



Chess Interschool National Finals

Aganalian - Petrosian, Tiflis 1945

This game is a fine example of how, by allowing White to commit his pawns to form a centre before choosing which of his own central pawns to move, Black can sometimes create pawn structures that give him a lasting advantage in the scope and activity of the major and minor pieces. Former World Champion Tigran Petrosian was a master of positional chess, and this game should inspire us all to love playing for an active advantage with the Black pieces!

1	d4	Nf6	
2	c4	d6	
3	Nc3	e5	
4	dxe5	dxe5	
5	Qxd8	Kxd8	
6	Bg5	c6	
7	Nf3	Nbd7	
8	O-O-O	Kc7	It may seem strange for Black to allow the early exchange of queens, depriving him of the right to castle. The Black king, however, is hard to attack on c7 with the queens off the board, and will also be well centralised ready for any endgame.
9	a3	Ng4!	A nice move, taking advantage of the unprotected pawn on f2, and planning to put pressure on White's dark squared bishop
10	Bh4	f6	
11	h3	Nh6	
12	g4	Nf7	
13	Bg3	a5!	a5 is a fundamental move in this opening, preventing b4 in order that Black can establish a knight on c5. Note that Black is in no real hurry to finish developing his pieces, because the White pieces are awkwardly placed. The White pawn on c4 can work very well with a pawn on d4 or d5, but the exchange of the d pawn on move 4 has caused the pawn to be poorly placed on c4. It blocks the scope of the light-squared White bishop, and may also become a target for capture later in the game.
14	Nd4	Nc5	
15	e3	Nd6	Breaking the pin on the e-pawn, but more importantly ensuring that Black can establish a knight on e4
16	Nc2	Nde4	
17	Nxe4	Nxe4	The threat to the f2 pawn means that Black will be able to exchange his knight for the g3 bishop, in the expectation that, as is usually the case, 2 bishops will be more effective together than a bishop and a knight.



It is interesting that after 17 moves, Black hasn't yet seen a need to develop his bishops or his rooks. This is an unusual sort of position in which it is the pawn structures that give Black the advantage. White is very short of active squares for his pieces and has little by way of attacking prospects. Black can afford to take his time, playing moves that force new weaknesses in White's pawn positions.

18	Bh4?		It is understandable that White wants to keep his bishop, but this is a poor move, wasting a tempo and not achieving anything. It would be better to play Rg1, in order to recapture on g3 with the rook instead of the pawn.
18		g5	
19	Bg3	h5!	There is no hurry to take the bishop, because it can't abandon the f-pawn. Black smartly opens up the h-file for his rooks.
20	gxh5	Nxg3	
21	fxg3	Rxh5	
22	Bg2	Be6	Black finally turns to the development of his bishops, and, by attacking the weak pawn on c4, he forces White to undevelop his own bishop once more.
23	Bf1	a4	
24	Rd2	Bc5	
25	Rf2	f5	
26	Rg1	Rah8	
27	Kd2	f4	
28	g4		



Black has a big advantage, with all of his pieces on strong, active squares. The White pieces, by contrast, have very little scope to move. The bishop and rooks are hemmed in, and the knight is tied down to the defence of the e3 pawn. Black can still afford to take his time, but instead now finds a winning sacrifice.

28		Rxh3!	
29	Bxh3	Rxh3	In return for the sacrifice of the exchange, Black will capture not only the h-pawn, but also the weak pawns on e3 and c4.
30	Kd3	Bxe3	
31	Nxe3	Rxe3+	
32	Kd2	Bxc4	
33	Re1	Rxe1	
34	Kxe1	e4	The power of the passed pawns now gives Black a decisive advantage.
35	Rh2	e3	The key to playing endings with a bishop and passed pawns is to place the pawns on the squares of opposite colour to that of the bishop. In this case this gives the White king and rook no freedom to defend.
36	Rh3	Be6	
37	Rh5	f3	
38	Rh2	f2+	
39	Resigns		A beautiful, clear-cut game by Petrosian