Arthur van de Oudeweetering

Chess Pattern Recognition for Beginners

The Fundamental Guide to Spotting Key Moves in the Middlegame

Contents
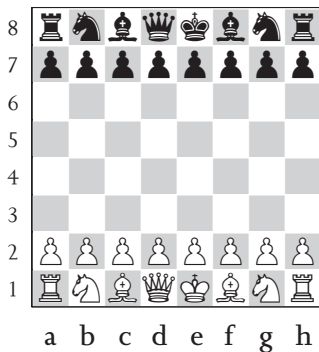
Explanation of symbols

The chessboard with its coordinates:

❑ White to move
■ Black to move
♔ King
♕ Queen
♖ Rook
♗ Bishop
♘ Knight

± White stands slightly better
∓ Black stands slightly better
± White stands better
∓ Black stands better
+− White has a decisive advantage
−+ Black has a decisive advantage
= balanced position
! good move
!! excellent move
? bad move
?? blunder
!? interesting move
?! dubious move
N novelty

Foreword
by Vladimir Chuchelov

In January this year, at the Tata Chess Tournament, I ran into Arthur, whom I know from the years when we were both trainers for the Dutch Chess Federation.

We both took care of one of the national youth selections; I think he did the youngest group. That really is some time back now, but in recent years I noticed he had become a serious chess author. Moreover, when we met this year, he told me, amongst other things, that he was working on the book which is now in front of you.

Arthur himself has provided an extensive Preface, in which he gives further information and explanation about the contents and structure of the book.

Of course here I could expand on that, and select a couple of the many interesting fragments, but in general it feels unnecessary to me to go through the book with you as well. Instead, I will say a couple of words about the subject itself.

Recognition of strategic patterns is a very essential matter; it really helps during a game. Once we see a certain familiar pattern, we can make a mental link with the current situation on the board and figure out the right way to proceed. Knowledge of different strategic ideas is directly linked to so-called intuition, which is a positional feeling that trainees should develop over the years. This goes for beginners as well as advanced players and even top players. It is part of our general chess development.

In my own praxis, working mostly with advanced players, we rather deal with a complete strategical evaluation of positions, which is known to my students as the 'strategic balance'. One specific strategic pattern will often play a role, but it will always be in the context of the whole evaluation, the pattern being just one of various elements. Nevertheless, it is something you can talk about at a later stage.

The present book is designed for the starting chess player. And indeed, it provides an excellent means to help you make your first steps towards this competence of making complete strategical evaluations of positions. This may be a long and difficult road to travel, but for now this book will make you acquainted with numerous basic patterns, and allow you to accumulate essential knowledge connected to these patterns.

Get ready and have a good time while working through the book!

Vladimir Chuchelov
Eupen, October 2018

Preface

As this book is about the middlegame, it could hardly be for absolute beginners. When you make your first steps in studying chess, there is a good chance that initially you will be attracted by other subjects than intricate middlegame strategy. For instance, many interesting opening books and DVDs will be available for you, covering fashionable, tempting opening lines. There's nothing wrong with that, it's great fun to play these in practice, and in due course it will hopefully teach you general things about the opening phase as well. Also, probably your eyes may fall on some instructive YouTube videos about the endgame, or you may even be attracted to a concise endgame manual and learn some basics. If it contains well-arranged material covering positions with a limited amount of pieces, this will easily allow you to pick up numerous instructive principles. This is very useful too, of course. Certainly you will be drawn into tactics when you start to be taken into chess. Lots of exercises are available on the internet, as well as in printed form. Apart from all this, chances are that some of you will install one of the easily available chess engines on your computer and experiment with it. If indeed you have done a bit of work and exploring in the diverse areas of chess, as described above, now this book will provide a next step to get acquainted with the game of chess, and will introduce you into the fascinating complexity of the middlegame. That is, with the help of clear patterns, which cover what will be considered basic knowledge by more advanced players.

Like in the preface of my book *Improve Your Chess Pattern Recognition* from 2014 (henceforth to be called IYCPR), I want to make two things clear right from the start. First of all, this book is definitely about pattern recognition, but there will be no such thing as a scientifically proper definition. The truth is, a proper definition can be rather diffuse, just like in current World Champion Magnus Carlsen's statement from 2010, where he emphasized the importance of pattern recognition: '*One of the most important things in chess is pattern recognition: the ability to recognise typical themes and images on the board, characteristics of a position and their consequences.*' (interview in the German magazine *Der Spiegel*) So before you is just a practical book, where in each and every chapter it will be clear to you which pattern is to be recognized in every example.

There is another important thing to point out: the book is about strategic patterns, not tactical ones such as typical mate patterns. You

may encounter some tactical patterns along the way, but generally you should pick those up from good books on tactics. Also, as the title says, this book deals mainly with the middlegame. So, strategic patterns in the middlegame it is!

As this book is designed for beginners, I have selected the more common and obvious patterns that underline the basic rules of the game. Whereas my two former pattern recognition books were partly based on previous columns I had written, this book has been written practically from scratch. To suit the purpose of the book, exceptions to the rules have been eliminated this time. There are no strong knights on the rim in this book, and no more chapters about the possible strength of doubled pawns. On the contrary, in the first section, you will find a chapter on how to profit from the expected weakness of an isolated doubled pawn, or how to profit from a classically strong knight on d5. Where in *Train Your Chess Pattern Recognition* (TYCPR) you could find a chapter with examples where a king could surprisingly stay in the middle, here, in Chapter 1, you will learn about the more standard dangers involved here. So, perhaps this book should have been the first of the series. But things have gone differently, perhaps reflecting the unpredictable course of a game of chess.

Content and structure
The book is divided into four parts, every one with a small introduction. Each chapter has at least six examples of a specific pattern, showing similarities and possible small differences. So, you won't have to digest an entire book on every subject, but the repetition will hopefully do its job as the mother of learning.

   The first part, called 'Typical pawns and pieces', contains eleven chapters about typically strong or weak pawns and pieces – a pretty straightforward subject to start with. Exercises follow right after. Three smaller parts are given next, and exercises on these subjects follow after the fourth and last part. This seemed to be the most appropriate place for a second little test, as now you will have to choose from a fairer amount of patterns than would have been the case if I had given exercises after each part. Now there is a second set of exercises, offering a decent mix. This is also more reminiscent of an actual game, where the position should lead you to the pattern (and not the fresh subject of the preceding chapter).

   First of all, the most common typical break moves in the middlegame are covered in Part II: 'When pawns meet' (Chapters 12-16). The third part is actually about 'when pieces meet': 'When to exchange and when not' (Chapters 17-20). I suppose this is the most difficult subject, because,

for instance, an exchange of queens may occur in every other game, but usually not on a specific square. Your memory will have to be triggered in another way to realize the possible importance of the moment and recognize the consequences of a piece exchange. Or, as Elizabeth Pähtz notes: 'The ability to exchange the right pieces is connected to patterns.' (on the DVD *How to exchange pieces*, one of the few publications dedicated to what seems an underrated subject) The fourth and last part of this book, 'Sacrifices – the classics' (Chapters 21-25) is dedicated, indeed, to classical sacrifices. It's always fun to look at sacrifices, and so this is probably a pleasurable part to finish with. And, fortunately, this is also a pattern that is easy to pinpoint, although in general the follow-up is often different in each case. A few more words on this subject are in order here.

A small warning

Although it may be easy to recognize a pattern while reading the book, the resulting course of the game may remain pretty complex and difficult. Whereas a tactical pattern will likely yield an immediate result, a strategic pattern does not usually lead to a decisive result immediately. Lots of other factors may have their say, and the examples in each chapter will make that clear. Also, a small battle between two patterns may occur. To make this clear, here is one example, which also gives us a sneak preview into some of the chapters:
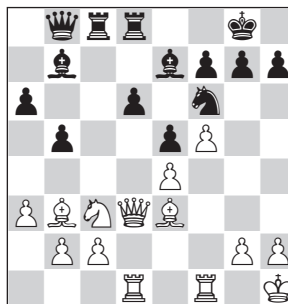
Nikolaevsky – Geller

This position is from the 1959 Ukrainian championship, between the later numbers 2 and 1 on the list. Nikolaevsky continued with **18.♗g5**. Do you have any idea what he was up to? The answer can be found in Chapters 6 and 19: he was intending to exchange some minor pieces with ♗g5xf6 followed by ♗b3-d5, after which he would be left with a good knight versus a bad bishop (see Chapter 19). What's more, he will have a typical strong knight on d5 (see Chapter 6). This is all very sensible, but

Nikolaevsky's concept was countered with another pattern. With the typical sacrifice **18...♖xc3!?** (Chapter 22) **19.bxc3 ♗xe4**, Geller completely changed the picture. The sacrifice is not immediately winning, but the pawn and White's bad pawn structure give Black sufficient compensation. Geller eventually won, but that's another story. Clearly, the knowledge of typical ideas is extremely helpful, although, alas, it does not win by itself. In his middlegame booklet from 1955 called *Strijd om de open lijnen* (*Battling for the open files*), the Dutch former World Champion Max Euwe came to the same conclusion in a more elaborate and lucid way. As always, his writing was hugely instructive. Here it is (abbreviated in the middle):

We might have excellent knowledge of the methods to open rook files, to get diagonals in our possession, or be able to accurately weigh the advantages and disadvantages of different pawn formations, yet in practice we are always in for surprises. It is a rarity when one particular characteristic controls the entire course of a game (...) Nevertheless, the reader should not be put off by all this. The knowledge he has acquired through study of the foregoing will not be lost. It will often provide valuable guidelines for the strategy to be followed and will therefore give him a sense of self-confidence.

A bit of history

Many ideas on chess strategy have evolved over the years, and specific patterns have become common knowledge. As a result, it is not illogical that numerous examples from the past, just like the one above, have found a place in this book. These games can provide good illustrations of the essence of an idea. The importance of 'studying the classics' has been elaborated upon by various renowned authors, such as recently, for instance, Shereshevsky and Tukmakov. This is not to say that, for example, a classical bishop sacrifice like ♗xh7+ (see Chapter 21) never recurs in modern practice. It does, of course, and sometimes it involves more advanced and complicated ideas. Hence, modern examples will also feature in this book, to paint a complete picture. As a result, you will be treated to a little chess history along the way as well.

When you have finished studying the book, surely the basic patterns, as well as the related ideas, will stick in your memory and will doubtlessly prove to be of use in your future games. For now, first of all, I wish you a lot of fun with this book!

Arthur van de Oudeweetering
Amsterdam, September 2018

CHAPTER 5

Kasparov's favourite

When you can place a knight on the sixth rank, right in the middle of your opponent's position, and you are able to support and maintain it there, you are bound to have made a pretty decent upgrade of your minor piece. What are the resulting advantages and how do you obtain such a terrific knight?
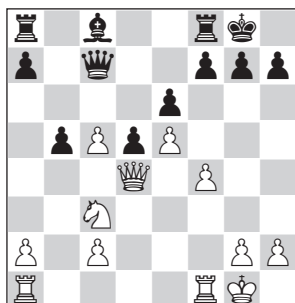
French Defence
Isaak Boleslavsky
Carlos Guimard
Buenos Aires tt 1954 (4)

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.e5 ♘fd7 5.f4 c5 6.♘f3 ♘c6 7.♗e3 cxd4 8.♘xd4 ♗c5 9.♗b5 0-0 10.♘xc6 bxc6 11.♗xc5 ♘xc5 12.♕d4 ♕b6 13.b4 cxb5 14.bxc5 ♕c7 15.0-0

15...b4
This may seem a clever sacrifice, but it turns out to be a 'horrible mistake' (Boleslavsky). 15...♗d7 was called for.
**16.♘b5**
Capturing is not obligatory in our royal game. Guimard had only reckoned with 16.♕xb4 ♗a6 17.♖fd1 ♖fc8, and Black is on top. He will regain the pawn on c5 with firm pressure along the c-file.
16...♕c6 17.♘d6

Now, this mighty knight dominates the rooks, as a result of which the c5-pawn can no longer be captured easily. 'White's position has gone from practically lost to strategically winning.' (Boleslavsky) Indeed, if you were to award points to the knight on d6, this would be much more than the traditional '3'.
17...a5 18.a3 bxa3 19.♖fb1 ♖a6 20.♖xa3 ♕a8 21.♖g3 g6 22.c4 ♗d7
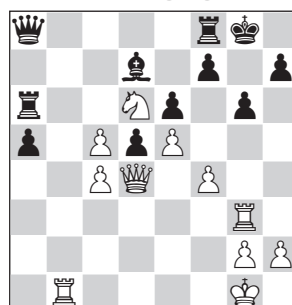
23.f5
The most pleasing way to win.
23...exf5 24.cxd5 a4 25.♖a3 ♖b8 26.♖xb8+ ♕xb8 27.h3
Despacito.
27...f4
27...♕a7 28.♔h2 ♖a5 29.e6 fxe6 30.♕f6 was the idea behind White's former little move. Great prophylaxis!
28.♕xf4 ♗f5 29.♘xf5 gxf5 30.d6 1-0

By the way, the same French Defence hides a well-known trap, which allows White to establish a knight on d6 at an early stage.
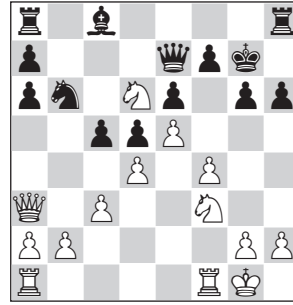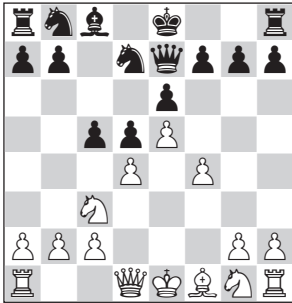
French Defence
Li Shilong 2515
Huang Qiming
Jinan 2005 (1)

1.♘c3 d5 2.d4 ♘f6 3.♗g5 e6 4.e4 ♗e7 5.e5 ♘fd7 6.♗xe7 ♕xe7 7.f4 c5?

This is a thematic attack on White's pawn centre, but it's too early here. The d6-square is readily available after the exchange of dark-squared bishops. Such an exchange to make the strong square accessible is a common theme. One example from another opening is 1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.c3 ♘f6 4.e5 ♘d5 5.d4 cxd4 6.cxd4 d6 7.♗c4 ♘b6 8.♗d3 ♘c6 9.0-0 ♘b4 10.♗g5 ♗e7 11.♗xe7 ♕xe7 12.♘c3 ♘xd3 13.♕xd3 0-0 14.♘e4 dxe5 15.dxe5 ♖d8 16.♘d6.
8.♘b5 ♘a6 9.♘d6+ ♔f8
After 9...♔d8 10.♗xa6 bxa6 11.♕d2 cxd4 12.♘f3 ♘b6 13.♘xd4 ♗d7 14.0-0 White easily won in the old game Gunsberg-Alapin, Frankfurt 1887.
10.♗xa6 bxa6 11.♘f3 h6 12.0-0 g6 13.c3 ♔g7 14.♕a4 ♘b6 15.♕a3

And White won:
15...♕c7 16.dxc5 ♘d7 17.b4 ♖f8 18.♘d4 ♘b8 19.♕c1 ♘c6 20.♕e3 ♗d7 21.a3 ♘xd4 22.cxd4 a5 23.b5 ♖ab8 24.a4 ♖g8 25.g4 ♔h7 26.♖f3 ♖g7 27.♖h3 ♖h8 28.♖xh6+ ♔g8 29.♖xh8+ ♔xh8 30.c6 ♗xc6 31.♖c1 ♕d8 32.bxc6 f5 33.gxf5 1-0

Here is another old game between two great players that also features 'knight versus bishop'. Again, the knight occupies a mighty spot within the opponent's position, though White had to work a bit this time. Also, here Black had the possibility of swapping his bishop for the knight when it reached its strong square.
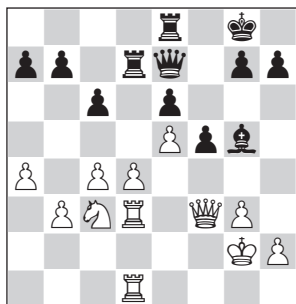
Alekhine's Defence
Mikhail Botvinnik
Salo Flohr
Moscow 1936

1.e4 ♘f6 2.e5 ♘d5 3.d4 d6 4.♘f3 ♗g4 5.♗e2 c6 6.0-0 dxe5 7.♘xe5 ♗xe2 8.♕xe2 ♘d7 9.f4 e6 10.c4 ♘5b6 11.♗e3 ♗e7 12.♘c3 0-0 13.♖f3 ♕e8 14.♖d1 ♖d8 15.b3 f5 16.♘d3 ♗f6 17.♗f2 ♕f7 18.♘e1

♖fe8 19.♖fd3 ♘f8 20.♘f3 ♕c7 21.♘e5 ♘bd7 22.♕d2 ♗e7 23.♘f3 ♘f6 24.♕c1 ♘e4 25.♘e5 ♘xf2 26.♔xf2 ♘d7 27.♕e3 ♘xe5 28.fxe5 ♕a5 29.a4 ♖d7 30.g3 ♕d8 31.♔g2 ♗g5 32.♕f3 ♕e7


33.c5

Botvinnik's – as always instructive – comments were: 'This at first sight somewhat strange move (as it weakens the d5-square!) puts Black in a critical position. It threatens to transfer the knight via b1, a3 and c4 to d6. But after c4-c5, White also avails of another plan – the advance of the b-pawn. I noticed this idea in one of Romanovsky's games from the 5th USSR Championship (versus Selezniev). Flohr prevents this second plan, and White goes over to the first.'

33...a5 34.♘b1 ♕f8 35.♘a3 ♗d8 36.♘c4 ♗c7 37.♘d6
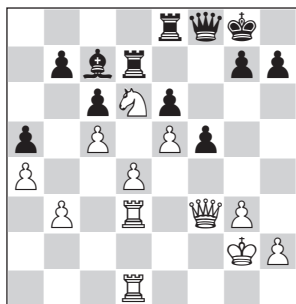
Sure he can take on d6, but then Black's position will remain utterly passive, granting White a protected passed pawn as well.

37...♖b8 38.♖b1 ♕d8 39.b4 axb4 40.♖xb4 ♗xd6?!
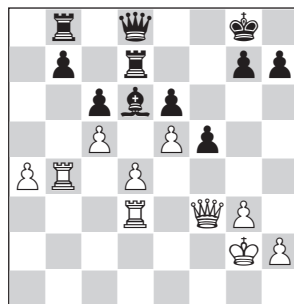
Understandably, Flohr no longer cares to see the sight of the awesome knight. But he cannot prevent being gradually pushed back.

41.exd6 ♕a5 42.♖db3 ♖e8 43.♕e2 ♕a8 44.♖e3 ♔f7 45.♕c4 b5 46.♕c2 ♖xd6 47.cxd6 c5+ 48.♔h3 cxb4 49.♕c7+ ♔g8 50.d7 ♖f8 51.♕d6 h6 52.♕xe6+ ♔h7 53.♕e8 b3 54.♕xa8 ♖xa8 55.axb5 ♖d8 56.♖xb3 ♖xd7 57.b6 ♖b7 58.♔g2 ♔g6 59.♔f3 ♔f6 60.♖b5 ♔e6 61.♔e3 ♔d6 62.♔d3 ♔c6 63.♔c4 ♔d6 64.♖d5+ ♔c6 65.♖c5+ ♔d6 66.♔b5 1-0

Here is a contemporary game with more pieces on the board, but with the same idea!

Queen's Gambit Declined

Bu Xiangzhi   2697
Xu Xiangyu   2534
Chengdu Ach 2017 (5)

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 d5 3.c4 e6 4.♗g5 h6 5.♗xf6 ♕xf6 6.♘c3 c6 7.g3

♘d7 8.♗g2 g6 9.0-0 ♗g7 10.e4 0-0
11.♕e2 dxe4 12.♘xe4 ♕e7

13.c5!?
Again, giving up the d5-square, but
making it possible for the knight to
enter on d6.
13...♘f6
Black wants to be able to challenge
the knight on d6 immediately, but
his c8-bishop will be restricted
soon.
13...b6!? would have been better.
**14.♘d6 ♘e8 15.♘c4 ♘c7 16.♘fe5
♗d7 17.♖ad1 ♖ab8**

White now creates a new front,
profiting from his spatial advantage
in the centre.
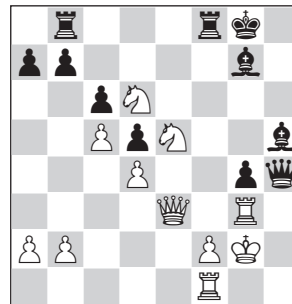**18.h4 h5 19.g4 ♗e8 20.gxh5 ♕xh4
21.hxg6 fxg6 22.♘d6**
Back home!
22...♘d5 23.♗xd5!

White immediately removes Black's
active knight; the subsequent rook
switch along the third rank both
protects his own king and adds to
the attack.
**23...exd5 24.♖d3 g5 25.♖g3 ♗h5
26.♕e3 g4 27.♔g2**

♖h1 is coming. White's absolute
superior activity secures an easy
win.
**27...♗xe5 28.♕xe5 ♗g6 29.♕e6+
♔g7 30.♖xg4 ♕f6 31.♕e5 ♕xe5
32.dxe5 ♖g8 33.f4**
Black resigned.

Such a powerful knight is often
fittingly called an 'octopus', because
of its eight strong tentacles. It
was the favourite piece of Garry
Kasparov, who famously used it
to dominate Karpov's position

in a game from their World Championship Match in 1985. Here is another one from a tournament where he impressively scored his first international success, when he was only sixteen years old.

King's Indian Defence
Roman Hernandez 2500
Garry Kasparov
Banja Luka 1979 (4)

1.c4 g6 2.♘c3 ♗g7 3.d4 c5 4.d5 ♘f6 5.e4 d6 6.♗d3 0-0 7.f4 a6 8.♘ge2 b5 9.cxb5 axb5 10.♘xb5 ♗a6 11.♘ec3

11...c4

This is a typical tactical shot, which creates the basic support for the octopus later on. Meanwhile, there was another surprising tactic: the immediate 11...♘xe4 12.♗xe4 (12.♘xe4 ♗xb5 13.♗xb5 ♕a5+) 12...♕a5, and surprisingly enough the b5-knight cannot be properly covered after 13.♘a3 (13.♗d3 ♗xb5) 13...♗xc3+ 14.bxc3 ♕xc3+.
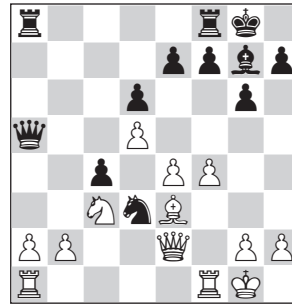**12.♗c2**
12.♗xc4 ♘xe4.
12...♗xb5 13.♘xb5 ♕a5+ 14.♘c3
Now watch: the knights go on their respective ways!

14...♘fd7 15.♕f3 ♘a6 16.0-0 ♘b4 17.♕e2 ♘c5 18.♗e3 ♘bd3 19.♗xd3 ♘xd3

In this type of position, where Black has sacrificed his b5-pawn like in the Benko (Volga) Gambit, Black has strong pressure against White's queenside along the long diagonal and on the open files. It goes without saying that the pressure will soon be unbearable with such a beast on d3. White's desperate attempt at active counterplay in the game quickly backfired.
20.e5 dxe5 21.fxe5 ♗xe5 22.♗h6 ♖fb8 23.♕f3 f5 24.g4 ♖xb2
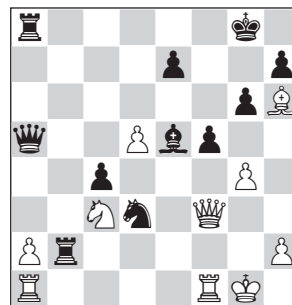
This is a blatantly obvious example for Chapter 3: the rook on the second rank assists in the attack.
25.gxf5 ♕xc3 26.fxg6 ♕d4+ 0-1

CHAPTER 12

Reaching for the hook

When you want to open a file for your rook, a so-called 'hook' in your opponent's pawn formation comes in handy. With a black pawn on h6, the white g-pawn will need only two moves to make contact, and as a result the g-file may be opened soon. Actually, this very example is a frequently-occurring break. We will look at several examples, when the kings' positions will differ. In all cases though, there will be action!
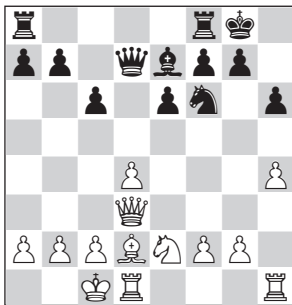
Opposite-side castling

Caro-Kann Defence
Thomas Luther 2509
Vladimir Epishin 2667
Nova Gorica 2000 (9)

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.♘d2 dxe4 4.♘xe4 ♗f5 5.♘g3 ♗g6 6.h4 h6 7.♘f3 ♘f6 8.♘e5 ♗h7 9.♗d3 ♗xd3 10.♕xd3 e6 11.♗d2 ♗e7 12.0-0-0 0-0 13.♘e2 ♘bd7 14.♘xd7 ♕xd7

In positions with opposite-castled kings, you need to be the fastest to start an attack. Obviously, a hook on h6 helps to gain a few tempi to open a file.
15.g4!

Note that in this Caro-Kann line, the white h-pawn has not yet advanced to h5; as a result, the h-file might be opened right away after g4-g5.
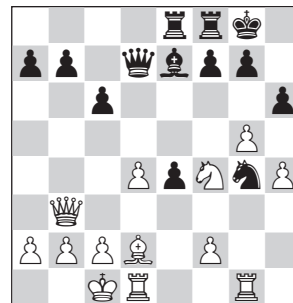**15...e5?**
15...♘xg4 16.♖hg1 looks rather dangerous, but as a counterattack on the queenside is far off and the text move turns out to be bad, Black just had to be brave!
16.g5 e4 17.♕b3 ♘g4 18.♖hg1 ♖ae8
Capturing on f2 is out of the question, for example: 18...♘xf2 19.♖df1 ♘g4 20.gxh6 gxh6 21.♖xg4+. But a move like 18...♔h7 would have been better. Epishin's move meets with a nasty knight leap.
19.♘f4

Threatening both 20.♘g6 and 20.♕g3. Already, Black is lost! A bad day for Karpov's former second.

19...hxg5 20.hxg5 ♗xg5 21.♘g6 ♗h6 22.♗xh6 ♘xh6 23.♘xf8 ♖xf8 24.d5 ♖e8 25.♖g5 ♔h7 26.♕g3 ♖g8 27.♖h1 ♕d8 28.♕f4 f6 29.♕xe4+ g6 30.♖gh5 1-0
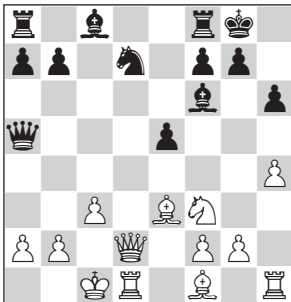
French Defence

Veselin Topalov 2707
Alexey Shirov 2722

Leon rapid (man+computer) 2001 (1)

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.♗g5 dxe4 5.♘xe4 ♘bd7 6.♘f3 ♗e7 7.♘xf6+ ♗xf6 8.h4 c5 9.♕d2 cxd4 10.♘xd4 0-0 11.0-0-0 h6 12.♘f3 ♕b6 13.c3 e5 14.♗e3 ♕a5

Here, Black has more counterplay. First of all, the a2-pawn is hanging.

15.g4!?

Topalov & company couldn't care less – they speed it up!

15...e4

After 15...♕xa2 16.♗d3, I would rather be the player with the initiative in a rapid game like this.
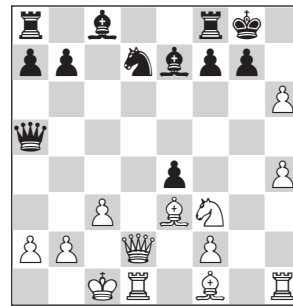
16.g5

Keeping the pace!

16...♗e7

16...exf3 17.gxf6 ♘xf6 18.♗d4 ♘g4.

17.gxh6

17...♕xa2?

This makes it easy for White. Shirov should have accepted the sacrifice with 17...exf3, when 18.♗d4 continues a fierce attack, while Black has not developed properly, but the follow-up is not as trivial as in the game: 18...♘f6 (18...g6 19.h7+ ♔xh7 20.h5) 19.♖e1 ♗e6 20.♖g1 g6 21.♖xe6 fxe6 22.♖xg6+ ♔h8 23.♕g5.

18.♕d4!

Covering the a4-square and attacking both e4 and g7.

18...♘f6 19.hxg7 ♖e8 20.♗c4 ♕a1+ 21.♔c2 ♕a4+ 22.♔b3 ♕xd4 23.♘xd4 ♔xg7 24.♖dg1+ ♔h7 25.♗xf7 ♖f8 26.♗g6+ ♔h8 27.♘f5 ♗xf5 28.♗xf5 ♘d5 29.♗xe4

29.♗d4+ would be the regular choice, but Topalov wants to hunt the bare king with opposite-coloured bishops. An elegant choice.

29...♘xe3+ 30.fxe3 ♖f2+ 31.♔b1 ♗c5 32.♖g5 ♗xe3 33.♖h5+ ♔g7 34.♖e1 ♗b6 35.♖g5+

Black resigned.

Early outings versus early castling

Four Knights Opening

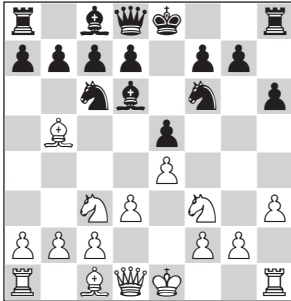**Vasily Yemelin**   2522
Andrey Kharlov   2638

Moscow 2002 (4)

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 ♘f6 4.♘c3 ♗d6 5.d3 h6 6.h3

6...0-0 7.g4

This is an opening-theoretical position. White launches g2-g4 immediately after Black's castling, and doesn't mind that the white king is still in the middle. Black's counter-action in the centre is delayed as a result of the fashionable bishop on d6.

7...♖e8

7...a6 and 7...♘d4 have been played as well.

8.g5 hxg5 9.♗xg5 ♘d4

9...♗e7 looks natural as well. White may continue with 10.♗a4!? (10.♖g1 ♘d4 11.♗c4 c6) 10...d6 11.♕d2.
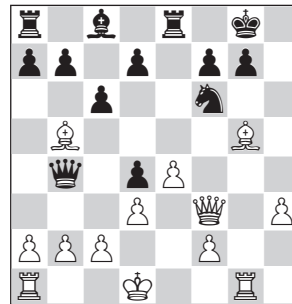
10.♘d5 ♗e7 11.♘xe7+ ♕xe7 12.♘xd4 exd4 13.♖g1

That's what it was all about – opening the g-file. Tactically, it just works.

13...c6

White has a dangerous attack after 13...♕b4+ 14.c3 dxc3 15.♗xf6 cxb2+ 16.♔f1 g6 (16...bxa1♕? 17.♖xg7+ ♔f8 18.♕xa1 ♕xb5 19.♖h7) 17.♖b1 ♕xb5 18.♖g4 ♗e6 19.♗xb2 (19.e5? d6 20.♖h4 ♖xf6 21.exf6 ♕g5).
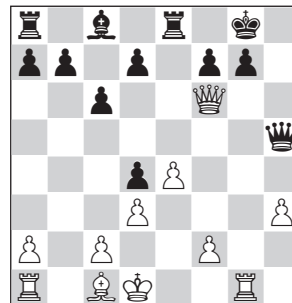
14.♕f3 ♕b4+ 15.♔d1

15...♕xb2

15...♘xe4 16.dxe4 ♕xb5 17.♗f6 g6 18.a4 ♕c5 19.♖g5.

16.♗c1?

The simple 16.♖c1 would have kept all threats alive.

16...♕xb5 17.♕xf6 ♕h5+

A small spanner in the works. Luckily for White, he still managed to win the ending, thanks to his lead in development:

18.f3 g6 19.♖g5 ♕h7 20.♕xd4 ♕g7 21.♗b2 ♕xd4 22.♗xd4 d6 23.h4 ♔f8 24.♔d2 ♔e7 25.f4 c5 26.♗b2

♔d7 27.f5 gxf5 28.h5 fxe4 29.h6 ♔c6 30.h7 e3+ 31.♔e2 f6 32.♗xf6 ♗e6 33.♖h1 ♖h8 34.♗xh8 ♖xh8 35.♔xe3 b5 36.a3 a5 37.♖h6 a4 38.♖xe6 ♖xh7 39.♖gg6 1-0
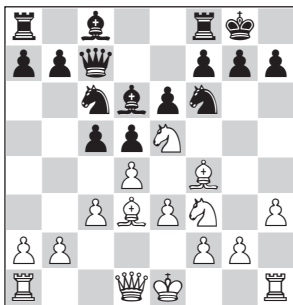
London System
Yury Kryvoruchko   2692
Daniel Sadzikowski   2590
Germany Bundesliga 2017/18 (6)

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♗f4 e6 3.♘f3 c5 4.e3 ♘c6 5.♘bd2 d5 6.c3 ♗e7 7.h3 ♗d6 8.♘e5 0-0 9.♗d3 ♕c7 10.♘df3

This is another sort of theoretical position (it has been seen before in various other games) in the popular London System.
10...h6 11.g4
And again, White immediately seizes the opportunity to try to open the g-file now that Black has castled.
11...♘d7 12.g5 ♘cxe5 13.dxe5 ♘xe5 14.♗xe5 ♗xe5 15.gxh6
And he managed! Now, can he get his pieces involved in an attack? Where will he leave his king?
15...g6
A typical reaction, but here the position will be opened soon

anyway. 15...gxh6!? 16.♘h4 ♖d8 17.♕h5 ♔f8 18.♕xh6+ ♔e7 would have been an interesting try.
16.h4 d4 17.h5 g5
A rather desperate try already. A nice line is 17...dxc3 18.hxg6 cxb2 19.g7! bxa1♕ 20.♕xa1 ♗xa1 21.♗h7+! ♔xh7 22.gxf8♕.
18.♘xg5
18.♖g1 was just as good.
18...dxe3 19.fxe3 ♗g3+ 20.♔f1 f5 21.♖g1

This is an unusual position, but White has managed to get an attack going, while his own king seems relatively safe on f1. With some fine tactics, the Ukrainian hauled in the full point:
21...♔h8 22.♕f3 ♗e5 23.♘h3 ♗d7 24.♘f4 ♖g8
24...♗xf4 25.exf4 ♗c6 26.♕e3 ♖g8 27.♖g6.
25.♖g6 c4 26.♗c2 ♗c6 27.♕g3 ♔h7 28.♕g5 ♗xf4 29.exf4 ♕f7 30.♖e1 ♗d5
Alas, 30...♖xg6 31.hxg6+ ♕xg6 runs into 32.♗xf5! exf5 33.♖e7+.
31.♖f6 ♗g2+
And here, 31...♕d7 is refuted by 32.♖xf5!.
32.♔f2 ♕c7 33.♖xf5 1-0