



C O L U M N I S T S

The Instructor

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Pawns Arranged against the Rules: On the Same Color Squares as the Bishop

or

"Lawless Pawns"

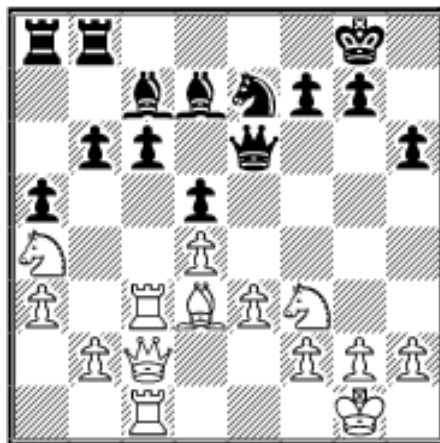
Both the reading of chess literature and our own tournament practice enrich us with knowledge of many rules and regulations, helping us orient ourselves on the limitless sea of chess positions. Nurturing our chess culture plays a most important part in the making of a complete chessplayer - but there is danger here, too. Trouble comes when a chessplayer believes so implicitly in the rules he has learned, that he begins to employ them unquestioningly - for there is no rule that has no exception. Routine, mechanical observance of book wisdom is just as likely to lead to the loss of vital points as the ignorance of basic knowledge.

One ought generally to arrange one's pawns on the color opposite that of one's own bishop. This is one of the most basic chess principles, fully applicable to both same color bishop vs. bishop as well as in bishop vs. knight endings. There are exceptions here as well, however; and not that rare, either. Some of these exceptions can even lead to generalizations of their own.

1) Suppose that, with bishops of the same color, we have achieved a clear positional advantage, by fixing the opponent's pawns on the same color



squares as his bishop (and consequently, placing our pawns “lawfully”, on the opposite-colored squares). While doing this, it can be important at times to leave some pawns on the same colored squares as the bishop, to help break down the enemy defenses.



Taimanov – Kotov
**Candidates’ Tournament,
 Zurich 1953**

White stands better, but how to take advantage of this? Taimanov outplays his opponent instructively.

24. Re1!?

In order to increase his pressure on the queenside, White must play b2-b4 - which doesn’t work right away, in view of 24. b4? ab 25. ab c5! (25...Bd6!?) 26. Nb2 (or 26. b5) 26...c4 with advantage. Therefore, White “spooks” his opponent with the threat of a central break, hoping to provoke him into weakening his own position.

24...f5?

The threat of 25. e4 was not that strong; Black should have ignored it, continuing either 24...Re8 or 24...Qf6.

25. b4! (now this move is possible) **25...ab 26. ab Bd6**

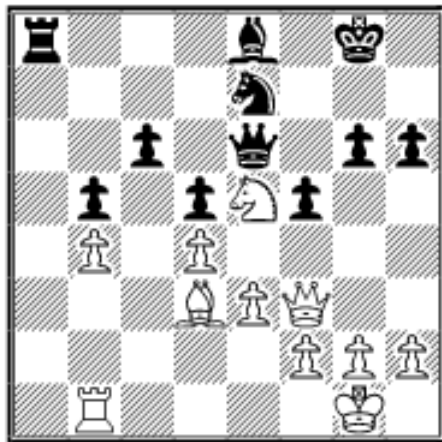
Now 26... c5 would be bad, in view of 27. Nb2 c4 28. Nxc4 dc 29. Bxc4 Nd5 30. Bxd5 intending 31. Rxc7.

27. Rb1 (intending 28. b5) **27...b5?!**

On 27...c5, White has a choice between 28. Nxb6 cb 29. Nxa8 bc 30. Rxb8 Bxb8 31. Qxc3 with a big advantage and 28. b5!? c4? (28...cd with advantage to White) 29. Rxc4! dc 30. Bxc4 Nd5 31. Qb3 with a winning

advantage. However, the text signals a grave positional concession from Black.

28. Nc5 Bxc5 29. Rxc5 Ra4 30. Ne5 Rba8 31. Qe2 Be8 32. Qf3 Ra1 33. Rcc1 Rxb1 34. Rxb1 g6



The comments which follow are excerpted from the famous book of the 1953 Candidates' Tournament:

“And so, White has obtained all that a positional player could dream of. With light-squared bishops on the board, five of Black's pawns stand

on light squares; his knight occupies an ideal position in the center of the board, and cannot be driven off; and Black's pieces are tied to the defense of his weak pawns at g6 and c6, which are on open files. Now, if only White's rook could seize the a-file!”

How should White choose his plan of attack? Since his opponent's weaknesses are all fixed on light squares, White should attack on the light squares, according to the following rough strategy (taking into account, of course, the responses of his opponent): h3, Kh2, Rg1 and g4. Another possibility would be to retreat the queen, followed by f3 and e4. With his moves h4 and f4, however, Taimanov deprives himself of any possibility of a break on the light squares, and thereby kills three-quarters of his chances.” (D. Bronstein)

35. h4? Kg7 36. Qg3 Qd6 37. f4? h5 38. Be2 Ra4?

A terrible mistake which results in a catastrophe. After 38... Kh7, White has no visible means of making progress.

39. Bd1! Rxb4 (if the rook retreats, then 40. Bxh5) **40.**

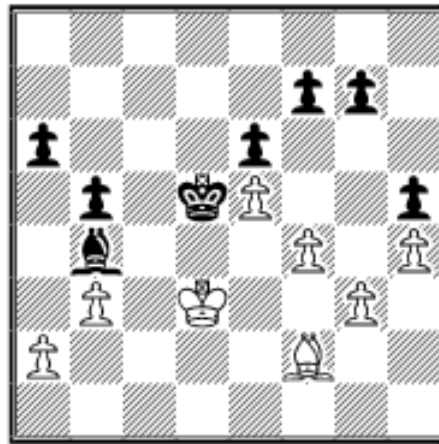
Ra1 (with a winning advantage)

The rook penetrates decisively on the a-file.

40...Nc8

40...Kh7 41. Ra7! Rb1 42. Qg5 Rxd1+ 43. Kh2
winning.

41. Ra8 (41. Bxh5? Ra4) **40...Qe6 42. Bxh5 Kf8 43. Bxg6 Bxg6 44. Nxb6+ Ke8 45. Ne5 Kd8 46. Qg7 Ra4 47. Rb8 c5 48. Rb7** Black resigned.



Sveshnikov - Kasparov
USSR Championship,
Minsk 1979

Black has the more active king and the better pawn structure: all the enemy pawns on the king side are fixed on the color of the bishop.

33...g6?

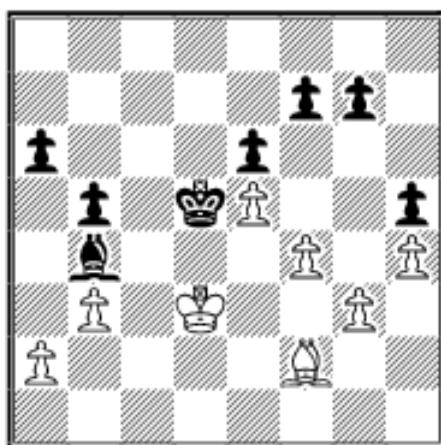
This looks logical at first sight, since Black's last pawn is removed from the same color square as his bishop. It also puts his opponent in zugzwang, since the bishop cannot retreat in view of 34...Be1. However, this is in fact a serious positional error, which should have cost Black the win.

34. Ke2 Bc5 35. Bxc5?

And White errs in turn! After the exchange of bishops, Black's king goes to a3, and then he can execute the standard procedure of exchanging pawns to clear the way for his king to go to the other side.

35...Kxc5 36. Kd3 Kb4 37. Kc2 Ka3 38. Kb1 a5 39. Ka1 a4! 40. ba Kxa4 41. Kb1 (41. Kb2 b4) 41...Ka3 42. Ka1 b4 43. Kb1 b3. White resigned.

Sveshnikov had to avoid the exchange of bishops. After 35. Be1! Ke4 36. Ba5, Black appears to have no way of strengthening his position. And if 35...b4 (hoping for 36. Bd2? Ke4 37. Be1 a5 38. Bd2 Bd4 39. Be1 Be3 with zugzwang; or 39. Bc1 Bc3 40. Be3 Be1!), White simply plays 36. Kf3!, with a draw.



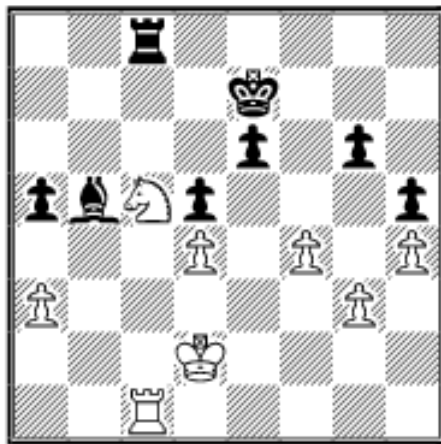
Let's go back to the diagram. Why was the natural move 33...g6 wrong? Because Black needs that pawn to be on g7, to help break up the enemy pawn chain. Kasparov should have played a waiting move with his bishop, in order to pass the move back to his opponent.

33...Ba5! 34. Ke2

Worth a look is 34. a3!?, followed by b3-b4; but then too, Black can play for the win by combining the possible breaks f7-f6 and a6-a5.

34...Ke4 35. Bc5 f6! (the break!) 36.ef gf. Black continues by putting his bishop at c7 (or if White plays 37. Bd6, then on b6), his king at f5, and then playing e6-e5 with a great (and probably decisive) advantage.

2) If your opponent is confined to passive defense on account of his “bad” bishop, but a pawn of his is “properly” placed (on the opposite-colored square), then it is this pawn that will sometimes become a weakness, and the chief target of your attack.



Arnason – Dolmatov Sochi 1988

Black's position is difficult - nearly all of his pawns stand on the same color squares as the bishop.

How should he defend? In order to answer this question, it is necessary first of all to understand what your opponent's intentions are.

49...a4!

The last Black pawn moves onto the same color square as the bishop. Does this violate of a well-known positional principle? Yes; but at the same time, it marks the observance of another, less well known one, which had just been formulated.

If White had been given the opportunity to play a3-a4, there would have been no saving the a5-pawn. Thus, Black's move was forced. "Whoso loseth his head will never complain again about baldness."

50. Rb1 Bc6 51. Rb6 Kf6

White's rook has no invasion squares, either on the b- or the a-files (after 52. Ra6 Rc7). The only way to win the a4-pawn now is by exchanging the minor pieces, but then the rook ending is a draw.

52. Ke3 Kf5 53. Kf3 Kf6 54. gf hg+ 55. Kxg4 Rc7

Black, in zugzwang, must allow the enemy rook to enter. But after the pawn exchange, this isn't so bad anymore.

56. Na6

Before getting his rook in, Arnason wants to ask his opponent a few preliminary questions.

56...Rc8 57. Nb4 Ba8

He cannot give up the center pawn: after 57...Bd7? 58. Nxd5+ Kf7, both 59. Nb4 and 59. Rb7 are strong.

58. Nd3

58. Ra6 is met by 58...Bb7 59. Rxa4 Rc3, intending 60...Bc8!

58...Bc6!

Of course Black can't allow White to shut the bishop in by 59. Ne5.

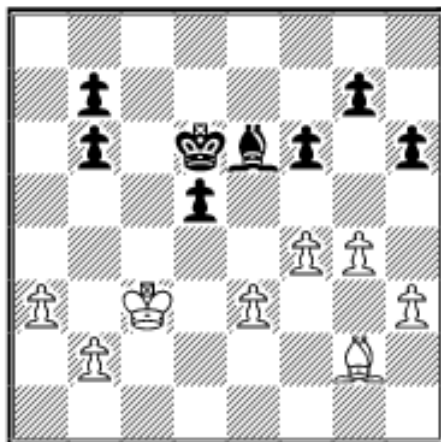
59.Nb4 Ba8 60.Nd3 Bc6 61.Nc5 Rc7 62.Rb8 Re7 63.Rf8+ Rf7!

63...Kg7? would lose after 64. Rc8 and Kg5. But after the exchange of rooks - 64. Rxf7+ Kxf7 65. Kg5 Bb5 - the king invasion is no longer decisive.

64.Rd8 Bb5 65.Rd6 Re7 66.Rb6 Be2+ 67.Kg3 Bd1

The game continued for quite a while longer. Dolmatov continued to defend accurately, and in the end, obtained a well-earned draw.

3) The stronger side will sometimes place his pawns on the same color squares as his own bishop, in order to restrict the opponent's bishop.



Wojtkiewicz – Khalifman **Rakvere 1993**

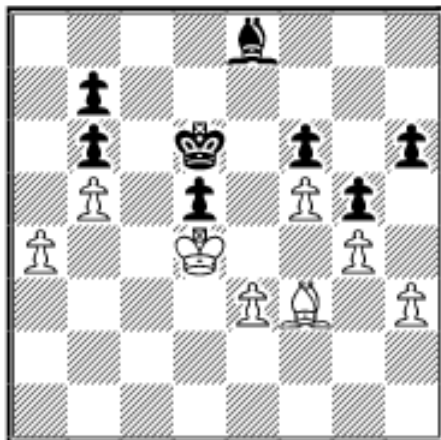
The routine 30. Kd4? would allow Black to set up an impenetrable position with 30...b5!, followed by b7-b6. For example: 31. Bf1 Bd7 32. Kc3 Kc5! (not allowing the enemy king on b4) 33.

b4+ Kd6. Here, White cannot create a zugzwang, because the bishop is unable to attack two pawns simultaneously.

30. a4! g5

30...Bd7! was more stubborn. On 31. Kd4? Bxa4 32. Bxd5 Bc6 33. e4 g5 34. e5+ fe+ 35. fe+ Ke7, Black should draw. Correct would be 31. b3 Kc5 (31...b5 32. a5 Kc5 33. b4+ Kd6 34. Kd4 is hopeless: after the unstoppable e3-e4, the b7-pawn is too weak) 32. Bf3! (32. b4+? Kd6 would be premature) 32...g5 33. b4+ Kd6 34. Bd1!, with 35. Kd4 to follow. This leads to roughly the same position as in the game.

31. Kd4 Bf7 32. Bf3 Be6 33. f5! Bf7 34. b4 Be8 35. b5!

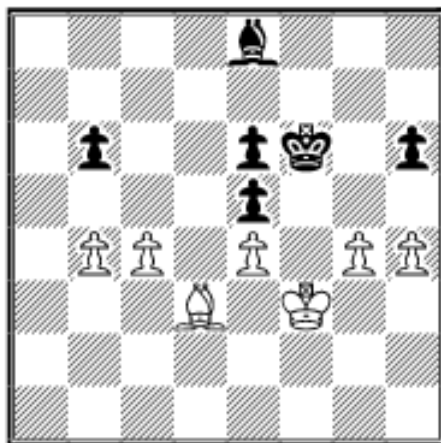


White has utilized his pawns for maximum restriction of the enemy bishop. Now he brings his bishop to b3, and then plays e3-e4. In formulating his plan, Wojtkiewicz had to calculate accurately the forced pawn ending that arises.

35...Bf7 36. Bd1 Bg8 37. Bb3 Bf7 38. e4 Bg8 39. Ba2 Bf7 40. Bxd5 Bxd5 41. ed Kc7 42. Kc3! (followed by 43. Kb4, 44. a5) **42...Kd6 43. Kc4 Ke5**

43...Kd7 also loses: 44. Kb4 Kd6 45. a5 Kxd5 (45...ba+ 46. Kxa5 Kxd5 47. Kb6 Kc4 48. Kxb7 Kxb5 49. Kc7 and wins) 46. a6 ba 47. ba Kc6 48. Ka4 b5+ 49. Ka5.

44. a5! ba 45. Kc5 a4 46. d6 b6+ 47. Kc6 a3 48. d7 a2 49. d8Q a1Q 50. Qd6+ Ke4 51. Kxb6 Kf3 52. Kb7 Kg2 53. Qd3 Qc1 54. b6 Qc5 55. Qb3 Kh2 56. Qf3 Qd4 57. Qc6! Kxh3 58. Kc8 Qb4 59. b7 Qf8+ 60. Kd7 Kxg4 (60...Qf7+ 61. Kd6 Qf8+ 62. Ke6) **61. Kc8. Black resigned.**



Shulskis – Shlekis
Lithuanian Championship 1994

The obvious move is 1. c5, for instance: 1...bc 2. bc Ke7 3. Ba6 Bc6 4. Bc8 Kf6 5. h5! Ke7 6. g5 hg 7. h6 g4+ 8. Ke3 Kf6 9. Bxe6 g3 10. Bd5 Bd7 11. Bb7 and

wins. But instead of 1...bc?, Black replies 1...b5!, and there is no win in sight: 2. Bc2 Bd7 3. Bb3 Kg6 4. Ba2 Kg7 5. h5 (or 5. g5 h5! 6. Bd5 ed 7. ed Bf5! =) 5...Kf6 6. Kg3 Bc6 7. g5+ hg 8. h6 Bxe4 9. Bb3 Kg6 10. Bxe6 Bc6! =.

1. b5! Ke7

1...Bd7 2. c5 bc 3. b6 Bc8 4. Bc4 Bb7 5. g5+ hg 6. hg+ Kxg5 7. Bxe6 intending 8. Bd5 and wins.

2. h5!

White employs the same strategy on the kingside as he

did on the queenside (2. g5? is a mistake in view of 2...h5! =). Now White can open the position on either wing, or even both at once, which guarantees him a simple win. For example: 2...Kf6 3. c5! bc 4. b6 Bc6 5. Ba6 winning; or 2...Kd6 3. Kg3 Kc5 4. g5 winning.

2...Bd7 3. c5 bc 4. b6 Bc8 5. g5! hg 6. h6 Kf6 7. Bc4 Kg6 8. Bxe6 Bb7

The bishop is taboo: 8...Bxe6 9. b7. However, he could have held out a little longer with 8...Ba6 - which still wouldn't have saved him after 9. Bd5 (9. Bc4 Bc8) 9...Kxh6 (9...c4 10. Bxc4) 10. b7 Bxb7 11. Bxb7 c4 12. Bd5 c3 13. Bb3 Kh5 14. Kg3 Kg6 (14...g4 15. Bc2 Kg5 16. Bd1 zugzwang - White wins) 15.Kg4 Kh6 16. Bc2 Kg6 17. Bd1 Kh6 18. Kf5 (zugzwang - White wins again).

9. Bd5 Bc8 10. b7 Bxb7 11. Bxb7 c4 12. Bc8 Kxh6 13. Bg4 (intending Ke3-d2-c3).

Black resigned.

4) Here White stationed his pawns on the same color squares as the bishop to prevent his opponent from closing up the position, while keeping in hand an unstoppable pawn break.

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Translated by Jim Marfia

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