

Can you be a positional chess genius?

Angus Dunnington

EVERYMAN CHESS PUZZLES

First published in 2002 by Everyman Publishers plc, formerly Cadogan Books plc, Gloucester Mansions, 140A Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2H 8HD

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British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN 1 85744 264 4

Distributed in North America by The Globe Pequot Press, P.O. Box 480, 246 Goose Lane, Guilford, CT 06437-0480.

All other sales enquiries should be directed to Everyman Chess, Gloucester Mansions, 140A Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2H 8HD
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To Mia Simone, my beautiful daughter

EVERYMAN CHESS SERIES (formerly Cadogan Chess)

Chief advisor: Garry Kasparov

Commissioning editor: Byron Jacobs

Typeset and edited by First Rank Publishing, Brighton.

Production by Book Production Services.

Printed and bound in Great Britain by The Cromwell Press Ltd., Trowbridge, Wiltshire.

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INTRODUCTION

The positional aspect of chess is ever-present. In every game at every level there are positional factors to be considered at every turn. There is no avoiding it. Yet so many times at tournaments and in chess clubs we hear someone say 'I'm a tactician', 'I like to play aggressively' or – the most common – 'All this positional stuff is too difficult for me'... The irony is, of course, that positional aspects of the game are often easier to understand than most players believe. Given time we can all appreciate the significance of vulnerable squares, isolated pawns, 'bad' bishops or even the implications of a piece actually leaving the board, but can we be guaranteed to steer our way through complexities at all times? – no, nobody can. All these are features of the game that can – and should – be considered in any given situation. The context may change but the fundamental points remain the same. As in life there are golden rules and guidelines that remain fairly constant – it is how we deal with them that counts. Most chess players fail to differentiate between thinking and calculating – we all have our limitations when it comes to the rather mechanical process of calculating, but thinking is another issue entirely.

This book is designed to make positional considerations come more naturally so that our thought processes 'go with the flow' from one game to another. I wouldn't suggest that positional play can be easy and automatic, but nor do I believe that it should be categorised as a difficult or obscure part of the game that is just a matter of taste. The more aware we become of the permanency of positional chess the easier the game is to play.

The very nature of chess precludes those somewhat rigid approaches we have to other sports or pastimes that have well defined spheres of possibility and skill. There is no golf grip or tyre selection in chess – ultimately we are our own limitation. We are the most finite factor in the amazingly rich equation that is chess. Indeed, being quite conscious of these limits we should approach the game in a

Test One



Test 1: Puzzle 1

Maximum score: 5 Points

□ Liublinsky

■ Botvinnik

Moscow Championship 1943

Black to Play

Black has weak pawns on the queenside and White threatens to trade off the rooks. How did Botvinnik kill two birds with one stone?

See page 89 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 2 points.



Test 1: Puzzle 2

Maximum score: 5 Points

□ Hodgson

■ Speelman

British Championship 1984

White to Play

A typical case of 'over-protection' – White hopes to accentuate the weakness of the backward e6-pawn by maintaining absolute control of the e5-square. How did he further improve his position?

See page 89 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 2 points.

Can You be a Positional Chess Genius?**Test 1: Puzzle 3**

Maximum score: 5 Points

□ Shirov

■ Miladinovic

Belgrade 1995

White to Play

Black has scattered pawns but these are accompanied by the bishop pair. Time to clamp down?

See page 89 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 2 points.

**Test 1: Puzzle 4**

Maximum score: 5 Points

□ McDonald

■ Lukacs

Budapest 1995

White to Play

The knight is fine on c4 but there is a better outpost that would enable White to tie his opponent down a little before launching the minority attack. How did White step up the pressure?

See page 89 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 2 points.

Test One

**Test 1: Puzzle 5**

Maximum score: 5 Points

□ M.Gurevich

■ Piket

Antwerp 1998

Black to Play

How did Black guarantee a level game by undermining his opponent's control of the dark squares?

See page 89 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 2 points.

**Test 1: Puzzle 6**

Maximum score: 10 Points

□ Richardson

■ Sadler

England 1995

Black to Play

White is on the defensive, under pressure on the d-file, b-file, the a5-e1 diagonal and from Black's unwelcome queen. However, in order to exploit his initiative Black must step up the pace. How did he do this using positionally oriented means?

See page 89 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 4 points.

Can You be a Positional Chess Genius?**Test 1: Puzzle 7**

Maximum score: 10 Points

□ Kasparov

■ Kramnik

Moscow (blitz playoff) 1996

Black to Play

In order to avoid a repetition White's last was ♖d4-b4. This led to difficulties for Kasparov – how?

See page 89 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 4 points.

**Test 1: Puzzle 8**

Maximum score: 10 Points

□ Petrosian

■ Morelos

Lugano Olympiad 1968

White to Play

How did White justify his early knight jaunt?

See page 89 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 4 points.

Test One



Test 1: Puzzle 9

Maximum score: 10 Points

□ Botvinnik

■ Konstantinopolsky

Sverdlovsk 1943

White to Play

Black might occupy the e-file for the moment but it is the 'bad' bishop – hampered by its own pawns – that is the most important factor in the position. How did White add to his opponent's problems?

See page 89 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 4 points.



Test 1: Puzzle 10

Maximum score: 10 Points

□ Baburin

■ Tseitlin

Cappelle la Grande 1994

Black to Play

With a trade of bishops on the a1–h8 diagonal White had hoped to reduce his opponent's influence on the dark squares. However, in doing so his own bishop has left the arena, inviting Black to assume the initiative by concentrating on this very colour complex.

See page 89 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 4 points.

Can You be a Positional Chess Genius?**Test 1: Puzzle 11**

Maximum score: 15 Points

 Tal Dvoretsky

USSR Championship 1972

White to Play

Given time Black will complete his development with a reasonable game... So don't give Black time! What was Tal's positional strike?

See page 89 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 6 points.

**Test 1: Puzzle 12**

Maximum score: 15 Points

 Karpov Adams

Dos Hermanas 1993

White to Play

White not only has the advantage of having two pawn islands to his opponent's three, but his rooks have the d- and e-pawns in their sights. How did Karpov use tactical means to practically force a series of exchanges that results in a decisive structural advantage in an ending?

See page 89 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 6 points.

Test One



Test 1: Puzzle 13

Maximum score: 15 Points

□ Oil

■ Hodgson

Groningen 1993

Black to Play

In order to have any chance of converting his positional pluses Black needs the help of the rook which, at the moment, plays a defensive role. How did Hodgson, one of the world's most imaginative players, successfully address this problem? You will either get it, or you won't...

See page 89 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 6 points.



Test 1: Puzzle 14

Maximum score: 15 Points

□ Skembris

■ Nenashev

Komotini 1993

White to Play

White's aggressively posted forces are primed for a positional breakthrough that leaves Black's king wide open.

See page 89 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 6 points.

Can You be a Positional Chess Genius?**Test 1: Puzzle 15**

Maximum score: 15 Points

□ Shliperman

■ Yermolinsky

Philadelphia 1997

Black to Play

White would like to combine his territorial advantage with the bishop pair, while Black needs to find a role for his bishop and outposts for his knights. Yermolinsky's next move facilitated the achievement of both these goals and, consequently, earned Black decent prospects.

See page 89 to *Ask A Grandmaster*, which will cost you 6 points.

Scorechart for Test 1

Puzzle	Points	Puzzle	Points
1	10	.....
2	11	.....
3	12	.....
4	13	.....
5	14	.....
6	15	.....
7		
8	Total	.....
9		

Test Two



Test 2: Puzzle 1

Maximum score: 5 Points

 Kamsky Kasparov

Manila Olympiad 1992

Black to Play

What should Black play?

See page 90 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 2 points.



Test 2: Puzzle 2

Maximum score: 5 Points

 Capablanca Marshall

New York 1909

White to Play

White's positional lead is clear, but how did he improve his position further?

See page 90 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 2 points.

Can You be a Positional Chess Genius?**Test 2: Puzzle 3**

Maximum score: 5 Points

 Petrosian Lutikov

USSR Team Championship 1981

White to Play

How did White reduce his opponent's activity while simultaneously adding to Black's positional woes?

See page 90 to *Ask A Grandmaster*, which will cost you 2 points.

**Test 2: Puzzle 4**

Maximum score: 5 Points

 Korchnoi Rogers

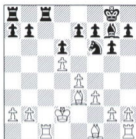
Novi Sad Olympiad 1990

White to Play

When there is only one open file on the board in an otherwise level position we should sometimes be satisfied with a modest but definite advantage. How did White secure such a lead in the diagram position?

See page 90 to *Ask A Grandmaster*, which will cost you 2 points.

Test Two



Test 2: Puzzle 5

Maximum score: 5 Points

White to Play

Black has recently played ...♗e6x♔d5 and White recaptured with the c4-pawn. How can White now secure a clear advantage?

See page 90 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 2 points.



Test 2: Puzzle 6

Maximum score: 10 Points

□ Volzhin

■ Rewitz

Aarhus 1997

White to Play

1 ♔xc7+ ♚xc7 2 a4 favours White but Volzhin did not want to part with his great knight. Consequently he went for a decisive positional bind that left his opponent tied up. How did he do this?

See page 90 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 4 points.

Can You be a Positional Chess Genius?**Test 2: Puzzle 7**

Maximum score: 10 Points

 Karpov Kramnik

Monte Carlo (blindfold) 1995

Black to Play

Despite the fact that this is a blindfold game Kramnik managed to make the most of his chances by forcing a serious positional concession in enemy territory. How did he engineer the creation of a hole which he eventually occupied with decisive effect?

See page 90 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 4 points.

**Test 2: Puzzle 8**

Maximum score: 10 Points

 Capablanca Alekhine

St. Petersburg 1913

White to Play

White's prospects of a kingside attack have just about disappeared (along with the trade of bishops) and Black has a decent grip on the centre. However, it is on the queenside that White can make significant progress. How did 'Capa' secure a clear advantage?

See page 90 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 4 points.

Test Two



Test 2: Puzzle 9

Maximum score: 10 Points

□ Bykhovsky

■ Smirin

Beijing 1991

Black to Play

A fairly even position; Black's isolated e5-pawn and White's control of the e4-square suggesting an edge for the first player. How should Black proceed?

See page 90 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 4 points.



Test 2: Puzzle 10

Maximum score: 10 Points

□ Lutz

■ Karpov

Dortmund 1993

Black to Play

Black's all-seeing bishop faces eviction from e5, where White would like to push his pawn in order to clear the b1-h7 diagonal. How did Karpov secure a lasting positional advantage?

See page 90 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 4 points.

Can You be a Positional Chess Genius?**Test 2: Puzzle 11**

Maximum score: 15 Points

□ Razuvaev

■ Honfi

Cienfuegos 1976

White to Play

White has just traded queens on b6, safe in the knowledge that the significance of his space advantage is greater as the ending approaches. In fact Black's minor pieces are rather awkwardly placed, allowing White to practically force the creation of a passed pawn. How?

See page 90 to *Ask A Grandmaster*, which will cost you 6 points.

**Test 2: Puzzle 12**

Maximum score: 15 Points

□ Spielmann

■ Maroczy

Gothenburg 1920

White to Play

White clearly has the enemy king in his sights. How did he use direct threats to induce serious structural weaknesses in Black's camp?

See page 90 to *Ask A Grandmaster*, which will cost you 6 points.

Test Two

**Test 2: Puzzle 13**

Maximum score: 15 Points

□ Gulko

■ Kramnik

Novgorod 1995

Black to Play

White's bishop is not good and his pawns have seen better times. How did Black transfer his knight to attack the enemy c-pawns?

See page 90 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 6 points.

**Test 2: Puzzle 14**

Maximum score: 15 Points

□ Khalifman

■ Lautier

Biel Interzonal 1993

White to Play

If only Black had a knight on d6. Can you find a plan, aimed at dislodging the blocking queen, that forces a concession?

See page 90 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 6 points.

Can You be a Positional Chess Genius?**Test 2: Puzzle 15**

Maximum score: 15 Points

□ Kasparov

■ Shirov

Horgen 1994

White to Play

White has a good knight on d5 but Black's is also useful. How did Kasparov reduce his dangerous young opponent to passivity?

See page 90 to *Ask A Grandmaster*, which will cost you 6 points.

Scorechart for Test 2

Puzzle	Points	Puzzle	Points
1	10	.....
2	11	.....
3	12	.....
4	13	.....
5	14	.....
6	15	.....
7		
8	Total	.....
9		

Test Three



Test 3: Puzzle 1

Maximum score: 5 Points

□ Botvinnik

■ Pomar

Varna Olympiad 1962

White to Play

White has a standard pawn sacrifice that creates an excellent outpost for one piece and increases the scope of another...

See page 90 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 2 points.



Test 3: Puzzle 2

Maximum score: 5 Points

□ Geller

■ P.Littlewood

Plovdiv 1983

White to Play

White offered a pawn sacrifice which secured a long-term positional advantage. What was it?

See page 90 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 2 points.

Can You be a Positional Chess Genius?**Test 3: Puzzle 3**

Maximum score: 5 Points

□ Khalifman

■ Knaak

Hamburg 1991

White to Play

How did White favourably change the pace?

See page 90 to *Ask A Grandmaster*, which will cost you 2 points.

**Test 3: Puzzle 4**

Maximum score: 5 Points

□ Ilincic

■ Leko

Belgrade 1996

Black to Play

White is already slightly worse thanks to the ugly d4-e3-f4 complex, the accompanying hole on e4 and generally poorer pieces. How did Black make the situation even more unpleasant for his opponent?

See page 90 to *Ask A Grandmaster*, which will cost you 2 points.

Test Three



Test 3: Puzzle 5

Maximum score: 5 Points

□ Sliwa

■ Szabo

Budapest 1954

Black to Play

Black can win material by force. How?

See page 90 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 2 points.



Test 3: Puzzle 6

Maximum score: 10 Points

□ Wahls

■ Ehlvest

New York Open 1994

Black to Play

For the moment White is not able to exploit either the backward d6-pawn or the hole on d5, giving Black time to reduce White's general influence. How did Ehlvest kill two birds with one stone?

See page 90 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 4 points.

Can You be a Positional Chess Genius?**Test 3: Puzzle 7**

Maximum score: 10 Points

□ Nikolaidis

■ Moskalenko

Agios Nikolaos 1995

Black to Play

An ability to take stock of the positional characteristics of scrappy positions is vital, for then we can pinpoint the most serious weakness and concentrate our efforts on exploiting it, rather than simply launching an attack on the king. Find Black's best plan.

See page 91 to *Ask A Grandmaster*, which will cost you 4 points.

**Test 3: Puzzle 8**

Maximum score: 10 Points

□ Oll

■ Anand

Biel Interzonal 1993

Black to Play

You will notice, here, that White's queen is obstructed by the rather awkward presence of the defending bishop on d2. How did Black exploit his opponent's clumsy-looking set-up to earn himself at least an equal game? (Depending on the accuracy of White's response).

See page 91 to *Ask A Grandmaster*, which will cost you 4 points.

**Test 3: Puzzle 9**

Maximum score: 10 Points

□ Botvinnik

■ Kan

USSR Championship 1939

White to Play

White has doubled, isolated c-pawns but it is another feature of the position that is more significant. How did White secure an advantage?

See page 91 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 4 points.

**Test 3: Puzzle 10**

Maximum score: 10 Points

□ Eliskases

■ Flohr

Semmering-Baden 1937

Black to Play

With a knight on the rim against a bishop it would seem that Black is worse, but he soon engineered a 'good' knight versus 'bad' bishop scenario. How did Black force an enduring ending advantage?

See page 91 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 4 points.

Can You be a Positional Chess Genius?**Test 3: Puzzle 11**

Maximum score: 15 Points

□ Taimanov

■ Botvinnik

USSR Championship 1953
(play-off)*White to Play*

White has a pawn majority in the centre as well as the two bishops – factors that he would like to combine by opening the position. This is why Black has nudged his rook to the e-file. What is White's best method of playing for e3-e4?

See page 91 to *Ask A Grandmaster*, which will cost you 6 points.

**Test 3: Puzzle 12**

Maximum score: 15 Points

□ Van Vliet

■ Znosko-Borovsky

Ostend 1907

Black to Play

White's Stonewall set-up has resulted in the usual hole on e4, but there are also potentially hazardous points on e3, d3 and c2. Black's initial move is not difficult to find but I want you to take your time and to explore the subsequent possibilities.

See page 91 to *Ask A Grandmaster*, which will cost you 6 points.

**Test 3: Puzzle 13**

Maximum score: 15 Points

Levitt
 Beaumont
 England 1996

Black to Play

It is generally a good rule to complete development before going on the offensive. Here White opts to hit the central knight before castling, allowing Black to generate a dangerous initiative.

See page 91 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 6 points.

**Test 3: Puzzle 14**

Maximum score: 15 Points

Timman
 Hübner
 Sarajevo (match) 1991

White to Play

Despite the symmetry it is clear that the bishops are to be developed differently – White prepares a second fianchetto with b2-b4, whereas Black has chosen more traditional means. However, the key factor here is that it is White to move, and there is an uncompromising continuation available.

See page 91 to Ask A Grandmaster, which will cost you 6 points.

SOLUTIONS AND POINTS

Solutions and Points: Test 1

Puzzle 1: 1...♞d4! is Black's best shot. In fact after 2 ♖e2 ♜c8 3 ♖xd4 cxd4 4 ♜f2 c5 5 ♞f1 f5 Black had repaired his pawns, had a new passed pawn and enjoyed a space advantage. Meanwhile it is difficult to see how White can actually use his material lead. 6 ♜g3 ♜d7 7 ♞ad1 f4 8 ♜f2 g5 saw Black continue the theme, with a good game.

Points: Five for the kamikaze rook.

Puzzle 2: White took advantage of the unprotected bishop to briefly send his knight in and out of enemy lines: 1 ♖xc6! ♜xg3 2 ♖cxd4 ♜d6 3 ♞ae1 and White had a wonderful position, with d4 and e5 under his firm grip, the e-pawn in his sights and the prospect of turning the screw after ♖e5, f2-f4 etc. (hence ♞ae1 rather than ♞fe1).

Points: Five for the neat shuffle.

Puzzle 3: Because the b2-pawn is attacked and defended twice we have to watch out for the liberating ...c6-c5. Consequently Shirov played the prophylactic 1 b4! Black then sensibly got rid of one weakness with 1...a5 2 a3 axb4 3 axb4 but still found himself struggling due to White's control of c5, the poor light-squared bishop and the vulnerable e6-pawn. In fact 3...♜e8 4 ♜c5 ♞d5 5 ♞xe6 ♜f7 was an attempt to mix it, although after 6 ♞xf6! gxf6 7 ♖c3 Black anyway felt the need to remove the powerful bishop with 7...♞xc5, emerging from the minor skirmish with nothing to show for the loss of a pawn.

Points: Five for 1 b4.

Puzzle 4: 1 ♖e5! was the first step to the desirable c5-square. Black should avoid parting with his dark-squared bishop as 1...♜xe5 2 dxe5 ♖d5 3 ♖d4, for example, leaves White with the superior minor pieces as well as pawns, while a well timed e3-e4 will add to White's space advantage. In the game 1...♖d5 2 ♖d3 g6 3 ♖c5 ♜c8 4

Can You be a Positional Chess Genius?

♞c3 ♞f6 5 b4 a6 6 a4 ♞d6 7 b5 finally got the queenside pawns rolling. After 7...axb5 8 axb5 ♞xa1 9 ♞xa1 ♞c7 10 bxc6 bxc6 11 ♞a4 ♞d7 12 ♞a6 ♞xa6 13 ♞xa6 ♞b8 14 ♞c4 followed by ♞a4-c5 White had an enduring lead thanks to his watertight pawn formation.

Points: Five points for the preparatory knight manoeuvre.

Puzzle 5: Piket played 1...♞e5!?, satisfied that 2 ♞xe5 ♞xe5 is in Black's interest since this both removes a useful defender and improves the bishop. Instead 2 ♞c3 ♞c6 prepared ...♞d4 and resulted in a balanced game.

Points: Five for the simple but effective manoeuvre.

Puzzle 6: Black's knight is not contributing at the moment, so we should be searching for the most appropriate entry point – d4. Therefore Sadler sent his knight on a decisive manoeuvre with 1...♞e8!. Meanwhile White tried to unravel: 2 ♞e1 ♞c7 3 ♞c1 ♞e6 4 ♞c2 (unfortunately for White 4 ♞f2 ♞f4 5 ♞c2 ♞xc2 6 ♞xc2 ♞xc3 leaves the back rank exposed) 4...♞b6+ 5 ♞f2 (again 5 ♞f2? fails, this time to 5...♞d4, when White loses material, e.g. 6 ♞xd4 exd4 7 ♞d1 d3+ 8 ♞f2 ♞b3 9 ♞h1 ♞xa4, or 6 ♞b1 ♞xc3 7 bxc3 ♞e2+ 8 ♞f1 ♞a6 etc.) 5...♞d4 and Black threatened 6...♞xc3 and 7...♞e2+ since White's queen is pinned. Then 6 ♞h1 ♞b3 saw the return of the queen to b3 with a position similar to where we started but with the knight having moved from f6 to the fantastic d4-square.

Points: Eight for the knight crusade and two more for keeping the f4-square in your sights.

Puzzle 7: 1...d4! fits in perfectly with Black's rooks occupying the centre files, the point being that 2 ♞xd4 ♞xd4 3 exd4 ♞xd4 wins Black two pieces for a rook after 4 g3 ♞xf4 5 gxf4 ♞xe2. After 2 ♞xd6 ♞xd6 3 ♞fd1 g5! the d-pawn suddenly grew in stature. 4 ♞h3 h6 followed by ...d4-d3 is very nice for Black, although Kasparov's 4 ♞h5 ♞xh5 5 ♞xh5 d3 anyway gave Black a protected passed pawn on the sixth rank! White could have tried 2 ♞fd1, when 2...g5 3 ♞h5 ♞xh5 4 ♞xh5 d3 is similar to the game, while 3 ♞h3 ♞xb4 4 axb4 d3 exploits the fact there is no pin on the d-file, 5 ♞f1 ♞d5 being a way for Black to press for an advantage.

Points: Two points for the win of two pieces for a rook, two if you're happy with Black's chances after the alternative 3 ♞h3 h6 and three for the game's establishment of a strong passed pawn. 2 ♞fd1 also needs to be investigated, so 2...g5! 3 ♞h5 ♞xh5 and 4...d3 receives a point, while 3 ♞h3 ♞xb4! with 5...♞d5 is another two points. The transformation from blockaded IQP to monster is worth remembering.

Puzzle 8: Black is ready to cement his grip on the light squares with ...e7-e6. A natural reaction is 1 e6, undermining Black's control of both f7 and g6, but Petrosian took this theme one step further with 1 f5!. The point is that the threat of fxg6 and ♞d3 forces 1...gxh5, when 2 e6 f6 3 ♞f7 ♞h7 presents White with 'extra' targets on f5 and h5. Now 4 ♞f3 ♞d7! 5 ♞xf5 ♞f8 sees Black hold the kingside together, so the game continued 4 0-0 dxe4 5 ♞xf5 ♞b6 6 ♞c3 c5 7 d5 ♞d7 (a faulty plan, but Black is in trouble in view of the inevitable ♞xh5) 8 ♞xh5 ♞xh5 9 ♞xh5 ♞xb2 10 ♞d6+! ♞d8 11 ♞e8+ 1-0.

Solutions and Points

Points: Seven for the general idea of tying Black up with the e6-pawn and unwelcome knight. Three more for the attack on the h5-pawn. For 1 e6, which does have a go on the light squares but rather lacks the immediate punch of the better 1 f5, take two points.

Puzzle 9: 1 f4! was played. By fixing another pawn on a light square White further reduced the scope of the bishop, thus rendering any ending very unpleasant for Black. There followed 1...♞e7 2 ♞fe1 ♞fe8 3 ♞xe7 ♞xe7 4 ♟f2 ♟f7 when, rather than the routine 5 ♞e1?, which allows Black to activate his king with 5...♞xe1 6 ♟xe1 d4! 7 ♟e2 ♟e6 8 ♟xd4+ ♟d5, White monitored the d-pawn, maintaining his positional lead after 5 ♞d1 ♞e8 6 ♞d2 h6 7 ♞e2, the point being that 7...♞xe2+ 8 ♟xe2 controls d4.

Points: Five for the simple 1 f4 as this in itself is enough to compound Black's defensive task. Two more for seeing that 1...♞e3 2 ♟f2 d4 3 ♞fd1 wins for White, and three for the patient 5 ♞d1.

Puzzle 10: 1...♞xb2! 2 ♞xb2 ♟xc4 3 ♞c3 ♟e5! is a good example of an effective positional exchange sacrifice. Black has managed to win the traditionally desirable e5-square despite his opponent's endeavours, and the h3-g4 pawn duo presents Black with a target. Unfortunately for White, exchanging knights leaves the bishop all alone, helpless against anything Black conjures up on the dark squares. Consequently the game went 4 ♟h2, when Black began immediate action: 4...h5! 5 ♞fe1 (5 gxh5 gxh5 6 ♟h1 looks risky but might be better) 5...hxg4 6 hxg4 ♞g5! 7 f3 ♟e3! and now White had little choice but to eliminate the new arrival, although after 8 ♞xe3 fxg3 9 ♞e1 ♟d7 10 ♞xe3 ♞b8 11 ♟f1 ♞b4 Black was firmly in the driving seat, (still) with a wonderful knight, the more active pieces and a passed pawn.

Points: Seven for a genuine appreciation of the positional pluses behind the exchange sacrifice, and three more if you then chipped away at the sitting duck on g4.

Puzzle 11: 1 e5! spoils the party for Black's pawns. For example after 1...♟xf3+ 2 ♟xf3 dxe5 3 bxc5 bxc5 4 ♟e3 White has more than enough compensation. In the game 1...bxc5 2 ♟xe5 left Black with a choice of captures. 2...cxd4 3 ♟xc6 ♞b7 is a suggestion of Tal, but then 4 ♟xd4 ♞xb4 5 ♟db5 is excellent for White. Dvoretzky played 2...dxe5, when 3 ♟xc5 ♞b7 4 ♟a4 left White with more space, a good outpost on c5 and a target on c6. However, Tal traded in these advantages after 4...♟e6 5 ♟d6! ♟d7 6 ♟e5 ♟xe5 7 bxc5, receiving for his troubles a more advanced base on d6 and an open b-file to play with. Black, on the other hand, cannot (safely) bring a rook to b8.

Points: The 'sacrifice' in the line with 1...♟xf3+ looks very pleasant for White – take five points for being happy with this. Then there are four points for 5 ♟db5! (after 2...cxd4), three for an appreciation of the c5-square in the game continuation and a further three points for not being satisfied with that and discovering the even better spot on d6.

Puzzle 12: 1 ♟d5! exploits a key feature in the position, namely the pin on the e-file. 1...cxd5 2 ♞xe7 is out of the question, while 1...♟xd5? 2 cxd5 ♟xg5 3 dxc6

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♠xd2 4 cxb7 wins for White. The game went 1...♠xd5 2 cxd5 ♘xd5 (2...♞xd5? 3 ♞xd5 ♘xd5 4 ♞xd5) 3 ♠e4! and Black was subject to another unpleasant pin. The remaining bishop is a liability on e7 (in fact the e7-square itself is a problem), e.g. 3...♠b4? 4 ♞xb4, 3...♞e8 4 ♠xe7 ♞xe7 5 ♠xd5 or 3...♠f6 4 ♠xf6 gxf6 5 ♞h6 f5 6 ♠xd5 exd5 7 ♞e7 etc. Consequently, after 3...♠xg5 4 ♞xg5 (threatening ♞xd5!) 4...♞b6 5 ♠xd5 exd5 6 ♞e7! Black was forced to trade with 6...♞g6+ in view of 6...g6? 7 ♞e5 and 6...♞f6 7 ♞xf6 gxf6 8 ♞xd5 ♞a7 2 ♞d6. Unfortunately for Black 7 ♞xg6 hxg6 8 ♞xd5 ♞a7 9 ♞d6 ♘h7 10 ♞e4 left him in a miserable ending – against Karpov.

Points: Three points for 1...♘xd5 ... 4 cxb7. Then we have a few pins to find – 2...♞xd5? 3 ♞xd5 and 4 ♞xd5 is worth two points, while 3...♠b4? 4 ♞xb4 and 3...♞e8 4 ♠xe7 with 5 ♠xd5 receive one each. Take three points for answering 3...♠f6 with 4 ♠xf6 and 5 ♞h6, and another three for noticing that (3...♠xg5) 4 ♞xg5 threatens 5 ♞xd5. Finally a correct evaluation of the ending after the forced exchange of queens wins you two points.

Puzzle 13: 1...♘h7!! is the magic move. Then 2 ♞c5 ♘g6! 3 h4 ♞h8 4 a3 ♞h5 left White's bishop looking rather silly, locked on to the d6-square with nothing to do. In fact we seem to have lost a whole rank! Now after 5 ♞g1 Black should have continued with the consistent 5...♞f5. Instead 5...♘h7!! allowed 6 ♞a7, forking a5 and f7 (although Hodgson prefers Black after 6...♞f5 7 ♞xa5 ♞f2) but Oll opted for 6 ♞d1 anyway, when 6...♞b3 7 ♞d2 ♞f5 finally brought the ambitious piece into the game. The finale is well worth a look: 8 g4 ♞f4 9 ♞b1+ ♘g8 10 g5 b4! 11 ♞d3 ♘c3! 12 ♠xb4 (threatening, ironically, a back rank mate) 12...♞a2+!! 0-1.



It is fitting that Black's rook is given the honour of delivering mate.

Points: The memorable 1...♘h7 and ...♞h8-h5-f5 manoeuvre is worth the whole fifteen points.

Puzzle 14: The entertaining Greek grandmaster offered his opponent a gift with 1 ♞xe7! but he had every intention of winning the game. Now 1...♞xe7? 2 ♠xf6 gxf6 3 ♘xd5 hits e7, f6 and b6, so Black's recapture is forced – 1...♞xe7 2 ♘xd5. This

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follow-up to the exchange sacrifice on e7 is a standard theme designed to force the disruption of the pawn cover in front of the enemy king. There followed 2...♖d8 (other possibilities to consider are 2...♖e2 3 ♗xf6 gxf6 4 ♖xf6+ and 2...♖e5 3 ♖xf6+ [3 f4 also looks good] 3...gxf6 4 ♗g3, e.g. 4...♖e2 5 ♗xd6 ♖xd1 6 ♗xd1 ♗ad8 7 ♗b4) 3 ♖xf6+ (3 ♗xf6!? is another option but the text guarantees pressure on both f7 and f6 as well as affording White the possibility of pinning the knight with ♗d1) 3...gxf6 4 ♖h5 (attacking f7 and h6 and threatening ♖g6+) 4...♗g7 5 ♗d1!. Notice that White does not yet threaten ♗xd6 because his king has no escape square in the event of ...♗e1+, for example. Nevertheless, the knight – and therefore protection of f7 – is a new factor to worry Black. Best now is 5...♗e5!, when 6 ♖xe5 fxe5 7 ♗xd8 ♗xd8 offers White decent chances of making progress in the ending, while 7 ♖g4+ followed by the ultimately necessary h2-h3 and ♗g3 is awkward for Black. 5...♖e7? 6 h3 leads to a decisive advantage for White, e.g. 6...♖e4 7 ♖g4+ ♖g5 8 ♗d7 ♖e1+ (8...h5 9 ♖f5 ♖e1+ 10 ♗h2 ♖e5+ 11 ♖xe5 ♗xe5 12 f4 ♗b5 13 ♗e4 ♗e5 14 ♗d5) 9 ♗h2 ♗f8 10 f4, or 6...♗ad8 7 ♗d3! ♖e4 (7...♖e1+ 8 ♗h2 ♖e5+ 9 ♗g3+ ♗h7 10 ♗c2+) 8 ♗e3 (threatening ♗xe4) 8...♗d4 (8...♗f8 9 ♖g4+) 9 f3! ♖g3 10 ♗xe7 ♖xh5 11 ♗xe8 ♗xb4 12 ♗e7 ♗b4 13 ♗xf7 ♖f4 14 b3 etc. Instead Black tried 5...♖d7?, covering g4 and intending ...♖f5. However, after 6 g4! ♗e6 (6...♗e5 7 ♗xd6! ♗xh5 [7...♖xd6 8 ♖xf7+ ♗h8 9 ♗xf6+] 8 ♗xf6+) 7 ♗g3 ♗ae8 (7...♗d8 8 ♗f4) White could have wrapped up with 8 ♗xd6! ♗e1+ (8...♗xd6 9 ♗xd6) 9 ♗xe1 ♗xe1+ 10 ♗g2, when f7 remains a major problem.

Points: The 'multi-fork' after 1...♗xe7 2 ♗xf6 and 3 ♖xd5 earns you two points, while 7 ♗b4 at the end of the line with 2...♖e5 is worth five (take two for the alternative 3 f4). In the game 3 ♖xf6+! and 4 ♖h5 (three points) is preferable to 3 ♗xf6 (but you can have three points if this is where you finished), and the subsequent 5 ♗d1 (with a flavour of the variations that follow) collects three. Award yourself two points for if you noticed that after Black's try with 5...♗e5 White can always convert one advantage for another by entering the ending with the superior pieces and pawns (it is nice to have such an option available). 1 ♗a4 ♖b5 2 ♗xf6 also looks good for White but is specific to the position, whereas 1 ♗xe7 is a classic mode of positional attack that is seen time and time again in a variety of forms. Consequently take only five for 1 ♗a4.

Puzzle 15: 1...b5! is, in fact, not an uncommon theme in such positions. In return for the useful d5-square and immediate access to the a8-h1 diagonal Black is prepared to sacrifice a pawn – leaving White with an ineffectual duo on b4 and b5 should he accept the offer. For example 2 cxb5 ♗b7 3 e3 ♖a8! activates the queen in textbook fashion and requires circumspect play from White, as the natural 4 ♗b2 ♗xf3 5 gxf3 ♖xf3 6 ♗g1 0-0 leaves White with insufficient compensation for the divided pawns. Best is 4 ♖c3 ♖d5! 5 ♖b2 ♖xb4 6 ♗e2 ♖c2+ 7 ♗d2 ♖xa1 8 ♗xa1 ♖b8 with an even game. Not surprisingly White preferred to keep his queenside pawns intact, the sequence 2 c5 ♗b7 3 e3 ♖a8 once again putting the question to the rather oddly placed bishop. Then 4 ♗b2 ♗xf3 5 gxf3 ♖xf3 6 ♗g1 0-0 7 ♗xb5 is assessed as unclear by Yermolinsky (although the vastly improved queenside might give White an edge), while 4...♖a4! 5 ♗d3 ♖e4 6 ♗xe4 ♗xe4 7 0-0 ♖a8 8 ♗a1 ♖b7 9 ♖e1 is simply level.

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Unfortunately for White the almost comical 4 ♖b2?? ♕xf3 5 gxf3 ♖xf3 6 ♖g1 0-0 7 ♕xb5 ♖a8! led to further problems, when the lesser evil 8 ♕e2 ♖h3 9 ♖g3 ♖xh2 10 ♕f3 d5 11 ♖b1 (with a clear advantage to Black) was passed over in favour of the losing 8 ♕f1?, the game ending 8...♗e4 9 ♖g2 (9 ♕g2 ♖xa1+) 9...♗df6 10 cxd6 cxd6 11 b5 ♗d5 12 b6 ♗b4! etc.

Points: For 1...b5! as a purely positional idea (long diagonal, the d5-square, perhaps doubling White's pawns etc.) award yourself five points. Daring to part with the bishop in the line with 2 exb5 is worth three points (assuming you are happy with Black's game after 6...0-0), while (4 ♖c3) 4...♗d5(xb4-c2+) is another three. Take the final four points for 4...♖a4! (after 2 c5 ♕b7 3 e3 ♖a8 4 ♕b2), which forces the removal of White's light-squared bishop due to the pressure on the b4-pawn. Nothing for 1...d5?!, which does address the light squares but at the cost of further reducing Black's influence on the dark squares, where White has an uncontested bishop.

Solutions and Points: Test 2

Puzzle 1: 1...♗f4! is crying out to be played. What is a pawn when there is an eager bishop to let loose? In fact White chose not to accept the pawn offer for a while, but even after 2 ♕c2 b5 3 ♖f2 ♗d7 4 ♗ge2 b4 5 ♗a4 a5 6 ♗xf4 exf4 7 ♕xf4 ♗e5 Black enjoyed compensation. Then 8 0-0-0 ♗c4 9 ♕c3 ♗xe3 gave him more than enough thanks to the now (uncontested) fantastic bishop and good overall control of the dark squares.

Points: Five for the general idea of ...♗f4 and the opening of the long diagonal.

Puzzle 2: White took advantage of his opponent's poorly placed queen to bring his knight back into the game with 1 ♗b2!, the point being that 1...♖xa2?? 2 ♗c4 traps the queen. Anticipating ♗c4 with 1...♖b5 does not help Black because 2 ♖h3 ♗f7 3 ♗e4 ♗d7 4 e3! spells trouble anyway in view of 4...dxc3 5 ♖d6!. Black played 1...♗h5 2 ♕e5 0-0, but 3 ♗c4 ♖b4 4 ♖h3 g6 5 ♖xe6+ was final.

Points: Five points for 1 ♗b2 which, quite simply, improves the knight before turning the screw. 1 ♖h3 forces 1...♗f7 and therefore earns two consolation points.

Puzzle 3: 1 ♗d1! practically forces 1...f6 because Black is better with a vulnerable f6-pawn and a humbled bishop on g7 than with no protection for his king. Meanwhile, over on the queenside, the game went 2 b4! ♖a7 3 bxc5 ♖xc5 (3...dxc5 does not help, e.g. 4 ♖c3 ♗d7 5 ♗b3 ♕f8 6 ♕a3) 4 ♖c3 ♖a5 5 ♗e3 ♕d7 6 ♖a1 ♗a4 7 ♖c4 ♖b7 8 ♕c3 ♖b6 9 ♖axa4 etc.

Points: Four points for appreciating that Black is in trouble regardless of his reaction to 1 ♗d1, and a further point for switching to the queenside with b3-b4.

Puzzle 4: By searching for a way to reach the traditionally desirable c7-square White found that after 1 ♕xd6! Black is unable to take on d3 in view of 2 ♕e7. Consequently the forced 1...♖xd6 2 ♕xf5 gxf5 3 ♖c2! hit both the f5-pawn and c7, leaving Black under slight but genuine pressure after 3...e6 4 ♖c7 ♖xc7 5 ♖xc7 ♖ab8 5 ♖fe1!. Of course Black can evict the rook with ...♗a8, but White simply drops back

to c3, when the a5-pawn is susceptible to attack, the e5-square beckons and Black is unable to contest the c-file. In the game White sent his knight from f3-e1-d3-c5, practically forcing ...♙g7-f8xc5, after which the recapture with the d4-pawn left White with a strong passed pawn.

Points: Five for the infiltration plan. Nothing for 1 ♖b3, which defends the bishop and eyes c5, but hands the c4-square over on a plate.

Puzzle 5: 1 ♖xc8+ ♖xc8 2 g3! and White prepares to lodge the bishop on the h3-c8 diagonal.

Points: Again Five. This long distance eviction is worth remembering.

Puzzle 6: 1 ♖xc4! bxc4 2 e3 leads to total domination of the light squares, thanks in no small part to the fact that after 2...♖b6 3 ♙xc4! ♖xb2? 4 ♙a6+ White's knight plays a starring role. In the game White accentuated his grip after 2...♙c5 3 ♙xc4 ♖b7 4 0-0!? ♗c6 5 a4!, when the intended 5...♗g5 does not trouble White in view of 6 ♖f5 ♖xc6 7 ♙b5 ♖e6 8 ♙xd7+ ♖xd7 9 ♖xg5 etc. There followed 5...♗d8 6 ♙b5 ♖d2? (6...♗xc6 7 ♙xc6 ♖xb2 8 ♙xd7+ ♗xd7 9 ♖d5+) 7 ♙c3 ♖d7 8 ♖b1! ♙b6 9 ♖c4 ♗xc6 10 ♙xc6!? ♖a7 11 ♙xd7+ ♗xd7 12 ♖xf7+ ♗e8 13 e6 ♖b7 14 ♙xg7 1-0.

Points: Seven for the general idea of the positional sacrifice. Three more if you delved further to discover that ...♖xb2 allows ♙a6+ (a key factor). It is true that 1 g3 ♙d5? 2 ♗xe7+ loses for Black, but 1...♙g5 sidesteps the check, hits c1 and genuinely threatens ...♙d5.

Puzzle 7: 1...e4! increased Black's space advantage and made the attractive e5-square available to the queen and knight, the latter on its way to d3. White immediately addressed this possibility by seeking to protect d3 from safety: 2 ♙b3 ♖e5 3 ♙c2 ♙d6! 4 g3 and now Black could add the f3-square to his 'must visit' list. The game continued 4...♗c5 5 ♗g2 ♖f5! (this and Black's next are aimed at exerting pressure on d3) 6 ♖d2 ♙e5! 7 ♖ad1 ♖b8! with a good game for Black. In fact his knight took in an impressive journey from e5: ...♗a4-b2-c4-e5-f3-g5 (all these in consecutive moves!) -f3-e5-d3!

Points: 1...e4 with the sole intention of ...♗e5-d3 is an excellent general strategy, earning you five points. However, 2...♖e5 and 3...♙d6, inducing g2-g3, takes the appropriate theme a stage further and is worth a further four points, while 5...♖f5 (indirectly covering d3) and 6...♙e5 deserves another point.

Puzzle 8: Remember to be open to unexpected possibilities – in this case White's route to a good game involves parting with his 'good' bishop: 1 ♙xd5! forces 1...exd5 because 1...♖xd5 loses to 2 ♖c5. After 2 ♖a5! Black does have a choice, albeit an unpleasant one, since 2...♙c6 3 ♗xc6 bxc6 creates a terrible weakness on c6. However, this could be the lesser evil, for Alekhine's 2...a6 3 ♖c7 ♖xc7 4 ♖xc7 left Black under too much pressure from the rook, the threat of 5 ♗g5 followed by 6 ♗gxh7 or 6 ♗e6+ being a priority over the defence of b7.

Points: Five for simultaneously damaging Black's structure and 'improving' White's

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with 1 ♖xd5 (including ♗c5), three more for 2 ♖a5! (guaranteeing a clear lead) and the incidental bonus of ♖g5 (which is there to be found by the eagle-eyed) deserves a further two points. 1 ♗c5 addresses the appropriate squares and pieces and consequently carries four consolation points.

Puzzle 9: With 1...e4! Smirin exploited his opponent's somewhat deserted kingside, denying White proper use of the e4-square while simultaneously creating a brand new outpost of his own on e5. There followed 2 ♖xe4 (2 fxe4 gives Black a bit more breathing space after 2...♖e5 or even 2...♖g4) 2...♖xe4 3 ♗xe4 (3 fxe4 ♗xh4) 3...♗xe4 4 fxe4 ♖e5 5 ♗d5 ♗f1 + 6 ♖e2 and now instead of 6...♖xc4?! 7 ♗d7+ with an eventual draw, Black should have played 6...♖f6!, maintaining his new-found positional superiority. White's extra pawn is going nowhere and there are juicy targets on e4, g2 and h4.

Points: Eight for the general plan, two more if you went as far as 6...♖f6.

Puzzle 10: 1...♗xf4 + 2 gx f4 ♗xf4 3 e5 is not exactly Karpovian, but sacrificing an exchange in order to keep the tremendous bishop in play certainly is: 1...♗xf4! 2 gx f4 ♗xf4 + 3 ♖b1 ♗e5! and Black had succeeded in securing complete control of the pivotal e5-square. After 4 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 5 h3 a5 6 b3 d6! 7 ♗d2 ♗e8 8 ♖e2 ♗g6 White's rooks lacked entry points and his bishop was passive. Karpov then brought his rook into the attack with 9 ♗df2 ♗c8! 10 ♖d1 ♗d4 11 ♗a2 ♗c5 12 ♗g2 (12 b4 ♗g5) 12...♗h5, eventually winning the game just over forty moves later.

Points: Ten for the general plan (including 3...♗e5).

Puzzle 11: After 1 e5! the threat to leave Black with an isolated pawn on d6 saw 1...dxe5 2 b5 ♗e8 (2...♗d7 3 c5 ♖c8 4 ♗c4 is too passive) 3 c5 ♖d7 4 ♖d5! e6 5 ♖c7+ ♖g7 6 c6 bxc6 7 bxc6 ♖b6 8 e7 and Black was in trouble in view of White's ability to support the e-pawn (♗a6 is coming soon). In fact White's lead was soon decisive: 8...♗d7 9 ♗fd1 ♗a4 (9...♗c8 10 ♖xc8 ♖xc8 11 ♗a6 brings with it the threat of 12 ♗b7, and 11...♖b6 12 a4! ♗ae8 13 a5 ♖c8 runs into 14 ♗d8!) 10 ♗d6! ♖f6 11 ♗xb6! ♖xe7 12 ♗b7 ♖f6 (12...♗d7 13 c8 ♗fxc8 14 ♗d1 and 12...♖d6 13 ♗a6 ♗d7 14 ♗d1+ ♖c6 15 ♗xd7! ♖xd7 16 c8 ♗+ ♖xc8 17 ♗xf7+ win for White) 13 ♗cb1! ♗c6 14 ♗b8 ♗c8 15 ♗e1! and Black was about to lose material, e.g. 15...♗d7 16 ♗xa8 ♗xa8 17 ♗b1! etc.

Points: 1 ♖d5 automatically comes to mind but Black does not have to take the knight, e.g. 1...♗ae8, when 2 ♖xb6 axb6 doubles the b-pawns but also doubles Black's defence of the important e5-square. 1 b5 is another natural-looking move. Then 1...♗d7 2 e5 is a similar idea to the game, but here White has already committed his queenside, thus removing his influence over e5 and in turn weakening the e4-pawn, e.g. 2...♗e6 3 exd6 exd6. Razuvaev's 1 e5 is well timed and strong. Our task was to make further progress on the queenside, which means addressing the problem of the guard on d6. Rather than dismissing e4-e5 on the grounds that it loses a pawn we should look for ways to make this otherwise desirable thrust work and, once we have seen that 1...♗d8 2 exd6 ♗xd6 loses to 3 c5 (take three points for this), and once we appreciate that the recapture ...e7xd6 gives White an easy target (two points), then the strategy falls into place. Take a point for being happy with White's

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compensation after 2...♔d7 3 c5 ♖c8. Then there are three points for sending the knight to e7 to support the pawn, two for having ♔a6 ready and four if your quest to take control of c8 led you to removing the b6-knight with a rook.

Puzzle 12: With both bishops aimed at Black's king and two knights within striking range it is hardly surprising that a break in Black's defensive wall could be decisive. Consequently White played the blunt 1 ♖h5!. Now 1...h6 2 ♔xg7! ♖xg7 3 ♖ef5+ wins for White, e.g. 3...exf5 4 ♖xf5+ ♖g8 5 ♖xh6 ♔f6 6 ♖e7+! with mate on h7, or 4...♖f6 5 ♖xh6+ ♖e5 6 ♔ae1+ etc. Therefore 1...g6 is forced, but this clears the a1-h8 diagonal completely, inviting Spielmann's 2 ♖g4! in view of the threat of mate on h6. Unfortunately for Black the dark squares must be surrendered as 2...f6 3 ♔xg6 is final and 2...♖f6 3 ♖e5! ♖g7 4 ♖h5+! gxh5 5 ♖g5+ highlights the results of ...g7-g6.

After 2...♔f6 3 ♖xf6+ ♖xf6 4 ♖h6! (4 ♖e5 ♖d5!) 4...♔c8 5 ♔ad1! ♖e7 6 ♔fe1! every piece played a part in White's positionally inspired attack. The game ended 6...♖e8 7 ♖f5! ♖e5 (7...gxf5 8 ♔xf5 f6 9 ♔xe6+ ♖h8 10 ♔d7) 8 ♔e5 ♔d5 9 ♖e7+! 1-0 (9...♖xc7 10 ♖xh7+! ♖xh7 11 ♔h5+).

Points: Eight for 1 ♖h5 and 2 ♖g4! (the main idea), three points for refuting 1...h6 (2 ♔xg7! etc.) and four for 3 ♖e5 (in conjunction with 4 ♖h5+!) against 2...♖f6.

Puzzle 13: After 1...♖g5! 2 ♔g7 (2 ♔xh5?? ♖e4+) 2...♖e4+ 3 ♖f1 ♖d6! the knight had been transferred from e6 to d6. Note that 3...♖xc3? leaves the way clear for White to double rooks with 4 ♔dd7! ♔xc3 5 ♔xc7+ ♖d8 6 ♔xb7 etc. After the text, however, 4 c5? ♔xc3 5 cxd6 cxd6 6 ♔xd6 ♔xc3 7 ♔dd7 ♔b5 wins for Black. White tried 4 ♔b6 (hoping for 4...♖c4 5 ♔xc7+ ♖b8 6 ♔dd7 ♖xb6 7 ♔xb7+) but 4...♔f7 5 ♔xf7 ♖xf7 6 ♔d4 ♖d6 saw the knight return to hit c4. The game continued 7 c5 ♖c4 8 ♖f2 b5! 9 cxb6 (9 ♔a1 ♔f8! 10 ♖e2 ♖d7 11 ♖d3 ♔f5 12 ♖e4 ♖e6 13 ♔a2 ♔d5 and Black is ready to pick up the target pawn with ...♖a5-b3xc5) 9...cxb6 10 ♔f6 b5 and Black soon won.

Points: Ten points for the transfer to d6 and two for correctly assessing the situation after 3...♖xc3. Delving further and finding 4 ♔b6 nets a further two points, with a final point for the calm 4...♔f7.

Puzzle 14: The f5-square beckons, and White's knight is far away: 1 ♖b1! ♔c8 2 ♖d2 and White already threatens to come to c4. The problem for Black is that 2...♔xd2 eliminates the knight but at the cost of the dark-squared bishop, a factor that might be significant later, should the game open up (with b2-b4 and/or f2-f4, for example). The game went 2...b5 3 ♖f3 c4?! 4 ♖h4 etc. 3...h5 has been suggested so that after 4 ♖h4 g6 there is no hanging h6-pawn. However, with his bishop over on b4 Black might have problems addressing the new weaknesses on the dark squares in front of the king, e.g. 5 f4 exf4 (5...c4 6 ♖f3) 6 ♔xd7 ♔xd7 7 ♔xf4 and Black is in danger of being overrun on the centre files.

Points: Seven points for pinpointing the relevant f5-square and the subsequent knight transfer, as well as the alternative outpost on c4. Four more for an appreciation of the price Black must pay on the dark squares, either by removing the knight (2...♔xd2)

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or in an effort to cover f5. Those of you who took this further, with specific analysis, can award yourselves four more points for dealing with these weaker dark squares created by 3...h5 and 4...g6 by striking in the centre with 5 f4!

Puzzle 15: With 1 ♖xb7!! ♗xb7 2 b4! Kasparov eliminated one promising piece and then severely restricted another. Meanwhile White's second knight is ready to advance to the versatile e3-square, although after 2...♗g5 3 ♖a3! 0-0 4 ♗e4 White had anyway succeeded in securing a bind. Now 4...f5 5 ♗d3 f4 6 ♖g4 accentuates White's domination of the light squares, so Shirov tried queenside activation: 4...a5 5 ♗d3 axb4 6 cxb4 ♖b8 7 h4! (forcing the bishop to choose a diagonal) 7...♗h6 8 ♗cb6 ♖a2 9 0-0 ♗d2 10 ♖f3 ♖a7 and now White should have continued 11 ♗b5! ♗d8 12 ♗d7 ♗e6 13 ♗e7+! ♗h8 14 ♗xf8 ♖xe7 15 ♗xe6 ♖xe6 (15...fxc6? 16 ♖c1! ♖d8 17 ♖c6) 16 ♗c6 (Kasparov), when the d5-square beckons once more.

Points: Five points for finding the exchange sacrifice and a further two for the cruel follow-up 2 b4. Take three for ♗a3-c4 and three more if you found and correctly assessed the position after 4...f5 5 ♗d3 etc. Deserving two points is 7 h4. 1 ♗c3 looks fairly sensible but fails to trouble Black (1...♖b8), so no points.

Solutions and Points: Test 3

Puzzle 1: Botvinnik played 1 e5! fxe5 2 f5!, securing e4 as a wonderful outpost, unleashing the bishop on the long diagonal and giving White a mini pawn majority on the f-, g- and h-files. After 2...♗f7 3 ♗e4 0-0-0 4 ♖g4! the investment was already paying dividends.

Points: 2 f5 is enough for the five points.

Puzzle 2: 1 ♗b6! ♗xb6 2 ♗xe6 fxe6 3 axb6 ♖xb6 4 ♗e4 and Black had a bad bishop to accompany his general weaknesses.

Points: Five for being alert to 1 ♗b6.

Puzzle 3: 1 ♗b5! homes in on d6, which Black cannot afford to relinquish. Consequently a capture on b5 is forced, and 1...♗xb5 2 cxb5 ♗b7 gives White time to play 3 ♗c4. Thus 1...♗xb5 was played, when 2 cxb5 gave White a newly mobile queen-side, the bishop pair, the c4-square and a potential target on e5. In fact White's supremacy on the light squares was soon demonstrated: 2...♗d5 3 ♖c4 ♖c7 4 ♖xd5! exd5 5 ♖xd5+ ♗h8 6 ♗f4! ♖ad8 (6...♖ac8 7 e6 ♗f6 8 ♖xf5 ♖xa5 9 ♗e5 is a lesser evil for Black according to Nesis) 7 e6 ♗b8 8 ♗xc7 ♖xd5 9 ♗c4 ♖dd8 10 ♗xd8 and White won.

Points: 1 ♗b5 guarantees White an excellent game. Five points.

Puzzle 4: 1...♗d2! 2 ♖d1 ♗e4 transfers the knight from one great outpost to another, forcing White to surrender his only decent piece in order to avoid the loss of material (3 ♖b3 ♗xa4). After 3 ♗xe4 dxe4 4 ♖b1 (forced) Black's remaining knight has access to both d5 and d3. In fact Leko turned to the other flank, attacking White's newly weakened kingside with 4...g5!

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Points: Five for the dancing knight(s). Otherwise 1...h5 2 ♖e5 ♖xe5 is good (e.g. 3 fxe5 ♜d7 or 3 dxe5 g5), so this nets two points.

Puzzle 5: 1...♙h6! is the key move, first chasing the rook away before dropping back: 2 ♖b1 ♙f8! 3 ♜bc1 ♜d5 and Black won a pawn.

Points: Five for the nifty two-step.

Puzzle 6: 1...h6! prepares to target the dark squares and proved successful after 2 0-0 ♙g5 3 ♜fd1 ♙xe3 4 ♜xc3 ♜g5! 5 ♜xg5 hxg5 6 ♜d2 ♜fd8! 7 ♙f1 ♜f8 8 ♜ad1 ♜e7. Requiring investigation is the natural 2 ♖d5. Then 2...♙xd5 3 exd5 ♖e7 4 ♙e4 (4 ♙e2 ♖f5) sees Black play 4...♙g5 nevertheless, the point being that 5 ♙xg5 hxg5 6 ♜xg5 f5 7 ♙f3 e4 8 ♙e2 ♖xd5 leaves Black with a good knight and more space.

Points: Five points for finding what is, in fact, a fairly standard idea in such positions (even the trade of queens on g5 adds a little to Black's centre by monitoring f4). Take another two if your strategy involved supporting the d6-pawn with ...♜fd8 followed by ...♜f8-e7, and three more for the line above with 2 ♖d5 ♙xd5 3 exd5 ♖e7 etc.

Puzzle 7: Most players – myself included – look straight to the g-file, which offers Black an avenue upon which his major pieces can try for an attack against the king. However, is this a realistic prospect? In the cold light of day... it appears not – even shoring up the defensive barrier with g2-g3 will slow Black down. Yet if we look at the situation while wearing our now fashionable positional hats we see that the c-file is much more promising for Black. This was Moskalenko's conclusion, the talented GM simply nudging his king to one side to make way for his rooks: 1...♜b8! 2 ♖d4 ♜g7 3 ♜fd1 ♜c8 4 ♜ac1 ♜c7 with ...♜bc8 to follow. The earlier advance of White's b-pawn both abandoned the now backward c3-pawn and, combined with the removal of the dark-squared bishop, served to relinquish considerable control of the dark squares (on both flanks). As well as the c3-pawn both c5 and e4 are a worry for White.

Points: Ten. Remember not to be fooled into 'caveman' mode just because the kings reside on opposite wings.

Puzzle 8: Black would like to contest the centre with 1...c5 but this allows 2 exb5. Consequently Anand played 1...bxc4! 2 bxc4 c5! which, perhaps surprisingly, already required a certain degree of care from White. Best is 3 exd5 cxd4 4 exd4 ♙xc3 (4...♖xd5 5 ♖xd5 ♙xd2+ 6 ♜xd2 ♜xd5?? 7 ♙f3) 5 ♙xc3 ♖xd5, when the bishops can be quite easily tamed by the knights thanks to the isolated d-pawn and Black's traditional strongpoint on d5. However, White's 3 dxc5? let Black in: 3...d4! 4 exd4 ♜xd4 5 ♜c2 (5 ♜c1 ♜d8 prevents White from castling, whereas Oll's choice prepares ♜d1 in the event of ...♜d8) 5...♖c6 6 0-0 ♜e5! and the newly available d4-square proved a problem for White.

Points: The 'equalising' plan of removing the problem pawn and challenging for d4 before White has castled is worth three points. Take two for correct evaluation of the two knights versus two bishops scenario, another two for being ready to keep

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White's king tied to the defence of the bishop with ...♖d8 (after 5 ♖e1) and three more for the finishing touch – freeing the d4-square for the knight.

Puzzle 9: It appears that White has a 'bad' bishop, but after 1 ♖e4! Black's useful knight must acquiesce to an exchange (or allow f5-f6), when White's bishop finds its way to a fantastic outpost on d5. The game continued 1...♖d8 2 ♖xf6+ ♖xf6 3 ♗e4! ♚b8 4 ♗ad1 b6 5 h3 ♗a6 6 ♗d5 with an aggressive set-up for White that was not diminished after 6...b5 7 exb5 ♚xb5 8 c4 etc.

Points: Ten points only for the bishop transfer to d5.

Puzzle 10: Thanks to the pin on the d-file Black could attack the d-pawn with 1...e5!, forcing 2 d5 (in view of 2 ♗ad1 ♖c4). Then after 2...♖c4 3 ♚e2 ♖d6 4 ♚b1 ♚c4 5 g3 ♚dc8 6 ♗g2 ♚c1+ 7 ♗xc1 ♗xc1+ 8 ♚e1 ♗xe1+ 9 ♗xe1 Black's domination of the only open file facilitated a transition to an ending that is difficult for White, the further moves 9...f5! 10 f3 fxe4 11 fxe4 b5 12 ♖d2 a5 effectively mobilising the queenside.

Points: Eight for planting the knight firmly on the useful d6-square, but only if you noticed that 2 ♗ad1 fails to 2...♖c4. The thematic trade of all the rooks nets two more points.

Puzzle 11: 1 ♖d2 brings the cavalry into the struggle for e4 but allows Black to drop his bishop back to g6 to contest the b1-h7 diagonal, e.g. 1...♗h5! 2 e4 ♗g6, when White's expansion has less momentum than is the case after Taimanov's selection: 1 ♖h4. This concentrates on the light squares by dealing with Black's bishop rather than e4. After 1...♗h5 2 f3 White can consider switching to a different kind of kingside expansion involving g2-g4, while the f5-square might be an option for the knight. Black stuck to the standard plan of 2...♗g6 3 ♖xg6 hxg6, perhaps with a tactic in mind should White advance immediately. However, this is exactly what White did... 4 e4! dxe4 (Black cannot allow e4-e5 followed by f3-f4-f5 etc.) 5 fxe4 and now the tempting 5...♖xe4? 6 ♗xe4 f5? fails to 7 ♗xe6! ♚xe1 8 ♗xe1, while 6...♖xd4 backfires thanks to 7 ♖e3! ♖c2 8 ♖f3, e.g. 8...♗xe4 9 ♖xe4 ♖xa1 10 ♗g5! f6 11 ♗f4, when 11...♖b3 12 ♖xc4 is check! Unfortunately for Botvinnik 5...♖d7 6 ♗g5 ♖h7 7 ♗c3 simply left White with the bishop pair, strong centre pawns and the f-file.

Points: Five only for beginning with 1 ♖d2. Eight for the more flexible and aggressive 1 ♖h4, with two more points for contemplating a well timed g2-g4. Take five points if you noticed that it is not necessary to bring a rook to e1 because White's queen is quite safe against tactics. It is interesting that Black almost runs out of pieces through trying 5...♖xe4 6 ♗xe4 f5.

Puzzle 12: The presence of the queen on c7 has led to White being forced to recapture on d4 (after ...c5xd4) with his c3-pawn because f4 needs defending. This leaves the b4-square free for an invading knight: 1...♖b4! and now we come to a bizarre line. After 2 ♗b5+ Black is guaranteed an advantage by blocking the check with bishop or knight, but 2...♗e7 is very tricky indeed, the point being that 3 0-0 ♖c2 forks the rook and the e3-pawn. Play might continue 3 ♗a4 b5 4 ♗b3 ♖d3+ 5 ♗e2

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♠g4!, when 6 ♖c2 looks level and 6 ♚f1 ♖xf4!?! 7 exf4 (7 ♖xd3 ♖xc3+ 8 ♖c2 ♠f2 9 ♚xf2 ♖xf2) 7...♠xf4+ 8 ♖e1 ♠xg2+ 9 ♖e2 ♠f4+ 10 ♖e1 ♠d3+ 11 ♖e2 ♠f4+ leads to a remarkable draw. Instead the game went 2 ♚b1 ♠d7 3 a3 ♚c8!, hitting both c1 and c2. Then 4 axb4 ♖xc1 5 ♚xa7 ♖xb2 5 0-0 ♖xb4 simply leaves White a pawn down, so 4...♠b5! 5 ♚e1 ♠c2 6 ♠xc2 ♖xc2 7 ♖xc2 ♚xc2 gave Black a rook in the heart of enemy territory, the bishop pair, light squares and the superior pawn structure.

Points: Ten for the main line, of which 3...♚c8! is the key move. One for fine-tuning with 4...♠b5 and four just for contemplating Black's unnecessary yet uncompromising 2...♖e7 in reply to the check – an odd idea, perhaps, but it does illustrate the implications of positionally suspect pawn centres.

Puzzle 13: 1...♠g4 2 ♠d2 h5 3 h3 h4 4 hxg4 hxg3 5 g5! is given by Gallagher, but Beaumont found 1...♠f4!!, which was a new move at the time of the game.

Unleashing the queen puts White in trouble, as can be seen from the following variations: 2 ♠f2? ♠xf2 3 ♖xf2 ♖f6! 4 ♖e3 ♠h6 5 ♚f1 runs into 5...♖h4, while 2 ♠d2? ♖h4 3 fxe5 ♠xe5 is decisive. After 2 ♖d2 ♠xc3 3 ♖xc3 ♠g4 4 ♠xg4 ♠xg4 Black has the bishop pair and White is still unable to castle in view of the pin created by ...♠d4, and the attempt to trouble Black's bishop with 5 f5 ♖h4! 6 h3 leads to problems on the e-file following 6...♠xf5 7 exf5 ♚ae8 8 ♠ce4 gxf5! etc.

Levitt played 2 ♠g1, when 2...♖h4 highlighted White's development problems and exerted considerable pressure on the dark squares. Now 3 ♖d2 ♠h6 4 0-0-0 f5 and 3 ♖c2 f5! 4 0-0-0 ♠h6 clearly favour Black, although 3 fxe5 ♠xe5 proved equally unpleasant. For example 4 ♖d3 c4 5 ♖f3 f5 6 0-0-0 fxe4 7 ♖xe4 ♠xg3? 8 hxg3 ♖xh1 9 ♠xg4 backfires for Black, but 7...♖g5+! 8 ♖b1 ♠xg3 brings with it the threat of ...♠f5. Meanwhile 4 ♠f2 ♠xf2 5 ♖xf2 f5 places White's king in another firing line, e.g. 6 exf5 ♠xf5 7 ♠f3 g5 8 ♖e2 ♖c4+ 9 ♖d2 ♖d3+ 10 ♖e1 ♠xc3+ 11 bxc3 ♖xc3+ 12 ♖f2 g4. The game went 4 ♠xg4 ♠xg3+! (4...♠xg4? 5 ♖d3 c4 6 ♖e3 f5 7 ♠f2! f4 invites an unlikely defence: 8 ♠ge2! ♖xh2 9 ♖h3!) 5 hxg3 ♖xh1 6 ♖f1 (6 ♠xd7 ♖xg1+ 7 ♖d2 ♖xg2+ 8 ♖e2 ♖xg3 gives Black too many pawns) 6...f5! (6...♠xg4? 7 ♖xg4 f5 8 ♖h3! fxe4+ 9 ♖e2) 7 ♠f3 and now Black missed the opportunity to push home his advantage with 7...♚ae8!, e.g. 8 ♖e2 fxe4 9 ♠xe4 ♠h3! 10 ♠f6+ (10 ♚a3 ♚xe4) 10...♚xf6 11 ♖xe8+ ♚f8 12 ♖xf8+ (12 ♖e2 ♠xg2+ 13 ♖xg2 ♚xf3+) 12...♖xf8 13 g4 h5!, or 8 ♖c2 fxe4 9 ♠xe4 ♚xf3+! 10 gxf3 ♖xf3+ 11 ♠f2 ♠h3 mate.

Points: Eleven for the main ideas behind Beaumont's theoretical novelty, including how to deal with White's alternatives to 2 ♠g1 and a general appreciation of the difficulties White experiences in the game after 3...♠xe5. Take an additional four for the uncompromising ...f7-f5 in subsequent lines.

Puzzle 14: Development in this case refers mainly to Black, whose game can be made quite uncomfortable by 1 d6!. This advance opens the h1–a8 diagonal and severely restricts Black's development. Obviously Black must do something about the intruder. Ironically Timman suggests that Black's best line is now 1...♚e6, intending to meet 2 b4 ♠b6 3 d3 ♚xd6 4 ♠f4 ♚e6 5 ♠d5 not with 5...♚e8 (5...♚e7/f6 6 ♠g5),

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when 6 ♖f3 is strong, but with 5...d6!, simply inviting White to part with his enormous bishop. Of course Black's compensation for the exchange is insufficient, but this looks more tenable than the game continuation. There followed 1...♖f6 2 d3 ♖xd6 3 ♗f4 and Black's troubles are far from over. His queen, rook and bishop have lost contact with each other, while there is also the matter of the dormant rook and bishop that have yet to see any action at all. Now 3...♖f6 4 ♖a4 ♗b6 ♗fe1 looks awkward for Black, so he tries another square: 3...♖a6 4 b4! (not walking into Black's little 'trap', which would follow the stereotyped 4 ♖a4?, when Black has 4...b5! 5 ♖xd4 ♗b7 with good chances of equality) 4...♗d8 (the b6-square would not be appropriate in view of 5 ♗d5, threatening 6 ♗c4) 5 ♗e1 ♗f8 (5...♗e6 6 ♗d5 d6 7 ♖b3! is excellent for White, while 5...♗xe1 + 6 ♖xe1 ♖e6 fails to blockade the e-file because White has 7 ♗d5!, when 7...♖e7 loses to 8 ♗d6, the point being that 8...♖xd6 9 ♖e8+ ♖f8 10 ♗xf7+ leads to mate) 6 ♖h5 d6 7 ♗d5.



For the price of a doubled pawn White has a commanding position, the pawn having been replaced by an all-seeing bishop. Meanwhile Black's pieces have been forced into awkward passivity. A possible finish is 7...g6 8 ♗xf7+! ♗xf7 9 ♗e8+ ♗f8 10 ♖d5+ ♗g7 11 ♗xf8 ♗xf8 12 ♗h6+. Instead the game went 7...♗d7 8 a4 ♗c8 9 ♗e4 g6 10 ♖f3 ♗c7 11 b5 ♖b6 12 ♗h6 a6 (12...♗e8 13 ♗d5 ♗e6 14 ♗xe6 fxe6 15 ♗xe6!) 13 ♗d5 ♗f5 14 g4 ♗c8 15 ♗e2 axb5 and Black resigned without waiting for a second rook to come to the e-file.

Points: Six for the general idea of meddling with Black's development while accelerating your own, and four more if you noticed that Black's rook is in trouble after taking time to collect the d6-pawn. Take three points if you would need a lot of persuasion to give up your bishop once it arrives on d5, and a final two for an appreciation of the importance of the e-file. No points for 1 b4?!, which helps the bishop find a decent home after 1...♗c7! 2 ♗b2 ♗e5 etc.

Puzzle 15: White played the blunt but effective 1 ♗a6!. In fact this is the beginning of an idea that forces Black away from the important e-file and, subsequently, causes him to lose valuable time if he is to return. Now 1...♗e7? runs into 2 ♗f4 ♗c6 3 ♗b7 ♗c4 4 b3, when Black will have insufficient compensation for the lost material,

Solutions and Points

while in the game after 1...♞c6 2 ♜b5 Black had no choice but to relinquish the c-file as 2...♞c8?! 3 ♜xd7! ♞xd7 4 ♜xf6 gxf6 5 ♖g3 seriously damages the defensive cover. Therefore 2...♞c7 3 ♜f4 ♞c8 4 ♜a6 ♞a8 finally sent the rook back home, allowing White to assume control with 5 ♞c1. Of course Black can then pave the way for his rook to return to c8, but this takes more time to engineer than the original eviction. In fact this is what happened in the game: 5...♖b8 6 ♜d3 ♜b7 7 ♜g5 ♖bd7 8 0-0 h6 9 ♜h4 ♞c8, and now 10 ♖c3 a6 11 ♞e2! b5 12 ♖e4 clamped down on the c5-square, ensuring White a definite lead.

Points: Ten for the successful harassment of Black's rook and five more for both working out how Black brings it back to c8 and, subsequently, that White emerges the better out of the deal.

Solutions and Points: Test 4

Puzzle 1: Unfortunately for Black 1 ♜b5! pins the knight and in so doing leads to serious structural damage, e.g. 1...♞ed8 2 ♜xc6 bxc6 3 ♖f1 and the shattered pawns will prove decisive in the ending.

Points: Five for the pin and the subsequent capture on c6.

Puzzle 2: After 1 ♞d3! ♞cd6 2 ♞fd1 ♞d7 3 ♞ld2! ♞b5 4 ♞d1 White had the ideal set-up. Then 4...b6 5 g3! ♜f8 6 ♜g2 ♜e7 7 ♞h5 a6 8 h3 ♞c6 9 ♖h2 a5 10 f4 f6 11 ♞d1 ♞b5 12 g4 saw White gradually creeping forward. In fact Black cracked under pressure: 12...g5?! 13 ♖h1 ♞c6 14 f5 ♜f7 15 e4 etc.

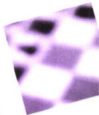
Points: Lining up all three major pieces (in the correct order) on the d-file earns you three points, with a further two for judging that the next phase involves the advance of White's kingside pawns – not a risky venture when the opponent is busy defending an IQP.

Puzzle 3: After 1...♞c7! White had to play 2 e5 in view of 2 g3 f5 or – even worse – 2 f5?? ♜g3. The problem for White is that now the g2-pawn is attacked. The game continued 2...♜c5 3 h5 (3 ♜xc5 ♞xc5 4 ♞xc5 ♞xc5 and both f4 and g2 are en prise, while 5 0-0 abandons the h4-pawn) 3...♜xe3 4 ♞xe3 ♖e7 5 ♖e4 ♖f5! 6 ♞d2 (6 ♜xf5 exf5 and 6...♞xc4 are both good for Black) 6...♜d5 7 ♖e3 ♖xe3 8 ♞xe3 ♞c5! , and now 9 ♞xc5 ♞xc5 is very good for Black, who has the c-file and the plan of breaking with ...f7-f6. In the game 9 ♞g3 h6 10 ♞h4 would also have been favourable for Black after 10...♖h8 (intending to defend with ...♞g8 if necessary) followed by ...d7-d6 or ...♞d4.

Points: Don't worry – the important work for the five points is the initial 1...♞c7! (as long as you followed up with ...♜c5 etc.).

Puzzle 4: 1 ♞ab1! doubles the protection of the b2-pawn, unpins the knight – thus paving the way for ♖c5 – and prepares to bolster the hold on c5 with b2-b4.

Points: Five for this simple but effective multi-purpose move. Note that only by appreciating the significance of the c5-square would White be looking to free his knight.



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Published in the UK by Everyman Publishers plc
Distributed in the US by the Globe Pequot Press

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ISBN 1-85744-264-4



9 781857 442649

£14.99

\$19.95