

Contents

Symbols	4
Introduction	5
‘The Devil is in the Detail’	7
Part 1: Tactics in Chess	8
What are Tactics and Combinations?	8
Tactics in Practice	18
Blow for Blow	24
Logical Analysis	30
Developing Tactical Skills	42
Exercises for Part 1	51
Part 2: The Technique of Calculating Variations	58
Calculation and Tactics	58
The Technique of Calculating Variations	64
What to Do Before Starting to Calculate	71
Unclear and Complex Situations	80
The Role of Judgement	86
When to Stop Calculating	94
Calculation by Stages	98
Concrete Action to Realize an Advantage	104
Resulting Moves	110
Summary	125
Calculation Training	126
Conclusion	131
Exercises for Part 2	132
Solutions	143
Solutions for Part 1 Exercises	143
Solutions for Part 2 Exercises	155
Index of Players	173

such mistakes are often the result of errors in judgement. This connection between calculation and the assessment of its consequences connects the previous topic with the next one.

When to Stop Calculating

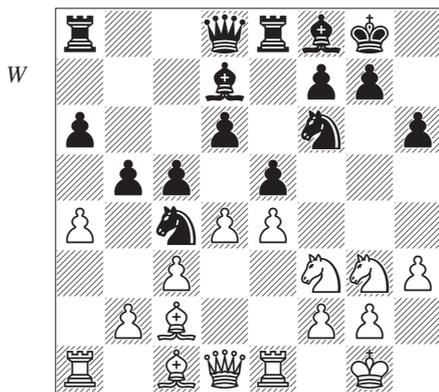
At an early stage in the discussion of calculating variations, we posed the question of when and how one should begin calculation. Now the time has come to consider when, and on the basis of which factors, one should stop calculating.

If we calculate more than necessary, we waste time and energy, while if we stop calculating too soon, the consequences can be even worse, for we can miss favourable opportunities for ourselves, or walk into a nasty surprise from the opponent. The following game is an example:

Parma – Geller

Capablanca memorial, Havana 1965

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♙b5 a6 4 ♙a4 ♘f6 5 0-0 ♙e7 6 ♚e1 b5 7 ♙b3 0-0 8 c3 d6 9 h3 h6 10 d4 ♚e8 11 ♘bd2 ♙f8 12 ♘f1 ♙d7 13 ♘g3 ♘a5 14 ♙c2 ♘c4 15 a4 c5 (D)



This is the Smyslov Variation of the Closed Lopez. Geller also played this line with the bishop on b7. The present position arose for the first time in this game. Geller was familiar with it from his home preparation, whereas Parma was forced to wrestle with unfamiliar problems

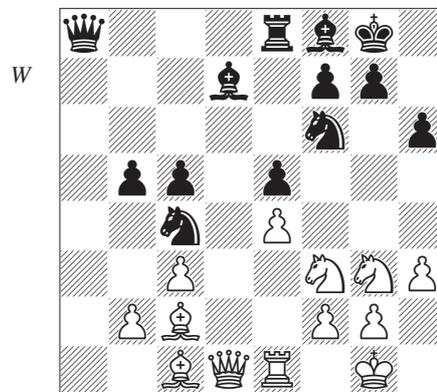
at the board. One can therefore understand the reasons for his following, rather optimistic, reaction.

16 axb5?!

In a later game, White played 16 b3 ♘a5! 17 axb5 axb5 18 d5 ♚c7 19 ♙e3 g6 20 ♘d2 ♙g7 21 ♚a2 ♚ec8! 22 ♚a1 ♚d8! 23 ♚c1 ♘b7, reaching a very complicated position with approximately equal chances, Jansa-Geller, Lugano OL 1968.

16...axb5 17 ♚xa8 ♚xa8 18 dxc5 dxc5 (D)

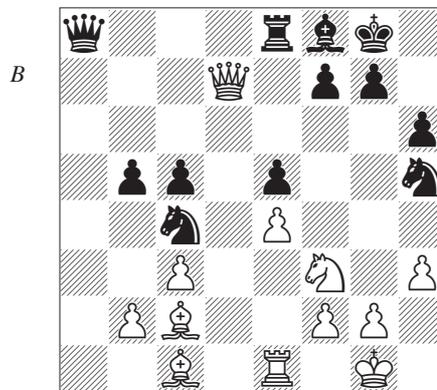
Here White could not restrain himself from continuing with his original idea, and he played:



19 ♘h5?

It was still not too late to revert to the typical Spanish idea 19 ♘h4!? ♚d8 20 ♚f3, although in this case, Black already has certain additional pluses compared with usual situations, and his position is slightly preferable.

19...♘xh5 20 ♚xd7 (D)

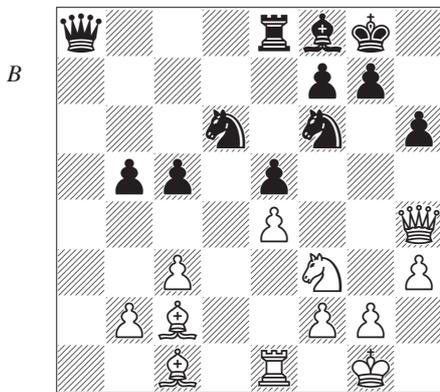


This is the position White was aiming for when he played his 16th move. It is not immediately obvious what is wrong with it: he has the advantage of the two bishops and the b5-pawn hangs. This may not be a lot, but it is something. However...

20...♗d6!

Suddenly it transpires that White did not look sufficiently deeply into the position, and just one move beyond his 'horizon', he already has to amend his assessment significantly. His queen is in trouble (a characteristic variation is 21 ♖d1? ♗f6 22 ♗c7 ♙c8 23 ♗b6 ♗d7), and has few squares.

21 ♗g4 ♗f6 22 ♗h4 (D)



22...♙e6!

This excellent manoeuvre dashes all White's hopes of counterplay and his queen now proves to be out of play. Geller gives an interesting and very characteristic comment: "A very strong move in such positions, of a type which Spassky has often made." Geller had an enormous knowledge of chess!

23 ♗d2 c4 24 ♗f1?

White loses a tempo, which turns a difficult position into a practically lost one. He should immediately improve the position of his queen by 24 ♗g3!?. Now Black breaks through powerfully on the queenside and White has no defence.

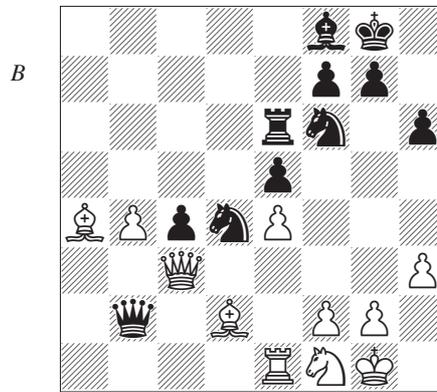
24...b4! 25 cxb4 ♗b5 26 ♙d2 ♗a2 27 ♗g3

Black also has a great advantage after 27 ♗e3 ♗xb2.

27...♗xb2 28 ♙a4 ♗d4!?

28...♙xb4 29 ♙xb5 ♙xd2 is equally strong.

29 ♗c3 (D)



29...♗a2!

This is the point of Black's 28th move. White is lost.

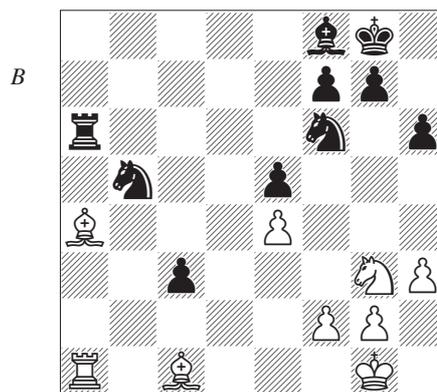
30 ♗a1

It is important that he cannot play 30 ♙a1? ♗e2+ 31 ♗h1 ♗xc3.

30...♗xa1 31 ♙xa1 ♙a6 32 b5

A pawn sacrifice born of desperation. He loses immediately after 32 ♗g3 ♗b3 or 32 f3 c3.

32...♗xb5 33 ♗g3 c3 34 ♙c1 (D)



34...c2!?

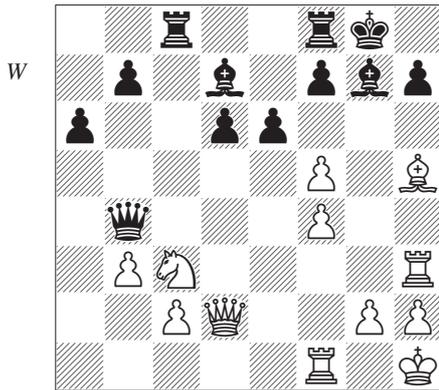
Also good was 34...♗d4!?. 35 ♙a2 ♗d7 36 ♙b3 ♗xb3 37 ♙xa6 ♗xc1.

35 ♙b2 ♗d4 36 ♙xc2

After 36 ♗f1, Black wins with 36...♗b3!, and on 36 ♙a2 by 36...♗d7! 37 ♙b3 ♙b6.

36...♖xa1+ 37 ♔xa1 ♞xc2 38 ♕xe5 ♞d7 0-1

The finish of the next game only takes four moves, but this small piece of calculation contains great richness.



Tal – Platonov
Dubna 1973

Black’s positional superiority is the first thing which strikes one. His dark-squared bishop is magnificent, and his pressure on the c-file looks almost decisive. What can White do? His only chances lie on the kingside, but how serious are they? What weaknesses in the black position are there on which White can build his hopes? Frankly, speaking, not many, but trying to hold Black’s pressure on the other flank by 20 ♖g3 ♗h8 21 ♖ff3 offers very few prospects, after, for example, 21...d5. But Tal would not have been Tal without digging up striking resources even in such a terrible position:

20 f6!

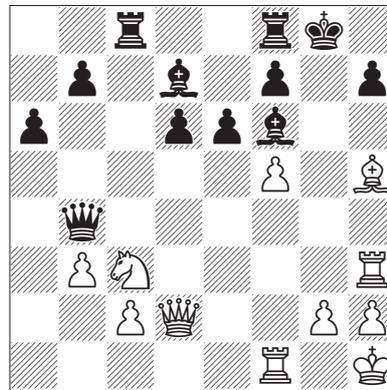
Absolutely essential, if White is planning to put all his hopes on a kingside attack. He must open lines for his queen and rook.

20...♗xf6 21 f5! (D)

Without this follow-up, the previous move makes no sense.

Now that the white pieces have come somewhat to life, and there is a chance of them combining together on the kingside, Black needs to do some more work calculating variations. I would emphasize that despite the heroics of the

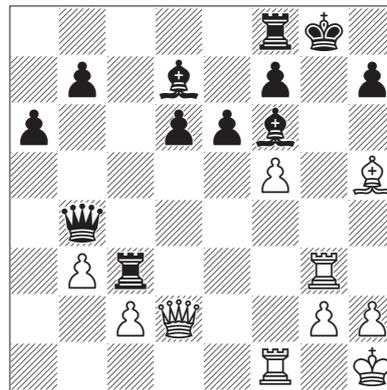
B



white pawns, the position has only become sharper, and its fundamental assessment has not changed. Black had, and still has, the advantage. All that has changed is the difficulty he faces in realizing that advantage. White has done his best to complicate his opponent’s task, but with correct play, Black should nonetheless convert his superiority. 21...♗xc3? is now a serious mistake, since after 22 ♖g5+ ♗h8 23 ♕g6! fxg6 24 ♖xg6 White wins. 21...♗d4!? looks very good, transferring the queen to the most important diagonal on the board. After 22 ♖d3 ♖e5 23 ♖xd6 ♕c6 24 ♖d3 ♖cd8 Black has repulsed all of his opponent’s attempts at active play, and retains the advantage. But why settle for just an advantage? Why not take a piece, especially as there seems no reason not to? There followed:

21...♖xc3? 22 ♖g3+ (D)

B



Now after 22...♕g7 23 ♖xg7+ (worse is 23 f6 because of the stunning reply 23...♖f3!! with