

Technique in Chess

Mark Dvoretsky

with

Artur Yusupov

Foreword by Karsten Müller



2023

Russell Enterprises, LLC
Portsmouth, NH USA

Technique in Chess
by Mark Dvoretzky with Artur Yusupov

ISBN: 978-1-949859-64-5 (print)
ISBN: 978-1-949859-63-8 (eBook)

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Published by:
Russell Enterprises, LLC
P.O. Box 332
Portsmouth, NH 03802 USA

<http://www.russell-enterprises.com>
info@russell-enterprises.com

Cover design by Molly Scanlon
Translated from the German by Robert Sherwood
Special thanks to Quality Chess

Printed in the United States of America



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Preface

Mark Dvoretsky was not only an outstanding trainer and book author but also an active chess journalist. He wrote numerous articles for various chess publications and collaborated on a series of popular chess sites on the Internet.

In 2018-2019, when we were combing through his chess archives with his son Leonid, we found a large quantity of rare materials – chess articles and drafts that were scarcely found in his books.

We had the idea of using this material to illustrate the theme “technique” for the continuation of the [German] book series *Training Manual*.

The name of the book was not chosen randomly. “Technique” has always been a central theme for Mark. Mastering the main principles of gaining an advantage helped Dvoretsky’s students progress faster and, of course, had a positive effect on their practical results in tournament play.

I was very fortunate to have been Mark’s student for many years and had the chance to talk with him and discuss various chess problems. I owe Mark not only my sporting successes; as a trainer, I have also benefited greatly from the experience of working with him. In my books I have tried to use and develop further the ideas gained from our cooperation.

Hence, I have decided to compile the scattered material into one book and fill in some gaps with my reflections based on Mark’s ideas.

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Mark constantly improved his chess material and refined the analyses with the help of the computer. The few examples he previously used in his books I now present in a somewhat novel form. In a number of cases, I was able to find and add something new. In addition to the materials from Dvoretsky's articles and drafts, which had not yet been published in German and which I have now translated, I have included in the theoretical part some quotations from my own publications (the *Tigersprung* series).

To make the reading of the book easier, I do not cite all my sources but limit myself to the following list of his most important books on the subject of "technique":

- *Chess Tests*, Mark Dvoretsky (Russell Enterprises)
- *Dvoretsky's Endgame Manual*, Mark Dvoretsky (Russell Enterprises);
- *For Friends & Colleagues, Volume I*, Mark Dvoretsky (Russell Enterprises);
- *For Friends & Colleagues, Volume II*, Mark Dvoretsky (Russell Enterprises);
- *Tragicomedy in the Endgame*, Mark Dvoretsky (Russell Enterprises).

For readers who want an even better overview of the topic "Technique" I recommend our joint book *Secrets of Endgame Technique: School of Future Champions, Vol. 3* (Olms).

Because the present book is a continuation of the "Training Manual" series, much of what Mark Dvoretsky wrote in the forewords to the other books applies here. I am not looking for new words for the same thoughts here but instead use quotes (with minimal changes) from these forewords.

The book begins with a "theoretical" explanatory section. This is followed by 102 practice positions, which naturally increase in difficulty according to the principle of "from the simple to the complicated" (the division is, of course, to be understood as relative). Good technique for gaining an advantage is useful in all areas of the game, so there are positions from the opening, middlegame, and especially the endgame – not only from practical games but also from various studies. The examples in the explanatory

section and the diagram positions in “Solutions” can of course also be used as exercises, especially if the diagram is marked W (White’s move) or B (Black’s move).

The comments to the solutions are very detailed, explaining not only the main line but also the explanatory side variations. I thought it important to demonstrate the logic in the search for a decision and to show how a chess player can come to the right conclusions at the board. The particular solutions and variations I present are not of course essential for everyone. Certainly, you can often reach the goal in a different way. This is normal, because each of us has his own head, as well as his own algorithm in his decision-making.

A few more technical details:

In the examples in the explanation section, the moves made by the players are printed in boldface. In the solution section, on the other hand, the moves of the main solutions are put in boldface regardless of whether they were played in the game or not.

[The small diagrams show positions that arise in the analysis of the side variations; they are also used in all the positions in the “Solutions” section.]

The studies often do not start with the original opening position, in which case the name of the composer is marked with *. I use the same symbols for practical positions that did not arise in the game but in analysis.

As in all of Mark Dvoretsky’s books, the quotations are either italicized or have the player’s name at the end. (My additions and the variants are reproduced with the initials “AY.”)

I sincerely hope that the careful reading of this book, concentrated work with the positions, and thorough study of the solutions will help the reader avoid disappointing losses when playing advantageous positions and will contribute to the improvement of his game.

Grandmaster Artur Yusupov
Weissenhorn, Germany
May 2023

49...♖×g8 50.a4+- ♖f7 51.a5
b×a5 52.b×a5 ♖e7 53.♖d2
♖d6 54.♖c3 ♖c6 55.♖b4 ♙c8
56.♖a4!

Black is in zugzwang. (AY)

56...♙b7 57.a6 1-0.

Concrete Play in Realizing an Advantage

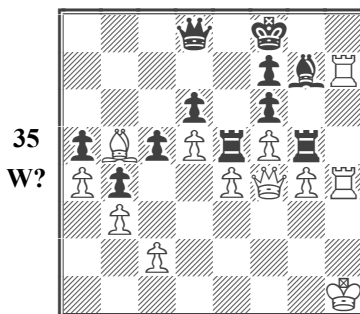
But there is another crucial element in the process of realizing the advantage, one that is to some extent contrary to the golden principles mentioned above. (AY)

When the opponent's resistance is stubborn, it is seldom possible to lead the game to victory by technical means alone. At a certain point, one must transition from positional maneuvering to precise calculation of variations and look for the concrete path to the goal.

Many chess players stumble over this, a misstep facilitated by various factors. We have already talked about the carelessness that manifests in the foretaste of victory. Understandable also is the desire to conduct the game in all "comfort" and without excessive effort. At the same time, one would like to avoid the risk of making a mistake in forced play. The difficulty lies in ascertaining the turning point when everything possible has already been extracted from the position according to the principle "do not

hurry." After that, it is necessary to find a concrete plan to take advantage of the superiority that has been achieved, or of the advantageously changed character of the battle.

At some point, the accumulated positional advantages will enable the stronger side to win the game by force or at least to increase his advantage significantly. If such a moment is missed, then the advantage remains, but its implementation is considerably more complicated, delayed, or even becomes impossible.



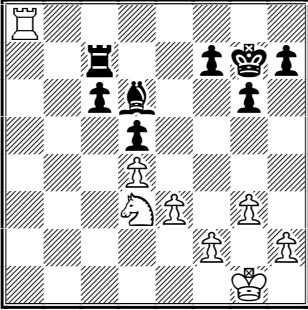
Yusupov – Vaganian
Minsk 1979

37.♖g2?!

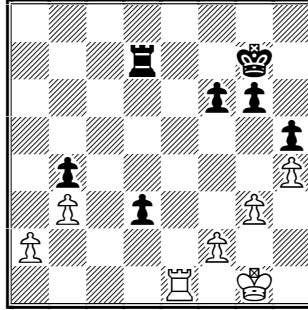
Artur Yusupov saw the winning combination 37.♖×g5!? f×g5 38.♙h8+ ♖e7 (38...♙×h8 39.♙×h8+ ♖e7 40.f6+) 39.♙×d8 g×h4 40.♙g8, and if 40...♖f6, then 41.g5+, but did not find it convincing enough and wanted first to strengthen his position and bring his king into the center. Unfortunately, he overlooked

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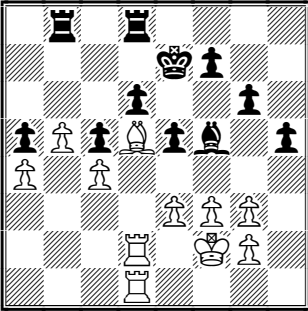
37
B?



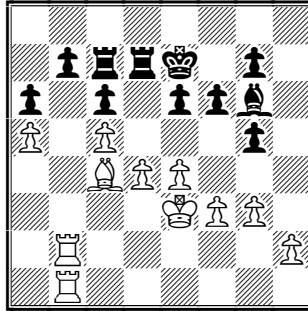
38
B?



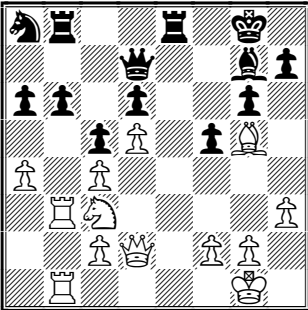
39
W?



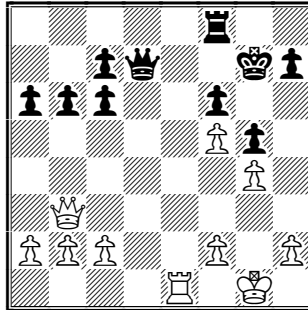
40
W?



41
W?



42
W?



Technique in Chess

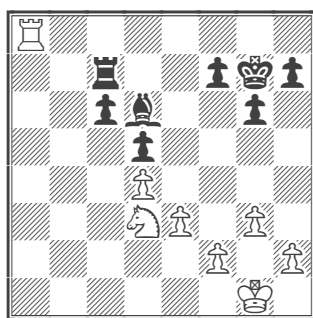
28. ♖e4? is tactically refuted: 28... ♜xc6 29. bxc6 ♗xe5! 30. fxe5 (30. h×g6 ∞) 30... ♜×e5+, with the threats 31... ♜×b2+ and 31... f5.

White has a decisive advantage and eventually won the game.

Exercise 37

Kotov – Pachman

Venice 1950



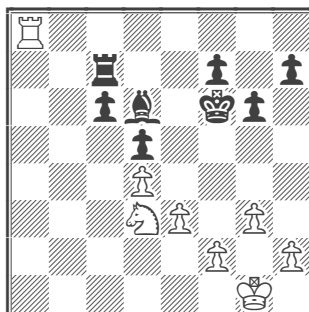
The solution begins with this diagram, the exercise position is the next diagram. Mark analyzed this position in his book *Secrets of Endgame Technique: School of Future Champions, Vol. 3*; here we present an expanded version of his discussion. (AY)

White's positional advantage is defined by his better pawn structure, in particular with respect to the weak pawn at c6. This one factor is, however, insufficient if Black plays 42... h5!

42... ♜f6?

Not 42... f5?! because of 43. h3 followed by g3-g4. If Black

counters with 43... h5, he has a second weakness on g6 after 44. h4.



Exercise position 37

43. g4!

A typical move. White fixes a second weakness in the opponent's camp – the h7-pawn. It is for just this reason that ...h7-h5 was absolutely necessary.

After 43... ♜g5 44. h3, Black can try to repair his position and trade off some pawns (AY):

(a) 44... h5? 45. f4+ ♜h4? 46. ♜g2.

This move is very good, but Dreev's variation is even more enjoyable: 46. g×h5 g×h5 47. ♜d8 ♗e7 48. ♜g2! ♜a7 49. ♜d7! ♜×d7 50. ♗e5+-, with mate next.

46... h×g4?? 47. ♜h8# (Kotov).

(b) 44... f5! is the best defense. If

45. f4+ (∅ 45. g×f5 ±) 45... ♜h4 46. g×f5, then 46... ♜g3!! (46... g×f5 47. ♜f2 ♜×h3 48. ♜a1 ♜g4 49. ♜h1+-) 47. f×g6 (47. f6 ♜f7! =) 47... h×g6 48. ♜d8 ♜a7 with

sufficient counterplay (analysis by Dreev). The move played was much weaker. (AY):

43...♖e6 44.♗g2

In the ending you must always think about improving the position of your king.

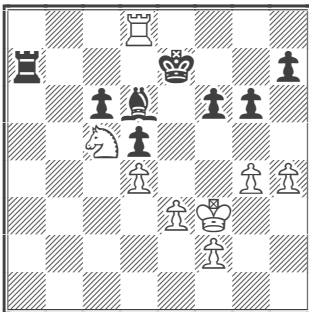
44...♞b7 45.♞e8+

Before an attack on h7 it is useful to force the black rook back into a passive position.

45...♞e7 46.♞h8 f6 47.h4 ♞b7
48.♗f3 ♞f7 49.♞e8+ ♞e7
50.♞d8!

White wants to place his knight on c5. To do this, it is important to tie the black rook to the defense of the c6-pawn. The passivity of the rook is a serious shortcoming in a rook ending.

50...♞a7 51.♘c5+ ♖e7



52.♞c8!

Fine technique. Not 52.♞h8? because of 52...♙xc5 53.dxc5 ♞a5!? 54.♞xh7+ ♗f8=.

52...♙xc5

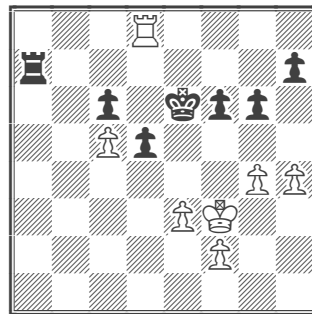
Now, on the other hand, the c6-pawn is attacked, and Black cannot activate his rook. On 52...♞c7, 53.♞h8! would now follow. Can you feel how unpleasant it is to have to defend two weaknesses (on c6 and h7) at the same time, and how much easier it would be to cover only the pawn on c6?

53.dxc5 ♗d7 54.♞h8 ♖e6

Bad at this point is 54...♞a5? 55.♞xh7+ ♗e6 (the king cannot retreat to f8 as in the 52.♞h8 variation) 56.♞g7+- Such “little details” play an important role in realizing an advantage.

55.♞d8

Alexander Kotov has successfully implemented his plan to arrive at an advantageous rook ending.



In his comments he considered the endgame won for White. However, Jonathan Speelman’s book *Endgame Training* questioned this assessment. The conclusion of the