



**PRACTICAL
BISHOP
ENDINGS**

GM Edmar Mednis

Practical Bishop Endings

Grandmaster
Edmar Mednis

1990

Coraopolis, Pennsylvania

Chess Enterprises

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Preface

As a result of my training and teaching work I have learned that less experienced players tend to greatly underrate the Bishop. It apparently seems such a simple piece as it just moves back and forth along a diagonal. Compare this to the tricky Knight which always lands on a square different in color from where it came from and is capable of the nastiest Knight forks! As a matter of fact, many "amateurs" tend to jump at any chance to exchange off a Bishop for a Knight. Yet more experienced players realize the inherent powers of a Bishop. However, to properly handle a Bishop a much more sophisticated understanding is required than for the Knight. This is particularly true for pure Bishop endgames.

For quite some time I have been wanting to write a treatise on Bishop endgames so that I could present the principles clearly enough to enable everyone to significantly improve their play of such endings. Recently David McKay Co. allowed my first endgame book, *Practical Endgame Lessons*, to go out of print. For about ten years it was "the" book which dealt with *understanding* the whole field of endgame play. The fact that the material in this book again became available to me was the impetus for doing *Practical Bishop Endings* now. Of course, everything has been substantially redone to make it clearer and better. Other sources have been my endgame writings, mostly from my syndicated column *The Practical Endgame*, as well as fresh material from my extensive files. As appropriate, direct credit is given in the text. Of course, any errors remain my responsibility. I would appreciate your calling them to my attention.

The book consists of two parts: pure same color Bishop endings and pure opposite color Bishop endings. The very last chapter summarizes all the previous chapters and compares same color Bishop endgames to opposite color Bishop end-

games. The objective of this book is the same as for *Practical Rook Endings*: to present material sufficiently clearly so that the reader will have at least 95% of the knowledge required to play such endgames successfully.

To ensure that the reader and the author are on the same wavelength regarding the meaning of the question and exclamation marks as they are used in the characterization of moves, these are the presently accepted meanings:

- ! = a strong move
- !! = a very strong move; a fantastic move
- ? = a bad move; a weak move
- ?? = a horrible move; a blunder
- ! ? = an enterprising move; a move worthy of consideration
- ? ! = a dubious move, for theoretical or practical reasons

This is my fourth book for B. G. Dudley's Chess Enterprises. I am gratified that the earlier *Practical Rook Endings*, *Questions and Answers on Practical Endgame Play*, and *Strategic Themes in Endgames* have been well received by the public. I am very happy to be associated with Bob Dudley. I am hopeful of a good public reception for this book also.

Edmar Mednis

New York, 1990

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Introduction

Characteristics of the Bishop

The most important characteristics of the Bishop in endgame play are:

(1) The Bishop is particularly good in open positions where there are pawns on both sides of the board.

(2) The Bishop is effective in coping with far advanced passed pawns because it can stop the pawn even from far away.

(3) If the Bishop's "job" is to attack a specific point, it can do this from anywhere along its diagonal. This allows maximum flexibility as far as determining where to place it.

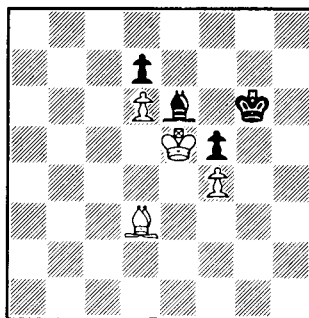


Diagram 1

White captures Black's f-pawn

Look at Diagram 1. Clearly Black's vulnerable point is the f5 pawn and the help of White's Bishop is needed to capture it. With White on move, there is no brute force way of capturing the pawn. Yet White wins with either 1 Bc2! or 1 Bb1!. The Bishop then still attacks f5 and irrespective of Black's response, White captures the f-pawn.

(4) The Bishop can "lose a move". What this means is that the Bishop can maneuver on its important diagonal back

and forth and can choose the moment that it returns to *the* key square. This is a very important strategy in zugzwang type positions.

The play from Diagram 1 can be considered to be an elementary case of this principle. A more advanced application of the value of "losing a move" is shown from Diagram 2, with Black on move. White has a decisive advantage because: 1) he has the superior King and, 2) his Bishop can menace Black's b- and f-pawns. Best play is:

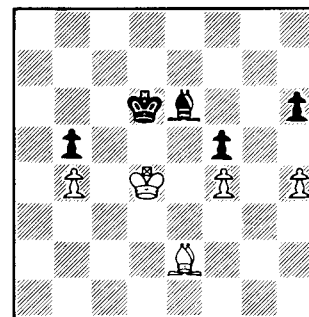


Diagram 2

White wins

1 Bd7

The b-pawn must be protected, while 1...Kc6? allows the decisive penetration by White's King with 2 Ke5.

2 Bb3 h5

The King and Bishop have no satisfactory moves and therefore the text is forced. However, now the h-pawn is also vulnerable to White's Bishop. Notice that if Black again would be on move, he would lose. Therefore, White with appropriate Bishop maneuvers wants to "give the move to Black".

3 Bb1! Bc8

If 3...Be6 4 Bc2! Bc8 (4...Bd7 5 Bd3! establishes the position after Black's 2nd move with Black again on move) 5 Bd1 and White wins the h-pawn and the game.

4 Ba2!

White threatens 5 Bf7 winning the h-pawn.

4 Bb7
5 Bb3!

Threatens 6 Bd1 winning the h-pawn.

5 Bc6

Or 5...Bf3 6 Bc2 Bg4 7 Bd3 Kc6 8 Ke5 and White wins.

6 Bc2! Bd7
7 Bd3! White wins.

The position after Black's 2nd move has been established with Black on move. Black must now lose either the f- or b-pawn and therefore the game.

PART I

Same Color Bishop Endgames

Chapter 1: Material Advantage

Section 1: Introduction

Material advantage obviously refers to an advantage in pawn(s). A three-pawn advantage is routinely sufficient for the win and so is a two-pawn advantage in all normal cases. The winning method generally consists of creating and queening passed pawns. Thus only the significant case in which one side has the material advantage of one pawn is considered in this chapter. Basically, a player needs to know when a one-pawn advantage is sufficient for a win and what the proper technique is for achieving it, or if he is a pawn down, when and how he can draw. His approach will depend on whether there are pawns on one or both sides, topics discussed in the next two sections.

The general exchanging principles also apply to same color Bishop endgames:

- the side up material wants to exchange Bishops.
- the side down material wants to achieve routine exchanges of pawns.

Section 2: Material Advantage of One Pawn

- Pawns On One Side Only

A. Bishop & Pawn vs. Bishop

As far as general defensive strategy is concerned, the defender can feel satisfied if he has achieved the above situation. He does not have to worry about losing any pawns and there is only one enemy pawn to be concerned about. He can

readily afford to sacrifice his Bishop for this last pawn. The key principles in knowing whether the resulting position is a win or a draw are as follows:

(1) *If the defending King is already in front of the pawn and cannot be chased away, or if it can get to such a square, the game is hopelessly drawn.*

A typical example from practical play is shown in Diagram 3, E. Mednis - F. Gheorghiu, Graz 1987, after White's 97th move. Black offered a draw here, because he cannot prevent White's King from reaching g2 and once there the King is unassailable. (97...g3 98 Kf3 followed by 99 Kg2; 97...Ke4 98 Kf2 followed by 99 Kg2; 97...Bg3 98 Kf1 followed by 99 Kg2.)

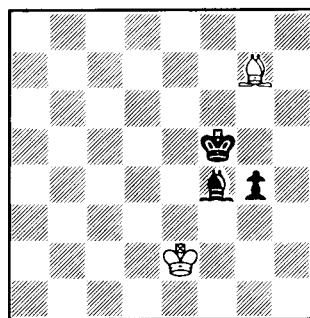


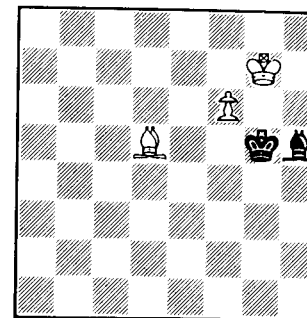
Diagram 3

E. Mednis -
F. Gheorghiu
Graz 1987
After White's
97th move

(2) *If the defending King cannot get in front of the pawn, the drawing chances are not good. To be sure of the draw, his Bishop must be mobile on both diagonals; (have access to at least two squares on each diagonal) and his King must be attacking the pawn from the rear while having vertical opposition.*

The above favorable defensive formation allows the defender to always achieve the draw, even if it is by just a hair. One such example is shown in Diagram 4 (L. Centurini 1856). (See Diagram 4 on the following page). Irrespective of who is on move, the position is drawn. A logical sequence with White on move is:

Diagram 4



L. Centurini
1856
Draw

1 Bf7 Be2
2 Bg6 Bc4

Black can always stay on one of two diagonals to prevent f7.

3 Bh7 Bd5
4 Bg8 Bxg8
5 Kxg8 Kxf6 Draw

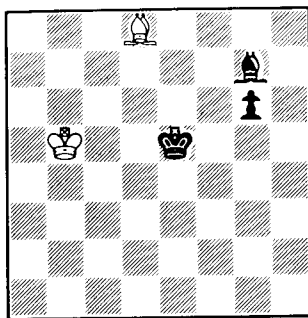
The above sequence shows the importance of Black's King location on g5, because White cannot chase Black's Bishop off the a2-g8 diagonal by playing a Bg8.

If Black is on move in Diagram 4, he draws with either 1...Bg6 or 1...Be8. He dare not give up his ideal King location.

(3) *Because it is so difficult in real life to reach the favorable defensive formation of Diagram 4, the defender's Bishop must try to prevent the pawn from being advanced until the defending King can get close enough to it.*

The following two examples from practical play will demonstrate the correct defensive approach. Diagram 5 shows the position from E. Mednis - F. Gheorghiu, Graz 1987 after Black's 89th move. (See Diagram 5 on the following page). The thematic game course is:

Diagram 5



E. Mednis -
F. Gheorghiu
Graz 1987
After Black's
89th move

90 Kc4

At the moment White's Bishop stands well enough and since there is no way that White can hope to prevent the ultimate promotion of Black's pawn without the defensive help of the King, it starts heading back.

90 Bf6
91 Ba5!

White's Bishop must get access to the c1-h6 diagonal as quickly as possible. Neither 91 Bc7+? Ke4 or 91 Bb6? Ke4 do the job.

91 Ke4

After 91...g5, White gets back in time with 92 Kd3 (92...Kf4 93 Bd2+; 92...Kf5 93 Ke2 Kg4 94 Bd2).

92 Bd2 Be5
93 Bg5!

The Bishop needs access to two diagonals, c1-h6 and h4-d8, to prevent the g-pawn from advancing.

93 Kf5
94 Bh6 Bf4
95 Bf8 g5

Now White's King gets back. But if 95...Ke4, 96 Be7 stops the pawn.

96 Kd3! g4

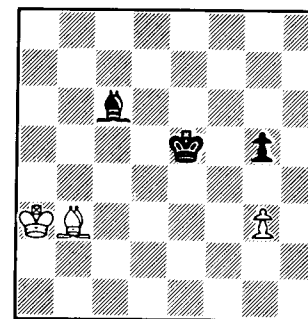
After 96...Kg4, 97 Be7 followed by 98 Bxg5 draws.

97 Ke2 Draw

We have reached Diagram 3, discussed earlier.

Diagram 6 shows the position after Black's 53rd move in K. Regan - P. Benko, 1978 USA Championship. After Black will capture White's pawn, the pawn situation will be the same as in Diagram 5. What is different is that here the Bishops are on light squares. Play continued as follows:

Diagram 6



K. Regan -
P. Benko
1978 USA
Championship
After Black's
53rd move

54 Kb2!

As from Diagram 5, here too the King has to try to get as close to the queening square as quickly as possible.

54 Kd4
55 Kc1 Ke3
56 Be6!

Getting in position to prevent the advance of Black's passed pawn-to-be.

56 Bf3
57 Bd7

The g-pawn cannot be saved in any case (57 g4 Kf4 and 58...Bxg4 will come with gain of time), so that White keeps the status quo.

57 Kf2
58 Kd2! Kxg3
59 Ke1 Bg2
60 Be6 Kh2

Instead 60...Bh3 61 Bf7 Kh2 is parried by 62 Bh5.

After the text move the theme of the position is very clear: if Black can get in ...g4, he will also get in ...g3 and will win. To draw, White must prevent ...g4. Therefore, quite wrong is, for instance, 61 Bf5? (the tournament bulletin erroneously gives this move as actually having been played). Black then wins as follows: 61...Bh3 62 Be4 g4 63 Bd5 g3 64 Be4 Bg2 65 Bd3 Bf3 66 Bf1 (White has access to only one square on the short f1-h3 diagonal and is easily chased off) 66...Bg4! 67 Kd2 Bh3 and Black wins.

61 Bg4! Draw.

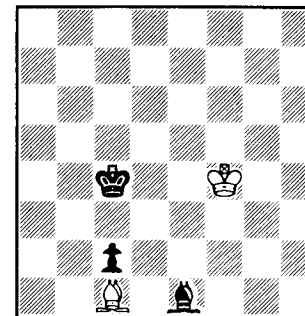
The game was adjourned after Black's 60th move and White had sealed this, the only correct move. Now White can prevent the advance of the g-pawn - 61...Bh3 62 Bh5, etc. - and the game was called a draw without resumption of play.

(4) *If the defender cannot achieve conditions (1) or (2) and cannot successfully execute (3), then he generally will lose.*

A typical lost position is shown in Diagram 7, A. Matanovic - P. Benko, Portoroz Interzonal 1958, after Black's 69th move. Because Black's pawn is already only one square from queening, White's Bishop only has one long diagonal. Black's winning method is to first chase White's Bishop off the c1-h6 diagonal and then to chase it off the short c1-a3 diago-

nal. The game course is:

Diagram 7



A. Matanovic
- P. Benko
Portoroz
Interzonal
1958
After Black's
69th move

70 Ke3 Kc3
71 Ke2 Bh4
72 Kf1

A move born in frustration. After the more "normal" moves, Black wins as follows:

a) 72 Ba3 Bg5 73 Ke1 Kb3
b) 72 Bf4 Kb2 73 Be5+ Kb1 74 Bf4 Bf6 75 Kd3 Bb2 76 Bg5 Bc1 77 Be7 Bf4 78 Ba3 Bd6!

72 Kd3

Here too Black could execute the plan shown under b) above: Kb3-a2-b1, followed by Bf6-b2-c1, etc.

74 Bh6 Bg3

The immediate 73...Bf6 would save a move.

74 Bg5 Be5
75 Bc1

If 75 Ke1 Bc3+ 76 Kf2 Bd2.

75 Bd4
76 Ke1 Be3
77 Ba3 Kc3

78 Ke2 Bg5
White resigns.

After 79 Ke1 Kb3 White's Bishop must give up guarding c1.

B. 2P vs. P; 3P vs. 2P

When the defensive King is back and the pawn formation healthy (i.e. the "normal" situation), the above cases should be readily drawn. Normal good moves are all that are required. The defending side should *not*:

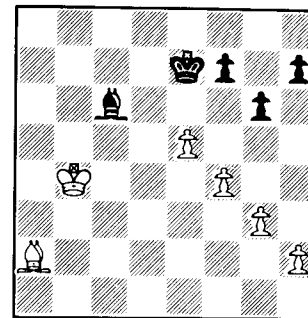
- allow the opponent's King to penetrate
- weaken own pawn formation
- put pawns on same color as own Bishop
- put pawns on same color as opponent's Bishop (This guideline works out to be the same as the previous one, but I am adding it for emphasis because of its importance.)

C. 4P vs. 3P

As the number of pawns remaining on the board increases, so do the winning chances of the stronger side. It can try more things while the defender has more to defend. The 4P vs. 3P case with all pawns on the same side is both frequent and important. As long as the defender pays close attention to the guidelines under B. above, he will not have serious difficulties in drawing. A model demonstration is shown from Diagram 8, G. Stahlberg - R. Fine, Kemeru 1937, after White's 38th move. White has the superior Bishop and pawn formation, but Black's King is well placed for defense and his pawn formation is fundamentally sound. GM Fine gained the draw as follows: (See Diagram 8 on the following page).

38 f6!

Diagram 8



G. Stahlberg
- R. Fine
Kemeru 1937
After White's
38th move

Offering a routine exchange of pawns in case White plays 39 exf6+. Also the pawn is no longer under attack by White's Bishop.

39 Kc5 Bd7
40 Bg8 h6

And not 40...h5? which seriously weakens the g- and h-pawn combination by putting the pawns on the same color as White's Bishop.

41 Kd5 Ba4
42 Kd4 Bd7

Black is satisfied to keep the status quo by playing simple, healthy moves.

43 Bc4 Ba4
44 Bd3 Be8! Draw agreed

Black should *not* play 44...f5? which seriously weakens the f- and g-pawn combination while turning White's e-pawn into a protected passed pawn, nor play 44...Kf7? which allows White's King to penetrate with 45 Kd5.

However, playable is an immediate 44...g5; but since it cannot be prevented anyway, Black can wait and see how White plans to make progress. A possible continuation could be:

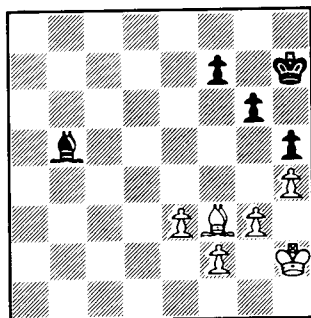
45 h4

g5! Still drawn.

Now that White has committed his Kingside pawns, it is logical for Black to stop potential play there. Notice the harmonious placement of Black's forces: the King and Bishop prevent penetration by White's King and, by being on dark squares, the pawns deprive White's Bishop of opportunities.

Yet, if the defender ignores "my guidelines", then an unwelcome loss is quite possible. That this can befall very strong players is shown by the course of play from Diagram 9, V. Hort - M. Bertok, Zagreb 1969, White on move. Black is somewhat handicapped here because his h-pawn is already on h5 and blocked. Thus, together with the g-pawn, it can eventually become an object for attack by White's Bishop. Otherwise Black's position is sound and there is no objective reason why - with best play - he should not draw.

Diagram 9



V. Hort -
M. Bertok
Zagreb 1969
White on
move

1 Bd5 Kg7
2 Kg2 Be2

Starting here, out of carelessness or ignorance, Black undertakes a series of inferior, time-wasting moves. Black should play 2...Kf6, followed by ...Ke7, ...f6 and ...Be8, thereby establishing a stable, drawn formation.

3 f3 Kf6

GM Hort gives the following interesting variation:
3...f6! 4 Kf2 Bb5 5 e4 Kf8 6 Ke3 Ke7 7 Kf4 Kf8 8 g4 hxg4 9

fxg4 Bd3 10 g5 fxg5+ 11 Kxg5 Bxe4! and Black draws. This line reveals a defensive resource Black has in Diagram 9: White's Bishop is the wrong color for his h-pawn and therefore Black has opportunities for the draw by sacrificing his Bishop for White's next-to-last pawn.

4 Kf2 Bb5
5 e4 Be8
6 Ke3 Ke5?!

The King has nothing to do here. The correct set-up for Black is 6...Ke7 followed by ...f6.

7 Bb3 f6
8 Ba2

A waiting move, giving Black an opportunity to blunder.

8 ... f5??

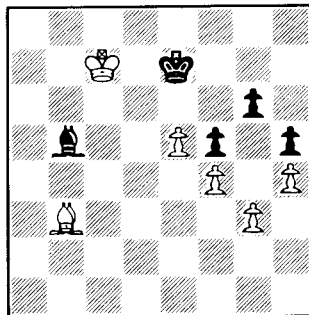
Criminally horrible. Required is 8...Kd6 followed by 9...Ke7 and Black's position remains defensible.

9 f4+ Kf6
10 e5+ Ke7
11 Kd4

The difference between this position and the final one from Diagram 8 is like night and day. Here White has the better King, better Bishop, better pawns and the extra pawn as a protected passed one. Therefore it should not be surprising that White has a forced win.

11 ... Ba4
12 Kc5 Be8
13 Kb6 Ba4
14 Kc7 Bb5
15 Bb3! Black resigns.

Diagram 10



V. Hort -
M. Bertok
Zagreb 1969
After White's
15 Bb3!

Black's choices are to either lose his Kingside or to allow a lost K + P endgame - which is no choice at all. The two main variations are:

(1) 15...Be2 16 Bg8 Kf8 17 Bh7 Kg7 18 e6 Kxh7 19 e7 Bb5 20 Kd8 Kg7 21 e8=Q Bxe8 22 Kxe8 Kf6 23 Kf8.

(2) 15...Be8 17 Bg8 Ba4 17 e6! Be8 (17...Bb5 18 Bf7 Kf6 19 Kd8 Ba4 20 Be8!.) 18 Bf7! Bxf7 19 exf7 Kxf7 20 Kd7! Kf6 21 Ke8 Kg7 22 Ke7 Kh8 23 Kf8 Kh7 24 Kf7 Kh6 25 Kg8.

Section 3: Material Advantage of One Pawn - Pawns on Both Sides

With pawns on both sides, under normal conditions, a one pawn advantage is sufficient to win. This is a strong statement, yet is borne out by practical experience. All the examples in this section are theoretical wins. They may look quite different from each other, yet are sufficiently "normal" to fit the above conclusion.

Since we are dealing with a won endgame, it is important to first become familiar with the general principles of **how to win a won endgame**. These are:

- Establish and follow a clear plan.
- Don't allow counterplay.
- Avoid unclear or unnecessary complications.

-- Be careful.

-- Never be in a hurry, either with respect to time or number of moves.

-- Hold on to material advantage.

-- When ahead in material, exchange pieces (here Bishops), not pawns.

-- Aim for the basic positions known as theoretical wins.

To the above principles must be added the specific techniques applicable to same color Bishop endgames. The winning strategy consists of these steps:

(1) Centralize the King.

(2) Put the Bishop on a useful diagonal.

(3) Create a passed pawn on the side with the pawn advantage.

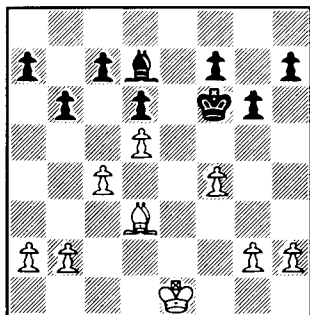
(4) Advance the pawn as far as possible. This will tie down the opponent's Bishop or King.

(5) If the Bishop is the blockader, offer to exchange Bishops. This will free the queening square or win the Bishop.

(6) If the King is the blockader, march your King to the other side of the board and pick up enough pawns to win.

Always remember that won endgames just don't win themselves. You need lots of care and discipline. If a player - no matter how strong - starts disregarding the principles enumerated above, the win can vanish quickly. I will start off with such an example. Diagram 11 shows the position from K. Pytel - S. Gligoric, Hastings 1973-74, after White's 23rd move. White had just before erroneously allowed the exchange of all Rooks and because of Black's more active King, White now finds himself in a lost B + P endgame:

Diagram 11



K. Pytel -
S. Gligoric
Hastings
1973/74
After White's
23rd move

23 Bf5!
24 Bf1

The K + P endgame after 24 Kd2?! Bxd3 25 Kxd3 Kf5 26 Ke3 Kg4! 27 Ke4 f5+! 28 Ke3 is even move lost because as soon as White runs out of pawn moves on the Queenside, he must lose a Kingside pawn.

24 Bb1
25 Kd2!?

Worse is 25 a3?! Kf5 26 g3 Ke4 followed by ...Kd4 and ...Ba2.

25 Kf5!
26 Ke3 Bxa2
27 Bd3+ Kg4!
28 Be2+ Kh4!

Black has won an important pawn, has the active King and no deficiencies whatever. It should be duck's soup for a famous GM, yet strange things start to happen now.

29 Kd4 Bb1?!

The Bishop stood well enough. Accurate was to start mobilizing the Kingside with 29...h6 and if then 30 Ke3, 30...b5! is decisive.

30 Bf1 Kg4?!

Pointless. The correct plan is still 30...h6 followed by 31...g5.

31 Ke3 Kf5??

This voluntary de-activation of the King is incomprehensible. With 31...Ba2 or 31...h6 Black could still achieve winning positions.

32 Be2 Kf6
33 h4! h5

Undesirable, but allowing 34 g4 would be equally undesirable.

34 g3 Bf5
35 Kd4 Bd7
36 Bd3

What a difference a few moves can make! It is *White* who now has the active King and the superior Kingside pawn formation. These factors are sufficient - with correct play - to neutralize Black's extra Queenside pawn.

36 c5+
37 dxc6 e.p.

It is in the interest of the defending side to exchange pawns, not to mention retaining his King on d4. Black would win after 37 Kc3? a6 38 b3 b5 39 Bc2 b4+ 40 Kb2 a5, with Black then moving his King to a6 and breaking decisively with ...a4 (Pytel).

37 Bxc6
38 Bc2 Bf3
39 Bd3 Ke6
40 Bc2 a5
41 Bd3 f5

Black wants to prevent a potential f5 by White and pays the clear cost of creating a weak g-pawn. The superiority of White's Kingside pawn formation is a very important factor in his achieving the draw.

42 Bc2 Bc6
43 Bd1 d5

All pawn exchanges are in White's interest, though Black has no other way to try to make progress. It would be wrong now for White to be greedy and play 44 Bf3?! because after 44...Kd6 45 cxd5 Bd7 followed by 46...b5, Black would get a mobile Queenside pawn majority, while White's d-pawn would only be an impotent figurehead.

44 cxd5+! Bxd5
45 Ba4

White's Bishop now is active, can get to Black's g-pawn and keep back Black's b-pawn. White also has retained the more active King. Black can't hope to make progress and the position is drawn.

45 Ba2
46 Be8 Kf6
47 Kc3 Be6

47...Bf7?? 48 Bxf7 Kxf7 49 Kc4 gives White a won K + P endgame.

48 Kd4 Bg8
49 Kc3 Bh7?! Draw.

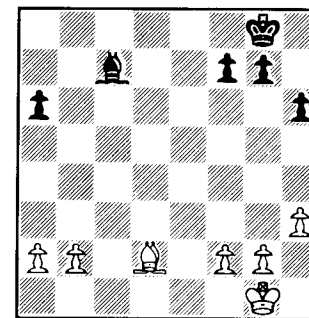
After managing to stalemate his Bishop on the least active square on the board, Black offered a draw. He can just hold on after 50 Kc4 Ke7 51 Bc6 Kd6 52 Kb5 Kc7 53 Bd5 Kd6 54 Bf7 Kc7.

Black's single greatest error was that he "forgot" that to win he needs the help of his King. Our last principle said:

"march your King to the other side of the board and pick up enough pawns to win." After 28...Kh4! Black had his King on "the other side", but then unaccountably marched back!

I will start the demonstration of the proper winning technique with a "pure" position, as shown in Diagram 12. The position is essentially symmetrical; White's "only" advantage is a clear, healthy extra pawn. With White on move, this is how to achieve the win:

Diagram 12



A won position for White
White is on move

1 Bc3

Putting the Bishop on a useful diagonal: it bears down on Black's Kingside and prevents ...Be5. At the moment 1 Be3 is rather pointless.

1 g6
2 Kf1 Kf8
3 Ke2 Ke7
4 Kd3 Kd6
5 Kc4

The King is centralized on an active, useful square.

5 Kc6
6 b4 Bb6
7 f3 Bc7
8 a4 Bb6
9 Bd4

The Bishop controls two important diagonals from here.

9 Bc7
 10 b5+ axb5
 11 axb5+

A passed pawn has been created.

11 Kb7

If Black plays 11...Kd7, so as to blockade the pawn with the Bishop, White wins after 12 b6 Bg3 13 Kd5 Bf4 14 b7 Bb8 15 Be5.

12 Kd5 Bb8
 13 b6

Advancing the pawn as far as possible to tie down Black's King.

13 Bh2
 14 Be5 Bg1
 15 Kd6

The King penetrates.

15 Kxb6
 16 Ke7 Kc5
 17 Kxf7

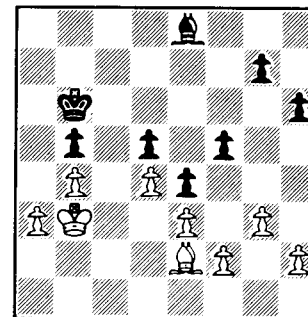
Winning by picking up the pawns.

17 Kd5
 18 Bg7 h5
 19 Kxg6 White wins.

He will also capture the h-pawn. The position would be won even without that.

The type of position shown in Diagram 12 does occur frequently enough. However, the practical player must learn to cope with situations which are less routine. An excellent example is shown from Diagram 13, H. Donner - A. Bisguier, Bled 1961, after Black's 48th move. As will be seen, White's play makes use of all the key "how to win a won Bishop endgame" principles.

Diagram 13



H. Donner -
 A. Bisguier
 Bled 1961
 After Black's
 48th move

White is a pawn up in Diagram 13. At the moment both Kings are rather active. Because White's pawns are safe from attack by Black's Bishop, whereas Black's pawns are potentially vulnerable to White's Bishop, White has some longer term prospects thereby. However, at this point White's only significant advantage is the extra pawn, which gives White a 2P vs. P Queenside majority. White's first objective, therefore, is to create a passed Queenside pawn:

49 Bd1!

With the idea of 50 a4 bxa4+ 51 Ka3 followed by 52 Bxa4. Black cannot prevent this.

49 Bf7
 50 a4 Be8
 51 Ka3

51 axb5 is also fine. But 51 a5+?! is dubious because White may not be able to penetrate the resulting rather blockaded position.

51 Bf7
 52 axb5 Be8
 53 g4!

Preparing to place the Bishop on a useful diagonal. Black's response is forced since 53...g6? 54 gxf5 gxf5 saddles Black with another long term pawn weakness - the f5 pawn.

53 fxg4
 54 Bxg4 Kxb5
 55 Kb3

Preventing potential counterplay from 55...Kc4. White, of course, wants to leave his Bishop active rather than retreat it to e2.

55 Bf7
 56 Bd7+ Kb6
 57 b5

Advancing the passed pawn as far as possible to tie down Black's King.

57 g5
 58 Kc3

The King now moves to the Kingside to see what damage it can do there.

58 Kc7
 59 Bc6

An ideal location for the Bishop since it continues defense of the b-pawn with attack on the d-pawn.

59 h5?!

In unpleasant positions, pawn pushes come easily, but generally should be resisted. Here also this makes it easier for White's King to get at Black's Kingside. Keeping the status quo with 59...Be6 followed by ...Kb6, ...Kc7 etc. is the

best that Black has.

60 Kd2 h4
 61 Ke2 Be6
 62 f3!

This break starts clearing the way for White's King.

62 exf3+
 63 Kxf3 Kb6
 64 e4!

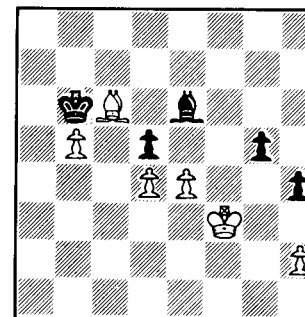


Diagram 14

H. Donner -
 A. Bisguier
 Bled 1961
 After 64 e4!

And this break continues the clearing process. Do note that all of this is worthwhile only because Black's King - chained to White's b-pawn - will not be able to help in defending his pawns.

64 ... g4+
 65 Kf4 dxe4
 66 Kxe4 Bc4
 67 Kf4 Be2

The K + P endgame after 67...g3 68 hxg3 hxg3 69 Kxg3 Bxb5 70 Bxb5 Kxb5 is lost by one tempo after 71 Kf4 Kc6 72 Ke5 Kd7 73 Kd5.

68 Bd7! Kc7
 69 Bxg4 Bxb5
 70 Kg5 Kd6

71 Kxh4

A two-pawn advantage wins here too. Black decides to go after the d-pawn, but this leaves him without defense against the h-pawn.

71 Kd5
72 Kg5 Kxd4
73 h4

As we already learned in Section 2, Part A, if the defending King cannot get back very quickly, he will lose. This example shows the bleakness of the situation against a Rook pawn still on the 4th rank.

73 Be8
74 Bf5! Ke5
75 Bg6 Bb5
76 h5 Bc4
77 h6 Bg8
78 Bf5! Black resigns.

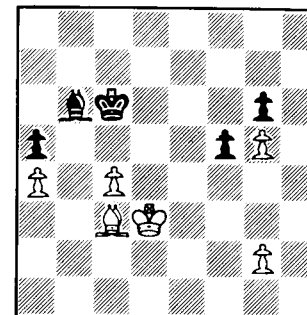
There is no defense to the coming 79 Kg6 followed by 80 Kg7.

Often enough the passed pawn that we have been able to create (or inherit from previous play) looks too sickly to be able to offer real prospects for progress. No matter. A passed pawn is a passed pawn and it is up to us to use our creativity to mobilize it so as to transform it into a power.

A marvelous example of the success of such an attitude is shown from Diagram 15 (on the next page), E. Paoli - H. Liebert, Debrecen 1968, with White on move. White's passed c-pawn looks like a non-starter, while the doubled g-pawns are no beauties and the forward one is vulnerable to Black's Bishop. Routine play will not be enough, e.g. after 1 Bd4, 1...Bd8! is adequate. Yet there is a creative way:

1 c5!!

Diagram 15



E. Paoli -
H. Liebert
Debrecen
1968
White on
move

Though apparently unprotected, the pawn is immune to capture. If now 1...Bxc5?! 2 Bxa5 and the impotent c-pawn has been "transformed" into an outside passed a-pawn, enabling the White King to soon infiltrate the Kingside. If 1...Kxc5?, Black lands in a lost K + P endgame because after 2 Bd4+ Kc6 3 Bxb6 Kxb6 4 Kc4! Kc6 5 g3 White has the opposition. Also 1...Bd8 is nothing since White has 2 Bf6.

1 Bc7
2 Kc4

Thanks to tactics White's King and c-pawn have been able to move one step forward. White's next step is to prepare the invasion of his King into Black's Kingside.

2 Bd8
3 Bf6 Bc7
4 Bc3 Bd8
5 Bd2 Bc7
6 Kd4! Bd8
7 Bf4! Be7
8 Ke5! Kxc5

This loses the Bishop, but 8...Bxc5 9 Kf6 allows White's King to devour the pawns.

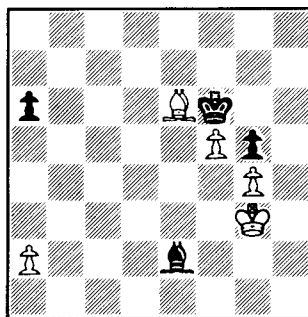
9 Ke6 Bd8
10 Kd7!

The fine tactical point of White's previous maneuvers. The Bishop is trapped, since 10...Bb6 fails to 11 Be3+.

10 ...	Bxg5
11 Bxg5	Kb4
12 Ke6	Black resigns.

There also are times when the passed pawn looks very nice. It may be, for instance, already a well advanced protected passed pawn. But if the defender can readily prevent its further advance, the win may be difficult to achieve. This is the situation in Diagram 16, M. Tal - Giterman, USSR 1951, after White's 41st move. White's protected passed f-pawn is stopped and the g-pawn is vulnerable to Black's Bishop. Obviously, without the a-pawns the position is a dead draw. Thanks to the presence of these pawns, White, if he can get into Black's Queenside, will win. The job is far from easy, but the 14 year old Tal gets it done thanks to some fine Bishop maneuvers:

Diagram 16



M. Tal -
Giterman
USSR 1951
After White's
41st move

41 ...	Ke5
42 Bc8	Bc4
43 a3	a5

Black's Bishop cannot remain on the active d1-g4 diagonal because after 43...Be2 44 Bb7! a5 White has 45 Bf3.

44 Kf3	Bf7
45 Bb7	Bg8
46 Ke3	Bf7

47 **Bf3**

Before the King heads for the Queenside, the g-pawn must be protected. The principle: don't allow counterplay!

47 ...	Bg8
48 Kd3	Ba2
49 Be2	Bd5
50 Bd1	

This and the following six to seven moves are a holding operation to gain time on the clock to prepare the winning maneuver. In practical play it is always a good idea to have sufficient time when deciding crucial strategy.

50 ...	Bg8
51 Kc3	Bf7

Black is forced to move only the Bishop, since if the King leaves its ideal location on e5, White's King will quickly penetrate.

52 Bb3	Be8
53 Bd1	Bf7
54 Bf3	Ba2
55 Bc6	Bg8
56 Bb5	Bd5
57 Be2	Bf7
58 Bc4!	Be8
59 Kb3!	

White has finally set up the optimum King and Bishop placement. The King gets ready to go to either a4 or c4. Since Black's Bishop cannot guard both of those squares simultaneously, nor can the King help out, White's King is sure to get at the a-pawn.

59 ...	Bc6
60 Be2!	a4+?!

Totally hopeless. The only practical try is 60...Kd4 61 f6 Bd5+ 62 Ka4 Ke5 63 Kxa5 Kxf6 though after 64 a4 White wins easily enough since Black's King cannot guard both sides of the board.

61 Kb4 Kf6
62 Kc5 Be8

If 61...Bb7, 62 Kb5 wins the pawn for nothing.

63 Bb5 Black resigns.

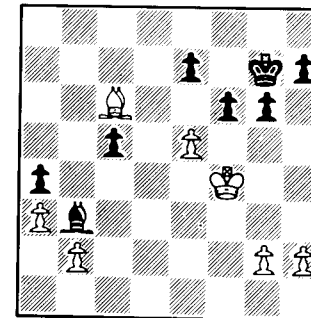
The above example illustrates so well the need for the stronger side's King to be able to effectively penetrate into the side of the board not defended by the weaker side's King. If this cannot be achieved, the chances are excellent that the game is drawn. The very first of my general principles stated: "Establish and follow a clear plan.". In same color Bishop endgames, a cardinal part of any plan must be to ensure that the King can penetrate into the enemy position. This important realization should be the guiding light when there is a choice between two or more potential paths. This concept is well illustrated by the play from Diagram 17, E. Mednis - A. Lein, New York (Marshall) International 1977, after Black's 34th move. A quick look shows that White is missing his f-pawn and has no discernible compensation for it. Therefore, White must expect that the likelihood of being in a theoretically lost position is very high. White's only advantage at present is that his King is more active than Black's. The chances are that this too will pass. I did not see a defensive plan that I had confidence in and therefore played:

(See Diagram on the next page)

35 exf6+!?

From a theoretical standpoint a move that makes Black's task easier, but I felt that most likely I would have to play it sooner or later. Yet my overriding reason for playing it now was to force Black to make a very major decision before

Diagram 17



E. Mednis -
A. Lein
New York
1977
After Black's
34th move

the time control at move 40.

Black must immediately decide on his "clear winning plan". He must recognize that an integral part of it must be to penetrate into White's Queenside. (As is true for the "normal" cases, so here too White's King can cope with the extra passed pawn on the Kingside.) How can Black get into the Queenside? The chances are poor that he will be able to use the c4 square because White's Bishop can control that readily enough. *Therefore the springboard for the invasion must be the d4 square.* Black's clear plan must ensure that his King can get to that square. If Black uses this logical decision making process, he will come up with the correct recapture. Is it 35...Kxf6 or 35...exf6?

A) 35 Kxf6?

This is the game continuation and is wrong. The correct 35...exf6 will be discussed under B).

The text move must have looked attractive to Black because he can quickly activate his King to e5. Yet there is no win, because the King can't get further. In a moment we shall see why.

36 g3 g5+
37 Ke3 Ke5
38 Be4 h6
39 Bc6

Already now we see the problem with 35...Kxf6?. White's King on e3 fulfills two defensive functions: stops the passed e-pawn and, most importantly, denies access to d4 for Black's King. And, like the Rock of Gibraltar, the King cannot be dislodged from e3. All that White needs to do is to keep his Bishop active and this is easy enough.

39	Kd6
40 Be8	c4

Since the prospects are so poor for a King invasion via this square, Black gets ready to use the pawn for a potential ...c3 break. Yet this break never offers the chance for an advantage.

41 Bb5	Kc5
42 Be8	e5
43 Ke4	Kd6
44 Ke3	Kd5
45 Bf7+	Kc5
46 Be8	Bc2
47 Bd7	e4
48 Kd2	Bb3
49 Ke3	

Draw

Offered by Black. There is no way to progress by normal means and the ...c3 break just never works. For instance, 49...c3 50 bxc3 Kc4 51 Kxe4 Bc2+ 52 Ke5! Kb3 53 g4! Kxa3 54 Kf6 Kb2 55 Bxa4 Bxa4 56 Kg6 etc.

B) 35 exf6!

Now Black will be able to execute his "classical strategy": create a viable passed pawn on the Kingside (the f-pawn), advance it to f4 to dislodge White's King from e3 and while White's King is busy coping with it, Black's King will penetrate into White's Queenside.

36 h4	h6
37 g3	Kf7!

Before advancing the Kingside pawns and thereby creating some holes on the light squares, Black centralizes the King.

38 Ke4	Ke6
39 Be8	f5+
40 Kf4	Kf6
41 Bc6	g5+
42 hxg5	hxg5+
43 Ke3	Ke5
44 Bb7	f4+
45 gxf4	gxf4+
46 Ke2	Bd5
47 Ba6	Kd4!

Compare this position with those after 35...Kxf6?: Black's King is ready to infiltrate and there is nothing White can do about it.

48 Kf2

Or 48 Kd2 f3! followed by 49...Bc4.

48	Bc4
49 Bb7	Kd3
50 Bc6	Bb3
51 Kf3	Kc2
52 Kxf4	Kxb2
53 Ke3	c4!
54 Kd4	c3
55 Be4	c2
56 Bxc2	Bxc2
57 Kc4	Kxa3
58 Kc3	Bb3
59 Kd2	Kb2

Black wins.

And so, despite White's best defense and Black's handicap of having the wrong Rook pawn for his Bishop, after the correct 35...exf6! Black's win is "routine".

Chapter 2: Positional Advantages

Section 1: Introduction

A more active King, a potentially more productive Bishop, an over-all superior pawn formation or a specifically very powerful pawn - these are the specifics of what is called "positional advantage". Often it is a combination of these factors that allows the positional advantage to be a meaningful one.

In making a judgment about a position a two step process is required: firstly, who is better, and, secondly, how large is the advantage. Though seemingly obvious, it must be emphasized that the first step is an absolute prerequisite for a successful result. If you evaluate your position to be superior, when in fact you stand worse, and proceed to play to win when you should be scratching for a draw, is it any surprise that you lose? Once we have the correct qualitative evaluation, then we need to consider the quantitative side. In a superior position, do we have good, some or no practical winning chances? The defender needs to ask the same questions in reverse. The theoretician always wants to know whether a position is a forced win or draw. But in real life often only a lot of postgame analysis can help to answer that. What the practical player needs to know is the relative "goodness" or "badness" of the position that he finds himself in and the correct strategy in aiming for the most that he can expect to get. It is these techniques that I will be presenting in the sections that follow.

Normally a positional advantage is expected to yield a material advantage -- in our case pawn(s). Once material advantage is achieved the win is usually simple, since the attributes of positional advantage generally remain. The examples that follow deal only with positions with pawns on both sides because only this situation gives meaningful winning chances.

Section 2: Better King

The examples in Chapter 1, Section 3, have already demonstrated the power and destructive capability of the King in Bishop endgames. The source of this power is three-fold: (1) the Bishop is, after all, only a minor piece; (2) the Bishop cannot protect pawns not of his color; and (3) if the King occupies an important post not of the Bishop's color, then the Bishop cannot chase him away.

We can make the following important generalizations regarding King location:

- (1) *If the King is on the fourth rank and cannot be chased away, this is a tangible advantage.*
- (2) *If the King is on the fifth rank and cannot be chased away, this gives good winning chances. Only when the opponent's position shows no fundamental weaknesses can he be sure of a draw.*

Let us now add meaning to the above principles by looking at actual positions.

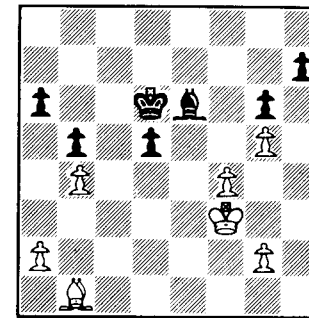
A. King on Fourth Rank

That a King on the fourth rank is *the* active King is easy to see graphically: put a King on the fourth rank on your board. You will see that the opposite King is thereby relegated to his third rank. Therefore it makes sense that an unsailable King on the fourth rank is a tangible advantage. *However, by itself, this advantage is insufficient for the win.* You must also be able to successfully attack the enemy pawns with your Bishop. These factors were already demonstrated in the evaluation of Diagram 2 and the play thereof.

Most examples from practical play are of somewhat more complicated nature. Characteristic is Diagram 18, A. Karpov - V. Hort, Budapest 1973, after Black's 37th move. Black had just before wrongly exchanged a pair of knights

and Karpov immediately starts to prove that White has a won position:

Diagram 18



A. Karpov -
V. Hort
Budapest
1973
After Black's
37th move

38 Ke3!

White is now sure to have the active King.

38	Bg4
39	Bd3	Be6
40	Kd4	

White's King now has a secure position on the fourth rank and thereby a "tangible" advantage. This when added to the following factors gives White a won position:

-- Black's King not only is relegated to its third rank but cannot move, because White's King would then infiltrate via c5 or e5.

-- All of Black's pawns are on the same color as White's Bishop, and because they are stuck on that color they are readily vulnerable. The primary target is the d-pawn; secondary targets are a6 and h7.

-- White will be able to create a passed pawn on the f-file. Note that White's doubled g-pawns are no handicap here, since they hold back Black's g- and h-pawns, thereby ensuring that the f-pawn is an effective extra pawn on the Kingside.

40 Bg4
 41 Bc2! Be6

If 41...Be2, White's f-pawn shows its power with 42 f5!, winning.

42 Bb3!

Forcing the Bishop to remain on the e6-g8 diagonal.

42 Bf7
 43 Bd1! Be6

Forced because of the threat of 44 Bg4.

44 Bf3!

Black now is in zugzwang and must allow either White's King or Bishop to penetrate. Notice how efficiently Karpov set up this position, without having to utilize the two existing tempo moves, a3 and g3.

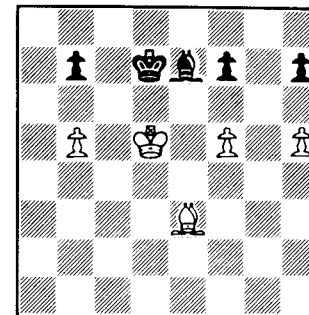
44 Bf7
 45 Bg4 Black resigns

White threatens 46 Bc8 and 45...Be6 46 Bxe6 Kxe6 47 g4 Kd6 48 f5 leads to an easily won K & P endgame for White.

B. King on Fifth Rank

A King on the fifth rank is a very substantial advantage because this relegates the opponent's King to its *second rank*. The defensive side must have a troublefree position not to be lost. One such position is shown in Diagram 19. It is drawn because White's Bishop cannot attack anything and Black's King can prevent any further penetration by White's King. (See Diagram 19 on the following page.)

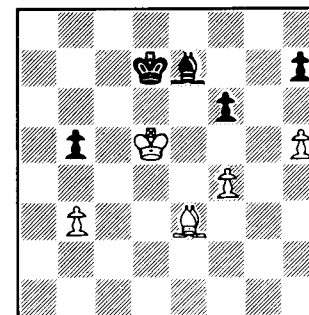
Diagram 19



Drawn

But a slight worsening of this position and chances are excellent that Black is lost. Consider now Diagram 20. White on the move wins rather effortlessly after:

Diagram 20



White wins

1 Bc5!

First the Bishop is chased back.

1 Bd8
 2 f5!

Then Black's f-pawn is fixed on the color of White's Bishop.

2 Bc7
 3 Bd4 Bd8

And now White wins Black's b-pawn and the game

with...

4 Kc5

White wins.

The play from Diagram 20 demonstrates how cramped the defender's pieces are on the last two ranks. Moreover, all such K & P endings are invariably lost for the defensive side.

Section 3: Better Bishop

In evaluating the quality of a Bishop, the first need to know is what is a "bad" Bishop and what is a "good" Bishop. The "bad" Bishop is one which is locked in by his own pawns and has therefore little scope to maneuver. Of necessity, this definition also says that such Bishop's pawns are vulnerable to an attack by the enemy Bishop. An extreme case of the "bad" Bishop is shown in Diagram 21. White's extra piece - his Bishop - is like a pawn and there is no win in the position.

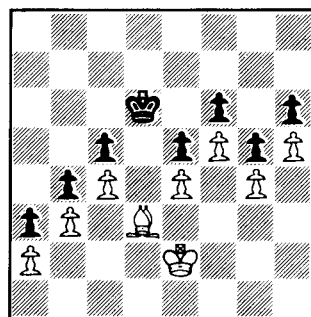


Diagram 21

Draw

For a Bishop to be "good", two factors must be present: (1) the Bishop may not be encumbered by his pawns, and (2) the Bishop must also be able to attack the enemy pawns, i.e. the pawns must be on the same color as the Bishop. In opening and middlegame play the first part of the definition is sufficient since if the Bishop has a great open diagonal it can combine with another piece (in particular the Queen) to wreak havoc. But in a same color Bishop endgame, the Bishop is by

itself and must be able to attack the vulnerable points (pawns!) by itself.

With the above background, we can now formulate the following two key principles:

(1) *In normal situations the "good" Bishop wins against the "bad" Bishop.*

A typical example from practical play is shown in Diagram 22, H. N. Pillsbury - Billecard, Munich 1900, after Black's 46th move. All of Black's pawns are on the same color as his Bishop and moreover, the Bishop is caught behind his own lines. On the other hand, White's Bishop is obviously good. With his next move White makes his Bishop even "better", thereby driving the last nail into Black's coffin:

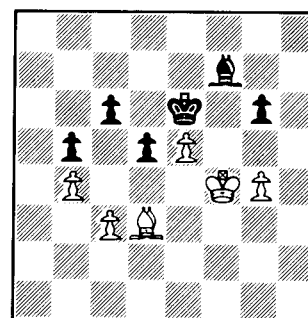


Diagram 22

H. Pillsbury -
Billecard
Munich 1900
After Black's
46th move

47 g5! Be8
48 Bf1 Bf7

This is the main line. In the game Black allowed a hopeless K & P endgame after 48...Bd7 49 Bh3+ Ke7 50 Bxd7 Kxd7 and lost quickly after 51 Ke3 Ke6 52 Kd4 Kf5 53 Kc5.

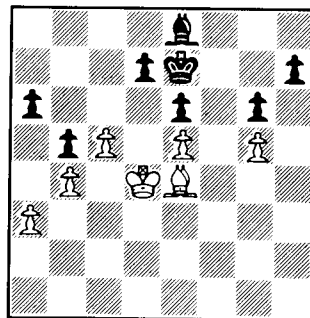
49 Bh3+ Ke7
50 Ke3 Be8
51 Kd4 Kd8
52 Kc5 Kc7

53 e6 and White wins.

The "bad" Bishop has been stalemated and Black's King must allow Kd6 with decisive effect.

If the "bad" Bishop is bad enough, even being at the start a pawn up may be insufficient to prevent the loss. In Diagram 23, White's Bishop is "perfect", Black's worse than bad. Even with Black on move he loses:

Diagram 23



White wins

1 ...	Kd8
2 Bb7	Kc7
3 Bxa6	Kc6
4 a4!	bxa4
5 b5+	Kc7
6 b6+	Kc6
7 Bb5+!	Kb7
8 Bxa4	

White has his pawn back and the open Queenside will allow his King to penetrate. Black's Bishop must continue its "modest" role.

8 ...	Ka6
9 Kc3	Kb7
10 Kb4	Ka6
11 Bb5+	Kb7
12 Ka5	Kb8
13 Ka6	Ka8

14 b7+ Kb8
15 Kb6 White wins

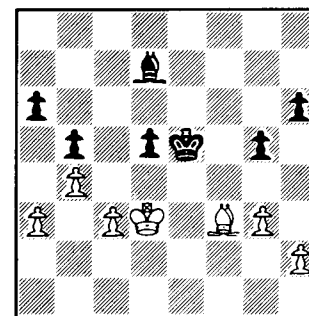
The moral of these two examples is simply: beware of voluntarily accepting the truly bad Bishop. It almost always loses.

(2) *The better Bishop always gives some winning chances.*

To be clearly sufficient for a win, however, additional advantages are required. These can be a better King or better pawns. A combination of all three usually gives a sure win, as we already saw from Diagram 2.

White's advantages in Diagram 24, B. Pytel - Hojdarova, Hungary 1969, White on move, are the better Bishop and better Queenside pawns. Black has the better King, but the d5 pawn is weak and the a6 pawn potentially so. His Bishop, though inferior to White's, has good scope and the Kingside pawn formation is healthy. White has some winning chances, but Black should draw with correct play. But soon Black goes astray:

Diagram 24



B. Pytel -
Hojdarova
Hungary 1969
White on
move

1 Bh5	Bf5+
2 Ke3	Bd7
3 h4!	g4??

A mammoth strategic error. Better is 3...gxh4 which exchanges off a pawn at the cost of weakening the f4 square.

However, best is leaving the Kingside pawns alone and playing 3...Be6!. If 4 Be8 Bc8 5 Bc6 Kd6! and White's position looks nice, but I don't see where he can penetrate. After the text, White's Bishop becomes very good and Black's very bad. By means of by-now-familiar tempo maneuvers, White wins a pawn and the game.

In same color Bishop endings, never, never, never voluntarily put your pawns on the same color as your Bishop unless there are very, very, very good reasons for it.

4 Bg6	Kf6
5 Bc2	Ke5
6 Bd3	Be8
7 Be2	Bd7
8 Bd1!	Be6
9 a4!	

Starting to undermine Black's Queenside. If Black exchanges, his a-pawn will be weak; if he allows White to exchange, then the b-pawn will be vulnerable.

9 ...	Bd7
10 axb5	axb5
11 Be2!	

Black again is in zugzwang. Since Black's King must keep his ground, a second weak Kingside pawn gets created.

11 ...	h5
12 Bf1	Bc6
13 Bd3	Be8
14 Bc2	Bf7
15 Bh7!	Be8
16 Bd3!	Ke6
17 Kd4	Kd6

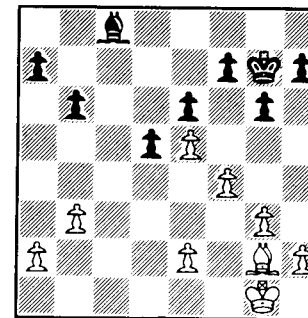
If Black's Kingside pawns would still be on g5 and h6, the position would be drawn. Now it is totally lost.

18 Bf5!	Bf7
19 Bh7	Be8
20 Bg8	Black resigns

To protect the d-pawn with 20...Bc6 means losing the h-pawn after 21 Bf7.

Diagram 25 shows the position from V. Smyslov - L. Szabo, Zurich Candidates 1953, after Black's 24th move. White has the better Bishop, since Black's d- through h-pawns are on the same color as his Bishop. Yet Black has no fundamental weaknesses and with careful play Szabo ensures the draw:

Diagram 25



V. Smyslov -
L. Szabo
Zurich Candidates
1953
After Black's
24th move

25 Kf2	Ba6
26 Ke3	

First White centralizes his King.

26 ...	h6
27 Bf3	f5
28 exf6+ e.p.	Kxf6
29 Kd4	g5!

The weaker side tries to exchange as many pawns as possible.

30 fxg5+	hxg5
31 e4	

Otherwise White can make no progress. If 31 h4 gxh4 32 gxh4 Bb7! followed by 33...e5(+) and Black has no worries.

31	dxe4
32 Kxe4	Bb5

And not 32...Bb7+?! 33 Ke3 Bxf3?? 34 Kxf3 as the outside passed pawn is usually decisive in K & P endings.

33 h4	gxh4
34 gxh4	a5!

Black also aims to exchange as many Queenside pawns as possible.

35 Kd4?!

With this and the following move, White underestimates Black's potential for counterplay. In order is 35 a3, to parry 35...a4?! by 36 b4.

35	a4
36 b4?!	a3!
37 Be4	Be8
38 Bb1	Bf7
39 Kc3	e5
40 b5	Bd5

Now Black has the better Bishop. Recognizing this, Smyslov hurries to force the draw.

41 Kb4	e4
42 Kxa3	e3
43 Bd3	Bf3
44 Kb4	e2
45 Bxe2	Bxe2
46 a4	Draw

47 a5 will exchange off Black's last pawn.

Section 4: Better Pawns

Having the superior pawn formation - or more simply, "better pawns" - can mean in a positive sense, having effective passed pawn(s) or in a non-negative sense, *not* being saddled with weak pawn(s). In this section both of these important categories will be covered.

A. Passed Pawns

As the number of pieces on the board decreases, the relative importance of pawns increases. It therefore follows that in an endgame where each side only has one Bishop, a viable passed pawn is a significant favorable factor. Most importantly, it may queen but even if it does not the King usually must blockade it (a blockading Bishop can often be chased off by an offer to exchange - see Diagram 29), which allows the opponent's King to wreak mayhem on the rest of the board. Therefore - as will be recalled from Chapter 1, Section 3 - the key principle in positions with a pawn advantage and pawns on both sides, is to create a passed pawn. The four types of desirable passed pawns are:

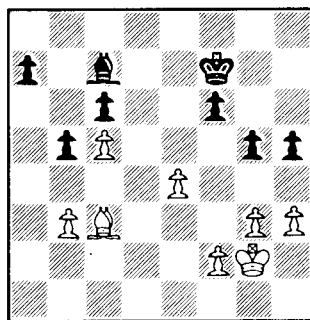
1. Outside Passed Pawn

The outside passed pawn is always a significant advantage because it ties down the defender (King or Bishop) far away from the rest of the board, enabling the offensive King to penetrate there. In most cases the outside passed pawn is sufficient to win. The exceptions occur when the defensive side's pawns are few, healthy and therefore readily defensible - as in Smyslov - Szabo, Zurich 1953 in the previous section.

A thematic demonstration of the value of the outside passed pawn is shown from Diagram 26, M. Tchigorin - H. N. Pillsbury, London 1899, after White's 33rd move. From his Queenside pawn majority Pillsbury creates a passed a-pawn which ties down White's Bishop and Black's King can then start bothering White's pawns:

(See the diagram at the top of the next page)

Diagram 26



33 a5!

Ensuring that after ...a4 Black will obtain an outside passed pawn. Black must not tarry as otherwise 34 b4! makes his task a lot more difficult.

34 Kf3 Ke6
35 Ke3?

Now White is definitely lost, as Black's Bishop will be able to menace White's Kingside pawns. Mandatory is 35 g4! ensuring that White's Kingside pawns can be placed on light squares.

35 g4!

Fixing White's pawns on the same color as Black's Bishop.

36 hxg4 hxg4
37 Kd3 a4
38 bxa4 bxa4
39 Bb4 Be5
40 Ba3

In a sense White has a favorable defensive set-up because his Bishop can successfully blockade the passed pawn. However, White is still lost because the absence of White's Bishop allows Black's King plus Bishop to dominate the center

M. Tchigorin
- H. Pillsbury
London 1899
After White's
33rd move

and exploit White's pawn weaknesses.

40 Ba1!
41 Bc1 f5
42 Ba3 Ke5!
43 exf5 Kxf5
44 Ke3 Ke5
45 f4+

The threat was 45...Bd4+ 46 Ke2 Kd5 and there is no defense to that. If 45 f3, then also 45...Bd4+ 46 Ke2 gxf3+ 47 Kxf3 Kd5 is sufficient.

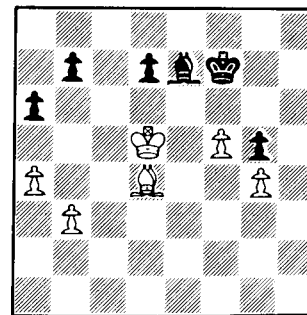
45 Kd5
46 f5 Be5!
47 Kf2 Ke4
White resigns

As a starter he will lose both Bishop pawns.

2. Protected Passed Pawn

A protected passed pawn is usually decisive. Because neither the King nor Bishop is required to protect it, they have free hands in trying to penetrate the other side of the board. Diagram 27 is quite won for White. Black's pawns and Bishop are basically O.K., but the protected f-pawn ties down the King so that White gains entry on the Queenside. With Black to move the play could continue:

Diagram 27



White wins

1 Bf8
 2 Bc5! Bg7

All K & P endings from this position are lost for Black. Now White protects his Bishop so that he can play Kd6.

3 b4! Bf6
 4 Kd6 Ke8
 5 Kc7 d5

The play after 5...b5 6 a5 d5 7 Kb6 is similar to the main line.

6 Kxb7 d4
 7 Kxa6 d3
 8 Be3 Bc3
 9 b5 d2
 10 Bxd2 Bxd2
 11 b6 Kd7
 12 b7 Kc7
 13 Ka7 White wins

3. Connected Passed Pawns

Connected passed pawns are better than disconnected passed pawns in Bishop endgames. Because connected passed pawns supported by the Bishop and/or King can be readily advanced, they usually win. For the defender to hope to draw, he must either be able to effect a blockade (very difficult to achieve) or obtain counterplay with a far advanced passed pawn.

The proper method of creating connected passed pawns and then utilizing them will be demonstrated from Diagram 28, B. Gurgenzidze - A. Zaitsev, 1969 USSR Championship, White on move. Just a quick look is enough to see that White must be clearly better. His Queenside pawn majority is in the form of a valuable protected passed pawn. On the other hand, Black's Kingside majority is hampered by the doubled pawn

and thus Black cannot create a passed pawn on that side. Yet for winning purposes, White must successfully answer the question: how to progress? The d5 pawn can be readily contained and the chances for penetrating the Kingside are poor. White's correct method is to create *under favorable circumstances* connected passed pawns using a characteristic tactical motif:

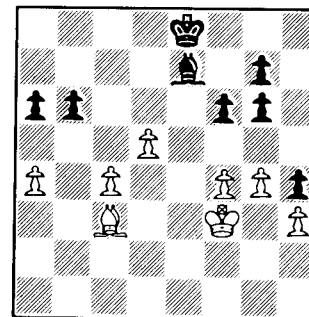


Diagram 28

B. Gurgenzidze
 - A. Zaitsev
 1969 USSR
 Championship
 White to
 move

1 Bd4!

White first improves his position all around: Bishop centralization, King centralization, Kingside pawn structure.

In the game White jumped the gun with 1 a5? bxa5 2 Bxa5, but after 2...f5! White's King was out of play and Black's a-pawn (*the* outside passed pawn) gave sufficient counterplay to draw.

1 Bd8

This passive retreat is forced since after 1...Bc5? 2 Bf2! Black only has the choice between the lost K & P endings after 2...Bxf2 3 Kxf2 or after 2...g5 3 Bxc5 bxc5 4 fxg5 fxg5 5 Ke4.

2 Ke4! Kd7

Black cannot afford 2...a5? because after 3 c5! bxc5 4 Bxc5 the a-pawn is vulnerable to White's Bishop and White's

King has access to b5.

3 f5! g5

Worse is 3...gxf5+ 4 gxf5 because then Black's h-pawn is unprotectable.

4 a5! bxa5
5 c5

Well supported by White's pieces, the connected passed pawns must in due course win. Yet note how White throughout combines defense against the a-pawn with the determination to advance his passed pawns.

5 a4
6 Kd3 Ba5
7 Kc4 Be1
8 Bc3! Bg3
9 Bb4! Be5
10 Ba3! Kc7
11 c6! Bf4
12 Bf8 Bc1
13 Bxg7 Bb2

Because Black's King had to watch the passed pawns, White's Bishop was able to penetrate Black's Kingside. Now White's King does its job of making the forward a-pawn harmless.

14 Kb4! a3
15 Kb3 Kb6
16 Bf8 Be5
17 Bxa3 Kb5
18 Be7! a5
19 Bxf6! White wins

After 19...a4+ 20 Ka2 Bf4 21 Bxg5! Bg3 22 Bxh4 White has five passed pawns. Also this example showed a common occurrence: the viable passed pawns paralyzed the

defender sufficiently so that he could not protect the rest of his property.

4. Advanced Passed Pawn

The further advanced a passed pawn is, the greater its force. The most important guideline to remember in positions with passed pawns is: passed pawns must be pushed! A basic demonstration of this is shown in Diagram 29. Here both sides have advanced passed pawns, but White's is further advanced and he wins easily after Bg3 - even if Black is on move. In normal situations - and unless the King can catch the passed pawn - the following principle applies: when both sides have passed pawns, the further advanced passed pawn wins.

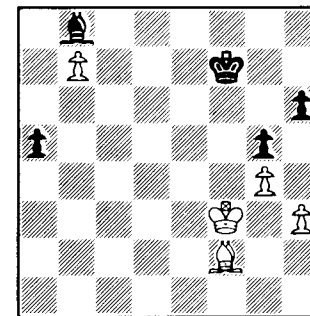


Diagram 29

White wins

B. Weak Pawns

Weak pawns can be considered to be those which are in danger of imminent capture by the King or Bishop. Yet such a definition will not help us in learning about pawn play involving inherently inferior pawn structures. Therefore in this section I will only be concerned with the inherently weak isolated pawn and the inferior double pawn structure.

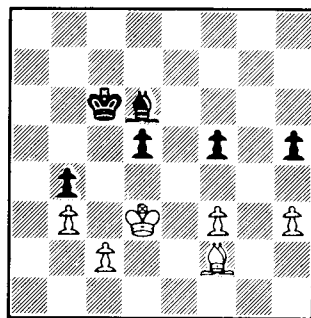
1. Isolated Pawn

The isolated pawn is one which has no pawn of the same color on an adjoining file. It is weak because it does not

have another pawn supporting it and because the absence of adjoining pawns makes it more accessible to the enemy King. When both sides have isolated pawns, both have opportunities for counterplay and the most likely game result is a draw. If only one side has isolated pawn(s), the stronger side has good winning chances because the protection of isolated pawns requires the help of either the King or Bishop, and this gives the stronger side's King or Bishop the opportunity to try to penetrate on the other side. If this can be done, the game generally is won; otherwise it is a draw.

This point is well illustrated by the play from Diagram 30, M. Matulovic - M. Cebalo, Yugoslavia 1970, White to move. Black has four isolated pawns, of which the b- and d-pawns are the most vulnerable ones and require continued attention by Black's forces. On the other hand White's Queenside pawns are perfect and the Kingside pawns safe from any attack by Black. Therefore White has some advantage, but to win White will have to penetrate into Black's Kingside. Can it be done?

Diagram 30



Matulovic -
Cebalo
Yugoslavia
1970
White on
move

1 Bd4 Kb5?!

Black completely misreads the scene of action. Correct is 1...Kd7 2 Ke3 Ke6 and it is doubtful whether White can make any progress.

2 Ke3 f4+??

The losing moment. We have already learned not to voluntarily put pawns on the color where they can be attacked by the enemy Bishop and this position is no exception. Absolutely required is 2...Kc6! 3 Bg7 Kd7 4 Kd4 Ke6 and although White has made progress, I have not found a win. After the strategic blunder 2...f4+??, Black has a second pawn accessible to White's Bishop and goes under. Section 3 on the "better Bishop" demonstrated how White should handle this. GM Matulovic's execution is flawless.

3 Kd3 Kc6
4 Bg7 Bc5
5 Bh6! Be3

After 5...Bd6?! 6 Kd4 Black is already in zugzwang.

6 Bf8! Kb5
7 Bd6 Ka5
8 Be5 Kb5
9 Bd4! Bc1
10 Ba7 Kc6
11 Bf2 Bb2
12 Be1! Kc5
13 c3!

The creation of an outside passed pawn at this moment leads to a forced win of Black's f-pawn.

13 bxc3
14 Bxc3 Ba3

Black has no choice, since the outside passed pawn creates a won K & P ending after 14...Bc1 15 Bd2! Bxd2 16 Kxd2 Kd4 17 h4!.

15 Bd2 Bb2
16 Bxf4 Bf6
17 Bd2! Kd6
18 Be3 Kc6
19 f4

Passed pawns must be pushed!

19	Be7
20 f5	Kd6
21 Bf4+	Kc6
22 Be5!	Bc5
23 Bg7	Ba3
24 Kc3	Bd6
25 Kd4	Ba3
26 Ke3	Bc1+
27 Kf3	Bd2
28 f6	Bc3
29 Bh8!	

The threat of 30 f7! forces Black's response.

29	Bb4
30 Kf4!	Bd6+
31 Kf5	Black resigns

After 31...Kd7 32 Bg7 White's f-pawn is ready to roll; 31...d4 32 Ke4 is the end of Black's counterplay.

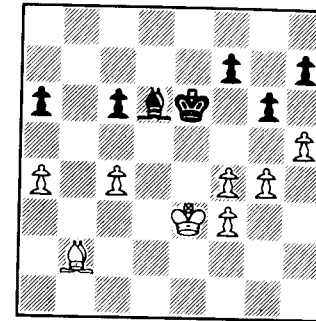
2. Doubled Pawns

Except for the case of isolated doubled pawns, double pawns as part of a pawn structure are not inherently weak defensively. Rather, the problem with double pawns is their lack of offensive punch. It is difficult to create a passed pawn from a pawn majority containing a double pawn. Even then a dynamic (non-symmetrical) formation is required. If the double pawn is part of a symmetrical formation, then it is impossible to create by force a passed pawn just from pawn play alone. We saw already in Diagram 28 how Black's pawn majority on the Kingside was made impotent by the presence of double pawns. Two additional examples are shown in Diagrams 31 and 32.

In Diagram 31 White's extra pawn is of very limited value since he cannot force a passed pawn on the Kingside.

If White tries 1 Ke4, Black simply forces the King back with 1...f5+ and then leaves the Kingside pawns as is. Over-all, Black's pawns are safe and with reasonable play the position is drawn.

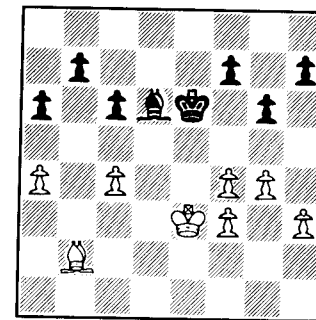
Diagram 31



Draw

The other side of the coin is illustrated in Diagram 32. Again White's Kingside majority is static and incapable of creating a passed pawn. On the other hand, Black's Queenside majority is a normal one and with 1...b5! Black creates a viable passed pawn and thereby good winning chances.

Diagram 32



Good
winning
chances for
Black

Section 5. Small Advantages in Bishop Endgames

The single most characteristic feature of the contemporary tournament scene is the need to win the game that you are playing. This is equally true both for the grandmaster and the amateur. Obviously when you are playing a match for the World Championship (and also of course the earlier

Candidates matches) the stakes are high. Yet the advent of the Swiss system tournaments where first place "is everything" and lower prizes "nothing" has placed a huge premium on winning. This is true for the GM ("Open") Group and also for the lower groups. This is particularly so for the tournaments in the United States.

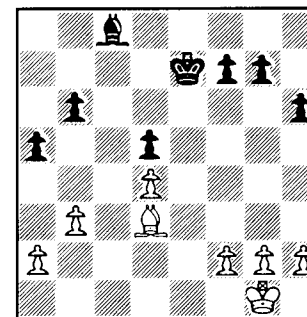
To win "almost all" games or at the very least "lots" of games, a certain amount of risk taking is required. Yet this must be at a measured level, since foolish risks just lead to losses. Therefore, more and more, experienced players are turning to the technique of trying to exploit small advantages into a win. The risk of losing such endgames is slim; the prospects of a win can be bright if you have the needed knowledge and determination. A "long time" ago it was thought poor manners to keep playing out superior, yet theoretically "dead drawn" endgames. You were supposed to trust your opponent's ability to always defend correctly. Such times are long past and the practical tournament player better be aware of that. *You must want to play out your slightly superior endgames with great enthusiasm and determination; you must be ready to defend slightly inferior endgames with great care and patience.* The worst thing that you can do in an inferior endgame is to get upset at your opponent for playing it out. This will lead to nothing but a lowering of your guard in trying to score the valuable half point.

To discuss this important subject I have selected two endgames: one where the defender is careless and loses deservedly and the other where the defense is up to the job. I decided to use same color Bishop endgames because the difficulty of correctly playing such endgames is often underrated by less experienced players.

Our first starting point is Diagram 33, W. Browne - J. Grefe, 1975 USA Championship, after Black's 22nd move. The only significant permanent item is that Black's d-pawn can be attacked by White's Bishop, whereas White's d-pawn is safe from Black's Bishop. Yet White can only attack Black's d-pawn by the Bishop, whereas Black has two defenders avail-

able. Therefore, obviously there can be no talk that the pawn is a significant weakness. *Black's isolated d-pawn is a significant weakness. Black's isolated d-pawn is a significant weakness. Black's isolated d-pawn is a significant weakness.* the advantage that White has. When I analyzed this endgame depth shortly after it was played, I referred to Diagram 33 as a "dead draw". But now - older and wiser - I know better. the first place, if a very strong international master can lose it, how can it be a "dead draw"? There are three important reasons why White not only should play it out but is *entitled* to do that: (1) White has no risk of losing, (2) Black will always have to move and can make error(s), and (3) because Black will always have to spend some energy in guarding the isolated pawn, this could give White some chances of opening up an infiltration into the Kingside. Much to gain, nothing to lose is the situation for White. White does win, as follows:

Diagram 33



W. Browne
J. Grefe
1975 USA
Championship
After Black's
22nd move

23 Kf1

Centralizing the King is a logical first step. Black has already accomplished this.

23 ... Bd7
24 a3!

At our starting point Black has the temporarily superior Queenside pawn formation. With the perceptive text White ensures that this situation can not be made permanent. After 23...Bd7, Black threatened 24...b5, followed by 25...b4, thereby ensuring that his Queenside pawns will always be on the dark squares, White's on light squares. However, after 24 a3!, White

is able - at his convenience - to continue with b4, thus also placing both of his pawns on the dark squares.

24	Kf6
25 Ke2	Ke7
26 Ke3	b5??

This major strategic blunder does not yet lose the game but is as wrong as can be: Black needlessly puts another pawn on a light square where it can be attacked by White's Bishop. But how can an experienced IM commit such an error? I think that the explanation involves letting down one's guard. The position appears "dead drawn" and the text helps to blockade the Queenside. Yet the damage done is permanent.

26 b4!

The refutation of Black's last move and the point of White's 24th. Black might as well capture, as after 27...a4?! the a-pawn could go lost in case the b-pawn is gone.

27	axb4
28 axb4	g5
29 f4!	

White now has the obviously superior Bishop, but Black can just prevent damage from that source. So White must try to get his King into Black's camp. There are no routes open on the Queenside, so White's King will have to head for the Kingside to look for chances there.

29	f6
---------	----

Black wants to be in the position that after a fxc5 he can recapture with the f-pawn and keep a symmetrical pawn formation. If Black would recapture with the h-pawn, then White has excellent chances for creating a viable outside passed h-pawn by g3 and h4.

30 Bg6	Bg4
--------	-----

31 h3	Bd7
32 Kf3	Kf8
33 Kg3	Kg7
34 Bh5	Bc6
35 h4!	

White tries to loosen Black's Kingside pawn formation in the hope of creating an invasion route for his King. Handicapped as he is by his vulnerable b- and d-pawns, Black must defend very accurately and purposefully to prevent this. Yet he never seems to fully grasp the seriousness of his condition.

35	Bd7
36 Bf3	Be6
37 Be2	Bd7
38 Bh5!	

Using the characteristic Bishop tempo maneuvers, whereby the Bishop can "lose a move", White has brought about the same position as after Black's 35th move, but with Black on move now. Yet having to move is unpleasant for Black. For instance, his Bishop has no good moves: 38...Be6? 39 Be8 wins the b-pawn or 38...Bc6? allows 39 Bg4! followed by Bc8 and Kg4 (similar to the actual game).

38	Kf8??
---------	-------

Since the Bishop can't move, Black moves the King. In critical positions a lot more perceptiveness is required. After the text White's King has a free road into Black's Kingside. The only correct defense is 38...gxh4+! 39 Kxh4 f5!, as pointed out by GM Robert Byrne. White's King then has no infiltration route and Black's Bishop can just protect his pawns. A g4 break by White is never feasible as after ...fxg4 the net result would be that Black's h-pawn becomes an outside passed pawn.

39 hxg5!

Just at the right moment when Black's King is away

from his g-pawn.

39 ... hxg5
40 fxg5 fxg5
41 Bf3

More accurate is 41 Bg4! (see move 45).

41 ... Be6
42 Be2 Bd7?

The only chance is 42...Ke7! (See note after Black's 44th).

43 Bf3

Again correct is 43 Bg4!. White wanted to play the text move quickly, so as to force Black to seal the next move.

43 ... Be6
44 Be2

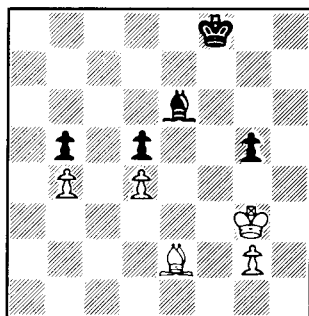


Diagram 34

W. Browne -
J. Grefe
1975 U.S.
Champion-
ship
After 44 Be2

44 ... Bd7?

Black's first move after adjournment leads to a definite loss since there is now no way to prevent White's King from penetrating Black's Kingside. A full night of analysis had convinced GM Browne that Black's only chance is 44...Ke7! 45 Bxb5 Kd6!. Black's King can then stop the b-

pawn and it is not clear what White can achieve on the King-side. White's advantage, of course, is huge and yet the win is not 100% certain. After the text move, it is.

45 Bg4!

Finally the right idea. Because the exchange of Bishops is not feasible, Black's Bishop must allow White's to penetrate.

45 ... Bc6
46 Bc8! Kg7
47 Kg4 Kg6
48 g3!

Putting Black in zugzwang. If now 48...Be8 White can win a pawn by 49 Bb7, e.g. 49...Bd7+ 50 Kf3 Be6 51 Bc6. However, most likely stronger is - similar to the game - 49 Bf5+! Kf6 (49...Kh6 50 Be6 Bc6 50 Kf5) 50 Bd3! Bd7+ 51 Kh5.

48 ... Kf6
49 Kh5! Be8+
50 Kh6

White's penetration route is unusual but effective. Thanks to zugzwang, White's King gets further and further in.

50 ... Bc6
51 Kh7 Be8
52 Bg4!

Enabling the King to reach g8, since 52...Bf7 fails to 53 Bd7 and 52...Kf7 to 53 Bh5+.

52 ... Bg6+
53 Kg8 Bf5
54 Be2 Bd7
55 Kf8! g4

Obviously undesirable, but no desirable moves exist,

e.g. 55...Bc6 56 Bg4! Bb7 57 Ke8, etc.

56 Bf1!

Preparing the final plan for zugzwang.

56 Bc6
57 Bg2! Bb7

After 57...Ke6, White gets to Black's g-pawn starting with 58 Kg7!.

58 Ke8 Ke6
59 Kd8! Kd6
60 Bf1! Bc6
61 Bd3! Black resigns

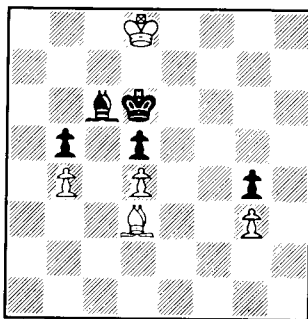


Diagram 35

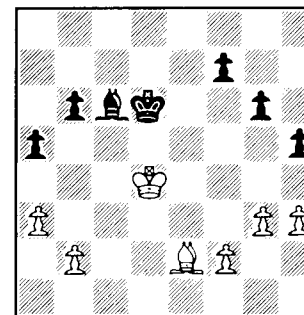
W. Browne -
J. Grefe
1975 U.S.
Championship
After 61 Bd3!

The end of this most classical endgame deserves a diagram. Though at this moment material is still even, because of zugzwang Black will now start losing his pawns: (1) 61...Ke6 62 Kc7 followed by 63 Kb6, (2) 61...Bd7 62 Be2!!, giving Black a Hobson's triple choice: lose the b-pawn, lose the g-pawn or lose the K & P endgame after 62...Kc6 63 Bxb5+ Kxb5 64 Kxd7 Kxb4 65 Kd6 Kc4 66 Ke5.

Now let us turn to an example of perfect defense against the then reigning World Champion, a patient maneuverer who continuously tests his opponent's skill. Yet the Champion-to-be shows why he deserves to wear his mantle.

Our starting point is Diagram 36, A. Karpov - G. Kasparov, World Championship 1985, Game 20, after Black's 46th move. The chess enthusiast who yearns for the romantic era is no doubt disappointed that such positions exist and are played out. Yet this is very much part of the bread and butter of contemporary tournament chess.

Diagram 36



A. Karpov -
G. Kasparov
1985 World
Championship
Game 20
After Black's
46th move

White must play out this position because he has two clear advantages: (1) the better King, since by being on the fourth rank it relegates Black's King to the third rank, and (2) the superior Bishop because it can menace Black's Kingside pawns. The above factors are not enough to win, but more than enough to attempt to do so. Kasparov's qualitative evaluation of the situation is perfect: "The ending is unpleasant, but it is tenable, a store of patience being all that is required." Therefore, Black clearly has the proper attitude, and "all" that is required is to find the proper moves - something which requires eternal vigilance.

47 Bc4 Be8
48 h4 f6

Both necessary and good: Black safeguards the important e5 square, enables a potential ...g5 advance, while removing one of the Kingside pawns from the vision of White's Bishop.

49 Bg8!

Already forcing Black to start serious thinking. The

attempt to activate the Bishop with 49...Bd7? 50 Bf7 Bf5 leads to problems after 51 f3!: (1) 51...Ke7 52 Bd5 Kd6 53 Be4, or (2) 51...Bc2 52 g4 Ke7 53 Bd5 Bd1 54 Be4 f5 (or 54...Kf7 55 gxh5 gxh5 56 Kd5) 55 gxf5 gxf5 56 Bxf5 Bxf3 57 Ke5 - in each case with a substantial advantage for White (analysis by GM Yuri Averbach).

49	Kc6!
50 Ba2	Kd6
51 Bd5	Ke7
52 Bg8	Kd6
53 Bb3!	

White, with his apparently aimless Bishop maneuvers, keeps giving Black the opportunity to go wrong. For instance, a blunder now is 53...Kc6?? because after 54 Ba4+ b5 55 Bc2 Black's b5 pawn is a new fundamental weakness.

53	Ke7
54 Bd1	Kd6
55 Be2	Bd7
56 Bd3	Be8!
57 Bc4	Ke7
58 Be2	

Because of Black's steadfast defense, it has become clear to White that the value of Bishop maneuvers has been exhausted. Therefore, it is time to prepare a pawn advance. The place to do this is where the opponent has weaknesses - the Kingside. Less obvious is how to do it. Kasparov points out that a routine pawn advance by 58 f3 Kd6 59 g4 is nothing because of 59...g5!, with the resulting pawn exchanges being only in Black's favor. He points out further that even delaying the f3, g4 advance until White's King is on f4 and Bishop on d3 will also not be sufficient to win because after "1" g4 hxg4 "2" fxg4 Bf7 "3" g5 Ke7 there is no apparent way for White to improve his position.

58	Kd6
59 g4	

Less flexible is 59 f4 since after 59...Bf7 60 Bd3 Be8 61 f5 Black has 61...g5, and with the improvement of his Kingside pawn formation, Black has approximate equality (Karpov + Zaitsev).

59	hxg4
60 Bxg4	

Here again is another moment of truth for Black and Kasparov took 30 minutes for his move, before correctly deciding that keeping the status quo is the right defense.

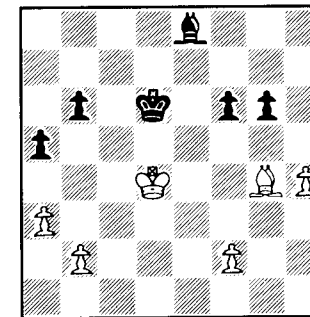


Diagram 37

A. Karpov -
G. Kasparov
1985 World
Championship
Game 20
After
60 Bxg4

The active 60...g5? 61 h5 f5 is refuted by 62 h6! Bg6 63 Bh5! Bh7 64 Kc4!. Kasparov is satisfied to end the analysis here with "White must win". Karpov + Zaitsev take it further: 64...g4 (The passive 64...Kc6 65 Be8+ Kd6 66 Kb5 Kc7 leads to zugzwang and trouble after 67 Ka6 g4 68 Bh5! Kc6 69 b4 axb4 70 axb4 Kc7 71 b5.) 65 Kb5 Ke5 (65...Kc7 66 Ka6! will transpose into the above line.) 66 Be8! (Black gets strong counterplay after 66 Kxb6?! Kf4 67 Kxa5 Kf3) 66...f4 (Now there is no time for 66...Ke4?! 67 Bc6+! Kd3 68 Kxb6 and White will come first) 67 Bc6 g3 68 fxxg3 fxxg3 69 Kxb6 Be4 60 Bxe4 Kxe4 71 h7 g2 72 h8=Q g1=Q+ 73 Kb5! and there is no reason why ultimately White shouldn't win.

60	Bf7!
61 f4	

White now threatens 62 f5!, creating a winning outside

passed pawn, thus forcing Black's response. White could have tried first a few more Bishop maneuvers with, e.g. 61 Be2 Bd5 62 Bd3 Bf7 63 Bc4 Be8, yet ultimately 64 f4 needs to be played and after 64...f5! we would have the same pawn formation as in the game. White can improve his King position after 65 Bg8! Ke7 (forced) 66 Kd5 or 66 Ke5, but Black's position is stable enough to hold. Still this approach seems to give White better practical chances than the game continuation.

61	f5!
62 Bd1	Bd5
63 Ba4	Bf3!

Black wants to keep his Bishop active, because after 63...Bf7 64 Bb5! he would be forced to play 64...Ke7 and acquiesce to the passive position discussed after White's 61st move.

After the text it is worthwhile to examine what White's pawn advances have led to. Both of Black's Kingside pawns are vulnerable to White's Bishop, with the g-pawn being fundamentally weak. Yet White also has absorbed some demerits: one pawn has been exchanged off, White's split pawns are vulnerable to an incursion by Black's King and, most importantly, White has a h-pawn - the RP which is the wrong color for his Bishop!

64 Bb3	Be2
65 Bf7	Bh5
66 Kc4!	Be2+
67 Kc3	Bh5
68 b4	

Black can never be put into zugzwang on the Kingside because a 68 Be8 is always answered by 68...Ke7 with an attack on the Bishop. Therefore, White must now try to progress on the Queenside. The text does have the disadvantage of causing a Queenside pawn to be exchanged off, yet it again forces Black to make the correct choice. Should Black's

pawn retain control of b4 or c5?

68	Ke7!
---------	------

The key again is that White cannot put Black into zugzwang by force on the Kingside and therefore Black's King will be able to hold his ground on d6 and thereby protect c5 sufficiently. Losing is 68...axb4+? 69 Kxb4 since White's King can then infiltrate as follows: 69...Kc6 70 Be8+ Kc7 71 Kc4! Kd6 72 Kb5 Kc7 73 Ka6 Be2+ 74 Ka7 Bh5 75 Bf7 Kc6 76 Kb8! (Kasparov). Notice how similar this winning maneuver is to that of the previous game. There White won by getting his King to g8 via the Kingside; here to b8 via the Queenside.

69 Bc4	Kd6!
70 bxa5	bxa5
71 Kd4	Bf3

Now, in Kasparov's words, Black's Bishop is "evicted" from the d1-h5 diagonal. He considers 71...Bd1 72 Bf1 Bf3! as the most accurate move order.

72 Bf1	Bd5
--------	-----

The Bishop must head back as after 72...Bg4? 73 Kc4! Kc6 74 Bg2+ Kb6 75 Bd5 White's King will penetrate decisively into Black's Kingside.

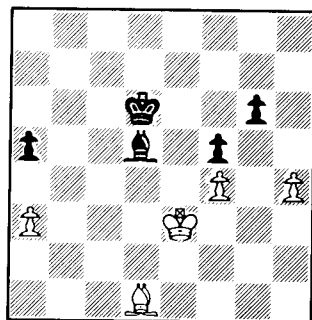
73 Be2	Bb7
74 Bd1	Bd5
75 Ke3!?	

(See Diagram 38 on the following page)

A surprising, creative move. White wants to attack the g6 pawn with a Be8 or Bf7 without allowing Black's ...Bh5 defense. By guarding the f3 square, White's King prevents Black's Bishop from getting to h5. Of course, the text allows Black's King to be activated and this factor will be enough to

obtain a draw.

Diagram 38



A. Karpov -
G. Kasparov
1985 World
Championship
Game 20
After 75 Ke3

75 ... Kc5
76 Ba4 Bf7
77 Bd7

White cannot put Black in zugzwang by 77 Kd3!? Bc4+ 78 Kd2 Bf7? 79 Kc3, because Black has the better 78...Kd4!, taking advantage of White's split pawns to reach equality after 79 Be8 Ke4 80 Bxg6 Kxf4 81 h5 Kg5 (Averbach).

77 ... Kc4
78 a4

Unavoidable, but with the disadvantage that the pawn now is on the same color as Black's Bishop. Yet Karpov, by playing a4 immediately, again forces Kasparov to be on his toes. The active 78...Kb4? loses after 79 Kd4 Bb3 80 Be8 Bxa4 81 Bxg6, e.g. 81...Bc2 82 Be8! a4 83 Bxa4 Bxa4 84 h5 Be8 85 h6 Bg6 86 Ke5 Kc5 87 Kf6 (Averbach). The active 78...Kc3? loses after 79 Bb5! when Black has nothing better than entering the above line with 79...Kb4 80 Kd4 Bb3.

78 ... Kc5!

Kasparov's perceptive solution: the King will be used to prevent the queening of White's Kingside pawns while the Bishop's function will be to obtain counterplay against the a4 pawn.

79 Bb5 Kd5!
80 Kd3 Kc5
81 Kc3 Kd6!
82 Kd4 Bb3!

White's a-pawn is worth - for Black - both of his Kingside pawns. In a moment we'll see why.

83 Be8 Ke7
84 Bxg6 Bxa4
85 Bxf5 Kf6

Draw!

Because White's h-pawn is the wrong color for his Bishop, Black has a sure draw if he sacrifices his Bishop for the f-pawn and his King can reach h8. It is not that difficult to realize that Black can achieve this. Kasparov gives the following instructive variation: 86 Bd3 Be8 87 Kc5 a4 88 Kb4 Ke6 89 Bc2 Kf6! 90 Bxa4 Kf5! 91 Bxe8 Kxf4 92 Bd7 Ke5 followed by ...Kf6, Kg7, Kh8.

Part II

Opposite Color Bishop Endgames

Chapter 3: Characteristics of Opposite Color Bishop Positions

As soon as there are opposite color Bishops on the board, always be aware of the following two principles:

(1) *If you are down material, look for drawing chances in a pure opposite color Bishop endgame.*

Probably the most unique endgame is the pure opposite color Bishop one. Here each of the Bishops does "his own thing", completely oblivious of the existence of the other one. In all other endgames the piece(s) can and do attack each other. The strategy of exchanging is often the key concept in playing to win superior endgames. But such matters become irrelevant in pure opposite color Bishop endgames. Therefore King activity very much increases in importance. However, the importance of having an active King is generally well recognized in all endgames. The concept that is so special in opposite color Bishop endgames is that of the BLOCKADE. Because there is no way to chase away the Bishop by offering an exchange, blockades in opposite color Bishop endgames are relatively easy to achieve and very difficult to break. Very often a one pawn advantage is insufficient to win; often enough to give comfort to the defender, a two pawn advantage is insufficient; and periodically even a three pawn advantage is not enough. The reason always is the same: a blockade which can't be broken.

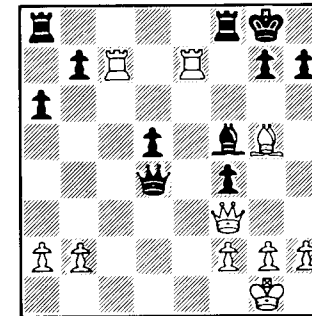
(2) *With major pieces (Queen and/or Rook(s)) on the board, opposite color Bishops favor the side with the attack.*

However, there is a paradox regarding the value of having the opposite color Bishops in an inferior position. If there are major pieces (Queen and/or Rook(s)) on the board,

and these can create an attack, then the defender's job is much more difficult, because there is nothing that he can put up to neutralize the strength of the enemy Bishop.

Often in such positions, the most effective method of increasing one's advantage is to exchange Queen's so that the defender's best piece is removed from the board and the attacking Bishop can do its job with little interference. This is well illustrated in the play from Diagram 39, J. Speelman - J. Nogueiras, Barcelona World Cup 1989, after Black's 21st move. White's Rooks doubled on the 7th rank are a fantastic power, yet Black's active Queen is doing double duty as both an attacker and defender. Therefore:

Diagram 39



J. Speelman -
J. Nogueiras
Barcelona
World Cup
1989
After Black's
21st move

22 Qc3!! Qxc3

Forced since 22...Qd1+?? 23 Re1 d4 drops the Queen after 24 Qc4+.

23 bxc3 Rae8
24 Rxc3+ Kh8
25 h3!

Of course, White's immediate need is to prevent the back rank mate. In the game White played 25 h4?! and won after poor defense by Black. However, much stronger is 25 h3! as recommended by GM Speelman after the game. White's Rooks stand fantastically, but his Bishop is not participating in the attack. If White could get the Bishop to d4, then the

end for Black would be immediate. Therefore White needs a route for the Bishop from g5 to d4. That route is Bh4-f2-d4 and therefore the Bishop needs access to both the h4 and f2 squares.

A likely continuation now would be:

25 Bg6

After 25...f3, simplest is 26 gxf3 followed by Be3; after 25...b5, decisive is 26 Bxf4 followed by Be3.

26 f3! b5

If 26...Rg8, 27 Rxh7+! Bxh7 28 Bf6+ Rg7 29 Bxg7+ Kg8 30 Bd4 is killing.

27 Rgd7

The immediate 27 Bh4 can be met by 27...Rc8; now 27...Rc8? is refuted by 28 Bf6+!

27 Re1+

After 27...Rf5, White plays 28 Bh4 and 29 Bf2; after 27...Kg8, 28 Rxd5 is good enough.

28 Kh2 Re2

Preventing Bh4-f2, but now the Bishop gets to d4 a different way.

29 Bh6 Rfe8
30 Bg7+ Kg8
31 Bd4 R8e6
32 Rg7+ Kf8
33 Bc5+ Ke8
34 Rg8 mate

Please recall how irrelevant Black's Bishop was in

coping with White's Bishop!

Still, most of the examples of the advantage of the opposite color Bishop in the attack occur with Queens on the board. Witness the play from Diagram 40, E. Mednis - J. Gore, Marshall Chess Club Championship, New York 1955, after Black's 39th move. At first glance it may appear that Black has a strong attack, yet the truth is otherwise. Black's Bishop is both irrelevant for an attack against White's King and impotent as a defender of the dark squares around his own King. White won quickly as follows:

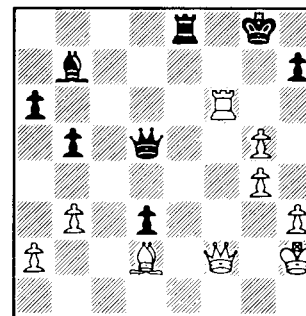


Diagram 40

E. Mednis -
 J. Gore
 New York
 1955
 After Black's
 39th move

40 Kg3 Qe4
41 Kh4! Qe7

Black has no viable plan for either defending the chronic dark square weaknesses around his King nor for achieving counterplay. Thus 41...Qg2 or 41...Qe2 are also met by 42 Qf4; after 41...b4 White plays 42 Qb6.

42 Qf4 Qe4

Here and on the next move Black tries to exchange Queens to lessen White's attack. If 42...Rf8, 43 Bb4! Rxf6 44 gxf6 wins. After 42...Be4 White wins a second pawn with 43 Rxa6 while retaining all his attacking chances.

43 Qd6 Qd5
44 Qc7! Rd8
45 g6!

The start of the decisive attack. Notice how the rock-like position of White's Bishop on d2 both blockaded the d-pawn, prevented checks on e1, while still being ready to jump into the attack at a moment's notice.

45 Qd7
46 gxh7+ Kh8

After 46...Kg7, simplest is 47 Qe5.

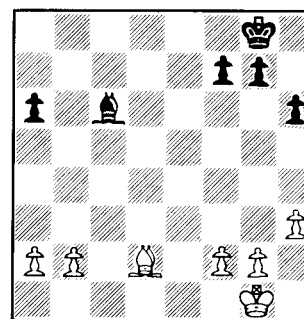
47 Rf8+ Black resigns

Chapter 4: Material Advantage -- Normal Positions

Section 1: One Pawn Advantage

A one pawn advantage, without other significant advantages, is insufficient to win. This is the principle which sets the pure opposite color Bishop endgame apart from all the others. In other endgames, a "good extra pawn" is sufficient. Let us return for a moment to Diagram 12. This was a thematic routine win. Yet, if we change the color of Black's Bishop to get Diagram 41, the position then is a certain draw. A likely continuation would be:

Diagram 41

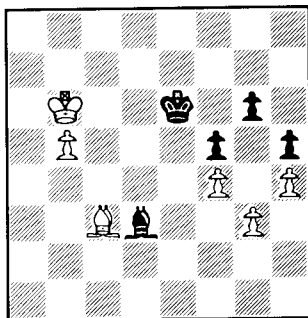


Draw

1 Bc3	f6
2 f3	Kf7
3 Kf2	Ke6
4 Ke3	Kd5
5 Bb4	g6
6 Bf8	h5
7 Be7	f5
8 Bd8	Bb5
9 h4	Bf1
10 g3	Bb5
11 b3	Ke5
12 Bc7+	Kd5
13 Kf4	Ke6
14 Kg5	Kf7
	Draw

Clearly White cannot hope to progress. Even if Black misplays Diagram 41 from the start and allows White the active King and a passed pawn on the Queenside, chances are that the position is still drawn. Let us now look at Diagram 42. White on move wins with 1 Kc6! followed by the advance of the b-pawn. But Black on move can still draw:

Diagram 42



White on
move wins
Black on
move draws

1 ... Kd7!
2 Kc5

Or 2 Ka5 Bd3 3 b6 Be4 4 Ka6 Kc8 5 Kb5 Kd7 5 Kc5 Ke6, etc.

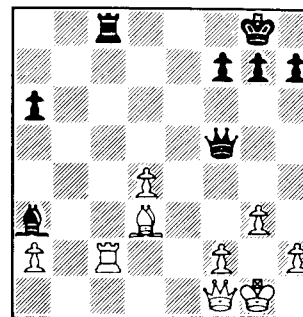
2 ... Be4
3 b6 Bb7
4 Be1 Ke6
5 Bf2 Kd7
6 Kd4 Ke6

Draw

White's King cannot get into the Kingside and the b-pawn remains securely blockaded.

Now let us take a quick look at some examples from tournament play which further prove the correctness of the principle stated at the beginning of this section. Diagram 43 is R. Fischer - J. H. Donner, Santa Monica 1966, after White's 30th move (30 Bc4-d3). The Dutch GM jumps at the chance to establish a drawn opposite color Bishop endgame.

Diagram 43



R. Fischer -
H. J. Donner
Santa Monica
1966 after
White's 30th

30 ... Rxc2!
31 Bxf5 Rc1
32 Qxc1 Bx1
33 Kf1

If 33 d5, 33...Ba3 stops the pawn

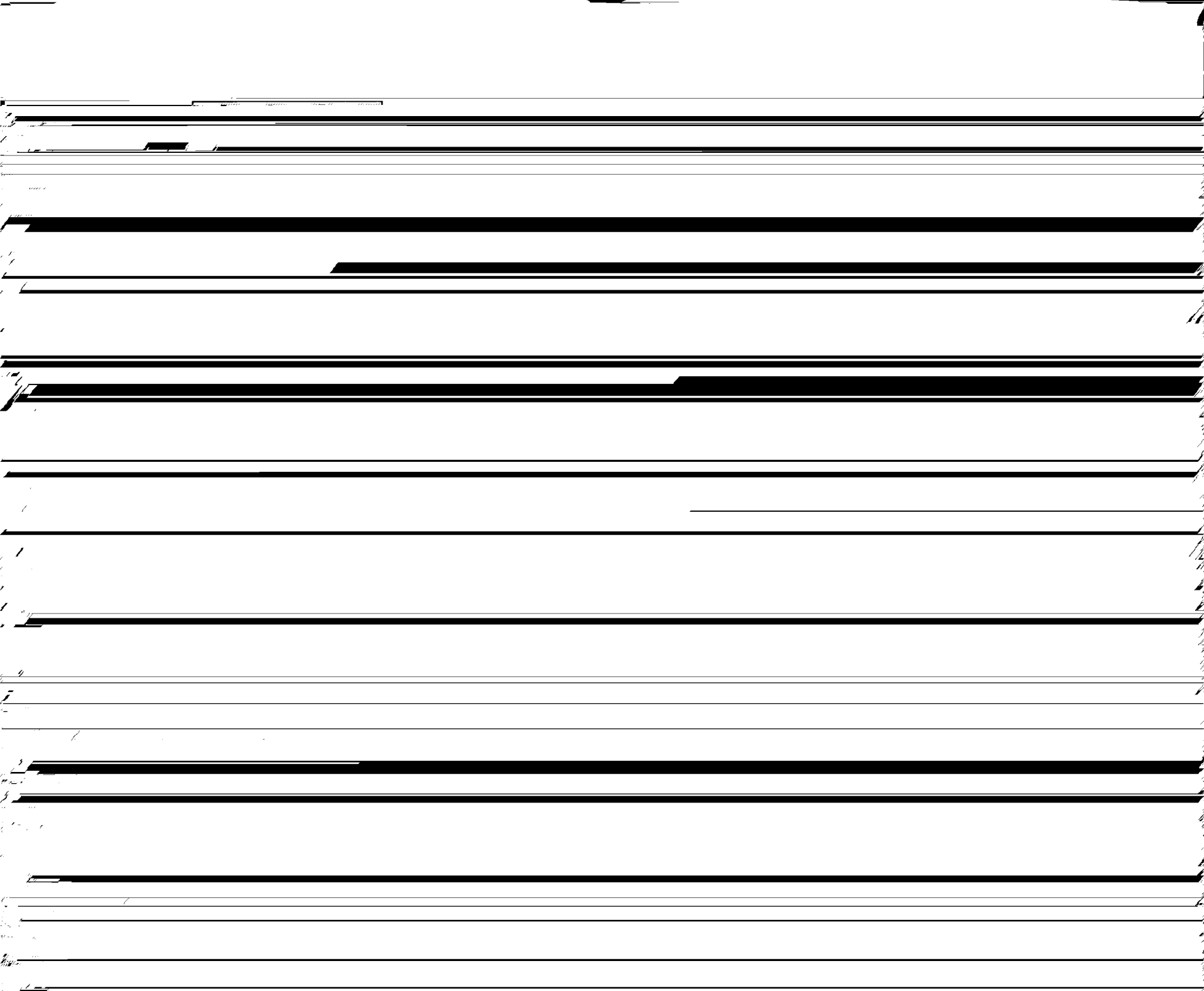
34 ... h6
35 Ke2 Kf8
Draw

Even as great a fighter as Fischer decided that there was nothing better than to offer a draw. Black readily stops the d-pawn and White has no hope for progress anywhere else either.

The play from Diagram 44 (on the next page), A. Matanovic - M. Udovic, Zagreb 1965, after Black's 34th move, shows that the extra pawn in the form of a far advanced protected passed pawn also may be insufficient to win. White's extra pawn is the c-pawn and Black is ready to paralyze that with 1...Bb4. Therefore, White tries:

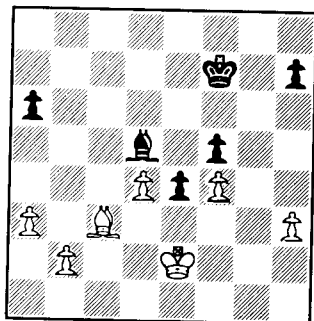
35 c5!

If now 35...dxc5?, then 36 d6 and 37 Kd5; White's King then is well placed, whereas Black's King is cut off from the d-pawn. Thus White has reasonable winning chances. Black therefore bases his defense on the principle of blockade.



There is little doubt that 47...Bxc4 48 Kxg6 Be2 is drawn also, but the text move demonstrated to me the futility of making any further winning attempts. It is important to realize how handicapped White was by his "do nothing" opposite color Bishop.

Diagram 46



D. Barlov -
E. Mednis
Graz 1987
After White's
40th move

Black also has every right to expect to draw Diagram 46, D. Barlov - E. Mednis, Graz 1987, after White's 40th move, though some more care is necessary than in the previous example:

40 ...	Ke6
41 Kd2	Bc4
42 Ke3	Bf1!

A key part of Black's defense: by closing off the Kingside, Black only has to worry about keeping White's King out of the Queenside.

43 h4	h5!
44 Kd2	Kd5
45 b3	Bd3
46 a4	Bf1

Black's position seems rock solid, but White finds a nice maneuver to untangle his pieces.

47 Bb2!	Bd3
48 Kc3!	Be2!

49 Bc1	Bd1
--------	-----

The crux of Black's defense was the last two moves. White's plan was Be3, followed by Kb4-a5, followed by b4, b5.

50 Be3	Kc6
51 Kc4	Be2+!
52 Kb4	Bd1!
53 Ka3	

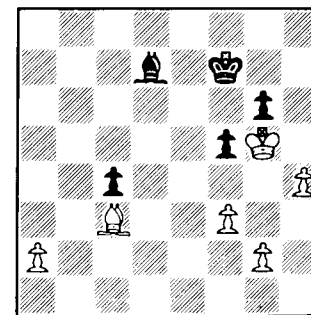
There is no time for 53 Ka5 because Black's Bishop captures both Queenside pawns.

53 ...	Kd5
54 b4	Be2
Draw	

White has been convinced that there is no way to progress. After the obvious 55 b5 axb5 56 a5, Black sets up an unbreakable blockade with 56...b4+!! 57 Kxb4 Ba6.

All the previous examples have shown how difficult it must be to win with a one pawn advantage. To be successful there truly must be significant positional advantages. The kind of position that can be won is shown in Diagram 47, B. Larsen - R. Hubner, Leningrad Interzonal 1973, after Black's 43rd move. The characteristics are:

Diagram 47



B. Larsen -
R. Hubner
Leningrad
(izt) 1973
After Black's
43rd move

-- On the Queenside each has a passed pawn, which is

blockaded by the Bishop. White has the advantage of having the more outside passed pawn. However, White's Bishop is the wrong color for the a-pawn and thus White must be careful that he is not left with the Bishop + a-pawn combination when Black's King can get to the queening square.

-- White has the active King.

-- Black's g-pawn is a fundamental weakness.

-- White has the potential h5 break with this plan after ...gxh5: Kxf5, followed by Kg5 and Kxh5. Black's Bishop on d7 prevents this plan, but can be pulled away by the advance of the a-pawn.

These factors add up to a win because White will win a second pawn under circumstances where his King remains active. The instructive game course is:

44 a3!

Already putting Black in zugzwang: if the Bishop stays on the c8-e6 diagonal, the a-pawn advances; if the Bishop stays on the a4-e8 diagonal, the h5 break is decisive.

44	Bc8
45	a4	Bd7
46	a5	Bc8
47	Bb2	

Another zugzwang position and Black's Bishop must give up his watch over f5.

47	Ba6
48	h5!	gxh5

White must be careful about how to capture. Wrong is 49 Kxh5? because after 49...c3! 50 Bxc3 Ke6 the position is drawn, since to progress White will have to exchange a King-side pawn and then Black's King quickly runs to the Queen-side while the Bishop sacrifices itself for White's last Kingside

pawn.

49 Kxf5	c3!
----------------	------------

In the game Black resigned after 49 Kxf5. The text is Black's best try since otherwise White plays Kg5 and Kxh5 and is up three passed pawns.

50 Bxc3	Bf1
51 g3	

Of course not 51 g4?? hxg4 with a draw as discussed in the note to Black's 48th move.

51	Be2
52	f4	Ke7
53	Ke5	White wins

Because White also is left with a g-pawn, Black's Bishop cannot afford to sacrifice itself for the f-pawn. White's two widely separated passed pawns, supported by an actively placed King are a sure win. The next section will show how to play such endgames.

Section 2: Two Pawn Advantage

Because a one pawn advantage usually is insufficient to win, the important questions become: when does a two pawn advantage win and when despite a two pawn disadvantage is the position drawn. As always, the correct technique for the stronger side is to first obtain passed pawns and then to try to queen them. The two categories of passed pawns are connected passed pawns and disconnected passed pawns. In this section will be considered the basic principles pertaining to each category. Chapters 5 and 6 will consider more advanced cases.

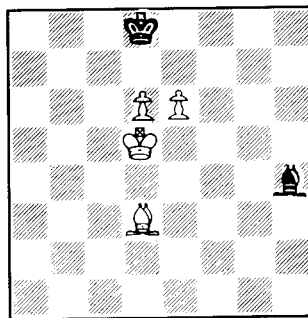
A. Connected Passed Pawns

We can formulate the following four important principles:

- (1) *The defending King must be in front of the pawns to have any hope for a draw.*
- (2) *When both pawns are on the sixth rank, the game is usually won. The only exceptions are a few RP + NP positions.*

A typical won position is shown in Diagram 48.

Diagram 48



White wins

It is won irrespective of who is on move. White's

winning technique consists of bringing the King over to the Kingside and then advancing the e-pawn. With White on move:

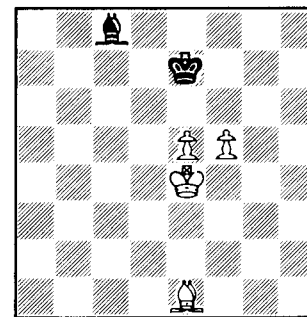
1 Bb5	Bf6
2 Ke4	Bg5
3 Kf5	Bh4
4 Kg6	White wins

White does not even need to play 5 Kf7; after 4...Bg3 or 4...Kc8 the e-pawn can be advanced immediately.

3) *If the pawns are further back, then the key question is whether they can be successfully advanced to the sixth rank. If the answer is yes, then there is a win; otherwise it is a draw.*

The two key situations are shown in Diagrams 49 and 50. Diagram 49 is drawn irrespective of who is on move. With White on move, play can proceed as shown on the following page:

Diagram 49



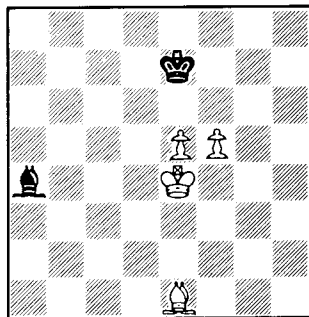
Draw

1 Bh4+	Kf7
2 Kf4	Bd7
3 Kg5	Bc8!
4 Be1	Bd7
Drawn	

Black draws by simply moving his Bishop back and forth between d7 and c8; White can make no progress because

his King must continue to protect the f-pawn. We can now formulate the following requirement for the positioning of the defender's Bishop to be able to draw: *it must be in front of the pawns, must attack one of them and must have sufficient maneuvering space to be able to remain on that diagonal.*

Diagram 50



White on
move wins

Black on
move draws

The course of play from Diagram 50 shows the damage that a momentarily misplaced Bishop can cause. If Black is on move, he can get his Bishop back with 1...Bd7! and draw. Yet White on move wins as follows:

1 Bh4+	Kd7
2 e6+	Kd6
3 Bg3+!	Ke7
4 Ke5!	

White is now ensured of getting both pawns to the sixth rank. The next step will be for White's King to get into Black's Kingside.

4	Be8
5 f6+	Kf8
6 Kf5	Bh5
7 Bd6+	Kg8

After 7...Ke8? 8 Kg5 it is over immediately.

8 Kg5	Be8
9 Kh6	Kh8

10 Be5!

Kg8

The pretty stalemate try 10...Bf7!? is parried by the even prettier 11 Bd4! Bxe6 12 f7 mate. After the text White sets up zugzwang with a thematic tempo move with his Bishop, thus allowing his King to finally reach the key g7 square.

11 Bd4!

Kf8

12 Kh7!

Bh5

13 Bc5+

Ke8

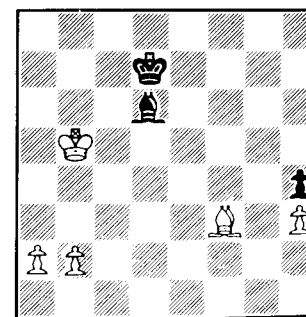
14 Kg7

White wins

(4) *The stronger side's King should be in front of the pawns for maximum effectiveness because then he can directly assist their advance.*

The importance of the above principle will be illustrated from Diagram 51, E. Walther - R. Fischer, Zurich 1959, after Black's 53rd move. It was only after considerable struggling that GM Fischer had reached this position. The presence of the h-pawns does not affect the evaluation of the position because White's Bishop is of the wrong color for his h-pawn. Therefore White will have to win on the Queenside with his connected passed pawns. Obviously Black's only chance for a draw is to set up a blockade. If White knows how to handle his King and pawns he will win. First I will demonstrate the correct method and then will give the game continuation.

Diagram 51



E. Walther -
R. Fischer
Zurich 1959
After Black's
53rd move

(a) The correct way = Make and keep the King active

54 b4!	Kc7
55 Ka5!	Kb8
56 b5	

White is ready for b6 irrespective of Black's response. Therefore Black has nothing better than to temporarily blockade the a-pawn. Note the powerful placement of White's Bishop on the central diagonal: it takes away b7 from Black's King and is the right color for the a-pawn.

56	Ba3
57 b6	Kc8
58 Ka6!	Kb8
59 Be4!	

Putting Black in zugzwang, because after 59...Kc8, 60 Ka7 is decisive. Therefore the Bishop must free the a-pawn.

59	Bc5
60 a4	Bd4
61 a5	Bc3
62 Kb5!	Bd4
63 a6	White wins

Both pawns are now on the sixth rank and there is nothing Black can do about the coming 64 a7+. Properly done, White's win seems easy, yes? Now we will see how *not* to do it.

(b) The wrong way = Game continuation

54 a4?	Kc7
55 b4	Kb8!
56 a5	

White's King now will not be able to help his pawns. Yet it is too late for 56 Ka5 because, as a result of the tempo lost with 54 a4?, Black has time for 56...Ka7 57 b5 Bc5.

56	Ka7
57 Kc4	

There is nothing in 57 Ka4 Bc7 58 b5 Bd8 because Black meets 59 b6+ with 59...Bxb6!

57	Bg3!
---------	------

Black could also draw with 57...Bc7 by then staying on the a5-d8 diagonal, yet that is a "short" diagonal and it is safer to be on the long g1-a7 diagonal.

58 b5	Bf2
59 Be2	Be3
60 Kb3	Bd2

To me 60...Bf2 seems a lot simpler.

61 b6+	Kb7
62 Ka4	Kc6!
63 Bb5+	Kc5!
Draw	

It is Black who now has the active King! White can make no progress: if 64 b7 Bf4 65 a6 Kb6 and the blockade is still complete. Thus by being ignorant of Principle (4) did IM Walther miss his chance for immortality.

B. Disconnected Passed Pawns

The following two general principles and four specific principles summarize our knowledge of disconnected passed pawns.

General Principles

(1) *The farther apart the pawns, the greater the winning chances. The only exception is the two RPs if the defending King is safely in front of the RP whose queening square is not controlled by the attacker's Bishop.*

(2) *The closer together the pawns, the more easily the weaker side's King can help achieve a successful blockade.*

Specific Principles

(3) *Pawns one file apart only draw.*

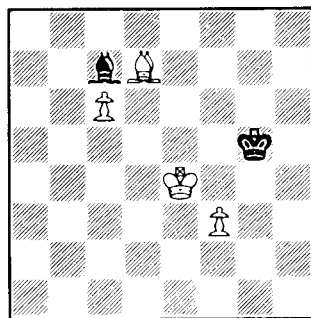
(4) *Pawns two files apart (especially the c- and f-pawn combination) give good winning chances.*

(5) *Pawns more than two files apart give excellent winning chances.*

(6) *To win, the stronger side's King must be able to penetrate into the enemy territory and assist in the advance of his pawns. Whether penetration is possible will be determined by the location of is own pawns and how active a location the defender's King has.*

The next three examples will help to explain the truth behind the above principles. Diagram 52 is a 1950 study by GM Yuri Averbach. If White's f-pawn would already be on f5 White would win, but this position is drawn. Because White's f3 pawn cannot be mobilized, Black's King can help his Bishop to blockade the c-pawn. With White on move play could continue:

Diagram 52



1 Kd5 Kf6!

Averbach
1950
Draw

Otherwise White will penetrate and win after 2 Ke6.

2 Bg4 Bg3!

But not 2...Ke7? when White will win after 3 Ke4! Kd6 4 Bd7 followed by 5 f4.

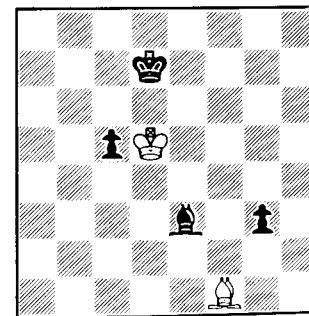
3 Kc5 Bc7!
4 Kb5 Ke7
5 Ka6 Kd8
6 Kb7 Bf4
Draw

There is no way that White can break Black's blockade.

For the combination of a *center* pawn and a *side* pawn, the correct defensive technique is: *blockade the center pawn with the King and use the Bishop to prevent the advance of the side pawn.*

For appreciating the problems in breaking a blockade, there is no better illustration than Diagram 53, N. Miller - A. Saigy, American Open 1971, White on move. Black's pawns are separated by three files, the g-pawn is already on the sixth rank and yet there is no win for Black! The main reason is that White's King has such a powerful active location that he can keep Black's King from penetrating either side of the board. Queenside penetration seems inherently hopeless, so let us see whether Black can get into the Kingside:

Diagram 53



N. Miller -
A. Saigy
American
Open 1971
White on
move

1	Bh3+	Ke7
2	Bg2	Kf6
3	Bh3	Kg5
4	Bg2	Kf4
5	Kc4!	

Black is clearly aiming to get to e3 and therefore White's King heads back.

5	...	Bd4
6	Kd3	Bg1
7	Bc6	Kg4
8	Bg2!	Bf2
9	Kc4!	Kf4
10	Kd3	Ke5
11	Kc4	Draw

Clearly there is no way for Black to break the blockade. Yet, as a postscript, I should mention that Black won the game. How? Because White resigned the game when Diagram 53 was reached! Why? Because he thought that it must be lost, because of a rule in Fine's *Basic Chess Endings* (I will have more to say about this "rule" in Chapter 5.)

Finally I will discuss a position where the defender is not able to blockade. Diagram 54 is S. Bernstein - E. Mednis, U. S. Championship 1961/62, after White's 39th move.

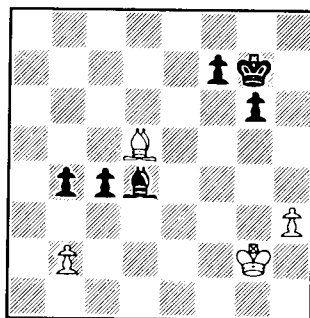


Diagram 54

S. Bernstein
- E. Mednis
U. S. Ch.
1961/62
After White's
39th move

Two moves before the time control I had to make the

fundamental decision whether to opt for disconnected pawns as far apart as possible (by playing 39...Bxb2) or to prefer having a further advanced passed pawn (by playing 39...c3). And the decision was:

39	c3!
----	------	-----

My reason for choosing this way was that it immediately immobilizes White's Bishop and therefore allows my King to be the first one to reach an active central location. By now it should be obvious that Black's King must penetrate decisively to win.

40	bxc3	bxc3
41	Bb3	Kf6!
42	Kf3	Ke5!
43	Ke2	f5!

Only after Black has ensured an active location for his King does he start mobilizing his other passed pawn. Because he will get the pawn to the 5th rank the win is assured.

44	h4	Ke4
45	Ba4	

The game was adjourned here and White sealed the text. He resigned without resuming the game. I had worked out the following - what I considered to be the main-line:

45	Bg7
46	Be8	Bh6!
47	Kd1	Kd3
48	Ba4	Bg7
49	Bb5+	Ke3

Black's King is excellently placed to assist the f-pawn's queening.

50	Be8	f4!
----	-----	-----

Because Black's Bishop can simultaneously protect the c-pawn and stop White's h-pawn, the g-pawn is not important for Black. What is important is to have his King assist the f-pawn.

51	Bxg6	Kf2!
52	Be4	f3
53	h5	Ke3!
54	Bc6	f2
55	Bg2	Kf4
56	Ke2	Bh6!
57	Kd3	Kg3
58	Bf1	Bg7
59	h6	Bh8
60	Ke2	Kh2!
61	h7	Bg7!
62	Kd3	Kg1

Black wins

Black's King is in and White's lights are out after 63 Ke2 c2. Note how the far advanced c-pawn was used as a "decoy" to assist Black's King in penetrating the Kingside.

Chapter 5: Material Advantage - Complex Positions

Here I will be discussing positions which are inherently complex or where the necessary play requires a very high level of sophistication and creativity. In all cases one side has a two pawn advantage, yet the landscape of each position is entirely different.

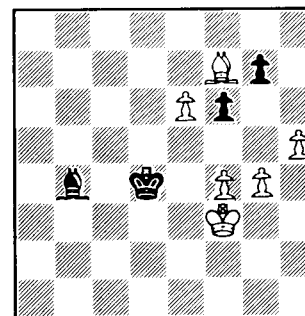


Diagram 55

Klimenkov -
Kabanov
USSR 1969
White on
move

The first position, Diagram 55, Klimenkov - Kabanov, USSR 1969, White on move, may on the surface appear rather simple, but will be shown to be full of hidden surprises. Though White is two pawns up, the following factors make the win problematical:

- all pawns are on one side, making it easier for the defender to blockade.
- the h-pawn is the wrong color for White's Bishop.
- the e-pawn is securely blockaded by the Bishop.
- White's Bishop has no offensive punch.
- White's King is contained, while Black's is actively placed.

There is another side of the coin for the last item however: Black's King is not well placed for defending,

because he doesn't have access to the e5 square, nor can he afford to step onto c5 or d5. It should be clear that White cannot afford to tarry in starting his attack:

1 g5

The threat of 2 h6 forces Black's reply. Of course, 1 f5?? is a horrible blunder because after 1...Ke5 Black has established a successful blockade.

**1 ... fxe5
2 Kg4!!**

The whole concept of this ending is to activate your own King, keep the opponent's King as far away as possible while at the same time preventing a blockade. Therefore the obvious 2 fxe5? is insufficient because after 2...Ke5 Black's King has a strong defensive position. Model play then would be: 3 Kg4 Bf8 4 h6! gxh6; 5 gxh6 Kf6! 6 Kh5 Bc5 7 h7 Kg7 8 Bg8. By maneuvering his King to the Queenside White will win Black's Bishop for the e-pawn, but of course the "wrong color Bishop" then denies White the win. There is no way to prevent Black's King from shuttling between g7 and h8 - unless White prefers to stalemate Black.

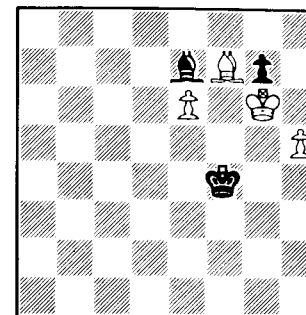
After 2 Kg4!!, Black's logical responses are 2...Ke4, 2...Be7 and 2...gxf4. Since the latter just transposes into a variation after 2...Be7 3 Kf5 gxf4 4 Kxf4, only the first two need to be considered.

A) **2 ... Ke4**

Black thereby tries to use his King as the primary defender, by keeping it as active as possible. Because 3 fxe5 Ke5 leads to the drawn positions give after 2 fxe5? Ke5, White must capture on g5 with the King.

**3 Kxg5 Be7+
4 Kg6 Kxf4**

Diagram 56



Klimenkov -
Kabanov
USSR 1969
Variation
after 2...Ke4
Position after
4...Kxf4

There are now two instructive ways for White to win:

(1) **5 Be8**

The idea behind this move is for White to delay capturing on g7 until the Bishop has been placed on an optimum location. I will now only give the main line.

**5 ... Bb4
6 Bd7! Be7
7 Kf7 Bb4
8 e7 Bxe7
9 Kxe7 Kg5
10 Be8 Kh6
11 Bg6! Kg5
12 Kf7 Kh6
13 Kg8 Kg5
14 Kxg7**

White wins

(2) **5 Kxg7**

After this routine capture, Black comes very close to setting up a blockade, but some very non-routine Bishop maneuvers save the day for White.

**5 ... Kg5
6 h6 Bf6+
7 Kh7 Bd8
8 Bh5!!**

Only this idea of Dutch IM van Wijgerden works. There is no progress with the routine 8 Bg6 Bf6 9 Be8 Bd4 10 Bd7 Bf6 11 Bc8 Kh5!, etc. The nice tempo play 8 Be8 Bf6 9 Bg6 Bd8 10 Kg7 Bf6+ 11 Kf7 is foiled by the nicer 11...Kxh6! 12 Kxf6 stalemate. The text has the same idea, but by not containing Black's King so much prevents the stalemate defense.

8 Bf6
9 Bg4!! Be7

9...Kxg4 10 Kg6 queens one of the pawns.

10 Kg7 Bf6+
11 Kf7 White wins

The King has been liberated, the pawns are ready to roll and there is no stalemate.

B) 2 Be7

Black prevents the threatened 3 Kxg5 and hopes for 3 f5? Ke5 when White's King cannot penetrate and the play would develop as after 2 f5?.

3 Kf5!!

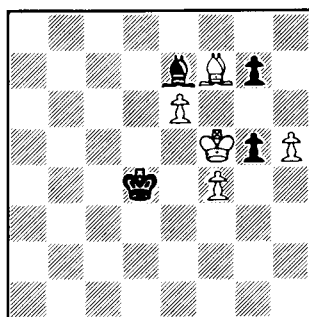


Diagram 57

Klimenkov -
Kabanov
USSR 1969
After 3 Kf5!!

Now White's King is active and the obvious threat becomes 4 f5. Black has two legal ways of preventing it.

3 gxf4

This is the game continuation and has the disadvantage that White's King has a clear road into Black's Kingside. Therefore, 3...g4!? 4 Kxg4 Ke4 suggests itself, but White still wins after 5 Be8!. The threat is 6 Bc6+ followed by 7 Kf5 and 8 Kg6. Black has nothing better than 5...Kd5, leading to the following play: 6 Kf5 Kd6 7 Kg6! (But not the tempting 7 Bf7? Bf6 8 h6 Ke7! 9 h7 g6+!! 10 Kxg6 Bd4 with a draw - analysis by van Wijgerden. This final position is a marvelous example of the blockade: White is up three pawns, yet there is no way for White's King to get in.) 7...Kxe6 (7...Bf6 8 Kf7! is hopeless for Black.) 8 Bf7+ (A more exotic win is 8 f5+ Ke5 9 Bd7 Bf6 10 Be6! - van Wijgerden. Black is in zugzwang: A Bishop move allows 11 Kxg7; a King move allows 11 h6.) 8...Kd7 9 Kxg7 Bd6 10 f5 Be5+ 11 f6, winning because the h-pawn will cost Black his Bishop.

4 Kxf4 Kc5

Heading back with the King will not work; keeping the King active will lose as in the variations after 2...Ke4.

5 Kf5 Kd6
6 Kg6 Bf8

If 6...Bf6, 7 h6 wins.

7 Kh7! Ke7
8 Kg8 Black resigns

A complete triumph for White's King activity! After 8...g5 9 hxg6 Bh6 10 Kh7! Bf8 11 g7 White wins.

As far as positions go, Diagram 58 seems normal enough, yet extreme sophistication will be required for Black to win. Diagram 58 is the adjournment position from a junior tournament held in conjunction with the Biel Open 1986. GM Patrick Wolff became fascinated with the possibilities that could arise and spent the better part of a night on it "for his

own pleasure". The analysis that follows is partly based on GM Wolff's work.

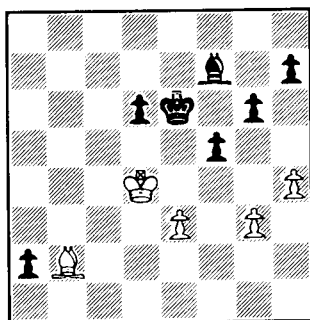


Diagram 58

Biel Open
(Juniors) 1986
White to
move

A quick count of material shows that Black is up two pawns. One of these is a far advanced passed pawn on a2. Yet at the moment both this pawn and Black's other extra pawn - the d-pawn - are very well blockaded. As a matter of fact, if we can visualize the complete exchange of all King-side pawns (i.e. White's e-, g- and h-pawns for Black's f-, g- and h-pawns), the position becomes a 100% certain draw. There even are two reasons for this. Firstly, Black will not be able to break the blockade and secondly, White's King can head for a1 and the Bishop sacrifice itself for Black's d-pawn. Therefore, it is far from certain if Black can win from Diagram 58. And even if a "chess god" would say that there is a win, it is necessary to actually find it.

In Diagram 58 it is White's move. White can use two approaches: (1) a passive, "do nothing" one, or (2) play e4. I will look at these in turn.

I White does nothing = passive defense

1 Bc3 Kd7!

The Bishop stands well enough, both protecting the a-pawn and covering the important d5 and c4 central squares. Therefore it is logical for the King to head as quickly as possible to where Black's strength is: the Queenside.

2 Bb2 Kc6
3 Ba1 Kb5
4 Kc3

The King cannot stand his ground, as after 4 Bb2 Kb4 or 4 Bc3 Ka4! followed by 5...Kb3, White's King will also have to head back to prevent Black's King from getting to c2.

4 Kc5!
5 Kd3 Kd5

Black's King is now well centralized and ready to infiltrate via e4. Black should never consider a move like 5...d5?? since then that key square is no longer available to his King and most likely White can set up a successful blockade.

6 Bb2 Be8!

With Black's King on its optimum square it is time to activate the Bishop. Black's immediate objective is to chase White's King away from d3.

7 Bd4 Ba4!

A sophisticated tempo move which puts White in zugzwang: White's Bishop must move and that leaves the e-pawn without sufficient protection for the coming King invasion.

8 Ba1 Bb5+
9 Kc3

Equally hopeless is 9 Kd2 Ke4 followed by 10...Kf3 and 11...Kxg3.

9 Ke4!

There is no way that Black can both protect the a-pawn and infiltrate with his King on the Kingside. But

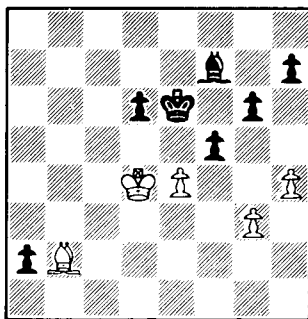
achieving the second objective is all that's necessary to win.

10 Kb3 Kxe3
 11 Kxa2 Kf3
 Black wins

After 12 Kb3 Kxg3 Black is up 3 pawns and will queen the f-pawn after 13 Bf6 f4, etc.

II Active Play With 1 e4!

Diagram 59



Biel Open
 (Juniors) 1986
 After 1 e4!

This move/plan must be the right one for a number of reasons. In the first place a *routine* exchange of pawns is always the correct general strategy for the side down material because it removes one potential enemy Queen from the board. Moreover, compared to the previous variation, White will not have an e-pawn that can go lost. However, in this case there also is a sophisticated strategic benefit from the text move: White's King gets access to the important e3 central square and this significantly increases White's prospects for setting up a blockade to prevent penetration of Black's King.

It is also important to realize that White achieves all of the above for "nothing". As already discussed earlier, the exchange of all of the King-side pawns leads to a drawn position. We should be able to realize that if we just remove White's e-pawn and Black's f-pawn from the board, that White can securely blockade Black's passed a- and d-pawns. Therefore, to win Black's King must be able to capture White's

Kingside. The question now simply is: can Black do this?

Black has two fundamental choices from Diagram 59: to take on e4 or not to take. I will analyze these in turn.

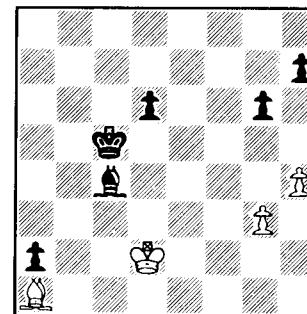
A) 1 ... fxe4?

The game continuation which definitely is the wrong practical choice. At this moment it is far from clear whether Black can win from Diagram 59. Yet it is necessary to keep the position as unbalanced as possible to increase the *chances* for the win. The routine text violates this principle. The position now is drawn and in fact the game was soon abandoned as a draw.

A thematic line of play now is:

2 Kxe4 Kd7
 3 Kd4 Kc6
 4 Ba1 Kb5
 5 Kc3 Kc5
 6 Kd3 Bc4+
 7 Kd2!

Diagram 60



Variation IIA
 After 7 Kd2!

The key to White's defense must be to prevent Black from getting at White's Kingside. To penetrate Black will have to do this via d5 and e4 and White wants to ensure that he can prevent this. Bad is 7 Kc3? because Black can powerfully mobilize his d-pawn with 7...d5! and 8...d4.

7 ... Kd5
8 Ke3!

This is the key difference between White's passive play from Diagram 58 and the play from Diagram 59: White's King is able to gain the unassailable position on e3.

8 ... Ba6
9 Bf6 Bc8
10 Bb2 Kc4
11 Ba1 Kb3
12 Kd2!

Black's King cannot be allowed access to c2.

12 ... Bf5
13 Bf6 Kc4
14 Ba1 Kd5
15 Ke3! Bb1
16 Bb2 Kc4
17 Ba1

White's Bishop is ideally placed to prevent both the a- and d-pawns from advancing. White is satisfied to keep the status quo.

17 ... d5

A last try.

18 Be5 Bf5
19 Ba1 Kb3
20 Kd2! Draw

The a- and d-pawns are stopped and Black's King can't penetrate the Queenside nor the Kingside. A total triumph for White's BLOCKADE.

Let us now return to Diagram 59 to analyze Black's

alternative approach.

B) 1 ... Be8!

Because ...fxe4 is not going to work, Black needs to force White to capture on f5. Then the position becomes more unbalanced and that increases Black's opportunities.

2 Ba1 Bc6
3 exf5+ gxf5!

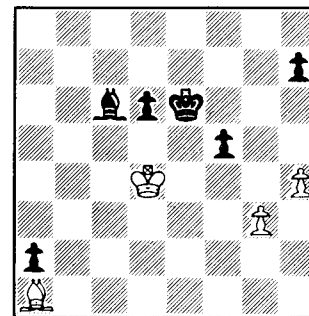


Diagram 61

Variation IIB
After 3...gxf5!

Of course, not 3...Kxf5? 4 Ke3 Kg4 5 Kf2 when White's Kingside pawns are safe from Black's King, while White's Bishop keeps blockading the a- and d- pawns. It is not at all yet obvious how Black can progress from Diagram 61, yet it is the only try.

4 Ke3!

White's King must watch both sides of the board. Thus after the temporizing 4 Bb2?! Black could perhaps immediately play 4...f4! (See the game continuation starting with Black's 10th move.) Clearly wrong is 4 h5? because after 4...h6! 5 Kc4 Bf3 6 Kb3 Bxh5 7 Kxa2 Bf7! White's pieces on the Queenside have no chance of coping with Black's Kingside power, e.g. 8 Bg7 h5 9 Kb2 f4! 10 gxf4 h4 11 Bd4 h3 12 Bg1 Kf5 13 Kc3 d5 14 Bh2 Ke4 15 f5 Kf3! 16 Kd4 Kg2 17 Bf4 h2 18 Bxh2 Kxh2 19 Ke5 Bg8!.

4 ... h5!

Prevents both a potential h5 by White as well as a counterattack by White's King against Black's Kingside pawns because Black can now routinely protect them with ...Bg4. Moreover, the text has no disadvantages. The only possible negative is that Black's King cannot now use the h5 square for infiltrating, but that would not be a realistic infiltration route under any conceivable situation.

5 Bb2 Ba4
6 Bc3 Bd1
7 Ba1 Bg4
8 Bb2

After 8 Kd4 Black can immediately execute the key strategic concept 8...f4!! 9 gxf4 Kf5 since 10 Kd5 is too slow: 10...Kxf4 11 Kxd6 Ke3 12 Kc4 Kd2 13 Kb4 Kc2 14 Ka3 Kb1 and the a-pawn costs White his Bishop while the h-pawn remaining is the right color for the Bishop.

As it turns out, White can only delay the ...f4 break. Still that is how the practical player should behave.

8 ... Kd5
9 Bf6

The King stand best on e3. After 9 Kf2? Black's King infiltrates the Queenside with either 9...Ke4 or 9...Kc4; after 9 Kd2? Black infiltrates the Kingside with 9...Ke4; after 9Kd3?! Black can immediately break with 9...f4!! (see the main line later). After the text, 9...f4+?? just drops the f-pawn since White can play 10 Kxf4 and get back in time with his King.

9 ... Kc4!
10 Ba1 f4+!!

This fantastic concept was discovered by GM Wolff. Black sacrifices a pawn to break up White's Kingside so that he can ultimately capture both of White's pawns there. White cannot capture with the King since after 11 Kxf4? Kd3

Black's King is in and the a-pawn will cost White his Bishop.

11 gxf4

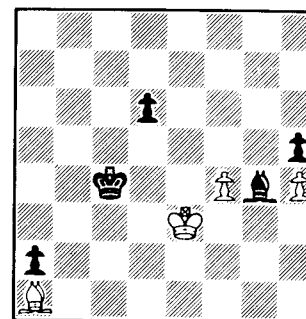


Diagram 62

Variation IIB
After 11 gxf4

If Black now routinely heads back with his King with 11...Kd5?, White has the perceptive 12 f5!!, thereby permanently gaining access to the f4 square for his King. White can then prevent Black from infiltrating the Kingside. White draws because from f4 he can keep Black's King out of the Kingside and from e3 he can keep Black's King out of the Queenside. White has achieved the ultimate defensive weapon: blockade.

11 ... Bf5!!

This important refinement of the Wolff concept was suggested by GM John Nunn. Black prevents White from sacrificing back the pawn until Black can capture with the King and thereby deny access to f4 to White's King.

12 Kd2 Kd5
13 Ke3

A valid alternative is to head to the Queenside with 13 Kc1 Ke4 14 Bf6 Kxf4 15 Kb2. But then the d-pawn becomes too strong, e.g. 15...Be6 16 Be7 Ke5 18 Bg5 Bc4 18 Bh6 d5 19 Bg7+ Ke4 20 Bf6 d4 21 Bg5 Kf3 22 Bf6 d3 23 Bg5 Ke2, followed by 24...d2. The problem for White in such an approach is that his King cannot help in the stopping of

the d-pawn because he is tied down to stopping the a-pawn.

13 Ke6
14 Kf3 Bc2

Definitely never 14...d5? since then White can protect the f-pawn with a Be5.

15 Kg3 Kf5
16 Kf3 Bd1+
17 Ke3

Inferior is 17 Kg3? Bg4 followed by 18...Ke4 and Black's King infiltrates.

17 Kg4
18 Bf6

No better is 18 Ke4 Bf3+ 19 Ke3 Bc6 20 Bf6 Bd5. White is in zugzwang and must give up the f-pawn.

18 Ba4
19 Ke4 Bc6+
20 Ke3 Bd5
21 f5

The minor evil is to give back the f-pawn.

21 Kxf5
22 Ba1 Kg4
23 Bf6 Bc6!

Putting White in another kind of zugzwang, whereby White's King must move further away from the f4 square.

24 Kf2 a1=Q!

The last major strategic decision that Black must make. He is happy to trade his passed a-pawn to achieve a passed h-pawn for two reasons: (1) the h-pawn is the correct Rook

pawn for the Bishop, and (2) the separation between the a- and d-pawns is only two squares, whereas the separation between the d- and h-pawns is three squares. The larger the separation between pawns, the more difficult it is to set up a successful blockade.

25 Bxa1 Kxh4

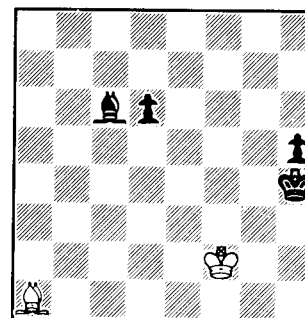


Diagram 63

Variation IIB
After
25...Kxh4

A thematically important basic position in opposite color Bishop endgames: the stronger side has two disconnected passed pawns separated by three files. For such a case it would seem that Reuben Fine's rule in *Basic Chess Endings* (p. 179) applies: "If the pawns are two or more files apart, they win." The passage of time (BCE was published in 1941) has shown this rule to not be universally true. There are positions where the defender is able to set up a successful blockade. Such position generally have the defending King sufficiently actively placed to prevent the stronger side's King from decisively penetrating into the defender's camp. In other words, the defender can achieve an airtight blockade.

However, in Diagram 63 Black's King is already actively placed and the win is routine enough. A logical sequence now could be:

26 Bf6+ Kg4
27 Be7 d5
28 Bf6 h4
29 Be5

29 Ke3?! Kg3 with 30...h3 and Black's task is easier.

29 Kf5!

It is important for Black's King to help both pawns advance.

30 Bd6 Ke4
 31 Be7 h3
 32 Bd6 d4
 33 Bc5 Kd3!

It is always good practice to activate the King when trying to queen pawns.

34 Kg3 Bd7
 35 Kf2 Kc3
 36 Bd6 d3
 37 Bf4 Kc2
 38 Ke1 d2+

Or 38...h2 39 Bxh2 d2+.

39 Bxd2 h2
 Black wins.

The last example already looks complex at the starting point. Diagram 64 shows the position of Bradvarevic - R. Maric, Yugoslavia 1970, Black on move.

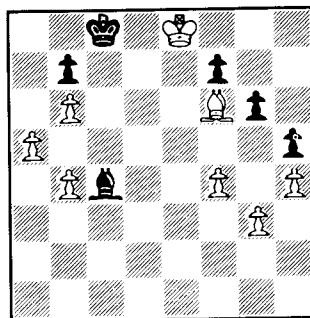


Diagram 64

Bradvarevic
 - R. Maric
 Yugoslavia
 1970
 Black on
 move

White's King has infiltrated totally into Black's posi-

tion and stands where Black's King once stood. Black's King is cooped up on his back rank. Moreover, White has a two pawn advantage on the Queenside. Yet if Black plays well he will draw. The reasons why Diagram 64 is drawn again revolve around the matter of a successful blockade:

-- White's Bishop has no offensive punch since all Black pawns are on the opposite-color squares.

-- White's King, though actively placed, also can do no damage, because Black's only vulnerable pawn - the f-pawn - can be readily protected by the Bishop.

-- Black's King, though passive, is exactly where he should be for defensive purposes. White cannot dislodge the Black King from his defensive, pawn-blockading duties.

Even though the position is a theoretical draw, White is obviously justified in making some attempts to win. The game continued as follows:

1 Kb8!

The Black King's job is to blockade White's Queenside pawns so it is important for the King to make sure that it is properly placed for that. Black must not tarry since otherwise 2 Be5 cuts the King off from the a-file.

2 Kd8 Ka8
 3 Be5 Bd3
 4 Ke7 Bc4
 5 Kf6

White realizes that his only chance for success is a breakthrough on the Kingside and thus positions his King for a potential f5. The King has no future on the Queenside; e.g. position him on c7 and you will see that there is no way of making progress there.

5 Be6

6 **Bd6** **Bc4**
7 **b5**

White starts a small demonstration on the Queenside which Black can and must ignore. Of course, 7...Bxb5?? 8 Kxf7 wins quickly for White since the passed pawn that White will obtain on the Kingside will cost Black his Bishop. Black need not fear White's Queenside play because one of White's extra Queenside pawns is doubled and therefore White can only obtain one passed pawn there. Black's King is positioned perfectly to stop one pawn.

7 **Bb3**
8 **a6** **Be6!**

Obviously not 8...bxa6?? 9 bxa6 and the two connected passed pawns win. After the text Black need not fear 9 a7 since then White's Queenside pawns are forever immobilized while Black's Kingside remains defensible. Therefore White now switches his total energy towards a Kingside breakthrough.

9 **Be5** **Bc4**
10 **f5!**

White is trying very hard to make progress, but Black can keep the Kingside blockade intact readily enough by the simple 10...Bd3. If then 11 fxc6 fxc6 or 11 Kxf7 Bxf5 and in either case Black is 100% safe.

10 **Bxb5??**

There is no rational chess explanation for such a horribly careless move. Black has no need to worry about the Queenside because the King safeguards everything there; instead he must look out for possible Kingside breaks. Yet Black momentarily forgets about the theme of the position. Apparently he felt that White still had nothing on the Kingside and the text would "prove" this.

11 **g4!!**

What a shock and rude awakening for Black who had only expected 11 fxc6 fxc6 12 Kxc6 when 12...Be2 still keeps the Kingside blockaded. Now, however, White gets a passed pawn there by force and wins because Black's King is stuck on the Queenside. However, White's exact execution is most impressive.

11 **hxg4**

No better are 11...Bd3 12 Kxf7 gxf5 13 gxh5 or 11...Be2 12 Kxf7 and White wins at least as surely as in the game.

12 **Kxf7** **gxf5**

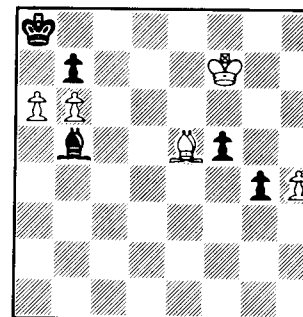


Diagram 65

Bradavrevic
- R. Maric
Yugoslavia
1970 After
12...gxf5

What White has to start worrying about now is a stalemate draw by Black and considerable care is required to prevent it. For instance, Black can draw after 13 h5 f4! 14 Bxf4 Bxa6 16 h6 Bd3 16 Kg7 g3! 17 h7 Bxh7 18 Kxh7 g2 19 Bh2 g1=Q 20 Bxg1 Kb8. Black's King oscillates between b8 and a8, when White can stalemate Black in several ways but cannot win.

13 **Bf4!!**

From the above variation we saw that if Black has time to both play ...Bxa6 and sacrifice the Bishop for White's h-pawn the game is drawn. The blockading ("interference")

text is able to just prevent that.

13 g3

Now 13...Bxa6 is too slow: 14 h5 g3 15 h6 g2 16 Bh2!
(Not 16 h7?? Bc4+ with a draw) 16...f4 17 h7 and wins.

14 h5 g2
15 Bh2 f4
16 h6 Bd3

Otherwise 17 h7 wins immediately.

17 axb7+! Kxb7
18 Bg1 Black resigns

White will win Black's Bishop with 19 Kg7 and 20 h7. Then White's King can first choose to capture Black's pawns or head immediately for the Queenside. There the King will help the b-pawn queen.

Throughout Black's King has the worst of both worlds: he is tied down to stop the b-pawn yet cannot hope for a stalemate.

Chapter 6: Positional Advantages

As before for same color Bishops, a positional advantage may be "better" pawns, Bishop, King - or a combination of these.

Section 1: Better Bishop

The concept of the better Bishop is easy to understand: it is the Bishop which can successfully attack enemy pawns. Diagram 66 illustrates this perfectly.

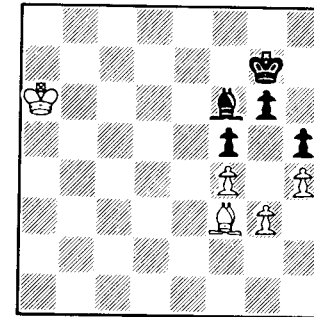


Diagram 66

Black on move

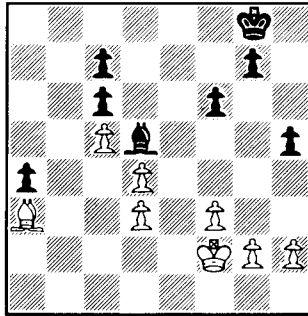
The pawn formation is symmetrical, White's King is "active", yet Black on move can capture all of White's pawns as follows: 1...Bd4, 2...Bf2, 3...Bxg3, 4...Bxf4, 5...Bg3, 6...Bxh4 - truly the better Bishop!

Section 2: Better Pawns

Since we already learned in Chapter 4 that a one pawn advantage in normal positions is insufficient to win, it is clear that there must be something quite special about having the superior pawn formation to be able to win starting with equal material. The kind of position that illustrates this is shown in Diagram 67, B. Kurajica - A. Karpov, Skopje 1976, after White's 33rd move. Black has a passed a-pawn, yet it is securely blockaded by White's Bishop. Moreover, White's doubled d3 pawn performs a valuable defensive function: it

prevents Black's King from penetrating into the Queenside via b5 and c4 and in the center via d5 and c4. Therefore to win Black will have to be able to break through on the Kingside. Can this be done?

Diagram 67



33 ... h4!

B. Kurajica
- A. Karpov
Skopje 1976
After White's
33rd move

GM Karpov realizes very well where the battlefield will be. Therefore, he activates the h-pawn and, also quite importantly, tempts White to challenge it.

34 g3?

Hindsight tells us that at least in the practical sense this is the losing move. (See the discussions after White's 37th and 44th moves for the "theoretical" side.) The text seriously weakens the Kingside pawn formation and leaves White without a satisfactory way of preventing Black's eventual ...g4 pawn break. This break will loosen up the light squares and allow Black's King to infiltrate. Karpov's exploitation of this is flawless and technically clear.

But how could we have used *foresight* to select the proper defensive set-up? Black's pawn break on the Kingside must obviously be based on an eventual ...g4; therefore the correct pawn formation for White should start with 34 h3!. Black could then be expected to place his King on h5, the f-pawn on f5, the g-pawn on g5. Thus prepared Black will play ...g4. At this moment White must be able to respond with

f4!, depriving Black's King of potential infiltration squares. White's position does remain passive, but I have not been able to discover any way that Black can *decisively* break into White's position. In certain positions Black can sacrifice his Bishop, but White always has enough defensive resources to draw.

34 ... Kf7!

Only so! Instead 34...hxg3+? leads to a dead draw, as does 34...g5? 35 gxh4 since Black in either case lacks breakthrough possibilities.

35 Ke3

Here and generally so in the future, worse is 35 gxh4 because Black's King will recapture the pawn and be actively placed for imminent penetration. (Yet see the comment after White's 37th move!)

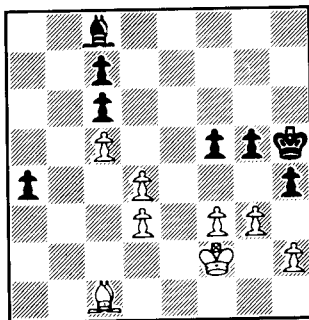
35 ... f5
36 Kf4 Kg6
37 Ke3?

Apparently worth little criticism since Black can force this retreat with ...Ba2 and ...Bb1. However, Karpov has pointed out that at exactly this moment the paradoxical 37 gxh4!? may be fully playable. The justification is that after 37...Kh5 38 Kxf5 Bxf3 39 Bb2 Bd5 40 Bc1 Bf7 41 Bb2 Kxh4 White has the saving 42 d5!.

37 ... Kh5
38 Bb4 g5
39 Kf2 Ba2

Black's Kingside pawns are ready for the decisive break. But first Karpov maneuvers around with the Bishop, both to find the most useful spot for it and to kill time before adjournment so that the winning maneuver can be prepared in the quiet of the home laboratory.

40 Ba3 Bb1
 41 Ke2 Ba2
 42 Bc1 Be6
 43 Kf2 Bc8!



B. Kurajica
 - A. Karpov
 Skopje 1976
 After Black's
 43rd move

Diagram 68

So that the Bishop can go to a6 to attack the d3 pawn, if the need ever arises. The ex-World Champion always likes to have as many pleasant options at his side as possible.

44 d5?

Throwing away this pawn ensures the loss, and according to Karpov is to be blamed on nerves. Also unsatisfactory is 44 Ke3? f4+! 45 gxf4 g4! with Black infiltrating and winning similarly to the game.

Therefore White must play 44 Ke2!. What then? After 44...Ba6 45 Bb2? Karpov gives 45...hgx3 46 hxg3 f4! 47 gxf4 (or 47 g4+ Kh4 48 Kf2 Kh3! followed by 49...Bxd3, then ...Bc4, ...Be6 and ...Bxg4.) 47...gxf4 48 Bc1 Kg5 49 Bb2 Kh4! 50 Kf2 Bxd3 and in due course Black's King will infiltrate on the Queenside. However, Karpov feels that with the correct 45 Ke3! White can draw because after 45...f4+ 46 gxf4 g4 he has 47 f5!.

The question therefore is whether Black has anything better than 44...Ba6 after 44 Ke2!. It seems to me that the immediate 44...f4! is very promising (45 gxf4 g4!). After 45 g4+ Black sacrifices the Bishop with 45...Bxg4! 46 f4+ Kxg4.

With three excellent pawns for White's impotent Bishop, Black should win.

44 cxd5
 45 d4 f4!

Black must open up the Kingside. Instead 45...g4?? 46 ;f4 is a certain draw.

46 gxf4

Black was threatening 46...fxg3+ 47 hxg3 h3! followed by ...g4. The h-pawn ties down White's King and Black infiltrates via the center or the Queenside.

If 46 g4+, Black has no need to "risk" 46...Bxg4 and can win by strictly positional means as follows: 46...Kg6!, followed by placing the Bishop on d3 and running the King over to the Queenside and infiltrating there via b5 and c4. It is the lack of the d3 pawn that makes this possible for Black.

46 g4!

The point of Black's previous move. White's light squares are weak and Black's King will infiltrate along them.

47 Kg2 Bf5
 48 Kf2 gxf3
 49 Kxf3 Be4+
 50 Kf2 Kg4

Black's King has finally penetrated into White's half of the board. At the moment White's position appears tenable. However, because of zugzwang White's pieces will have to give way.

51 Bb2 Kxf4
 52 Bc1+ Kg4
 53 Bb2 c6!

A good practical move. Black prevents forever any White counterplay based on c6 and an attack on Black's c-pawn by White's Bishop.

54 Bc1 Kh3!

The start of the final phase. Black's actual goal is to get his King into White's Queenside. With the paradoxical text he is able to deflect White's King so that the primary goal is achieved.

**55 Kg1 Bg6!
56 Kh1 Bh5!**

Black tries to get White's Bishop to move, which then would enable either Black's a-pawn to advance or Black's King to reach f4.

**57 Kg1 Bd1
White resigns**

GM Kurajica saw what was coming - because of zugzwang Black's King gets to the Queenside - and didn't want to be shown. The probably continuation would have been: 58 Kh1 Kg4 59 Kg2 Kf5! 60 Kf2 (equally hopeless is 60 Kh3 Ke4 etc) 60...Ke4 61 Ke1 Bg4 62 Bb2 Kd3. Black's King is in and the a-pawn will cost White his Bishop.

Section 3: Better King

Because of the inherent limitations of the Bishop in a pure opposite color Bishop endgame, the importance of the King increases. If the King is active and has the potential of doing real damage, it can become a huge power. The potential for King power is already present in Diagram 69, (see diagram on the next page), J. Bellon - D. Minic, Siegen Olympiad 1970, after White's 39th move.

A thorough evaluation of the position leads to the following conclusions:

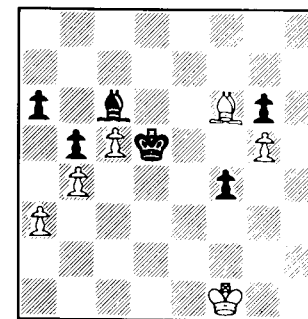


Diagram 69

J. Bellon -
D. Minic
Siegen Olympiad 1970
After White's
39th move

- The g-pawns are equivalent: both are on the color opposite that of the enemy Bishop and readily defensible.
- Each side has a sound passed pawn.
- The Bishops are also equivalent: neither can do any damage.
- Black's King is obviously the active one.

This later factor together with the weakness of White's a-pawn (as will be seen there is no way to defend it) should give Black wonderful winning chances. But how to go about it? There are three continuations worth discussion:

1) Direct Defense with 39...Kc4

White has three ways to defend. The critical defense point is ultimately the b-pawn - as we will see the a-pawn goes lost very quickly.

(a) Direct Attack with 40 Bb2

**40 Bb2 Kb3
41 Bc1 f3**

Hold on to material, where possible!

**42 Kf2 Kc2
43 Bf4 a5!**

This is unquestionably the fastest way because the straightforward 43...Kb2 allows White to blockade with 44 Bc7! Kxa3 45 Ba5. The Soviet IM Mark Dvoretzky has demonstrated that here too Black can get White into zugzwang with 45...Kb3 46 Ke3 Kc4 47 Kf2 Kd3 48 Bd8 Ke4 49 Bc7 Kf5 50 Bd8 Kf4! and Black either wins the g-pawn or gets in ...a5. In due course Black should win.

After the text White must capture as otherwise Black plays 44...a4.

44 bxa5	Kb2
45 a6	Kxa3
46 a7	b4

Black wins

The b-pawn will cost White his Bishop. Meanwhile Black's Bishop is ideally placed to stop both of White's passed pawns.

(b) Blockade from the back starting with 40 Be5:

40 Be5	f3!
--------	-----

Black cannot afford to give up the f-pawn because White's King plus passed pawns gain a draw after 40...Kb3? 41 Bxf4 Kxa3 42 Bd2 a5 43 bxa5 b4 44 Bc1+! Ka2 45 Ke2 b3 46 Kd3 b2 47 Bxb2 Kxb2 48 Kd4 Kb3 49 Ke5 Kb4 50 Kf6 Be4 51 c6 Kxa5 52 c7 Bf5 53 c8=Q.

41 Bc7	Kb3
42 Kf2	Kxa3
43 Ba5	Kb3

The same position has been reached as in the note to Black's 43rd move in the 40 Bb2 variation, with Black winning after 44 Ke3 Kc4 45 Kf2 Kd3 46 Bd8 Ke4 47 Bc7 Kf5 48 Bd8 Kf4, etc.

(c) Blockade from the back starting with 40 Bd8:

40 Bd8	Kb3
41 Ba5	Kxa3
42 Kf2	Kb3

Black wins

Because Black's f-pawn is still on f4, this prevents a blockade by White on the h2-b8 diagonal and makes Black's task considerably easier than in the position after 40 Be5 f3 41 Bc7. Black's winning method is:

(1) His King walks over to f5 to attack the g-pawn which White must defend with Bd8.

(2) Black then plays ...a5. White has two choices:

-- If bxa5, Black's passed b-pawn assisted by the King will cost White his Bishop and the game.

-- If Bxa5, Black captures the g-pawn and wins on the Kingside by leaving the f4 pawn where it is, advancing the g-pawn to g3, then playing Kg4 and finally the decisive f3.

2) Elegance with 39...a5

The point of this move order is to prevent the variation 39...Kc4 40 Be5! f3 41 Bc7. The main line after 39...a5 is as in the variation after 39...Kc4 40 Bb2:

39 ...	a5
40 bxa5	Kc4!

But *never* 40...Kxc5? because after 41 Be7+ the a3 pawn is safe.

41 Bb2	Kb3
42 Bc1	f3
43 Ke1	Kc2
44 Bf4	Kb2

Black wins the a3 pawn and the game.

3) The game continuation 39....Ke4?

With two moves to go before the time control Black apparently decided to "play it safe" by protecting the f4 pawn so that it doesn't need to be advanced to f3. Yet the question raised by the move is: what is the King doing on the King-side?

39 Ke4?
40 Kf2 Bd5
Draw

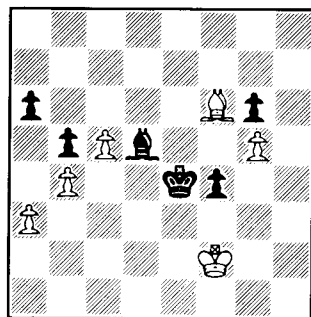


Diagram 70

J. Bellon -
D. Minic
Siegen Olympiad 1970
After
40...Bd5

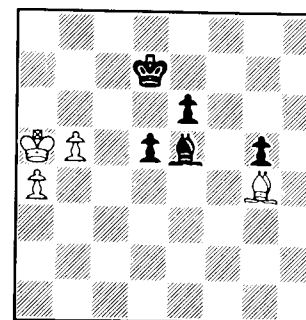
The game was adjourned here with White sealing his 41st move. The Yugoslavs offered a draw in the morning because after a full night of analysis they had not found a win. They considered the following to be the main line: 41 Bd8 Bc6 42 Bc7 Kf5 43 Bd8 Kg4 44 Be7! a5 (This correct break now comes too late) 45 bxa5 Kf5 46 a6 Ke4 47 a7 Kd4 48 a8=Q! Bxa8 49 c6! Bxc6 50 Bd6. The position is drawn since Black cannot win White's a-pawn or g-pawn and White's King securely blockades the f-pawn.

Not surprisingly the passage of time has punctured a few holes in the above variation. Thus IM Dvoretzky has shown that instead of 42...Kf5?, Black can play 42...f3 and win by walking over and capturing the a-pawn, as given in two of the earlier variations. On the other hand, White can draw by playing the immediate 41 c6!!. The c-pawn is not important for White's prospects; the chance for a successful blockade is

EVERYTHING. After 41...Bxc6 White's Bishop has much more scope and can protect the b4 pawn from the front and also has access to the g1-a7 diagonal from e.g. c5 and can help to stop the f-pawn. Very exhaustive analysis by Dvoretzky has shown that White can just defend.

The extraordinary importance of the more active King is driven home by the resulting play from Diagram 71, R. Calvo - D. Byrne, Palma de Mallorca 1968, Black on move.

Diagram 71



R. Calvo -
D. Byrne
Palma de
Mallorca '68
Black on
move

Each side has connected passed pawns and Black even an extra pawn in the form of the passed g-pawn, yet it is White who has a forced win! The factors responsible for this are:

- White's King is directly able to assist the passed pawns to advance.
- White's passed pawns are farther advanced than Black's.
- In the immediate future White's Bishop is able to blockade Black's pawns.

Even though it is his move, Black has no satisfactory defense:

1 Kd6

The game continuation whereby Black aims to immedi-

ately activate *his* King. Alternatives are no better:

(1) 1...Bd4 2 Ka6 Kd6 3 a5 e5 4 Kb7! (Keeping the King in front of the pawns both gives White's King maximum mobility and restricts the Black King's defensive opportunities.) 4...Kc5 5 Be2! (Not only protecting the b-pawn but also denying Black's King the important b5 square.) 5...g4 6 a6 g3 7 a7 g2 8 a8=Q g1=Q 9 Qa3 Mate.

(2) 1...Kc7 2 Ka6! d4 3 b6+ Kb8 4 a5 followed by Kb5, a6, a7+. Since White has the right Bishop for the a-pawn, Black lacks the defensive resource ...Bxb6 after White's a6.

2 Ka6!	Kc5
3 a5	d4
4 Bxe6	

There is no reason not to take off this pawn. Then White no longer has to worry about connected passed pawns and the Bishop can blockade the d- and g-pawn combination. However, the immediate 4 b6 also wins.

4	d3
5 b6!	

Passed pawns must be pushed!

5	Kb4
6 Bf5!	

A very fine strategic move: White forces the d-pawn forward so that the f1-a6 diagonal is opened up for the Bishop (see move 15!).

6	d2
7 Bg4	Bf4
8 b7	Bc7!

If instead 8...Bb8, 9 Kb6 followed by the advance of the a-pawn leads to an elementary win. The text requires White to come up with some sophisticated moves.

9 Bd1!

Forcing the Black King to abandon the attack on the a-pawn since Black has no reasonable waiting moves.

9	Kc5
10 Ka7	Kb5
11 a6	Ka5
12 b8=Q!	

The only way to win. Instead 12 Be2 Bd6 13 Ka8? leads to nothing after 13...d1=Q 14 Bxd1 Kxa6.

12	Bxb8+
13 Kb7	

Black's Bishop is stuck on b8 to prevent a7. As soon as the Black King can be deflected from the attack on the a-pawn White will win.

13	Kb5
14 Bg4!	Ka5
15 Be2!	Black resigns

Zugzwang is here! Neither Black's King nor Bishop has a reasonable move, while giving up the d- and g-pawns only postpones the inevitable.

Chapter 7: Summary and Comparison of Same Color Bishop vs. Opposite Color Bishop Endgames

Here I present a summary of the preceding six chapters.

A. Bishop and Pawn vs. Bishop

Same Color

If the defending King is in front of the pawn and cannot be chased away, the game is drawn. If the defending King is not in front of the pawn or can be chased away, the game is generally lost. The winning strategy consists of deflecting the defending Bishop (the only defender in the absence of the King) away from the pawn by offering to exchange Bishops.

Opposite Color

As long as either the defending King or Bishop controls any square in front of the pawn, the game is drawn.

B. Material Advantage Generally Necessary To Win

Same Color

1. Pawns on one side only: two pawns
2. Pawns on both sides: one pawn

Opposite Color: two pawns

C. Winning Strategy With Material Advantage

Make a passed pawn(s) on the side with the extra pawn(s). Remember: passed pawns must be pushed! If the enemy Bishop tries to stop it, deflect it by offering to exchange Bishops. If the enemy King stops it, infiltrate with own King into the other side of the board and capture enough

pawns to win the game.

D. Defensive Strategy With Material Disadvantage

1. Try for as many *routine* pawn exchanges as possible.
2. Try to have pawns on only one side of the board.
3. With opposite color Bishops aim for a blockade.

E. Positional Advantages

A more active King (one that is at least on the fourth rank or can get there), a better Bishop (able to attack enemy pawns), and better pawns (have viable passed pawn(s) and a flexible, sound formation; avoid doubled/isolated/backward pawns) are the three types of positional advantages. To have winning chances in positions with even pawns, at least two of the above advantages are usually required. Always try to keep the enemy Bishop as impotent as possible. Therefore never, never, never *voluntarily* put your pawns on the same color as the enemy Bishop.

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