All,

Whilst showing this game recently to somebody else, I suddenly realised how

neatly it demonstrates some very interesting features.

Gally is a good friend of mine and I am sure that he will take the comments

here in the spirit in which they are meant.

It is not a public condemnation of his play, but a sheer illustration of the

thinking patterns that can occur, which guide a player to victory. The

thought process seems simple enough and black appears to allow most of it.

However, it is the logical execution of a game plan that is ultimately

victorious for white.

Enjoy.

[Event "BCA British Championship"]

[Site "Scarborough, ENG"]

[Date "2011.08.14"]

[Round "7"]

[White "Ross, Chris"]

[Black "Gallagher, John"]

[Result "1-0"]

[ECO "A05"]

[Annotator "Chris Ross"]

[PlyCount "83"]

[EventDate "2011.08.19"]

{A05: Réti Opening}

1. Nf3 Nf6

2. g3 d6

3. Bg2 e5

{Black now indicates that his setup is going to be similar to the King's

Indian Defence. This is perfectly acceptable and a logical response to the

opening chosen by white. White need not commit to the centre as of yet, but

it has to be made apparent to his long-term objectives.

Now, having fianchettoed the light-squared bishop, it is clear that the

light squares are of vital importance.

Now, a bishop developed at knight 2, is often targeting the opposite knight

2 square. In this case, g2 eyes b7, b2 will eye g7 and vice versa.

Here then, b7 is a point of focus and it is extremely fitting how a lot of

white's play follows a simple, long-term objective.}

4. c4

{Controlling some of those vital light squares. Also a route for the white

queen to target the b7 square has been created.}

4... g6

5. Nc3 c6

{With this move, black initiates a very significant structural

determination.

The fianchettoed bishop on g2 is suddenly blunted. In order to maximise the

most of the fianchettoed bishop on g2, the blunting pawn, c6, has to be

targeted, in order to get through to the b7 square.

This is important, as the white development plan has now become very

straight forward.}

6. d3

{Another important structural feature. White is setting up his pieces on the

light-squares, dominating them in order to control them.

Black has also fianchettoed on the king-side, which makes the dark-squares

important to him. Opening up the centre with d2-d4 allows e5xd4 captures,

thereby bringing the "Dragon" bishop on g7 to life. White wishes to

neutralise that bishop as much as possible and limit it's effectiveness

behind the e5 pawn as much as possible.}

6... Bg7

7. Rb1

{The next stage in the plan. The c6 pawn has to be targeted. To do that, the

pawn must be exchanged. Since white does not want to push his D-pawn forward

to be exchanged, the B-pawn is required to facilitate the weakening of the

black queen-side.

Also, the material along the big diagonal, a1-h8, is removed away from any

potential tactics of the "Dragon" bishop. a common enough plan, initiated in

many English type setups, and similar to the "minority attack" feature in

the Queen's Gambit Declined. Here, the plan is more effective due to the

fast nature in which the c6 pawn can be targeted.}

7... O-O

8. O-O Nbd7

9. b4

{And so the plan is begun. C6 is going to be challenged, the B-file to be

opened up and the rook well positioned on an open file. tactics with e5-e4

have also been ruled out.}

9... a6

10. a4

{Continuing with the enforcement of the B-pawn march. Examples of other

routes can be seen below in the opening references.}

10... Rb8

{Black begins to realise that the pressure on the b7 square is going to be

almost intolerable.

Although this is an understandable precaution, it may have been best to

leave the rook on the A-file and hope for something along that file once it

has become open. The black queen may have done best to sit on c7 and hold up

the protection on the b7 square.}

11. b5 axb5

12. axb5 c5

{Due to the pinned nature of the b7 pawn now on the B8-rook, allowing

exchanges on c6 is almost impossible. Black now decides to blockade the

position, but in doing so, he creates himself two backward pawns, on b7 and

d6. This may seem insignificant, but small positional advantages are now

beginning to accumulate.}

13. Bd2

{Simple development. It is the knight on c3 which is loose. The bishop does

not have a better square as of yet. The next stage in the process needs to

be commenced.}

13... b6

{Black attempts to rid himself off this poor old pawn on b7. The pawn

structure is aesthetically improved, if not resolved structurally. This

simple push however, creates two more "outposts", which come back to haunt

black soon enough.

Better may have been to use the b6 square to allow some sort of development

for his pieces. 13... Nb6 14. Qc2 is a likely continuation.}

14. Ra1

{Rooks belong on open files, and hence, why the knight on c3 needed

protection, to prevent any e5-e4 tactics. Also, the rook's attack onto b7

has been blocked off vertically. Hence, the necessity to attack b7

horizontally! Also, rooks belong on the 7th rank, as well as on open files.

The process is all very simple, if you follow simple positional features.

The tempi invested in making the process is not important.}

14... Bb7

15. Ra7 Qc8

16. Qb3

{The natural square for the queen. D5 is held in check, and in some

variations, f7 is a focus point, especially so with the rook on a7. The

other rook's passage into the play is made feasible.}

16... Ra8

{Black may well have considered a break here. 16... e4 17. dxe4 Nxe4 18.

Nxe4 Bxe4 19. Rd1 but I do not like the state of the backward D-pawn.}

17. Rfa1 Rxa7

18. Rxa7 Qb8

19. Qa2

{The rook on a7 is maintained. The queen remains on the a2-g8 diagonal and

a4 and a3 are left clear for a rook retreat if necessary.}

19... Rc8?

{And at last, the slow, simplistic way, in which white has played, has

forced the tactical inaccuracy. Struggling to find a plan, black seeks a way

in which he is somehow able to play Rc7 maybe and wriggle out with a

complicated contortion.

However. 19... Rd8 is the only move available for black in the position.

Now, having accumulated all the desirable positional advantages, a good

position will usually yield a tactical flourish. They do say, good

positional play facilitates tactical possibilities. Being aware of when

those opportunities offer themselves is the key though, naturally.

Here, the chance has now arisen. The tactical flourish which caps everything

off beautifully.}

20. Nxe5!

{Winning a clear pawn. Lines and diagonals are now opened up. B7 is the

focus square again.}

20... Bxg2

{Naturally, if 20... dxe5 21. Bxb7 and the house is just about down.}

21. Nxd7

{The Zwischenzug move, which makes the variation viable. B8 is attacked,

gaining enough tempo to allow the exchange}

21.. Nxd7

22. Kxg2

{Accuracy. 22. Rxd7 Bb7 is not the best route.}

22... Nf6

{The knight has nowhere else really to go. Black is desperately trying to

get some counter play, maybe by e5-e4. Again, white does not allow him the

time for this.}

23. Bg5

{Eliminating the defender of the d5 outpost, giving white a "good knight VS

bad bishop" minor piece balance, protecting the e4 tactic and making black's

life as miserable as possible.}

23... h6

24. Bxf6 Bxf6

25. Nd5 Bd8

{Black is just about ran out of possibilities. Retreating to g7 allows forks

on e7 and the b6 pawn is left weak if black defends the bishop with 25...

Kg7.}

26. Qa6

{And yet another outpost is exploited. The b7 square is the focus once again

and the white queen penetrates to attack the b6 pawn. Further material loss

has to be guaranteed now.

Black is effectively in Zugzwang.}

26... Kf8

27. Rb7

{White now repeats the position to gain time on the clock. Also, the

occupation of the b7 square, as targeted on move 2 with g3, is neatly

accomplished.}

27... Qa8

28. Ra7 Qb8

29. Rb7 Qa8

30. Nxb6 Qxa6

{The ending is lost for black, naturally, and it is a matter of technique

now. No better was 30... Bxb6 31. Qxb6 Kg7 32. e4 when black can do

absolutely nothing at all.}

31. bxa6

{Making things as easy as possible. Strictly speaking 31. Nd7+ Kg7 32. bxa6

is the more accurate route, but it did not matter much now.}

31... Bxb6

32. Rxb6 Ke7

33. Rb7+ Ke6

{Black is two pawns down, white has a massive passed A-pawn. The ending is

extremely easy to convert. Block the black pawn moves and it will soon be

over.

The rest is elementary.}

34. a7 Ra8

35. Kf3 h5

36. Kf4 f6

37. h4 d5

38. cxd5+ Kxd5

39. e3 Kc6

40. Rf7 f5

41. Kg5 Kb6

42. Kxg6 1-0

Opening references

A.

10. Nd2 Ne8 11. Qc2 f5 12. a4 Kh8 13. b5 Qc7 14. Nb3 Nef6 15. Bd2 d5 16.

bxc6 bxc6 17. cxd5 cxd5 18. Rfc1 Bb7 19. Qd1 Qd8 20. Na5 Qxa5 21. Rxb7 Rac8

22. Nxd5 Rxc1 23. Qxc1 Qxa4 24. Nxf6 Nxf6

Khetsuriani,B (2331)-Hrisanthopoulos,D (2128)/Kallithea GRE 2009/1-0}

B.

10. Bd2 Re8 11. Qc2 d5 12. cxd5 cxd5 13. Ne1 Nb6 14. Na4 Nxa4 15. Qxa4 b5

16. Qb3 Be6 17. a4 Rc8 18. Rc1 Rxc1 19. Bxc1 Qc7 20. Bb2 e4 21. axb5 axb5

22. dxe4 dxe4 23. Qc2 Qc4 24. Qd2 Rc8

Navarro,C (2115)-Ferreyra,D (1901)/Mar del Plata ARG 2011/1-0 (37)})

C.

12... cxb5 13. Nxb5 Qe7 14. Ba3 Nc5 15. Nc3 Bd7

16. Nd5 Nxd5 17. cxd5 Na4 18. Qd2 Rfc8 19. Rfc1 Nc5 20. e4 Qf8 21. Rc2 Bh6

22. Qe2 Qe8 23. Bxc5 Rxc5 24. d4 Rxc2 25. Qxc2 exd4 26. Nxd4 Bg7 27. Qd2

Appel,M-Abel,D/Oberhof 1998/EXT 2000/0-1 (43)

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