THE WEAKNESS OF "c6" SQUARE IN POSITIONS WITH OPEN CENTER

COMPREHENSIVE ENDGAME COURSE - PART 1

RARE WEAPON AGAINST THE LENINGRAD SYSTEM IN DUTCH DEFENCE

GO TWO STEPS BACK!

FIND THE BEST MOVE BY BOOSTING YOUR INTUITION - PART 1

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## Table of contents

**Endgame Series (by GM Davorin Kuljasevic)** ................................................................. 4  
Milev, Zdravko – Smyslov, Vassily/ Leipzig ol (Men), 1960 ............................................... 7  
Tal – Trifunovic/ Palma de Mallorca, 1966 ................................................................. 10

**Fighting for the initiative (by GM Boris Chatalbashev)** ................................. 13  
Sokolov, Andrei – Shirov, Alexei/ France, 1994 ........................................................... 13  
Rare but interesting line in Trompovsky ................................................................. 16  
Portisch, Lajos – Matanovic, Aleksandar/ Skopje/Ohrid, 1968 .............................. 21

**Rare weapon against the Leningrad system in Dutch defence (by GM Grigor Grigorov)** .................................................................................................................. 24

**Dragon Variation in Sicilian Defence (by IM Spas Kozhuharov)** ......................... 35

**Soviet Chess School (by GM Viktor Gavrikov)** ...................................................... 48  
Botvinnik, Mikhail – Donner, Jan Hein/ Amsterdam GAK, 1963 ............................ 48  
Lerner, Konstantin Z – Anastasian, Ashot/ Novi Sad, 1988 ........................................ 51  
Kosic, Dragani – Mackic, Zoran/ YUG-chT Vrnjacka Banja, 1998 ......................... 56  
Hoenlinger, Baldur – Kasdan, Isaac/ Gyor, 1930 ...................................................... 60  
Khalifman, Alexander – Lau, Ralf/ Dordrecht, 1988 ............................................. 60

**Test Yourself (by GM Petar G. Arnaudov)** ................................................................ 64  
Test Yourself Solutions ........................................................................................... 67

Editor: IM, WGM Iva Videnova
Endgames series
(by GM Davorin Kuljasevic)

Dear reader,
Welcome to the wonderful world of endgames! In this series, we will talk about the final part of a chess game – the endgame. But before we go any deeper into our topic, let us determine why knowing endgames is essential for every chess player.

Why are endgames important?

Some chess players, when they hear the word „endgame“, tend to think of it as something tedious and boring. But, as they soon find out, knowledge of endgames is important for every player who likes to win games. Why is that so?

Well, because a lack of knowledge and skill in the endgame often leads to disappointing results, such as drawing a winning position, or losing a drawn one. Chess is such a game, where all of your previous gains can be erased by one careless move. Nowhere does that become as visible as in the endgame as the game is very often decided in this stage.

What does it mean to play the endgame well?

„Ok“, you might say, „now I know why endgames are important, but how do I become good at them?“

There are two things that make a strong endgame player:

1) Knowledge of theoretical endgames and principles

2) Endgame technique

Countless chess books have been written on the subject of theoretical endgames. Most of them contain examples of how to play pawn endgames, rook endgames, endgames with light and heavy pieces and mixed endgames. Typical endgames are explained in detail and chess students are expected to learn them as an integral part of their chess education.

For a quick example, let us look at one of the most important theoretical rook endgames.

A rook endgame – "Sixth rank" defense

Additionally, every chess player who studies endgames gets acquainted with basic endgame principles, such as king's opposition, knight's opposition, square rule, triangulation, zugzwang, rook behind the passed pawn, etc. These principles and their application in games should become the „staple diet“ of every aspiring chess player.
Here is an example of one of the most basic rules in endgames with passed pawns:

This is one of the most important theoretical and practical rook endgames. White has an extra pawn. His winning plan is simple - push the pawn forward and promote it to a queen. But in this position, black king is in the way of the pawn. So white needs to kick away the king from e8 with his rook and king. Having all this in mind, black plays a move that disrupts white’s plan.

1...g6! This move cuts white king off the 6–the rank (this is why this is called a sixth-rank defense), securing the position of his own king in front of white pawn.

1...g1?! would be an inaccurate defense because white has 2.d6! (2.e6 would allow the sixth rank-defense 2.g6+ just like in the game.) 2.d1+ (or 2.g6+ 3.e6) 3.e6 and white king hides on e6! With the following Ra8 check, white has succeeded in his plan.

2.e6 The only attempt. White threatens d6. The point is that white can not chase the king away only with his rook: 2.a8+ e7 3.a7+ e8 and there is no progress for white.

2...g1! The right move. The rook has done its job on the 6th rank and now goes behind white pawn in order to give checks from behind.

2...h6? would be a mistake that would lose the game. White would get his king to the sixth rank with: 3.d6 threatening checkmate in one move (a8). The only defense is 3.f8 but after 4.a8+ g7 5.d7 white has finally succeeded in his plan – he kicked away black king from e8. Now the pawn can freely promote to a queen. 5.h1 6.e7 d1+ 7.c6 White executes a typical manoeuvre of getting closer towards black rook. 7.c1+ b5 b1+ 9.c4 c1+ 10.b3 b1+ 11.c2 The king is too close and black has no more checks. 11.e1 12.e8# xe8 13.xe8 and white’s win is a now matter of checkmating with rook and king against the king.

3.d6 d1+

Stopping white from giving the deadly check on a8.

4.e5 e1+ The problem for white is that he can’t hide from checks on e6 anymore because his pawn is already there. This is another point of 6th-rank defense – luring white pawn on e6!
5.\textit{f}f5 \textit{g}f1+ 6.\textit{g}g4 White has nothing better than moving towards black rook.

6...\textit{g}g1+ 7.\textit{f}f3 \textit{e}e1!

But now he realizes that the pawn has lost protection of the king. After

8.\textit{a}a6 \textit{e}e7 9.\textit{f}f2 \textit{xe}6 10.\textit{xe}6+ \textit{xe}6 we have a draw. Sixth-rank defense works in similar situations with a passed pawn on any other file (a, b, c, ..., h).

The square rule

This pawn endgame goes to show one of the most important rules of endgames with passed pawns - the "Square rule". Both white and black have dangerous passed pawns. Since none of the kings are in front of the pawns, the only way from stopping them from promoting is catching them or, as chess players like to say, "get into their square". As shown on the diagram, white on the move has to get into the square of black e-pawn, which is marked by the square with angles: e1, b1, b4, e4.

1.\textit{b}b4! And white just manages to do that. The king is now in the square of the pawn and he can stop it.

This rule is very important to know because otherwise white would even lose the game if he engages in a pawn race with 1.h5? e3 2.h6 e2 3.h7 e1\textit{w}+ and black promotes the queen with check 4.\textit{b}b5 \textit{h}h1 and wins the pawn, so all he needs to do to win the game is to checkmate with the queen against the king.

1...e3 Let's see what happens if black tries to catch white pawn. He is obviously out of the square marked with h8–d8–d4–h4. If we take it one move further, 1...\textit{c}c7 2.h5 \textit{d}d6 he is still out of the square. This means that white promotes the queen after 3.h6 \textit{e}e6 4.h7 \textit{f}f7 5.h8\textit{w} with a winning endgame.

2.\textit{c}c3 Again, white king gets into a square of the pawn, this time a smaller one (e1, c1, c3, e3).

2...e2 3.\textit{d}d2 and he finally catches the pawn. We have already seen that black king is out of white pawn's square, so white safely promotes a new queen with a winning position.

Once a chess player gets a handle on the basic theoretical endgames and principles, he can proceed to mastering endgame technique. For this, he needs to understand advanced
endgame principles. Let us name a few of them here: schematic thinking, the principle of two weaknesses, good and bad piece trade, king centralization, supressing counterplay, etc. Many of these principles were explained in an excellent endgame book „Endgame Strategy“ by Mikhail Shereshevsky. In our endgame series, we will build upon these principles with classical and modern examples from endgame practice.

For now, let us take an example of a great endgame player, the ex-World Champion (1957-1958), Vassily Smyslov. (see the photo below)

Milev,Zdravko - Smyslov,Vassily
[D22]
Leipzig ol (Men) fin-A Leipzig (1), 28.10.1960

In this middlegame position, white just announced check to black king with the queen on d4. Smyslov offers queen trade with:

33...\textit{f6}! The alternative 33...e5 probably didn't appeal to Smyslov because white gains counterplay against the f7 pawn after 34.\textit{xd5} followed by \textit{d7}.

34.\textit{xf6+ \textit{xf6} White has accepted the opposite-colored bishops endgame with rooks on the board. It might look drawish at the first sight, but black holds a long-term edge, thanks to the spoiled pawn structure on white's kingside (potential weaknesses).

35.\textit{b3}?!
Milev makes the first mistake in the endgame. It is important to notice that white may take the bishop with 35.\textit{xf8} but then black take it back with 35...\textit{xd1}+ Now we have a rook endgame in which black wins a pawn after 36.\textit{g2 b1} with excellent winning chances. It is understandable why white player didn't go for this position (he correctly solved the "Problem of piece exchange", which we will talk about later). However, white forgot about another, even more important endgame principle - "Centralization of the king". 35.e2! was, therefore, the right move. White king gets closer to the center and gives support to its bishop.

35...h6 36.g2? White does not only fail to bring his king closer to the center - he puts it even further!

36.e2 was, again, the right choice.

36.b1 Smyslov begins to methodically strengthen the position. He puts the pressure on the first potential weakness - the b3-pawn.

37.c2 b2 38.c8 d2! A strong move. Black does not only activate the bishop - he also threatens to block the connection between white rook and the bishop by putting his own bishop to c3.

39.f1 White realizes that his king belongs to the center after all, but he might be too late...

39...c3 Mission accomplished - and now white bishop is hanging.

40.d1 d4!

Another strong move. Black bishop holds a dominant position in the center of the board, at the same time attacking the second weakness, the f2 pawn.

41.c2 Here we have a principle of "Two weaknesses" at play, because defending the f2 pawn with 41.e2 would allow black to win the first weakness 41.xb3 - the b3 pawn!

41.g5! "King’s activity" - another common theme in endgames. Black king is moving towards another weakness in white’s position - the f3 pawn.

42.c4 e5 43.d1? The decisive mistake. White gives up the h-pawn, but underestimates the strength of black’s h-pawn.

43.h3 was necessary to save the pawn, and white is still fighting on, despite a difficult position.
43...b1!

A very strong intermediate move. At the first sight it seems illogical to draw white king towards the center, but there is a deeper idea behind the plan. Black will take the h2 pawn and then push the h-pawn toward the promotion square. In this case, white king could stop the pawn from the g2 square. But now the king is forced to e2 to protect the bishop, so it can’t protect the h-pawn as well. This is yet another example of two weaknesses principle, the first weakness being the d1 bishop, and the second one the h-passer. Another important principle at work here is "prophylaxis", or in other words – preventing your opponent’s ideas (g2 in this case).

44.e2 xh2 45.xb4 White won the b-pawn in exchange for his h-pawn, but Smyslov shows that his passed pawn is much stronger than white’s.

45.h5 46.b7 f6 47.d7 h4 48.f4 As we explained earlier, white’s king was deflected from stopping the h-pawn with a precise 43...b1! Now he has to give up the f-pawn to get into the square of the h-pawn.

The attempt to stop the pawn with the rook with 48.d8 and h8 runs into 48...g7!

48...xf4 49.xf3 Now white king is in the square of the pawn, but black has two passed pawns on g and h files so his position is winning.

49.g5 50.g2 e5! Once more Smyslov demonstrates his understanding of the importance of king’s activity in endgames.

51.h5?

The final, tactical, mistake. White’s position was getting very difficult to play anyway and mistakes are quite common in such positions.

51...h3+! A precise move that forced black to resign because after 52.xh3 h1+ black wins the bishop on h5.

We have seen many important endgame principles in Smyslov’s game. However, seeing them in games of other players is one thing – another thing is to be able to use them in our own games. This is why the other part of the endgame technique comes through practice. As a player gathers experience in tournament
games, he/she gets a chance to apply some of the learned endgame positions and principles. If necessary, the player will decide to improve on one or another part of his/her endgame skill by studying games of old masters. Through a combination of study and practice of endgames, the player can reach – mastery.

**Masters of endgames**

Chess history recognizes many great endgame players. In fact, virtually all World Champions were excellent endgame players, including such reckless attackers as Mikhail Tal (see the photo below) or Garry Kasparov.

![Tal - Trifunovic](image)

Tal, with white pieces, is a pawn up, but is still far from winning the game. One of black’s main trumps is his advanced passed h-pawn. How does a brilliant tactician deal with it?

1.e6! A beginning of a beautiful combination.

Had white blocked the pawn with 1.\(\text{h}2\) black would get enough counterplay attacking the f4 pawn with 1...\(\text{h}4\)

1...\(\text{xe}6\) If black took the pawn with the king, it would interfere with black’s bishop defense of h3 pawn, so white could now take it with 1...\(\text{xe}6\) 2.\(\text{h}xh3\); On the other hand, black could play an intermediate move 1...\(\text{h}2\)! threatening to promote the pawn on the next move. Therefore 2.\(\text{h}xh2\) \(\text{xh}2\) 3.\(\text{h}xh2\) is forced, when 3...\(\text{xe}6\) 4.\(\text{g}2\) \(\text{d}7\) 5.\(\text{g}3\) would lead to an unpleasant same-color bishops endgame for black. White would eventually create a passed pawn with a b4–b5 breakthrough.

2.\(\text{a}7\)+ \(\text{d}7\)! Trifunovic still doesn’t realize Tal’s idea.

Otherwise he would have played 2...\(\text{f}8\) 3.\(\text{a}8\)+ \(\text{g}7\) 4.\(\text{xh}8\) \(\text{xh}8\) 5.\(\text{xh}3\) again trying to defend a pawn-down bishops endgame.

3.\(\text{h}2\)!!
This is the point of Tal's combination – the famous "Zugzwang". This word comes from German language, meaning that the opponent is losing with any move that he makes. Let’s see for ourselves that black is indeed losing:

3...\textit{h}5 3...\textit{d}8 allows 4.\textit{a}8+! \textit{c}8 5.\textit{a}6

\textit{c}7 6.\textit{xc}8 \textit{xc}8 7.\textit{xc}8+ \textit{xc}8 8.\textit{xc}3 with a winning pawn endgame; 3...\textit{e}6 runs into 4.\textit{c}4+! \textit{e}7 5.f5 followed by Be6, winning as well.; 3...\textit{f}5 looks like a good enough defense, but white strikes from the other side with 4.b5! cxb5 5.c6 winning the bishop.; Finally, 3...\textit{b}8 stops b5, but leaves the h3 pawn unprotected, so white wins with 4.\textit{xc}3! f5 5.\textit{xf}5 also transferring into a winning pawn endgame.

4.b5! \textit{xc}5 Black prevents losing the bishop after 4.cxb5 5.c6

5.\textit{xc}3 f5 Black counted on this move to get out of the pin. But, as it turns out, it is only a temporary measure.

5...\textit{c}2+ 6.\textit{g}1 (6.\textit{g}3 \textit{c}3+ 7.\textit{g}2 \textit{xc}3)

6.\textit{bxc}6! Tal finds the "second weakness" - the c6 pawn, which is so often the winning theme in endgames.

6...\textit{xc}6 7.\textit{xf}5 \textit{d}6

Forced, and here comes the final point of the combination

8.\textit{g}3! Before taking on d7, white improves the position of his king.

It would be a huge mistake to take the bishop at once 8.\textit{xd}7 \textit{xd}7 9.\textit{xd}7+ \textit{xd}7 as the pawn endgame after 10.\textit{g}3 \textit{e}6 11.\textit{g}4 \textit{f}6 is theoretically drawn. In order to win such an endgame, white needs to have his king in front of the pawn so that he could achieve the "Opposition".

8...\textit{e}8 9.\textit{xd}7 Now is the right time to exchange all pieces and enter a pawn endgame.

9...\textit{xd}7 10.\textit{xd}7+ \textit{xd}7 11.\textit{g}4 \textit{e}6 12.\textit{g}5 Extra tempo that Tal won with 8.Kg3 allowed him to take control of f6, the critical square in front of the pawn.

12...\textit{f}7 13.\textit{f}5!
and now white wins by opposition! Tal's opponent Trifunovic resigned at this moment, but let us take this basic endgame a little further to show the importance of opposition.

13...♗e7 Black is forced to move out of the way. It is important to note that if it was white to move, black would hold the opposition and the game would be drawn.

In case of 13...♖g7 white goes the other way 14.♔e6

14.♗g6 ♕f8 15.♕f6 White forces another opposition.

15...♖g8 16.♔e7! Finally, white kicked out black king from the f-file and his pawn has a free pass toward the promotion square.

16...♖g7 17.f5 ♕g8 18.f6 ♕h7 19.f7 ♕g6 20.f8♕ and the rest is easy.

On the other hand, Tal didn't get to use his endgame skill to the full potential, because many of his games simply didn't reach the endgame. A lot of them finished in the middlegame, where he either destroyed his opponent in a sweeping attack, or died by the blade of his own sword.

Thankfully, there were quite a few people who not only played the endgame well – they also played them a lot! Enter Akiba Rubinstein (see the photo below), a Polish Grandmaster (1880-1961). Almost half of the tournament games he ever played ended in a rook endgame! Rubinstein was a fine player whose games have treasured endgame teachings for many generations of chess players

Some of the other great masters of endgame are Jose Raul Capablanca, Salo Flohr, Vassily Smyslov, Bobby Fischer, and the current World Champion Magnus Carlsen, to name just a few. One can always admire and learn from their endgame prowess, so I encourage the reader to study endgames of these players if he/she wants to improve their skill.

We hope that this short endgame guide, along with the future endgame lessons in our magazine, will help the reader learn more and get better at one of the most captivating parts of a chess game!
Fighting for the initiative
(by GM Boris Chatalbashev)

Generally whatever opening you choose you must develop your pieces as fast as possible, trying also to control the center. Then in the middlegame you try to impede on your opponent the plan you have chosen. And possibly that your pieces become active enough so they dominate the board. To do this one must strive for the initiative. This is the first stage, later you build up on this, creating a domination or direct attack against the king. But from practical players’ perspective - it rarely happens for free. Your opponent is also alert and also has a reasonable plan. He wants to be active himself or exchange your good pieces. So in order to win the tempos needed to take the initiative quite often one must make some concessions - either positional or material. Of course every player has to evaluate what is more important. But generally I must tell you that every top player jumps on the opportunity to take the initiative at the first possible moment! As you will see from the games such opportunity comes after 1–2 slow, somewhat aimless moves from the opponent, awkward piece placement, just a temporary weakness - and one must be ready to exploit that! Also there are some types of positions - with kings in the center or castled at the opposite sides, dynamic, with a lot of tension and tactics. In these the initiative is more important than anything. We are going to start with the fight for the initiative right from the opening.

Sokolov, Andrei (2555) –
Shirov, Alexei (2715)
France, 1994

1.e4 g6 2.\textit{c3} g7 3.f4 c6 4.\textit{f3}?! 

Quite often it happens that a player wants to avoid theory and makes a somewhat strange move. Here the idea is to discourage d5, but developing the queen so early is not good as this can give black tempos later attacking the strongest piece.
After 4.d4 d5 5.e5 we reach, though not with the normal move order, a well-known position where I prefer for black 5...\( \text{h}6 \)

4...d5! Nevertheless! There is nothing wrong with 4...d6, of course, but I am sure that the majority of GMs would play the more active move, trying to exploit the awkward placement of the queen. And a player like Shirov does not need a second invitation for a sacrifice.

5.d3 Sensible.

After 5.exd5 \( \text{f}6 \) you do not need to calculate more to know that Black is somewhat better. Just to spot the ideas - \( \text{g}4, \text{c}6-d4 \), the weak diagonal g1–a7. For example: 6.dxc6 (6.\( \text{c}4 \text{g}4 \) (6...0–0 7.\( \text{g}e2 \text{g}4 \) 8.\( \text{g}3 \text{b}5 \) (8...\( \text{xe}2 \)) 7.\( \text{g}3 \text{f}5 \) 6...\( \text{xc}6 \) 7.\( \text{b}5 \text{d}7 \)

5...\( \text{f}6 \) 6.h3 Again a little slow.

6...e5!?

Third sacrifice! Even though it is an obvious one, it shows that when you start attacking you better not allow your opponent to breathe even for a single move!

10.\( \text{f}2 \) After 10.dxe4 \( \text{xe}4 \) 11.\( \text{xe}4 \text{dxe}4 \) 12.\( \text{xe}4 \text{e}8 \),

After 7.fxe5 \( \text{fd}7 \) 8.d4 c5 the position is not so clear. The play may continue 9.dxc5 (9.\( \text{e}3 \text{c}6 \) (In his book "Fire on the board" Shirov gives 9...\( \text{xd}4 \) 10.\( \text{xd}4 \text{c}6 \)? missing 11.e6! Just shows that nobody can calculate everything and many sacrifices are just by intuition.) 10.\( \text{ge}2 \text{dxe}4 \) 11.\( \text{xe}4 \text{e}0–0 \) 9...d4 10.\( \text{b}5 \text{e}0–0 \) 11.\( \text{xd}4 \text{xc}5 \) 12.\( \text{e}3 \text{bd}7 \) 13.0–0–0 \( \text{xe}5 \) 14.\( \text{f}4 \text{a}5 \) 15.\( \text{b}1 \text{d}8 \) 16.\( \text{e}2 \text{e}6 \)

7...\( \text{gxf}5 \) 8.\( \text{exf}5 \) 0–0 9.\( \text{ge}2 \text{e}4 \)!
the position opens up so much that it is tough to imagine that the white king will survive in the center.

10...exd3 11.cxd3 ♘e8 12.♗d1 ♘bd7?

This time Black plays too slow. Strange, as he had seen the forth sacrifice - 12...c5 with advantage.

12...♗a6 is a computer suggestion, but for humans is not easy to see that after 13.g4 he has 13...♗e4!

with the idea 14.dxe4 dxe4+ 15.♕e1 e3! and ♗b4 to follow; 12...c5 threatening d4 13.♖xc5 ♘xf5

13.g4 ♗e5 14.♗g3 d4 15.♗e4 ♗d5 16.♗h2?

Because of the Black's mistake earlier, White has managed to play g4 and ♗g3, creating a serious chances on the kingside. Now he had to play the active 16.♗h5 with very murky, approximately equal play.

16.♗h5 ♗c4 17.♗g5 (17.dxc4?! ♗e3+) 17...♗e3+ 18.♕c1 ♗a5 19.♗xg7 ♕xg7

16...♗b6! Last Black's piece comes into play.
White is unable to defend the pawn on d3.

17.\( \text{Nh5} \) \( \text{a6} \) 18.\( \text{Wxd4} \)
18.\( \text{gxh7} \) \( \text{xh7} \) 19.\( \text{f4} \) c5
18...\( \text{h8}! \)

**Rare but interesting line in Trompovsky**

Of course, there are many openings where one side (usually White) sacrifices material for initiative and fast development. But I think this is a good example for our theme, as both Black and White are a pawn up at a certain moment and give it back almost immediately. The initiative is more important!

1.\( \text{d4} \) \( \text{f6} \) 2.\( \text{g3} \) e4 3.\( \text{f4} \) c5 4.f3 \( \text{f6}! \)

The main line is 4...\( \text{a5}+ \) 5.c3 \( \text{f6} \) 6.d2 cxd4 7.b3 \( \text{b6} \) 8.Wxd4 Not every player, though, likes to exchange queens that early. Also it has been analyzed in considerable depth. With the rare 4..\text{Nf6} Black can not only surprise his opponent, it is a good move anyway.

5.dxc5 After 5.d5 \( \text{Nh5} \) 6.c1 e5 Black has a good version of similar positions in Classic Benoni/Kings Indian (6..e6 is also interesting.)

5...\( \text{b6}! \)
6.e4 Almost nobody from the good players has accepted the sacrifice and understandably so - after 6.cb6 \textit{x}b6 Black wins another tempo because of b2 pawn and quickly occupies the center. His next move are easy - d5, c6, e5, c5. Note that all this is possible because White has played f2–f3, not only weakening the diagonal, but the knight on g1 cannot develop normally.

6...\textit{bxc}5 7.e5 White has given back the pawn, but now he is ahead in development. He must try to make quick use of it, though, as Black after bxc5 may prevail in the center and has better strategic perspectives in general.

7.c3 c6 8.d5 d6 9.c4 d7 10.e2 e6 11.dc3 b6 12.b5 b7

The key move. If the knight has to retreat, then all Blacks’ concept is just a failure.

8.c3 c6 9.d2 h5 9...\textit{xe}5?! 10.b5 b8 11.0–0–0 e6 (11.a6 12.xe5! \textit{xe}5 13.a5) 12.a5 d3+ 13.xd3 \textit{xf}4+ 14.b1 e7 15.e4 with initiative

10.e3N
When preparing that line I was somewhat afraid of that move, although nobody has used it in practice. It looked to me that White gains too many tempos for the pawn and his play is easy - 0–0–0, g4, g5, f4 with nice initiative.

10.\( \text{d5} \) is not winning, but rather losing a tempo 10...\( \text{b8} \) 11.\( \text{e3} \) (11.e6 \( \text{xf4} \))

Like it or not, in order to avoid bigger trouble, Black gives up the material advantage but manages to exchange the queens.

The alternative 13...\( \text{h5} \) is not losing, but very dangerous - 14.f4 \( \text{c7} \) 15.\( \text{e2} \) g6 16.\( \text{hxh5 gxh5} \) 17.\( \text{e4 d5} \) 18.\( \text{f6+ d8} \) 19.\( \text{f3} \) with attack; And 13...\( \text{g8} \) is a move that you must never consider. 14.\( \text{b5}! \)

14.\( \text{xd5} \) \( \text{xd5} \) 15.\( \text{xd5 exd5} \) 16.\( \text{xd5 d6} \) 17.\( \text{f4 e6} \) 18.\( \text{d1 0–0–0=} \)
Bruzon Batista, Lazaro (2609) - Flores, Diego (2558) [B06]

1.d4 g6 2.f3 g7 3.e4 d6 4.c3 d7
5.c4 e6 6.0-0 a6 Black has played a rather passive set-up. But it has been used in even higher profile games, especially in 'must win' situations for Black, for example in FIDE knock-outs. The reason - no exchanges at all, no forced draw variations. Here or at next move, though, it was better to start developing the kingside with 6...Ne7 and 7...0-0. Since Steinitz and Lasker there is a principle to develop first the side where you are likely to castle. Now Black's king stays at center for one move too long, which White cleverly uses.

7.a4 b6 8.e1 b7 9.e5!

9...dxe5 Somewhat safer is 9...d5 but after 10.f1 Black's bishops are looking very grim.

10.d5! Opening lines against the king.

10...exd5 11.xd5 e7 12.g5 xd5 12...f6 does not really help Black's cause - 13.xe5! 16

13...xd5 14.d7 xc4 15.xf6! xd7 (15...xf6 16.xf6+ xf7 17.xf3 xf5 18.ad1! xf6 19.d7+) 16.xe7+!
Here White goes astray. In such situations the attacker must seek to regain the material without loosening his grip or giving up the initiative.

There are some other moves offering big advantage, but the best is the prophylactic 18...\textit{e}6!

The consequences of that move and the following computer geometry are not easy to be calculated in advance. Still, the ideas are the same - white lacks material, but has initiative and huge lead in development. He will take one of the bishops by force. (For a practical player it is enough to see that 16...\textit{x}d7+ \textit{e}7 17...\textit{x}e7+ c6 18...\textit{x}g7 is a pawn up) 16...\textit{x}e7 17...\textit{x}e7 \textit{x}e7 18...\textit{g}4 f7 19...\textit{b}4+ \textit{d}7 20...\textit{d}1+ \textit{c}8

21...\textit{g}4+ \textit{b}8 22...\textit{d}7 \textit{c}8 (22...\textit{f}8 23...\textit{f}4) 23...\textit{b}4 a5 24...\textit{d}2+-

13...\textit{d}5 \textit{b}8 14...\textit{c}6 f6 15...\textit{x}f6! \textit{xf}6

16...\textit{xe}5 \textit{xe}5 17...\textit{xe}5 \textit{d}8 18...\textit{d}5?! aimed against 18...\textit{f}6. Black is so tied-up, pins everywhere, he will lose the extra piece anyway 18...\textit{f}7 19...\textit{d}2 \textit{f}8 20...\textit{x}d7 No exchanges in that line compared to the game, White is winning.

18...\textit{f}7 19...\textit{e}1 \textit{f}8 The white queen is now hanging, so Black relieves his position by eliminating some of White's active pieces.

20...\textit{x}d7 \textit{c}6 21...\textit{xc}6 \textit{d}4
In the following battle Black managed to save half a point.

**Draw**

It might look as a theoretical article and someone may use the variation (it is definitely good), but I think it is also a great example of logic in chess. Multiple transformations between material and development advantage happen so often in games, not only in the opening. Unfortunately even the most enterprising chess sometimes ends in just an equal ending...

**Portisch, Lajos - Matanovic, Aleksandar [E05]**
Skopje/Ohrid Skopje (5), 1968

1.c4 ♗f6 2.d4 f3 e6 3.g3 d5 4.g2 ♗e7 5.0–0
0–0 6.d4 dxc4 7.e5 c5 These days almost everybody plays 7…c6

(8.♗xc6 bxc6 9.♕xc6 ♑b8 10.♕c3 the bishop on c6 is somewhat misplaced and Black can try either to cut it from the rest of White's army with 10…♗d5 or exchange it immediately (10…♗b7) 8…bxc6 9.♕xc6 ♑e8 10.♕xe7+ ♑xe7 when Black normally loses the pawn on c4, but frees himself with either}
c5 or e5. White must be careful with the squares around his king. Alas, as in many similar variations, there is a plenty of theory, which estimates the position as almost forced draw...

8.dxc5 \( \text{c7} \) 9.\( \text{xc4} \) \( \text{xc5} \) Black’s idea is that because of \( \text{xf2} \) threat, White has to make some passive move, defending the knight. If so he will develop rather comfortably. The fight is for one single tempo!

10.\( \text{c3}! \)

And Portisch ignores the threat!

10...\( \text{d8} \) The problem is that 10...\( \text{xf2}+ \)

11.\( \text{xf2} \) \( \text{xc4} \)

will be met by 12.\( \text{xf6}! \) gxf6 13.\( \text{h6} \) followed by \( \text{e4} \), possibly e3 threatening mate on g4 and so on. Black is an exchange and a pawn up, but the king is very weak, the queenside is not developed at all. White can gain even more tempos with \( \text{c1} \) or \( \text{d6} \), his play generally is very easy.

11.\( \text{f4}! \)

Again trying to win as many tempos and develop as fast as possible.

11...\( \text{xf2}+ \)? Blunders most often happen
when someone already does not like his position...

The best move 11...\texttt{We7} does not solve all the problems 12.\texttt{Wc2} \texttt{Oc6} 13.\texttt{Ad1} and White is better, his pieces are well-placed, Black still has to find a way to develop the queenside.

12.\texttt{xf2} \texttt{E5} 13.\texttt{b5}!

This is what Black missed, in all variations checks on c5 will be countered with \texttt{e3}.

13...\texttt{e7} 14.\texttt{d2} \texttt{c6} 15.\texttt{ba3} \texttt{e6} 16.\texttt{c1} \texttt{e4} 17.\texttt{g1} White defended accurately and gradually won the game.

1-0
Rare weapon against the Leningrad system in Dutch defence
(by GM Grigor Grigorov)

Hello dear reader! I have the pleasure to introduce you in the extremely interesting Leningrad system in Dutch defence. The flexible pawn structure in this variation makes the arising positions very difficult to be analysed with a computer. One needs deep understanding in order to treat correctly such types of positions. That's why the Leningrad system is the favorite choice of creative players like Nakamura, Bartel and Malaniuk. In the present article I would like to share with you my favorite weapon against this dangerous system. The variation that I am going to show you is not only positionally sound, but also it's less popular than the main lines. My practice shows that the majority of the players are not well prepared against this rare line. You can also seize the opportunity to cause nightmares to your opponents. The main position arises after the moves:

1.e3 f5 2.d4 f6 3.g3 g6 4.g2 g7 5.0-0 0-0 6.bd2 d6 7.e1

We have reached the main crossroad of this rare line. By his last move white prepares the advance e2–e4 after which the rook will be able to exert pressure along the semi-open "e" file. I would like also to emphasize on the fact that white hasn't played yet the move c2–c4 and he has the possibility to restrict the "g7" bishop by means of c2–c3.

7...e4 The main move in this position. Black takes radical measures against the pawn advance. He wants to open the "f" file for his rook after possible exchange of the knights. Before we continue it's necessary to take a look at other possible continuations.

7...c6 Very interesting idea. Black not only prepares the e7–e5 advance but also increases
the pressure over the "d4" pawn. The main drawback of this move is that the knight is placed in front of the "c7" pawn. As a consequence, the "c" pawn can no longer participate in the fight for the center by c7-c6. Furthermore, as it will become clear later, in some cases white could use the restricted mobility of black's Queen. In general, you must think twice before placing your knight in front of the "c7" (c2) pawn! 8.e4! In order to use the "bad" position of the knight, white should play very energetically. The move 8...e5

![Chess Diagram]

Allows white to obtain the favourable pawn structure which we have already discussed.

**a)** After 8...fxe4 9.\( \text{???} \)xe4 \( \text{???} \)xe4 (9...\( \text{???} \)g4 10.c3 \( \text{???} \)d7 11.\( \text{???} \)b3+ \( \text{???} \)h8 12.\( \text{???} \)fg5f \( \text{???} \) ½–½ Steinmacher, J-Denk, J/Forchtenberg 2003/EXT 2004 (12)) 10.\( \text{???} \)xe4

We reach an extremely important position where black has 3 options: \( \text{???} \)f5, d5 and e5. Let's analyze them separately. 10...e5

![Chess Diagram]

**a1)** 10...\( \text{???} \)f5 11.\( \text{???} \)e1 The move 11...\( \text{???} \)g4
is almost always well met by

**a11)** 11...e5 This option leads by force to highly favorable for white endgame. 12.dxe5 dxe5 13.♗xd8 ♗xd8 14.c3

We have a typical position where black has problems due to the weakness of the "e5" pawn and the restricted mobility of the black's dark-squared bishop. In such positions, our plan include 3 main stages:
1) blockade of the "e5" pawn by means of ♖g5−e4 and ♖e3.
2) exchange a pair of rooks along the "d" file.
3) Launch a queenside expansion (b2−b4, a2−a4) which will be supported by the minor pieces. 14...e4 Black couldn't afford himself to wait anymore. 15.♖g5 ♔e5 16.♗xe4 ♔d3 17.♖d1! h6 Not only preventing the move Bg5 but also planning to double the rooks along the "d" file. Fortunately, white finds an interesting way to undermine the stability of black's knight. 18.f4! Planning ♔f2 on the next move. 18...c5 Very interesting idea. Black tries to support their knight at any price! (The move 18...♗fe8 Doesn't offer black enough compensation. Play might continue: 19.♗f2 ♖f8 20.g4! ♖xc1 21.♖xc1 ♖c8 22.♖e4+ White is just pawn up) 19.♖f2 ♔e4 (19...♗xf2? 20.♖xd8 ♖xd8 21.♗xf2 ♖d1 22.♖xb7+- White threatens to play Bf3 after which the game is over.) 20.♖xd3 ♖g4! 21.♖d2 ♖xd3 22.♗e4 ♖f5 (22...♖e2 23.♖xg6) 23.♖xb7 White's plan is very simple - he wants to play ♖d1, ♖d2 and ♖f3 with completely winning position. Black's compensation for the missing pawns doesn't seem to be sufficient. His only decent idea is to transfer the dark-squared bishop on the "a7−g1" diagonal but white has enough resources to prevent this plan. 23...♖fe8 24.♗f2 ♖f8 25.b4!+-

**a12)** 11...♗d7
Quite a typical idea in such structures. Black activates his queen and at the same time wants to prepare e7–e5 advance by means of $\text{f}ae8$. Also in some cases he could try to exchange the white-squared bishops by playing $\text{h}h3$. 12.c3 This move forces black to lose important tempo in order to parry the threat $\text{h}b3+12...\text{h}h8$

13.d5! Typical idea in such kind of structures. White’s play is now based on the backward pawn on "e7". 13...$\text{d}e5$ 14.$\text{d}xe5$ $\text{d}xe5$ 15.$\text{d}e3$

pressure against the "e7" pawn. Despite of the wide choice of moves, black is doomed to passivity. 15...$\text{h}f6$

Black tries to get rid of their weakness on "e7" by playing e7–e5 as soon as possible. In order to achieve this advance, he should remove his pieces from the long diagonal (b6, $\text{f}ae8$ and only then e7–e5). Although, white gains valuable time to organize his invasion along the "e" file. For instance: after 15...$\text{h}h3$ 16.$\text{x}h3$ $\text{h}xh3$ 17.$\text{d}d4$ $\text{f}5$ 18.f4!

White's plan is fairly simple: After the exchange of the dark-squared bishops he will seize the opportunity to build a tremendous

White is almost winning. 18...$\text{f}6$? Loses on the spot. (18...$\text{xd}4+$ is somewhat better although white's advantage is still close to
decisive. For example: $19.\text{fxd} 4+ \text{xf} 6 20.\text{xe} 7 \text{fxd} 4+ 21.\text{cx} \text{xd} 4+$ $19.\text{xe} 7 \text{ae} 8 20.\text{xf} 6+ \text{xf} 6 21.\text{xc} 7+– 1–0$ Szekely, P-
Simons, R/Rosmalen 1993/EXT 2002 (50); 15...c5?!

prevents the exchange of the bishops but allows nice tactical trick. $16.\text{xc} 5! \text{xc} 3$
$17.\text{d} 4+ \text{xd} 4 18.\text{xd} 4+ \text{g} 8$ Now it's time to make use of the awkward position of black's bishop. $19.\text{h} 3!$ Preparing the advance $\text{g} 3–\text{g} 4$. The pawn on $\text{h} 3$ is untouchable because of the unprotected position of the "e7" pawn. $19...\text{d} 8 (19...\text{hx} 3 20.\text{hx} 3 \text{hx} 3$
$21.\text{xe} 7 \text{f} 7 22.\text{xf} 7 \text{xf} 7 23.\text{f} 4+ followed$ by $\text{Qd} 6) 20.\text{ae} 3 \text{f} 7 21.\text{ae} 1 \text{a} 6 22.\text{h} 4 \text{f} 8$
$23.\text{g} 4 \text{c} 2 24.\text{c} 3 \text{a} 5 (24...\text{a} 4 doesn't help either). 25.\text{f} 3!++$ black couldn't defend simultaneously "h7" and "e7" pawns.)
$25.\text{h} 6+ \text{g} 8 26.\text{d} 2$ Black resigns in view of the threat $\text{Rc} 8$. 1–0 Bogdanovski, V-
Nikac, P/Niksic 1994/EXT 98 (26); After 15...a6 16.\text{d} 4 \text{xd} 4 17.\text{xd} 4+ \text{g} 8 White executes his typical plan without facing any difficulties. $18.\text{e} 3! \text{f} 7 19.\text{ae} 1+$

Despite of the fact that white's advantage is obvious, I would like to give you some useful tips which will help you to convert your advantage in such type of positions. As you could see, black has enough resources to defend the weakness on e7. That's why we should try to create a second weakness in black's camp. In order to achieve that, we should take the following actions:
1) Exchange white-squared bishops by means of $\text{e} 4$ in order to make use of the weakened "e6" square.
2) Place the rook on e6 while the queen should on e4.
3) Create second weakness on the kingside using h4–h5 pawn contact; $16.\text{d} 4 \text{ae} 8$
$17.\text{e} 3 \text{b} 6 18.\text{d} 2 \text{e} 5! 19.\text{dx} 6 \text{e} 6 20.\text{ae} 1$
$\text{xe} 3 21.\text{xe} 3 \text{g} 7 22.\text{xf} 6 \text{xf} 6 23.\text{e} 7+!+ 1–0$ Schulz,K-Zysk,R/Germany 1992/GER-chT
(30);

a13) It looks tempting to play 11...\text{b} 4? but white has a powerful response at his disposal. 12.\text{h} 4! \text{d} 7 (The "c2" pawn is untouchable:
$12...\text{xc} 2? 13.\text{x} 5 \text{xa} 1 14.\text{x} 7 \text{g} 7 15.\text{e} 3–+$; 12...\text{xc} 2? 13.\text{d} 2! with the idea to attack the knight by a2–a3. 13...\text{d} 3 14.\text{f} 1$
$\text{xc} 1 15.\text{xc} 2+–) 13.\text{xf} 5 \text{xf} 5 14.\text{e} 2! \text{c} 6$
$15.\text{c} 3 \text{d} 5 16.\text{b} 3 \text{ab} 8 17.\text{d} 2+ The strong pair of bishops and the weakness on "e7"

28
gives white an obvious advantage. Now he is planning to play \( \text{Ke1; Ce4} \); \( \text{12.c3} \) with the idea \( \text{Pb3+} \) followed by \( \text{Qg5} \) \( \text{12...h8} \). Allowing white to grab the bishop pair but there is nothing better. (\( \text{12...e6?!} \)

Prepares the move \( \text{Qf6} \) which allows black to make use of the weakened "f" file. Fortunately, that idea doesn't work because white can use the unprotected position of the bishop on \( g4 \) to transfer his rook on the kingside. \( \text{13.Ke4!} \)

\( \text{Ke5} \) \( \text{14.Kg5} \) Typical for this variation intermediate move. White’s plan is quite logical - \( \text{Rh4, Qd2, Bh6} \) followed by \( \text{Ng5} \). For instance: \( \text{14...d7} \) \( \text{15.Ke4} \) \( \text{Me8} \) \( \text{16.Ed2} \) \( \text{Ec8} \) \( \text{17.Kh6} \) \( \text{Kf7} \) \( \text{18.Ke1} \) \( \text{Kxh6} \) \( \text{19.Kxh6} \) \( \text{Kd8} \) \( \text{20.Kg5} + \) \( \text{\frac{1}{2}} \) \( \text{\frac{1}{2}} \) Geisler, R-Jugel, T/Germany 1994/GER-chT2 (35); \( \text{12...d7?} \)

is losing immediately after the typical: \( \text{13.Wb3+ Kh8} \) \( \text{14.Qg5} \) Because after \( \text{14...Qd8} \) White make use of the restricted mobility of the black-squared bishop. \( \text{15.f3! Kg5} \) \( \text{16.g4} \) \( \text{h6} \) \( \text{17.fxg5} \) \( \text{hxg5} \) \( \text{18.Qxg5} \) \( \text{Qf6} \) \( \text{19.Qxf6} + \text{Qxf6} \) It seems that black has parried all the threats but white has at his disposal the following rook transfer along the 3rd rank. \( \text{20.Ke3! gxf5} \) \( \text{21.f4!} \) \( \text{c6} \) \( \text{22.Ke3} + \text{g7} \) \( \text{23.Qg3+} \) \( \text{Qg6} \) \( \text{24.Qxg6+} \) \( \text{Qxg6} \) \( \text{25.Qg8++} \) 1–0 Szekely, P-Theocharides, C/Athens 1997/EXT 2001 (29); \( \text{13.h3} \) \( \text{Kxf3} \) Otherwise white plays \( \text{d4–d5} \). After: \( \text{14.Kxf3} \) \( \text{e5} \) \( \text{15.dxe5} \) \( \text{Ke5} \) \( \text{16.Qg2} \) \( \text{h7} \) \( \text{17.Ke3} \) \( \text{Ke8} \) \( \text{18.Qa4} \) We reach an open position where the potential of the bishop pair is extremely high. \( \text{D...D...} \) Schulz, K-Vokac, M/Prague 1987/EXT 97 (65); \( \text{a2}) \) \( \text{10...d5} \)
11.\textit{\texttt{g4}}! Very important moment. The reader already knows that the rook could be very well placed on \texttt{h4} - from here it controls the "\texttt{g4}" square and at the same time participates in the kingside attack. That's exactly the move that I have chosen in my game against GM Michal Krasenkow from Poland. (11.\textit{\texttt{e1}} doesn't work here because of: 11...\textit{\texttt{g4}} 12.\texttt{c3 e5!} and black is completely fine.) 11...\textit{\texttt{f5!}}

The best way to play this position! Krasenkow wants to put his bishops on \texttt{e4} and \texttt{f6} and only there to play \texttt{e7-e5}. (11...\textit{\texttt{f5}} 12.\texttt{c3 e5?} 13.\texttt{dxe5 xe5} 14.\textit{\texttt{dxe5 xe5}} 15.\textit{\texttt{f4!}} (15.\textit{\texttt{e3? c6}} 16.\textit{\texttt{d4 e8}} 17.\textit{\texttt{exg7 xg7}} 18.\textit{\texttt{d2 \text{f}2} 1/2}–1/2

Lythak, A-Reinderman, D/Groningen 1996/EXT 98 (31) 15...\textit{\texttt{xf5}} 16.\textit{\texttt{e4!+}}) 12.\texttt{c3 \text{f}6} 13.\textit{\texttt{g5}}!

(In the game I played: 13.\textit{\texttt{g5}} and after: 13...\textit{\texttt{e4}} 14.\textit{\texttt{xf6 xf6}} 15.\textit{\texttt{d2 xg2}} 16.\textit{\texttt{xg2}} We have reached an equal position which I managed to win after some inaccuracies made by my opponent. The strong knight jump was found only in the analysis.) After: 13...\textit{\texttt{e6}} What has a forced way to obtain a pair of bishops in slightly better endgame. 14.\textit{\texttt{xh7 xh4}} 15.\textit{\texttt{xf8 xe7}} 16.\textit{\texttt{g4 xf8}} 17.\textit{\texttt{e2!}} It's good to activate the queen before we capture the bishop. Now white is planning to play \textit{\texttt{Qe3}} and \textit{\texttt{h3}} after taking the bishop. 17...\textit{\texttt{e4}} 18.\textit{\texttt{f3}} White a slight edge.; 11.\textit{\texttt{g5!}} Once again we have this typical intermediate move. As I have mentioned in my comments to the move 7...\textit{\texttt{c6}}, black queen lacks good squares. White’s pressure could be very dangerous. 11...\textit{\texttt{e8}} 12.\texttt{dxe5 dxe5} Black is forced to accept the inferior pawn structure. 13.\textit{\texttt{h4}} White is willing to play \texttt{c3 d5+} and Re1 after which his advantage is undisputable. For instance: 13...\textit{\texttt{f5}} 14.\texttt{c3 e4} 15.\textit{\texttt{d5+! f7}} 16.\textit{\texttt{e1! f8}} 17.\textit{\texttt{d2 h6}} 18.\textit{\texttt{e3 g5}} 19.\textit{\texttt{xe4!}}

This quality sacrifice ensures total domination on the light squares. 19...\textit{\texttt{xe4}} 20.\textit{\texttt{xe4+ 1–0}}
b) 8...f4

Quite an original pawn sacrifice which couldn't be accepted immediately in view of 9... h5. Black is planning to increase the pressure over "d4" pawn by playing simple moves like g4, h5 and e5. White couldn't waste time! 9.d5! The only way to fight for an advantage! 9...b8.

This solid move also fails to equalize. White's plan is to transfer the knight on d2 to d4.

b1) After 9...b4

White makes use of the vulnerable position of black knight. 10.gxf4! h5 11.f1 g4 It seems that black finally has sufficient counterplay but white is in time to execute the following blow: (11...xf4?? Is impossible due to: 12.xf4 xf4 13.d2+- Winning a piece) 12.f5! e5

(12...gxf5 doesn't work in view of: 13.h3 xf3

14.xf3 f6 15.exf5+ With g3, e6 and g5 to follow) 13.d2! Very deep idea – white not only attacks the knight but also is preparing a queen transfer to g5! 13...xf3 14.xf3 c5 15.xh5 gxh5 16.c3 a6 17.g5+ h8
18.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textsc{w}}xh5}-- The game is over. 1-0 Heinbuch,D-Gupta,M/Germany 1992/GER-chT2 (24);

\textbf{b2)} 9...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{d}}e5} Creates defects in the pawn structure which could be exploited in a very interesting way. 10.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{d}}xe5}} dxe5 11.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{c}}c4}} \\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{d}}h5}}
12.b3! Diagram 23

![Diagram 23]

It's already very difficult for black to defend the "e5" pawn – \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{b}}b2} is coming. 12...b5 Eliminates the threat but weakens the queenside. 13.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{a}}a5}} c5 (After 13...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{d}}d7}} White can make use of the weakness on c5 14.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{b}}b7}} With the idea \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{c}}c5}) 14.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{c}}c6}} \\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{d}}d6}}

Black has defended everything and he intends to continue with \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{d}}d7}}. Unfortunately for him white hasn't said yet his last word! His plan is to open a line on the queenside. 15.a4! b4 16.c3! \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{d}}d7}} 17.cxb4 cxb4 18.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{b}}b2}} fxg3 19.hxg3 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{f}}f7}} 20.\\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{c}}c1}}± White's advantage is beyond any doubt. By playing \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{d}}d2}} he will force black to defend the b4 pawn by a7–a5. Only then the queen will go to b6 square and the rooks will be doubled along the "c" file. 1–0 Gruber,T-Effert,K/Zell 1991/GER (34); 10.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{b}}b3}} fxg3 11.hxg3 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{g}}g4}} 12.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{b}}d4}} c5 13.dxc6 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{x}}xc6}} 14.c3 White retains an edge due the space advantage and the weakened light squares in black’s camp. Moves like Qb3 followed by Ne6 are always in the air. 1–0 Franke,H-Borngaesser,R/Bad Neuenahr 1987/CM 04 (99); 9.exf5 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{x}}xf5}} 10.dxe5 dxe5 11.c3
The position on the board is extremely difficult for black. As always white should block the e5 pawn by Ng5–e4 and later prepare his queenside expansion by means of We2, Bb3–c5, e3, d1 and b4.; 7...c6 Typical idea in Dutch defence. Black ensures better control over the center and at the same time is planning to prepare the advance e7–e5 by Wc7 or We8. The drawback of 7...c6 is that e7–e5 takes much more time while white is ready to break in the center. 8.e4 fxe4 9.Wxe4 Now black has huge problems caused by the weakened "e" file. White is already threatening De5. 9...Dxe4 10.We4 f5 11.We1 Black is almost helpless in front of the typical threat c3 followed by Qb3 and Ng5. For example: 11...Dd7 12.c3 Dh8 13.Wb3 Bb8 14.Dg5! We8 15.De6 Dxe6 16.Wxe6± 1–0 Szekely,P-Roy Chowdhury,S/Calcutta 1996/CBM 50 ext (52); 7...h5

Extremely creative approach. Black is ready to meet e2–e4 advance by f5–f4 and at the same time prepares e7–e5. 8.h3! Very strong reaction after which f4 is no longer possible due to g4. Now white is planning to play e4. 8...Dc6 Black prepares e7–e5 but doesn't control the "d5" square. As a rule, in such kind of pawn structures white always tries to advance further his central pawn when black is not controlling the "d5" square. (The direct 8...e5 fails to 9.dxe5 dxe5 10.e4 The e5 pawn is very weak. This variation illustrates the rule that it's not advisable to break in the center while you are behind in development.) 9.d5 Db4 10.e4 fxe4 11.Dxe4 White's advantage is tremendous. Now he wants to occupy the "e6" square by playing Neg5. 11...h6 12.c3 Da6 13.Dd4± 1–0 Huhndorf,A-Wolf,U/Germany 2002/EXT 2004 (28); Another option for black is to play a Stonewall type of positions after 7...d5 8.c4 c6 9.b3 Dbd7 10.Db2
11. c3 h6 12. h3 e5 13. dxe5 exf3 [The move 13...exf5 doesn’t seem to propose enough compensation for the pawn. 14. fxe4 c6 (14...dxe4 15. wxd8 wxd8 16. f2+) 15. exd5 w6+ 16. h1 cxd5 17. wxd5+ e6 18. d4! wa5 19. f4 f7 20. g1 With the idea e3–d4. Dydyshko,V-Ibragimov,l/Azov 1991/CBM 25 (50)]

14. exf3 e5 15. f4 c6 16. e3 e8 17. d4

I believe that white could claim a slight edge in this position. The g6 pawn is weak and black knight is far from being stable. In the future battle white will be trying to combine the threats against black’s kingside with pressure along the “d” file. 1–0 Schulz,K-Jahr,U/Porz 1989/EXT’97 (36)]

We have reached highly unusual version of the Stonewall system in Dutch defence. The main difference is that black’s black-squared bishop usually stands on d6 where not only controls the "e5" square but also makes more difficult white’s play on the queenside. In order to use that drawback, white could play b4 as soon as possible. Later he may have chosen the following plan: Rac1, Qb3, a4 and b5. Also it’s important to mention that due to the move g7–g6 black is no longer able to activate his light-squared bishop using the route d7–e8–h5. Taking into consideration these factors, we could conclude that white’s position is better.]

8. xxe4 fxe4 9. g5 d5 10. f3 [White must attack the center before the development of black’s queenside.]

10...c6 [The main move.]

[After 10...exf3 11.exf3 The "e" file is too weak. White’s immediate threat is Ne6. The play may continue: 11...c6 12.c3 f6 13. h3 Now the knight will go to d3 via f4. Black’s position is strategically very difficult. 13...h6 14. f4 e6 15. h3 d6 16. d3 Now 16...f8 is well met by the nice little trick 17. f4 with the idea: 17...g5 18. xc7 xfx3 19. f4+]
Hello, dear friends of the ancient game. During the next issues of our magazine, we will present the contemporary situation of the Dragon variation. This article is useful for the creation of the opening repertoire. Using the most powerful chess programs, many forgotten and old variations have been improved and turned into games at the high level. The Dragon variation is not an exception. Over the years, the variation has suffered hits, but repeatedly its lovers found resources that allowed it to remain alive until nowadays. In the beginning of my articles, I will discuss one of the most acute and dangerous variations, where every move is crucial and the knowledge of the smallest details of the position is compulsory for both sides. This is the variation where White makes the long castle. The defining moment in this system occurs on the ninth move when Whites have to choose between two moves $\textsf{c}4$ and $0-$0. The first article of the series is dedicated to the Dragon variation with 9. $\textsf{c}4$. 

1.e4 c5 2.$\textsf{f}3$ d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.$\textsf{x}d4$ $\textsf{f}6$ 5.$\textsf{c}3$ g6 6.$\textsf{e}3$ $\textsf{g}7$ 7.f3 0-0 8.$\textsf{d}2$ $\textsf{c}6$ 9.$\textsf{c}4$ $\textsf{d}7$ 10.0-0-0 $\textsf{c}8$ 11.$\textsf{b}3$ $\textsf{e}5$

This is main strating position of the variation.

12.h4

This is the main and most dangerous move. White is planing on pushing h4-h5, sacfricing the pawn in order to open the „h“ line. It is necessary to point out that the white attack becomes even more dangerous after the exchange of the dark-squared bishops. Many of you probably know the famous quote of the world champion Robert Fisher: „In the Dragon variation Black is strategically lost – White opens the „h“ line, exchages the dark-squared bishops, gives
several checks and declares checkmate." Despite the joking nature, this statement shows what we have to beware of, when paying this position. Before proceeding to the analysis of the baselines, we will look to some rare continuations.

The first continuation that we will look at is 12.g4.

This move is ill-advised, because it weakends the "f3" pawn. 12...b5! 13.g5 The pawn on "b5" cannot be taken due to the weakness on "f3". (13.exb5? axf3! Black's advantage is obvious.) 13...b4 14.dxe2 dxe5 15.f4 (After 15.exb4? White has problems, cause by the limited mobility of the light-squared bishop. 15...a5! 16.d3 a4+) 15...dxc4 16.bxc4 dxc4

This is a typical sacrifice of the exchange, which can be found in a great amount of games. The idea behind it, is to destroy the cover in front of the white king, by removing one of the attacking white pieces (c3). 14.bxc3 a5!
This move intends to cause more weaknesses in front of the white king. 15.a4 \textit{c}7 16.\textit{e}3 \textit{c}5 17.\textit{d}2 \textit{xa}4 Black has more than enough compensation for the sacrifice of the exchange: 12.\textit{b}1

Interesting prophylactic move, which shows White's intention for a positional play. On the other side, Black uses the given opportunity to organize a pawn attack on the white king who castled on queenside. 12...\textit{c}4 13.\textit{xc}4 \textit{xc}4 14.g4 b5 15.b3 b4!?

Interesting continuation, which recently became more popular among chess players. This move is thoroughly analyzed by Czech Grandmaster Jiri Stochek. The idea is that through the sacrifice of the exchange, Black manages to destroy the defense in front of the white king and to gain some interesting counter chances. The fight got an extremely sharp character. 16.bxc4 The acceptance of the sacrifice is the most principal continuation. Black has no difficulties after 16.\textit{ce}2 \textit{c}8 17.g5. (Major mistake 17.\textit{xb}4, because white knight is captured in the center of the board. 17...a5 18.\textit{d}2 e5 and Black wins.) 17...\textit{h}5 18.\textit{g}3 \textit{a}5 19.\textit{xh}5 gxh5

The Black's position is more preferable. Black has the pair of bishops in an open position and is ready to take advantage of the weakened white

\textbf{MODERN CHESS}
queenside. On the other hand, white cannot open the file against the black king.) 16...bxc3 17.\(\text{wxc}3\) \(\text{\textbackslash w}c7\)

Critical position for the assessment of the variation. The Black’s compensation is due to the white weak king and compromised white pawn structure. We should also not underestimate the power of the black dark-squared bishop who stands threateningly against white queen. Here’s how we could put the figures in this type of position: \(\text{\textbackslash c}8\), \(\text{\textbackslash a}4\) (e6), \(\text{\textbackslash d}7\)-b6 (e5).

12...h5

Black is trying to stop White’s attack on kingside using radical measures. The next step is to neutralize white light-squared bishop by \(\text{\textbackslash c}4\).

13.\(\text{\textbackslash g}5\)

Very dangerous continuation. By putting the black knight under target, White strengthens is typical threats \(\text{\textbackslash d}5\) and g4. It is necessary to underline that in many variations, the “e7” pawn remains unprotected.

Another interesting continuation for black is 13.\(\text{\textbackslash h}6\) \(\text{\textbackslash c}4\) 14.\(\text{\textbackslash x}c4\) \(\text{\textbackslash x}c4\) 15.\(\text{\textbackslash x}g7\) \(\text{\textbackslash x}g7\)

Extremely characteristic for this variation. Dragon position. White attacking potential diminished after the exchange of the white pair of bishops. Black’s attack is a totally different story. His attack on the queenside develops for itself. Further plan includes moves like \(\text{\textbackslash a}5\), \(\text{\textbackslash f}c8\) \(\text{\textbackslash b}7\)-b5-b4. At a certain moment it is possible to move e7–e5, followed by \(\text{\textbackslash e}6\). 16.\(\text{\textbackslash b}1\)
White prefers the prophylactic move.

a) 16.\textit{he}1

When in this variation, White places its king rook in the center of the board, it shows his desire to steer the game into a strategic manner. As the readers will convince themselves, it is very difficult to win against Dragon variation with positional play! 16...\textit{a}5 17.\textit{g}5 White seeks for the exchange of the queens. Otherwise, Black’s initiative acquires a dangerous character. 17...\textit{x}g5+ 18.h\textit{x}g5 \textit{h}7 19.e\textit{e}5 \textit{x}g5 20.ex\textit{d}6 ex\textit{d}6 21.\textit{d}b5 \textit{b}5 22.\textit{x}b5 \textit{e}6= with a completely equal endgame.

b) Another standard move for white is 16.\textit{d}5

16...e5! A typical reaction to white offensive knights in the center. The weakness of the “e6” pawn will be compensated by the threats on the semi-opened file “c”. 17.\textit{e}2 \textit{xd}5 18.\textit{x}d5 \textit{c}6. The black game is more preferable - his plan includes move like: \textit{e}6, \textit{c}7 and \textit{fc}8.

c) Another interesting option for white is 16.g4

A typical Dragon position occurred. White does not stop with material sacrifices, in order to as soon as possible to the black king. On the other hand, if Black manages to stop the attack, the material advantage will decisive for the game. Here is how the game could continue: 16...hx\textit{g}4 17.h5 \textit{h}8!
Ingenious defense, which puts in doubt the plan with 16.g4 18.hxg6 (after 18.fxg4 game quickly turns into an equal endgame. 18...hxg4 19.hxg6 \(\text{xd4}\)! 20.\(\text{xd4}\) \(\text{xd1}\) 21.\(\text{xd1}\) \(\text{b6}\) 22.\(\text{xb6}\) axb6 23.gxf7 \(\text{xf7}\) =) 18...fxg6

Black accepts the challenge. The game takes a very particular character. 20.\(\text{de2}\)

White is again at the crossroads – he needs to decide whether to look for a break in the center (f3-f4 followed by e4-e5) or to seek to open the file against black king (fxg4). 19.f4 (19.f4 gx4 19.f4 20.e5 Energetic move, which is the only opportunity for white not to lose material. 20.dxe5 21.\(\text{xe6}\) 22.\(\text{xd8}\) \(\text{xd8}\) 23.\(\text{xd8}\) \(\text{f5}\) Black has more than enough compensation for the sacrifice of the exchange.) 19.e5

The principal continuation. “e2” square is the most suitable place for the white knight, because it can easily get on the kingside (\(\text{g3}\)) and also prevents the typical sacrifice on “c3”. The critical position arises after the moves:

C1) The attempt to conquer the white "h" file is doomed to fail because the black top has ideally a support point "h3". 20.fxe5 dxe5 21.\(\text{b3}\) (After 21.\(\text{e6}\) 22.\(\text{xd8}\) \(\text{xd8}\) 23.\(\text{xd8}\) \(\text{xe4}\) 24.\(\text{xe4}\) Passed pawn “g” is too dangerous.) 21...\(\text{h3}\)!.
22.\textit{hf1} \textit{f3} 23.\textit{xf3} \textit{gxf3} 24.\textit{h1} \textit{g4} 25.\textit{d1} \textit{f6} The equal outcome is inevitable.

\textbf{C2)} Another interesting possibility is 20.\textit{xh8} \textit{xh8}

White willingly provides his opponent the possession of the “h” file in exchange for putting pressure on the backward pawn “d6”. However, Black has enough resources to protect it. 21.\textit{de2} (21.\textit{b3} \textit{f8}! 22.\textit{fxe5} (22.\textit{xd6} \textit{xd6} 23.\textit{xd6} \textit{c6} Black has an enormous advantage.) 22...\textit{dxe5} 23.\textit{g5} \textit{e7=} With approximately equal game.)

21...\textit{c6!} Black manages to defend his weakness. The strong passed pawn “g4” and the possession of the only opened file allows Black to look with optimism to the continuation of the game.

\textbf{c3)} 20.\textit{b3}

20...\textit{xc3}! Again the sacrifice on “c3” is actual. 21.\textit{xh8} (...21.\textit{xc3} \textit{h1} 22.\textit{xf4} 23.e5 \textit{dxe5} 24.\textit{xe5} \textit{f3} 25.\textit{e3} \textit{e8}! 21...\textit{xh8} 22.\textit{xc3} \textit{h6} 23.\textit{b1} \textit{xf4=} Black king is well protected, and “g4” pawn is very dangerous. There is a dynamic balance on the board.; 20...\textit{h1} 21.\textit{b1} \textit{e4} 22.\textit{xe4} \textit{xe4} 23.\textit{fxe5} \textit{xe2} 24.\textit{xe2} \textit{g5}+

25.\textit{d2} The most dangerous continuation. (Inaccurately 25.\textit{b1} \textit{c6} 26.\textit{e1} (26.\textit{g1} \textit{f3} 27.\textit{f2} \textit{dxe5=}) 26...\textit{dxe5} 27.\textit{xe5}+ \textit{xe5} 28.\textit{xe5} \textit{f6} with advantage for Black.) 25...\textit{xd2+} 26.\textit{xd2} \textit{dxe5} 27.\textit{e3} \textit{c6} 28.\textit{g1} \textit{f3}
The assessment of this endgame is a draw. To support this argument we give you the following example of possible continuation: 29.b4 \(\text{\textipa{f}6}\) 30.c4 \(\text{\textipa{e}6}\) 31.c1 e4 32.b5 g3 33.c5 \(\text{\textipa{d}7}\) 34.c6+ \(\text{\textipa{c}7}\) 35.cxb7+ \(\text{\textipa{x}b}7\) 36.c6 g5 37.a4 g2 38.f2 g4=; 16...\(\text{\textipa{a}5}\) A typical move for the Dragon variation, Black develops the queen on an attacking position and prepares to double the heavy pieces on the “c” file. 17.h1 (17.b3 \(\text{\textipa{c}7}\) Black achieved his goal. White knight is away from the center of the board and the typical sacrifice on “c3” is pending. 18.g4hxg4 19.h5 \(\text{\textipa{x}c}3\)! An excellent sacrifice of the exchange, after which the game gets a double-edged character with mutual chances. 20.hxg6 fxg6 21.bxc3 gxf3 22.h6+ \(\text{\textipa{f}7}\) It is necessary to point out that in this type of positions, the white king is more vulnerable. The black king is fully protected by the strong \(\text{\textipa{f}6}\).) 17...\(\text{\textipa{fc}8}\)

In order to explain the danger that this position hides we will look at a fragment of the match between GM Ian Nepomniachtchi (2723) and GM Wei Yi (2551), played two years ago. 18.\(\text{\textipa{e}3}\) a6 19.e2 \(\text{\textipa{c}5}\) 20.\(\text{\textipa{dd}2}\) b5 21.d1 e5 22.b3 \(\text{\textipa{c}7}\) 23.g5 e6 Black’s advantage is undisputed. He managed to place the heavy pieces on the semi-opened file “c” and now is planning a pawn attack by pushing a6–a5–a4 and b5–b4.; Quiet slowly is 13.b1

13...\(\text{\textipa{c}4}\) 14.xc4 \(\text{\textipa{x}c}4\) 15.b3 (A typical mistake in this kind of position would be 15.h6? because after 15...\(\text{\textipa{x}d}4\) White loses immediately.) 15...\(\text{\textipa{b}8}\) Rarely played, but an interesting continuation. The idea is to clear the “c8” square for the rook from “f8”. The queen, on the other hand, supports the movement of the
After this move, Black manages to master the initiative and to get ahead with the attack. 18.\texttt{b}e3 \texttt{b}5 19.\texttt{a}a5 \texttt{b}4! 20.\texttt{xc}4 \texttt{bxc}3 21.\texttt{b}3 \texttt{b}5–+

A picturesque position! White is helpless.

13...\texttt{c}5 14.\texttt{b}1

14...\texttt{b}5 15.\texttt{f}4 \texttt{c}4 16.\texttt{xc}4 \texttt{xc}4 17.\texttt{e}5 \texttt{b}4! 18.exf6 exf6 19.\texttt{d}3 \texttt{xd}4! 20.\texttt{xd}4 \texttt{bxc}3 21.\texttt{x}d6 fxg5 22.\texttt{x}d7 \texttt{a}5 23.\texttt{e}8
Up to this position six games reached, in four of them Black has won. The other two finished with a draw.

23...\texttt{xa2} 24.\texttt{xf8+ \texttt{xf8} 25.bxc3 \texttt{gx}f4=; 14.f4

14...\texttt{e}c4 15.\texttt{d}d3 \texttt{g}g4! 16.\texttt{xc}c4 \texttt{f}f2 17.\texttt{e}e2 \texttt{x}xh1 18.\texttt{b}b3 \texttt{g}g4 19.\texttt{f}f3 \texttt{x}c3! 20.bxc3 \texttt{a}a5 21.\texttt{x}h1 \texttt{x}c3 22.\texttt{d}d1 (22.\texttt{d}d1 \texttt{a}a1+ 23.\texttt{d}d2 \texttt{c}c3+=) 22...a5! The Black’s chances are better!]

14...\texttt{e}e8

By defending the “e7” pawn, Black prepares the retreat of the bishop in case of \texttt{h}h6.

15.g4 The most acute continuation! From this point, our analysis will be based on the game played by Radjabov – Carlsen in Baku, 2008. The other options are not dangerous:

15.\texttt{e}he1

15...\texttt{a}a5 16.f4 \texttt{c}c4 17.\texttt{x}xc4 \texttt{x}c4 18.\texttt{x}xf6 \texttt{x}f6 19.\texttt{d}d5 \texttt{x}d2 20.\texttt{x}f6+ \texttt{xf6} 21.\texttt{x}d2 \texttt{f}5=; 15.\texttt{h}h6
Despite the unprotected king, Black is out of danger from a checkmate and he can look forward with optimism.

15...c4 16.xc4 xc4 17.xg7 xg7 18.g4 hxg4 19.h5 h8 20.hxg6 fxg6 21.f4 e5 22.xh8 (22.de2 xh1 23.xh1 xe4 24.xe4 xe4 25.fxe5 e8 26.h6+ f7 27.f4 xe5=) 22..xh8 23.de2 f8 24.fxe5 xe4 25.d3 (25.xe4 xe4 26.exd6 f3) 25...xc3+ 26.xc3 f4 27.d5 f3 28.d4 dxe5 29.xe5+ h6 20..xc3! Once again, we come across this typical sacrifice! 21.bxc3 xc3 Black has a fantastic compensation for the sacrifice of the exchange.

15...hxg4 16.h5 xh5 17.xh5 gxh5 18.h2 g6 19.xh5

19..a5! Energetic and strong countermeasures against White’s dangerous threats.

20.f4 Obviously 20.xg6? loses immediately after the elegant move 20..e6! 21.h5 xg5++; Was also tested: 20.d5 e6 21.f5
The main problem with White’s plan. Unfortunately for White, Black has a powerful counterstrike. 21...\textit{xd}5! 22.\textit{xd}5 \textit{exf}5 23.\textit{h}1 (23.\textit{xg}6 \textit{xg}6! 24.\textit{xg}7+ \textit{g}7 25.\textit{exd}5 \textit{g}6 26.\textit{f}4 \textit{xf}3 27.\textit{xf}1 \textit{h}5+) 23...\textit{e}6 24.\textit{h}7+ \textit{f}8 25.\textit{h}6 \textit{hxh}6 26.\textit{wh}6+ \textit{e}7 27.\textit{xe}6 \textit{xe}6 28.\textit{exf}5+ \textit{xf}5 29.\textit{fxg}4 \textit{f}2 Valenti 2201–Gonzalez 2474 0–1 2013

20...\textit{xd}5!? An interesting decision of the world champion Magnus Carlsen! Black liquidate one of the most dangerous white attacking figures (\textit{g}5).

21.\textit{fxg}5 [21.\textit{wxg}5 \textit{wxg}5 22.\textit{fxg}5 \textit{xd}4 23.\textit{xd}4 \textit{g}7–+] 21...\textit{e}6 22.\textit{f}5? An ambitious move, which appears to be a mistake. Better was to play \textit{g}4 with a slightly better position for Black.
Positions with open center – Part I
[GM Viktor Gavrikov]

Dear reader, this article marks the beginning of a middlegame course, in which I will try to share with not just my specific knowledge of the middlegame, but also my personal chess philosophy. Learning resources that will be provided are the result of my long practice as a chess player and trainer. I want to emphasize that despite the name of the course, it will not focus only on the middlegame. For one year, our task will be to acquaint our readers with the main pawn structures arising from the opening – open center, isolated pawn, hanging pawns, isolated pair of pawns c3+d4, pawn advantage on the queenside, pawn chains and Sicilian pawn structures. After honing the knowledge of these pawn structures, you will be able to rely your opening repertoire on extremely solid foundations. Also, I would like to point out that a great amount of the given examples will change from middlegames to endgames. This first article of the whole course is dedicated to the positions with open center, where the “c” and “d” pawns are not on the board. Since this topic is very extensive, it will be divided in smaller sections. In this issue of our magazine we will discuss the weak point “c3” (“c6”) in position with an open center. As you will see later, this is an extremely important position indicator, whose importance is often underestimated even by strong grandmasters. At the end of the article, I will provide a test by which you can test your understanding of the material. In the first example, we will meet with a masterpiece of positional play in a game of patriarch of Soviet chess school - sixth world champion Mikhail Botvinnik.

Botvinnik, M – Donner, J [A14]
Amsterdam (4), 15.12.1963
1.c4 ♜f6 2.♘f3 e6 3.g3 d5 4.♗g2 ♞e7

This variation is also very popular in modern practice among Grandmasters, but also at the amateur level. In this position, the main alternative is quite ambitious: 4...dxc4 5.♗a4+ c6 6.♗xc4 b5!? 7.♗c2 ♞b7 Black's idea is to play c6-c5 and if he does so, he will have decided his debut problems. 8.d4 (8.♗c3 ♞bd7 9.0-0 ♞e7 10.d3 0-0 11.♗f4 ♛c8 12.♗ac1 ♔b6
This is another strategic plan that leads to a good position for Black after 7...c3 (7...b2 a4

8...a3 c6 Black can be satisfied with the opening and look forward with optimism.) 7...d4 8.b5 c5 9.e3 c6 10.exd4 cxd4 11..e1 d7! A key move 12..b2? (Black’s idea is revealed in the following continuation 12..bxd4? 13.exd4 14.e6 14..c2 (14..b2? 15..c5 with victory) 14...xa1 15..xa1

Black is fully prepared for the c6-c5 move. Gavrikov,V (2575)-Dautov,P (2595)/Germany 1997/ 1/2-1/2) 8...bd7 9.e5 (9.0-0 c5) 9..b6 10.e3 c5 11..dx7 12..xb7 13.0-0 c8 14..c1 e7! 15.dxc5 xc5 16.b4 f6 17..c3 g7 (17...a4 18..e4) 18..e4 19..d4 0-0= S-S Raetsky,A (2405)-Rasch,H (2250)/Biel 1997/

5.0-0 0-0 6.b3 [In this position, Black has several equal continuations.

6...b6

6..a5!? White has sufficient compensation for the exchange, but nothing more. The position is unbalanced and both sides remain with opportunities to win.) 12..e5 13.d3 h8 14.a3 f6 With good game for Black. Gavrikov,V - Ziatdinov,R/ Biel 1992

7..b2 8..d5 8..d5 To a different pawn structure leads 8..exd5 9.d4 With a transfer to a position similar to New-Indian defense, which will be discussed in our following articles.

9.d4 c5

It looks safer to play 9..d7 10..c3 c5 11..c1 e8 12..x5 e5 13..d3 cxd4 14..xd4 xc1 15..xc1 1-0 Smyslov,V-Simagin,V/Moscow 1966 15...c5 16..c3 f6=
10.dxc5 dxc5 11.bd2 d7 12.a3 5f6

Black prevents e2-e4, but allows White to gain space on the queenside.

It was possible to play 12...a5 without being frightened by 13.e4 5f6 14.e5 because of 14...e4 15.xe4 xxe4 16.wxe2 d5 17.d2 xg2 18.xg2 w7 19.e4 ffd8. With approximately equal chances. Razuvaev,Y (2510)-Klovans,J (2480)/Tbilisi 1973/MCD (32), 1/2-1/2

13.b4 e7 14.d4!

Therefore, we come to the main topic of the article, namely the weakness of the “c6” square. The strategical battle in the game is whether White will manage to place his knight there, which will shrink Black’s position and will give White the opportunity to develop easily the initiative. The first task is to exchange the light-squared bishops, as the one from “b7”, defends the “c6” square.

14.xg2 15.xg2 c7 16.b3

16.fc8

Maybe it was stronger to play 16..ac8!? 17.fc1 b7+ 18.f3 d5 19.e4 f6 20.b5 b8 Preventing d4-c6.

17.fc1 b7+ 18.f3 d5

Even after the exchange of the queens, White will remain with initiative 18..xf3+ 19.xf3

19.e4 f6 20.b5!
Black’s position became tenser - $\text{c6}$ is a real threat.

20...a6? A serious mistake.

It was necessary to exchange the rook by playing 20...e5 21.e2 xc1 22.xc1 c8 because after 23.xc8+ (23.d1! $\text{ed7}$ 24.d6 $\text{b8}$ 25.xe7+ $\text{xe7}$) 23...xc8 24.f4 $\text{ed7}$ The invasion of the “c6” square is now less dangerous for Black: 25.c6 $\text{f8}$ 26.wc4 ($\text{xe7}$!) $\text{c2}$ 27.xf6 $\text{xf6}$ 26...a8 ($\text{xc5}$ 27.xf6 xf6 28.d4 a6 29.a4 axb5 30.axb5+) 27.a4 (27.xf6 $\text{xf6}$ 28.a4 $\text{b7}$! 29.e5 $\text{d7}$ 30.$\text{f3}$ $\text{d3}$! =; 27.e5 $\text{d5}$ 28.a4 a5; 27.a4 a5 28.bxa6 $\text{c5}$ 29.b5 $\text{xa6}$) 27...e8 White has a slightly better position, but it is hard to materialize the advantage.

21.c6 $\text{f8}$ 22.a4 axb5 23.axb5 $\text{xa1}$ 24.xa1 $\text{a8}$ 25.d1!

The white rook is more active, that is why the exchange is not reasonable. The knight on “c6” coerces Black’s position. The main principle is not to exchange the pieces when you have spatial advantage.

25...e8? This move is weak, but Black is almost in zugzwang.

Worse was 25...a4? 26.e5 $\text{d5}$ 27.d8; if 25...a2?! then 26.c4 ...a4? 27.e5 $\text{d5}$ 28.d8 $\text{a8}$ (28...c8 29.xf7+ $\text{h8}$ 30.xe6) 29.xf7+ $\text{h8}$ 30.c6; The only way to continue to resist was 25...h6 26.c4 $\text{c7}$?

26.c4 $\text{c5}$ 27.e5!
This move leads to a loss immediately.

27...\texttt{c8}\texttt{7}?

27...\texttt{c7}\texttt{7}? Constraining the queen’s activity is in White’s favor, because it creates additional tactical threats. 28.d7! \texttt{xd7} 29.e7+ \texttt{xe7} 30xb7+–

28.a1!

With an inevitable threat a7, because \texttt{a8} is impossible to play.

28.c7 29.a7 \texttt{xa7} 30.a7 \texttt{xa7} 31.xb6 1–0

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
\texttt{Lerner, K – Anastasian, A} [A14] & Novi Sad, 1988 & 1.c4 c5 2.d3 d6 3.d3 c6 4.g3 b6 5.g2 \texttt{bd7} 6.0–0 \texttt{e7} 7.b3 0–0 8.b2 d5 9.cxd5 \texttt{xd5} 10.\texttt{xd5} \texttt{xd5} 11.b1
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

Another possible arranging of the Black pieces is: 8..d6 9.e3 \texttt{bd7} 10.e2 a6 11.f1 \texttt{c7} (or 11..e4) 12.ac1 (12.d4 \texttt{fe8}) 12.e4 13.b1 b5 14.d3 \texttt{ef6} = S-S Hort,V (2580)-Gavrikov,V (2535)/Lugano 1989

9.cxd5 \texttt{xd5} 10.xd5 \texttt{xd5} 11.b1

This move prepares \texttt{d1} and prevents \texttt{c6} because of e2-e4.
11...\textit{f6} [To a possible draw led 13...\textit{c6} 14.d3 (14.d4?! \textit{\textbackslash f6}) 14...\textit{xf3} 15.\textit{x}f3 \textit{\textbackslash c8} 16.\textit{g2} \textit{\textbackslash d6} 17.a3 \textit{\textbackslash c7} 18.\textit{ac1} \textit{\textbackslash fc8} 19.e3 h6= 0–1 Larsen,R-Smejkal,J/Reykjavik 1978] 14.d4 \textit{\textbackslash c8}  

[14...\textit{\textbackslash f6}?! 15.\textit{e5}; 14...\textit{\textbackslash c7}]  

15.dxc5 \textit{\textbackslash x}c5 16.\textit{e5} \textit{\textbackslash x}g2 17.\textit{\textbackslash x}g2 \textit{\textbackslash d8}  

[Weaker was 17...\textit{\textbackslash b7}+ 18.f3 \textit{\textbackslash ad8} 19.b4 \textit{\textbackslash a}4 (not 19...\textit{\textbackslash d7}? 20.\textit{\textbackslash d4}! \textit{\textbackslash x}e5 21.\textit{\textbackslash xd8}) 20.\textit{\textbackslash c2} b5 21.\textit{\textbackslash c6}+/-; or 17...f6 18.\textit{\textbackslash c4} \textit{\textbackslash c6}+ 19.f3 b5 20.\textit{\textbackslash a}5 \textit{\textbackslash b6} 21.b4 \textit{\textbackslash a}4 22.\textit{\textbackslash b}3 \textit{\textbackslash ac8} 23.\textit{\textbackslash d3}]

Another option is 17...\textit{a5} ...18.\textit{\textbackslash d6} \textit{\textbackslash f6} 19.\textit{\textbackslash c4} b5 20.\textit{\textbackslash b6}? \textit{\textbackslash c7} 21.\textit{\textbackslash d4} \textit{\textbackslash ad8} 22.\textit{\textbackslash d1} \textit{\textbackslash b7} 23.\textit{\textbackslash d7} \textit{\textbackslash xd7} 24.\textit{\textbackslash xd7} \textit{\textbackslash d8} 18.b4 \textit{\textbackslash e4}?  

This move is weak, because it allows White unimpededly to implement his main idea - to place the knight on "c6". White keeps the initiative and after 18...\textit{\textbackslash a}4?!  

19.\textit{\textbackslash b3} \textit{\textbackslash b7}+ (19...\textit{\textbackslash c3} 20.\textit{\textbackslash xf7}! \textit{\textbackslash c6}+ 21.f3 \textit{\textbackslash xf7} 22.b5) 20.f3 b5 21.\textit{\textbackslash xd8}+ \textit{\textbackslash xd8} 22.\textit{\textbackslash d1}; It was necessary to choose between 18...\textit{\textbackslash d7} ...19.\textit{\textbackslash ac1} \textit{\textbackslash b7}+ 20.\textit{\textbackslash c6} \textit{\textbackslash c5}! 21.b5 a6!  

52
(Doubtful is 21...\h2 22.\h2 a6 because of 23.a4! ...dxf4? 24.\h2++-) 22.\h2+ \h2 23.f3 \f8=; и 18...\b7+ 19.f3 \d7 20.\c4 (20.\d4?!

20...\f8 21.\h2? \h2 22.\h2 \c7+) 20...\f6=

19.\h2+ \h2 20.\c6! \d7 21.\c2 \c5 22.b5 Despite the fact that there are not too many pieces on the board, White has a better position due to the strong knight on "c6".

22...\b7 23.\d1 a6 24.a4 \e8 25.f3 \a8

[25...h6]

26.\d4 axb5 27.axb5 e5?!

Seeking counter play, Black only weakens his position.

[27...h6]

28.\d5 e4?

On this square, the pawn becomes vulnerable.

28...f6

29.f4 h6 30.\c4 e3 It is mistaken to play 30...\a1? 31.\f5 \e6 32.\d8 \f6 33.\xf7!; And after 30...\b7 White plays 31.\d6 \c7 32.\d5±
31.\textit{\text{f5}} \textit{\text{b7}} \textit{\text{if}} 31...\textit{\text{e6}} \textit{\text{then}} 32.\textit{\text{xf7}}!

32...\textit{\text{fxf7}} 33.\textit{\text{f5}} \textit{\text{e8}} 34.\textit{\text{fxe6}} \textit{\text{dxe6}} 35.\textit{\text{d5}}+

32.\textit{\text{d5}} \textit{\text{e4}}? \textit{\text{The}} \textit{\text{decisive}} \textit{\text{mistake}} \textit{\text{in}} \textit{\text{an}} \textit{\text{already}} \textit{\text{hard}} \textit{\text{position}}.

32...\textit{\text{d7}} 33.\textit{\text{dxd7}} \textit{\text{dxd7}} 34.\textit{\text{d5}}+

33.\textit{\text{e5}} \textit{\text{xe5}} 34.\textit{\text{dxe5}} \textit{\text{c5}} 35.\textit{\text{e8}}+

It is important not to give the chance for the black queen to step up in the game in case of
35.\textit{\text{exe3}} \textit{\text{d7}}

35...\textit{\text{h7}} 36.\textit{\text{f3}}+-
36...e6 37.xe3 c7 38.f3 d6 39.e7!

1–0

Kosic, D (2500) – Mackic, Z (2420)
[E14]
YUG-chT Vrnjacka Banja (8), 1998

1.d4 f6 2.f3 e6 3.e3 b6 4.d3 b7 5.0-0 e7

[5...d5 6.c4 dxc4!? 7.xc4 a6 it is also possible]

6.c4 0–0 7.c3 d5 8.b3 bd7 9.b2 c5 10.cxd5 cxd4

This move forces the exchange of the queens, after which the knights’ endgame is hopeless for Black.

39...d8 40.xd8 xd8 41.e4

11.xd4 xd5 Again a position with an open
center.

12. \( \text{\textit{\text{Qxe5 Qxe5}}} \) 13. \( \text{\textit{Bb5!}} \)

A move with multiple ideas, such as: \( \text{\textit{Qc6}} \), \( \text{\textit{Qc6}} \) or \( \text{\textit{Qf5}} \).

13. \( \text{\textit{Qf6}} \) The idea is that 13...\( \text{\textit{Qc8?!}} \) is not good, because 14.e4! \( \text{\textit{Qxe4}} \) 15.\( \text{\textit{Qxe6 Bxe6}} \) 16.\( \text{\textit{Qxd7 Qc2}} \) 17.\( \text{\textit{Qxd4}} \) (17.\( \text{\textit{Qxe6+ Qh8}} \) 17...\( \text{\textit{Qf6}} \) (17...\( \text{\textit{Qxb2}} \) 18.\( \text{\textit{Qxe6+ Qh8}} \) 19.\( \text{\textit{Qxb2 Qf6}} \) 20.\( \text{\textit{Qc1}} \) With better chances for White to realize his material advantage.) 18.\( \text{\textit{Qxe4 Qxb2}} \) 19.\( \text{\textit{Qxe6+ Qh8}} \) 20.\( \text{\textit{Qad1}} \)

Every chess player should be satisfied when reaches such a position. White has a pawn up in a position without any risks. Black can try 13...\( \text{\textit{Qf6}} \), but even in this situation, White has initiative after 14.\( \text{\textit{Qc6}} \)

14...\( \text{\textit{Qxc6}} \) (14...\( \text{\textit{Qxd4?}} \) 15.\( \text{\textit{Qxd4 Qg5}} \) 16.\( \text{\textit{Qxd5}} \) \( \text{\textit{Qxd5}} \)±

15.\( \text{\textit{Qxc6 Qe8}} \) (15...\( \text{\textit{Qc7}} \) 16.\( \text{\textit{Qc1 Qb7}} \) (16...\( \text{\textit{Qc5?}} \) 17.\( \text{\textit{Qxf6 gxf6}} \) 18.\( \text{\textit{Qg4+ Qh8}} \) 19.\( \text{\textit{Qh4}} \)
18...\textit{fxd8}+ \textit{exd8} 19.\textit{b5} \textit{c5}! White’s position is more favorable, but it is hard to materialize the advantage. (19...\textit{d2} 20.\textit{c8}+ ...\textit{f8}\textsuperscript{?} 21.\textit{a3} \textit{d7} 22.\textit{d8}! \textit{xa2} 23.\textit{e7} \textit{a1}+ 24.\textit{f1}+-)

17.\textit{f3}!

With the queens on the board, White has more chances.

17...\textit{e7} 18.\textit{c4} \textit{fd8} 19.\textit{e5} [19.\textit{b5}!] 19...\textit{d6} [19...\textit{d2}]

20.\textit{c3} \textit{d7} 21.\textit{h5} \textit{f8} 22.\textit{b4}!

Better was to play 16...\textit{fxd1} 17.\textit{fxd1} \textit{fd8}
Well-known idea, the white pawn on “b5” assures the defense of the bishop and additionally constrains Black’s position.

22...g6 23.b5 White intensifies the control of the “c6” square.

23...c5 [23...f6 24.h3]

24.a4 A useful move

24...d6 25.g3 Prophylactic move. Remember this trick, when the opponent has no counter play - strengthen absolutely the position and then move on to the decisive actions.

25...c7 26.c1 e7?!

This move is imprecise and allows White to take over control over the “c5” square. It is difficult to play position without counter play.

[26...c5]

27.d4!

27...f6? The decisive mistake

[27...d6]

28.xf6 gxf6 29.e8! xc4 [29...b7 30.xf7+! Most likely this tactical strike missed Black’s attention.]

30.xf7+!

30...g7 31.xc4 xc4 32.xe6 c1+ [Also hopeless was 32...xa4 33.f3 e8 34.c6 e7 35.h4 with definitive advantage.]

33.g2 d2 34.f5 a1 35.f3 aa2 [After
35...\textsubscript{e}xa4 White wins 36.\textsubscript{b}b7+ \textsubscript{h}6 37.\textsubscript{e}e6 Threatening \textsubscript{g}g8.

36.h4 \textsubscript{d}e5 37.\textsubscript{b}b7+

White has a technical winning position and the rest of the game does not need any comments, because it is not related to our subject.

37...\textsubscript{f}f8 38.\textsubscript{b}b8+ \textsubscript{e}e7 39.\textsubscript{a}xa7+ \textsubscript{f}f8 40.\textsubscript{b}b8+ \textsubscript{e}e7 41.\textsubscript{c}c7+ \textsubscript{f}f8 42.\textsubscript{h}h3 \textsubscript{h}5 43.\textsubscript{c}c8+ \textsubscript{g}g7 44.\textsubscript{a}a6 \textsubscript{x}f2 45.\textsubscript{g}g8+ \textsubscript{h}6 46.\textsubscript{a}xa2 \textsubscript{g}g4 47.\textsubscript{h}h8+ \textsubscript{g}g6 48.\textsubscript{f}f7+

Hoenlinger, B - Kashdan, I [D48]
Gyor Gyor, 1930

16...\textsubscript{a}a3!

17.\textsubscript{d}fd1 \textsubscript{d}d5 The knight seeks to go on the “c3” square

18.\textsubscript{b}b1?

A mistake that allows Black unimpededly to realize his plan.

It was necessary to play 18.\textsubscript{b}b1\textsubscript{a}xa3 19.\textsubscript{d}d2 b4 (19...\textsubscript{b}xc1 20.\textsubscript{b}xc1 b4 21.\textsubscript{g}g5 \textsubscript{h}6 22.\textsubscript{e}e4) 20.\textsubscript{b}xc8 \textsubscript{d}xc8 (20...\textsubscript{d}xc8 21.e4! \textsubscript{f}f6 (It is weak 21...\textsubscript{c}c3? 22.\textsubscript{b}b1\textsubscript{a}xa6! \textsubscript{d}xd1 23.\textsubscript{b}xb7 \textsubscript{b}b8 24.\textsubscript{d}d1+t) 22.\textsubscript{e}e5 \textsubscript{w}a5 23.\textsubscript{c}c4 \textsubscript{w}c5 24.e5 \textsubscript{c}c5 25.f3 \textsubscript{d}d5) 21.\textsubscript{e}e5 \textsubscript{c}c3.
23.\textit{d}d2  \textit{w}a5  24.\textit{c}c4  \textit{w}c7  25.\textit{e}e4;  or  18.\textit{d}d4  \\
\textit{x}b2  19.\textit{w}xb2  ...b4  20.\textit{e}e2  \\

18...\textit{x}b2  19.\textit{w}xb2  b4!  \\

20.\textit{w}e5?  \textit{c}c3--+

21.\textit{x}c3  \textit{bxc3}  22.\textit{x}h7+  \textit{\textsc{hxh7}}  23.\textit{w}h5+  \\
\textit{g}8  24.\textit{g}5  \textit{e}4  \\

Also wins:  24...\textit{w}xg5

\textbf{Test on the learned material so far!}  \\
Khalifman, A (2505) – Lau, K (2540) [E08]  \\
Dordrecht Dordrecht, 1988
28.\textcolor{red}{\text{b6}}! White attacks both pawns on “b5” and “a5” at the same time.

28...\textcolor{blue}{\text{xc6}} [28...\textcolor{blue}{\text{d5}}? 29.\textcolor{red}{\text{xd5}}! exd5 30.\textcolor{blue}{\text{xc7}} \textcolor{red}{\text{xc7}} (30...\textcolor{red}{\text{xc7}} 31.\textcolor{blue}{\text{e6++-}}) 31.\textcolor{blue}{\text{b8++-}}]

29.\textcolor{blue}{\text{xc6}} \textcolor{blue}{\text{c7}}?

A mistake, Black obviously misses the subsequent combination in the game.

[29...\textcolor{red}{\text{e8}} 30.\textcolor{blue}{\text{c1}} \textcolor{blue}{\text{d5}} 31.\textcolor{red}{\text{xb5}} \textcolor{blue}{\text{a8+}}]

30.\textcolor{blue}{\text{d8+}}!

This tactical strike is possible due to the

30...\textcolor{blue}{\text{f7}} 31.\textcolor{blue}{\text{c5}}!

Using the vulnerable position of the black king, White forcing gets a technically won position with decisive material advantage.

But not 31.\textcolor{red}{\text{e5}}? 

31...\textcolor{blue}{\text{e7}} 32.\textcolor{blue}{\text{xc7}}+ \textcolor{red}{\text{xc7}} 33.\textcolor{blue}{\text{a8}} \textcolor{blue}{\text{c2}} 34.\textcolor{blue}{\text{xa5}} \textcolor{blue}{\text{xe2}} 35.\textcolor{blue}{\text{xb5}} \textcolor{blue}{\text{xa2}} 36.\textcolor{blue}{\text{b7+}} \textcolor{blue}{\text{d6}} 37.\textcolor{blue}{\text{c4+}}
c5 38...xg7 g4 39...xh7 xf2+ With good chance for a salvation

31...xd8 32.e5+ xe5 33.xe5 d5
34.d4 a8

After 34...d7 it was possible 35.c5 b7 36.c6 b6 37.d7+ f6 38.g4?

(38.a7)...38...fxg4? 39.e4 with a victory]

35.f3 b4 36.e4 fxe4 37.fxe4 c3 [Or 37...f6 38.b6]

38.d7+ f6 39.e5+ xe5 40.xg7+

Khalifman confidently converted his material
TEST YOURSELF
(By GM Petar G. Arnaudov)

Try to find the best move in each position

Test №1

Black to move...

Test №2

Black to move...
Evaluate the position!

Test №3

White to move...
MODERN CHESS

Test №4

Black to move...

Test №6

Black to move...

Test №5

White to move...

Test №7

White to move...
MODERN CHESS

Test №8

Test №10

White to move...

Black to move...

Test №9

Test №11

White to move...

White to move...
Test Yourself Solutions

(1) Iljiushenok,Ilia (2450) - Eljanov,Pavel (2727) [B48]
EICC 2015 Jerusalem (1.3), 24.02.2015

21.\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}xf6+! gxf6 [21...\textcolor{red}{\text{h}}8 22.\textcolor{red}{\text{g}}g3±]
22.\textcolor{red}{\text{g}}g3+ \textcolor{red}{\text{h}}h8 23.\textcolor{red}{\text{g}}g7!! \textcolor{red}{\text{fxe}}5 [23...\textcolor{red}{\text{xg}}7
24.exf6+ \textcolor{red}{\text{xf}}6 25.\textcolor{red}{\text{h}}xc7+-]
24.\textcolor{red}{\text{h}}h6 \textcolor{red}{\text{xf}}1+ 25.\textcolor{red}{\text{xf}}1 \textcolor{red}{\text{b}}5+ 26.\textcolor{red}{\text{g}}g1= [26.\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}e1+-]
26...\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}d3=

(2) Veinberg,Nimrod (2350) - Smirin,Ilia (2650) [A41]
EICC 2015 Jerusalem (1.29), 24.02.2015

9...\textcolor{red}{\text{f}}xe4! 10.\textcolor{red}{\text{xe}}4 \textcolor{red}{\text{xe}}4 11.\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}e3 [11.\textcolor{red}{\text{xe}}4 \textcolor{red}{\text{f}}5]
11...0–0

(3) Aharon,Ofir (2311) – Ivanisevic,Ivan (2638) [C03]
EICC 2015 Jerusalem (1.35), 24.02.2015

38...\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}d3+! [Black is winning, the bishop stops b- and h- pawns from f8 and White is hopeless.]
39.\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}d1 \textcolor{red}{\text{a}}a3 40.\textcolor{red}{\text{g}}g6 \textcolor{red}{\text{d}}d4 41.\textcolor{red}{\text{f}}f5 \textcolor{red}{\text{e}}3
42.\textcolor{red}{\text{g}}g4 \textcolor{red}{\text{c}}3 43.h5 \textcolor{red}{\text{f}}f8 44.h6 \textcolor{red}{\text{d}}xh6 45.\textcolor{red}{\text{f}}3
\textcolor{red}{\text{xb}}3 46.\textcolor{red}{\text{g}}g4 \textcolor{red}{\text{c}}3 47.\textcolor{red}{\text{f}}3 \textcolor{red}{\text{d}}d4 48.\textcolor{red}{\text{h}}h5 \textcolor{red}{\text{f}}f8
49.\textcolor{red}{\text{g}}g4 \textcolor{red}{\text{e}}e4 50.\textcolor{red}{\text{h}}h5 \textcolor{red}{\text{f}}f4
0–1

(4) Shimanov,Aleksandr (2594) – Navara,David (2735) [D70]
EICC 2015 Jerusalem (3.1), 26.02.2015

22.\textcolor{red}{\text{b}}b8xe4!! 23.\textcolor{red}{\text{xe}}4 \textcolor{red}{\text{e}}e2 24.\textcolor{red}{\text{xe}}1 \textcolor{red}{\text{xd}}3

(5) Moiseenko,Alexander (2695) – Huzman,Alexander (2582) [D53]
EICC 2015 Jerusalem (3.19), 26.02.2015

31.bxc6 \textcolor{red}{\text{d}}xd2 32.\textcolor{red}{\text{xg}}5+ \textcolor{red}{\text{hx}}5 33.h6++–
1–0

(6) Indjic,Aleksandar (2546) – Smirin,Ilia (2650) [C68]
EICC 2015 Jerusalem (3.29), 26.02.2015

29...\textcolor{red}{\text{xg}}2! 30.\textcolor{red}{\text{xd}}5 \textcolor{red}{\text{xe}}3 31.\textcolor{red}{\text{xe}}3 \textcolor{red}{\text{xe}}3

(7) Khismatullin,Denis (2653) – Eljanov,Pavel (2727) [E46]
EICC 2015 Jerusalem (10.3), 06.03.2015

44.\textcolor{red}{\text{g}}g1!! \textcolor{red}{\text{xd}}1+ 45.\textcolor{red}{\text{h}}h2 \textcolor{red}{\text{xc}}6 46.\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}e7+
\textcolor{red}{\text{h}}h6 47.\textcolor{red}{\text{f}}f8+ \textcolor{red}{\text{g}}g5 48.\textcolor{red}{\text{xf}}7 \textcolor{red}{\text{f}}f6 49.\textcolor{red}{\text{f}}4+ \textcolor{red}{\text{h}}h6
50.\textcolor{red}{\text{xf}}6 \textcolor{red}{\text{e}}e2 51.\textcolor{red}{\text{f}}f8+ \textcolor{red}{\text{h}}h5 52.\textcolor{red}{\text{g}}g7 \textcolor{red}{\text{h}}6
53.\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}e5+ \textcolor{red}{\text{h}}h4 54.\textcolor{red}{\text{f}}f6+ \textcolor{red}{\text{h}}h5 55.\textcolor{red}{\text{f}}x5 \textcolor{red}{\text{g}}g6
1–0

(8) Riazantsev,Alexander (2688) – Vocaturo,Daniele (2579) [E11]
EICC 2015 Jerusalem (2.7), 25.02.2015

16.\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}e4! \textcolor{red}{\text{e}}e8 17.\textcolor{red}{\text{h}}h6+ \textcolor{red}{\text{g}}g8 18.\textcolor{red}{\text{g}}g5 \textcolor{red}{\text{xg}}5
19.\textcolor{red}{\text{xg}}5+ \textcolor{red}{\text{h}}h7 20.\textcolor{red}{\text{h}}h6+ \textcolor{red}{\text{g}}g8 21.\textcolor{red}{\text{g}}g5+ \textcolor{red}{\text{h}}h7
22.\textcolor{red}{\text{h}}h6+ \textcolor{red}{\text{g}}g8

(9) Riazantsev,Alexander (2688) – Vocaturo,Daniele (2579) [E11]
EICC 2015 Jerusalem (2.7), 25.02.2015

23.a4!! \textcolor{red}{\text{e}}e7 24.\textcolor{red}{\text{a}}a3+-

(10) Baron,Tal (2510) – Dreev,Aleksey (2643) [B18]
EICC 2015 Jerusalem (7.40), 03.03.2015
30...\text{\textit{xc2}}!! 31.\text{\textit{xc2}} [31.\text{\textit{xc2}} \text{\textit{a3+}} 32.\text{\textit{xa3}}
\text{\textit{xc2+--}}]
31...\text{\textit{a3+}} 32.\text{\textit{c1}} \text{\textit{b7}} 33.\text{\textit{h3}} \text{\textit{b4}} 34.\text{\textit{g1}}
\text{\textit{xc3+}} 35.\text{\textit{xc3}} \text{\textit{e4}}
0–1

(11) Muzychuk,Mariya (UKR) –
Koneru,Humpy (IND) [C45]
WWCC2015 Sochi (22.1), 26.03.2015

26.\text{\textit{d2!!}} \text{\textit{f8}} 27.\text{\textit{d5+}} \text{\textit{xd5}} 28.\text{\textit{xd5+}}
\text{\textit{h8}} 29.\text{\textit{f7!}}

1–0