



Garri Kasparov (Activist)



Anatoli Karpov (Reflector)

Karsten Müller / Luis Engel / Makan Rafiee

The Human Factor in Chess – The Testbook

Find out your Player Type



Robert „Bobby“ Fischer
(Pragmatic)



What's my style?



Wilhelm Steinitz
(Theorist)

Karsten Müller / Luis Engel / Makan Rafiee

The Human Factor in Chess
– The Testbook

Find out your Player Type

JBV Chess Books

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Foreword

Not all chess players will easily be able to characterize and classify their own playing style. When calculating candidate moves, different factors of either a dynamic, defensive, strategic or tactical nature are taken into account. So it's understandable that players tend to attribute these aspects to their style, which can make it difficult to discern the dominant traits. For this purpose, the present player type test book offers assistance, and after the tasks have been completed, the evaluation of the results may surprise some readers.

While in the first work, "The Human Factor", the reader or other players were assigned to one of the four prototypical player types, this test book is about choosing the preferred move in a given position. Based on these tasks, it becomes clear that – as is so often the case in chess – individual decisions are crucial, the sum of which determines the affiliation to one or the other player type.

While dealing with the tasks, an interesting question arises: Can the tendency of individual players to make decisions according to certain patterns in a given position only be determined – or can it also be influenced or changed. If the latter is the case, it should be examined to what extent it's possible to acquire useful new patterns of calculation and decision-making with the aim of integrating at least certain aspects of another player type.

Each of the tasks has a correct or best solution, regardless of the preferences of the four types. The trigger for this objectively correct decision can either lie beyond the characteristics of the player types or unite those of all four. In any case, this also makes it clear that it will certainly be helpful to deal with the way of thinking, the calculation routine and the basic assumptions of players of all four types and to try to study decisions that are less close to one's own type.

Approaching the goal of integrating characteristics of other player types, undoubtedly requires the willingness to jump over one's own shadow more than once. Even if the further development of one's own player personality to a universal player uniting all player types may remain a utopia, it's still worth pursuing.

I hope that all readers will enjoy working on the tasks in this book and that their own play will benefit from it.

Vincent Keymer, November 2022

Introduction

As a supplement to our book 'The Human Factor' we are now presenting a work with exercises and test questions that enable the reader to better identify one's own style. As a third author, we brought in FM Makan Rafiee, who designed the tests to distinguish the player types in Chapter 6. Except for these, the book is self-explanatory even without knowledge of our first work. It is intended as a test book, but can also be used as a textbook by studying the solutions right away.

Our representation of the 'player types' is based in principle on the classification that Lars Bo Hansen makes in his excellent book *Foundations of Chess Strategy* (GAMBIT 2005). Regarding the history of this model, the following remarks by the well-known Danish chess author GM Jacob Aagaard are of great interest:

"I first came across the model of four different types of players, divided into the two axis of thinking method (logical/intuitive) and stylistic preference (technical/dynamic – or long term vs. short term if you like) in a lecture given by Mark Dvoretsky in 1999 or 2000, which Peter Heine Nielsen and I had organized. ... A lot of Danish top players attended the training session, but I cannot remember if Lars Bo Hansen was there. I always presumed that his presentation of the model was based on the Dvoretsky model, with a personal twitch, so to speak.

But sometime in the last year someone told me that this is quite a common model in business education. Given that Lars Bo Hansen has a background in that field, it is quite possible that he came up with it on his own. As with most useful tools, they get invented many places in the world independently.

I wrote about the Dvoretsky version of the model in the chapter *Who are You?* in my book *Thinking Inside the Box*, (Quality Chess 2017). However, this is nothing compared to the extensive treatment Karsten and Luis have later given this idea. As always, knowledge moves forward."

Of course, Mark Dvoretsky's use of this model adds tremendous value to it. On the other hand, it's not the only possible model and of course, the so-called 'stereotyped thinking' generally brings with it all sorts of dangers. However, since I have presented this model at many seminars and training events and was amazed how well it fit, the idea for this book came up at some point.

As a player I belong to the type 'activist' – as a trainer and author, however, I'm a 'theorist'. The goal, of course, should be to become as universal as possible. You usually win with your strengths, but it makes sense to also work on the weaknesses and include the specific strengths and weaknesses of the respective opponent in the decision-making process. In positions where there is only one move, every good player should find it of course. So the different styles of play are especially important in positions where there is a wide range of possibilities. However, also in the kind of positions that you should strive for based on your own style and that of the opponent.

Furthermore, you can of course ‘imitate’ a style, and against certain opponents this can even be the right strategy. For example, activists and especially hyperactivists have certain extremely outstanding characteristics, and if an opponent can adapt well to them, it’s very valuable. An example is Kramnik’s victory in the World Championship match in London 2000 against the activist Kasparov. Kramnik managed to always steer the game in the desired direction, so that Kasparov didn’t even get an opportunity to show what he is able to do in positions with attack and initiative.

While the main focus in the book *The Human Factor* was the division into the four playing styles, we now want to emphasize the universality of each player. After dealing with the exercises for the four player types, it should become clear how your own abilities are distributed. Because of course every player is more or less universal – one possibly more in the direction of Magnus Carlsen, the other more in the direction of the young Mikhail Tal. And even if you are skeptical about the model, the examples and tasks should definitely provide good training material on the different topics.

For chess players, this game is probably so interesting just because there are different approaches and styles. If, in any given position, you had to find exactly one ‘best move’, it would rather put off many players, because it would be too reminiscent of pure mathematics. In this book, distinctions and stereotypical thinking are overemphasized, and with good reason, because this approach leads to a clearer picture. Fortunately, reality is of course not so one- or four-dimensional. Nevertheless, we hope that it helps to also look at the topic of styles and types from this perspective.

We would like to thank Vincent Keymer for his foreword, Harald Fietz and Bernd Vökler for the ideas they contributed, Aditya Mittal, Jonas Lampert, Tom Wölk, Jakob Weihrauch, Karsten Dehning-Busse and Christian Koschetzki for randomly checking some of the exercises, and Robert Ullrich and Thomas Beyer for the excellent layout and the usual exemplary presentation.

GM Dr. Karsten Müller, GM Luis Engel and FM Makan Rafiee
Hamburg / Berlin, November 2022

Chapter 1

Activists

Activists among world champions: Alekhine, Tal, Spasski, Kasparov, Anand

Activists among other renowned players: Shirov, Morozevich, Topalov, Pillsbury, Anderssen, Bronstein, Larsen, Taimanov, Aronian, Judit Polgar, Karsten Müller

Hyperactivists: Tal, Neshmetdinov

Their strengths

Activists rate initiative and attacking options relatively high and material values lower. This is particularly pronounced among hyperactivists who are often ready to make considerable sacrifices in order to get attacking chances. Typical of this is Tal's famous quote, 'There are correct sacrifices – and mine.' They often have a good sense for initiative and dynamics and are also ready to accept static weaknesses. This can of course be disadvantageous, but often provides good entertainment on the board. One of their usual strengths is the concrete calculation of lines based on intuitive evaluation.

Their weaknesses

Sometimes they make pawn moves that look good at the moment, but do far more harm than good in the long run. They tend to overestimate their own attack on the king while underestimating the opponent's attack. They are significantly less good in defense and often bring intuitive sacrifices that are objectively incorrect.

Sometimes they don't have a good time management and often find themselves in time trouble because they search for too long for something that doesn't exist, especially when their intuitive assessment of the position doesn't correspond to the objective evaluation. Since they are often good at blitz and rapid, they can live with this weakness, but of course it's not really beneficial. As a result, activists often become more pragmatic over time, which can be seen, for example, in the careers of the world champions Tal and Kasparov.

Therefore, Lars Bo Hansen classifies the world champions Alekhine, Spasski and Kasparov as pragmatics, which of course is okay. However, since so many of Kasparov's game examples fit so well in this chapter, it was easy for us to at least classify *him* as an activist. However, the transition of the styles is fluid and even Michail Tal could be placed among the pragmatics from around 1966.

Their willingness to take risks

They often take risks and as a rule try to keep the 3rd result (meaning: their own victory) in the game. Therefore, especially with hyperactivists, long series of games

without any draw can occur. Under certain circumstances, however, this can be a disadvantage. For example, this phenomenon explains the two legendary 6–0 defeats of Taimanov and Larsen against Fischer in 1971. Both of them simply continued to play for win, instead of switching to damage limitation and striving for a consolidating draw.

Their training options

In addition to trusting one's own strengths by working on the openings and solving tactical exercises, the goal of becoming more pragmatic and universal also comes into question. Also, studying the games of reflectors can be advantageous. Kasparov, for example, has benefited enormously from his world championship matches against Karpov. Or you can study games from Tal's later period (i.e. from his 'year of change' 1966) or those from Kasparov's later career. By doing so, you can understand how these players have managed to become universal and pragmatic without completely losing the fire of their youth.

Their opponents

When activists meet over the board, it often leads to spectacular duels that do not always end as the Elo ratings suggest. Strong reflectors are particularly dangerous opponents for activists, as was shown, for example, in the world championship match 'Carlsen – Anand' and in the first world championship match 'Karpov – Kasparov'. The reason is that in such a constellation, the strengths of the activists don't come into their own, because the reflectors know how to prevent it with their good sense of active prophylaxis.

Their openings

Activists often advance the theory of special lines. For example, Kasparov's 'Chess-Base file' with its many spectacular novelties and new assessments was particularly legendary in this regard.

Typical openings

With White, activists prefer 1.e4, sharp lines of the open Sicilian, the King's Gambit and the Evans Gambit.

With Black, they tend to play the Najdorf Variation and the King's Indian.

Before proceeding, please note two important differences to our book *The Human Factor*.

– In the following examples, the chosen approaches do not always come from activists. The same applies to the chapters on theorists, reflectors and pragmatics. The simple reason is that, after all, it's not about determining the player type of the actual players, but that of the individual reader.

- Depending on your solution, different types of points can be scored, for which the following abbreviations apply:

AP activist point

TP theorist point

RP reflector point

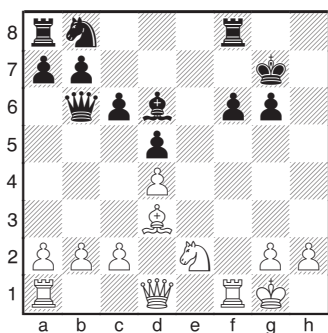
PP pragmatic point

Intuitive assessment of attacking chances

(Solutions starting on page 19)

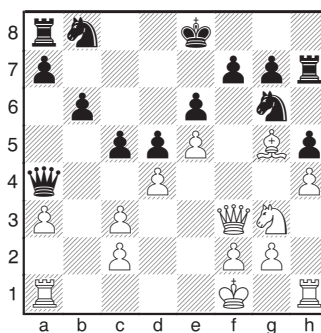
Unlike pragmatics, activists often rely on a primarily intuitive assessment of a sacrifice.

A01.01



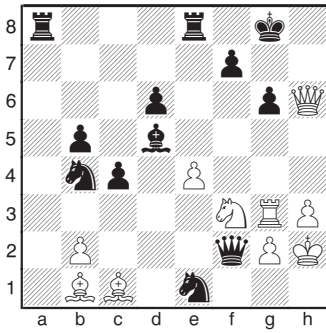
How should White continue?

A01.02



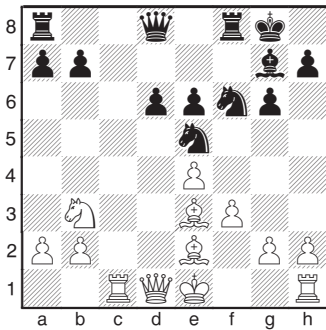
How to assess ♘f5?

A02.01



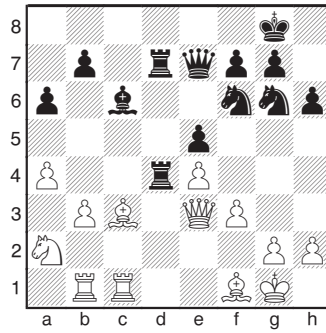
Does White have more than a draw?
If so – how should he start?

A02.02



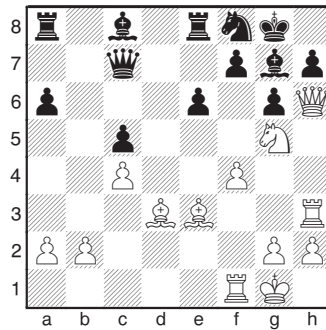
Can Black exploit his
development advantage?

A02.03



Does Black have a
promising sacrifice?
What is the critical line?

A02.04



Can White strike immediately?

Solutions

A01.01

Karsten Müller (2513)

Wolfgang Uhlmann (2488)

Austria 2001

After **17.♙xg6!** Black is lost. Here the intuitive assessment that the attack must succeed because the black defenders are far too late is sufficient as a 'solution'.

On the other hand, **17.♔h1?** misses the chance, because Black can defend with **17...♖c7**.

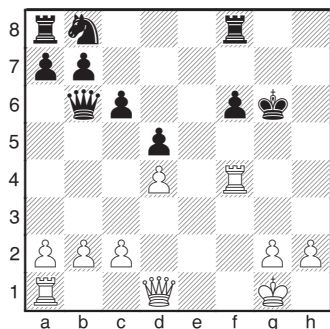
17...♙xg6

Now the clearest way to win is **17...♞h8!**? **18.♘f4 ♞h4 19.g3! ♞xf4 20.♞h5!** (**20.gxf4 ♔xg6 21.♔h1+-**) **20...♞xd4+ 21.♔h1 ♞xf1+ 22.♞xf1+-**, although many other roads lead to Rome.

18.♘f4+

The alternatives **18.♘g3** and **18.♞d3+ ♔f7 19.♘f4** also win easily.

18...♙xf4 19.♞xf4



K.M.: GM Igor Nataf told me that he had once prepared this line and concluded that the attack could not be parried. However, I managed to apply this novelty first. The intuitive reason why the sacrifice should work from an activist's point

of view is that the threat **♞g4+** cannot be warded off, because the black knight cannot intervene quickly enough, while White can immediately deploy his queen and all major pieces.

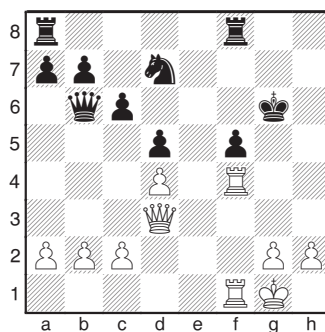
19...f5

After **19...♔f7 20.♞g4!** Black cannot continue with **♘d7** or defend himself in any other way; e.g. **20...♞b4 21.♞af1 ♞d6 22.♞h5+ ♔e7 23.♞h7+ ♔d8 24.♞xb7+-**.

20.♞d3 ♘d7

20...♞d8 21.♞af1 ♞g5 22.♞f3+-

21.♞af1



White can calmly activate the reserves since Black cannot secure his king's position.

21...♘f6?!

- **21...♘e5 22.♞g3+ ♘g4 23.h3+-**

- **21...♞f6 22.♞xf5 ♔g7 23.♞g5+ ♔f8 24.♞h5+-**

22.♞xf5+ ♔g7 23.♞g5+ ♔h8 24.♞h6+ and **1-0** in view of the possible continuation **24...♘h7 25.♞xf8+ ♞xf8 26.♞xf8#** or **24...♔g8 25.♞g6+ ♔h8 26.♞h4+ ♘h7 27.♞xh7#**.

1 AP for the intuitive assessment that the sacrifice leads to the goal.

A01.02
Alexei Shirov (2737)
Suat Atalik (2570)
 Plovdiv 2003

15. ♖f5!!

"A beautiful sacrifice, Shirov hardly could have calculated all to the end and had to rely at least partly on his intuition and fantasy. It didn't let him down – White gets a very strong, possibly even decisive attack. At least even after analysis I can't find any plausible defense, in the game the defender's task is much more difficult." (Stohl in CBM 98)

After the greedy 15. ♖xh5? ♗c6, Black is even clearly better because all his pieces are well placed in contrast to those of the opponent.

15... ♖c4+?!

Although Black could defend himself more tenaciously, there was already no rescue.

– After 15... ♗f8 16. ♗d6 ♖d7 17. c4!+- he will hardly survive the opening of the position.

– And after 15... exf5 16. ♖xd5 ♗c6 17. e6!+- the attack also goes straight through.

16. ♗g1 exf5 17. ♖xf5 ♗d7 18. e6 ♗f6
 19. ♖e1 ♖xc3

19... ♗f8 20. ♗xf6 gxf6 21. e7 ♗g6
 22. ♖h3+-

20. exf7+ ♗xf7 21. ♖e6+ ♗f8 22. ♖h3!

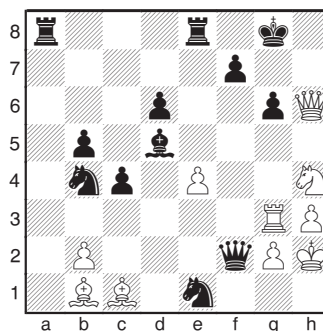
The last reserve is approaching.

22... ♖xd4 23. ♖f3 ♗xh4 24. ♖f4 ♖c3
 25. ♗xh4 ♖h6 26. ♖e5 ♖d2 27. ♗xf6 1-0

2 AP for 15. ♖f5!

A02.01
Viswanathan Anand (2788)
Michael Adams (2719)
 Saint Louis 2005

27. ♗h4!



With this crucial reinforcement, White ensures that the knight stays on the board. Now there's no defense against the double threat ♗xg6 and ♖f5. However, given the large number of candidate moves and lines, it's not easy to find one's way around.

1) 27. ♗g5? can be parried with 27... ♗c6 (27... ♗bd3!?∞) as shown in the line 28. ♗e3 ♖f6 29. exd5 ♗e5 30. ♖h7+ ♗f8 31. ♗e4 ♗1f3+ 32. gxf3 ♗xf3+ 33. ♗g2 ♗h4+ =.

2) 27. ♖xg6+? fxg6 28. ♖xg6+ ♗f8 29. ♖f6+ ♗g8 is also only good for a draw.

3) The same applies to 27. exd5? ♖e2! 28. ♗h4 ♗bd3 29. ♗xd3 cxd3 30. ♖xg6+ =; 30. ♗xg6?? ♗f3+ -+.

27... ♗ed3

– 27... ♖a7 28. ♗f5 ♖xg3+ 29. ♗xg3 gxf5 30. ♖g5+ (30. ♖f6+-) 30... ♗f8 31. ♖f6 ♖e6 32. ♖h8+ ♗e7 33. ♗g5+ ♗d7 34. exd5+-

– 27... ♖e6 28. exd5 ♖f6 29. ♗xg6+-

28. ♗xg6 ♖xg3+ 29. ♗xg3 fxg6 30. ♖xg6+ ♗f8 31. ♖f6+ ♗g8 32. ♗h6 1-0

1 AP for the assessment that White wins.

2 AP for the only winning move 27. ♖h4!

A02.02

Klaus Bischoff (2561)

Daniel Stellwagen (2489)

Pulvermühle 2004

16... ♗xe4!

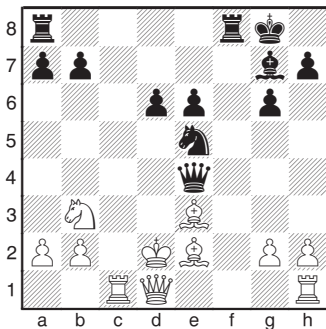
This sacrifice poses significant practical problems for White.

16...d5 is a safe alternative, after which White retains some pressure; e.g. 17.0-0!? dxe4 18. ♖xd8 ♜fxd8 19.fxe4 ♗xe4 20. ♖c7.

17.fxe4

This is the critical test, because after 17.0-0 ♗f6 Black is slightly better.

17... ♖h4+ 18. ♔d2 ♖xe4



Intuitively, Black should at least have enough compensation because the unstable and misplaced white king disrupts coordination and harmony and this problem is not easy to fix.

19. ♖c3

The desirable move 19. ♗d4? is convincingly refuted with 19... ♖xe3+!! 20. ♔xe3 ♗h6+ 21. ♔e4 ♜f4+ 22. ♔e3 ♜f5+ 23. ♔e4 d5#.

19... ♖xg2?

However, this greedy pawn grab is not good, since Black's compensation is not of a material nature.

After the dynamic 19...b5! 20. ♗d4 b4 21. ♖b3 (21. ♖c7? ♖xe3+!-+) 21...d5, Black has dangerous compensation. Objectively, however, White should still be able to hold on if he defends himself properly.

20. ♔c1 ♜ac8 21. ♖e1 ♜xc3+ 22. bxc3 ♖c8?

22... ♖h3 limits the damage.

23. ♗d4?

23. ♖xd6 ♜xc3+ 24. ♔d1+-

23... ♖xh2 24. ♔b1 ♖g2 25. ♗d2 ♖d5 1/2-1/2

1 AP for the decision to play 16... ♗xe4.

1 AP for the idea of sacrificing the queen on e3.

1 PP for 16...d5

A02.03

Hikaru Nakamura (2791)

Anish Giri (2769)

Saint Louis 2016

28... ♗xe4!

The game approach 28... ♗xe4? turned out to be wrong, because this strong bishop is urgently needed for the attack.

29.fxe4 ♖xe4 30. ♖b6!

(After the less precise game continuation 30. ♖a7?!, White won only after further entanglements.)

30... ♗d5 31. ♖f2 ♜f4 32. ♖e1 ♖c5+ 33. ♔h1 ♗e3 34. ♗b4 ♖xc1 35. ♜xc1 ♜xf1+ 36. ♖xf1 ♗xf1 37. ♜xf1+-

29.fxe4

The alternative is 29. ♗xd4 exd4 30. ♖e1 and after 30...d3! Black can keep the

Overall evaluation 'Activists'

Activist points 28

Pragmatic points 6

Reflector points 1

maximum total score 35

Accordingly, the objective view – i.e. without taking into account the specific type of player – looks as follows:

30-35	points:	ELO 2500+
26-29	points:	2400-2500
22-25	points:	2300-2400
18-21	points:	2150-2300
14-17	points:	2000-2150
11-13	points:	1800-2000
0-10	points:	below 1800

However, this activist rating should not be overestimated, because it can also be seen as simply a gimmick.

Chapter 2

Theorists

Theorists among world champions: Steinitz, Botvinnik, Kramnik

Theorists among other renowned players: Siegbert Tarrasch, Aron Nimzowitsch ('My System'), Peter Leko, Anish Giri, Georg Meier, Ulf Andersson, Nikola Sedlak, Sergey Tiviakov, Ruslan Ponomarev, Hans Berliner, Matthias Wahls, Victor Moskalenko, Mark Dvoretsky, Josif Dorfman ('The Chess Method'), Alexander Bannikov ('Strategy of squares'), Lars Bo Hansen

Their characteristics

On the one hand, you can see chess as a concrete game and always focus on calculating lines. But on the other hand, you can develop a general theory. Such a theory can be very general, such as the one that states you should always maximize the number of your own move options – or it can be tailored more specifically to specific structures. By the way, one of the secrets of why chess is so fascinating could be that all general theories have one thing in common: they are ultimately not entirely convincing.

In fact, otherwise things would be too simple and chess would only be a part of mathematics. Only in certain theoretical endgames are there rules of thumb that are equivalent to mathematical laws. In all other areas there are exceptions – and sometimes even far more exceptions than rule-abiding cases! Accordingly, the real art is not learning the rules of thumb by heart, but rather training your intuition in view of exceptions.

We want to continue with special theories on such structures and other positional issues and we do understand the type of player 'theorist' in exactly this sense. As a rule, these structures or positional issues are determined in the opening and also determine at least the early middle game. Sometimes, however, their effect can even extend into the endgame – such as e.g. in the French Defense, in the Benko Gambit or in certain Sicilian lines.

Their strengths

Theorists are extremely familiar with their structures and all the associated maneuvers and plans and can also rely on their sharpened intuition when using them. Theorists are incredibly strong in their pet structures and their opening systems are very stable and can be used in the long run. Their logical and systematic play is clearly pointed out, for example, in Botvinnik's comments on his games. Many representatives of this type are good at theoretical endgames and know the entire relevant endgame theory by heart.

Their weaknesses

They stick to their principles, even if they sometimes don't fit the position, and then often get into time trouble. They are somewhat inflexible and even stay true to their openings if they don't achieve any good results. And, of course, their respective specific theories may also have weak points of their own. What we have in mind are strong theorists who have very plausible theories, at least in their area of validity and application. However, some theorists sometimes lack a sense of the limits of the respective area of application and also the flexibility required to switch to other approaches in a specific position if necessary.

How do theorists play against the other types of players?

Of course, they always try to get into 'their' positions using 'their' openings. However, if necessary, they are also able to adapt and tailor strategies to the opponent if they can make a suitably fitting image. And this is how theories come into play – such as for example the one that against attacking players the dynamic potential should be reduced as much as possible, which Kramnik was able to implement in such an exemplary way in the world championship match against Kasparov.

How to play *against* theorists?

One should try to take advantage of their sometimes lack of flexibility and get them out of 'their' position. Occasionally it can happen that they recently scored 0 out of 5 with this or that opening – and that they will still keep playing it. Such a thing would be highly unlikely for all other types of players, but against some theorists it can be worthwhile to prepare for the opening in question anyway – or even precisely *because* of this 'pre existing condition'. For activists, it can be recommended to study the first match 'Tal vs Botvinnik'. Meanwhile, the world championship fight 'Anand vs Kramnik' showed the value of novelties that led to highly tactical positions in which the theorist Kramnik no longer felt at home because his knowledge of the structures was suddenly worthless.

Typical opening systems that lead to clearly defined structures – and some of their most renowned advocates

Berlin Wall in the Ruy Lopez (Kramnik)

French (Botvinnik, Moskalenko)

Rubinstein Variation in the French (Georg Meier)

Queen's Gambit with Botvinnik's infamous pawn roller

'Fort Knox' in the French (1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 dxe4 4.♗xe4 ♕d7 followed by ♕c6, ♕xe4, c6 etc.)

London System (Sedlak)

Stonewall in the Dutch (Moskalenko)

Accelerated Dragon in the Sicilian (1.e4 c5 2.♗f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♗xd4 g6)

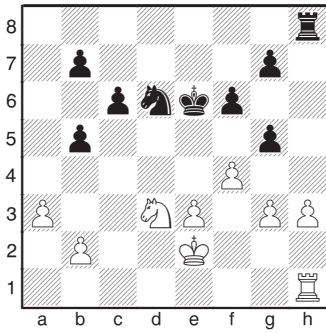
Maroczy bind with both colors (Tiviakov)

Sveshnikov Variation in the Sicilian (Peter Leko)

The art of pawn play

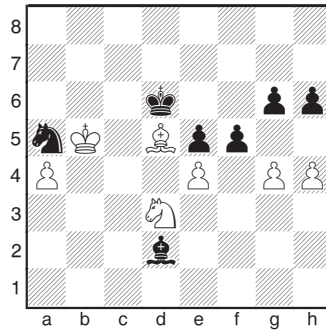
(Solutions starting on page 39)

T01.01



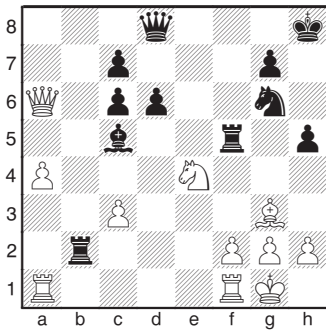
How should Black proceed on the king side?

T01.03



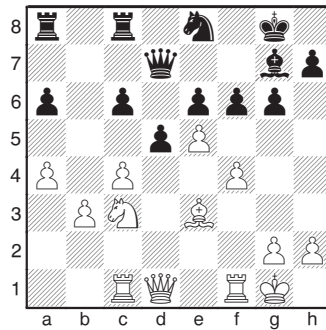
How should White handle the tension on the king side?

T01.02



How should White react to the opponent's activity?

T01.04



How should White continue?

Solutions

T01.01

Dreev, Alexey (2640)

Gelfand, Boris (2695)

Groningen 1997

53...g4!

After fixing the white g-pawn, Black gets an 'eternal' knight on e4 that will dominate the whole board.

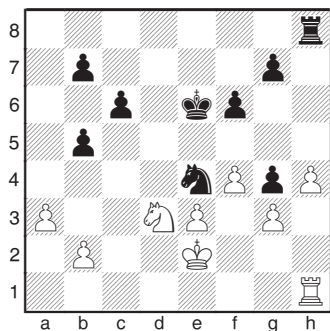
On the other hand, 53...♖e4? would be premature because of 54.♔f3 ♖d2+ 55.♔e2 ♖c4 56.fxg5 fxg5 57.h4.

54.h4?!

– 54.♖c5+ ♔e7 55.h4 b6 56.♖b3 ♖e4 57.♖g1 ♖d8 58.♖d4 ♔f7–+

– 54.♖f2 ♖f5! 55.♔d3 ♖d8+ 56.♔c2 ♖xe3+ 57.♔c1 ♖c4 58.hxg4 ♖xb2–+

54...♖e4–+



Now the announced total dominance of the knight is obvious.

55.♖g1 ♖d8 56.♖g2 c5 57.♖g1 c4 58.f5+ ♔xf5 59.♖f1+ ♔e6 60.♖f4+ ♔f7 61.♔e1 ♖d2 0-1

1 TP for 53...g4

T01.02

Morozevich, Alexander (2774)

Sokolov, Ivan (2690)

Sarajevo 2008

20.h4!

With this tactically secured blockade move (20...♖xh4? 21.♔xh4 ♖xh4 22.♖c8+) White stops the counterplay and secures the magnificent square on g5 for his knight.

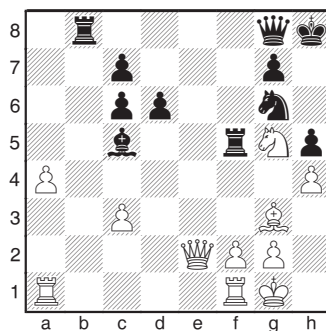
1) Both 20.♖xc5? ♖xc5 21.♖d3 ♖f6 and 20.h3? h4 21.♔h2 ♖e8 22.♖xc5 ♖xc5 allow Black much more counterplay. However, White should still be a bit better thanks to his strong passed a-pawn.

2) 20.♖d3?! ♖d5 21.♖f3 ♖f8 22.c4 ♖f5 23.♖c3 ♖b8 24.h4 is also better for White, but it's less good than the game continuation.

20...♖b6

Despite his active position, Black cannot increase the pressure. White, on the other hand, will play his strategic trump cards sooner or later.

21.♖c4 ♖g8 22.♖e2 ♖b8 23.♖g5



Now White is reaping the rewards of his strategy.

23...♗f8 24.♖xh5+ ♘h7?!

24...♖h7 is more tenacious, but doesn't save in the long run either.

25.♖ae1 ♗b6 26.♖e7 ♖bf8 27.♙h2 ♗5f6
28.a5 1-0

2 TP for 20.h4!

T01.03

Adams, Michael (2610)

Believsky, Alexander (2595)

Interpolis Tilburg 1992

61.h5!

This undermining measure is of crucial power.

After 61.gxf5? gxf5 62.h5 f4 63.♗f2 f3 64.♗g4 ♙c7=, Black can hardly move, but White cannot reinforce his position.

61...gxh5

61...fxe4! is practically the most promising defense that Black should definitely try. The position is still clearly lost, but after 62.hxg6 ♙xd5 63.g7 exd3 64.g8♖+ ♙e4 65.♖h7+ ♙d4 66.♖e7+- anything can happen in practical play!

62.gxf5 h4 63.f6 ♗c3

After 63...h3 64.f7 ♙e7 65.♗xe5, Black is one move too slow: 65...h2 66.♗g6+ ♙d7 67.f8♖ h1♖ 68.♗e6+ ♙c7 69.♖c8+ ♙d6 70.e5#.

64.f7 ♙e7 65.♗c5 ♗b7 66.♗xb7 h3
67.♗c5 1-0

1 TP for 61.h5!

1 PP for realizing that 61...fxe4! is the best defense.

T01.04

Meier, Georg (2558)

Wojtaszek, Radoslaw (2599)

German Bundesliga 2009

18.a5!

This push serves to prepare the strong maneuver ♗c3-a4-b6, which will shake up Black's position.

With 18.exf6?! ♗xf6 White would only free the opponent's pieces.

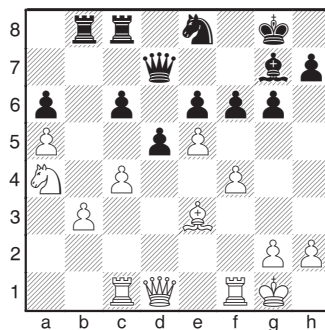
18...♖ab8

After 18...fxe5 19.♗a4! the fork on b6 wins an exchange. Black has some compensation, but White retains a clear advantage, as shown in the following lines:

- 19...exf4 20.♗b6 ♖e7 21.♗xf4 e5
22.♖e2+-

- 19...e4 20.♗b6 ♖b7 21.♗c5 ♖cb8
22.♗xa8 ♖xa8 23.b4+-

19.♗a4



Undeterred, the knight pounces on the weaknesses.

19...♖e7?!

19...♖b7 was more tenacious, but after 20.♖e2 ♗f8 21.♗c5 ♗xc5 22.♗xc5 f5 23.♗b6 ♗g7 24.♖f3+- there's no doubt about White's winning advantage.

20.♗c5 ♖f7 21.♖d3

Strategically White has achieved every-

thing: the black pieces are passive and there's no way to change their fate.

21...♖b7 22.♗h3?

After this mistake, White loses much of his advantage and the game was later drawn.

Better 22.b4! with the possible continuation 22...f5 23.g3 ♖c7 24.♙d6 ♙f8 25.♗b6 ♜d8 26.cxd5 exd5 27.♙xf8 ♜xf8 28.♗d7+-.

2 TP for 18.a5 with the plan to bring the knight to b6.

30.♙xc5 ♙xc5 31.♗xc5+-

This knight dominates the black pieces and prevents any counterplay.

31...g5?! 32.♗g4 ♙f8?! 33.♗h6 ♜e7 34.♗f5 ♗xf5 35.exf5 h5 36.♞d6 ♙g7 37.♙f2 a5 38.♞ed1 1-0

1 TP for 28.♗g4 with the plan to bring the knight to d3.

T02.01

Ponomariov, Ruslan (2743)

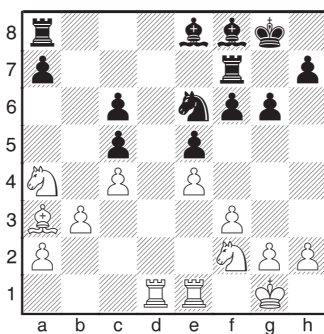
Dreev, Alexey (2677)

Moscow 2002

28.♗g4!

White gains a tempo to transfer the knight to the desired square on d3, and Black's position soon collapses.

28...♙f8 29.♗f2



Since Black can't do anything about White's plan, he will lose at least one pawn.

29...♗d4

29...♞d7 30.♞xd7 ♙xd7 31.♗d3+-

T02.02

Polgar, Judit (2678)

Tiviakov, Sergei (2603)

Ohrid 2001

24.♙xg7!

White's idea is to transfer the knight to d5, but the correct move order is very important. With the intermediate exchange on g7, Judit Polgar eliminates any swindle chances.

24.♗f4? also looks very logical, but gives Black a chance to disturb the harmony of the white pieces. After 24...♗a4! 25.♙xg7 b4! the white queen has to keep the ♞c6 protected and thus leave the long diagonal. White is still better, but things are not that clear yet.

1) After 26.♗c4?! ♗xg7 27.♗d5, the reply 27...♗e6 limits the damage.

2) And although 26.b3! bxc3 27.bxa4 ♙xg7 28.♗d5 is also better for White, Black can still fight.

24...♗xg7 25.♗f4+-

About the authors

Karsten Müller

GM Dr. Karsten Müller was born on November 23rd, 1970 in Hamburg. He studied mathematics and received his doctorate in 2002. From 1988 to 2015 he played for the 'Hamburger SK' in the German 'Bundesliga' and in 1998 he was awarded the title of Grandmaster. The busy and globally recognized endgame expert was named 'Trainer of the Year' by the German Chess Federation in 2007. As a player he belongs to the type 'activist' – as a trainer and author, however, he is a 'theorist'.

Together with Frank Lamprecht he is the author of the following highly esteemed works: *Secrets of Pawn Endings* (2000) and *Fundamental Chess Endings* (2001).

With the co-author Martin Voigt he wrote *Danish Dynamite* (2003), with Wolfgang Pajeken *How to Play Chess Endgames* (2008), with Raymund Stolze *Zaubern wie Schachweltmeister Michail Tal* and *Kämpfen und Siegen mit Hikaru Nakamura* (2012).

Müller's book *Bobby Fischer, The Career and Complete Games of the American World Chess Champion* (2009) also attracted attention – and particularly his excellent series of ChessBase-Endgame-DVDs *Chess endgames 1-14*. Müller's popular column *Endgame Corner* was published at 'www.ChessCafe.com' from January 2001 until 2015, and his column *Endgames* is published in *ChessBase Magazine* since 2006.

13 of his books have already been published by 'Beyer Verlag':

Schachtaktik, *Positionsspiel*, *Verteidigung* (together with Merijn van Delft), *Schachstrategie* (together with Alex Markgraf), *Italienisch mit c3 und d3* (together with Georgios Souleidis) and *Magie der Schachtaktik* and *Magical Endgames* (together with C. D. Meyer), *The Human Factor* (together with mit Luis Engel), *The Best Endgames of the World Champions* (volume 1 + 2), *The Best Combinations of the World Champions* (volume 1 + 2, together with Jerzy Konikowski) and *Bobby Fischer, 60 best games*.



Luis Engel

Luis Engel was born on October 14th, 2002 in Hamburg. Together with his twin brother Robert, he joined the 'Hamburger SK' in 2011 and has been playing in the Bundesliga for his club since the 2017/18 season. In October 2019 he fulfilled his third GM norm and is currently the second youngest grandmaster in Germany (behind Vincent Keymer). He crowned his career so far by winning the 'German Championship' for men in Magdeburg in 2020. In contrast to Karsten Müller, as a player Luis is a 'pragmatic'. He is currently studying law in Hamburg.



Makan Rafiee

Makan Rafiee was born on June 3rd, 1991 in Kassel. He studied mathematics and computer science at the 'Georg August University' in Göttingen and has since worked as a consultant in IT security with a focus on cryptography. Makan started playing chess at the age of four and has held the FM title since 2015. He has been playing for FC Bayern Munich in the Bundesliga since 2017. Like Karsten Müller, Makan Rafiee is an activist.

