



## The Two Weaknesses Principle

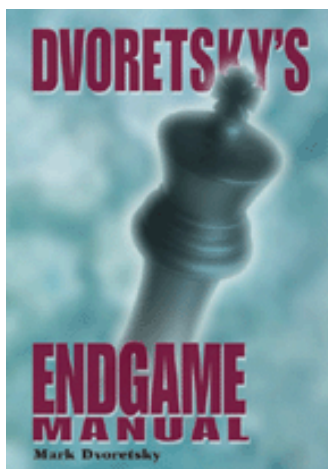
The "Two Weaknesses Principle" is one of the most important techniques for exploiting an advantage. You may read about it in *Endgame Strategy* by Mikhail Shereshevsky, and *Technique for the Tournament Player* by Dvoretsky and Yusupov, or in my own *School of Chess Excellence 1 - Endgame Analysis*. In order to remind you of what we're talking about, I will cite from the latter book:

### COLUMNISTS

*The*

*Instructor*

Mark Dvoretsky



*On defense, your opponent will try to defend his weaknesses securely. In a general sense, the "weakness in his camp" might turn out to be, not merely a vulnerable pawn or an unfortunately placed piece, but also, for example, an invasion square which must be defended, or an enemy passed pawn which must be blockaded.*

*A smartly conducted defense will usually be able to cover one weakness without too much difficulty. So, if your opponent is condemned to passivity, do not attempt to force the win at this one single point – play widely! The correct strategy for the stronger side is to find, or create, a second weakness in the enemy camp. By attacking this second weakness, and then if necessary switching back to the first, we break down, and finally destroy, the enemy's defense.*

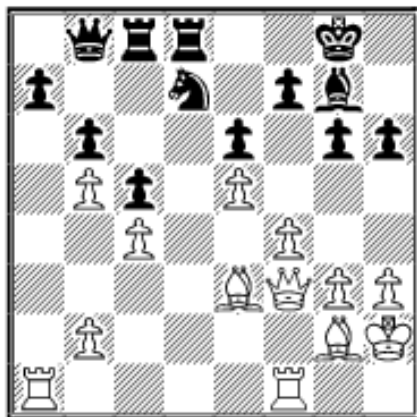
*Observe how the great masters of the endgame exploit their advantage. You will see that, nearly always, they open up a "second front".*

Allow me to present a few instructive examples of this theme, collected from various sources (not, however, from any of the sources cited above), beginning with a rather simple episode from one of my games, examined in the Dvoretsky and Yusupov book, *Secrets of Opening Preparation*.

**Dvoretsky - Tataev**

Bjeltsi 1972





White's positional advantage is obvious. To begin with, he restricts the opposing forces by threatening to win the a7-pawn.

**21. Rf1-d1**

Black must now meet the threat of 22. Qb7 Qxb7 23. Bxb7 Rb8 (23...Rc7 24. Bc6) 24. Rxa7.

**21...Rc8-c7**

An unnatural move; 21...Nf8 was better.

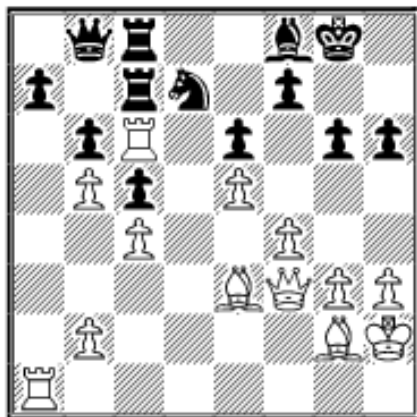
**22. Rd1-d6! Bg7-f8**

On 22...Nf8 I had intended 23. Rad1 Rcd7 24. Qc6; and on 24...Rc8, I would probably have sacrificed the queen: 25. Qxd7 Nxd7 26. Rxd7 (intending to continue 27. Rb7 and 28. Rdd7), or even 25. Rxd7 Rxc6 26. bc Nxd7 27. Rxd7.

**23. Rd6-c6**

Once again, the a7-pawn is in trouble: now White threatens 24. Rxc7 Qxc7 25. Qb7.

**23...Rd8-c8**



Black has no moves – his pieces are blocked by his own pawn at c5. Here is the perfect time to recall the "two weaknesses principle." It usually works in the endgame; but sometimes, it's also useful in those middlegames where the opponent is completely tied down and deprived of counterplay. Up to this point, White has been operating on the queenside. Black has warded off the immediate threats, but almost all of his pieces are stranded over there. In such cases, transferring the attack to the other wing turns

out to be quite effective.

**24. h3-h4! h6-h5**

24...a5 is met by 25. h5, breaking up the black king's protection.

**25. g3-g4 h5xg4 26. Qf3xg4 Bf8-g7 27. h4-h5 Nd7-f8**

White should continue Be4 and Rg1 – but in what order? When exploiting your advantage, you should always pay close attention to your opponent's

counterthreats. The natural 28. Be4? in this case is refuted tactically: 28...Rxc6 29. bc Bxe5! 30. fe? (30. hg leads to an unclear position) 30...Qxe5+, followed by either 31...Qxb2+ or 31...f5.

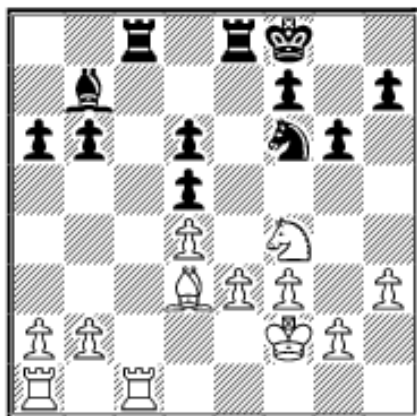
### 28. Ra1-g1!

White has a decisive advantage now, and was able to convert it into a win.

The next example is taken from my article dedicated to the endgame technique of Grandmaster Anthony Miles.

### Miles - Larsen

Tilburg 1978



### 22. g2-g4!

This is a standard space-gaining maneuver on the kingside. Weaker is 22. h4?! h5, and White has fewer ways of organizing an assault. Also dubious is 22. b4?! b5, because now White will have to take measures against the knight maneuver Nd7-b6. After 23. a4 Rxc1 24. Rxc1 ba 25. Ra1 Bc6 26. Bxa6 Rb8 27. b5 Bxb5 28. Rb1 a3 or 23. Rxc8 Rxc8 24. a4 ba 25. Rxa4 Rc6, White only has a small advantage.

### 22...Kf8-e7

On 22...g5 23. Ne2 White threatens both h3-h4 and Ng3-f5.

### 23. h3-h4 b6-b5

In advancing his kingside pawns, White concurrently threatens the d5-pawn – he intends to play Bc2-b3, followed by g4-g5. Bent Larsen wards off the threat (24. Bc2 Nd7 25. Bb3 Nb6); but in order to do this, he has to weaken the queenside dark squares.

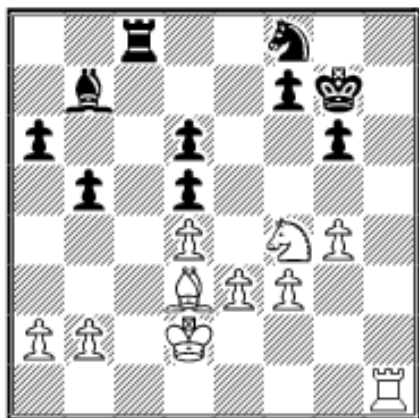
### 24. h4-h5 Nf6-d7 25. Rc1xc8 Re8xc8 26. Ra1-h1 Nd7-f8

26...Nb6? is impossible, in view of 27. hg hg 28. Nxg6+ fg 29. Rh7+

### 27. h5xg6 h7xg6 28. Kf2-e2

By moving his king to d2, White not only neutralizes the enemy rook, but also renews the threatened maneuver Bc2-b3. Larsen therefore moves his king to g7. By covering the invasion square at h7, he frees his knight to defend the weak d5-pawn.

28...Ke7-f6 29. Ke2-d2 Kf6-g7



30. Rh1-c1!

An unexpected change in White's plans! His opponent is coping, for the time being, with defending all his weaknesses: he prevented the rook's invasion on the h-file, and is prepared to defend the d5-pawn in timely fashion with his knight. However, all this has required the black king to bury himself on the kingside, so Miles is changing the active theater of operations to the other side of the board. After exchanging rooks, he wants to

bring his knight to a5, the square weakened by Black's 23rd move.

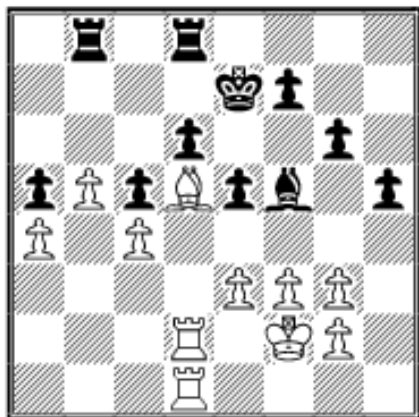
30...Rc8xc1 31. Kd2xc1 Kg7-f6 32. Kc1-d2 b5-b4

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

33. Kd2-c2 a6-a5 34. Bd3-b5! Nf8-e6 35. Nf4xe6 f7xe6 36. Kc2-b3 Kf6-g5 37. Kb3-a4 e6-e5 38. Ka4xa5 e5xd4 39. e3xd4 Kg5-f4 40. Bb5-d7 Kf4-e3 41. Ka5-b6 Bb7-a8 42. Kb6-a7 Ke3xd4 43. f3-f4 Black resigned

### I. Sokolov - Salov

Madrid 1994



I found this endgame in a nice book by GM Christopher Lutz, *Endgame Secrets*.

At this point, White has only one real trump – his protected passed pawn at b5. In order to make progress, it is important for him to stir up play on the kingside. But the routine f3-f4 would have little effect: even with both white rooks on the f-file, Black could defend himself successfully with Rf8 and f7-f6.

The right plan is to prepare g3-g4, by doubling rooks on the f-file. The exchange on g4 would not only expose a second weakness (the pawn at f7), but also open the h-file for a white rook.

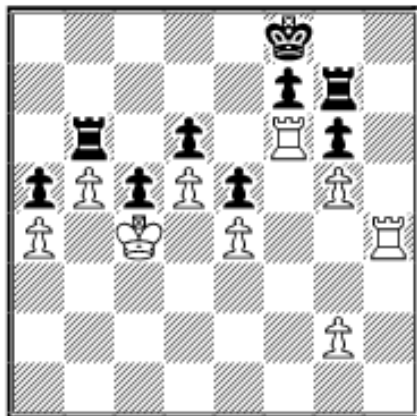
35. Rd1-f1

This and White's next move could hardly be considered the most accurate – it's unclear why he didn't bring his king to e3 right away, after playing 35. e4. But these moves don't hurt anything, since his opponent has no active possibilities.

35...Rb8-b6

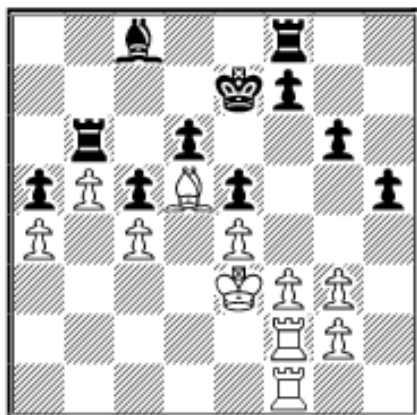
It would have made sense to bring a rook to g7 or h7, in order to cover the weak point at f7, while simultaneously making it harder for his opponent to invade on the h-file, after it is inevitably opened. However, analysis shows that here too, Black would not have been able to cover all his weaknesses. A sample line is:

35...Rg8 36. e4 Be6 37. Ke3 Rg7 38. Rdf2 Rb6 39. Rh1 (39. g4 hg 40. fg Rh7 would be inaccurate) 39...Rb8 40. Rh4 Rb6 41. g4 hg 42. fg Rb8 43. g5 Bxd5 44. cd Kf8 45. Rf6 Rb6 46. Kd3 Rg8 47. Kc4 Rg7. This is not at all forced, but it demonstrates White's resources very well.



48. Rh8+ Rg8 49. Rxcg8+ Kxcg8 50. Rxd6! Rxd6 51. Kxc5 Rd8 52. b6, and wins. A typical *denouement*: Black's king and rook successfully ward off the kingside threats, only to meet a rook sacrifice, securing the decisive breakthrough on the opposite wing.

**36. Kf2-e1 Rd8-f8 37. Ke1-e2 Rb6-b8 38. e3-e4 Bf5-c8 39. Ke2-e3 Rb8-b6 40. Rd2-f2!**  
(see next diagram)



**40...Bc8-d7**

If 40...f6 41. Rh1, intending 42. g4 hg 43. Rh7+ (or he could add some further preparatory moves).

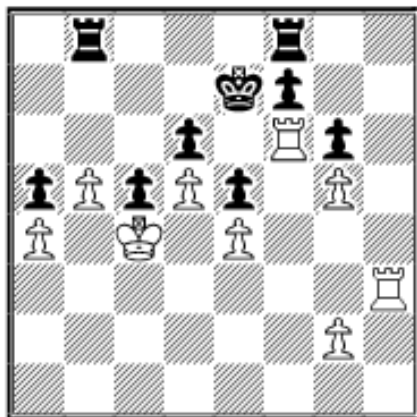
**41. g3-g4! h5xg4**

41...h4 is met by 42. g5, followed by f3-f4 or Rh1.

**42. f3xg4 Bd7-e6 43. g4-g5 Rb6-b8 44. Rf2-f6! Be6xd5 45. c4xd5 Rb8-b7 46. Ke3-d3**

Of course, the king's position should be strengthened, while he still has the time.

**46...Rb7-d7 47. Kd3-c4 Rd7-b7 48. Rf1-f3 Rb7-b8 49. Rf3-h3!**



**49...Rf8-h8**

On 49...Rb6 50. Rh7 is decisive. The threat would be 51. Rxc6, and on 50...Ke8 51. g3, Black is in zugzwang.

**50. Rh3xh8 Rb8xh8**

Black has defended his kingside weaknesses, but lifted the blockade of the passed b-pawn, which Ivan Sokolov immediately exploits.

**51. b5-b6 Rh8-h1 52. Kc4-b5 c5-c4 53. b6-b7**

Of course not 53. Kxc4?? Rb1.

**53...c4-c3 54. Kb5-a6 Rh1-b1 55. Rf6-f3 c3-c2 56. Rf3-c3** Black resigned.

### **Rozentalis - Appel**

German Bundesliga 1994

**1. e4 Nf6 2. e5 Nd5 3. g3 d6 4. ed ed (4...cd) 5. Bg2 Nf6 6. d4 d5 7. Nf3 Be7 8. 0-0 0-0 9. Ne5 Nbd7 10. Nc3 c6 11. f4**

White has obtained a slightly better position from the opening.

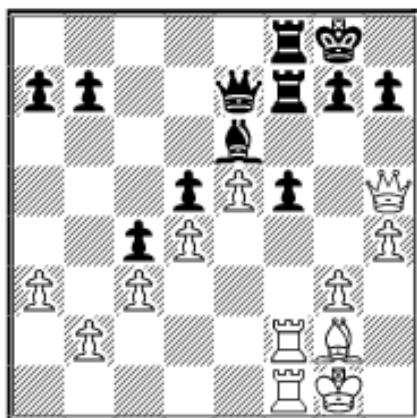
**11...Nxe5 12. fe Ne8 13. Qh5 f5?**

It doesn't pay to free the opponent's hands - 13...f6 14. Bf4 was the lesser evil.

**14. Ne2 Nc7 15. c3 Ne6 16. h4 Rf7 17. Nf4 Nxf4 18. Bxf4 Be6 19. Rf2 Qa5 20. a3 c5 21. Be3 c4**

If 21...cd 22. Bxd4 with a solid plus.

**22. Raf1 Raf8 23. Bg5 Qd8 24. Bxe7 Qxe7**



White's advantage is now beyond doubt. The only remaining question is how to break down the opponent's defense, since Black's position remains fairly solid. Eduard Rozentalis solves the problem brilliantly.

**25. a3-a4!!**

White is not going to break through on the kingside (unless, of course, his opponent voluntarily plays g7-g6), so Rozentalis "opens a second front" on the queenside,

aiming to send his queen over there.

### 25...Qe7-d7?!

Black fails to guess his opponent's intention, and defends too passively. His pieces should not have been moved from where they stood – here, they could have joined in a kingside counterattack, once the white queen moves to the queenside. For example: 25...b6!? (intending 26...a6) 26. Qd1 g6!? (with the queen on h5, this move is bad because of Qh6, giving White new chances on the kingside; but now, Black is ready to continue Kg7 and h7-h6) 27. Qa1 f4. However, 28. Qe1! fg 29. Rxf7 Rxf7 30. Rxf7 and 31. Qxg3 leaves White with the better position.

Instead of 26. Qd1, Vadim Zvjagintsev suggests an alternate plan: 26. Rf4!? a6 27. Bf3, followed by Bd1-c2.

### 26. Qh5-d1! Rf8-c8

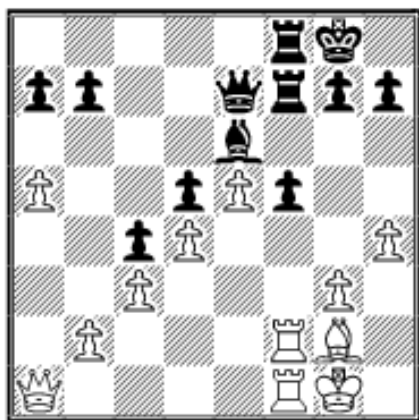
If 26...g5 27. hg Qe7, then 28. Qd2 Rg7 29. Qf4 Rxc5 30. Bf3. After lines are opened on the kingside, White once again changes over to the attack.

### 27. a4-a5! Rc8-f8

This was the move played, if we are to believe the computer database and Jonathan Rowson's book, *The Seven Deadly Chess Sins*, where this game is analyzed. But according to the *Informant*, it was 27...Rff8. Both versions reunite after Black's 31st move.

### 28. Qd1-a1! Qd7-e7

Rozentalis believes that Black should have tried 28...g5 here, which would have led to about the same position as that occurring in the note to Black's 26th move.



### 29. Qa1-a3!!

Certainly not a trade Black could have been expecting. White ruins his own pawns, but in return he gets the open b-file, which his rooks will now occupy. And if Black's queen leaves the diagonal, then White's queen invades at c5 or d6.

### 29...Qe7xa3?!

Rowson prefers 29...Rd8, which White would probably have met by 30. Ra1, with b2-b3 to follow.

### 30. b2xa3 Rf8-d8 31. Rf2-b2 Rf7-c7 32. Rb2-b5 Rd8-d7 33. Kg1-f2!

One result of the exchange of queens is that White can now safely activate his king.

**33...g7-g6 34. Kf2-e3 Kg8-g7 35. Rf1-b1 Kg7-f7 36. Rb5-c5!**

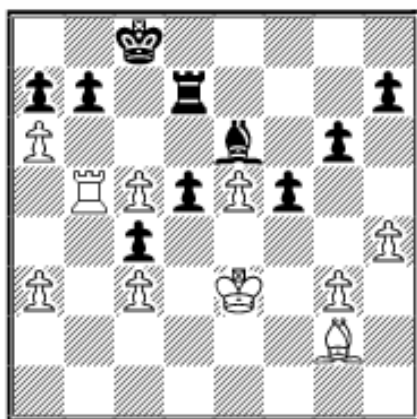
It would be pointless to play the king to f4 now, while Black can reply h7-h6. After the exchange on c5, he will occupy the central square d4.

**36...Kf7-e7 37. Rb1-b5 Rc7xc5**

Rozenalis gives the variation 37...Kd8 38. a4 Rxc5 39. dc Kc7 40. Kd4 Kc6 41. Rb4 Kc7 42. c6! bc 43. a6 Kc8 44. Kc5, winning easily.

**38. d4xc5 Ke7-d8 49. a5-a6 Kd8-c8**

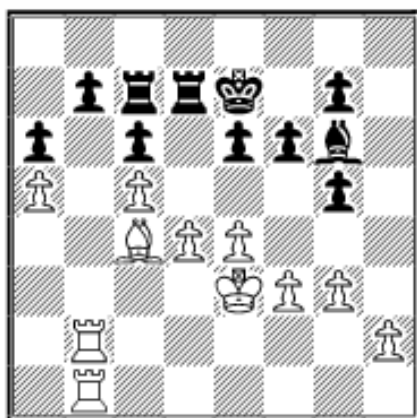
39...ba 40. Ra5 is hopeless for Black.



**40. Rb5-b6!! Be6-g8**

If 40...ab 41. a7, and the pawn queens.

**41. Rb6-f6 Rd7-d8 42. Ke3-d4 b7xa6 43. Rf6-d6** Black resigned.



**Shirov - Kinsman**

Paris 1990

White's advantage is obvious. What's the best way to convert it? Alexei Shirov writes:

*One weakness – the b7-pawn – is securely nailed down. The fact that the black rooks are tied down is also of considerable importance. From my earliest days, however, I have been taught that in order to win you need at least one more weakness. And here this turns out to be the g7-pawn.*

**30. h2-h4!**

31. f4!?, with the same idea, isn't bad either.

**30...g5xh4**



On 30...Bf7 31. hg fg (31...e5 32. gf+ gf 33. Bxf7 ed+ 34. Kd3 Kxf7 35. Rb4), White plays f3-f4 – although not right away, because of 32. f4? gf+ 33. gf e5! He should prepare it by 32. Be2 or 32. e5.

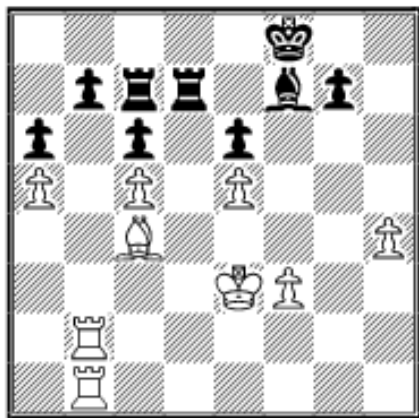
### 31. g3xh4 Bg6-f7 32. e4-e5!

*The basis of White's idea. Once he begins his attack on the g7-pawn, the b7-pawn will no longer require defending – which means that the second weakness will have to be the pawn at e6. (Shirov)*

32. Bd3 (intending 33. Rg2 Kg8 34. Rbg1) is less convincing, in view of 32...e5 33. de fe.

### 32...f6-f5?

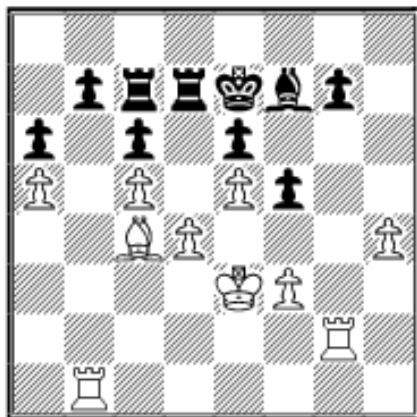
This makes White's job easier. 32...fe 33. de Kf8 was more stubborn (but 33...Bh5 34. Rg2 g6 35. Rbg1 Rd8 36. f4 Rcd7 37. Rxd6 Bxd6 38. Rxd6 was hopeless).



34. f4?! would be inaccurate here, in view of 34...Bg6! (intending 35...Bf5) 35. Bxe6 Re7 36. f5 Rxe6 37. fe Bxb1 38. Rxb1 Ke7; however, after 34. Rg2 Black's position looks difficult. For example: 34...Re7 35. Rd1! Rcd7 36. Rd6 Bg8 37. Rgd2 Ke8 38. Kf4, followed by Kg5 and f3-f4-f5 (as soon as Black defends his weaknesses at g7 and e6 in this variation, White finds new ones: the d-file and the forward outpost on d6).

As often happens in such situations, Black's best chance lies in a search for active counterplay. He must play 34...Bg8 (or 34...Rd8) 35. Rbg1 (threatening h4-h5-h6) 35...Rd8 36. h5 Bh7! 37. f4! (37. Bxe6 Re7) 37...Rcd7! (37...Bf5 is bad after 38. h6 g6 39. Rxd6 Bxd6 40. Rxd6, or 37...Re7 38. h6! gh 39. f5!) 38. Bxe6 Rd3+ 39. Kf2 Rc3, when the position unexpectedly becomes sharp. White can probably play more exactly, but at least this way Black could keep fighting.

### 33. Rb2-g2



**33...g7-g6?**

Again, too passive! The only line that left some chances to wrinkle his opponent's brow was 33...Rc8! 34. Rxc7 Rh8 35. Rh1 Rhd8.

**34. Rb1-g1**

The threat to sacrifice the exchange on g6 is unstoppable.

**34...Rc7-c8 35. Rg2xg6! f5-f4+ 36. Ke3-d3 Rc8-d8 37. Rg6-f6! Rd7xd4+ 38. Kd3-c3 Rd4-d1 39. Rg1-g7 Rd1-c1+ 40. Kc3-b3 Rc1-b1+ 41. Kb3-c2**, and Black resigned.

We shall examine our last game in greater detail, from beginning to end. When I first saw it, the game interested me, and I prepared annotations for myself and, of course, for my students. Later, I found Joel Lautier's comments, and included them within my own material. As it happened, our analyses and conclusions, instead of contradicting one another, were closer to being complementary.

The two-weaknesses principle was employed quite convincingly in the latter part of the game. But I also found myself interested in the problem faced by the players at the conclusion of the opening phase, as well as in the analysis of the reason why Black spoiled his good position in a couple of moves.

**Lautier - Ponomarev**  
Enghien les Bains 1999

**1. d2-d4 Ng8-f6 2. Ng1-f3 c7-c5 3. d4-d5 d7-d6 4. Nb1-c3 g7-g6 5. e2-e4 Bf8-g7 6. Bf1-e2 0-0 7. 0-0 Nb8-a6**

*My only knowledge of this position was a vague recollection of an old Smyslov game against Schmid himself, the inventor of Black's system. I remembered White applied the standard Nd2-c4 manoeuvre, to which Black replied ...Nc7, followed by ...b6 and ...Ba6. The only thing that was carved in my memory was the move b2-b3 for White, together with the fact that Smyslov had won a beautiful game, or hadn't he? (Lautier)*

**8. Nf3-d2 Na6-c7 9. a2-a4 b7-b6**

An alternative possibility is 9...a6!?

**10. Nd2-c4 Bc8-a6 11. Bc1-g5?!**



In the Smyslov - Schmid game (Helsinki Olympics 1952) the continuation was **11. Bf4! Rb8?! 12. b3!!** (this is the brilliant prophylactic move that was carved into Lautier's memory: now on Bxc4, White always has the reply bc!, stopping Black's queenside counterplay) **12...Nd7** (12...Nh5 13. Bd2) **13. Qd2 f5 14. Rad1 fe** (14...Bxc3 15. Qxc3 fe 16. Bh6 Rf7 17. Bg4) **15. Nxe4 Rf5** (15...Bb7 16. Bg5 Qe8 17. Bg4! Bxd5 18. Nxd6! ed 19. Nxd6 Qe5 20. Nb5, with advantage) 16. Bg4! Rxd5 17. Be6+ Nxe6 18.

Qxd5, and White won.

It would make sense not to wait for b2-b3, and play 11...Bxc4 at once (or 11...Nd7!? 12. Qd2 Bxc4): 12. Bxc4 a6. However, after something like 13. Re1 (13. Qe2!?) 13...Nd7 14. Qd2 Rb8 15. Bh6 b5 16. Bxg7 Kxg7 17. Bf1, Black would still stand worse. For example: 17...Ne5?! 18. f4 Nc4 (Bukic - Janosevic, Kraljevo 1967) 19. Qc1!, or 17...c4 18. Ne2! (18. f4 Nc5 18. e5?! f6! = is weaker – D. Janosevic).

After 11. Bg5, Black could aim for the same positions as after 11. Bf4: 11...Bxc4 12. Bxc4 a6 13. Re1 (Lautier thinks 13. Qe2 is stronger, controlling the b5-square and forestalling Rb8) 13...Nd7 14. Qd2 Rb8, leading to the Bukic - Janosevic game cited above. And here's one more practical example on this theme: 14...Re8?! 15. Bf1 Rb8 16. f4 b5 (Black is much worse after 16...f6 17. Bh4 b5 18. ab ab 19. b4! ab 20. Na2 - I. Belov) 17. ab ab 18. e5!, with advantage to White (Popa - I. Belov, USSR 1987).

### 11...Qd8-d7!

Ruslan Ponomariov quickly finds his footing in this situation, and with this accurate move, underscores the almost unnoticed drawback of the bishop's development at g5.

*It now dawned on me that I must have pushed my bishop one square too far, as it would have been much handier to have it on f4 in order to stop ...e7-e6, the next move on Black's agenda. (Lautier)*

### 12. b2-b3?!

*Yes, such is my faith in the great Vasily Vasilievich. Almost any other move would have been stronger. (Lautier)*

Ponomariov may not have been familiar with the technique found once upon a time by Smyslov; whereas Lautier not only knew of it, but used it. Unfortunately, the position has shifted a little; and as a result, the vaunted strategy comes a cropper. For it was aimed against the plan with Bxc4, a7-a6 and b6-b5, whereas here, Black now has another good plan: that of opening lines in the center by e7-e6.

**12...e7-e6! 13. Qd1-d2**

White would not like 13. de? Qxe6! 14. Qxd6 Bxc4 15. Qxc7 Bxe2 16. Nxe2 Nxe4 or 14. Qd3 Nxe4 15. Nxe4 d5 very much (Lautier).

**13...e6xd5**

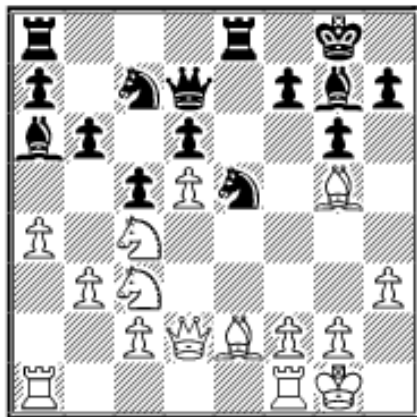
13...Nxe4!? 14. Nxe4 ed was worth a look. Of course, after 15. Nf6+ Bxf6 16. Bxf6 dc, the dark-square bishop looks terrifying; but there appears no direct way of whipping up an attack, and Black's extra pawn may compensate him for his sufferings.

**14. e4xd5 Rf8-e8**

Threatening 15...Ne4.

**15. Be2-f3 Nf6-g4 16. h2-h3**

White probably didn't like 16. Rae1 because of 16...Bxc4 17. bc Be5!

**16...Ng4-e5 17. Bf3-e2**

The critical point of the game! Black stands excellently, and needs only to evaluate properly the point of exchanging on c4. In Lautier's opinion, Black should not have exchanged at all – he recommends 17...f5!? and 18...Nf7.

I think that Black can take on c4, but only once – taking twice was the mistake!

**17...Ne5xc4**

17...Bxc4 wasn't bad either:

(a) 18. bc?! f5 19. Ra3 (White prepares 20. Nb5) 19...Nf7 20. Bf4 Re7 (20...Bxc3!? 21. Rxc3 Qxa4) 21. Nb5 Rae8 (Lautier);

(b) 18. Bxc4 a6 (18...Qf5!?) 19. Be2 f5, followed by Nf7, when Black stands no worse.

**18. Be2xc4**

*18. bc?? is strategically desirable, but tactically flawed: 18...Bxc3 19. Qxc3 Rxe2 and Black wins. (Lautier)*

**18...Ba6xc4?**

Too passive! Black must choose either 18...Bb7 (intending a7-a6 and b6-b5), or 18...Qf5!? (threatening 19...Bxc3) 19. Be3 (19. Bh6 Bxh6 20. Qxh6 Qxc2) 19...Bxc3 20. Qxc3 Nxd5 21. Bxd5 Qxd5, and White appears to have sufficient compensation for the lost pawn, but no more than that.

### 19. b3xc4

Now Black must constantly reckon with the threat of a4-a5, as well as Nb5. And on 19...Qf5, White now has the easy reply 20. Ra3.

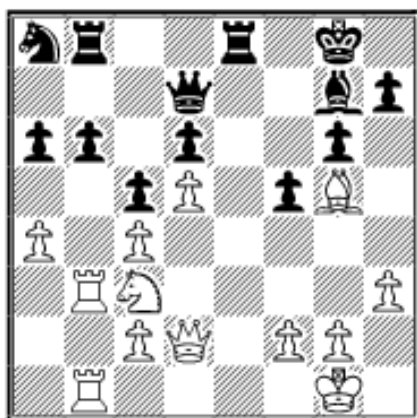
### 19...a7-a6?! 20. Ra1-b1 Ra8-b8 21. Rb1-b3 f7-f5?!

There was no reason to create additional weaknesses for himself. 21...Rb7 22. Rfb1 Reb8 was preferable, although then too, 23. Qd3 intending 24. Ne4 leaves Black in a difficult position.

On 21...b5 White comes out a pawn up: 22. ab ab 23. Nxb5 Nxb5 24. Rfb1! Nc3 25. Rxb8 Nxb1 26. Rxb1 Qa4 27. Qd3 (Lautier).

### 22. Rf1-b1 Nc7-a8

*Black's position, and this move in particular, bear a strong resemblance to some women's portraits by Picasso. (Lautier)*



### 23. h3-h4!

*According to the well-known "principle of two weaknesses". Having already achieved maximum pressure on the queenside (no further increase is possible, since 23. a5 Qc7 would be useless – Dvoretzky), White needs to open a second front on the kingside in order to stretch Black's defenses to breaking point. The g6-pawn is particularly vulnerable, since White can attack it easily with Ne2-f4 and Rb3-g3.*

*23...Bxc3 is hardly worth considering: 24. Qxc3 Qxa4 25. Ra3 Qd7 26. Rxa6. (Lautier)*

### 23...h7-h5

Now g6 is weakened, and White switches to the attack, after first distracting Black's pieces by a break on the queenside.

### 24. a4-a5! Qd7-c7

24...b5? would lose to 25. cb Bxc3 26. Qxc3 ab 27. Qf6.

**25. Nc3-e2! b6xa5 26. Ne2-f4 Rb8-b4**

On 26...a4, both 27. Ne6 Qa7 28. Rxb8 Rxb8 29. Rxb8+ Qxb8 30. Nxc7 Kxc7 31. Qc3+ Kh7 32. Qf6 Qe8 33. Qxd6 a3 34. Qxa6 (Lautier) and the immediate 27. Rxb8 are strong (this prevents the queen sacrifice that Black could play after 27. Ne6) 27...Rxb8 28. Rxb8+ Qxb8 29. Nxc6 (29. Qa5?! Qb1+ 30. Kh2 Nb6!; 29. Qe1!?) 29...a3 30. Ne7+ Kf8 31. Qa5.

If 26...Rxb3 27. cb Kh7, White decides by 28. Ne6 Qb7 (28...Qb6 29. Nxc7 Kxc7 30. Qc3+ Kh7 31. Qf6 Qc7 32. Bf4) 29. Bf4 (Lautier).

**27. Rb1-e1!**

As soon as Black's rook leaves the 8th rank, White promptly creates a threat of invading along the e-file.

*Timing is important in the attack: threats should come with tempo whenever possible. (Lautier)*

**27...Qc7-f7?!**

27...Be5 28. Nxc6

27...Rxe1+!? 28. Qxe1 Qf7 29. Re3 Be5 30. Nd3 Rxc4 31. Nxe5 de 32. Rxe5 Re4 33. Rxe4 fe 34. Qxe4 Nb6 35. d6, with a great advantage (Lautier).

**28. Re1-e6!**

28. Rxe8+ Qxe8 29. Re3 is inferior, in view of 29...Be5.

**28...Rb4xc4**

Black defends against 29. Rxc6, at the cost of once again allowing White to use the queenside to strengthen his kingside attack. On 28...Nb6!? it would have been a mistake to continue 29. Qe2 Be5! (but not 29...Rxe6? 30. de Qe8 31. e7 Be5 32. Ne6) 30. Rxc6? Qxc6 31. Nxc6 Bh2+. White would have continued 29. Rxc6 Nxc4 30. Qd1, for example: 30...Ne5 31. Rxd6 a4 32. Rxb4 cb 33. Nxc5, with a winning position (Lautier).

**29. Rb3-b7! Qf7xb7 30. Re6xe8+ Kg8-h7 31. Re8-e7 Qb7-b1+**

31...Nc7 32. Bf6 Qb1+ 33. Kh2 Ne8 34. Ne6 is just as hopeless.

**32. Kg1-h2 Rc4xc2 33. Qd2-e3 Qb1-b2 34. Qe3-e6**, and Black resigned.

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