3 to d3 could certainly have been used to better purpose. Instead of the move played, White should have bolstered his central position with 11 e3 and perhaps even followed with f2-f4.

11 ... \( \text{Qbd7} \)

12 e3 (10)

Not a very effective decision. White seems to be playing without a definite plan. He should have faced the fact that he has no advantage, and played 12 f4?!, guaranteeing an equal game.

What can be said about the position we have now reached? Black is very strongly established in the centre: his pawn structure is solid. He is therefore already quite entitled to think about active operations.

12 ... g5! 

If you don’t have the central position under control, it is better to avoid this kind of undertaking; otherwise you risk suffering a counter-blow in the centre and coming away empty-handed. But there is no danger of this in the present case, since Black firmly controls the entire complex of central squares. The fact that the kingside is now the object of his attention is easy to explain — nearly all his pieces are pointing in that direction. So Black’s plan arises naturally out of his pawn structure and the arrangement of his pieces. I believe that my position is already slightly superior.

Beliavsky’s assessment of the position was evidently similar, or he would not have started looking for simplification.

13 a4

White returns to the idea of exchanging the dark-squared bishops; by this means he hopes somehow to extinguish his opponent’s initiative.

13 ... \( \text{Qg6} \)

It was also worth considering 13 ...Qh5 14 \( \text{Wc1} \) \( \text{Qe4} \), with somewhat better chances. The move played has the aim of hindering White’s obvious plan — \( \text{Wc1} \) and \( \text{Qa3} \). For of course 14 \( \text{Wc1} \) would now be met by 14 ...f4.

14 f4

White insists on carrying out his plan.

14 ... \( \text{Qh5} \)

There is no longer anything for the bishop to do on g6.

15 \( \text{Wc1} \)

White should evidently have decided on 15 \( \text{Qf3}?! \). This may look a little strange, but then White already has to think about defending. In addition, it is quite possible that the bishop on g2 will soon prove inferior to its opposite number on h5; after all, it is only directed against the solidly defended pawn on d5.

15 ... \( \text{Qe4} \)

16 \( \text{fg} \) (11)

Played in the hope of establishing his knight on f4 (after the natural 16 ...Wxg5); but ...

16 ... \( \text{Qxc3}! \)

17 \( \text{Wxc3} \) \( \text{Qe2} \)

On f4 the knight could indeed be a bulwark of the defence, so I willingly give up my bishop for it.

18 \( \text{Qe1} \) \( \text{Qxd3} \)

19 \( \text{Qxd3} \) \( \text{Wxg5} \)

Black has acquired a noticeable plus, which resides above all in the structure of his position. He is
threatening a highly unpleasant advance of his h-pawn to attack the pawn-chain h2-g3 and thus create palpable weaknesses in the White camp.

To counter that plan, Beliavsky carried out the following exchanging operation:

20 \textit{xa3} \textit{xa3}
21 \textit{xa3} \textit{xf6}
22 \textit{xf1} h5!
23 \textit{xf4} \textit{xf4}
24 gf

Despite the simplification, the ensuing endgame is difficult for White. I was the first to seize the g-file, and in addition the white bishop proved weaker than my knight. This is quite a standard ‘Stonewall’ situation: the bishop comes up against a barrier of black pawns while there is nothing to stop the nimble knight from creating concrete threats.

Black subsequently managed to win in instructive fashion by going into a rook ending. In the process, a further structural advantage took shape: as a result of the exchange of minor pieces on e4, a black pawn appeared on that square, considerably cramping the enemy.

Among the instructive aspects of this game, I would point to Black’s treatment of the centre. He accorded it his constant attention, and strove to cover the crucial e5 square with his pieces. Only after achieving a solid position in the centre did he venture on active kingside operations.

I shall now demonstrate two more games from the same event, the 54th USSR Championship in Minsk. The first, against Grandmaster Tsekhovsky, is interesting for the way in which White makes use of his pawn centre. Strictly speaking this is a middlegame operation, but studying the opening in isolation from the middlegame is scarcely appropriate. The standard pawn structure arising from the opening plays a large part in determining the further course of the game. The modern approach to the opening consists precisely in studying such typical structures, in probing deeply into their characteristic laws and the methods of combat which they demand.

Yusupov-Tsekhovsky

**USSR Championship (Top League), Minsk 1987**

**Grüenfeld Defence**

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<th>Move</th>
<th>Notation</th>
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<td>d4</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>c4</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>\textit{dxc3}</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>e4</td>
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A fashionable Grüenfeld variation. White has the pawn centre; Black tries to attack it with his pieces and undermine it.

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<td>\textit{xe3}</td>
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The plan my opponent now chose was not the most thematic:

10 ... \textit{xa5}

The usual line is 10...\textit{g4}. Instead, by taking the pressure off the d-pawn, Black is surely leaving me more scope to manoeuvre.

11 \textit{d3} b6
12 \textit{xc1} \textit{w7}

The immediate capture on d4 was worth examining, since the possibility of d4-d5 is one of Black’s problems in such positions. In many cases the advance of the d-pawn is beneficial to White in spite of Black’s usual counterplay based on ...c5-c4 and the break with ...e7-e6.

I decided that for the moment I would simply strengthen my position.

13 \textit{wd2} \textit{xb7}

In a strict sense, the opening is over – both sides have developed their pieces. However, for a better understanding of this kind of position, it is useful to observe how White utilises his central advantage to work up an initiative.

14 \textit{h6}

An advantage of possessing the centre is that the play may more easily be transferred to the flanks. White considers that under cover of his powerful centre he is already entitled to go into action against the enemy king. The exchange of dark-squared bishops is part of his strategic plan, since the bishop on g7 is a very active piece and also, properly speaking, the king’s sole defender.

14 ... \textit{aad8}
15 h4?! A theoretical novelty. It was also worth considering 15 d5. After the moves 15...c4 16 \textit{xe4} e6 17 \textit{xe7} \textit{g7}, White plays 18 f4, while if 18...\textit{e5}, then 19 \textit{e5} with an attack. In the game, I managed to carry out this same idea in an even more advantageous form.

15 ... \textit{wd6}?! A move lacking in concrete aims. He could have attacked the centre more effectively with 15...\textit{c6}, and if 16 d5 then 16...\textit{e5}, trying to utilise the central squares to hamper the co-ordination of White’s pieces.

16 d5

The start of a highly instructive operation, by which White strengthens his central position still further. Black’s reply is forced, since 16...\textit{e6} fails to 17 c4.

16 ... \textit{c4}
17 \textit{xc2} e6?!

If Black had anticipated what now follows, he would have preferred 17...\textit{e5}. But assessing the position wrongly, Tsekhovsky advanced his pawn only one square.

18 \textit{xe7} \textit{g7} (12)

At this point White finally consummates his plan, which involves a positional pawn sacrifice.

19 f4!

White’s idea is easy to understand: after 19...ed 20 \textit{e5}!, he will occupy the excellent central square d4 with his knight and follow with f4-f5 etc. In other words the pawn centre...
will be replaced by a pawn-and-piece centre, under cover of which White will conduct a forceful attack on the king.

Tseshkovsky is an experienced player, and of course he perfectly sized up the danger of taking the white d-pawn. He set his hopes on undermining the centre with:

20...f5

But here too, the defects of Black's position are so to speak visible to the naked eye: his king is exposed, the knight on d5 is shut out of play, White has more pawns in the centre - these are all very significant factors. Not surprisingly, White finds a clear-cut solution.

20...Dd4!

The knight will help the pawns to advance further.

21...f6

Of course not 21...Dxe6+?? because of 21...Wxe6. Accomplishing his pawn breakthrough in the centre, White has created a mighty passed pawn on e6 which gives his opponent no end of trouble.

21...Dd6 

A much weaker move would be 22...Dxe4?! on account of 22...Dxd4 23 Wxd4+ Dxd4+ 24 cd Dxe4 25 e7 Dxd4 26 cd Wd+ Df8, and Black has enough compensation for the exchange.

22...Dxd4

23 cd

The queens must be kept on. At this point 23...Dxd4+? would lose by force to 24 Wxd4+ Dxd4 25 e7 De8 26 f5+ Dh7 27 Df4. It is easy to see that capturing on f5 is also hopeless, for example 23...Dxf5? 24 Dxf5 gf 25 Wg5+.

23...Df7 (13)

The triumph of White's central strategy! In effect he has three connected passed pawns, the one on e6 being especially dangerous. What can Black offer in the way of resistance? If 24...gf, White simply goes into the ending with 25 Wg5+, after which the e-pawn is simply not to be stopped. On the other hand if

24...Dd5, White achieves his aim with 25 fg hg 26 Dxf8 Wxf8 27 Wf1 Df5 28 Dxf5!, and again the pawn on e6 advances to queen. So Black has little choice.

24...He8

25 He5 gf

26 Wf4!

The e-pawn is now defended indirectly (26...Wxe6 27 Wc7+). White intends 27 Dxc4 with the terrible threat of Dc7.

26...Dd5

26...Wf8 would not save him either, in view of 27 Dxc4 Wxe6 28 Dc7+ Dh7 29 Dxb3 Dd5 30 Dxd5 Dxd5 31 Wg5+, and White wins with a direct attack.

27 We5+ Df6

White wins after 27...Wg8 28 Dc3 or 27...Wf6 28 e7.

28 Dc3 f4

29 h5+ 1-0

The result was to be expected - the game had not gone Black's way. First he missed the right moment to join combat in the centre, then he dithered a little more - and White overcame him with vigorous attacking play. What else can be said? Observe how White combined the threat of a central breakthrough with threats against the king. This too is one of the advantages of a strong centre - under cover from it, you can start an attack on the king at any moment!

In the following game, a popular variation of the Benoni was played.

Yusupov-Dolmatov

USSR Championship (Top League), Minsk 1987

Modern Benoni

1 d4 Df6

2 c4 e6

3 Dc3 c5

4 d5 ed

5 cd b6

6 Dc3 g6

7 Df4 a6

8 e4 b5

In textbook terms, this kind of flank attack by Black ought to be refuted by White's action in the centre - and in general such pawn moves are supposed to be incorrect, premature, and so forth. In the Benoni, however, the pawn advance to b5 has a serious purpose, which lies not so much in direct queenside play as in the fight against the opponent's centre! As a rule Black proceeds to drive the knight away from the strong square c3, and in many cases - if he achieves ...c5-c4 - his own knight will head for c5 to threaten the white e-pawn. To outflank White's centre with a view to organising pressure against it - this, we may say, is the fundamental idea of the Modern Benoni.

White should of course keep to the usual rules, in other words prepare a break in the centre. This is the aim of his next move.

9 Wc2 Dg5

Already Black has to defend against e4-e5.
What is White to do, then? There is no way of finishing his development quickly. He has to use a little cunning.

15 \textit{Qd2}!

Another move that seems to go against the rules, but in actual fact it serves the purposes of development by preparing g2-g3. In this way White solves several problems at once. He shuts the knight on h5 out of play; the bishop on g2 will support the centre; and in due course the knight will go from d2 to e4.

Black stands considerably worse. He should now have continued his development with 15...\textit{Qd7}. It is true that even then, after 16 g3 \textit{Qe5} 17 \textit{Qe2}! (it is important to control d3), I would have had a tangible plus. For instance if 17...\textit{Qg4}, White would simply exchange on g4, after which either f2-f3 or \textit{Qe3} could be played.

Instead, Dolmatov tries to solve the problem of the queenside and the c4 square at one stroke, but the move he plays is probably already the decisive error.

15 ... \textit{Qd7}? (14)

How should I proceed now? I could of course carry on with my original plan of 16 g3, but Black replies 16...\textit{Qb5}, after which White's chief trump -- the square c4 -- will fall; if the bishops are exchanged, a black pawn appears on b5.

There is, however, another way. Realising what the opponent intends, White can try to stop him. For such a possibility exists.

16 \textit{a4}!

The bishop cannot now reach b5. It becomes clear that with 15...\textit{Qd7} Black was merely depriving his queen's knight of its rightful square. It is hard to see how he will now complete his development.

Dolmatov found nothing better than:

16 ... \textit{Qd8}

But naturally, this led to no good.

17 g3 \textit{Qg4}

18 \textit{Qe3} \textit{Qf3}

At this point White could simply have played 19 \textit{Qxf3} \textit{Wxf3} 20 \textit{Qg2} \textit{Wf6} 21 \textit{Qd4} with a clear plus. But by now he is out for more, and acts more vigorously, bearing in mind that with a lead in development (even though it is none too obvious at present) you have to attack!

19 \textit{e5}!

Decisively opening up the game.

19 ... \textit{de}

20 \textit{Qxf3} \textit{Wxf3}

21 \textit{Qg2} \textit{Wf6}

22 \textit{d6} \textit{Qa7}

Black is still capable of resistance. For example, 23 \textit{Qd5} would be answered by 23...\textit{We6}! followed by 24...\textit{Qd7}, attacking the pawn on d6. Therefore White does not rush things.

23 0-0 \textit{Qg7}

Black loses quickly after the moves 23...\textit{Qd7} 24 \textit{Qd5}?! \textit{Wf7} 25 \textit{Wd3} with 26 \textit{Qe7} coming, the rook on a7 proves to be totally misplaced and material losses are inevitable.

It is now essential for me to bring my heavy pieces into the game; otherwise the enemy fortifications cannot be breached. How to arrange the rooks is always a difficult question. In this case White appears to find the right answer.

24 \textit{Qc1}! \textit{Wd7}

25 \textit{Qf1} \textit{Qf5}

If 25...\textit{Qe6}, then after 26 \textit{Qd5} \textit{Wg5} 27 \textit{Qxg5} \textit{Qxg5} the white knight once again penetrates to e7.

26 \textit{Qxf5} \textit{Wxf5}

27 \textit{Qe3}!

This is why the rook went to c1! Black has no adequate defence against an exchange sacrifice on e5. The point is that he has not managed to finish his development and connect his rooks.

27 ... \textit{e4}

28 \textit{Qxe4} \textit{Wxe5}

29 \textit{Qd5} \textit{Wf6}

29...\textit{Qxb2} 30 \textit{Qdxc5}.

30 \textit{Qxc5} \textit{Qxc5}

31 \textit{Qxc5} 1-0

In both these last two games (against Tsekhovsky and Dolmatov), my opponents -- essentially --
never succeeded in emerging from the opening. For that reason it was useful to examine the games in full. Black seemed to make no obvious mistakes, and yet these examples proved that one or two inaccurate decisions — misjudgment of the position, neglect of the pawn structure, failure to fight for the centre in good time, inexactitude in defence — are sometimes enough to bring about a quick defeat.

2 Logic in the Opening

Mark Dvoretzky

How does opening theory develop? What is it that helps a chessplayer to find the right answer to an opening problem which faces him, either over-the-board or in home analysis? Undoubtedly he needs the ability to improvise, to spot combinations, to calculate variations accurately. Yet there is another component that is nearly always present in our opening investigations and plays quite a prominent role. That component is logic!

I wish to bring to your attention some examples of the logical solution of opening problems.

Clearly, logic does not function in a vacuum. It operates on our specific knowledge of chess openings and also on the typical precepts and judgements which we have acquired; it helps us to relate these factors to a particular chess position and hence to work out the correct decision. The more ideas we possess, the greater will be the scope for logic; and the deeper and more accurate our reasoning will become.

Let me remind you of a standard stratagem in the Sicilian Defence; it arises in positions of the Scheveningen type.

![Chessboard Image]

Dolmatov-Dvoretzky
USSR Championship (Top League)
Minsk 1979

Obviously White’s last move was 13 g4. How should Black continue? According to a general principle of strategy, it is desirable to meet a flank attack with a counter-stroke in the centre. Black played: 13...d5! and thereby obtained an excellent position.

Consider the situation which may have preceded the diagram. Let us put the black e-pawn back on e6. If Black now plays ...d6-d5, White replies e4-e5 and acquires a strong point for his knight on d4. It is therefore usual for Black to play ...e6-e5 first, fixing the White pawn on e4, and only then to strike with
...d6–d5. Any Scheveningen or Najdorf player must be thoroughly familiar with the strategem of ...e6–e5! followed by ...d6–d5.

In the following examples, we shall see how this same strategem affects decisions taken by both White and Black.

**Dolmatov-Lerner**

_USSR Championship (Top League)_

_Minsk 1979_

[Diagram]

What should White play? He obviously aims to complete his development with ²d2, ³ae1 and ²h1, thus achieving an active position. But these considerations are not enough to indicate the best move; White needs to apply the concept of 'prophylactic thinking' which we have frequently encountered.

Let us ask what Black wants here, what methods of play are available to him. The answer is clear by now: ...e6–e5 followed by ...d6–d5. Is that his only possibility? Hardly - White also, for example, has to reckon with 13...d5 14 e5 ³e4.

If Dolmatov had been thinking on these lines, he would surely have played the move he recommended himself in his notes to the game - 13 ³g3! Then if 13...d5 14 e5, the black knight can no longer invade on e4; while if 13...e5, White has the excellent reply 14 ³f5.

In the game, unfortunately, Dolmatov was careless. He didn't give attention to his opponent's threats, and played:

13 ²h1?

In itself, this move is quite useful in such positions, but here it is out of place and allows Black freedom of action.

13...

14 ³g3
d5!

Black has succeeded in striking in the centre and seizing the initiative.

**Smyslov-Hort**

_Petropolis IZ 1973_

_Sicilian Defence_

To be sure: g2–g4–g5. (He achieves nothing with 13 ³g3 ³e5 14 e5 de 15 fe ³fe4! 16 ³xe4 ³xe4.)

How will Black react to 13 g4 here? The value of 13...d5 14 e5 ³e4 is questionable, but 13...e5 is altogether bad in view of 14 ³f5 (with tempo) and then 15 g5 - Black has no time for the counter-stroke ...d6–d5.

However, Black can first attack the white e-pawn with 13...³e5!, proceeding only after 14 ²f2 with 14...d5 15 e5 ³fe4 or 14...e5 15 ³f5 d5.

Vassily Smyslov is an experienced and careful player, and will not allow this.

13 ²f2!

Now, with the e-pawn (and the e4 square) securely guarded, White is threatening g2–g4. How should Black counter this threat?

13...³e5 prevents the immediate g2–g4, but Black has to reckon with 14 b4 ³e7 15 g4. While achieves his aim, albeit at the cost of weakening his queenside.

What other resources does Black have? In 1979, I analysed this position with Platonov. He suggested the reply 13...³ae8, quite a clever move typical of Sicilian positions; it is now recommended in opening manuals. If 14 g4, then 14...e5! follows with great effect, since on 15 ³f5 Black has either 15...d5! (the bishop on e7 is defended) or 15...e6 16 g5 ³e5! (Abramov-Akopian, corr. 1981).

However, Platonov's move also has a major snag: the square e8 may be needed for the knight, White secures the better chances with 14 e5!.

Thinking on these lines, I arrived at a fairly original solution - 13...g6? Depriving the white knight of the f5 square, Black prepares 14...e5. If White plays 14 e5 himself, Black retreats to e8 either at once or after exchanging pawns. From e8 the knight will later go to g7. Opening the centre like this can hardly be good for White. Black seems to me to have a good position.

As you can see, logical analysis, taking some standard concepts as its starting-point, made it possible to probe deeper into the nature of the position and even to unearth some new ideas (which await confirmation in practice, of course).

Hort played superficially, and soon came under a strong attack.

13...

14 g4?

Black's knight will now be driven away from f6. Hort frees the d7 square for it, but the result is merely a loss of time. He should have resigned himself to retreating to e8.
The following quiet variation of the English Opening was at one time highly popular:

1. c4 e5
2. Qc3 d6
3. g3 Qf6
4. g2 Qd6
5. g2 0-0
6. 0-0 e4
7. Qe1

Until fairly recently it was thought that the sharper 7 Qg5 promised White nothing. But this view changed when World Champion Kasparov played the move in his match with Karpov at Seville (1987) and then in the 1988 USSR Championship against Ivanchuk.

21 ... Qf3!

Black is in a cramped position, so Smyslov avoids exchanging. At the same time he has a specific design: h2-h4, followed by bringing the knight to g4 via h2. High-class play!

22. Qe5 Wc7
23. Qg4 Qd7
24. Qd4

Threatening 25 Qh6+.

If 25...de, then 26 Qe3 with a clear plus.

On 29...Qxh7, White has the decisional 30 g6+.

30. Qxtf6+ Qe8
31. Qb1 Qe7
32. Qb8+ 1-0

An excellent win by Vassily Smyslov. Its foundation was laid in the opening, when Black didn't manage to counter White's flank attack (g2-g4) with the standard counter-blow in the centre.

In the examples we have seen so far, it was possible to come to the right decision merely by skilfully applying a well-known opening stratagem. But often you have to take into account some much more delicate and less obvious details of a position. New games played with the relevant system contribute their arguments to the unceasing theoretical debate, and it is hard to do without studying them.

Black's last move, though not obligatory (theory recommends the cautious 11...b6), is quite popular. It was this move that Korchnoi selected in his 6th World Championship game against Karpov (Baguio, 1978). Karpov obtained nothing from the opening, and the game continued: 12 a4 Wc7 13 Qxd5 Qxd5 14 cd Qb8 15 Qe3 Qf5 16 h3 Qd7 17 c4 b6 18 Wc3 Qc5 19 b3 Wd7 20 Whh2 Qe7 21 Qd4 Qf6 22 Qac1 Wc8 23 Wc3 1/2-1/2.

World Championship games, even colourless ones like that, always stimulate further developments in opening theory. Grandmaster Wolfgang Uhlmann worked out a promising plan for White and employed it with success. Let us first try to judge for ourselves what White should be aiming for here.

White has the two bishops. But at the moment there is no 'advantage of the bishop pair', since their mobility is restricted. To open the game, to give the bishops freedom — this is White's chief task. If an exchange of knights takes place on d5, White can afterwards advance c3-c4 and place his queen's bishop on the long diagonal. But what about the king's bishop? The black e-pawn which is impeding it will have to be removed with the aid of White's f-pawn.

Karpov didn't even try to solve the problem of his light-squared bishop. Uhlmann played much more energetically.
Uhlmann-Osmanagić
Dečin 1979
(from Diagram 19)

12 \( \text{xd}2 \) \( \text{we}7 \)
13 \( \text{f}4! \) \( \text{ef} \)

In such positions it is dangerous to refrain from taking on \( f3 \); White would play \( f4-f5 \), restricting the black queen's bishop, and prepare a pawn advance on the kingside. Uhlmann gives this variation: 13...\( \text{xd}7 \)
14 \( \text{xd}5 \) \( \text{xd}5 \) 15 \( \text{cd} \) \( \text{db}8 \), and now that the knight is far away from e5 White can continue with 16 \( \text{f}5! \). If 16...\( \text{f}6 \), White has the strong 17 \( \text{c}e3 \) with \( \text{f}4 \) to follow, while if Black plays 16...\( \text{c}3 \), the pawn is bound to fall after 17 \( \text{c}c1 \) and \( \text{f}3 \). White has a clear advantage.

14 \( \text{ef} \) \( \text{d}7 \)
15 \( \text{h}e1 \) \( \text{f}8 \)
16 \( \text{f}4 \) (20)

This is the formation that Uhlmann has been aiming for.

The bishop is now exerting strong pressure along the h1-a8 diagonal. The white knight will sooner or later go to d5, and after the exchange on that square the other bishop will come into the game. Then the white kingside pawns will advance. Meanwhile Black will have no counterplay at all. His knights are deprived of central outposts. White is playing to win without taking the slightest risk.

16 ... \( \text{hab}8 \)
17 \( \text{wd}3 \) \( \text{de}7 \)
18 \( h3 \)

In such cases Nimzowitsch said that White had a 'qualitative majority' on the kingside, meaning that the white pawns could march forward while the black ones could not.

18 ... \( \text{c}6 \)
19 \( \text{d}5 \)

Of course White refuses to exchange his light-squared bishop.

19 ... \( \text{e}xd5 \)
20 \( \text{cd} \) \( \text{xe}1 \)
21 \( \text{xe}1 \) \( \text{e}8 \)
22 \( \text{b}4! \)

A slight departure from the plan we have been discussing. White probes on the queenside for good measure, seeking to create chances for active play there. He aims to obtain a passed pawn after the exchange on b4, and to pressurise the backward pawn on c7.

22 ... \( \text{ab} \)
23 \( \text{cb} \) \( \text{b}5 \)

White cannot create a passed pawn now, but chronic weaknesses have arisen in the c-file.

24 \( \text{c}3 \) \( \text{d}7 \)
25 \( \text{d}4 \) \( \text{d}8 \)

26 \( \text{wc}3 \) \( \text{a}8 \)
27 \( a3 \) \( \text{c}8 \)
28 \( \text{f}2 \)

Black can do nothing while Uhlmann consistently strengthens his position.

28 ... \( \text{a}8 \)
29 \( \text{e}3 \) \( \text{c}8 \)
30 \( \text{f}3 \) \( \text{e}8 \)
31 \( \text{g}2 \) \( \text{a}8 \)
32 \( \text{we}1 \)

The battery along the e-file conforms to the textbook rule: queen behind rook.

32 ... \( \text{f}6 \)
33 \( \text{g}4 \) \( \text{h}7 \)
34 \( \text{h}2 \) \( \text{e}8 \)
35 \( \text{d}3 \) \( \text{f}6 \)
36 \( \text{d}6 \) \( \text{f}6 \)
37 \( g5 \) \( hg \)
38 \( fg \) \( \text{g}7 \)
39 \( \text{e}7 \) \( \text{f}8 \) (21)

At this point White could simply have pushed his h-pawn. After 40 \( h4 \), the reply 40...\( \text{dg}6 \) 41 \( \text{xd}7 \) \( \text{d}xh4+ \)
42 \( \text{g}3 \) \( \text{xf}3 \) 43 \( \text{xf}3 \) \( \text{f}8 \) is unsound on account of 44 \( g6 \). Therefore, Black would probably seek counterchances with 40...\( c6 \) or possibly 40...\( c5 \).

Uhlmann finds an excellent combination which exploits his advantage in the quickest way possible.

40 \( g6! \) \( \text{dxg}6! \)?
41 \( \text{xd}7 \) \( \text{d}4+ \)
42 \( \text{g}3 \) \( \text{xf}3 \)
43 \( \text{xf}3 \) \( \text{f}8 \)

Has White perhaps miscalculated? His rook is trapped.

44 \( h4!! \)

No, he has not. This modest-looking move is the point of the combination; the h-pawn is going to queen.

44 ... \( \text{e}8 \)
45 \( \text{xe}7 \) \( \text{xe}7 \)
46 \( h5 \) \( \text{a}8 \)

And Black resigned without waiting for the reply.

Now let us suppose you are thinking of playing this variation with Black. You already know about the Uhlmann game, and understand what a threat the white bishop pair can be. Naturally you have no intention of succumbing ignominiously like Osmanagić. So what should you do? Switch to a different variation? Well, if you take that attitude, you will not accumulate any openings at all – for some kind of problem will arise in all of them. No, let us think up something here – surely White doesn’t simply obtain the advantage by force.

Once you have clearly recognised the danger, you can feel your way
into the position, absorb its essential nature, and finally discover an idea that will help you in the fight.

Uhlmann-Popov
Berlin 1979
(from Diagram 19)

12 ²d2 ²e7
13 f4 ef
14 ef

It looks as if nothing can stop White from implementing his plan. It unfolds in a perfectly natural manner: ²ae1, f4, and at some point ²d5.

14 ... ²e5!
15 ²ae1 ²e5 (22)

I don't know if Popov discovered this idea over the board or at home. Anyway, his unconventional manoeuvre solves the defensive problem; the active position of the queen guarantees Black counterplay. He gains time—to prepare a knight move, White needs to withdraw his king to h1 and play b2-b3. But an even more important point is that the queen is actually controlling d5, so that it is not at all simple for White to get his knight there. If he plays f4, Black may be able to exchange knights with ...²g4, when ²d5 will fail to ...²f2+.

16 ²h1 ²d7
17 b3 ²e7
18 ²d3 ²ae8

To prepare ²d5, White has had to place his queen on d3, where it is exposed to ...²e5. Black has had time to double his rooks. 19 f4 can be met by either ...²g4 or ...²e4.

19 ²d5 ²xd5
20 cd ²e5
21 ²d4!

The only move. Not 21 ²c2? ²xd5 22 f4 ²d3.

21 ... ²xd4
22 cd ²d3
23 ²xe7 ²xe7

Now White has to play accurately; an invasion on e2 is threatened. For example if 24 ²xa5?, Black has 24 ...b6 25 ²d2 ²e2, with a very active game. How can this be prevented? White needs to meet ...²e2 with ²d1, but without falling for a check on f2.

24 ²g1!

If now 24 ...²e2?, White has 25 ²d1, and the threat of ²f1 is highly unpleasant, while the pawn on a5 is still en prise.

24 ... b6
25 ²d1 ²b4

Two pawns are attacked; White has to exchange.

26 ²xb4 ab

27 ²c1 ²c8

A roughly equal endgame has been reached.

28 f4 ²a6
29 ²f3 ²f8
30 ²f2 ²e8
31 a3 ba
32 ²a1 ²d8
33 ²xa3 ²b7
34 h4 f5
35 h5 ²e8
36 ²g2 ²e7
37 b4 ²e8
38 ²a7 ²c8
39 ²f3 ²e7
40 ²a1 ²d8

½-½

Now let us put ourselves in Uhlmann's shoes. 'I worked out such a good plan,' he thinks, 'and I don't want to give it up now. I'll have to find a way to improve it.'

When you are familiar with the ideas, it is easier to think up an innovation. In this case, the novelty arises from purely logical considerations.

White's position (after 11 moves) has a pleasing appearance, but he would like to stop the black queen from reaching c5. How? If White pushes his pawn to f4, the queen is deprived of e5. It follows that at move twelve, instead of 12 ²d2, White should consider 12 f4. He may be uneasy about playing this before completing his development and connecting his rooks. But it ought to be tried...

Uhlmann-Plachetka
Trenčianske Teplice 1979
(from Diagram 19)

12 f4 ef
13 ef ²e7
14 f4!

Now if White can just get in ²d2 and ²ae1, he reaches the very position he is aiming for. Of course he has to reckon with ...²e4, but then he always has ²d5 in reply.

I will take this opportunity to re-emphasize a point that we have come across more than once already. The most profound moves, the best positional decisions, are those which combine the implementation of our own plan with a prophylactic response to the opponent's intentions. The move-order that Uhlmann has chosen is strong for this very reason. Without relinquishing his own basic design, the Grandmaster simultaneously forestalls Black's queen manoeuvre to c5.

14 ... ²d7
15 ²d2

If now 15 ...²f8, the reply is 16 ²ae1, reaching the same position as in Uhlmann-Osmanagić, where White succeeded in gaining a clear plus (see Diagram 20).

15 ... ²d8

Black wants to bring his queen onto the g1-a7 diagonal all the same—via b8.

16 h3 ²b8

Now 17 ²ae1 is answered by 17 ...²a7 18 ²e2 ²c5. White has a
pair of extra tempi in comparison with Uhlmann-Popov, but Black nonetheless retains counter-chances.

17 \( \text{Qxd5!} \)  \( \text{Qxd5} \)
18 \( \text{c7} \)  \( \text{d7+} \)
19 \( \text{Wh2} \)  \( \text{Qe7} \) (23)

Otherwise 26 f5 is very strong. But now the black bishop is endangered.

26 \( \text{Wd2!} \)

Preparing to drive the black pieces back with b3, c4 etc.

26 ...  \( \text{Qh4} \)
27 ...  \( \text{b3} \)
28 ...  \( \text{Qh4} \)
29 ...  \( \text{Qg2} \)
30 ...  \( \text{Ke2} \)

The threat was 31 f5. But now, utilising the dark squares, Uhlmann assaults the enemy kingside (where the g7 point is hopelessly weak). As usual in such cases, the presence of opposite-colour bishops adds impetus to the attack.

31 ...  \( \text{Qd4} \)
32 ...  \( \text{c6} \)
33 ...  \( \text{We3!} \)
34 ...  \( \text{We7} \)
35 ...  \( \text{Qe8} \)
36 ...  \( \text{xf6} \) 1-0

After this game the entire variation was assessed as favourable to White, and Black abandoned it. But he didn’t have to! The fact is that a new improvement was there for the asking. Let us take another look at the position after 12 f4 ef 13 ef (24).

The Uhlmann-Popov game demonstrated a promising idea for Black – transferring his queen via e5 to the g1-a7 diagonal. In Uhlmann-

Plachetka, Black showed that the queen could go there by a different route, via b8. But at first, for some reason, he moved it in the opposite direction with 13 ...  \( \text{We7?} \). This was illogical! How about 13 ...  \( \text{Qd7} \), so as to meet 14 f4 (or 14 ... \( \text{Qd2} \)) with 14 ... \( \text{Wb8} \), followed by ... \( \text{b7} \) and ... \( \text{Qc5} \). Compared with the last game, Black saves two whole tempi. I see no advantage here for White.

Let us now suppose you have quickly looked through one or other of these games in Informator, with notes that concentrate on the middlegame. Perhaps you simply trusted the evaluation given in the book. If the game you happened to look at was Uhlmann-Popov, you would conclude that the variation gives White nothing, whereas if it was Uhlmann-Plachetka you would assess it in White’s favour. Taking the book verdict at face value, you would fail to acquire a true understanding of the position. Unfortunately that is just how a good many players do study the openings. This is why ‘novelties’ like 13 ...  \( \text{Qd7} \) (followed by 14 ... \( \text{Wb8} \)) often pass unnoticed – novelties which could be arrived at almost automatically by someone looking closely into the position and tracing the development of ideas in the particular variation.

And can you name the remarkable classical game in which the queen manoeuvre was first seen?

Janowski-Rubinstein
Karlsbad 1907

29 ...  \( \text{Wd8!} \)

Apparently intending 30 ... \( \text{Wg5} \).
30 ...  \( \text{Wg4} \)
31 ...  \( \text{Qg2} \)
32 ...  \( \text{f6} \)

and Black now has the option of queenside activity.

See how an idea from a completely different opening can sometimes come in useful! But what opening was this? The position contains ‘King’s Indian’ features, but at that time the King’s Indian was not yet in use. In fact the game opened with the Four Knights.
Enrich your chess 'culture', accumulate ideas – you will then be able to apply them in the most varied situations. We will now look at one more interesting illustration of this theme.

I once happened to play the following game in a team tournament.

Dvoretsky-A.Schmidt
Tbilisi 1979
Alekhine's Defence

1 e4  
2 d4  
3 e5  

Other playable replies are 3...d4 and 3...c6d7.

4...e2!

The black knight is in danger. Nimzovitsch called such pieces tempo-eaters. The knight has moved twice already and will have to move again. White presently gains one tempo attacking it with d2-d3, and may gain another afterwards with d3-d4.

In the 1972 Moscow Championship, Bao played 4...d4 against me. I am afraid that I overlooked the chance to win a pawn with 5 c3! (when 5...c6 or 5...d3 would fail to 6 Wa4+; Editor's note: after 5...d5?! 6 Wa4+?! d5 7 Wxe4? Black in fact has 7...c5 with at least a draw; better is 6 b5 with a large advantage). Admittedly, as was later shown, the reply 5...c6! promises Black distinct compensation.

4...f6  
5 d3  

Here is another curious little opening riddle. White has a way to secure a considerable plus. How?

Would 6 f4 be your suggestion? The knight retreats to f7, and from there attacks White's centre. An interesting idea is 6 Wf4 (threatening 7 Wh5+...fe 7 Ox d5. But Black replies 7...g6, and if 7 h4 then 7...g6.

The correct line is 6 Wf3! fg 7 f4! gh 8 Wf4 (again threatening 7 Wh5+...g6 9 Whh4 Wg7 10 d4 and 11 Wd2, with overwhelming pressure against Black's kingside. This occurred in a game Polovodin-Palatnik in the same year (1979), but unfortunately I played differently against Schmidt.

Two games with this variation, and in both of them I missed the strongest line. Such episodes should set a player thinking – they cannot be coincidences. The fact is that I have never personally had much taste for opening play. I was not endeavouring to gain the advantage but to reach my own type of position, to sidestep my opponent's opening preparation and then outplay him somehow or other. With this approach, you often do overlook the strongest lines in the opening; you are simply not used to looking for them. Kasparov's approach, for example, is fundamentally different. Ever since childhood he has sought to gain the maximum from an opening. He has a superb feel for where the initiative lies, and is eager to seize it. For him, of course, it would be quite simple to find the strongest continuations such as 5 c3 or 6 Wxg5. He is used to this; he is intent on searching for them. When a chessplayer lacks such a propensity, he neglects some important opportunities. So you see – a couple of examples from my own games, and already a diagnosis can be given. It is clear where there is scope for improving my play, at any rate in the opening.

In the present game, I played in my own style – I found a quiet scheme which in general terms is quite a sensible one.

6 Wf3  
7 ef  
8 d4 (27)

We have now reached a position that I would like to discuss with you.

Is there an opening that this position reminds you of? The Exchange Variation of the French, of course. The pawn structure is almost exactly the same. The difference is to be found in the pawn on f6 and the placing of the pieces. The white knight has somehow found its way to g3, and the black one to f7.

Let us try to decide which player benefits from these deviations from the Exchange French. For this purpose let us recall, for example, the game Winter-Alekhine, Nottingham 1936: 1 e4 e5 2 d4 d5 3 ed ed 4 Wd3 Wc6 5 Wc2 Wd6 6 c3 Wb4. What purpose is served by the queen sortie? The answer is, it prevents Wf4, an important move by which White wishes to exchange his passive bishop. For his own part, Black plans an analogous operation: ...Wd7 and ...f5.

Indeed, control of f4 and f5 is very important in such situations. To return to my game with Schmidt, we should note that White can play f4 d3, f5 e2 and f4, whereas ...f5 is out of the question for Black.

What else can be said? Black's kingside has been weakened. White can direct pressure against h7 with f4 d3, c3 and Wc2. Black will evidently have to reply with ...g7-g6. Then White will play h2-h4 and in due course h4-h5. Castling kingside will be dangerous for Black.
We may conclude that from White’s point of view, this is the Exchange French in an improved form. If events proceed calmly, his position is preferable. The further course of the game was to confirm this.

8 ... \( \text{Qe6} \)

White has a perfectly clear-cut plan of action: \( \text{d3, Qe2, f4, h4, 0-0-0} \). A whole string of moves can be played easily, without thinking. The opponent must both think and struggle.

9 ... \( \text{Qe6} \)

Black prepares to castle long, to escape a kingside attack.

10 \( \text{d3} \) \( \text{Wd7} \)

11 \( \text{Qe2} \)

Now Black has another problem. Do you remember the article ‘The Superfluous Piece’, which you saw at our last session (i.e. in Training for the Tournament Player)? Well, here is one case of too many pieces. Black needs the d6 square for both his knight and his bishop, but they aren’t allowed to occupy the same square at once. If the bishop goes to d6, the knight on f7 is left with nothing to do. If the knight goes there, how is the bishop to be developed?

11 ... \( \text{Qd6} \)

12 \( \text{Qe2} \) \( g6 \)

13 \( h4 \) 0-0-0

14 \( \text{Qf4} \) \( \text{Qb8} \)

15 0-0-0 \( \text{Qa5} \)

16 \( \text{Qb1} \) \( b6 (28) \)

White’s opening strategy has justified itself; he has a small but secure plus. He can gradually contrive his opponent by means of 17 \( \text{Qe1} \) (vacating f4 for a knight) followed by b2-b3, depriving the black knights of the c4 square, etc. (Unfortunately, in a hurry to seize the f5 point, I played 17 h5?! \( \text{g5} \) 18 \( \text{Qxd6} \) \( \text{Qxd6} \) 19 \( \text{Qf5} \), and achieved little.)

Let us go back to the position after White’s 8th move, when the Exchange Variation arose (see Diagram 27). Incidentally, at this point Schmidt had a serious think, but still failed to sense the strategic danger in store for him.

During the game I was worried about 8 ...e5!, transforming the pawn structure. After this, the game no longer resembles an Exchange French. What, then, does it resemble? More than anything else, the position with the isolated black pawn on d5 recalls the Tarrasch variation of the French Defence.

Which side benefits from the differences between this position and the normal Tarrasch? Anatoly Karpov, who in his time has won a large number of games with the latter variation, has written: ‘The main theme of White’s play is control of the d4 point. This theme must be constantly pursued.’ If White does not securely control this square, he cannot hope to achieve anything.

In the Tarrasch Variation the knights are usually placed on f3 and d2. Then, after the pawn exchange on c5, a knight goes to b3 with tempo, and from there it controls d4. In our analogous position a white knight has moved offside, and is not participating in the fight for the centre. This placing of this knight improves Black’s chances in comparison with the normal Tarrasch.

Black’s set-up with ...f6 and ...Qf7 is harder to evaluate. Doesn’t it weaken his own position? There is no obvious answer. We can deal with the question more easily if we know about one of the strategic ideas that Black sometimes employs in the Tarrasch Variation. It was demonstrated in the following game.

Gipsis-Korchnoi
Amsterdam 1976
French Defence

1 \( \text{e4} \) \( \text{e6} \)

2 \( \text{d4} \) \( \text{d5} \)

3 \( \text{Qd2} \) \( \text{c5} \)

4 \( \text{Qf3} \) \( \text{Qe6} \)

5 ed \( \text{ed} \)

6 \( \text{Qb5} \) \( \text{Qd6} \)

7 dc \( \text{dc} \)

8 0-0 \( \text{Qe7} \)

9 \( \text{Qb3} \) \( \text{Qd6} \)

10 \( \text{Qg5} \)

11 \( \text{Qe1} (29) \)

A standard opening position. Several moves have been tried here: ...\( \text{Wc7} \), ...\( \text{Qg4} \) and ...\( \text{e6} \). The plan Korchnoi adopts is also noteworthy.

11 ... \( f6! ? \)

12 \( \text{Qh4} \) \( \text{Wb6} \)

13 \( \text{Qc2} \) \( \text{c6} \)

14 \( \text{Qg3} \)

It pays White to exchange the dark-squared bishops. But Black has prepared a suitable answer to this try.

14 ... \( \text{Qe5} ! \)

The defence is grounded on the strongpoint at e5.

15 \( \text{Qfd4} \) \( \text{Qd7} \)

I would have preferred to retreat to f7, solidly fortifying the pawn on d5.

The game concluded: 16 a4 a6 17 a5 \( \text{Wc7} \) 18 c3 \( \text{Qad8} \) 19 \( \text{Qc1} \) \( \text{Qc8} \) 20 \( \text{Qd3} \) \( \text{Qg6} \) 21 \( \text{Qf4} \) \( \text{Qxf4} \) 22 \( \text{Qxf4} \) \( \text{Qxe8} \) 23 \( \text{Qg3} \) \( \text{Qc5} \) 24 \( \text{Qf1} \) \( \text{Wf7} \) 25 \( \text{Qa4} \) \( \text{Wg6} \) 26 \( \text{Qe3} \) \( \text{Qg4} \) 27 \( \text{Qd3} \) \( \text{Wf7} \) 28 \( \text{Qxe8+} \) \( \text{Qxe8} \) 29 \( \text{Wc2} \) \( \text{g6} \) 30 b4 \( \text{Qa7} \) 31 b5 \( \text{Qe5} \) 32 \( \text{Qf1} \) ab 33 \( \text{Qxb5} \) \( \text{Qc5} \) 34 \( \text{Qd1} \) \( \text{Qg4} \) 35 \( \text{Qa1} \) \( \text{Qa8} \) ½-½.
Now back to Alekhine's Defence. With our knowledge of the Korchnoi game, we can conclude that the knight on f7 and pawn on f6 are not so ineptly placed, and may be useful to Black's build-up. This only strengthens our impression that Black has a favourable version of the Tarrasch Variation.

A game of chess is not a composed study in which there is always just one solution. I have indicated one sound approach to the position, but a completely different logic is also feasible. When I invited Nana Aleksandria to think about the position (Diagram 27), she found a solution of her own which is just as valid - the interesting queen check 8...\(\text{f}8\)\(\text{c7+!}\).

How should White react? A queen exchange is not dangerous to Black. If 9 \(\text{e}e3\), then 9...\(\text{b}b4+\) is embarrassing. The move 9 \(\text{g}1\text{e}2\) holds up White's development. 9 \(\text{g}e2\) looks natural, but then Black has 9...\(\text{g}4\)!

An exchange on e4 would suit Black, while after 10 \(\text{f}3\) \(\text{d}d7\) (followed by 10...\(\text{b}6\) and 10...\(\text{c}5\)), the knight is deprived of the f3 square and it is hard for White to complete his development.

How do you arrive at a move like 8...\(\text{f}7+\) ? It may perhaps seem eccentric to make a queen move when nothing except one knight is developed. But you may hit on this check merely from a certain feeling of unease, from realising that if the game proceeds on natural lines the result will be in White's favour. Not wishing to allow that, you look for the most effective cure and sometimes find it.

But wholly original ideas in chess are seen extremely rarely. Everything has occurred before at some time or other - including such a queen check, which is much easier to find if you know the following game, or rather Bent Larsen's annotations to a position that arose in the opening.

Larsen-Portisch
Amsterdam II 1964
French Defence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>e4</th>
<th>e6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>d4</td>
<td>d5</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>c3</td>
<td>b4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>ed</td>
<td>ed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>f3?! (30)</td>
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</table>

I hand you over to Larsen:

'This set Portisch thinking! The exchange variation has had a reputation as a dull drawish line for many years; for instance, 5 \(\text{d}3\) \(\text{c}6\) 6 \(\text{d}2\) \(\text{g}e7\) followed by 6...\(\text{f}5\), and there are no problems for Black.

'The text move, which I had played in some blitz games against my friend Palle Ravn (Danish champion, 1957), is directed against the very manoeuvre ...\(\text{g}e7\) and ...\(\text{f}5\); after 5...\(\text{d}7\) 6 \(\text{d}3\) \(\text{b}6\) \(\text{c}6\) 7 \(\text{d}2\) White's position has become quite attractive.

'Because of this game 5 \(\text{f}3\) became almost popular for a short while, but it disappeared again because of the reply 5...\(\text{e}7+\)!, for instance 6 \(\text{d}2\) \(\text{c}6\) 7 \(\text{b}5\) \(\text{f}5\) with more than enough compensation for the pawn.

'During the game I thought of the possibility 5...\(\text{d}7+\) and toyed with the idea 6 \(\text{e}3\) \(\text{e}3\) 7 \(\text{b}3\) \(\text{c}6\) 8 \(\text{d}2\), which may look strange but is very good for White. However, a Yugoslav game Mestrovic-Marić, Kraljevo 1967, seems to prove that 6 \(\text{e}3\) is of dubious value because of 6...\(\text{d}6\) 7 \(\text{d}3\) \(\text{c}5\) !. After this I tend to believe that 5...\(\text{d}7+\) is Black's strongest move.

'Immediately after the game O'Kelly stated that the easiest solution for Black was 5...\(\text{e}6\), but I don't agree; after 6 \(\text{d}3\) \(\text{f}6\) White ought to play 7 \(\text{f}4\).

'Also 5...\(\text{c}5\) has been recommended, but 6 \(\text{c}4\) 7 a3 \(\text{a}5\) 8 \(\text{b}1\) looks very good for White.

'Portisch had enough to think about!'
3 Unexpected Moves in the Opening

Artur Yusupov

What chessplayer has not fallen into crafty opening traps? Who has not been caught out in some variation that seemed to have been discarded by theory long ago but is actually quite viable? Who has not fallen victim to his own prepared line, which, when tested, turns out to have a 'hole' in it? It has happened to all of us. Time and again we have come up against unexpected moves in the opening, and of course we are perfectly familiar with the highly unpleasant feeling which results.

The search for unexpected ideas (that is, new to the opponent!) is the fundamental source of developments in opening theory. And when you come to think of it, all our efforts in preparing for a game are directed precisely at finding something to puzzle, astonish and stump our opponent, something to force him off his normal course. Surprise him, and you will beat him! But then, our rivals are trying to do the same thing.

Of course, thorough opening preparation considerably reduces the probability that some opening move or variation will be a surprise to you. But it is impossible to prevent unpleasant shocks entirely, and you need to be mentally prepared for them.

One surprise is unlike another. By this I mean that a new move by the opponent may be objectively strong, or else it may be designed just for you, with your probable reaction in mind - for any surprise is first and foremost a blow to your nerves. A great deal depends on how quickly you recover and adjust your frame of mind to the full-blooded struggle. Mental disarray can lead to a quick collapse.

Incidentally, an encounter with the unexpected and unfamiliar is by no means always demoralising; it may, on the contrary, stimulate your imagination and compel your brain to work at full capacity. It quite often happens that the winner is not the player who catches his opponent in a prepared line, but the one who is caught! Relying wholly on the strength of his prepared analysis, a player may be incapable of extracting top performance from himself. In this case, anything unexpected in his opponent's play, even something completely trivial, may be fatal to him - he simply cannot re-adjust to a tough, genuine contest.

I wish to elucidate this topic with examples from my own games. I shall begin with a game in the World Cup against the Hungarian Grandmaster Sax. Of course, players prepare very hard for such important encounters. I aimed to catch Sax out in a variation of the Queen's Indian which I had analysed fairly thoroughly.

Yusupov-Sax
Rotterdam World Cup 1989
Queen's Indian Defence

1 d4
2 c4
3 Qf3
4 g3
5 b3
Apart from this, perhaps the most popular line, I have played 5 Qbd2 a few times.
6 Qd2
7 Qg2
What sense is there in Black's loss of tempo? The point is that after b2-b3, the natural square for White's bishop would have been b2. Later, perhaps, White will try to put his bishop on the long diagonal all the same, but on c3 it is less securely placed than on b2 and is also depriving the knight of its natural development square. On the other hand if White brings his knight out to c3, he will still have to remove his bishop from d2. So it turns out that Black's manoeuvre doesn't actually lose a tempo at all.

8 0-0
d5
9 Qe5

Exploiting the fact that a capture on c4 is unplayable for the moment (owing to the vulnerability of c6), White attempts to seize the centre. The knight on e5 is extremely troublesome for Black, and he has to exchange it.

9 ... Qfd7

Another move that seems to break the rules (Black moves the same piece twice in the opening), but in closed positions this is sometimes permissible. In this case the struggle for the centre is more important than the quickest possible development of the pieces. And seeing that the knight on b8 is literally shackled by the knight on e5, Black's move is in a sense a developing one.

10 Qxd7 Qxd7
11 Qe3

This is what I told you about - White has to spend a tempo bringing his bishop onto the long diagonal. Incidentally, taking on c4 is still very dangerous for Black, since after 11...dxc4 12 Qd5 cd 13 Qg7 White prevents him from casting and obtains a lasting initiative for the pawn.

11 0-0
12 Qd2 Qe8

At the time when the game was played, this move was almost considered obligatory, but present-day theorists are giving more and more thought to other lines. One of the
new and good continuations is 12...\(\text{a6}\). This was first played by Portisch against Karpov (Rotterdam 1989), and afterwards Karpov used the same idea himself in his match against me. The position is quite intricate, despite its seeming simplicity, but we will not go into details now — that is what reference books are for.

13 e4

Playing for the centre! You may recall that in the Kasparov-Karpov matches of 1984/5 and 1986, Black tried answering with 13...\(\text{b5}\), whereupon White played 14 \(\text{e1}\), but here Black employs a more popular plan.

13 ... c5

14 ed ed

15 dc

White is not able to win a pawn; 15 \(\text{xd5}\) is met by 15...\(\text{a6}\).

15 ... dc

The present position has arisen more or less by force from 13...\(\text{c5}\). If you are unfamiliar with it, fathoming its nuances over-the-board is not so simple. In principle, positions so critical for the opening variation ought to be studied in the most thorough fashion, and subjected to detailed analysis in home preparation.

16 c6

Here White has to reckon in the first place with 16...\(\text{ch}\), since capturing on \(\text{d7}\) is no good — the bishop on \(\text{c3}\) is en prise. A sharp tactical skirmish begins, which I thought was not unfavourable to White.

16 ... \(\text{ch}\)!

17 \(\text{e1}\) \(\text{b5}\) (31)

I dare say this is the most thematic. Sax attacks the pawn on \(\text{c6}\); as before, he is not afraid of \(\text{c6xd7}\). If White tries to sell his bishop more dearly with 18 \(\text{d5} \text{xg7}\) \(\text{xg7}\) 19 \(\text{de}\), Black simply plays 19...\(\text{xd7}\). He has the bishop pair, and it is not clear how to exploit the weakening of his position.

18 \(\text{xh3}\)!

At this moment, I suddenly ceased to be happy about the way things stood. Sax was too willingly going into the complications, which — according to all my pre-game assessments — ought to turn out in my favour. He couldn’t be so naive as to go in for this sort of play without having something specific in mind! It dawned on me that there might turn out to be a flaw in my calculations. Sax, I repeat, had replied too confidently and quickly.

In such a situation the main thing is not to lose your head, not to panic. You must try to correct the position more deeply and find out what exactly the opponent is thinking of. It is also psychologically important to brace yourself for something unexpected, some unpleasant surprise.

Grasping all this, I still didn’t see how I could refrain from capturing on \(\text{g7}\) as planned. But I admit I played the move without my former optimism.

19 \(\text{d5}\) \(\text{g7}\)

20 \(\text{d4!}\) (32)

Let us together try to figure out Sax’s defensive idea. Black doesn’t have a wide choice here. Thus, 20...\(\text{f6}\) is no good — White simply gains the advantage with 21 \(\text{d6}\) \(\text{c6}\) 22 \(\text{d}x\text{e6}\) \(\text{a1}\) 23 \(\text{d}x\text{a1}\). The main line that I had examined in my home analysis was, of course, 20...\(\text{xg2}\), to which White replies with 21 \(\text{d5}\) (other moves hardly deserve serious attention). There is no reason to fear 21...\(\text{f6}\), while after 21...\(\text{h8}\) 22 \(\text{d}x\text{e7}\) White’s attack gives the impression of being irresistible.

Indeed, how is Black to defend? 22...\(\text{d3}\) looks logical (23 \(\text{d7}\) \(\text{f6}\), but the king is on \(\text{h8}\), so why not play 23 \(\text{d4+}\) first? After 23...\(\text{f6}\) 24 \(\text{d7}\) \(\text{e8}\) 25 \(\text{d}x\text{h7}\) 26 \(\text{d}x\text{h8}\) and 27 \(\text{d}x\text{h3}\), Black’s position is not to be envied.

Then suddenly I saw 23...\(\text{d5}\)!. It turns out that this is what Sax was counting on! But nothing can be done about it; it is too late to back out.

19 ... \(\text{xg7}\)

20 ... \(\text{xg7}\)

21 \(\text{f5}\) \(\text{h8}\)

22 \(\text{d7}\) \(\text{h3}\)

23 \(\text{d4+}\) \(\text{d5}\) (33)

Capturing on \(\text{c5}\) with the queen looks unplayable, but White also has no wish to play an ending with equal material and the black bishop on \(\text{h3}\).

At this point I had to think very hard before I succeeded in unearthing the saving idea. I was somewhat helped by the feeling that I had not
made any obvious mistake. Certainly I had played sharply and plunged into complications, but my previous play scarcely deserved such stern punishment as the inferior ending arising after 24 ♕xe5 ♖xd4 25 ♗xd4.

24 ♕xe5+! f6
25 ♘e2!

When you discover such an idea you feel a sense of relief, you realise that you have not been playing all that badly. The move played is more precise than 25 ♘e1, when Black would have 25...♕c7! (whereas now this can be met with 26 ♗d1). In addition, 25 ♘e2 sets up the threat of 26 ♖xh7+.

25 ... ♖xf5
26 ♗d1

The black queen is unexpectedly trapped. All the same, I had not caught Sax unwares. He had seen in advance the only defence by which Black—in turn—can save himself.

26 ... ♕g4!
26 ... ♕g4

White has various ways of drawing. For instance, he can play the pretty 27 ♖xh7+ ♕xh7 28 ♖xg4 ♖e8 29 ♗d7+ ♕f7 30 ♕xh7+ ♕xf7 31 ♖xg8 ♘xa2, and the queen ending is probably drawn. But there is no need for such elegance, and in the game I would have played more simply: 27 ♖xh7 ♖xe2 28 ♖xf8+ ♕xf8 29 ♖xe2 ♕f7, with full equality.

Imagine my astonishment when I learned that Sax had not thought up this whole idea himself but had taken it from a game Chernin-Browne, played in the tournament at Lugano a couple of weeks before the World Cup! Chernin, who had analysed this variation from White's side, followed the same path as I did, came up against the same unpleasant novelty (which Browne may have found over-the-board), but then—unlike me—played 24 ♕xe5 and drew the game after lengthy exertions. That is, he failed to find the right solution when confronted with an unexpected move. Perhaps he simply lost his nerve.

Clearly there are no recipes for all such occurrences. The main thing is not to lose your self-control but to search coolly for a weak point in your opponent's conception. And of course you must always be psychologically prepared for unexpected moves such as 23...♕c3. I was greatly helped by sensing in good time that Sax had caught me out! When you realise what is in store, it is easier to find an antidote.

This game, of course, may give rise to some discouraging thoughts.

It demonstrates once again that with the abundance of information that saturates the modern chess world, it is sometimes quite impossible to keep abreast of all the latest developments in opening theory! Yet if you aim for distinguished results and at the same time have a liking for sharp, uncompromising variations, you cannot do without knowing the latest theoretical developments.

The next game we are going to examine is of a completely different character. In Yusupov-Sax, the players' opening knowledge reached as far as the transition to an endgame. This time, it peters out around move five!

Yusupov-Timman
Linares 1989
Slav Defence

1 d4 d5
2 c4 c6
3 ♗f3 ♗f6
4 ♗c3 e6
5 ♗xe5 (34)

I play the Exchange Variation now and again. In this tournament, a game Gulko-Timman from a previous round had attracted my attention. It seemed to me that in that game White managed to secure a plus. Gulko continued 4 ♗xe5 ♗c6 5 e3 e6 6 ♗c3 ♗d6 7 ♗xd6 ♖xd6 8 ♖d3 ♗c6 9 ♖f4! It is now clear why White didn't hurry to develop his king's knight. He was waiting to see where the enemy dark-squared bishop would go, so that on 9...♗f5 ♖d5 he could secure firm control of the important e5 point.

I decided to try the same idea, but slightly altered the move-order.

5 ... e5!

A novelty! Having plenty of experience of playing Timman, I realised that he would fight for the initiative right from the first few moves, and that conceding it to him was extremely dangerous. The move he plays is indeed an obvious attempt to seize the initiative. White must of course capture on e5 now, but with what? Pawn or bishop?

6 ♗xe5

I rated the knight on c6 as a more active piece than the bishop on f4. The situation after 6...e5 seemed to me to be more promising for Black.

6 ... ♗xe4
7 d3 d4

I had the impression that Timman's analyses ended here. He obviously liked this position.

Let us for a moment consider White's possibilities. Naturally, 8
$a4+$ looks tempting. But doesn't its very obviousness put you on your guard? It would make me cautious. Well, is this check playable or not? Sure enough, if fails. Black answers with $b5$, and what is White to do? Taking with the queen is bad on account of $c7$, and if White takes with the knight Black again replies $d7$ threatening $a7-a6$. Undoubtedly Black wins.

So there is nothing for it but to move the knight into the centre.

$e4$

Just now, the bishop check on $b4$ is not dangerous; White simply blocks it with his knight. Timman continues to force the pace.

$...$ $b6 (35)$

Have a think what White should do now. What should be his policy, faced with such an unusual turn of events in the opening - when Black is perhaps over-straining to seize the initiative and win?

There is a great deal at stake with every move here. The pawn on $b2$ is en prise, but surely White isn't going to defend it with his rook? The pusillanimous $Dd6+$, trying to reduce the opponent's attacking force somehow or other, is also unappealing; in my view, after $...c6$ $d6+exb2$, Black remains with a minimal advantage.

$e3+$

An uncompromising decision. Of course White cannot be entirely sure how the complications will end, but he obeys the laws of opening strategy, bringing new pieces into the battle without worrying about the defence of the b-pawn.

$...$ $xb2$

$e1$ $b1$

Are there any other continuations? Should White take the pawn on $d4$ with his queen? Let us see: $10 xdx4 c4+$ $d1$ (not $11 exd2 c3$), and now Black is not forced to exchange queens but can play $11 c3$. Need we go further? Frankly, with his king on $d1$, White's position inspires no confidence.

If you think White can extricate himself here, try 'mulling over' this position at home. Try to substantiate all your impressions by concrete analysis. But don't forget that in the practical game, you cannot work out everything in full. The main thing is to form a valid impression of where a particular variation will lead, and judge whether it is worth opting for this line or at least examining it seriously. I repeat that in the present case I considered $10 xdx4$ very risky for White, even on psychological grounds, since it hands the initiative over to the opponent. I had no wish to be the defender. I wanted to bid for the initiative myself with every move!

$10$ $...$ $b4+$

The strongest reply; Black wants to force the retreat of a piece White has already developed. Capturing on $a2$ would have been extremely risky, for it would have enabled White to start an attack either with $e3$ or with the simple capture $11 xdx4$.

$ed2$

A purely practical decision. By retreating this knight rather than the other, White reduces his opponent's options. In either case Black can capture on $d2$, but this way the exchange is forced, since after $11 ... a3$ White can take on $d4$ without worry.

$11$ $...$ $xd2+$

$12$ $x dx2$ $xa2$

We can now draw up a provisional balance of the operation that started with $10 b1$. White has lost a pawn, but in return he has made it possible to complete his development quickly. Incidentally, which move serves that end best?

$e3$

Quite right! One point worth noting is that if I had not found this resource in advance, I might not have played $10 b1$ either; I would have looked for some other line. I now thought White was firmly grasping the initiative.

$13$ $...$ $de$

What should White do now?

There are two candidate moves - $14 b5+$ and $14 fe$ - and the question is which is the more precise. The latter, do you think? Can you explain why? Because the bishop retains the option of going to $c4$? Yes, this is the first thing that springs to mind. If White plays $14 b5+$ instead, Black will be able to take the $c4$ square under control with $14 ... f8 15 fe e6$. Yet this is not the only purpose of capturing the pawn.

$14$ $fe$

Black in turn faces a choice - either to develop his bishop with $14 ... e6$, or to bring his knight out to $e7$. In the case of $14 ... e7 15 b4$, there was a sly trap in store for him. The natural reply $15 ... a5$? would be pretty refuted by $16 xxf7+!! xxf7 17 b5+$ $g6 18 e6+$ winning the queen, or $17 ... e6 18 0-0!$ with unanswerable threats against the king.

Of course Black doesn't have to fall into the trap. He can defend differently, but there is no point in calculating the variations any further. The simple judgement that White has a strong attack after $15 b4$ is sufficient. Timman evidently came to the same conclusion and steered clear of this line.

$14$ $...$ $e6$!

As you see, from the standpoint of the practical struggle, $14 fe$ was indeed more precise than $14 b5+$. White has retained the option of checking on $b5$, but also has a different and stronger line at his disposal.
15 \( \textit{H}xh7 \)
The rook joins in the attack.
15 ... \( \textit{B}d8 \) (36)

An aggressive rejoinder. The alternative was \( 15...g6 \), preparing in advance a refuge for the king – which, as is clear already, will have to renounce castling. But then after 16 \( \textit{Q}e4 \), the knight breaks into the enemy position. White's initiative is also dangerous after a queen exchange: 16...\( \textit{W}x5+ \) 17 \( \textit{W}d2 \) \( \textit{W}xd2+ \) (17...\( \textit{W}xe5 \) 18 \( \textit{W}b4 \) 18 \( \textit{W}d2 \).

In such situations it is important not to become obsessed with one particular continuation but to see the whole varied range of possibilities. Here White has two courses. One is obvious: 16 \( \textit{B}b5+ \). The other is less so: 16 \( \textit{W}e1 \). I rejected the bishop check on the grounds that it only helps Black to realise his plan of evacuating the king...\( \textit{W}f8 \). \( g7-g6 \) and ...\( \textit{g}7 \), followed by developing the knight.

16 \( \textit{W}c1! \) \( g6! \)

A prophylactic move, preparing the king's escape route to g7. Here I considered various possibilities, including 17 \( \textit{Q}c4 \). But after the simple 17...\( \textit{W}xc4 \) 18 \( \textit{W}xc4 \) \( \textit{W}xg2 \), I somehow couldn't find an attacking continuation.

17 \( \textit{W}c3! \)

Improving the position of his queen, White simultaneously forestalls the development of the enemy knight. 17...\( \textit{Q}h6 \) is met by the unpleasant 18 \( \textit{W}b4 \). Bringing the knight out to e7 is also bad, for there it would at once be pinned: 18 \( \textit{B}b5+ \) and 19 \( \textit{W}b4 \).

17 ... \( \textit{W}f8 \)

18 \( \textit{B}d3 \)

White continues the attack and completes his development at the same time. As you can see, even with such concrete tactical play, the actions of both opponents conform to the underlying principles of chess strategy. In fact, both sides (apart from the fact that one is conducting an attack and the other has to fend off immediate threats) are making moves which either develop pieces or prevent the opponent from doing so!

18 ... \( \textit{B}c8! \)

A subtle move. With the white queen on the long diagonal, the black king will feel most uncomfortable on g7. After 18...\( \textit{g}7 \)? 19 0-0, there is already a nasty threat of \( \textit{W}xh7+! \).

19 \( \textit{W}b4+ \)

If Timman had delayed ...\( \textit{B}c8 \) for an instant, the white queen could have occupied the central point d4, whereas now it has to make do with the flank square b4.

19 ... \( \textit{Q}g7 \)

20 0-0 \( \textit{Q}h6 \)

Black has finally managed to develop his knight.

21 \( \textit{B}e4 \)

Threatening 22 \( \textit{Q}g5 \). But Timman brings his last piece into the fray in the nick of time!

21 ... \( \textit{H}h8 \)

22 \( \textit{B}d6 \)

White has to renounce his intended knight sortie to g5.

22 ... \( \textit{d}5! \) (37)

Both players were already getting short of time. Being dealt a blow like this in time-trouble is not very pleasant, but White succeeds in finding the correct solution to the problem.

23 \( \textit{B}e4! \)

The exchange sacrifice is of course temporary.

23 ... \( \textit{B}xb7 \)

24 \( \textit{W}xb7 \) \( \textit{B}b8 \)

In overall terms, the position is equal. Now 25...\( \textit{B}8 \) is forced, since 25...\( \textit{W}e6? \) would fail to the obvious 26 \( \textit{W}xh7+! \).

25 ... \( \textit{Q}h8 \)

26 \( \textit{W}f6+ \) \( \textit{Q}g8 \)

27 \( \textit{W}g5 \) \( \textit{Q}g7 \)

28 \( \textit{W}f6+ \)

Forcing a draw by repetition.

28 ... \( \textit{Q}g8 \)

29 \( \textit{W}g5 \) \( \textit{Q}g7 \)

30 \( \textit{W}f6+ \) \( \frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2} \)

Of course, given a little more time, the struggle could have been continued. For example, White could have set an attractive trap with 30 \( h3 \), hoping for 30...\( \textit{W}e6 \). There would follow 31 \( \textit{B}f5 \) \( \textit{W}d7 \) 32 \( \textit{B}c6! \) \( \textit{W}c7 \) 33 \( \textit{W}xh6+! \) \( \textit{B}xh6 \) 34 \( \textit{Q}xh6+ \), and White gives mate. But I don't advise you to be tempted by such traps in serious play; they are not without dangers. After the correct 30...\( \textit{g}8 \) (taking control of the f6 square) there would be some difficulties for White to overcome. As played, the duel ended in a draw at once.

The game we have just examined illustrates an important principle which I generally try to follow. Faced with an unexpected move in the opening, try not to give the opponent a psychological advantage on any account; search for active possibilities, strive for the initiative by any means. Only then can you count on solving your opening problems successfully.

The next example shows how you can strive for victory with an opening set-up which the opponent knows better than you.
Black is pursuing a very specific aim. I won’t insist that my decision here was best. But it was combative - it forced my opponent to solve some concrete and none-too-simple problems! Moreover, strictly speaking, this move doesn’t lose all that much time. After all, White must now withdraw his bishop, otherwise Black simply exchanges it and acquires the advantage of the bishop-pair.

9...\textbf{\textit{d}}2

When playing 8...\textbf{\textit{d}}5 Black had to have some particular plan in view, for White clearly intends to drive the knight back with c2-c4. Then there will be nothing to justify the loss of time. But what exactly can Black undertake? The pawn sacrifice 9...b5 looked dubious to me. Of course it contains a positional idea - the attempt to control the light squares - but just now it is rather premature. What else is there?

9...\textbf{\textit{b}}6

10 \textbf{\textit{c}}4 \textbf{\textit{a}}6

Essentially, Black is just mystifying his opponent. I don’t think that with an operation like ...\textbf{\textit{d}}5 and ...\textbf{\textit{a}}6 you can achieve much. There are several normal reactions for White. One is 11 \textbf{\textit{b}}4, another is 11 \textbf{\textit{g}}2\textbf{\textit{f}}3 followed by \textbf{\textit{c}}2. Black would soon probably have to withdraw his knight to f6, after which White would have a comfortable game. Still, in so far as Black has done nothing truly reprehensible, his handling of the opening is basically just one possibility amongst many others.

Shirazi approached the position differently. He felt that his knight on c2 was already developed and that it was time to bring out his light-squared bishop.

11 g3

A move provoked by the position of the bishop on a6.

11... \textbf{\textit{e}}7

12 \textbf{\textit{g}}2 (39)

Here again, I chose a combative solution. You may be asking what it was. It is not so simple to find.

\begin{center}
\begin{figure}
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Let us consider the resources for both sides. In the first place, a worrying thought arises: what if White withdraws his queen to c2 next move? The knight will have to leave d5, and if I’m not careful I will even lose the exchange on a8.... This looks dangerous. I had been intending to move the rook to b8, but then I thought: ‘Suppose he does take my rook. After ...\textbf{\textit{x}}a8 perhaps I’ll find some counterplay on the long diagonal.’

Another feature of the position is that if Black didn’t have a knight on d5, he could play ...\textbf{\textit{d}}7-e5, for the white queen is undefended! Is there some way Black can carry out this attractive tactical stroke?

Objectively, the move I played may be questionable, but in the final analysis it was thanks to this move that I won the game.

12... \textbf{\textit{d}}5f6?!

Have a try at explaining the point of Black’s combination. After the seemingly forced line 13 \textbf{\textit{x}}xf6+ \textbf{\textit{x}}xf6 14 \textbf{\textit{x}}a8 \textbf{\textit{x}}a8 15 0-0, White is not threatened with anything - but the whole point is that this line is not forced! It is precisely in the intermediate blow 14...\textbf{\textit{e}}5! that the idea of the combination lies.

13 \textbf{\textit{x}}xf6+ \textbf{\textit{x}}xf6

14 \textbf{\textit{x}}a8

Of course Shirazi is not compelled to play this, but as I was hoping, he couldn’t resist the temptation to take the rook.

14... \textbf{\textit{e}}5!

15 \textbf{\textit{e}}4 \textbf{\textit{a}}8

16 \textbf{\textit{a}}8 \textbf{\textit{x}}a8 \textbf{\textit{d}}3+

The decision to embark on this whole variation was extremely difficult. After all, the exchange is the exchange! But I studied it closely and concluded that Black does have compensation. The character of the game has abruptly changed and the initiative is on his side.

There are certain particular cases where such risky play is justified. Shirazi has an active style; he likes to
attack. Players of this type are prone to underrate the opponent's threats and defend without too much assurance.

17 \( \text{Qf1} \) \( \text{xa8} \)
18 \( \text{b3} \) \( \text{Qb7} \)

The immediate \( 18...c5 \) was also worth considering.

19 \( \text{g1} \) c5! (40)

20 \( \text{Qe3?} \) \( \text{ed} \)

It seems that Shirazi had intended
21 \( \text{Qd1} \), and only now saw the reply - that same 21...\( \text{Qe5!} \) again. Discounted by this turn of events, he lost his bearings and succumbed more or less without a fight.

21 \( \text{f4?!} \) cd
22 \( \text{Qxd3} \) de
23 \( \text{Qe2} \) ef
24 \( \text{Qxf2} \) \( \text{xa1} \)

The upset is that Black simply has a sound extra pawn and the better position.

25 \( \text{Qxa1} \) f6
26 \( \text{Qc1} \) \( \text{f7} \)
27 \( \text{Qe3} \) e5
28 \( \text{a4} \) \( \text{e6} \)
29 \( \text{a5} \) f5
30 \( \text{c5} \) bc
31 \( \text{Qd3} \) \( \text{d5} \)

Realising the advantage is simple.
Black simply pushes his kingside pawns.

32 \( \text{Qxc5+} \) \( \text{w6} \)
33 \( \text{b4} \) g5
34 \( \text{Qa6} \) \( \text{f4+} \)
35 \( \text{Qf2} \) e4
36 \( \text{h4} \) h6

There is no need to work out any variations. Two connected passed pawns combined with the formidable bishop are quite enough to win the game.

37 \( \text{Qc7} \) \( \text{e5} \)
38 \( \text{hg} \) \( \text{hg} \)
39 \( \text{gf}+ \) \( \text{gf} \)
40 \( \text{Qe5} \) e3+
41 \( \text{Qe2} \) \( \text{e4} \)

0-1

Let us ask what it was that enabled Black to win so easily. He was up against a system of development that was unfamiliar to him, and usually this promises nothing good. In my view, the secret of Black's success is largely bound up with his psychologically correct reaction to the opponent's unexpected choice of pawn. He didn't allow himself to be drawn into any prepared variations of a forcing nature, such as a42\( \text{d} \)e2 5\( \text{a} \)3 6\( \text{xc3+} \); he preferred an original scheme of development with a well-defined positional basis. Such tactics - deflecting the opponent from his course, especially if he is in a lower category - frequently produce good results.

The next example continues the theme of the French Defence. The following game against A.Sokolov was played in our Candidates Match, and I remember that it gave me much more satisfaction.

A.Sokolov-Yusupov
Candidates Final (3), Riga 1986
French Defence

1 \( \text{e4} \) \( \text{e6} \)
2 \( \text{d4} \) \( \text{d5} \)
3 \( \text{Qc3} \) \( \text{b4} \)
4 \( \text{e5} \) \( \text{Qe7} \)
5 \( \text{a3} \) \( \text{xe3+} \)
6 \( \text{bc} \) \( \text{c5} \)
7 \( \text{Qf3} \) b6

White plays to undermine the centre.

Match chess has a quality of its own; the opening contest occupies a special place in it. The aim of Black's last move is obvious: he wants to exchange his bad 'French bishop'. In the first game, Sokolov preferred to avoid this exchange by playing \( 8 \text{b5+} \) \( 9 \text{d7} \) \( \text{d3} \). He obtained quite a good position, but subsequently lost in a complex struggle. It was clear that for game three he would think up something new. But what? To be honest, my second and I did not succeed in guessing it during our preparation, so the opening of this game was to a certain extent unexpected to me.
Now I had to have a serious think. I only had some vague recollections of the games in the Geller-Spassky Candidates quarter-final (Sukhumi 1968), where this variation had been seen a few times. In such situations you have to use your common sense, and if the position permits, steer away from well-trodden paths, selecting lines that are positionally well founded but not so well studied.

I sensed that the further course of the struggle would in many ways depend on which squares the black knights went to – in particular, where the queen’s knight was developed.

12 ... 0–0
A move that arouses few doubts.

13 cd
But now it is time to deviate from the well-studied lines and not wait for Sokolov to spring some surprise on me. As far as I recall, Spassky took on c5 with his queen.

13 ... Qxd5!?
Quite a good place for the knight. At the moment Black is scarcely afraid of c2–c4, since the knight can settle on b4.

14 Wd3
What would you suggest for Black now?

To answer this question properly, you have to recognise the aim of White’s last move. He intends, of course, to play 14 Qg5, forcing ...g7–g6 which suddenly weakens the dark squares. This weakening is very significant when you consider that White’s dark-squared bishop has no opposite number.

14 ... h6
The position is very complicated. I was aiming to meet 15 d1 with 15 ... Qc6, and if 16 Qa3, then 16 ... Qb4, leading to unclear play. Sokolov played more directly, but less soundly.

15 c4 (42)

What are the possibilities for Black now? With the white pawn on a4, the move 15 ... Qb6 is clearly uninviting. The knight would also be badly placed on c7. The choice is between 15 ... Qb4 and 15 ... Qd7.

I rejected 15 ... Qb4 on the basis that after 16 We4 Qxc6 17 Qc3 my knights would be in an awkward position. The one on b4 superficially looks active, but that is all. In reply to 17 ... Wc7, White would strengthen his position with 18 d1! (the right rook) 18 ... Qd8 19 Qd6, and if 19 ... Qxd6 then 20 Qxe5, emerging with an extra pawn.

On reflection I decided that the right place for the knight was e7.

Here it can be useful in defence of the kingside and generally has good prospects. In some lines it can move to f5 and then d4; or else it can go to g6 to attack the pawn on e5. Of course, in selecting this move, I also had to assess some concrete variations – for example the following, which seems fairly dangerous to Black: 15 ... Qe7 16 d1 Wxd3 17 Qxd3 Qc6 18 Qe3, and the pawn on c5 looks indefensible. But in fact it is not! I had prepared the reply 18 ... Qc8!, and if 19 Qxe5 then 19 ... Qxe5! This may be called the tactical justification of 15 ... Qe7.

In this case we observe how a general appraisal of the situation is linked to concrete analysis. This is generally a prerequisite for taking the right decision. You can deduce all manner of general considerations in support of a move, but if it afterwards turns out that in one variation you simply lose a pawn, all your arguments will lose their point. It is vital to support your judgements with exact calculation!

15 ... Qd7!
16 We4
Now the important question is where to develop the queen’s knight – on c6 or d7. After some thought, I opted for 16 ... Qd7, since after 16 ... Qb6 the defence of the c5 pawn would be much more complicated. In general, when facing an unexpected system, it is essential to give increased attention to your opponent’s threats.

16 ... Qd7
17 Hb1?
The best continuation was 17 d1. But I saw that after 17 ... We7 there was no need to fear 18 d6?! in view of 18 ... Qf5!, when 19 Qc7 is bad: 19 ... Wb7 20 Hb1 Qb6, with the deadly threat of 21 ... Qc8.

Sokolov’s move was superficial. He understood that I would have met 17 d1 with 17 ... We7, and decided to forestall that move by preparing the reply 18 Wb7. Yet 17 ... Qe7 is by no means obligatory. Black can now achieve easy equality with 17 ... Hb8. But at this moment I sensed that my position was already superior and that I could very well play for the win.

17 ... Wa5!
If you have the opportunity for an active move, take it! Black now seizes the initiative. The white pawn on a4 is en prise. White should definitely have admitted his mistake and returned his rook to a1.

18 d1
Why didn’t I simply take the pawn? At first sight Black is not threatened with anything.

In fact, though, 18 ... Wxa4? can be met by 19 Qxb4! gh 20 a1 Wc6 21 Wc6 Qxc6 22 Wxd7, and White has everything in order. Black is counting on something better.

18 ... Hb8!
The alternative 18 ... Qb6 was not bad either, but 18 ... Hbd8 seemed to me the most energetic decision (not, however, 18 ... Hbd8 19 Hxd7). As
long as White's bishop is still on the back rank, his king cannot feel secure. It has no 'loophole', and tactical threats are already in the air.

19 \( \text{W}c2 \) (43)

Sokolov decides to protect his a-pawn, and misses the striking rejoinder. It is amusing that just as in the previous game, a knight sortie from d7 to e5 seals White's fate!

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
25 & \text{Axd4?} & \text{cd} \\
26 & \text{Wd3} & \text{Axd8} \\
27 & g3 & \text{Wc5} \\
\end{array}
\]

The queen frees the path of the e-pawn.

28 \( f4?! \)

This merely leads to a weakening of White's king position. But he is in a bad way in any case, so this move should not be severely criticised. The rest is simple.

28 ... \( \text{Wb4} \)

29 \( \text{Aa1} \) a5

This move appears rather obvious, wouldn't you say? It fixes an enemy pawn and brings Black's own pawn closer to its queening square. You should keep on strengthening your position as long as permitted, and then look for a concrete plan of exploitation. In the present case, with White deprived of any counterplay, Black has no reason to hurry.

30 h4 h5

31 \( \text{Aa1} \) \( \text{Wxa4} \)

32 \( \text{Aa5} \) g6

33 \( \text{Af2} \) \( \text{Wxa2+} \)

34 \( \text{Af3} \) a4

35 \( \text{Ab6} \)

With the idea of 36 \( \text{ Axe6} \). Black now repeats the position to gain time.

35 ... \( \text{Ag7} \)

36 \( \text{Ab1} \) \( \text{Ag8} \)

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
37 & \text{Ab6} & \text{Wa1}! \\
\end{array}
\]

Commencing decisive operations. On 38 \( \text{Axe6} \), I intended 38...\( \text{Axb8}! \) 39 \( \text{Axe6+} \) \( \text{Ag8} \), and Black carries on with his own attack.

38 \( \text{Af2} \) a3

39 \( \text{Aa6} \) \( \text{Ab2+} \)

40 \( \text{Wd2} \) d3+

0-1

Sokolov resigned on checking that I had made the time-control.

What is instructive in this game? It shows how important it is to give attention to the opponent's threats - both his obvious tactical ones and his more veiled positional ones. In this connection I dare say I should single out the move 15...\( \text{Df7} \), which in a way laid the foundation of Black's success. At any rate, it helped him solve his opening problems.

Don't forget one other very cunning weapon in the opening - transposition of moves! Sometimes the opponent only needs to switch two moves round, and all your pre-game analytical work comes to nothing. If this does unexpectedly happen, the main thing is not to spend time kicking yourself (it does nothing to help your cause!). Remember the old adage: grieving over a past mistake means making another one!

We will now examine my game with the English Grandmaster Miles. It was played at the start of the Tunis Interzonal, and was of great importance to me. At that time Miles was considered one of the strongest grandmasters in the West, and had excellent tournament results. I had Black, and thus decided to play a fairly solid opening. Here is what came of it:

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
1 & \text{c4} & \text{c6} \\
2 & \text{e4} & \text{e5} \\
3 & \text{ed} & \text{ed} \\
4 & \text{Aa3} & \text{Axe4} \\
5 & \text{Ac3} & \text{Af6} \\
\end{array}
\]

When up against an unfamiliar system, you naturally want to steer towards something you more or less know. I had some idea of the variations arising from 6 \( \text{Aa3} \) \( \text{Ac4} \), but alas, Miles played differently.

6 \( \text{Ag5} \)

My opening knowledge came to an end here. What was I to do? The move 6...\( \text{e6} \) would have led to theoretical structures that were well
known — but not to me. I therefore decided to look for some reasonable alternative course.

6 ... \( \mathcal{L}e6! \) (44)

7 ... \( \mathcal{g}f! \)

This move too has definite drawbacks, but on the whole I consider it more logical than 7 ... \( \mathcal{e}f. \) The pawn captures towards the centre and thereby increases Black’s control of it. But the main thing is that it avoids a situation where White virtually obtains an extra pawn on the queenside and Black has no strategic prospects.

8 \( \mathcal{W}d2 \)

Miles doesn’t hurry to bring his knight out to \( f3; \) he wants to retain the option of restraining the black e-pawn with \( f2-f4. \) Of course this decision has its minus side — neglecting the laws of development may have serious consequences.

8 ... \( \mathcal{W}a5 \)

At the moment, bringing the dark-squared bishop into play is a somewhat complicated matter (since \( \mathcal{g}f3-h5 \) is unplayable). So Black completes his queenside development, aiming to castle long. The queen will be more actively placed on \( a5 \) than on \( d7. \) The tactical justification is 9 \( \mathcal{O}xd5? \) \( \mathcal{W}xd2+ \) 10 \( \mathcal{O}xd2 \) 0-0-0, and Black wins his pawn back on \( d5. \)

9 c5 0-0-0

10 \( \mathcal{b}b5 \) (45)

In my view it was better to finish his development with 10 \( \mathcal{O}ge2 \) and then \( g2-g3. \)

What move would you recommend for Black after 10 \( \mathcal{b}b5? \) Perhaps 10 ... \( h5, \) with \( \mathcal{h}h6 \) to follow? That is one idea. But I decided to play less directly.

10 ... \( \mathcal{g}g8! \)

Black tries to induce a weakening of his opponent’s position. On 11 \( \mathcal{g}3 \) he could very well play 11 ... \( h5; \) but he might also consider 11 ... \( \mathcal{g}g4, \) which dissuades White from bringing his knight out to \( e2 \) and prepares the thematic \( ... e7-e5. \)

11 \( \mathcal{f}4 \)

Miles takes prophylactic measures against \( ... e7-e5. \) But after playing several pawn moves, he is behind in developing his pieces. I endeavour to exploit this.

11 ... \( \mathcal{h}h6 \)

Black’s play is simple and natural. It somehow automatically comes about that all his moves further his chosen plan. The bishop on \( h6 \) helps towards carrying out \( ... e7-e5, \) but it may also quite possibly contribute to some tactical blow.

At this point it was imperative for Miles to attend to his development. Admittedly, 12 \( \mathcal{f}3 \) is met by the troublesome 12 ... \( \mathcal{g}g4 \) 13 0-0 \( e5! \). Nonetheless, as far as counterplay goes, White should have been seeking it somewhere in that area.

12 \( \mathcal{W}f2 \)

The same thing has cropped up more than once before in the games we have examined: one superficial decision leads to another, and the result is that pieces already developed have to move several times. White’s difficulties are in a sense ‘pre-programmed’; they result from 8 \( \mathcal{W}d2 \) and perhaps even from 7 \( \mathcal{X}x6 \). 13 \( \mathcal{g}g4 \) Creating the dire threat of 13 ... \( \mathcal{W}x5! \).

13 \( \mathcal{W}d1 \) \( \mathcal{X}f5 \)

Threatening 14 ... \( \mathcal{O}c2+. \) A mere thirteen moves have been played, and Black has already launched the decisive attack. Such is the punishment for White’s neglect of development.

14 a3

At all events, 14 \( \mathcal{g}g2 \) was better. Yet after 14 ... \( \mathcal{O}c2+ \) 15 \( \mathcal{F}f1 \) \( e5 \) 16 \( \mathcal{W}g3 \) \( \mathcal{X}g4! \) the complications work out in Black’s favour. (Would you have suggested 14 ... \( a6 \) instead? That is a strong move, but the line indicated is even simpler.)

14 ... \( \mathcal{O}c2+ \)

15 \( \mathcal{W}d2 \) \( \mathcal{X}e4! \)

After 15 ... \( e5 \) White could just about struggle on with 16 \( \mathcal{O}e2, \) but now the game finishes quickly.

16 \( \mathcal{O}e2 \) \( \mathcal{X}g2 \)

17 \( \mathcal{W}h4 \) \( \mathcal{X}d4 \)

18 \( \mathcal{W}h3+ \) \( f5 \)

19 \( \mathcal{d}d3 \) \( \mathcal{O}x2 \)

20 \( \mathcal{X}e2 \) \( \mathcal{X}f4+ \)

It is time to resign, but Miles plays a few more moves through inertia.
4 Inventive Solutions to Intractable Opening Problems

Sergei Dolmatov

What does a chessplayer’s opening preparation usually amount to? The answer is, studying particular variations which are given in monographs, in Informator, in articles devoted to that or that opening. You find the key positions there and think about them; you analyse, look for innovations, pick out useful games and so forth. This is the most widespread method of handling opening information, and without doubt a legitimate one for investigation within the field of some specific opening.

But another method is also possible — one of generalising, identifying common situations arising out of completely different openings. It is useful, for example, to study typical pawn structures; some are just as characteristic of one system as of another. Some intriguing conclusions can be drawn from watching how various players respond to innovations — well or badly, with or without spending large amounts of time; some endeavour to find a refutation on the spot, others just look for the most solid available continuation. There are numerous interesting factors here.

If you find any indications that you possess this faculty for generalising, you should not hesitate to make use of it. This approach to mastering the knowledge of openings may prove to be the most productive for you personally. Let me stress once again that it is possible to improve your chess by widely differing methods, according to your individual inclinations.

At present I am working on the middlegame. I have become interested in a topic which no one before has investigated seriously — the art of elastic manoeuvring. Karpov practises this art excellently, as did Psakhis in his best years; whereas in Kasparov’s games (for example), there are only very rare instances of it. Kasparov has always been used to executing concrete plans, whereas positional manoeuvring serves no clear-cut purpose except, perhaps, one: it tests the opponent’s understanding of absolutely all nuances of the position. If neither side has any positional advantage (or if it is insufficient to bring tangible results), it is often necessary to manoeuvre, to move to and fro in what looks like an aimless manner, taking care not to
worsen the position of your pieces. When the opponent is unable to stand up to this manoeuvring and commits inaccuracies, it is possible to alter the character of the struggle abruptly by tactical means and seize the initiative.

This is the theme I have been studying; each of you can choose your own. Having selected a theme, seek out examples of it in games by leading players, and analyse how they solve the problem that interests you. From the totality of examples, try to pick out those which are united by a common factor. Solving such imaginative tasks brings much benefit.

I now come to a problem which I shall discuss in rather more detail; generally speaking, no one has yet thought about it seriously — perhaps because it demands a high level of chess ability.

Sometimes top-ranking grandmasters play strong moves which they themselves find hard to explain. Furthermore it is virtually impossible to prove even in post-mortem analysis that these moves are objectively strongest. Despite this, they help to solve the problems in the particular context of the game. They leave their imprint on the whole of the subsequent struggle; they give it its essential character. By detecting such moments in games by top players, you can dramatically increase your understanding of chess.

One example is the second game of the fourth Kasparov-Karpov World Championship match, Seville 1987.

I shall now show you some examples of this same theme, taken from my own games. I shall not attempt a strict proof that the solutions discovered in the critical positions are the strongest. But these moves have significant thought behind them; they exert a decisive influence on the further course of the contest. Some of them, incidentally, are responses to unexpected opening moves. The opponent has played an innovation, and all the problems have to be resolved at the board rather than in leisurely home analysis. Let me repeat: if you devote some study to such situations — which tend to go unnoticed — then you can make appreciable progress.

In a tournament in Iceland I was playing Lev Polugaevsky. The opening was a Dutch Defence. I play the black side of this opening a great deal, and it was not hard to predict that Polugaevsky would be fully armed. He usually prepares his openings thoroughly. There was indeed a surprise in store for me. I felt it coming, by the way in which my opponent conducted the game. He made his moves very slowly, clearly aiming to put me under a guard; he didn't want me to deviate from the main line. But I had confidence in my opening scheme, and wanted to stand up for my convictions; hence I was not intending to deviate in any way.

Polugaevsky-Dolmatov
Reykjavik 1990
Dutch Defence

1. d4 f5
2. c4 d6
3. g3 g6
4. g2 g7
5. 0-0 0-0
6. c4 d6
7. dxc3 c6

Black has played the so-called Leningrad System, choosing a variation of it which is not the most fashionable. I believe it was introduced into contemporary practice by Grandmaster Yusupov, but at present I seem to be playing it more often than anyone else. It had been known earlier, but had a bad reputation. The usual move in this position is 7...e5.

8. b3

This is what White played in the well-known game Karpov-Yusupov, Linares 1989, in which Artur came to grief and Karpov scored a good win. But to me this plan doesn't seem convincing.

8 ... e5

The idea of this move is simple. I attack the knight on c3 and at the same time prepare ...e7-e5. When I devised this innovation (Yusupov played 8...e7, followed by ...a5 and ...Qa6), I thought that by achieving ...e7-e5 Black would obtain a comfortable position. White's best
move seemed to be 9 \( \mathcal{d}2 \), but then I retreat with \( \ldots \mathcal{w}c7 \), leaving the white bishop less well placed than in Karpov-Yusupov. I had played several games on these lines, drawing them all. But Polugaevasky played differently.

9 \( \mathcal{d}b2 \) \( \mathcal{e}5 \) (47)

The first time I had reached this position was against H.Olafsson in the qualifying tournament for the World Cup (Moscow 1989). He continued with 10 de de 11 e4. Misjudging the position, I played 11...fe?! and came out worse. A stronger move is 11...fe4, which enabled me to win with Black in two tense struggles against D.Gurevich (Palma de Mallorca 1989) and Browne (in this same Reykjavik tournament).

10 \( \mathcal{w}d2 \)

A novelty, undoubtedly prepared at home. Polugaevasky looked very pleased with it. It was indeed unexpected and unpleasant – I had missed it in my opening preparation. The idea is simple: White defends against his opponent’s chief positional threat of 10...e4 (which would fail to 11 \( \mathcal{d}xe4 \)). You will understand that if Black could push his pawn to e4, he would obtain a fine position. The problems would all be on White’s side – his kingside would be sealed up, the f2-f3 break would be largely ineffective. For this reason I had treated 10 de de 11 e4 as the main line, overlooking that 10 \( \mathcal{w}d2 \) was playable.

With 10...e4 ruled out, finding another move for Black is very awkward. But I thought ‘I must count my blessings. I’ve got in ...e7–e5, and that’s something!’

10 \ldots \mathcal{w}c7
11 de de
12 e4

Of course White doesn’t allow ...e5–e4. But what should I do now? In approximately similar positions, I had replied either ...e6 or ...e4. By analogy with my games against Gurevich and Browne, I would like to play 12...e4. But unfortunately it won’t do here, because after 13 g3, the usual reply ...\( \mathcal{d}h5 \) loses its force (13...\( \mathcal{d}h5 \) 14 fe, and there is no real compensation for the pawn); while if instead 13...\( \mathcal{e}f \), White breaks through in the centre with 14 e5.

In the event of 12...fe 13 \( \mathcal{d}g5 \), the knight settles on e4 and secures White a positional plus. Incidentally, in the Dutch Defence the structure with an isolated black pawn on e5 and a white knight on e4 is sometimes not so simple to assess – on condition that Black’s c-pawn is on e7 and his knight can go to c6 and d4. Then Black usually has adequate counterplay. But with the pawn on c6, the position tends to be a good deal worse for him. Hence 12...fe is no good.

On reflection I realised that Polugaevasky couldn’t have checked every variation thoroughly (his preparations were done during the tournament, just before each game), and I thought up a move which he must have missed. The move is fairly natural and probably best, but for some reason it had escaped his attention. It put us on an equal footing – from now on we both had to solve our problems independently of the board.

12 \ldots \mathcal{d}a6!

It now turns out that the natural 13 \( \mathcal{d}ad1 \) is not good for White in view of 13...fe 14 \( \mathcal{d}g5 \) \( \mathcal{d}g4 \), hitting the rook. Polugaevasky didn’t like the immediate capture on f5, because it helps develop Black’s pieces, but he had to do it.

13 ef \( \mathcal{d}xf5 \)
14 \( \mathcal{d}ad1 \) (48)

I should like you to pay special attention to this position; it has a bearing on the basic themes of our discussion. Up to here, the play has proceeded logically. Polugaevasky introduced a novelty, and I reacted in what was probably the best way. But at this point I sensed that the position is still quite dangerous for Black. He has achieved a fair amount (bringing his bishop to f5 in one move and developing his knight), yet problems remain – fairly serious ones. The black pieces are not badly placed, but White may drive them back with tempo by means of h3 and \( \mathcal{g}4 \). The pawn on e5 is isolated, and neither knight can reach \( \mathcal{d}f4 \). Exchanges will only make my defence more difficult, for the isolated pawn will remain, and there will be less and less opportunity for counterplay. It was in these conditions that I had to find a plan for further action.

The move I played was, I think, the strongest. If decisions of this kind interest you, look for them (for example) in Kasparov’s games. True, this will not be simple. Outwardly, such moves are unobtrusive. Annotators usually fail to understand them and do not explain them, so it is best to study commentaries written by the players themselves.

14 \ldots \mathcal{e}f8!!

Not an impressive-looking move, but I am proud of it. The rest of the contest will be wholly dominated by the ideas that went into this move. What, then, is its point?
The pawn on e5 is weak and it is useful to defend it. The rook was badly placed on f8, since if I had brought my knight out to h6 White could have played ...a7. This was among the reasons for my decision.

But of course there is more to it than that; there is a deeper reason for placing the rook on d8. White clearly wants to play h2-h3, depriving the Black pieces of the g4 square and securing e3 for his queen. Then he will play g3-g4. It is against this plan that Black has prepared a tactical antidote, based on invading d3 with a knight.

15  h3  Qc5
16  We3  Qd3!

This is the whole point – the knight is invulnerable owing to a fork: 17  xxd3  xxd3 18  Wxd3 e4.

If you are in good shape and able to find such solutions, you are not disconcerted by inferior positions; you are capable of saving a dubious game. If I hadn't discovered this idea – if instead of 14...Qe8 I had played some 'normal' move such as 14...xh8 – I am convinced I would have imperceptibly sunk into a difficult position; I would have lost by a gradual process, without even understanding why. I might have blamed the opening for my bad position and concluded that the whole variation was no good. That is how many games end, when a player fails to find the unique imaginative solution to a particular position. Of course I didn't know for sure where it would all lead, but I appreciated that after 14...Qe8 I could obtain counter-chances. Even if I lost, it would not be without a fight. When my opponent replied 15 h3, I was definitely convinced I had made the correct choice. This is complex prophylaxis, if you like; I had to understand that White intended h3, and find a way of combating his plan.

The game was to end in a draw after some notable excitement. I do not see where White could have improved his play and obtained an advantage.

17  Qa1

Threatening 18 g4. The knight on d3 is insecure, and I didn't want to put a pawn on e4.

17 ...  Qb4

Continuing to harry the opponent with short-range threats – this time it is a fork on c2. On 18 g4, White has to reckon with 18...Qxd3. The bishop replaces the knight on this square, and Black follows with ...e4 and ...Qc2. As you can see, it is not so simple to drive the black pieces back. Polugaevsky hopes to do so by first covering the weak squares c2 and d3.

18  Qe1  h5! (49)

Black stops g3-g4, and incidentally prepares ...Qh7 and ...Qh6. Note that with a white knight on f3 I would not have played this way. Moves have defects as well as good points; my opponent has parried my threats, but in so doing he split his rooks and allowed ...h7-h5. White now has no time to lose, since the plan of ...Qh7 and ...Qh6 is unpleasant for him.

19  a3  Qc2

The knight has done plenty of work, and can be sent away for a rest.

20  Qxc2  Qxc2

Here Polugaevsky was faced with an interesting problem, and he coped with it successfully. He has to choose between the two possibilities 21 Qd2 and 21 Qc1. The latter looks safer, since 21...Qxb3? fails to 22 Qd4. Black must retreat...

21...Qf5. Still, after 22 Qd4 Qxe4 23 Qxe4, he can choose between 23...Qxb3 and 23...Qh7, and then he has everything in order – as we found when we looked at it after the game.

21 Qd2!

Polugaevsky takes a tougher decision. His rook is placed much more actively here than on e1, since it remains on the open file. True, this means sacrificing the b-pawn.

Withdrawing the bishop with 21...Qf5 would be a psychological concession which Black wants to avoid. If you are offered a pawn and there is no forced refutation, my view is that you should accept the sacrifice.

21 ...  Qxb3!
22  Qb5!

On 22 Qb3 Black has 22...Qf7, defending the pawn on g6 and attacking c4, so White doesn't manage to attack the bishop on b3.

22 ...  cb
23  Wxb3  bc
24  Wxb7  Qae8 (50)

Of course White has full compensation for the pawn. In this position I offered a draw, and it was accepted. Both players were already running short of time. Polugaevsky thought that playing on a pawn down was risky, while I felt that I would not succeed in exploiting the material advantage. Subsequent analysis vindicated the draw agreement.

Polugaevsky had 25 Wc6 in mind. I would have replied 25...Qb6, with a view to 26...e4. White can prevent this with 26 Qd6 Qxb6 27 Qxa6. If Black defends the a-pawn with a
regulation’ move such as 27...\textit{ce}7, then after 28 \textit{ff}c1 his position is very difficult and may actually be lost, in spite of the extra pawn. So 27...c3 is essential. A forced line ensues: 28 \textit{ff}c1 e2 29 \textit{fe}c6 \textit{xf}d8 30 \textit{xf}xc2 \textit{xd}d1+ 31 \textit{ff}g2 \textit{xf}a1 32 \textit{fe}d5+ \textit{xf}xd5 33 \textit{xf}xc8+ \textit{ff}h7 34 \textit{xf}xa7 \textit{ff}a2. On the surface there is still some danger to Black, but objectively the position is drawn.

I think it should now be clearer to you what I had in mind when I spoke of moves which in an ‘irrational’ position exert a decisive influence on the further course of the struggle. Just such a move was 14...\textit{ff}e8. The issue is not whether it can be proved best by analysis. This move contains a particular set of ideas – the very ones which were later implemented in the game; that is the main thing.

Next, a more complex example of the same theme. Here again there is an element of prophylaxis, but it is not at all obvious. This game against Kiril Georgiev was played in a European Club match.

Dolmatov-Kir Georgiev
Moscow 1989
Sicilian Defence

\begin{verbatim}
1 e4       c5
2 \textit{ff}f3  d6
3 d4       cd
4 \textit{xf}d4  \textit{xf}d6
5 \textit{ff}c3  g6
6 \textit{ff}e3  \textit{ff}g7
7 f3       0-0
\end{verbatim}

8 \textit{ff}d2  \textit{ff}c6

The Dragon Variation. The attitude of the strongest players to this opening is virtually unanimous – it is fairly risky for Black. Yet in top-level games White tends to sidestep the sharpest and most uncompromising lines; he doesn’t try to refute Black’s set-up in a head-on clash. The point is that there is an immense amount of Dragon theory which constantly increases on the basis of games played by middle-ranking players – whereas among the top grandmasters, hardly anyone plays this opening with Black. For that reason, they have no wish to bother themselves constantly with highly complex investigations when there is no telling when they may be useful.

To me, the Dragon always presents the problem of how to obtain a comfortable game, let alone an advantage. I never play 9 \textit{ff}c4; there is too much theory on it, and too little scope for originality. I like to play chess, not to engage in a contest as to whose opening analysis is more exact. I am therefore interested in 9 0-0-0 and 9 g4, both of which are playable. At present the popularity of 9 0-0-0 has been increasing, because in reply to 9...d5 a new resource has been found: 10 \textit{ff}e1!?.

9 g4

I had noted this move long ago. I once lost a game with 9 0-0-0, and decided to try out 9 g4, an idea that was not new but forgotten. But Karpov beat me to it, playing this move in 1982 against Miles and Mestel. The line became popular, but eventually Black found a strong antidote, and today this continuation for White has no high standing. I know of several paths to equality. The soundest plan for Black is one which, according to theory, leads to an unclear ending: 9...\textit{ff}c6 followed by ...\textit{xf}d4 and ...\textit{ff}a5. On this topic, I recommend that you study the notes to my game with Shirvoy (Klaipeda 1988) in the third issue of \textit{Shakhmaty v SSSR} for 1989. Incidentally, playing 9...\textit{xf}d4 first is much worse.

9 ...  e6 (51)

I think that after the present game this move will disappear from use. It had been played against me – by Tseshkovsky – in one game seven years earlier (in the international tournament at Frunze in 1983). All I remembered was that although I had won that game, I had gained nothing much out of the opening. I now had to have a fresh think about the position.

Black’s idea is easy to understand – he aims to play ...d6-d5. Before exchanging on d5, I shall want to drive his knight away with g4-g5. I weighed up the natural continuation 10 0-0-0 d5 11 g5 \textit{ff}h5, and noticed that if now 12 ed, Black exchanges twice on d4 and takes the g-pawn with check. Should I defend the pawn on g5 first? 10 h4 looks natural, but after 10...d5 11 g5 \textit{ff}h5 Black will have the opportunity for ...\textit{gg}3, exchanging his knight for my bishop. That, by the way, is what happened in my game with Tseshkovsky; after 10 0-0-0 d5 11 g5 \textit{ff}h5 12 h4, Black played 12...\textit{gg}3 13 \textit{ff}g1 \textit{xd}f1 14 \textit{ff}xh1 \textit{ff}a5, and an unclear position resulted.

Now the point of the move I played becomes clear.

10 \textit{gg}1!

This may seem a perfectly logical decision, but it was not at all simple to take. The problem here is purely psychological: I had to break away from a well-known convention. It looks as if White should be conducting a traditional attack with h2-h4-h5, and the rook on g1 doesn’t fit in with this plan at all. In actual fact, it is far more important to carry out the prophylactic idea which underlies the modest rook move. Once Black has played ...e7-e6, he can no longer refrain from advancing in the centre:

10 ...  d5
11 g5

Now on 11...\textit{ff}h5 White plays 12 ed, and the knight on the edge of the
board is very badly placed; it has no moves at all. In such positions White sometimes transfers his own knight to g3, forcing an exchange which opens the h-file for his attack.

Georgiev decided to withdraw his knight to a normal square.

11... \( \mathcal{Q}d7 \)
12... \( \mathcal{Q}f6 \)

At this point I didn't bother to examine 13 \( \mathcal{Q}xd5 \), when White's backward development is bound to tell.

13 0-0-0

Positions like this sometimes arise from the Keres Attack in the Scheveningen Variation, but in that case the black king's bishop is on e7. Black plays ...\( \mathcal{Q}c6 \), denying an invasion on c4 which is not easy for White to stop. Here, with the bishop on g7 instead, the knight can be kept away by b2-b3. White can play this with no reservations, whereas with the bishop on e7 Black could reply with the dangerous play ...\( \mathcal{Q}b4 \).

13... \( \mathcal{Q}c6 \)
14... \( \mathcal{Q}f4 \)

It is useful to deprive Black's knight of the e5 square.

14... \( \mathcal{Q}e8 \)
15 \( \mathcal{Q}g3 \)

Perhaps 15 \( \mathcal{Q}f2 \), not allowing an exchange sacrifice, was more precise.

15... \( \mathcal{Q}d7 \)
16 \( \mathcal{Q}f2 \)

The impression is that Black has serious problems with his d-pawn and will not succeed in creating counterplay. In reply to ...\( \mathcal{Q}c6-a5 \), White always has b2-b3!

17 \( \mathcal{Q}b1 \)

For the time being White simply improves his position. He can win the game without needing to hurry. First he has to fortify himself in the centre.

17... \( \mathcal{Q}e7 \)

Perhaps Kiril could somewhere have played more ingeniously; perhaps there was a moment when he too could have found some inventive idea such as 10 \( \mathcal{Q}g1 \) or the 14...\( \mathcal{Q}e5 \) of the previous game. But his play has been conventional, and his position is now becoming strategically hopeless.

18... \( \mathcal{Q}f5 \)

Exchanges merely hasten the end for Black. If 18...\( \mathcal{Q}xd4 \), then 19 \( \mathcal{Q}xd4 \) \( \mathcal{Q}f5 \) 20 \( \mathcal{Q}e6 \).

19 \( \mathcal{Q}xf5 \)
20 \( \mathcal{Q}h3 \)

I only need to exchange both pairs of bishops, and it will be obvious how much weaker the black knight is than the white one. What remains is apparently not complicated - I can just exchange pieces and win the game.

20... \( \mathcal{Q}xh3 \)
21 \( \mathcal{Q}xh3 \)
22 \( \mathcal{Q}h6+ \)

See how successfully my rook has joined in the fight! But then, this was a consequence of the modest 10 \( \mathcal{Q}g1 \).

22... \( \mathcal{Q}g4 \)

In this position Black has run out of ideas. The only variation I needed to calculate was the queen sortie to g4 after a double exchange on c3. Let us see: 22...\( \mathcal{Q}xh2+ \) 23 \( \mathcal{Q}xh2 \) \( \mathcal{Q}xh2+ \) 24 \( \mathcal{Q}xh2 \) \( \mathcal{Q}f4 \) 25 \( \mathcal{Q}e1+ \) 26 \( \mathcal{Q}e1 \), and after 26...\( \mathcal{Q}xh4 \) 27 \( \mathcal{Q}e8+ \) \( \mathcal{Q}g7 \) 28 \( \mathcal{Q}c5 \) there is no defence against mate.

23 \( \mathcal{Q}d4 \)

White has fully implemented his idea. I didn't even need to advance my kingside pawns - the game ought to be decided by active operations in the centre. But from this moment, my opponent started defending ingenuously. Georgiev began to play unexpected moves, trying to alter the complexion of the game.

23... \( \mathcal{Q}h5 \)

I assumed Black would not have made this move if 24 gh did not suit him. I didn't bother to check it by calculating any variations. I kept firmly to my own course of action, especially since this was quite sufficient for victory.
I now made what was undoubtedly a serious mistake. White’s pieces are fully mobilised, and it is now time to proceed to a clear-cut exploitation of the advantage. The move that needs to be calculated is 29  \( \mathcal{Q}b3 \), but to be honest I didn’t even consider it, since it leaves the c-pawn hanging. Yet it was not hard to see that on 29...\( \mathcal{A}xg2 \) White wins with the simple 30 \( \mathcal{A}xa7 \). On the other hand if 29...\( a6 \), White plays 30 \( a7 \) anyway; after 30...\( \mathcal{A}c8 \) 31 \( \mathcal{A}d3 \), there is no defence against the check on \( c8 \). That would have been a logical conclusion to the game. But it appears I was not destined to win it. I continued in the same leisurely manner as before.

Incidentally, this kind of dilemma - whether to continue positionally or switch to direct action - is one that chessplayers frequently have to resolve. Up to this point I think my play was entirely correct, although there may have been valid alternatives. But at this crucial moment I hesitated and broke Steinitz’s famous rule: when you have the advantage, you must attack, or risk losing it. It is true that the move I played doesn’t throw away the win, it only makes it more complicated. The trouble is, as Tarrasch used to say, ‘mistakes never come singly’ - one error quite often brings another in its wake.

29  \( \mathcal{Q}b2 \)?  \( \mathcal{A}c6 \)

What happened next is hard to explain. While of course has a totally won position. The simplest course is 30 f5!  gxf5, when 31...\( \mathcal{A}c4+ \) fails to 32 \( \mathcal{A}xg7 \). At this moment the only danger to myself - as I clearly saw - was the tactical stroke 30...\( \mathcal{A}c4+ \).

30  \( \mathcal{A}d3 \)?

I thought I was continuing to strengthen my position and (most importantly) defending against 30...\( \mathcal{A}c4+ \). In fact, this blunder simply invites that move.

30  

30...\( \mathcal{A}c4+ ! \)

I had assumed that after 31 \( \mathcal{A}xc4 \) 32 \( \mathcal{A}x6 \) 4 d4 33 \( \mathcal{A}x6 \), White would come out a piece up; I forgot that the knight is taken with check. Having done irreparable damage, I fortunately didn’t lose my head; I realised that it was now dangerous to play for the win.

31  \( h2 \)  \( \mathcal{A}x6 \)
32  \( \mathcal{A}x5 \)  \( \mathcal{A}x3 \)
33  \( \mathcal{A}x6 \)  \( \mathcal{A}x6 \)
34  \( \mathcal{A}e8+ \)  \( \mathcal{A}x8 \)
35  \( \mathcal{A}x8+ \)  \( \mathcal{A}g7 \)
36  \( \mathcal{A}h3 \)

and after a few more moves we agreed a draw.

So in this game, one move – 10  \( \mathcal{E}g1 \) – exerted a very strong influence on the whole course of the struggle; it simply predetermined it. The opponent’s possibilities were thereby restricted, and the rook was brought into the game effectively and without loss of tempo.

The next example is a game with Alexander Beliavsky, which ended in success for me.

Dolmatov-Beliavsky

USSR Championship (Top League), Odessa 1989

Ruy Lopez

1  \( e4 \)  \( e5 \)
2  \( \mathcal{E}f3 \)  \( \mathcal{E}c6 \)
3  \( \mathcal{A}c4 \)  \( \mathcal{A}c6 \)
4  \( \mathcal{A}f7 \)  \( \mathcal{A}f6 \)
5  \( \mathcal{A}c4 \)  \( \mathcal{A}c7 \)
6  \( \mathcal{A}e1 \)  \( \mathcal{A}e7 \)
7  \( \mathcal{A}h4 \)  \( \mathcal{A}e4 \)
8  \( e3 \)  \( \mathcal{A}x5 \)
9  \( \mathcal{A}d3 \)  \( e5 \)
10  \( \mathcal{A}d7 \)  \( \mathcal{A}e8 \)
11  \( \mathcal{A}d2 \)  \( \mathcal{A}b7 \)
12  \( \mathcal{A}c2 \)  \( \mathcal{A}e8 \)

Black plays the Breyer System. I didn’t know very much about it - you can’t remember everything. Theory considers the main line to be 13 \( \mathcal{A}f1 \) 14 \( \mathcal{A}f3 \) 15 \( \mathcal{A}e2 \), and examines variations stretching to move 20 or 30. Some highly complex positions arise, in which it is easy to lose control. I don’t like to play that way, especially with White.

There is, however, another system, less popular but containing a fair amount of poison. In my preparations I had come across the game A.Sokolov-Beliavsky from the previous USSR Championship. Sokolov had gained an advantage, and I decided to play in the same way.

13  \( a4 \) 14 \( \mathcal{A}f3 \)
14  \( \mathcal{A}d3 \)

My impression of this position has changed from game to game. At first I thought that Beliavsky’s

14...\( c6 \) was obligatory. But then in the Reykjavik tournament in 1990, H.Olafsson played 14...\( \mathcal{A}d6 \) 15 \( \mathcal{A}c5 \) against me, and Geller explained after the game that all this had long been familiar - to a small circle. But even though the plan adopted by Olafsson was new to me, this did not stop me from gaining an opening advantage with 16 \( ab \) 17 \( \mathcal{A}xg8 \) \( \mathcal{A}xg8 \) 18 \( \mathcal{A}f3 \) (this, as I found out later, is where I innovated) 18...\( \mathcal{A}xg8 \) 19 \( \mathcal{A}xh5 \).

14...\( \mathcal{A}d6 \) 15 \( \mathcal{A}f4 \) \( e5 \)
15  \( b3 \)  \( g6 \)

Against Sokolov, Beliavsky continued differently: 15...\( \mathcal{A}e8 \) 16 \( \mathcal{A}a3 \) \( \mathcal{A}d5 \).

16  \( \mathcal{A}a3 \)  \( \mathcal{A}c7 \)
17  \( \mathcal{W}c2 \)  \( \mathcal{A}xa3 \) (54)

Here I had a think, and realised that this time Beliavsky wasn’t aiming to bring his knight to f4, as he had done against Sokolov; he was planning... \( \mathcal{A}d6-d5 \). I quickly decided that if he achieved this central advance, several pieces would be exchanged and he would equalise. So I
went on deliberating, since I had plenty of time in hand. I had taken five minutes for all the foregoing moves, and now I took 40 or 50 over this one. Finding the correct move didn't take as long as that, but I couldn't make up my mind to play it. The reasons were psychological - I liked the idea but it went against the conventional pattern, and my hand wouldn't reach out to move the piece.

18...Hab1!!
Prophylaxis! Once when Nimzowitsch played a move like this, Tarra-rasch called it 'mysterious'. In return, Nimzowitsch gave the heading 'Mysterious Rook Moves' to an entire section of his book My System. He wrote: 'What this amounts to is a certain kind of preventive measure. Essentially, it is only the outward appearance of the move that is "mysterious" (the rook occupies a file that is closed at present), but not at all its strategic aim. Preventing the opponent's freeing moves is far more important than asking whether the rook is currently active or is occupying a passive position.' But why does White's last move make it harder for Black to carry out his plan of ...d6-d5?

As a matter of fact, the immediate ...d6-d5 was not a threat. For example, after the natural 18 Haa1, Black's 18...d5? would be met by 19 Hxg7 Hxg7 20 b4! ed 21 cd, and Black is left with a bad light-squared bishop and an inferior pawn structure. The correct method would be 18...ba! 19 ba, and only then 19...d5 with equality.

But after 18 Hab1!! Beliavsky cannot reply 18...ba 19 ba d5, since the rook on the now open b-file is attacking the black bishop and tying the queen to its defence. The continuation would be 19 Hxf8 Hxf8 20 ed, after which White takes on e5, winning a pawn. And we already know how an immediate 18...d5 would be met.

You may well ask what happens if Black refrains from ...d6-d5 and plays, for instance, 18...Hg7. The d6 point is weakened, but is it all that serious? I shall not go into details but merely observe that if White carries out his intended move e3-c4, the b-file will again quite likely be opened by an exchange of pawns, so again the rook may be of use.

As a player, Beliavsky is a little lacking in flexibility. He usually copes excellently with tactical variations, but is significantly weaker when it comes to positional refinements. This is a case in point; he doesn't want to renounce his chosen plan. He sees that exchanging pawns on a4 is disadvantageous, whereas the immediate ...d6-d5 cannot be refuted outright. He overlooks that the resulting position is strategically difficult for him.

18... d5?
19 Hxf8 Hxf8
20 ba!

Of course Black's position is not yet lost, but White has acquired a secure plus from the opening.

20... de
21 Hxe4!
I didn't want to sharpen the play unnecessarily; after 21 Hxe4 Hxe4 22 Hxe4 f5, I would already need to sacrifice my bishop on f5.

I think Black should now play the restrained 21...Hd6. Beliavsky opens lines to no avail.

21... ed?!
22 cd Hd6 (55)

White's positional advantage is obvious, but at this point I am afraid I made a serious mistake. I should have played 23 a5! Ha7 24 Hb2, giving myself an extra tempo compared with the game. Oblivious of what Black intended here (namely to double rooks on the e-file), I played my next move more or less unreflectingly, hastily.

23 Hb3?
Aiming to attack f7 with 24 Hg5.
23... Hc7!
Black hopes to seize the initiative, seeing that my pawns have suddenly become vulnerable. He threatens to play 24...Hde8, followed (after a rook exchange) by...Hd5.

I now had to collect my thoughts and find what is probably the only move to hold White's entire structure together.

24 Hc2!
The correct retreat square, from which the bishop defends the a-pawn. In playing this move, it was essential to work out the variation 24...Hxe1+ 25 Hxe1 Hc5 26 Hb1 ba 27 Hxa4 Hc3, and now 28 Hc4l. White's position would be uncomfortable without this finesse, but fortunately it is available.

24... Hde8
25 Hb2+ Hxe1+
26 Hxe1 Hxe1+
27 Hxe1 (56)

A serious error. Black had the choice of allowing the queenside to be blocked with a4-a5, or exchanging on a4 himself. Beliavsky assessed the position wrongly. He should have played 27...ba! 28 Hxa4 Hb6, with an acceptable game.
Note that if 27...\( \mathcal{W}c7 \), the answer is not 28 \( \mathcal{D}xd3?! \) \( \mathcal{W}c2 \), or 28 \( \mathcal{D}f1?! \) ba 29 \( \mathcal{A}x\mathcal{A}4 \) \( a5 \), but 28 \( \mathcal{D}xf3 \) \( \mathcal{W}e2 \) 29 \( a5 \) \( \mathcal{D}e4 \) 30 \( \mathcal{D}d3 \), followed by \( \mathcal{W}c1 \).

28 \( a5 \) \( \mathcal{D}bd5 \)
29 \( \mathcal{D}d3 \)

White has the advantage again, since his opponent is left with a bad bishop.

29 ... \( \mathcal{A}e8 \)

Attempting to bring the bishop to f5. I prevent this, of course.

30 \( \mathcal{D}e5 \) \( \mathcal{D}f4 \) (57)

Characteristic play by Beliavsky. If he has an opportunity he goes straight for the attack. He now threatens to check on e2 or play 31...\( \mathcal{D}d5 \).

31 \( \mathcal{D}d1! \)

Perhaps my opponent overlooked this bishop manoeuvre. White has defended against everything, for example 31...\( \mathcal{W}d5 \) 32 \( \mathcal{D}f3 \). If 31...\( \mathcal{W}e7 \), then 32 \( \mathcal{D}f5 \) is strong. At this point Black should probably continue 31...h5?! But just as at move 18, Beliavsky is reluctant to abandon his plan; he persists with the same

manoeuvre, which only weakens his position.

31 ... \( \mathcal{W}d5 \)
32 \( \mathcal{D}f3 \) \( \mathcal{W}e5 \)
33 \( \mathcal{W}e1! \)

Black was hoping for 33 \( \mathcal{W}h2? \) \( \mathcal{W}h4 \). But now he has to sound the retreat. To add to his problems, Beliavsky was now short of time.

33 ... \( \mathcal{D}e4 \)
34 \( \mathcal{D}d6 \)
35 \( \mathcal{D}e3 \)

A leisurely build-up is highly unpleasant for an opponent in time-trouble. I strengthen my position and exchange his active pieces, while he doesn't know when to expect the decisive events.

35 ... \( \mathcal{W}d6 \)

The correct reply. When he played it, I first thought that Black was aiming to recapture on d5 with a piece, and I prepared to continue with 36 \( \mathcal{D}xd5 \). But suddenly it dawned on me that he might well take with the pawn. When realising an advantage, you usually have better winning chances if the pieces on the board are of different types. Bishop against knight is better than a bishop-versus-bishop ending. I felt that if Black took on d5 with his pawn, I would be better off keeping the knight on c3 than the bishop on f3.

36 \( \mathcal{D}xd5! \) \( cd \)

I was pleased at having figured out my opponent's plans in time.

37 \( \mathcal{W}d2 \) (58)

A little positional riddle: how do you think Black should conduct the defence? In his time-trouble Beliavsky failed to find the right solution.

The weakness of the dark squares in Black's camp is palpable. There is nothing to be done about the queenside, but the gaps on the kingside could have been covered by placing pawns on the dark squares f6, g5 and h6 — as is fitting when you have a light-squared bishop. The correct move, retaining chances of successful defence, was 37...g5!.

37 ... \( \mathcal{W}g7? \)

I now consider Black's position hopeless.

38 \( \mathcal{D}h4 \)
39 \( \mathcal{W}e3 \) \( \mathcal{D}e6 \) (59)

Unfortunately it was now my turn to go wrong.

40 \( \mathcal{W}g3? \)

In principle I don't recommend taking a major decision on move 40. But in this case there was a clear win; two accurate moves, and my opponent could have resigned. I should have played 40 \( \mathcal{D}xe6+! \) \( \mathcal{A}xe6 \) 41 \( \mathcal{W}e5+! \) \( \mathcal{W}xe5 \) 42 \( \mathcal{D}c5 \), when the white king is threatening to penetrate. On 42...f6, White has 43 f4. I saw that the immediate 40 \( \mathcal{W}e5+ \) \( \mathcal{W}xe5 \) 41 \( \mathcal{D}xe5 \) was unclear, but simply missed the preliminary exchange on e6.

Such mistakes are usually costly. Black has a bad position but he hopes to construct a fortress somehow and maintain it. The process of breaking down the opponent's defence may prove long and difficult (in actual fact the struggle was to continue for more than 40 more moves). If an opportunity turns up for altering the scene at once to your own advantage, you need to see it and take it. You may not find such a convenient method afterwards.

40 ... \( \mathcal{W}f6 \)

The game was adjourned here. In my analysis I unfortunately failed to find the strongest plan to exploit the advantage; it was shown to me afterwards by Beliavsky.

41 \( \mathcal{D}e1 \)

The sealed move. When making it, I had formed a reasonable plan. The black knight will soon withdraw to c7. White can bring a knight to f4,
but there seems to be no direct win. This being the case, I thought I would need to play 22-f3 and g3-g4 and then push the pawn to g5 to conquer the dark squares. But before advancing the pawns I would need to remove my king from the kingside.

Instead of 41 \( \text{Qe1} \), Beliavsky suggested 41 \( \text{Qe2} \) 42 \( \text{Qf4} \) 43 \( \text{Qf7} \) 43 \( \text{Qe1} ! \). I hadn't seen the retreat to c1 - I only looked at 43 \( \text{Qe3} \). The main threat is \( \text{Qcd3} \) and then \( \text{Qe5} \). With the queen on c3, Black would have the defence 43...\( \text{Qc6} \). (The point of having the king on f7 is not to allow \( \text{Qce6+} \)). With the queen on c1 this defence doesn't help, since White has 44 \( \text{Qfd3} \) (threatening 45 \( \text{Wh6} \)) 44...\( \text{Qg7} \) 45 \( \text{Qf4} \). A splendid way to win! Beliavsky confessed that on account of this plan he was reluctant to play on at all.

41 ... \( \text{Qe7} \)  
42 \( \text{Qd2} \) \( \text{Qg4} \)

I thought this only helped me to advance my pawns, but my opponent, as it turned out, was trying to prevent the manoeuvre \( \text{Qc3-e2-f4} \). It is amusing how differently we approached the position.

43 \( \text{Rf3} \) \( \text{Qe6} \)  
44 \( \text{Qe2} \) \( \text{Qf7} \)  
45 \( \text{Qg4} \) \( \text{hg} \)  
46 \( \text{Qf5} \) \( \text{Qe6} \)  
47 \( \text{Qg5} \) \( \text{Qf5} \)  
48 \( \text{gf}+ \) \( \text{Qxf6} \)

If 48...\( \text{Qxf6} \), then 49 \( \text{Qe5} \) is decisive, but after the move played, White can win easily with 49 \( \text{Wh6} \)!

which has the same idea: \( \text{Wh8+} \) and \( \text{Qe5} \).

49 \( \text{Qg5+}? \) \( \text{Qf7} \)  
50 \( \text{Qe3} \)

By now I had noticed my mistake and was trying to put it right. I withdrew my queen in the hope that Beliavsky would return his king to f6 to prevent 51 \( \text{Qe5} \). But he was on the alert and found the only correct defence, despite mutual time-trouble.

50 ... \( \text{Qe6}! \) (60)

It has suddenly become quite unclear how to make progress. White’s hands are tied by the exposed position of his king. Time on the clock was very short. I realised that I was on the verge of having to say goodbye to my dreams of winning. And then I succeeded in finding the solution, perhaps one of the best in the whole game.

51 \( \text{Qg3}! \)

A committal move, since several pawns are going to be exchanged. White will only be left with two. I saw I was obtaining the better knight endgame, but didn’t know if it was a

win. Still, even this opportunity was one that might not recur.

51 ... \( \text{Qc5} \)

If 51...\( \text{Qxc5} \), then 52 \( \text{de} \) with a large positional plus, since 52...\( \text{Wh6} \) is met by 53 \( \text{Qf4} \), controlling the very important \( d4 \) point.

52 \( \text{Qxg3} \) \( \text{Qxd4} \)  
53 \( \text{Qxf5}! \) \( \text{gf} \)

After 53...\( \text{Qxf5} \) 54 \( \text{Qd6} \), the continuation 54...\( \text{Qxa4} \) 55 \( \text{Qc7} \) is bad for Black, while on 54...\( \text{Qe7} \) White has the decisive 55 \( \text{Qc5} \) \( \text{Qd4} \) 56 \( \text{a6} \) \( \text{Qc6} \) 57 \( \text{Qe3} \), intending \( \text{Qd4} \) or \( \text{Qf4} \).

54 \( \text{Qxa6} \) \( \text{Qd6} \)  
55 \( \text{Qd7} \) \( \text{Qxb5} \) \( \text{Qg6} \)  
57 \( \text{Qd4} \) (61)

This is the position White has been aiming for, on the correct assumption that his passed pawns on the wings are stronger than his opponent’s in the centre. Some interesting play now commences. I thought that Black had two moves: 57...\( \text{Qh5} \) and 57...\( \text{Qf4} \). I planned to meet the latter with 58 \( \text{Qe2} \) \( \text{Qh5} \) 59 \( \text{Qf3} \) \( \text{Qxh4} \) 60 \( \text{Qxf4} \). There is only one pawn left on each side, but Black cannot save himself. The white king goes to the queenside and drives the knight away. The pawn on d5 is merely a hindrance to Black.

The other variation goes 57...\( \text{Qh5} \) 58 \( \text{Qe3} \) \( \text{Qa6} \) 59 \( \text{Qxf5} \) \( \text{Qg4} \) 60 \( \text{Qe3} \) \( \text{Qd5} \) 61 \( \text{Qd5} \) \( \text{Qf5} \) 62 \( \text{Qe4} \) \( \text{Qg5} \) 63 \( \text{Qb8} \) \( \text{Qd4} \) 64 \( \text{Qe6} \) 65 \( \text{Qc6} \) 66 a6, and wins.

Beliavsky found a third possibility; he played a cunning waiting move. But there is no longer a way to save the game.

57 ... \( \text{Qa6} \)  
58 \( \text{Qe3} \) \( \text{Qc5} \)  
59 \( \text{Qf4} \) \( \text{Qd3}+ \)  
60 \( \text{Qe3} \) \( \text{Qd4} \)  
61 \( \text{Qf4} \) \( \text{Qd4} \)  
62 \( \text{Qg3} \) \( \text{Qf6} \)  
63 \( \text{Qe2} \) \( \text{Qf6} \)  
64 \( \text{Qf4} \) \( \text{d4} \)

Something is achieved: the pawn has been forced to advance to a square where it is more easily attacked. But then, 62...\( \text{Qe5} \) loses at once to 63 \( \text{Qd3}+ \).

65 \( \text{Qe2} \) \( \text{Qf7} \)  
66 \( \text{Qd1}! \) \( \text{Qf6} \)  
67 \( \text{Qd2} \)

Placing the opponent in zugzwang is always pleasant.

67 ... \( \text{Qf7} \)

White can win in various ways. I decided to eat the pawn.

68 \( \text{Qe2} \) \( \text{Qg6} \)  
69 \( \text{Qxd4} \) \( \text{f4} \)  
70 \( \text{Qe2} \) \( \text{Qh5} \)  
71 \( \text{Qf3} \) \( \text{Qxh4} \)
72  \( \text{\#xf4} \)

The win is very simple now, because a knight always has great difficulty coping with a rook's pawn.

The final moves were: 72...\( \text{\#b5} \)
73 \( \text{\#e5} \) \( \text{\#g6} \) 74 \( \text{\#d6} \) \( \text{\#f7} \) 75 \( \text{\#c5} \) \( \text{\#a6} + \) 76 \( \text{\#b6} \) \( \text{\#d4} \) 77 \( \text{\#c6} \) \( \text{\#d5} + \)
78 \( \text{\#b7} \) \( \text{\#e6} \) 79 a6 \( \text{\#d7} \) 80 a7 \( \text{\#c7} \)
81 \( \text{\#e5} + \) \( \text{\#d8} \) 82 \( \text{\#c4} \) \( \text{\#a8} \) 83 \( \text{\#b6} \)
\( \text{\#c7} \) 84 \( \text{\#c6} \) 1-0

The game could have finished sooner if I had played more precisely. As it was, a curious and (I am afraid) fairly typical picture emerged. White solved the problems of the position and acquired a plus. Afterwards he weakened, committed inaccuracies and gave away all his advantage or a large part of it. Then he took control again, outplayed his opponent again, and began to be careless again. Certainly, it is hard to play faultlessly the whole time if the opponent is resisting for all he is worth; in such cases errors are only to be expected.

Now an example from a different opening – the Caro-Kann. The game was one of my few wins in the Hastings tournament. There were only three of them – yet they were enough for first place with a little to spare.

Dolmatov-Speelman
Hastings 1989/90
Caro-Kann

1  e4  c6
2  d4  d5
3  ed  ed

4  c4  e6
5  \( \text{\#e3} \) e6
6  \( \text{\#f3} \) \( \text{\#b4} \)

I nearly always play the Panov Attack, which often leads to a line of the Nimzo-Indian – as it does here.

7  \( \text{\#d3} \) d6
8  \( \text{\#xc4} \) d6
9  d6 \( \text{\#bd7} \) 62

A book position. There has been nothing new here for a long time. I know about 10 \( \text{\#e1} \) and 10 \( \text{\#d3} \). Black replies 10...\( \text{\#xc3} \) 11 bc b6 followed by 12...\( \text{\#b7} \). White develops his bishop on g5, leading to a complex struggle. Theory considers that White has no particular advantage.

On the day of this game, I was in the mood for playing unconventionally – especially since my opponent was Jon Speelman, no ordinary player himself, who looks for complications and heads straight towards them. A very active player, he makes a congenial opponent – he produces interesting games. I decided to continue ambitiously and sacrifice a pawn on c3 with 10 \( \text{\#g5} \)!

I had made an analogous sacrifice before, in a game against Flesch (Bucharest 1981). But in that game, instead of 9...\( \text{\#bd7} \), my opponent played the immediate 9...\( \text{\#xc3} \)? 10 bc \( \text{\#c7} \). There followed 11 \( \text{\#d3} \)? \( \text{\#bd7} \) (11...\( \text{\#xc3} \) is strongly answered by 12 \( \text{\#f4} \) 12 \( \text{\#a3} \) \#e8 13 \#d2! \#e8 (not 13...\( \text{\#xc3} \) 14 \#c4 and wins) 14 \#f3 \#f8 15 \#e4, with an obvious advantage to White. As you see, the bishop didn't go to g5 in any variation; at that time, I thought there was nothing for it to do there. But now I decided to try it. The idea occurred to me at the board; I hadn't analysed it at home.

Speelman is a bold player, and of course he accepted the offer.

10 \( \text{\#g5} \)? \( \text{\#xc3} \)
11  bc \( \text{\#c7} \)
12  \( \text{\#d3} \)!

I played this last move quickly, since the pawn sacrifice was the whole idea of 10 \( \text{\#g5} \). It was too late now to shy away from uncompromising lines; the cautious 12 \#d3?! allows Black easy equality after 12...\( \text{\#b6} \) 13 \#b3 \#b7 14 \#f1 \#ac8.

Essentially I was taking an imaginative, combative decision which involved a fair amount of risk. During the game I found encouragement in the following thought: 'I can't possibly have made any sort of mistake, since the only move I played independently was the perfectly reasonable \( \text{\#g5} \). What could be more natural than this move? Though my opponent wins a pawn, he is giving me a few tempi which ought to balance his small material plus.

12  ... \( \text{\#xc3} \)
13  \#e1 \( \text{\#a5} \) (63)

When I sacrificed the pawn it was imperative to foresee this position and find the move which now follows. If White plays a nondescript move, say 14 \#e1 to prepare \#e5, then after 14...\( \text{\#b6} \) 15 \#e5 \#b7 he is left without proper compensation. Black completes his development successfully, and in addition I have an isolated pawn in the centre. Even with material equality (putting a White pawn back on b2), Black would have a fine position. Therefore, I repeat, it was essential to foresee my next move.

14  \#e5!

Now 14...\( \text{\#b6} \) is met by 15 \#f3 \#d5 16 \#h3, threatening 17 \#xd7, and White works up a dangerous initiative. Such a turn of events is not to Speelman's liking.

14  ... \#xe5
15  \#e5 \#a3
16  \#e1!
Taking on e5 with the rook is inferior on account of 16...əd5 and then...ə5, when it is not clear how White develops his initiative further.

16...əxe5

After the game Speelman suggested 16...əxe4—a wholly unexpected possibility which wouldn’t occur to just anyone. In the event of 17 əxe4 əxe5, Black’s ingenious move is justified. But after 17 əxe8, Black is left with a bad position: 17...əxg5 18 əxa8 əxa8 19 h4, and now 19...əd8 fails to 20 əxh7+, as the lvy 19...g6 is met by the calm 20 əb1, and the knight is lost all the same.

17 əxf6 (64)

A draw results from 18 əxh7+ üxe7 19 əh5+ əg8 (of course not 19...əg7?? 20 ef+ and wins) 20 əg4+ əh8 (but not 20...əh7 21 ef) 21 əh4+ (now 21 ef fails to 21...əg8 22 əh4+ əg6). White can also give perpetual check with 18 əg4+ əh8 19 əh4 f5 20 üg6+ əg8 21 əg4+.

I sat there looking over these variations in my opponent’s thinking time, and suddenly Speelman played a different move. After the game I asked him, ‘Were you playing for a win?’ It turned out that he was not. He was afraid of playing 17...gf on account of 18 əg4+ əh8 19 əh4 f5 20 əf6+ əg8 21 ef1?? əd7 (there seems to be nothing better) 22 əe3. The only defence is 22...əe1 23 əf1 əxe3. Fortunately for me, Speelman thought that White retains winning chances here. Analysing it afterwards, we found no win.

17... əe8?!

When he played this, the surprise was almost too much for me. My thoughts were fixed on drawing, but now I looked and couldn’t see a perpetual check. I was the exchange and a pawn down. ‘Oh well, it’s just tough luck!’ I thought. For five minutes I couldn’t see anything that would do. I was sidetracked by all sorts of tries such as 18 əh5, and was astonished not to discover a draw. And then it dawned on me that it was pointless looking for a draw at all—I should be playing for mate. It is that sort of position!

18 əxh7+!! əxh7

A draw results from 18 əxh7+ əxh7 19 əh5+ əg8 (of course not 19...əg7?? 20 ef+ and wins) 20 əg4+ əh8 (but not 20...əh7 21 ef) 21 əh4+ (now 21 ef fails to 21...əg8 22 əh4+ əg6). White can also give perpetual check with 18 əg4+ əh8 19 əh4 f5 20 əf6+ əg8 21 əg4+.

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18 əxh7+!! əxh7

18...əf8 19 əg4+ əf12 20 ef wins.

19 ... əe8 20 əg5+ əf8

I think Speelman had missed the sacrifice on h7 followed by the white rook switching to the attack (although the idea is much the same as in the line he calculated after 17...gf). Otherwise he would not have gone into this position. How is he to defend now, faced with the transfer of the rook to the g or h-file?

Again my opponent astonished me. He found a means of prolonging his resistance for another fifty moves.

21 ... əb6

White has two moves: əe3 and əd4. An uneasy feeling came over me; I was afraid of getting it wrong.

22 əe3 əa6

23 əg4

If 23 əe4, then 23...əe2 24 h3 (24 f3? əe5+) 24...əe8, and 25 əf3 is met by 25...əxh6! 26 əc5+, proceeding to counter-attack against the white king.

23... əe2 (65)

24 əxg7!

White gains nothing from 24 əxg7+ əxg7 25 əh6+ in view of 25...əh8! drawing (but not 25...əf8? 26 əh7 mating). Afterwards, Grandmaster Smagin, who had been following the game, insisted that I could have won with 24 əh3. But I had calculated exactly this line: 24...əe8 25 h3 əe4 26 əd1+ 27 əh2 əd3! 28 əxg7 əe5, and who wins now? After this you can understand why I preferred to go into a won ending—and also, incidentally, why I rejected 22 əe3 əe6 23 əg3.

24... əxg4

25 əxf6+

There was also the intermediate check 25 əh6+. It is always vital to pay attention to this kind of possibility (such ‘trivial’ points can have a decisive bearing on the result of a game), and decide if it is worthwhile. In the present case I think it was better to take on f8 at once. White is preparing the advance of his h-pawn, and doesn’t want the black king to be on h7 to impede it.

25... əxf8

26 əxg4 əa8

27 əh4

A natural move, but nonetheless imprecise. 27 əe5, restricting the black king’s activity, was stronger. I was not worried about 27...əf7, seeing that it led to the loss of another pawn, but that is just what my opponent played.

27... əf7

28 əg5+ əd7
29 \[f4\] a5!
I should point out that Speelman is an excellent defender. He plays well all round, but is especially strong in defence - I felt this during the game. He set me such problems that there was a moment when I doubted whether I could win at all.

30 \[xf7+\] \[c6\] (66)

The h-pawn cannot queen on its own; the g-pawn must be brought to its help. Meanwhile Black will try to obtain a passed pawn on the other wing. A race between the pawns is not an attractive prospect. I therefore decided to put a brake on my opponent’s counterplay, at least temporarily, and only then advance my own pawns.

31 \[f3+\] \[c5\]
32 \[f3+\] \[c6\]
33 \[f3+\] \[c5\]
34 \[a3+\] \[c4\]
35 \[b3+\] \[c5\]
36 a4!

The threat was 37 \[b5+\]. Speelman defends his pawn and prepares to break with ...b6-b5.

37 \[c3+\] \[d5\]
38 f4 \[d4\]
39 \[xf3+\]
39 \[xf3+\] 40 \[c4+? \[c3\] 40 g3+ with a won position.
39 ...
40 \[c6\] \[c3\]
41 \[c1+\]

Here White should have preferred 41 g3!.
41 ...
42 h5 \[e8\]
43 \[f1+\] \[d2\]
44 \[b5\] \[e3\]
45 g3 \[d4\]
46 \[g2\]

Everything seems to be in order; White has stopped ...b6-b5, improved his position, and started to push the h-pawn. I almost stopped paying attention to Speelman’s moves.

46 ...
47 h6?!

A much more precise move was 47 g4!.

47 ...
48 \[d7\] b5
49 ab a4
50 b6 a3
51 \[a4\] \[b2\]
52 \[b4+\] \[a2\]
53 h7!

Now there is no simple way to win. I decided to sharpen the fight, allowing Black to play ...b6-b5 at last.

48 \[d7\] b5
49 ab a4
50 b6 a3
51 \[a4\] \[b2\]
52 \[b4+\] \[a2\]
53 h7!

Having stopped the black pawn by driving the king in front of it, White indirectly protects his own h-pawn. It cannot be taken without loss of a rook. However, the position is still not simple; I have let Black advance his passed pawn too far. The win hangs by one tempo.

53 ...
54 b7 \[e2+\]
55 \[f3\] \[b2\]
56 \[c4+\] \[b3+\]
57 \[g4\] \[b2\]
58 \[c8\] \[xh7\]

After 58...a2 59 \[xh8\] a1\[W\]
(59...\[xb7\] 60 \[g8\] a1\[W\] 61 \[h8\]) 60 b8\[W\] \[d1+\] 61 \[g5\], White escapes the checks since the rook on b3 is pinned.

59 \[b8\] \[g7+\]
60 \[h5\] \[xg3\]
61 \[d6\] \[h3+\]
62 \[g6\] \[bg3+\]
63 \[f7\] \[h7+\]
64 \[xe6\] \[h6+\]
65 \[f5\] \[xd6\]
66 ed a2
67 d7 a1\[W\]
68 \[b7+\] 1-0

White’s next move will be \[d8\] and Black hasn’t a single check.

I have now acquainted you with my approach to one aspect of the study of chess. In each game that we examined, we encountered the problem of one key move - usually occurring just after the opening - which gave a particular direction to the game and exerted an immense influence on the further course of the struggle. To me this is very much a problem for the imagination, not only involving chess principles as such, but also the player’s intuition, emotions, psychological condition.

The inspired solutions I demonstrated could only be conceived directly at the board in the process of a tense contest. My advice therefore is to fortify yourself psychologically, cultivate your intuition and learn to control your emotions. Do not confine yourself to the acquisition of knowledge; aim at self-improvement in the most diverse areas.
5 Practical Exercises
Mark Dvoretsky

I suggest that you exercise your skill by trying to answer for yourselves the questions which confronted the players in the opening stage of a game played some time ago.

I found this game in the remarkable book Het groot analyseboek by Jan Timman, published in 1979. I studied Timman's analyses with immense interest and to my own great benefit. Certainly, I discovered several mistakes in them. If an annotator doesn't confine himself to general remarks but makes a genuine attempt to investigate a game deeply, then of course some mistakes are inevitable, owing to the sheer complexity of the problems facing the analyst. Many errors pointed out by readers of the book were corrected in the English edition entitled The Art of Chess Analysis. Then in 1989, Timman presented me with a new edition in French: L'art de l'analyse.

The commentaries to the games in Timman's book had been written at various times over a period of years and published in a Dutch chess magazine. The game you are going to see is one of the first in the collection, and appears to be annotated to a lower standard than the rest. It clearly illustrates the fact that Timman was an indifferent analyst in his youth. Later, with accumulated experience, he began to analyse much better.

You will be given a fairly short time – from 5 to 15 minutes – to find the solution to each of the exercises I set you (some of which defeated Timman himself). But don't worry – you will be helped by some 'leading questions' which define your task more precisely.

Usually the problems that are set in competitions have completely clear-cut solutions – such as a forcing combination or a precisely calculated endgame. The test I am about to give you is a little unorthodox. Many questions will be of an obscure nature. It will be sometimes be hard to prove that one line of play is better than another. You will have to trust your general impression of the position, your intuition. Calculation of variations will also be required, of course; but it will be even more important to survey all the resources for both yourself and your opponent, and to assess the resulting situations correctly.

The questions will be of an entirely practical nature, and should be answered from the point of view of a player rather than an annotator. Your task will be to find – within the limits of the allotted time – the variations which are most important and most relevant to taking a practical decision. You will need to find the best possible trade-off between calculating variations and making positional judgements.

Polugaevsky-Mecking
Mar del Plata 1971
Semi-Slav Defence

1 c4       e6
2 Qf3       d5
3 e3       Qf6
4 Oc3       e6
5 b3       Obd7
6 Ab2       Ad6
7 d4

At this point 8 Wc2 would lead to a well-known position from the Meran Variation (1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 Qf3 Qf6 4 Oc3 e6 5 e3 Abd7 6 Wc2 Ad6 7 b3 0-0 8 Ab2) in which White's light-squared bishop is most often developed on e2. However Polugaevsky deviates slightly from the usual set-up.

8 Ad3       He8
9 Wc2 (67)

Now for the first exercise.

Q1 Indicate the basic candidate moves or possibilities for Black (10 minutes).

Well, nearly all of you stated Black's basic ideas correctly. There were even some suggestions that I didn't have in mind but are also worth examining. I considered that there were three basic possibilities here:

a) 9...de 10 bc e5 – the standard plan in similar positions, provided that the bishop is on e2. With the bishop on d3, it looks weaker.

b) The immediate 9...e5 – in such cases you always have to decide whether it pays to allow an exchange on d5.

c) The preparatory move 9...Wc7, the idea of which will be discussed presently.

Vadim Zviagintsev suggested the totally different plan of completing Black's development with ...b6 and ...Ab7. I shall not discuss this suggestion at any length, as I have not analysed it, but it seems quite sensible, and Black does sometimes play that way in similar situations – so it scores a bonus point.

Let me now state my own preference. The move I like best is 9...Wc7. Of course I cannot prove anything
I can only offer an explanation. What is the idea of the move? Well, let us consider — why didn’t White castle on move 9? Because of the reply 9...e5! White would then be unable to take on d5 in view of the fork with 10...e4. He would have to exchange on e5 in circumstances favourable to Black.

The point of 9...e5 was to keep control of the e4 square, so that after 9...e5 White would have the chance to exchange on d5. This explains Black’s quite subtle reply 9...e7. It is a useful move in this kind of position anyway, but in addition Black renews the threat of the fork after 9...e6-e5.

Vasya Emelin was the only one to choose this move — for this I award a bonus point to him too.

9...e7 was not played in the game or indicated in the notes. It is essentially an opening novelty, and quite a good one. This indeed is how novelties are devised; you just have to investigate the game or opening variation attentively and fathom its concealed ideas.

In his list of ‘candidate moves’, Yan Teplitsky gave almost every feasible move including 9...e5. This is rather overdoing things; it is like trying to fire a broadside. With such an abundance of possibilities, it is hard to reach any precise conclusions; too much time is needed. Try to use your judgement to set some limit to the list of candidate moves.

\[ 9 \text{... } e5 \]

**Q2 How should Black continue? (10 minutes).**

Given quiet play, White will obtain a small but stable positional advantage. So above all you should look at moves which disrupt the ‘normal’ flow of the game.

The first attempt is 13...\( \text{f5} \) 14 \( \text{c}3 \) \( \text{x}c3+ \) 15 \( \text{Wx}c3 \) \( \text{Wx}c3+ \) 16 \( \text{Qxc}3 \), and now 16...d4 — since otherwise White would have the more pleasant ending. After 17 \( \text{Qb}5! \) Black must sacrifice the exchange with 17...\( \text{d}e8 \) 18 \( \text{Qc}7 \) ef4.

You nearly all reached this position in your analysis, but not everyone succeeded in following the variation through clearly to its end. However, in the first edition of his book, even Timman went wrong. He gave an exclamation mark to the bad move 19 \( \text{Qd}7 \), which is refuted by 19...\( \text{e}8 \) 20 \( \text{x}a8 \) \( \text{Qf}5 \). The right continuation, of course, is 19 \( \text{Qxf2} \) \( \text{Qg}4+ \) 20 \( \text{Qg}1 \) \( \text{d}8 \) 21 \( \text{Qxa}8 \) \( \text{x}d3 \) 22 \( \text{Q}h3 \). An almost identical position — imagine the black rook on d2! — might be unclear owing to the bad position of the white king. But as it is, White has everything in order, for example 22...\( \text{Q}f6 \) 23 \( \text{Qh}2 \), or 22...\( \text{Qe}3 \) 23 \( \text{Qf}2 \). Black doesn’t have proper compensation for the exchange.

This whole variation occurred in a later game, Makarychev-Chekhov, Moscow 1981.

Seeing that the exchange sacrifice is unsound, the check on a5 has little point. Another active try is more interesting — 13...d4?!

If White replies 14 f4 or 14 \( \text{d}1 \), then 14...\( \text{Qd}6?! \). After 15 0-0 Black has a bishop sacrifice on h2. After 15 h3, Black has 15...\( \text{Qa}5+ \) 16 \( \text{Qh}5 \) or 16...\( \text{Qg}5 \), exerting pressure on the kingside. Very clever! The simple 14...\( \text{Qd}4 \) is also quite sufficient for equality.

The thematic reply is 14 e4! (69).

Q3 What are the consequences of 14...\( \text{Qxe}4 \) ? (5 minutes).

You all without exception gave the correct verdict. After 15 \( \text{x}e4 \) d3 16 \( \text{x}d3 \) \( \text{x}b2 \), White should not play the move given by Timman — 17 \( \text{d}1? \) \( \text{Qa}5+ \) — but simply 17 \( \text{x}h7+! \) \( \text{Qh}8 \) 18 \( \text{x}b2 \), and Black has no compensation for the pawn sacrificed.

What should Black do instead, then? White has the better pawn structure and is threatening to advance with f2-f4. The ending after 14...\( \text{Qa}5+ \) 15 \( \text{Qd}2 \) is clearly in his favour. Black must act as energetically as he can, and I think the only serious possibility is 14...\( \text{Qg}4 \). But after 15 \( \text{h}3 \), what is the reply? Black can deprive his opponent of castling rights, but after 15...\( \text{Qa}5+ \) 16 \( \text{Qf}1 \) the advantage is still with White. A stronger move is 15...\( \text{Qh}4 \). Now after 16 0-0, Black can strike with 16...\( \text{Qh}2 \) and all kinds of threats arise: ...\( \text{x}h3 \), or ...\( \text{Qd}3+ \). It is true that by playing 16 g3, White suddenly reminds his opponent that the
d-pawn has been en prise for some time. But Black is not disheartened, since after 16...\textit{Wh6} 17 \textit{Oxd4 Wb6} or 17...\textit{Oxh8}, the situation on the board is as confused as ever. Can you by any chance give a verdict on the final position of this variation? I worked out this whole series of moves in my analysis, sifting and discarding the alternative lines. Black is clearly justified in playing this way. It is risky for him — he remains a pawn down — but White too is taking a risk with his weakened kingside and his king stuck in the centre.

So the conclusion is that Black has the queen check on a5 which is not very effective, and also the enticing 13...d4!? which attempts to stir up complications. But Mecking opted for a different move:

13 ... \textit{Wd6}

To assess this move objectively, you need to do the following exercise.

Q4 Annotate the next series of moves played in the game (15 minutes).

14 \textit{Oxe5} \textit{Wxe5}
15 0-0 \textit{Oxh7}
16 \textit{Oxd4 (70)}

First let us evaluate the diagram position. It is evident that after the exchange of dark-squared bishops, White retained a slight positional plus due to his opponent's isolated d-pawn and passive light-squared bishop. It is not certain that White will be able to win, but at any rate he will be pressing throughout the game. Could Black have avoided this prospect?

Some of you suggested taking on e5 with the rook instead of the queen. I shall not give any points for this, for I don't see any particular merit in it. White replies to 14...\textit{Wxe5} with 15 \textit{Oxd4}, and is not worried about 15...\textit{Wh4}+ 16 \textit{Wd2 Wxd4?? 17 \textit{Oxh7+}. He plans \textit{Wc1}, followed (if he has the chance) by \textit{Wc7}. It is also worth considering 15 \textit{Wc1 d4 16 e4}.

After 14...\textit{Wxe5} 15 0-0, the recommendation of 15...\textit{Oxe4} is unconvincing. White puts his knight on d4 and at a suitable moment can even exchange on e4, emerging with a strong knight against a passive bishop. Black's position has the same defects as in the actual game.

However, the move 15...\textit{Oxg4}! gives Black quite good counterchances; it enables him to stir the position up. Naturally you could not work out the variations accurately in the short time, but your positional judgement rightly told many of you that this was the move Black had to decide on. The logic that operates here is typical of such situations: before resigning yourself to defending passively for the whole game, you must first look for any active resources that may change the unfavourable course of events. And if a move such as 15...\textit{Oxg4} has no direct refutation and leads to unclear situations, it should be played.

But White, for his part, could also have played more strongly and not allowed this unnecessary sharpening of the fight. In place of 15 0-0, a good method was 15 \textit{Wc3}! Many of you pointed it out. It is important to drive the black queen off its excellent central square. The position after 15...\textit{Wxe3}+ 16 \textit{Oxe3} is one that we know already from the variation 13...\textit{Wxa5}; our analysis of it was not superfluous. As you recall, 16...\textit{d4} 17 \textit{Oxb5} gives White the advantage; while if the black queen retreats, White can castle or play 16 \textit{Wd4}.

Would you suggest answering 15 \textit{Wc3}? Well, White simply castles, and 16...\textit{Oxh3} is harmless because of 17 \textit{Oxf4}. White plans \textit{Wd4} followed by \textit{Wf4}, or the even more active \textit{Wc7}. At any rate, in this line there is none of the counterplay which flares up after 15 0-0! \textit{Oxg4}!

Volodya Baklan indicated the variation 15 \textit{Wc3} \textit{Wf5} 16 0-0 \textit{Oxg4} 17 \textit{h3 Oe5}. But after 18 \textit{Oxf4} White still stands a little better; the pawn on d5 is weak. White is not obliged to castle but can play 16 \textit{Od4}. Still, on the whole it is true that Black has to wriggle somehow. I award a bonus point for this attempt to work out the consequences of 15 \textit{Wc3}.

We are now in a position to assess 13...\textit{Wd6} objectively. It leads to a somewhat inferior, passive position. Black should have preferred the more dynamic 13...d4?!

I give the maximum score of ten to those who pointed out the counterattacking idea 15...\textit{Oxe4}! for Black as well as the move 15 \textit{Wc3} for White. In two cases, your answer was based on the correct assumption — White has to think up something in place of 15 0-0, in view of the strong retort 15...\textit{Oxg4}! — but the move you gave was not \textit{Wc3}. For this I awarded part-scores between five and ten. Yan Teplitsky scored the least points because he 'fired a broadside' just as in the first exercise. He had been warned! Once again he pointed to a mass of possibilities including the correct ones, but didn't give a clear preference to any of them. You shouldn't be afraid of expressing your opinion. Of course it may turn out to be mistaken, but you learn from your mistakes. After all, the true aim is not to score maximum points in this competition. We are trying to develop an approach to decision-making, which you can utilise in practical play. In practice, you are obliged in the end to make a clear-cut choice between a move you like less and one you like more.
Now let us take a thorough look at the variation 15 0-0 \(Qg4\)1. How does White defend against the mate? The first attempt is 16 g3 \(\text{Wh}5\) 17 h4 (71).

Q5 How should Black continue? (5 minutes).

Here Black has the powerful move 17...\(g5\), which gives him a splendid position and a strong attack. The threats are ...\(gh\), and if appropriate ...\(De5\). You analysed 18 \(\text{Wg}2\). The reply I had in mind was 18...\(gh\), 19 \(\text{Wh}1\) h3+. In one of the answers, someone wrote that 18...\(gh\) was a bad move because of 19 \(Q\text{f}4\). I don’t think so – after 19...h3+ 20 \(\text{W}h1\) \(\text{Wh}6\), Black stands well. But perhaps 18...\(\text{X}e3\) is even stronger. The student who suggested this scores a bonus point.

The only difficulty about this exercise is the fact that Black has another tempting move, 17...\(De5\), which is not so easy to reject. This was actually the move recommended by Timman, but if we continue the variation with 18 \(\text{Q}xf4\) \(\text{Q}f3\) + 19 \(\text{W}g2\) \(\text{W}g4\) (the piece sacrifice 19...\(\text{Q}xh4\)+ 20 \(\text{W}g4\)+ 21 \(\text{Wh}2\) \(\text{Wh}xh4\) + 22 \(\text{Q}g1\) \(\text{Q}g4\)+ 23 \(\text{Q}g2\) is also inadequate) 20 \(\text{Wh}\), then it becomes clear that with White’s very unpleasant threat of 21 \(\text{Ax}e2\), the position must be assessed in his favour.

Let us continue our review of the defences to the mate threat which arises after 15 0-0 \(Qg4\). The second try is 16 \(Qg3\). In this case there are scarcely any questions to be asked; Black obviously replies 16...\(h5\)!. Play continues (let us say) with 17 \(\text{X}e1\) h4 18 \(\text{Q}f1\) h3 19 \(\text{G}g3\) \(\text{Wf}6\), followed by ...\(\text{X}e5\). An attack on the light squares commences; Black’s position is clearly better.

Timman recommends 16 \(Q\text{f}4\), and comes to an amusing conclusion: after 16...\(\text{Wf}6\) (with a view to 17...\(d4\)) 17 \(\text{Q}e2\) \(Qg4\) 18 \(Q\text{f}4\), the game ends in a draw. But does Black need to bring his knight back? He has two active moves, 16...\(g5\) and 16...\(d4\). In the first edition of his book (in Dutch), Timman wrote that both these moves were bad. In the English edition he only rejected one of them. It was not until the French edition (which took into account an article of mine published in New in Chess, criticising the mistakes in his book) that he gave the correct verdict – both moves promise Black an excellent game.

I will demonstrate one of these variations now. I shall then ask you to work out the other.

16...\(g5\) 17 \(h3\) \(g6\)! 18 \(e\) \(\text{X}f4\) 19 \(\text{W}xg4\) gives Black the advantage. If White regains his pawn by taking on h7, Black will attack in the h-file. Where did Timman go wrong here?

He was led astray by the attempt to win a pawn: 17...\(\text{X}xh5\)? 18 \(\text{Wh}xh6\) \(\text{W}g8\) 19 \(\text{W}xh6\) \(\text{Wh}xh6\) + 20 \(\text{Wh}7\), and by now it is White who is mounting a formidable attack.

The second variation begins with 16...\(d4\) 17 \(\text{Wh}xh7+\) \(\text{Wh}8\) 18 \(h3\) (72).

Q6 What position should Black be aiming for? (10 minutes).

Black has quite a few tempting possibilities. There are some fairly sharp, complicated lines; you cannot of course analyse them fully in the space of ten minutes. The aim is not so much to calculate as to estimate, to acquire a feel for where your advantage lies and what kind of position will be soundest. Try it.

Timman examines three continuations. The first goes 18...\(\text{X}xf4\) 19 \(\text{W}xh2\) \(\text{W}h4\) 20 \(g5\) \(\text{Wh}6\) \(\text{W}g7\) 22 \(\text{W}xg7+\) \(\text{W}xg7\) 23 \(\text{Wh}5+\) \(\text{Wh}xh7\) 24 \(\text{Wh}6+\), and White wins. The second goes 18...\(d6\) 19 \(\text{Q}g6\)! (the pawn on f7 is awkward to defend) 19...\(\text{W}xh7\) 20 \(\text{X}xh4\) 21 \(\text{X}xh8\) \(\text{X}xh8\). Black has gained two pieces for a rook, but his game is untenable owing to his weak king position; after 22 \(\text{W}xh7\) \(\text{Wh}6\), White’s threats are irresistible. Finally, the third continuation goes 18...\(\text{Wh}6\) 19 \(\text{W}xh7\) \(\text{W}xh7\) 21 \(\text{X}xh8\). But why should Black commit hara-kiri, opening up lines for his opponent’s rooks? In this last line he has the perfectly simple 19...\(\text{W}xh7\)! (instead of 19...\(\text{Wf}6\)), giving him splendid prospects.

So we see that after 16 \(\text{Q}f4\) Black is by no means compelled to settle for a draw but can choose between two attractive possibilities. What is White to do, then? Did his imprecise move 15 0-0? really give him the worse position? I do not think so. There is one more variation to examine: 16 \(\text{Wh}xh7+\) \(\text{Wh}8\), and only now 17 \(\text{Qg}3\). Obviously Black ought to win the bishop for three pawns: 17...\(\text{X}g6\) 18 \(\text{X}xg6\) \(\text{W}xg6\), with the probable continuation 19...\(\text{W}xh8\) 20 \(\text{Wh}xh8\) \(\text{Wh}xh8\) 21 \(\text{X}xh8\). Solving endgame studies is one thing. Once you are lucky enough to hit on the right sequence of moves, it is generally no trouble to evaluate the end position – it is a straight win, draw or loss. Practical play is much more complicated. Here, forced variations very often culminate in wholly unclear situations. I do not
know what judgement to pass on the diagram position. If anyone does know, let them tell us! But in any event I maintain that this is White's best option in response to the knight sortie 15...\(\text{Qg4}\).

If Black had played that move, imagine how hard White's task would have been! He would have had to examine 16 \(\text{Qg3}\), 16 \(\text{Qf4}\) and 16 \(\text{g3}\) – and then select this piece sacrifice (16 \(\text{Qxh7}\#\)) by process of elimination. He would have needed to feel – since exhaustive calculation was impossible – that everything else was dangerous for him, whereas in this case an unclear ending would arise.

We have now finished with the opening stage of the game under discussion. The play settled down to a quiet middlegame. It would be wrong to assert that White had a large plus, let alone a won position. Experienced, cool defenders are usually capable of saving themselves in this kind of situation.

But subsequently the difference in class between the two opponents made itself felt. Polugaevsky is a mature positional player. As for Mecking ... A year after this game, Tigran Petrosian wrote about him: 'Certainly, he is not a bad player. Perhaps he will improve, but I am convinced he will never be World Champion. This is mainly because of the narrowness of his chess thinking. For example, Mecking does not understand the significance of weak and strong squares. I have played him three times. In 1968 he lost to me owing to the weakness of his light squares. A year later he presented me with all the dark squares and again suffered defeat. And in the San Antonio tournament of 1972, Grandmaster Mecking again let me have dark-square control, and with it – victory. What distinguishes Mecking is lively piece play, but he has no genuine grasp of the underlying nature of a position; this is what makes me have doubts about his future as a player.'

A severe but instructive 'diagnosis'. I would point out that a weakness on squares of a particular colour usually results from placing pawns on the same colour of squares as your bishop. We shall see Mecking commit precisely this elementary positional error.

Here is how the game continued.

\[
\begin{align*}
16 & \text{\textbf{Qc8}} \\
17 & \text{\textbf{We2}} \\
18 & \text{\textbf{Wd6}} \\
& \text{\textbf{Wb2}}
\end{align*}
\]

Take note: if you have a light-squared bishop, it usually pays to place your queen on a square of the opposite colour. White covers the vulnerable squares on the queenside, and prepares to advance his pawns there if the occasion arises.

18 ... \(\text{a6?}\)

Petrosian is proved right – Mecking doesn't know which squares to keep his pawns on.

19 \(\text{Hxc1}\) \(\text{Qg4}\)

Too late! This no longer has much point.

20 \(\text{Qb3}\) \(\text{Wb6}\)
21 \(\text{Hxc8}\) \(\text{Hxc8}\)
22 \(\text{He1}\)

Polugaevsky follows the well-known rule: 'Take young players into the endgame!' It is easy to see that 22...\(\text{Qxe3}\) fails to 23 \(\text{Hxe8+}\) \(\text{Qxe8}\) 24 \(\text{Wxc1}\) or 24 \(\text{Wxe5}\).

22 ... \(\text{Qe6}\)
23 \(\text{Hxc8+}\) \(\text{Qxe8}\)
24 \(\text{Wc3}\) \(\text{Qd7}\)
25 \(\text{Qd4}\) \(\text{Qe8}\)
26 \(\text{a4}\) (74)

There is an old saying: 'When two do the same thing, it is not the same.' Polugaevsky places a pawn on the same colour square as his bishop, just as Mecking did before. But his aim is to advance it further, to fix his opponent's queenside. If Black plays 26...\(\text{a5}\) to thwart this plan, there follows 27 \(\text{Qb5}\) \(\text{Qxb5}\) 28 \(\text{Qxb5}\). This kind of device – which incidentally is quite difficult, and demands a subtle appraisal of the position – is called the transformation of advantages. White gives up one of his trumps – he exchanges his opponent's 'bad' bishop – but in return he procures another: a clear superiority in the placing of his pieces. Black will have great difficulty defending the entry points.

26 ... \(\text{Wc7}\)
27 \(\text{Qc7}\) \(\text{Qxc7}\)
28 \(\text{a5}\)

Here it was essential for Black to work out 28...\(\text{Qxe6}\)? If 29 \(\text{Qxe6}\), then 29...\(\text{f5}\) 30 \(\text{f4}\) \(\text{Wf7}\), followed by ...\(\text{h6}\), ...\(\text{f6}\) and only ...\(\text{e5}\). This was his best chance, giving realistic hopes of a draw. But Black plays a superficial move instead.

28 ... \(\text{Qf8}\)?
29 \(\text{Qf1}\)

Now the idea no longer works – after 29...\(\text{Qe6}\) 30 \(\text{Qxe6}\) \(\text{f5}\), the pawn on h7 is en prise. But Black could have played 29...\(\text{h6}\) and only then ...\(\text{Qe6}\).

29 ... \(\text{Qe7}\)
30 \(\text{Qe2}\) \(\text{g6}\)

Funny to see a grandmaster play like this! He sees that 30...\(\text{Qe6}\) is met by 31 \(\text{Qf5}\#\), and without any hesitation places one more pawn
on the same colour squares as his bishop.

31 \( \text{Q}\text{d2} \) \( \text{Q}\text{e6} \)

32 \( \text{Q}\text{xe6?!} \)

I find this hard to understand. The obvious move was 32 \( \text{Q}\text{c3} \).

32 ... \( \text{f}\text{e} \)

33 \( \text{f}\text{4} \) \( \text{e}\text{5} \)

34 \( \text{g}\text{3} \) \( \text{d}\text{d6} \)

At this point Timman tries to show by detailed analysis that Black could have held out with 34 ... \( \text{Q}\text{b5} \). To me his variations don’t seem sufficiently convincing, but there is no doubt that this was Black’s best chance. At any rate, White could not have gone into a king and pawn endgame, since after 35 \( \text{Q}\text{xb5} \) \( \text{a}\text{b6} \) 36 \( \text{Q}\text{e3} \) \( \text{Q}\text{e6} \), Black can answer 37 \( \text{Q}\text{b4} \) with 37 ... \( \text{d}\text{4} \).

35 \( \text{Q}\text{c3} \)

Now 35 ... \( \text{Q}\text{b5} \) is no longer playable; in the variation 36 \( \text{Q}\text{xb5} \) ab 37 \( \text{Q}\text{b4} \) \( \text{d}\text{4} \), White captures on \( \text{e}\text{5} \) with check.

35 ... \( \text{Q}\text{e6} \)

36 \( \text{Q}\text{b4} \) (75)

We now come to our final exercise.

Q7 What would you play here?

(5 minutes).

Mecking has spoilt his position enough already, and I am not convinced it can be held. But in any situation you must fight.

White threatens to play 37 \( \text{f}\text{e}+ \) \( \text{Q}\text{xe}5 \) 38 \( \text{Q}\text{e}5 \), penetrating on the dark squares. If Black exchanges on \( \text{f}4 \), the white king will transfer itself to \( d4 \). It is unlikely that White would fail to exploit such a huge positional plus, with all Black’s pawns on the same colour squares as his bishop.

The most natural move is 36 ... \( \text{d}\text{4} \)!

(If only to put a pawn on a dark square). I only gave you five minutes because it is not necessary to calculate the move exactly. A cursory appraisal of each side’s resources is sufficient. Perhaps this move loses all the same, but it is not such a simple matter. White would have to come to a decision – to take on \( d4 \) or \( e5 \), or perhaps play 37 \( e\text{4} \). But who knows which of these is correct?

Timman, at any rate, does not know. At first, for some reason, he didn’t examine this defence at all. After I had pointed it out in my article, he wrote in the French edition of his book that White wins with 37 \( e\text{4} \), followed by 38 \( \text{f}\text{e}+ \) \( \text{Q}\text{xe}5 \) 39 \( \text{Q}\text{c}5 \) \( \text{Q}\text{xb3} \) 40 \( \text{Q}\text{b6} \). Nonsense! Black has nothing to fear after 40 ... \( \text{d}\text{1} \) 41 \( \text{Q}\text{xb7} \) \( \text{d}\text{3} \). In any case, if he wishes, he can easily parry White’s ‘threat’ with 37 ... \( \text{d}\text{7} \).

36 ... \( \text{e}\text{7} \)

This further confirms Petrosian’s remarks about Mecking’s poor positional understanding. The remainder of the game is a lucid illustration of how to win such endings.

37 \( \text{gf} \) \( \text{g}\text{4} \)

38 \( \text{Q}\text{c3} \) \( \text{d}\text{3} \)

38 ... \( \text{Q}\text{e}5 \) 39 \( \text{b}\text{4} \+)

39 \( \text{Q}\text{d4} \) \( \text{g}\text{2} \)

If White had the chance place his bishop on the h1-a8 diagonal, he could break with \( e\text{3}-e\text{4} \) and attack the pawn on \( b7 \).

40 \( \text{h}\text{4} \) \( \text{d}\text{3} \)

41 \( \text{b}\text{4} \)

Before starting the decisive action, White makes all the useful moves to improve his position – following the well-known endgame rule, ‘Do not hurry!’

Incidentally, this statement is not as obvious as you may think. Are these pawn moves really useful to White? After all, a zugzwang position might well arise, where a tempo move with a pawn (b3-b4 or h2-h4) would be very handy. It is likely that Polugaevsky already sees how he will break through; he knows he does not need to keep any tempi in hand for the purpose of giving his opponent the move.

41 ... \( \text{h}\text{1} \)

42 \( \text{e}\text{2} \) \( \text{g}\text{2} \)

43 \( \text{g}\text{4} \) \( \text{e}\text{4} \)

44 \( \text{c}\text{8} \) \( \text{c}\text{7} \)

45 \( \text{e}\text{6} \) \( \text{d}\text{6} \)

46 \( \text{g}\text{8} \) \( \text{h}\text{6} \)

47 \( \text{f}\text{7} \) \( \text{h}\text{5} \)

Forced.

48 \( \text{e}\text{8} \) \( \text{c}\text{2} \)

49 \( \text{f}\text{7} \) \( \text{e}\text{4} \) (75)

50 \( \text{f}\text{5} \)

This break overthrows Black’s defence. If 50 ... \( \text{gf} \), then 51 \( \text{Q}\text{xf5} \) and the passed h-pawn is decisive.

The final moves were: 50 ... \( \text{xf5} \) 51 \( \text{Q}\text{xd5} \) \( \text{Q}\text{c8} \) 52 \( \text{e}\text{4} \) \( \text{e}\text{7} \) 53 \( \text{c}\text{e5} \) 54 \( \text{h}\text{h}4 \) 55 \( \text{g}\text{6} \) \( \text{h}\text{3} \) 56 \( \text{g}\text{7} \) 57 \( \text{g}\text{8} \) \( \text{h}\text{1} \) \( \text{w}\text{h8} \) 58 \( \text{h}\text{7}+ \) \( \text{Q}\text{d8} \) 59 \( \text{w}\text{f8}+ \) 1-0

Let us think about the reasons for Black’s defeat. As regards the middlegame, everything is clear. Enough has already been said about Mecking’s failure to understand the simple positional question of which squares to place the pawns on.

But then, the seeds of defeat were already sown in the opening or in the transition from opening to middlegame, when Black was left with an unpromising position. Why did that happen?

Mecking played very passively, conceding the initiative to his opponent. He didn’t utilise the attacking
opportunities that presented themselves in the opening – 13...d4! and 15...\(\text{Q}g4\) (or for that matter in the endgame – 36...d4!). Perhaps this was because he didn’t sense the strategic danger in the situation. Mecking may have imagined that defending against an experienced grandmaster is simplest in a quiet position. But this is a fundamental error. The very thing an experienced grandmaster wants is to play a position in which he is risking nothing and the only question is whether he is going to win or draw. A double-edged game with a risk of losing is far less congenial to him.

It cannot be said that White’s opening play was ideal. By failing to find 15...\(\text{Wc}3\)!, he gave Black the chance for 15...\(\text{Q}g4\)!, which would have abruptly altered the character of the fight. But afterwards Polugaevsky’s conduct of the game was entirely rational.

Passive tactics in the opening stage are dubious. What is needed is the opposite – maximum energy as well as maximum precision. After all, the outcome of the opening skirmish frequently determines the whole complexion of the subsequent play. The basic theme of these exercises was nothing other than the struggle for the initiative in the opening. You were training yourselves to find concrete solutions to opening problems.

Now for the results of our competition. The top scorers were bunched together. The single point difference between the winner and those who shared second to fourth places was of no great significance. The contest did nonetheless have an outright winner, and it was Maxim Bogulsavsky with 38 points. I congratulate him:

The next three places were shared between Dragiev, Emelin and Georgiev with 37. Makariiev and Zviagintsev scored 35 points each. Makariiev fell down rather badly at the start, in his analysis of 13...\(\text{Wa}5\!)$. Vadim Zviagintsev failed to cope with the series of moves that had to be annotated; he didn’t indicate 15...\(\text{Q}g4\!) – a very serious omission. Apart from this major failure, he did well in all the exercises. Volodya Baklan gained 33 points. The lowest score on this occasion went to Yan Teplitzky. You see how hard it is when you join in competitions at the last moment. He had only just arrived and evidently didn’t have time to acclimatise himself.

6 Building an Opening Repertoire

Mark Dvoretsky

There are many different approaches to working on your opening repertoire. It is an individual matter, and every chessplayer has his own guidelines. I hope that those I am going to describe will nonetheless also prove useful.

Which openings to include in your repertoire

Your choice of openings should depend first and foremost on your own style and taste. This rule may seem obvious, but all the same it is quite often broken, even by strong players.

When I was teaching at the Institute of Physical Culture, one of the students, a Candidate Master whose tournament results were rather poor, showed me some of his games. He was a quiet, sober-minded young man, and I was astonished that he played sharp openings like the Sicilian and King’s Indian. Why was this? The answer turned out to be simple. In the Moscow Palace of Young Pioneers he had belonged to a group whose coach was keen on fashionable opening lines. In other words, the young player’s choice of openings had depended not on his own taste but on that of the coach. I advised him to change his repertoire – in particular, to switch to \(\text{d}4\) with White. Soon afterwards his results improved, since he started playing his own kind of chess.

That was an example from the experience of a Candidate Master. But it seems to me that an entirely similar mistake was made by Grandmaster Mikhail Tal in his preparation for the return match against Botvinnik. In their first match, Tal had had some problems on the White side of the Caro-Kann, even though he achieved a plus score from that opening. In the return match he resolved to ‘stun’ Botvinnik with the Advance Variation which at that time was rarely used. From a strictly technical viewpoint he may have prepared it quite well. He did, in fact, have some interesting ideas in this system, yet he registered a minus score with it: one win, several draws and two losses. The explanation is simple. Tal had an excellent understanding and feel for open positions with lively piece play, but \(\text{e}4-\text{e}5\) leads to a closed position of the strategic type. In such a game Botvinnik had no trouble finding his bearings, whereas this was not at all Tal’s forte. He went straight into...
Another thing that players with good memories can usefully do is to expand and diversify their repertoire. They can afford to play a variety of openings, since they are able to absorb and memorise them. This enables them to select whatever system is most welcome to a particular opponent.

For players with less good memories it is dangerous to follow the same path. I know from my own experience what an exasperating labour it is to memorise 'theory' before a game. You have it all written down in notebooks, you have gone through it ten times before starting play, and still you can't remember it. If this is so, it may well be better to concentrate on what I would call 'opening schemes'—logical systems with a smaller amount of theory, in which it is more important to understand the position and know about typical ideas and resources than to memorise specific details and precise move-orders.

In general, openings might be formally divided into 'opening variations' and 'opening schemes'. Of course this classification is relative, since the theory of any opening involves both a set of exact, concrete variations and elements of logic and planning—the question is only how these factors inter-relate. Thus, with a good memory, go ahead and learn 'opening variations'; with an indifferent memory, concentrate on 'opening schemes'.

Example of an *opening scheme*

A long time ago, when I was still a 'first category' player, I was interested in the question of how to combat the Closed Variation of the Sicilian Defence. People are sometimes worried by strange problems! How to play a normal Sicilian with Black—I evidently knew that.

My coach at that time was A. Rosshal, and I have to say that he was a good one. He is now a well-known journalist, though unfortunately somewhat lacking in principle. In one of his coaching sessions he demonstrated a system of play against the Closed Sicilian. I liked the system and it seemed logical. I saw that it was not only suited to that particular opening but would work against a number of analogous formations by White—for instance the King's Indian Attack. In other words, this scheme is fairly flexible and versatile. I recommend it to you too; you will not regret it.

Right away I started employing this new plan.

Gorodilov-Dvoretzky

Leningrad 1964

French Defence

1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5

Black's plan is suited to many contexts, including the Chigorin Variation of the French.

| 3 | g3 | Qc6 |
| 4 | d3 | g6 |
| 5 | Kg2 | Kg7 |
| 6 | 0-0 | Qg7 |
| 7 | d3 | 0-0 |

Immediately after the game I discovered that in such situations Black has to reckon with the positional threat of c4-c5, as played in the beautiful game Petrosian-Pachman, Bled 1961. (This game, as well as some others I shall mention, can be found in the Appendix to this lecture.) But when you are just starting to play a new system, there are many refinements you don't yet know about. Deep understanding comes with practice.

8 c3 d6
9 Qd1?

I had played this way in similar situations myself. I would retreat the knight, push my pawns to f4 and g4, and expect to give mate shortly. I was particularly interested in how Black can resist this sort of attack.

9 ... Nb8

The advance of the b-pawn is Black's basic plan. He creates counterplay on the queenside.

10 f4 b5
11 h3 b4
12 Ne3 bc
13 bc Na6 (77)

Strategically I believe Black virtually has a won game. A short while ago the bishop on g7 faced a solidly defended white pawn on c3, but now it is pressing against a weak, vulnerable one. The other bishop has also
occupied an excellent diagonal, attacking the pawn on d3. Black controls the open b-file and will increase the pressure with ... \( \text{Wh}a5 \). His well thought-out scheme for deploying his forces has enabled him to work up a queenside initiative in a short time.

What is White to do? Look how flexibly the black knights are positioned. They defend each other and at the same time the knight on e7 is controlling f5. Black has to give close attention to White's possible thrust with his f-pawn. If this breakthrough is threatened (for example after g3-g4), Black will prevent it with ...f7-f5. In so doing he will retain control of all the central squares; his position will remain solid and supple.

![Chessboard diagram]

14 \( \text{Wc}2 \)?
My opponent wants to develop his queen's knight, but comes up against a tactical stroke typical of this set-up.
14 ... \( \text{Qb}4 \! 
15 \text{cb} \text{Axa1} 
There is no need to show any more – Black is a sound exchange up, and won easily.

My first outing with this opening scheme had been a success. Things went equally well in the following game.

**Turovsky-Dvoretsky**

*Moscow 1964*

*French Defence*

1 e4 e6
2 \( \text{Wc}2 \) c5
3 \( \text{Qf3} \) d6
4 g3 g6
5 \( \text{Qg}2 \) \( \text{Qg}7 \)
6 0-0 \( \text{d6} \)

By this time, as you can see, I understood the position better and didn't allow e4-e5. It was Cicero who said that anyone can make a mistake but only a madman persists in his errors.

7 \( \text{Qc}3 \) \( \text{Qe}7 \)
8 d3 0-0

The position now resembles a Closed Sicilian (since the knight is on c3), but it is more comfortable for Black than that system normally is, since White doesn't usually block his f-pawn with his king's knight. In addition, it is hard to make sense of the move \( \text{Wc}2 \) – it serves no purpose for White.

9 \( \text{Qe}3 \) \( \text{Ab}8 \)
Black's plan is the same – to extend the diagonal of his king's bishop by advancing the b-pawn.

10 \( \text{Wd}2 \) (78)

Here is an interesting problem which is important for the whole variation. White probably wants to play \( \text{Qh}6 \). Black can preserve his strong bishop from exchange by playing 10...\( \text{Be}8 \) and meeting 11 \( \text{Qh}6 \) with 11...\( \text{Qh}8 \), but a different reaction is also possible; Black may allow the exchange, then rearrange his pawns on dark squares (...e6-e5, ...f7-f6) and play to confine White's light-squared bishop which becomes 'bad'. Both strategies are feasible, and in each game Black needs to consider the specific reasons for adopting one or the other.

10 ... \( \text{Be}8 \)?

Why is this move dubious? At that time I didn't realise that Black must watch out for 11 d4 as well as 11 \( \text{Qh}6 \). After the opening of the d-file, the pawn on d6 becomes vulnerable. In such cases Black usually needs to prevent d3-d4 by playing ...\( \text{Qd}4 \).

11 \( \text{Qd}1 \)
White wants to seize the centre with c2-c3 and d3-d4. But this plan is too slow; it would only make sense if Black had no time to 'fasten onto' the pawn on c3 with his own b-pawn.

11 ... \( \text{b5} \)
12 c3 \( \text{b4} \)
13 d4 \( \text{bc} \)
14 \( \text{Qe}1 \) \( \text{Qa}6 \)
15 \( \text{Qe}1 \) \( \text{cd} \)
16 \( \text{Wxa5} \! 
Black's pieces are very harmoniously placed – much more so than White's. Just as in the previous game, the black bishops are sweeping the whole board, the rooks control the b- and c-files, and the white pawn on d4 is weak. After 17 \( \text{Wxa5} \) \( \text{Qxa5} \), the black knight would go to c4.

17 \( \text{Qc}3 \) \( \text{Qe}8 \)
18 \( \text{Qe}1 \) \( \text{Wa}3 \)

Threatening to invade on b2 with a rook.

19 \( \text{Qab1} \) \( \text{Qa}5 \)
When you are sure of your plan you don't even need to think much – all your moves are natural. The game plays itself; Black could even have played this way in a blitz game.

20 \( \text{Qxb8} \) \( \text{Qxb8} \)
21 \( \text{Qb1} \) \( \text{Qc}8 \)
22 \( \text{Qd}1 \)
Better is 22 \( \text{Qd}5 \).

22 ...

23 \( \text{Qb}4 \) \( \text{Wxa2} \)
24 \( \text{Qc}3 \) \( \text{Qa}3 \)
25 \( \text{Qc}1 \) \( \text{Qxb}4 \)
26 \( \text{Qxb}4 \) \( \text{Qb}6 \)
27 \( \text{Qd}2 \) \( \text{Qc}6 \)

0-1

The harvest begins.

White resigned since he is losing a second pawn.
In demonstrating this game I have not gone deeply into any variations. The first reason is that both opponents were only in the 'first category'. Concrete details and nuances are best studied in games by stronger players. But secondly, we are examining an 'opening scheme' rather than an 'opening variation'. In a case like this, the detailed analysis of variations is less important to us than the outline of the game, the plans of both players, the typical devices for conducting the fight.

This comparatively easy method of play brought results not only in junior contests. I later continued to employ the scheme successfully against very strong opponents.

Bronstein-Dvoretsky
Moscow 1976
Sicilian Defence

1 e4 e5
2 9c3 9c6
3 g3 g6
4 9g2 9g7
5 d3 d6
6 9e3 d6

Why not 6...9d4 instead? That was what Denker played against Smyslov in the USSR-USA match in 1946. Take note, however: the black knight should occupy d4 only after the white king's knight has moved to f3 or e2. White answers 6...9d4?! with 7 9xe2! followed by c2-c3 and d3-d4. The variation 7...9xe2 8 9xe2 9xb2 9 9b1 favours White, since 9...9a5+ 10 9d2 9xa2 fails to
11 9xb2 12 9c3.
7 f3 9g7
8 9f3

Now which move, 8...0-0 or 8...9d4, do you think is more precise? We have already observed that Black has to take d3-d4 into account. It is not always dangerous, but it is better to prevent it all the same.
8 ... 9d4!
9 0-0

One of the basic positions of the Closed Sicilian has been reached. White has a number of continuations: 10 9d2, 10 9e2, 10 9b1; even the pawn sacrifice 10 e5?! has been played. In this situation, general considerations are not enough; knowledge of the detailed theory is indispensable. You can easily find out about it for yourselves if you want, but at present we have other aims.

10 g4

What should Black play now? It would be very dangerous to allow a pawn sacrifice with f4-f5, breaking up the pawn cover in front of the white king. The standard response to such a threat, as we have said before, is the counterstroke ...f5-f4.

10 ... 9f5 (79)

But how is Black going to take back on f5? In this kind of position there is a rule of thumb: recapture with the opposite pawn to the one your opponent captured with; in other words answer g4x5 with ...e6x5, and e4x5 with ...g6x5. I don't know how to explain it logically, but my experience with the system tells me that this rule generally applies.

11 gf ef
12 9d2

In this position the standard plan of ...9b8, ...b5 and ...b4 is rather slow. Black needs to complete his development and go into action in the centre. What is the best square for his light-squared bishop? In such positions it often develops on e6 (after a preliminary ...9h8, so that 9g5 may be met by ...9g8). But I decided to place it on c6 to oppose the white bishop on the long diagonal.

12 ... 9c6
13 9f2

White finally evicts the knight from d4.

13 ... 9xf3+
14 9xf3 9c6
Black wants to prepare ...d6-d5 (perhaps by playing ...b6 and bringing his queen to b7), after which he would win the battle for the centre.

15 9g2 b6
16 9ad1 9c7

Black intends ...b7, ...9ad8 and ...d5.

17 9e2
Of course, taking the pawn on b2 is bad; White would answer c2-c3 and set about trapping the bishop. He now wants to play c2-c4 after first protecting the b-pawn. I guessed this plan and prepared an antidote.

17 ... 9a8
18 9c1 9b7 (80)

Black's position is preferable; his pieces are exerting troublesome pressure on the opponent's centre.

19 c4?! Positively this move is justified; it prevents the advance ...d7-d5, and prepares to bring the knight to d5 via c3. However, in carrying out his plan, Bronstein has underestimated the flank diversion I have prepared. It seems he should have played 19 9g3, to which Black would reply 19...d5 20 e5 d4 with somewhat the better chances.
19 ... 9a6!
The pawn on a2 is threatened, but in addition Black wishes to exchange pawns in the centre. If White takes on e4 with a piece, my knight will acquire the tremendous square f5. If he takes with his pawn, I shall capture on c4.

20 \( \text{Qc}3 \) \( \text{fe} \)  
21 \( \text{de} \)  

Nevertheless 21 \( \text{Qxe}4 \) was better. In my opponent’s place I would not want to part with the pawn.

21 ... \( \text{Ld}4+ \)  
22 \( \text{f}1 \) \( \text{Wxc}4 \)  
23 \( \text{Kf}1?! \) \( \text{wh}8 \)  
24 \( \text{Qe}2 \) \( \text{g}7 \)  
25 \( \text{b}3 \) \( \text{Wxa}6 \)  
26 \( \text{Qg}3 \) \( \text{Wb}7 \)

Again Black has set up that battery on the long diagonal which he possessed a few moves earlier. Against the natural 27 \( \text{Bx}6 \), I had prepared the highly unpleasant counter-blow 27...\( \text{Qf}5! \) (28 \( \text{Bx}6 \) \( \text{Qh}4 \)).

27 \( \text{Qg}1 \)?

He should have supported his bishop with 27 \( \text{Qf}1 \). Now I still force events to my own advantage.

27 ... \( \text{Qf}5! \)  
28 \( \text{Qxf}3 \) \( \text{Qxf}5 \)  
28...\( \text{gf} \) 29 \( \text{Kb}2 \) \( \text{f}1 \) is also good.

29 \( \text{Bx}6 \) \( \text{xe}4 \)  
30 \( \text{Lxe}4 \) \( \text{Wxe}4 \)  
31 \( \text{Wxe}4 \) \( \text{xe}4 \)  
32 \( \text{Bd}8+ \) \( \text{f}8 \)  
33 \( \text{Bxf}8+ \) \( \text{xf}8 \)  
34 \( \text{f}5 \) \( \text{g}7! \)  
35 \( \text{fg} \) \( \text{d}4 \)  
36 \( \text{g}7+ \) \( \text{gg}8 \)

37 \( \text{Af}1 \) \( \text{Wxg}7 \)

Black has a decisive advantage.

We shall come back to this ‘opening scheme’ later, but for the moment let us continue our discussion of how to construct an opening repertoire.

Some remarks on the technique for opening work

The most inefficient method—which I have never used—is to write down opening information in a notebook. Nothing worse can be imagined! You fill up the pages with games and variations—then new games, fresh ideas, additional variations come to light, and you don’t know where to put them. Some pages of information turn out to be unsound—they have to be revised or even discarded, and of course you can hardly insert clean pages into your book. A kind of version gradually develops—you feel how outdated your notes are, and how inconvenient it is to write down novelties.

All your information, especially on the openings, should be collected in a card index. The cards can either be miniature ones or large sheets. When necessary you can always write out a new card, affix it to any other one, throw away one that contains mistakes—in short, do what you like with them.

Another piece of advice is to leave wide margins; there will always be something to insert in them. Leave gaps in places where you feel something new will crop up. Write on one side of the card only.

Artur Yusupov, Sergei Dolmatov and all other chessplayers who work with me possess large sets of files containing analyses of various openings or even individual variations. But today, of course, even this way of working is a little old-fashioned. Obviously it is much handier to manage your card index on a computer. In this form it is always just as good as new. You can easily amend it, add to it, correct it. You can use a system of codes whereby everything is neatly classified. Computerised handling of opening information is a topic demanding special discussion; we will not go into it just now.

‘Your own theory’

Let us suppose you have made a good choice of openings and your card index is organised faultlessly. It contains the latest games and excerpts from specialised articles. You are thoroughly acquainted with it and have committed everything to memory. ‘Now I’m bound to get a plus from the opening’, you think to yourself. But you are wrong—because to achieve really good results, it is not enough to know the ‘official’ theory. What is essential (as Botvinnik once remarked) is to possess ‘opening theory of your own’.

It is very important to include in your repertoire some systems and variations on which your opinion differs, even if only slightly, from that of the theorists. This contribution of your own may be a novelty which entails the reappraisal of a whole variation or rehabilitates a scheme considered bad. Or it may be an unconventional assessment of a familiar position. The position may be to your own liking although it is supposed to be none too favourable. You evolve a plan of action suited to it, and decide that you are willing to play it despite its dubious reputation.

In general you need to be keen on your own pet lines, systems that you have analysed and have a feel for. A player who only knows what has been played before can scarcely count on success. He will never gain the advantage against an experienced opponent, since the latter will know it all too. But with the aid of ‘your own theory’, you can be a step ahead of your opponent in the opening; you can put him in an uncomfortable position, take him into territory where he doesn’t understand what is happening.

How an opening repertoire expands

It is not often that a player just gives his head a scratch, says to himself ‘How about studying, er, the Nimzo-Indian?’—then turns to the Encyclopaedia and learns it up. Such things happen, but only rarely. Usually a new scheme or variation is taken into
your repertoire as a result of some particular stimulus. To many young players this stimulus is supplied by their coach. He will say 'I've got some good analysis on such-and-such an opening system. I'll show it to you - you'll beat everyone with it.' This often proves useful. But do not make a habit of working this way. Sooner or later the coach's stock of ideas will dry up, and anyway you will attain a standard where he can no longer help you; you will have to think for yourself. That said, the help of a coach may indeed give you some good ideas now and again.

When Valery Chekhov won the qualifying tournament for the World Junior Championship in 1975, it was clear that the openings he was playing would not do for the championship itself. He had no active systems with Black, and even with White he played all kinds of rubbish although he had been coached by an openings specialist at the Palace of Young Pioneers before he started working with me.

Recognising where his weak points were, and what problems needed to be solved, I invited Grandmaster Sveshnikov to one of our training sessions. The set of openings that he could show us was well known - he has been playing them all his life. With Black he plays the Lasker-Pelikan or Sveshnikov Variation; with White against the Sicilian he plays 2 c3. This was exactly what we needed - a system against the Sicilian and an active way of combating 1 e4. At that time there wasn't a large mass of theory on the Sveshnikov Variation; the only other player who constantly used it was Taimanov. Sveshnikov helped us to assimilate these two openings, and Chekhov employed them successfully in the World Junior. They became part of his repertoire. What is more, the notes made during that training session were useful to me in widening my own stock of openings. I later showed the Sveshnikov Variation to Artur Yusupov and Sergei Dolmatov, and they too played it for a while. In other words, a few hours' consultation with Sveshnikov helped to shape the opening repertoire of a whole group of players for some time.

Another example is Dolmatov's preparation for the World Junior Championship in 1978. The situation was a similar one: Sergei didn't have a reliable system with White against the Sicilian. I couldn't help him myself, since I didn't play anything respectable against it either - I would just play \( \underline{2} b5 \) at the first convenient moment. Before the tournament we invited Grandmaster Tukmakov to a training session. Tukmakov is a connoisseur of the Sicilian for the Black side. For such a specialist to demonstrate the basic ideas of White's play is not too difficult. Our consultation with him proved exceptionally useful to Dolmatov. In the World Junior he played normal Sicilian lines, confronting the Scheveningen Variation with confidence; ever since then he has constantly been successful with White in the main lines of the Sicilian.

It often happens that information is 'in the air' and reaches us by chance. Once, while still at university, I went to the Institute of Physical Culture to hear a lecture by Grandmaster Razuvayev on the Exchange Variation of the Spanish Game. He demonstrated some recent games by Fischer and explained their basic ideas. I enjoyed that one-and-a-half-hour lecture so much that after looking at the Exchange Variation for myself I went on to win some good games with it.

So a hint from a coach or specialist may come in very useful and stimulate you to include an opening in your repertoire. It is easy to see why. When you begin studying an opening, you have a huge pile of material in front of you - large numbers of games and some pages of small print in the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*. You don't know how much of this is actually needed, what the main lines are and which lines are of secondary importance. You look at variations without knowing what lies behind them. If your coach can explain the main ideas and help you to make your selection, this is of course a major step forward.

But then, it is not just from your coach that you can expect help. Working jointly with one of your friends is especially productive. You both have your own ideas and collections of information, and it pays to exchange them and analyse them together. The drawbacks to this way of working are always outweighed by the advantages. Of course you cannot play an opening variation against the same friend who analysed it with you; and if he is the first to use one of your innovations, you can no longer rely on it for surprise effect. So much for the snags. On the plus side - first, you are acquiring fresh information, and secondly, the openings you already play will be more thoroughly worked out. Ultimately you are competing not against your friends but against the rest of the chess world. You are disarmed against your colleague but better armed against all other players - and that is more important. The cooperation between Yusupov and Dolmatov, extending over many years, is a very instructive example. Numerous variations were worked out by their joint analysis. Some ideas of Yusupov's were taken up by Dolmatov and vice versa; as a result they both improved their opening repertoire.

So the second stimulus to expand your repertoire is the exchange of information with a friend.

A third type of stimulus is the analysis of games. It is precisely in this way that strong players discover the ideas that are most important to them. At the previous session of our
A few years passed. Something in the Grünfeld Defence caught my interest, and I opened the Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings. Suddenly I noticed that the opening variation of Nezhmetdinov's game, in which he found a forced win for White, appeared in ECO with the opposite assessment — better for Black. I realised at once that this was a mine that could be laid to catch some assiduous reader of opening books.

Nezhmetdinov-Amateur

Kazan 1951

Grünfeld Defence

1 d4 ♘f6
2 c4 g6
3 ♘c3 d5
4 cd e4
5 e4 ♘xe3
6 bc ♘c5
7 ♘b5+ ♘d6?! This very move was recommended in the first edition of ECO. (In the second edition the mistake is corrected; 7...♘d7 is now given as the main line for Black.)
8 d5 ♕a5
In addition to this sortie, 8...a6 should be considered. A forced exchange of blows now ensues.
9 ♕a4!
What is Black to do? Nezhmetdinov has defended his bishop; after a queen exchange, Black loses a piece.
9 ... ♕xc3+
10 ♕e2 ♘d7 10...♕xa1 is met by 11 dc.

In ECO this position is assessed as better for Black. The white rook is en prise. Do you see how Black answers the natural move 13 ♐b1? Quite right — 13...♗d3!! 14 ♘xd3 ♘xc6+, and Black emerges with an extra pawn. This occurred in a game Isakov-Nikitin (1947).

You may suggest 13 ♘f3. That is an interesting move. It is not considered in ECO, so let us take a look at it. What if Black captures the rook? White replies with 14 ♙d1, or the even more accurate 14 ♘xd7 ♖xd7 15 ♙d1. Excellent — with 13 ♘f3 White has developed a piece and stopped the rook from being taken. What should Black play? Of course, 13...♗d3+! again, but this time White doesn’t have to take the queen. After 14 ♘e1 ♗c3+ he can repeat moves — which is something — but is entitled to play on for a win with 15 ♙d2 ♙xa1+ 16 ♗e2. Black cannot then take the other rook, on account of 17 ♙e5. He must play 16...♕b2, keeping e5 under control. Let us say White continues with 17 ♙d1 or 17 ♙c1. Is his attack enough for the exchange? It would be interesting to ponder this position.

But before immersing yourself in complex analysis, you must always ask: ‘Have I missed something earlier, right at the start of my calculations?’ It makes no sense to study lengthy variations which the opponent can simply sidestep. In fact, after 13...♗d3+ 14 ♘e1, Black has the excellent reply 14...♗g7!, which seems to refute 13 ♘f3 outright.

I suggest you study the diagram position for yourselves and try to solve the problem: *how did Nezhmetdinov win the game?* (solution p.138)

I showed the opening variation to Yusupov and Damlotov. It was of more interest to Yusupov, who constantly opened with 1 d4, than to Damlotov who did so only from time to time. Well, here was this opening trap. But could it be used? There were two questions that first had to be answered.

To begin with — what if Black chooses a different move-order and plays 6...♗g7 instead of 6...♗c5? In this case White must either prepare for the main lines of the Grünfeld or find some means of sidestepping them. We began analysing 7 ♘a3,
Theory does consider this move, and Dolmatov proceeded to win an excellent game against Bagirov with it. Still, the bishop on a3 somehow doesn’t ‘fit in’ with the Grünfeld. We finally concluded that White can hardly lay claim to an opening advantage in this line. So it seems he cannot do without studying the ‘normal’ Grünfeld lines.

The second question arises after 6...c5 7 a4b5+. What happens if Black avoids 7...c6? According to theory, 7...d7 8 d3 gives White the better chances. After all, what is one of White’s problems in the normal Exchange Grünfeld? Black attacks the white d-pawn with his own c-pawn, his bishop and the knight on c6. White defends it with his knight and bishop. In principle, he would like to have his knight on f3, but he then has to reckon with the pinning move ...g4. Therefore White more usually develops the knight on e2. If it does go to f3, he usually plays a1 first – not all that useful a move – so as to take the rook off the a1-h8 diagonal. But after 7 a4b5+ d7 8 d3, White has no worries about his centre – his opponent can neither pin with ...g4 nor bring his knight out to c6.

The most natural move for Black is 7...d7. After 8 d7+ wxd7 9 d3, White has achieved something – he doesn’t have to fear a pin on his knight, and can solidly protect his centre. But are these substantial gains? On the basis of some game played long ago, theory stated that Black had equality. We began studying the resulting positions and unearthed some ideas for White; we even concluded that he could count on an advantage. Then we came across an article in a foreign magazine, which demonstrated in detail that with precise play Black does equalise. We couldn’t refute this analysis, and hence in the end we lost interest in the variation and its trap.

All the same, in the World Junior Team Championship at Graz in 1981, Yusupov lured Morenz into this very line and won exactly as Nezhmetdinov did. So studying that old book did bring some profit, albeit on a small scale.

More often, of course, new ideas come to you from more recent games and articles. Let me tell the story of another successful discovery.

In 1984 in Estonia, Aleksandr Dreev and I were preparing for the World Junior Championship together with another participant in the tournament – Lemb Oll. International Master Neri, Oll’s coach, brought to the training session a whole suitcase full of chess publications including many different foreign journals. I had not seen them before and started going through them at my leisure. In one Bulgarian magazine I found an article on the Exchange Variation of the Queen’s Gambit Declined.

1 d4 d5
2 c4 e6

This move is stronger than 18 exd4 d5.

In the game already mentioned, Marshall scored a quick win with 19 e7! h6 20 d4 wb4? 21 a3! wc4 22 w2 f7 23 b3! wb3 24 d2 wa2 25 d3, but Black could have defended better with 20...wc7!, threatening 21...xd4.

19 ... h6

At this point the game Tal-Vaganian, Moscow 1975, continued 20 e5 w7 21 w6 d6? 22 w3 d7 23 a5, and Black was unable to defend his pawn on a7 in view of the terrible threat of 24 d5 exd5 25 dxe5. However, even this game proves that White has an opening advantage; by playing to simplify with 21...d7!, Black could have counted on equalising.

The author of the article suggested an interesting build-up for White:

White masses his forces in the vicinity of the kingside. He can avoid exchanges in the e-file by occupying e5 with his knight when necessary, and then bringing his major pieces across to the adjacent kingside files.

The idea seemed to me to be promising from both the purely technical and the practical viewpoint. No
one can follow every periodical; the article in a Bulgarian journal would be known in Bulgaria but might not be noticed elsewhere. So we would have some ideas that our rivals would not be familiar with.

Actually this variation had little to offer Dreev, since at that time he opened with 1 e4. I simply copied out the analysis on the assumption that it would come in useful sooner or later.

When preparing with Yusupov for the Candidates Tournament in 1985, I suggested that he should investigate this system. I showed him the variations given in the article, and he liked them. First we analysed the resulting positions, then we played a training match to a time control of fifteen minutes for the game.

Incidentally, I strongly recommend playing speed games to consolidate the opening information you are studying. (Of course, analysis should precede the games, and supplementary analysis should follow them.) They don't take up much time, but they generally serve to bring new problems to light, even if the players have done some work on the opening already. In Yusupov's view you should take alternate colours, facilitating a more objective view of the position.

In our series of games we unearthed a large number of fresh nuances and acquired a much better feel for the opening than before. Yusupov incorporated the Exchange Variation into his repertoire for White. In the Candidates tournament he won a hard-fought game against Spassky, crushed Nogueiras, and had further success with the system later.

Of course, Yusupov's successes did not at all result from any special strength of the variation in question. On the contrary, we came to the conclusion (which was not hard to predict) that Black can secure equality with precise play - just as in any other sound opening. The point was simply that we were a little ahead of the opposition - we had investigated the position more deeply and built up a stock of ideas that were generally unfamiliar.

Since Artur doesn't just play the White side of the Queen's Gambit, our analyses also helped him to strengthen his defences for Black. In particular, playing Black in the eighth game of his Candidates Match with Jan Timman, when it was imperative for Timman to win, Yusupov played a move we had prepared in our training session - 18...h6!? (instead of 18...Hd8) - and easily equalised.

Both White and Black

We have briefly discussed the basic principles for constructing an opening repertoire. I shall now describe one particular concept in greater detail. It will find favour with players of the white pieces who don't go all-out for the maximum - for an advantage by any possible means - but merely seek to play 'their own' game, their own type of position.

It sometimes makes sense to play with White a system that suits you with Black - that is, to approach the White side of an opening by playing Black with an extra tempo.

Shortly after taking up my effective plan for combating the Closed Sicilian - a plan which brought me wins in the majority of games - I naturally conceived the idea of using the same formation with White. What did this entail? Obviously I had to take up the English Opening. Of course, in that opening Black has a wide range of systems at his disposal, and White must be prepared for any of them. But if Black incautiously plays 1...e5, I have the chance to draw him into my favourite scheme.

Grandmaster Razuvaev once told me about a specific method he employs in his (highly productive) work on opening theory. He always selects and concentrates on certain key games which he treats as paradigms of the opening he is studying. They must be games in which both players (or at least one of them) played logically, constructively, and in which valuable ideas and typical resources were employed. Such games enable you to understand the opening formation more deeply and commit it to memory more easily.

You may regard the following game as a paradigm of its system.

'Dvoretsky-Timoshchikenko
USSR Team Ch, Moscow 1966
English Opening

1 c4 e5
2 Qc3 Qc6
3 g3 g6
4 Qg2 Qg7
Black plays a Closed Sicilian with colours reversed.

5 e3 Qe7
An interesting point - I consider Black's last move rather weak. In this variation, the knight is better placed on f6 or even h6. The reason is purely tactical and not at all obvious. It will come to light a few moves later.

6 Qe2 0-0
7 0-0 d6
8 d3 Qe6
Remember how we answer this?
9 Qd5!
Of course! We have to prevent...
...d6-d5.
10 Qb1
I can now explain why the knight on e7 is worse placed than on f6 or h6. Black is at present unable to play...h3, for after exchanging I take his pawn on c7. With the knight on f6 or h6, the move...h3 would be possible, since after the exchange on h3 White couldn't take the pawn in view of...Qg4 forcing mate. A small tactical detail with a great deal of
significance. If Black could exchange the light-squared bishops unhindered, he would stand quite well. Incidentally, the position with the knight on f6 ought to be familiar to you from my article The 'Superfluous' Piece, published in Training for the Tournament Player.

10 ... ♞xd8

A game Dvoretsky-Veselovsky, Moscow 1967, went 10...a5 11 a3 ♞ae8? (Black should not just abandon the queenside to its fate) 12 b4 ab 13 ab ♞xd8 14 b5 c6 15 bc b5 ♞xe7+ ♞xe7 (83).

A little exercise for you to work out for yourselves: What is White's most accurate continuation from the diagram? (solution p.138)

11 b4 ♞xd5

11...c6 is answered by 12 ♞xe7+ ♞xe7 13 b5. After a pawn exchange on c6, the bishop comes out to a3 and the queen to a4, etc. White has an easy, comfortable game.

Black’s last move leads to a closed type of position.

12 cd ♞h3

Quite honestly I am proud of my next move. I had only just gained my Master title at the time, but I rate it as a true Grandmaster move. I found it by a purely logical process, and we will now examine this logic.

What does the opponent want to do? It is always useful to ask yourself this question. Most likely, Black wants to exchange off his bad bishop with 16...♗h6.

Should I consent to the exchange? If I move my bishop to b2 or g1, the black bishop will be controlling the c1 square and it will be hard to carry out my natural plan - pressure in the c-file with my major pieces against the backward pawn on c7. In addition, the black knight will acquire the excellent g5 square in the vicinity of my king.

It is very dangerous to ‘stick to your principles’ and make stereotyped judgements - such as ‘if my opponent’s bishop is “bad”, that means I mustn’t exchange it.’ Any rule has numerous exceptions. I had a think, and decided ‘There’s nothing for it - I’ll have to exchange.’

But where should the exchange take place? I can let Black take on c1, which enables me to occupy the c-file with tempo. Or I can capture on h6, when the black knight will be badly placed. The latter solution appeared sounder.

But how am I going to arrange my pieces on the c-file? The most natural build-up is: queen to c2, rook from f1 to c1, and the rook from b1 can be transferred to c3. That means I have the choice between 16 ♖c2 and 16 ♖b3. The rook move is evidently more precise; after the exchange on h6, there may be the chance of a double attack with ♖c1 hitting c7 and h6 at once.

This last consideration was to be fully vindicated (albeit in a slightly different form) in a game I played two years later against Kremenetsky (USSR Championship, Kharkov 1968). He answered 16 ♖b3 not with 16...♗h6 but with 16...♖b6. I continued according to plan with 17 ♖c3, and after 17...♕g5? 18 ♖xg5 hg 19 ♖c1 two black pawns were indeed under attack: c7 and g5.

16 ♖b3!! ♖h6
17 ♖xh6 ♖xh6
18 ♖c3 ♖h7

What should I play now?

The natural plan is ♖c2 and ♖c1. Black will protect his pawn with ...♖c8. What then? Obviously a queenside pawn offensive, but a well-known positional maxim is relevant here: before advancing, you must give yourself something to ‘fasten’ on - an object of attack.

19 ♖c1 ♖g7
20 ♖a3 ♖a6

Forced - Black has to free his rook. But now the pawn on a6 makes it easier for White to open lines on the queenside. He will play a2-a4 and b4-b5; after ...a6xb5 he will most likely recapture on b5 with the queen.

21 ♖c1 ♖c8
22 ♖b3 (85)
The more active move 22 \textit{\textit{W}} a5 deserved attention.

his intention? If so, White has the splendid rejoinder 24 f4! The pawn on g4 is then depriving the queen or knight of that square.

Now let us think about 23...f4. White cannot reply 24 g4? on account of 24...\textit{\textit{N}} xg4. What is the drawback to Black's move? It removes the pressure from the White e-pawn - so now I can strike at the enemy centre with 24 d4!, simultaneously switching the rook and queen to the defence of the kingside.

This means that at present I have nothing to fear; I have an answer to each of my opponent's attacking moves. It means I can coolly make a useful move on the queenside. Quite a good example of precise logical deduction based on 'prophylactic thinking'.

23 a4! f4
24 d4

All according to the rules. A central counter-stroke - and a timely one - against the opponent's flank attack. B1 ... as two attacking possibilities. He can play g5-g4 at once, or exchange on g3 first. But after 24...fg 25 hg g4, White has the very strong 26 f4!.

24 ... g4
25 de de

Now how should White continue?

I saw a superb outpost for my knight on e6.

26 gf! ef
27 \textit{\textit{D}} d4 \textit{\textit{D}} h8
28 \textit{\textit{E}} e6 c6
29 \textit{\textit{W}} b2!

Black's opening plan - his queenside offensive - triumphs.

30 ... ab
31 ab gf+
32 \textit{\textit{D}} x f3 \textit{\textit{D}} f5

Such 'kamikaze' moves crop up quite often in desperate situations. You must take maximum care in attending to these final outbursts from your opponent; give him no counterchances whatever. The knight can be taken of course, but why permit the slightest intensification of the fight?

33 \textit{\textit{E}} g1+ \textit{\textit{D}} g7
34 bc bc
35 \textit{\textit{E}} c2!
The game is won by quiet moves.

From the King's Indian Defence to the King's Indian Attack

Dyed-in-the-wool King's Indian players sometimes try to obtain their accustomed positions with colours reversed and a tempo more. It might appear fairly simple, if you know the ideas of this opening, to utilise the extra tempo advantageously. In actual fact there are no easy tasks in chess, and an extra tempo doesn't always bring gains. Why? One thing that remains firmly implanted in my
memory is a comment by Mikhail Tal on a wholly symmetrical position in the English Opening, which arose in the first game of his Candidates Match with Laszlo Portisch in 1965:

"Of course it would be ridiculous to speak of any advantage for Black in this symmetrical position, but it is one hundred per cent true that playing the Black side is easier. The point is that as long as his opponent's moves seem to him to be the strongest, he can copy them with a clear conscience and wait for a convenient moment to "vary"; whereas White is compelled to act on his own initiative."

Something similar applies to the exploitation of an extra tempo in positions with reversed colours – the need to act on your own initiative constitutes the whole difficulty. Let me show you an unfortunate instance from my own experience. To understand it better, I will first briefly acquaint you with a variation of the King's Indian Defence which I used to play with Black – and from which I took the ideas that I vainly tried to implement when reaching the same position with White.

1 d4 Qf6 2 c4 g6 3 Qc3 Qg7 4 e4 d6 5 Qf3 0-0 6 Qe2 e5 7 d5 Qbd7 8 0-0 Qe5 9 Qe2 a5

The main line here is 10 Qg5 h6 11 e3. The move 10 Qd2 went out of use on account of Geller's reply 10...Qh6! (87), which has the aim of exchanging Black's 'bad' bishop.

Naturally I am applying Geller's idea. When you play an opening with colours reversed, you have to know the ideas for playing it the usual way round.

After 11 Qb3 Qxc1 12 Qaxc1 Qxd7, or 12 Qxc5 Qh6 followed by ...Qd7 and ...f5, Black stands quite well. Mukhin once played 11 b3 against me; I replied 11...Qe8, carried out ...f5, and won in good style.

Now, equipped with this little piece of information on the King's Indian, consider the following game.

Dvoretsky-Albert
Odessa 1974
King's Indian Attack

1 Qf3
2 g3
3 Qg2
d0 0-0 4 Qf3
d4
d5 Qd4
d6 Qd4
d7 Qe4
d8 Qe4
d9 a4
10 h3

As you see, the position is exactly as before, but I have an extra tempo. What should I use it for? I decided to prepare f2-f4 by means of 11 Qe1. Yet, however paradoxical it may seem, this move did not improve my position – it worsened it. I must have been misled by the analogy with my game against Mukhin, but a more serious factor was my reluctance to think, to probe into the concrete details of the position. A good example of the harm that comes from playing by rote!

But what should I have done? 11 Qf2 looks tempting. If Black plays 11...Qb6, White's move is fully vindicated. An answer that must be taken into account is 11...Qg5 (with the same idea as White's 10 h3 – to exchange off the 'bad' bishop). Can you see how White should continue after that? I think the only correct way is the gambit 12 f4! ef 13 Qf3 Qh6 14 Qh4! I would not advise Black to go into this position. See what interesting possibilities turn up in a situation which a moment ago seemed to us wholly transparent and lacking in interest!

Black should most probably meet White's positional threat of f2-f4 with the typical blockading operation 11...Qg6!? 12 f4 ef 13 Qf5. The game acquires a new complexion, which in my view is not unfavourable to Black.

Apart from 11 Qf2 what else can White do? Nothing in particular – perhaps just the minimally useful moves 11 b3 and 11 Qh1. So the extra tempo seems to bring no great benefit here. All the same, White does have a fairly good position, and we have agreed that when playing openings with colours reversed we are not counting on an advantage but on 'our own' type of game.

11 Qe1? Qb6
12 Qxe8 Qxe8!

With the white knight on f3, this possibility would not exist. When Black played this move, I started worrying. The positional threat of ...Qf7-f5 has arisen. For example, after 13 b3 Qxc4 14 bc 0-0 15 ef Qxf5 White's pieces are absurdly placed, his knight will never get from e1 to e4. Black will aim to play ...e5-e4 at some moment, perhaps after first bringing up his pieces and placing his knight on b4.

13 Qxb6 ab
Threatening 14...Qb5.
14 Qg2 f5
15 ef Qxf5
16 f3
Black could now have gained the advantage with 16...\texttt{Wh}h3! Then 17 \texttt{We}2 b5 would be bad for White, while 17 \texttt{Qg}2 could be strongly met by 17...\texttt{Qf}5; intending 18...\texttt{Rh}5. White's position cranks on both sides of the board.

But I was lucky – my opponent quite unnecessarily went in for complications.

\begin{itemize}
  \item 16 ... c4?! \\
  \item 17 \texttt{We}2 \texttt{Qc}5 \\
  \item 18 \texttt{Qg}2 c3! \\
  \item 18...\texttt{Rae}8 is met by 19 dc e4 20 fe \texttt{Rx}e4 21 \texttt{Wd}3. \\
  \item 19 bc b5 \\
  \item 20 a5 \\
\end{itemize}

At this point Alburt offered a draw. With optimism unwarranted by the position, I refused. But after a tense struggle the game concluded peacefully all the same.

In the next example, White used his extra tempo more effectively.

\begin{center}
\textbf{Dvoretsky-Tataev}

\textit{Biel} 1972

\textbf{King's Indian Attack}
\end{center}

1 e4 e5 
2 \texttt{Qf}3 g6 
3 d3 \texttt{Qg}7 
4 g3 \texttt{Qc}6 
5 \texttt{Qg}2 \texttt{Qf}6 
6 0-0 d5 
7 \texttt{Qe}3 0-0 (90)

I had repeatedly reached this position with Black, after 1 d4 \texttt{Qf}6 2 c4 g6 3 \texttt{Qf}3 \texttt{Qg}7 4 g3 0-0 5 \texttt{Qg}2 d6 6 0-0 \texttt{Qc}6 7 \texttt{Qc}3 (Black sometimes plays 7...\texttt{Qi}5 or 7...\texttt{Qg}4 here, but 7...e6 is the most popular of all) 7...e5 (89).

White has the choice between 8 de and 8 d5. The pawn exchange is not as innocuous as it looks. At first I replied to 8 de with 8...de. But in the variation 9 \texttt{Wxd}x d8 \texttt{Qxd}8 10 \texttt{Qf}5 \texttt{Qe}6 11 \texttt{Qc}2 it is not so easy to achieve equality, for instance: 11...\texttt{Rf}6 12 \texttt{Rxf}6 \texttt{Rxd}2 13 \texttt{Rg}xg7 \texttt{Rgxg}7 14 \texttt{Rx}c6 bxc 15 b3, and White's chances are somewhat better thanks to his superior pawn structure (Koifman-Dvoretsky, Moscow Championship 1966).

The game Vaganian-Dvoretsky, USSR Championship (First League), Tbilisi 1973, went 8 de \texttt{Qxe}5 9 \texttt{Qxe}5 dxe 10 \texttt{Wxd}8 \texttt{Rxd}8 11 \texttt{Gg}5 \texttt{Gd}4! 12 e3?! \texttt{Qxc}4 13 \texttt{Qac}1 c6! 14 \texttt{Axf}6 \texttt{Axf}6 15 \texttt{Qe}4 \texttt{Qxc}1 16 \texttt{Axf}6+ \texttt{Qg}7 17 \texttt{Qe}8+ \texttt{Qf}8 18 \texttt{Qxc}1 \texttt{Qxe}8 19 \texttt{Qxc}6 \texttt{Qe}6! 20 \texttt{Qc}5 \texttt{Qg}8 \texttt{Bf}-\texttt{Bf}.

White similarly gains nothing from 12 b3 c5, but he can maintain the pressure with 12 \texttt{Qd}5! \texttt{Qxd}5 13 cd e4 14 \texttt{Qf}d1; theoretical books give inaccurate information here.

After 8 d5 \texttt{Qe}7, Yurkov played 9 c5 against me in the 1966 Moscow Championship. At that time I had just gained the Master title. I didn't know much about the theory of this variation, and had never seen the move 9 c5. Since Nimzowitsch's My System, which I had formerly studied with great pleasure, was still in my memory, I succeeded over-the-board in finding an idea on the Nimzowitsch pattern, involving a blockading knight: 9...\texttt{Qe}8 10 cd \texttt{Qxd}6. There followed 11 e4 c5?! 12 a4?! \texttt{Qd}7 13 \texttt{Qe}1 h6 14 b3 f5, with a good game for Black. White could have seized the initiative with 12 dc \texttt{Qxe}6 13 \texttt{Qg}5 f6 14 \texttt{Qc}3, with 15 \texttt{Qe}5 to follow (Ivkov-Utimen, Palma de Mallorca 1970). Therefore Black does better not to hurry with 11...\texttt{e}5 but to play 11...h6! first, and then, according to circumstances, 12...c5, 12...c6 or 12...f5.

The main line is 9 e4 \texttt{Qd}7. In Doda-Dvoretsky, Polanica Zdroj 1973, there followed 10 \texttt{Qe}1 f5 11 \texttt{Qd}3 \texttt{Qf}6 12 f3?! (better 12 f4, as Etruk had played against me a year earlier) 12...h6! 13 \texttt{Qd}2 g5 (threatening 14...f4) 14 ef \texttt{Qxf}5. The initiative is on Black's side; his further plan is \texttt{We}e8-g6, ...\texttt{Qd}4, ...\texttt{Qf}5, ...\texttt{Qf}7, ...\texttt{Qg}8, ...h5, ...\texttt{Qg}4.

Bringing the knight to d3 is slow. White should choose between 10 \texttt{Qc}3, 10 \texttt{Qd}2 and 10 b4. The unconventional 10 \texttt{Qg}5? h6 11 \texttt{Qh}3 is also worth considering, followed by 12 f4.

After this digression into the realms of King's Indian theory, let us return to Dvoretsky-Tataev.

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{diagram}
\end{center}

I have an extra tempo, then. Which moves are useful to White, and which are not? What do you think of 8 \texttt{Qe}1, for example? Well, that would be a move in the style of my game with Alburt – it worsens White's position instead of improving it. Black replies 8...d4 9 \texttt{Qe}2 e5. Now White needs to bring about f2-f4, and with this in view his rook is clearly better on f1 than on e1.

8 \texttt{Qh}3!
less, and he tried to think up something a little new.

8 ... h6
9 Qd2!

If now 9...d4, it would be obvious that my last move was useful. But I had to take into account after 9...de 10 de, since Black controls the d-file and the point d4. Therefore, the idea was 10 Qxe4 (with this knight, so as to answer 10...Qd7 with 11 Qb3) 10...Qxe4 11 Qxe4. How is Black to defend his pawn? 11...b6 will not do. If 11...Wa5, then 12 Qd2. There remains 11...Wb6, but then there follows 12 Qe3 Wxb2 (12...Qd4 13 c3 Qb6 14 b4) 13 Qb1 Wxa2 14 Qxc5. Those who play the Benko Gambit should like this position. In that opening, working up overwhelming pressure on the opponent’s queenside is not always as easy as it is here.

So either 9...d4 or 9...de will be in White’s favour. But Black’s pawn on d5 is under attack. It follows that Black must choose between 9...Qe6 and 9...e6. In either case the advance f2-f4 which White is planning will gain in strength.

9 ... e6
10 f4

This time 10...de will be met by 11 de followed by 12 e5. A White knight will go to e4, and two very unpleasant ‘holes’, on d6 and f6, will appear in the Black position. It is therefore bad for Black to open the centre.

10 ... b6
11 Qh2 Qa6
12 e5 (91)

An interesting positional exercise: should the knight retreat to d7 or e8? (We won’t even consider h7, where the knight is out of play.)

What is Black planning to do subsequently? Of course he is not going to weaken his pawn chain with 12...f6. He intends to gain space on the queenside with 12...b6-b5-b4. How will White react? He will probably hinder this plan by playing a2-a4. At the same time a knight excursion to b5 will become feasible. After 12...Qe8 Black can bring his bishop to b7, then play 12...Qc7 and ...b5. White’s Qb5 will not be dangerous, since from e8 the knight controls d6. With the knight on d7, by contrast, none of this play will be available. White will achieve a clear plus, since his opponent will not have a normal plan.

12 ... Qd7?
13 a4! Qe8
14 Qf3 Wc7

Now how should White continue? Black’s pieces have nowhere to go – they are hemmed in by their own pawn on c5. At this point it will be helpful to recall the ‘two weakness principle’. It usually applies in the endgame, but also occasionally in the middlegame when the opponent is completely tied up and deprived of counterplay. Up to now White has been attacking on the queenside. Black has already played the immediate threats, but nearly all his pieces are stuck on that side of the board. In such cases a transfer of the attack to the other wing is very effective.

15 Qb5 Qxb5
16 ab Qd4
17 e4!

A good positional move; the diagonal of the king’s bishop is extended, and the mobility of Black’s pieces is reduced.

17 ... dc
18 dc Wb8

The threat was 19 Wa4.

19 Qe3
19 Qxd4?! cd 20 b3.
19 ... Qxf3+?!

After this Black is left without any counterplay. He should have sacrificed a pawn with 19...Wf8.

20 Wxf3 Wfd8
21 Wd1 Wd7
22 Wd6! Wg7
23 Wc6 Wc8 (92)

White needs to play Qe4 and b6, but which move should come first? When realising an advantage, close attention must be paid to the opponent’s counter-chances. The natural-looking 28 Qe4? is tactically refuted by 28...Wxc6 29 bc Wxe5! 30 fe Wxe5+, with threats of 31...Wxb2+ and 31...f5.

28 Wg1!

White has a decisive advantage, which he conducted to victory.

When playing a system that suits you with Black with colours reversed, you can hardly ever borrow any concrete variations directly from the normal form of the opening. On the other hand, as I hope to have shown, you can in a broad sense utilise your knowledge of the typical plans, devices and assessments. Indeed it is generally true that to
acquire a deep understanding of any
opening, the study of overall ideas is
at least as important as the memorising
of specific variations.

It sometimes happens that to solve
the problems of one opening, you
make use of precepts characteristic of
an entirely different system. It
follows that a practical player should
not confine himself to studying
games played with ‘his own’ open-
ings. You should select any well-
annotated games for study, even if the
openings are wholly foreign to your
repertoire. In this way you will not
be extending your repertoire direc-
tly, but perhaps some game will
serve as a pointer towards doing so.
The main thing is that you will in-
crease your stock of positional ideas,
resources and judgements, which, as
I have said, can be applied in the
most varied contexts when appropri-
ate. Ideas that appeal to you should
be recorded in the form of ‘posi-
tional images’, which we discussed
during the previous session of the
school.

Answer to Exercises

Nezhmetdinov-Amateur (1951)
13 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Wb3!!}}! \texttt{Wxa1} (13...\texttt{Wxb3} 14
\texttt{Qxd7+} and 15 ab, with an extra
piece for White) 14 \texttt{Qb2} \texttt{Wb1} 15
\texttt{Qf3!} \texttt{Wxh1} 16 \texttt{Qe5} (threatening
mate in one) 16...\texttt{e6} 17 \texttt{Qxd7+}
\texttt{Qxd7} 18 \texttt{Qb8+} \texttt{Qd8} (18...\texttt{Qe7} 19
\texttt{Qd5 mate}) 19 \texttt{Wb5+} with a decisive
attack.

The game concluded: 19...\texttt{Qe7} 20
\texttt{Wb7+} \texttt{Qf6} 21 \texttt{Wxf7+} \texttt{Qg5} 22 \texttt{Qf3+}
\texttt{Qh5} 23 \texttt{gx4!} \texttt{Qxe4} 24 \texttt{Wxe6+} \texttt{Qf4}
25 \texttt{Qe5+} \texttt{Qxe4} 26 \texttt{Qg5 mate}.

Dvoretsky-Veselovsky (1967)
White’s plan is clear: play on the
queenside. In a suitable order, he in-
tends \texttt{Wb4}, \texttt{Qf3}, \texttt{Bb6/b8} etc.

In carrying out a plan, it is essen-
tial to take account of the opponent’s
intentions. What does Black want
here? Obviously it would pay him to
relieve the pressure on his queenside
by playing 17...\texttt{Qh3} to exchange off
the light-squared bishops. For this
reason, the natural-looking 17 \texttt{Wxa4?}
would be a serious inaccuracy.

The bishop exchange can easily
be avoided by 17 \texttt{Qe1}. But otherwise
this move has no use to White – it
doesn’t fit into his plan.

The strongest continuation is 17
\texttt{Qa3!}. Increasing the pressure on
the queenside, White simultaneously
preserves his light-squared bishop
from exchange. It is precisely moves
like this – combining furtherance of
your own plan with prophylaxis
against that of the opponent – that in
Nimzowitch’s view constitute the
essence of true positional play.

Black only lasted a few more
moves: 17...\texttt{Qe8} 18 \texttt{Wc4} \texttt{Qe7} 19
\texttt{Wb3 f5?} (19...\texttt{Qd7}, with a view to
20...\texttt{d5}, was more logical; I would
probably have replied 20 \texttt{Qb8} \texttt{d5 21
Qb1 dc 22 Qb7}) 20 \texttt{Qb8} \texttt{Qf3} 21
\texttt{Qb4 Qa7} 22 \texttt{Ra1 Qd7} 23 \texttt{Ra6 Qf7}
24 \texttt{Qa5} 1-0. In the final position, the
queenside domination by White’s
pieces is truly picturesque.

Appendix to ‘Building an
Opening Repertoire’

(The following games were men-
tioned in the lecture; they will give
you a fuller idea of the opening var-
iations discussed.)

Petrosian-Pachman
\textit{Bled 1961}
King’s Indian Attack

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{ll}
1 & \texttt{Qf3} & c5 \\
2 & \texttt{g3} & \texttt{Qc6} \\
3 & \texttt{Qg2} & \texttt{g6} \\
4 & 0-0 & \texttt{Qg7} \\
5 & \texttt{d3} & e6 \\
6 & \texttt{e4} & \texttt{Qe7} \\
7 & \texttt{Qe1} & 0-0?!
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

As we have already seen, 7...\texttt{d6}
should be played here.

8 & \texttt{e5!} & \texttt{d6} \\
9 & \texttt{ed} & \texttt{Wxd6} \\
10 & \texttt{Qbd2} & \texttt{Wc7} \\
11 & \texttt{Qb3} & \texttt{Qd4?!}

Better is 11...\texttt{b6} 12 \texttt{Qf4 Qb7}.

12 & \texttt{Qf4} & \texttt{Wb6} \\
13 & \texttt{Qe5} & \texttt{Qxb3} \\
14 & \texttt{Qc4!}

More precise than 14 ab \texttt{Qd5} 15
\texttt{Qd4} \texttt{Wc6}.

14 & \ldots & \texttt{Wb5} \\
14 & \ldots & \texttt{Wd8} ab, with threats of 16
\texttt{Qd6} and 16 \texttt{Qa5}.

15 & \texttt{ab} & \texttt{a5} \\
The threat was 16 \texttt{a5}.

16 & \texttt{Qd6} & \texttt{Qf6} \\
17 & \texttt{Wf3} & \texttt{Qg7} \\
18 & \texttt{Qe4?!} &

White could already have played
the combination he plays next move.

18 & \ldots & \texttt{Qd8} (93)

Smyslov-Denker
\textit{Match USSR-USA, Moscow 1946}
\textit{Sicilian}

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{ll}
1 & \texttt{e4} & c5 \\
2 & \texttt{Qb3} & \texttt{Qc6} \\
3 & \texttt{g3} & \texttt{g6} \\
4 & \texttt{Qg2} & \texttt{Qg7} \\
5 & \texttt{d3} & e6 \\
6 & \texttt{Qe3} & \texttt{Qd4}?! \\
7 & \texttt{Qe2} & d6 \\
8 & \texttt{e3} & \texttt{Qe6} \\
9 & \texttt{Wxf6+} & \texttt{Qxf6} \\
10 & \texttt{Qe5+} & \texttt{Qg5} \\
21 & \texttt{Qg7} & 1-0
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

8...\texttt{Qxe2} looks more natural.

9 & \texttt{d4} & \texttt{cd} \\
10 & \texttt{Qxd4!} &

White needs to recapture with
piece so that he can later exploit it
weak d-pawn.

10 & \ldots & \texttt{Qxd4}
Better is 11...\(\texttt{Qf6}\).

12 \(\texttt{Qe3}\) \(\texttt{Qe7}\)

13 \(\texttt{Qe2}\) 0-0

14 0-0 \(\texttt{Qe6}\)

15 \(\texttt{Wd2}\) \(\texttt{Wc7}\) (94)

15...d5 fails to 16 \(\texttt{Qc5}\).

White is aiming for an advantageous exchange of light-squared bishops. 24...\(\texttt{Wh7}\) can be answered by 25 \(\texttt{Qc4}\) (with the idea of 26 h4), or by 25 \(\texttt{Bb5}\) and 26 \(\texttt{Wd3}\).

24 ... \(\texttt{Wh7}\)

25 \(\texttt{Qd5}\) \(\texttt{Qf7}\)

26 \(\texttt{Qxe6}\) \(\texttt{Qxe6}\)

27 \(\texttt{Bd3}\) \(\texttt{Qe7}\)

28 \(\texttt{Qc1}\) \(\texttt{Qf7}\)

29 \(\texttt{Qe4}\) \(\texttt{Qg4}\)

30 \(\texttt{Bd5}\) \(\texttt{Wg4}\)

31 \(\texttt{Qd3}\)

32 \(\texttt{Qxd6}\)! walks into 31...\(\texttt{Qxd6}\)

33 \(\texttt{Qxd6}\) \(\texttt{Wxd4}\)!

After the text the game continued

31 ... \(\texttt{Qc7}\) 32 \(\texttt{Qxd6}\) \(\texttt{Qxd6}\) 33 \(\texttt{Qxd6}\)

\(\texttt{Qf8}\) 34 \(\texttt{Qxe5}\) \(\texttt{Qxf2}\) 35 \(\texttt{Qd7}\) \(\texttt{Qf7}\)

36 \(\texttt{Qxf7}\) \(\texttt{Qxf7}\) 37 \(\texttt{Qd8}\) \(\texttt{Qg7}\)

38 \(\texttt{Qe8}\) \(\texttt{g5}\) \(\texttt{Qh8}\) \(\texttt{Qg6}\) \(\texttt{Qg6}\) \(\texttt{Qg6}\) \(\texttt{Qg6}\)

41 \(\texttt{Qxh6}\) \(\texttt{Wh5}\) 42 \(\texttt{Qd1}\) \(\texttt{Qc5}\) 43 \(\texttt{Qg2}\) \(\texttt{Qe7}\) 44 \(\texttt{Qf1}\) \(\texttt{Qg4}\) \(\texttt{Qf6}\) \(\texttt{Qf6}\)

46 \(\texttt{Qf5}\) \(\texttt{Qg4}\) \(\texttt{Qh2}\) \(\texttt{Qf7}\) 48 \(\texttt{Qd3}\) \(\texttt{Qg5}\)

49 \(\texttt{Qe2}\) \(\texttt{Qf8}\) 50 \(\texttt{Qe4}\) \(\texttt{Qg6}\) 51 \(\texttt{Qd5}\)

52 \(\texttt{Qe4}\) \(\texttt{Qf6}\) 1-0.

Dolmatov-Bagirov
Frunze 1983
Grüinfeld Defence

1 ... \(\texttt{e5}\)

2 \(\texttt{Qc3}\) \(\texttt{Qf6}\)

3 \(\texttt{c3}\) \(\texttt{d5}\)

4 \(\texttt{d4}\) \(\texttt{g6}\)

5 \(\texttt{e4}\) \(\texttt{Qc3}\)

6 \(\texttt{bc}\) \(\texttt{Qg7}\)

7 \(\texttt{Qa3}\) \(\texttt{Qd7}\)

8 \(\texttt{Qf3}\) \(\texttt{c5}\)

9 \(\texttt{Wb3}\) 0-0

10 \(\texttt{Qd3}\)

Obviously stronger than 10 \(\texttt{Qe2}\) cd 11 cd \(\texttt{Qf6}\). On 10 \(\texttt{Qd1}\), ECO recommends 10...cd 11 cd \(\texttt{Qf6}\) 12 \(\texttt{Qd3}\)

\(\texttt{Qg4}\) 13 \(\texttt{Wxb7}\) \(\texttt{Qxf3}\) 14 \(\texttt{gf}\) \(\texttt{Wxd4}\) 15 0-0 (15 \(\texttt{Qxe7}\)! \(\texttt{Wc3}\) + 16 \(\texttt{Qe2}\)

\(\texttt{Qxd5}\)) 15...\(\texttt{Qe5}\) 16 \(\texttt{Qxe7}\) \(\texttt{Qf8}\) 17 \(\texttt{Qxf6}\) \(\texttt{Wxf6}\) 18 \(\texttt{Qc7}\) \(\texttt{Qf3}\) with equality.

10 ... \(\texttt{b6}\)!

In Evans-Korchnoi, Buenos Aires 1960, Black played more actively with 10...\(\texttt{Qc7}\) 11 0-0 \(\texttt{Qb8}\) (intending to continue ...\(\texttt{b7-b5}\); after 12 \(\texttt{Bb5}\)

\(\texttt{b6}\) 13 \(\texttt{Qd1}\) \(\texttt{a6}\) 14 \(\texttt{Qd3}\) \(\texttt{b5}\) 15 \(\texttt{Qb1}\)

\(\texttt{Qb7}\), he obtained an excellent position.

11 \(\texttt{Qd1}\)

11 0-0? allows 11...\(\texttt{Qe5}\) with equality.

11 ... \(\texttt{e6}\)

12 0-0 \(\texttt{Wc7}\) (95)

The start of a sharp plan for a kingside attack, typical of such positions.

13 ... \(\texttt{Qb7}\)

14 \(\texttt{Qg5}\) \(\texttt{Qf8}\)

14...\(\texttt{h6}\)? 15 \(\texttt{Qxe6}\) 16 \(\texttt{d5}\).

15 \(\texttt{Wb1}\) \(\texttt{Qab8}\)

16 \(\texttt{h4}\) \(\texttt{b5}\)

Black's queenside pawn advance comes too late. A better move was 16...\(\texttt{Qc6}\), threatening mate and intending ...\(\texttt{Qc4}\).

17 \(\texttt{h5}\) \(\texttt{b4}\)

18 \(\texttt{hg}\) 19 \(\texttt{Qxg6}\) \(\texttt{Qg6}\) 20 \(\texttt{Qxe6}\) \(\texttt{Qf6}\) 21 \(\texttt{d5}\).

19 \(\texttt{Qf+}\) \(\texttt{Qh8}\)

20 \(\texttt{Qxh7}\).

Threatening \(\texttt{Qb1-g6-h5}\).

20 ... \(\texttt{Qg8}\)

21 \(\texttt{Qd3}\)

22 \(\texttt{Qc5}\) \(\texttt{Qxh6}\)

23 \(\texttt{Qg8+}\) \(\texttt{Qg7}\)

24 \(\texttt{Qd3}\)

24 \(\texttt{Qf4}\) \(\texttt{Qh6}\) 25 \(\texttt{Qd3}\).

24 ... \(\texttt{Qf4}\)

He could have made things more complicated for White by 24...\(\texttt{Qf4}\), but Dolmatov's analysis shows that White would still keep a decide plus: 25 \(\texttt{Wxh4}\) \(\texttt{Qg6}\) 26 \(\texttt{Qf6+}\) \(\texttt{Qf8}\)

\(\texttt{Qxf6}\) 28 cd \(\texttt{Qf6}\) 29 \(\texttt{Qf6}\) \(\texttt{Qh6}\) 30 \(\texttt{Qxf6}\) \(\texttt{Qf8}\) 31 \(\texttt{Qh4}\) \(\texttt{Qf5}\) (31 \(\texttt{Qxe6}\) is much weaker) 31...\(\texttt{Qxf6}\) 32 \(\texttt{Qf7}\) \(\texttt{Qf7}\) 33

\(\texttt{Qf8+}\) \(\texttt{Qd7}\) (35 \(\texttt{Qd5}\) 36 \(\texttt{Qf3+}\) \(\texttt{Qf6}\)

37 \(\texttt{d5+}\)) 36 \(\texttt{Qxa6}\) \(\texttt{Qh4}\) 37 \(\texttt{Qxa3}\).
and White has four pawns for a bishop.

Zunian, and won.) Timman evidently counted on the same variation being repeated; he must have found an improvement on Ribli’s play. But Yusupov has studied the system deeply; he has given himself the option of varying his plans where necessary and thereby sidestepping his opponent’s pre-game preparations.

\[ \begin{align*}
15 & \text{f3} & \text{e6} \\
16 & \text{xf3} & \text{xe6} \\
17 & \text{e4} & \text{fe} \\
18 & \text{xe4} & \text{h6?!} \\
19 & \text{d2}?! (96)
\end{align*} \]

An ineffective response to Black’s novelty. White should have preferred 19 \text{d5}, as played against me a year earlier by Yusupov himself, in a training game with a 15-minute time control.

Against Ribli at the Lucerne World Team Ch (1985), Yusupov chose the more risky plan of 14...b6?! 15 \text{wb4} b5!, and obtained a quick draw. (Incidentally, in the same event, he played the White side of this very system against Li

22 \text{xe8} \text{xe8} \\
23 \text{d5} \text{d5} \\
24 \text{d3} \text{w6} \\
25 \text{d3} \text{c6} \\
26 \text{d3} \text{a8} \\
Black wants to tie his opponent down with 27...\text{d4} and 28...\text{d6}. However, 26...\text{d8}, with the same purpose, was more exact.

27 \text{w2}! \text{g6} \\
28 \text{d4}! \text{xh4} \\
In view of the match situation, Yusupov sacrifices the exchange to force a draw. A perfectly playable alternative was 28...\text{f7} 29 \text{d1} \text{w6} or 29...\text{f7}.

29 \text{f7} \text{h7} \\
30 \text{xf8} \text{xb2}! \\
31 \text{f2} \text{a1}+ \\
32 \text{f1} \text{a2} \\
A natural play in such cases – without changing the position you prolong the game to the adjournment, then at home you check whether there are any winning chances.

33 \text{f2} \text{a1}+ \\
34 \text{f1} \text{a2} \\
35 \text{f2} \text{b1}+ \\
36 \text{f1} \text{b2} \\
37 \text{f2} \text{b1}+ \\
38 \text{f1} \text{c2} \\
39 \text{f2} \text{c1}+ \\
40 \text{f1} \text{d2} \\
41 \text{f2} \text{d1}+ \\
1 \text{c4} \text{d6} \\
2 \text{d3} \text{g6} \\
3 \text{d3} \text{g7} \\
4 \text{e4} \text{d6} \\
5 \text{d4} 0-0 \\
6 \text{e2} \text{e5} \\
7 \text{d5} \text{c6} \\
8 0-0 \text{d5} \\
9 \text{d6} \text{a5} \\
10 \text{b3} \text{h6}! \\
11 \text{wc2} \text{e8} \\
12 \text{d3} \text{xc1} \\
13 \text{wxc1} \text{f5} \\
14 \text{ef} \text{xf5} \\
15 \text{we3} \text{w6} \\
15...\text{b6}!!.

16 \text{d2} \text{d6} \\
17 \text{a3}! (97)

The right move is 17 \text{f3}, with roughly equal chances. Now Black gains the initiative.

97

\[
\begin{align*}
96 & B
\end{align*} \]

Mukhin-Dvoretsky
Moscow 1969
King's Indian

18 \text{b4} \\
19 \text{ab} \text{xb1} \\
20 \text{xxb1} \text{d5} \\
21 \text{w3}
21 \textit{\textbf{f3}} e4, or 21 \textit{\textbf{d4 e4}} 22 \textit{\textbf{dxe4}} \textit{\textbf{d4}, is bad for White.} 36 \textit{\textbf{d3}} \textit{\textbf{f7}} 37 \textit{\textbf{d3}} \textit{\textbf{e7}}! 0-1

White resigned because after 38 c5 b6 39 \textit{\textbf{d4}} bc 40 \textit{\textbf{dxe5}} he will soon be in zugzwang.

Etruk-Dvoretzky  
\textit{\textbf{Viljandi 1972}}  
\textit{\textbf{King's Indian}}

23 \textit{\textbf{e4!}}  
24 \textit{\textbf{c1}}  
25 \textit{\textbf{d2}} + 25 \textit{\textbf{dxe2}} \textit{\textbf{d3}}, or at once 25 \textit{\textbf{wxb2}}.  
24 \textit{\textbf{dxe2}}  
25 \textit{\textbf{dxe2}} \textit{\textbf{d3}}  
26 \textit{\textbf{dxe4}}.  
26 \textit{\textbf{e1}} \textit{\textbf{wxb2}}  
27 \textit{\textbf{d3}} \textit{\textbf{d4}}  
28 \textit{\textbf{dxe4}} \textit{\textbf{d4}}  
29 \textit{\textbf{dxe4}} \textit{\textbf{d3}}  
30 \textit{\textbf{d1}} \textit{\textbf{d1}}?

I had been preparing this move, which wins a pawn. Black gains nothing from 30 \textit{\textbf{dxe2}} 31 \textit{\textbf{d1}} \textit{\textbf{dxf2}}  
32 \textit{\textbf{dxf2}} \textit{\textbf{wxf2}} + 33 \textit{\textbf{d1}} \textit{\textbf{d1}} 34 \textit{\textbf{wxf1}}. During the game we both thought that 30 \textit{\textbf{dxe4}}?! was refuted by 31 \textit{\textbf{dxe2}} \textit{\textbf{wxec4}} 32 \textit{\textbf{gg5}} \textit{\textbf{wxed5}} 32 \textit{\textbf{wxf7}}, but instead of 31 \textit{\textbf{wxf7}}, Black can win with 31 \textit{\textbf{xf1}}! 32 \textit{\textbf{dxe4}} \textit{\textbf{dxf2}}.

31 \textit{\textbf{dxe2}} \textit{\textbf{dxf2}}  
32 \textit{\textbf{d1}} \textit{\textbf{dxe4}}  
33 \textit{\textbf{dxe4}} \textit{\textbf{d8}}!  
34 \textit{\textbf{dxe5}} \textit{\textbf{dxe5}}  
35 \textit{\textbf{dxe5}}

The rook ending is probably lost too.

35 \textit{\textbf{d}}

An important position for the assessment of the variation. Black answers 16 \textit{\textbf{d3}} with 16...\textit{\textbf{f6}}, followed by \textit{\textbf{g7}} and...\textit{\textbf{d8}}, achieving an excellent game. White should play 16 \textit{\textbf{d6}} \textit{\textbf{d6}} 17 \textit{\textbf{d4}}. Then his position appears preferable, though a draw would be the most likely result.

16 \textit{\textbf{g4}}?

A nervous move, handing the initiative to the opponent.

16 ... \textit{\textbf{d4}}
17 \textit{\textbf{h3}}
17 \textit{\textbf{e3}} \textit{\textbf{w7}} 18 \textit{\textbf{d3}} \textit{\textbf{e8}}, with an endgame advantage to Black.

17 ... \textit{\textbf{d4}}
18 \textit{\textbf{e1}}

Relatively best. 18 \textit{\textbf{d3}} fails to 18...\textit{\textbf{gxg4}}! 19 \textit{\textbf{hxg4+}} 20 \textit{\textbf{d1}} \textit{\textbf{d5}} 21 \textit{\textbf{d2}} \textit{\textbf{xf4}} 22 \textit{\textbf{xf4}} \textit{\textbf{xf4}} 23 \textit{\textbf{xf4}} \textit{\textbf{wxh4+}}. On 18 \textit{\textbf{e3}}, Black has 18...\textit{\textbf{g3}}+ 19 \textit{\textbf{gg2}} \textit{\textbf{xf1}}+ 20 \textit{\textbf{dxf1}} \textit{\textbf{d5}}, or even 20...\textit{\textbf{g4}}.

18 ... \textit{\textbf{exe1}}
19 \textit{\textbf{exe1}} \textit{\textbf{d7}}?

Irresolution! I wrongly abandon the line which I had been planning: 19...\textit{\textbf{d5}} 20 \textit{\textbf{d2}} \textit{\textbf{d3}}+ 21 \textit{\textbf{d3}} \textit{\textbf{fxd3}} 22 \textit{\textbf{d2}} \textit{\textbf{f7}} (22...\textit{\textbf{d3}}!?) and if 23 \textit{\textbf{d6}} Black can take the pawn on b2; otherwise...\textit{\textbf{d7}}-h5, opening the game for the player with the bishop pair, is highly unpleasant.

20 \textit{\textbf{d2}}
21 \textit{\textbf{d2}}
22 \textit{\textbf{d2}}
23 \textit{\textbf{d2}}
24 \textit{\textbf{d2}}
25 \textit{\textbf{d2}}
26 \textit{\textbf{d2}}
27 \textit{\textbf{d2}}
28 \textit{\textbf{d2}}
29 \textit{\textbf{d2}}
30 \textit{\textbf{d2}}

The decisive mistake! After 30 \textit{\textbf{d5}} White should be able to draw, even though 30...\textit{\textbf{exe8}} would still set him a few problems.

30 ... \textit{\textbf{d7}}
31 \textit{\textbf{d7}}
32 \textit{\textbf{d7}}
33 \textit{\textbf{d7}}
34 \textit{\textbf{d7}}
35 \textit{\textbf{d7}}
36 \textit{\textbf{d7}}
37 \textit{\textbf{d7}}
38 \textit{\textbf{d7}}
39 \textit{\textbf{d7}}
40 \textit{\textbf{d7}}
7 The King’s Indian Attack
(from White’s viewpoint)

Mark Dvoretsky

A chessplayer who opens with 1 e4 may, if he wishes, include in his repertoire the system 1 e4 e6 2 d3!? or 1 e4 c5 2 Qf3 e6 3 d4!? Avoiding the French or Sicilian, White develops his pieces on the same lines as Black in the King’s Indian Defence. In so doing, he hopes to gain not only from the extra tempo that results from switching the colours, but also from the fact that Black’s ...e7-e6 is not of great value here. (In the King’s Indian Defence, White very rarely plays e2-e3.)

The same type of position results from Réti’s Opening – 1 Qf3 d5 2 g3 c5 3 Qg2 Qc6 4 0-0 – if Black plays ...e7-e6 now or next move. (Incidentally, there are other formations for Black which also come under the heading of ‘King’s Indian Attack’ provided that White develops his pieces on the King’s Indian pattern.) But the present survey is based on my personal experience of this opening and takes most of its material from my own games – and I usually play 1 e4. So this move-order will receive most attention.

Some of the games given below are without theoretical significance since at least one of the players makes inferior moves in the opening. Nevertheless, these games can still prove useful in acquainting you with the structure characteristic of this opening and the typical strategic and tactical ideas and precepts which are applied in it.

A) Black develops his bishop on e7

1 e4 e6
2 d3 d5
3 Qd2 c5
4 Qg3 Qc6
5 g3 Qf6
6 Qg2 Qe7
7 0-0

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The material in this section is divided into three parts. The ‘Main Line’ is discussed on page 149 and ‘Black refrains from castling’ on page 150.

(1) Basic ideas for White (examples of inferior play by Black)

Knight sacrifice on g5

Dvoretsky-Damsky
Moscow 1969

7 ... 0-0
8 Ke1 b6?!
9 e5 Qd7
10 Qf1 Qb7
11 h4 Wc7
12 Wf4 b5

Compared with the normal treatment of the variation (8...b5 etc.), Black has lost several tempi.
13 Qh2 d4?
This move makes it easier for White to conduct the decisive attack.
14 Qg5! h6
15 Wh5! hg
16 hg Whb8

After 16...Whd8 17 Qg4 Qf8, White has the strong move 18 Ke4, with Qg2 and Qh1 to follow.
17 Qg4 Qf8
18 Qd6?!

Even stronger than 18 Ke4 Qg6.
18 ... Qxf6
Or 18...Qf 19 ef e5 20 Qd5 Qd6
21 Wh6 Qc6 22 g6 and mates.
19 ef e5
20 Qd5! Ke8
Or 20...ef 21 Ke7; or 20...Kd8 21 Qg2; or 20...Kf7 21 fg Qg6 22 Wh6 Qxd5 23 Wh6.
21 g6 Qd8
22 gf+ 1-0

Black resigned in view of 22...Qx7 23 Wh5 g6 24 Wh6.

Knight sacrifice on d5

Dvoretsky-Yusupov
Blitz game, Moscow 1987

7 ... Wc7
8 Ke1 0-0
9 e5 Qd7
10 We2 b5
11 h4 a5
12 Qf1 a4
13 a3 b4
14 Qf4 ba
15 ba Kxa6
16 Qe3

With the black queen on c7, the white knight’s best route to g4 is via e3, creating the strong threat of Qxd5!
16 ... Ke8?
17 Qxd5! ed
18 e6 Qc8
19 ef+ Qxf7
20 Qe6+ Qf8
21 Qg5 Qxg5
22 Qd6+ Qe7
23 Qxd5 1-0

The undermining move c2-c4

Dvoretsky-Gorchakov
Moscow 1973

7 ... 0-0
8 Ke1 b5
9 e5 Qd7
10 Qf1 e5?
11 \textit{Qxf6}

If 11...\textit{Qxf6}, then 12 \textit{Qf4}, attempting to seize the e5 point.

12 \textit{h4!}

12 \textit{Qxe6?} \textit{Qdxe5}.

12...\textit{Qb6?} 13 \textit{Qe3} or 13 \textit{Qh2}.

13 \textit{Qg5!} \textit{Qd6}

On 13...e5, Black's position is undermined by the powerful 14 \textit{c4}!

However, after 13...\textit{Qd6}, it was also worth considering 14 \textit{c4}?! \textit{b5} 15 \textit{dc} \textit{Qxg5} (15...\textit{Qxc4} 16 \textit{Qxe6}! 16 \textit{Qxg5} (or \textit{Qe4}) 16...\textit{Qxc4} 17 \textit{Qf4}. If now 17...\textit{Qxf4} 18 \textit{Qf4}, White has 19 \textit{Qxd5}, while if 17...\textit{Qd8}, then 18 \textit{Qc1} with the threat of 19 \textit{b3}.

Another good possibility is 14 \textit{Qh5?!} \textit{h6} 15 \textit{Qe3} (the same device as in Dvoretsky-Damsky) 15...\textit{e5} (if 15...\textit{Qxd4} or 15...\textit{Qd7}, White has 16 \textit{Qg4} threatening 17 \textit{Qxb6+} 16 \textit{Qf4}! \textit{gh} 17 \textit{Qg6} 18 \textit{fe} \textit{gh} 19 \textit{ed} \textit{Qg7} (19...\textit{Qxg5} 20 \textit{Qxd5}) 20 \textit{Qh3}, followed by \textit{Qe3-g2-f4}.

\textbf{Dolmatov-Meyer}

\textit{Philadelphia 1991}

7 ... \textit{0-0}
8 \textit{Qe1} \textit{b5}
9 \textit{e5} \textit{Qc8}
10 \textit{Qf1} \textit{f6}?! 11 \textit{ef} \textit{Qxf6}
12 \textit{Qe3} \textit{Wd6}

Dolmatov planned to answer 12...\textit{e5} with 13 \textit{Qc4}! \textit{bc} 14 \textit{Qd4} 15 \textit{Qd2} with advantage.

13 \textit{c4}! \textit{Qc7}
14 \textit{Qg4} \textit{e5}

15 \textit{Qxf6+} \textit{gf}

In the event of 15...\textit{Qxf6}, White has the pleasant choice between 16 \textit{Qg5} and 16 \textit{cd} \textit{Qxd5} 17 \textit{Qxe5}.

16 \textit{cd} \textit{Qxd5}
17 \textit{Qd2!} \textit{Qe6}
17...\textit{f5} 18 \textit{Qc4}!

18 \textit{Qd4} \textit{Qe7}
19 \textit{Qh6} \textit{Qfd8}
20 \textit{Qc1} \textit{c4}
21 \textit{Wh5} \textit{Qac8}
22 dc \textit{bc}
23 \textit{f4!} and White has an undoubted advantage.

An exchange of knights on \textit{d4}, as a rule, is not dangerous to White

\textbf{Fischer-U. Geller}

\textit{Netanya 1968}

7 ... \textit{Qe1} \textit{Qc7}
8...\textit{b5}
9 \textit{e5} \textit{Qd7}
10 \textit{We2} \textit{b5}
11 \textit{h4} \textit{a5}
12 \textit{Qd1} \textit{Qd4}?! 13 \textit{Qxd4} \textit{Qd4}?! 14 \textit{Qf4}?! \textit{Qd6}?! 15 \textit{Qh2}?! 16 \textit{Qd5}?! 17 \textit{Qd6}! 18 \textit{Qxf4}! 19 \textit{Qwd7} 20 \textit{Qh2} \textit{Qfd8}.

16 \textit{Qc1} \textit{Qa6}?

But now White's thematic strike against \textit{d5} secures him the advantage. Black should have chosen between 16...\textit{Qb6} and 16...\textit{Qd4}.

17 \textit{Qxd4}? \textit{ed}
18 \textit{ed} \textit{Qd8}
19 \textit{ed} \textit{Qe6}
20 \textit{Qg4}! \textit{Qf5}

If 20...\textit{Qxd7}, then 21 \textit{Qe5} is decisive.

21 \textit{Wh5} \textit{Qxd7}
22 \textit{Qf4} \textit{Qd6}
23 \textit{Wh6} \textit{Qd6}
24 \textit{Qxe6} \textit{Qxe6}

At this point the obvious- looking 25 \textit{Qe1} would unexpectedly lead to a draw after 25...\textit{Wxe1}+! 26 \textit{Qxe1} \textit{Qg7} 27 \textit{Wh5} \textit{Qf6}.

25 \textit{Qe5}!!

An elegant coup, after which White's positional plus becomes decisive.

25 ... \textit{Qxe5}
26 \textit{Qe1} \textit{f4}?!
15 ... h6
16 Qa2?! In reply to the immediate 16 c4, I didn't like 16...de 17 de Qb6 18 Qd2 Wd4. The move played is an attempt to strengthen this plan – for example, 16...a4?! 17 c4 Qb6 18 Qd2!. On the other hand after 16...Qd6, I imagined that the attack with 17 Qg5 would gain in strength.

However, White's idea is incorrect. Preferable moves were 16 Wh2 and 16 h3.

16 Qg5? Played without due consideration. But then, Black was already threatening 17...d4.

17 h6 Only now did I discover that all White's combinative tries are easily refuted: 18 Wh5 (18 Qxf7 Whx7 19 Wh5+ g6) 18...hg 19 hg g5 20 Wh4 (20 Wh3 Qxg5) 20...Qd4 21 Wh2 Qf5 22 Qxf5 ef 23 Wh1 Qf8 24 Wh1 Qg7, or 21 Qg4 Qf5 22 Wh3 Qxg5. 18 Qh3 Qf8 White's play has come to a dead end. With possibilities of ...d5-d4 or ...Qd4 at his disposal, Black is clearly better.

An interesting prophylactic move.

13 Qe3 Qa6
14 a4?! The start of an unsuccessful plan. 14 h5, aiming for Qg4 and h6, was stronger.

14 ba
15 ba White is playing for c2-c4.

9...0-0.
10 We2

The Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings recommends 10 e5 Qd7
11 d4 and 12 Qf1.

10 ... 0-0-0
11 a3 a6

It was worth considering 11...h6? and if 12 b4, then 12...Qe5.

12 e5 Qd7
13 h4 h6
14 h5 Qf8

On 14...g5, White was intending 15 hg fg 16 Qh3 Qf8 17 Qf1 or 17 b4?!

15 b4 g6
15...f6 16 ef Qxf6 17 Qb1.

16 Qb1 Qb7
17 bc bc
18 Qb3?? Qa6?

Better is 18...g6 19 Qe3 Qd7 20 c4 d4 21 Qf4 Qd8.

19 Qe3! Qxh5
19...c4 20 Qc5 Qxc5 21 Qxc5 with an attack.

20 Qxe5 Wxe5
21 Qc2 Qc7
22 c4 d4?!
23 Ld2

White has a decisive advantage.

23 ... Qd7
24 hg e5
25 Qa5 Qb6
26 Qc6 fg
27 Qxe5 Qd6
28 Qe6 Qd7
29 Qa5 Qb7
30 Qxa7+ Qxa7
31 Qxb6+ Wxb6

When the black king stays in the centre, the plan of exchanging on d5 is also feasible.

Dvoretzky-Bogomolov
Moscow 1967

7 ... b5
8 Qe1

The immediate 8 ed! ed 9 c4! is also good.

8 ... Qb7
9 ed ed
10 c4!

The typical thrust in the centre.

10 ... bc
11 dc 0-0
12 cd Qxd5
13 Qc4

White's position is somewhat preferable. He subsequently succeeds in outplaying his opponent: 13...Qf6 14 Qg5?! Qxg5 15 Qxg5 Qd4 16 Wh2 h6 17 Qd4 Qh4 18 Qad1 Qd2 19 Qf1 f5 20 Qf6+ Wxf6 21 Qxb7 Qad8 22 Qh1 Wh7 23 Qa5 Qb8 24 Qg2 Qxb2 25 Qc3 Qb5 26 a4 Qb8 27 Wxc5 Qxc8 28 Qc6 Qxc5 29 Qxc6 Qc8 30 Wxc2! Qxc6 31 Qd3 Qd6 32 f3 Qd5 33 Qc1 Wh7 34 Qg7 Qf7 35 Qc4 1-0

(Black lost on time)

If White plays e4-e5, Black should try to get in ...g7-g5; the
verdict on the position depends on this thrust.

Chekhov-A.Ivanov
Sochi 1975

1 g3 Qf6
2 h3 d5
3 d3 e6
4 0-0 Qe7
5 d4 Qb6
6 Qb2 Qb7
7 e4 c5
8 e5 Qf6
9 Ke1 Qe6
10 ... Qe7

Already 10...g5! was worth considering.
11 Qf4 h6
12 h4 d4?

Better is 12...0-0 13 Ke3 Qf8. After the text White won the game as follows: 13 c3! dc 14 bc 0-0-0 15
d4 Qf8 16 Qd2 Qg6 17 Ke3 cd 18
d cd Qb4 19 Qa4 Qad7 20 a3 Qxd2
21 Qxd2 Qb8 22 Qc1 Qd5 23 Qe4
Qd7 24 Qc2 Qe8 25 Ke1 Qd8 26
Qf1 We7 27 Qd2 Qf8 28 Qxc6
Qxc6 29 Qxc6 We8 30 a5 b6 31
Qe8+ b-0.

B) Black develops his bishop on g7

1 e4 e6
2 d3 d5
3 Qd2 c5
4 Qg3 Qc6
5 g3 Qg7
6 0-0 Qge7

(1) Castling is bad for Black – White’s attack is very dangerous

Dvoretsky-Ubilava
Tbilisi 1979

8 ... 0-0
9 ... Qe5

White proceeds with a standard plan of attack: Dh1, h4, Qf4, Qh2-g4 etc. Black’s defence is more difficult here than in the system with the bishop on e7, since his kingside dark squares have been weakened by 9...Qg6.

13 ... Wc7
10 We2 a5
11 h4 h6
12 Qf1

White could try 12 a4! ?, with c2-c3 and Qf1 to follow.

25 Qd6! Qb7
26 Qxe6 Qd4
27 ... Qd5 27 Qd5 Qf7 28 Qxc6
Qxe6 29 e6 and wins.

27 Qxd4 cd
28 Qd3 Qxg2
29 Qxg2 Qf7
30 Qh1! Qf5
31 g4 Qb7+
32 Qg1 Qe3
33 Qxe3 Qf3
34 Qxg6 Qxf6
35 Qhxh6+ Qf1

Dvoretsky-Khalifman
Sverdlovsk 1987

8 ... 0-0-0!
9 e5! Qc7
10 Qe2 b6
11 h4 a6
12 Qf1

Another quite good line seems to be 12 c3?, but then White has to reckon with 12...f6 13 ef Qxf6 14 Qf1 e5.

12 ... Qd4
13 Qxd4 cd
14 Qf4 Qc6?!

A better idea was 14...Qac8 15
Qac1 Qc5, aiming to attack the queenside pawns with his queen. All the same, 16 Qh2 followed by Qh4 or h4-h5 would give White a dangerous attack.

15 a3 Qd7
16 Qd6+ Qf8 17 Qxf2 Qxg2
18 We6 Qxd6
19 Qxd6 Qd3
20 Qd3 Qf5
21 ... Qg6
22 Qf1 Qd8
23 Qf3 Qf6
24 Qf4...

I would have met 15...Qac8? by the simple 16 Qac1!, since 16 Qh2?! allows Black to confuse the issue with 16...Qxe5! 17 Qxe5 Qxe5 18
After 14...\textbf{\textit{Q}}xe5! Black would have the better game.

15 \textbf{\textit{Q}}xe4?! (102)

8 ... \textbf{\textit{b}}6
9 \textbf{\textit{c}}3 \textbf{\textit{b}}7
On 9...\textbf{\textit{a}}6?! White has 10 ed \textbf{\textit{Q}}xd5 11 \textbf{\textit{W}}xh4.
10 \textbf{\textit{Q}}f1 \textbf{\textit{h}}6
11 \textbf{\textit{h}}4 \textbf{d}4?!
The ending after 11...de 12 de \textbf{\textit{W}}xdl 13 \textbf{\textit{X}}d1 is clearly more pleasant for White.
12 \textbf{\textit{c}}4 \textbf{\textit{e}}5
13 \textbf{\textit{h}}5
14 \textbf{\textit{Q}}h2?! followed by \textbf{\textit{F}}-f4.
15 \textbf{\textit{W}}d7?!
16 \textbf{\textit{Q}}xh2.
17 \textbf{\textit{f}}5?!
Black now has the better position, since White has no active possibilities.

Dolmatov-A.Sokolov
\textit{Manila IZ 1990}

8 ... \textbf{\textit{b}}6
9 \textbf{\textit{e}}3
In Dolmatov's view, 9 \textbf{\textit{Q}}f1 is more accurate; White intends to play 10 e5, for example in answer to 9...\textbf{\textit{d}}4. On the other hand, 9...de 10 de \textbf{\textit{W}}xd1 11 \textbf{\textit{X}}d1 gives White a favourable ending similar to that which arose in the game.

10 \textbf{\textit{g}}1?
11 \textbf{\textit{f}}6.
12 \textbf{\textit{a}}4
13 \textbf{\textit{b}}1!
0-0
If 13...a3, then 14 ba, attacking the pawn on b6.
14 \textbf{\textit{Q}}f4 \textbf{\textit{e}}5
After 14...a3 15 \textbf{\textit{A}}dc1! ab 16 \textbf{\textit{X}}xb2, the pawn on b6 is vulnerable. 16...\textbf{\textit{Q}}b4? fails against 17 \textbf{\textit{H}}d2! \textbf{\textit{Qxa}}2 18 \textbf{\textit{Xa}}1.
15 \textbf{\textit{Q}}e3 \textbf{\textit{a}}6
16 \textbf{\textit{b}}3 \textbf{\textit{a}}b
17 \textbf{\textit{ab}}
White's position is clearly preferable.

Dvoretsky-Anikaev
\textit{USSR Ch 1/4 Odessa 1972}

8 ... \textbf{\textit{b}}6
9 \textbf{\textit{e}}5?! \textbf{\textit{Wc}}7
10 \textbf{\textit{W}}e2 \textbf{\textit{h}}6!
11 \textbf{\textit{h}}4 \textbf{\textit{g}}5!
12 \textbf{\textit{h}}g \textbf{\textit{h}}g
13 \textbf{\textit{Q}}xg5 \textbf{\textit{Wxe}}5!
14 \textbf{\textit{Wxe}}5 \textbf{\textit{Qxe}}5?!

(3) Maintaining the central tension

Dvoretsky-Averkin
\textit{USSR Ch (First League), Odessa 1974}
8... b6
9...ab7
10...ed! ed

Instead of 8...c1.

8...ed

8...dxd5 9...c6 b6 10...c4, with 11...d4 to follow.

9...cd
9...dxd4! 10...dxd4...dxd4 11...d6 is dubious for Black, but 9...c4!? deserves attention.

10...bc
Black should prefer 10...g4?!, even though after 11...h3...f3 12...f3 0-0 13...f4, intending e2-e1 and...d1, White retains positional compensation for the sacrificed pawn.

11...af5
A stronger line was 11...f4 0-0 12...d5 and 13...c5, with the better chances for White.

11...af5
He could have equalised with 11...d7? 12...d4...f3!. On the other hand 12...d5d4? is inferior: 13...xe7...dxe7 14...xe7...dx5 15...g7...xg7 16...x5 with advantage to White.

12...e1...e6
13...g4!

14...dxe4!!
But not 14...c3 on account of 14...dxe4 (14...e2? 15...x5).

14...dxe4

15...dxe4 15...d6b5? 16...d4.
15...dxe4...x5
15...dxe4? 16...x5.
16...d5!
16...d5? would be a mistake: 16...dxe4 17...x5...x2.

16...d5!

Avoiding the dangerous 16...x5d1 17...x5...d5...e7? 18...d4, when White can choose between 18...d6 fe 19...d6...d5 20...d6+...d8 21...e1+...d7 22...d7+ and 18...d6?! 0-0 (18...d6 19...d3, threatening 20...d6+ bc 21...d3) 19...x5d6 fe 20...d6+...d5 21...d7.

17...x5
17...x5...c5!

Kaiszauri-Tukmacov
Vilnius 1978

White now has a decisive positional advantage, which Dolmatov accurately conducts to victory:

31...c5 32...d6 e6 33...e5 34...d4...e7 35...d6 36...d6 37...d6 38...d6 39...d6 40...d6 41...d6 42...d6 43...d6 44...d6+ 45...d6 46...d6 47...d6 48...d6 49...d6 50...d6 51...d6 52...d6 53...d6 54...d6 55...d6 56...d6 57...d6 58...d6 59...d6 60...d6 61...d6 62...d6 63...d6 64...d6 65...d6 1-0.

(4) Exchange of pawns on d5

Yurtayev-Dvoretsky
Frunze 1983

8...b6
9...c3...c7?
9...ab7.
10...ed! ed

Dvoretsky-Yulson
Moscow 1986

8...ed!?
If 10...dxd4, then 11...dxd4...dxd4 12...d3 with advantage to White.

11...bc
12...bc...c4
13...d4...d4
14...e3...d7
15...d2

White has acquired slightly the better position from the opening.

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Not 19...a asks 20 Alexc6, with 21 Alexc3+ to follow. With the queenside closed, White has a free hand for action on the other wing, where he is stronger.

A different scheme of development is 13 Alexc3 followed by Alexf2, Wxd2, Ace1 and if appropriate d3-d4.

Black is aiming for 17...b5 18 ab Xxb5, with pressure against b2.

This knight retreat allows White to carry out a typical kingside diversion.

White can also place his bishop on e3 at once, and after 12...d4 13 Alexf2 undermine Black’s centre with c2-c3.

White has an overwhelming positional advantage.

(2) Black refrains from ...f7-f5

Dvoretsky-Diesk
Wijk aan Zee 1975

8 ... b6
9 f4 c7
10 f5 ef
10...de?! 11 f6! gf 12 Alexe4.
11 ef f6
12 c3 Ace6
12...Ace5! 13 d4 cd 14 cd Dxc6 looks inviting, but White has the strong manoeuvre 15 Dxb1 and 16 Ace3.

Dvoretsky-Chekhov
Sverdlovsk 1987

8 ... b6
9 f4 c7
10 ef ef
11 Ddf3 Wc7?!
12 c3

White is better, but only slightly. The game, which ended in a draw, is notable for Black’s cool and accurate defence.

C) Black plays ...d6 and ...Dge7

Netanya-Liberzon
1983

1 e4 e6
2 d3 d5
3 Od2 c5
4 Oge3 Dc6
5 g3 Dg6
6 Oge2 Dge7
7 0-0 0-0
8 Dh4?! (104)

18 Dg5

Threatening 19 Wh5.

Better is 18...Af6.

White can also place his bishop on e3 at once, and after 12...d4 13 Alexf2 undermine Black’s centre with c2-c3.
19 \( \text{Qf4} \)
White’s position deserves preference.

Fischer-Ivkov
Santa Monica 1956

8 ... b6
9 f4 de
10 de \( \text{Qa6} \)
11 \( \text{He1} \) (105)

11 e5 can be met by 11... \( \text{c7} \) 12 \( \text{He1} \) \( \text{Wd4}+ \) 13 \( \text{Wh1} \) \( \text{Hd8} \) 14 e3 \( \text{Wf2} \).

11 ... c4
Practice has also seen 11... c7 12 c3 \( \text{Qd3} \) (12... \( \text{Wd7}?! \) 13 \( \text{Wh5} \) \( \text{Hd8} \) 14 e5 f5? 15 ef \( \text{xf6} \) 16 \( \text{Qxe4} \) \( \text{Wh6} \) 17 \( \text{Wxh6} \), and White won; Lerner-Dolmatov, Kharkov 1975) 13 e5. The game Dolmatov-Lautier, Polanica Zdroj 1991, continued 13... \( \text{Wd7}?! \) (13...b5, followed by ...c4, ... \( \text{b6}+ \) and ... \( \text{c4} \), was stronger) 14 \( \text{Qxe4} \) \( \text{Hd8} \) 15 \( \text{Wg4} \) \( \text{Qxe4}?! \) 16 \( \text{axc4} \) \( \text{Qg6} \) 17 \( \text{Qf3} \) \( \text{Oc6} \) (106) D) Black leaves his pawn on c7

1 e4 e6
2 d3 d5
3 \( \text{Qd2} \) \( \text{Qd6} \)
4 \( \text{Qgf3} \) \( \text{Oc6} \) (106)

Dvoretzky-Ek
Wijk aan Zee 1975

5 c3
Black intends to play ...e6-e5, and at some point he will most likely exchange pawns on e4. In that case White’s bishop will not be very well placed on g2. It therefore makes sense to develop it on the f1-a6 diagonal. Essentially a Philidor Defense arises, with colours reversed and two extra tempi for White.

6 ... e5
Black could try 5...a5?.

6 \( \text{Qxe2} \)
b2-b4, a useful move in such positions, was worth playing here.

7 ... a5
8 \( \text{Qe1} \) 0-0
9 \( \text{Wc2} \) h6
10 \( \text{Qf1} \) \( \text{He8} \) (107)

Dvoretzky-Orlov
30-minute game, Moscow 1984

11 b3
One of the typical plans in this kind of position is b2-b3, a3-a4, \( \text{Qb2} \) and b3-b4, as a result of which White gains space on the queenside and may create threats against the pawn on e5.

In reply, Black was unable to find an effective arrangement of his forces.

11 ... \( \text{Qg4} \)
12 \( \text{h3} \) \( \text{Qh5} \)
13 a3 \( \text{Qd6}?! \)
14 \( \text{Qb2} \) \( \text{Qb8} \)
15 ed \( \text{Qxd5} \)
16 c4 \( \text{Qf4} \)
17 g3 \( \text{Qe6} \)
18 \( \text{Qxe5} \) \( \text{Qxe5} \)
19 \( \text{Qxe5} \)
And White won.
19 \textit{h}g3 g4

It was essential to play 19...\textit{x}e3.

20 \textit{hg} \textit{Q}xg4

21 \textit{Q}d5 \textit{Z}ae8

22 \textit{Q}c4 \textit{W}g6

23 \textit{Q}d3

23 \textit{Q}h4 \textit{Q}xh2.

23 ...

24 \textit{Q}h4 \textit{Q}xf2

25 \textit{Q}xe7+ \textit{Z}xe7

26 \textit{Q}xh2 \textit{Z}xe2

27 \textit{Q}xg6 1-0

E) Exploitation of light-squared weaknesses

Dvoretsky-Rogoizhnkov

\textit{Moscow 1965}

1 g3 \textit{Q}f6

2 \textit{g}2 d5

3 \textit{Q}f3 e5

4 0-0 \textit{Q}e6

5 d3 e5

6 \textit{Q}bd2 \textit{Z}e7

7 e4 0-0

8 c3 \textit{de}?

Not a good exchange. White now has a clear plan for playing on the weakness of c4, d5 and f5.

9 \textit{de} \textit{W}e7

10 \textit{W}e2 \textit{Z}e8

11 \textit{Z}e1

White avoids 11 \textit{Q}c4, which would give his opponent a hint as to the right set-up: 11...\textit{Z}e6 12 \textit{Z}e3 \textit{h}6.

11 ...

12 \textit{f}1 f8

12...\textit{h}6.

13 \textit{g}5! \textit{g}7

14 \textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6

White wants to seize the d5 point, and therefore exchanges one of its defenders — the knight on f6.

15 \textit{Q}e3 \textit{Z}e6 (108)

16 \textit{Z}f1!

And now he exchanges the other guardian of d5 — the light-squared bishop.

16 ...

17 \textit{Z}e4 a6

18 \textit{Z}ad1 b5

19 \textit{Z}d5! \textit{Z}e7

20 \textit{Z}xe6!

Transformation of the advantage — renouncing his central outpost, White spoils his opponent's pawn structure. With the intermediate move 19 \textit{Z}d5! he deflected the enemy knight onto the inferior square e7, from which it will need to return to c6 with loss of time.

A weaker line was 20 c4? \textit{Z}xd5 21 \textit{Q}xd5 \textit{Z}xd5 22 \textit{cd} \textit{Z}g7, followed by ...f7-f5 and ...e5-e4; or 22 \textit{cd} c4, intending ...\textit{Z}f6-e7-c5/d6.

20 ...

21 \textit{Z}d8 \textit{Z}d8

22 \textit{Z}d1

The rook exchange makes the doubled pawns harder to defend, and increases the scope of the white queen.

22 ...

23 a4!

Now the queenside pawns become vulnerable too.

23 ...

24 \textit{Z}d1 \textit{Z}f7

25 \textit{Z}g4 h5

26 \textit{Z}xf6!

Another transformation of the advantage. White exchanges his opponent's bad bishop to secure an even greater weakening of the central pawns — and also of the dark squares on the kingside, where he will threaten to penetrate.

26 ...

27 \textit{b}6 \textit{b}6

28 \textit{Z}d2 \textit{Z}g7

29 \textit{Z}h4 \textit{Z}e7

30 \textit{Z}d3! b4

30...\textit{c}4 is met by 31 \textit{Z}e3 and 32 \textit{Z}b6.

31 \textit{Z}g5 \textit{bc}

32 \textit{bc} \textit{Z}d8?

33 \textit{Z}b5?

Intent on his plan of \textit{Z}b5 and \textit{Z}x\textit{c}5! White misses 33 \textit{Z}xd8!.

33 ...

34 \textit{Z}x\textit{c}5! \textit{Z}d7

35 \textit{Z}c7!

And Black soon resigned.

Dvoretsky-Kupreichik

\textit{Odessa 1974}

Now on 7 \textit{g}2, Black has the embarrassing 7...\textit{Z}a6; therefore White develops his bishop on the f1-a6 diagonal.

7 \textit{Z}h5! \textit{Z}d7

7...	extit{Z}b7 8 \textit{Q}e5?.

8 \textit{Z}e2!

It is important to prevent ...\textit{a}7-a6.

White can now meet 8...\textit{a}6? with 9 \textit{Z}x\textit{a}6 \textit{Z}b4 10 \textit{Z}d3 \textit{Z}xa2 11 \textit{Z}e5! with advantage — but not 11 0-0? on account of 11...\textit{Z}e3!.

8 ...

9 c3 \textit{Z}e7

10 0-0 0-0

11 \textit{a}4 \textit{Z}e7

12 \textit{Z}e1

Stronger than 12 \textit{Z}c4?! a6 13 \textit{Z}f4 \textit{Z}b7. However, 12 e5?! \textit{Z}d5 13 \textit{Z}d3 was worth considering.

12 ...

\textit{e}5

Black is afraid of White's e4-e5,
and therefore plays this move which weakens the d5 point. From now on, White’s plan is roughly the same as in the preceding game.

13 \( \mathcal{Q}f1 \) a6!?
14 \( \mathcal{Q}d3 \)
14 \( \mathcal{Q}xa6 \mathcal{Q}xe4 \) is unclear.
14 ... \( \mathcal{Q}a5 \)

If 14...h6, then 15 \( \mathcal{Q}e3 \) with 16 \( \mathcal{Q}f5 \) to follow.

15 \( \mathcal{Q}g5 \) \( \mathcal{Q}b3? \)
16 \( \mathcal{Q}xf6! \) \( \mathcal{Q}xf6 \)
17 \( \mathcal{Q}a3 \) \( \mathcal{Q}e6 \)

After 17...\( \mathcal{Q}a5 \) 18 \( \mathcal{Q}e3 \) \( \mathcal{Q}e6 \) 19 \( \mathcal{Q}xa6 \) c4 20 \( \mathcal{Q}b5 \), Black has no compensation for losing a pawn.

18 \( \mathcal{Q}e3 \)
18 ... \( \mathcal{Q}e7 \)
19 \( \mathcal{Q}c4! \)
Stronger than 19 \( \mathcal{Q}c4 \) \( \mathcal{Q}a5 \).
19 ... \( \mathcal{Q}c4 \)
20 \( \mathcal{Q}xc4 \) \( \mathcal{Q}a5 \)
21 \( \mathcal{Q}a1 \) b5?

An unsuccessful attempt to confuse matters. He should have defended patiently with 21...\( \mathcal{Q}xc4 \) 22 \( \mathcal{W}x4 \) \( \mathcal{K}d8 \) 23 \( \mathcal{K}d1 \) \( \mathcal{K}f6 \), aiming for ...\( \mathcal{W}c6 \).

22 ab ab
23 \( \mathcal{Q}xb5 \) c4!?
24 \( \mathcal{Q}e4! \)
Black loses material without any compensation.

24 ... \( \mathcal{K}b8 \)
25 \( \mathcal{Q}xc4 \) \( \mathcal{Q}xc4 \)
26 \( \mathcal{Q}xc4 \) \( \mathcal{W}b6?! \)
27 \( \mathcal{Q}xe5 \) \( \mathcal{K}b7 \)
27...\( \mathcal{W}xb2 \) 28 \( \mathcal{K}c8+! \).

5 \( \mathcal{d}4! \) cd
6 \( \mathcal{Q}xd4 \)

White’s loss of tempo is not as senseless as it may seem. Black now has to reckon with the sortie \( \mathcal{Q}b5 \); when the bishop is developed on g7, the d6 square can prove weak. In this connection it should be noted that there is no bishop on d3 to obstruct the d-file for White, as there is in the analogous variation of the Paulsen System (1 e4 c5 2 \( \mathcal{Q}f3 \) e6 3 d4 cd 4 \( \mathcal{Q}xd4 \) a6 5 \( \mathcal{Q}d3 \) g6?!).

6 ... a6
7 \( \mathcal{L}g2 \)

It is also worth considering 7 c4!?

\( \mathcal{L}g7 \) 8 \( \mathcal{L}e3 \).
7 ... \( \mathcal{L}g7 \)
8 \( \mathcal{Q}xc6 \) bc

The ending after 8...dc 9 \( \mathcal{W}x8+ \) \( \mathcal{Q}xd8 \) 10 \( \mathcal{Q}d2 \) is clearly in White’s favour, thanks to Black’s weak dark squares on the queenside.

9 0-0 \( \mathcal{Q}e7 \)
If 9...d5, then 10 cd cd 11 c4 and 12 \( \mathcal{Q}c3 \).
10 \( \mathcal{W}d6! \) \( \mathcal{W}a5 \)
On 10...0-0, White consolidates his advantage with 11 \( \mathcal{Q}e3! \). This is better than 11 c4?! a5, with ...\( \mathcal{L}a6 \) to follow.

11 \( \mathcal{L}d2!?! \)

White gains nothing from 11 \( \mathcal{Q}d2?! \) \( \mathcal{L}e5 \) 12 \( \mathcal{W}d3 \) d5 13 \( \mathcal{Q}b3 \) \( \mathcal{W}b5 \); but he could have played 11 \( \mathcal{Q}a3?! \) \( \mathcal{L}e5 \) 12 \( \mathcal{W}d1 \) (12 \( \mathcal{W}d3?! \) d5 13 \( \mathcal{L}d2 \) \( \mathcal{W}e7 \) is weaker, but 12 \( \mathcal{L}d2?! \) \( \mathcal{L}d6 \) 13 \( \mathcal{L}xa5 \) deserves attention) 12...d5 13 ed cd 14 \( \mathcal{Q}e4! \) with advantage.

Dvoretsky-Chubinsky

Philadelphia 1990

5 \( \mathcal{d}4 \) cd
6 \( \mathcal{Q}xd4 \) a6
7 \( \mathcal{L}g2 \) \( \mathcal{W}c7?! \)
8 0-0 \( \mathcal{L}g7 \)

This time Black would answer 9 \( \mathcal{Q}xc6 \) with 9...dc1! So White must set
about constructing a strong centre with pawns and pieces.

9  \text{Ke}3  \text{Qe}7
10  \text{c}4  0-0
11  \text{Ke}3  \text{d}6
In the event of 11...\text{xd}4 12 \text{xd}4 \text{xc}4 13 \text{xe}7 \text{xe}7 14 \text{Ke}1, White has more than enough compensation for the sacrificed pawn.

12 \text{Kc}1  \text{xd}4?!?
13 \text{Kxd}4  e5?!
An improvement was 13...\text{xd}4 14 \text{xd}4 e5.

14 \text{Ke}3  \text{e}6
15 \text{Kd}5  \text{xd}5
16 \text{cd}
White has acquired a large positional plus. He intends to meet 16...\text{wa}5 with 17 \text{wb}2! \text{xa}2 18 \text{wb}4, or 17...\text{xd}2 18 \text{xd}2 followed by 19 \text{xb}4.

16... \text{wd}7
17 \text{wb}3  f5?!
18 \text{wb}6  \text{Mac}8
19 \text{Kb}3  \text{xc}1
20 \text{xc}1  \text{c}8
21 \text{b}3!  \text{xc}1+!
22 \text{Kb}1
Black's position is strategically hopeless.

22... \text{wc}3 23 \text{xb}3 \text{xb}3 can be answered by either 24 \text{Qd}2 or 24 \text{Qxa}5.

23 \text{Lxc}4  \text{Qe}8
24 \text{Ld}2  \text{Qe}5!
25 \text{Qxe}5  \text{Qxe}5
26 \text{Lb}5  \text{wc}7?!
27 \text{Lg}2?!
28 \text{wa}2

Dvoretsky-Filipowicz
Polanica Zdroj 1973

5 d4  \text{Lg}7?!
6 dc  \text{b}6?!
6... \text{wa}5+ 7 \text{Ld}2 \text{xe}5 8 \text{Lc}3.

7 cb  \text{xb}6
8 \text{Qbd}2  d5
9 \text{Kd}3  \text{Qe}7
10 e3  0-0
11 a4  \text{Kb}8
12...e5?!
13 \text{Ka}3!  \text{Lb}7
14 \text{Kb}3  \text{wa}7
15 \text{Ke}2  \text{Nf}8
15... \text{xe}8?!, preparing ...e6-e5, was interesting.

16... \text{wd}7
16 \text{Kc}1  \text{wa}8
17 h4!  d4?!
18 \text{Qc}4!  \text{Ka}6
19 \text{Qxb}8  \text{x}b8
20 \text{Lc}2  \text{Lb}7
21 \text{Laf}1!  \text{dc}
22 bc  \text{Lxc}4

Veselovsky-Dvoretsky
Moscow 1973

5 \text{Lg}5?!!  \text{wc}7
6 \text{Lg}2  \text{Lg}7
7 \text{Ld}3  \text{Qg}7
8 \text{Ld}2  h6
8...0-0 9 \text{Kh}6.

9 \text{Lc}3  \text{Dd}4
10 0-0  d6
11 \text{Qe}1  \text{dd}7
\text{Ld}7-\text{d}6

The plan of c2-c3 and d3-d4

Fischer-Panno
Buenos Aires 1970

5 \text{Lg}2  \text{Lg}7
6 0-0  \text{Qg}7
7 \text{Lc}1  \text{d}6
If?...0-0, then 8 \text{e}5 is unpleasant.
8 e3  0-0
8...e5?!
9 \text{Ld}4  cd
9...b6?!
10 cd  d5?!
10...\text{wb}6 deserves serious consideration.

11 e5
White's chances are now preferable. Attacks against his centre are unsuccessful: 11...\text{Qd}5 12 \text{Qd}3 \text{wb}6 13 \text{Qa}4, or 11...f6 12 \text{Qxc} 13 \text{Qh}6.

11... \text{Qd}7
12 \text{Qc}3  \text{Ec}8
13 \text{Qf}4  \text{Qa}5
14 \text{Qc}1  b5
15 \text{b}3!  b4
16 \text{Qe}2  \text{Qb}5
16...\text{Lxe}1 is more precise.

17 \text{Ld}2  \text{Qc}6
18 \text{g}4  a5?!
In a cramped position you have to seek exchanges; 18...\text{Lxe}2 was essential, but White would still stand better after 19 \text{wb}2 \text{wb}6 20 \text{Qe}3 \text{Qb}8 21 \text{Qf}1.

19 \text{Qg}3  \text{wb}6
20 \text{h}4!  \text{Qb}8
21 \text{Gb}6  \text{Qd}7
22 \text{Lg}5!
Threatening both 23...\texttt{Wxc7} and 22...
\texttt{xg7} 22...\texttt{xh6}.

22...
\texttt{xh6}

24...\texttt{Wxh6} \texttt{Cc8}

25...\texttt{Qxe8} 27...\texttt{Wd8}?

Black had to play 26...\texttt{Qf8} 27...\texttt{Qf4} (27...\texttt{Qe1}?) 27...\texttt{Qe7} (White threatened 28...\texttt{h5} or 28...\texttt{Qg5}), although after the further moves 28...
\texttt{Qf1} 29...\texttt{Qxf1} the advantage is with White.

27...\texttt{Qg5} \texttt{Qf8} (112)

Fischer-Durão
Havana OL 1966

Not 11...\texttt{Qd1}? \texttt{Qa6}.

11...
\texttt{Qe5}

12...
\texttt{Qe5}

13...
\texttt{Qe5}

14...
\texttt{Qe5}

15...
\texttt{Qe5}

16...
\texttt{Qe5}

17...
\texttt{Qe5}

18...
\texttt{Qe5}

19...
\texttt{Qe5}

Fischer has achieved a large positional plus – there are both light-square and dark-square weaknesses in his opponent’s camp.

19...
\texttt{Qc4}

20...
\texttt{Qc4}

21...
\texttt{Qc5}

22...
\texttt{Qc7}

23...
\texttt{Qc7}

24...
\texttt{Qc7}

25...
\texttt{Qc7}

26...
\texttt{Qc7}

27...
\texttt{Qc7}

28...
\texttt{Qc7}

29...
\texttt{Qc7}

30...
\texttt{Qc7}

31...
\texttt{Qc7}

32...
\texttt{Qc7}

33...
\texttt{Qc7}

34...
\texttt{Qc7}

35...
\texttt{Qc7}

36...
\texttt{Qc7}

The decisive blow! Black cannot

play 33...\texttt{ba} on account of 34...\texttt{Qc6+}
\texttt{Qe7} 35...\texttt{Qb7+}.

33...
\texttt{Qc7}

34...
\texttt{Qc7}

35...
\texttt{Qc7}

36...
\texttt{Qc7}

37...
\texttt{Qc7}

38...
\texttt{Qc7}

39...
\texttt{Qc7}

40...
\texttt{Qc7}

41...
\texttt{Qc7}

42...
\texttt{Qc7}

The b-pawn has no time to advance to b4: 9...\texttt{b5}?! 10...\texttt{b4} 11...\texttt{b5} 12...\texttt{b6}, with the better chances for White.

10...
\texttt{Qc7}

11...
\texttt{Qc7}

12...
\texttt{Qc7}

If 12...\texttt{Qc8}, then 13...\texttt{d4} 14...\texttt{Qd4}, followed by \texttt{Qf1} or \texttt{Qc4}.

13...
\texttt{Qd4}

14...
\texttt{Qd4}

15...
\texttt{Qd4}

16...
\texttt{Qd4}

17...
\texttt{Qd4}

18...
\texttt{Qd4}

A more natural line seems to be 19...\texttt{Qd4}! and 20...\texttt{h4}, starting active operations on the kingside.

19...
\texttt{Qd7}

20...
\texttt{Qd7}

21...
\texttt{Qd7}

22...
\texttt{Qd7}

23...
\texttt{Qd7}

24...
\texttt{Qd7}

25...
\texttt{Qd7}

26...
\texttt{Qd7}

27...
\texttt{Qd7}

28...
\texttt{Qd7}

29...
\texttt{Qd7}

30...
\texttt{Qd7}

31...
\texttt{Qd7}

32...
\texttt{Qd7}

33...
\texttt{Qd7}

34...
\texttt{Qd7}

35...
\texttt{Qd7}

36...
\texttt{Qd7}

White’s chances are still slightly preferable.
Preparing for a Game

Artur Yusupov

The harder the training, the easier the battle' - as Suvorov liked to say when sending his generals into mock assaults. This immortal maxim from the great commander is applicable to chess too. The more laborious and painstaking your preparatory work, the more effortless the game itself will be!

Preparing for a game is a highly individual process. Much of it depends on what sort of opening arsenal you possess. Some players solve this problem quite simply; they don't prepare for each particular opponent but make straightforward preparations for the tournament as a whole, deciding in advance which set of openings to use. They hope that when faced with an unexpected move in the opening, they will be able to cope with the situation over the board. Usually these are players with a narrow but well constructed repertoire.

An example is Grandmaster Andrei Sokolov. When playing him, it is not hard to predict the opening. With White he always opens 1 e4. With Black (when appropriate) it is a Queen's Indian. Nothing else! Andrei keeps meticulously to his own opening repertoire, but of course he knows it thoroughly and has vast experience of playing his systems.

Sokolov reckons that if an opponent succeeds in casting doubt on one of his variations, he can repair it on the spot; the next opponent will have a much harder time finding a flaw in the same line, and ultimately he (Sokolov) will possess a completely 'fireproof' repertoire - which is particularly important when playing Black. This kind of logic, this approach to solving the problems of the opening, is, generally speaking, a viable option.

As a rule, however, players do not stick too rigidly to this approach; they prefer to vary their opening systems now and again. For otherwise their opponents have too easy a task in preparing for them.

By way of an example let me tell you how I prepared, together with Mark Dvoretsky, for my game with the Cuban Jesus Nogueiras in the Candidates Tournament at Montpellier. At that time Nogueiras' repertoire was not broad enough, and we noticed that in the Queen's Gambit he kept on playing one system which in my view was very risky. Immersing ourselves in the position, we discovered a new plan which I put into operation in the game. The innovation proved exceptionally effective! I need hardly say how much our task was facilitated by the narrowness of my opponent's opening repertoire.

Yusupov-Nogueiras
Montpellier Ct 1985
Queen's Gambit

1 d4 d5
2 e4 e6
3 d3 c6
4 f3 f6
5 g5 Qbd7
6 c3 cd
7 e3 Qd6

This is what Nogueiras kept playing.

8 Qd3 Qf8 (113)

Black wants to play ...Qg6 and ...h7-h6, forcing an exchange on f6. The obvious drawback to his plan is that he has moved the same piece twice in the opening but aims to move it a third time, thus clearly breaking the rules of mobilisation.

Furthermore the move 8...Qf8 means a delay in castling. All this spurs White to energetic measures.

9 Qe5

An obvious-looking thrust. Black has relinquished control of e5, and the white knight immediately goes there. In answer to 9...Qg6, White will play 10 f4. This plan for seizing the central square e5 was introduced into tournament practice as long ago as the last century, by the great American player Harry Nelson Pillsbury. Here is a more recent example: the game Chernin-Cvetković, Belgrade 1988, continued 10...0-0 11 Wc2 We8 12 0-0 Qb4 13 Wh1 Qxc3 14 bxc6 h6 15 f5!, and White went ahead with the decisive assault.

9 ...

Wb6

Black wishes to exchange the menacing knight on e5 before it is supported by the f-pawn. To this end he violates yet another principle of opening play - he brings his queen out too early. If he intends to take on b2 for good measure, the pawn will cost him dearly; after 10 0-0 Wxb2 11 Qc1, White has a decisive lead in development.

10 0-0
11 Qe5

In our pre-game analysis we had considered 11...Qd7, and intended to meet it with 12 Qf4. If then 12...Wxb2?! 13 Qc1 Qg6, White has 14 Qxg6 hxg6 15 e4, opening up lines in the centre. Instead of taking the pawn Black should continue his development with 12...Qe5. That
was in fact played in Gukov-Smagin, Moscow Ch 1984.

11 ... 

Not a good reply. This attempt to go into action with inadequate development cannot be recommended. We had nonetheless looked at this move in our preparation, though of course our analysis of it was fairly cursory. We thought White could gain a plus with 12 c7f4 d5g6 13 d7xg6 h6 14 h3 d7xh6 15 e4, but at the board I worked out that Black could defend with 15... wb2 16 ec1 0-0, returning the extra pawn.

Looking deeper into the position, I perceived a stronger continuation. Can you see what it was? No? Then let me give you a hint. White must indirectly utilise the position of the black knight on g4.

12 waf4! 

This sets up the highly unpleasant threat of 13 cxd5. On 12... d7, White can choose between 13 wa3?! f6 14 ef gf 15 c7h4, and the less obvious 13 e6?! wxf6 14 cxd5 wxf3 15 wxf3. In either case, with his lead in development and his bishop pair, White has a strategically won position.

12 ... 

Throwing caution to the winds, as they say.

13 cxe1 

Of course not 13 cxd5? wxf6. Now Black cannot take on e5 with his knight, if only because of 14 c6 c6 wb6 15 cxd5 (14 cxd5 cxd5 15 cxe6! is also strong).

I had a long think here, feeling that in a position like this there was bound to be a forced win. 14 c7c2 wb6 15 h1 wb7 16 cxd5 might seem tempting, but after 16... wxf3 there is nothing definite; while if 16 c7f4, Black can continue the fight with 16... d6.

Then I saw it!

14 c7d4!! 

A move of murderous power. By simply centralising his queen, White creates five (!) threats at once: 15 c7xh6, 15 d7xh6, 15 d7b4, 15 d7b1 and 15 bxb6. There is no defence against all of them. For example, 14... wxf3 parries four threats but loses to the fifth — 15 e6!

14 ... f6 

15 c7f6 c7f6 

If Nogueiras had played 16... c7g6 17 wxf6 c7g8, I could have exploited the opposition of the queens with 18 cxd5.

17 c7b5 wb6 17... c7d4 18 c7d6 mate.

Black resigned in view of 24... c7xd3 25 c7xf6.

Let us return once again to my game with Nogueiras. One question will perhaps be asked: if I had prepared the whole variation in advance, why did I need to look for a stronger continuation during the game? The question is legitimate, and it is worth dwelling on it a little.

The key factor here is the amount of time taken for preparations. It is one thing to study a variation in complete comfort at home. Preparation during the course of a tournament is quite another thing. When preparing immediately before the game (you normally have just a couple of hours for this), you clearly cannot go into all the refinements. So it was in the present case. We didn’t work out in detail how to reply to 11... d5g6; our task was simply to ascertain that in this line too, the position is comfortably for White and fairly dangerous for Black. The move we had in mind, 12 c7f4, is sufficient to uphold that verdict. But it by no means follows that the move is strongest.

Blind faith in your pre-game analysis is generally to be avoided, and not just because a mistake may have crept into it. The point is that the pressure of the contest, the tense competitive environment, enhances your intuition, stimulates your imagination and sharpens your powers of calculation. This is why, however meticulous your analysis, you should double-check your prepared
variations during the game and look for ways to strengthen them. The playing session is just the time when some new unexpected idea may occur to you! Of course it is not worth spending time on moves like $9 \text{Qe}5$ or $10 \text{f4}$ (in answer to $9...\text{Qg6}$), but when you reach a position that you didn't analyse but just assessed perfunctorily, careful checking is simply essential.

Success in the opening, then, largely depends on your ability to predict the variation your opponent will choose, and prepare for it effectively. This is especially important (but difficult) when playing opponents like Timman, whose opening repertoire is very wide.

But of course there is no guarantee that in the couple of hours spent preparing for a particular opponent in the tournament, you will find the very best way to combat his chosen set-up. For this reason, the second major ingredient of success is the quality of your preparation before the tournament, the general level of your opening knowledge, the breadth of your own repertoire.

No doubt any experienced chessplayer can easily recall occasions when he made use of lines prepared a long time before. An example of this is my game with the Hungarian Grandmaster Zoltan Ribli which we are now going to examine.

Preparing for Ribli is difficult, because he is one of those players who vary their openings. He has a fairly wide range of systems and a thorough knowledge of the variations he plays. But in that same Montpellier tournament I somehow succeeded in predicting what he would do; furthermore, in the line in question, I had an important improvement stored up. Essentially, therefore, my entire preparation merely amounted to leafing through my notes and refreshing my memory of the variations!

Yusupov-Ribli
Montpellier Ct 1985
Semi-Tarrasch

1 $d4$ $\text{Qf6}$
2 $c4$ $e6$
3 $\text{Qf3}$ $d5$
4 $\text{Qc3}$ $c5$
5 $cd$ $\text{Qxd5}$
6 $e4$ $\text{Qxc3}$
7 $bc$ $cd$
8 $cd$ $\text{Qc6}$
9 $\text{Qc4}$ $b5$

All this is very well known to theory.

10 $\text{Qe2}$ $\text{b4}+$
11 $\text{Qd2}$ $\text{wa5}$
12 $d5$ $ed$
13 $ed$ $\text{Qe7}$

Why did Ribli choose this variation? After all, it is not one of his chief opening weapons. Presumably he wanted to catch me unawares. I had never played the White side of this line; the present position had never occurred before in my games. But Ribli was unlucky. How was he to know that I had thoroughly studied the Semi-Tarrasch three or four years earlier, and found an improvement for White?

14 $0-0$ $\text{Qxd2}$
15 $\text{Qxd2}$ $0-0$
16 $\text{Qb3}$ $\text{wd8}$

A very interesting pawn formation has arisen. White has a strong passed pawn in the centre; Black aims to blockade it and if possible attack it.

17 $\text{Qf3}$

17 $\text{Qxb5}$ has also been tried. In Kir.Georgiev-Ribli, Sarajevo 1985, the continuation was 17...$\text{Qb7}$ 18 $\text{Qc5}$ (after $18 \text{d6} \text{Qg5}$ Black has counter-threats) 18...$\text{Qb6}$! 19 $\text{Qxb5}$ $\text{Qxb5}$ 20 $\text{Qb1}$ $\text{Qxd5}$ 21 $\text{Qc1}$ $\text{Qxd1}$ 22 $\text{Qxb1}$ $\text{Qc6}$ 23 $\text{Qd7}$ $\text{Qb8}$! 24 $\text{Qde7}$ $\text{Qc6}$, and here a draw was agreed.

17 ...

$\text{Qf5}$ (115)

Theoretical books have considered 18 $\text{Qd3}$ here, but after 18...$\text{Qd6}$! Black appears to equalise. However, it had seemed to me from the very outset that the diagram position is a little more comfortable for White. My labour of analysis merely confirmed me in this opinion.

18 $\text{Qc1}$!

The fruit of my previous exertions. White develops his rook and at the same time discourages 18...$\text{Qd6}$ (in view of 19 $\text{Qc6}$).

18 ...

$\text{Qd6}$

It is well known that a knight is a good blockader, so Ribli's decision is positionally justified. Perhaps he reckoned that after the obvious 19 $\text{Qd4}$ $\text{Qd7}$ 20 $\text{Qc6}$ his queen would emerge on $f6$ and the position would level out. True enough, his knight on $d6$ would be excellently placed and his rook could occupy the e-file.

However, it turns out that White can keep the queen away from $f6$.

19 $\text{Qd4}$!

An unpleasant move for Black to meet. Now 19...$\text{Qf6}$ would mean spoiling his pawn structure. Still, that would evidently have been the least of the evils. What Ribli played was worse.

19 ...

$\text{Qb6}$?!

The queen is worse placed here than on $f6$. It is a long way from the kingside, where White can work up an initiative unhindered. In the present case, clearly, White should not exchange queens.

20 $\text{Qf4}$! $\text{Qd7}$
21 $\text{Qd4}$ $\text{Qe8}$?!

A major inaccuracy. Black should have kept his rook on $f8$ for the defence of the kingside.

22 $\text{Qc6}$ (116)
White has a tangible plus. This is largely a result of his successful opening preparation. We have arrived at a position that was not only perfectly familiar to me but suited my style as well. What more can be expected of an opening? You could only, perhaps, be closer to the ‘ideal’ if you knew all the moves right to the end — as Lev Polugaevsky sometimes does in his games. But in my view that approach is not rational. It requires an enormous expenditure of energy, and for what? For winning (as a rule) just one solitary game.

Of course the present case is not like that. And yet, for a ‘rational’ chessplayer, this is the ideal outcome of his preparation. In general, if you find a move such as 18 c1 and see that the resulting position is just a little better for you as well as suiting your temperament — then play it without hesitation!

Ribli, I recall, was dismayed by this turn of events. Perhaps that was why his subsequent defence was not the most tenacious.

By this time, many roads lead (as they say) to Rome. In particular, 30 \textit{b6} is very strong — attacking the knight on b2 and defending the rook on e1. But I was attracted by a different idea.

30 \textit{c4}!

At this point Black’s most tenacious move is 30...\textit{c4}, but after 31 \textit{d2} \textit{c8} 32 \textit{h7}+ \textit{xh7} 33 \textit{exe8} White is the exchange up and has a won position. Ribli played differently, however, and fell into a trap.

30 ... \textit{c3}

31 \textit{d1} \textit{d3}

Ribli was banking on this intermediate stroke. Now 32 \textit{exe3} would be a mistake: 32...\textit{xf4} 33 \textit{f3} \textit{c2} + (the same check would be the answer to 33 \textit{xh8}) 34 \textit{f1} \textit{e8} 35 \textit{exe3} \textit{d4} 36 \textit{h7}+ \textit{f8}, and Black emerges with an extra pawn.

32 \textit{xh7}!! 1-0

Material losses are unavoidable for Black.

The next example is on much the same theme — with just the one major difference that I couldn’t for all the world have guessed my opponent’s choice of opening. This was the first time in his life that Kevin Spraggett had played the Tarrasch Defence! The Canadian Grandmaster had prepared for our Candidates Match very thoroughly, and the Tarrasch was one of his opening surprises. But it did not work! There were two reasons. First, I had already carefully studied the variation he prepared.

Secondly, the variation was more in keeping with my style than with his.

After suffering this fiasco, Spraggett did not persist — he gave up the Tarrasch for the rest of the match.

Yusupov-Spraggett

\textit{Quebec C8 (3) 1989}

Queen’s Gambit, Tarrasch

1 \textit{d4} d5

2 \textit{c4} c6

3 \textit{e4} \textit{e6}

4 \textit{c3} \textit{c6}

5 \textit{d3} \textit{d6}

6 \textit{g3} \textit{g6}

7 \textit{f4} \textit{f5}

8 0-0 0-0

9 \textit{g5} \textit{g6}

The usual 9...\textit{cd} 10 \textit{d4} \textit{d6} leads to a more complex struggle.

10 \textit{d5} \textit{c5}

11 \textit{xf6} \textit{xf6}

12 \textit{xd5} \textit{xb2}

13 \textit{d7} \textit{ad8}

14 \textit{c1} \textit{xc1}

15 \textit{axc1}

This variation occurred in the sixteenth game of the Petrosian-Spassky World Championship Match in 1969. After that it was unpopular for many years. However in 1988, in the Linares tournament, the Spanish International Master (now Grandmaster) Miguel Illescas used it against Alexander Belavsky and secured equality. Spraggett must have based his analysis on that game.

You may ask what mistake he was making in choosing to play this
opening against me. Spraggett didn't take into account that I was playing at Linares myself — and that I naturally paid attention to Beliavsky-Illcas, since I was due to play White against Illcas a couple of rounds later. Such are the fine points that you sometimes have to consider in your preparations! The question is not just whether this or that variation has occurred in your opponent's games, but whether he was present when the variation was played!

Basically Spraggett fell victim to my preparation for the game against Illcas (in that game, incidentally, a different form of the Tarrasch Defence occurred). But then, it happens that I had already analysed the present position long before the Linares tournament.

15 ... \textit{\texttt{A}}e7

Against Petroian, Spassky preferred 15...b6. After 16 \texttt{Qxe6 f6 17 \texttt{Qh3 or 17 e3 he should have run into difficulties. (In the game Petroian played the less exact 17 \texttt{Qc4.)}}

16 \texttt{Qxe6 f6 17 \texttt{Qc4}} \textit{\texttt{Qf6 (118)}}

At this point White used to play 18 \texttt{Qb1}. Here are some examples to show that Spraggett's plan for securing a clear-cut draw was not without serious foundation:

\textbf{a)} 18...\texttt{Qd7} 19 h4 \texttt{Qd4?}, and Black simplifies the position to his own benefit; \textit{\texttt{Ftachnik-Minev, Bucharest 1978.}}

\textbf{b)} 18...\texttt{Qd6} (the b-pawn is defended indirectly) 19 h4 \texttt{Qd4} 20 \texttt{Qe4 b6 21 \texttt{Qh3 Qf7 22 Qc1}} (equality also results from the line 22 e3 \texttt{Qc8 23 g4 g5!}, as occurred in the Beliavsky-Illcas game already mentioned) 22...\texttt{Qe8 23 e3 Qe7 24 Qf1 Qa5! and there are no worries for Black; Ornstein-Schneider, Copenhagen 1981.}

Incidentally, in \textit{\texttt{ECO}}, Kasparov himself assessed this opening variation as sufficient for equality.

18 e3!

Realising the disadvantages of exchanging rooks, White doesn't hurry to play \texttt{Qb1}. In fact, it is not yet clear whether this move is needed at all (the rook may turn out to be more useful on \texttt{c1}). The move played, which I had prepared to use against Illcas, proved to be a theoretical novelty, although hardly anything could be more logical — White takes control of the d4 square, on which unwelcome exchanges could otherwise take place.

18 ... 19 h4 19 h6 20 \texttt{Qe4 Qd8 21 Qh3}

I prevent the exchange of a pair of rooks. If Black persists with 21...e5, the consequences are severe: 22 \texttt{Qg2 Qd1 23 Qxd1 Qxd1, and the white bishop has the opportunity to attack the b-pawn from c8 (after that the knight on c6 will be attacked too), while the black bishop on f6 is bad. Naturally Spraggett is not attracted by such a prospect; he prefers to conduct the defence without weakening himself unnecessarily.

21 ... \textit{\texttt{Qf7}}

22 \texttt{Qg2 Qe8 (119)}}

Here again White derives benefit from not hurrying with \texttt{Qb1}. Probing deeply into the position, I realised that on b1 there is generally nothing for the rook to do. In addition I came to the conclusion that White's main task now lies in activating his knight, and I formed a specific plan for doing so. What was that plan? Let us think.

There is clearly only one route by which the knight can be brought into play without fear of exchange. That route is via d2. How does White gain control of this square? By covering it with a rook. So the first part of his plan is obvious — a rook must be brought to c2. When the knight comes across to c4 it will not only create specific threats, but a kingside pawn advance will become possible — for example, f2-f4 will considerably strengthen White's position.

I think we can now sum up the results of Spraggett's preparation for his game against me and my preparation for his game against Illcas. Black is deprived of prospects while White has achieved the sort of position he wanted; he has a small but persistent advantage, and a plan for strengthening his position further.

I confess that there were parts of my former analysis that had slipped my memory. But this unexpectedly turned out for the best; it made me take a serious think about the position over-the-board, appraise it so to speak with fresh eyes, calculate variations anew. In other words, even the factor of surprise in my opponent's choice of opening was of some benefit to me.

23 \textit{\texttt{Qc1}} 24 \textit{\texttt{Qe2}}

Here again Spraggett committed an unobtrusive but significant error. He weakened the position of his knight with:

24 ... b6?

White at once took advantage of this with:

25 \texttt{Qf4!}

This creates the tactical threat of
A powerful rejoinder. Now 32...c7?? is met by the decisive breakthrough 33 f5+ ef 34 gf+ wh7 35 ef1.

32 ... cc7
33 cc2 dc3
34 cc6 wh7
35 g5 hg
36 hg cb4 (1/0)

37 cc8?!

Unfortunately I missed an attractive stroke which would have ended the struggle at once: 37 g6+ wh6 (37...gx6 38 cc5+ 38 cc5!)

37 ... cc6

37...g6 was more stubborn.

38 fh3 fc7
39 fh8 ed5
40 fc4

Obviously 40 cc6 would have won the exchange, but White is intent on constructing a mating net.

And he succeeds.

40 ... ef
41 cc5! cc+ 42 cc3 1-0

So I managed to win this important encounter by rather strange means – thanks to my preparation for a completely different game! This reminds us once again that serious analytical work is not done in vain – provided, of course, that the results are recorded, fully understood and committed to memory. In chess, most work held in store is sooner or later turned to account – though it may be years afterwards.

I would again emphasise my view that a player’s chief preparatory work must be done in advance – not during tournaments, but in between them! I remember a conversation I had with Korchnai at the Tilburg tournament in 1987. Complaining of his rather poor play, Viktor said that unfortunately he had not had time to prepare for the tournament properly; so he had arrived for it without any fresh ideas. This vexed him. True enough, before an important contest it is vital to evolve a healthy stock of new ideas and have something up your sleeve. You can hardly count on success without it.

It sometimes happens that young players without too much experience try to base their preparations on the study of out-of-the-way variations, lines that have been insufficiently investigated. In principle this is normal for a player who has not yet equipped himself with a wide opening repertoire – who, because of his youth, simply has not absorbed that mass of theory which today’s professional player is snowed under. But there is no sense in making the avoidance of theoretical variations into an end in itself by choosing lines that are known to be inferior and relying on all sorts of eccentric, trappy moves. Such a strategy is ill-conceived.

What method is most effective, then? My position is simple: in the opening you must endeavour to play the objectively best moves, even if this means a much greater amount of preparatory work and more detailed analysis. In any event, what you play must be thoroughly studied, you must have all its nuances at your fingertips.

Summing up what has been said, we can lay down two main principles for choosing an opening when preparing for a particular opponent.

1) First: you should take your own capabilities as your starting point – that is, you should try to reach a position which you know well and which corresponds to your opening tastes, your style of play. For if your penchant is for strategic manoeuvring and your prepared line culminates in a position of the gambit type with wild complications, you risk coming away empty-handed no matter how conscientious your pre-game analysis was. For this reason, experienced grandmasters sometimes reject even promising continuations if they do not suit their style. You will agree that we hardly expect Garry Kasparov to go into a passive position even with Black. It
simply is not in character! Look how he played in his matches with Anatoly Karpov. He deliberately avoided passive positions, preferring to give up a pawn and achieve a draw in a complex struggle rather than refrain from sacrificing and achieve the same half point through accurate but non-aggressive play. Conversely, see how Karpov prepared himself for the matches. He constantly avoided superfluous complications in the opening, going in for them only in cases where he was firmly convinced — on the basis of deep analysis — that he had prepared a really strong and promising line.

So the primary aim of your preparations must be to obtain the kind of game where you feel comfortable.

2) The second task perhaps involves more subtlety. Try to take your opponent in positions that are least congenial to his style and do not correspond to his tastes as a player. In this case the likelihood of errors on his part will greatly increase. Among recent examples, I will only recall Gata Kamsky’s failure in the Linares tournament of 1991. To a large extent the explanation was precisely that his opponents were quick to detect the shortcomings of his opening repertoire and easily took him into positions with which he was unfamiliar (simply on account of his youth and lack of experience). He suffered terribly throughout the tournament, especially when he had the black pieces — with which he lost all his games!

By way of a ‘positive’ example, let me tell you of my game against the English grandmaster Jonathan Speelman in the same tournament. I shall not demonstrate the game but merely explain what I had to do to prepare for it.

The game was played in the first round; a player’s fortunes in the entire event can depend on how he starts off! I had White, and my opponent’s opening repertoire was no secret to me. I didn’t much bother about the Queens Gambit Declined, although of course I did have a specific variation ready just in case. Looking through Speelman’s most recent games, I came to the conclusion that the likelihood of a Slav was also slim. Therefore I didn’t do any special preparation for that defence either, especially since I had a few things stored up for it anyway.

What I expected was that Speelman, a player with a combative and original style, would quite likely answer 1 d4 with 1...d6. I should add that he has a good feel for positions of the Pirc type and plays them fairly often. Yet at first I was frankly tempted to go into just that kind of position. But then I decided against it, as I didn’t have anything special up my sleeve in the normal Pirc. I decided not to get involved in a major theoretical dispute, preferring to reduce the amount of effort needed for preparation.

Then I suddenly had an idea for drawing Speelman into ‘my own’ sort of position even after 1 d4 d6. What I had to do was reply 2 g3! You may ask what advantage that move-order has, in comparison (say) with 2...d5. The point is that against 2...d5 the English grandmaster often chooses the system with 2...Qf6 3 c4 &g4. By playing 2 g3 I greatly diminish the power of this sortie, since I can support the knight from g2 with my bishop — which should hardly be to Speelman’s liking. Of course, this order of moves might lead to a normal King’s Indian with g2-g3, but that didn’t worry me since the variation is part of my repertoire.

Note that I was given extra room for manoeuvre by the fact that I had a choice of systems against the King’s Indian. If (for instance) I had only ever played the Sämisc against it, I would have had much more trouble steering clear of Speelman’s prepared lines. For example, after 1 d4 d6 2 c4 he might have played 2...g6, avoiding ...Qf6. I should have had to analyse that too. As it was, with the single move 2 g3 my preparation was practically concluded!

In the game, after 1 d4 d6 2 g3, we transposed into a King’s Indian, the position was one that I knew well, and in consequence I managed to obtain the more comfortable game. I was completely satisfied with the outcome of the opening.

That kind of preparation is certainly very economical. But then in my view, preparation in the course of a tournament should always be as economical and expedient as possible. As I have said, too great an expenditure of effort on the eve of a game can boomerang during actual play. For this very reason you need to be able to vary your openings. In the first place this will increase your chances of luring your opponent into a position where he is uncomfortable, and secondly he will have more difficulty in preparing to play you.

My game with Kasparov in that same Linares tournament can serve as another example of successful preparation. In this case the element of surprise was particularly effective. Kasparov was not expecting me to play the Dutch Defence (Leningrad System). When I replied to 1 d4 with 1...f5, he was nonplussed for a moment. I noticed how unpleasant this reply was for him; he had clearly failed to take it into account in his preparations. As a result Kasparov used up more time over the opening than I did, but even that was not the main thing. In English language, his first serve had gone into the net; he had to rely on his second and less powerful one. I quickly managed to seize the initiative. And in this last-round game a win was ever so important to him!

To spring a surprise in the opening is of course no bad thing, but I would not recommend playing a variation for the first time in your life just for the sake of one particular
novelty. Bluffing like this is extremely dangerous, especially against a seasoned opponent.

Essentially, all kinds of advice can be given on the subject of preparation. There are as many opinions as individuals! Every strong player has his own recipes and sometimes an entire system. I would remind you, for example, of the so-called ‘Capablanca principle’. It is very sensible and useful. Capablanca said that for each tournament he normally prepared one opening for White and one for Black. (In the latter case he evidently meant one against 1 d4 and one against 1 e4.) How did he justify this approach? He claimed that even if his prepared variations contained defects, his opponents would hardly be able to detect them, given the small amount of time at their disposal within the tournament schedule. Sure enough — if you have been poring over a variation (let’s say) for a week and have not found a refutation, you may well ask why your opponent should unearth one in a couple of hours just before the game.

Preparation for a tournament, then, begins long before the first round. This enables you to save your energy during the contest and facilitates your choice of opening against a particular opponent. As I said before, the ideal variation would be one that didn’t demand any analysis at all but merely required you to refresh your memory of your homework. Of course, like any ideal it is unattainable, but you must strive after it!

If you do have to put in some work immediately before the game, you should go about it rationally. Don’t attempt to refute the opponent’s set-up outright — it sometimes makes sense to avoid it altogether. Don’t involve yourself in a theoretical duel on territory where you sense that your opponent is well prepared. Only when you feel that his variation contains some serious flaw (remember the ‘Nogueiras Variation’!) should you bend your efforts to finding a concrete refutation.

It is very important to be able to foresee your opponent’s procedure — how he will prepare, what he will select, what he is expecting you to do. Otherwise it is hardly possible to direct your own preparation correctly.

Try to understand what sort of player you are up against — combative or positional, bold or cautious, a calculator or an experimenter. If you know, for example, that your opponent copes badly with endgames, is it worth inventing something new in the opening? Is it not simpler to find a variation which leads straight into an ending?

However, if your own arsenal of openings is limited, even the most exact appraisal of your opponent’s chess personality will not enable you to exploit his weak points. In that case you have practically no choice. Play what you know well and understand — play, so to speak, not against a specific opponent but against his pieces. (Remember the title of the collection of best games by the Yugoslav Grandmaster Svetozar Gligoric — ‘I Play Against the Pieces’?)

The most outstanding representative of this tendency — which, by the way, overlaps in some respects with the ‘Capablanca principle’ I mentioned before — was, as is well known, the great Akiba Rubinstein.

This approach is not flexible, but on the other hand it is economical. Of course, it requires you to know your own openings exceptionally well! Otherwise your opponent, who has no trouble deducing your opening, will throw you off balance with some surprise he has stored up in advance. To assemble a brilliantly organised, practically impeccable opening repertoire is of course only within the power of a very experienced player. But even young players can set out on that path; you can expand your arsenal gradually, perfecting one variation after another, rather than attempt to master all openings at once.

There is one other ‘opening weapon’ I should like to mention, although it more properly comes under the heading of chess psychology. This weapon is the masking of your intentions. Suppose your choice of opening has worked perfectly and your opponent has risen to the bait. In spite of this you don’t give the appearance of having caught him in a prepared line. On the contrary, you do all you can to conceal it, to stop him from sensing the danger too soon.

Incidentally, both Kasparov and Karpov do this. Sometimes when they are perfectly familiar with the position in front of them and all the subsequent play, they still keep on pondering their moves.

I should like to warn you against enthusiasm for such methods. In principle they are usable, but only within strict limits — in medically prescribed doses, so to speak. In other words: conceal your intentions by all means, but don’t spend too much time doing it — that has its dangers. For one thing, unforeseen problems may arise in the course of the game, and secondly the time may be needed for realising your advantage. I would therefore advise a different approach. If you know how to play the position and have analysed it inside out before the game, make your moves quickly! By this very means you will increase the psychological pressure on your opponent. He knows he has been caught out, so he is not too sure of himself anyway — and playing fast gives you a clear psychological initiative. After all, seizing the initiative — in both the purely technical and the psychological sense — is just what we should aim for when playing an opening.

At first sight, some of my advice might seem a little contradictory. For instance, you will recall that in my game with Nogueiras I didn’t do
what I have just recommended – play my prepared variation quickly. In actual fact there is no contradiction. Chess is not a matter of arithmetic; it is not at all monolithic; the application of this or that rule may depend on the most minute nuances of a particular situation. Don’t try to work out a rigid code of instructions to be followed in all cases; what is more important is simply to know the various approaches to solving the problems that face you. The choice of approach is sometimes purely subjective and determined by the player’s style and taste.

9 You Are Right, Monsieur La Bourdonnais!

Yuri Razuvaev

All things return into their own circles.
Only these circles revolve.

Andrei Voinesensky

Say what you will, our own generation (never mind anybody a little older) had a happy chess childhood. The era of Informator and ECO (the full title Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings sounds so frightful) was yet to come. We hardly knew about opening classification schemes, we didn’t spend hours copying out games; we didn’t apply scissors to innumerable bulletins from a crowded programme of tournaments, and our fingers didn’t get wrinkled with paste. The so-called information boom had yet to rear its head; the vocabulary of necessary terms was pleasantly sparse and comprehensible to anyone. Today, on opening Informator, even an experienced professional needs to start by feverishly scanning a page of new Esperanto that is incomplete (as yet!) but growing apace. In former days, chess books could simply be read (opening manuals were hardly ever produced). Admittedly the number of books published was much smaller, but I agree with those who say that in childhood it is more important to have one really good book that you really love. Thus it was fairly easy to satisfy our needs. And then, all you had to do to obtain a book was go to the shop and buy it.

But everything changes, including chess. The avalanche of information that overwhelms us today goes hand in hand with a dedicated, all-embracing study of chess openings. Over the past twenty years, the investigative passion has acquired the features of an epidemic. We have done splendid work mining the raw materials of chess. The starting position, so formidable a century ago, has lost its primeval mystery, and in all openings (the classical ones as well as those formerly considered unsound) reliable roads have been more or less cleared if not yet paved. What is opening theory? Methods of play from the starting position, you might think. But how everything has changed! Today, we select some position occurring after, say, the odd eighteen moves; and we start from there!
To the uninitiated, I should mention how this standard position is reached:

1 e4 c5 2 ∙f3 d6 3 d4 cd 4 ∙xd4 ∙f6 5 ∙c3 a6 6 ∙g5 e6 7 f4 ∙b6 8 ∙d2 ∙xb2 9 ∙b1 ∙a3 10 f3 ∙c6 11 fe fe 12 ∙xc6 bc 13 e5 de 14 ∙xf6 gf 15 ∙e4 ∙e7 16 ∙e2 h5 17 ∙b3 ∙a4 18 ∙xf6+ ∙xf6 19 c4 (121)

'But surely that isn't all forced,' the reader will exclaim, trying to control his mixed feeling of bewilderment and mild panic.

Don't worry — of course it is not. Let me try to explain it. In the first place, there is such a thing as fashion in chess. Secondly, a position like this is easier to analyse than the starting position. And there is a further point. Let us admit that now and again we get obsessed with something to the point of forgetting our original aims and directives. Yet one thing we do recall is that 'no quest is more natural than the quest for knowledge.'

Sergei Makarychev once told me of a trip he made to Tunis. The day before setting off, he went to a chess club. In one room, he came across a little group of young players devotedly analysing the baffling ramifications of the Sveshnikov Variation (this was the blossoming time of that paradoxical system). Walking into a Tunis chess club a day later, Sergei was rather surprised to see the same engaging spectacle, in which — who would have thought it? — the position on the board coincided uncannily with the previous one. And when, in the not-too-distant future, the really powerful computers get to work, we shall witness (and participate in) some far more striking events than those so brilliantly portrayed by Ostop Bender's prophetic speech in the novel Twelve Chairs.

In all this, it has been said that the further we go in among the trees, the less we see of the wood. Of course, chess ideas (just like any others) possess a strong magical power of attraction, but at times it pays us to stop and take our bearings. Long experience has taught the human race that 'a thousand paths lead to error — one path leads to truth.' The history of chess ideas reveals itself as a 'dialectical' process. In chess books, an accepted outline of this process has long been established:

1 the old Italian school (a great time — you wouldn't think pawns were a scrap of use, the way they sacrificed them);

2 Philidor (laying the foundations of the positional school, the first attempt at a balanced view of chess);

... and so on.

I dare say those books are competently written, but cold print, as a rule, has converted everything into rigid formulae that turn us away permanently from first-hand inquiry. A thing that sticks in my own mind is the way the Steinitz Gambit was invented. It goes 1 e4 e5 2 ∙d3 ∙c6 3 f4 ef 4 d4. I am amazed to read in some books that the originator of this idea, so strikingly bold and imaginative, is ranked among the dogmatists. But if in our own day we are taken aback by Steinitz's experiments, how they must have shocked the first World Champion's contemporaries. Sam Loyd, that Homer of chess, reacted to the birth of the new gambit in a fitting manner. Here is the problem (White to play and mate in three) he composed for the occasion.

The position after 1 d4 d5 2 e4 is as old as the game of chess as we know it. At any rate, it appears in the Götingen Manuscript (end of the 15th century) and in Damiano's work of 1512. The earliest books give the line 2...dc 3 e4 b5 4 a4 c6 5 ab cb 6 b3. In his treatise of 1561 entitled Book of the Ingenious Art of Chess, Ruy Lopez (traditionally the first major opening theoretician) refined the order of moves by playing 5 b3 and answering 5...cb with 6 ab, which gives White the advantage. Over forty years later — in an essay entitled Puzzo or the Knight Errant,
in praise of the Italian player Leonardo da Cutri – Salvio pointed out the neat trap that we all know about: 2...dc 3 e3 b5 4 a4 c6 5 ab cb 6 Wf3.

The gambit, in fact, turned out to be a gambit only in name, and Black began to seek satisfaction in counterplay. In the second edition of his famous tract The Noble Game of Chess (1745), the Syrian player Philipp Stamma pointed out that 3...e5!? was playable. A very important landmark in the history of the variation 1 d4 d5 2 c4 dc 3 e3 e5 was the series of matches between La Bourdonnais and McDonnell. It is a pity that the only thing most of us can recall from that remarkable encounter is the final position of the 16th game in the fourth match. (124)

La Bourdonnais-McDonnell
6th game of the second match
Queen's Gambit

1 d4 d5
2 c4 dc 3 e3 e5

At this point Chigorin makes an interesting comment: 'La Bourdonnais recognises 6...Qf6 as better than the move played.' Seeing that the theory of the 3...e5 line is in a poor state, La Bourdonnais's opinion is (to use a hackneyed phrase) worthy of attention.

7 Qf3 0-0
8 0-0

In the first match 8 Qe3 had been played, but 8 0-0 looks more natural.

8 ... e6

Again Chigorin's note is interesting: 'This method was indicated by Philidor, but La Bourdonnais considers it bad.' What does modern theory say? Unfortunately, 150 years on, it has not succeeded in giving a precise answer. I can only point out that until recently, players believed Philidor. Now they are having some doubts.

9 h3 Qbd7

The next game provides food for thought. It is modern in character, and of inimitable beauty.

La Bourdonnais-McDonnell
15th game of the first match
Queen's Gambit

10 Qe3 Qb6
11 Qb3 Qfd5

Today 11...Qbd5, à la Steinitz, is more often played.

12 Qe2

The 17th game of the first match went 12 a4 a3 13 Qes Qe6 14 Qc2 f5? 15 Qe2 Qf4 16 a5 Qe2 17 Qf7 18 Qe4 Qf6 19 Qxf4! Qxf4 20 Qxf4 Qc4 21 Wh5 Qxf1 22 Qxg6 h5 23 Qxg6 Qc8 24 Wh8+ Qf7 25 Qh7+ Qf6 26 Qf4 Qd3 27 Qe6+ Qg5 28 Wh6+ Qf5 29 g4 mate.

12 ... Qh8
13 Qae1 Qd6
14 Qc2 f5?

Persistence in error is commonly called pig-headedness.

15 Qe5 f4
16 Wh5 Qf6
17 Qg6+ Qg8
18 Qb3+ Qbd5
19 Qxd5

...Qxh5 20 Qxe7 mate is pretty.

19 ... cd
20 Qxd5+ Qxd5
21 Wh5 Qf7
22 Qe5 Qe6
23 Qxe6 Qxe5
24 de Qe8
25 Qxe3 etc.

The next game provides food for thought. It is modern in character, and of inimitable beauty.
book **Uncrowned Champions** by Neishtadt. I would add that nearly every move by La Bourdonnais radiates energy and power.

19 ... $\text{Wxd}4+$
20 $\text{c}e2$ $\text{Wf}6$
21 $\text{Hh}5$ $\text{Wg}6+$

The queen exchange would not save Black either: 21...$\text{Wxf}3$ 22 $\text{Hxf}3$ $\text{e}7$ 23 $\text{Hhf}5$ $\text{f}6$ 24 $\text{g}5$ $\text{x}c3$ 25 bc $\text{d}5$ 26 e4 etc. In reply to 21...g6, Chigorin gives 22 $\text{Wh}3$ gh (if 22...$\text{Wf}5$, then 23 $\text{Hxf}5$) 23 $\text{Hxf}6$ $\text{x}f6$ 24 $\text{Wxh}5$, and Black has no defence against the battering ram g5–g6.

22 e4 $\text{Qd}5$
23 $\text{Hh}1$ $\text{Kh}6$
24 g5! f5
25 $\text{Qxd}5$ cd
26 $\text{x}d5+$ $\text{Wh}7$
27 $\text{Hxh}6+$ $\text{Wxh}6$
28 gh 1–0

**La Bourdonnais-McDonnell**

7th game of the third match
Queen's Gambit

1 d4 $\text{d}5$
2 $\text{c}4$ dc
3 e3 e5
4 $\text{xc}4$ ed
5 ed $\text{Qf}6$
6 $\text{Qc}3$ (126) $\text{Ad}6$

As mentioned above, this is the move La Bourdonnais considered strongest.

7 $\text{Qf}3$ 0–0
8 h3 $\text{Ee}8+$
9 $\text{xc}3$ $\text{Af}4$

The La Bourdonnais-McDonnell matches demonstrated White's attacking possibilities after 1 d4 d5 2 c4 dc 3 e3 e5. The position arising out of the opening was characterised by Chigorin in these terms: 'At this stage Black's set-up is similar to a position that arose in Zukertort's games against Steinitz and also in Lasker's games with the latter. The only difference is that here Black has a pawn on c6, not e6. The plan of defence was just the same for McDonnell as for Steinitz.'

After the series of La Bourdonnais-McDonnell matches the variation sank into oblivion and was hardly ever employed in practice. Sometime in the first quarter of the twentieth century, the conclusion was drawn that White is better off playing against a pawn on e6 than on c6. What was the reason? I must frankly confess that I have never fathomed it. Indeed, it seems to me that the conclusion lacked any reason. Subsequently (the case is a typical one), 3 $\text{Qf}3$ was virtually the only move to be played — apart from an occasional 3 e4 — and in notes for the uninitiated it was explained that 3 e3 is weaker because of the counter-stroke ...e5. Of course there did remain a few doubters, but no one paid attention to them. In 1965, Neishtadt's book *The Queen's Gambit* appeared. This respected theoretician wrote: 'Authors of opening manuals unanimously hold the correct move to be 3 $\text{Qf}3$, so as not to allow ...e7–e5, but the strength of that counter-stroke should not be overestimated.'

As often happens, help came from another quarter. In the middle of the 1970s, the Petroff Defence experienced a wave of popularity. The following variation was extensively tested: 1 e4 e5 2 $\text{Qf}3$ $\text{Qf}6$ 3 $\text{xe}5$ d6 4 $\text{Qf}3$ $\text{xe}4$ 5 d4 $\text{Qf}5$ 6 $\text{d}3$ $\text{Le}7$ 7 0–0 $\text{Dc}6$ 8 $\text{Le}1$ $\text{Dc}4$ 9 $\text{c}4$ $\text{Qf}6$ 10 cd $\text{Qxd}5$ 11 $\text{Qc}3$ 0–0 12 $\text{Le}4$ $\text{Le}6$.

A few years of experience, and the needle on the scale moved from 'equal game' to 'clear plus for White'. It turned out that conducting Black's defence with the e-file open was not at all easy. This revised assessment was echoed in games with the Queen's Gambit Accepted.

**Timman-Panno**

*Mar del Plata 1982*

**Queen's Gambit**

1 d4 d5
2 c4 dc
3 e3 e5
4 e3 ed
5 ed $\text{Qf}6$
6 $\text{xc}4$ $\text{Le}7$
7 $\text{Qf}3$ 0–0
8 h3 $\text{Qh}7$
9 0–0 $\text{Qb}6$
10 $\text{Lc}3$ $\text{Qf}5$
11 $\text{Qf}d5$ (127)

A well-known position. Pay attention to Timman's next move. Black has removed his knight from the kingside; White at once brings
his own second knight closer to the black monarch.

12 \text{\textit{Qe}4} \text{\textit{He}8} \\
13 \text{\textit{Qd}2} \text{\textit{Ff}5} \\
14 \text{\textit{Qg}3} \text{\textit{Ge}6} \\
15 \text{\textit{Qc}2} \text{\textit{Dd}7} \\
16 \text{\textit{a}3} \text{\textit{Qf}8} \\
17 \text{\textit{Qd}3} \text{\textit{Gg}6?}

In Timman’s view, a better line was \textit{17...f6} followed by \textit{...Qf7}, but the initiative would still be for White.

18 \text{\textit{Qh}6} \text{\textit{Qf6}} \\
19 \text{\textit{Wd}2} \text{\textit{Qd}5} \\
20 \text{\textit{Qe}5} \text{\textit{Qe}6} \\
21 \text{\textit{Qc}2} \text{\textit{Dd}7} \\
22 \text{\textit{Qg}4} \text{\textit{Qg}5} \\
23 \text{\textit{Qxg}5} \text{\textit{Wxg}5} \\
24 \text{\textit{Wh}4} \text{\textit{Qf6}!} \\
25 \text{\textit{Qe}5} \text{\textit{Wd}4} \\
26 \text{\textit{Qxf}6}+ \text{\textit{Wxf}6} \\
27 \text{\textit{Qe}4}

It is characteristic of this type of position that although Black defends well, he is unable to extinguish White’s initiative entirely. With his last move Panno wrongly neglected the chance to simplify the position with \textit{27...Qxe4 28 Wxe4 Qe7}.

28 \text{\textit{Qb}3!} \text{\textit{a}5} \\
29 \text{\textit{Wc}3} \text{\textit{Qxb}3} \\
30 \text{\textit{Wxb}3} \text{\textit{Wxd}4} \\
31 \text{\textit{Qf}6+} \text{\textit{Qh}8} \\
32 \text{\textit{Qa}1} \text{\textit{Qe}8?!} \\
33 \text{\textit{Qe}4} \text{\textit{Wd}8} \\
34 \text{\textit{Qxe}6!} \text{\textit{fe}} \\
35 \text{\textit{Wc}3} \text{\textit{Qe}7}

On \textit{35...Wf8}, Timman gives the striking finish \textit{36 Qxh7+! Qxh7 37 Qh4+ Wh6 38 Wf6!}.

36 \text{\textit{Qh}5+} \text{\textit{Qg}8} \\
37 \text{\textit{Qx}e6} \text{\textit{Wf}7} \\
38 \text{\textit{Qf}6+} \text{\textit{Qf}8} \\
39 \text{\textit{Wc}5+} \text{\textit{Qg}7} \\
40 \text{\textit{Qe}7} \text{\textit{Wxf6}} \\
41 \text{\textit{Wxe}5 mate}

The finale of this fine game was conducted in nineteenth-century style.

In the next example White failed to exploit his positional assets, but his method of play in the opening is undoubtedly of interest.

A subtle manœuvre. White at once increases his own scope, and Black will be left with a choice of technically difficult endings.

10 \text{\textit{Qb}3} \text{\textit{Qbd}5}

Following Philidor and Steinitz.

11 \text{\textit{Qe}1} \text{\textit{c}6} \\
12 \text{\textit{Qg}5} \text{\textit{Qe}6} \\
13 \text{\textit{Qe}5} \text{\textit{Qf}7}

The unstable position of the black pieces on the e-file is beginning to tell. For example, 13...\textit{Wad}5 is met by 14 \textit{Qxf7! Qxf7 15 Qxd5 Qxh7 16 Qxe7}, or 14...\textit{Qxe7 15 Wf2!} (as pointed out by Lev Psakhis; but 15 \textit{Qxf6} is also good), and Black badly needs a bright idea – or to put it in conventional chess sign-language:

At this point Browne’s habitual time-scramble started, and the game ended in a draw on move 41. At move 25, as Petrov stated, a very strong continuation would have been 25 \textit{g4} followed by \textit{Qg2}, \textit{h2-h4} and \textit{g4-g5}, with advantage to White.

\textit{Haven you ever seen a chess article without a brilliant example of the author’s own play? ‘Silly question’, you will say. Quite.}
Quite a good reply to 23...\(\text{Qxf5}\) is
\[24 \text{Qxf5} \text{gf} 25 \text{Qh2} \text{Qh8} 26 \text{d5} \text{Qxd5} 27 \text{Qxd5} \text{Qxd5} 28 \text{Qxd5} \text{cd29} \text{Wd4} \text{Wg7} 30 \text{Qg1+} -
\]
\[24 \text{Qh2} \text{Qh8} 25 \text{Qg1} \text{Qd5}
\] The threat was 26 \(\text{Qg5}\) and \(\text{Wd4}\).
\[26 \text{Qxd5} \text{cd} (129)
\]

27 \(\text{Qg6}\) \(\text{Qc6}\)
After 27...\(\text{Qg8}\) White has a number of good lines, for instance:

28 \(\text{Axd}g7+\text{Qxg7} 30 \text{Qg1+}\text{Qh8} 30 \text{Qh4} (30...\text{Whh4} 31 \text{Qf7 mate}).
\]
28 \(\text{Hdg1}\) \(\text{Hf8}\)
29 \(\text{Qh6!}\) \(\text{Qg8}\)
30 \(\text{Axb3}\) \(\text{Axd6}\)
If 30...\(\text{Whf6}\), then 31 \(\text{Wh4}\) is decisive.
31 \(\text{Wg2}\) \(\text{Hfd8}\)
32 \(\text{Axd5}\) \(\text{Axd5}\)
33 \(\text{Axe6}\) \(\text{Wf8} (130)\)
If 33...\(\text{Wh7}\), an amusing mate follows:
34 \(\text{Wxd5}\) \(\text{Axd5}\) 35 \(\text{He8}\).
34 \(\text{He8!}\)
Such moves are easy to find and fun to play.
34 ... \(\text{Axe8}\)
35 \(\text{Axd5+}\) 1-0

Our excursion has reached its end. The awkward moment of summing up the results has arrived. We often argue about the best move in various positions, but thank God we all still play according to different styles. It would seem that in the opening you can use your imagination a little and try to find your own way (or what suits you best among positions deriving from other players). On this question I am in favour of subjectivity.

So – you are right, Monsieur La Bourdonnais!

In place of a Postscript

It is some years since the above article was first published. The author has re-read it at Mark Dvoretsky's request, but has decided to refrain from correcting it. The article not only contains reference material but also the thoughts and feelings that preoccupied me seven years ago. It seems to me that when set down on paper, our thoughts so to speak detach themselves and cease to belong solely to their originator. Therefore I didn't want to touch material that is already in some measure estranged from me.

I frankly confess that I read through the article with a feeling of trepidation. Let me explain why.
One of my favourite chess books since childhood has been the chess manual of the legendary Capablanca. The exceptional clarity which imparts an almost mathematical sense to the words; the innate, more exactly pristine, feeling for harmony; the all-pervading, truly Mozart-like charm. A book like this is one that you don't want to part with for long, and I come back to it frequently.

But one day, a Grandmaster by then, I came across some lines which took me aback.

1 \(\text{d}4\) \(\text{Qf6}\)
2 \(\text{c}4\) \(\text{e}6\)
3 \(\text{Qc}3\) \(\text{Qb}4\)
4 \(\text{Wb}3\) \(\text{c}5\)
5 \(\text{dc}\) \(\text{Qc}6\)
6 \(\text{Qf}3\) \(\text{Qd}4\)
7 \(\text{Qd}2\) \(\text{Qc}5\)
8 \(\text{Wc}2\) \(\text{0-0}\)
9 \(\text{a}3\) \(\text{Qc}3\)
10 \(\text{Qxc}3\) \(\text{a}5\)
11 \(\text{g}3\) \(\text{Wc7}\)
12 \(\text{Qg2}\) \(\text{e}5\)
13 \(\text{0-0}\) \(\text{a}4 (131)\)

Under the diagram I read: 'In this position from a game Stähler
Nimzowitsch, White has the two bishops and a solid formation. In return, Black has a well-placed knight on c5. In general the position should no doubt be assessed as better for White, but although he did win this game, his advantage at this point is scarcely a winning one. Seeing that Nimzowitsch specialized in this variation, a substantial improvement of Black's defence should hardly prove possible...'

How unfortunate! For Capablanca is speaking of an opening which in our day is counted among the most correct – the Nimzo-Indian. The fact has to be faced that even geniuses can be wrong in their appraisal of opening ideas. Hence, ever since I have been writing books and articles on chess openings, the feeling of being doomed by the passage of time has never left me. In this instance, however, I was in luck; the judgements expressed in the article have remained valid over the past seven years. In conclusion, I have pleasure in showing the reader one further example.

The effortless, graceful style of Rafael Vaganian, who has a liking
and a capacity for subtle piece play, is ideally suited to the type of position we have discussed.

Vaganian-Hübner
Tilburg 1983
Queen's Gambit

1  d4  d5
2  c4  dc
3  Cc3  e5
4  e3  ed
5  ed  Qf6
6  Qxe4  Qe7
7  Qf3  0-0
8  0-0  Qbd7

In a game Zaichik-Karpeshov, Volgodonsk 1983, the attempt to simplify with 8...Qg4 gave White the advantage after 9 h3 Qf3 10 Wxf3 Qc6 11 Qe3 Qxd4 12 Wxb7 c5 13 Qxd4 cd 14 Qad1 Qc8 15 b3 Qc7 16 Qf3 Qd7 17 Qe2.

9  Qe1  Qb6
10  Qb3  c6
11  Qg5  Qg4

Nonchalance bordering on frivolity. Without his own light-squared bishop it will be very hard for Black to 'pacify' the bishop on b3.

12 Wd3  Qxf3

If 12...Qh5, as recommended by some commentators, then 13 Qe5 is highly unpleasant.

13 Wxf3  Qd5
14 Qxe7

The position is full of temptations and mirages; for example, at this point 14 Qxe7 Qxe7 15 Qe1 looks very inviting, but Vaganian gives a brilliant refutation: 15...Qbc8 16 We2 Qe8 17 Qxf7+ Qxf7 18 We6+ Qf8 19 Qe3 Qd6 20 Qf3+ Qf5 21 Qxf5+ Qxf5 22 Wxf5+ Wxf6!! and White perishes for lack of a loophole for his king.

14 ... Qxe7
15 Qe5!

A subtle technical device: White keeps the black knights from d5, and in this way greatly enhances the pressure from the bishop on b3.

15 ... Qg6
16 Qe4  Qd7
17 Qd1  Qa5

Black stops halfway. His knight belongs on f6. But even then White would carry out d4-d5 after a preparatory 18 Qc3, and the advantage of bishop against knight would make itself felt.

18 Qe3  Qad8? (132)

The threat was 20 Qd6. From this point on, Black's play is dictated by his opponent.

20 h4!  h6

As Vaganian points out, the h-pawn was immune: 20...Qxh4 21 Wh5 Qg6 22 Qh3 h6 23 Qxg6!.

21 Qg4  Qh8
22 h5  Qf4
23...Qf4 23 Qxf4 Qxf4 24 Qd6! is no better for Black.

23 Qg3  g5

An oversight hastening the end.

24 Qg4  fg
25 Qf1

White's pieces are moving with rare co-ordination and ease. In such cases you just need a 'feel' for the position, and the rest of your moves play themselves.

25 ... Qd8
26 Qc3  Qd6
27 Qc5  Qc8

Black misses his last chance to play ...Qf6. Now White manages to bring his knight into the attack, after which Black will no longer be able to hold the position.

19 Qe4  Qc7
How Opening Novelties are Born

Boris Zlotnik

The quest for what is new is the prime demand of the human imagination.

Stendhal

Defining in aphoristic form the essence of the three phases of a chess game, Rudolf Spielmann wrote: 'In the opening, a chessplayer is a book; in the middlegame, an artist; in the endgame, a machine.'

In chess as in life, the ordinary and prosaic undoubtedly bulks larger than the extraordinary and the artistic. However, even in the opening - and still more in the endgame - there is of course a place for creativity. One of the most appealing aspects of chess, in which analysis and imagination overlap, is precisely the search for opening novelties in the course of a player's habitual efforts to learn new systems and variations or perfect those he already uses.

Seeing that the discovery of opening innovations depends to some extent on individual ways of working, most of my examples will be taken from my own games in the interests of clear presentation.

It is usual to divide opening innovations into two categories. The first comprises those which are invented at the board in the course of a tournament game; the second consists of those devised in the peace and quiet of home study.

We will start with some novelties belonging to the first category. They are not so rare even now, in our present age of the proliferation of information.

Zlotnik-Gik
Dubna 1968
Sicilian Defence

1 e4 c5
2 \&f3 d6
3 d4 cd
4 \&x d4 \&f6
5 \&c3 g6
6 \&e3 \&g7
7 \&c4

Lapsus manusc (a finger-slip), as Alekhine liked to write in such cases. There was a banal reason why I didn't play the natural 7 f3. Before the game, the young, newly qualified master had been swimming in the Volga and sunbathing to his heart's content; sitting down at the board in a blissfully enervated state, he automatically brought his bishop out to c4 on the assumption that 7 f3 0-0 had already been played.

7 ... \&g4
8 \&b5+ \&f8
9 0-0? (133)

In a game Schelde-Botvinnik, Stockholm 1962, White played 9 \&d2, avoiding damage to his pawn structure after the exchange on e3. The further course of the game showed, however, that Black's bishop pair was a more significant factor than his loss of the right to castle.

Annoyed at my absent-mindedness and bitterly needing something to cheer myself up, I took the purely emotional decision (my emphasis - B.Z.) to force the game out of its normal channel. After the move I played, and the subsequent exchange on e3, White is left with doubled isolated pawns on the e-file. On the other hand the f-file is opened, and White's lead in development becomes formidable.

For twenty years I never gave another thought to the diagram position. I assumed that my novelty, concocted by chance, was fit to be used only once - to dumbfound an opponent in a single game. Hence, on seeing my game with Gik quoted in Eduard Gufeld's book on the Dragon Variation (1982), I was genuinely astonished at the question mark appended to 7...\&g4. In his book Analytical and Critical Writings, 1957-70 (1986), Botvinnik considers 7 \&c4 a careless lapse, but makes no mention of 9 0-0. Nor is the idea employed in present-day tournaments. Usually such a conspiracy of silence is not merely due to ignorance. The explanation came only in 1987 at the USSR Junior Championships, when one of the competitors, Sergei Tiviakov - today one of the most promising young players in the country - showed me a counter-innovation for Black. Since I believe that in chess there is such a thing as copyright, albeit only in a moral sense, I will not reveal Black's idea here but will leave my readers to find it for themselves.

9 ... \&xe3
10 fe e6
11 \&c4 \&e7
12 \&cxb5! \&g8? (134)
12...c5 was essential. Now a cascade of sacrifices descends on the Black position. Curiously enough, the following moves made such a strong impression on my opponent that afterwards he not only congratulated me on my win but thanked me for a fine game. A rare case of gentlemanly manners in the harsh world of chess.

13 Qxd6!! Qxd6
14 bxa6

Hoping to pick up three pieces for the queen. Black is mated after 14...Wxd1 15 Wxd1 Qxc6 16 Qc7 Qxb7 17 Qxf7+ Qg7 18 Qb3+ Qe7 19 Qf7.

15 Wd8+ Qf8
16 Qxf7! Qxf7
Or 16...Qxf7 17 Qf1!

17 Wxc8 Qxc8
18 Wxe4+ Qg7
19 Wd4+ 1-0

Improvised novelties, i.e. those which are not prepared in advance, rarely arise from an emotional impulse as in the foregoing example. Much more often they result from studying the position in a state of maximum concentration and unearth its secrets, to the ticking of the clocks in the tournament hall.

Kuzovkin-Zlotnik
Moscow 1981
Queen's Indian Defence

At the time when this game was played, the chess world had been impressed by Kasparov's brilliant win against Marjanović (Malta OL 1980), which continued 15...Qd7? 16 Qh3 Qh8? (16...Qd8!) 17 Qe4! Qxb2 18 Qg5! with a decisive attack.

When thinking about my move, I rather vaguely recollected that Kasparov had gained a striking victory, but I didn't have any ideas of my own about the position. Immersing myself in analysis, I came to the conclusion that the piece causing Black the most annoyance was the knight on f5. I therefore began studying the moves 15...Qd7 and 15...Qc8. In answer to the first of them, I didn't like 16 Qh3. My reason for choosing the second lay in the variation 15...Qc8 16 Qd6 Qxe3! 17 bc Qe6 18 c4 dc 19 Qxa8 Qxa8, with excellent prospects for Black.

15 ...

At the end of the game I looked up Kasparov's notes to his encounter with Marjanović. In answer to 15...Qc8 he gave the following variation, claiming it was promising for White: 16 Qd6 Qe6 17 Qxd5 Qxd5 18 Qxd5 Qxd5 19 Qxd5 Qxb2 20 Qd1.

After the present game (Informer 31/618), Kasparov evidently changed his mind about 15...Qc8. In his book The Test of Time, he noted that it was playable. More than that, it would appear to be the strongest. At any rate, the same idea was used against Kasparov by Karpov in the second game of their first match, though the sequence of moves was a little different: 13 Qf4 Qc8, after which the game went 14 g4 Qb6 15 Qc1 Qd7 16 Qd2 Qc5. Black's position proved to be very solid. After this, the whole gambit line with 7 d5 went out of fashion.

Returning to our original game, I should point out that 16 Qd6 was relatively White's best move.

16 Qd4?? Qd7
17 Qc1 Qb7
18 Qe5 Qxe5

Black has succeeded in consolidating his position while keeping the extra pawn.

19 Qxe5 Qf8
20 Qh5 g6
21 Wd2 f6
22 Qh4 Qc5
23 Qb3 Qad8?

23...Qxe6 was better. Now White could have minimised Black's advantage with 24 Qxe5 bc 25 Qa4 Qd6 26 Qxc5 Qxe5 27 Qxe5, although after 27...d4 the defence is still not easy.

24 Qd1? Qe5
25 Qxe5 bc
26 Qa4

26 Qa4 was no better in view of 26...Qd7 27 Qa5 d4.

26 ...
27 Qa5 Qe7
28 f4 Qe3
29 b4 cb
30 Qxd5 Qxd5
31 Qxd5+ Qg7
32 Qf2 Qa3

0-1

The chief category of opening novelties, of course, comprises those which are prepared in home analysis. Perhaps this category can be subdivided into three groups. Some novelties arise by chance; some proceed by way of analogy; some serve to create original situations. I shall give examples of all three types.

One of the most striking novelties of 1988 arose in the following position.
1 e4  e6
2 d4  d5
3 Qc3  Qb4
4 e5  c5
5 a3  Qxc3+
6 Qe7
7 Wg4  0-0
8 Qf3  Qc6
9 Qd3  f5
10 ef  Qxf6
11 Qg5  e5! (136)

(from diagram 136):

12 Wh4

According to Dokhoian, 11...e5 left Psakhis in a state of shock. He thought for 40 minutes over his reply; in the end he didn’t risk going into the standard line which is quoted in all the French Defence monographs: 12 Axh7+ Axh7 13 Wh5+ Qg8 14 Qxf6 gf 15 de (137).

13 Qxf6  gf
14 Wxf6  cd
15 cd  cd
16 Qxd4  Qxd4
17 Wxd4  Qf5
18 0-0  Qf6
19 Wf6  d4
20 cd  Wxd4
21 Hfd1  Hxd8
22 Hb1  Hd7
23 Wg5+ ½-½

Let us now look at an example of an opening novelty devised on the basis of an analogy. This type is the most frequent of all. Of course, the degree of resemblance to a familiar precedent varies from one case to another. The analogy may be obvious or covert; in this example it falls roughly in the middle of the scale.

Psakhis-Dokhoian
USSR Championship (First League),
Klaipeda 1988
French Defence

Although the last move has been known for a long time, and the verdict of theorists was unanimous: this way of playing is no good in view of 12 Axh7+ Qxh7 13 Wh5+ Qg8 14 Qxf6 gf 15 de.

Approved by conventional opinion, this last line is reproduced in my own book on the French Defence which appeared in 1982. Yet it was in the course of working on that book that I discovered just how many acknowledged verdicts are based on old games, some of which — in addition — were not by players of an adequate standard. These two factors — the date of the verdict and the unconvincing credentials of the players — are bound to arouse suspicions about the conclusions of theory in these cases.

The history of 11...e5! (the novelty here consists in the change from question mark to exclamation mark) is as follows:

In the summer of 1988, Grandmaster Dokhoian (at that time only a Master) and his coach Kishnev approached me with the question of how to alleviate Black’s difficulties in the variation 11 Qg5 Hf7 12 Axxe7 Hxe7 13 Wh4. I knew very well from my own practical experience what a thankless defensive task Black faces in that line. So, speaking as the author of a book in which some of the judgements were questionable (for reasons just explained), I voiced the suggestion — or rather the conviction — that 11...e5 was perfectly playable.

We briefly analysed it together, and to our surprise (including my own) we confirmed that 11...e5 is a promising move. It became clear that a new shot had appeared on the tree of opening knowledge. Dokhoian soon had a chance to try the move out in practice and reap the reward of the novelty. Here is the first game with this line to be published in Informator (46/383).

Let us now look at an example of an opening novelty devised on the basis of an analogy. This type is the most frequent of all. Of course, the degree of resemblance to a familiar precedent varies from one case to another. The analogy may be obvious or covert; in this example it falls roughly in the middle of the scale.

Makarychev-Zlotnik
Moscow 1978
Sicilian Defence

1 e4  c5
2 Qf3  Qc6
3 Qc3  g6
4 d4  cd
5 Qxd4  Qg7
6 Qe3  Qf6
7 Qc4  Wa5
8 0-0  0-0
9 Qb3  Wc7
There followed 13...\(\text{Ng}4\) (an idea of Vasiuak's) 14 \(\text{Bxg}4\) \(\text{Bxg}4\) 15 \(\text{Bxg}4\) \(\text{Qxc}2\) 16 \(\text{Qxb}5\) \(\text{Qxa}1\) 17 \(\text{Qxa}1\) \(\text{Qc}6\), with a clear plus for Black.

Comparing the two diagrams, we can easily identify their thematic similarity. The next stage in the development of the idea was my own dismal experience in a game against the Kharkov Master Vaisman (Moscow 1964). Playing White in the position preceding diagram 138, I played 13 \(\text{g}4\)? instead of 13 \(\text{Qf}3\). The reply, of course, was again 13...\(\text{Ng}4\)!. Pondering this game and Fischer-Korchnoi, I was led to the following thought. Since Black gains the advantage when his bishop takes a pawn on \(g4\), it is reasonable to assume that in an analogous position without the white g-pawn en prise, the bishop sortie to \(g4\) is sufficient for equality.

Now back to my game with Grandmaster Makarychev, in which my opponent very quickly grasped the point of the innovation. After a few minutes' thought he offered a draw, but to me it seemed a shame to end the game here.

\[\begin{align*}
14 & \text{Bxg}4 & \text{Bxg}4 \\
15 & \text{Bxg}4 & \text{Qxc}3! \\
16 & \text{Qc}2 & \text{Bxa}1 \\
17 & \text{Bxa}1 & \text{e}5 \\
18 & \text{Bb}6 & \text{c}7?
\end{align*}\]

Throwing a pawn away. It was not too late to maintain equality with \(23...\text{Ba}6!\) 24 \(\text{Bxa}5\) b6 25 \(\text{Qb}4\) \(\text{Bxa}4\).

\[\begin{align*}
24 & \text{Bxa}5 & \text{Bb}6 \\
25 & \text{c}4! & \text{f}5 \\
26 & \text{c}5 & \text{f}4 \\
27 & \text{Bb}3 & \text{Bxb}3 \\
28 & \text{Bxb}3 & \text{g}5
\end{align*}\]

29 \(\text{Bf}1\) \(\text{f}3\)
30 \(\text{g}1\) \(\text{Bd}3\)
31 \(\text{Qa}5\) \(\text{Bxf}3+\)
32 \(\text{Qg}1\) \(\text{Rf}7\)
33 \(\text{Qc}4\)

and White won.

We will now examine two games by famous grandmasters. In the first, the innovation seems to have been devised with the aid of a classic example. In the second, a truly novel situation is created.

**Romanishin-Geller**

**USSR Ch (Top League), Erevan 1975**

**Spanish**

\[\begin{align*}
1 & \text{e}4 & \text{e}5 \\
2 & \text{Qf}3 & \text{Qc}6 \\
3 & \text{Bb}5 & \text{a}6 \\
4 & \text{Qa}4 & \text{Qf}6 \\
5 & \text{Qb}3 & \text{c}5 \\
6 & \text{Bb}4 & \text{b}5 \\
7 & \text{Bc}3 & \text{Qe}7 \\
8 & \text{Bd}2 & \text{Bxb}6 \\
9 & \text{Bxe}5 & \text{Qf}5 \\
10 & \text{Bf}4 & \text{Qe}7 \\
11 & \text{Bc}2 & \text{Bxc}3 \\
12 & \text{Bxc}3 & \text{Bc}6 \\
13 & \text{Bxf}3 & \text{cd} \\
14 & \text{e}4 & \text{Qc}4 (141)
\end{align*}\]

This position had occurred many times in various tournaments before the present game. There had been repeated attempts to demonstrate an advantage for White due to his bishop pair, but these efforts were frustrated by the weakness of the...
It was worth considering 18...b4. After 19 $Q\text{f}5$ be (not 19...$Q\text{e}6$? 20 $\text{Wb7}$ 20 $Q\text{h}6$ $Q\text{e}6$! (20...cb? 21 $Q\text{x}g7$ ba $\text{W}a7$ 22 $\text{xe}1$ $Q\text{e}8$ 23 $\text{Wh}5$, or 22...$Q\text{e}6$ 23 $\text{W}g3$, winning for White in either case) 21 $\text{Wg3} Q\text{h}5$ 22 $Q\text{g}4$, Black has the pleasant choice between repeating moves with 22...$Q\text{f}6$ and playing the tempting 22...cb. White's best course at move 19 seems to be 19 cb, regaining the pawn; but after 19...$Q\text{e}6$ 20 $Q\text{f}5$ $Q\text{g}6$ 21 $Q\text{xe}7+$ $Q\text{xe}7$, or 19...$Q\text{g}6$ 20 $Q\text{h}6$ $Q\text{e}8$ 21 $Q\text{f}5$ $Q\text{f}8$, Black has a good game.

19 $Q\text{x}a4$ $Q\text{e}8$
20 $b4$ $Q\text{e}8$
21 $Q\text{c}3$ $Q\text{b}5$
22 $Q\text{c}2$ $Q\text{c}8$
23 $Q\text{x}a6$ $Q\text{x}c$3
24 $Q\text{a}8$ $Q\text{c}7$
25 $Q\text{d}5$ $Q\text{d}6$?

This allows White to regain his pawn while keeping the initiative. The variation 25...$Q\text{x}c2$ 26 $\text{Wx}b5$ $Q\text{f}6$ 27 $Q\text{e}a1$ is also in White's favour.

The best move was 25...$Q\text{d}4$!, for example: 26 $Q\text{x}d4$ $Q\text{d}6$ 27 $Q\text{x}f8+$ $Q\text{x}f8$ 28 $Q\text{h}7+$ $Q\text{h}7$ 29 $Q\text{a}8$ $Q\text{c}8$ 30 $Q\text{a}8$ $Q\text{x}c8$, and Black's chances are not at all worse.

26 $Q\text{f}8+$ $Q\text{f}8$
26...$Q\text{x}f8$ is dangerous on account of 27 $Q\text{xb}5$ $Q\text{xc}2$ 28 $Q\text{a}1$.

27 $Q\text{xh}7+$ $Q\text{xh}7$
28 $Q\text{xb}5$

Thus material equality has been restored, and White's position has to be preferred in view of his passed b-pawn and the chance of forcefully activating his rook. Undoubtedly White also held the psychological initiative, having demonstrated the (practical!) validity of his scheme. An important point is that Geller had used up a large amount of time searching for a refutation.

It is therefore no surprise that Black lost quite quickly from this position where White's advantage is not actually very great.

28...$Q\text{g}8$
29 $\text{a}1$ $Q\text{d}5$
30 $Q\text{a}7$ $Q\text{e}4$
31 $Q\text{b}8$ $d4$

A more accurate move was 31...$Q\text{xb}4$; then after 32 $Q\text{xe}5$ $Q\text{c}8$, Black would have more chances of successful defence.

32 $Q\text{g}5$ $Q\text{h}7$
33 $Q\text{c}7$ $d3$
33...$Q\text{c}8$ was no better, for example: 34 $Q\text{xe}5$ $Q\text{c}1$+ 35 $Q\text{h}2$ $d3$ 36

34 $Q\text{xf}8$ $Q\text{xf}8$ (or 36...$Q\text{x}f8$ 37 $Q\text{d}5$)
37 $Q\text{e}3$ $Q\text{e}8$ 38 $Q\text{x}d3$ $Q\text{xb}4$

Let us now look at an example where an original situation is brought about by a pawn sacrifice that does not rely on an analogy. Incidentally the game was played in the same tournament as the previous one, and against the same opponent.
Gulko-Geller
USSR Ch (Top League),
Erevan 1975
Grünenfeld Defence

1. d4 d5
2. Qf3 Qf6
3. e3!

A very rare move in games at grandmaster-level, but it commences White’s intended build-up.

3. ... g6
4. c4 g7
5. cd Qxd5
6. Qe2

Another unorthodox move. Instead, 6 Qc3 would lead to familiar Grünenfeld lines. White’s outwardly tame play naturally spurs his opponent to activity.

6. ... c5
7. e4 Qb6
8. d5 0-0 (144)

An unusual position has arisen, with only superficial similarity to well-known ones. White's problem is that he has lost a tempo in advancing his e-pawn and is therefore behind in development; furthermore his pawn centre is vulnerable to breaks with ...e7-f5 and ...e6-d6. Playing this position demands imagination and a willingness to accept risk.

9. a4!

The prelude to an interesting pawn sacrifice. The natural-looking 9 0-0 is inferior because of 9...e6 10 d6 (after 10 de Qx e6 Black has an excellent game) 10...Qc6 intending ...Qc6-d4, and the white queen’s pawn is hard to defend.

Black’s next move is necessary in view of the threatened 10 a5.

9. ... f5
10. Qbd2
10. a5 fails to 10...fe 11 ab e6 12 Qaxa7 fe 13 Qa4 Qd7 followed by 14...Qa6.

10. ... fe
11. Qxe4 Qxd5
12. 0-0 b6
13. Qc4 e6

This is the position White was aiming for when he sacrificed his pawn. 14 He1 was inferior in view of 14...h5!, when it is not easy for White to develop an initiative.

14. ... Qa6

Evidently the strongest reply. For instance, 14...Qc6 was weaker on account of 15 ab Qxb6 16 Qe5 Qd4 17 Qxd4 Qxd4 18 Qc6 Qb8 19 Qe3! with the better game for White.

15. ab ab?

This natural move turns out badly. What is ‘natural’ is by no means always best, especially in such an unconventional position. 15...Qxb6 was stronger. Then 16 Qxd5 gives White nothing in view of 16...ed 17 Qxd5+ Qe6, while after 16 Qe1 Qc7 Black would retain adequate defensive resources.

16. He5 Qdc7
17. He2?

A stronger move was 17 He3. Then 17...b5 is inadequate because of the simple 18 Qxe6+, while 17...Qd6 is well answered by 18 He1.

17. ... Qe8
18. He1 b5
19. Qd3

With 19 Qxe6+ and multiple exchanges on that square, White would recover his pawn but emerge with the worse position.

19. ... Qb7
20. Qe5 Qd8?

Again the natural move proves to be a mistake, and this time it looks like the decisive one. After 20...Qd4!

21 Qxa8 Qxa8 (not 21...Qx a8 22 Wh5!) 22 Qb1 Qc6, there would be plenty of fight left.

21 Qb1 Qd4
21...Qd5 was relatively better; White would reply 22 f4.

22 Qe3

White could have decided the game more quickly with 22 Qxh7!. After 22...Qxe5 23 Qxe8 Qc6 24 f3 Black loses the exchange.

22. ... Qd7
23. Qe5 Qd4
24. Ha3

All White’s pieces have joined in the attack, and the threat of a sacrifice on h7 cannot be parried. After the move Black now plays, White switches to a ‘posersic’ solution and contents himself with winning the exchange.

24. ... Qd5
25. Qe3 Qf4
26. Qx f4 Qxf4
27. Qxe6 Qb4
28. Qd1! Qxf3
29. Qf Qc6
30. Qf8 Qxf8
31. Qc4 Qf6
32. Qd5+ Qh8
33. Qx a6!

Black lost on time here, but of course his position is hopeless.
The Move ...g7-g5 in the French Defence

Aleksei Kosikov

Chess has been in existence for one-and-a-half thousand years, but notwithstanding its venerable age, it is now experiencing a second youth. Its popularity is growing, the number of tournaments is on the increase. Views on chess strategy in general and opening theory in particular are rapidly changing.

In recent years, systems formerly considered unpromising have come into fashion – for example the Dutch Defence and the Giuoco Piano. New directions in opening theory have been pioneered. Fifty years ago, the Sveshnikov Variation would simply have been rejected as an anathema – Black doesn’t have a position, he just has a conglomeration of weaknesses. And what about the Benko Gambit? Black sacrifices a pawn in the opening, then dreams about the endgame. Yet both systems are at present highly popular. At times, in fact, White looks for ways to avoid them.

Major changes are also taking place within particular opening systems; players are approaching them differently, altering the methods of playing them and assessing them.

The French Defence is an old favourite of mine; I have played it for more than a quarter of a century. By the example of this opening, I wish to demonstrate how the treatment of numerous variations is currently being transformed.

What are the classic presuppositions about the standard ‘French’ positions which arise after White’s pawn has advanced to e5? Black’s plans have always been associated with pressurising the pawn on d4 and working up a queenside initiative. Sometimes Black also plays ...f7-f5, after which a struggle develops round the e5 point. White, meanwhile, fortifies his centre and tries to organise an attack (with pawns or pieces) on the kingside.

However, modern chess has become a matter of ‘total war’ – the battle is fought with all the pieces on any part of the board. And so in the French Defence, a kingside counter-attack is just as normal a weapon for Black as a counter-attack on the queenside.

I first came across the move ...g7-g5 about thirty years ago, when I examined the following game:

```
Sakharov-Petrosian
USSR Ch semi-final
Kiev 1957

1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 Qc3 Qb4
4 e5 c5
5 Qd2 Qe7
6 a3 Qxc3
7 axc3 cd
8 Wxd4 Qf5
9 Wf4?! Wf4 is more accurate.
9 ... h5
10 Wf4 (146)

146 B

Tumenok-Kosikov
Kiev 1977
French Defence

1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 Qc3 Qb4
4 e5 Qe7
5 a3 Qxc3+
6 bc e5
7 a4 Qd6
8 Qf3 Qd7
9 Qd3 Wc7
10 0-0 c4!
11 Qe2 f6
12 Qe1 0-0-0
13 Qa3 (147)

147 B

10 ... g5!
11 Qb5+ Qc6
12 Wd2 d4!
13 Qb4 Wd5!
14 We2 Wxg2
15 Wf3 Wxf3
16 Qxf3 Qd7
17 Qxg5 Qxe5

147 B

Black has obtained the advantage, and went on to win.
```

At that time, the move ...g7-g5 looked like an eccentricity, a mere exception which didn’t at all disprove the rule.

But for my own part I remember this device, and started using it – not without success.

What can Black’s plan be? In the event of a pawn exchange on f6, he will try to achieve ...e6-e5. If the
tension of the central pawns is maintained, it will make sense to play ...f6-f5 at some moment, and then attack on the kingside.

I had in mind the following deployment of my pieces: bring the rook from d8 across to f7, where it will not only contribute to the attack but also help to defend along Black’s second rank; place a knight on f5 and make it secure with ...h7-h5; withdraw the king to a8 and the bishop to c8, fortifying the b7 point and freeing the rank for the rook’s action. In some circumstances the manoeuvre ...d7-e8-g6-h5 will also be possible.

Where should I start? The right move is:

13 ... d5!

Now 14 d6?? Wd8 gives White nothing; after ...f7 and ...d5, the bishop will be under attack. White’s best line would appear to be 14 f1 e7 15 g3!, aiming to bring the bishop out to h3 after an exchange of pawns on f6 (Duebal-Fichtl, Bamberg 1972).

14 a5 f7
15 a6?

A serious strategic error – sealing the queenside is good for Black. Furthermore the pawn on a6 may later become weak.

15 ... b6
16 d6 Wd8
17 Qh4

Preventing 17 ... d5 and preparing f2-f4.

17 ... f5!

Black’s attack on the wing can only succeed if the centre is stable. The hasty 17...g5? is bad because of 18 c5.

18 f4 (148)

18 ... g5!

A typical pawn sacrifice to open lines – something like a ‘Benko Gambit’ in the French Defence.

19 fg Wg5
20 Wd2 f6
21 d5 h6
22 gh Qg6!

It would be a gross mistake to play 22...Qxg2++; after 23 Qh1 followed by 24 Qg1, it is White who seizes the initiative on the kingside – he simply has more pieces there.

23 Qf1 Qh6
24 Qh1

Now Black has to watch for a rook sacrifice on b6, for example after 24...Qc8?

24 ... Qd8!

Before commencing the decisive assault, it pays to secure the king’s position. Now 25 Qxb6? no longer works: 25...ab 26 a7 Qxa7 27 Qxa7 Qc8. Undoubtedly White should be constructing a defensive rampart with Qf2, Qe1, Qad1, Qd2.

25 Wc1?

White’s chances of mounting an attack are practically nil, yet still he attempts to do it. This is what distinguishes pig-headedness from persistence!

Let us formulate Black’s plan of action. It is important for him to advance his f-pawn to f4 (after a preparatory ...Qg4). In this way the pressure against g2 will be intensified, the knight will obtain the f5 square, and the diagonal b1-h7 will be freed for the bishop and queen. But first, Black must put paid to White’s hopes of a rook sacrifice on b6.

Once the plan is clear, the following moves are easy to play.

25 ... Qc8!
26 Qa3 Qe8
27 Qe3 Qh8
28 Qe1 Qd7
29 Wf2 Qg4
30 Qe2 Qh5
30...f4 31 Qe1 is premature.
31 Qd2

The usual advice to the defender is to exchange pieces, but here the exchange of light-squared bishops brings White no relief.

31 ... Qg7
32 Qh5 Qxh5
33 Qd3 Qg4!
34 Qd2 Qf4
35 Qe1 Wh7

Threatening 36...Wxf2.

36 Qc1 Qd5
37 Qf1 (149)

See how immensely active the black pieces are. The accumulation of positional advantages usually creates the conditions for a decisive combinative breakthrough. And the right moment has now arrived!

37 ... Qh2!
38 Qh2 Qg3
39 Whxg3

Forced, since 39 Qg1 Whx2+ leads to mate.

39 ... Whx2
40 Qg1 Qg6
41 Qxf4 Qxg2+
42 Qf1 Qg1+
43 Qf2 Qg2+

0-1

After 44 Qe3, the final blow is delivered by the knight which has been lying in wait throughout the game: 44...Qe7! 45 Qxg1 Qxf5 mate.

Today in the French Defence Black pushes his pawn to g5 in the most varied circumstances. Here is another example.
On the other hand if 25...\( \textit{c}6? \), White simply has 26 \( \textit{xc}6! \) \( bc \) 27 \( \textit{d}3 \).

26 \( \textit{gb} \)

On 26 \( \textit{g}1 \), Black has the strong move 26...\( \textit{f}7! \), attacking \( \textit{f}2 \) and intending 27...\( \textit{d}3+ \) and 28...\( \textit{d}7 \).

26 ... \( \textit{gh}+ \)

27 \( \textit{f}1 \) \( \textit{gb}+ \)

28 \( \textit{e}1 \)

At this point 28...\( \textit{g}2! \) would have won at once. Black played less precisely (28...\( \textit{b}4+ \)), but soon won all the same.

I should now like to tell you the story of a new opening idea which I worked out and which became very popular in the mid-1980s. The process which results in an opening novelty will be revealed to you from the inside.

One day, while studying the Tarrasch Variation of the French, I had a think about what Black ought to play after...
The Move...g7-g5 in the French Defence

\[ \text{\ldots} \text{x}e5 \text{Qxe5} 17 \text{fxe5} \text{Qd}7 18 \text{Wh}5+ \text{Qd}8 19 \text{Qxe5} \text{Qg}8+ 18 \text{Qh}3 \text{Qg}5, \text{and from the sharp fight Black eventually emerged victorious.} \]

11 ... \text{Qxf6}  
12 \text{Qg}3 \text{cd}  
13 cd 0-0  
14 \text{Me}1? (153) 

The decisive mistake. It was essential to play 14 h3 followed by \text{Qh}2.

\[ \text{\ldots} \text{e}5!! \]
To accentuate the white king's vulnerability, Vaganian breaches the central fortifications without shrinking from material sacrifices.

15 fe \text{Qdx}e5!  
16 de \text{Ah}4+!!  
17 \text{Qxh}4 \text{Mxf}3!!

Now 18 gf \text{Qf}2+ quickly leads to mate. The concluding moves were:

18 \text{Hf}1 \text{Wb}4+  
19 \text{Hf}4 \text{Wf}7+  
20 \text{Qg}5 \text{W}6!  
21 \text{Hf}5 \text{Mx}f5  
22 \text{Qf}4 \text{Wx}e5  
23 \text{Wg}4 \text{Hf}7

This brilliant and crushing win suggested to me the basic principle by which Black can exploit his lead in development. It is essential to fix the enemy king in the centre and then break the centre open at any price.

However, in Panchenko-Kosikov, Dnepropetrovsk 1978, my opponent answered 7...\text{Wx}a5 with 8 dc! \text{Wx}c5 (of course 8...\text{Qx}c5? fails to 9 b4! \text{Qh}3, followed by \text{Qf}2-d3. White acquired a plus, and went on to win.

There is another excellent formation for White: 8 \text{Lc}3! cd (8...b5 9 dc! b4 is no good because of 10 \text{Qd}4 \text{Qb}7 11 a3! bc 12 b4; Tsekhovsky-Vaganian, Vilnius 1975) 9 \text{Qd}4 \text{Qx}d4 10 \text{Qxd}4.

In my search for an improvement on Black's play, a logical thought arose: why place the queen on a5 if it retreads to b6 anyway shortly afterwards? So I started studying the move:

7 ... \text{Wb}6

I scanned the reference books. At that time, theory continued as follows:

8 g3 cd  
9 cd

In the case of 9 \text{Qxd}4 Qc5, followed by ...\text{Q}4 and ...\text{f}7-f6, Black obtains counterplay.

9 ... Qh4+  
10 Qf2 f6  
11 Qg2 (154) with the claim that White has the advantage: 11...0-0 12 Qd3, with Qe2 and h2-h4 to follow.

This position engaged my attention for a long time. Black has rather an ungainly cluster of pieces on the queenside (\text{Qb}6, Qd7, Qe8, Qa8); they severely hamper each other's movement. Black could of course play 11...\text{Wc}7, aiming for ...\text{Qb}6, ...Qf7 and ...0-0-0, but meanwhile White would complete his own development, and his spatial advantage would strongly influence the further course of the struggle.

But let us approach the situation from a different angle. Black has developed four pieces — however awkwardly — while White has only developed one knight, which in any case is depriving the other knight of its best square. Moreover, it is Black's move, so his lead in development is quite substantial. It is well known that in closed positions this is not such a significant factor. It follows that Black must open the game up — clear away the pawn barriers.

Hence I conceived an idea which at first sight looked insane: 11...g5?!! Nearly all Black's forces are grouped on the queenside, yet he begins tactical operations on the kingside where his opponent's pieces are more numerous. Anti-positional? Not entirely — for we have noted that Black does have the better development, and it is very important for him to open lines. Furthermore it is on the kingside that the white king is hiding.

In February 1980 the Top League of the USSR Championship was staged in Vilnius. I spent a few days there, and one evening I showed my idea to Gennady Kuzmin, a grandmaster with a highly unconventional cast of mind. His verdict, however, was categorical: 'It's just impossible, it'll never work.' But he couldn't give any variations as proof.

In the summer of 1981, again at Vilnius, the USSR Junior Team Championship took place. My thirteen-year-old pupil Lena Sedina was in the Ukrainian team.

In the crucial match against the combined Moscow team, with the assent of the trainers, my innovation was launched for the first time. The experiment was successful. Without going into details, I will show you the opening stage.
Saburova-Sedina
Vilnius 1981

11 ... g5!?  
12 ef g4  
13 f7+!  
14 Qe5  
The idea was to answer 14 Qg5 with 14...Qf6, threatening 15...h6.

14 ... Wxd4  
15 Wxd4  
16 Qxg4  
17 Qf3  
18 Qf3 b6!  
19 Qb5  
20 Qd1  
21 Qd7  
22 Qd2  
Black has achieved a good position and eventually won.

Of course you don’t need to be a grandmaster to realise that at some point the position was fairly dangerous for Black. Thus at move 14 for example, instead of 14 Qe5, it was worth considering 14 Qg5 Qf6, and now 15 h3!

It wasn’t desirable to expose the black king too much, so a new search began for an improvement. As a result, I managed to find a new way to carry out the same idea. It turns out that the thrust with the g-pawn is playable a move earlier:

10 ... g5! (155)

I showed this new idea to my old friend Leonid Kaplun, a master from Tarnopol, and with my agreement he tried it out in the autumn of 1983. This was the result:

Poliantsev-Kaplun
Ukrainian Team Ch 1983

11 fg  
12 Qxe5  
13 Qg2  
14 Qf3  
15 b3  
16 Qb2  
17 Qc1  
18 gh  
19 Qe2?

Better is 19 Qe5.

19 ... 0-0  
20 Qe5  
21 Qd2  
22 Qf3  
23 Qxe6+  
Black has acquired a positional advantage which he subsequently conducted to victory.

That, however, was not the first game in which my innovation was tested. Lena Sedina had played it a few months earlier.

Voronova-Sedina
USSR Women’s Ch  
semi-final 1983

11 Qe3  
12 h3  
13 Qxe6  
14 Qxd7+  
15 gf  
16 de  
17 Qb3  
18 Qd2  
A very sharp position has arisen, in which Black has more than enough for the sacrificed pawn. She duly won.

Since then a large number of games have been played with my variation; improvements have been found for both sides, but to my knowledge no refutation has come to light. This is not surprising. The move 10...g5 is positionally well founded and wholly in keeping with the modern attitude of ‘total war’.

As long as the variation was still in its experimental stage and not well known, I naturally followed its fortunes with keen interest. But when it finally found approval in tournaments at the most varied levels, my interest in it gradually faded. Working through a pile of the latest games and tracing theoretical refinements almost as far as move forty can be rather a boring job.

The search for new paths was on again. In general, the key to success in the opening rests to a large extent on your ability to keep ahead of fashion, if only by half a step. But new ideas don’t result from mechanically going over variations; you must try to grasp the essence of the events taking place on the board.

Let us recall that in the game Poliantsev-Kaplun, Black had occasion to re-route his bishop from b4 to a more suitable place. And then in Voronova-Sedina White was able to develop Qe3, when the black queen couldn’t eat the pawn on b2 because of the bishop on b4. Of course it was tempting to force Qf2, but can’t Black actually do without the bishop check?

Serebro-Kosikov
Kiev 1984

9 ...  
10 Qh3  
11 Qf1

Of course not 10 Qd3 Qxd4.

10 ...  
11 Qd3  
The alternative 11 Qe2 0-0! 12 Qxe6+ (12 0-0 fe 13 fe Qdxe5) 12...Qh8 13 Qd7??! Qxd7 14 0-0 Qg4 leads to an extremely complicated position rather in Black’s favour, but the game continuation also suited me perfectly well; White has been induced to move his king even without the check on b4.

11 ...  
12 Qg2  
13 Qf3

Afraid of the attack, White tries to exchange queens, but the result is that his own queen strays further from the kingside where the main
action is going to occur. The viability of Black's idea depends on the assessment of the sharper moves 13 ef?! and 13 fg?!.

13 ... \( \text{La}6 \)
14 \( \text{Lxe}6+ \) \( \text{La}8 \)
15 \( \text{Lxd}5 \) \( g4 \)
16 \( \text{Lxe}3?! \) \( \text{Lb}6! \)
17 \( \text{Lxe}4! \) \( \text{gf}+ \)
18 \( \text{Lxf}3 \) \( \text{Dc}4 \)
19 \( \text{Lc}2 \) \( fe \)
20 \( de \)

The position may still look unclear, but in fact Black can win by force. How?

A sacrifice on e5 seems indicated, but after 20 ... \( \text{Ld}4x5 \) 21 \( fe \) \( \text{Lx} f3 \) 22 \( \text{Lxf}3 \) \( \text{Lg}4+ \) 23 \( \text{Lx} g4 \) \( \text{Lxe}2+ \) 24 \( \text{Lh}3 \) the white king escapes from pursuit. So the sacrifice needs to be based on a different idea.

20 ... \( \text{Ld}4x5 \)
21 \( fe \) \( \text{Lx} f3! \)
22 \( \text{Lxf}3 \) \( \text{Lc}6!! \)

The third sacrifice in a row! The important thing is to bring the rook into the attack with tempo.

23 \( \text{Lxe}6 \) \( \text{Lc}8+ \)
But not 23 ... \( \text{Ld}4+?? \) 24 \( \text{Lxd}4 \), and the queen is defended.

24 \( \text{Lf}4 \)
On 24 \( \text{Ld}4 \) \( \text{Ld}4+ \), White loses his queen.

24 ... \( \text{Ld}3+ \)
25 \( \text{Lxf}2 \) \( \text{Lc}5+ \)
26 \( \text{Lxe}1 \) \( \text{Lx} e4! \)
27 \( \text{Lg}5 \)

White also loses after 27 \( \text{Lf}1 \) \( \text{Ld}4 \)

28 \( \text{Lg}4 \) \( \text{Lx} e2+ \) 29 \( \text{Ld}2 \) \( \text{Ld}8+ \).

So in the French Defence, together with the classical methods of play, Black can and should employ sharp plans for seizing the initiative. And the start of hostilities in the opponent's territory is frequently signalled by the counter-stroke ...g7-g5!

12 Opening Investigations

Vladimir Vulson

How does a chessplayer study forcing variations in the opening? Let me tell you about my own experience of working on the Dragon Variation of the Sicilian.

Bobby Fischer once said that in this system 'weak players even beat Grandmasters', since White's strategy is very simple and logical. There are indeed serious difficulties that Black has to watch for, but Dragon players try to make up for this by knowing the theory and the standard devices better than their opponents. When playing this variation you cannot blindly copy other players' games. The many ideas that find their application at the board are first subjected to thorough scrutiny at home. Success goes not to the player with the most book knowledge but to the one who has done most in the way of private investigation. I shall now recount some episodes from clashes with the Dragon.

In 1974, Karpov's win against Korchnoi in the second game of the Candidates Final made a powerful impression on everyone.

Karpov-Korchnoi
Moscow 1974
Sicilian Defence

1 \( e4 \) \( c5 \) 2 \( \text{Ld}4 \) \( \text{f}6 \) 3 \( \text{d}4 \) \( \text{d}4 \) 4 \( \text{Lxd}4 \)
5 \( \text{Lc}3 \) \( \text{g}6 \) 6 \( \text{Lg}7 \) \( \text{f}3 \)
7 \( \text{Lc}6 \) 8 \( \text{Ld}2 \) 0-0-0 \( \text{Lc}4 \) \( \text{d}7 \) 10 \( \text{h}4 \) \( \text{Lc}8 \) 11
12 \( \text{Ld}3 \) \( \text{e}5 \) 13 \( \text{Lxe}5 \) 14 \( \text{Lh}5 \) \( \text{Lxe}5 \) 15 \( \text{g}4 \) \( \text{Lc}6 \) 16
17 \( \text{Lxe}5 \) 18 \( \text{Lx} e6 \) \( \text{Lxe}6 \) 19 \( \text{Lxe}6 \) \( \text{Lxe}6 \)

At this point the move 19 \( \text{Ld}3 \) came as a great surprise to Korchnoi. He thought for a long time but failed to find a reasonable plan of defence. After 19 ... \( \text{Lxe}5 \) 20 \( \text{g}5 \) \( \text{Lxg}5 \) 21
\( \text{Ld}5 \) \( \text{Lxd}5 \) 22 \( \text{Lx} d5 \) \( \text{Lx} e8 \) 23 \( \text{Lxe}4 \)
24 \( \text{Lxe}5 \) \( \text{Lc}6 \) 24 \( \text{e}5 \) \( \text{Lxe}4 \) 25 \( \text{ef} \) 26 \( \text{Lxh}7+ \)
27 \( \text{Lxh}7+ \), he suffered a crushing defeat.

Immediately after the game, Botvinnik stated his opinion that Black should have defended with 19 ... \( \text{Ld}8 \), so as to bring the queen across to the defence of the kingside.
It was by analysing that continuation that I began my own campaign to restore the reputation of the Dragon Variation.

To begin with, I ascertained that the straightforward attempt to win a piece with 20 e5 gives White nothing. Black defends with 20...de 21 \$hd1 \$xc7 22 \$d2 e6 23 g5 \$d5. Or if White continues to play for mate, the continuation can be 21 \$g3 \$d4 22 g5 \$h5 23 \$xh5 gh 24 \$xh5 \$f5.

But can Black equalise in the ending after 20 g5 \$h5 21 \$g3 \$f5? I couldn’t see any advantage for White in the variation 22 \$xh5+ \$xh5 (but not 22...\$xh5 23 \$xh5 gh 24 \$d5) 23 \$xh5 gh 24 \$xh5 \$c5, since after 25 f4 b5 the weakness of the pawn on e4 makes itself felt. However, if a white pawn appears on h6, Black is not in the best of shape: 22 \$xh5 \$xh5 (22...gh 23 \$xh5) 23 gh gh 24 \$d2, and Black cannot claim equality. Is he really forced to defend this inferior ending?

The next step in my research was to look at...

The idea was to bring the queen to the defence of the kingside via the central square e5. It looked as if White could win with...

20 g5 \$h5
21 \$g3 \$e5
22 \$xh5 gh
23 \$xh5

With the seemingly unanswerable threat of f3-f4 followed by \$h5-f6+,

but Black still has a drawing opportunity. He sacrifices first the exchange:

23 ...
24 bc \$xc3

and then after

25 f4 (153)

followed by \$d3-h3, and secures the ideal square f5 for his bishop. It is no trouble to verify that lines such as 25 f5 de are in Black’s favour.

All that remains is to examine

25 \$hd1

At first sight this move retains all White’s trump, because of the weakness of Black’s back rank.

Can the whole variation really be bad for Black? Does Karpov’s 19 \$d3 pose insoluble problems? I almost despaired of finding anything, when suddenly the paradoxical

25 ... \$f8

occurred to me. If White doesn’t agree to repeat moves with 26 \$h1 \$g7, he is forced to concede the f5 square. Of course he emerges with an extra pawn, but the pressure against c2 ties his pieces down.

All I had to do now was wait for an opponent to go in for 19 \$d3. But time passed, and new thoroughfares were opened up in Dragon Variation theory. It was established that after 16 \$d2 Black obtains a good game with 16...\$c8. Later there was a tendency for Black to base his whole plan on the blocking move ...h7-h5. Unfortunately, therefore, the analysis I have just shown you lost its relevance to current trends.

For many years I waited for an opportunity to use an interesting prepared variation in another branch of the Dragon. Let us return to the ‘standard’ position arising after...

1 e4\n2 \$f3 \$f6\n3 d4 cd\n4 \$xd4 \$f5\n5 \$e5 \$f6\n6 \$e3 \$g7\n7 \$f3 0-0 \n8 \$d2 \$e6 9 \$e4 \$d7 10 \$c4 \$e5 11 \$b3 \$c8 12 0-0 \$e4 13 \$xc4 \$xc4 14 \$h5 \$xh5 15 \$g4 \$f6 (160)

In addition to Karpov’s move 16 \$d2, White has 16 \$h6, 16 \$e5 and 16 \$b3 at his disposal. I shall not
go into all these continuations but merely tell you about one particular theoretical duel.

As long ago as 1976, when Yurtsev and I were examining 16 e5, we came to the conclusion that apart from the book move 16...\textit{Q}xg4 it was worth considering 16...\textit{d}e. Having worked out all the details, I began waiting for someone to play 16 e5 against me. This finally happened ten years later.

\textbf{Arkhipkin-Vulfsan}  
\textit{Moscow 1986}

\begin{verbatim}
16 e5 \textit{d}e  
17 \textit{Q}b3 \textit{W}c7  
18 g5 \textit{L}f5  
19 gf ef  
20 \textit{L}h6  
This natural move is a mistake. White gets nowhere by playing for mate.  
20 ... g5!  
Now the light-squared bishop assumes the chief defensive functions.  
21 \textit{Q}e4 \textit{X}xe4!  
The only way! After 21...\textit{Q}xe4 22 \textit{fe} \textit{X}xe4, White would obtain an overwhelming attack by 23 \textit{Wh}2! \textit{H}h4 24 \textit{Wh}xh4.  
22 fe \textit{L}xe4  
23 \textit{L}xg7 \textit{L}xg7  
24 \textit{H}h3 \textit{L}g6  
Black wants to mobilise his kingside pawn mass as soon as he can: now White must not on any account exchange queens; he has to base his play on tactical threats against the black king. Perhaps I should have preferred 24...\textit{b}6, to restrict the knight and forestall White’s following rook manoeuvre.  
25 \textit{H}c3 \textit{W}e7  
26 \textit{H}c5  
White is only reckoning on 26...\textit{f}5, which is bad in view of 27 \textit{W}c3. He should have thought about activating his knight by means of 26 \textit{Q}e5.  
26 ... h5  
27 a4 h4  
28 a5 a6  
29 \textit{W}d5  
On the seemingly logical 29 \textit{K}d5, Black’s pieces would unexpectedly come to life with 29...\textit{H}c8 30 e3 \textit{W}b4+. After the move played, I aimed to advance my f-pawn.  
29 ... \textit{Q}e8  
30 \textit{H}c3 g4  
31 \textit{Q}e5 f5  
32 \textit{Q}xb7 g3  
33 \textit{Q}d6 \textit{L}g5+  
34 \textit{W}b1 \textit{H}e7  
35 \textit{H}c7 f4  
36 \textit{Q}xe7 \textit{W}xe7  
37 \textit{W}c6 h3  
38 \textit{Q}e8+  
Since White cannot afford to capture on a6, he tries to create some sort of threats against the king.  
38 ... \textit{H}h6  
39 \textit{Q}f6 \textit{H}h5  
40 \textit{Q}e4+ \textit{W}h4  
41 \textit{W}a8 h2  
42 \textit{W}h8+ \textit{Q}g4  
43 \textit{Q}f6+ \textit{Q}g5  
44 \textit{Q}g8 \textit{W}c5 (161)  
White resigned because my king easily hides from the checks in enemy territory. After the game Arkhipin said he thought White’s position was hopeless after 21...\textit{X}xe4. Nonetheless I reached the same position again, exactly a year later.
\end{verbatim}

\textbf{Maliutin-Vulfsan}  
\textit{Moscow 1987}

\begin{verbatim}
24 \textit{H}h2  
(Instead of 24 \textit{H}h3.)  
This innovation gives Black no trouble at all.  
24 ... \textit{H}c8  
25 \textit{Q}a1 \textit{Q}g6  
26 \textit{c}3 \textit{W}c4  
27 a3 h5  
28 \textit{Q}c2 g4  
29 \textit{W}b1 g3  
30 \textit{Q}g2 h4  
31 \textit{Q}a1 f5  
32 \textit{W}g5 \textit{W}g4  
33 \textit{W}xg4 fg  
and it proved impossible for White to stop Black’s armada of pawns.
\end{verbatim}
In contrast to positions examined previously, the white pawn on f3 is seriously hindering Black’s kingside pawn advance. At this stage I thought Black’s position was very difficult.

24 ... h5
25 Hh4?

But this is unnecessarily involved. The advance of the a-pawn looks far more natural and stronger, and would eventually have given White a passed pawn on the queenside.

25 ... h4
26 Ha4 d7
27 Hb4 f5

This is the outcome of White’s planless play! The pawns set off on their march, and already it is very hard to defend against them.

29 Qa2 Hf6
30 Hb8 g5
31 Ha4 Hxc4
32 Qxc4 f4
33 Hc1 d6
34 Qd2 g4

The whole trouble for White is that his rook cannot get back to its own camp.

35 Qg5 Hg7
36 Ha8 Qd5
37 c4 Qe6
38 Qc7 e4+
39 Qc1 e3

Here the game was adjudicated a win for Black, since after 40 Qe4 Hh4 his pawns cannot be stopped.

So the last round in the opening bout was won by White, but I think it is too early to write off the entire variation. It is up to Black to find something.

Another aspect of opening research is to look for new continuations in old and forgotten systems. After all, many systems are neglected not at all because theory has discredited them but because the attention has switched to other, more fashionable lines.

Until recently, one such forgotten system was 4 f2-f3 against the Nimzo-Indian. Back in the 1960s it was frequently played by Grandmasters Portisch and Gheorghiu. It is worth recalling Gheorghiu’s win in the 1966 Olympiad against none other than Fischer.

**Gheorghiu-Fischer**

*Havana OL 1966*

**Nimzo-Indian Defence**

1 d4 Hf6
2 c4 e6
3 Qc3 Hb4
4 f3 d5
5 a3 Hxc3+
6 bc 0-0?

6...c5 is preferable, giving one of the key positions of the Sämisch Variation. But then, not all Nimzo-Indian players like to meet the Sämisch in that particular way.

7 cd ed
8 e3 Qh5

9 Qf3 h5

This early activity fails to give Black full equality. Fischer rejected 8...c5 so as to avoid the well-known lines in which, after completing his development, White carries out the central advance e3-e4. I would remind you that the classic example of this plan was the famous game Botvinnik-Capablanca, AVRO 1938.

8...Réf5 is also seen.

9 wc2 He8
10 g4! Hf4
11 h4 c5
12 Qf3 Qg6
13 Qd3 Hc6
14 Qc2 Qc6
15 g5

At this point – curiously enough – wary of his redoubtable opponent, Gheorghiu offered a draw. True to his uncompromising style, Fischer declined, though his position is already highly dubious.

15 ... Hc8
16 h5 Hf8
17 Qd3 h6
18 hg Qg5
19 wb1 Qa5
20 Qd4 c4

Exchanging on d4 looked more logical, so as to use the c4 square for the knight.

21 Qc2 Qe6
22 Ha2 Hf7
23 a4 Hf6
24 Qa3 Hd7
25 Qh2 b6
26 Qb5 Qb7
27 e4 de
28 Qxe4

Gheorghiu avoids taking unnecessary risks with 28 fe; Black might then find some chances against the white king.

28 ... Hc8
29 Qe5 Qg4
30 Qd5 Hxe5
31 Qd6+ gf
32 de Qc5
33 Qc5 Qd5
34 Qxg3 Qxf3
35 Qxf3 Qxe5
36 Wc1

White proceeded to convert his material plus into a win.

The gilt-edged Rubinstein Variation with 4 e3 gradually supplanted all other systems against the Nimzo-Indian for a considerable time. However, the following episode prompted me to look for new ideas in the 4 f3 system. In 1978, the Moscow player Sergei Kishnev showed me an interesting idea in the variation 1 d4 Qf6 2 c4 Qe6 3 Qc3 Qb4 4 f3 c5 5 d5 Hxc3+ 6 bc Wa5 (163).
master title if he won. His opponent was Boris Zlotnik, an experienced master and a great connoisseur of the Nimzo-Indian. To start such a game without having a special weapon was downright dangerous. So in place of the book move 7...d2, Sergei suggested the pawn sacrifice 7...e4. We convinced ourselves that acceptance of the sacrifice gave Black nothing but trouble. In the game, however, Black avoided 4...c5 and chose 4...d5. The game was full of vicissitudes but eventually White won.

It was two weeks later that 7...e4 was first tested in practice.

Vulfsen-Veselovsky
Moscow 1978
Nimzo-Indian Defence

This game was an excellent lesson to me.

11 ... Qg6
12 h4 h5
13 g5 Qg8
14 Qg3 Qe7
15 f3 d6
16 Qf5 fxg5
17 ef Qe7
18 Wc2 0-0-0
19 0-0 f6
20 f4 (164)

and at a suitable moment Black will win his pawn back on f5. Those who suggested the energetic 22...b5 were falling into the same trap as my opponent in the actual game.

22 ... b5?
23 ... Qxc5!

Now the complexion of the game abruptly changes, and Black loses virtually without a fight.

23 ... dc
24 d6 Wxc4?

The decisive mistake! I shall not give all the complicated variations but just say that the best defensive chances were offered by the counter-sacrifice 24...Qc6 25 cb Qe8 26 bc Qxc6 27 Qxc6 Wxc6 28 Wxd1 Qc4.

25 Wf3 Qxf5?
26 Qd3

and White quickly exploited his material plus.

Now try to find the strongest continuation for Black.

If your positional flair is good, you ought to find the pawn sacrifice:

20 ... e4!

White's bishops now have very little scope.

21 Qxe4 Wa4
22 Wd3 (165)

Now another little exercise – what is the best way for Black to exploit his big positional advantage?

This time, those advocating the cautious approach with 22...Wb8 were right. The queen will be brought to c8 (or to d7 after 22...Qc8),

and at a suitable moment Black will win his pawn back on f5. Those who suggested the energetic 22...b5 were falling into the same trap as my opponent in the actual game.

22 ... b5?
23 ... Qxc5!

Now the complexion of the game abruptly changes, and Black loses virtually without a fight.

23 ... dc
24 d6 Wxc4?

The decisive mistake! I shall not give all the complicated variations but just say that the best defensive chances were offered by the counter-sacrifice 24...Qc6 25 cb Qe8 26 bc Qxc6 27 Qxc6 Wxc6 28 Wxd1 Qc4.

25 Wf3 Qxf5?
26 Qd3

and White quickly exploited his material plus.

Pursuing my study of the 4 f3 system, I discovered that many of the positions arising in it had hardly been investigated at all. Practical material was very scarce. It was thought that Black could obtain a

good game either by 4...c5 5 d5 Qh5, or by 4...d5 5 a3 Qe7 6 e4 dc 7 fe e5 8 d5 Qc5. The third method which I encountered in my game with Veselovsky was also considered sound.

If he wants, Black can transpose into the Sämisch Variation with 4...d5 5 a3 Qxc3+ 6 bc Qc5 7 dc Qxd5. In this line too, theory relied on games played in the 1950s and 1960s.

I took particular care to study characteristic positions with a completely blocked centre, which above all demand an understanding of the play rather than knowledge of specific variations. The following game shows that I made some progress in this area.

Vulfsen-Loktev
Moscow 1985
Nimzo-Indian Defence

In my pre-game analysis I had discovered an idea for stopping the manoeuvre ...Qd7-f5-g6.

9 Wxa4?? 0-0
10 g4 Qe8
11 h4

Once Black has castled, the pawn storm seems to have more
With a little regrouping of his bishops White neutralises the pressure along the b-file once and for all. There is nothing left for Black to do but defend passively.

\begin{align*}
24 & \ldots & \text{c5} \\
25 & \text{d3} & \text{e7} \\
26 & \text{c2} & \text{d8} \\
27 & \text{d2} & \text{c8} \\
28 & \text{c3} & \text{b8} \\
29 & \text{d2} & \text{eb7} \\
30 & \text{e3} & \text{e7} \\
31 & \text{h2} & \text{bb7} \\
32 & \text{g1} & \text{d7} \\
33 & \text{f4} & \text{ef} \\
34 & \text{wxf4} & \text{d8} \quad (167)
\end{align*}

point than in my game with Velvelovsky.

\begin{align*}
11 & \ldots & \text{c7} \\
12 & \text{wc2} & \text{a6} \\
13 & \text{a4} & \text{kb8} \\
14 & \text{d2} & \text{b5} \\
15 & \text{a5} & \text{d7}
\end{align*}

After this pawn advance, Black’s chronic lack of space will make itself felt.

\begin{align*}
15 & \ldots & \text{e8} \\
16 & \text{g5} & \text{d7} \\
17 & \text{h5} & \text{d7} \\
18 & \text{d3} & \text{g6} \\
19 & \text{e3} & \text{bc} \\
20 & \text{xc4} & \text{kb7} \\
21 & \text{c2} & \text{wb8} \\
22 & \text{c1} & \text{d7}
\end{align*}

Control of the b-file brings Black no tangible advantages, but may distract White temporarily from his kingside activity. The bishop manoeuvre which Black now undertakes is clearly unsuccessful. To obtain any counterplay at all, he had to resolve upon ... \text{c5-c4}.

\begin{align*}
22 & \ldots & \text{kb5} \\
23 & \text{c4} & \text{d7} \\
24 & \text{d1} & \text{d7}
\end{align*}

In this way, work devoted to research raises your level of mastery in practical play.

**13 Middlegame Problems**

**Mark Dvoretsky**

The middlegame is the most complex and the least investigated phase of chess. One way of working on this subject is to study typical positions.

Unfortunately a classification of such positions is not at present available. It would not be simple to compile. There are various criteria by which the typical categories might be defined. The most important criterion is the pawn structure (for example positions with an isolated pawn or with a blocked centre, etc.). The material situation might also be taken into account (clash of major pieces, ‘good’ knight against ‘bad’ bishop ...); so might the arrangement of the pieces on the board, especially the kings (castling on opposite sides, king in the centre, etc.). The provision of such a classification could greatly ease the task of collecting and absorbing information on the middlegame.

The aim of the present article is to offer some thoughts on the methods of studying typical middlegame positions. It is intended for advanced players, to whom it is not enough to be acquainted with generalities — to know, for instance, that an isolated pawn in the centre may be a weakness as well as a strength; that a player with such a pawn should try to attack, while his opponent should aim to simplify and exploit the weak square in front of the pawn; and so on.

These propositions are all true, but more refined methods of appraisal need to be mastered to achieve success. To anyone studying these methods, it is not irrelevant whether (for example) an isolated pawn arises out of the Tarrasch Defence to the Queen’s Gambit or the Tarrasch Variation of the French Defence. Given the numerous differences in the arrangement of the other pawns and pieces, the techniques applied in these systems will somewhat differ in the two cases.

A conclusion suggests itself: as a rule, typical middlegame positions are closely associated with a specific opening variation, so that to study them is to study the opening at the same time. It is sometimes very hard to define just where the opening ends and the middlegame begins. In our day, the very concept of the ‘opening’ covers meanings that are quite different from former usage.

One day I was present at a lecture given to chess students by Yuri Razuvaev, on the Exchange Variation of
the Spanish. In the course of the lecture Razuvaev hardly demonstrated any ‘book’ variations. Instead he showed us games which provided models of how to play this or that typical position arising out of the opening in question.

In particular, he demonstrated the following game.

**Fischer-Portisch**

*Havana OL 1966*  

**Spanish**

1. e4  
2. d3  
3. c3  
4. d4  
5. 0-0  
6. d4  
7. cxd4  
8. b3  
9. a6  
10. Qe5!

White is threatening 11 Qc4. The attempt to solve Black’s development problem tactically by 10...g4  
11 f3 0-0-0 is refuted by 12 e5! and Black loses a piece (Hort-Zheliandinov, Havana 1967). The natural move played by Portisch leads to a weakening of the pawn on c5, which Fischer superbly exploits.

10. e5  
11. c4!  
Fixing the c5 pawn.

11. e5  
12. c3  
13. Qc3  
(168)

White now won the game as follows:

14. e5! Qxe5  
15. Qxe5 Qc3  
16. bxc5 Qxe6  
18. cb ab  
19. Qa7! Qb8  
20. Qxb1 Qf7  
21. Qxb5 Qbd8  
22. Mb4 Qxa2  
23. Qxc7 Qc8  
24. h4! Qd2  
25. Qf3  
26. Qe2  
27. Qb5 Qa8  
28. h5 Qc5  
29. Qf4+  
30. Qf7  
31. Qf1  
32. Qe4  
33. Qf6  
34. Qf6+  
35. Qg5  
36. Qxf3  
1-0

After that lecture I felt like playing the Exchange Variation myself. A little later I had an opportunity.

**Dvoretsky-Ivanov**

*Moscow 1972*  

**Spanish**

1. e4  
2. d3  
3. c3  
4. Qxe5  
5. 0-0  
6. d4  
7. Qxd4  
8. Qc3  
9. e5  
10. f4  
11. Qb3  
(170)

Now there followed:

14. e5! Qxe5  
(or 14...f6 15 Qxe4 with advantage)  
16. Qxe5 Qc3  
16. bxc5 Qg6  
17. Qc6  
18. cb ab  
19. Qa7 Qc6  
20. Qxb5  
21. Qa5 Qc8  
22. Qb4 Qd5  
23. Qc4  
24. Qd2  
25. Qe7  
26. Qxc7  
27. Qf6  
28. Qxf3  
1-0

In this game White ‘copied’ not only Fischer’s powerful opening play but also the devices with which he conducted the fight in the middlegame – the same break with e4-e5!, the manoeuvre Qc6-a7! in order to win a pawn.

Such a complete transfer of all the ideas from one game to another is quite a rare occurrence, but we constantly have occasion to apply an overall plan and individual stratagems taken from a model we have studied.

It is worth recalling, for example, that in a game against Unzicker (Siegen OL 1970), Fischer himself applied a strategic concept (f4-f5!!) devised by Emanuel Lasker in a famous game against Capablanca.

**Lasker-Capablanca**

*St. Petersburg 1914*  

**Spanish**

1. e4  
2. d3  
3. c3  
4. Qxe6  
5. d4  
6. Qxd4  
7. Qd4  
8. Qc3  
9. 0-0  
10. f4  
11. Qb3  
(170)

12. f5!

Lasker confines the enemy lightsquared bishop, ensures the exchange of dark-squared bishops and fixes the pawn on f6 which he intends to
attack with g2-g4-g5 and (if appropriate) e4-e5.

12 ... b6
13 ∆f4 ∆b7?

The correct reaction was to play 13...∆xf4! 14 ∆xf4 c5, with chances for both sides.

Now there followed: 14 ∆xd6 cd 15 ∆d4 ∆xd8 16 ∆e6 ∆d7 17 ∆ad1 ∆c8 18 ∆f2 b5 19 ∆fd2 ∆d7 20 ∆d4 ∆f7 21 a3 ∆xa8 (21...∆x6f! is better) 22 ∆f2 ∆a7 23 g4 h6 24 ∆d3 a5 25 h4 ab 26 ab ∆ae7 27 ∆g3 ∆g8 28 ∆e4 g6 29 ∆g5 g5+ 30 ∆f3 ∆b6 31 hg hg 32 ∆h3 ∆d7 33 ∆f3 ∆e8 34 ∆d1 h7 35 e1 d6 36 ∆e4 ∆d5 37 ∆c5 ∆c8 38 ∆xd7 ∆xd7 39 h7 ∆f8 40 Ra1 ∆d8 41 Ra8+ ∆c8 42 ∆c5 1-0

Fischer-Unzicker
Siegen OL 1970
Spanish

1 e4 e5 2 ∆f3 ∆c6 3 ∆b5 a6 4 ∆xc6 dc 5 0-0 f6 6 d4 ed 7 ∆xd4 ∆g5 8 h3 f5 9 ∆e2 ∆e7 10 0-0 ∆f6 11 ∆f3 ∆c7 12 ∆ad1 ∆d8 13 ∆h4 ∆d6 14 ∆g3 1-0

We can thus draw a further conclusion: the best method of studying typical middlegame positions is to select appropriate games and analyse the plans — the tactical and strategic precepts and ideas — employed in them.

Clearly the games to select are those employed in exemplary fashion by both — or at least one — of the players.

I recommend collecting complete games rather than fragments, since it is normally useful to furnish yourself with an overall picture of the contest — starting with the opening refinements and finishing with the endgame, which may itself contain typical features characteristic of the system you are studying.

As a rule, you will select games by players who constantly reach positions of the type in question. Thus, when studying the middlegame arising from the Exchange Variation of the Spanish, you should give attention first and foremost to the games of Lasker and Fischer. But other games too can of course be valuable.

For example, the genius Capablanca, playing the Exchange Variation with White for virtually the only time in his life, created a classic model of how to attack in this opening when the players castle on opposite wings.

Capablanca-Janowski
St Petersburg 1914
Spanish

1 e4 e5
2 ∆f3 ∆c6
3 ∆b5 a6
4 ∆xc6 dc 5 fxe4 ∆e5 6 ∆xe5 d6 7 ∆xe5 d5 8 ∆f4 ∆e7 9 d4 0-0 10 ∆xe7+ ∆xe7 11 ∆xe7+ ∆d6 12 ∆d4 h5 13 ∆fxe5+ ∆xe5 14 ∆xe5 ∆d6 15 b5 ∆b6 16 ab ∆a5 17 ∆d5 ∆c5 18 c4

So far Black has managed to prevent the opening of lines on the queenside, but the price is high — the white knight is entrenched on d5. All White needs to do now is prepare the advance d3-d4 and c4-c5. Black is defenceless.

The game concluded: 18...∆g5 19 ∆f3 ∆e6 20 ∆c3 ∆d8 21 ∆f1 ∆g7 22 d4 ∆d4 23 ∆c2 ed 24 ∆f4 25 c5 ∆xd5 26 ed ∆xd5 27 c6+ ∆f8 28 cd ∆xg7 29 d5 ∆e8 30 d6 cd 31 ∆c6 1-0

In the next game, White followed the plan that Capablanca had demonstrated.

Dvoretsky-Korjakin
Moscow 1971
Spanish

1 e4 e5 2 ∆f3 ∆c6 3 ∆b5 a6 4 ∆xc6 dc 5 0-0 f6 6 d4 ed 7 ∆xd4 ∆g5 8 h3 ∆xf3 9 ∆xf3 ∆d6 (it was evidently better to try for equality with 9...0-0 10 ∆d2 ∆d7 11 ∆f4 ∆g5) 10 ∆d2 ∆e6 11 ∆c4 0-0-0 (173)

In opening books you will find Keres' recommendation 12 ∆g3 (intending f2-f4), but this allows Black to equalise at once with 12...∆xe4! 13 ∆xe5 ∆xe5 14 ∆xe5 ∆d6. A better option is the plan demonstrated by Capablanca in the foregoing example.
Forestalling 15...g4, which can now be met by 16 h4!.

15 ... b6
16 Dc3 Dd8?
16...Dd7 first is better.

17 b5! cb
18 ab a5

If 18...ab, then 19 Dc7! is strong, for example: 19...f6 20 Db1 (not 20 Dd5? Dxd5) or 19...Db6 20 Dd5 Dxd5 21 Ka8+! Dd7 22 ed Dxd5 23 Dh8 Ddh8 24 Dxg5.

19 Dd5 f6
19...Dxd5 20 ed Dxd5 is very strongly answered by 21 c4!.

20 c4 Dc5?
21 Dc3! Dxe3

Or 21...Dd7 22 d4 h4 23 Dh2 Dd6 24 c5.

22 fe Dd7

The structure of the position is the same as in Capablanca-Janowski. Thanks to the weakness of the pawn on f6, White has no need to prepare the c4-c5 break – he can play it at once.

23 c5! h4
24 De1 Dxe5
25 Dh6 De8
26 Dc6 Df8
27 Dxe5 1-0

The viability of Capablanca's plan is shown once more in the following game.

Meecking-Korchnoi
Candidates Match 1974
Spanish

Now let us see what is involved in a systematic attempt to study a typical middlegame position. By way of example, I propose that we examine the old plan of d4-d5 in the Chigorin Variation of the Spanish.

We shall do this by selecting and analysing games. But first, a word about another working principle. The methods of playing typical positions can usefully be studied in a historical perspective, by tracing their evolution. This makes for a deeper understanding of the ideas in the position.

The move d4-d5 in the Chigorin Variation was very popular in the 1920s. After that it was almost forgotten; it was only many years later that it attracted attention once again.
White’s plans against other knight moves.

Geller-Mecking, Palma de Mallorca 1970: 13...Qa5 14 b3! Qd7 15 Qf1 Qd7 16 Qg3 c4 17 b4 Qh8 18 Qf5 Qd8 19 Qh2! a5 20 Qe3! ab 21 cb Qx5 22 ef c3 23 Qg4! Qe7 24 Qxf6+ Qxf6 25 Qc4! Qd7 26 Qd3 Qf5 27 h4 Qe7 28 g3 Qd8 29 a3 Qc8 30 Qb1 Qc7 31 Qe2 Qb8 32 Qb3 Qd7 33 Qf1 Qc7 34 Qe3 Qf6 35 Qe4 Qe7 36 g4! f6 37 Qe3 Qd7 38 Qbxc3 Qh8 39 Qe4 Qd8 40 Qd2 Qc4 41 Qxc4 Qxc4 42 Qc3 Qh6 43 Qxc4 bc 44 g5 Qf5 45 Qh8 Qd8 46 Wh5 e3 47 Qe3 h6 48 f6 1-0.

Geller-Hernandez, Las Palmas 1980: 13...Qa7 14 Qf1 Qd7 15 a4! (hindering the manœuvre...Qd7-c8-b6) 15...Qd8 16 Qg3 Qd8 17 a5! c4 18 Qd2 Qh8 19 Qh2 Qe7 20 Qg5! Qe8 21 Qd2 Qd7 22 Qf5 Qf5 23 Qb3 Qc8 24 Qe1 h6 25 Qe3 Qf5 26 ef Qxf5 27 Qxf5 Qxf5 28 Qd1 Qd6 29 Qg3 Qg6 30 Qa1 Qc6 31 Qe4 Qe7 32 Qd2 Qd1 33 Qc1 Wh5 34 Qc6 Qd3 35 Qc4 Qxd2 36 Qxd2 Qf7 37 Qf5 Qe8 38 Qxd6 Qxd5 39 Qxa6 Qxa6 40 Qxa6 1-0.

14 a4 Qb8 (176)

Weakening the queenside with 14...b4 (or 14...Qd7 15 ab Qxb5) is dangerous, as shown by this example:

Capablanca-Vidmar, New York 1924: 14...b4 15 Qc4 a5! (otherwise 16 a5! Qdx5! Qa6 17 Qb3! de 18 Qd6 Qxd6 19 Qxd6 Qxd6 20 Qxd6 Qh7 21 Qxb7 Qxb7 22 cb! cb 23 f3 Qf8 24 Qe3 h6 25 Qed1 Qc6

26 Qa1 Qe8 27 Qf2 Qxd1 28 Qxd1 Qe8 29 Qg4 Qd6 31 Qxe6 Qh6 32 Qh8+ Qd8 33 Qxd8 Qd7 34 Qxa5 Qc5 35 b3! Qxb3 36 Qxb4 Qd4 37 a5 1-0.

Incidentally, in annotating this game, Tartakower mentioned Teichmann's recommendation 14...Qa5! - a move that has hardly ever occurred in practice. This just shows that by reading old books and studying old games and the notes to them, you can unexpectedly come across interesting 'novelties' and 'improvements'.

The classic model for playing the Black side is considered to be the following game.\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Thomas-Rubinstein} \\
\text{Baden-Baden 1925}
\end{align*}
\]

White has set up a typical attacking formation on the kingside; Black has demonstrated how best to regroup his forces for defending and if possible counterattacking on that wing. His task is now to exchange rooks so as to nullify the threats to his king:

21 Wh1 Qd7
22 Qe3 Qa8
23 Wg2 Qxa1!
24 Qxa1 Wb7
25 Qh2 Qa8
26 Wf1 Qa6
27 Qd2 Wb8
28 Qa6 Wxa6
29 Qd3 Qg5
30 Qg2 h5!
31 Qd1 Qf7
32 gh Qh6
33 Wh2 Qc8
34 Wg2 Wh8
35 Qd2 (177)

Black's position deserves preference, mainly because White is deprived of active possibilities whereas Black can prepare to break with...h7-h5 and...f6-f5.

29 Qb3 Qg5
30 Qg2 h5!
31 Qd1 Qf7
32 gh Qh6
33 Wh2 Qc8
34 Wg2 Wh8
35 Qd2 (177)

Black won as follows: 35...Qf5! 36 ef Qxh4 37 f6 Qxf6 38 Qf3 Qh4 39 Qg6 Qg3+ 40 Qf5! 31 Qx7 Qx7 42 Qc4 Qd7 43 Qh6 Qg6 44 Qxg7 Qxg7 45 Qc4 Qd2 Qd7 47 Qc3 Qxd5 48 Qg5+ Qg6 49 Qe7+ Qg8 50 Qd5+ Qd7 51 Qg7+ Qf6 52 Qd8+ Qf5 53 Qd7+ Qf5 54 Qd8+ Qg7 55 Qe7+ Qf6 56 Qxd6 Qd2+ 57 Qf6 Wh6! (zugzwang) 58 Qd1 Qf5+ 59 Qg2 Qxb1 60 Qf8+ Qg5 61 Qd8+ Qg4 62 Qd7+ Qf5 63 Qd1+ Qg5 0-1.

Tartakower wrote that 'the value of this game lies not merely in any specific variations but rather in the overall construction of that solid defensive base from which Black's counterattack developed.'

In the game Thomas-Grünfeld three rounds later, Black employed the same plan of defence as Rubinstein, but manoeuvred less accurately. The game lasted a long time; on move 78, the following position was reached (178):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Thomas-Grünfeld} \\
\text{Baden-Baden 1925}
\end{align*}
\]

Black now finally carries out the familiar undermining move:
The Rubinstein game greatly helps towards understanding Black's methods of play, but in that game White manoeuvred unconvincingly. Having formed the plan of a kingside attack, why did he open the a-file, where Black at once set about exchanging the rooks? It was more logical for White to free his hands by closing the queenside - or else not to touch his queenside pawns at all, when Black would not have found it so simple to obtain counterplay in that sector. Let us look at some examples.

Bogoljubow-Rubinstein
Baden-Baden 1925

15 \text{c4}!?
(Instead of 15 \text{ab}).

Now after an exchange of pawns, White would organise pressure on the queenside, so Rubinstein coolly played:

15 \ldots b4

There followed:

16 \text{b3} \text{\text{d}d6+}
17 \text{g4} g6
18 \text{h1} \text{g7}

Bogoljubow now demonstrates two typical devices for conducting the attack; opening lines with f2-f4 and sacrificing a knight on f5: 24 f4! ef 25 \text{c5} ef5! \text{dx}f5 26 \text{g6} \text{xf}4 \text{xf}4 \text{f7} 28 \text{xh}2 \text{h7} 29 \text{g2} \text{g7} 30 \text{d}e5 \text{d}d7 31 \text{g}g2 \text{g7} 32 \text{h}h1 \text{h}h8 33 \text{w}e2 \text{w}e8 34 \text{g}g3 \text{w}g8 35 \text{g}g4 \text{h}xh6 36 \text{xh}1 \text{xh}1 37 \text{xh}1 \text{xh}1 \text{xh}1 \text{xh}7+ 38 \text{g}g2 \text{h}5 39 \text{d}d1 \text{h}6 40 \text{w}e1 \text{dx}4 41 \text{b}b3 \text{a}5 42 \text{w}e2 \text{w}e8 43 \text{dx}4 \text{w}h6 44 \text{g}g1 \text{f}f7 1/2-1/2

However, White's attack is not as harmless as may appear from the games examined so far. Here is a characteristic example.

Dubinin-Suetin
RSFSR Team Ch 1950
Spanish

1 e4 e5 2 \text{f}f3 \text{d}6 3 \text{b}b5 a4 4 \text{w}g5 5 \text{c}c3 6 \text{e}e7 7 \text{w}e2 \text{b}7 8 \text{d}d3 \text{d}d6 9 \text{c}c2 \text{e}e8 10 \text{w}xh2 \text{d}d2 11 \text{f}f6 12 \text{w}xh2 \text{w}xh2 13 \text{d}d3 \text{g}7 14 \text{c}c1 \text{d}d7 15 \text{g}g7 16 \text{d}d2 \text{g}6 17 \text{f}f1 \text{g}7 18 \text{h}6 19 \text{e}e3 \text{g}8

Another bad move is 19 \text{g}g5?, in view of 20 \text{f}f3! gf 21 \text{d}d7 \text{g}g7 22 \text{w}f6+ \text{h}8 23 \text{h}h4?. Black should have played 19 \text{x}x\text{f}7.

20 \text{w}g3 \text{h}8
21 \text{f}f1 \text{d}d8 (180)

On 21 ... \text{g}g8, Dubinin suggests 22 \text{w}f1 \text{c}d8 23 \text{w}g2 \text{f}f7 24 \text{c}c7+ \text{g}g8 25 \text{w}h4!.

22 \text{d}d5\text{f}5!
Again the typical knight sacrifice. It is important to note that White has such a preponderance of forces on the kingside that even after the sacrifice the attack can develop gradually, with quiet moves. On 22 ... \text{g}g5, Dubinin aimed to continue 23 \text{f}f1 \text{f}f8 24 \text{d}d4! \text{f}f4! (24 ... \text{d}d7 25 \text{w}h5) 25 \text{d}d2 \text{f}f7 26 \text{w}f3! \text{g}g7 27 \text{w}g4!, threatening 28 \text{d}d6+? h9 29 \text{f}f1 and White wins.

The game concluded:
22 ... \text{f}f8 23 \text{c}c7+ \text{g}g8 24 \text{g}g5 \text{h}8 25 \text{h}h4! gf 26 \text{w}f6 27 \text{f}f1 \text{w}h8 28 \text{d}d5! \text{x}x\text{f}5 29 \text{f}f5 \text{g}g8 30 \text{h}h5 \text{g}g8 31 \text{w}xh7! \text{g}g7 32 \text{w}h5+ \text{f}f8 33 \text{g}g5 \text{w}f8 34 \text{f}f6+ \text{h}8 35 \text{f}f6+ e4 36 \text{d}d4+ 1-0

So the plan of attack we are examining was useful to White in another opening variation - 6 \text{w}e2, instead of 6 \text{d}d1. Of course if White chooses this system, he has to be prepared to face a gambit; after 6 ...b5 7 \text{b}b3 0-0 8 \text{c}c3, Black has 8 ...\text{d}d5!?, and if 9 \text{e}e4 then 9 ... \text{f}f4?. But in the above game Black avoided this line.

Black also played passively later (it was worth considering 13 ... \text{d}d4, or a move earlier 12 ...\text{c}c4 followed by ...\text{d}d5-b7-c5); he didn't create counterplay on the queenside but only set up Rubinstein's defensive formation on the kingside. White was essentially playing with an extra tempo, which he acquired by dispensing with 7 \text{d}d1 (the rook went to g1 in one move). Black's error 19 ... \text{g}g8 allowed Dubinin to carry out his brilliant combinative attack.

But even this brilliant game did not cast doubt on Rubinstein's plan of defence which had undergone many tests successfully. In fact the system with d4-d5 disappeared from tournament practice for a long time, although attempts to resurrect it were made more than once. Eventually, however, the adherents of the White side discovered some ideas which breathed new life into this old
system. Let us return to the basic position of the variation, after 14 a4 \#b8 (see diagram 176).

Karpov-Unzicker
Nice 1974

15 ab ab
16 b4! \#b7

Black can also go over to Rubinstein’s defensive formation at once with 16...c4 17 \#e1 \#e8. The plan employed by Rubinstein’s opponents – g4, \#f3, \#h2, \#g1 – doesn’t seem too effective here. But in our own day White has found a different plan: 18 \#h3! \#f6 19 f4 \#f7 20 \#d3 g6 21 f5 \#g7 22 g4, with unpleasant pressure on the kingside, as in Karpov-Spassky, Moscow 1973 – although that game ended in a draw.

17 \#c5 \#f7
18 \#c4

In Spassky-Korchnoi, Candidates Match 1968, White developed his bishop on d2, but achieved nothing in particular: 18 \#d2 \#e8 19 \#e3 \#f8 20 \#h2 \#xa1 21 \#xa1 \#d8 22 \#w7 \#a8! 23 \#wxb7 \#b8, and a draw was agreed.

18 ... \#a8
19 \#w2 \#f8

Better would be 19...\#b8 followed by 20...\#c8.

20 \#d3 g6
21 \#g3 \#f8
22 \#a2 c4
23 \#b1 \#d8!?! (181)
24 \#a7!

The bishop on a7 paralyses all

White appears to be preparing queenside play, but in fact his intention is quite different. By putting pressure on the b5 pawn, he will compel his opponent to play ...c5-c4.

After that, White will block the queenside with a4-a5 and start an attack on the kingside. But how does this differ from the Bogoljubow-Rubinstein game, in which White at once forced the closure of the queenside by playing 15 c4? Let us see how events proceeded.

18...\#a8 19 \#w2 e4 20 \#c4 \#e8 21 a5 \#d8 22 g4 \#g6 23 \#g3 \#e6 24 \#h2 \#f7 25 \#g1 \#g7 26 \#g2 \#h8 27 \#f1 \#g8

How is the pressure to be increased further? We know the answer from previous games: White must play f2-f4.

28 \#d2 \#e8 29 \#f4e 30 \#wxf4 \#e5 31 \#d3 \#e8

In the event of 31...\#xf3+ 32 \#xf3, Black would be forfeiting his sole trump – the knight established in the centre.

32 \#d4 \#e8 (182)

Zuckerman-Kostro
Polanica Zdroj 1972

15 b4! \#b7
16 \#f1 \#d7
17 \#d2 \#f8
18 \#d3

We can now judge White’s plan properly. The queenside pawn formation is ideal for him; he has gained control of the key square d4. Observe that even if Black managed to evacuate his king to the queenside, White could still unsettle it with raids along the g1-a7 diagonal.

33 \#g6 34 \#f4 \#e7 35 \#g4 \#e5 36 \#h4 \#e8 37 \#g6 \#f7 38 \#xh7+ \#xh7 39 \#g4 1-0

By way of commending the queenside pawn configuration chosen by Zuckerman, I should like to add one further point – the idea of a positional piece sacrifice on c4.

Bronstein-Winiwarter
Krems 1967

36 \#xc4! bc 37 \#xc4 \#b5 38 \#b6 \#xe2 39 \#xe2 \#e7 40 \#xc8 \#xc8 41 \#a7 \#d7 42 \#xa6 1-0

So the scales have tipped in White’s favour in this interesting variation. It is now up to Black to have a say....
14 The Link between Opening and Endgame

Aleksei Kosikov

Do you remember that splendid novel of fantasy by the Strugatsky brothers, Monday Begins on Saturday? Its title contains a valid thought: our preoccupations of tomorrow originate today (if not yesterday!). Thus it is in chess: the endgame sometimes begins in the very opening!

When studying an opening, it is not enough to ‘swot up’ on variations. You need a deep understanding of the events taking place on the board; for this, you have to master the ideas of the coming middlegame and sometimes even the endgame. I should add that with the ceaseless stream of information by which chessplayers today are engulfed, it is sometimes not until well into the endgame that an opening variation terminates. I remember a game between Igor Novikov and Vladimir Tukmakov in the Top League of the USSR Championship in 1984. White introduced an improvement on move thirty-six, after an ending with bishop against pawns had arisen; by winning the game, he revised the assessment of a Grünfeld variation that was popular at the time.

I would like to share with you some of my impressions of the way the opening conflict is conducted. I shall demonstrate some games in which the eventual ending had to be taken into account from the very outset. In the course of the discussion you will be given some exercises to solve independently.

Palatnik-Kosikov

Odessa 1979

Slav Defence

1 d4 d5
2 c4 e6
3 Qf3 Qf6
4 a4 c5
5 Qe5
6 ... Alekhine’s continuation, which remains topical to this day. The alternative, which also has a long history, is 6 e3.
7 f3 c4
8 e4 c5
9 Qg5 h6
10 Qh4 c5
11 dc Qxd1+
12 Qxd1 Qc2
13 e1 Qh7?!

Black chooses an unpromising line. To those interested in the variation, I recommend a study of 13...Qxa4!, as played by Ehlvest against Bareev in the First League of the 1986 USSR Championship (see Informator 41, Game 435).

14 e4 Qc6 (184)

18 Qd1 Qfd8
19 Qxd8+!

Rook exchanges should extinguish Black’s initiative, after which the basic strategic defect of his position—the confinement of his bishop on h7—will make itself felt.

20 Qxd8 Qb6
21 Qf1

Of course, not 21 Qf1?? Qxc3 22 bc Qxf3+.

22 Qxe2
23 Qxd8 Qxh7

Black has ‘the advantage of the bishop pair’, but that is a purely formal assessment. What ‘advantage’ is there with that bishop on h7?

23 ... Qxc3

This exchange appears forced. I didn’t at all like 23...Qc6 24 Qb5 a6 25 Qdb6, when White breaks into my queenside, exploiting the absence of my king and light-squared bishop.

24 bc Qxe6
25 Qd6 b6 (185)
26 Qd3

A natural centralisation of the king. Now how is Black to prevent it from breaking into his camp?

26...Qe5+? 27 Qd4 Qf6 is useless on account of 28 Qc8. The black king must quickly be brought to the defence.

26 ... Qf8
27 Qc4 Qd7
The position has been transformed. Have a try at assessing it. Who holds the advantage, and how great is it?

Some of you preferred White, and thought his advantage was a big one. Why? Because of the 'good' bishop in an open position, and White's more active king.

However, this verdict is dogmatic and superficial, and I completely disagree with it. In actual fact, the advantage—a substantial one—is already with Black.

Let me state my view of the relation of bishop to knight in the endgame. In an open position where both sides have weaknesses, the knight may prove stronger than the bishop. I will give a somewhat abstract example. Imagine an endgame without kings; White has a knight, and pawns on a2, c2, e2 and g2; Black has a dark-squared bishop, and pawns on b7, d7, f7 and h7. By attacking the enemy pawns, the knight will most probably drive them onto the same colour of squares as the bishop, which will thus become a 'bad' one.

Let us return to the diagram. The bishop is not all that strong, and the White camp contains more pawn weaknesses. White's only active possibility is 31 \textit{Bb5}; let us examine it. Black replies 31...\textit{Ba7}; and is not afraid of 32 f6 gf 33 \textit{Ba}6 \textit{Bd}5, when he keeps the extra pawn. Instead, 32 \textit{Bf}2 \textit{Bd}5 transposes into the game continuation (see below). The only other line to consider is 32 \textit{Ba}6 \textit{Bf}5. Now 33 \textit{Bxa}7 is hopeless: 33...\textit{Bxa}3 34 \textit{Bb}6 \textit{Bd}2 35 \textit{Bc}4 \textit{Bd}4 34...\textit{Bc}6 35 \textit{Bg}6, followed by ...\textit{Bf}5 and ...\textit{Bc}4. White would have to play 33 \textit{Bf}2, but the answer is 33...\textit{Bc}6 34 \textit{Bxa}7 \textit{Bd}6 35 \textit{Bg}4 (35 \textit{Bb}6 \textit{Bd}8+! 35...\textit{Bc}4, ...\textit{Bf}5 and ...\textit{Be}5-e3.

31 \textit{Bf}2 \textit{Bd}7
32 \textit{Bb}5 \textit{Bd}5
If 32...\textit{Bd}5, Black would have to reckon with 33 a5.
33 \textit{Bc}4 \textit{Bd}7+
34 \textit{Bb}4 \textit{Bc}6
35 a5!!
Hardly any of you would want to defend this position for White. The move played loses by force, but the alternative 35 \textit{Bb}4 a5+ 38 \textit{Ba}3 also looks absolutely dismal.

35... \textit{Bd}6+
36 \textit{Bc}3 \textit{Ba}6
37 \textit{Bd}7 \textit{Bd}6
38 \textit{Bg}4 (187)

Black not only has an outside passed pawn (which means that any pawn endgame is won for him); another key factor is that White's bishop is shut out of play. Can you see how to exploit this?

Yes – it is time to start hunting the bishop already:
38... \textit{Bd}6
39 \textit{Bc}3 \textit{Bb}6
Threatening 40...\textit{Bb}7.
40 \textit{Bb}8 \textit{Bf}6
41 h4 \textit{Bc}8!!
Complete domination of the bishop by the knight. The rest is elementary.
42 \textit{Bb}4 \textit{Bb}7 43 \textit{Bc}5 44 \textit{Bf}5 \textit{Bc}6 45 \textit{Bb}4 \textit{Bd}6 46 \textit{Bb}3 \textit{Bc}5 47 \textit{Bd}3 \textit{Bx}d4 48 49 g5 h5 50 h4 51 \textit{Bf}4 \textit{Bb}6 52 \textit{Bc}4 \textit{Bd}7 53 \textit{Bd}4 \textit{Bf}6 0-1
An elegant finale.

Now for \textit{exercise number 1}:
White clearly gained a plus from the opening. At what point did he lose it, and how can his play be improved?

The Slav Defence is my long-standing, tried and trusted weapon. I associate it with good and bad memories, successful ideas and severe defeats. I will now tell you the story of one of my good ideas.

Magerramov-Kosikov
Daugavpils 1978
Slav Defence
1. Qf3 d5
2. c4 c6
3. ed cd
4. d4 Qf6
5. Qe3 Qe6
6. Qf4 Qf5
7. e3 e6
8. a3 Qd7
9. Wd4 Wb6
9... Bc8 is also played.
10. Qh4

There was a time when this was virtually considered the refutation of 9...Wb6. The point is that the unsubtle 10. Qg6 allows White to gain a substantial plus by breaking in the centre: 11. Qxg6 hg 12. e4! de 13 d5!

10... Le4! (188)

188

When I began studying the position after 10 Qh4, I felt that the only drawback to White’s plan was the awkward position of his knight on the edge of the board. Thus it was that I devised 10...Le4!

I had first played it against Bukhin in the 1978 Ukrainian Championship, two months before the present game. The continuation was 11 0-0 Le7 (11...a6 or 11...e8 deserved attention) 12 Qxe4? de 13 d5! Qc5! 14 dc 0-0! 15 Wc4 bc! 16 Le4 Qxe4 (better than 16...Wxh4 17 Wd5 Qxa4 18 Qxf8 Qxb2 19 Wxe4) 17 Wxa4 Qxh4 18 Wxe4 Qf6 (18...Wxh2 is extremely dangerous) 19 Qe5 Qxe5 20 Wxe5 Qd8 21 Wfd1 Wb5! 22 Wxb5 (22 Wc3 Qd5 23 e4 Qc5, with counterplay) 22...cb 23 Qf1 Qxd1 24 Qxd1 Qc8, and a draw was agreed.

That game had some bad consequences for me. Playing against Rashkovsky in the Daugavpils qualifying tournament (a few rounds before my game with Magerramov), I underestimated a similar break in the centre and ended up in a difficult position:

11... Qc1?? Qc8

[For information: 11...Le7 is perfectly playable. After 12 Qxe4 de 13 d5, Black has these choices:

(a) 13...Qe5 14 dc 0-0 15 Qxe5 Wxc5 16 0-0 bc 17 Qxe6 Qad8! 18 Qg3 g5 19 Wxe4 (19 Qxe4 gh 20 Qf4 Qd2) 19...gh, with equality; Azmaiparashvili-Dvoretsky, Tbilisi 1980.

(b) 13 ed!! 14 Qf5 Qg5 15 Qxc6+ bc 16 Qxe5 Wxc5 17 0-0 0-0 (17...g6) 18 Qe5 Qf6 19 Qxe6 gf 20 Wd1 Qh8 21 Qf5 d4! (a game Ehlvest-Sergeev, Leningrad 1979, went 21...Qg8? 22 Wx7 Qf8 23 Qc6, with chances for both sides) 22 ed Wd5, and Black gains the advantage. – Mark Dvoretsky]

Let us now return to my game with Magerramov. In answer to 10...Qe4! he played the natural but inferior move (from diagram 188):

11 f3?! Qd3!!

This is the tactical justification of Black’s idea. He could have done the same thing a move earlier, but then White could have gained the advantage by 11 Qxd5! ed 12 Qxd3. It was important to provoke f2-f3 first, so as to deprive the white knight of the f3 square.

12 Qxd5!

Practically forced. After 12 Qxd3 Wxb2 13 0-0 Wxc3 14 Qb5 Qb6, Black is close to having a won position.

12... Qb6

Of course not 13 Wxb5 ed, and Black has an extra piece.

13... Qxa4

14 Qxa8 (190)

14 Qxa8 fails to 14...Le7 15 Qg3 g5 (White pays the price of f2-f3).

190

Now here is exercise number 2:
Assess the consequences of 13...bc.
positions, for example after 15 b3!? 
\[ \text{exh4+ 16 Qd2 0-0 17 Qc7.} \]
A much stronger move is the one I found literally a few hours before the game:

14 ... 
\[ \text{Qb4!} \]

This not only threatens to win the exchange but vacates the c6 square for the 'errant' bishop. An amusing situation has now arisen: White is the exchange and a pawn up, but both his knights are trapped.

15 Qd2

I planned to answer 15 Qc1 with 15 ... Qc6.

[For information: Glikanets-Dvoretsky, Tbilisi 1979 went 15 g4 (freeing g2 for the knight) 15 ... Qd3+! 16 \[ \text{Qe2 Qxf4+ 17 Qf (91);} \]

17 ... Qe7!! (an important intermediate move. 17 ... Qd6 at once is weaker: 18 Qc1 0-0 19 Qc7 Qc6 20 Qxc6 bc 21 Qa6 Qxf4, and the endgame is drawish. In this line, if 18 ... Qe7 then 19 Qc7 Qc6 20 Qd5; if 18 ... Qc6, then 19 Qd5 ed 20 Qf5 with a certain amount of complication) 18 Qg2 (18 Qac1 0-0 is bad for White.

18 g5 is met by 18 ... Qd6 19 Qac1 0-0 20 Qc7 Qc6 21 Qxc6 bc 22 Qa6 Qxf4, and White loses a pawn) 18 ... Qd6 19 Qac1 Qc6! 20 Qxe3 0-0. Black has acquired a material plus and proceeded to exploit it. – Mark Dvoretsky]

15 ... 
\[ \text{Qe7} \]

16 Qc7+ 
\[ \text{Qd8} \]

17 Qh1 
\[ \text{g5!} \]

The sharp tactical skirmish in the opening has resulted in a clear plus for Black.

18 Qg6

18 Qg3 gh 19 Qf4 Qb6 is no better for White.

18 ... 
\[ \text{hg} \]

19 Qg3 
\[ \text{Qd5} \]

20 Qd5 
\[ \text{ed} \]

21 Qc7+ 
\[ \text{Qe8} \]

22 e4

The rooks need scope, so White endeavours to open some files.

22 ... 
\[ \text{Qc6} \]

23 ed 
\[ \text{Qd5} \]

24 Qd6 
\[ \text{Qb6} \]

25 Qxe7 
\[ \text{Qxe7} \]

26 h3 
\[ \text{Qc4+} \]

27 Qc3

Not 27 Qc2 Qe3+ and 28 ... Qxg2.

27 ... 
\[ \text{Qd6} \]

28 Qe1 
\[ \text{Qc8} \]

29 Qe2 
\[ \text{Qa3+} \]

30 Qd2 
\[ \text{Qe2+} \]

31 Qe1 
\[ \text{Qxe2+} \]

32 Qxe2 
\[ \text{Qd2} \]

33 Qc1

After 33 Qd1 Qxa2 Black is certain of victory.

33 ... 
\[ \text{Qxd4+} \]

34 Qf2 a5

35 a3 a4

36 Qe3 Qe6

37 Qc2 b5

White's position is hopeless; Black only needs to play with elementary accuracy. But, as is well known, winning a won position is a very difficult thing.

38 Qd2 
\[ \text{Qe5} \]

39 Qf2 
\[ \text{Qd4} \]

40 Qe3 
\[ \text{Qb3} \]

41 Qd1 
\[ \text{Qa5} \]

42 Qe1 
\[ \text{Qe6} \]

43 Qe2 (192)

On 32 ... Qd4, Black would have to reckon with 33 Qxd3+ Qxd3 34 Qxg6.

43 ... 
\[ \text{Qf6} \]

53 Qxg6!

A weaker line is 53 Qh2 Qf3 54 Qg6 Qd4 55 Qh3+ Qf5 56 Qh1 Qd2, and Black wins.

53 ... 
\[ \text{Qd4+} \]

54 Qf6 
\[ \text{Qe4 (193);} \]

192

The obvious move here is 43 ... Qc4++; after the white king retreats, the black king breaks in on the opposite flank. Instead I commit an error which all at once complicates Black's task.

43 ... 
\[ \text{Qf5?} \]

44 Qf4+! 
\[ \text{Qg4} \]

45 Qe3+ 
\[ \text{Qf4} \]

46 Qxf4

White has managed to reduce the number of pawns, which increases his chances of escaping.

The game was adjourned here. Analysis showed that it is hard for Black to realise his advantage, but even harder for White to draw.

55 Qf2

The sealed move.

55 ... 
\[ \text{Qf5!} \]

56 Qe5 
\[ \text{Qd3} \]

57 Qd2

White would lose with either 57
After this game, naturally, a search began for new lines for White. Against Beliavsky in the 1979 USSR Championship, Yusupov played:

\[11\, 0-0-0\] (194)

Black has succeeded in equalising the chances, and the game ended in a draw.

A new attempt to strengthen White's play was made in Mordasov-Vekshenkov, Alma-Ata 1980. Instead of 15...\texttt{Qe}3, White played 15...\texttt{Qe}2. The further course of events was similar to the previous game: 15...\texttt{Qb}4 16...\texttt{Kc}1 0-0 17 a3 ...\texttt{x}c3 18 ...\texttt{x}c3 e5 19 de ...\texttt{xe}5, but after 20...\texttt{Bh}1 21 ...\texttt{xc}3 White acquired an advantage.

Now here is exercise number 3:
In answer to 15...\texttt{Qe}2, find the best plan of defence for Black that does not involve weakening his pawn structure.

Solutions to Exercises

I have to say that none of the students succeeded in answering all three questions accurately. Of course they were fairly difficult, and in any case the solutions – just as in most opening positions – may be disputable or may not be the sole correct ones. Nevertheless this kind of training is very important and useful. If you want to handle an opening with confidence, you must learn to cope independently with the problems that face you, without relying on the opinion of a coach or the recognised authorities.

Exercise 1
(Palatnik-Kosikov)

Up to move 23, neither the students nor I had any reservations about White's play. The first controversial position was the following (195):

One group of students (Zviagintsev, Boguslavsky, Kiriakov, Makaryev) evidently wished to avoid the weakening of White's queenside pawns, and suggested the variation 23...\texttt{Da}2 \texttt{Le}7 24...\texttt{Dxe}2 \texttt{Dc}6 25...\texttt{Dxe}3 \texttt{a}6 (25...\texttt{f}5!) 26...\texttt{a}5. In the resulting position they preferred White. But why? After the thematic break 26...\texttt{f}5! (which I am afraid no one even examined) 27 e5 (27 ef \texttt{xf}5) 27...\texttt{f}4! the problem of Black's light-squared bishop is solved. The continuation might be 28...\texttt{Da}4 \texttt{Le}2 29 \texttt{Dc}5 \texttt{xc}5 30 \texttt{xc}5 \texttt{D}b3 with equality.

No – that recommendation is unconvincing. I think that the moves 23...\texttt{Dxe}2 \texttt{Dxe}3 24...\texttt{bc} \texttt{Dc}6, as actually played, were correct.
We noticed that Black's chief problems are his light-squared bishop which is shut out of play, and his king which is further from the centre than the white one. White's chances of success largely depend on whether he can come to grips with his opponent quickly, force a tactical fight on him before he can bring up his main forces.

To this end, I liked the idea suggested by Svidler, Baklan and Emelin: 25 a5!, followed by 26 Qd6 Qxa5 27 fxax7 and then 28 a6 with a clear plus for White.

But the move 25 Qd6!, which occurred in the game, is no worse. The point is that in answer to 25...b6, when White played the mechanical 26 Qd3?, he should have preferred the more constructive 26 c4! For example 26...f5 27 c5 be 28 axc5 fe 29 fe, and only now 30 Qd3 with excellent winning chances.

It was after 26 Qd3? Qx8 27 Qc4 Qe7 28 Qg3 e5 that White made the decisive mistake: 29 Qf5+?.

**Exercise 2**
(Rashkovsky-Kosikov)

Most of you stated a view that I agree with: by playing

13 ... b6! (196)

Black would have obtained a perfectly satisfactory position.

Emelin and Baklan found the interesting variation 14 Qf1 Qe7 15 f3 g5 16 fe gf 17 Qf3 de 18 Qxe4 fe with unclear play. I have no doubt they are right, but first and foremost we should examine a sharp attempt by White to break through immediately in the centre.

14 Qxe4 de
15 d5 ed
16 Qf1

After 16 Qf5 g6 17 Qd6+ Qxd6 18 axd6 c5! 19 Qe5 f6 followed by 20 Wc6, White has insufficient compensation for the pawn.

16 ... Qc5!?

Another line was suggested:

16...Qc5 17 Wd4 Wd8 18 Qf5 Qc6.

This also seems perfectly playable.

17 b4? Wxb4
18 Wxb4 Qxb4
19 Qxd5 g6!

with chances for both sides.

**Exercise 3**
(Mordasov-Vekshenkov)

*(see diagram 197 overleaf)*

Makariev, Zviagintsev and Kiriakov recommend 15...Wa7 followed by 16...b5. The plan is interesting, but not without its dangers—as Yushpov points out. There can follow 16
15 In the Footsteps of One Game (Non-theoretical reflections)

Mark Dvoretsky

All theory is grey, my friend,
And green the golden tree of life.

Goethe

A game of chess only begins with an opening, it doesn’t by any means end with it. It may indeed happen that the opening formation determines the final result, but the outcome of the fight depends much more often on the skill of the players in later stages of the game. Despite this, many young chess players spend all their spare time strengthening their opening repertoire, skimming through immense numbers of the latest games published in magazines, bulletins and Informator, or recorded on computer disks. Eventually, without realising it, they become nothing but narrow specialists, the sort about whom the unforgettable Kozma Prutkov once said: ‘A specialist is like a man with toothache – he has a lop-sided swelling.’ Without constructive work on the middlegame and endgame, your knowledge of these departments remains fragmented and your overall understanding of chess suffers. I am convinced that a player with a broad, well-rounded chess education is bound to have better prospects than a ‘theoretician’.

From a cursory glance through a game it is very hard to discern the problems confronting the players, the ideas behind the moves, and the attractive variations that remained behind the scenes. I prefer to study strong players’ games with detailed annotations, preferably written by one of the participants. Such annotations not only give the reader an insight into a grandmaster’s productive laboratory, they often make him want to argue with some of the views expressed – they stimulate the reader’s own analytical inquiries.

Chess games hardly ever repeat themselves, but situations that arise in them, ideas, typical resources – these things often are repeated. Sometimes one insignificant episode will give rise to a long chain of associations; similar cases in your own or someone else’s games will come to mind. These associations are very useful – they help you to remember and consolidate the material you are studying.

Many of the tales in the Arabian Nights have characters in common, or arise from the same initial situation. Without aspiring to the laurels of the celebrated Sheherazade (a name I can’t help associating with chess), I intend to acquaint my readers with some chess episodes that are called to my mind by one game (more precisely the first half of it) which happens to be not too interesting in itself. I hope these stories will provide quite a good illustration of the thoughts I have voiced in this preamble.

Prelude

Gavrikov-Dolmatov
Tallinn 1985
Queen’s Gambit

1 e4 e5 2 e5 c6 3 d4 c5 4 d5 d6 5 dxe5 e7 6 Nf3 c6 7 g4 Nc5 8 Bg2 Bb7 9 0-0 cxd5 10 Nxd5 Nf6 11 Be2 Bd7 12 Ng3

What can be said about the system of development White has adopted? It seems to me that its strategic idea lies in embarrassing the opponent by placing the white rook opposite the queen – which cannot move aside to any convenient square as the white queen moved to e2. A similar motif arises in other openings (such as the Tarrasch Defence), but we will not pursue this theme at the moment – we have less than a thousand and one nights at our disposal.

12 ... Qxe5
13 h5 Qe8

It would have been better to play ...cd, either here or last move. We shall come back to this point, though only after some time.

14 Qxc4 Qxf3

What else? Black has to reckon with either 15 dc or 15 d5, and it is no good playing 14...cd 15 Qxd4, with the terrible threat of 16 Qxe6.

15 gxf3 cd
16 ed!

After 16 Qxd4 Qf6, with 17 ...Qe7 to follow, Black could have removed his queen from the white rook’s line of fire. But now it is hard for him to defend against the standard central breakthrough d4-d5!.

16 ... Qd6
17 f4

Not the premature 17 d5 e5 18 Qe4 Qe7.

17 ... Qd6 (198)
It is only now that the game deviates from a precedent established thirty-five (!) years earlier. The game Gligorić-Unzicker, Dubrovnik OL 1950, went 17...\text{e}8 18 \text{f}5! \text{c}8 18...\text{e}7 19 \text{d}4 and 20 \text{d}5! 19 \text{d}4 \text{w}7 20 \text{d}5! \text{e}5 21 \text{w}g4 \text{x}d8 22 \text{x}d7 \text{a}7 23 \text{d}6 \text{w}x6 24 \text{f}e 25 \text{d}6, and White won.

18 \text{a}c1 \text{c}8
19 \text{a}6 \text{c}7
20 \text{w}f3 \text{d}7
21 \text{a}3 \text{d}8
22 \text{d}3 \text{g}6
23 \text{w}e2 \text{f}3

Dolmatov has deployed his forces effectively and achieved complete equality. The game lasted much longer (and was by no means free of errors), but was eventually drawn.

Don't you have the impression that White stood better but didn't make the best of his chances? Somewhere he missed an opportunity. But where?

**Story Number One: Bishop or Knight?**

White never carried out his basic positional threat of d4-d5. Let us return to the situation after Black's 17th move. Why didn't White break through in the centre at that moment?

The answer is simple. Both opponents saw the variation 18 d5 ed 19 \text{d}x5 \text{d}x5 20 \text{d}x5 (20 \text{d}x5 \text{w}f6) 20...\text{c}8. The black queen goes to f6 next move, and White's pressure along the d-file evaporates.

That may be so, but how about taking on d5 with the bishop instead of the knight? After 18 d5! ed 19 \text{d}x5!! Black's 19...\text{d}x5 can be strongly answered by either 20 \text{d}x5 (there is no longer a convenient square for the black queen to withdraw to) or 20 \text{d}x5. Black's best move is probably 19...\text{c}8, but even then White has the pleasant choice between 20 \text{d}b5, 20 \text{b}7 (intending 21 \text{d}b5) and a simple bishop retreat. He obviously retains the initiative.

Grandmaster Dorfman once stated a half-facetious, half-serious maxim: 'The worst bishop is always better than the best knight.' It would seem that somewhere in our subconscious we are in agreement with him, with the result that moves like 19 \text{d}x5!! frequently fall outside our field of vision; we grudge offering our bishop for exchange. To overcome this psychological barrier, it helps to be acquainted with situations where an analogous unconventional decision was taken. ('Analogous' and 'unconventional' - how incompatible these words seem at first sight! And yet, as Lipnitsky wrote in his remarkable book *Problems of Modern Chess Theory*: 'Specific individual decisions do not at all entail a rejection of general chess norms: some laws and norms which may well be obvious are rejected in favour of others which may be more deeply concealed.')

I shall now illustrate this theme with two examples from my own practice.

**Dvoretsky-Romanov**

**Moscow 1963**

**Nimzo-Indian Defence**

1 d4 \text{d}f6 2 c4 e6 3 \text{c}c3 \text{b}4 4 c3 \text{c}5 5 \text{d}f3 \text{d}5 6 \text{d}d3 0-0 7 0-0 cd 8 ed \text{e}c4 b6 10 \text{g}5 \text{b}7 11 \text{w}e2 \text{e}7 12 \text{d}f1 \text{w}c7 13 \text{h}3 \text{d}6 14 \text{a}c1 \text{d}c8 (199)

18 \text{d}x5 \text{w}b8
19 \text{w}f4 \text{d}5
20 \text{x}e7+ \text{x}e7
21 \text{w}x8+ 1-0

The next example was played in a contest at a much higher level, and we will look at it in rather more detail.

**Gulko-Dvoretsky**

**USSR Ch (Top League), Erevan 1975**

**Ragozin System**

1 d4 \text{d}f6
2 c4 e6
3 \text{c}c3 \text{b}4
4 \text{d}f3 d5
5 e3 0-0
6 \text{d}d3 \text{d}6
7 0-0 \text{a}6

A purely prophylactic move. Its explanation is that if Black proceeds at once with his basic plan of 7...\text{d}8 \text{w}c4 \text{d}6 (with the intention of 9...\text{e}5), he has to reckon with 9 \text{d}b5 or 9 \text{w}x5?!

Actually, theory considers the first of these moves to be harmless. Lipnitsky's book that I mentioned quotes an interesting game Bannik-Cherepov (1952), which has a direct bearing on our theme. It went 9 \text{d}b5 \text{w}e7 10 \text{d}2 (10 \text{d}x6 cd, with 11...\text{e}5 coming, gives White nothing either) 10...\text{d}4 11 \text{a}e1 \text{e}5 12 \text{d}e (200) and now Black played, not 12...\text{x}e5? (when 13 \text{d}x6 gives White the better chances),
Why didn't Botvinnik play 10 de \(\text{Qxe5}\) 11\(\text{Qxd6}\) with advantage? We know the answer already - because of 10...\(\text{Qxe5}\)!

Botvinnik later strengthened White's play with 9 b4! e5 10\(\text{Qb2}\) \(\text{Qg4}\) 11 de (202).

but 12...\(\text{Qxe5}\)!. A tense sequence of moves ensued: 13 \(\text{Qxe5}\) \(\text{Qxe5}\) 14 \(\text{Qe2}\) \(\text{Qd8}\) 15 \(\text{Qb4}\) \(\text{Qd2}\) 16 \(\text{Qxc7}\) \(\text{Qd7}\) 17 \(\text{Qa5}\) \(\text{Qxf1}\) 18 \(\text{Qxa8}\) \(\text{Qxe3}\) 19 \(\text{Qc}\) \(\text{Qxa8}\) 20 \(\text{Qb4}\) \(\text{Qxb4}\) 21 \(\text{Qxb4}\), and the game ended in a draw.

The White side of this line in the Ragozin System was handled a little differently by Mikhail Botvinnik. The first game of his return World Championship Match against Mikhail Tal in 1961 went 4 e3 0-0 5 \(\text{d3}\) d5 6 a3 d6 7 \(\text{Qc4}\) \(\text{Qd6}\) 8 \(\text{Qb3}\) \(\text{Qc6}\) 9 \(\text{Qd5}\)?! e5 (201) (9...\(\text{Qe7}\)?) 10 \(\text{Qxd6}\) \(\text{Qxd6}\) 11 de \(\text{Qxd1+}\) 12 \(\text{Qxd1}\) \(\text{Qg4}\) 13 \(\text{Qe2}\) \(\text{Qxe5}\), with an active position for Black.

At the time when this game was played, I believed Lipnitsky's verdict that Black obtains fully adequate counterplay by going into action on the queenside: 11...\(\text{h6}\) 12 \(\text{e1}\) b5 13 \(\text{Qb3}\) \(\text{Qb7}\). (Present-day theory takes a different view; the Encyclopedia of Chess Openings assesses the variation as better for White.) Despite this, I played a different move: 11...ed?! Why? The answer is quite an interesting story.

In those years I was helping Mikhail Botvinnik in some of his activities with the talented young players at the chess school he was conducting. A short while before the national championship, I had acquainted the students with the game Taimanov-Fischer from Buenos Aires 1960.

The game was full of fascinating action in all its phases. In his youth Bobby Fischer used to play the Ragozin System. On reaching the position in the last diagram, he chose 11...ed?! 12 \(\text{Qxd4}\) \(\text{Qd7}\) 13 \(\text{e1}\) \(\text{b7}\) (13...\(\text{Qc5}\) 14 \(\text{Qf1}\) \(\text{Qg6}\) deserved preference, but the plan of \(\text{c3}\), \(\text{Qg2}\) and \(\text{f4}\) guarantees White a lasting initiative - as demonstrated by the game Keres-Lipnitsky, USSR Ch 1951) 14 \(\text{Qg5}\) \(\text{Qxd4}\) 15 \(\text{Qd5}\)! \(\text{Qe5}\) 16 \(\text{f4}\), and Taimanov obtained a considerable advantage.

One of the students asked why Fischer didn’t simplify the position with 12...\(\text{Qxd4}\) 13 \(\text{Qxd4}\) (204), followed by 13...c5 or 13...b5. (In this line 13 \(\text{Qxd4}\) c5 14 \(\text{Qd2}\) b5 15 \(\text{Qf1}\) \(\text{Qe7}\) is unclear.)

Now Black too can 'mark time' if he wants, with 8...h6?! (depriving the white pieces of g5 is useful), but he decides to clear the position up.

8...dc
9 \(\text{Qxc4}\) \(\text{Qd6}\)
10 e4 e5
11 \(\text{Qe3}\) (203)

I was ready for this question (since I had analysed the game in advance) and explained that White answers 15...c5 not with 14 \(\text{Qe3}\)!! b5, but with 14 \(\text{Qxf6}\) \(\text{Qxf6}\) 15 \(\text{Qf4}\) followed by e5, gaining the advantage. A stronger line for Black is 13...b3! 14 \(\text{Qb3}\)!! c5 15 \(\text{Qxf6}\) \(\text{Qxf6}\) 16 \(\text{f4}\) (or
16 \( \text{Q}x\text{d}5 \text{W}x\text{d}8 \) 16...\text{c}4 17 \text{e}5 \text{B}x\text{c}5+, solving all his problems. But instead of 14 \text{B}x\text{e}5?! the move 14 \text{e}5! (205) has to be taken into account (although it is not actually clear whether White achieves anything to speak of after 14...\text{B}x\text{e}5).

![Chessboard diagram]

After thinking about the position, I realised I had no effective way to counter the threat of \text{e}4-\text{e}5!. There followed:

\begin{align*}
12 & \ldots \\ 13 & \text{Bx}x\text{d}4 \\ b5 \\
\end{align*}

And now, luckily for me, Boris continued hastily with:

\begin{align*}
14 & \text{e}5? \\
\text{bc} \\
\end{align*}

which led to equality. (So as not to stray too far from the main subject, I must pass over the tough struggle that ensued and the highly ingenious trap in which Gulko eventually caught me. However, this game and also Taimanov-Fischer are given in full in the supplement to the lecture.)

Instead of 14 \text{e}5?, White could have kept the advantage by playing 14 \text{B}x\text{b}3! \text{c}5 15 \text{W}x\text{e}3 \text{c}4 16 \text{B}x\text{c}2, and only answering 16...\text{b}4 with 17 \text{e}5! \text{bc} 18 \text{W}x\text{d}1.

A comment on my opponent's error is supplied by that well-known maxim of chess psychology, 'The threat (in this case \text{e}4-\text{e}5) is stronger than the execution.' But that too could be the topic of an entirely separate discussion...

**Story Number Two: Study the Grandmasters' Annotations!**

Let us return to our starting-point – the point where the games Gligoríc-Unzicker and Gavrikov-Dolmatov diverged. If we open Svetozar Gligoríc's book *I Play against the Pieces* (Moscow 1983), we find that in his note to move 17 of his game with Unzicker he gives the following variation: 17...\text{W}x\text{f}6 18 \text{d}5 \text{e}d 19 \text{B}x\text{d}5! \text{B}x\text{b}5 20 \text{W}x\text{b}5. Why didn't Gavrikov make use of this advice?

Was he unaware of the Gligoríc game? Hardly – Gavrikov had played this line of the Queen's Gambit several times before, and he puts a great deal of work into studying opening theory. Had he forgotten it? That is most unlikely – Viktor has a phenomenal memory; he seems to remember absolutely everything. The explanation, I think, is that players who are keen on opening theory go all out to digest as much raw information as quickly as they can, and are sometimes reluctant to spend time on thoroughly studying the games they look at, or on examining the annotations. It would seem that either Gavrikov didn't pay any attention to Gligoríc's notes, or else he didn't read the book at all but merely learnt about Gligoríc-Unzicker (or rather, the opening stage of the game) from a reference work.

Over twenty years ago something similar happened to Yuri Balashov, a player with as powerful a memory as Gavrikov and the same approach to opening study.

**Balashov-Dvoretsky**

*Spartakiad, Moscow 1967*

King's Indian

1 d4

2 c4

3 \text{W}x\text{c}3

4 e4

5 f4

A clever choice of variation, and one that was exceedingly unpleasant from my viewpoint.

At a coaching session before the Spartakiad, Yuri and I had shared the same room. The idea was that he would play on the junior board for the Moscow team, and I was his reserve. However, the managers of the RSFSR team succeeded in acquiring Balashov to play for *them*, and took him away from the Moscow team. The short time we had spent together was enough for Yuri to conclude – rightly – that opening theory was not my strong point. In the Four Pawns Attack it is impossible to act on general considerations – in the sharp positions you have to keep finding the sole correct continuations. Conducting such a fight with precise knowledge of a vast amount of theory is very far from easy.

Balashov is a past master at preparing his openings for a particular opponent. I remember him winning with Black against Yuri Razuvaev in the First League of the 1974 USSR
Championship. The opening was a main-line Grünfeld variation in which Razuvaev was a leading specialist. After the game Balashov revealed that the plan he chose had been used by Smyslov a short while before. 'How could I have missed that game?' Razuvaev exclaimed in dismay. 'I mean, I go out of my way to keep up with the theory of that line.' In reply, Balashov smiled craftily and said: 'Well you see, it was only published in the English magazine The Chess Player, which you don't take.'

5 ... 0-0
6 0-0 c5
7 d5 e6
8 0-0 e5
9 cd ed
10 Qxd2
didn't know anything about this move (nor, for that matter, could I remember the sharp variations arising from 10 e5). I started looking for a way to deviate from theory with an unexpected move.

10 ... c4?" I was delighted at finding this move, but I am afraid it was a little late. The move had been played a year earlier, in the Havana Olympiad, by Bobby Fischer. His opponent Ponomar reacted ineffectively with 11 0-0 Qxb7 12 0-0! b5! 13 Wh1 a6 14 Qc4 Wh8, and Black gained the advantage.

11 a4 Qa6
12 0-0 Qc5
13 e5!"

Perhaps the quiet 13 Qf3 deserved preference. Already, incidentally, a considerable body of theory on this position had accumulated.

13 ... de
14 Qxe4 e4?!

After 14...e5 15 Qxf4, the white pieces are too active. Afraid of coming under attack, I resolved on a positional pawn sacrifice.

15 Qxe3 Qd3
16 Qxh3 ed
17 Qxd3 ed
18 Qd2 Qc8
19 b3 (207)

When sacrificing his pawn Black had calculated as far as here, and hoped that in the resulting position sufficient tactical resources would turn up.

19 ... Qe4

Now I worked out a variation which almost leads by force to an endgame that is acceptable to Black.

20 Qxe4 Qxa1
21 Qed6 Qc3!
22 Qxc3

I heaved a sigh of relief, since I had not seen a convincing answer to 22 Wc1 – though I was hoping to find one if the need arose. After the game I asked Balashov why he chose not to play that way. 'It was risky,' he said with a shrug.

22 ...
23 Qxd6 Qxd6
24 Qd4 Qd3
25 Qxe8 Qxd4
26 Qe1 Qe8
27 Qd6 Qd5
28 Qxe8+ Qf7
29 Qxb7 Qe6

Clearly the game should end in a draw. And so it did, though only after many adventures. One of the instructive episodes in the rook ending which shortly arose is examined in my book Secrets of Chess Training (see the chapter 'Rook against Pawns').

At the end of the game Balashov astounded me by saying: 'It's all been seen before.' He suggested I should look at Mikhail Tal's article on the international tournament at Palma de Mallorca (1966), published in the fifth issue of Shakhmaty for 1967. Naturally I looked up the magazine and found the game Pomar-Toran, which up to move 19 was identical with my game against Balashov.

But what struck me most of all was Tal's note to Black's nineteenth move, which was 19...Qg4. Tal wrote: 'During the game I thought that 19...Qe4 20 Qxe4 Qxa1 21 Qxd6 Qc3 was stronger. But analysis revealed that with 22 Wc1! White could have maintained both a material and a positional plus.'

I was right to be afraid of that move. But how was it that Balashov – who remembered the game, the issue of the magazine where it was printed, and no doubt the page-number too – did not make use of the resource indicated by Tal? We already know the answer: Balashov probably just acquainted himself with the game but didn't study it and took no interest in the notes.

When it comes to assessing the position after White's 19th move, we can conclude that 19...Qg4 is inadequate for equality. Black must rely on the brilliant combination which Toran found after one and a half hours' thought in the above-mentioned game.

19 ...
20 Qd4 Qd4+
21 Qxd4 Qxc4!

Black's intention is illustrated by the variation 21...Wh4 22 h3 Qxc4 23 bc Qe3 24 h3 Qh3 25 gh Wg3+, with perpetual check. However, discovering an idea is not enough – you must put it into operation in the most precise way. With 24 Whd1! (instead of 24 hg?) 24...Qd3 25 Wc1, White could beat the attack. Toran therefore alters the move-order.

22 bc Qe3!
23 Qd4 Threatening both 22...Wh4 and 22...Qd3.
24 Qd4 Qc7
25 Qg7!
The only way to continue playing for a win. We already know that 25 h6 \( \text{Nh3} \) leads to perpetual check, whilst 25 \( \text{Qe2?} \) is met by 25...\( \text{Bxh3!} \) 26 \( \text{gxh3} \) \( \text{xf2} \) \( \text{Ke6} \).

25 ... \( \text{Qe3} \\
26 \text{wb6+} \text{g7} \\
27 \text{we5+ (208)} \\

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The losing move (Black was probably in severe time-trouble). 27...\( \text{gg8?} \) would also be wrong, if only because of 28 \( \text{Hb2!} \) \( \text{xf1} \) 29 \( \text{xh7,} \) but after 27...\( \text{f6} \) the game would presumably have ended in a draw: 28 \( \text{Qe4} \) \( \text{xf1} \) 29 \( \text{Qf6} \) \( \text{Qe3} \) 30 \( \text{Gg8}+ \) \( \text{Qh5} \) 31 \( \text{Qf6} \)+.

28 \( \text{We7+} \) \( \text{h6} \\
29 \text{Qe4!} \\

From now on White does all the attacking. The threat is 30 \( \text{We8+} \) \( \text{Qh5} \) 31 \( \text{Qxh6} \)+.

29 ... \( \text{Qxe4} \\

The game concluded: 30 \( \text{We4} \) \( \text{Qxb2} \) 31 \( \text{Qh5!} \) \( \text{f5} \) 32 \( \text{Qxb3!} \) \( \text{g6} \) 33 \( \text{Qxe3} \) \( \text{We7} \) 34 \( \text{Qh2} \) \( g5 \) 35 \( \text{fg}+ \) \( \text{Qxg5} \) 36 \( \text{Qe1} \) \( \text{We7+} \) 37 \( \text{Qh1} \) \( \text{Qxc4} \) 38 \( \text{Qxe4} \) \( \text{Qbc3} \) 39 \( \text{Nd1} \) \( \text{Qc2} \) 40 \( \text{Qee1} \) 1-0

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Story Number Three: What did my opponent intend?

Let us return once again to our starting-point. We recall that Dolmatov didn’t manage to secure equality against Gavrikov. A sound plan of action for Black was demonstrated in the game we are now going to examine.

Gavrikov-Yusupov

Tunis 12/1985

Queen’s Gambit

1 \( \text{d4} \) \( \text{Qf6} \\
2 \( \text{Qf3} \) \( \text{d5} \\
3 \text{c4} \text{e6} \\
4 \text{Qe3} \text{Qe7} \\
5 \text{Qg5} \text{Qg5} \\
6 \text{c3} \text{h6} \\
7 \text{h4} \text{Qg4} \\
8 \text{d3} \text{d3} \\
9 \text{Qe2} \text{e5} \\
10 \text{Qe3} \text{Qe4} \\
12 \text{Qd1 (209)} \\

13 \text{ed} \\

Against 13 \( \text{Qxd4} \) Yusupov intended 13...\( \text{Qxc3} \), to lessen the opponent’s pressure against d5 and obtain shelter for his own queen on the c-file. 13...\( \text{Qxg3} \) 14 \( \text{Qf6} \) also appears playable, for example: 15 \( \text{Qf6} \) \( \text{Qb4} \) 16 c5 \( \text{Qxc3} \) 17 \( \text{Qxc3} \) \( \text{Qdx5} \) 18 \( \text{Qxe6} \) \( \text{Qc8} \) 19 \( \text{Qa6} \), and at this point a draw was agreed in Novikov-Lputian, USSR Ch 1984.

13 ... \( \text{Qxg3} \\
14 \text{Qf6} \\

In contrast to Gligoric-Unzicker and Gavrikov-Dolmatov, Black is now firmly in control of the important d5 point.

Shortly before the Interzonal Tournament, Yusupov had captained the Moscow Young Pioneers team in the Komsomolskaya Pravda contest (in which the grandmaster captains give simultaneous displays with clocks against the young players of the other teams). Artur later told me that in one of his games against Baku he had played this line with White but failed to gain a plus – his young opponent conducted the opening with extreme accuracy. It turned out that the Baku players had been helped in their preparations by their captain Garry Kasparov. When facing Gavrikov, Artur tried to remember that game...

15 \( \text{Qe5} \) \( \text{Qe8} \\
16 \text{Qac1} \\

16 \( \text{Qb5} \) is clearly premature: 16...\( \text{dxe} \) (Black can also play the immediate 16...\( \text{a6} \) 17 \( \text{Qa7} \) \( \text{Qc7} \) 17 \( \text{Qxc4} \) 18 \( \text{Qa7} \) \( \text{Qc7} \), threatening 19...\( \text{b5} \) or 19...\( \text{Qa8} \). Now, however, Black needs to take care of \( \text{Qb5} \).

16 ... \( \text{Qg4} \\
17 \text{Qc4} \text{Qd5} \\
18 \text{Qb3} \text{Qc3} \\
19 \text{Qc2 (210)} \\

Among all the deep conceptions expounded in Aron Nimzoitvich’s My System, one of the most important seems to me to be the idea of prophylaxis. Nimzoitvich writes: ‘Neither attack nor defence is, in my opinion, a matter properly pertaining to positional play, which is rather an energetic and systematic application of prophylactic measures.’ This thought may appear paradoxical or incomprehensible, but I hope our analysis of the present game will help us to grasp it.

This is Nimzoitvich’s explanation of prophylaxis: ‘What it is concerned with above all else is to blunt the edge of certain possibilities which in a positional sense would be undesirable.’ He goes on to examine two forms of prophylaxis: over-protection of strategically important points, and prevention of freeing pawn moves. However, prophylaxis can be understood in a broader sense, as preventing not only pawn moves but other ideas of the opponent.

To neutralise the opponent’s designs, you must first detect them and judge how dangerous they are. Sometimes this is not so simple, and in any case from our earliest years
we have been accustomed to think first and foremost about our own plans, not the ideas and plans of others. Hence from the point of view of a practical player it is actually more useful to speak not of prophylaxis but of 'prophylactic thinking' – an inward disposition for deciphering the opponent's intentions. Let me reveal one of my professional 'secrets' which is supported by all my experience as a coach. A chessplayer who has acquired the capacity for prophylactic thinking will significantly raise his class – he will dramatically improve in positional play, in the technique of exploiting an advantage, and in other areas.

Of course, Grandmaster Yusupov trained himself in prophylactic thinking a long time ago, before he even was a grandmaster. Let us now watch this skill in operation.

19 ... \( \text{Nc7}!! \)

A grandmaster's move! Black improves his position and prepares \( \text{We8} \) (or \( \text{Wh8} \)), which is an effective antidote to his opponent's central offensive. Now the knight sacrifice on \( f7 \) is definitely unsound.

20 \( \text{Wd3} \) \( \text{Nc6} \)

It turns out that after 21 \( \text{Lc2} \) \( g6 \) White cannot play 22 \( \text{Qxg6? fg} \), when the rook on Black's second rank joins in the defence.

21 \( \text{Qg4} \) \( h5! \)

Parrying the obvious threat of 22 \( \text{Lc2} \) \( g6 \) \( 23 \text{Qxh6+}. \)

22 \( \text{Qe3 (211)} \)

22 \( \text{Qxf6+ We7xf6} \) would have led to equality, but Gavrikov is trying for more.

25 \( \text{He1?!} \)

White has decided to improve the position of his rooks by playing \( \text{He1} \) and \( \text{Hcd1} \). Is this a sensible operation? Undoubtedly. Yet it is completely untimely. At this point it was White's turn to apply some 'prophylactic thinking' directed against Black's transparent plan for activating his forces with \( ...\text{g7} \) and \( ...\text{Hh8} \). The simplest way to solve the problem was 25 \( \text{We3} \) (but not 25 \( \text{Wh3} \) \( \text{Qg5} \) and 26 \( ...\text{g7} \)), for example: 25...\( \text{g7} \) (25...\( \text{Qg7} \) 26 \( \text{Wh6+} \), or 25...\( \text{Qg5} \) 26 \( \text{Qf4} \) 26 \( \text{Qe5} \), with approximately equal chances.

25 ... \( \text{Qg7} \)

26 \( \text{Hcd1} \)

Consistent but bad! It was essential to forestall the threatened attack against the white king by means of a series of exchanges: 26 \( \text{We3} \) (or 26 \( \text{Qxf6 at once} \) 26...\( \text{Hh8} \) 27 \( \text{Qxf6} \) \( \text{Wxf6} \) 28 \( \text{We5} \), although even here Black has somewhat the better ending.

26 ... \( \text{Hh8} \)

27 \( \text{Wh3} \)

What is White aiming for? Obviously he wants to simplify with 28 \( \text{Qxf6 Wxf6} \) 29 \( \text{We5} \), but this threat is easily met by a move which fits in with Black's plan of attack.

27 ... \( \text{Hh5}! \)

How quickly White has landed in trouble!

28 \( \text{Wf4?} \)

It was better to play 28 \( \text{Qxf6} \)

28 ... \( \text{Le7}! \)
The bishop is transferred to a formidable attacking post on d6. A possible continuation is 29 \(Dc5 \ Dg6\) 30 \(Dc3 \ Wh4\) 31 f3 \(Dg3\) 32 \(Dc3\) 32 \(Dxh7 +Wh1+\!).

32 ... \(Dd8!\)

Black's last piece joins in the attack, threatening 33...\(Dh8\). Therefore White resigned.

White lost quickly without making any obvious positional mistakes. The reason was simply that Gavrikov had not mastered the art of prophylactic thinking, as Yusupov had. Thus the game was rather like a fight between boxers in different weight classes.

The theme of prophylaxis is one of my favourites. I could go on about it for much longer, but it is now time to stop. In conclusion, I would like to dispel any impression you may have gained that I am generally against the serious study of opening theory. Just recall some of the examples we have looked at – think of the difficulties that a player was often up against, as a result of not being adequately prepared in the opening – and you will realise that I am not at all urging you to give up opening study. Generally speaking, any chessplayer undoubtedly does right to occupy himself with whatever aspect of the game attracts him most. All I wanted to do was warn you against concentrating on opening theory at the expense of everything else. I wanted to show how many fascinating and extremely useful discoveries you can make by immersing yourself in the wonderful world of a chess game.

'At this moment Sheherazade saw the morning appearing and, discreet, was silent.'

Supplement to 'In the Footsteps of One Game'

In the games Taimanov-Fischer and Gulko-Dvoretsky, the opening phase of which we have already examined, there were many more interesting and instructive events. I now present them in full.

Taimanov-Fischer
Buenos Aires 1960
Ragozin System

[Diagram 213]

1.e4 \(Dc5\) 2.\(Dc3\) e6 3.d4 \(Dc6\) 4.e3 0-0 5.\(Dd3\) d5 6.\(Dc3\) \(Dc6\) 7.0-0 \(Dc8\)

1.e4 \(Dc6\) 9.\(Dc5\)! \(Dc7\)?? (9...\(Dc5\)??; 9...\(Dc6\)??) 10.\(Dd3\) 10.\(Dc2?!\), preparing \(Dd1\)) 10.\(Dc2?!\), preparing \(Dd1\)) 10..a6 11.\(Dc3\) \(Dd6\) 12.e4 13.\(Dd3\) ed?! 14.\(Dxe4\) 14..\(Dxe4\) 15.\(Dxe4\) b5! 16.e5 c5!! 15.e1 \(Dc7\)

16.\(Dg5\)! \(Dxe4\) 17.\(Dd5\)! (The only way! The crude 17.\(Dxe4\) would allow Black to simplify with 17...\(Dc5\)) 17...\(Dc5\) 18.f4 \(Df5\) (213)

This was Black's only move.

19.\(Dxf3\)

Taimanov makes the natural move, which preserves his advantage (in view of 19...\(Dd4\)+ 20.\(Dh1\) \(Dxh4\) 21.\(Dxf6\), with an overwhelming position), but the capture with the pawn also deserved serious attention; it avoids giving the black queen the d4 square.

In a good position like this, you don't usually want to take unnecessary risks or calculate sharp variations – especially since there is no easy win to be seen after 19.gf \(Dxb2\). For example 20.\(Dxb1\) \(Dc3\) 21.\(Dxe6\) \(Dc5\)+, or 20.e2 \(Dc3\) 21.\(Dxe6\) gf 22.\(Dxd6\) \(Dh8\) 23.\(Dxe7\) \(Dg8\).

However, when realising an advantage, there generally does come a moment when it is essential to exert yourself, work out precise variations and find a clear-cut way to attain your goal. White could have won with 19.gf \(Dxb2\) 20.\(Dxe2\) \(Dc3\) 21.\(Dxf6\) gf 22.\(Dxf6\). On 22.\(Dh3\) (the move Taimanov was worried about), White has 23.\(Dd5\) b6 (23...\(Dc5\)+ 24.\(Dh2\); 23...\(Dxf4\) 24

24 \(Dh5\) \(Dc5\)+ 25.\(Dc5\) \(Dxh2\) 26.\(Dc6\) 27.\(Dg2\) 28.\(Dg7\)+ \(Df8\) 29.\(Dg5\)+, or 29.\(Dxf7\) \(Dg8\) 30.\(Dxf8\)+.

Excessive laziness or caution may in fact result in new obstacles on the road to victory.

19 ... \(Dd4+\)

20.\(Dh1\) \(Dg4\)!

20...\(Dxd5\) 21.\(Dxd5\) is not promising for Black.

21.\(Dh4\) \(Dxe4\)

22.\(Df3\) \(Df5\)

The queen lacks a secure post; 22...\(Dd4\) is strongly met by 23.\(Dxd1\), while if 22...\(Dc3\) White has the decisive 23.e5.

23.\(Dd4\) \(Dc5\)

24.\(Dd4\) Threatening 25.b4!

25 ... \(Dc6\)

26.\(Df3\) \(Dc5\)

27.b4 (214)

White achieves nothing with 25.\(Dxe7\) \(Dxe7\) 26.\(Dxe7\) \(Df8\) 27.b4 \(Dxe4\), in view of the reply 28.\(Dxe4\).

25 ... \(Dc6\)
White could have won a pawn with 26 aned 27 axe7 28 c6 but exploiting it with queens on the board would not have been simple, given the exposed position of his own king (we now see the effect of 20...g4!).

Talmanov wisely avoids the temptation. When you have a solid positional plus, it is important not to sell it too cheaply.

26 ... axd5
27 ... axd5
28 e5!

The accurate order of moves. Advancing on the kingside, White creates a queenschase threat at the same time: 29 a5 c6 30 axc1. The immediate 28 a5 is weaker, as after 28...c6 29 f5 Black has 29...b5! 30 axc1 ...

28 ... ac3
29 ac1 ah2

By attacking the pawn on b3, Fischer tries to distract his opponent from his attack.

30 ab1 ac3 (215)

Black has conducted a difficult defence to good effect, and was on the point of neutralising his opponent's initiative completely. He had to play 38...g7! 39 c1 (39 d2? axg4) 39...g7 40 g5 b4!, setting up the threat of 41...e1.

Evidently worn out by the ordeal he has had to go through, Fischer makes a mistake that could have been fatal.

39 ab?

Strangely enough, this exchange which looks natural (especially in time-trouble – it brings move forty nearer!) deprives White of the chance to force through his attack.

The winning move was 39 e1!, with the unavoidable threat of 40 h6+ g7 41 h7 (or f4).

39 ... ab
40 ab2

Now 40 axc1 is suitably answered by 40...a8, and White's rook is disarmed by the threat of 41...e1 and exchanges.

40 ... e7
41 ab4 f8
42 e7 h8
43 f8 f8
44 f8 f8

White's extra pawn plays no significant role; the game should be drawn.

45 ab5 (217)
45 ... d4?

The obvious line was 45...f1+ 46 g1 d4, forcing 47 h2 with roughly equal chances. Fischer had probably decided to try for more,

and overlooked his opponent’s simple reply.

46 g1! f4

Black has to allow a queen exchange and go into an unfavourable bishop ending. However, the draw is still within reach.

47 f4 c8
48 f8+f8 e7
49 f8+ e6
50 e6 d6
51 b4 a7
52 e1 f4
53 e3 e3
54 g5 e6!

An inaccuracy. 54...e7! 55 g6 f8 was simpler.

55 g6 e7
Black could try 55...h4?, because the position of the black king on e7 gives White the necessary tempo to bring his own king out of captivity.

56 e1 f4
57 h4+ f8 (218)
58 g3! d6!

The natural-looking 58...e3? would have lost to 59 d6 followed by e1 and f6-e5-f4.
White will try to drive the enemy bishop away by opposing it with his own bishop — a very important resource in such situations. Black can prevent this only by using his king actively.

This type of endgame was analysed as long ago as the middle of the last century by the Italian player Centurini. He established the chief rule for the defence — the black king must position itself behind the white king. Here is one of his positions which demonstrates how Black should defend (220).

If we now make the moves 81...\(d\varepsilon f5 82 \varepsilon d5\), we reach the famous position where Janowski resigned against Capablanca in the New York tournament of 1916.

The black bishop is controlling a square that the pawn must cross.

If 1 \(e7\) is unplayable, while after 1 \(e3\) \(a5\) 2 \(b6\) \(d2\) 3 \(c7\) \(e3\) Black's bishop cannot be shut off, since his king controls the c5 square.

Yuri Averbakh has shown that in Capablanca-Janowski Black had no need to resign. He could have reached the Centurini formation with 1...\(f4!!\) 2 \(d4\) (2 \(e5+\) \(e3\) 3 \(b5\) \(d3\) 4 \(e6\) \(e4\) 2...\(f3!\) 3 \(b5\) \(e2\) 4 \(e6\) \(d3\) 5 \(b6\) \(g5\) 6 \(e7\)
(on 6 \(b7\) \(c4\) 7 \(a6\), Black again stations his king in the rear of the white one: 7...\(b3!\) 8 \(f2\) \(d8\) 9 \(e1\) \(e4!\) with a draw) 6...\(c3\) 7 \(d5!\) (7 \(d6\) \(e4\) 7...\(d2!!\) (not 7...\(e3\) 8 \(d6\) \(b6\) 9 \(e6\), or 8...\(b3\) \(e5\) \(a4\) 10 \(d6\) 8 \(d8\) 8 \(b6\) \(a5\) 8...\(c3\) \(d3\) \(e7\) \(b6!\) 10 \(e6\) \(e5\) 11 \(d6\) \(e4\).

Even in his youth (he was only seventeen), Fischer had made a serious study of chess as a whole, not just opening theory. He was familiar with Averbakh's analysis and therefore achieved the draw without difficulty.

82...\(f4!\)
83 \(d4\) \(e7\)
84 \(c5\) \(d3!!\)
85 \(e6\) \(e4\)
86 \(b6\) \(g3\)
87 \(a7\) \(c7\)

\(1/2-1/2\)

Gulko-Dvoretsky
USSR Ch (Top League),
Erevan 1975
Ragozin System

1 \(d4\) \(e6\) 2 \(c4\) \(e6\) 3 \(d3\) \(b4\) 4 \(d3\) \(d5\) 5 \(e3\) 0-0 6 \(d3\) \(d6\) 7 \(b6\) 8 \(h3\) \(d3\) 9 \(a4\) \(d4\) 10 \(e4\) \(e5\) 11 \(e3\) \(d3\)
12 \(d4!!\) \(d4\) 13 \(d4\) \(d5\) 14 \(e5?\) (14 \(b3\) \(c5\) \(e3\) 14...\(c4\) 15 \(c2\) 14 \(e5!\) bc 18 \(d1\))
14...\(bc\) 15 ed (221)

What should Black play now?

Delighted to have come out of the opening with nothing worse than a slight scare, I immediately committed a serious inaccuracy. Since my queenside pawns remain disunited anyway, I ought at least to have preserved the more aggressive one on c4 which fixes a weakness on b2. After 15...\(a6!\) the chances are about equal.

I am afraid I conducted the next phase of the game rather superficially, and my opponent gradually outplayed me.

15...\(xd6?\) 16 \(xc4\) \(e6\) 17 \(xc2\) \(e8\) (17...\(d5\) deserved attention) 18 \(d1\) \(c5\) (18...\(b6\) 19 \(xc2\) is somewhat better for White)
19 \(d2\) \(h5\) 20 \(d4\) \(c5\) 21 \(d2\) \(h6\) 22 \(d1\) (intending 23 \(e5\)) 22...\(g6\) 23 \(h2\) (222)
Black's position is clearly worse. The white pieces are more active (the attacking tries $\text{Re}5$ and $\text{Wd}6$ have to be watched for), and the black queenside pawns are weak. In such cases it is very important to find an idea which can set the opponent some kind of problems and throw him off the natural course by which he aims to strengthen his position still further.

23 $\ldots$ $\text{Wf5}!$

I reckoned that in an ending with the rooks on, the black bishop might prove stronger than a white knight, thus compensating in some measure for the weak pawns. In the middlegame, on the other hand, it is knights that usually co-operate better with queens.

In addition, Black sets up a positional trap. Will he be tured into $24\text{Wd}6?!$ (threatening $25\text{Re}5$)? In reply, I had prepared $24\text{Rd}8?! 25\text{Wxd}8\text{Rxd}8 26\text{Rxd}8+$ $\text{Qh}7$. The resulting position gives me real counter-chances based on $\text{Wes}5$ and $\text{g7-g5-g4}$. Incidentally I realized very well this move in mind last move, when in the white position he was $\text{Re}3$ in $27\text{...Qe4}$, when White has two alternatives:

(a) $28\text{Re}4\text{exe}4$ (28...$\text{Qe}4$?) $29\text{Re}6$, and now White's tries are all unconvincing: $29\text{Re}6\text{Qe}6$, or $29\text{Re}2\text{Qe}6$ (aiming for $\text{Qg}5$), or finally $29\text{Re}6\text{Qb}1$.

(b) $28\text{Re}2!\text{Qf5}$ (28...$\text{Qf}6$ is evidently weaker: $29\text{Re}8+\text{Qx}8 30\text{Qd}4\text{Qe}6 31\text{b}3\text{Qe}4 32\text{be}4\text{Qd}6 33\text{Qc}5 a5 34\text{Qg}3\text{Qc}4 35\text{Qf}4 36\text{Qd}4\text{Qd}1+ 37\text{Qa}5\text{Qe}6$, or $30\text{Qb}6$? $\text{Qf}5 31\text{Qc}2\text{Qd}3 32\text{Qc}2\text{Qf}3 33\text{Qc}5$, and Black has a hard defensive task ahead of him.

I decided to use a favourite defensive ploy — tempting my opponent into winning a pawn in return for maximising the activity of my pieces.

27 $\ldots$ $\text{Qf8}!!$

The cool $28\text{Qe}3$ would have been more troublesome to meet.

This is the position Black was aiming for. His rook is now active (he threatens $32\text{...Rd}2$, winning the pawn back); the bishop is stronger than the knight and hampers its activity (I was hoping for just this kind of situation when I exchanged queens). The drawing chances are quite substantial.

At this point I expected the natural $32\text{b}3$, parrying the threat of $32\text{...Rd}2$. After $32\text{...Qe}7$, White would have to reckon with $37\text{f}5\text{f}4$ (especially if his king went to g3). On $33\text{Rc}6$, Black has $33\text{...Rd}2$ (the pawns on a2 and b3 are vulnerable), while $33\text{Rc}5$ can be adequately met by $33\text{...Qd}6$.

In such cases there is also a certain psychological factor which tends to favour the inferior side. The opponent doesn't realise that the pawn was sacrificed for definite positional compensation; he thinks he has simply won it. Imagining that he is close to his goal and that the rest is a matter of technique, he tends to weaken and play carelessly — and this can usually be exploited.

But my luck was out! Gulko didn't make this psychological mistake. He thought for a long time (leaving himself with only ten minutes for eight moves), and discovered an excellent practical chance.

32 $\text{Rx}6$!

White doesn't want to place his pawns on light squares. He plans $a2-a3$, preserving the possibility of advancing the pawn further when the case arises. In addition his move involves an extremely cunning trap, which unfortunately I didn't detect.

Of course Black cannot play $32\text{...Rx}x2?? 33\text{Rx}x8+\text{Qe}7 34\text{Qf}5+$, but why shouldn't he play $32\text{...Rx}d2$, when two pawns are en prise at once? Obviously, White will reply $33\text{a}4$. Glancing over the variations, I decided that this was not dangerous.

32 $\ldots$ $\text{Rd}2$?!?

Continuing according to plan with $32\text{...Qe}7$ was sounder. White would probably have replied $33\text{g}4$! (better than $33\text{Qg}3\text{f}5 34\text{f}4\text{g}5$), but after $33\text{...h}5 (33\text{...Rd}2? 34\text{Qg}3\text{xa}2 35\text{Qf}5+ 34\text{Qg}3\text{hg}3\text{hg}6$ or $35\text{...Qd}7$, Black's drawing chances are very considerable.

33 $\text{a}4$ $\text{Rx}x2$

34 $\text{a}5$ (225)

Now what should Black play?

Again I glanced at the variation I had been preparing — $34\text{...Qe}2 35\text{a}6$
\textbf{In the Footsteps of One Game (Non-theoretical reflections)}

Curiously enough, half a year before this game, a very similar situation had arisen in an encounter between the same opponents (226). On that occasion too, Gulko was equal to the task.

\textbf{Gulko-Dvoretsky

Vilnius Z 1975}

The position is strategically hopeless for Black. If 50...\textit{\texttt{g8}}, then 51 \textit{\texttt{e4}} is strong.

I decided to provoke my opponent into winning a pawn by a combination, since I saw that the resulting bishop endgame might not prove too simple.

50 ... \textit{\texttt{f5}}?  
51 \textit{\texttt{xf8+}} \textit{\texttt{xf8}}  
52 \textit{\texttt{xf6}} \textit{\texttt{xf6}}  
53 \textit{\texttt{xf6+}} \textit{\texttt{g8}} (227)

\texttt{f3} h5. Then the worst that can happen is the loss of the c-pawn, which merely leads to the drawn ending familiar to us from Taimanov-Fischer, but it is not clear how White can even achieve that, for example: 58 \texttt{gh}+ \textit{\texttt{h5}} 59 \textit{\texttt{e4}} \textit{\texttt{h6}}! 60 \textit{\texttt{d4}} \textit{\texttt{c1}} 61 \textit{\texttt{xc4}} \textit{\texttt{xb2}} 62 \textit{\texttt{xb2}} \textit{\texttt{b4}}.

Gulko's understanding of the position was excellent, and he played the winning move.

54 \textit{\texttt{g5}}!  
55 \textit{\texttt{c3}}  
56 \textit{\texttt{f2}}  
57 \textit{\texttt{c3}}!

Again White is careful; 57 \textit{\texttt{f3}}? would be met by 57...\textit{\texttt{c4}}! 58 \textit{\texttt{g4+}} \textit{\texttt{g6}} (or 59...\textit{\texttt{g5}}), with ...\textit{\texttt{h7-h5}} to follow.

57 ... \textit{\texttt{h5}}  
57...\textit{\texttt{c4}} 58 \textit{\texttt{d4}} \textit{\texttt{f4}} 59 \textit{\texttt{xc4}} also wins for White.

58 \textit{\texttt{b3}}  
59 \textit{\texttt{d3}}  
60 \textit{\texttt{c1}}!  
61 \textit{\texttt{c4}}  
62 \textit{\texttt{b4}}!

\texttt{1-0}
16 Samples of Play by Our Students

Artur Yusupov

In this chapter we return to the problems a player faces when preparing for a game and conducting its opening phase. We shall be examining typical mistakes that we detected when analysing games by our students, whose ages are given in brackets.

Sitnik(8)-Stepanavichus
Tallinn 1989

13 \( \text{Dxe7+} \) \( \text{Wxe7} \)
14 \( f5? \)
It was still not too late for 14 \( \text{Dc3}! \).

Now White achieves his aim. Unprepared flank attacks should be met by energetic measures in the centre. The fitting retribution for White's offence against the principles of development was pointed out by Mark Dvoretsky: 14...\( \text{Dxe5} \) 15 \( \text{We4} \) \( \text{Dc5} \) 16 \( \text{Wxa8} \) \( \text{Lb7} \). The queen is trapped, and the advantage passes to Black.

15 \( \text{fG} \) \( \text{Dxe5} \)
16 \( \text{Wg+} \) \( \text{h8} \)
17 \( \text{Wg8+!} \) \( \text{Xg8} \)
18 \( \text{fg} \) \( \text{mate} \)

Gaponenko(14)-Repkova
European Girls' Ch 1991
French Defence

1 \( e4 \) \( e6 \)
2 \( d4 \) \( d5 \)
3 \( \text{Dc3} \) \( \text{Df6} \)
4 \( \text{Kg5} \) \( \text{Kf7} \)
5 \( e5 \) \( \text{Dfd7} \)
6 \( h4 \)
The Chatard-Alekhine Attack. White sacrifices a pawn to gain time and open the h-file. Black usually declines the gambit and tries to carry out the standard central counterstroke...\( c7-c5 \). However, after the immediate \( \text{6..c5} \) he has to reckon with a knight sortie to \( b5 \) after the exchange of dark-squared bishops. Therefore the simplest method is to play 6...\( a6 \) first.

6 ... \( \text{h6?!} \)
7 \( \text{Kc3} \) \( e5 \)
8 \( \text{Wg4} \) \( \text{f8} \)
9 \( \text{Kf3} \)
The same mistake as in the previous game - you should not throw yourself into an attack before completing your development. The correct line was 9 \( \text{Df3} \) \( \text{Dc6} \) 10-0-0-0 with the better chances for White.

9 ... \( \text{Dxe5} \)
10 \( \text{Kg3} \) \( g6 \)
11 Better is 11 \( \text{Df3} \). \( \) (229)

Black feels that a counterblow in the centre must be the way to refute her opponent's unprepared attack, but the particular move she chooses is unsound. In her own notes to the game, Inna Gaponenko demonstrates the right method: 11...\( \text{cd} \) 12 \( \text{Wxg6} \) \( \text{Dxe5} \) 13 \( \text{Kxh6} \) \( \text{Kf8} \) 14 \( \text{Wg7} \) \( \text{Dxf3} \) 15 \( \text{Kxf3} \) \( \text{Kf6} \), and Black wins.

12 \( \text{Kd} \) \( \text{Dxe5} \)
13 \( \text{Wf4} \) \( \text{Dxf3}+?! \)
As is well known, 'mistakes never come singly'. Black had to play 13...\( \text{Dd} \). If then 14 \( \text{Wf4} \), the simplest line is 14...\( \text{Kd7} \) 15 \( \text{Kxa3} \) \( \text{Dxf3}+ \) 16 \( \text{Kxf3} \) \( \text{Kc7} \), with advantage to Black.

A much stronger reply is 14 0-0-0!. (Development above all!) White need not fear 14...\( \text{Dd3}+?! \) 15 \( \text{Kxd3} \) \( \text{Kxh4} \) 16 \( \text{Kxh4} \), when the minor pieces are clearly better than the enemy queen. Instead Black must play 14...\( \text{Kxf3} \), White is forced to recapture with her queen, temporarily blocking the development of her king's knight. All the same, after 15 \( \text{Dxf3} \) \( \text{Kxh4} \) 16 \( \text{Kxd5}?! \) ed 17 \( \text{Kxd5} \), followed by \( \text{Kc4} \) and \( \text{Kf3} \), the position looks worrying for Black (Dvoretsky).

14 \( \text{Dxf3} \) \( \) (230)

It is astonishing how quickly the
situation has been transformed. Both black knights, which were already developed, have been exchanged, and now the superior placing of White's pieces is manifest.

14...g7? is better. After the move played, Gaponenko organizes a decisive attack on the king.

15 Qe5 f6
16 Qe4! de
17 Kh1 ef+
18 Qe2!

After 18 Qxf2 Wxd1 19 Wxf6 Wd4+ 20 Qg3 Hh7 21 Qxg6+ Qg8 22 Qe7+ Qf8, the game is drawn by perpetual check.

18... Wf7
19 Qxf6 Qg7
20 Qe4 f6
21 Qg3! Qg5
22 Wxe5+ Qg8, White intended 23 Qd3! followed by 24 Qf6+ Qf7 25 Qf3.

22 Qg4 Hf8
23 bg f5
24 gh Qh7
25 Qg6+ Hf6
26 Qxf6+ Wxf6
27 Qd8! Wxb2

If 27...f4 (counting on 28 Wg8+ Qxe6 29 Qxe6 Wf5+, White's simplest course is 28 Qd3+ Wd5 (28...Qxh6 29 Qh3+ 29 Wxf5+ ef 30 Qxg2 b6 31 Qxe2 Qxh6 (31...Qb7 32 Qd7+) 32 Qf3 Qb8) 33 Qc6 (Gaponenko).

28 Wc7+! Qxh6
29 Qh2+ Qg5
30 Qg8+ 1-0

Mugerman-Makariev (14)
Moscow 1989
Queen's Pawn Game

1 d4 Qf6
2 Qg5 e6
3 Qd2 c5
4 Qe47!

The fundamental tasks at the start of a game are the quickest possible development of the pieces and the fight for the centre. Therefore you should avoid moving the same piece repeatedly (unless of course the manoeuvre brings some concrete rewards, or is forced). The danger of breaking this rule is illustrated by the following short variation: 4 dc?! Qxe5 5 Qd4? Qxe4 6 Qxb2 mate.

It was better to strengthen the centre with 4 e3.

4... d5

White benefits from 4...cd? 5 Wd4 Qe7 6 Qd6+, since this makes Black's development more difficult.

5 Qxe5 Qxe5

As a result of his dubious operation, White has spent two tempi exchanging the bishop on f8 and has also exchanged off his own centralised d-pawn. In consequence, the initiative passes to Black.

6 dc Wa5+
7...Qa6? is weaker in view of 7 Wd4, while on 6...Qbd7 White has 7 b4.

7 Wd2 Wxe5
8 Qxf6 g6

Threatening 8...Qe4.

Black's superior development secures him the upper hand even in the endgame.

10 Qg2 Qd7
11 Qf3
11 e3?! followed by Qe2 was worth considering.

11... Qe5?

IIia Makariev repeats his opponent's mistake: he wastes time in the opening. He should have continued his development with 11...e5! 12 Qd1 Qe6 13 0-0 0-0-0, achieving central control and a promising position.

12 0-0 Qxf3+

The upshot is that Black has wasted two tempi on a knight exchange that was no use to him. However, on 12...Qf4 White has the unpleasant 13 Wf6??, as pointed out by Dvoretsky.

13 ef??

Makariev planned to answer 13 Wxf3 with 13...Qf7??, The obvious 13...0-0 is worse on account of 14 e3, followed by Bb4-a4 etc.

13... Wf7

13...e5?! is met by 14 f4! Qc6 15 Wf1.

14 f4 Qe6?! (232)

Another mistake similar to 9...Qc6. Black misses a chance of playing actively in the centre with 14...d4! at once, and only afterwards...Qc6.

15 Qf1?

Returning the favour. White takes measures against...e6-e5, but allows a more dangerous continuation. The
The right move was 15 c3!, hindering the thematic ...d5-d4.

The reply 15...e5? 16 Bxe1 Bxe8 (16...Bd6? 17 f5 fe 18 Bf3, or 16...d4 17 Bxe6 bc 18 fe fe 19 Bxe2! with advantage to White) 17 f5 fe 18 Bg5 f6 (18...Bd6 or 18...Be7 would be met by 19 Bf5+) 19 Bxf6 Bxf is dangerous for Black in view of 20 Bxe5! (but not 20 Bxd6+? Bxd7 21 Bxe5?? Bxf3+ 22 Bf1 Bxe8 20...Bxf2+ 21 Bf1, and Black's scope is drastically reduced by the constant threat of a bishop check from h3.

If Black still plays 15...d4?!, White has the advantage after 16 Bxe6 bc 17 cd; though 16...d7 17 Bxb7+ Bxb7 is more stubborn and gives good drawing chances.

Black should definitely prefer the prophylactic 15...Bb8?!, preparing either ...d5-d4 or ...e6-e5.

7 Bxc4 (233)
If 7...Bxc4, then 7...e4! 8 Bg5 Bb8.

7 ... Dd7?!

By attacking the queen, Vadim Zviagintsev hopes to disrupt the coordination of his opponent's forces. But the cost of achieving this is a loss of time. Black is manoeuvring in the opening with pieces already brought out, committing the same fundamental mistake as in the foregoing example. His lead in development (White has lost time moving his queen, and his bishop on d2 is not too effectively placed) ought to have been converted into a more stable advantage – the better pawn structure. The correct line was found by Petya Svidler: 7...e4! (in this case the second move with the bishop is justified, because White in turn has to spend time defending his d-pawn) 8 Bc3 Bxf3. There could follow 9 Bdd5 10 Bxd5 Bxd5 11 Bb5 Bbd7 12 Bd2 Bf6 13 Bb3+ Bxe6+ 14 Bxe6 15 Bxe6, with the better ending for Black.
then 19...\(\text{g}5\)! with chances for both sides.

18 \(\text{We}3\) \(\text{We}8\)
19 \(\text{h}3?!\) \(\text{De}4\)

Black also 'stands worse after 19...\(\text{D}d5\) 20 \(\text{D}x\text{d}5\) \(\text{x}d5\) 21 \(\text{h}a\text{c}1\).
20 \(\text{D}x\text{e}4\) \(\text{D}x\text{e}4\)
21 \(\text{D}g5\)

The advantage is now on White's side — a just penalty for Black's slow, purposeless manoeuvring.

Nikonovich-Baklan(12) 
Alisha 1990
Queen's Pawn Game

1 \(d4\) \(Df6\)
2 \(Df3\) c5
3 \(dxc5?!\)

As a rule, exchanging the central d-pawn for the e-pawn is unfavourable. White made an analogous mistake in the game Mugerman-Makariev which we have already examined. Better moves are 3 \(d5\) and 3 e3.
3 ... e6
4 g3 \(Dx\text{c}5\)
5 \(Dg2\) \(Dc6\)
6 0-0
6 c4?! \(\text{W}a5\#1\).
6 ... 0-0 
7 c4 b6
8 \(Dx\text{e}5?\) (234)

A serious mistake, of the kind we saw in previous games. Wasting tempi in the opening, White quickly ends up in a difficult position.

8 ... \(\text{D}x\text{e}5!!\)
The restrained 8...\(\text{b}7??\) is much weaker; after 9 \(\text{a}4\) the game is level. By sacrificing the exchange, Volodya Baklan starts an attack against the enemy king. White's light-squared bishop will be cut off from the kingside and from his main forces.

9 \(\text{a}xa8\) d5!

Of course not 9...\(\text{a}6\) 10 \(\text{g}2\) \(Dx\text{c}4\) 11 \(Dc3\). Black's aim is not to regain material but to develop his attack quickly.

10 cd?

Often the best defence against a gambit — and sometimes the only one — is to return the extra material at a suitable moment, so as to consolidate your forces or bring about simplification. In this case White should have returned a couple of pawns with 10 \(\text{Dxf4 Dxc4}\) 11 \(\text{Dc6 Dxb2}\) 12 \(\text{wb3}\), though the advantage would still have been with Black.

10 ... \(\text{a}6?!\)
The simple 10...ed?!, bringing the bishop into the attack on the c8-h3 diagonal, is not bad either. For example: 11 \(\text{Dxf4 Dg6}\) (11...\(\text{h}3??\) is not in keeping with the position; after 12

\(\text{Dxe5 Dxf1}\) 13 \(\text{Dxf1 Dxa8}\) 14 \(\text{Dxf6}\) \(\text{gf}\) 15 \(\text{Dd2}\), the chances are all on White's side) 12 \(\text{Dg5 Dh3}\) 13 \(\text{Dc6}\) \(\text{Dxf1}\) 14 \(\text{Dxf1 Dxd6}\) 15 \(\text{Dxb5}\) (15 \(\text{Dxf6 Dxf6}\) 16 \(\text{Dxd5 Dxb2}\) is no better) 15...\(\text{Dc4}\) and wins. Or 12 \(\text{Dc6 Dxf4}\) 13 \(\text{Df6}\), and White's fate is not to be envied.

The only way to put the defence in some kind of order would be 11 \(\text{Dxe3 Dh3}\) 12 \(\text{Dxd5 Dxf1}\) 13 \(\text{Dxf1}\).

11 \(\text{Dc6}\)
11 \(\text{Df4 Dg6?!}\) 12 \(\text{Dc6 Dxf4}\) 13 \(\text{Dg6}\) with an attack.

11 ... \(\text{ed}\)
12 \(\text{a4}\) b5?!

An ingenious move, but objectively not the strongest. He should probably have preferred 12...\(\text{Dc8}\)!
13 \(\text{Dg2}\) (if 13 \(\text{a4}\), then 13...\(\text{Dh3}\) is decisive) 13...\(\text{Df5}\).

13 \(\text{Dc2}\) (235)

\(\text{Dxe5 Dxf1}\) 13 \(\text{Dxf1 Dxa8}\) 14 \(\text{Dxf6}\) \(\text{gf}\) 15 \(\text{Dd2}\), the chances are all on White's side) 12 \(\text{Dg5 Dh3}\) 13 \(\text{Dc6}\) \(\text{Dxf1}\) 14 \(\text{Dxf1 Dxd6}\) 15 \(\text{Dxb5}\) (15 \(\text{Dxf6 Dxf6}\) 16 \(\text{Dxd5 Dxb2}\) is no better) 15...\(\text{Dc4}\) and wins. Or 12 \(\text{Dc6 Dxf4}\) 13 \(\text{Dg6}\), and White's fate is not to be envied.

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11 \(\text{Dc6}\)
11 \(\text{Df4 Dg6?!}\) 12 \(\text{Dc6 Dxf4}\) 13 \(\text{Dg6}\) with an attack.

11 ... \(\text{ed}\)
12 \(\text{a4}\) b5?!

An ingenious move, but objectively not the strongest. He should probably have preferred 12...\(\text{Dc8}\)!
13 \(\text{Dg2}\) (if 13 \(\text{a4}\), then 13...\(\text{Dh3}\) is decisive) 13...\(\text{Df5}\).

13 \(\text{Dc2}\) (235)

\(\text{Dxe5 Dxf1}\) 13 \(\text{Dxf1 Dxa8}\) 14 \(\text{Dxf6}\) \(\text{gf}\) 15 \(\text{Dd2}\), the chances are all on White's side) 12 \(\text{Dg5 Dh3}\) 13 \(\text{Dc6}\) \(\text{Dxf1}\) 14 \(\text{Dxf1 Dxd6}\) 15 \(\text{Dxb5}\) (15 \(\text{Dxf6 Dxf6}\) 16 \(\text{Dxd5 Dxb2}\) is no better) 15...\(\text{Dc4}\) and wins. Or 12 \(\text{Dc6 Dxf4}\) 13 \(\text{Dg6}\), and White's fate is not to be envied.

The only way to put the defence in some kind of order would be 11 \(\text{Dxe3 Dh3}\) 12 \(\text{Dxd5 Dxf1}\) 13 \(\text{Dxf1}\).

11 ... \(\text{Dd7}\)
The queen penetrates to h3, where it will create irresistible threats.
14 \(\text{Dg2}\)
14 \(\text{Dd2 Dh3}\) 15 \(\text{Df1 Dg4}\) with unavoidable mate.
14 ... \(\text{Dc8}\)
The point of Black's plan.
15 \(\text{Dh1}\) \(\text{Dh3}\+)
16 \(\text{Dg1}\) \(\text{Dg4}\)
17 c3 d4!

0-1

Severe punishment for neglecting to develop the pieces.

Zviagintsev(15)-Felgin
CIS Junior Ch, Jurmala 1992
Benoni

1 \(d4\) e6
2 c4 c5
3 d5 ed
4 cd d6
5 \(\text{Dc3}\) g6
6 e4 \(\text{Dg}7\)
7 \(\text{Dge2}\) \(\text{Dc}7\)

A rare continuation, the point of which is to undermine the centre with an early ...\(\text{e}7-\text{f}5\). The insertion of 7...\(\text{a}6?!\) 8 a4 impairs this idea; after 8...\(\text{Dc}\) 9 \(\text{Dg}\) 0-0 10 \(\text{D}x\text{e}2 \text{f}5\) 11 \(\text{Dxf5}\) 12 \(\text{Dxf5}\) \(\text{Dxf5}\) 13 0-0, Black has problems developing his knight, since 13...\(\text{Dd}7??\) fails to 14 \(\text{g}4! \text{xc}3\) 15 bc \(\text{e}4\) 16 f3 (analysis by Zviagintsev).

But now, after 8 \(\text{a}3 0-0 \text{9 c}2 \text{f}5\) 10 \(\text{Dxf5}\) 11 \(\text{Dxf5}\) \(\text{Dxf5}\) 12 0-0, Black can play 12...\(\text{a}6?!\).
8 \( \text{h}6 \)?

White provokes a weakening of the black kingside pawns.

9 \( \text{f}3 \)? (236)

On 9...0-0??, White would play 10 \( \text{d}2 \) with tempo. Black plans to exchange on e4 and then play ...\( \text{d}5 \) to unsettle the bishop on e3.

He would be playing into his opponent's hands with 11...\( \text{g}h \) 12 \( \text{x}h3 \), or 11...\( \text{a}6 \) 12 \( \text{g}xg4 \) 13 \( \text{h}3 \) when White has excellent compensation for the pawn.

12 \( \text{d}4 \)

12 hgf! \( \text{d}5 \) 13 \( \text{d}4 \) is not bad either.

12 ... \( \text{b}6 \)?

The start of a faulty manoeuvre. In answer to 12...\( \text{d}5 \), Black was probably worried about 13 \( \text{b}5+ \), yet after 13...\( \text{f}7 \)? things are not so clear. 13...\( \text{f}8 \) is weaker on account of 14 \( \text{h} g4 \) 15 \( \text{d}e6+ \), or 14...\( \text{x}g4 \) 15 \( \text{d}2 \) with a dangerous initiative for White.

It was also worth considering 12...\( \text{a}5 \)? 13 \( \text{b}3 \)? (or 13 \( \text{c}2 \) \( \text{xc}3 !) 14 be \( \text{d}5 \) 15...\( \text{xc}3+ \) (13...\( \text{d}6 \) 14 \( \text{b}5+ \) with an attack) 14 be \( \text{d}5 \) 15 \( \text{b}5+ \) \( \text{d}8 \)? with double-edged play (Zviagintsev). If 13 \( \text{d}6 \)?, then 13...\( \text{xc}3+ \) 14 be \( \text{d}5 \).

13 \( \text{d}6 \)

Zviagintsev planned to meet 13...\( \text{a}5 \)? with 14 \( \text{b}5 \) \( \text{f}7 \) 15 \( \text{a}4 \)!

However, Black should have played 13...\( \text{xc}3+ \) 14 be \( \text{d}5 \) \( \text{b}1 \) \( \text{a}5 \). This position resembles the line with 12...\( \text{a}5 \), though here White has an extra tempo.

The move actually played is clearly unsound. Black is breaking one of the simplest rules: Don't go "pawn hunting" in the opening. White now wins by force, exploiting the unfortunate position of the enemy queen.

14 \( \text{x}g7+ \) \( \text{f}7 \)

15 \( \text{d}2 \)

16 \( \text{b}3 \)

17 \( \text{b}3 \)

18 \( \text{b}5 \)

19 \( \text{d}3+ \) \( \text{e}5 (237) \)

White has brought his pieces into the attack with tempo and prepared the final combinative stroke in the centre.

15 ... \( \text{d}4 \)

16 \( \text{a}3 \)

17 \( \text{e}3 \)

18 \( \text{d}3 \)

19 \( \text{d}5 \)

20 \( \text{d}6 \)

21 \( \text{a}1 \)

22 \( \text{g}7 \)

23 \( \text{f}4 \)

24 \( \text{xe}5+ \)

25 \( \text{h}6+ \)

26 \( \text{g}5+ \)

Kramnik-Zviagintsev(14)

Leningrad 1990

Philidor's Defence

1 \( \text{e}4 \)

2 \( \text{d}4 \)

3 \( \text{c}3 \)

4 \( \text{f}3 \)

The queen exchange is worth considering: 4 \( \text{d}e \) 5 \( \text{w}x \) \( \text{xd}8+ \) \( \text{w}x \) \( \text{xd}8 \) 6 \( \text{d}6 \) 7 \( \text{c}4 \), with the better game for White. The move played transposes into a variation of Philidor's Defence.

4...

5 \( \text{c}4 \)

6 \( \text{e}7 \)

7 \( \text{e}1 \)

7 \( \text{w}2 \).

7...

8 \( \text{a}4 \)

8 \( \text{c}7 \)

The standard retort 8...\( \text{e}5 \)?, recommended by present-day theory, limits the opponent's possibilities on the queenside. The game Ivkov-Planinc, Amsterdam 1974, continued 9 \( \text{h}3 \) ed 10 \( \text{xd}4 \) (or 10 \( \text{xd}4 \) \( \text{c}5 \) 11 \( \text{g}5 \) \( \text{e}6 \) 12 \( \text{x}e6 \) \( \text{x}e6 \) 13 \( \text{d}1 \) \( \text{e}8 \) 14 \( \text{x}e6 \) \( \text{x}e6 \) 15 \( \text{d}6 \) \( \text{w}b6 \) with unclear play; Timoshchenko-Planinc, Polanica Zdroj 1979) 10... \( \text{c}5 \) 11 \( \text{f}4 \) \( \text{b}6 \) 12 \( \text{b}3 \) \( \text{e}6 \) 13 \( \text{x}e6 \) \( \text{x}e6 \) 14 \( \text{d}3 \) \( \text{c}7 \) 15 \( \text{d}4 \) \( \text{d}4 \) 16 \( \text{d}4 \) \( \text{d}ad \), with equal chances.

9 \( \text{h}3 \)

Preparing to develop his bishop on e3. Another possibility is 9 \( \text{d}5 \) ?

9...

h6

In the event of 9...\( \text{b}6 \)?, Zviagintsev was afraid of 10 \( \text{d}5 \) \( \text{b}7 \) 11 dc \( \text{x}e6 \) 12 \( \text{g}5 \) with advantage to White.

In a game Kuchukhidze-Zviagintsev, played earlier in the same tournament, White answered 9...\( \text{h}6 \) with 10 \( \text{a}5 \)? After 10...\( \text{b}8 \), White gains nothing from 11 \( \text{d}5 \) \( \text{b}5 \) 12 \( \text{a}6 \) \( \text{x}b6 \), but the prophylactic 11 \( \text{a}2 \) deserves serious attention. If then 11...\( \text{b}5 \), White has 12 \( \text{a}6 \) \( \text{d}5 \).
Instead of this, White played 11
\( \textbf{\&c3} \), and Black solved the problem
of his queenside by means of 11...
\( \text{b5} \). 12 \( ab \) \( ab \) 13 \( d5 \) \( b5 \) 14 \( \text{\&a7?!} \)
\( \text{\&b7} \). 15 \( \text{\&xb7} \) \( \text{\&xb7} \) 16 \( \text{\&b3} \) \( b4?! \) 17
\( \text{\&a2} \) \( cd \) 18 \( ed \) \( \text{\&a5} \).

Volodya Kramnik naturally attempted to improve on White’s play
when preparing himself for the present game.

10 \( \text{\&e3?!} \) (238)

10...
\( \text{\&e8?!} \)

A stock move, freeing \( f8 \) for the
knights or bishop. But now White is
able to put pressure on the queenside. Confronted with an unexpected
move in the opening, Zviagintsev plays rather passively and concedes
the initiative to his more experienced opponent.

10...
\( \text{\&xa4} \). 11 \( \text{\&xe4} \) \( d5 \) doesn’t work in view of 12 \( \text{\&xd5} \) \( cd \) 13 \( \text{\&c3} \). Black needs to offer resistance to his opponent’s plans. He can do this
either by 10...
\( \text{\&b6?} \) (aiming for gradual queenside expansion by...
\( \text{\&b7} \) and...
\( \text{\&b6-b5} \)) 11 \( d5 \) (11 \( \text{\&h4} \)
\( \text{\&xe4} \) 12 \( \text{\&f5} \) \( \text{\&d6} \) 11...
\( \text{\&b7} \) 12 dc

\( \text{\&xc6} \) 13 \( \text{\&d2} \) \( a6?! \) 14 \( \text{\&e2} \) \( \text{\&b7} \),
with chances for both sides — or else
by the simple 10...
\( \text{\&a5?!} \).

11 a5!

White is planning 12...d5.

11...
\( \text{\&f8?!} \)

A more natural line is 11...
\( \text{\&a8} \) 12
\( \text{\&d5} \) \( \text{\&g6} \).

12 d5!

\( \text{\&c5} \)

12...cd 13 \( \text{\&xd5} \) \( \text{\&c5} \) is hardly attractive either.

13 \( \text{\&d2} \)

13 \( \text{\&xc6} \) dc 14 dc bc is quite
good; the resulting pawn structure
favors White.

13...
\( \text{\&d7} \)

14 b4!

\( \text{cd} \)

The only defense.

15 \( \text{\&d5} \) \( \text{\&d5} \)

16 \( \text{\&c5} \) \( \text{\&e6} \)

Neither 16...
\( \text{\&a6} \) 17 \( \text{\&f3} \) nor
16...
\( \text{\&a8} \) 17 \( \text{\&b1} \) is any good for
Black.

17 c4?! 18 \( \text{\&f4?!} \)

18 \( \text{\&xf4} \) ef

19 a6

White’s initiative on the queenside
and in the centre has created weaknesses in Black’s pawn structure. If instead 19...
\( \text{\&h4} \) (threatening 20
\( \text{\&f3} \)), Black has 19...
\( \text{\&e7} \), activating his “bad” bishop.

19...
\( \text{\&c6} \)

20 ab

\( \text{\&xb7} \)

21 \( \text{\&xb7} \)

If 21...
\( \text{\&w4} \), Black again has
21...
\( \text{\&e7?!} \)

21...
\( \text{\&wxb7} \)

22 \( \text{\&b1} \) (239)

22...
\( \text{\&g5?} \)

Tarrasch rightly observed that one
badly placed piece means a bad
game. The principles of development
don’t just apply in the opening.
Black has to activate his bishop, but
without weakening his castled position. The most logical move is thus
22...
\( \text{\&c7} \).

A line given by Zviagintsev is
also interesting: 22...
\( \text{\&a5?!} \) 23 ba \( \text{\&c7} \)
24 \( \text{\&g4} \) \( \text{\&a5} \) 25 \( \text{\&wxf4} \) \( \text{\&a2} \).

23...
\( \text{\&h4?!} \)

In this way White acquires a clear
plus.

23...
\( \text{\&e6} \)

24...
\( \text{\&h5} \)

Stronger than 24...
\( \text{\&h4} \) 25 \( \text{\&f3} \)
\( \text{\&xe4} \) 26 \( \text{\&xf5} \) \( \text{\&xe1}+ \) 27 \( \text{\&wxf4} \) \( \text{\&e7} \)
with counterchances (Zviagintsev).

24...
\( \text{\&g6} \)

25...
\( \text{\&g4} \) 26...
\( \text{\&e5?!} \)

After 26...
\( \text{\&f3} \), Black obtains
counterplay with 26...
\( \text{\&e8} \) 27 \( \text{\&xf5} \) \( \text{\&h6} \).

26...
\( \text{\&e8} \)

27 ed \( \text{\&xe1+} \)

28 \( \text{\&xe1} \) \( \text{\&xb4?!} \)

This loses. Black should have
eliminated the more dangerous d-
pawn.

29...
\( \text{\&d6} \)

29...
\( \text{\&wxd2} \) 30...
\( \text{\&d1} \)

30...
\( \text{\&d1} \)

In view of 30...
\( \text{\&wxd7} \) 31 \( \text{\&wxd6} \) +
\( \text{fg} \) 32 \( \text{\&f6} \).

Romanishin-Aleksandrov (17)
Pula 1990

Catalan

Playing against a grandmaster, es-
pecially one of such calibre, is not
only a serious test but also an excel-
""
with 13...c5! and won a striking victory: 14 Wa2 Wa5+ 15 b4 cb 16 Wxax1 a6 17 Qe6 Qe5 18 Qxb5! 19 Qxe7? Qc2! (Black has an obvious plus) 19 Qf3 0-0 20 a4 a6 21 Qd3 Qd4 22 Qd2? Wg5+?? 0-1 (22...Qxd3) 23 Qd4 e5 24 Qxc4 ef+ 25 gf Wf5 26 Qd6 Wd6+ 0-1.

In a game Polovodin-S.Ivanov, St Petersburg 1992, White's attempt to improve with 18 Qxd3 led to the same discouraging result: 18...Qxd3 19 Qxd3 0-0 20 Wb2 ba 21 Wxa3 Wb5+ 22 Qd2 Wxd8 23 e3? Wf5 24 Qe2 Qe2+ 25 Qd2 Qxd2+ 26 Wxd2 Wxf2+ 27 Qd3 Wxd2 28 Qb1 e5 29 Qb2 Qxd4+ 0-1.

9 ... Qb8
10 Qc3 Qd7?? (240)

For the moment Black has an extra pawn, but he is behind in development and his pieces are not coordinated. Earlier games had seen 10...e6 11 Qxe5 0-0 (11...Wxd4 12 Qxc6 favours White) 12 Qxc6 Qxc6 13 Qxc6 Qxc6 14 Wxc4 Qe3 15 Qb5, but after 15 Qa1 Qb6 16 Wc5 White retains some initiative. In the game Krasenkov-Medinis, Palma de Mallorca 1987, there followed 16...Qf6 17 a4 Qe8 18 a5 Qxb1 19 Qxb1 Wd6 20 Wxd6 Qd2 and now it was essential for Black to play 21...Wf3! 22 Qxc7 with chances of equalising. In Romanischin-Bönsch, Berlin 1990, Black succeeded in neutralising White's initiative with 16...h6 17 h5 Qf3 18 a5 Qa6 19 e3 Wg5 20 Qxb6 Qxc5 21 de cb 22 cb Qb8 23 Qb1 Qd3 24 Qf8.

Aleksandrov's move is an interesting novelty. Black prepares to return the pawn so as to create highly promising counterplay.

11 a3 b5!
12 Qxb5 Qd5!

As Romanischin pointed out, 12...a6 13 Qd3 Qxd4 is weaker on account of 14 Wf5! Qb3 15 Wd5 f6 16 Wc4 (16 Wb5+?? Qd6 17 Wb7) 16...Qxa1 17 ab Qb3 18 Wxc4, and White has a won position.

13 Qd3?
After 13 e4!! Qxe4 14 Qxe4 Qxc6 15 Qxa7 ed, White's position is preferable. Aleksandrov had prepared 13...e5 14 ed (14 Qe3! Qxc3 15 Qxc4 16 Wxc4 Qxc5 17 Qxf3 Qb5, or 14 Qxe6? Qa8 15 Wb7 Qa5) 14...ab 15 Qd1 ed, with mutual chances.

13 ... Qxb2

This time 13...Qxc3 14 Qxc3 leads to advantage for White after 15 Wxc4 Qxf3 16 Qxf3 Qb5 17 Qc5.

14 Wxc4 Qa5
15 Qd3 Qb3
16 Qf1 (241)

16 ... c5!

Usually castling ought not to be delayed so long. But there are situations where other factors prove more important than straightforward development. Black's position has a serious defect in the backward c-pawn, which may prove extremely weak. At present the activity of his pieces makes up for this fault, but if White manages to extricate himself he will acquire a clear plus. Aleksandrov therefore loses no time in working up counterplay in the centre and on the queenside.

Let us see what would happen after the stereotyped 16...0-0-0??! The reply 17 Qd2? would be a mistake owing to 17...Qd5 18 Qf3 Qxe2 19 Qxe2 Qxc3 20 Qxc3 Qxc3 21 Wa6 c5! 22 Wc7 Qd2! 23 Wh1 Qxd4 (Aleksandrov).

17 Qe5! is much more dangerous. Quiet continuations leave Black with clearly the worse position: 17...c6 18 e4 Qf6 19 Wh1 Qb8 20 Qa1, or 17...a6 18 Qd7 Qxd7 17 Qxd5 ed 20 Wb6 Qxc6 21 e3 (Romanischin).

Nor is Black rescued by 17...Qb5?! 18 Wd2 Qxc3 19 Qc3 f6. According to analysis by Dvoretzky and Aleksandrov, White can play either 20 Qf3 Qxe2 21 Qxb3 Qxb3 22 Qxe2 Qxe1 23 Qxe1 Qb8 24 Qa2, or 20 Qc6 Qxc6 21 Qx6 Qxc3 22 Qxc3 Qxc6 26 Qxc6 Qxc6 24 Qxc6 Qxc6 24 Qxc6 Qb8 25 Qc1 c5 26 Qd6. Both lines are dismal for Black.

17 Wd2?

Of course not 17 dc?? Qb5 18 Wd4 Qxc3 19 Wg7 Qxe2+ 20 Wh1 Qf8, and Black comes out a piece up. On the other hand if 17 Qxc5 Qxc3 18 Qxc3 Qb5, the white d-pawn is under attack.

17 ... c4
18 Qe5 Qxc3
19 Qxc3 Qb5??

A gross blunder due to lack of time. What a pity! Up to here, both sides had played excellently and the young player was standing up to his experienced opponent.

19...Qb8 is also a mistake: 20 Qxc4 Qb3 21 Qxc6+ Qf7 21...Qf8 22 Wf4 22 Qxb3 Qxb3 23 Qg5+ f6 24 Qc5 Qf8 25 Qxa7 with a plus for White (Romanischin).

An exception should not be made into a rule! It was now time to castle. After 19...0-0-1, Dvoretzky shows that 20 Qxc4? Qc7 21 Qa1 fails to 21...Qxc1 22 Qxc1 Qc8.

20 a4! f6

Both players saw that after 20...Qa6 21 Qxb3 White would have a fierce attack:
as demonstrated by Romanishin: 27
\[\text{wxa7+ wxa7 28 woa7+ w06 29 h4} \]
e4 30 hxe4 h8 (30...wxe4 31 h4 and 32 h7) 31 wxe2 wxe2 32 wxe3
(or 32 c7) 32...wd3 33 wxe4+.

27 wxe3+ w06
28 w07 c3
29 h4+ w04
30 wxe2 w2
33 h4+ 1-0

Boguslavsky(15)-Bazhin
USSR Junior Team Ch 1990
Modern Benoni

1 d4 w06
2 c4 c6
3 w03 w03
4 w04 w02
5 c3 w05
6 e4 g6
7 f4 w07
8 e5 w07

Boguslavsky's strategy is typical of such positions and quite instructive. Exchange your opponent's developed pieces - then your lead in development will be particularly effective.

19 wxe2
20 wxe2 wxe2
21 w03 w03
22 w03+ w03

Extremely sharp opening lines such as this demand precise knowledge of theory. Playing them purely on the basis of common sense is exceedingly difficult, for the first inaccuracy can be fatal.

To avoid conceding the initiative to his opponent, Black should have sacrificed a whole rook with 14...w06!!
15 w07 w06 16 w06 w04. But can such a decision conceivably be taken over-the-board, with no help from
pre-game analysis?

15 w03 w06
16 w03 w03
17 w03 w03
18 0-0 w06
19 w06 (242)

Black has two extra pawns in the ending. But with opposite-coloured bishops, the material plus is not so significant. It is much more important to have the attack. Black's king is in mortal danger. Boguslavsky planned to meet 23...c4 with 24
w07+ w05 25 w05 w05 (25...w04
26 w05+ w06 27 w06+ w07 28 w07+ w07
29 w07+ w06 30 w06 26 w06+ w06 27 w06+ w07 (27...w05 28 w05+ w05
29 w05 w05+ w06 30 w06+ w06 31 w06+ w06 32 w06+ w06 33 w06+ w06
34 w06+ w06

23 w06
24 w06+ w06
25 w06+ w06
26 w06+ w06
27 w06+ w06
28 w06+ w06
29 w06+ w06

On 26...w06, the simple 27 c7 is good. If 26...w06 (hoping for 27
w06? w06), White wins the ending.
A direct consequence of Black's loss of time in moving his rook's pawn. White is preparing f2-f4, and 16...Qxe5? fails to 17 Qxd2! Qc7 18 Qxb8 Qxe4 f6 20 Qe1! Qc6 21 Qc6+!.

16 ... Qe7
17 Qg4 g6!
18 Qf4!
18 Qxg6? Qxe5.
18 ... Qc5?!

In Svidler's opinion it was worth considering 18...h5?! 19 Qg3 Qc5, but not 19...Qxc5? 20 Qg6! fg (20...Qg6 21 Qxf7+ Qxf7 22 Qh3) 21 Qg6+ Qd8 22 f5! ef 23 Qg5! Qe8 24 Qe1! Qb6 25 Qe7+ Qxe7 26 Qg8+ Qe8 27 Qxd5+ Qd7 28 Qe6 29 Qxe6 Qxe6+ 30 Qh1, and White has a winning attack.

19 Qxg6!
Demolishing the protective pawn wall, White launches an attack on the king in complete accordance with the demands of the position.

19 ... fg
19...Qg8 20 Qxf7+ Qxf7 21 Wh5+.
20 Qxg6+ Qd8
34 \text{He7+} \text{Qf6} 35 \text{Wh6+} \text{Qg6} 36 \text{Wg7+} \text{Qf5} 37 \text{Wh7+} \text{De5} 38 \text{We7+} \text{(Svidler)}.

However, White has a stronger line: 30 \text{Wh4+!} \text{Qf6} (30...\text{Qd7} 31 \text{Wh7+} \text{Dc5+} \text{De7} (31...\text{De7} 32 \text{Wa4+} \text{Qe7} 33 \text{Wf4+} \text{Qd6} 34 \text{Wd6+} \text{Qb5} 35 \text{a4+} \text{Qe4} 36 \text{Qc1+} \text{Db3} 37 \text{Qxg8}) 32 \text{Qxf8} ! \text{Qxf8} 33 \text{Df1}, and wins.

30 \text{Wh4+!} \text{Qd7}
30...\text{Qxd6} 31 \text{Wxe4}.
31 \text{Wh7+!} \text{Qe6}
32 \text{Qc1+} \text{Dh5}
33 \text{a4+!} \text{Qe5}
34 \text{Qe7+} \text{b6}
35 \text{b4+} \text{Qxb4}
36 \text{Qb1+} \text{Qa5}
37 \text{Qd2+!} 1-0

\text{Makariev}(15)-\text{Rasulov}
\text{CIS Junior Ch, Jurmala 1992}
\text{King's Indian}

This game may be singled out as a curiosity – White loses without playing a single move of his own!
Alas, in his preparation Makariev made a very common mistake. He decided to repeat a long theoretical variation without carefully checking it for correctness. Look where it led:

1 \text{d4} \text{Qf6}
2 \text{c4} \text{g6}
3 \text{Qc3} \text{g7}
4 \text{e4} 0-0
5 \text{Qf3} \text{d6}
6 \text{Qe2} \text{Qc6}
7 0-0 \text{e5}
8 \text{d5} \text{Qe7}

9 \text{Qe1} \text{Qd7}
10 \text{Qd3} \text{f5}
11 \text{Qd2} \text{Qf6}
12 \text{Q3} \text{f4}
13 \text{e5} \text{g5}
14 \text{cd} \text{cd}
15 \text{Qf2} \text{Qg6}
16 \text{Wc2} \text{Qf7}
17 \text{Qf1} \text{h5}

So far everything has followed the familiar patterns. But suddenly it is worth examining the thematic
18 \text{h3} \text{a6}?! It is worth examining the thematic
19 \text{fg} \text{h2} 20 \text{hg} \text{Qe8} (or 20...\text{Qh7} 21 \text{Qb5} \text{Qg5} 22 \text{a4} with unclear play; Sosonko-Kavalek, Tilburg 1980) 21 \text{a4} \text{Qf6} 22 \text{a3} \text{Qh4}
23 \text{Qd1} \text{Qg3} 24 \text{Qh3} \text{Wh4} 25 \text{Qd2} \text{Qf6} 26 \text{Wh1} \text{Qd7} 27 \text{a5} \text{Qa8} 28 \text{Qe1} \text{Qf5} Sokosno-Hellers, Wijk aan Zee 1986.
19 \text{a4} \text{Qf8}
20 \text{a5} \text{g4}!
22 \text{Qa4} \text{Wh7} 23 \text{a5}
21 \text{fg} \text{hg}
22 \text{hg} \text{b5}
23 \text{ab} \text{Wxb6}
24 \text{Qa4} \text{Wa7}
25 \text{a5} \text{Qb8}
If 25...\text{Qb7}, then 26 \text{Qa3} with the better chances for White.
26 \text{g5}!

The game is following Rogers-Sznapik, Thessaloniki OL 1988, which continued: 26...\text{Qh7} 27 \text{Qh6} \text{Qf3}? (27...\text{Qd7} 28 \text{Qxd7} \text{Qxd7} 29 \text{Qg4}, or 27...\text{Qxb6} 28 \text{Qxb6} \text{Wxb6}
29 \text{Qxc8} \text{Qxc8} 30 \text{Qg4} and White gains the upper hand – Spasov) 28

\text{Qxf3} \text{Qxb6}! 29 \text{Qxb6} \text{Wxb6} 30 \text{Qxc8} \text{Qg5} 31 \text{Qxa6} \text{Qe3}? (31...\text{Qxb2} was essential, with a view to 32 \text{Qxd6}!! \text{Qf4} with counterplay; however, according to Rogers, White still keeps the better chances with 32 \text{Qc2}! \text{Qd4} 33 \text{Qa3} 32 \text{Qa3} \text{Qb6} (32...\text{Qd4} 33 \text{Qc1}) 33 \text{Qg4} \text{Qh6} 34 \text{Qc2} \text{Qh7} 35 \text{Qg1}, and White won. Rogers annotated this game in Volume 46 of Informator.
26...
27 \text{Qg4}?! \text{Qg4}(246)

\text{Wc6}?
Rogers gave this move an exclamation mark. In reply, he only considered the lines 28...\text{Qd7} 29 \text{Qb6}! and 28...\text{Qh7} 29 \text{Qc3}. Makariev knew Rogers' analysis and took an uncritical view of it, for which he was punished.
In the light of Makariev-Rasulov, it is worth examining Spasov's recommendation 28 \text{Qa3}?!?
28...
\text{Qe2}!
This unexpected resource gives Black a very strong attack. For example, 29 \text{Qb6} is met by 29...

30 \text{Qc8} (if the queen retreats, Black simply has 30...\text{Qxb6} 30...\text{Qe3} 31 \text{Qc3} \text{Qxc8} 32 \text{Qxc8} \text{f3}. Or if 29 \text{Qb5}, then 29...\text{Qd7} 30 \text{Qc7} (30 \text{Qh3} \text{Qb5} 31 \text{Qh7} \text{Qe8}, attacking the knight on a4) 30...\text{Qg5} 31 \text{Qxb8} \text{Qh4}.

29 \text{Wc2} \text{f3}
30 \text{g3}
Otherwise Black plays 30...\text{Qf4}.

29...
\text{Qg7}?
Threatening 31...\text{Qh1}+! 32 \text{Qxh1}

\text{Wxf2}.

31 \text{Qe1} \text{Qh3}
0-1

Even very strong players are sometimes victims of credulity. A game Miles-Christiansen from the San Francisco tournament of 1987 was published in Volume 44 of Informator:

1 \text{e4} \text{c5} 2 \text{Qf3} \text{Qf6} 3 \text{Qxe5} \text{d6} 4 \text{Qf3} \text{Qxe4} 5 \text{Qc3} \text{Qf5} (247)

28 \text{Wc6}?
Rogers gave this move an exclamation mark. In reply, he only considered the lines 28...\text{Qd7} 29 \text{Qb6}! and 28...\text{Qh7} 29 \text{Qc3}. Makariev knew Rogers’ analysis and took an uncritical view of it, for which he was punished.
In the light of Makariev-Rasulov, it is worth examining Spasov’s recommendation 28 \text{Qa3}?!?
28...
\text{Qe2}!
This unexpected resource gives Black a very strong attack. For example, 29 \text{Qb6} is met by 29...

6 \text{Qxe4} \text{Qxe4} 7 \text{d3} \text{Qg6} 8 \text{Qg5}
\text{Qe7} 9 \text{Qxe7} \text{Qxe7} 10 \text{Qxe2} \text{Qc6} 11
0-0 0-0 12 \text{Qe1} \text{Qae8} 13 \text{Wd2} \text{Qe5}
14 d4 $\text{Qxf3}+$ 15 $\text{Qxf3} \text{Qd7}$ 16 c3 b6 17 $\text{Bxe8} \text{Bxe8}$ 18 $\text{Ke1}$ $\text{Kxe1+}$ 19 $\text{Bxe1} \text{Qf8}$ 20 g3, and the players agreed a draw.

The young Indian player Viswanathan Anand decided to make use of such a simple path to equality. But in the Biel tournament in 1988, his opponent Zapata answered $5...\text{Qf5??}$ with $6 \text{Be2}$. Black had to resign, since he could not avoid losing a piece ($6...\text{Be7} 7 \text{Qd5}$).

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