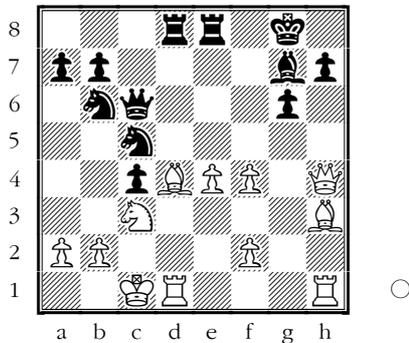
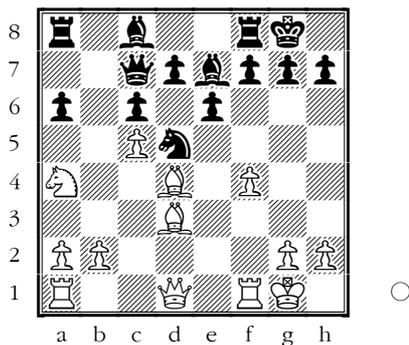


Test Yourself!

G. Kuzmin - Bakhmatov
Kiev, 1963



G. Kuzmin - Sveshnikov
41st USSR Ch Moscow (14), 21.10.1973



On This Day...

by GM Alex Baburin

GM **Gennady Kuzmin** (Ukraine) will celebrate his 60th birthday today – he was born on 19 January 1946.

While his best rating was only 2580 (in January 1998), we should not forget that he was already 52 then. But in the 1970s Kuzmin was among the best Soviet players.

Particularly dangerous in attack, Kuzmin played many great games and combinations, some of which you can find in today's database.



World Chess News

4NCL

The third 4NCL weekend was played on 14–15 January in Birmingham. Both main contenders – *Wood Green* and *Guildford* – won their matches comfortably. It seems that first place will be again decided from their encounter in early May.

Standings after 6 rounds:

1. Wood Green – 11 (33½)
2. Guildford-ADC – 11 (33)
3. Barbican – 9
4. Slough Sharks – 8 (30)
5. Hilsmark Kingfisher – 8 (26½)

[Official website](#)

Corus, Wijk aan Zee

Yesterday there was a day-off at the tournament. Let's look again at the situation in the A-event:

Standings after 4 rounds:

- 1–2. Topalov and Anand – 3;
- 3–4. Ivanchuk and Gelfand – 2½;
- 5–9. Aronian, Leko, Mamedyarov, Adams and Karjakin – 2;
- 10–13. Bacrot, I. Sokolov, Tiviakov and van Wely – 1½;
14. Kamsky – 1.

Round 5 (19 January) pairings:

- Tiviakov – I. Sokolov
- Topalov – Mamedyarov
- Gelfand – van Wely
- Karjakin – Bacrot
- Aronian – Adams
- Ivanchuk – Kamsky
- Anand – Leko

[Official website](#)



Beware: Blunder:

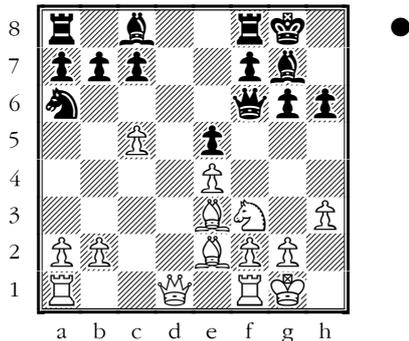
by GM Alex Baburin

Last Sunday I saw the following game at the 4NCL:

Wells - McShane

4NCL, Birmingham, 2006

1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♗g7 4.e4 d6 5.d4 0-0 6.♗e2 e5 7.0-0 ♘a6 8.♗e3 ♘g4 9.♗g5 ♖e8 10.dxe5 dxe5 11.h3 h6 12.♗d2 ♘f6 13.♗e3 ♖e7 14.♘d5 ♖d8 15.♘xf6+ ♖xf6 16.c5 (D)



This is a popular position, which first occurred in the game Kramnik-Shirov, Monaco 1997. There Black played 16...b6. Since then most other players went for 16...♘b8, relocating the knight to c6.

Instead Luke quickly played 16...♘b4?!, obviously with the same idea. I instantly saw 17.♖d2!, attacking the knight and the h6-pawn. Black loses a pawn without enough compensation. Fortunately (Luke is my team-mate!), after a long think Peter played 17.♖a4? and a draw was soon agreed.

The moral of this story? GMs are only humans after all! Not that I ever thought otherwise...

I did a bit of research and found two more games with 16...♘b4?! in Mega 2005. In Wiley (2263) - Likavsky (2410), Presov open, 2001, White also chose 17.♖a4?, while in the game Kaufman (2427) - Kovalev (2400), Olomouc, 1999, White found the correct move 17.♖d2!, won a pawn, but lost the game!

Annotated Game

by GM Alex Baburin

I had a good result at the last 4NCL meeting, winning two games against two IMs. As usual, I had to get up at 4:00 to catch the first flight to Birmingham, but I managed to get just enough sleep before the games.

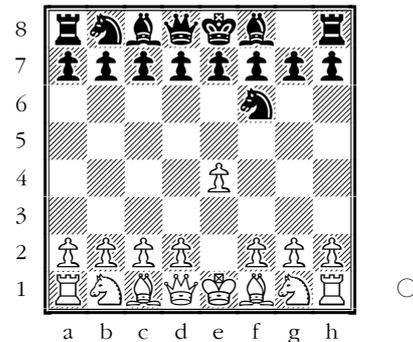
My opponent on Sunday was IM Andrew Greet. I had never faced this young player before, but I knew that he did well in the last British [Championship](#).

White: IM Andrew Greet (2423)

Black: GM Alex Baburin (2511)

4NCL Birmingham (6), 15.01.2006

1.e4 ♘f6 (D)

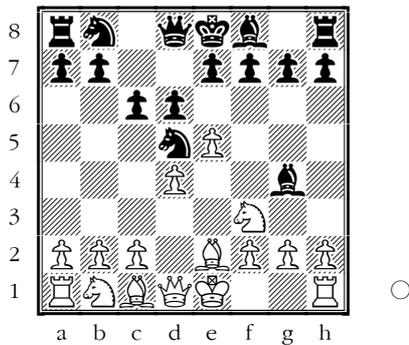


Yes, I know... The Alekhine *is* a risky opening, but at least this is the devil I **know**! In any game I lose with this opening I can always say where I went wrong, while I have lost some Najdorf games without having a clue about the source of my troubles!

2.e5 ♘d5 3.d4 d6 4.♘f3

Of course, the Four Pawns Attack - 4.c4 ♘b6 5.f4 is the most critical line, while the Exchange Variation - 5.exd6 is the most practical and therefore very popular. I've played dozens of games starting from that position (I usually reply with 5...exd6) and the only thing which keeps me intrigued is my memory - I don't remember my games and have to work out things again and again! I read somewhere that Emanuel Lasker dreamt of forgetting everything he had learnt. To me that comes naturally!

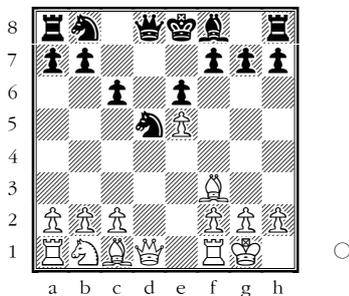
4...♗g4 5.♗e2 c6 (D)



I've tried many systems against the Main Variation (4.♟f3) and this is one of them. It is called the Flohr Variation, after the famous Czech GM Salo Flohr, who tried it against Botvinnik.

6.c4

There is nothing wrong with 6.0-0 but then Flohr's idea becomes apparent: 6...♞xf3 7.♞xf3 dxe5 8.dxe5 e6 (D)



White has the two bishops, but this is hardly an asset here – the dark-squared bishop is limited by the e5-pawn, while the light-squared one is restricted by black pawns (e6/c6). The main features of this position are: weakness of the e5-pawn and weakness of the d6-square. Chances are about equal, I think.

The most critical line is 6.♟g5. After 6...♞xe2 7.♞xe2 dxe5 8.dxe5 e6 White has better chances, as he has kept the knight rather than the light-squared bishop. That knight is much more useful both in protecting the e5-pawn and occupying the d6-square.

Of course, poor is 6.h3, as taking on f3 fits Black's plan: 6...♞xf3 7.♞xf3 dxe5 8.dxe5 e6.

6...♟b6 7.♟bd2

I usually faced here 7.exd6 exd6.

7...♟8d7 8.0-0

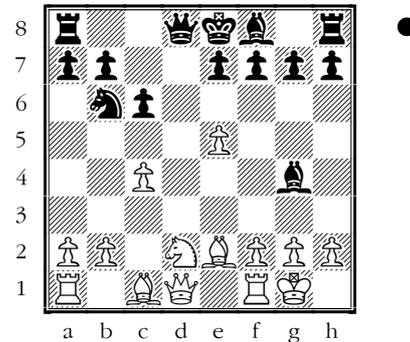
Also possible is 8.♟g5 ♞xe2 9.e6 f6

10.♞xe2 fxg5 11.♟e4 ♟f6 12.♟xg5 ♟xc4! (Burgess).

8...dxe5

Another popular line is 8...♞xf3 9.♟xf3 dxe5 10.dxe5 e6. Again, Black's idea has been to get rid of one of the enemy knights.

9.♟xe5 ♟xe5 10.dxe5 (D)



This position was new to me. I had probably seen it in some books on the Alekhine, but during the game I did not have a clue how Black was supposed to play here... Which is not always a bad thing – it allows you to look at the position afresh.

10...♞f5

I think this is best. In some games Black tried 10...♞e6.

I did not particularly like the position after 10...♞xe2 11.♞xe2 e6. But perhaps it's not too bad. For example: 12.b3 (Bagirov in his 1987 book gives 12.♟e4 "with advantage", clearly missing 12...♞d4!) 12...♞d4 13.♞b1 ♞d8 14.♟e4 ♞d3 15.♞xd3 ♞xd3 16.♞e3 ♞e7 17.♞fd1 ♞d8 18.♞c5 ♟d7 19.♞d6 f5 20.exf6 gxf6 21.♞c7 ♞c8 22.♞f4 ♟c5 23.♟c3 ♞d8 24.♞xd8+ ♞xd8= Vogt-Cibulka, Stary Smokovec 1973.

11.♞b3

I don't like this move, which my opponent played rather quickly. Better is 11.♞g4, seeking the exchange of the light-squared bishops.

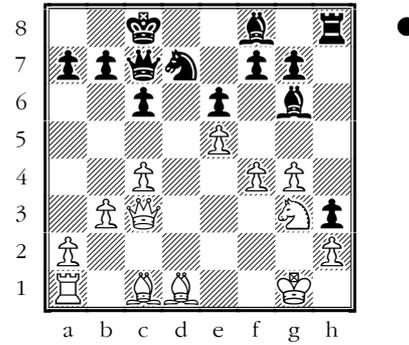
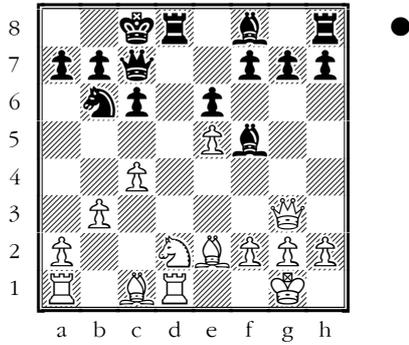
11...e6 12.♞d1

White spent 24 minutes on this move, but I don't think it was best. I trust that 12.♞g3 or 12.♟f3 was preferable.

12...♞c7 13.♞g3 0-0-0

Because of the pressure on g7, Black had troubles developing the f8-bishop, so castling long seemed natural.

14.b3 (D)



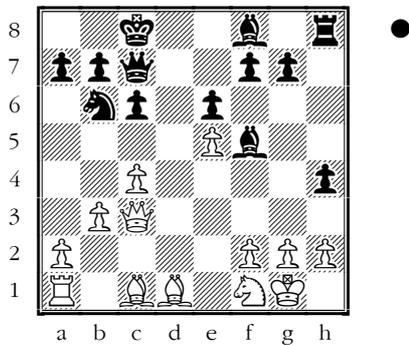
White needs this move if he wants to relocate his knight. I am impressed that *Junior* suggests (at least initially!) as the main move 14.♖f3 ♜xd1+ 15.♙xd1 ♜xc4 16.♙e2 ♜b6 – have computers lost all respect for material?! **14...h5!?**

I spent 25 minutes on this move. 14...♙b4 15.a3 gives Black nothing, so I mainly looked at 14...♙c2 15.♞f1 ♙b4 16.♜b1. I felt that he Black should be OK, but could not see a clear plan. Computer favours Black after 16...♜d7 17.♙b2 f6.

15.♜f1

One sample line goes like this: 15.♜f3 ♜xd1+ 16.♙xd1 h4 17.♜xh4?? ♞xh4 18.♞xh4 ♞xe5, winning. Probably better was 15.♞e3?! when ...h4 can be met with h2–h3.

15...♞xd1 16.♙xd1 h4 17.♞c3 (D)



17...h3

That was my idea – to weaken the white king. In fact, I completely missed a nice tactical shot: 17...♙b4!, gaining time for development.

18.g4

There is nothing wrong with this move – it won't be easy for Black to get at the enemy king. However, my opponent played this move with a wrong idea in mind.

18...♙g6 19.♜g3 ♜d7 20.f4? (D)

That was his plan – to lock out the g6–bishop after the eventual f4–f5. But White can't afford to weaken his position so much.

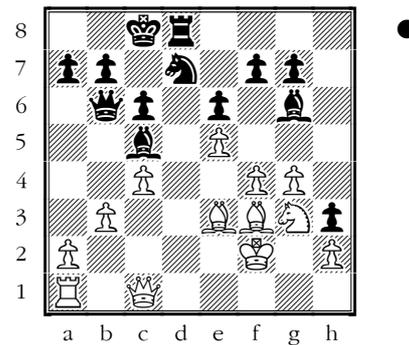
20...♞b6+! 21.♙e3 ♙b4! 22.♞c1 ♙c5 23.♞f2

23.♙xc5? ♞xc5+ 24.♞f1 ♞d4 is hopeless for White.

23...♞d8

My first intention was to play 23...f6. But I could not find anything concrete after 24.exf6 gxf6 25.♙e2. I must say that I missed the paradoxical idea 25...f5!.

24.♙f3? (D)



I expected 24.♙e2, when I considered two ideas. First is the peculiar-looking move 24...♙h7!? – intending to blow up the White's centre with ...g5!.

But I was leaning towards 24...♙d4!, which makes it hard for White to untie his pieces. For example: 25.♞d2 ♜xe5! 26.♞d1 ♜d3+ 27.♙xd3 ♙xd3–+.

24...♜xe5!

I saw this move instantly, but then nearly rejected it on false grounds.

25.fxe5 ♞d3 26.♜f1 ♙xe3+

When I first looked at 24...Nxe5!, I only saw here 26...♞xe3 27.♜xe3 ♙d4. This is possible, but clearly not best for Black.

27.♜xe3 ♞d4! 28.♞e1 ♞xe5!

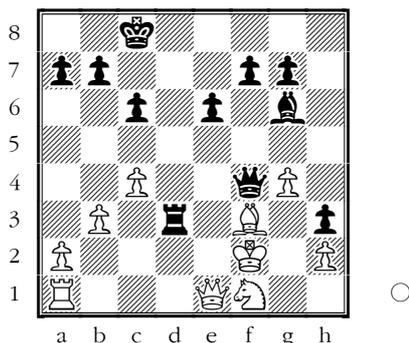
The line 28...♞xe3 29.♞xe3 ♞xa1 is probably winning, but why settle for

so little?

29. ♖f1

Or 29. ♖d1 ♜xh2+ 30. ♖f1 ♜f4 31. ♖f2 ♜e4 32. ♖e2 h2-+,

29... ♖f4 (D)



30. ♖e2 ♜d4+ 31. ♖e3 ♖d2 32. ♖d1 ♖xe2+ 33. ♖xe2 ♜b2+ 34. ♖d2 ♖e5 0-1 Time: 1.51 - 1.52 The time control was 40 moves in 2 hours, 20 moves in 1 hour and 30 minutes allegro finish.

Solutions to our quiz:

G. Kuzmin - Bakhmatov

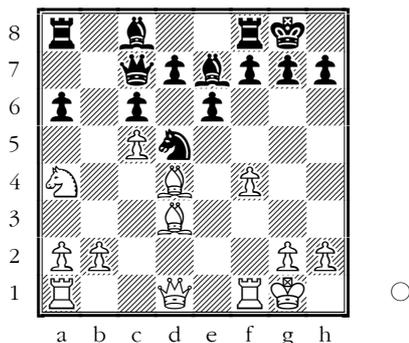
Kiev, 1963



26. ♜xh7+! 1-0 The line 26... ♜xh7 27. ♜e6+ ♜h6 28. ♖xh6+ ♜xh6 29. ♖h1# is clear enough!

G. Kuzmin - Sveshnikov

41st USSR Ch Moscow (14), 21.10.1973



16. ♖b6! ♜xb6 17. ♜xh7+! ♜xh7 18. ♜h5+ ♜g8 19. ♜xg7! ♜xg7 20. ♜g4+ ♜h7 21. ♖f3 1-0

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