## Chess Theory: The Basics <br> by Jared Bray

Back when I was a young man freshly enamored by the game of chess I believed the middle game was where all the fun stuff happened! The crazy sacrifices of a Mikhail Tal or Garry Kasparov emboldened me to play fiercely and sacrifice material quickly. The seething counter attacks of a Larry Christiansen or completely obscene pawn advances of an Alexi Shirov was enough to convince me there was nothing better than when all the pieces were ripping across the board.

It was much, much later in life that I had one of those head pains I later discovered to be an epiphany - I lost more often than I won and it was usually in the endgame where l'd find my defeat! That is, when my attacks stalled and my opponent defended accurately, l'd be left down material and facing the impossible task of holding a very poor position. Since at that point most of my pieces were off the board I couldn't sacrifice them anymore and my opponent using his superior material edge would simply push a pawn I could not stop until promotion. It wasn't a fun realization!

So I shifted gears, as it were, and began to look at endgame studies; to take on the computer in those tricky rook endings or balanced pawn endings to see if I could draw. I spent time comparing matched pieces with various pawn formations
or knight-vs.-bishop endings. Holding squares, creating outposts, limiting my opponents maneuverability, all these strategies useful in the middle game often transferred over luckily so it wasn't a completely foreign terrain to spend time on. But there is something more in the endgame that masters have memorized and weaker players tend not tooendgame theory.

A master can tell you when you should or shouldn't lose an ending despite the win coming many moves later based on established theory. There are databases for six piece endgames out there. Any position involving six pieces and one can simply look up if it's a win or loss. Of course, one can't do that in the middle of a game but he or she can memorize pawn formations and motifs.

And this is what I wanted to share in this write-up, a couple motifs from many a game but shown quite spectacularly in this game between Reuben Fine and Miguel Najdorf from 1949. Below is the key position. Black to move and win!


At first glance your gut may be screaming that White has the better of it if not winning ... but you would be wrong. Feel free to analyze it now before I discuss it.

Black plays $1 \ldots$ g5! It appears to lose a pawn outright. So why would Miguel play it? Let's calculate and see: 1...g5 2.Nxg5 h3!! 3. Nxh3 Kxh3 So far it would appear Mr. Najdorf was on a bender before the match and having a bit of a joke, but let's look deeper and see if he had an idea here. $4 . \mathrm{Kf} 2 \mathrm{Kh} 25 . \mathrm{Kf} 1 \mathrm{Kg} 3$ 6.Ke2 Kg2 7.Ke1 Kxf3 8.Kf1. At this point it looks as if White may hold despite dropping the pawn but if you already know your K-vs.-K+P endgames, you know White is lost. 8...Ke3 9.Ke1 f3 10.Kf1 f2 and the White king must move out of the way and Black will queen after 11 ...Ke2.

White was up a knight and was completely lost ... why? Because of set well-known techniquesshouldering and opposition. The Black king could force the White king off of his pawn and win it. There was also the known K-vs.-K+P endgame theory in play here. Black's pawn was already on f4 and when White had to take the opposition to hold his position, he


## GAME A

Ethan Stech - Zac Schuh Springfield Ladder Championship November 18, 2018

Czech Benoni Defense
In Round 2 of our 2018 Ladder Championship, Ethan Stech and Zac Schuh squared off and gave us a terrific display of hard-hitting, off-beat chess!

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 c5
3. d5 e5
4. Nc3 d6
5. e4 Be7
6. Nge2 O-O
7. h3 Ne8 (1)


Black's position is solid, even though White enjoys a slight space advantage.
8. g4
g6
9. Be3
Bg5
10. Qd2 Bxe3
11. Qxe3 Nd7
12. Ng3 Ng7
13. h4

The kingside storm is a' brewin' ....
13. ... Nf6
14. f3 h5
15. g5 Nd7
16. O-O-O a6!
17. Bd3 Qa5 (2)

The battle lines are drawn. Black has prepared extensively for a solid queenside assault.
(diagram next column)

18. Nf5?! ...

Sacrificing a perfectly good piece, this move creates critical weaknesses in Black's defenses! A slower - but perhaps more advisable - continuation might be 18. Rdf1. As it stands, a flurry of decisive exchanges ensue.
 advantage, but White's queen is where she wants to be.

$$
\begin{array}{ll}
\text { 22. } . . . & \mathrm{Ng} 7 \\
\text { 23. Ne4! } & \mathrm{fg}
\end{array}
$$

The White knight has left his defensive assignment on the queenside, but if now Black chooses to grab the c-pawn, it could lead to disaster: 23. ... Nxc4?? 24. Nf6+ Kh8 25. Qh6\#. And of course, grabbing the a-pawn with the queen leads to the same result. Meanwhile, there's a future for this knight on the kingside.

| 24. Qxg6 | Nxc4 |
| :--- | :--- |
| 25. Ng5! | Rfe8 |
| 26. Qf7+ | Kh8 |
| 27. Qg6 (4) $\ldots$ |  |

24. Qxg6 Nxc4
25. Ng5! Rfe8
26. Qf7+ Kh8
27. Qg6 (4) ...


Indeed, although ahead in material, unless the Black king continues dancing back \& forth, White has an immediate checkmate - and so Black's queenside assault can never be realized. Hence, a draw was agreed upon. Great attack by Mr. Stech! In the final round, Mr. Schuh beat his opponent and went on to be crowned our 2018 Ladder Champion, in a 5way tie for first, decided by various tie-breaker criteria.
$1 / 2-1 / 2$

## Chess Basics

(continued from p. 1)
was a tempo shy of forcing stalemate.

So the two elements, shouldering and opposition, were present in this endgame that Miguel Najdorf was very well acquainted with and he could tell way back when he played 1 ...g5 that he had the position won. I encourage any would be master to study them.
(continued on p 4)

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## GAME B

Spencer Manchester - Cody Whittington Springfield Ladder Tournament

January 11, 2019
Queen’s Pawn Opening - Mason Variation
From opening night of the 2019 Ladder Season, played by a couple of our newer participants.

1. d4 d5
2. Bf4 Nf6
3. e3 g6
4. c3 Bg7
5. Bd3 Nc6
6. Nd2 Nh5 (1)


White will not be keeping the bishop pair ... but his position is solid otherwise.

$$
\begin{array}{ll}
\text { 7. Bg3 } & \text { Nxg3 } \\
\text { 8. hxg3 } & \text { O-O?! }
\end{array}
$$

With an open h-file, this might be dangerous. How will White exploit it?
9. Ngf3 Bg4
10. Qc2 e5
11. e4 de
12. Bxe4 ed
13. Bxc6 (2) ...


Black enjoys a slight advantage and White seeks to balance that by messing up Black's pawn structure.
13. ... d3?

Unfortunately this cheeky advance gives White new life, despite the passed pawn!

| 14. Qa4! | Bxf3 |
| :--- | :--- |
| 15. Bxf3 | Re8+ |
| 16. Kd1 | Qe7! |
| 17. Ne4 | h5 |
| 18. Re1 | Kh8 |

Black saw the danger if he played something careless, e.g. 18. ... a6 19. Nf6+ Qxf6 20. Rxe8+ Rxe8 21. Qxe8+ and White wins. However, 18. ... c6 can be a useful move and short-circuits that continuation.
19. g 4 ?

An invitation to fork his pieces!.
19. ... hg!
20. Bxg4 f5
21. Qb3 fxg4
22. Rh1+ Bh6
23. Rxh6+ Kg7 (3)


But now White has a big problem. If he saves his rook Black runs away with the game: 24. Rh1 Qxe4 25. c4 (to get some play on the diagonal, in a dire situation) Qe2+ 26. Kc1 d2+ 27. $\mathrm{Kb1}$ and Black is home free.

## 24. Qb4? Qxb4 <br> 25. Rh7+! ...

A great little move under the circumstances. But White probably saw that after 25. ... Kxh7 26. Nf6+ Kh6 you still gotta play 27. cxb4 giving the Black rook time to get behind the advanced d-pawn.

> 25. ... Kxh7
26. cxb4 Rxe4
27. Kd2 (4)...
(diagram next column)


Mr. Manchester resigned. Black will inevitably prevail. Fritz suggests the following possible continuation: 33. Rh4+ Kg7 34. Rc4 Rxf2 35. Rc7+ Kf6 36. Kc1 d2+ Kxb2 d1=Q and then mate in four. A fun see-saw battle!

0-1

"Combinations have always been the most intriguing aspect of chess. The master looks for them, the public applauds them, (and) the critics praise them. It is because combinations are possible that chess is more than a lifeless mathematical exercise. They are the poetry of the game; they are to chess what melody is to music. They represent the triumph of mind over matter."

## GAME C

James Huggins - Roger Pagel Springfield Open Chess Tournament October 27, 2018

Alekhine Defense
From the Springfield Open, Round 2. Jim Huggins is from Kansas.

| 1. e4 | Nf6 |
| :--- | :--- |
| 2. e5 | Nd5 |
| 3. d4 | d6 |
| 4. $\mathbf{N f 3}$ | Bg4 |
| 5. Be2 | Nc6 |
| 6. c4 | Nb6 |
| 7. ed | cd |

Up to here, all according to the established lines.

> 8. b3 g6
9. Bb2 Bg7
10. Nbd2 O-O
11. O-O Bf5 (1)
${ }_{W}^{1}$


A nice sharp position, about equal. There's some interesting tension focusing on White's d4-pawn.

## 12. Re1 Nb4 <br> 13. Nh4

Good solution for the forking threat. Now if 13. ... Nc2 14. Nxf5 Nxe1 15. Nxg7 Nxg2 16. Kxg2 Kxg7 and material is even, but White has a better game. Pagel wisely backed off.

| 13... | Bd7 |
| :--- | ---: |
| 14. 3 N | Nc6 |
| 15. $\mathrm{Nf1}$ ?! (2) $\ldots$ |  |

(diagram next column)

[^0]Paul Keres


White's queen wants a better view of her vulnerable d4-pawn. But Fritz prefers 15. Nhf3 here, because otherwise that h4-knight is just flapping in the breeze, as Black is about to demonstrate.
15. ... e5!

White's game now becomes very cramped as Black's tactics explode onto the board! He will win a pawn while gaining substantial space.
16. Nf3 e4!
17. N3d2 f5
18. Qc2

Sadly, 18. Nb1 might've been better.
18. ... Nxd4
19. Bxd4 Bxd4
20. Rad1 Be5
21. Ng3 Rc8 (3)


Compare this diagram to the previous, just $61 / 2$ moves ago. Black is only a pawn up, but with excellent prospects for advancement. White's pieces have nowhere to go.
$\begin{array}{ll}\text { 22. Ndf1 } & \text { Qf6 } \\ \text { 23. Ne3 } & \text { Bc6 } \\ \text { 24. } c 5!? & \text {... }\end{array}$
White desperately seeks advanced squares for his pieces.
$\begin{array}{ll}\text { 24. } . . . & \text { dc } \\ \text { 25. } \mathrm{Nc} 4 & \text { Bd4 } \\ \text { 26. } \text { Nxb6 } & \text { axb6 }\end{array}$

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It's a tough position, but here White should try 28 . a4 instead. The problem is that Black's next move wins a piece.


White resigned. Mr. Pagel admits he had been apprehensive going into this match, as in the first round, Mr. Huggins had beaten our friend Zac Schuh, a formidable Class A player.

0-1

## Chess Basics

(continued from p. 2)
It's not magic what stronger players do in their endgames despite their clear clairvoyance. It's skill, worked and hewn into a tactical weapon at the board. If by chance you found the example easy, good! Then you know what to do next-study more endgame theory! Expound on the shouldering and opposition themes. Involve more pawns including chains and isolanis. Revel in the knowledge transferred down from centuries of other players blundering left and right when either a draw or win was achievable. Make all the N.N. Players that played Morphy look like the fools they were without modern day analysis and find incredible pawn breaks in your own games!

JB

## Blast From the Past!

Fred Sadoogi - Marty Phillips Springfield Round-Robin Championship January, 1992

English Opening - Symmetrical Variation
An extremely tense third-round match from the Annual Springfield Round Robin, from over a quarter of a century ago.

| 1. c4 | c5 |
| :--- | :--- |
| 2. Nc3 | Nc6 |
| 3. Nf3 | Nf6 |
| 4. g3 | g6 |
| 5. Bg2 | Bg7 |
| 6. O-O | O-O |
| 7. a3 | b6 |

Until this move, Black has just been a copy-cat!


Not surprisingly, the position is equal.

| 9. $\mathbf{b 4}$ | cb |
| :--- | :--- |
| 10. $\mathbf{a b}$ | d5 |
| 11. c5?! | d4! |
| 12. Nb5 | Nd5 |

Black's advanced d-pawn becomes the subject of the game.

## 13. Ne1 Rb8

14. Nd3 ...

White conducts a convoluted changing-of-the-guard, but this knight blockade doesn't just stop Black's intruder at d4 - it also gums up White's structure.

## 14. ... a6 <br> 15. Na3 b5

Already White has a passed pawn! At this juncture, there's no need for a fire drill.
16. Qb3 Nc7


Though White's center pawns form a virtual trampoline for Black to jump on, Mr. Sadoogi's position is stable. Mr. Phillips notes: "I was under serious time pressure after seventeen moves!"

$$
\begin{array}{ll}
\text { 18. e4 } & \text { de e.p. } \\
\text { 19. de } & \text { Qd7? }
\end{array}
$$

Black prepares to make use of that wide open d-file, but maybe Her Majesty should not be leading the charge.

## 20. Rd1! Rfd8 <br> 21. Nf2 Qe7 <br> 22. Bb2 Rxd1+ <br> 23. Rxd1 Bxb2 <br> 24. Qxb2 Nd5

With material even, Fritz nonetheless considers White's game practically winning now, and suggests 24. ... Rd8 would've put Black at less of a disadvantage, after 25. Rxd8+ Qxd8 26. h3.

## 25. Nc2 Rd8?! <br> 26. Ng4! Qf8 <br> 27. Rxd5? ...

White put a lot of stock in removing that knight. Mr. Sadoogi had imagined a deadly windmill attack on the Black king ... which unfortunately doesn't really have teeth. However, 27. e4 was a much better way to dispatch that knight.
27. ... exd5
28. Nf6+ (3) ...
(diagram next column)



At first blush this looks devastating, but then when you actually calculate follow-up moves ... well, let's see. 28. ... Kh8 and then if 29. Nd7+ Black simply plays 29. ... Qg7 - crisis averted. All you really have here is a possible draw by repetition: 28. ... Kh8 29. Nxd5+ Kg8 and then repeat the check. If Black wants to venture an 'escape' via 28. ... Kg7?? he loses to 29. Nd7+. But Mr. Phillips had no delusions about that variation.

| 28. ... | Kh8 |
| :--- | :---: |
| 29. Ne8+ | Kg8 |
| 30. Nd6 | $\ldots$ |

And so for his efforts, White settles his knight on a very nice outpost ...
30. ... Rxd6!?

Too nice, perhaps!

| 31. cxd6 | Qxd6 |
| :--- | :--- |
| 32. Qc3 | Bc8 |
| 33. Qd2 | Be6 |
| 34. e4! | Bd7 |
| 35. e5?! | ... |

With Black up a pawn - and with White's last move, a passed pawn White foregoes immediate material equality and goes for more space. He can eliminate the passed pawn anyway. Fritz calls it a toss-up.
35. ... Qb8
36. Bxd5 Qa7+
37. Kg2 Ne7
38. Be4 Kg7
39. Nd4 Qb6
40. Qc3 Bg4
41. Qc5 Qxc5
(continued on page 8)


GAME D
Raphael Obiyo - Jon McClenahan Mid-Missouri Open Championship July 9, 2018

Queen's Pawn Game
This match took place in one of Michael Clark's impromptu tournaments at Ichiban Restaurant on Glenstone. I had met Mr. Obiyo at the MSU Chess Club but had no idea of his playing strength, and so decided to use a defense with which I'd been experimenting. This game has a lot of aimless play and some unusual positions, but in the end I found an interesting tactic.

1. d4 c6
2. Nf3 d6
3. Bf4 Bg4
4. h3 Bh5
5. e3 Nd7
6. Bd3 Ngf6
7. Bc4 h6
8. Nc3 Qc7 (1)


This opening has similarities to the trendy "Black Lion Defense." This is the basic setup that Black aims for: solid but with less space. His next step, however, is to advance the epawn and break the position open.

## 9. b3?

Not sure of the purpose of this move, other than making things uncomfortable for his own bishop. "When you don't know what to do, wait for your opponent to get an idea it's sure to be wrong!'" (Siegbert Tarrasch) Probably better was for White was 9. Be2.
9. ... e5!
10. de de
11. Bh2 Bb4
12. Qd3 (2) ...


Fritz liked this move as much as I did when I played it (which is unusual). Now my mind's eye saw the continuation: 13. Qxe4 Bxc3+ winning the rook. But when White came up with a different response, unfortunately, I got lost.

## 13. O-O Bxf3?

The correct follow-up here would've been 13. ... Ndc5 (attacking his queen) 14. Bxe5 (counterattacking mine), Qc8 15. Qd1 Nxc3 and Black has a winning advantage.
14. gxf3?
14. Nxe4 would've gained back the lost material without the damage to the pawn structure.

| 14. ... | Nxc3 |
| :--- | :--- |
| 15. a3 | Ne2+ |
| 16. Qxe2 | Bd6 |

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Certainly not the best place for one's queen. After 20. Bxd6 exf3 21. Bxc7 Kxc7 22. Bxf7 gf 23. Be6 and White is right back in the game.
20. ... gf

Now White will be facing a future of dangerous g -file intruders.
21. Rfd1 Bxh2+
22. Qxh2 Rhg8+
23. Kh1 Ne5
24. Rxd8+ Rxd8
25. Qg1 Nf3 (4)


A great little spot for Black's knight.

$$
\begin{array}{lc}
\text { 26. Qg2 } & \text { b6 } \\
\text { 27. h4? } & \text {... }
\end{array}
$$

White is looking for a plan. 28 Qh 3 looks like a candidate move: attack the backward pawn at f5. However, Black saw more value in losing that pawn to a marauding queen, than in keeping it.
27. ... Rd6

Since White's queen had control of the open g-file, Black intends to drive her off with a rook "lift", aiming for g6.
(continued on p. 7)

GAME E
Brian Rude - Matthew Hammons
Joplin Open
December 1, 2018
Closed Sicilian
Fourth round of the Joplin Open.

| 1. e4 | c5 |
| :--- | :--- |
| 2. Nc3 | a6 |
| 3. f4 | b5 |
| 4. Nf3 | Nc6 |
| 5. g3 | e6 |
| 6. Bg2 | $\ldots$ |

This was looking like a standard Closed Sicilian, but a popular $4^{\text {th }}$ move for Black is to fianchetto the lightsquared bishop and then challenge the center. Black chooses to challenge the center without the fianchetto!
6. ... Nf6?!
7. O-O b4
8. e5 (1)


Playing "Chicken" with pawn pushes!

```
8. ...
bxc3
9. exf6
cxb2
10. Bxb2 gf
```

Black's kingside pawn structure is verkakte, but the open g-file may yield some dividends, especially in combination with that fianchettoed light-square bishop ... coming soon, no doubt! Mr. Rude liked his two strong bishops, so he didn't mind being a pawn down here. Nonetheless, Fritz likes Black's game.

## 11. d4 Qb6 <br> 12. Rb1 Rb8

Although the b-file battery is powerful, Black may have wanted to play 12. ... d5 for reasons that will be apparent.


White's pawn advance cleared the diagonal and made a sharp position sharper. But rather than sideline the knight, Black would've been better served taking the d-pawn: after 13. ... ed 14. Nd2 c4+! 15. Kh1 Qc5 16. Bxf6 Rxb1 17. Nxb1 Rg8 18. Re1+ White is ahead, but less significantly. Now, the powder is loaded; let the pyrotechnics begin!


The smoke has cleared and material is even ... but now, about that fianchettoed light-squared bishop ...

## 17. Rb8!

That bishop has been sleeping the whole game, and now will die in bed because there's no way to save it now! Beyond that, there's a mate threat.
17. ... d6
18. Rxc8+ Kd7
19. Ra8 ed
20. Ng5 d4



The dark-squared bishop (which ALSO never moved in the game!) is pinned and double-attacked. With the prospects of losing yet another piece, Mr. Hammons resigned. This gave Mr. Rude his fourth victory, a perfect score of 4.0, and he took the first-place prize.

1-0


GAME D
(continued from p 6).

## 28. Qh3 Kb7

I must admit, by "running away" to avoid a possible check (thanks to preparations made on the $26^{\text {th }}$ move), I was actually setting a nasty trap. "Please, take my hanging pawn!"
29. Qxf5? ? (5)

29. ... Rd1+!
30. Rxd1 Qh2\#

Steinitz would've been sick: " $A$ win by an unsound combination fills me with artistic horror." Nonetheless, given the position, Black was happy to grab the win.

## SW Missouri Chess Calendar

## ㄹㅁㅋㅗ Springfield ロреп Schalastic

 February 9 . 2 alalAges K-12 at the Southside Senior Center. 2215 S. Fremont. Springfield starting at 11 AM . Four rounds Swiss G10/d0 To enter: adamgrantwhitaker@gmail.com

Theme: King's Gambit Friday. Febraury 日, בala

Brush up on your Romantic Era tactics!
(see article on p. 1)
2215 S. Fremont, Springfield
Starts at 7 PM. G15/d5

## Springfield Fark Baard Club Ladder Taurnament

Our ongoing cumulative Ladder Tournament for 2019 is played on every Friday (except the last of the month - see Blitz Tournament below) at 7:15 PM. G90/d5. Members only: so ... JOIN THE CLUB (\$10 annual fee) and JOIN THE FUN!

## Blitz Taurnaments!

G10/d0. Entry fee \$1.
All proceeds go to benefit our hosts. the Southside Senior Center.

Be there by 7:15 pm to register for pairings.

If you would like to notify us of an upcoming chess-related event in our area. contact Roger Pagel: brevcamp@yahoo.com

Blast
(continued from p. 5)


The question is simple: can White's isolated passed pawn triumph over Black's two connected passed pawns?
42.
43. Kf2 Kf8
44. Ke3 Nf5+
45. Nxf5 Bxf5
46. Bd5

This exchange of knights has favored Black, and now White can't afford to exchange bishops.
46. ... Be6
47. Be4 Ke7
48. Kd2 Kd7
49. Kc1 Kc7 (5)


In this position, 50. Bd3!? is White's only chance to stay alive (and then 50 ... Kc6 51. Bxa6 Kxc5, after which White might be able to hang on). Unfortunately White didn't find that move, and the rest is history.

| 50. Kb2 | a5 |
| :--- | :--- |
| 51. h4 | h5 |
| 52. Ka1 | a4 |
| 53. Kb1 | a3 |
| 54. Kc1 | b3 |

a5
h5
a4
54. Kc1
b3
55.c6 b2+
56. Kd2


Mr. Sadoogi resigned. If White had played 56. Kc2, 56. ... Bf5 forces the exchange, after which Black's king mops up.

0-1
"You may learn much more from a game you lose than from a game you win. You will have to lose hundreds of games before becoming a good chess player."
J. R. Capablanca


[^0]:    "The older I grow, the more I value pawns."

