



CHESS REPORTS

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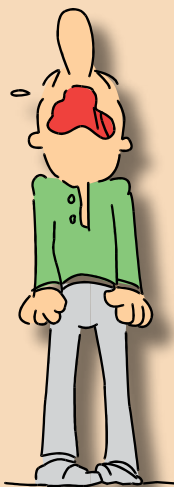
FURTHERING CHESS UNDERSTANDING FOR THE PURPOSE OF INCREASING YOUR
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#35

www.chessreports.com • bob.long@chessreports.com

KEEPING SCORE

Roy Orbison Made a Big Hit out of "Crying"



Why do we Lose and What Can be Done?

Bob Holliman tells us his tale of woe and while at it admits to the reasons it happened: laziness, unpreparedness, exhaustion, and taking his opponent for granted. We've all done it. You are NOT alone. Read on Yoda.

For this article I plan some ranting and raving, a bit of philosophy, and then the chess.

From time to time you need to take an inventory of what you have done and where you are headed. Call this planning and organizing; just don't do it! That's right, **do not plan or organize and you will end up exactly where you are.** I've always been amused at what are called "Monday morning quarterbacks." These guys, and I guess now gals, come to work, school or wherever and tell everyone within earshot what should have happened. Fact is, these people could not do what they say. We call this "rubber meets the road." Its easy to talk but hard to walk.

As an investor Warren Buffett has made a few bil-

lion. From time to time he is worth 30-35 billion based on his stock holdings. From what I've read this dollar amount does not bother him in the least, at least on a relative scale. I mean what is a few billion between friends? However as I am sure he will tell you: don't lose money is our number one rule. Somewhere I read he only looks at the prices in terms of "what am I worth" once a year. That is a fairly good time frame for a chess player to give his game an evaluation. Honesty

This piece is authored by friend and highly competent former master Bob Holliman—who is trying to figure out how to get out of the hole he made for himself.

being the best policy, I've got to give myself an "F" on a year to year basis. Following are my comments on the past year of tournament play.

If any of your are charter subscribers then you know from my first *Chess Reports* article that I said I'd use a comparison between myself and my friend, Ron Luther, to see how we did over the following year. I made this choice because Ron is one person I know who actually studies chess—I mean the guy works at it whereas I just sit down and play. So here is the pawns to pawns result using the same starting and ending events.

Ron had a net loss of 7 USCF points and I gave up 10. In the past year we both had some really ugly results and I won't comment on them except to say that it was horrid. In fact I had a net gain of around 30 points until the MO Class where I refused to win easily won games, games that 20 years ago would have been quick work.

From the mess I've diagnosed, there is at least one problem that I'll call "lack of board vision." There is noth-

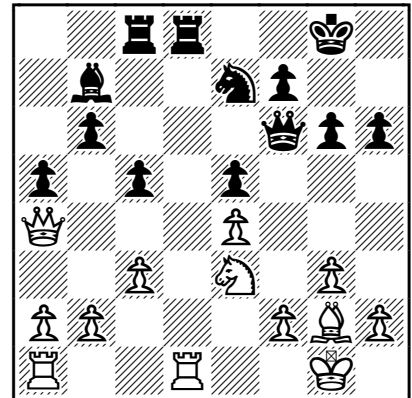
ing mystical about this. It is simply not looking at where your pieces and pawns are, and just making moves, or should I call them blunders?

As to the cure that's going to be a tough one. The only thing I can think of that may help is doing problem studies—you know, that combinations, tactics stuff. As charter subscribers will recall, I discussed the birth of an idea played at the National Open and it came as the result of going through tactical studies.

As I look at my note card, I see that I began working through the CD (or DVD or whatever it is—all I know is you put it in the computer) and note the following dates in May of 06: 15,16,17,18, 22 (note the 4 day gap) then June 11, 25, July 14, Aug. 12, Sept. 10,11,18 and that was it. Twelve days of study over a period of a year—can everyone just say "pathetic?" **If I were my coach I might fire me.** But then again, my full time students have gone from a 10th place National finish in 2005, to 7th in 06, and 4th in 07. Perhaps the teeth are starting to grow—some-

where! Now if the guy could just follow his own advice!

**Bob Holliman - Nate Swinger
Missouri Class 2007**



Here we have the first of several "positions." I'll try to explain how a master can go about playing bad chess. White has some advantages here:

- 1) The d5-square is available to me, whereas the counterpart for Black, d4, is eternally prevented.
- 2) The presence of Bishops of the same color is actually good for me. A pawn on d5 can easily be supported.
- 3) The black Q-side pawns are "loose" and become targets.

So you may note, "With all that going for you, Nd5 is obvious."

Of course, and it's good and, half a dozen other

things. **Never let it be said that I let the obvious get in the way of the possible.** What technician, worth his weight in plastic pieces, can resist penetrating into the enemy position? Not me, that's for sure.

Thus, in this position I came up with a way to take control of the d-file and work into d7 thus making short work of this game.

22. ♖h3 ♖c6

22... ♜xd1+ 23. ♜xd1 ♜b8 24. ♘d5 ♘xd5 25. exd5 ♚f3 26. ♙g2 ♚f6 27. d6 and this should be about all there is. Thus Black's ...♙c6 is good, but my next move is rotten.

23. ♚b3??

Horrid play! Obviously ♚c2 does not drop a pawn, and ♚c4 may even be playable, but not ♚b3, dropping the e4-pawn.

23... ♙xe4 24. ♙xc8 ♜xc8 25. ♚f1

The problem here is not the false mate on g2; the problem is the h1-square.

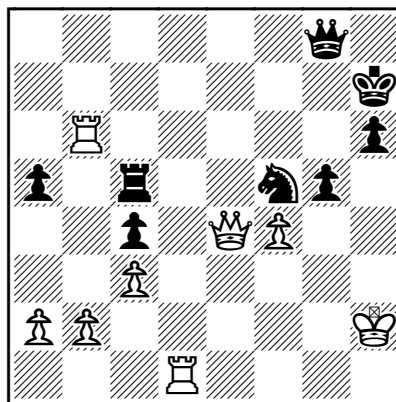
Well when you make a bad move keep with the plan. A bad plan is better than none.

25. f4 exf4 26. ♜f1 g5 27.

♘g4 ♚g6 28. ♜ae1. Fritz came up with this, showing me the tactical tricks I easily overlooked, because I was just trying to squeeze him to death—I guess I'll sharpen the old hunting knife in the future.

Luther keeps telling me I don't need to technique people to death, just cut them up, slice and dice. I'll have to admit that slash and dash is sounding a bit better right now. It's either that or back to the gym and weight training so I can squeeze their throats!

28... c4 29. ♚d1 f5 30. ♚d4 fxc4 31. ♜xe4 ♘f5 32. ♚d5+ ♚h7 33. ♜e6 ♜c5 34. ♚e4 ♚g7 35. gxf4 g3 36. ♜xb6 gxh2+ 37. ♚xh2 ♚g8 38. ♜d1+-



25... ♚f3 26. ♚xb6 ♘f5 27. ♘xf5 ♙xf5 28. ♜ac1

Trying to unify the Rooks,

or more exactly, defend the one on a1 and give the King an exit square.

28... ♙h3+ 29. ♚e1 ♙g4 30. ♜d8+ ♚h7 31. ♜c2 ♚e4+ 32. ♚d2 ♚e2+

Ouch, that hurt. But as you can see, White could still have probably won this game despite my inexact defense. Moves like f4 are easy to find so what happened?

Well, when I dropped the e4-pawn I realized he did not have to move the c8-Rook and my **thought process went into panic mode.** I've been attacked like crazy, and it does not bother me, but this time I just let myself get annoyed.

0-1.

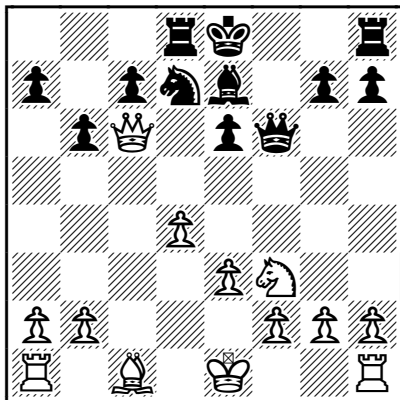
Chess blindness must be like a cold or other viral thing—it comes and goes. But what do you do when the previous was your first round game against someone about 400 points below you? I've had a small number of problems like this, and I'd like to eliminate losing games like this one; first you have to establish some control.

My next game was against someone 500 points lower than me and I had to do a

bit of work to put him away. That brought me back to some level of play and produced the following game which I can only think of as “swill.” (Ed.: To quote Joel Benjamin.)

Way too much effort on what the other player could do. My planning was neither clear nor logical, and I refused to play direct moves once again.

Bob Holliman - Kevin Cao
Missouri Class 2007



After 13 moves Black is fundamentally lost. He is down a pawn and has no hope, except for the fact that he is playing me; a guy who loses more won games than anyone.

The curse of the chess master is that he has to play both sides of the board.

Often you (i.e., the master)

will see things the other player simply will never see. Here I can pick up another pawn: ♖xc7, and I start to see ideas for him like ...♙d6, ...♗g6 and ...♞xf3, and Black has some play.

What I failed to “see” is that the Bishop cannot go to d6 as it is not guarded, and that the Knight on d7 has only b8. Talk about getting your “visions” messed up.

I also saw Ne5, adding another piece to the pin, but “saw” that after ...0-0 15. Nxd7 Qxf2, I don’t have any squares—what’s wrong with d1?

“Nothing,” but then he has Qxg2—I am clearly forgetting that my Queen holds g2; now his R/f8 would be hanging. Trust me, I can find many ways to lose a won game.

14. ♙d2 0-0

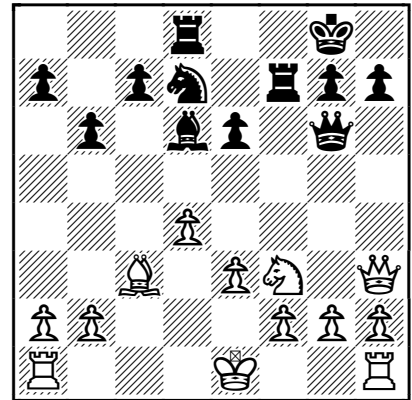
And this does what? Still good is:

15. ♙c3

15. ♖xc7 ♗g6 16. ♗g3 ♖c2 17. ♙c3 ♙b4 18. 0-0 ♙xc3 19. bxc3 ♖xc3 20. ♞fc1 ♖b2 21. ♖c7 ♘f6 22. ♖c6 and this is looking like THE END as Black has no play.

15...♙d6 16. ♖e4 ♗h6 17.

♖h4 ♗g6 18. ♖h3 ♞f7



19. 0-0-0

Right idea, wrong direction: 19. 0-0 ♞df8 20. ♘e5 ♘xe5 21. dxe5 ♙c5 (21...♞f3 22. ♖h4 ♙c5 23. ♖c4 a5 24. a3 ♞3f7 25. b4 axb4 26. axb4 ♙e7 27. f4+- Fritz) 22. ♞ad1.

19...b5 20. ♞he1 b4 21. ♙d2 c5 22. e4 cxd4 23. ♘xd4 ♞e8 24. f3 ♘e5 25. ♙e3 ♘c4 26. ♖b1 ♖f6 27. ♖h5 h6 28. ♙f2 ♞c8 29. ♙h4 g5 30. ♙g3 ♙xg3 31. hxg3 ♞d7 32. e5 ♘xe5

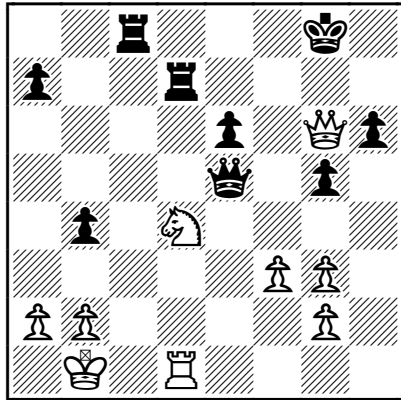
And now for another hallucination... (by the way, Fritz says White has an advantage thru the last 15 or so moves and it is nearly a full point). Here I “thought” **the light squares were weak and that a Queen and Knight penetration would be the end so...**

33. ♞xe5 ♖xe5 34. ♖g6+

headache.

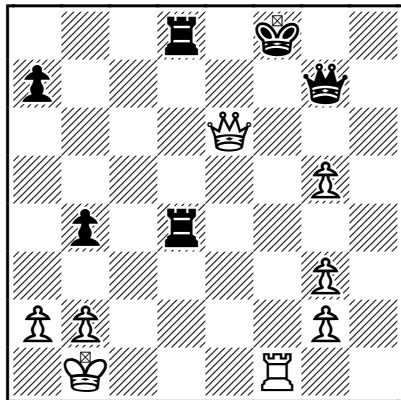
On the Sunday morning round I found myself against another player 400 or more points below me. Again, I refused to win a won game.

Thomas Rhomeier - Bob Holliman
Missouri Class 2007



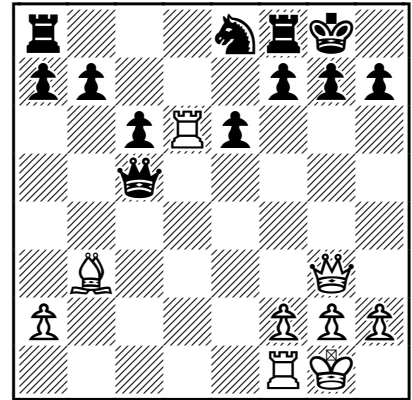
34... ♖g7!!

For some reason I "thought" he had to move the King (?????) Don't ask me, I just work here. 34... ♖f8 35. ♗xh6+ ♔e8 36. ♗g6+ ♖f8 37. ♗xe6 ♗g7 38. f4 ♖cd8 39. fxg5 ♖xd4 (39... ♗f7=) 40. ♖f1+



35. ♗d3 ♖d8 36. ♖d2 ♗h8 0-1.

At the end of day one of this event I have a 1-2 score, and am wholesaling USCF points by the truck load. Even trying to comment further on this game gives me a



11. ♖g5 ♗c7 12. h3 ♖h5 13. ♖e1 0-0-0

I am guessing he does not want to open the g-file for my Rook by taking on f6.

14. c3 ♖de8 15. ♖e2 ♖d5 16. ♖d2 ♖g6 17. ♖f3 h6 18. ♖e3 ♖xe3 19. ♖xe3 e5 20. ♖c4 e4 21. ♖xd6+ ♗xd6 22. ♖h5 f5 23. ♖xg6 ♗xg6 24. ♖g3

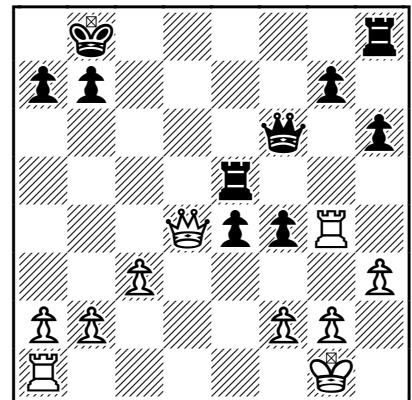
This can't be good; the Rook has no retreat squares against the pawns.

24... ♗f6 25. d5 cxd5 26. ♗xd5 f4 27. ♗c5+ ♗b8 28. ♖g4 ♖e5 29. ♗d4

White has just played his Bishop back to d3 to avoid a swap. Black can now simply win by taking the Knight on f3, then the pawn on d4, and then it's just a matter of time after some unwinding. However I found a better (!) idea...

10... ♖d6

10... ♖xf3 11. ♗xf3 ♗xd4 12. ♖a6 ♗b6 13. ♖c4 ♖e7 14. ♗g3 0-0 15. ♖h6 ♖e8 16. ♖ad1 ♗xb2 17. ♖d7 ♖d6 18. ♖c1 ♗xc1 19. ♖xd6 ♗xc2 20. ♖b3 ♗c5.



29... ♖d8??

29...g5 30. h4 ♖d8 31. hxg5 hxg5 32. ♖c4 ♗f5 33. f3 e3 and I just don't see White surviving for long.

30. ♖xf4!! ♖e7 31. ♖c4 ♖c8 32. ♖b3 ½-½.

Here Thomas let me off the hook.

Again, a case of not looking at all of the possible replies that my opponent could make before moving.

The Diagnosis

So Dr. Bob, what is the diagnosis, and what can be done with this Board Vision problem?

I must tell you I was not in good shape for this event. Not enough sleep and obviously, from the above logging of my chess study, preparation was seriously lagging.

First **a dose of confidence.** When you drop your first round game it (at least at my level of play) really sends you for a loop. Those that breath the highly refined air of +2600 know how to deal with losses... they also play better, but that is for another time. From a practical side

perhaps I should have told myself "I will play better next round." (**Cute story:** John Watson is commenting in one of his books about Luke McShane and another GM discussing a position; the other GM is lamenting his pawn structure. If I remember right, McShane tells him not to worry—his pawn structure will be fine in his next game.)

We must take the lessons and not look back. Too much brooding over spilled milk. Pick up the lesson and focus on the next game. I spent the next few hours after round 1 "replaying" this mess, telling myself what a horrid chess player I am and so on. (I can be very brutal to myself). One can always go back and go through their games to find weaknesses; the one I found was simple **laziness.**

In the first game "f4" would have solved my King safety issue, but I did not look at that; instead I was looking for other ways to win with no risk.

Next I'll suggest a **dose of desire.** One must want to win before they can! In the games above I had no de-

sire to win. I just showed up to play a tournament and wile away a few hours with my buddy Ron Luther. Did I mention there was a steak dinner involved as well as a trip to a buffet? (Ron's wife appropriately calls buffets "hog troughs" and I think she is right although "Honey, let's go to the hog trough" just does not sound like a good invitation to a date).

Sometime in the last century Garry Kasparov (Gary who?) said that there were a half dozen real chess players (obviously he put himself in with the real guys?) and that the rest of us were just "tourists." Well, to be honest I've been an intentional chess tourist several times. Often a tournament is a way for me to escape the tedium of my responsibilities. One of Virginia Woolf's lines comes to me:

"I want fun, I want fantasy, I want to kick up my heels and be off."

Well, then again VW filled her pockets with rocks and walked into the Thames—I don't think I'd be interested in that kind of thing but what she wrote did make sense.

You have to decide if this tournament is serious or fun. Practical realist that I am requires me to warn everyone: *you will not win them all.*

Oklahoma OK

In May I went to Tulsa for the OKIE Chess Festival. The organizers (Jim & Frank Berry, Tom Braunlich and the OCF) have patterned this event after my favorite event of the year—the annual Vikki Ann Zee or “Corus” event in Holland. After all in the dead of winter do you really have nothing better to do than to go to Holland, to a sea-side resort (temp stays at or below zero—do they swim in the ocean?) and play chess?

Sorry, I digress.

Anyway last year I tied for first in my group. Tom Braunlich had the best tie-breaks so he went to the “A” group called the OKIE Masters and I was invited back to the “C” group which I refer to as the “Bargain Basement.” (My own slap at myself and not at any of the other participants—just want to make that clear). The winner of the “C” group gets invited back in ‘08 to the B group. Like-

wise the B winner goes to the A group.

I went with a purpose—I wanted to go to the B, and then the A group. The idea of playing in round robins appeals to me more than open Swiss events. Likewise I prefer class events over pure opens. In fact I believe in this so much that I’ve forbidden my students to just play in open tournaments unless it’s the only thing available.

So Bob (me) shows up in Tulsa with a purpose. The average rating in the C group is around 2080 so its not going to be easy to sweep this field. After the end of 2 days I am the only 5-0 score.

Perhaps I got a bit tired or lazy, but I let my 6th round opponent have underserved counterplay upon which he immediately offered me a draw. In the 7th round I was half asleep and had to work a bit to draw the game; in the final position I had the better Bishop but was not in a killer mood.

After the first two days I let up on the desire aspect and managed to still win the section on tie-break as the 2nd place finisher won all of her

other games. So I know going into the 08 event I have to keep the desire to win foremost.

That will take some physical conditioning, getting enough rest, and doing some study.

Now I am going to throw in a curve ball. Sometimes you go to an event for the experience. Say you are rated 1600 and just want an experience. You have won the lottery (or planned for this) and you enter the Under 2400 section at the World Open knowing few players like yourself will be there and you are sure to get almost all of your games against 2200+ players.

You may have the desire, and you may come out with a win or two, and who knows, a few draws as well, but this is a chess “tourist” event and I think that such an effort is fine from time to time. Me? Well as you see above, I’d like to make that trip to Holland, play in the side events, and watch the GMs play.

Environmental Conditions

Just being in that environment would improve your

play. Tim Redman, past USCF president, once told me that when he directed the US Championship back in the 70s, his playing strength increased. Back then it was a 2 week round robin event.

Imagine the chance to watch (even ask questions) of the country's best... hey, when you are the TD they will speak to you!

Conclusions

Let me conclude this discussion with some advance planning, perhaps a chess tourist event for some of us.

The US Open will be in Dallas next year and my plans are to play the full schedule. My last US Open was in Lincoln, back in 75, so I am due for an open (I don't count the 5 year period where I was trying to help the USCF by running for the board - let's not discuss that, it's not good). Why not see if you can make this event and we can have a "Chess Reports" group with the goal of some working time together?

That's probably more than you or our editor expected, but from time to time I get

the urge to "dissertate"—oh yea, I've got to get around to writing one of those, one of these days.

Bob Holliman

[Ed. Note: Bob's exhaustion I can testify to—but it is not a good idea to play in events when you are that worn out.

He does raise a good point, one he and I have talked about: MEETING a couple times a year to crank ourselves up! **Let's set a date for all of us to go to Dallas next year.** It would be a sign of:

1. Willingness;
2. Self-Discipline;
3. A plan of study;
4. Recouping our brains;
5. Doing something instead of just talking about it;
6. Show yourself HOW to act instead of making constant excuses of WHY you can't do something.

Let's go to the US Open in Dallas for 2008. Let's prepare for it through the pages of "Chess Reports" and self-study.

We can go down there and whip some heinie! I should be in Savannah by then, and unless my wife already has something planned she didn't tell me about, I'll be there.



A Correction from a Trusted Friend

Dear Bob,

I am fine.

CR on endgames is good! I have just one remark: In *Harrwitz-Löwenthal, 1853* White can draw by 55. Kxg5! followed by f4-f5 instead of 55. fxxg5? as his King is more active.

You have already published 34 CR issues. Good news and a lot of work done!

I hope that you find good programs to present Andrew's lessons on DVD!

Best wishes,

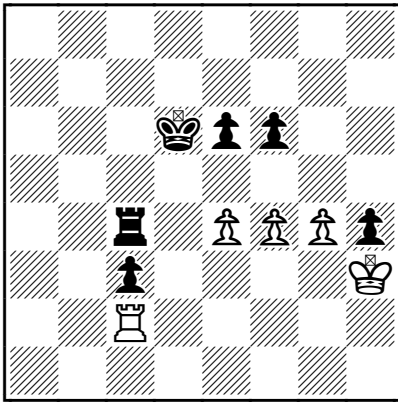
Karsten Müller

[Ed. Note: Aha! That's why Karsten is the grandmaster, and I am not.

I must've been in one of those "clever" moods. You know the kind—where you are wrong but you think you know what you are doing?

Here is the original

position:



Harrwitz-Löwenthal, 1853

**53. Kxh4 Kc5 54. g5 fxc5+
55. fxc5.**

I was enamored with the sideline of 53. Rc1 and I got “sloppy” over the game line. (Read Holliman’s remarks in this issue for more on this subject.)

55. Kxg5! Kb4 56. f5 Rxe4 57. f6 and Black has a lot of ways of drawing, but nothing that wins.

Greg Delaney showed us some endgame play, and fellow subscriber had a very nice endgame which was featured in Chess Clinic #2. If any of our subscribers have some good endgames they would like to show the rest of us, by all means, send them to me.

I am trying to think if I had any good endgames!?! Maybe a few.]

What Was It Like When You Were in High School?

That is, were you one of the “cool guys,” like our friend to the right, or were you one of those: rejects, nerds, or wannabes?

Many of us go through that phase.

It doesn’t matter that later the “cool guys” made it, or didn’t make it; it only matters what YOU are doing with YOUR life.

We make choices, don’t we: good ones (sometimes), and perceived bad ones? It’s never over, not even when the Fat Lady sings because, “Who asked her?”

I will be starting a new life in or around the Savannah, GA area, hopefully this year. There are a lot of new plans, hopes, and dreams, but during all the pain and gain ONE thing keeps standing out: WHAT are you doing right now and is that what you want?



I’ve heard all the excuses and used most of them myself, but not anymore.

As much of a doer as I am, the broad picture?? **I am sitting on my ass and probably most of you are too.** I’ve never been on an ocean cruise, I haven’t played in a US Open since 1994, the list goes on.

Now I even realize how much I despise whining: doing it and listening to it.

Check out page 409 and come to the Chess Clinic—real chess improvement is in all the packages, not the packaging. Move your butt!

See you there!

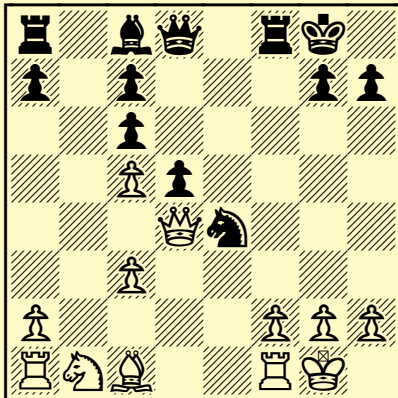
Have You Ever Spent a Whole Day Analyzing a Position That Was Accepted as a Draw but Perhaps Was Lost? Then, You Realize You Really Weren’t Sure of Anything? Join Me in Issue #36 for an Examination of “Torture at the Chessboard.”

The **QUIZ** Page (side to move wins)

Try to solve these in 5 minutes or less. Put down the first move on the "report" sheet supplied with "Chess Reports" issue #27. Do not use any kind of help, just your own brain. Visualize the solution without moving the pieces. This is to **HELP** you!

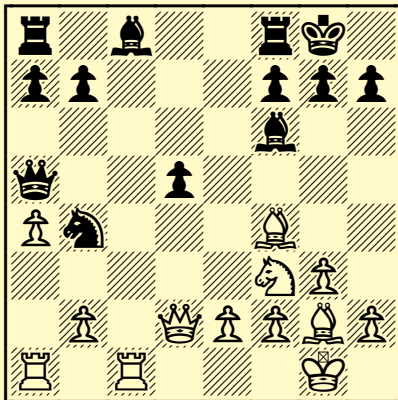
1

Black's
"best"
move



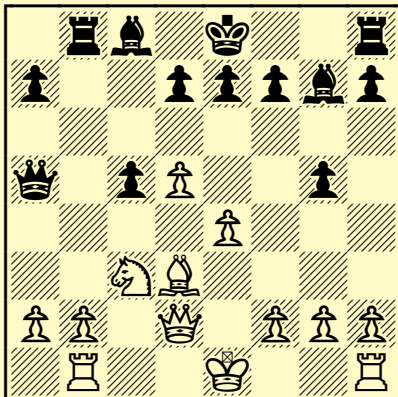
2

White's
"best"
move



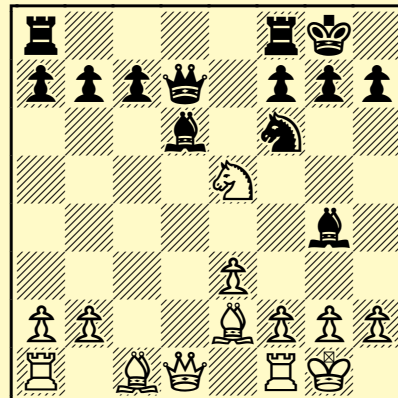
3

Black's
"best"
move



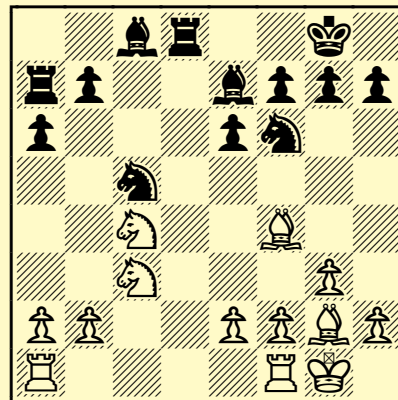
4

Black's
"Best"
move



5

White's
"best"
move



Quizzes are an excellent way to warm up, stay in shape, and discover new possibilities. They are part of the Course. Some are not too hard, others are harder. There may be 1-2 which tax you.

They are also necessary for you to get a refund in case you are unhappy with what we are trying to do. If you don't have a filled out sheet, how can we help you? Please, help yourself!

(Be sure to enter your **FIRST** move on your Score Sheet, sent with issue #27).

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AUGUST 18, 2007

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**AUG 18
Saturday**

**Don't forget to
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early!!!**

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START RIGHT—HURT 'EM

by GM Daniel King

Item (DVD):

Power Play 4: Start Right

Publisher:
Chessbase

Year:
2007

This is King's 4th DVD in this Power Play series—I think THIS one is the best.

Here's "why":

1. He has finally found his form and has great presentation;

2. He has chosen some superb material. For example, the first 4 games he shows are played by Paul Morphy. It appears, from "watching" this DVD, that King has become a Big Fan of Paul Morphy!

3. He gives some great TIPS during the games about good moves and some moves which are often bad (...a6 comes to mind).

4. He also shows the many advantages of the Trompowsky while also recommending GM Peter Wells' book of the same name.

5. When I watch a *Chess-Base* DVD, it is usually not possible to watch all 15-20 chapters just due to the time. But this DVD is so good, I found myself watching one chapter after another.

6. Another suggestion: Play 1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5. King confides that he has won an "extraordinary" number of games, in less than 20, moves. To me this is very VALUABLE information.

7. This DVD is about putting "pressure" on your opponent from the word **GO!** He wants to retain the initiative, almost at any cost.

8. I love King's command of the English language. He gives Svidler-Carlsen to show how White took matters in his own hands due to poor (none) development. He uses the phrase, "So and so got hammered."

9. He gives some good ideas for Black also: get your pieces out, get castled, make sure your game is safe. He gives the Nimzo-Indian, however, as an opening where maybe Black can strive for more! (Possibly because of White's undeveloped K-side, even though he has good "protection" in the center.

The WHOLE DVD is worth viewing as King gives good suggestions one after another—something some presenters seem to avoid.



These titles can be obtained from **Chess4Less** by calling Greg at 1-800-397-7117 and telling them that Bob Long sent you.