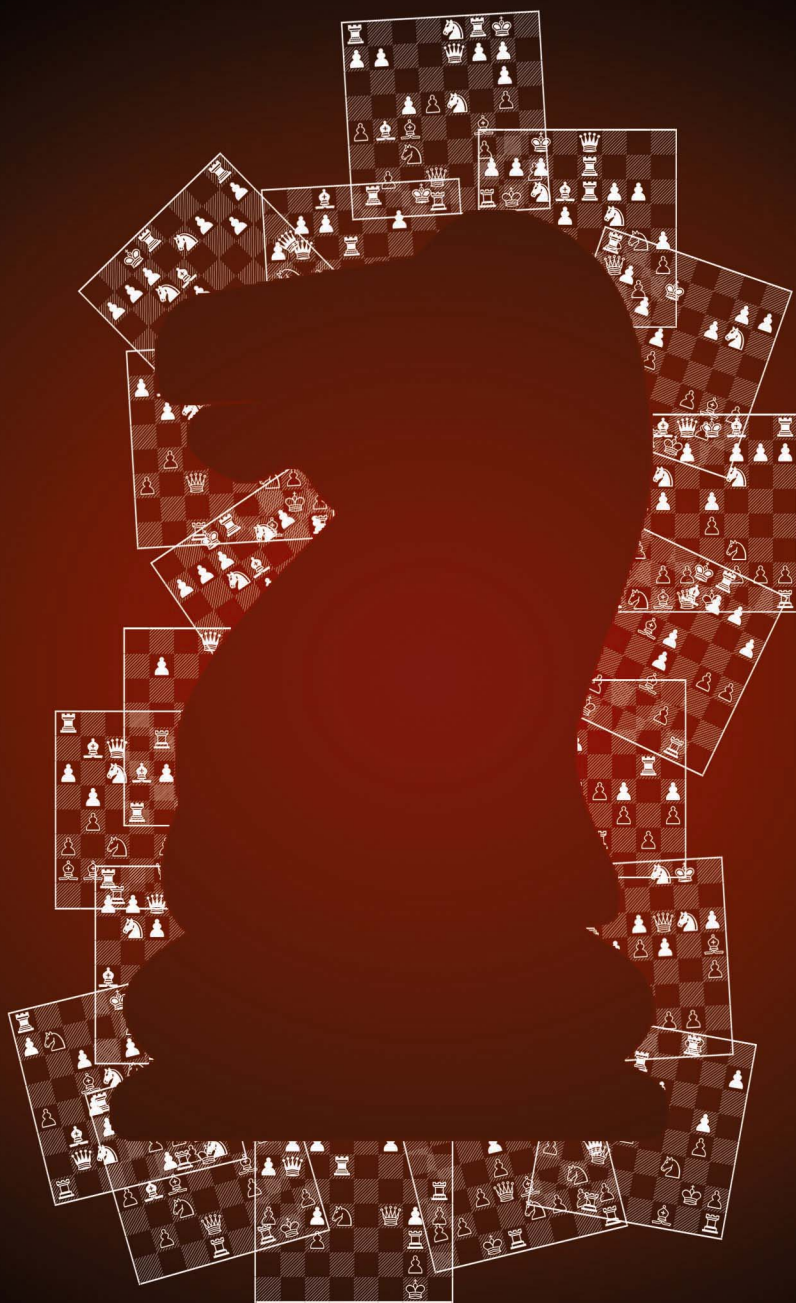


CHESS LESSONS

SOLVING PROBLEMS & AVOIDING MISTAKES



MARK DVORETSKY

Chess Lessons

Solving Problems & Avoiding Mistakes

Mark Dvoretsky



**2017
Russell Enterprises, Inc.
Milford, CT USA**

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Solving Problems & Avoiding Mistakes
by Mark Dvoretzky

ISBN: 978-1-941270-70-7 (print)
ISBN: 978-1-941270-71-4 (eBook)

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Published by:
Russell Enterprises, Inc.
P.O. Box 3131
Milford, CT 06460 USA

<http://www.russell-enterprises.com>
info@russell-enterprises.com

Cover design by Janel Lowrance
Translated from the Russian by Boris Gleyzerov
Special thanks to Artur Yusupov

Printed in the United States of America



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Signs & Symbols

!	a strong move
!!	a brilliant or unobvious move
?	a weak move, an error
??	a grave error
!?	a move worth consideration
?!	a dubious move
=	an equal position
±	White stands slightly better
±	White has a clear advantage
+−	White has a winning position
∓	Black stands slightly better
∓	Black has a clear advantage
−+	Black has a winning position
∞	an unclear position
#	mate
∞	with compensation
↔	with counterplay
(D)	See the next diagram
W	White to move
B	Black to move
m	match
wm	match for the world championship
zt	zonal tournament
izt	interzonal tournament
ct	candidates' tournament
cm	candidates' match
ch	championship
ch(1)	championship, 1st league
wch	world championship
ech	European championship
f	final
sf	semifinal
qf	quarterfinal
ol	Olympiad
tt	team tournament
jr	junior competitions
corr	correspondence game
simul	simultaneous display

Foreword

The book you have just opened is a collection of thoroughly annotated games. Some of them are far from being exemplary, but every one of them, without exception, is rather interesting and instructive. Their prehistory follows.

Every day a great number of fascinating games is played all over the world; to examine them all is certainly impossible. If it is not a question of searching for material on an opening variation that is of interest or of getting acquainted with the creative work of future opponents, it makes sense for a coach to limit himself only to games and fragments that have already been analyzed by annotators whom he respects. This approach enables him to save a great amount of time. Giving a cursory glance to comments, he can often determine right away if there is any useful information for him there, be it a convincing illustration of some important ideas, or, on the contrary, an edifying exception from a general rule, or, perhaps, an unusual combination or a fragment that may serve as a successful training exercise.

A given example is put to a severe test, as it pays to use high-quality material only. If a game under examination passes it successfully, it gets registered in some form or other and your own comments are noted.

Almost inevitably, during training work with students, new subtleties turn up, so you have to refine and revise your earlier conclusions and correct your own comments. This process keeps repeating.

Occasionally, the reasons for changes are the readers' feedback on articles in which I publish my analysis; or they may be the results of other authors' publications in which I happen to find my examples with fresh comments. Finally, when you do a computer check of your own earlier analysis, you always find out some details you previously missed, as the quality of both computers and analytical engines constantly improves.

Then somewhere along the line I start to feel that I have hoarded a fairly large amount of interesting and informative analysis that I would like to introduce to a wide range of chessplayers by writing a book about the results of my investigations.

It is this desire that was the main stimulus for publishing the four volumes of the *School of Chess Excellence* series that I consider to be one single large book (even the numbering of the chapters is consecutive for the whole series). It was my first book. Analytical programs were rather weak then, so all the analysis was carried out without computer assistance. The engine had already been employed during preparation of the reprints, so I had to make many corrections; however, those were usually not fundamental and did not change either concept of the book or the character of the tests.

More than ten years later, I decided to prepare a new portion of my teaching material for publication and wrote *Dvoretsky's Analytical Manual*. This book certainly could not have been written without computer assistance, so it is understandable that the comments were much more voluminous and informative

than before. Undoubtedly, this is my most complex book, so I feared that it would be in demand only among a narrow circle of elite chessplayers. However, I was pleasantly surprised and greatly delighted to find on Amazon only positive reviews with highest possible ratings sent by average chess amateurs.

More years have passed, and now the time has come for another analytical book. You are holding it in your hands now. In its conception and structure, this book is similar to the previous one, so they share some common features that my other books lack. I mean above all the complexity indication system for exercises that I suggest: the more asterisks you see, the more complicated is an exercise. Opinions of opponents who have played the examined games are italicized, as is every quotation.

The basic aim of delving into complex analysis was to obtain a most exact and objective pattern of the struggle, to evaluate the pros and cons of opponents' decisions as accurately as possible. Sometimes the result turned out to be a pile of purely "computer-like" variations that made it next to impossible to figure out the inner logic of a position. In such cases, I would drop variations, leaving only conclusions which resulted from them. Still, I have included most analysis into the book, although I understand perfectly well that this abundance of complicated variations is bound to make comprehension difficult for readers (not that you have to explore every one of them; you may limit yourselves to the ones that are most interesting for you).

The main reason for that is that every statement in the text should be proven; verbal evaluations alone are insufficient in our times. Both readers who study books and my students during training sessions often disagree with me and suggest their own versions. Only objective analysis will help us to determine who is right – and this analysis turns out to be rather extensive sometimes.

Second, while immersing myself in variations, I often stumble onto some most interesting situations, both instructive and/or really striking and beautiful. It would be a great shame to omit such moments, even if they are only indirectly connected with an original position from which analysis started.

Another reason for the abundance of analysis was my desire to give an objective evaluation of the earlier annotations: either to corroborate them, to improve on them or, in some cases, to refute them. My wish is that, while they are getting acquainted with already well-known games, neither practicing players nor authors of new books on chess would become influenced by errors committed earlier, but would see a more accurate pattern of struggle. An ideal is certainly unattainable here, but the least we can do is to try to approach it as best we can.

So far I have been talking mostly about analysis, but analysis is certainly not an end in itself, but only a tool that is necessary for any author. While working on the games that I have included in this book, I have sought to uncover their core ideas which are important for a chessplayer's improvement and demonstrate them as vividly as possible. Those may include both approaches to playing out certain typical situations and mastering various positional and tactical ideas, as well as improving technical skills and training an ability to search for decisions and to make them on the basis of the precise calculation of variations.

In purely educational monographs, an author recounts his planned subjects consistently; however, this is not possible in collections of complex games (in particular, in the collections of great players' selected games). On the other hand, in such collections, there is no need to proceed consistently from the first page to the last. That goes for this book too: a reader may choose to study only those parts that are most interesting to him, for example, those devoted to positional play, or to attack, or defense... He may even read only certain short chapters that illustrate, say, positional material sacrifice or disastrous consequences of being overcautious in the games against stronger opponents. One can also concentrate on purely practical training by solving exercises in diagrams where you will see a question mark next to an indication of the side to move. The last two parts of the book are devoted to the specific forms of training that I routinely use during my lessons: analysis of games in the form of solving a string of consecutive tasks and playing out of certain specially selected positions.

I hope that this book will be of help not only to high-ranking players at whom it is primarily aimed, but also to every reader who is serious about self-improvement and wishes to understand problems that grandmasters and masters face over the board and the ways they solve them; what are the reasons for errors they sometimes commit and how to avoid those mistakes.

Mark Dvoretzky

31. ♖xf6! ♜xf6 32. ♖g4+ and 33. ♖xc8+-.

28...e7xf6 29. ♖f7xf6+ ♜h8-h7 30. ♖b1xb7+

An unclear endgame that arises after 30. ♖f7+ ♜h6 31. ♖b3 ♜f8! 32. ♖xd3 ♜xf7 33. ♖xf7 ♖e5 34. ♖h3+ ♜g5 35. ♖f1±, certainly does not look tempting to White.

30...♜e8-e7 31. ♖b7xe7+ ♖c6xe7 32. ♖f6xe7+ ♜h7-h6 33. ♖e7-h4+ ♜h6-g7 34. ♖h4-f6+ ♜g7-h6 35. ♖f6-f4+ ♜h6-g7?!

Considerably more stubborn is 35...♜h7!, and if 36.h4, then 36...♖g8± (or even 36...♖c7 37.h5 ♖d4!).

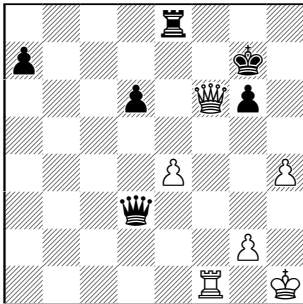
36.h2-h4!

37.h5 is threatened.

36...♖c8-e8

The threat is parried: 37.h5? ♖xe4=.

37. ♖f4-f6+



B?

37...♜g7-h7?

The final inaccuracy that greatly alleviates White's task. Black should have played 37...♜h6!. I see no direct way to the win here. However, after 38. ♖f4+ (but not 38. ♖f5? with the threat of 39. ♖h5+!, because of 38...♖g3!) 38...♜g7 39. ♖f7+ ♜h6 40. ♖f4±, Black faces a very difficult and most likely futile defense.

38. ♖f1-c1!

The rook breaks through to the seventh rank with tempo. The struggle is over!

38...♖d3-e3 39. ♖c1-c7+ ♜h7-h6 40. ♖f6-g7+ ♜h6-h5 41. ♖g7-h7+ ♜e3-h6 Or 41...♜g4 42. ♖xg6+. **42.g2-g4+** Black resigned. In spite of certain inaccuracies, this is a brilliant game in which Sznapiak's play was very strong.

Attacking with Energy and Precision

More than four decades ago, I was playing in the USSR Championship in Yerevan. The title went to Tigran Petrosian, and one of the highlights of not only the championship, but of the whole year was a captivating duel between Petrosian and Oleg Romanishin – the only game that the future champion lost.

This game has been annotated in many publications; I will list only those that are known to me and which were used during the preparation of my material:

(1) *Chess Informant*, Vol. 20, 1976. The comments by Romanishin and Mikhalchishin were of rather high quality (of course, if we take into account the absence of analytical engines in those times); the annotators covered many important points correctly.

(2) Alexander Volchok's *Strateguiya Ataki (Offensive Strategy)*, 1981. As far as I remember, it was this book that prompted me to examine the game and to prepare my own comments.

(3) Larry Christiansen's *Storming the Barricades*, 2000.

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(4) Sergei Shipov's *Yozh (The Hedgehog)*, 2004.

(5) Garry Kasparov's *Revolution in the 70s*, 2007

(6) Vladimir Tukmakov's *Shakhmaty. Klyuch k Pobede' (Chess: The Key to Victory)*, 2012

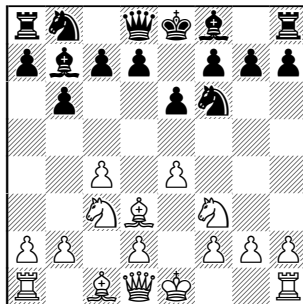
During my training sessions I preferred to demonstrate examples in which, although other players' comments are used, my part in analysis is substantial and changes in many cases the picture of the game.. As for the game Romanishin-Petrosian, its basic evaluations seemed unshakable for a long time, although, while exploring the key moments of the struggle, Vadim Zviagintsev and I had managed to discover something interesting. This is why, until fairly recently, I rarely showed that game to my students, and never ever dreamed about publishing my own version of comments.

But in February of 2015 I suggested that we discuss it during the Russian National team's training session. After the studies were over, the team coach, grandmaster Alexander Motylev, checked some of the problems we had discussed with the help of a computer. During the processing of the variations that he had found, I have also been able to add something, so now I think it is possible to familiarize the readers with my present interpretation of the game.

Romanishin – Petrosian

USSR ch Yerevan 1975

1.c2-c4 ♖g8-f6 2.♗b1-c3 e7-e6 3.♗g1-f3 b7-b6 4.e2-e4 ♜c8-b7 5.♜f1-d3!?



There were many moves made in this position – 5.d3, and 5.e5, and 5.♗e2. But for some reason, nobody had ever thought of making an ugly-looking but quite logical move with bishop (Tukmakov).

At the finish of the same USSR championship, the idea of the Lvov master (Oleg had not yet made grandmaster then) had been picked up by Lev Polugaevsky, who used it against Boris Gulko. Black reacted with 5...d5 6.cd ed 7.e5 ♗fd7, but it is another principled continuation, 5...c5!?, that was to become the main line. On 6.♜c2, there follows 6...♗c6 7.d4 cd 8.♗xd4 ♗xd4 9.♗xd4 ♜c5, and if 6.0-0, then either 6...d6 7.♜c2 e5 or 6...♗c6. Admittedly, in the latter case, Black has to reckon with 7.e5 ♗g4 8.♜e4, leading to great complications. White can obtain the same position with a transposition of moves: 6.e5!?, ♗g4 7.0-0 ♗c6 8.♜e4.

5...d7-d6

Petrosian's purely chess-related reaction was quite predictable: he had always met opening surprises in a most reserved and solid way (Tukmakov). A former world champion's rejection of more ambitious counters allowed his opponent to carry out his plan of

creating a strong pawn-and-piece center unimpeded.

Should one react to his opponent's opening surprises in a principled fashion? This question has become especially important in recent times, when every novelty is almost certainly checked with a computer. It is quite understandable that no one is eager to determine if his opponent is bluffing, or to search for weaknesses in the latter's home-cooked variations over the board. But on the other hand, **rejection of principled rejoinders often leads to losing the opening initiative, both psychological and purely chess-related.** Of course, there are no ready answers here – every player makes his own decisions at his own risk and peril, in accordance with his own playing style and his perception of a position on the board.

6. ♖d3-c2 c7-c5 7. d2-d4 c5×d4 8. ♗f3×d4

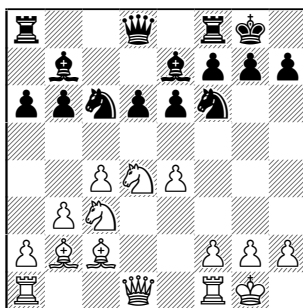
This structure is called “a hedgehog.” The first grandmasters to employ it with Black on a regular basis were Ulf Andersson and Ljubomir Ljubojevic. This game is different from standard hedgehog positions because the bishop is on c2. From this square, it is able to take part in the attack on kingside on occasions, but, on the other side, it does not oppose one of the Black's standard resources, namely the break b6-b5. Will those motifs be significant in the future? It depends mostly on the players' skill in the forthcoming struggle.

8... ♗f8-e7 9. 0-0 0-0 10. b2-b3 ♗b8-c6

The knight's development on d7 is more typical for a hedgehog, but I believe that in this particular

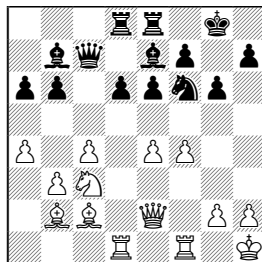
case, Petrosian is right. By exchanging knights, he improves his chances to carry out b6-b5.

11. ♖c1-b2 a7-a6



12. ♖g1-h1

In a later game, Polugaevsky-Petrosian (USSR Team ch, Kislovodsk 1982), White has somewhat changed his offensive scheme: 12. ♖×c6 ♗×c6 13. ♖d3!. Now 13...b5?! is bad because of 14. ♗d5!. Tukmakov recommends 13...♖e8!?, and 14. ♗d5? ed 15. ed ♗b7 16. ♗×f6 ♗×f6 17. ♖×h7+ ♖f8 already does not work. Petrosian preferred 13...g6 14. a4 ♖c7 15. f4 ♗ad8! 16. ♖e2 (16.f5 is pointless because of 16...e! 17. ef d5! – Bagirov) 16...♖fe8 17. ♗ad1 ♗b7 (17...♗d7!?) 18. ♖h1.

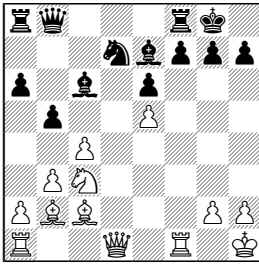


After 18...♗d7, White's advantage (if any) was slight, but Black misplayed: 18...♖c5? allowed the powerful blow 19.e5!, and Polugaevsky quickly won.

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12...♖d8-c7

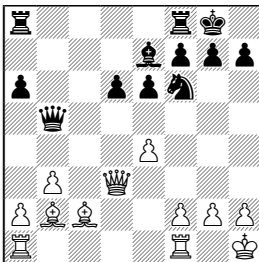
In his game against Polugaevsky during the 1976 Interzonal in Manila, Florin Gheorghiu immediately started active play on the queenside: 12...♖b8 13.f4 b5. His opponent reacted in a very energetic fashion: 14.e5! de 15.♗xc6 ♗xc6 16.fe ♗d7?! (16...♙xe5? 17.♗d5 was bad, but to retreat with the knight to e8 was preferable).



W?
*

17.♗d5! ed 18.cd, and Black's position is difficult.

It is generally thought that the most precise move here is 12...♖d7. In the 12th game of the Candidates' Match Mecking-Polugaevsky (Lucerne 1977) there followed 13.♗xc6 ♗xc6 14.♖d3 b5! (14...g6 15.a4!±) 15.cb (the knight sacrifice 15.♗d5? ed 16.ed?! fails to 16...bc 17.bc ♗a4! 18.♗xf6 ♗xc2-+) 15...♗xb5 (now on 15...ab the move 16.♗d5! is now strong) 16.♗xb5 ♙xb5.



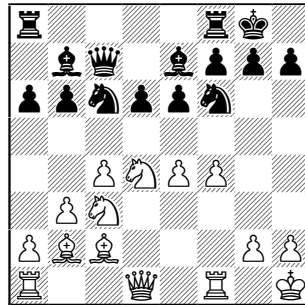
The Brazilian grandmaster chose the modest 17.♖a1±. In Vladimir Bagirov's opinion, stronger is 17.♖d4!?,

intending 18.♗d3. His recommendation was soon tried in the game Smejkal-Petursson, Reykjavik 1978. I would rather play 17.♖h3!?, having in mind not only 18.♗d3, but also 18.f4.

Also worth mentioning is a positional pawn sacrifice, 12...b5 13.cb ♗xd4 14.♙xd4 ab 15.♗xb5 e5 16.♙e3 d5 that was also suggested by Bagirov. White cannot take on e5 with the bishop because of 17...♗g4 followed by 18...♗xe5 and 19...♗f6. However, he can prepare this capture with 17.♙e2! – Black does not have sufficient compensation for his pawn.

I suppose that Petrosian's move is no weaker than any other one; it was later that he had committed a real positional inaccuracy (which, by the way, was not mentioned by the annotators).

13.f2-f4



B?

Now was the right moment for a programmed break on the queenside: 13...b5! 14.cb ♗xd4 (a transposition of moves is possible: 13...♗xd4 14.♙xd4 b5!) 15.♙xd4 ab. Black's position is at least no worse; he continues 16...b4, 16...♙c5 or 16...♗c6 followed by 17...♙b7.

13...♗a8-d8?! 14.♖a1-c1

White has parried the threat of the break and seized the initiative; now it is

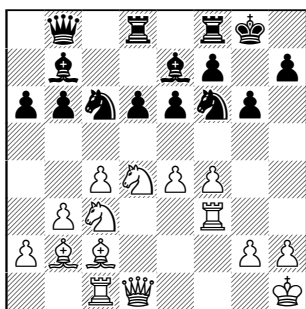
difficult to suggest a constructive plan for his opponent.

14...♖c7-b8?!

Romanishin and Mikhalchishin denounce the queen retreat and recommend 14...♗xd4 15.♖xd4 ♖c5 instead. However, Motylev holds that even then, after 16.♖d3 ♖h5 17.♖g3! ♖g4 18.♖e3!, White's position is preferable.

15.♖f1-f3 g7-g6?!

A natural-looking but not really successful move that allows White to launch a formidable attack. Instead, Sergey Shipov analyzed 15...♗xd4 16.♖xd4 b5 and 15...d5; he came to the conclusion that in both cases White retained better chances.

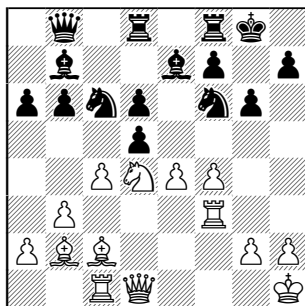


W?

16.♗c3-d5!!

A positional piece sacrifice puts his opponent in a tight spot. At first I had written "a typical piece sacrifice" (we have seen it in some of the above-examined branches), but then it came to me that it became typical only after Romanishin played it. There are other ways of carrying out the attack, for example, 16.f5 ♗e5 17.♖g3, but it appears that the player from Lvov has chosen the method of operation that is most energetic and dangerous for his opponent. Admittedly, White also has to be very accurate now.

16...e6xd5

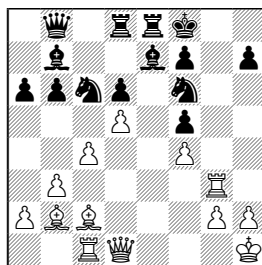


W?

Now Romanishin has to make a first difficult choice.

After the game, he stated that the strongest continuation was the tempting sacrifice of a second piece: **17.♗f5 gf 18.ed**. By the way, giving check with a rook is premature, as after 18.♖g3+ ♖h8 19.ed, the black rook gets to the g-file without loss of time.

The only defense is **18...♖fe8 19.♖g3+ ♖f8**. The continuation 19...♖h8 20.dc ♗xc6 immediately loses to both 21.♗xf5 ♖g8 22.♖h5 ♖g7 23.♖xg7! ♗xh5 24.♖xh7+ and 21.♖d4 followed by 22.♖xf6+!



W?
**

20.♗xf5! Less accurate is 20.dc! ♗xc6 21.♗xf5 ♗e4!? (21...d5!?). Volchok analyzes the position arising after 23...d5 24.♗e5 ♖b7 25.c5!, but, instead of 24...♖b7, Black has an intermediary move 24...dc!

20...♗c8 There is already no escape: after 20...♗e5 21.fe de 22.♖d2

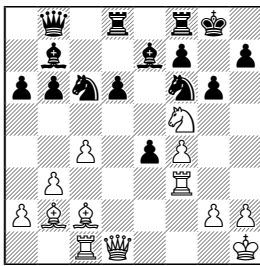
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♙d6 23.♜h6+ ♚e7 24.♞f1, it is impossible to parry White's attack.

21.♙xh7! ♜xh7 22.♙g7+ ♜g8 23.♜h5, and mate is unavoidable (the variation by Romanishin and Mikhalchishin).

While thinking about a sacrifice, it is important to not to go too deeply into calculation of a line that seems the main one to you. First you have to check if your opponent has other opportunities at the very beginning of the variation (the principle of "candidate moves").

As Larry Christiansen points out, Black manages to refute the sacrifice with **17...de!** (instead of 17...gf?).



He continues a short variation by Romanishin and Mikhalchishin, **18.♜xe7+ ♜xe7 19.♙d4**, as follows: **19...d5! 20.♜xf6 d4 21.♞g3 ♜d6-+**. Christiansen also examines another line: 18.♞g3 d5! 19.♜xe7+ ♜xe7 20.♙xf6 dc (20...♜f5; 20...♜d6) 21.♜g4 ♜d6 22.♙e5 ♜d2-+. His analysis was independently repeated in later publications.

It is interesting to note that Volchok, who thought the sacrifice on f5 to be correct, considers, as a reply to 17...de, the move **18.♙xe4!?** that has been somehow overlooked in the other annotators' analyses; his own is not very good, though. 18...gf? is poor: 19.♞g3+ (but not 19.♙xf5? quoted by

Volchok, the quickest refutation for which is 19...♜e5!) 19...♜h8 20.♙xf6+ ♙xf6 21.♜h5 (there is the threat of 22.♞h3) 21...♞g8 22.♜xf5 ♞g6 23.♞xg6 hg 24.♜xf6+ ♜g8 25.♞c3 or 25.♙d5. But 18...♜c7 is quite playable: 19.♙xc6!? ♙xc6, and 20.♞e3? (with the idea of 20...gf? 21.♞g3+ ♜h8 22.♙d4! – Volchok) fails to a simple move, 20...♞fe8!, so White has to give perpetual check: 20.♜h6+ ♜g7 21.♜f5+!. But the main point is that after 18.♙xe4, there is the very strong reply **18...d5!!**, planning to eliminate the daring knight in a more advantageous situation, for example, 19.cd (19.♜xe7+ ♜xe7 20.♙d4 ♞d6-+; 19.♜h6+ ♜g7 20.cd ♜xh6) 19...gf 20.♞g3+ ♜h8 21.♙f3! ♙d6! 22.♜e2! (22.dc? ♜xd1+ 23.♙xd1 ♙xc6-+) 22...♜d4!? or 22...♜b4!? with advantage to Black.

Thus, the sacrifice of the second piece is incorrect. The annotators who have proved this (obviously, by the "method of elimination") unanimously award the text move with an exclamation point – and were wrong! We still have to compare the immediate pawn capture on d5 and the preliminary exchange of knights on c6.

The first choice seems to be more accurate: White queen gets to the central d4-square immediately. However, after a more careful examination, it turns out that it cannot create any serious threats from there and, most likely, would have to be transferred to the kingside. On the contrary, after trading off the knights, the black c6-bishop comes under fire, and White gains a most important tempo for developing his attack.

The strongest continuation is given by Dmitry Jakovenko: **17.♜xc6! ♙xc6 18.ed** (incidentally, it means