

GM Bartłomiej Macieja
IM Witalis Sapis



CHESS STRATEGY EXPLAINED

1

Bartłomiej Macieja
Witalis Sapis

Chess Strategy Explained

Volume 1

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Table of Contents

Introduction	9
Tutorial	13
Chapter 1 – Weakening the opponent’s position	15
1.1. Restricting the opponent’s pieces	15
1.2. Weakening the pawn structure	44
1.3. The switchback	64
1.4. The disappearing move	78
Chapter 2 – Trading	101
Chapter 3 – Problems	135
Chapter 4 – Solutions to problems	147
Index of players	203

Introduction

Authors

Bartłomiej Macieja – Grandmaster since 1999

Best achievements as chess coach:

- Olympiads: Head Coach of Venezuela (2008) and Mexico (2014)
- Head Coach of UT Brownsville and UT Rio Grande Valley (since 2012)

Gold medals:

- US National Collegiate Championships (2018, 2019)
- Southwest Collegiate Championships (2015, 2018, 2019)
- Texas Collegiate Championships (2014, 2016, 2018, 2019)

Best achievements as chess player:

- Highest FIDE rating: 2653 (in 2004, Top 40 in the world)
- Champion of Europe: Batumi 2002
- Participated 4 times in FIDE KO-system World Championships (1999, 2000, 2001, 2004); in 2000 in New Delhi qualified to the Top 16
- Participated 3 times in FIDE World Cups (2002, 2005, 2007)
- Champion of Poland: Warsaw 2004, Chotowa 2009
- Winner or co-winner of 32 international tournaments (1993–2019)

Best team achievements:

- 7 Olympiads: 1 gold medal for individual performance
- 4 European Team Championships: 1 silver medal for individual result
- European Club Cup: 5 silver and 1 bronze team medals
- Polish Team Championships: 19 team medals, including 12 gold

Engagements as chess activist:

- President of the Council of Polish Chess Players (2003–2012)
- General Secretary of the Association of Chess Professionals (2004–2007 and 2012–2015)
- Member of the FIDE Rules and Tournament Regulations Commission (2005–2007 and 2009–2014)
- Member of the FIDE World Championship Committee (2005–2009)
- Member of the FIDE Group of Rating Experts (2009–2014)
- Member of the FIDE Qualification Commission (2012–2014)
- Chief Organizer of GM/IM-norm, collegiate, and scholastic tournaments

Witalis Sapis – International Master since 1990

Best achievements as chess coach:

- Online Coach and Instructor of the Youth Academy of the Polish Chess Federation (for a few years)
- Coach of the National Team of Poland for Blind and Visually Impaired (2016–2017)
- European Team Championship for Blind and Visually Impaired
 - Warsaw 2016, gold medal
- Olympiad for Blind and Visually Impaired
 - Ohrid 2017, bronze medal
- World Championship for Disabled
 - Dresden 2017, gold medal
- OTB and online coach (for decades)

Best achievements as chess player:

- Highest FIDE rating: 2470 (in 1996, Top 10 of Poland)
- Polish Individual Champion of:
 - 1979 – Sopot – Elementary Schools
 - 1979 – Radom – Youth (Under 17)
 - 1981 – Plock – High Schools
 - 1983 – Brok – High Schools
 - 1987 – Bydgoszcz – Polish Army
 - 2010 – Torun – Blitz of Arbiters
- 3-time Polish Team Champion (1986, 1990, 1992)

Activist of the Polish Chess Federation:

- Member of the Youth Commission (2000–2003)
- Member of the Arbiters' Council (2000–2003)
- Member (2009–2013) and Chairman (2013–2016) of the Sports Commission

Best achievements as chess arbiter:

- International Arbiter since 2005, Chief Arbiter of some 80 tournaments of the Polish Championship level and international tournaments

Journalist:

- Cooperating with top chess magazines in Poland, such as Magazyn Szachista, Panorama Szachowa, Czasopismo Mat (for decades)

Goal

The number of possible positions in chess is huge, according to Shannon it is of the general order of $10^{42.5}$. The number of possible chess games that can be played within just 40 moves is way higher than the number of atoms in the known, observable universe. It means, even the most powerful computers are unable to precisely calculate everything.

In the practice of every chess player, strategic thinking, selection of plans, and the skilled evaluation of their consequences are needed. A gradual improvement of the position is often the key to success in the entire game. Not surprisingly, so valued in life skills as strategic, critical, logical, and analytic thinking, problem solving, foreseeing, taking rational decisions, concentration, patience, and memory, can be naturally improved by playing chess regularly. We cordially encourage you to do so.

There are many strategic rules in chess that can help you in the selection of the correct moves and the entire plans, especially in the key moments, therefore help you be successful. The rules are often universal, they don't apply solely to a concrete position. It underlines the importance of learning them and makes them useful in all game stages, that can rise from all kinds of openings.

A strategy doesn't substitute a tactic, but it perfectly complements it, and even prepares. Many chess players can comfortably see tactical solutions, but in someone's else games, as in their own games they are unable to reach positions where such solutions would be possible. It is often said, there is no point in looking for wonderful solutions in positions that you can see with the naked eye that are bad, because they violate the basic strategic rules. Similarly, in positions built on strong strategic foundations, there is almost always a strong move.

The goal of this book is to explain the basic strategic principles of chess, and to provide examples showing the benefits of using them. We have noticed there are not many books dedicated to this topic, addressed to a wide range of readers, therefore we have decided to fill out the gap.

Examples

1. We have used our own games, because it has two major advantages:
 - it is easier to recall our own way of thinking,
 - it is, undoubtedly, original material.
2. In order to avoid the necessity of looking for the remainder of the games in other sources, we have decided to include the notation of all games used in the book. We have indicated in bold the moment from which the game was used.
3. When a few examples come from the same game, its notation is added after the last of them, and it includes information on the appearance of various themes.
4. Examples that come from the same game are additionally numbered. For instance, (1/3) means it is the first example out of three that appeared in that game. The numbering of the examples refers to the order of their appearance in that game.
5. Sometimes, the same example could be used to illustrate various themes. In such cases, that was the authors' choice to use it in a certain chapter.
6. Games within chapters (other than problems) are sorted by date (broken down by authors).

Problems

1. A part of the book is in a form of a test that can show us how we deal with the strategic problems solving.
2. The problems should be solved in the order of their appearance in the book, as sometimes a few problems are taken from the same game, and we could have learnt the solutions too early.

Tutorial

A few practical hints can help in the decision making. Undoubtedly, they are only a certain simplification of the problem. Chess is a very complex game and every generalization includes a ton of exceptions. Our task is to see when we deal with such an exception.

Look at the weaknesses!

A driver moving on roads uses road signs. A chess player also has such road signs, and these are the weaknesses.

- The squares in the center and in the own camp that are not protected by the pawns can easily become weak. Avoid trades of pieces that protect those squares. If your opponent has a weakened complex of squares of a certain color, try to trade bishops that control those squares.

- Isolated pawns, especially when they are additionally doubled, in a long term become objects of attack of the opponents' pieces. The square in front of an isolated pawn is often weak and may become a dreamed outpost for the opponent's piece. Don't weaken your pawn structure, if it is not for the tangible benefits. Remember that pawns can't move backwards!

- Pawns may also become tactical weaknesses, especially when the difference between the number of attacks and defenses of a particular object is equal or higher than zero. Then every additional, sudden attack of the opponent, especially a double one, may finish with a material loss.

- Pieces may also become tactical weaknesses, although usually temporary ones, as it is easier to move them around. More often they become strategic weaknesses, when their activity is limited by own or the opponents' pawns. Don't let it happen!

Additional hints:

- If you have less space, try to trade pieces. You will increase chances that there will be a good spot for each of your remaining piece.
- Play on the side of the chessboard where you have the advantage of space.
- If you have advantage in development, open the position. The opponents' king may easily get into troubles. It is also good to open the position when you have bishops and your opponent has knights.
- Start considering the moves with the forced ones (checks, captures, attacks), only then consider the remaining once.
- Don't leave the king without protection of your pieces. Also, ensure that the king has a luft where he can hide in the event of a check on the first rank.

Chapter 1

Weakening the opponent's position

1.1. Restricting the opponent's pieces

The strength of pieces changes, depending on the position. Pieces that can't spread their wings are obviously weaker than those that can do it. We must, therefore, strive to cut the wings of the opponent's pieces.

□ Macieja Bartłomiej

■ Kliment A. (3/3)

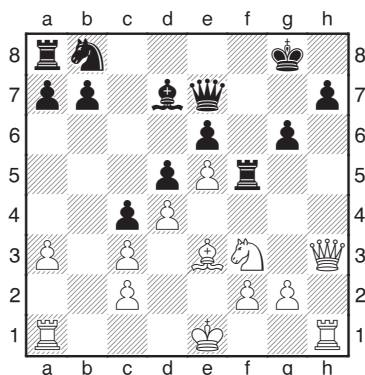
Saint Petersburg (Russia) 1996

□ Sapis Witalis

■ Koziel Ryszard

Czestochowa (Poland) 1980

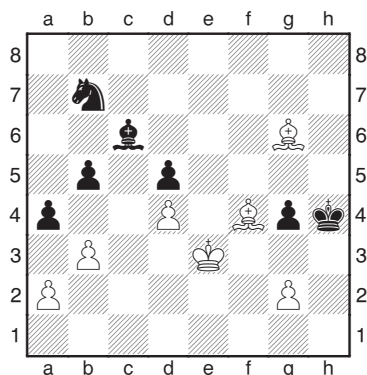
1



White to move

After **1.g4**, White defended against the threat of Rh5, and at the same time forced the opponent to give up the exchange, as after **1...Rf7 2.Bg5 Qe8 3.Bf6**, there was no defense against 4.Ng5.

2

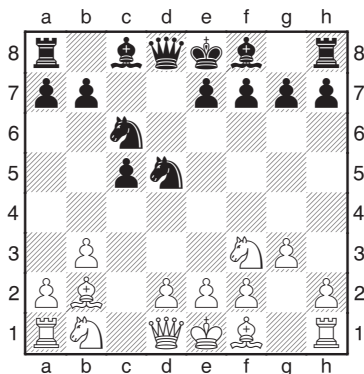


White to move

By playing **1.g3+ Kh3 2.Bc7**, White excludes the knight on b7 from play, and then White plays as if he was a piece up.

□ **Schneider Stefan**
 ■ **Macieja Bartłomiej**
 Lyngby (Denmark) 1996

3

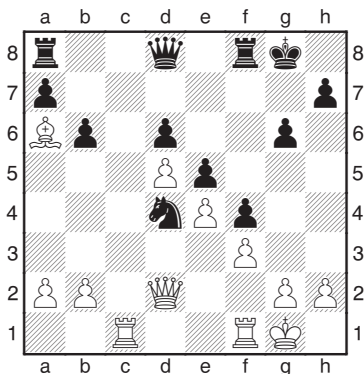


Black to move

After **1...f6 2.Nc3 e5**, Black closed the way of the bishop on b2, to develop which White had lost 2 tempos.

□ **Rudenko Jerzy**
 ■ **Sapis Witalis**
 Czestochowa (Poland) 1980

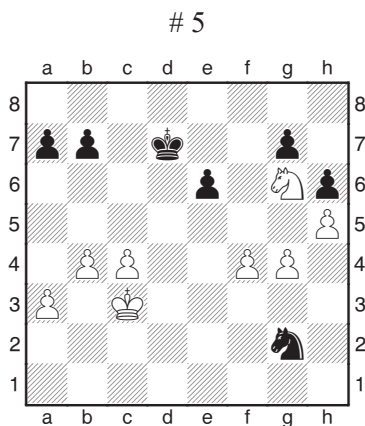
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Black to move

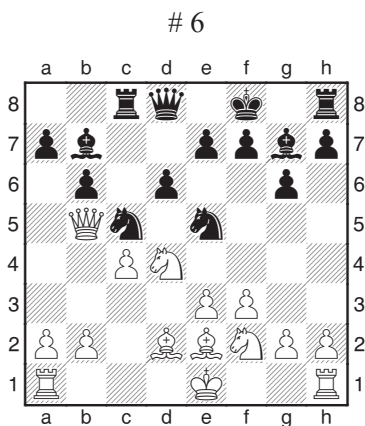
By playing **1...b5**, Black cuts off the diagonal f1-a6 for the white bishop, and due to the threat of **2...Qb6** wins him.

□ Macieja Bartłomiej
 ■ Pozdniakov Sergei (6/6)
 Saint Petersburg (Russia) 1996



After **1.Kd2**, there is no way to escape for the black knight, so White wins him.

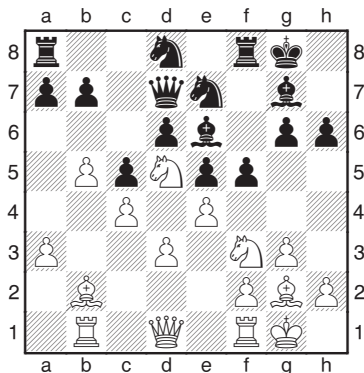
□ Włodarski
 ■ Sapis Witalis
 Czestochowa (Poland) 1981



By playing **1...a5**, Black limits the possibilities of white queen's retreat from a too active position. In order not to lose her, White is forced to give up material.

□ Widera Jan
 ■ Macieja Bartłomiej (1/5)
 Koszalin (Poland) 1997

7

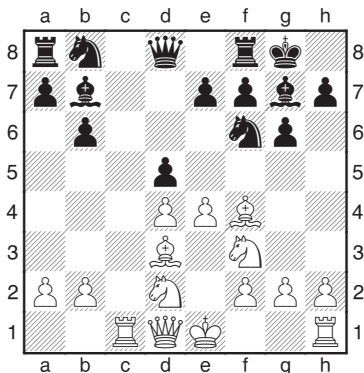


Black to move

By playing **1...f4**, we are gaining space on the kingside and preparing the advance of the „g” pawn.

□ Sapis Witalis
 ■ Ostrowski Leszek
 Cracow (Poland) 1985

8

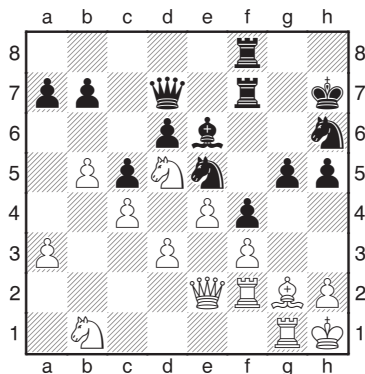


White to move

The move **1.e5** closes both black bishops. Moreover, the knight has to leave the f6 square, weakening the kingside. It allows White to begin an immediate attack there.

□ Widera Jan
 ■ Macieja Bartłomiej (5/5)
 Koszalin (Poland) 1997

9

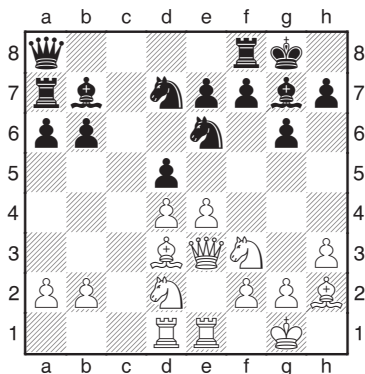


Black to move

By playing **1...g4**, we are creating the threat of the further advance of the „g” and „h” pawns.

□ Sapis Witalis
 ■ Sendera Jarosław
 Szczecin (Poland) 1986

10

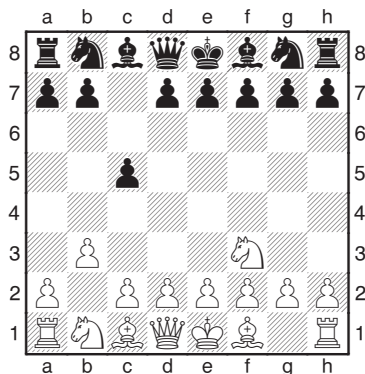


White to move

After **1.e5**, white pawns d4 and e5 restrict the range of activity of the bishop on g7, while the pawn on d5 restricts the bishop on b7. Winning the „c” file will not matter at all, as all important squares on the file are controlled by white pawns and pieces. Generally, Black cannot push back the attack on the king-side, as he doesn't have enough space and pieces there. The plan of f4-f5 and possible g4, if Black moves the pawn to e6, is practically unstoppable.

□ Cooper Thomas
 ■ Maciej Bartłomiej (1/4)
 Reno (USA) 1999

11

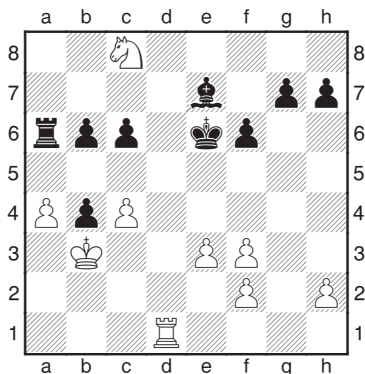


Black to move

White plans to develop his bishop to b2. Therefore, Black places an obstacle on the way: **1...d6 2.Bb2 e5.**

□ Ferenc Jozef
 ■ Sapis Witalis
 Slupsk (Poland) 1991

12

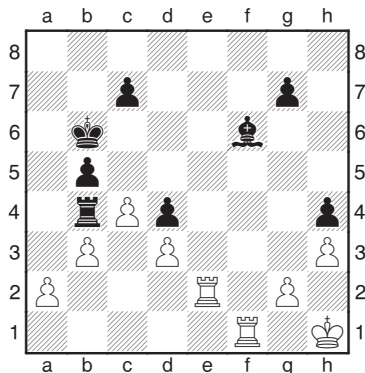


Black to move

By playing **1...Bc5**, we are restricting the knight. Even though it will not be possible to win him immediately, the rook will have to protect him all the time, what will restrain it from other options.

□ Macieja Bartłomiej
 ■ Scholz Franz-Peter
 Saint Vincent (Italy) 2000

13

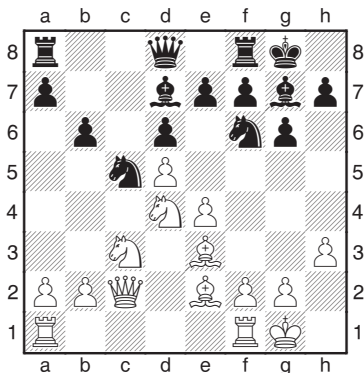


White to move

The easiest way to convert the edge is to take advantage of a badly placed rook on b4. After **1.c5+ Kxc5 2.Rc2+ Kd6 3.Rb1**, there is no defense against a3.

□ Sapis Witalis
 ■ Gozdecki (1/2)
 Lebork (Poland) 1991

14

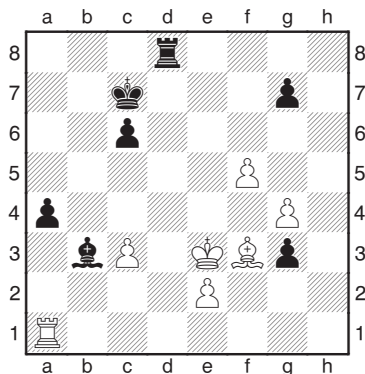


White to move

After **1.b4**, we are pushing back the actively placed knight to a terrible position on b7.

□ Pelletier Yannick
 ■ Maciej Bartłomiej
 Stepanakert/Khankendi 2004

15

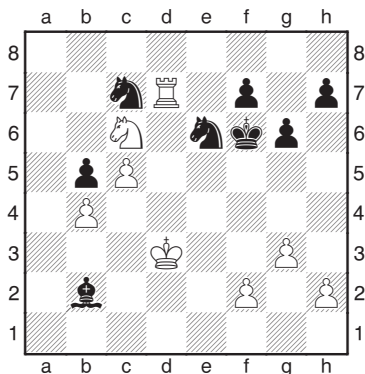


Black to move

By playing **1...Rd1**, using the threat of the trade, we are forcing white rook to move to a3, as after **2.Rxd1 Bxd1 3.Kd2 a3 4.Kc1** Black would have played **4...Bxe2**.

□ Sapis Witalis
 ■ Zapolskis Atanas
 Legnica (Poland) 1992

16

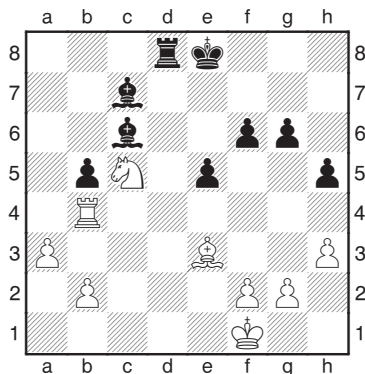


White to move

By playing **1.Kc2 Ba1 2.Rd1 Be5 3.f4**, we are winning the bishop, as it appears that he doesn't have enough space to maneuver. Another possibility was **1...Ba3 2.Kb3 Bc1 3.Nd4 Nxd4 4.Rxd4 Ke7 5.f4 Ne6 6.Re4 f5 7.Re1 Bd2 8.Re2 Bc1 9.Kc3**, followed by **10.Re1**.

□ Lagowski Patryk
 ■ Maciej Bartłomiej
 Warsaw (Poland) 2004

17

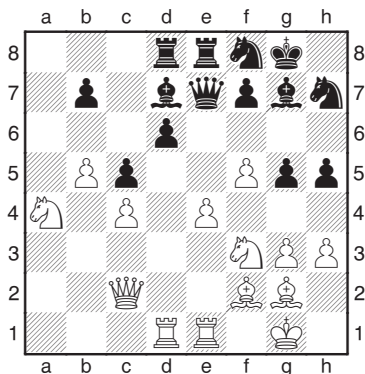


Black to move

After **1...Ba5**, white rook doesn't have a good square to retreat, as after **2.Rb3 Bd5** the exchange is lost. The other retreat, **2.Rh4**, loses a pawn after **2...Rd1+ 3.Ke2 Re1+ 4.Kd3 Bxg2**.

□ Sapis Witalis
 ■ Jaracz Pawel (5/5)
 Soczewka (Poland) 1992

18

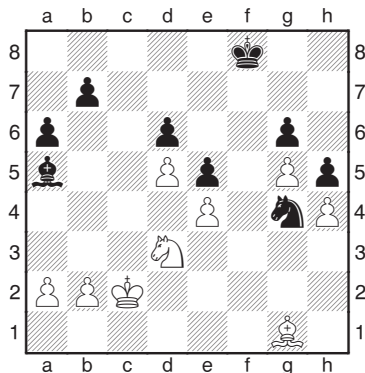


White to move

After **1.Nb6**, black pieces are so squeezed that with the chessboard full of pieces there is the threat of winning the queen by d5.

□ Naiditsch Arkadij
 ■ Macieja Bartłomiej
 Kusadasi (Turkey) 2006

19



White to move

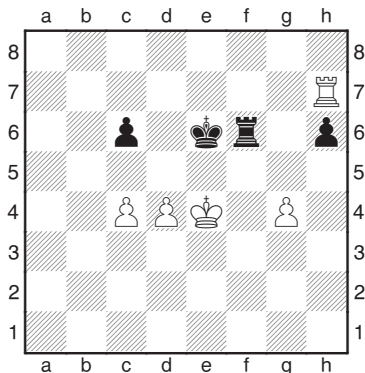
By playing **1.b4**, White restricts the possibilities of black bishop. As black knight cannot make a move, the winning plan for White is:

- to trade pawns “a” and “b”,
- to trade the knight for black bishop.

Black will be then in zugzwang, and will be forced to give away the pawn on d6.

□ Sapis Witalis
 ■ Daurelle Herve
 Legnica (Poland) 1993

20



White to move

After **1.Rg7**, we are putting our opponent in zugzwang, and he has to give away one of the pawns. After a rook’s move – the pawn on h6, after **1...Kd6 2.c5+ Ke6 3.Rc7** – the pawn on c6.

Sapis Witalis – Koziel Ryszard [C03]

Czestochowa (Poland) 1980

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 Be7 4.Ngf3 Nf6 5.Bd3 c5 6.exd5 exd5 7.dxc5 0–0
8.0–0 Bxc5 9.Nb3 Bb6 10.Nfd4 Nc6 11.c3 Nxd4 12.Nxd4 Bxd4 13.cxd4 h6
14.Qb3 b6 15.Bf4 Be6 16.Rac1 Rc8 17.Rxc8 Bxc8 18.Re1 Re8 19.Rxe8+
Qxe8 20.Be5 Qc6 21.Qc2 Qxc2 22.Bxc2 Nd7 23.Bd6 b5 24.b3 f6 25.Bg6
Nf8 26.Bd3 Bd7 27.Bb8 a6 28.f3 Ne6 29.Ba7 Kf7 30.Kf2 Nf4 31.Bc2 g6
32.Bb8 Ne6 33.Ke3 f5 34.Bd6 Nd8 35.h4 Ke6 36.Bf8 Nf7 37.Bd3 Kf6
38.Kd2 g5 39.hxg5+ hxg5 40.Kc3 a5 41.Bc5 Nd8 42.Bb6 Nb7 43.Bc7 g4
44.fxg4 fxg4 45.Kd2 Bc6 46.Ke3 Kg5 47.Bf4+ Kh4 48.Bg6 a4 **49.g3+ Kh3**
50.Bc7 axb3 51.axb3 b4 52.Kf4 Bb5 53.Bf5 Be2 54.Bc8 Ba6 55.Bxg4+
Kg2 56.Bf3+ Kf2 57.Bxd5 Ke2 58.g4 Kd3 59.Ke5 Kc3 60.g5 Bd3 61.Bxb7
Kxb3 62.Bd6 Kc3 63.Be4 Bc4 64.d5 b3 65.Ba3 b2 66.g6 Ba2 67.Bxb2+
Kxb2 68.g7 Bxd5 69.Bxd5 1–0

Rudenko Jerzy – Sapis Witalis [A31]

Czestochowa (Poland) 1980

1.c4 c5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 b6 5.Nc3 Bb7 6.Bf4 d6 7.Bg3 g6 8.f3
Bg7 9.e4 0–0 10.Be2 Nh5 11.Bf2 Nf4 12.Bf1 Nc6 13.Nd5 Nxd4 14.Bxd4
Bxd4 15.Qxd4 e5 16.Qd2 Ne6 17.Bd3 Bxd5 18.cxd5 Nd4 19.0–0 f5 20.Rac1
f4 21.Ba6 **b5 22.Rfd1 Qb6 23.Qxd4 exd4 24.Rc6 Qa5 25.a3 Rab8 26.Rdc1**
Rb6 27.Bc8 Qd2 28.Be6+ Kh8 29.R6c2 Qe3+ 30.Kh1 d3 31.Rc8 Rxc8
32.Rxc8+ Kg7 33.h4 Qe1+ 0–1

Wlodarski – Sapis Witalis [A31]

Czestochowa (Poland) 1981

1.c4 c5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 b6 5.Nc3 Bb7 6.Bf4 d6 7.Bd2 g6 8.f3
Bg7 9.Qc2 Nbd7 10.e3 Ne5 11.Be2 Nfd7 12.Nd1 Rc8 13.Qb3 Nc5 14.Qb5+
Kf8 15.Nf2 **a5 16.Bxa5 bxa5 17.b4 Ba6 18.Qxa5 Qxa5 19.bxa5 Bxc4**
20.Rb1 Bxe2 21.Kxe2 Nc4 22.Nc6 Bf6 23.Rhc1 Rxc6 24.Rxc4 Ra6 25.Rb5
Kg7 26.Nd3 Nxd3 27.Kxd3 Rha8 28.Ra4 Rc8 29.Rb6 Ra7 30.a6 Rc3+
31.Kd2 Rcc7 32.Kd3 d5 33.a3 e6 34.e4 dxe4+ 35.fxe4 Bd8 36.Rd6 Be7
37.Rb6 Bc5 38.Rb5 Bg1 39.h3 Rc6 40.Rb1 Bh2 41.Rb7 Raxa6 42.Ra7
Rd6+ 43.Ke2 Rac6 44.Rb7 Rc2+ 45.Ke3 Bg1+ 46.Kf4 Rf2+ 47.Ke5 Bh2+
48.g3 Bxg3# 0–1

Sapis Witalis – Ostrowski Leszek [A48]

Cracow (Poland) 1985

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 c5 3.c3 b6 4.Bf4 g6 5.Nbd2 Bg7 6.e4 cxd4 7.cxd4 0–0 8.Rc1 Bb7 9.Bd3 d5 **10.e5 Ne8 11.h4 Nc7 12.h5 Ne6 13.Be3 Nc6 14.hxg6 fxg6 15.Rc3 Nf4 16.Bxf4 Rxf4 17.Nb3 e6 18.Qc1 Rg4 19.Rxc6 Qf8 20.Rc7 Rxc7 21.Nbd2 Rc8 22.Bf1 Rg4 23.Bh3 Rxc7 24.Qxc7 Re4+ 25.Nxe4 Qxf3 26.Bxe6+ Kh8 27.Rxh7+ 1–0**

Sapis Witalis – Sendera Jaroslaw [A48]

Szczecin (Poland) 1986

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.Bf4 Bg7 4.e3 d6 5.h3 0–0 6.Bc4 b6 7.0–0 Bb7 8.Nbd2 c5 9.c3 Nbd7 10.Bh2 a6 11.Qe2 Ra7 12.Bd3 Qa8 13.e4 Ne8 14.Rfe1 Nc7 15.Rad1 cxd4 16.cxd4 Ne6 17.Qe3 d5 **18.e5 Rc8 19.Nh4 Nd8 20.f4 f6 21.e6 Nf8 22.f5 Bc6 23.fxg6 hxg6 24.Nxg6 Bb5 25.Bf5 Nxg6 26.Bxg6 Rc6 27.Bf5 Qc8 28.Bf4 Ba4 29.Nb3 1–0**

Ferenc Jozef – Sapis Witalis [D16]

Slupsk (Poland) 1991

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 c6 3.d4 d5 4.Nc3 dxc4 5.a4 Bg4 6.e3 e5 7.dxe5 Qxd1+ 8.Kxd1 Nfd7 9.Bxc4 Nxe5 10.Be2 Nxf3 11.gxf3 Be6 12.Kc2 Nd7 13.b3 Nc5 14.Bc4 Bxc4 15.bxc4 a5 16.Ne4 Na6 17.Bb2 Nb4+ 18.Kb3 f6 19.Rad1 Be7 20.Rhg1 Kf7 21.Bd4 Rhd8 22.Bb6 Rxd1 23.Rxd1 Ra6 24.Bc5 b6 25.Nd6+ Ke6 26.Bxb4 axb4 27.Nc8 **Bc5 28.Rd8 g5 29.Re8+ Kd7 30.Rh8 Kc7 31.Rg8 h5 32.h3 f5 33.e4 fxe4 34.fxe4 g4 35.hxg4 hxg4 36.e5 Ra8 37.Ne7 Rxc8 38.Nxg8 Bxf2 39.e6 g3 40.Nf6 g2 41.e7 g1Q 42.e8Q Qb1# 0–1**

Sapis Witalis – Jaracz Pawel [E68] (5)

Soczewka (Poland) 1992

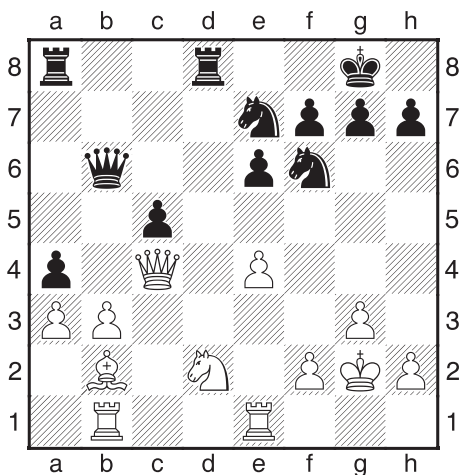
1.d4 g6 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.g3 Bg7 4.Bg2 0–0 5.0–0 d6 6.c4 Nbd7 7.Nc3 e5 8.b3 Re8 9.Qc2 c6 10.Rd1 Qe7 11.e4 exd4 12.Nxd4 Nc5 13.f3 a5 14.Be3 Nfd7 15.Bf2 *(Prophylaxis)* Ne5 16.h3 *(Prophylaxis)* h5 17.f4 Ned7 18.Re1 Nf8 19.Rad1 Bd7 20.a3 Rad8 21.b4 axb4 22.axb4 Nce6 23.Nf3 *(Trading)* Nh7 24.Na4 *(Improvement)* c5 25.b5 g5 26.f5 Nef8 **27.Nb6 f6 28.Qd2 Qf7 29.Qd5 g4 30.hxg4 hxg4 31.Qxf7+ Kxf7 32.Nh2 Ke7 33.Nd5+ Kf7 34.Nc7 Bc8 35.Nxe8 Kxe8 36.Nxg4 Ke7 37.Ne3 Nd7 38.g4 Ne5 39.Bg3 Bh6 40.Nd5+ Kf7 41.Bxe5 fxe5 42.Kf2 Bd7 43.Rh1 Kg7 44.f6+ Nxf6 45.Nxf6 Rf8 46.Rxd6 1–0**

1.2. Weakening the pawn structure

Weaknesses are an important element influencing the evaluation of the position. Pawn weaknesses can constitute a bigger problem than piece weaknesses. Pieces can easier be moved around, while pawns can't move backwards. However, counting that the opponent will create the weaknesses by himself can finish like awaiting Godot. That's why it is good to be a good Samaritan and help the opponent in this task.

Sapis Witalis – Maciej Bartłomiej
Legnica (Poland) 1994

41



White to move

After **1.Bxf6** the pawn structure of black king gets weakened.

It was more precise to include 1.bxa4 and only after
1...Qc6 2.Bxf6 gxf6 3.Qc3 White would reach huge advantage.

1.3. The shuttle

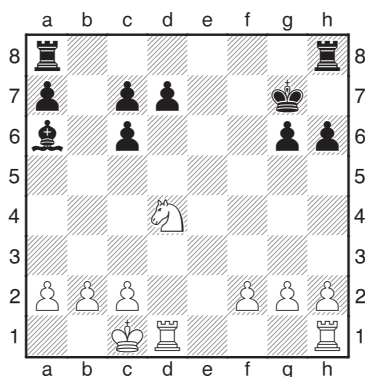
Maneuver that aims to force our opponent to weaken his pawn structure and worsen the position of his pieces. The concept of the maneuver is that a piece moves to a square from which it comes back to the original square after fulfilling the task. The maneuver is similar to “the disappearing move”, with the difference being that the piece doesn’t come back to a new square. In chess composition, the maneuver is often referred to as “the switchback”. Less formally, it is known as “The Hobbit or There and Back Again”.

□ Maciej Bartłomiej

■ Kite Sebastian

Szeged (Hungary) 1994

70



White to move

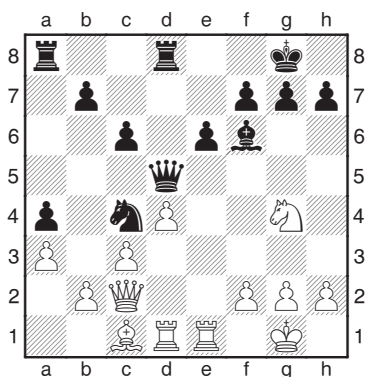
By playing **1.Nf3**, White attacks the d7 pawn and threatens to play Ne5. After **1...d6**, the c6 pawn and the e6 square become weak, so the knight comes back to the original square, heading toward the targets: **2.Nd4**.

□ Hurnik Zbigniew

■ Sapis Witalis

Bierutowice (Poland) 1981

71



Black to move

By playing **1...Bg5**, Black provoked his opponent to play **2.f4** (2.Bxg5 was stronger) and then after **2...Bh4** also to **3.g3**. White has weakened his pawn structure, additionally his major pieces can't attack through the third rank. After fulfilling the task, the bishop come back to the original square: **3...Bf6**.

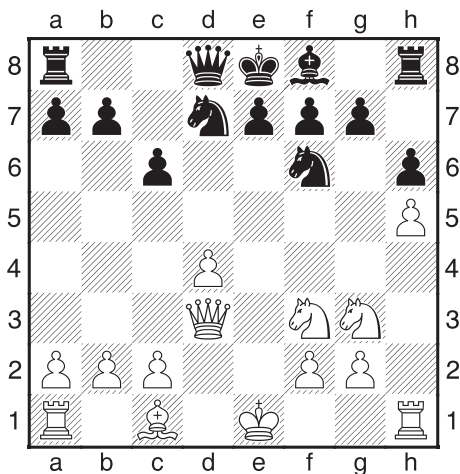
1.4. The disappearing move

The concept of the maneuver is that a piece forces the weakening of the opponents' pawn structure or worsening his placement of pieces, before it lands on the square it really aims for. Usually, the maneuver is performed by a bishop, for example Bc1-g5-e3. The maneuver is similar to “the shuttle”, with the difference being that the piece doesn't back to the original square.

Macieja Bartłomiej – Sapis Witalis

Lubniewice (Poland) 1994

88



White to move

By playing **1.Bf4**, White provokes **1...Qa5+**, what after **2.Bd2 Qc7** significantly reduces options of Black. After 1.Bd2, Black would have a variety of plans with a short castle available.

Chapter 2

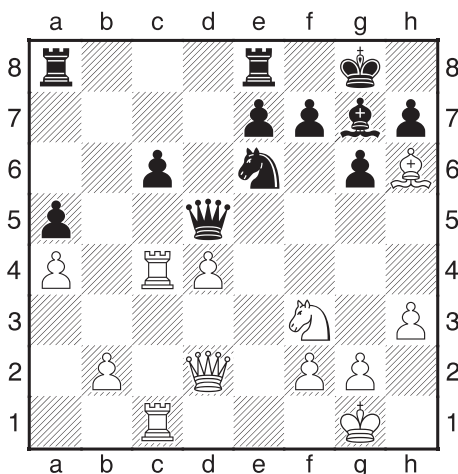
Trading

Trading (exchanging) pieces and/or pawns is one of the key elements in chess. Even though not as spectacular as a combination, sometimes it has a similar effect and may constitute an introduction to tactical actions. The goals of trading include:

- gaining the control over certain square(s) by eliminating their defender,
- simplifying the position when our opponent has more space or disadvantage,
- eliminating our opponent's dangerous piece or his king's defender,
- getting rid of our badly placed piece.

Macieja Bartłomiej – Sapis Witalis (2/2)
Sopot (Poland) 1997

121



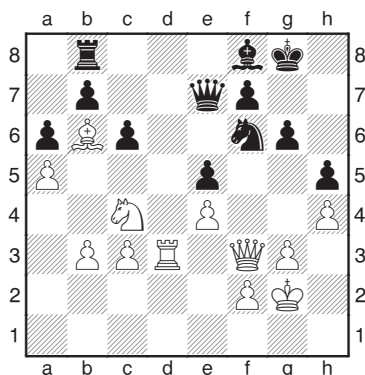
Black to move

It is not always easy to take a decision, whether to trade or not. In the position above, the g7 bishop attacks the d4 pawn and protects the e5 square. On the other hand, white bishop can become an important defender of the d4 pawn and the f4 square. Black decided to play **1...Bh8**, but **1...Bxh6** would also lead to an equal position.

Chapter 3

Problems

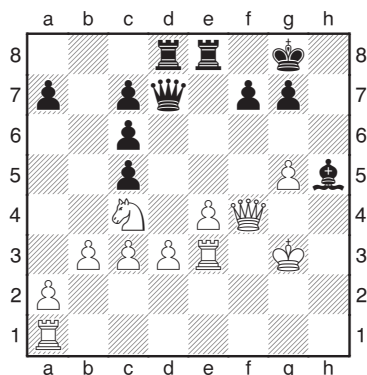
Problem 1



White to move

1. Evaluate the position.
2. Find the best continuation.

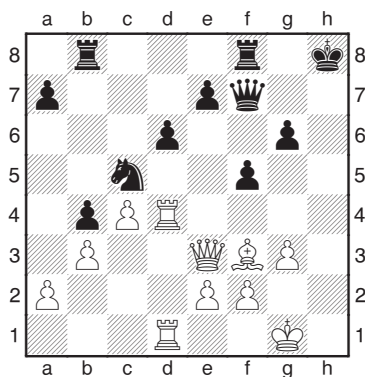
Problem 3



White to move

1. Evaluate the position.
2. Find the best continuation.

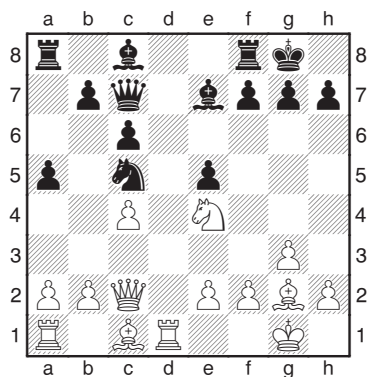
Problem 2



White to move

1. How can White obtain a huge advantage?

Problem 4



Black to move

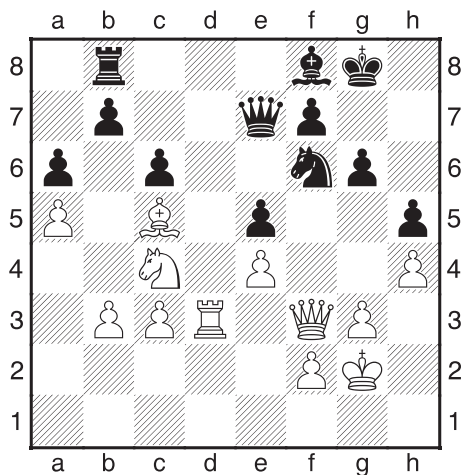
1. Evaluate the position.
2. Find the best continuation.

Chapter 4

Solutions to problems

Problem 1

Maciej Bartłomiej – Petran Peter (3/3)
Senek (Slovakia) 1998

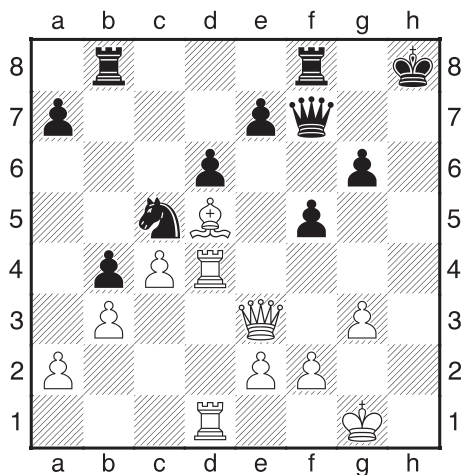


1. The position is better for White, who controls the “d” file and has more active pieces.
2. The continuation **1.Bc5 Qxc5 2.Qxf6** leads to the trade of minor pieces and results in the activation of the white queen, while Black loses the control over the d7 square.

Trading

Problem 2

Sapis Witalis – Blaszczyk Zygmunt (2/2)
Poland 2005

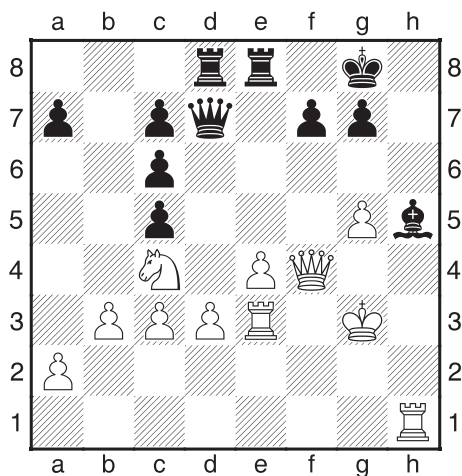


1. White wins by playing **1.Bd5**, forcing the weakening of the opponent's pawn structure with **1...e6**. After the bishop's return, the d6 pawn is lost and the position collapses: **2.Bf3 Kg7 3.Rxd6 Rbc8 4.Bc6**. The problem has the alternative solution: **1.Rh4+ Kg7 2.Qh6+ Kf6 3.Rf4**, which is tactical and requires the calculation of long lines. For a chess engine, **1.Rh4+** is stronger, for a man, definitely **1.Bd5**.

The shuttle

Problem 3

Macieja Bartłomiej – Khavsky Sergey
Saint Petersburg (Russia) 1996



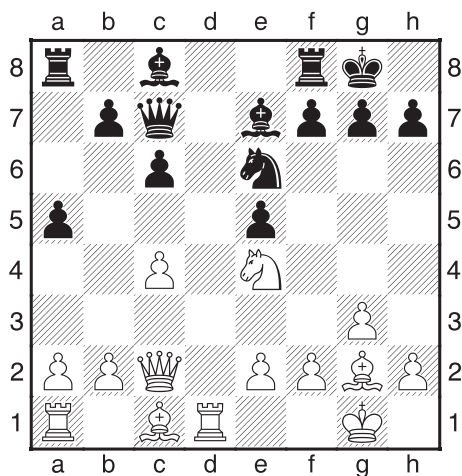
1. White has a better position due to the weaknesses of the “c” pawns and a bad position of the opponent’s bishop.

2. By playing **1.Rh1**, White forces **1...g6**, what weakens the dark squares and cuts off the bishop from defending the f7 pawn. After **2.Rf1**, the rook takes control over the “f” file.

The disappearing move

Problem 4

Fiodorov Mikhail – Sapis Witalis (1/3)
Legnica (Poland) 1996



1. White has conquered the only open file, but he doesn't have much benefits out of it, as Black controls all important squares along it. White is also better developed. The key factor of the position is the center, though. Black has already the pawn on e5, which is more important than the pawn on c4. Black has also the possibility of playing f5 to increase the advantage in the center. We can therefore conclude that Black is better.

2. Black should play **1...Ne6**, to force (with the threat of Nd4) the weakening of the opponent's light squares (especially the d1-h5 diagonal) with **2.e3**. The alternative way of defending the d4 square, 2.Be3, leads to even bigger problems after 2...f5 3.Nc3 f4.

Trading



photo: Przemysław Kądziołka

Bartłomiej Macieja

Grandmaster since 1999

Coach:

2018–2019 back-to-back US National Collegiate
Champion with University of TX Rio Grande Valley

Player:

- Highest FIDE rating: 2653 in 2004
- World's Top 40 by rating in 2004
- Top 16 at WC in New Delhi 2000
- Champion of Europe, Batumi 2002
- Champion of Poland 2004 & 2009
- Participated in 7 Olympiads
- Winner or co-winner of 32 international tournaments

Activist:

- Polish Council of Players President
- ACP General Secretary
- Member of FIDE Commissions:
 - Rules and Tournament Regulations
 - World Chess Championship
 - Qualification
 - Group of Rating Experts



photo: Fotos Słupsk

Witalis Sapis

International Master since 1990

Coach:

With the National Team of Poland for Blind and
Visually Impaired won:

- European Team Championship for Blind and
Visually Impaired 2016
- World Team Championship for Disabled 2017

Player:

- Highest FIDE rating: 2470 in 1996
- Top 10 of Poland
- Champion of Poland U-17 in 1979

Arbiter:

- International Arbiter since 2005
- Chief Arbiter of some 80 tournaments of the
Polish Championship level and international
tournaments

Activist of Polish Chess Federation:

- Member of Youth Commission
- Member of Arbiters' Council
- Chairman of Sports Commission

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9

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