



This month, I am offering for your attention an excerpt from my memoir that is being prepared for publication, *A Book for Friends and Colleagues*. I touch on some general problems for the development of a young chess player, and so I think this excerpt is appropriate for my column.

## First Steps

One of the best tournaments I ever played in, in both the competitive and the creative respects, was when I was only second category. (The rating system didn't exist back then, and a young player had to follow a path from the fifth category to the first; with subsequent progress he received the title of candidate master, and then the master's title.) But I'll get to everything in order!

At the age of twelve (as we'd see it today – very late!) I started studying chess at the Kalinin District House of Pioneers. Then again, "studying" is an inaccurate word. The chess section was headed by a very old first-category player, Andrei Sergeevich Smyshlyaev. There were a lot of kids, and only enough teachers to open and close the auditorium, put out the equipment, maintain order, hold tournaments and provide their results to the Moscow qualifications commission. I had to figure out everything else on my own, or to be more precise together with my friend Sasha Karasev.

I quickly achieved the fifth and fourth categories, but at that stage I got slightly bogged down and decided to "work on some theory." In the summer vacation I successfully studied the solid and superbly-organized book by Ilya Maizelis Chess. I was studying it thoroughly and didn't have enough time for the whole book – the section "Openings" was left unmastered. Perhaps that was precisely the source of the difficulties that I experienced constantly later when I was playing the early stage of the game.

My work on chess didn't bear fruit right away, naturally. In the fall I achieved the third-category norm (ten points out of ten), and then the second-category one (ten out of eleven). I played in another two or three individual and team events, but further improvement at the House of Pioneers was impossible – there weren't enough highly-qualified players to organize a tournament for a first-category norm. And then I took part in the Spartakiad of Second-Category Players of 1963, which was held at the Moscow Palace of Pioneers on the Lenin Hills.

I felt like a provincial, having made it to an event in the "wider world" virtually for the first time. Many of my opponents were residents of that world, regularly working with experienced coaches, masters or candidate masters. On the other hand, provincials don't usually display any particular timidity, and I didn't experience it either.

The qualifying norms were very high: a score of seventy-five percent. That meant 9 out of 12, and since I had to play thirteen games and norms were never rounded down, I needed one extra win: 10 out of 13.

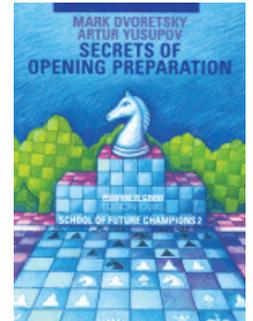
I played my "big" game at the start of the tournament.

### Gorelik – Dvoretzky

Spartakiad of Second-Category Players (1), 1963  
French Defense [C02]

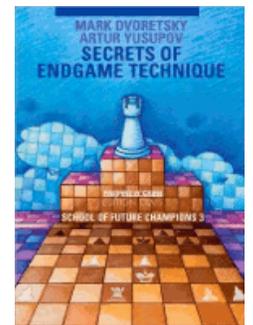
1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.c3 Nc6 5.Nf3 Qb6 6.Be2 Nge7?

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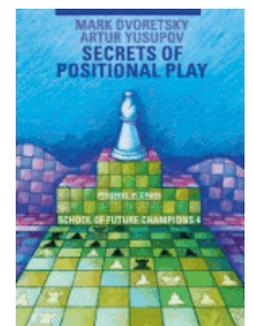
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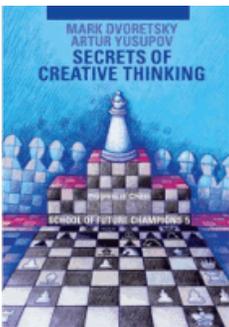
## COLUMNISTS

### The Instructor

Mark Dvoretzky

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[FEN "r1b1kb1r/pp2nppp/1qn1p3/2ppP3/3P4/2P2N2/PP2BPPP/RNBQK2R w KQkq - 0 7"]

### 7.Na3

Black's opening inaccuracy (well known in theory) was left unexploited. In the game Euwe – Kramer (Zaandam, 1946) 7.dc! Qc7 8.Nd4! (the exclamation mark is from old books and notes; in fact 8.Na3!? is no less strong) 8...Nxe5? 9.Nb5 Qxc5 10.Qd4! was played, and it was already time for Black to resign.

Unfortunately, in those days I wasn't in the habit of checking a reference book either before the game or after it to get to know the opening variation better. Which meant that sooner or later I would inevitably repeat my mistake. And indeed, a year later, when I was already studying at the Palace of Pioneers, my friend Sasha Shvarts caught me in the variation.

Then again, I also kept things together after 8...Qxe5 (instead of the losing 8...Nxe5?) 9.0-0 (White wants to get an overwhelming advantage on the queenside by playing b2-b4) 9...Nf5 10.f4 Qf6 11.Nxf5 and started to confuse the game with the non-standard 11...ef!? (White's task is simpler with 11...Qxf5 12.Be3+/-).



[FEN "r1b1kb1r/pp3ppp/2n2q2/2Pp1p2/5P2/2P5/PP2B1PP/RNBQ1RK1 w kq - 0 12"]

The Fritz program on my computer doesn't particularly object to my partner's subsequent moves; nevertheless, the position soon became unclear: 12.Be3 Be6 13.Nd2 0-0-0 14.Nf3 d4! 15.cd Bxc5 16.Rc1 Bb6 17.Ne5 Bd5 18.Bf3 Kb8 19.Bxd5 Rxd5 20.Nxc6+ bc unclear. The game ended with a peaceful outcome on the thirty-sixth move.

### 7...cd 8.cd Nf5 9.Nc2 Bb4+ 10.Kf1 Be7 11.a3?!

Theory recommends 11.h4 or 11.g3 with a subsequent 12.Kg2. My opponent chose an unsuccessful plan involving a noticeable lag in development.

### 11...Bd7 12.b4 Rc8 13.g4? Nh4 14.Nxh4 Bxh4 (threatening 15...Nxe5!) 15. Be3 f6 16.f4 0-0 17.Kg2



[FEN"2r2rk1/pp1b2pp/1qn1pp2/3pP3/1P1P1PPb/  
P3B3/2N1B1KP/R2Q3R b - - 0 17"]

Has any kind of association occurred to you in connection with the position that has been created? One did occur to me during the game. In my case, "cruising" through opening theory didn't mean having no interest at all in chess literature or general chess theory. I recalled a game that was played between Alekhine and Capablanca at the AVRO Tournament in Holland in 1938. In it Alekhine moved his king forward to destroy an enemy piece that had wandered into his camp.



[FEN"r2bb1k1/q5pr/1p2p1Np/pP1pP2P/  
N2P1Pp1/P3Bn2/1Q4K1/2R4R w - - 0 31"]

31.Kg3! Qf7 32.Kxg4 Nh4 33.Nxh4 Qxh5+ 34.Kg3 Qf7 35.Nf3 1-0

Here I did start to worry: would I lose my bishop after a king move to h3? I didn't want to take with the pawn on e5 because of the reply 18.de. Of course, I thought of a reciprocal attack on the vulnerable c2 knight. Having figured out the forced (as it seemed to me) variation, I immediately saw its impressive concluding move.

**17...Ne7! 18.Kh3 Ba4**

It was possible to play a little more simply: 18...Ng6 19.Bd3 fe 20.Bxg6 (20. fe Bf2) 20...ef!-+, but I was so enchanted by the idea I'd found, I wasn't looking around any more.

I didn't look around later either: the game wasn't subjected to critical investigation for many years after it was played. The reason is obvious – a subconscious desire not to throw doubt on an idea of which I was justifiably proud. And only recently the merciless Fritz put everything in its place: it became clear that Black achieved a big advantage by many methods, and the one chosen by me, although not bad, objectively wasn't the best.

**19.Bd3 Rc3**

There were worthy alternatives here, too. For example, this combination is very strong: 19...Bxc2! 20.Bxc2 fe 21.Kxh4 ef, with a subsequent 22...e5-+.

**20.Qd2 Qc7 21.Rhc1 Rc8 22.Ra2**



[FEN"2r3k1/ppq1n1pp/4pp2/3pP3/bP1P1PPb/P1rBB2K/R1NQ3P/2R5 b - - 0 22"]

## 22...Be1!!

Under three strikes! In *Lasker's Manual of Chess* (which I couldn't obtain in those years), such thrusts are called "desperado": the world champion showed that pieces that are apparently doomed to death are capable of all kinds of craziness.

I didn't look at any other moves, understandably, although 22...fe 23.de (23.fe g5) 23...g5! (but not 23...Ng6 24.Bxg6 hg counting on 25.Kxh4? g5+! – because of 25.Nd4!) 24.fg Qxe5-+ wasn't bad.

23.Rxe1 Bxc2 24.Rxc2 Rxc2 25.Bxc2 Qxc2 26.ef (it's preferable to exchange queens immediately) 27...gf



[FEN"2r3k1/pp2n2p/4pp2/3p4/1P1P1PP1/P3B2K/2qQ3P/4R3 w - - 0 27"]

The picture of the battle has changed sharply. There's an obvious advantage on Black's side, associated with the presence of his opponent's "bad" bishop (this has been my favorite positional theme since childhood) and my possession of the open c-file. On the other hand, the latter factor disappears if White manages to knock all the major pieces off the board.

## 27.Re2?!

27.Qxc2 Rxc2 28.Rc1 is better, on which Black replies 28...Rc4-/. The move in the game allowed him to create an attack with the queens on the board, continuing 27...Qg6!, but I was already in the mood for a favorable endgame.

## 27...Qxd2 28.Bxd2 Kf7 29.Re3 Rc2 30.Be1 Rc4 31.Rd3 b5!

Correct: my opponents' pawns are fixed on squares that are the color of his bishop.

## 32.Kg3 Nc8!

The knight comes up to the "holes" in the pawn chain – the e4- and c4-squares.

## 33.Kf3 Nd6 34.Ke2 Rc2+ 35.Rd2 Rc3 36.Rd3 Rxd3

The temptation to win a pawn turned out to be too strong, although it also can't be ruled out that it would have been easier for Black to make the best of his advantage with the rooks on the board.

**37.Kxd3 Nc4 38.Bf2 Nxa3 39.Bg3 Kg6 40.h3 Nc4 41.Bf2?! (41.Be1) 41... Nd6?! (41...a5! 42.ba Nxa5 43.Kc3 Nc6, with a subsequent h7-h6 and f6-f5) 42.Be1 Ne4 43.Ke3**



[FEN"8/p6p/4ppk1/1p1p4/1P1PnPP1/  
4K2P/8/4B3 b - - 0 43"]

The game was adjourned in this position. I had to analyze it myself: computer programs didn't exist in those days and I didn't have a coach.

I evaluated the position as easily winning, of course, but to my surprise it all turned out to be not so simple. In the end I managed to choose the right plan. My analysis was very useful for the future – it helped me to understand important peculiarities of similar endings.

A knight by itself can't win the game. Black has to create a path to his opponent's camp for his king – for that you have to exchange one or two pairs of pawns on the kingside.

An immediate 43...f5 is a mistake because of 44.g5, so I recorded the move **43...h6.**

**44.Kf3**

My opponent chose a waiting tactic. In analysis I also had to deal with the active try 44.h4!?. On the direct 44...h5?, White replies 45.f5+! ef 46.gh+ Kxh5 47.Kf4, with sufficient counterplay. I intended 44...Nd6 45.h5+ Kf7, with a subsequent Ne8-g7 (taking the h5 pawn in my sights), and only then f6-f5. I don't know how convincing that plan was, but I didn't see a better one.

**44...Nd6 45.Bc3 Nc8!**

It was already possible to go f6-f5, then exchange on g4 and h6-h5. But what then? The white king gets in the way of the black one. The "principle of two weaknesses" (about which I didn't have the slightest idea at the time, of course) came to my aid. Transferring the knight to c6 creates the threat of the breakthrough a7-a5, and to prevent the breakthrough the king has to get closer to the queenside, and then undermining the pawn chain on the kingside has more force.

**46.Ke3 Ne7 47.Bd2 f5! 48.Be1 fg 49.hg h5**



[FEN"8/p3n3/4p1k1/1p1p3p/1P1P1PP1/  
4K3/8/4B3 w - - 0 50"]

Black's knight is positioned ideally. On 50.g5, the continuation 50...Nf5+ 51. Kd3 h4 52.Bf2 h3 53.Bg1 Ng3 decides matters. But the main idea of Black's plan is displayed in the variation 50.Kf3 hg+ 51.Kxg4 Nc6! 52.Bc3 a5 53.ba b4 54.Bd2 b3 55.Bc3 Nxa5-+.

**50.gh+ Kxh5 51.Kf3 Nc6 52.Ke3**

The same thing again: 52.Bc3 a5! 53.ba b4-+.

**52...Kg4**

In the book *Dvoretsky's Analytical Manual*, commenting on an episode from an ending in the first Karpov – Kasparov match, I wrote: "In such situations, the enemy king is slowly pushed back, the knight comes to f5, and after the forced king retreat, the black king goes to f3, followed by another knight check, etc." (In relation to this endgame the specific squares and the color of the pieces have been changed). As you can see, I mastered this typical plan back in my childhood game with Gorelik.

**53.Bd2 Ne7 54.Bc1 Ng6**

54...Nf5+ corresponded to the plan described above, but it's also possible to play this way – first eat the pawn, and only then drive the king back.

**55.Bd2 Nxf4 56.Bc3 Ng6 57.Bb2 Ne7 58.Bc3 Nf5+ 59.Kd3 Kf3 60.Be1 Ne7 61.Bh4 Ng6 62.Bf6 Nf4+ 63.Kd2 Ke4 64.Be5 Ng2 65.Bf6 Ne3 66.Be5 Nc4+ 0-1**

"The grandmaster didn't spoil his opponents with a variety of openings" (a line from my favorite novel by Ilf and Petrov, *The Twelve Chairs*) – and I also followed the example of the "great conman" Ostap Bender. In my next game as black, as in almost all my subsequent ones, my favorite French Defense was played.

**Komov – Dvoretsky**

Spartakiad of Second-Category Players (3), 1963



[FEN"2r2rk1/pp3ppp/4p1n1/q2pP1N1/  
b1nP1BP1/P2B4/2P2P1P/R1Q2RK1 w - - 0 19"]

**19.h4! Nxh4?!**

Impudent play: Black doesn't want to defend accurately with 19...Rfe8 20.h5 (20.Nxh7!? Kxh7! 21.h5 Qc3 22.hg+ fg 23.Kg2 Qxd4 24.Rd1!, and only after a queen retreat - 25.Rh1+ is unclear) 20...Nf8 21.h6 Qc3.

Objectively the best reply is 19...h6! 20.Nxe6, and now either 20...Nxf4 21.Nxf4 Nd2 22.g5!?, with a sharp position, or 20...fe!? 21.Bxg6 Qc3, with good play for Black. I'm giving (far from exhaustive) variations here and later only for objectivity: in second-category tournaments no one calculates them accurately – that's a difficult task even for masters and grandmasters.

The main drawback of the move in the game is the opening of the h-file, on which White will attack. By luring the king there: 20.Bxh7+! Kh8 21.Bg3! (but not 21.Bd3? Qc3), he achieved a decisive advantage.



[FEN"2r2r1k/pp3ppB/4p3/q2pP1N1/b1nP2Pn/P5B1/2P2P2/R1Q2RK1 b - - 0 21"]

For example, 21...Nf3+ (sacrificing a piece for two or three pawns doesn't help either, 21...Qc3 22.Bxh4 Qxd4 23.Bg3!, with a subsequent Kg2) 22.Kg2! (22.Nxf3 Kxh7 is unclear) 22...Ncd2 (22...Nxc5 23.Qxg5 Kxh7 24.Rh1+ Kg8 25.Qh5+-) 23.Nxf3 Nxf1 24.Qxf1 (24.Bd3 Nxc3 25.Kxc3 Kg8 26.Qh1 Rfd8 27.Qh5 is also good, intending Rh1 and Ng5) 24...Kxh7 25.Qh1+ Kg8 26.Qh5 Bxc2 27.Rh1 f6 28.ef gf 29.g5+- (or 29.Bd6+-).

### 20.Nxh7?!



[FEN"2r2rk1/pp3ppN/4p3/q2pP3/b1nP1BPn/P2B4/2P2P2/R1Q2RK1 b - - 0 20"]

My opponent was tempted by an attack on the rook, hoping to mate me after 20...Rfe8 21.Bg5! Nf3+ 22.Kg2 Nxc5 (22...Nxd4 23.Nf6+! Kf8 24.Rh1) 23.Qxg5. Then again, Black could defend successfully here too, by continuing 21...Ng6! (instead of 21...Nf3+?), as 22.Nf6+ gf 23.Bxf6 Qd2 doesn't work. And on 22.Bxc4 (with the idea of 22...Rxc4? 23.Nf6+!), there follows 22...Kxh7 or 22...Qc3.

I solved the problem in a much simpler way – with a positional exchange sacrifice.

### 20...Qc3!

In such a sharp situation the rook is no more valuable than a minor piece. And time is what's really important here: it's vital to create reciprocal threats as quickly as possible. Counterplay in the center, according to the well-known

classical principle, is the best way of opposing a flank attack.

For a sophisticated player the solution for Black is probably obvious, but for a young second-category player this was a small discovery.

### 21.Nxf8 Kxf8

21...Qxd4! is stronger.

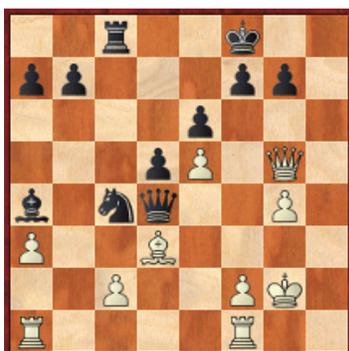
### 22.Be3

22.Bg5 Nf3+ 23.Kg2 Qxd4 (24.Rh1 was threatened) 24.Qf4 (24.Kxf3? Nxe5 +) 24...Qxf4 25.Bxf4 Nxe5! (or 25...Nfxe5) led to a favorable endgame for Black. 22.Bg3!? Qxd4! (22...Nf3+? 23.Kg2 with a subsequent Rh1) 23.Bxh4 Qxg4+ 24.Bg3 Nxe5 25.Qf4 Nf3+ deserved attention, and now White either agrees to a repetition of moves, 26.Kg2 Nh4+ 27.Kg1 Nf3+, or continues the battle in the double-edged position that arises with 26.Kh1 Qh3+ 27.Bh2 Bc6!?

### 22...Nf3+ 23.Kg2 Nxd4 24.Bxd4?

A hasty exchange. 24.Rh1 Ke8 is better, with mutual chances.

### 24...Qxd4 25.Qg5



[FEN"2r2k2/pp3pp1/4p3/3pP1Q1/b1nq2P1/P2B4/2P2PK1/R4R2 b - - 0 25"]

### 25...Nxe5?

The simple 25...Qxe5 brought Black a clear advantage. Without thinking twice, I made a natural move, attacking everything at once (g4, c2 and d3), after which my opponent could force a draw. Alas, I wasn't able to rid myself of this kind of "flunk" throughout my entire playing career.

### 26.Rh1 Kg8

26...Ke8 27.Qxg7 also led to equality; for example, 27...Bxc2 (27...Qxg4+ 28.Qxg4 Nxc4 29.Rh4! f5 30.f3 is risky) 28.Rh8+ Kd7 29.Bb5+ (29.Rxc8 Bxd3 30.Qg8=) 29...Kc7 30.Rxc8+ Kxc8 31.Rc1 Qe4+ 32.Kg1 Nf3+ 33.Kf1, with inevitable perpetual check.

### 27.Bh7+ Kf8 28.Bd3

Neither player noticed the interesting retort 28.Bf5!?. On 28...Kg8, it's possible to play 29.Qh4 (the g4-pawn is defended). On the other hand, after 29...Ng6 30.Bxg6 fg the position remained drawn. 28...f6 29.Rh8+ Kf7 30.Qh5+ Ke7 31.Rxc8 Qxa1 32.Qh8 ef 33.gf (33.Qxg7+ Ke6) 33...Nc6 34.Qxg7 + Kd6 probably also leads to the same outcome, but via a more complicated path.

### 28...Kg8 29.Qh5??

"Fighting spirit triumphs over reason" – this reminded me of a phrase from Bronstein's book about the 1953 Candidates Tournament. My opponent doesn't want to repeat moves, but playing for a win turns out to be playing for

a loss.

**29...Qxg4+ 30.Qxg4 Nxg4 31.Rh4 f5**

Black has too many pawns for the exchange, and his opponent doesn't manage to win a piece.

**32.Rb1 b6 33.Kg3?! Bxc2!**

A straightforward tactic: 34.Rc1 Rc3.

**34.Bxc2 Rxc2 35.f3 Rc3 36.Kf4 Nf6 37.Re1 Kf7 38.Re3? g5+ 0-1**

Weak play? Of course it was weak, but it wasn't devoid of ideas.

**Dvoretzky – Romanov**

Spartakiad of Second-Category Players (6), 1963

Nimzo-Indian Defense [E54]

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e3 c5 5.Nf3 d5 6.Bd3 0-0 7.0-0 cd 8.ed dc 9.  
Bxc4 b6 10.Bg5 Bb7 11.Qe2 Be7 (11...Nbd7!?) 12.Rfd1 (12.Rad1) 12...Qc7?  
13.Bb3 (13.Rac1!) 13...Nc6 14.Rac1 Rac8**



[FEN"2r2rk1/pbq1bPPP/1pn1pn2/6B1/3P4/  
1BN2N2/PP2QPPP/2RR2K1 w - - 0 15"]

The typical breakthrough in the center 15.d5 suggests itself. However, after 15...ed 16.Nxd5 Nxd5 17.Bxd5 Bxg5 18.Nxg5 h6 White doesn't obtain anything. 16.Bxf6 Bxf6 17.Nxd5 Qd6 (there's also 17...Nd4!? 18.Nxf6+ gf 19.Nxd4 Qxc1=) is useless too.

Despite my young age and low chess qualification, I managed to find an unusual solution to the problem. As a result I not only won the point I needed, but also added a useful little brick to the wall of my future strategic arsenal.

**15.d5! ed 16.Bxd5!**

This move, when it's not the knight that's being exchanged, but the bishop, is discussed in the book [School of Future Champions 2: Secrets of Opening Preparation](#), in the chapter "In the Footsteps of One Game."

**16...Rfe8 17.Qc4**

This queen thrust seemed very strong to me, but my computer confirms that this isn't the case in connection with the reply 17...Ne5!, and it suggests instead 17.Qd3!+/-, with the idea of 18.Qf5.

**17...Nxd5? 18.Nxd5 Qb8 19.Bf4**

Black is defenseless. On 19...Qa8, the move 20.Nc7 is decisive, and on 19...Bd6, either 20.Bxd6 Qxd6 21.Nxb6, or 20.Nf6+ gf 21.Bxd6 Qa8 22.Qg4+.

**19...Na5 20.Nxe7+ Rxe7 21.Qxc8+! 1-0**

Not all my games ended so favorably. I suffered two defeats and made one draw, and I had to score one-and-a-half points in the last two rounds to

achieve the first-category norm. I had to play black in both games. Then again, at that level the color had no significance – it was probably even the other way around: all my losses of points occurred when I had the white pieces.

### Lukachevsky – Dvoretzky

Spartakiad of Second-Category Players (12), 1963  
French Defense [C11]

**1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.e5 Nfd7 5.f4 c5 6.Nce2 Nc6 7.c3 Qb6 8.Nf3 f5 (8...f6; 8...Be7) 9.a3 c4**



[FEN"r1b1kb1r/pp1n2pp/1qn1p3/3pPp2/2pP1P2/P1P2N2/1P2N1PP/R1BQKB1R w KQkq - 0 10"]

My perception of these kinds of positions back then was simplistic and dogmatic. I had no doubt that the weakened b3-square guaranteed Black a protracted positional advantage. I didn't sense the dangers (especially as my opponent apparently wasn't thinking about the natural plan of attack on the kingside with g2-g4), played carelessly, and in the end I was punished for it.

**10.Qc2 Na5 11.Be3 Qb3 12.Qd2 Nb6 13.Nc1 Qb5 (13...Qa4!?)**

I missed the reply 14.b4!?, of course, although objectively it isn't clear whether it's worth pushing the pawn: after 14...Nc6 15.Be2 a5, Black retains counterplay.

**14.Qc2 Qa4 15.Qd2 Nb3 16.Nxb3 Qxb3 17.Qc1 a5?**

An inane move. 17...Bd7 suggested itself.

**18.Be2 Bd7 19.Kf2**



[FEN"r3kb1r/1p1b2pp/1n2p3/p2pPp2/2pP1P2/PqP1BN2/1P2BKPP/R1Q4R b kq - 0 19"]

**19...Ba4??**

A serious mistake, and a double one. Firstly, White could have attacked the e6 pawn with the move 20.Ng5, winning a tempo for the attacking 21.g4 (which is why it was necessary to play 19...Be7). Secondly, there's a very strong tactical idea that was implemented by my opponent in the game.

**20.Nd2 Qb5**

Black still doesn't suspect the danger. On the other hand, with 20...Qc2 21. Qf1 his position remained weak too.

### 21.b3!

Only here did the suspicion arise: I lose a piece, at minimum. This is where the ridiculous advance of the a-pawn made itself felt! I didn't want to resign (especially as losing meant not achieving the norm) – so I had to find the best practical chance, create at least some kind of difficulty for my opponent. And I made the best decision: I sacrificed my queen for just a rook.

### 21...Bxb3 22.Nxb3 Qxb3 23.Rb1



[FEN"r3kb1r/1p4pp/1n2p3/p2pPp2/2pP1P2/PqP1B3/4BKPP/1RQ4R b kq - 0 23"]

### 23...a4!!

Black manages to extract an advantage from the unhappy a-pawn anyway – this pawn will move over to b3, becoming a strong passed pawn, making coordination of the enemy pieces more difficult.

### 24.Rxb3 ab 25.Qb1?

Strange as it may seem, despite being a queen up, playing White isn't easy, and he doesn't cope with the task. It was probably worth bringing his rook to the queenside: 25.Rd1.

### 25...Rxa3 26.Bc1? (26.Rd1) 26...Ra2 27.Rd1 Na4 28.Bd2



[FEN"4kb1r/1p4pp/4p3/3pPp2/n1pP1P2/1pP5/r2BBKPP/1Q1R4 b k - 0 28"]

Hooray!, I'm not losing any more - I can chase the queen with the rook forever on the b2, c2 and a2 squares. And here I made a courageous decision: sensing my opponent's uncertainty, as well as the objective difficulties he was facing, I didn't try to force a draw but continued the battle. In fact, no active possibilities are evident for White, while Black can bring in the reserves, finally completing (with considerable delay) the development of the kingside.

### 28...Kd7! 29.g4 g6 30.gf?! (for whom is the line being opened?) 30...gf 31.Ke3 (31.Be1 is better.) 31...Rg8 32.Bxc4?

And this is now desperation!

**32...dc 33.d5** (33.Rg1 Rxc1 34.Qxg1 b2) **33...Rg2**

33...Bc5+ 34.Kf3 Nxc3 decided matters more impressively.

**34.de+ Kxe6 35.Kf3 Ra:d2 36.Rxd2 Rxd2 0-1**

My main impression from the game was that in any situation it isn't worth getting desperate, you can almost always find counter-chances, making your opponent's task harder. This conclusion was very useful to me later: I regularly got into bad positions, but I rarely lost, because I'd learned how to get out of the water still dry.

### **Rubtsov – Dvoretzky**

Spartakiad of Second-Category Players (13), 1963

French Defense [C13]

In my last game I only needed a draw, so I tried to act more solidly, sometimes even being excessively cautious. But only until a curious tactical opportunity turned up...

**1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 de 5.Nxe4 Nbd7 6.Nf3 Be7 7.Ng3 h6 8. Bd2 c5 9.c3 b6 10.Bc4 Bb7 11.0-0 0-0 12.Re1 Qc7 13.Rc1 Nd5**



[FEN"r4rk1/pbqnbpp1/1p2p2p/2pn4/2BP4/2P2NN1/PP1B1PPP/2RQR1K1 w - - 0 14"]

The position is roughly equal, and White is perhaps even a little better after 14. Ne5. But here my opponent undertook a strange operation.

**14.Bxd5?! Bxd5 15.c4 Bxf3 16.Qxf3 cd 17.Re4?!**

17.Qg4 Ne5-/+ is bad, although after 17.Nh5! (with the idea of 18.Qg4) White maintained approximate equality. I would probably have replied with the strong 17...Nf6, on which White shouldn't rush with 18.Nxf6+ Bxf6 19.Bxh6 because of 19...Be5, with an attack on the h2-pawn. 18.Bf4! is stronger, and certainly then 19.Nxf6+ Bxf6 20.Bxh6.

**17...Nf6**

A move that can be explained by the tournament position, of course – Black is worrying about safety above all, not allowing the appearance of a rook on the kingside and the thrust Nh5. The variation 17...Nc5 18.Rg4 (or 18.Rxd4 Bf6 19.Rg4) seemed too sharp. Objectively the strongest continuation was probably 17...Ne5!?, although not everything is clear here either after the example 18.Qb3!? Rad8 19.Bf4.

**18.Rxd4 Rad8 19.Bc3 Rxd4 20.Bxd4 Rd8 21.Be3 Qe5 22.b3**



[FEN"3r2k1/p3bpp1/1p2pn1p/4q3/2P5/1P2BQN1/P4PPP/2R3K1 b - - 0 22"]

Now Black could have achieved an advantage by continuing 22...Qb2! 23. Qe2 Qxe2 24.Nxe2 Ng4. But a tactical idea attracted my attention: couldn't I lure my opponent into winning the a7 pawn? The main variation quickly flashed through my head, and I couldn't resist the temptation any longer.

**22...Rd3!?** 23.Qa8+? (23.Rd1) 23...Kh7

But not 23...Bf8, so as not to frighten my partner off. The bishop should stay under attack.

**24.Qxa7?**

The trap worked!

**24...Rxe3! 25.Qxe7 Re1+ 26.Rxe1 Qxe1+ 27.Nf1 Ne4 28.Qxf7 Nd2**

White loses a piece.

**29.h4 Nxf1 30.h5 Ne3+ 31.Kh2 Ng4+ 32.Kg3 Nf6**

The knight succeeded in shielding the king from perpetual check. Black won easily.

Let's draw some conclusions:

1) When a young player is at the "interim" level: stronger than a beginner, but not yet a master or a candidate master, every serious event is important for him. I tried to show with my example how a style is formed in these tournaments, old habits are displayed and new useful (and also harmful) ones are acquired, and technical skills are mastered in practice. Gifted children can follow this path by themselves, but the help of a good coach speeds up and regulates the improvement process considerably, of course. A bad coach, on the contrary, can do a great deal of damage.

2) Creative achievements are by no means a prerogative only of masters and grandmasters. Players of almost any level are capable of making breakthroughs, finding and bringing to life interesting ideas.

3) I was a weak player then, of course, and even the somewhat better games that I gave in the article are full of inaccuracies and mistakes. Then again, focusing attention on oversights and playing defects makes sense when the problem of further improvement is being solved. If we're talking about evaluating the talent and promise of a young player, though, it's more important here to evaluate his achievements, to enable him to generate interesting ideas at the board. From that point of view everything was seemingly fine with me, and it was no accident that right after the tournament I received an invitation to study at the Palace of Pioneers, in the strongest group. A new phase of my chess life had begun.

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