

# VIRGINIA CHESS

Newsletter

The bimonthly publication of the  
Virginia Chess Federation

2012 - #1



2012 Virginia Open

March 2-4 in Sterling

*see page 3 for full details — be there!*

# VIRGINIA CHESS

## Newsletter

2012 - Issue #1

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# Emporia Resurrected

Back in VIRGINIA CHESS #2009/4 we observed the end of “one of the longest running and sweetest traditions of Virginia chess” when Woody Harris decided to wrap up his running of the annual Emporia Open at 25 years. Some two later, the tournament has been revived as a VCF Cup event. The 26<sup>th</sup> not-quite-annual edition drew 29 players (coincidentally the exact same number as entered the 25<sup>th</sup> “grand finale”) and no fewer than 5 of them finished 4-1 to tie for 1<sup>st</sup> place: Yuri Barnakov, Larry Larkins, Andrew Rea, Franco Jose & Harold May.

Robert Mahan & Chris Giofreda shared the top Under 1700 prize. Matthew Gaines won U1200. Ernie Schlich directed the tournament.

**Franco Jose - Larry Larkins**

**Slav**

1 Nf3 d5 2 c4 c6 3 cxd5 cxd5 4 d4 Nc6 5 Nc3 Nf6 6 g3 Bf5 7 Bg2 h6 8 Ne5 e6 9 Qa4 Qb6 10 Nxc6 bxc6 11 O-O Bd6 12 Bd2 O-O 13 Nd1 Rf8 14 Ne3 Bg6 15 Bc3 Ne4 16 Rac1 c5 17 Ng4 Nxc3 18 bxc3 c4 19 Kh1 Qb2 20 Qa6 Qa3 21 Qxa3 Bxa3 0-1 White could have played on but after 22 Rcd1 Bb2 he loses the c3 pawn for nothing. It would have been a thankless and almost certainly futile defense.

**Yuri Barnakov - Andrew Rea**

**Trompovsky**

1 d4 Nf6 2 Bg5 g6 3 Bxf6 exf6 4 e4 d6 5 Bc4 Bg7 6 Nc3 Be6 7 Bxe6 fxe6 8 Qg4 f5 9 exf5 exf5 10 Qe2+ Qe7 11 Qxe7+ Kxe7 12 O-O-O Nc6 13 Nf3 Kd7 14 Nd5 Rae8 15 c3 Re2 16 Rhf1 Ne7 17 Nxe7 Rxe7 18 Kd2 Rhe8 19 Rde1 c6 20 Rxe7+ Rxe7 21 h4 h6 22 Kd3 Bf6 23 g3 b5 24 a4 a6 25 axb5 axb5 26 Ra1 Ke6 27 Ra6 Rc7 28 Rb6 Rc8 29 Ne1 f4 30 Ke4 fxg3 31 fxg3 d5+ 32 Ke3 Bd8 33 Ra6 Be7 34 Ng2 Bd6 35 Kf3 h5 36 Nf4+ Bxf4 37 Kxf4 Kf6 38 b4 Rc7 39 Ra8 Re7 40 Rf8+ Kg7 41 Rc8 Re4+ 42 Kf3 Re6 43 Rc7+ Kf6 44 Rd7 g5 45 hxg5+ Kxg5 46 Rh7 Kg6 47 Rh8 Rf6+ 48 Kg2 Re6 49 Rc8 Rf6 50 Kh3 Kg5 51 Rg8+ Rg6 52 Re8 Kh6 53 Re5 Rg4 54 Re6+ Rg6 55 Re8 Kg5 56 Re7 Kh6 57 Rf7 Kg5 58 Re7 Kh6 59 Re8 Kg5 60 Re5+ Kh6 61 Re8 Kg5 62 Re5+ Kh6 1/2-1/2

**Dexter Wright - Franco Jose**

**Caro Kann**

*Notes by Ernie Schlich*

Like the Emporia Open, Black in this game comes back from the dead! 1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 dxe4 4 Nxe4 Bf5 5 Ng3 Bg6 6 h4 h5 7 Nf3 Nd7 8 Bd3 Bxd3 9 Qxd3 e6 10 Be3 Ne7 11 O-O-O Ng6 12 Ng5 Bd6?? 13 Nxe6 Qf6? 14 Bg5 [14 Nf5 Bf8 15 Nc7+] 14...Qxe6 15 Rhe1 Nde5 16 dxe5 Bc7 17 Kb1 O-O 18 f4 Ba5 19 c3 Rad8 20 Bxd8 Rxd8 21 Qf5 Qc4 22 Rxd8+ Bxd8 23 Qd7 Bxh4 24 Re4 Qc5 25 Ne2 Qf2 26 Qh3 Ne7 27 Qh1 Nf5 28 Qg1 Qxg1+ 29 Nxg1



Emporia, *continued*

**b5 30 Ne2 c5 31 e6 fxe6 32 Rxe6 Bf2 33 g3 Nxc3 34 Nxc3 Bxc3 35 f5 h4 36 Rg6 Kh7 37 Rg4 [37 Kc2 Bf2 38 Rg2 Bg3 39 Kd3] 37...Be1 38 Rg2 Bg3 39 Kc2 Kh6 40 Kd3 Kg5 41 Ke2? Kxf5 42 Kf3 g5 43 Rg1 g4+ 44 Kg2 Bf4 45 Rh1 h3+ 46 Kf1 Ke4 47 Ke2 a5 48 b3 a4 49 b4 cxb4 50 cxb4 Kd4 51 Rd1+ Kc4 0-1** Around move 32 White had twenty minutes remaining on his clock and Black only had 3½. When the game ended Black still had a minute and a half to spare while White had just 20 seconds.

**Joan Schlich - Raymond Fletcher**

**Queen's Pawn Game**

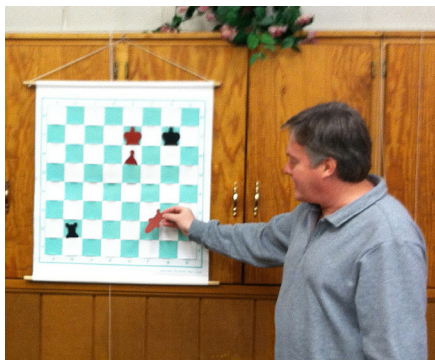
*Notes by Ernie Schlich*

**1 d4 Nf6 2 Nf3 d5 3 e3 Bg4 4 c4 e6 5 Nc3 c6 6 cxd5 exd5 7 Bd3 Bd6 8 h3 Bh5 9 Bd2 Nbd7 10 Qc2 Bg6 11 O-O O-O 12 Bxg6 hxg6 13 e4 Nxe4 14 Nxe4 dxe4 15 Qxe4 Re8 16 Qd3 Nf6 17 Rfe1 Qd7 18 Qb3 Nd5 19 Ne5 Qc7 20 Nc4 Be7 21 Rac1 [21 Re4 =] 21...Rad8 22 Ne3 [22 Re4] 22...Qb8 23 Nxd5 Rxd5 24 Re4 Bf6 25 Rxe8+ [25 Bf4 Qa8 26 Rxe8+ Qxe8 27 Qxb7 Bxd4 28 Qxc6] 25...Qxe8 26 Qxb7 Bxd4 27 Rxc6? [27 Bf4] 27...Bxf2+ 28 Kf1 Bb6 29 Rc8 Rf5+ 0-1**

## Free Chess Lesson Every Week

The headline is manipulative but basically true. There is a chess club that meets on Monday mornings at the Madison Senior Center (*aka* Madison Community Center or Madison Recreation Center), 3829 N Stafford Street, Arlington, Va 22207. Mostly retirees attend—the club meets during what are normally work hours, after all—but they are not going to turn away chess lovers of any age. FIDE Master and three-time state champion (and VIRGINIA CHESS editor!) Macon Shibut gives a lecture each week from approximately 9:30 to 10:30 am. Skittles and occasional tournament play follows the lecture.

From the parking lot in the front of the building, enter the main set of doors that are too your left, go up the half-flight of stairs, turn left, walk to the end of the hall and the chess club meets in the room on your left (ie, in the front corner of the building). Note: there are no meetings on Monday holidays or on any Monday when the Arlington Public Schools close due to inclement weather.





The Virginia Chess Federation proudly presents the 44th annual



**DoubleTree Hotel Dulles Airport-Sterling**  
**21611 Atlantic Boulevard, Sterling, Virginia, 20166**

5-SS, Rd 1 Game/120, rds 2-5 40/2 SD/1 \$\$3400 in Two Sections, top 4 in Open guaranteed, rest based on 140 entrees.

**Open:** \$600(+plaque)-400-300-200 (G), top X, A each \$180.

**Amateur:** \$400(+plaque)-200-150, top B, C, D, U1200 each \$160, Unrated \$100. **Both:** Reg Friday 3/2 5:30-7:45pm. Rds 8, 10-4:30, 9-3:30. EF: \$50 if received by Feb 25, \$60 later and at site. \$30 Re-entry allowed from rd 1 into rd 2 only. Sat Reg 9-9:45am with  $\frac{1}{2}$ pt bye allowed with entry, declared before rd 1 and then irrevocable. VCF membership required for Virginia residents (\$10 adults, \$5 under 19) Hotel \$69(!!) rooms, 1-703-230-0077, reserve by Friday Feb 17th to ensure chess rate. NS, NC, W. FIDE (Open). Chess Magnet School JGP.

**Enter:** Make checks payable to "Virginia Chess" and mail to Michael Atkins, PO Box 6138, Alexandria, VA 22306  
[www.vachess.org/vaopen.htm](http://www.vachess.org/vaopen.htm), [matkins2@cox.net](mailto:matkins2@cox.net) for questions,  
 No Internet or phone entries.





Former VIRGINIA CHESS editor Dave Giltinan has returned to chess after a layoff of nearly 30 years.

Erik Nickels - David Giltinan

Internet Chess Club Team 45/45 League, 2011

### Queen's Gambit

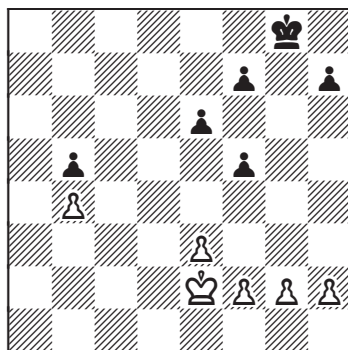
Notes by Dave Giltinan

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 Nf3 e6 4 e3 Nf6 5 Bxc4 c5 6 O-O a6 7 dxc5 Qxd1 8 Rxd1 Bxc5 9 Nc3 O-O 10 a3 b5 11 Be2 Nc6 12 b4 Be7 13 Bb2 Bb7 14 Nd2 Rfd8 15 Bf3 Rab8 [A little passive, but okay so far.] 16 Nb3 Rxd1+ 17 Rxd1 Ne5 18 Bxb7 Rxb7 19 Nc5 Rb6 20 Ne2 Nc4 21 Bxf6 Bxf6 22 Nd7 Rd6 23 Nxf6+ gxf6 24 Rxd6 Nxd6 25 Nc3 f5 26 Kf1 Nc4 27 a4 Nd6? [Just taking the a pawn was better.] 28 axb5 Nxb5? [This is just dumb. Black is going to miss his knight shortly. Now the draw is not so easy.] 29 Nxb5 axb5 30 Ke2



### 30...Kf8?

Amazingly, this natural looking move may have lost the game. There are two moves which draw:



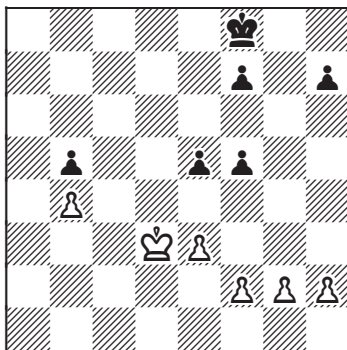
30...e5 creating a wall on the fourth rank. 31 e4 f4! sealing off the queenside from penetration. (Taking the pawn instead is suicide: 31...fxe4 32 Ke3 f5 33 g4!! fxg4 as good as anything 34 Kxe4 Kf7 35 Kxe5 winning) 32 g3 fxg3 33 fxg3 Kg7 34 Kf3 Kf6 35 g4 Kg5 36 h3 h6 37 Kg3 and no one can make progress;

30...Kg7! 31 Kd3 e5! same idea one move later 32 e4 Kf6 33 g3 Kg5 34 h3 f4. Now it's White who has to be careful. He can't take the pawn, eg 35 gxf4+? Kxf4! and he can't simultaneously protect his e-pawn and also guard f3. Instead, the necessary retreat 35 Ke2! draws.

**31 Kd3** [31 f4 and 31 e4 are also possible, but no better, eg 31 f4 Ke7 32 Kd3 f6 33 Kd4 Kd6 etc] **31...Ke7?**



This appears to be the losing move. Black's last chance to save himself was 31...e5!



Just in time! Now neither 32 e4 nor 32 f4 appears to quite work:

32 f4 exf4 33 e4 Kg7 (33...Ke7 transposes) 34 exf5 Kf6 35 Ke4 Kg5 36 Ke5 (an immediate 36 f6 will again transpose) 36...Kg4 37 f6 h5! hoping to use the h-pawn as a crowbar against the White pawns 38 Kd6! going after the f-pawn; if White goes after the b-pawn instead Black will queen first 38...h4 39 Ke7 h3 40 gxh3+ Kxh3 41 Kxf7 and now both sides get a queen: 41...f3 42 Ke8 f2 43 f7 f1Q 44 f8Q. Now trading Queens would be the wrong idea: 44...Qxf8+? 45 Kxf8 Kxh2 46 Ke7 and White wins the race and the game. On the other hand— 44 Qe2+! and I can't find a win for White if Black keeps the Queens on the board. 45 Qe7 White has a passed pawn on the 7<sup>th</sup> rank but it's 'deep in Injun territory' and can quickly be eliminated in many lines. 45...Qh5+ 46 Kd8 Kxh2. Both kings are exposed with queens on the board, which makes me suspect White is never going to get the Black b-pawn and promote. As I said, I can't find a win. Can you?

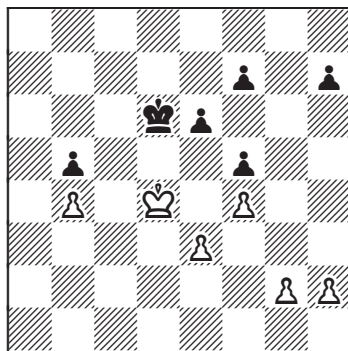
32 e4 f4 33 Ke2 Kg7 34 Kf3 Kf6 35 Kg4 Kg6 36 g3 fxg3 37 fxg3 h6 38 h3 f6 39 Kf3 h5 40 g4 h4 = but not 40...hxg4+? 41 Kxg4!

### 32 Kd4 Kd6 33 f4 (diagram)

At the time this looked to me like it should be an easy draw, but in fact Black is just dead lost!

33...f6 34 e4 [Black can still hope for a draw after any other move by White, eg 34 h3? e5+ 35 Kc3 Kd5 36 Kd3 exf4 37 exf4 h5 38 g3 Kd6 39 Kd4 Kc6 and the White king cannot penetrate] 34...fxe4(?)

Loses but so does everything else, although 34...e5+ holds out longer. 35 fxe5+ fxe5+



*Sealing the win!*



36 Ke3 and Black has no defense:

36...Ke6 37 Kf3 Kf6 38 exf5! Kxf5 39 g4+! ouch! 39...Kg5 40 Kg3! (not 40 Ke4? losing the g-pawn and the win) and Black is out of moves;

36...f4+ 37 Kf3 Ke6 38 Kg4 Kf6 39 Kh5!! Kg7 40 Kg5 h6+ 41 Kf5!;

36...fxe4 37 Kxe4 Ke6 38 g4! and Black is helpless 38...Kf6 39 h4 Ke6 40 g5 Kf7 41 Kxe5.

**35 Kxe4 e5?** [making White's job even easier] **36 fxe5+ fxe5 37 g4 Ke6 38 h4 h6 39 g5 hxg5? 40 hxg5 Kd6 41 g6 Ke6** [okay, I really should just resign] **42 g7 Kf7 43 Kxe5 Kxg7 44 Kd5 Kf7 45 Kc5 Ke7 46 Kxb5 Kd7 47 Kb6** [hoping against hope for some kind of stalemate opportunity] **47...Kc8 48 Ka7 Kc7 49 b5 1-0**

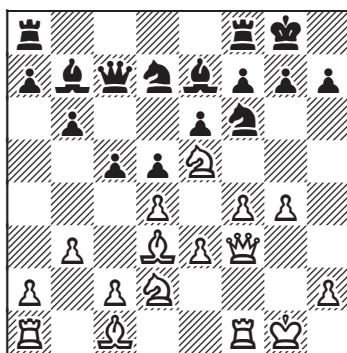
**David Long - Elan Rodan**

**Chesapeake Open 2012**

**Zukertort**

*Notes by Elan Rodan*

This game demonstrates the power of pawns in restricting pieces and opening up critical lines. As Philidor stated, "Pawns are the soul of chess". **1 d4 Nf6 2 Nf3 b6 3 e3 e6 4 Bd3 Bb7 5 Nbd2 d5** [preventing e4] **6 Ne5 Be7 7 O-O O-O 8 f4 c5** [The move ...c6 is often played against the Catalan with the White bishop fianchettoed on g2, but here ...c5 is more active.] **9 b3** [9 c3 is another possibility] **9...Nbd7** [This move may provide more flexibility than the alternative ...Nc6, with the knight landing defensively on f8 in some lines as well as keeping the h1-a8 diagonal unrestricted for Black's light-square bishop.] **10 Qf3!?** [I was expecting either 10 c4 or 10 Bb2 here, but the text move places additional control over e4.] **10...Qc7** [protecting b7 and connecting rooks] **11 g4**



At first glance, Black appears on the defensive. White threatens g5, which would remove a key defender of the vulnerable h7 square and invite menacing kingside attacks. However, Black has a counter-attacking resource. **11...c4! 12 Be2** [If 12





bxc4 then 12...dxc4 13 Be4 Nxe4 14 Nxe4 f5 wins a piece; or if 12 g5 then 12... cxd3 13 gxf6 Nxf6 14 cxd3 Rac8 leaves Black with a strong lead in development, the bishop pair and a superior pawn structure. Additionally, the elimination of White's light-square bishop reduces his attacking power. My computer engine gives 12 Nxd7 Qxd7 13 Be2 c3! 14 Nb1 Ne4 This variation resembles the actual game.] **12...c3! 13 Nb1 Nxe5** [exchanging off White's strong knight] **14 fxe5** [14 dxe5 is more resilient, but even then after 14...Ne4 White has difficulty developing his queenside and Black controls the critical h1-a8 diagonal.] **14... Ne4 15 a4 f6!** [Now the queen is misplaced on f3] **16 exf6 Rxf6 17 Qg2 Rxf1+ 18 Bxf1 Rf8 19 Ba3 Rf2 20 Qxf2** [The best practical chance; after the more passive 20 Qh3 Black can play 20...Bg5 with increased pressure.] **20...Nxf2 21 Bxe7 Nxf4! 22 Bg2 Qxh2+ 23 Kf1 Ba6+ 0-1**

Dmitry Velikov - Geoffrey McKenna

DC Chess League 2012

Sicilian

*Notes by Geoff McKenna*

**1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 Nc3 Nf6** [My opponent thought for a while before proceeding here.] **4 g3 Nc6 5 Bg2 g6 6 O-O Bg7 7 d3 O-O 8 h3** [A fork in the road. One natural plan here would be to play for ...b5, perhaps beginning with 8...Rb8] **8... Nd4 9 Nd4 cxd4 10 Ne2 Qb6** [Here I spent some time looking at 10...e5. I was worried about the possibility of White playing c3 and later d4, and I thought the text might be more flexible in this event.] **11 c3 dxc3 12 bxc3 Rd8** [Black wants to get in ...d5 to stake out some space in the center.] **13 Be3 Qa6 14 Qd2 d5 15 e5** [Here I was tempted by 15...Nb6 16 d4 Nb6 hitting c4, but White has many other options.] **15...Ne8 16 Bc5!? Bf5!?** [Not 16...Bxe5 17 Bxe7 Rd7 which would leave Black's pieces awkwardly placed.] **17 Rad1 Bxe5 18 Bxe7 Rd7 19 Bc5!** [Now White can't be stopped from planting the bishop on d4, putting pressure on the Black kingside.] **19...Rc8 20 Bd4 Bg7 21 g4! Be6 22 f4 f5** [Played to avoid being drowned by 23 f5 and maybe 24 Nf4] **23 g5 Bf8 24 Be5 Bf7 25 Rfe1 Nc7** [The position is tense and I felt optimistic here. However, Black somehow loses the thread over the next few moves. Perhaps a reader can explain what I did wrong?] **26 h4 Nb5 27 h5 Qb6+ 28 Kf1 Bc5 29 a4 Nd6?!** [In severe time pressure Black plays for the positional trap 30 d4 Nc4] **30 hxg6 Bxg6** [Hanging the d-pawn but I consoled myself with the thought that the text reduces the likelihood of Qh8mate. However, it turns out White is now able to swarm into the central files.] **31 Bxd5+ Nf7 32 Rb1 Qd8** [Daydreaming of 33 c4? Rxd5 but White forces Black's pieces onto bad squares with gain of tempo.] **33 Bf6 Be7 34 Bxe7 Qxe7 35 Nd4** Here I didn't see any way to slow the White advance. **1-0**





## Do "New Ideas" Stand Up in Practice?

by Richard Reti

*Translators' Note: In 1922 Richard Reti published one of the undisputed classics of chess literature, NEW IDEAS IN CHESS. In this book Reti described the historical development of chess ideas up through the then-current "hypermodern movement." He elaborated upon this theme in a later book, MASTERS OF THE CHESSBOARD, which was published in 1932. In the meantime, however, the following supplement to NEW IDEAS appeared in a 1926 edition of Календаю Шахматиста (CHESSPLAYER'S CALENDAR). CALENDAR was a Soviet periodical under the editorship of masters Veinstein and Levenfisch. The October 1987 issue of Шахматный Бюллетень (CHESS BULLETIN) reprinted the article with the observation, "in these days when the study of openings emphasizes concrete variations, Reti's general approach to the problems of the opening and his reasoning are of special interest." Ron Tekel and Macon Shibut produced an English translation of Reti's article, which we published in VIRGINIA CHESS #1993/5. That was before the birth of VCF web sites, online access to VIRGINIA CHESS, etc. Word of the article nonetheless got out to the extent that we receive occasional requests for it from researchers and chess players. We thought it worthwhile to go ahead and republish it again now in the Internet age. This translation is ©1993 by R Tekel & M Shibut and may not be reproduced without permission.*



**I** WILL TRY TO ANSWER THE QUESTION IN THE TITLE, which was posed to me by the editor of a recent book. I will also use this opportunity to comment on the hypermodern school of chess, as my name is associated with this idea in the eyes of the general public. My work is often cited in this connection by critics and adherents alike.

Tartakower originated the term "hypermodernism". In my opinion it is not especially attractive, but in view of its widespread acceptance I will adopt it.

To address the principle question of whether hypermodernism has justified itself, we first must agree on what the word represents. Confusion surrounds even this point. Many chess enthusiasts regard the fianchetto and the holding back of center pawns as the essence of hypermodernism. In fact, while these are striking features, they are only manifestations of its underlying ideas and are not the ideas themselves. To others, hypermodernism is at least a bending of the laws of strategy if not a complete rejection of healthy positional tastes. Still others see in hypermodernism a



return to the ideals of Anderssen and Morphy at the expense of the principles laid out by Steinitz. This notion portrays hypermodernism as a kind of “neoromanticism”.

My first task, by no means easy, is to overturn such false views of hypermodernism. The disciples of the neoromantic interpretation tend to be close adherents of my 1922 book *NEW IDEAS IN CHESS*. Earlier than others, they proclaimed me to be an innovator. They also regarded me as a liberator from “dull” or “boring” positional play. (I’m expressing their views - not my own!) Their euphoria became something of an embarrassment for me inasmuch as I was received by them as a “messiah” to common chess players. Nonsense! Hypermodernism really has nothing to do with such neoromanticism. It strives not to destroy but to create; to continue the development of theory founded on the work of the great masters of the past.

Now we may consider the true meaning of hypermodernism:

Principles of play in so-called “open” positions were well known to chess masters in the era preceding Steinitz. That type of position occurs when the pawns of both sides do not bypass each other during the initial skirmish but are exchanged or sacrificed, as in gambits. As a result the board is cleared; free lines and diagonals appear. Masters of that age correctly appreciated how the loss of a tempo was tantamount to loss of the game; they knew that attacks undertaken with insufficient force on hand were doomed to failure; etc.

Then came Steinitz. He established a whole new school of chess. He discovered principles governing so-called “closed positions”. In this category of position, pawns lock against one another and exchanges are minimal. Both sides try to limit the opponent’s freedom of movement in the center. This new school paid particular attention to questions of pawn structure; the use of strong and weak points; etc.

Up until then, only open and closed positions were known. A third type of “mixed positions” - half open and half closed - were hardly ever encountered in practice. For it was assumed that each side had to use the pawns straightaway to prevent the opponent from occupying the center and to fight for space.

Thus games of that time began with the double step movement of one or the other center pawn; for example, the move 1 e4, which lays claim to space in the center. The opponent usually answered 1...e5 fighting for space himself and preventing White from forming a broad pawn center. Black also tried 1...c5 or 1...e6 however, for any appearance they give of neglecting the basic requirements is illusory. Experience demonstrated that Black could not in any case advance both center pawns two squares, eg, after 1...e5 Black’s d-pawn had to remain at d6. So in playing 1...e6 Black had in mind the move 2...d5, whereby he would be no worse off than usual in terms of his pawn center. The e- and d- pawns merely exchanged roles, while the space occupied by the defense was undiminished. The



essential situation remained unchanged, although White had to decide whether to open the game by exchanging pawns or to close the position by 3 e5. Similarly 1...c5 appeared, although not with the purpose of playing a true Sicilian Defense. Black's intention was again 2...e6 with ...d5 soon to follow. The purpose of 1...c5 was to hinder the formation of a chain of White pawns at d4/e5.

An analogous idea underlay Tchigorin's method of defending the queen pawn game (the Old Indian Defense). Instead of 1...d5 and satisfying himself with a single step by the king pawn, Tchigorin began 1...Nf6 to hinder e4 by White and next moved the d-pawn one square (2...d6) to prepare the double-step advance of his e-pawn (assisted by ...Nbd7). Thus we get the same idea as in the French Defense but on the opposite flank. (Today Tchigorin's defense appears in an ultra-modern form where Black surrenders the center.)

In all these old openings, an early clash of center pawns occurs and this leads to either an exchange or a blockade. Thus former theory recognized only two classes of position. Positions of the third class were unknown.

Nimzowitsch presses his claim - undisputed, however - to be the first to consciously reject an automatic occupation of the center by pawns. True, he only used such systems as the second player and not as the aggressor. The Alekhine Defense epitomizes the problems arising in such openings. Alekhine plays 1 e4 Nf6. By this move he does not rush to occupy the center with pawns and he even presents White with a chance to gain space by 2 e5 with gain of tempo.

The practice of recent years indicates that 2 e5 is double edged and leads to clear disadvantage for White, since Black's counterattack by ...d6 begins rapidly and finds a convenient target in White's pawns. Thus there is no reason for Black to rush to occupy the center with pawns, because White hasn't the means to exploit Black's delay nor to strengthen his central grip in the long run. It became evident that the double step of White's pawn, and its dominion in the center, does not amount to a real advantage. To the contrary, Alekhine's Defense shows how the pawn in question can easily become an object of attack. This notion is as valid for White as for Black. And thus crumbled the old image of a pawn center as representing the best method of play.

However, when one or both sides avoids forming a pawn center in the opening we get that category of positions that was unknown in the past. Here both sides' center pawns are neither free nor blocked but retain the possibility of transposing to either of these categories. Prior to hypermodernism no theory existed for such "unfixed" positions.

Just as Steinitz and his new school discovered laws for closed positions, the hypermodern school seeks those principles of play that apply to "unfixed" positions.



By defining hypermodernism in this light I all but answer the question contained in the title. One can measure the practical successes of hypermoderns in various ways; one can regard their experiments as deviations from “correct” play; but one cannot *a priori* reject their approach to positions of a sort previously uninvestigated.

Theoretically, it is entirely possible that hypermodernism is digging its own grave. Let us suppose that the best method of play in non-fixed positions (including the initial position, which has been investigated empirically but not codified) is shown one day to consist of immediately transposing into some position of the first two categories. This would indicate a predominance or superiority of the old methods of play and a necessity of returning to them. Note, the results of hypermodern research thus far gives no indication for such a conclusion. But even if such a conclusion was possible, even then, by strengthening the general theory of openings hypermodernism would have proven its worth.

**W**ISHING TO INCLUDE a bit more meat in this discussion, I highlight what sort of tasks remain for hypermodern investigation. So for example, one unsolved problem has wide interest: we have already seen that an early advance of center pawns creates points of attack for the opponent and is probably not the optimal line of play. On the other hand, if such moves are delayed a danger arises that they will be prevented altogether, resulting in a cramped position for a long time. In early hypermodernism this very mistake was the cause of many defeats. But even now there are no general rules for determining the proper moment for advancing into the center.

Merely by raising such questions hypermodernism has already contributed a great deal. Now I will propose a thesis, the proof of which the reader and I can seek together. It is known that the significance of a single tempo, and thus the significance of development, is greatest in open positions. In closed positions it plays almost no role. Consequently, it would seem to be in White’s interest to open the game (without loss of tempo, of course). How can this be achieved? Most likely by exposing and attacking the opponent’s strong points. One would expect Black’s strongest point in the center to be d5 since, unlike e5, it has natural protection by the queen. Therefore, the ideal initial move is 1 c4, immediately taking aim at d5. Should Black support d5 by 1...Nf6, then White reinforces the attack by 2 Nc3. Let’s assume that Black answers 2...e5. This weakens d5 and reveals his intention of building his position around e5 by such moves as ...Nc6 and ...d6. (Even with 2...e6 he could not control d5 in the long run.) Now White need not continue attacking d5, which Black abandoned without a fight, by 3 g3 and 4 Bg2. Rather, following the logic given above White should strike the new bastion e5 by 3 Nf3 and (in reply to 3...d6 or ...Nc6) 4 d4, and he thereby achieves an advantage.



Alternately, from Black's point of view: having started a tempo behind in development Black is interested in a closed game. It is futile for him to assail the opponent's strong points since that will lead to a dissolution of the position. His plan must be to establish a blockade on the weak squares in White's position. The creation of a mutual blockade will obviously lend the game a closed character. Therefore, if White begins, say, 1 d4 it is disadvantageous to attack the strong point by 1...c5, but preferable to pressure the weakened e4 by 1...Nf6 with the idea of ...b6 and ...Bb7.

Such general considerations do not comprise an exhaustive proof. But I hope this will demonstrate to the reader the value of seeking general laws - in a word, theory - for non-fixed positions.

What will be hypermodernism's future? Nowadays it has many opponents, especially among older masters. But even they cannot ignore its achievements. The more conspicuous the practical benefits of hypermodernism, the sooner it will be accepted by masters in general.

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