

Contents

Foreword by John Nunn	8
Authors' Preface	10
Introduction	12
Symbols	13
1 Activity	15
A) King Activity	15
A1) An Endgame is Not a Middlegame	15
A2) Cutting Off the King	24
A3) Barriers	29
A4) The Bodycheck	30
A5) The Réti Manoeuvre	32
B) Rook Activity	33
C) Activity in General	36
2 The Art of Pawn Play	39
A) Passed Pawns	39
A1) Outside Passed Pawns	39
A2) Protected Passed Pawns	41
A3) Connected Passed Pawns	43
A4) Passed Pawns Must be Pushed!	44
A5) Blockade	45
B) Creating a Passed Pawn	48
B1) Mobilizing a Pawn-Majority	48
B2) Pawn Breakthrough	52
B3) Eliminating Enemy Pawns	56
C) The Minority Attack	57
D) Undermining	59
E) Pawn Power	60
3 Do Not Rush!	65
A) Preparatory Measures	65
B) Subtle Technical Moves	67
C) Repeating Moves	68
D) The Art of Manoeuvring	69
E) Playing with the Whole Army	72

F)	Too Much of a Rush	73
4	The Right Exchange	76
A)	The Importance of Exchanges in the Game of Chess	76
B)	Critical Moments in the Endgame	78
C)	Exchanging into a Pawn Ending	82
D)	Exchanging into a Rook Ending	86
E)	Exchanging a Pair of Rooks	89
E1)	The Attacker Wants to Exchange a Pair of Rooks	89
E2)	The Defender Wants to Exchange a Pair of Rooks	91
F)	Simplification into an Endgame	93
G)	The Defender Exchanges Pawns, the Attacker Pieces	96
H)	Eliminating the Last Pawn	97
I)	The Defender of a Weakness Must be Exchanged	98
J)	Transformation	100
K)	What is Important is What is Left on the Board, Not What Disappears	102
L)	Avoiding an Unfavourable Exchange	102
5	Thinking in Schemes	106
A)	Target Positions	106
B)	Make a Wish!	107
C)	Improving the Position of a Piece and Makogonov's Principle	108
D)	Plans	110
6	Weaknesses	114
A)	Pawn- and Square- Weaknesses	114
A1)	Pawn Weaknesses	114
A1a)	Isolated Pawns	114
A1b)	Doubled Pawns	115
A1c)	Backward Pawns	116
A1d)	A Pawn that has Advanced Too Far	116
A2)	Weak Squares	118
B)	A Complex of Weak Squares	118
C)	Creating and Fixing a Weakness	121
D)	Manoeuvring	123
E)	The Principle of the Second Weakness	129
F)	The Exploitability of a Weakness	131
G)	Fatal Passivity with Structural Weaknesses	132
7	The Fight for the Initiative	135
A)	The Importance of the Initiative	135
B)	Passed Pawns and the Initiative	137
C)	Psychology	138

D)	Sacrificing Structure for Initiative	139
E)	Sacrificing Material for Initiative	140
F)	Opposite-Coloured Bishops	141
G)	When the Queen is in her Element	141
8	Prophylaxis and Prevention of Counterplay	145
A)	Foiling the Opponent's Plans	145
B)	Mysterious Rook Moves	147
C)	Preventing Counterplay	148
9	The Bishop-Pair in the Endgame	151
A)	Steinitz's Method of Restriction	151
B)	Transformation	153
C)	Control	155
D)	Opening the Position for the Bishops	157
E)	Supporting Passed Pawns	160
F)	Attack	161
G)	Two Bishops against Rook and Minor Piece	163
H)	The Bishop-Pair as a Drawing Weapon	166
I)	Fighting against the Bishops	168
I1)	Blockade	168
I2)	Total Sealing of the Position	169
I3)	Support-Points for the Knight	171
10	Zugzwang	173
A)	A Powerful Endgame Weapon	173
B)	Theoretically Important Endings	177
C)	Reciprocal Zugzwang	179
D)	Triangulation and Spare Moves	180
11	Fortresses	183
A)	Elementary Fortresses	183
B)	A Secure Camp	190
B1)	Fortresses against a Bishop	190
B1a)	Averbakh's Barrier	190
B1b)	The Bishops Inhabit Different Worlds	191
B1c)	The Well-Entrenched Knight	192
B2)	Fortresses against a Rook	194
B2a)	The Knight Fights Well in a Confined Space	194
B2b)	Typical Drawing Fortresses with Bishop against Rook	196
B3)	Fortresses against the Queen	199
C)	Pawn-Barriers	200
D)	Incarcerating Pieces	204

D1)	An Incarcerated King	204
D2)	Pieces Shut Out of Play	208
E)	Tied and Pinned Pieces	210
E1)	Tied to a Pawn	210
E2)	Tying	210
E3)	A Dangerous Passed Pawn	211
E4)	Pinning	212
F)	A Typical Mistake	213
12	Stalemate	216
A)	The Last Chance	216
B)	Theoretically Important Stalemate Positions	217
C)	Desperado	219
D)	Underpromotion to Avoid Stalemate	219
13	Mate	222
A)	An Incarcerated King	222
B)	The All-Important First Check	223
C)	Rooks in Seventh Heaven	225
D)	Attacking with Opposite-Coloured Bishops	227
E)	The Knight in the Attack	231
F)	Long-Term Mating Attacks	233
14	Domination	235
A)	Total Domination	235
B)	Theoretically Important Endings	237
C)	Methods of Restriction	238
C1)	Restricting a Bishop	238
C2)	Restricting a Knight	239
C3)	Restricting the Whole Enemy Force	241
C4)	Incarcerating a Piece	242
15	Converting an Advantage	245
A)	Transforming One Advantage into Another	245
A1)	Bishops are Generally Easier to Exchange	246
A2)	Transforming a Static Advantage into a Dynamic One	246
A3)	Returning Material	248
A4)	Basic Considerations	249
B)	Practical Examples	250
B1)	Space Advantage	250
B1a)	Widening the Operational Front	254
B2)	Material Advantage	255
B2a)	An Extra Pawn	255

B2b) Converting the Advantage of the Exchange	256
16 The Art of Defence	259
A) Defend Actively	259
B) Prophylaxis in Defence	260
C) Maintaining a Blockade	260
D) Defensive Sacrifices	261
E) Fight to the Death	262
17 Typical Mistakes	265
A) Deficient Knowledge of Endgame Theory	265
B) Carelessness / Loss of Concentration	270
C) Playing to the Gallery	273
D) Premature Resignation	274
D1) Trusting the Opponent / Shock after an Unexpected Move	275
E) Passivity	275
F) Inappropriate Activity	276
G) Don't Play on the Wing where Your Opponent has the Advantage	277
H) Unnecessarily Giving up Material	277
I) Greed	278
J) Following Rules of Thumb Too Mechanically	280
18 Rules of Thumb	281
A) 20 Golden Rules of the Endgame	281
B) Rules of Thumb	281
Solutions to the Exercises	284
Bibliography	345
Index	347

2 The Art of Pawn Play

[Pawns] are the very Life of this Game.
FRANÇOIS-ANDRÉ DANICAN PHILIDOR

The older I get, the more I value pawns.
PAUL KERES

In contrast to all the other pieces, pawns cannot move backwards. They take tiny steps and there are often long delays between each pawn move. On account of this leisurely progress, it is often the case that the pawn-structure changes only very slowly and hence it leaves its stamp on the position for some considerable time. Of course, you can never deduce the best move just from a consideration of the pawn-structure alone, but in most cases this does give definite clues as to the direction in which one's thoughts should be pointed. This fact alone is enough to demonstrate the great importance of the pawns. So consider each pawn move carefully!

Before we become immersed in the subject-matter, we should like to point out that this theme also overlaps with other chapters. You can find related subject-matter, for example, in Chapter 6 on the theme of pawn weaknesses, in Chapter 5 on support-points for pieces, and in Chapter 4 on pawn exchanges. Finally, the important rule of thumb 'don't move pawns on the wing where the opponent has the advantage' is closely examined in Chapter 17.

A) Passed Pawns

For me, the passed pawn has a soul, just like a human being, unacknowledged desires slumbering deep within, and fears, of whose existence it is scarcely aware.

ARON NIMZOWITSCH

In the endgame, passed pawns increase enormously in importance, in comparison with the

other phases of the game. In the endgame they either play a diversionary role or are even the decisive factor. The former case arises if the passed pawn is so dangerous that it draws the fire of the opposing forces, who are thus forced to abandon the main battle-zone. Thus, for instance, an outside passed pawn (see A1) often diverts the enemy king. Protected passed pawns (see A2) have the advantage that they compel enemy pieces to adopt defensive duties, yet do not require protection by their own pieces. Thus the presence of protected passed pawns generally increases the overall activity of the side that has them.

Passed pawns are generally a decisive factor if they are so powerful that, despite all obstructions, they succeed in promoting, or if they force the opponent to give up material to prevent their advance. For example, connected passed pawns (see A3) advancing in 'close formation' are as a rule extremely hard to stop. Not only can they defend each other, but they can also help one other by controlling the squares that each needs to move to.

Basically, when there are passed pawns, the following rules of thumb are applicable:

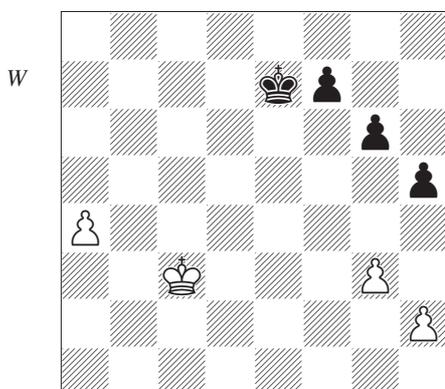
1. Passed pawns must be pushed.
2. In any race between passed pawns, it is not the quantity but the quality of the passed pawns that counts.

All these aspects will now be enlarged upon, point by point.

A1) Outside Passed Pawns

In pawn endings and minor-piece endings, an outside passed pawn is a particularly powerful force, since it diverts the main defender.

In the diagram on the following page, Larsen's king must deal 'personally' with the a-pawn, enabling White to seize the advantage on the kingside:

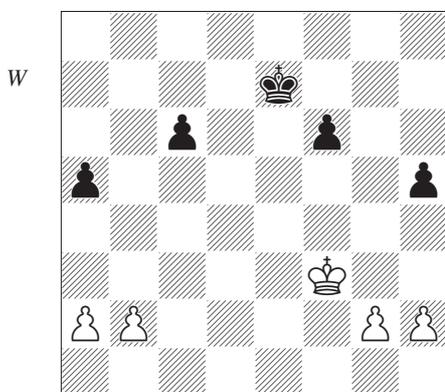


2.01

R.Fischer – B.Larsen
Denver Ct (5) 1971

1 ♔d4 ♕d6 2 a5 f6 3 a6 ♔c6 4 a7 ♖b7 5
 ♕d5 h4
 5...f5 6 h4 +-.
 6 ♕e6 1-0

The next example illustrates the genesis of
 an outside passed pawn:

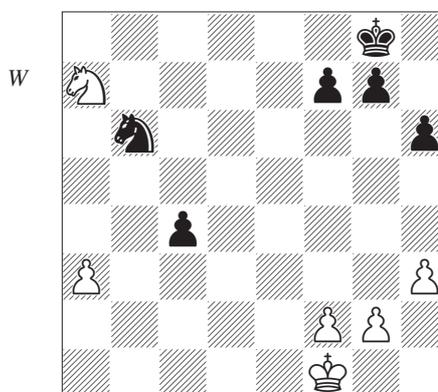


2.02

J.Hjartarson – E.Gausel
Nordic Ch (Reykjavik) 1997

1 h4 ♕e6
 The actual game continuation was 1...f5 2
 ♕f4 ♕f6 3 a4 c5 4 b3 (zugzwang) 1-0.
 2 g4
 White creates a passed pawn on the h-file.
 2...hxg4+ 3 ♕xg4 ♕f7 4 ♕f5 a4 5 h5 c5 6
 b3 axb3 7 axb3 ♕g7 8 h6+ ♕xb6 9 ♕xf6 +-.

The rule formulated by Botvinnik that “knight
 endings are just like pawn endings” applies es-
 pecially when an outside passed pawn is pres-
 ent, since in knight endings this also generally
 constitutes a great advantage. The knight cannot
 lose a tempo, so that zugzwang plays an impor-
 tant role, just as in pawn endings. Furthermore,
 a sound extra pawn is normally a winning advan-
 tage. Naturally there are also some differ-
 ences, such as the sacrifice of the knight and
 other tactical resources by the tricky knight.
 But now, back to the outside passed pawn:



2.03

N.Robson – K.D.Müller
corr. 2005

White should win, since he has the outside
 passed pawn and the slightly more active king.

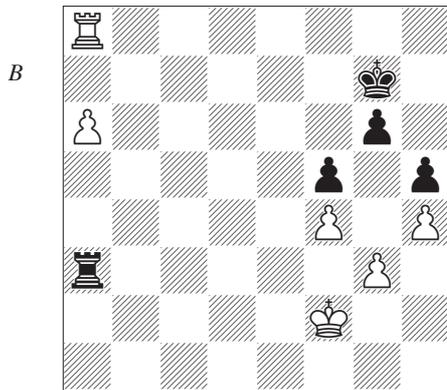
1 ♕e2 ♕f8 2 ♖c6 ♕e8!?

The king should be brought into play. The
 game continued 2...c3 3 ♕d3 ♖c4 4 ♖d4 ♖xa3
 5 ♕xc3 and the knight was dominated, since
 after 5...f5 6 ♕b3 ♖b1 7 ♖f3 the cage was
 closed. With 7...g5 8 ♕b2 g4 9 ♕xb1 gxf3
 Black was able to avoid immediate loss of mat-
 erial, but the pawn ending was hopeless: 10 g3!
 (10 gxf3? ♕f7 11 ♕c2 ♕g6 12 ♕d3 ♕g5 13
 ♕e3 h5 =) 10...♕f7 11 ♕c2 ♕g6 12 ♕d3 ♕f6
 13 ♕e3 1-0.

3 ♖b4 ♕d7 4 ♕e3 ♕d6 5 ♕d4 g6 6 ♖a2
 ♖d5 7 h4 ♖b6 8 ♖c3 ♕c6 9 a4 ♕b7 10 ♕c5
 ♕a6 11 ♕b4 f5 12 f4 h5 13 g3 ♕b7 14 ♕b5 +-.

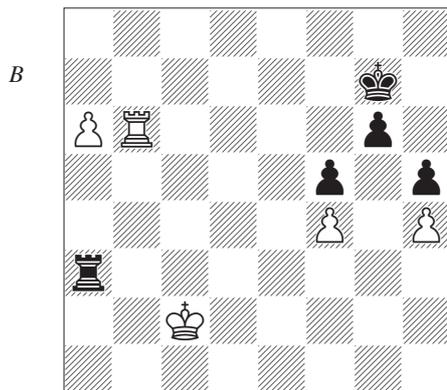
As just demonstrated in exemplary fashion,
 in minor-piece endings an outside passed pawn

is generally a very dangerous weapon. But with rooks, matters are very different if the defending rook can get behind the passed pawn. Thus the following position is only a draw:



2.04
G. Levenfish and V. Smyslov
1957

1... ♖f7 2 ♔e2
After 2 a7?! ♔g7 the white king no longer has any shelter on the queenside.
2... ♗g7
2... ♖xg3? runs into the old outflanking trick
3 a7 ♖a3 4 ♖h8 +-.
3 ♔d2 ♖xg3 4 ♖b8 ♖a3 5 ♖b7+ ♔f6 6 ♖b6+
6 a7 ♔e6 7 ♔c2 ♔d5 8 ♔b2 ♖a6 9 ♔b3 ♔c5 =.
6... ♔g7 7 ♔c2 (D)

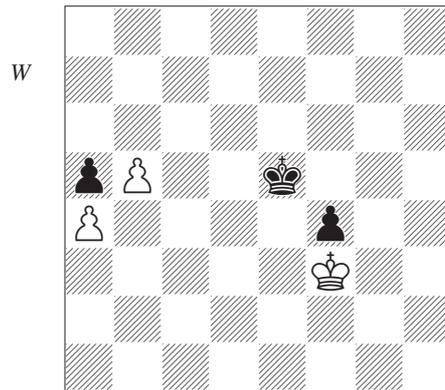


Now Black gains some much-needed counterplay:

7...g5!! 8 fxg5
8 hxg5 h4 9 ♖h6 h3 10 ♔b2 ♖a5 11 ♔c3 h2
12 ♖xh2 ♖xa6 13 ♔d4 ♖e6 =.
8...f4 9 ♔d2 f3 10 ♖b7+ ♔g6 11 a7 ♖a2+ 12 ♔e1 ♔f5 13 ♖f7+ ♔g6 14 ♖xf3 ♖xa7 15 ♖f6+ ♔g7 16 ♖h6 ♖a4 17 ♖xh5 ♖a6 =
The white rook is boxed in.

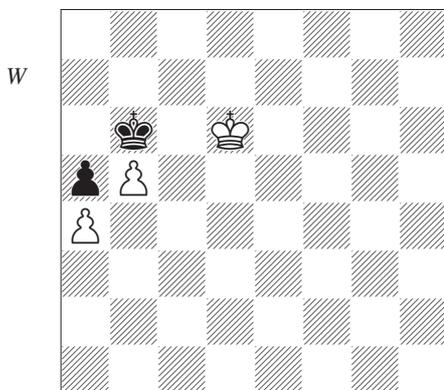
A2) Protected Passed Pawns

A lot depends here on which piece blockades the pawn and how restricted this piece is by having to act as a blockader. If a strong blockading knight stands in its way, a protected passed pawn loses much of its power and influence. In a pawn ending, however, a protected passed pawn is a real force, since the king himself has to deal with it.



2.05
N. Grigoriev (end of a study)
'64', 1930

White can win even if it is his move.
1 ♔g4
Black must now either give up his f-pawn or leave the square of the b5-pawn.
1... ♔e4
1... ♔e6 2 ♔xf4 ♔d6 3 ♔e4 ♔e6 4 ♔d4 ♔d6
5 ♔c4 ♔c7 6 ♔d5 ♔b7 7 ♔d6 ♔b6 (D).
Now White wins the battle for the opposition, since Black is barred from the squares a6 and c6: 8 ♔e6 ♔c7 9 ♔e7 ♔b6 10 ♔d6 ♔b7 11 ♔d7 ♔b6 12 ♔c8 ♔a7 13 ♔c7 ♔a8 14 ♔b6 +-.
2 b6 f3 3 ♔g3!



A very important *zwischenzug*, which enables White to liquidate into a pawn ending after both pawns promote.

3...♙e3 4 b7 f2 5 b8♙ f1♙ 6 ♖e5+ ♔d2 7 ♜xa5+ ♔d1 8 ♜d5+ ♔c1 9 ♜c5+ ♔d1 10 ♜d4+ ♔c2 11 ♜f2+ +-

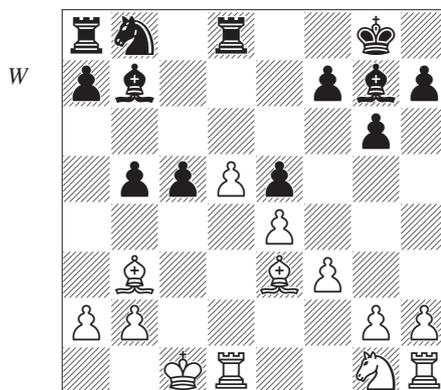
Naturally at this point we should also like to include an example which illustrates the importance of a protected passed pawn in a piece ending. However, we must admit that it was (rather surprisingly for us) not very easy to track down a suitable position. In the database you generally find either games in which a protected passed pawn is securely blockaded and which end in favour of the blockading side, or else positions in which the side with a protected passed pawn is so obviously on top that they are not really suitable as instructive examples for this book. But it would be wrong to conclude from this that a protected passed pawn can play an important role only in pawn endings. The truth seems to be that players have such great regard for the protected passed pawn that they allow the opponent to create one only if they are in great difficulties or if, on the other hand, they are quite sure that it can be securely blockaded.

1 ♙c2

Botvinnik's plan consists of undermining the black queenside pawns with b3 followed by a4.

1...♞d7

Let us hear what Botvinnik has to say about this position: "Tal has created definite counter-chances. His immediate aim should be to



2.06

M.Botvinnik – M.Tal
Moscow Wch (13) 1961

blockade the pawn with his knight, which in this case would be fulfilling a mass of useful functions, without itself being in danger. After this, the queenside pawns could have gradually begun to advance. In concrete terms it could have taken the following form: 2 ♞e2 ♜ac8, and then 3...♞f6, 4...♞e8 and 5...♞d6. Of course, while manoeuvring, Black would have to adapt to the opponent's plans and moves. But even if there occurred 4...♞f6, 6...♞e8 and 8...♞d6, this would do Black no harm. After rejecting this plan, Tal was faced with the sad necessity of blockading the pawn with the rook. The blockade theorist Nimzowitsch would have condemned him for this. One should blockade with a piece which, in so doing, retains its ability to attack."

2 ♞e2 ♙f8 3 ♞c3 a6?!

Once again let us listen to Botvinnik: "Perhaps the losing move. The bishop at b7 is shut out of play for a long time and, most importantly, White can carry out his plan unhindered. Black should have decided on 3...b4."

4 b3 ♜ac8 5 ♙d3 ♞b6 6 ♙e2 ♜d6 7 ♙b2 f5

7...b4 8 ♞b1 c4 9 bxc4 ♞xc4+ 10 ♙xc4 ♜xc4 11 ♜c1 also leaves White with a clear advantage.

8 ♜c1 ♜f6 (D)

9 a4!

Now that White has completed all the necessary preparations in peace, he implements his plan with this move. Black can no longer prevent