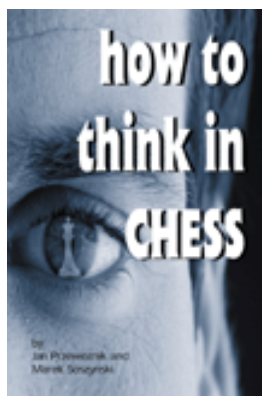




C O L U M N I S T S

*The**Instructor*

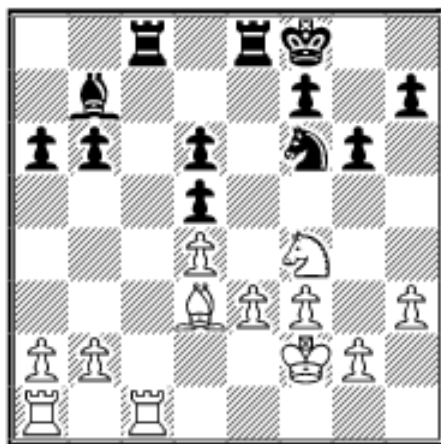
Mark Dvoretsky



Anthony Miles' Endgame Technique

I was not personally acquainted with Anthony Miles (even though I did meet him at various tournaments on occasion), but from an instructional standpoint, I knew him quite well. For there are many of his games and excerpts of his games included in my instructional materials and in my notebook of exercises. The examples I would like to present herewith demonstrate the first English grandmaster's topflight endgame technique.

Perhaps this characterization will surprise the reader, used to Miles' reputation as a "streetfighter" - such a term suggests desperate combat in irrational positions, hardly dry mastery of the endgame. However, one can, one must fight for victory in the most widely differing circumstances, including "boring"-looking endgames; and Miles had this skill down cold.

Miles - Larsen Tilburg 1978**22 g4!+/-**

A standard kingside space grab.
22 h4?! h5 is weaker, as White is left with fewer options for exerting pressure. Also dubious is 22 b4?! b5 (Black prepares ..Nd7-b6) 23 Rxc8 [23 a4 Rxc1 24 Rxc1 ba 25 Ra1 Bc6 26 Bxa6 Rb8 27 b5 Bxb5 28 Rb1 a3+/=] 23...Rxc8

24 a4 ba 25 Rxa4 Rc6+/=.



22...Ke7

After 22...g5 23 Ne2, White is threatening both h3-h4 and Ng3-f5.

23 h4 b5

With the advance of his kingside pawns, White also threatens the d5-pawn - he intends Bc2-b3 followed by g4-g5. Black parries this threat (24 Bc2 Nd7 25 Bb3 Nb6), but this forces him to weaken the queenside dark squares.

24 h5 Nd7 25 Rxc8 Rxc8 26 Rh1 Nf8

26...Nb6? is impossible, owing to 27 hg hg 28 Nxg6+ fg 29 Rh7+.

27 hg hg 28 Ke2

By stationing his king at d2, White not only neutralizes the enemy rook, but also renews the threat of Bc2-b3. So Larsen moves his king to g7, to cover the invasion squares on the h-file, thereby freeing his knight to defend the weak pawn at d5.

28...Kf6 29 Kd2 Kg7 30 Rc1!

After the Black king wanders off to the kingside, Miles switches the focus of his activities to the opposite side of the board. After trading rooks, he intends to invade a5 - the square Black weakened by his 23rd move - with his king.

30...Rxc1 31 Kxc1 Kf6 32 Kd2 b4

If 32...Bc6 (preparing a6-a5), then 33 a4!+-.

33 Kc2 a5 34 Bb5! Ne6 35 Nxe6 fe 36 Kb3 Kg5 37 Ka4 e5 38 Kxa5 ed 39 ed Kf4 40 Bd7 Ke3 41 Kb6 Ba8 42 Ka7 Kxd4 43 f4. Black resigned.

This endgame clearly demonstrates two important elements of the English GM's endgame mastery, which we shall see in action in most of the following examples:

(a) Skillful pawn play; and (b) Exploitation of the “two weaknesses principle”.

We probably ought to spend a little more time discussing that second element. Allow me to quote the description of the two weaknesses principle from one of my own books.

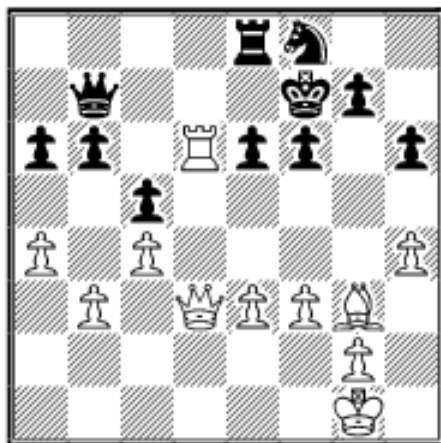
On the defensive, your opponent will try to defend all his weaknesses securely. In the widest sense of the word, a weakness in his camp may be not only a vulnerable pawn, or a poorly placed piece, but also, for example, an invasion square, which must be defended, or an opposing passed pawn, which must be blockaded.

With a smartly-conducted defense, holding one weakness is not usually too difficult. So, if your opponent is condemned to passivity, don't try to win just on one point - play the whole board! The proper strategy for the stronger side consists of seeking out, or creating, a second weakness in the enemy camp. By attacking this second weakness, and then, if necessary, switching the attack back to the first one, we break down and finally defeat the enemy defense.

Observe how the great endgame masters exploit their advantage. You will see that nearly all of them will, at some point, open up a “second front”.

That's how it went in the example we just looked at. It is interesting to follow how the kingside assault allowed White, first, to create a hidden threat to the d5-pawn, provoking a weakening of the enemy pawn chain; and then simplified his invasion of the queenside.

Miles - Dzindzichashvili Tilburg 1978



37...Re7?

An instructive technical error. Hastening to neutralize White's pressure on the d-file, Dzindzichashvili loses sight of another very important element of the position: the placement of the kingside pawns. 37...h5! was necessary, fixing White's pawn on

h4, the same color square as his bishop. In that event, White's advantage would probably have been insufficient for victory.

38 h5!

Miles immediately exploits his opponent's carelessness, seizing space on the kingside. Of course, the h5-pawn can always be traded off by playing g7-g6, but then Black will be saddled with an isolated pawn at h6.

**38...Rd7 39 Rxd7+ Qxd7 (39...Nxd7 40 Qg6+ is just bad)
40 Qxd7+ Nxd7 41 Bc7!**

The bishop is clearly better than the knight, which is tied to the b6-pawn.

41...a5?!

Clearly afraid of the a4-a5 break, Black seals off the queenside, thereby relegating himself to eternal passivity. His hope, that his opponent will be unable to clear a path into his camp for the king, will be dashed.

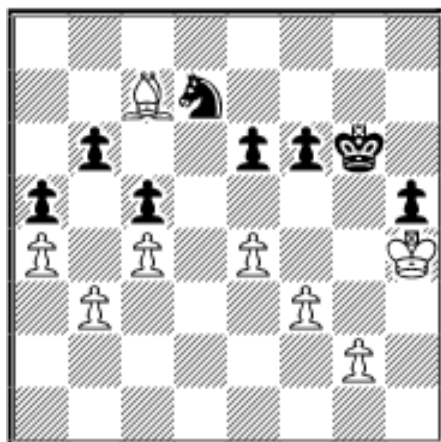
42 Kf2 g5

Perhaps he should have refrained from this move; but such advice is easier to give than to follow, when Black is so cramped.

43 hg+ Kxg6 44 Kg3 Kg5 45 e4 h5 46 Kh3

The hasty 46 f4+? would allow Black to fix this White pawn on the same color square as the bishop by 46...Kg6 and 47...f5, practically eliminating White's winning chances. Of course, Miles avoids this positional error.

46...Kh6 47 Kh4 Kg6 48 Bd8 Kh6 49 Kg3 Kg7 50 Kh4 Kh6 51 Bc7 Kg6



52 g3

Miles refrained from the immediate 52 g4 because of 52...hg 53 fg f5; however, after 54 ef+ gf 55 g5, White still wins. On the other hand, he can still play this advance anytime.

52...Kh6 53 g4!

Yet another typical endgame technique, which we call “enlarging the playing field.” The point is to exchange pawns, with the goal of clearing the king’s path to the opposite wing.

53...hg 54 fg! Kg6 55 Kg3 Kg5

On 55...f5 56 gf+ ef 57 Kf4! decides.

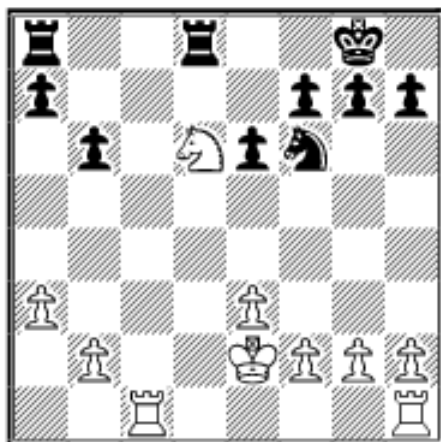
56 Kf3 Kh6

56...e5 does not help, in view of 57 Kg3 Kg6 58 Kh4 Kh6 59 Bd8 Kg6 60 g5! fg+ (60...f5 61 ef+ Kxf5 62 Kh5 e4 63 g6+-) 61 Bxg5 Nb8 62 Bd8 Nd7 63 Kg4+-, and zugzwang.

57 Kf4 Kg6 58 e5! fe+ (58...f5 59 gf+ ef 60 e6) 59 Bxe5 Kf7 60 Bc7 Kf6 61 g5+ Kf7 62 Kg4 Kg6 63 Bd6

Black resigned. He is not only in zugzwang - he will fall into zugzwang again and again, since his knight, tied as it is to the b6-pawn, cannot move from the spot. For example: 63...e5 64 Bc7 (zugzwang) e4 65 Kf4 (65 Bd8) 65...e3 66 Kxe3 Kxg5 67 Ke4+-, or 63...Kf7 64 Kh5 Kg7 65 Bc7 (zugzwang) Kh7 (65...e5 66 Kg4+-) 66 g6+ Kg7 67 Kg5 (zugzwang), and wins.

Miles - Ligterink Amsterdam Zonal 1978



19 Rc6!

Of course, the knight cannot be maintained at d6; but while it is there, White can use its protection to seize the c-file. In reply, Black doubles his rooks on the d-file, but that has less value. Not only are the invasion squares on that file covered by the White king,

but the c-file being that much further from the kings makes those invasion squares that much harder to defend.

I would recommend the interested reader study, in Nimzovich's *My System* (at the conclusion of the third chapter, devoted to the 7th and 8th ranks), the game Nimzovich - Tarrasch, Breslau 1925. The material, the pawn structure, and, most importantly, the course of the struggle in that game are amazingly similar to this endgame of Tony Miles'.

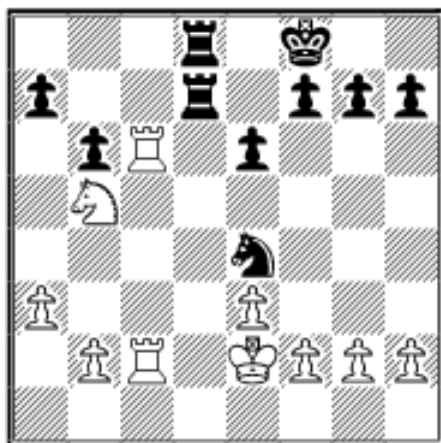
19...Kf8

Almost nothing is changed by 19...Rd7 20 Rhc1 Rad8 21 R1c2! And on 19...Nd5, Miles gives 20 Rhc1! Ne7 21 Rc7!, with advantage to White.

20 Rhc1 Rd7 21 Nb5

21 Nc8, to separate the rooks, suggests itself; but then Black continues 21...Nd5!, aiming to trade off the knights by 21...Ne7, which practically equalizes. In Miles' opinion, 21 Nc4 was also worth looking into.

21...Rad8 22 R1c2 Ne4



Our earlier comment about the relatively small value of Black's control of the d-file now appears mistaken: How does White meet the threatened rook invasion at d2? 23 f3? Rd2+ 24 Rxd2 Rxd2+ 25 Ke1 Rxb2 leads to Black's advantage; 23 Nd4?! is met by 23...e5=; and if 23 Rc8?! Rxc8 24 Rxc8+ Ke7=.

23 f4!!

A wonderful solution to the problem: White secures the f3 square for his king, and the important d4 square for his knight at the same time. Now the rook check is no longer dangerous: 23...Rd2+?! 24. Kf3+/- . And on 23...Nd6?! 24 Nxd6 Rxd6 25 Rxd6 Rxd6 26 Rc7, Black finds himself in a difficult rook endgame (here, the comment about the relative value of the two files finds convincing support).

23...Ke7?!

Failing to sense the strategic danger, Ligterink makes a natural, quiet move. I believe it was time for Black to take active measures on the kingside with 23...g5! On 24 g3 (24 R6c4!/? is worth considering) Black does not continue 24...Rd2+?! 25 Kf3 f5 26 g4!+/-, but 24...g4! 25 Nd4 h5+/=.

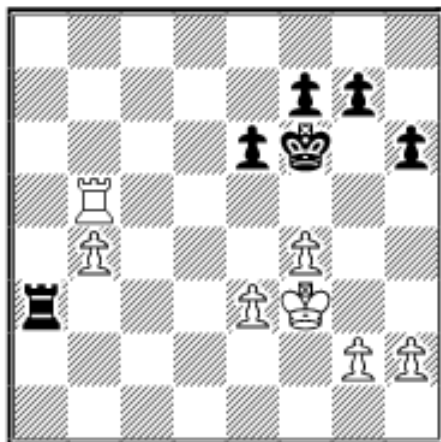
24 Rc7 a6 25 Nd4 Kf6

Black loses a pawn after 25...Rc7 26 Rxc7+ Rd7 27 Nc6+ Kd6 28 Rxd7+ Kxd7 29 Nb8+ and 30 Nxa6+-.

26 b4 h6?!

Black also has a difficult position after 26...Rxc7 27. Rxc7 Rd6 28. Nf3, intending Ne5 (Miles). Here too, as it was three moves earlier, Black's best chance was the energetic 26...g5!?

27. Rxd7 Rxd7 28. Kf3 Nd6 29. Rc6 (Black's position is already hopeless) **29...Nb5 30. Nxb5 ab 31. Rxb6 Ra7 32. Rxb5 Rxa3**



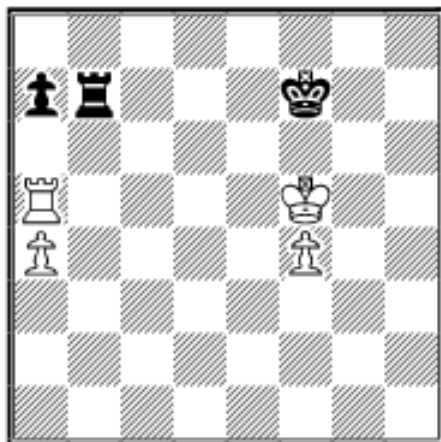
33 h4!

The final stroke! Miles is in no hurry to push the passed pawn, intending to pressurize the kingside first with h4-h5!, to be followed, perhaps, by the attacking g2-g4-g5. The Dutch master thought White's technique so impressive that he immediately

laid down his arms.

In an interesting, recently published book, *The Seven Deadly Chess Sins* (in the chapter entitled "Plus Equals Mode"), Jonathan Rowson presents an instructive fragment in which Miles, from a nearly equal, quiet position, completely outplays his opponent, finally winning a pawn. I have included the concluding, and relatively simple, stage of cashing in the advantage from this game in the endgame manual I am preparing for publication.

Miles - Webb Birmingham 1975



**49 Ra6 Rc7 50 Kg5 Kg7 51 f5
Rd7 52 a5 Rc7 53 Rd6!**

White has strengthened his position to the utmost. Now he implements the standard plan in such positions of seizing the 7th rank by a5-a6 and Rd6-d8-b8-b7.

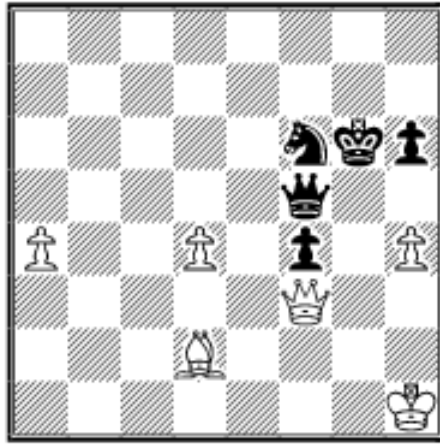
**53...Kf8 54 Rd8+ Ke7 55 Rh8
Kd6 56 Kg6 Rc1 57 Ra8**

Good technique: White combines the threat to advance the f-pawn with his attack on the a7-pawn (once again, as so often before, the two weaknesses principle!).

57...Ke5 58 Re8+ Kf4 (58...Kd6 59 Re6+ Kd7 60 Ra6+-)
**59 f6 Rg1+ 60 Kf7 Ra1 61 Kg7 Kf5 62 f7 Rg1+ 63 Kf8
Kg6 64 Re6+.** Black resigned.

Of course, there are many, many endings that are not so quiet and “strategical” in nature. Sometimes, even in the endgame, we get a sharp struggle, requiring accurate calculation of variations. Here too Miles, as a rule, was at his best, sometimes extracting more out of a position than could have been achieved by “normal” means. I shall now show an interesting example along these lines.

Miles - Larsen London 1980



In positions with passed pawns, the bishop is, more often than not, superior to the knight. This evaluation would probably have held true, after the exchange of queens. On the other hand, a queen and knight, in close proximity to the enemy king, generally work very well together, and can create strong threats. In

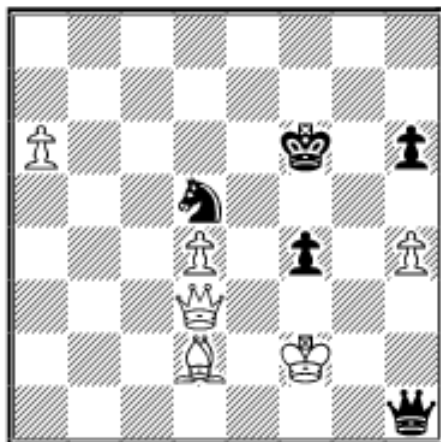
other words, White holds the strategic advantage, so Black must rely on tactics in his search for salvation.

Larsen could have saved the game here, had he found the line later pointed out by Miles, involving the sacrifice of all his remaining pawns: 47...Qb1+! 48 Kg2 Qc2 49 Qxf4 Ne4 50 h5+ Kg7 51 Qxh6+ Kf7, and the only way to save the bishop is continuous checking of the Black king.

47...Nd5? 48 a5+/- Qb1+ 49 Kh2 Qa2 50 Qd3+ Kf6 51 Kh3?!

A significant inaccuracy! Even in such sharp endgames, it sometimes makes sense to act strategically. The move 51 h5! (in Miles' style, by the way), securing White's queen the g6 square, would have kept a great advantage. The idea behind the move becomes clear in the variation 51...Ne3 52 Kg1 Qg8+ 53 Qg6+! Qxg6 54 hg, with a winning minor-piece endgame.

51...Qa1 52 Qa6+ Kf5 53 Qd3+ Kf6 54 Kg2 Qd1!
(threatening 55...Ne3+) **55 Kf2 Qh1 56 a6**



56...Qxh4+?

Taking the pawn with check looks completely natural; all the same, it is the decisive mistake! White's king now escapes the checks on the queen's wing, and the passed a-pawn decides the issue.

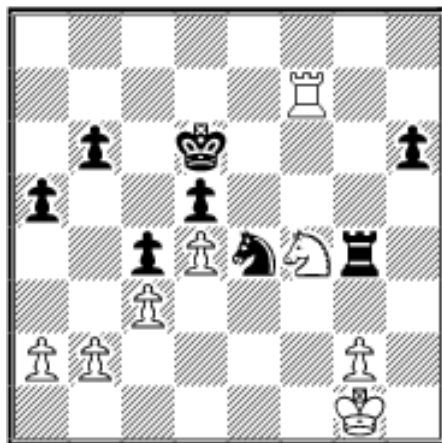
As Miles notes, Black had to make immediate use of his passed f-pawn by 56...Qh2+! 57 Kf1 Qh1+ 58 Ke2 Qg2+ 59 Kd1 f3. White's only possible try is 60 Qe4!, but then Black continues 60...Qf1+! (stronger than 60...Qg1+ 61 Kc2 f2 62 Qe5+ Kg6 63 h5+) 61 Qe1 (61 Kc2 Qc4+) 61...Qd3! 62 Qe5+ Kg6 63 h5+ Kh7 64 Qxd5 Qb1+, with perpetual check.

57 Ke2 Qh2+ 58 Kd1 Qg1+ 59 Kc2+- Qg2 60 Kb3 Nc7 61 d5!

A decisive interference. Black can't afford to exchange queens: 61...Qxd5+ 62 Qxd5 Nxd5, in view of 63 Ba5! f3 64 a7 f2 65 a8Q f1Q 66 Qf8+. (The simple 61 Bxf4!? was equally sufficient.)

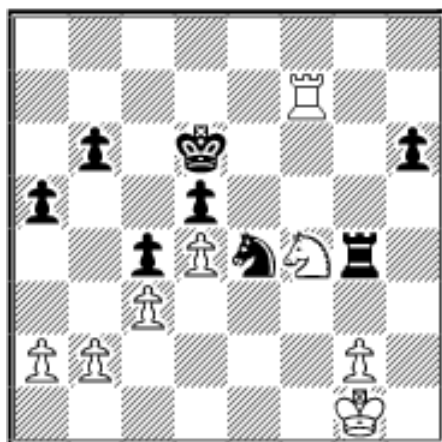
61... Nxd5 62 a7 Qg8 63 Qa6+ Nb6+ 64 Kb4! Qe6 65 Kb5 f3 (65...Na8 66 Qxe6+ Kxe6 67 Kc6+-) 66 Qxb6.
Black resigned.

In conclusion, I present two exercises in which you will be asked to figure out for yourself what Miles played.



Miles - Nikolac Wijk aan Zee 1979

White to move



Miles - Makarychev Oslo 1984

White to move

Solutions

1) Miles - Nikolac

White achieves nothing after 48 Rf5 Rg5.

48 a4!+/-

With this unhurried move, White stops Black's only rational plan of b6-b5-b4, and places him in zugzwang. Any retreat of the knight from the e4 square allows 49 Rf6+. 48...Rg5 is bad, because of 49 Rh7; and if 48...Rh4, then 49 Ng6! and 50 Ne5 (but not 49 Rf5? because of the pretty reply 49...Rh1+!)

48...Kc6 49 Rf5!

Now 49...Rg5 does not defend the pawn after all, in view of

50 Nxd5! Rxf5 51 Ne7+ and 52 Nxf5.

49...Nd6 50 Rf6 Rh4 51 g3 Rg4 52 Kg2

Black's position is now completely hopeless. Miles made short work of cashing in his advantage.

52...h5 53 Nxb5 Kd7 54 Kf3 Rg8 55 Nf4! Rxb3+ (55...Ne4 56 Nxd5!) 56 Kxb3 Ne4+ 57 Kg4 Nxf6+ 58 Kf5 Ne4 59 Nxd5 Nd6+ 60 Ke5 Nf7+ 61 Kf6 Black resigned.

2) Miles - Makarychev

White's queen would dearly love to go after the queenside pawns; but first it is necessary to prevent the enemy's counterplay on the kingside. 37 Qc6? would be premature in view of 37...Bxb3 38 Kxb3 Qg1+. And 37 Nf1? Qb2 is useless, as is 37 Ne2? Qe1!, when White cannot play 38 Qxe5+?? Bf6.

37 Nh1!!

Threatening 38 Qc6, with advantage, for instance: 37...Be7 38 Qc6 Bd6 39 Ng3, intending h4-h5.

The game continued: **37...Qb2 38 Qc6 Qb1?** (38...Bg5! was necessary: 39 Kf3 Qb1 40 Ng3 Qd1+ 41 Kg2 Qd8) **39 Qxc7 Qe4+ 40 Kh2 h5 41 Qc6 Qc2 42 gh Qf5 43 Qg2!? Qxh5 44 c5! bc 45 b6 Qd1 46 Qc6! Be7 47 Ng3 c4 48 b7 Bd6 49 Ne4 Bb8 50 Qc8 Qf3 51 Qxb8 Qxe4 52 Qc7 Qf3 53 Kg1! Qd1+ 54 Kg2 Qd5+ 55 Kg3** Black resigned.

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Translated by Jim Marfia

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