All,

Here is a lovely demonstration of what can occur if you don't' develop and

get your pieces out quickly enough, in the right positions, as soon as

possible. Exchanging developed pieces or going for wanders with them, rarely

if ever, result in a positive outcome.

[Event "CCCA League Matches 2009-2010"]

[Site "Peterborough, ENG"]

[Date "2010.04.14"]

[Round "12.1"]

[White "Winfridsson, Ola"]

[Black "Ross, Chris"]

[Result "0-1"]

[ECO "E30"]

[WhiteElo "2133"]

[BlackElo "2205"]

[Annotator "Chris Ross"]

[PlyCount "110"]

[EventDate "2010.04.14"]

[WhiteTeam "Cambridge A"]

[BlackTeam "new England A"]

{E30: Nimzo-Indian: Leningrad Variation}

1. c4 Nf6

2. Nc3 e6

3. d4 Bb4

4. Bg5

{The Leningrad is not that potent a weapon against the trust-worthy

Nimzo-Indian. White often has to dabble with tactics and have his

dark-squared bishop kicked around a lot. Black is naturally striving for

control of the dark-squares and aims to break-open the central pawn barrier.

The double-pin by 4. Bg5 is more of a bluff than anything else, as black is

not seriously concerned about any capture on f6. In that sense, unless white

is able to enforce e2-e4 with e5 threats without black having to

strategically weaken his position, black, is already well on the road to

equality.}

4... c5

5. Rc1

{Not the trendy way to meet black's obvious plan of dominating the

dark-squares. Blockading with 5. d5 is the common route for white with an

expansion through the centre. Black will naturally take on c3 and head for a

"good knight VS bad bishop" ending, where it is up to white to prove that

his bishop pair and strong pawn centre is sufficient enough compensation to

justify his opening.

5. Rc1 simply doesn't fit into the white strategy in any case, for

re-captures on c3 with a rook don't' really conform to his positional

objectives. especially so, when black is permitted to exchange a flank pawn

for a central one.}

5... h6

6. Bh4 cxd4

7. Qxd4 Nc6

{Black has achieved at least equality here, with the better developed and

coordinated pieces. Black also has an extra central pawn.}

8. Bxf6?

{Yet another major positional inaccuracy by white. Exchanging the

all-important dark-square controller is not beneficial to white's

development or positional aims. Even more vital, black is not permitted to

enforce the exchange of queen's, allowing him to enter into an end-game,

where the presence of the bishop pair will make it difficult for white to

equalise.}

8... Qxf6

{Simplest and best. Black wishes the queen exchange, as then the shattered

pawns won't be a point of concern, as the black king will be able to hide on

e7 without potential attacks by white. Not as accurate was 8... Nxd4 9. Bxd8

Kxd8 10. e3 Nc6 11. a3 Bxc3+ 12. Rxc3 b6 13. Nf3 Bb7 14. Be2 Rc8 15. O-O Ke7

16. Rfc1 d6 17. Nd4 Ne5 18. b4 Nd7 19. Bf3 Bxf3 20. Nxf3 e5 21. Kf1 Rc7 22.

e4 Rhc8 23. Ke2

Fraser Mitchell,J (2018)-Naslund,M (2243)/Liverpool ENG 2008/1-0 (51)}

9. Qxf6 gxf6

10. g3?

{Yet another major positional inaccuracy by white. The fienchettoing of the

bishop is the wrong displacement for the minor piece. Indeed, this takes yet

another move to bring the bishop to life, whereas the immediate 10. e3 gives

it breathing space, protecting the c4 pawn, which is a point of weakness, as

will soon become apparent. F2 is also a square for potential tactics, and

10. e3 blunts the bishop's attack of that square.

The G-file should not concern white until a black rook has landed on g8.

What the rook does on g8 is another question in itself and black may do best

to ignore that particular file. Here are some examples where white got some

play:

10. Nf3 Ke7 11. e3 Rg8 12. g3 b6 13. Be2 Bb7 14. O-O Rac8 15. a3 Bd6 16.

Rfd1 Bb8 17. Nb5 Rgd8 18. b4 a6 19. Nbd4 a5 20. Rb1

axb4 21. axb4 f5 22. Rdc1 Ne5 23. Rb2 Be4 24. Nxe5 Bxe5

Albrecht,R (2215)-Richter,M (2375)/Dresden 2002/EXT 2003/0-1 (60)

10. a3 Be7 11. e3 f5 12. Nge2 b6 13. Nf4 Bb7

14. Be2 Ne5 15. O-O Rc8 16. Nb5 a6 17. Nd4 Rg8 18. Rfd1 Bf6 19. g3 Ke7 20.

b3 Rc7 21. Nd3 Nxd3 22. Rxd3 Rgc8 23. Rcd1 Be4 24. R3d2 Ke8

Graf,J (2420)-Chandler,M (2600)/Germany 1989/GER-chT/0-1 (37)

Which clearly demonstrates that white has a difficult position already.}

10... b6

11. a3

{Simply driving the bishop back to a more effective square. Forcing this

once again just loses tempi. White should be concentrating on development.

Note how the c4 pawn has become weaker in addition.}

11... Be7

12. Nb5?

{White is obviously intent on wasting valuable time shuffling his pieces

around, rather than concentrating on attempting to consolidating his

position. The knight wandering is a one-move tactic and easily avoided. 12.

Bg2 Bb7 is the only way to continue as white.}

12... Rb8

{Simple and best. The tactic is avoided and the rook comes to bare on a

potentially open file, once b6-b5 has been played. Now the knight stands

stupidly on b5, vulnerable to attacks. Advanced pieces like this are bound

to be driven back with gain of tempi, inevitably giving the defender the

chance to gain a more positional dominating grip of the position.}

13. Bg2 a6

14. Nc3 Ne5

{And now the exposure of the weakened c4 pawn becomes apparent. The bishop

on g2 is in many ways, a redundant piece.}

15. Nd1

{A clear sign that white is in a very unhappy position. 15. Ne4 Bb7 with

f6-f5 looming is very uncomfortable for white.}

15... f5

16. Nf3

{White, at last, gets around to getting developed. Is it all too late

though...}

16... Bb7

17. O-O

{Connecting the rooks [almost connecting!] but doesn't white want his king

in the centre for the end-game? As miserable as it looks, 17. Rg1 Bxf3 18.

Bxf3 O-O! may be white's best hope.}

17... Nxf3+

18. Bxf3 Bg5?!

{Black's first slight inaccuracy. Black was unwilling to exchange

immediately on f3 as it wasn't so obvious that the bishop could dominate the

poorly placed knight on d1. However, after the exchange on f3, black should

be striving for the break d7-d5 and exploiting the uncoordinated state of

the white pieces.}

19. Rc3 Ke7

20. Bxb7 Rxb7

21. b3 Rc8

{The smoothness of the black piece coordination should give a clear

indication to how fluid his position is. Black is now all poised for a

minority attack on the queen-side. White will do well to hold this ending.}

22. f4?

{This very move may be white's losing positional idea. The bishop is driven

to a better square and the white pawns are fixed on the same-coloured

squares as the bishop.

Absolutely essential was 22. a4 when the pawn-breaks have to be carefully

calculated by black.}

22... Bf6

23. Rd3 b5

{Breaking up the pawn-chain and initiating the minority attack. White must

drop a pawn somewhere or be tied down to heavy-defensive duties.}

24. Ne3 bxc4

25. bxc4 h5

{Black wishes to eliminate his final weakness, the pawn on the H file. Also,

he wishes to saddle white with yet another backward pawn on g3. Can white

hold...}

26. Rfd1 h4

{Black could have been more patient here with 26... Rc6 27. h3 but it's

black who's making all the progression.}

27. Kf2 hxg3+

28. hxg3 Rc6

{A simple comparison of the pawn structures will confirm that white is

struggling to find an adequate defence. Black can probe at will without

endangering himself.}

29. Kf3 Bg7

30. R1d2

{The pawn thrust 30. g4 does nothing to alter the pawn formation, as black

can re-establish his pawn control of the e4 and g4 squares. 30. g4 fxg4+ 31.

Nxg4 f5 doesn't help white in any way.

White is now clinging and waiting for black to deliver the final part of his

plan.}

30... Ke8

{Black has all the time in the world.

First, the king's positioning is improved, to stop any captures on d7 with

check. Also, surprisingly, the bishop is ready to be re-routed.}

31. Rd6

{Any exchanges will just help black, so white should simply sit and wait

with 31. Rd1 and hope and pray. Inactivity and playing lastly is not very

pleasant though.}

31... Rbc7

{Coming to the time control, black wanted to play solidly. More accurate is

31... Rxd6 32. Rxd6 Ke7 33. Rd3 [33. Rxa6? Rb3 with Bd4 to follow] and black

can continue as in the game.}

32. R2d3

{White had the chance here to try a break with 32. g4 fxg4+ 33. Nxg4 a5 and

black would have to re-gather himself.}

32... Bf8

{Attempting to re-route the bishop to a better diagonal. 32... Ke7 33. Rxc6

Rxc6 34. g4 fxg4+ 35. Kxg4 f5+ 36. Kf3 was probably best.}

33. Rxc6 Rxc6

34. Rb3 Bc5

35. Nc2 Bd6

{Demonstrating that white is running out of moves and is just about

zugzwanged. The queen-side pawns are too weak.}

36. Rc3 Bc5

{Time-control chess. However, the time control has now been reached. Time

now to begin the winning process.}

37. Nb4

{Active, but white may do best to play 37. Rb3 and ask black to progress.}

37... Rb6

38. Nc2

{Best is 38. Nd3 Bf8 39. c5 and white may even be OK!}

38... Rb2

{Black is not being very clinical in his play. 38... a5 39. Rd3 is the way

to continue.}

39. e3 Ke7

40. Ne1 Ra2

41. Nc2 a5

{At last white has been successfully zugzwanged.

The white pieces are so tied up that the rook, knight and king can not move.

When tied down so much, tactically, something has to give.}

42. Ke2 Bxa3

{The little combinations that always reveal themselves when positionally,

you are so dominant.}

43. Rxa3 Rxc2+

44. Kd3 Rg2

45. Rxa5 Rxg3

46. Ra7 Rg1

{Black has to come around to the C-file to attack that lonely C-pawn. So,

white tries to cut the rook off from the 8th rank. That's OK though, as the

1st rank has been cleared.}

47. Kd2 Rg8

48. Kd3 Rc8

49. Kd4 Kd6

{More showy than effective. The point is to wriggle the king in. Also, I'm

asking white to push his C-pawn, weakening it even further. The lure, of

course, works!}

50. Ra6+ Rc6

51. c5+

{The pawn is naturally weaker this far advanced, but white had been

struggling now for nearly 3 hours. There is no wonder that there is little

resistance at the end.}

51... Kc7

52. Ra7+ Kd8

53. Rb7 Ra6

54. Ke5 Ke7

55. Rc7

{The final blunder!

White is going for dirty tactics that involve c6-c7 with the d7 pawn being

pinned. However, it's the white king that is in trouble, not the C-pawn this

time!}

55... Ra4

{With the threats of 56... Re4# and 56... f6#...both of which, can not be

prevented!}

56. 0-1

Chris Ross  
April 2010