

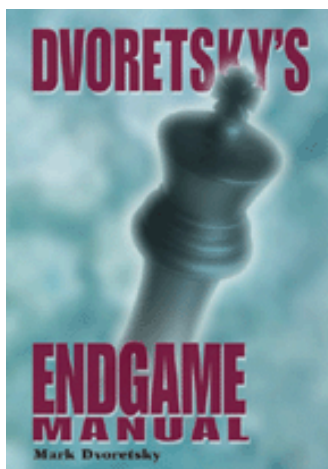


COLUMNISTS

The

Instructor

Mark Dvoretsky



Ripples in the Water

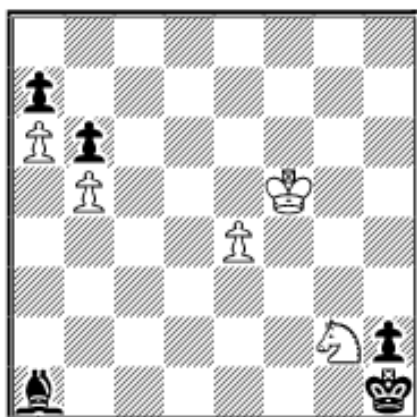
Part 2: "Comparison" while Calculating Variations

In the previous article, we had already seen a case illustrating the way in which a player may select the right move quickly, and without sinking deep into the calculation of complex variations, by using the comparison method. This rather refined technique for making decisions shows up in various forms.

Sometimes, we can choose a move quickly based on simple logic: because we can see that the move brings about a situation that's not a bit worse, and in some respects better, than the one we get after the other possible continuations.

This was precisely the situation we found ourselves in when considering White's 20th move in the Marshall - Schlechter game, examined in the previous article.

Here's another example along these lines, one I presented in my lecture on the Dvoretsky and Yusupov book, *Attack and Defence*.


**F Bondarenko, M Liburkin
1950**

White has two moves here: 1. Nh4 and 1. Ne1. If Black replies 1... Kg1 2. Nf3+ Kg2 3. Nxh2, there is no difference between them. However, on 1. Ne1 Bc3! 2. Nf3 Kg2, we reach the same position, except with Black's bishop on c3.

We don't need to determine whether or not this makes any



serious difference: why give our opponent an additional defensive resource?

1. Ng2-h4!

In an actual game, you would compare the two possibilities, quickly move the knight to h4, and let your opponent try to find the saving line. While he was doing that, you would have time yourself to delve a little deeper into the variations.

1...Kh1-g1 2. Nh4-f3+ Kg1-g2 3. Nf3xh2 Kg2xh2

Now if White's king goes after the a7 pawn, Black will box him in by putting his own king on c7. How to prevent this?

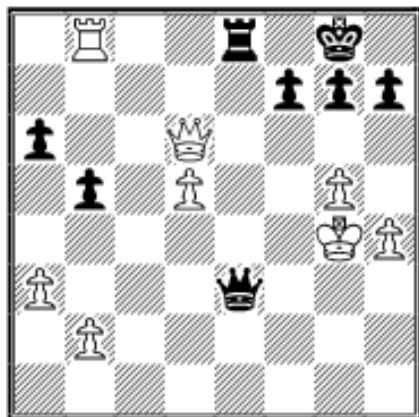
4. e4-e5! Ba1xe5 5. Kf5-e6!! Kh2-g3 6. Ke6-d7 Kg3-f4 7. Kd7-c8

And the bishop is in the way of its own king.

Note that on **4...Bc3** (instead of 4...Bxe5) **5. e6 Bb4 6. Ke5 Kg3 7. Kd5 Kf4 8. Kc6 Ke5 9. Kb7 Kd6**, it is now the king who blocks the bishop: **10. e7!**, and wins.

This last variation makes it clear that the tempo Black wins after the mistaken **1. Ne1? Bc3!** is vitally important to him: **2. Nf3 Kg2 3. Nxf2 Kxf2 4. e5 Kg3 5. e6 Bb4 6. Ke5 Bf8** (or **6...Kg4**) **7. Kd5 Kf4 8. Kc6 Ke5 9. Kb7 Kd6 10. Kxa7 Kc7**, and draws.

In the following example, Black had to compare positions at the end of his calculated variations, not the beginning.



Evans - Tal

Amsterdam Interzonal, 1964

Black wins a rook here, by forcing the trade of queens with check.

There are two ways of doing so:

38...h5+ 39. gh f5+ 40. Kxf5 Qf3+ 41 Kg5 Qf6+, and 38...f5+ 39 gf h5+ 40. Kxh5 Qf3+ 41 Kg5 Qf6+.

The resulting positions are

completely identical, except that in the first case, White retains an extra pawn at h6, which does not exist in the second line. Clearly, this is the factor we must focus on. And in fact, 38...h5+? would not win: after 42. Qxf6+ gf+ 43. Kxf6 Rxb8 44. Ke7! (not 44. d6? Rb7! 45. Ke6 Kf8 46. d7 Rb6+ 47. Kf5 Rd6!) 44...Rb7+ 45. Ke8 Rb6 46. h7+! Kxh7 47. Ke7, White is saved.

38...f7-f5+! 39. g5xf6 h7-h5+! 40. Kg4xh5

40. Kf5 Qe4+ 41. Kg5 Qg4 mate

40...Qe3-f3+ 41. Kh5-g5

41. Kg6 Qg4 mate

41...Qf3xf6+

An alternate solution exists: 41...Qg2+!? 42. Kf5 (42. Kh5 Kh7!) 42...g6+ 43. Kf4 Qh2+ 44. Kg5 Qxd6 45. Rxe8+ Kf7 46. Re7+ Kf8, and wins.

42. Qd6xf6 g7xf6+ 43. Kg5xf6 Re8xb8 44. d5-d6

The main line is 44. Ke7 Rb7+! 45. Ke8 Rh7 46. d6 Rxh4 (this is where the absence of a White h6-pawn matters!) 47. d7 Re4+ 48. Kd8 Kf7 49. Kc7 Rc4+ 50. Kd6 Rd4+.

44...Kg8-f8 45. h4-h5

45. d7 Rb6+

45...Rb8-b7 46. Kf6-e6 Rb7-h7 47. Ke6-d5 Kf8-e8 48. Kd5-c6 Ke8-d8 White resigned.

It gets more complicated when the comparison includes positional evaluation. Here is how Jonathan Nunn describes such situations in his book, *Secrets of Practical Chess*.

"If, for example, you understand that move A is "0.2 pawns" better than move B, then you will certainly play move A, and not move B; and it will not matter whether it leads to a position 0.3 pawns better for you, or 0.1 pawns worse - what matters is only the comparative value of each move."

One should be careful with such comparisons, based upon positional considerations - for such an evaluation may lead you astray. Which is exactly what happened to Nunn when he examined the following example.

Meszaros - Zimmerman
Balatonbereny 1994

1. b3 e5 2. Bb2 Nc6 3. e3 d5 4. Bb5 Bd6 5. f4



Nunn compares two possibilities:
5...Qe7 and 5..Qh4+ 6. g3 Qe7.

"The only difference is that in the first case, the White pawn is on g2, while in the second, it's on g3.

Undoubtedly, the inclusion of g3 favors Black. If White exchanges his bishop on b5 for the knight on c6, he will lose control of the light squares, and then the weaknesses

created by g3 will become serious. White may, taking these circumstances into account, choose instead to retreat the bishop, but then he will have to lose time."

The game continuation was **5...Qh4+ 6. g3 Qe7 7. fe Bxe5 8. Nc3 Nf6** (8...d4!? 9. Nd5 Qc5) **9. Nf3 Bg4**. As far as this position goes, Nunn's judgment is correct: White would be

better off if his pawn were on g2.

But he made a weak move earlier: 7. fe? instead of 7. Nf3. For example, 7...Bg4 8. h3 (8. fe Bxe5 9. Bxe5 Bxf3 10. Qxf3 Qxe5 11. Nc3 Nf6 12. 0-0 is also possible - here, the move g2-g3 doesn't degrade his position, but it probably doesn't improve it, either) 8...Bxf3 9. Qxf3 Nf6



In this situation, the move g2-g3 now favors White. It is apropos to mention that an analogous position, but without the check on h4, (5...Qe7 6. Nf3 Bg4 7. h3 Bxf3 8. Qxf3 Nf6) was examined by the famous theoretician Vsevolod Rauzer back in the mid-'30's. He showed that White should not play 9. 0-0 ef 10. ef 0-0 11. Bxc6 bc 12.

Nc3 Rfe8, and recommended 9. g3 instead, calling this position approximately equal (9. Nc3!? is also worth considering).

The bishop development to g4 is not forced - the pawn sacrifice f7-f6 is worth looking into. For example: 5...Qh4+ 6. g3 Qe7 7. Nf3 f6!? (7...e4? 8. Bxg7 Bg4 fails to 9. Be2!) 8. fe (8. Qe2!? would be safer) 8...fe 9. Bxc6+ (but not 9. Nxe5? Bxe5 10. Bxc6+, in view of 10...Kd8!) 9...bc 10. Nxe5 Nf6 11. Nxc6 Qe4, when Black, according to theory, has enough initiative to compensate for the material. Here, the weakening of the White king's position by g2-g3 appears to have played into Black's hands.

But now let's look at 5...Qe7 6. Nf3 f6!? 7. fe?! (7. 0-0) 7...fe 8. Bxc6+ bc 9. Nxe5 Qh4+! (with the pawn already at g3, Black would not have this possibility) 10. g3 Qh3 (10...Qe4? 11. 0-0!) 11. Qe2 Nf6 - Black develops a very strong attack.

We may conclude that the comparative method does not work here - evaluating the worth of the zwischenzug queen check is very difficult, using guidelines such as "for" and "against".

Now here is, perhaps, an even clearer example.

Dvoretsky - Vainstein
Wijk aan Zee, 1975

1. e2-e4 c7-c5 2. Ng1-f3 d7-d6 3. Bf1-b5+ Bc8-d7 4. Bb5xd7+ Qd8xd7 5. 0-0 Ng8-f6! 6. e4-e5 d6xe5 7. Nf3xe5 Qd7-c8!

7...Qc7 would be less exact, in view of 8. d4! e6?! 9. Bf4 Bd6 10. Na3!, when White has a clear advantage (Dvoretsky - Bunjaner, Moscow Championship Semifinal 1971), or 8...cd 9. Bf4, threatening 10. Ng6.

8. d2-d4 e7-e6

8...cd and 8...Nc6 are also worth considering.

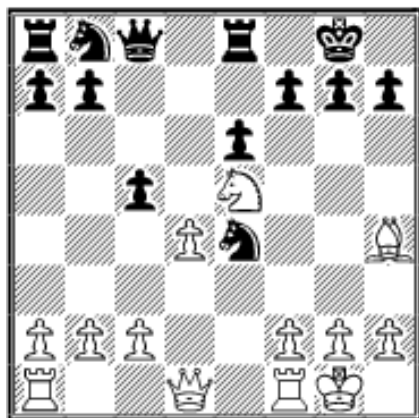
9. Bc1-g5 Bf8-e7

After 9...Nc6, White gets nothing out of the tempting 10. Bxf6 gf 11. Ng4 f5 12. Nf6+ (or 12. d5 fg 13. dc Qxc6 14. Qxg4 0-0-0) 12...Ke7 13. d5 Kxf6 14. dc Qxc6. The more restrained 10. c3!, intending 11. Qa4, is better.

10. Nb1-c3 0-0 11. Nc3-e4

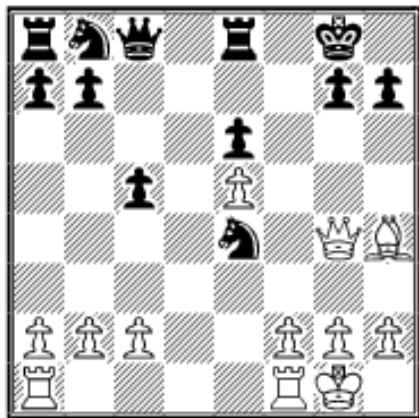
11. Ng4 Nbd7 is equal.

11...Nf6xe4 12. Bg5xe7 Rf8-e8 13. Be7-h4



13...f7-f6?!

I had intended to respond to 13...Nc6 with 14. Qf3 (or 14. Re1), which appears to retain somewhat better chances. The strongest move here was 13...Nd6! (intending Nf5), which completely resolves Black's opening problems. Now, I get a chance to sharpen play.

14. Qd1-g4! f6xe5 15. d4xe5

The knight has nowhere to retreat: 15..Nd2? 16 Rfd1 is just bad. The desperate 15..g5? (banking on 16. Rfe1? Kh8 or 16. Bxg5? Nxc5 17. Qxc5+ Kh8 18. Qf6+ Kg8, when White would have to settle for the perpetual) is refuted by 16. f3! or 16. f4! h5 (16...c4 17. fg Nc5 18. g6; 16...Qc7 17. Rae1!) 17. Qxh5 gh 18. Qg6+ Kh8 19. f5!

This means Black will have to give back the extra piece by taking on f2 with the knight. The only question is whether he should do it at once, or after inserting 15...Qc6 16. Rfe1 (16. Rae1? Nd2).

The second line looks more attractive, since it pulls the White rook off the newly-opened f-file, and the bishop from its active position at h4. That was my opponent's thinking. But just as in our preceding example, so it was here: the attempt to fall back on the comparative method fails, because the countervailing factors were not taken into account: by playing 16. Rfe1, White gives additional support to the important e5-pawn; and more importantly, on c6 the queen deprives Black's knight of the best square it could have developed on.

15...Qc8-c6?!

15...Nxf2! 16. Rxf2 Nc6 was stronger, when Black has almost equalized (17. Bf6 Qc7 was not dangerous).

16. Rf1-e1 Ne4xf2 17. Bh4xf2 Nb8-d7

It appears that the knight would have been better developed on a6.

18. Ra1-d1

White's advantage is indisputable: the drawbacks of his

opponent's choice of development have become self-evident.

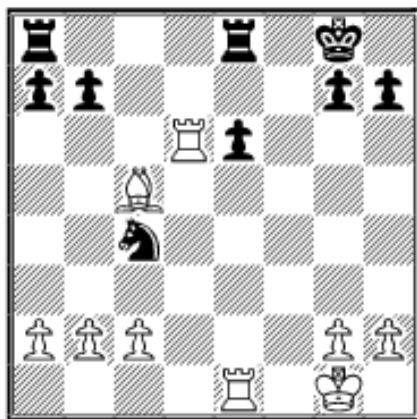
18...Nd7-f8 19. Qg4-c4

More accurate than 19. Rd6 Qb5. Black should now have stuck to passive defense with 19...b6. His attempt to "wriggle out" only made my job easier.

19...Nf8-g6?! 20. Rd1-d6 Ng6xe5

20...Qc8 21. h4

21. Qc4xc5 Qc6xc5 22. Bf2xc5 Ne5-c4



White must make a choice between 23. Rdx6 and 23. Rd7. In such cases, it's important to calculate accurately, in order to choose the most exact continuation, the one which will deprive one's opponent of any hope.

23. Rd6xe6!

23. Rd7 b6 24. Bd4 e5 25. Bc3 isn't bad, either, but the text is stronger.

23...Re8xe6 24. Re1xe6 Ra8-c8

This just leaves White with a healthy extra pawn. I had expected 24...Nxb2, when the tempting 25. Re7?! would allow Black to complicate the game by 25...Rc8 26. Bd4 Rxc2 27. Rxg7+ Kf8 28. Rxb7 Nd3. So I had intended 25. Bd4 Kf7 (25...Nc4 26. Re7) 26. Rd6 Ke7 27. Rd5 Nc4 28. Rc5, with a winning position.

25. Bc5-d4 Kg8-f7 26. Re6-e2 a7-a6 27. Kg1-f2 Nc4-d6 28. g2-g4 Nd6-b5?

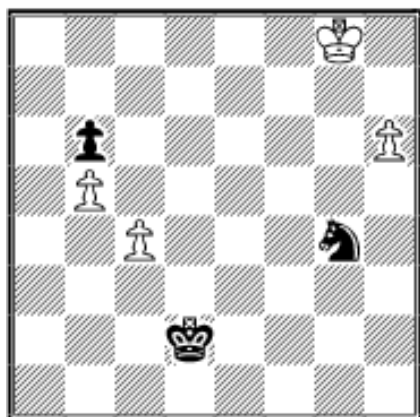
Black goes into a variation in which he hopes to trade off the minor pieces and reach a rook ending. Nothing comes of it.

29. Bd4-e5 Rc8-c4 30. h2-h3 Nb5-d4 31. b2-b3!

It's not the minor pieces that get traded, but the rooks - plus, the Black knight falls into a trap.

31...Nd4xe2 32. b3xc4 Ne2-c1 33. a2-a3 b7-b5 34. c4xb5 a6xb5 35. Kf2-e3 g7-g6 36. Be5-b2 Nc1-a2 37. Ke3-d4 Black resigned.

There are times when the difficulty of comparing two similar variations is not so much the undefined nature of the evaluation, as the total absence of any sort of evaluative or logical basis on which we might base our decision. In such cases, we must extend our calculation, aiming to find the point at which the difference between the two positions will make itself felt. See if you can solve two studies on this theme.



**N. Elkies
1987**

It's not hard to see here that 1. c5? Nxf6+ 2. Kf8 Nf5 3. cb Nd6 leads to a draw. That means we must choose between 1. Kg7 Nxf6 2. Kxf6, and 1. h7 Nf6+ 2. Kg7 Nxf7 3. Kxf7. Uh-huh, sure - what kind of difference is that, whether

White's king is on h7 or on h6? But since there is a difference, we must keep looking, to see whether the difference in the king's positions will tell. Approaching the problem in this fashion, we increase our chances of finding the right reply.

1. h6-h7! Ng4-f6+ 2. Kg8-g7 Nf6xh7 3. Kg7xh7 Kd2-e3!

The only move - it's important to deprive the White queen, soon to appear on the board, access to the f4 square.

4. c4-c5 b6xc5 5. b5-b6 c5-c4 6. b6-b7 c4-c3 7. b7-b8Q c3-c2

With White's king on h6, he could now try 8. Kg5!, but after

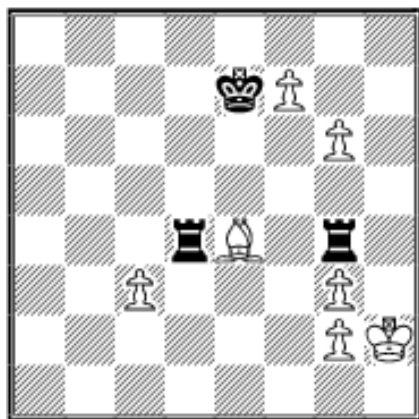
8...Kd2 (or 8...Ke2), Black is saved. But now there is a far more powerful resource available.

8. Qb8-h2!! c2-c1Q

8...Kd3 9. Qf4 Kc3 10. Qc1.

9. Qh2-h6+

That's why the king couldn't be on the h6 square!



F. Simkhovich 1940

White must keep both enemy rooks under fire simultaneously, in order to prevent either one from leaving the 4th rank. But which way: 1. Bf5 or 1. Bf3? We must concentrate on finding the refutation to one of the moves (and unfortunately, we don't

know which one yet).

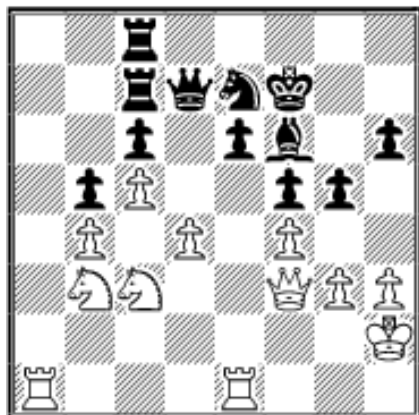
Close analysis reveals that 1. Bf3? loses to 1...Ra4! 2. Bd1 Kf8! (zugzwang) 3. Kh3 Ra1! 4. Bxg4 Rh1#.

1. Be4-f5! Rd4-c4

1...Rg5 is not dangerous, because of 2. g7! Kxf7 3. g8Q+ Kxg8 4. Be6+ Kg7 5. cd=.

2. Bf5-e6! Ke7-f8 3. Kh2-h3 Rg4-e4 4. Be6-d5! Rc4-a4 5. Bd5-c6! Re4-c4 6. Bc6-b5! Rc4-g4 7. Bb5-d7! etc.

In conclusion - a very complex practical example of this theme.



Browne - Belyavsky
Novi Sad 1979

The obvious continuation would be to double rooks on the e-file. The question is: Which is more accurate - 41. Ra2 or 41. Re2. First, let's examine the correct approach.

41. Ra1-a2!! Ne7-d5

Black's position is not eased by 41...Ra7 42. Rae2 Ra3 43. Nb1 Ra4 44. Rxe6 Rxb4 45. Rd6, nor by 41...Ng6 42. Rae2 Re8 43. d5!

42. Nc3xd5 Qd7xd5 43. Qf3xd5 e6xd5 44. f4xg5! h6xg5 45. Ra2-f2! Kf7-g6 46. Re1-e6!

Considerably stronger than 46. Ref1 Re8.

46...Rc7-e7 47. Re6-d6!

Threatening 48. Na5. Black has no moves.

After 41. Re2?!, in the concluding position of this variation, White's rook would have been, not on f2, but on f1, which would have allowed Black to respond 47...Re2+ 48. Kh1 Re3, obtaining counterplay.

Browne "guessed wrong", and played **41. Re2?! Nd5! 42. Nxd5 Qxd5 43. Qxd5 ed**. Here, he went over the variations after 44. fg hg 45. Rf1 Kg6 46. Re6 or 46. Ref2, saw that he would have a very hard time showing an advantage there, and played something else.

44. Ra6 gf 45. gf Rg8 46. Na5 Rgc8 47. Nb3 Rg8 48. Rea2 Re8! 49. Ra7 Rxa7 50. Rxa7+ Kg6 51. Na5 Bxd4 52. Nxc6 Re2+ 53. Kg3 Re3+ 54. Kg2 Re2+ 55. Kf1 Rf2+ 56. Ke1 Rxf4 57. Ne7+ Kg5 58. Nxd5 Re4+ 59. Kf1 (59. Kd2? Bxc5) 59...f4! 60. Rf7 Be5 61. c6 Rc4 62. c7 Kg6 63. Re7 Kf5 64. Kf2 Rc2+ 65. Kf3 Rc4 Draw.

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