

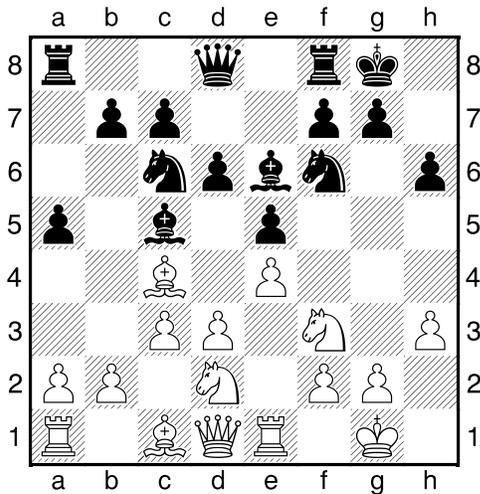
Let's Look at f3-h4

Here we have two “modern” games that feature attacking play. Both of the games share a ‘similar’ opening structure from old openings. This type of structure is played, in many cases, to avoid modern (and very deep) opening preparation.

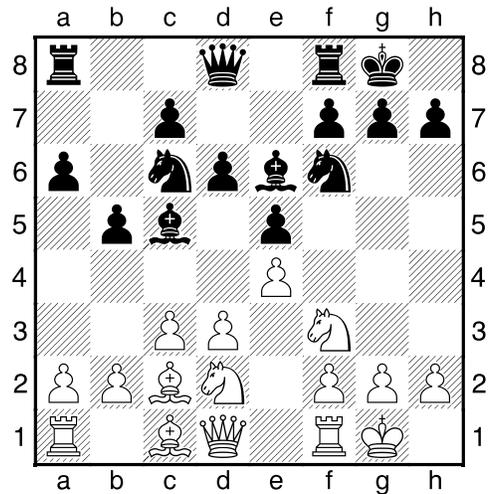
This is not to say that these players do not look deeply into these structures before playing them (especially Giri), but to many players they will look old.

After nine moves this is how they looked.

Giri - Anton



Piorun - Huschenbeth



The first is from a Giuoco Piano, while the second is from the Ruy Lopez. But note the similarities of the pawn structure. In his video series detailing chess structures, IM Sam Collins calls this the Philidor Structure.

The battle will rage in the 5th quadrant, and whichever side plays an effective P-Q4 (old school descriptive notation helps here!) [For modern players, whomever gets his d-pawn forward one square effectively.] first will be doing well.

Going through these games in depth in person would make a huge difference in understanding for the aspiring player, as opposed to this short article, but I will try to shine some light as to what is taking place.

The key differences are the white squared bishop for white and the queenside pawn structure for black. Try to work out just what those differences will mean, and let's get to the games!

If nothing else I would like you to stay aware of all of the undefended squares each side leaves in “their” half of the board. Pay special attention if those squares contain valuable pieces!

Also pay attention to those squares that might be ‘defended’ but the defense is poor. For example; a square guarded only by a king, or maybe defended once, but attacked twice (those should be considered valuable targets).

These squares – undefended, or poorly defended - are places where our pieces should feel at home! Especially if they capture material.

Modern Attacking Chess

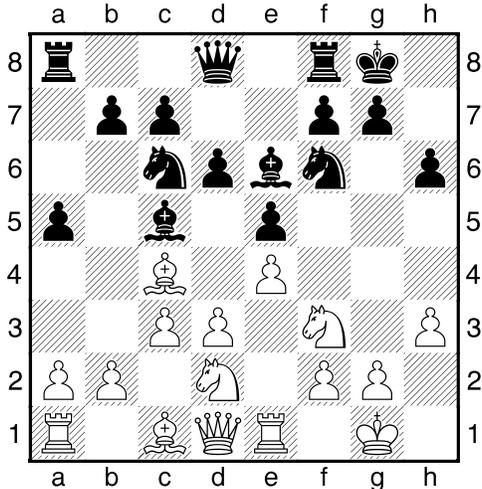
Giri, Anish (2780) - Anton Guijarro, David (2674) [C54]

22nd ETCC Open 2019 Batumi (3.9), 26.10.2019

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙c4 ♙c5 4.0-0 ♘f6 5.d3 d6 6.c3 a5 [C4: Giuoco Piano: 4 c3 Nf6, main lines with 5 d4 and 5 d3 5]

7.♖e1 0-0 8.h3 h6 [The position is equal, but the potential for play is rich.]

9.♘bd2 ♙e6

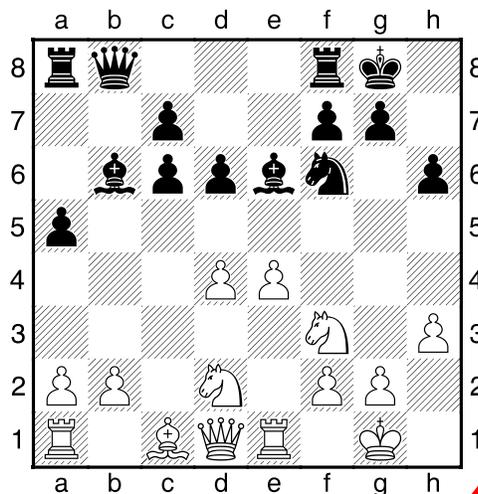


The European team championship took place immediately after the Isle of Man Grand Swiss. Anish Giri had withdrawn from the Isle of Man event immediately before it began. This was a strategic move on his part, as he is currently in line to receive an invitation to next year's candidate's event as the highest rated player not already qualified, by other means. Skipping that event protected his rating from any "accidents".

Anton played at Isle of Man and did surprisingly well. In fact, he played this exact way as black in a key game...

10.♙b5 ♖b8 11.♙xc6 [11.♘f1N ♖a7 12.d4 exd4 13.♙xc6! dxc3 14.♙a4! ♙xf2+ 15.♔h2 ♙xe1 16.♖xe1 d5 17.♙e3 c5 18.e5! ♘e4! was Aronian-Anton, Isle of Man 2019. It ended in a hard-fought draw after 61 moves.] I'm sure Giri noted this, just as Anton noted...

11...bxc6 12.d4 exd4 13.cxd4 ♙b6



[13...♙b4 14.a3 ♙xd2 15.♘xd2 was Giri-Ding, Shenzhen 2019 1/2 (43)]

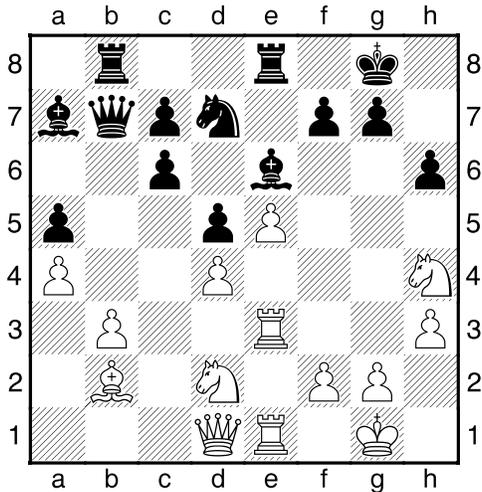
14.a4N [Predecessor: 14.♘f1 a4 15.♘g3 1-0 (49) Anand, V (2773)-Vidit, S (2702) Kolkata 2018]

Modern Attacking Chess

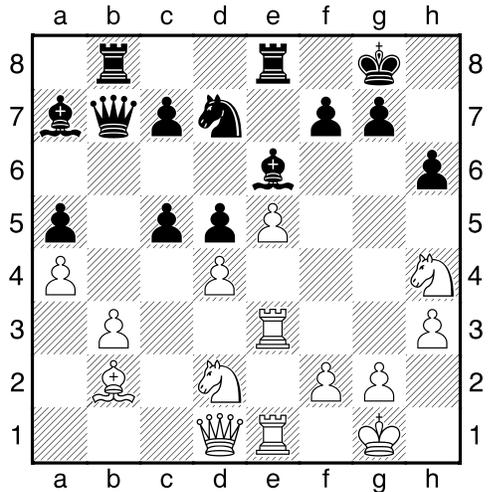
14...♖e8 15.♖a3 [this is the idea. A common theme in many middlegames is a ♖ lift to the third and using that as a highway to the king side.]

15...♔b7 16.♖ae3 ♖ab8 17.b3 ♕a7 18.♕b2 d5! 19.e5 ♘d7! [19...♘e4 is an interesting pawn sacrifice, and black has had the d7-d5 push as an option for the past few moves.]
20.♘h4

We have made it to the point of interest. What had you come up with?



20...c5?



Attacking in the 5th quadrant is logical, but perhaps ill-advised. Of course, it is easy for us as Monday morning armchair quarterbacks to say this. Armed as we are with perfect hindsight and our friendly SM at our sides.

That same SM gives us clues as to how to play, too... READ ON!

[20...♔b4= and Black is okay, as the queen can join the defense of the king.]

21.♖g3! +- [Now it is a big counting game. How many pieces can white bring to the kingside attack? [All of them!] and black to the defense.... well, not so many. Thus, white can afford to shed some pieces to blast open the king. Let's see...]

21...♔a6? [Perhaps better is 21...cxd4

22.♔h5±; 21...♔b4±]

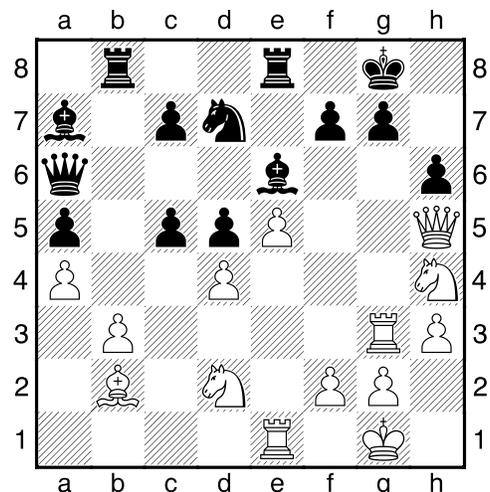
22.♔h5 [Diagram at right]

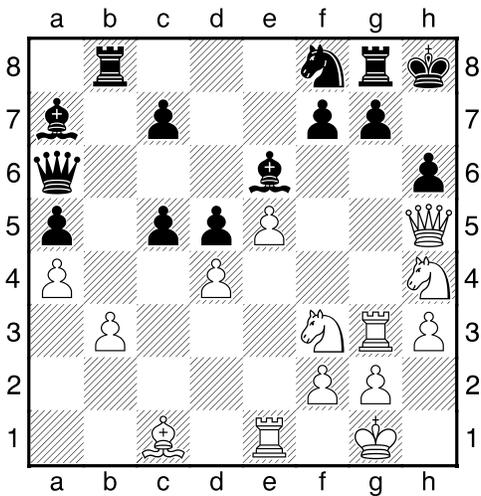
Strongly threatening Qxh6.]

22...♔h8? [22...♘f8 23.♔xh6 ♘g6]

23.♕c1 ♖g8 24.♘df3 ♘f8

[Diagram next page]





25. ♖xh6! g6

[Diagram right]

[25...gxh6

26. ♔xh6+]

26. ♘xg6+!

[Clearance sac.

White mates.]

26...fxg6 27. ♔h4

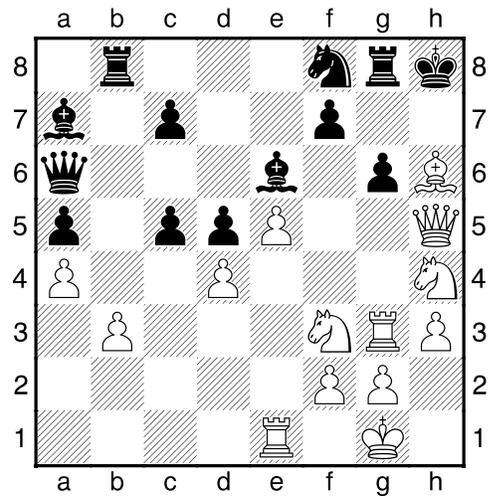
♘h7 28. ♘g5

[Accuracy:

White = 74%

Black = 36%.]

1-0



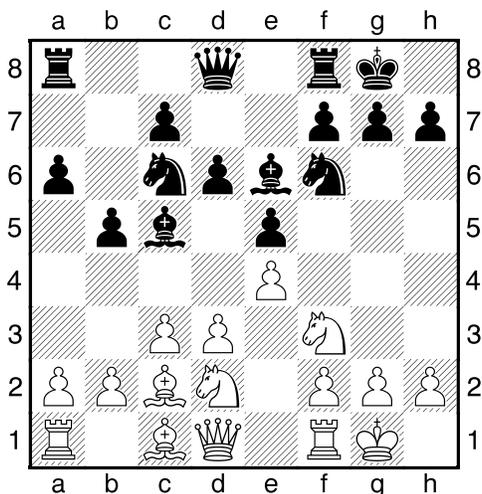
Piorun, Kacper (2660) - Huschenbeth, Niclas (2620) [C78]

POL-chT DMP Ekstraliga 2019 Katowice (7.19), 03.09.2019

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 a6 4.♙a4 ♘f6 5.0-0 ♙c5 6.d3 d6 7.c3 0-0 8.♘bd2 [C78: Ruy Lopez: Archangelsk and Moller Defences]

8...b5 [8...♙a7 9.h3 ♘e7 10.d4 ♘g6 11.♙c2 c5 12.dxe5 dxe5 13.♘c4 ♔c7 14.♙g5 ♙e6 15.♘e3 1-0 (42) Bosiocic, M (2599)-Wang, H (2730) St Petersburg 2018]

9.♙c2 ♙e6



[An interesting point here is that when you check the database it is usually black to play! And black scores very well, but in the few cases when it is white to play here, white has scored 100%. Black sets an interesting trap with this move...]

Do you see it?

Moving to the next level from simply noting where undefended squares (and pieces) are and taking advantage of them is to play actively so that you make pieces undefended. Or, even better(!), you entice your opponent to unprotect them by allowing him to play moves that look alluring to him!!

The absolute classic game for that theme is seen in Robert Byrne- R.J. Fischer, US Championship 1964. Now that is an outstanding lesson on attacking chess, and ... opening play.

10.h3 [The position is equal. White guards g4 and does not fall for the "trap".]

Modern Attacking Chess

[The trap comes if white plays an "obvious" and "normal" move...Perhaps even hoping for the famous Ruy draw repetition. 10.♖e1 ♘g4 11.♖e2 (11.♖f1 ♕xf2+ (11...♘f6 12.♖e1 ♘g4) 12.♖xf2) 11...♕xf2+ 12.♖xf2 ♘e3 13.♙e2 ♘xc2 14.♖b1 ♕xa2 15.b3 ♕xb1 16.♘xb1 ♘a1 17.♙b2 ♘xb3 18.♙xb3] Note how in this line the bishop at c2, becomes undefended, The rook at a1 is taken advantage of being undefended. The square e3 is made undefended...

10...h6 11.♖e1 ♖e8 12.♘f1 d5 13.exd5N [Predecessor: 13.♕d2 ♕f8 14.♘g3 a5 15.♙e2 dxe4 16.♘xe4 ♘xe4 17.♙xe4 0-1 (29) Kochetkova,J (2320)-Aleksandrov,A (2615) Minsk 2015; 13.d4]

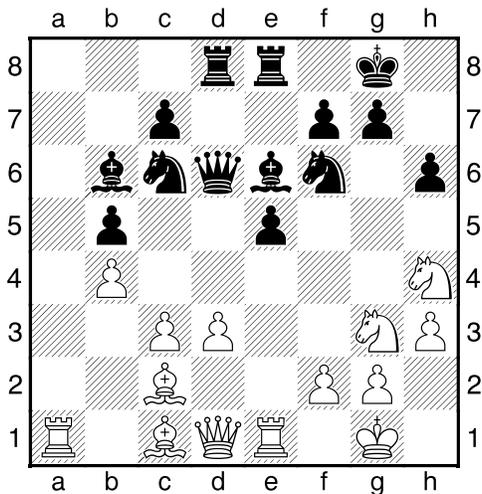
13...♙xd5 [13...♘xd5; 13...♕xd5] All of the captures looked good to black.

14.♘g3 ♖ad8 15.b4 ♕b6 16.a4 ♙d6! 17.axb5 [17.♕e3 ♕xe3]

17...axb5 18.♘h4? [Diagram]

We have made it to the point of interest. What had you come up with?

Bring out the B.U.G. !!



White's last just "begs" for retribution. (If you see.)

- It makes the knight undefended.
- The Ra1 is undefended.
- The f2 pawn is weak.
- It weakens control of d4.

[18.♕d2=]

Black realized that getting his queen to d4 was the key to taking advantage of all of the factors.

18...♘d4 [More accurate is to play Nc6xb4, but it amounts to the same position.]

Black saw the capture on b4, but did not play it because he missed the 21st move for in the following line:

[18...♘xb4! 19.♕a3 (19.cxb4 ♙d4 see game) 19...♙c5 20.♕xb4 ♙xf2+ 21.♔h2 ♙f4!

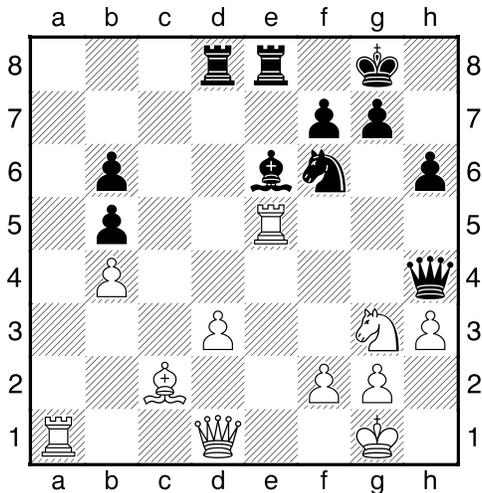
Again, the same theme – undefended squares! Go back to the original position. Can you visualize this line?

It's easy to miss this move ... 22.♘f3 ♘h5]

19.cxd4 ♙xd4 20.♕e3 [20.♘e4 ♘xe4 (20...♙xa1 21.♘xf6+ gxf6) 21.♕e3 ♙b2; 20.♕d2; 20.♘hf5 ♕xf5 21.♕e3 ♙d7]

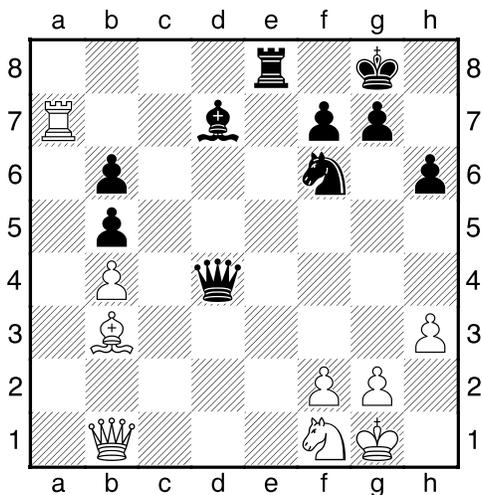
20...♙xh4 21.♕xb6 cxb6 22.♖xe5 [Diagram]

Modern Attacking Chess



White searches for chances due to the doubled b-pawns.

Calculate the Finish!



28. ♖a1-a7

In this phase of the game black played inaccurately at times: Nerves for getting a good game as black against a strong player; It is a complicated position; Shortness of time; The subtleties of playing the best as opposed to just good moves. They all played their part.

22... ♖d5 [22... ♙xb4 23. ♖b1; 22... ♙d4! 23. ♖e2 (23. ♖xb5 ♘d7) 23... ♙xb4]

23. d4 [23. ♖e3 ♙xb4 24. ♘b3 ♖d6 25. ♖b1]

23... ♙xd4 24. ♖xd5 [24. ♙xd4 ♖xd4 25. ♖xb5 ♘d5 26. ♖a7 ♖xb4; 24. ♙b1]

24... ♙xd5 25. ♙b1 ♘d7 [25... ♙d4]

26. ♘b3 [26. ♘d3]

26... ♙d2 [26... ♙d4]

27. ♘f1 ♙d4 28. ♖a7?

[Diagram at left]

The rook move fails to counter black's threat. Necessary was: [28. ♘e3 ♘e6 29. ♘xe6 ♖xe6]

This is where you get to calculate the finish.

Again, stay with our theme, undefended (under-defended) squares!

28... ♖e2 29. ♘e3 [29. ♖a8+]

29... ♙f4 30. ♖a8+ ♘e8 31. ♙f1 ♖xe3 32. ♘xf7+ [32. fxe3 ♙xe3+]

32... ♙xf7 33. fxe3 ♙xe3+ 34. ♙h1 ♘c6 35. ♖a7+ ♙g6 [35... ♙g8 36. ♙f5 ♘e4]

36. ♙b1+ ♘e4 37. ♙a2 ♙xh3+

0-1

The light notes don't really do justice to the workout that one would get going through this game "live" while working out the answers to the questions posed.

Indeed, my philosophy for helping one improve in chess is based upon the premise:

You (we) will always be able to find the answer to our questions.

If we are struggling to do so, then it is simple...

We are not asking the right questions!

Thus, our work is built upon discovering just what questions we *should* be asking.

Now let's finish off with the third game...

[Bonus Time!]

Dubov, Daniil (2699) - Svane, Rasmus (2592) [D37]

22nd ETCC Open 2019 Batumi (7.4), 31.10.2019

[This entire game is worthy of an extensive look under our theme of modern attacking chess. Indeed, this game is "a serious candidate" for the game of the year (GM Danny King), but here we will only look at the finish as I came across it after I had prepared this article.

I will say though that going through just this final part with my students interactively is a very fruitful exercise, and much better for one than simply seeing it in print, or on YouTube.]

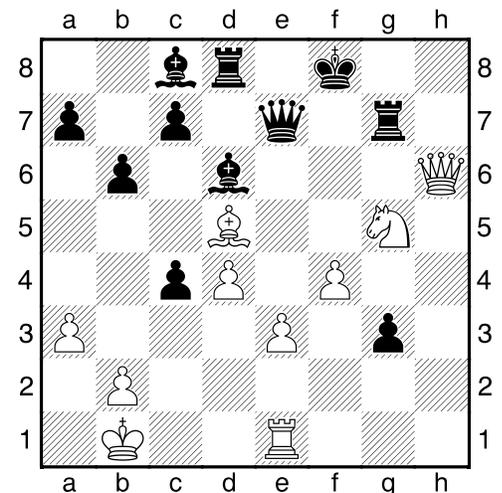
1.c4 e6 2.♘c3 d5 3.d4 ♘f6 4.♘f3 ♙e7 5.♙f4 0-0
 6.e3 b6 7.♚c2 ♙a6 8.0-0-0N dxc4 9.♘g5 ♘c6
 10.a3! g6! 11.h4 ♙d6 12.g3!± ♚e7 13.h5! e5
 14.hxg6 hxg6 15.♙g2 exf4 16.♙xc6 fxg3 17.♙b1!
 ♖ad8 18.f4? ♙c8! 19.♖de1 ♙g7 20.♘d5 ♘xd5!
 21.♖h7+! ♙g8 22.♖xf7! ♖xf7 23.♚xg6+ ♙f8!
 24.♚h6+ ♖g7! 25.♙xd5

(Diagram at right)

Now Qh8+ would kill.

The battle now is joined. Black has a big choice: counter attack, or run?

The counter attack feels correct, but black runs with]



25...♙e8

[Better is 25...♙f5+= 26.e4 ♙e8 27.exf5 ♚xe1+ 28.♙a2 ♖xg5! 29.♚xg5 ♖d7]

26.♚h5+± [White has compensation.] 26...♙d7 [White must now prevent ...c6.]

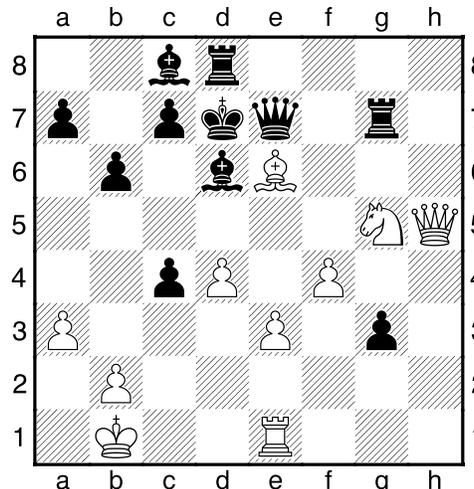
27.♚h3+ ♙e8 28.♚h5+ ♙d7

[This threatens to win with ...c6.

Perhaps black was playing a psychological angle....

He was a bit lucky to get this far, and maybe he was thinking, "I'm ok with the perpetual, and draw, but my opponent is uncompromising and perhaps he will push too hard to win!"

29.♙e6+! [Diagram]



... and white does push to win! Disdaining the perpetual.

Black gets to choose now: run, or give up the queen for much material! I'm thinking his first choice and plan was to play ♚xe6, but when he got here, he looked around, and said, "I don't see any mate! So, I don't need to capture... I can just run."

What do you think?

29...♔c6? [29...♚xe6!± 30.♘xe6 ♔xe6]

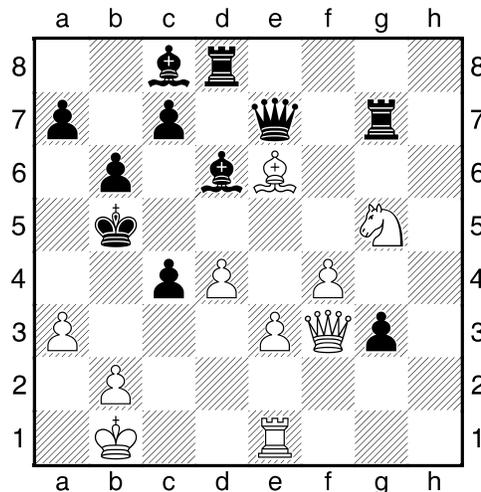
[Let's use the lessons from the Fischer game: Trap the king, do not let it just run away... or force it to run away]

30.♚f3+

[30.♚h1+ In this case this move is equivalent from an attacking point of view. The h1–a8 diagonal is what is important, not the h-file, f-file, 3rd rank, or first rank. However(!), it might be a more accurate move since it gives black the opportunity of playing g3–g2 to block this check. Then capturing ♚xg2+ eliminates the pawn, and in some future variations, black would prefer to have the ♖g2 as we will see.]

30...♔b5 [Diagram]

[Trying to run, and again this must be prevented.]



31.♘xc4+! ♔a5□

[Capturing with 31...♔xc4 is not possible, because we can build the wall with 32.♚c6+ that allows us to force the king down the board to a mating finale. 32...♘c5 33.♚c1+ ♔d3 34.♚c3+ ♔e2 35.♚g2+ ♔e1 36.♚c1#]

32.♚d5+ ♘c5

[32...c5 is straight forward 33.b4+ ♔a4 34.♔b2 ♘b7 (34...♚e8 [or ♚d7] then 35.♘e4) 35.♘b3+ ♔b5 36.a4+ ♔xb4 37.♚c4+ ♔a5 38.♚b5#]

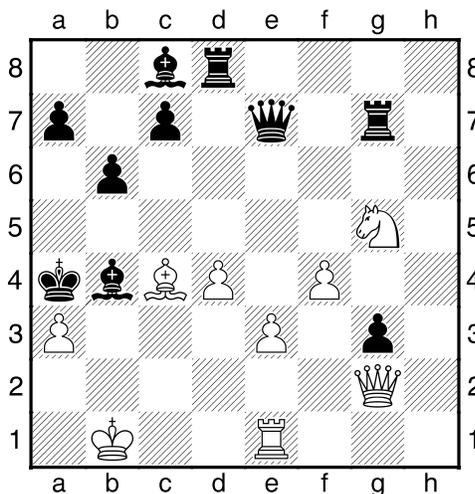
33.b4+ [Pin] ♔a4 [The king is walled off to the a-file, we need an accurate move ...]

34.♚g2!

[White mates with this "retreat"!!]

[Again, a tempting check 34.♚c6+ is wrong(!) as it forces black to move where he wishes, but also leaves the ♚ off-side for future action 34...♔xa3 35.♚e2 ♘f5+ 36.e4 ♚e8]

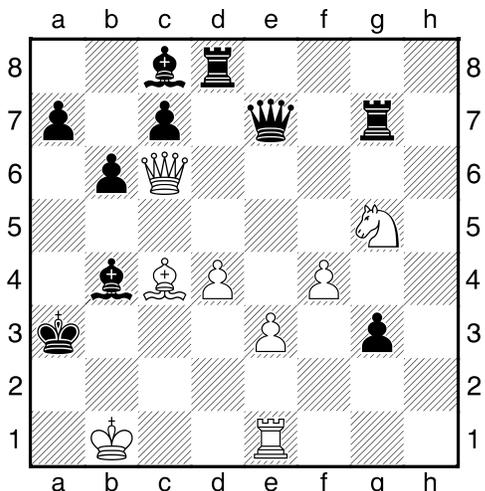
34...♘xb4!



[34...♘f5+ This check would prolong the 'struggle' by one move as you and your SM can figure out, but the text looks very good and promising for black. Give back some material in order to escape...]

35.♚c6+ ♔xa3 [Diagram]

Modern Attacking Chess



[... and now, one last king trap! please...]

36. ♖b3!! And we threaten [[Δ ♔a4#]]

We have to remember the boxing ring. The queen controls all the squares, except a ♘'s move away. So if he captures our bishop ... [36... ♗xb3 We can then mate after 37. ♕c2+ ♔a3 38. ♕a2#]

Therefore he stops the mate on a4.

36... ♗d7

[But, since we have seen the mate if he captures the ♗, then all we have to do is simply force him to take the ♗! Then it would be easy... and so the game ends]

37. ♕c1+! ♔xb3 38. ♕c2+ ♔a3 39. ♕a2#

[Accuracy: White = 76%, Black = 44%.]

1-0

2019

Milestones:

51 years since my first USCF tourney

41 years since I became a Master

2018 & 2019

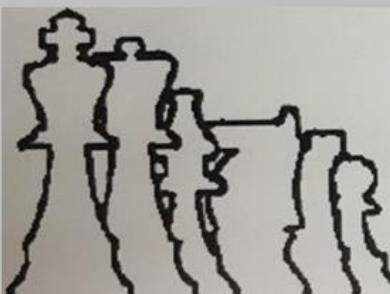
US Senior Champ Age 65-69

Top 50 in the U.S.:
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Next time we will look at some ENDGAME ideas.