All,

Here is a nice little game, which demonstrates beautifully how you can storm

through the centre and create that spearhead that can rip through the heart

of your opponent's position. It is always intriguing how the tactics always

figure themselves out when you have such a superior positional advantage. I

didn't have to spend much time on the tactics in this game, as the

positional thread has been played before in many similar lines, especially

so in the Centre-Counter defence opening. Following the simple positional

ploy of targeting the light-squared bishop of black's, cramping him up and

then centrally thrusting, all came very naturally. It was only towards the

end of the game where the tactics had to be calculated, and even then, it

did not take much to find the flourish.

Enjoy a very thematic game.

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[Round "4"]

[White "Ross, Chris"]

[Black "Okosieme, Iozeph"]

[Result "1-0"]

[ECO "B17"]

[WhiteElo "2230"]

[BlackElo "2020"]

[Annotator "Chris Ross"]

[PlyCount "73"]

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{B17: Caro-Kann}

1. e4 c6

2. d4 d5

3. Nd2 dxe4

4. Nxe4 Nd7

5. Nf3 Ngf6

6. Nxf6+

{The easiest for white. The knight can do a dance around the king side,

making trips to g5, but I, personally, do not find it a fruitful exercise.

Simple development is necessary and this liquidation is actually a neat

illustration that black, by seeking early exchanges, does not necessarily

achieve equality.}

6... Nxf6

7. Bc4

{The most active square for the bishop at the present time. Black has to

solve the issue of his own light-squared bishop, and intriguingly enough, it

is this bishop of black's, which white targets for the whole of the game.

White's own light-squared bishop is concentrating on the e6 square, which

becomes critical throughout the game.

White also wishes to delay the development of his own queen's bishop.

Bringing that out to f4 or g5 allows Bg4 pins and the white d4 pawn is

coming under a lot of pressure. D3 would be a nice square for the

light-squared bishop, but that is not possible yet due to the loose nature

of the aforementioned d4 pawn, which is proving to be white's annoying

piece. Note later, how the removal of this one annoyance for white, becomes

a very powerful asset indeed! Be2 is a passive square for the bishop, which

would unpin, but white can avoid all of that by this light-squared bishop's

immediate development. Bg4 is now prevented, pinning the white king's

knight, due to tactics with Bxf7+ and Ne5+ ideas.}

7... Bf5

{Black wishes to develop the bishop out of the pawn chain. G4 is no longer

possible, due to the tactic mentioned, Bxf7+, and hence, the f5 square is

chosen for it's development. However, as in many lines of the

Centre-Counter, Caro-Kan and other such systems, the bishop is a big

target.}

8. Qe2

{Waiting to develop the queen's bishop yet another move. White does not want

to play Bg5 immediately due to Ne4 ideas. Although not a major problem, it

is a distraction that white need not trouble with. The white queen is

developed and a decision to where white is going to castle is prolonged.

White has a game-plan, but does not wish to make it obvious to black as of

yet.}

8... e6

9. Bg5

{And now the queen's bishop is developed to it's best square. The knight is

pinned and so, there are no immediate tactics. The black king's bishop can

not be developed to it's most dangerous square, d6, so easily now, as the

pin on the f6 knight could prove to be fatal.}

9... Be7

10. O-O-O

{Completing development and demonstrating to black that an opposite-castling

game is offered. Although this is acceptable to black, it is clearly worse

for him, due to his lack of development. White is now fully prepared for the

attack and can launch his pawn-storm very rapidly, in comparison to black's

own queen-side operations.}

10... h6

{A Pr3 move, and one that has been played many times before.

It's hard for me to criticise this move, as it actually gives the h7 square

for the black light-squared bishop. The placement of that bishop though is

the key to the whole strategy of the game. Is h7 the square for that bishop?

If not, then is h7 then required as a flight-square. F7 is a big focus and

needs protection, as can be seen later.

Sure, the dark-squared bishop of white has now to make a decision, but this

only provokes him into the action he is intent on.

Black should develop as normal, maybe put the queen on c7, or take the

plunge and castle king-side however scary it may appear. At least he would

not have any pawn weaknesses to contend with in that case.}

11. Bxf6

{The first move in a line of options, but consistent with his whole game

strategy.

The dark-squared bishop is not a stunning piece for white and it does not

really have any major squares to retreat to. Yes, it can drop back onto h4,

but it will be ultimately exchanged on e7 for black's own dark-squared

bishop. That in itself is not a bad thing, but the future of the black

dark-squared bishop is not as rosy as the white one. Indeed, white has to be

wary of the f4 square, which could become potentially vulnerable. Although

not immediately obvious, if the black knight from f6 wanders into d5, Nf4

tactics have to be taken care of.

And after all, what is the white bishops doing, both of them? Is not the

white knight a slightly better piece than the black dark-squared bishop? I

think so, and once again, we return to the game strategy, which is to target

the black light-squared bishop. To make that a target, we have to squeeze up

on it. This means, a pawn storm, which will involve g2-g4, h2-h4 and then

h4-h5, or even, as the game follows. In that regard, the dark-squares are

all becoming very weak. The white dark-squared bishop retreat to h4 and a

likely drop back into g3 will only hinder that plan of pawn-storming the

king-side.

All of this is logical enough and makes perfect sense, especially so when

the dominating white knight, which is soon to land predominately in the

centre, can not be allowed to stand unmolested.

See below for extensive opening references.}

11... Bxf6

12. Ne5

{Establishing a strong knight outpost and facilitating the aforementioned

king-side pawn storm.}

12... Qc7

13. f4

{Occupying that vulnerable f4 square, supporting the knight on e5 and

preparing a further king-side pawn storm. Tactics are also now abundant.

Black has to be careful on how he castles.}

13... O-O-O

{Castling on the safer side, bringing the king away from the storm that is

arriving through the centre. Tactics are now apparent though, and white's

next seizes the initiative for certain.}

14. g4

{The black light-squared bishop becomes a target. It is fast running out of

squares to run to. Note how the early provocative h7-h6 deprives the bishop

retreat to g6, as then an exchange on g6 would shatter the pawns. How is now

black to respond?}

14... Bxe5

{Black is just about forced into this exchange. The natural retreat square

for the light-squared bishop is to h7, but this allows very dangerous

tactics with Nxf7, neatly demonstrating that the f7 pawn is vulnerable. Any

queen capture on f7 would lose the lady to Bxe6+ forks, a very cute way to

illustrate the weakness of the light-squares and especially f7. Yes, tactics

are not immediately on, as black may have Qxf4+ ideas, but you would think

that an exchange is at least dropping.

For these reasons, black felt obliged to exchange on e5 to give black the g6

square for his bishop. However, black has given up the bishop pair and that

valuable dark-squared bishop, his only compensation for the earlier h7-h6

move. That compensation has now evaporated, giving white a big advantage,

especially so after his natural recapture.}

15. dxe5

{Ridding myself of the only annoying weakness in the white camp. The d4 pawn

is no longer a target, needs protection and indeed, this pawn now becomes a

massive spearhead in black's position. Space has been gained and white is

now set for a big pawn push.}

15... Bg6

{Feeling it necessary to protect the f7 pawn still.

The bishop is to be further squeezed though and black wanted the h5 square

as a flight option. All very logical, but predictable. White now needs to

proceed with the shutting in of this poor light-squared bishop. If h5 is his

flight square, this will hit d1, gaining time on the rook. The plan is then

obvious, support f4-f5, but prevent tempo-gaining ideas with Bh5.}

16. Rxd8+

{There are no penetration squares down the D-file and nothing need to be

feared for the time being. This exchange avoids any Rxd1+ deflection ideas

by black. Things are now starting to become critical for him. Yes, black

does want exchanges and an end-game would be desirable for him. White must

avoid as many exchanges as possible and especially avoid the queen-exchange,

but one pair of rooks is not disastrous for white. There is another

consideration, but that can not be seen until the tactics later.}

16... Rxd8

17. Rf1 Qe7

{Black has now to resort to tactics to enable his bishop to be protected.

The push f4-f5 is going to squeeze black even more, and black also wants to

put pressure on the e5 pawn, which is the spearhead to white's thrusting.}

18. Qe3

{Putting the queen on a better square. The dark-squared bishops are now off

the board and so the queen does belong on such a coloured square, as like

the black counterpart. The white queen guards against any annoying Qg5+

tactics by black, as then any push with f4-f5 would leave the pawn to

tactics. The queen also gains tempo on the loose a7 pawn, but also has the

added option of swinging along the 3rd rank, maybe to trap a loose bishop on

h5, by Qh3 ideas, or even protecting a potentially weak bishop of white's,

if Bb3 is forced at some stage. A logical move, bettering the position of

the white queen.}

18... Kb8

{A logical response, protecting the a7 pawn, but this is slow. Black should

have sought activity for his inferior positional status. I was more

concerned with 18... Qb4 when my forced 19. Bb3 then gave him the time to

protect his a7 pawn. However, in that sense, the black queen would be

standing on a much more active square.}

19. f5 exf5

20. gxf5 Bh5

{Thus has white achieved his first major objective in the whole game

strategy. The light-squared bishop is squeezed out onto a very vulnerable

square. More importantly though, is that white has now created himself a

massive passed E-pawn, which he now intends to thrust through the heart of

black.

This is now where positional considerations have to be very carefully

guarded, as with the opening up of the position, tactical possibilities

become abundant.

However, good solid sensible chess should still prevail.}

21. c3

{This was the only point of the game where I took some time to consider the

major tactical considerations. Instinct told me that 21. Qg3 Qg5+ 22. Qxg5

hxg5 was the path to follow, but I did not wish to waste a tempo in

exchanging the queens on g5. If the queens were to come off, which I did not

really want to do, then I wanted it on my terms. I did not wish to lose a

tempo in that doing. Hence, I tried to find a move that was both useful and

productive in the end-game. This freeing up of the back-rank gave some area

for concern as it does make the white king that more airy than I really

liked. However, the controlling of the d1 square by a future Bb3 was

important, I felt and the prevention of any Rd4 or Qd4 moves by black was

also of value. This also puts a pawn on a dark-square, in preparation of the

end-game.

However, it was also a psychological move. Opening up the white king as this

must have given black some hope for attacking and tactical possibilities.

Black may be then more reluctant to exchange queens on g5 if he believes in

potential attacks or tactics against the seemingly weakened white king.

I think there is water to this theory and since black indeed went for

tactics, I give this move the due credit I think it deserves. A practical

move, if you like, rather than the best variation.}

21... Re8

22. e6 fxe6

23. fxe6 Qd6

{Again this is just about forced, as white was threatening Qe5+ tactics

picking up that very loose bishop on h5. This combination of the two

threads, the central thrust and the targeting of the light-squared bishop

are very neatly illustrated in his position, and hence, why, white can take

the position slowly, as black is just about in Zugzwang.}

24. h4

{Further restricting black. This removes the pawn of the attack of the black

queen. IT also stops black from getting ideas of advancing his own outside

passed pawn.}

24... Bg4

{Black is naturally eager to round up that annoying pawn on e6, which is now

attacked by all three of black's major pieces. However, to attack the pawn

from behind, the bishop has to give up the protection of the f7 square, the

7th rank. That nice f7 square, which is incidentally coming back to haunt

black. Strange isn't it how the same features reappear in a game...}

25. Re1 Re7

{Again, a very natural move and one, which is hard to criticise. Black would

love the queens to come off the board here, as then the black king would

march along the dark-squares and aid in the rounding up of the spearhead on

e6. This can not be allowed, naturally.

OK, Re7 does protect the f7 square, which is a point of penetration, but by

protecting the 7th rank, the 8th rank has also been left vulnerable, which

was another long-term consideration, when I exchanged rooks on d8, all those

moves ago.

However, before that exploitation, I have to again join the two concepts.

Currently, the idea of the spearhead thrust has been halted, so a switch

back to the targeting of the light-squared bishop is required.

Again, considering black's previous moves, the h7-h6 move has come back to

haunt him many times in this game and so my attention returned to that.

Which square has that Pr3 move created?

Yes, g6 is a point of penetration now. If my queen can sit on g6, it not

only protects e6, but hits g7 and, oh yeah, that light-squared bishop. Now

to get there.}

26. Qe4

{The shortest and quickest route. The bishop is attacked.}

26...... Qg3?

{Black's losing move, but it was hard to see why immediately. For him, that

is, but I was always aware of the two-strand policy I was adopting. Things

were bad for him, but this just illustrates how over-aggression has been

black's undoing.

The cheeky snatch for the H-pawn is bound to be doomed. Tactics can not

favour black in such positions, especially with a massive pawn on e6. In any

case, black can not really afford to move the queen away from the b8-h2

diagonal.

26... h5 was the only move for consideration. White will then penetrate on

g6 as mentioned, but black would simply have to cope with that and attempt

to wriggle that bit more.}

27. Rf1

{Highlighting the fact that f7 has been weakened and more importantly, the

back-rank for black. Things are now looking very bleak for black and there

does not seem to be a solution for him here.}

27... a6

{Attempting to provide the black king a flight square. This is soon cut-off

though.

27... Re8 guarding the back rank only allows the ramming of the E-pawn with

28. e7 and I am guessing that the retreat 28... Bh5 would be necessary to

secure the queening square on e8. However, with the pawn now on e7, black's

job of preventing a collapse of his position is just about impossible.}

28. Qd4

{Simply cutting out the flight square, renewing the Rf8 penetration idea.

Even Qd8 mates are on. All the dark-squares are taking over, the g7 pawn hit

and a sneaky tactic prepared.}

28... Re8

{There was no other way to protect against the Rf8+ tactic.

And finally, the switching from one plan to another is beautifully

demonstrated here. The spearhead is protected, readied for pushing, but what

was that other strand? Oh yeah, the light-squared bishop, which had nowhere

to go. I can now win that poor old piece.}

29. Rg1

{Winning the loose bishop on g4. There is no saving move here for black. The

rest is simple technique.}

29... Qxh4

30. Rxg4 Qe1+

31. Kc2 g5

{Black can resign now. The pushing of these pawns is a fruitless effort to

prolong the game. White can mop up in a number of ways here. There was no

point in further consideration of features here, so I simply played quickly

and practically. I did not seek out the best moves, just played sensibly and

allowed it to win itself, a full bishop up.}

32. Re4 Qh1

33. Qe5+ Ka8

34. e7

{Again, not the most accurate, but I just wanted to demonstrate that the

two-fold game-plan of mine was duly executed!}

34... Qg1

35. Rd4 Ka7

36. Qc5+ b6

37. Rd7+

Actually mating black, but I may have stolen the queen on g1 for the fun of

it.

In any case, black decided it was now enough.

A very neat game, with a game plan duly followed to precision.}

37... 1-0

Opening references.

A.

10... Bg4 11. h3 Bxf3 12. Qxf3 Nd5 13. Bxe7 Qxe7 14. Kb1 O-O-O 15. Rhe1 Rd7

16. Bb3 Qf6 17. Qxf6 gxf6 18. Re4 Rg8 19. g3 f5 20. Rh4 Nf6 21. c3 h5 22.

Kc1 Kc7 23. Bc2 Rdd8 24. Re1 Rg5 25. Bd1

Timoscenko,G (2530)-Razuvaev,Y (2465)/Ashkhabad 1978/MCL/1/2-1/2})

B.

11. Bh4 Nd5 12. Bg3 O-O 13. Bd3 Bxd3 14. Qxd3 Qa5

15. a3 Rad8 16. Rhe1 c5 17. c4 Nb6 18. d5 Bd6 19. Qe4 exd5 20. cxd5 c4 21.

Be5 Bxe5 22. Nxe5 c3 23. Qb4 cxb2+ 24. Kxb2 Rxd5 25. Qxa5 Rxa5 26. Nd7 Rc8

Kroeze,F (2390)-De Boer,S/Haarlem 1996/EXT 2000/1/2-1/2 (65)

C.

11. Bh4 Ne4 12. Bxe7 Qxe7 13. Bxd5 cxd5 14. Qb5+ Qd7 15. Qxd7+ Kxd7 16. Ne5+

Ke7 17. g4 Bh7 18. h4 Rac8 19.

Rd2 Rc7 20. Rh3 Kd6 21. Ra3 b6 22. Rf3 f6 23. Nd3 Be4 24. Re3 g5 25. f3 Bxd3

26. Rexd3

Klima,L (2215)-Korneevets,A (2325)/Moravia 1996/EXT 1998/0-1 (57)}

D.

11. Bh4 Ne4 12. g4 Bh7 13. Bg3 Nxg3 14. fxg3 Qc7 15. Ne5 Bd6 16. h4 f6 17.

Bxe6 fxe5 18. dxe5 Be7 19. Rhf1 Rf8 20. Rxf8+ Bxf8 21. Qf3 Qe7 22. Qb3 Rb8

23. Bd7+ Qxd7 24.

Rxd7 Kxd7 25. Qf7+ Be7

Tal,M-Fuster,G/Portoroz 1958/IZT/1-0

E.

11. Bf4 Nd5 12. Be5 O-O 13. g4 Bg6 14. h4 b5 15. Bd3 Bxd3 16. Qxd3 Nb4 17.

Qb3 Qd5 18. g5 h5 19. Nd2 Nxa2+ 20. Kb1 Qxb3 21. cxb3 Nb4 22. Ne4 Kh7 23.

Rh3 Rad8 24. g6+ fxg6 25. Rg1 Rf5

Castaneda,N (2341)-Eperjesi,L (2303)/Budapest 2001/CBM 082 ext/0-1 (47)  
  
Chris Ross

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