



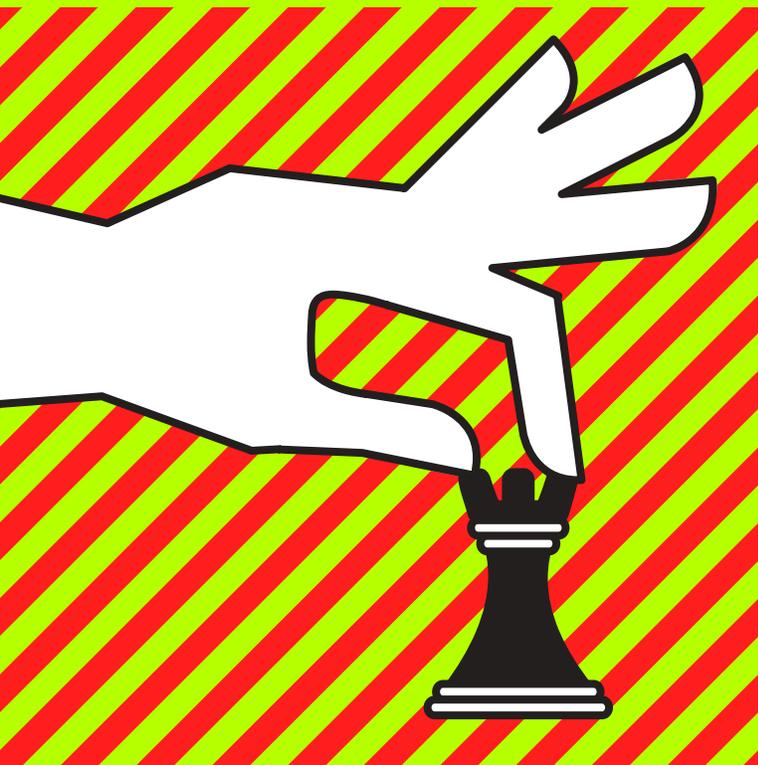
Modern Chess Magazine

Issue 23

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Middlegame Positions

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Hedgehog Part 3

Tactical Vision
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The Skill of Manoeuvring: Middlegame Positions



GM Swapnil Dhopade

Ever wondered how strong players take their pieces effortlessly to the best squares? It seems, transferring the pieces from worse to good posts is their second nature. As an expert driver drives without really thinking about it, so does a strong Grandmaster Maneuvers his pieces without much conscious thinking. They can 'feel' the way for their pieces. Maneuvering is essentially transferring pieces to better squares, where they can do a better job than what they are doing currently. Such a transfer of a piece may enhance our chances of achieving a desired result (gaining an advantage, equalizing, etc.). I consider maneuvering a skill just like driving which can be improved with proper training and practice. By solving a lot of positions on maneuverings, by studying the games with instructional manoeuvrings one can develop a good feel for the good placement of their pieces.

In the first article on this subject we saw how this skill of maneuvering has helped me in my own games. In this article we

will have a look at excellent examples of manoeuvrings in the middlegame from the games of strong players. Manoeuvrings in middlegames can serve a lot of useful purposes, for example:

- 1) Favourable exchange of pieces: We can use manoeuvrings to achieve the favourable exchange of pieces.
- 2) Increase attacking potential: Sometimes some of our pieces are already near the opponents king but they still need support of other colleagues to crash through! Manoeuvrings can help us bring more pieces in the attack.
- 3) Exploiting weak pawns: Some opponents pawns can be weak as they are left with little support. We can maneuver our pieces to win such lightly guarded pawns.
- 4) Exploiting weak squares: Advance of pawns can create weaknesses of squares. Such weak squares can be exploited by good manoeuvres.
- 5) Increasing pressure: Sometimes with efficient manoeuvrings we can increase pressure on opponents position.

The annotated games will be followed by test positions for you to solve! All these annotated games and positions are selected from recent tournament games. All the best!

In this game we will see how Black skilfully exploits opponents far advanced weak pawns.

□ **Amin,B** **2709**
 ■ **Swiercz,D** **2655**

12th World Teams 2019 (1.3) 05.03.2019

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.c3 Nf6 5.d3 d6 6.0-0 a6 7.Bb3 0-0 8.Re1 h6 9.Nbd2 Be6 10.Nf1 Bxb3 11.Qxb3 Qd7 12.Ng3 Rfe8
 Black prepares for the d6-d5 break by supporting the e5 pawn. **13.h3 d5 14.exd5 Nxd5 15.Ne4 Bf8**

16.Bd2

[16.Bxh6? is not possible due to... Na5!+ when White loses his h6 bishop.]

16...b5 gaining space on the queenside.

17.a4? start of a wrong plan! White wants to weaken the light squares on Black's queenside, but White's misplaced pieces gives Black a lot of initiative.

[Δ17.Rad1 with the idea to break with c3-c4. Rad8 18.c4 Nf4∞ would have led to an unbalanced position playable for both sides.]

17...b4! 18.a5?!

now Bh6 is a threat as Black does not have Nc6-Na5 anymore. But I think White missed Black's strong manoeuvre! Can you find the best move for Black?

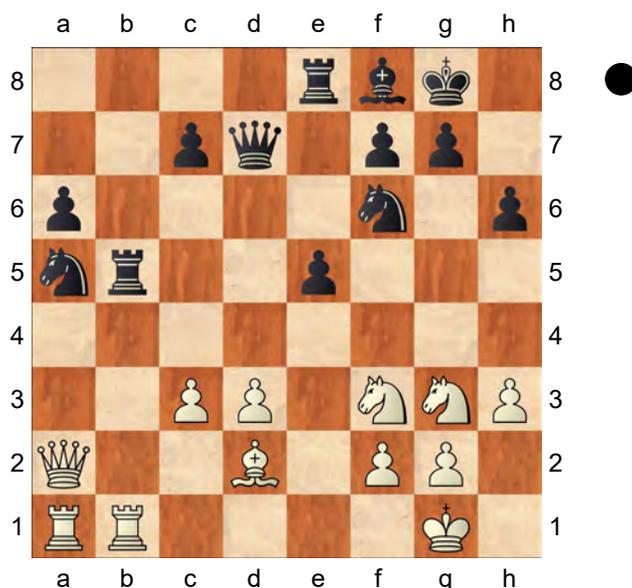
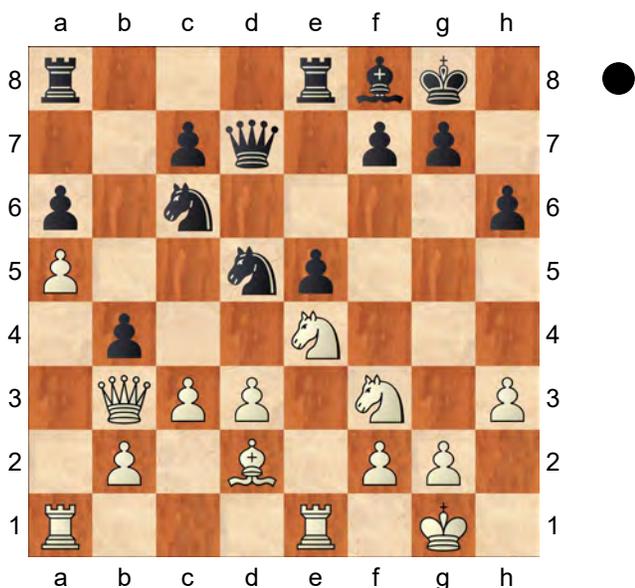
18...Rab8! a nice manoeuvre! The rook obviously belongs to the b-file, but it also intends to go to b5 hitting whites a5 pawn and also defending against the threat of Bh6. **19.Qc4 Rb5** The rook is well placed on b5. White's position is already difficult! **20.Ng3 bxc3 21.bxc3 Nf6!** Black retracts the knight away from the d-file in order to put pressure on the weak d3 pawn. Both the a5 and d3 pawns are terrible weaknesses for White.

[There is no need to take the weak a5 pawn immediately with, 21...Nxa5?! as after, 22.Qa2 threatening c3-c4. Nb3 23.c4!± White will have a slightly better position.]

22.Reb1? after this White's position simply collapses.

[22.Be3 was a better try. But after, Nxa5 23.Qh4 Qxd3 24.Bxh6 Qh7!± and Black is clearly better.]

22...Nxa5 23.Qa2



Find the best move for Black.

23...Qxd3! By temporarily sacrificing the a5 knight, Black eliminates the d3 pawn which opens new possibilities for Black.

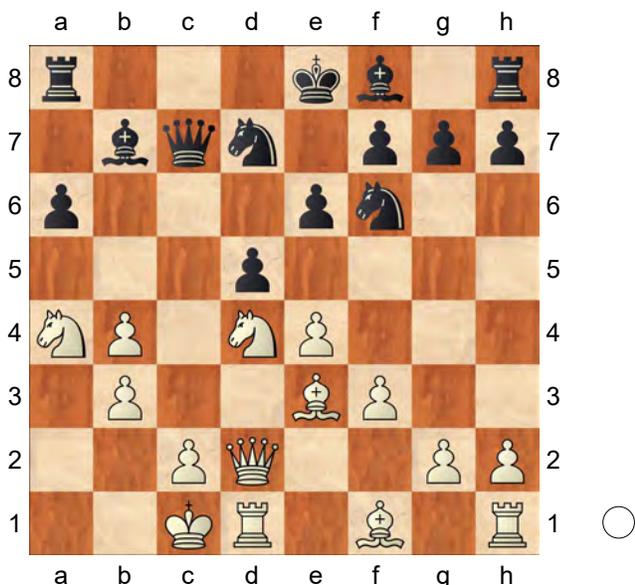
24.Rxb5 axb5 25.Qxa5 e4 this is the point, Black recovers the piece.

26.Nd4 Qxd2 27.Nf1 Qd3 28.Qxc7 b4 29.Rc1 e3! another strong move.

30.fxe3 Rxe3 31.Nc6 b3 32.Qb8 b2 33.Qxb2 Re2 0-1

Sasikiran, Krishnan **2673**
 Artemiev, Vladislav **2761**
 Karpov Poikovsky Tournament (3.1)

In this game we will see how manoeuvring can help us in attacking play. **1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.f3 e6 7.Be3 b5 8.Qd2 b4 9.Na4 Nbd7 10.0-0-0 Qa5 11.b3 Bb7 12.a3 Qc7 13.axb4 d5**



Black just played d6-d5 intending to get counterplay for the sacrificed pawn on the queenside. How should white handle blacks plans?

14.Bf2! A cool manoeuvre! The white bishop goes to g3, attacking the black queen and disrupting his co-ordination.

[14.Bf4?! with similar ideas as in the game is inferior due to, e5 15.Bg3 h5! 16.h4 g6 with a fine position for black.]

14...Bd6

[14...dxe4?! 15.Bg3 e5 16.Bc4! and white seizes the initiative. ½-½ (37) Borisovs, L (2229)-Taylor, B (2168) ICCF 2017]

[14...e5 15.exd5!? (15.Nf5 0-1 (29) Bok, B (2607)-Gordievsky, D (2622) Wijk aan Zee 2018) 15...exd4 16.Re1+ Kd8 17.Bc4 leads to massive complications.]

15.Bg3!N

[15.exd5 1-0 (36) Nakamura, H (2781)-Grandelius, N (2647) Caleta 2018]

15...Bxg3 16.hxg3 the exchange of the dark squared bishops have eased the pressure on the b4 pawn. White can also use the h-file to create chances on the kingside. **16...dxe4 17.g4!**

white immediately starts an action on the kingside. **17...Nd5 18.Bc4 Ne5?**

[Better was, 18...exf3 19.gxf3 0-0 ± though white still has the upper hand.]