

CHESS CALCULATION TRAINING

Volume 1

Middlegames

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

KEY TO SYMBOLS	5
PREFACE	7
CHAPTER 1: WARM UP	9
SOLUTIONS – CHAPTER 1	35
CHAPTER 2: PUNISH BAD COORDINATION!	47
SOLUTIONS – CHAPTER 2	65
CHAPTER 2: FIND THE UNEXPECTED BLOW!	73
SOLUTIONS – CHAPTER 3	85
CHAPTER 4: PLAY THE RIGHT MOVE UNDER PRESSURE!	91
SOLUTIONS – CHAPTER 4	101
CHAPTER 5: A DEVASTATING ATTACKING MOVE!	109
SOLUTIONS – CHAPTER 5	131
CHAPTER 6: FIND THE STUNNING WINNING MOVE!	145
HELP PAGE!	150
SOLUTIONS – CHAPTER 6	151
CHAPTER 7: PLAY THE KILLER POSITIONAL MOVE!	155
SOLUTIONS – CHAPTER 7	165
CHAPTER 8: FIND THE MISSED MOVE!	171
SOLUTIONS – CHAPTER 8	185
CHAPTER 9: EVALUATE THE OPPORTUNITY!	193
SOLUTIONS – CHAPTER 9	201
CHAPTER 10: MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE!	207
SOLUTIONS – CHAPTER 10	215
CHAPTER 11: SPECIAL SECTION	219
SOLUTIONS – CHAPTER 11	231

KEY TO SYMBOLS

!	a good move
?	a weak move
!!	an excellent move
??	a blunder
!?	an interesting move
?!	a dubious move
□	only move
=	equality
∞	unclear position
∞	with compensation for the sacrificed material
±	White stands slightly better
∓	Black stands slightly better
±	White has a serious advantage
∓	Black has a serious advantage
+−	White has a decisive advantage
−+	Black has a decisive advantage
→	with an attack
↑	with initiative
↔	with counterplay
△	with the idea of
▷	better is
≤	worse is
N	novelty
+	check
#	mate

PREFACE

After writing my exercise book “The Chess Manual of Avoidable Mistakes – Volume 2”, I wanted to continue in the same spirit by launching another series of books: “Chess Calculation Training”. This first volume will focus on middlegames.

I have always found that existing puzzle books, however good they are, only provide a rather mechanical form of mental training. In this new collection, you will find exercises to help you improve in specific areas of thinking, such as you may encounter in your own games. To help this, all the problems are taken from real games, with most of them having taken place in the last year.

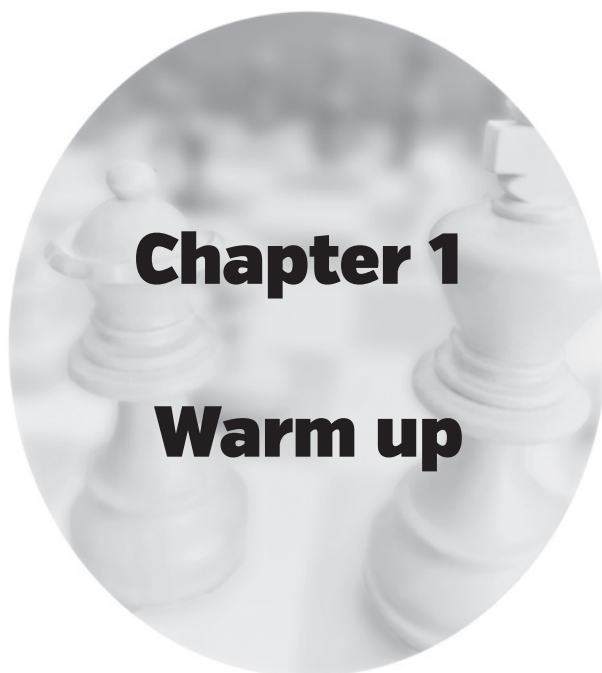
The book begins with a warm-up. After that, you will find several types of exercises. Some of these fall into the same categories as those in my previous book, as they were readers’ favourites. Other categories are completely new, for instance: “Find the killer positional move!” or “Find the stunning winning move!”.

The problems in the book are accessible to players with a level from modest to confident. The most difficult ones are marked with an asterisk, while the most challenging chapter comes with a help page, that you may check when necessary.

I hope you enjoy solving these 496 puzzles, and look forward to seeing you again in Volume 2: Endgames.

Romain Edouard

March 1st 2017



Chapter 1

Warm up

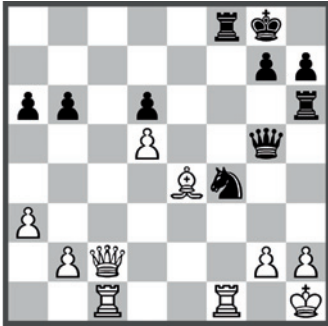
As the title indicates, this part of the book is a warm up. For each position given, you must find the winning move. If there seem to be more than one, you should go for the quickest and/or the clearest.

This chapter contains exercises of all types, which could have been used in several of the other chapters. They have been collected in this chapter because of their lower difficulty and will prepare you nicely for the rest of the book!

This chapter is quite long: I recommend attempting one or two pages [4 to 8 exercises] as a daily routine, or as a warm-up before looking at another chapter.

1

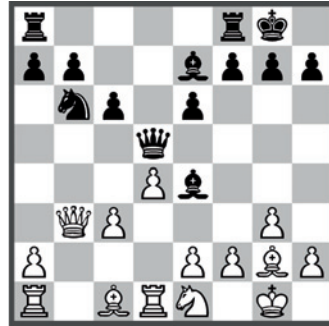
Naiditsch, A. – Mamedyarov, S.



■ 29... ? +-

2

Landa, K. – Zhu, C.



□ 15. ? +-

3

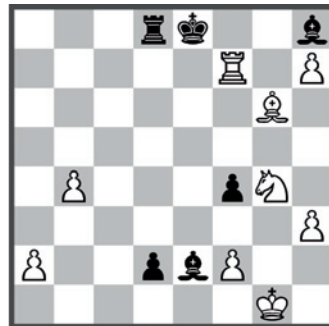
Sher, M. – Kamsky, G.



■ 15... ? +-

4

Aronian, L. – Grischuk, A.



□ 41. ? +-



Chapter 3

Find the unexpected blow!

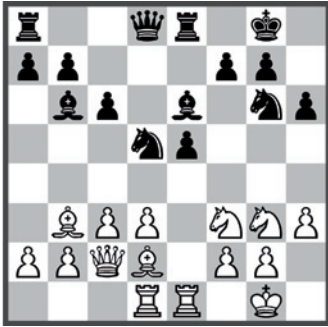
In this chapter, you must find unexpected incisive moves! Sacrifices, intermediate moves, surprising and hidden moves will be on the menu.

The aim of this chapter is to help you to understand how rich chess is in ideas, so that you can overcome your bad automatic reflexes. Everyone is able to spot basic things. You have to force yourself to see the rest!

The difficulty of the exercises in this chapter ranges from medium to difficult.

📖 1

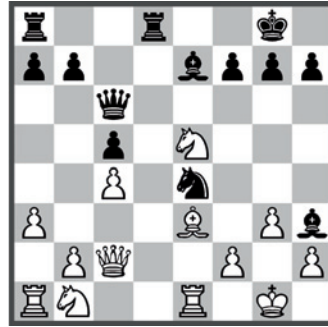
Ivanchuk, V. – Karjakin, S.



■ 16... ? ±

📖 2

Rozentalis, E. – Socko, B.



■ 17... ? -+

📖 3

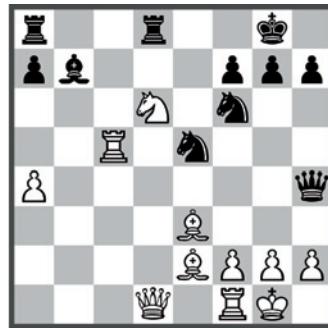
Guerrero, R. – Raimbault, P.



□ 18. ? +-

📖 4

Aronian, L. – Mamedyarov, S.



■ 22... ? -+



Chapter 4

Play the right move under pressure!

In each exercise in this chapter you are under pressure from your opponent. You must find the only move, or simply the best response, depending on the problems you are facing.

A short introduction to each exercise will set you on the path to the solution. The aim of this chapter is to prepare you for difficult situations: being under attack, needing to find resources, time pressure...

The difficulty of the exercises in this chapter ranges from medium to very difficult, the most challenging ones being marked with an asterisk.

1

Negi, P. – Zhukova, N.

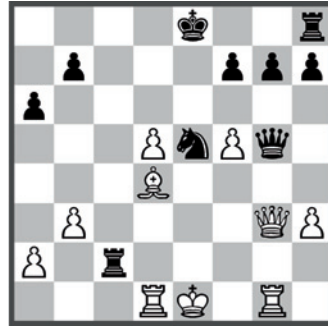


■ 22... ?

Black has one move to stay fully in the game, can you spot it?

2

Korobov, A. – Negi, P.



■ 23... ?

Find the drawing move!

3

Mateo, R. – Demuth, A.

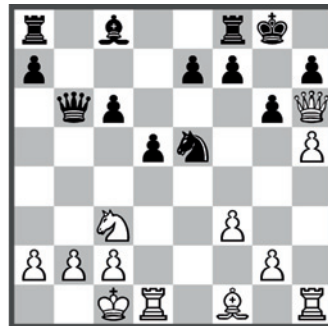


□ 28. ?

Black is threatening ...♙a2: but White has a way to keep the dynamic balance. Find it!

4

Vega Gutierrez, S. – Videnova, I.



■ 15... ?

It looks like Black is running into big problems, but in fact he is completely fine! Can you find how?



Chapter 7

Play the killer positional move!

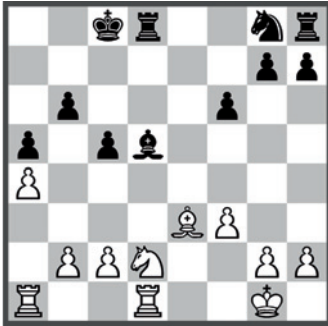
In this chapter, you must find strong positional moves. The solution is always concrete and the evaluation of the position which will result should be very helpful.

A good positional move does not mean there are no tactics involved! On the contrary, this series of exercises is intended to help you to intelligently mix tactics and strategy.

The difficulty of these exercises ranges from medium to difficult, the most challenging ones being marked with an asterisk.

5

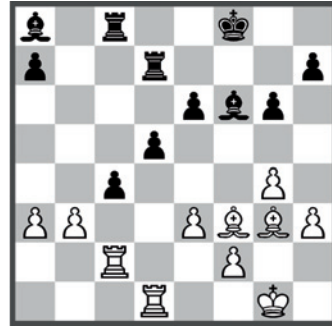
Mamedyarov, S. – Ragger, M.



□ 18. ? ±

6

Smirin, I. – Radjabov, T.



■ 29... ? -+

7 [*]

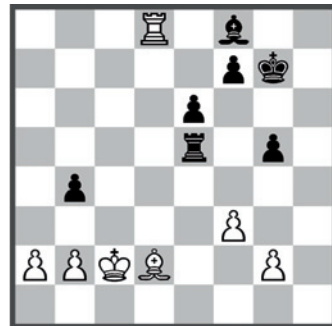
Vachier Lagrave, M. – Studer, N.



□ 12. ? ±

8

Harikrishna, P. – Grandelius, N.



□ 40. ? +-



Chapter 8

Find the missed move!

In this chapter, each position is accompanied by a series of moves which were played in a game. You must find the missed opportunity in this series of moves. The player whose move it is in the given position is the one who missed an opportunity.

In order to help you in your search, I will also give you the evaluation of the position if that missed move had been played.

The aim of this part of the book is to encourage you to concentrate on what is important, looking at the whole board, so you can spot key moments.

These exercises will also help you to find the right balance in your analysis: passing quickly over obvious things while making sure to notice possible surprises, so you develop a feeling for when the key moment has arrived.

The difficulty of these exercises ranges from medium to difficult, unless an asterisk indicates that the exercise is very difficult.

1

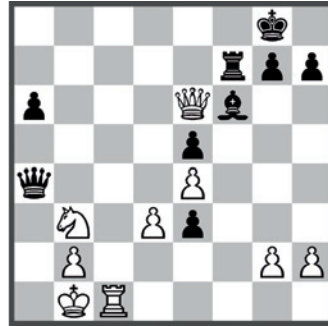
Vallejo Pons, F. - Topalov, V.



30. ♖f6 ♘d8 31. ♗g5 ♘d2
32. ♘h6+ ♕g7 33. ♘f5+ ♖h8--
[±]

2

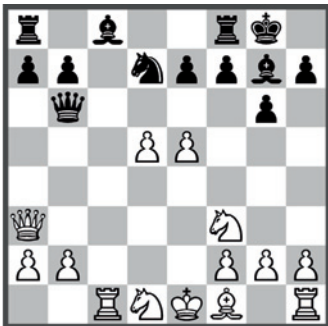
Negi, P. - Wen, Y.



33... ♗d7 34. ♖c8+ ♕d8
35. ♘c5 ♗xe6 36. ♖xd8+-
[-+]

3 [*]

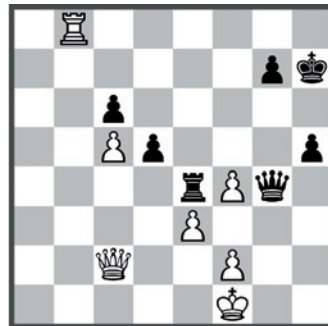
Nguyen, D. - Negi, P.



15. ♗xe7 ♘xe5 16. ♘xe5 ♕f6
17. ♘d7 ♕xe7 18. ♘xb6 axb6♚
[±]

4

Karpov, A. - Timman, J.



43. ♖e8 ♗g6 44. ♖d8 h4
45. ♖d6 ♗f5 46. ♗d1 ♖e6=
[+-]