

28. Qe4 e5
 29. Qxf5 Rxf5
 30. Re4 Kf6
 (1/2-1/2, 50)

Section 2.2: Piece Pressure as Compensation for Weak Pawns

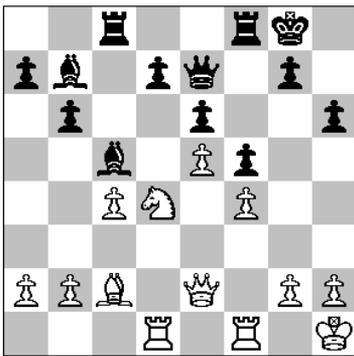


Diagram 40. Geller–Boleslavsky (Zurich, 1953), White to move

The following are the noteworthy positional features of Diagram 40:

- Black has the two bishops.
- Black's light square bishop has an excellent diagonal, bearing down on g2.
- Black has a backward d-pawn.
- White has a space advantage in the center.
- The e- and f-pawns of each side form a locked pawn chain.

These features form the basis for the following assessment. Black's backward d-pawn is a target, requiring protection by his pieces, and also impairing the transfer of his pieces between queenside and kingside. In contrast, White's central space advantage makes it relatively easy for his pieces to move about, and in particular, to organize an attack on the d-pawn.

Black's two bishops appear to be well placed, but they can't accomplish anything constructive without the support of Black's major pieces. One way to get them into play would be to attack White's base of the pawn chain, the f-pawn, by ...g5. This would encompass several points: to weaken White's e-pawn by eliminating his f-pawn, and to exert pressure against g2 by exchanging on f4 and placing his major pieces in the g-file.

Notice that the creation of a half-open file for White would pose no problem to Black's f-pawn, since it is firmly protected by his e-pawn. This demonstrates one advantage of attacking a pawn chain where your pawn is furthest advanced.

19.Nb5 a6

It was essential for Black to preserve both bishops. Worthy of consideration is the mysterious looking 19...Ra8, which also helps inhibit White's expansion on the queenside.

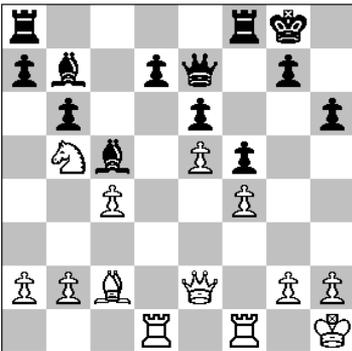


Diagram 41. Geller–
Boleslavsky, after 19...Ra8
(analysis)

A sample line: 20.Qd2 Bc6

(20...Rfd8 21.Nd6 Bc6 22.b4 forces 22...Bxd6, after which the weakness of the d-pawn would become serious)

21.a3 a5 22.Nd4

(22.Nd6 a4! inhibits b4, demonstrating the usefulness of

the rook on a8)

22...Bb7 23.Nb3 Bc6 24.Nxc5 bxc5 with good play for Black, as White's b-pawn is as weak as Black's d-pawn. Black's c-pawn, while hard to defend, is also hard to attack. If White plays more deliberately, for example, 21.Nd6 a5 22.b3

(intending 23.Qc1, 24.a3, 25.Qb2, and 26.b4),

then 22...Qh4, with the threat of advancing the g-pawn, gives Black good counterplay.

It might seem illogical to remove the rook from c8, where it appears to be well posted. However, since Black is unable to increase the pressure against White's c-pawn, the rook really doesn't accomplish anything from c8, and is merely subject to attack.

Finally, note that White was not threatening to win material by 20.Nxa7, since 20...Ra8 and 21...Rxa2 would regain the pawn. However, the isolation of Black's b-pawn might benefit White. If not, White could make real the threat to the a-pawn by playing 20.a3, after which Black would wish that his rook were on a8.

20.Nd6	Bxd6
21.Rxd6	Rc6
22.Rfd1	

White should not allow the exchange of rooks, as this reduces his ability to exert pressure on d7, as pointed out by Bronstein in the tournament book. 22.Rd4 seems logical, preparing to pile up on the d-pawn, and intending 22...Rfc8 23.Ba4 R6c7 24.Rfd1 Bc6 25.Bxc6 dxc6 26.Rd6 with a dominating position, or 22...d6 23.Rfd1 Rd8

(23...dxe? 24.Rd7)

24.Ba4 winning a pawn.

22....	Rxd6
23.Rxd6	Bc6

24.b4

This threatens 25.b5 followed by the capture of the pawn at b6, but permits a vicious counterattack. More prudent would have been 24.Kg1, to enable 25.g3 in response to 24...Qh4.

24....**Qh4****25.Rd4**

25.b5? loses a pawn by 25...axb 26.cxb Bxb5!, since 27.Qxb5? Qe1+ leads to mate (Bronstein). 25.Qe3 g5 26.fxg f4! followed by 27...f3! (even after 27.Qd4) rips open White's kingside.

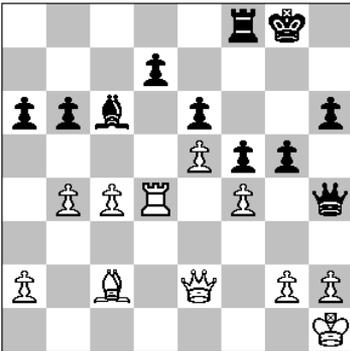
25....**g5**

Diagram 42. Geller–
Boleslavsky, White to move

Giving up the f-pawn is suicidal. After 26.Qe3, White has chances to hold. A sample line: 26.Qe3 gxf 27.Rxf4 Qg5 28.Qd2 (28.Qf2 Kh8 [threatening 29...Bxg2+, since White's queen would be "overloaded"] 29.Rd4 Rg8 30.Rd2 f4 wins, as both 31...f3 32.g3 Qxd2! and 31...Qxe5 are threatened)
28...Kh8 29.Rf2 f4 30.Qe2
(30.Qd3 Rf7 31.Qg6 Qxe5!)
30...Rg8

(threatening 31...f3!)

31.Be4! neutralizes the pressure, as 31...Qxe5 32.Bxc6 Qxe2
33.Rxe2 dxc6 34.Rxe6 is fine for White.

More dangerous for White (after 26.Qe3) is 26...Kh8, for
example, 26...Kh8 27.Kg1

(27.fxg f4 28.Qd2 f3!! 29.gxf Qh3! is curtains)

27...Rg8 28.g3 Qh3 29.Qf2 gxf 30.Rxf4 Rg4! 31.Rxg4 Qxg4
32.Qxb6 Qg5! (threatening to penetrate while preventing
33.Qd8+) puts White on the critical list.

Note how Black's attack is strengthened by deferring the
exchange on f4 until his pieces are poised to exploit the resulting
opening of the g-file. This illustrates the value of retaining
"favorable tension" in order to build up.

White can defend better, however, by 26.Qd2, which saves a
tempo in many lines. After 26.Qd2 Kh8 27.Kg1 gxf

(27...Rg8 28.fxg Qxg5

[28...f4 is met most effectively by 29.g6!]

29.Qxg5 Rxg5 30.g3 dissipates Black's initiative)

28.Rxf4 Qg5 29.g3, White has consolidated.

26....	gxf
27.Qf2	Qe7!

Beginning a maneuver that leaves Black a pawn ahead.

28.a3	Qg7
29.Rxf4	Qxe5
(0-1, 44)	

The reader may be struck by how rapidly White's position
deteriorated as a result of inaccurate play. Instrumental to
White's downfall was Black's light square bishop, which was
much more useful for attack than White's was for defense. Since
it was difficult for White to arrange the exchange of bishops,

Black's potential for counterattack was difficult to eliminate. However, White at least could have suppressed this counterattack by sustained pressure against the weak d-pawn.

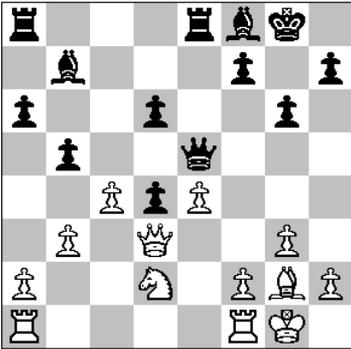


Diagram 43. Kotov–Petrosian
(Zurich, 1953), White to move

In Diagram 43, Black's pawn on d4 is both isolated and passed, but neither of these characteristics can be readily exploited. The vulnerability of the pawn is offset by Black's pressure on White's e-pawn, which inhibits the move 22.Nf3. On the other hand, it may be a long time before Black can exploit his d4-pawn's passed status, since White presently has more than enough pieces to keep it from advancing.

Nonetheless, the d4-pawn is useful to Black in shielding his pawn at d6 from attack.

Note the tension between Black's b-pawn and White's c-pawn. If White leaves it alone, Black might pressure the c-pawn, but if White exchanges on b5, his c3-square might be prone to occupation by Black. If Black recaptures on b5 with his a-pawn, White would have a backward a-pawn in addition.

Black also has the two bishops, which he will try to exploit by opening the position.

22.Rfe1