

Bughouse Chess

Tandem-Chess / Team-Chess / Siamese-Chess / Hungarian Chess



**Georg
v. Zimmermann (Ed.)**

Monday, 21 August 2006

On the following pages we present to you extracts from *the* Bughouse Book. Some of them are rather extensive. The reason is that besides from trying to create interest in the book we also wanted to give something back to those in the Bughouse community who can not easily (or not as fast as others) get their hands on a paper copy.

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www.bughouse-book.com

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Preface

Bughouse Chess is probably the only four player board team game where you have complete information about the game situation at all times and which has no random factor. In fact, you might say that it is even fairer than chess. In chess whoever gets white has an advantage. In bughouse, one player on each team has white, the other black.

Why should you play this game? For the same reason you play chess: because it is fun, and not in the least for the team factor it adds – finally there is someone else to blame for your losses! Just give it a try and you will see.

If you know how to play chess, you do not have to learn much to play bughouse. The rule differences to chess can be understood in a few minutes. Their simplicity shows the beauty of the game.

Many chess fanatics like to say that chess is a teacher in life. As a bughouse fanatic, I think you can say the same about bughouse. For example, in bughouse, as in life, time is of vital importance. While in chess you only have to watch not getting flagged, the dynamics of bughouse chess force you to move as fast as your opponents. This makes the game a nice metaphor for life in the Computer Age, where those who cannot keep pace invariably fall behind (and if this depresses any older readers, you have my humblest apologies).

In addition, bughouse teaches lessons in human relations. You learn the importance of teamwork in winning. You also learn diplomacy – how to forgive a partner who just got mated when you were winning, resisting your baser instinct to hit him over the head with your board – well, at least not too hard.

As some smart guy said: "Imagine there was a war but everyone was playing bughouse chess" – or something like that.

This book is for all levels of players: chess players who want to learn bughouse, players who have played enough to have some feel for the basics but want to get better, and experts who have played thousands of games. Most readers will probably just want to leaf through the pages. But if you are a beginner, you should probably start with the rules article [page 13] and the beginners strategy article

[page 17]. You could then continue with Maarten's article on Attack and Defense [page 26] and the advanced strategy articles [page 28]. If you want to learn about openings, YScorpion's article is excellent to get started [not in this preview]. Eventually – and after many hours of playing – you will be able to tackle even the toughest puzzles and understand all the comments in the annotated games.

Looking at the list of contributors (right after this introduction) you might realize this is as if Anand, Leko, Kramnik and others have contributed to *one* chess book. What you hold in hand is a joint effort of many top bughouse players.

I very much hope you will have as much fun reading this book as we had writing it. One of my goals with this book was to learn how publishing, organizing sales, cooperation over the Internet and coordinating contributors works. If this book teaches you half as much about bughouse as I had to learn about those things, you will certainly become a bughouse player to be reckoned with!

See this book as homage to a great game and to the great time we had with it.

Send comments and corrections to

Georg v. Zimmermann

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The ~~crossed-out~~ articles are not included in this online preview, only in the book.

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Contributors

I would like to thank all the authors for their contributions and use this opportunity to introduce them to the reader. Most have helped a lot more than you might guess from looking at the Contents section. Therefore I give some details here but do not forget that in the end I, the editor, remain solely responsible for any omissions and mistakes.

■ Igor Bjelobrk

I've played bughouse online for the past 6 years, for fun. I like bughouse because its fast-paced and multi-dimensional. The team aspect of the game also makes it more enjoyable and I made many friends through playing the game.

Igor has for example won the Bughouse Nation's cup for Australia, played on Fics in year 2002, beating the very strong Swedish team of Aronsson/Olson.

I also play a lot of tournament chess and my current fide rating is 2370. I hope to become an international master within the next few years. I also go to university and study electrical engineering.

Igor contributed the "1.e4 Nf6 Opening" article, being the first to finish his part. He helped a lot proof-reading large parts of the book which was of tremendous help.

■ Jimmy J. Lee

Jimmy learned bughouse in a local college chess club and never stopped playing since. Before bughouse, he played chess in high school and has won several county chess championships. His first bughouse gathering was during 2000 in San Jose, CA. He now plays bughouse almost daily on the Free Internet Chess Server (FICS) where he also offer Bughouse lessons at affordable rates. Jimmy just graduated from the University of California, Berkeley where he studied economics and now spends time just trying to have fun.

Jimmy contributed the "An Attacker's perspective" strategy article.

■ Dušan Škaloud

Dusan lives in the Czech Republic, Hradec Králové where the game is called "Dutch chess". Together with Jan Mazuch and the Czech chess federation Dusan organized the first official bughouse championships in the Czech Republic. He also played three times in Berlin and always in the Czech Open. He is especially fond of bughouse because of its real-time strategy aspects, it having more possible moves and dimensions than classic chess (with the massive opening theory).

Dusan is the author of many utility programs for bughouse: "blitz", "bughouse ELO calculator" and "Double Chessboard", allowing people to play bughouse on the internet or a local network with humans or computers. Dusan is a computer scientist, his other interests include strategy games, artificial intelligence, sport, movies, and history.

Dusan created many of the puzzles in the back of the book, always being reliable and eager to help.

■ Klaus Beckmann

Klaus has played his first bughouse game almost 29 years ago, at a local chess club. In 1999 he discovered the ICC (Internet Chess Club), and found out about Fics from Ebenfelt's Bughouse website. Klaus has helped numerous new players getting started on FICS and organized the World Bughouse Nations Cup on the FICS in 2002.

He is working as a tax advisor and is a living example that chess and bughouse can go hand in hand: he has been playing chess team matches as long as he has been playing bughouse.

Klaus helped writing the "Beginners Strategy", "Bughouse Rules" and "Bughouse on the Internet" articles and contributed questions to the annotated game three. He has supported the project from the very start.

■ Jeremy Keller

Now 24, learned to play Bughouse at a school-grade chess tournament then discovered "real" bughouse online at ICC. Jeremy has been one of the very top bughouse players for years now. In the FICS GrandPrix cycle in 2001 he has won 4 of the 8 tournaments he participated in, reaching 2nd place 3 times and 3rd place once. He used to play chess tournaments a lot, winning numerous class prizes and the Central Florida Chess Club Championship, but stopped playing tournaments about 5 years ago. He enjoys other strategy games as well as sports, specifically basketball. Graduated from Univ. of Florida with MS in Computer Science. Now selling cars and starting an internet business on the side.

Jeremy has contributed the huge article on the “1. .. e6 structures”. He has helped proof-reading and improving the “1.e4 e5” article, is co-contributor of “Climbing the Bughouse ladder” and helped annotating game two. It has greatly helped this book to have such a strong player improve on many of the articles. Thank you!

■ Justin Foo

As a junior I learned bughouse as "transfer chess" (that is what it is called in Australia), with different rules to those on FICS and without clocks (clearly no understanding of the game!). I don't play chess over the board anymore. I initially played bughouse as a guest on ICC and I was subsequently introduced to FICS. Online bughouse is the only bughouse I know and I enjoy the pressure of partnering and playing good players.

Justin Foo has in fact been playing on the FICS for a long time now. This experience shows in his annotations of game three.

■ Linus Olson

I'm Linus Olsson, 21, studying business and economics at the university of Lund, Sweden. I played a lot of chess when I was a kid and I played a lot of bughouse then, too, as it was very popular as at the Swedish junior chess tournaments.

I think the main advantage playing bughouse, especially on the internet is that you play in teams. You not only play for yourself but also for another guy. If I play blitz on the internet I just move the pieces but my mind is preoccupied with other things. In Bughouse, you can't let your partner down by such play.

I haven't have time to play so much bughouse on FICS the last year, but I'm still playing some at my local chess club with Jacob Mejvik whom you might know from FICS and some other local guys.

In Berlin 2004 Linus reached 2nd place in the Berlin Bughouse tournament and 4th place in Berlin 2005.

LinusO has contributed the large opening article on “1.e4 e5” and has helped annotating game two.

■ Neph Diaz

23, was born in Pasadena, TX and is currently attending the University of Houston studying Nursing. Neph is one of the strongest Bughouse players in the United States. His amazing speed shows at blitz chess as well: clear 2nd at 2005 National Open Blitz - Reserve Section and 2006 National Open Blitz - Reserve Champion.

Neph reached 1st place at the 2005 A.C.U.I. Regionals representing the University of Houston as he has done for 4 years,

Neph is 2000 U.S. Team East Bughouse Champion, 2000 Texas State Bughouse Champion, 2001 U.S. Team East Bughouse Co-Champion, 2005 Texas State & Collegiate Open Bughouse Champion, and back to back 2004-2005 National Open Bughouse Champion. When not involved in a Bughouse match, Neph also enjoys playing the trumpet, piano, ping pong, listening to Techno or Jazz (and singing a little karaoke).

Neph has helped annotating game two and three. He has helped improving the “Bughouse rules made easy” and “Strategy for the beginner” article.

■ David L. Olson

I learned the game in High school back in '85 It was fun and got more people involved with chess as well. I played chess, reaching candidate master while playing bughouse in several tournaments and gatherings: 1999 San Jose gathering Tournament partnered with Jan Patek (JTP), U.S. Open champion 2000 partnered Ben Gradsky (Insanemaniac) US East Team Bug tournaments 2000 tie for first partnered (Insanemaniac), 2001 tied for second with Sheena Madan, Scott Kittsley chess Festival 2001 (Wisconsin) 1st place with (Insanemaniac) Berlin 2005 B final tied for 2nd partnered Robert Huber (Yankadi), Main event 13th.

I have a wonderful wife from Indonesia, Kiky. On September 2nd 2005 the future bughouse champion Kitana Sari Olson was born. I work with computers at a dog race track in Kansas which allows me to play bug..:)

David has contributed the “US Bughouse road trip” and helpful advise. His article was an editor’s dream: no need to change a thing!

■ Mark Polak

24 years old. Born in Riga, Latvia. Been living in Israel since 1987. Studying Computer and Cognitive Science in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. First learned bughouse in a chess club, some 15 years ago. Played different variants of the game throughout the years. Been playing on FICS since 2000. Mark reached a good 4th place in the Berlin tournament in 2005. He won the Israeli bughouse championship (rules slightly differ from the standard) with YScorpion, in 2004.

Mark has helped annotating game one, and has helped proof-reading the article on 1. .. e6 structures. He has also contributed a puzzle position and improved one of the strategy articles by a lot. Thank you!

■ Fabrice Liardet

Bughouse is not my first love as a game. I learned it when I was 16 or 17, and it did not fit me too well at that time, as I was a very slow player (I still am), and an extremely individualist mind, always playing for my game only. I liked the tactics and the mating attacks a lot and was not too bad at those, but as soon as my opponent started to use the sit weapon the game appeared a lot less fun to me. This was before I realized what bughouse really was.

My bughouse skills have then grown in the same time as my social skills, and it can certainly be said that one helped the other. When I started to learn about the pleasure of making the partner win the game, I really fell for the game of bughouse, playing all the time with my friends, and soon not finding any opponents close to my strength in Geneva where I live.

It is just when I was getting tired of winning all the time :-)) that I discovered the FICS server, which meant a second bughouse life to me. Seeing that there existed players miles above my level have been a motivation to discover new fields in the game, and also to start an annual bughouse gathering in Geneva - but that is a different story.

The “different story” continues in Fabrice’s article “The Geneva Gathering”. Fabrice has also contributed many of the puzzles. Those are simply amazing. Do not forget to check them out!

■ Maarten Aronsson

Hi, I'm Maarten from Sweden. I was born in 1976 and played my first game of bughouse in a Swedish chess club in 1984, at the tender age of eight. I immediately fell in love with the game. I played vast amounts of games during chess tournaments as a kid. However, as I got older and started playing less chess I also played less and less bughouse. But then in 1995 I discovered online bughouse on FICS and ever since then I play regularly online. I love the game because of the pace, the teamwork and the spirit of the players.

Maarten won the Bughouse tournaments Geneva 2002 (with a local player as partner) and Berlin 2003 and 2004 (with Marcus Mueller as partner).

Maarten has contributed the articles on “Defensive strategies” and “Mating techniques”. He has also helped annotating game three. Maarten was one of the first to finish his contributions – an important factor in making the editor not lose faith in the project.

■ **Sergiy Vasylykevych**

Sergiy Vasylykevych (fermy). Ph.D. in math. I've known the game for more than 20 years, always loved it for the thrill of time pressure and friendly banter. The discovery of FICS really hooked me on bug. Rather annoyingly, life always gets in the way of hobbies. Nowadays I rarely play.

Sergiy won the Berlin tournament in 2002 with creepingdeath, reached 3rd place in 2005 with alamar and 2nd place in 2006 with GusMcClain.

Sergiy has contributed the enormous article on “Initiative vs. material”. The tremendous job he did in improving the bpgn-viewer (“chessbase” for bughouse chess) made creating this book – especially the annotated games – a lot easier. If you want to improve your game this is the best tool – after the book you are holding in hand of course.

■ **Chris Ferrante**

Chris Ferrante works as a computer programmer in the Atlanta area. He and his wife Becky have been married for over 20 years and have two daughters, Laura and Alicia. He no longer plays in a competitive tennis league but enjoys bicycle riding for exercise. All this sounds quite normal and unexceptional - surprisingly, a few bughouse players are like that.

Chris has contributed a version of his “Top ten ways to tell you have a bad bughouse partner” which fits both internet and over the board bughouse and has revised and proof-read many of the articles.

■ **Daniel Denes**

Daniel Denes a.k.a. "Marv" has been playing bughouse on the internet since 1997 with changing success. Whenever he feels unhappy with his game, he will run a tournament that will allow him to act as arbiter so he doesn't have to play himself. Together with Ralf Zöller he runs the yearly Berlin Bughouse Gathering that has developed to one of the biggest events in the Bughouse world, and the European bughouse website <http://www.bughouse.info> . Contact: Marv@bughouse.info

Daniel has contributed the article on the Berlin Bughouse Gathering. Thank you for this and the great gatherings!

■ **Elad Y. aka YScorpion**

I learned bughouse on the internet. I honestly don't like the game anymore and can't say anything good about it. I have played once at a local tournament if it

matters. The rest of the details I rather not tell. What I only say is, the ego is the source of all troubles.

We of course respect YScorpion's wish to remain anonymous though one could get quite curious in who he is – having been the top internet bughouse player for a while! YScorpion has contributed the "Climbing the Bughouse ladder" article.

■ **Georg v. Zimmermann**

I learned to play bughouse in local youth chess competitions and discovered internet chess as an exchange student in Portland, Oregon. Lately life and a mysterious book project (try telling people you are working on a "bughouse chess book". A what?!) got in the way. I've had bar exams till June 2006. Further plans are a doctorate thesis in Internet law and a lot of traveling. I'd like to experience the Glacier on Mount Kilimanjaro and the rain forest as long as they are still there. Speaking about that: for the last 20 years I have always been very diffident about bothering people with the ecological implications of their actions and instead grown sad and quiet. This has changed. We are all reasonably wealthy (not starving like too many people in this world) and smart (we can play chess, remember). It would cost us so little to eat a little less meat, buy from organic farms, invest a bit more in regenerative technologies. Oh sure, I know, you like the taste of Mc' Donald's food and from the few dollars you save you can buy a faster computer. Damn more important than the future of our planet, the survival of other species and ultimately the planet we live on, I see! But I am getting side-tracked.

Georg has during his most active bughouse playing period in 2001 been number 5 in the final bughouse GrandPrix standings reaching a height of rating 2444. He is the author of a bughouse and single board bughouse playing program sunsetter. See <http://sunsetter.sourceforge.net>

He is the editor of this book and has contributed to the content of most of the articles.

Further Thanks to

■ **Andreas Ebenfelt**

for one of the first good pages on bughouse strategy on the Internet.

■ **Chuck Moulton**

for hosting the project's webpage and giving helpful advise during the whole project.

■ **David Chong**

for keeping up <http://bughouse.net>, a great one-stop-shop for bughouse information, up and running for a long time.

■ **FICS administration and creators**

For creating and running a chess server, free of charge, which supports bughouse chess. <http://freechess.org>

■ **“Flesh”**

for (one of?) the first large sites on Bughouse chess. To dip into the Bughouse past visit <http://web.archive.org/web/www.slip.net/~allegro/>

■ **“James Baud”**

for the great database of Bughouse games at <http://www.bughouse-db.org> and a lot of past projects!

■ **Lieven Clarisse**

for selecting a number of great games and positions worth analyzing. Lieven also has a collection of many thousand bughouse games on the internet, <http://members.lycos.nl/bughouse/>

■ **Stephen Vakil**

For the first Bughouse database and programming help on a lot of the Bughouse projects.

■ **The Gathering Organizers**

To the organizers of the “Big” gatherings: Daniel Denes, Ralf Zoller and Suza Cramer in Berlin, Fabrice Liardet and his hospitable friends in Geneva and Mason in San Jose but also all the organizers of smaller gatherings who spend a lot of time and energy for us to have fun!

■ **Zon Juan Jan**

for creating the first versions of the wonderful bughouse viewer software and for the bughouse interface Thief.

■ **And everyone else ...**

I might have forgotten. Thanks everyone for your time and effort in fostering such a great game!



Bughouse Chess Rules in 1 Minute

What is Bughouse ?

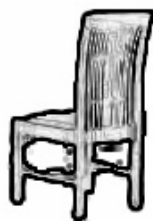
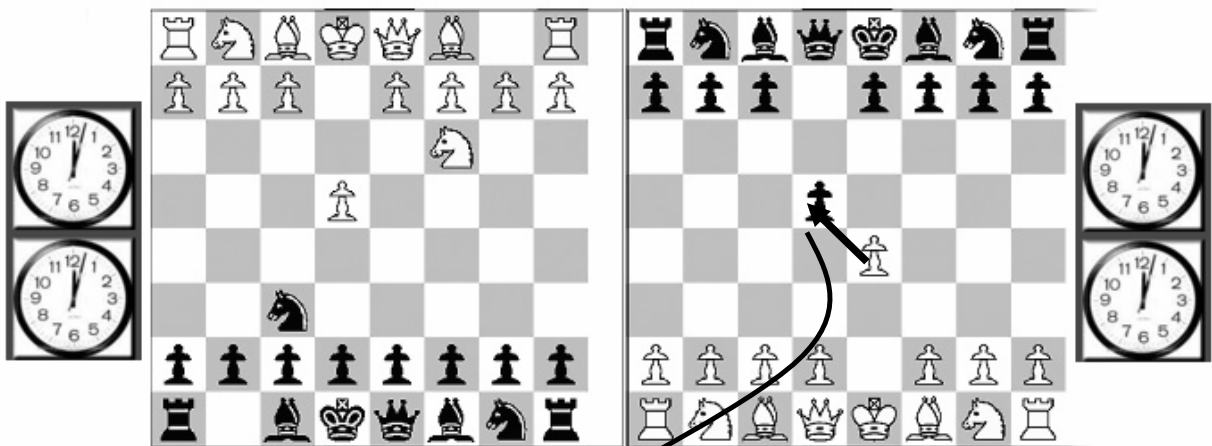
- ◆ Bughouse is a 2 on 2 *team* game involving 2 boards/sets and 2 clocks.
- ◆ The Game is over when one of these three occur: a teammate checkmates, his opponent makes an illegal move, or he runs his opponent out of time. If one teammate wins, the whole *team* wins.



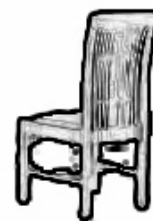
White
player of
Team A



Black
player of
Team A



Black
player of
Team B



White
player of
Team B

How Bughouse Chess works:

◆ All chess rules apply. Bughouse is simply chess with a twist! Whenever a piece is captured, it is given to your partner who can either a) drop that piece on any *unoccupied* square or b) make a regular chess move and save that piece or any others he gets to drop later.

◆ Above is an example of how this is. On the right board white can capture a pawn with exd5 . If he does so, he hands this pawn to his partner (teammate) who can, instead of a normal chess move use it (for example to place it on b4).

How a piece can be dropped:

◆ Just as long as it is an *unoccupied* square (no drop-taking), one can drop check and you can drop checkmate (which ends the game).

◆ The *only* exception to dropping pieces is that pawns can *not* be placed on the 1st or last rank. A pawn may be placed on the 7th rank and when it promotes one should indicate what piece it is. When captured, it reverts back to a normal pawn.

Now you know enough to get a game going! Read on if you want to know how special cases are solved.

Special cases and over the board rules:

◆ A Rook dropped onto either Rook home square is considered not to have moved; so one may castle with such a Rook. A similar rule applies to a Pawn dropped onto the second rank: The Pawn inherits the two-step-move option along with the risk of en passant capture.

◆ The pieces of a player's color which are not on his board are considered to be potentially in the player's stock. Hence, unless all necessary pieces are on his board (very unlikely):

a) The player is not considered to be stalemated (since it is possible to get a piece to drop)

b) The player is not considered to be checkmated if he could block the check with a piece potentially in his stock. Thus, a checkmate must be given either with a "contact check", a knight check, or with a double check.

c) There will be no situations in which it is determined that a player has insufficient material to mate (as it is always possible that the player's partner could capture pieces with his King providing the needed material, when the game is still in progress.)

When playing **over the board** (→ see the article on Internet Bughouse [not in this preview] for details on internet play) the following should be observed:

- ◆ Clocks are set on the outer side of both boards so all can view the time.
- ◆ A promoted pawn *physically* remains a pawn. It can be laid down to indicate that it is a promoted pawn.
- ◆ It is important to show the pieces one has in hand when one's opponents asks during his/her turn. It is forbidden to hide chess pieces from your opponent or his partner. If (by purpose or not) a player is hiding some of his pieces, his opponent can press the clock and ask him to show them.
- ◆ It is forbidden to physically reach over the board and complete a move for the partner though it *is* allowed to communicate and tell moves to the partner.



N.N. : Strategy tips for the beginner

“Chess was invented by buggers who were too bad to get a partner.”

All kidding aside, there has always been a contingent of chess players who start with bughouse and then stop it after awhile. Despite their chess playing abilities, they lose most of their bughouse games.

One prominent example is the team IM Muse / GM Tischbierek who both came to the 2003 bughouse tournament in Berlin. Chess players would feel very confident that they would win it hands down, but that was not the case. They finished 20th of 23 teams, as most of the other teams were experienced bughouse players who had already played more than 5,000 bughouse games on FICS (Free Internet Chess Server), the most popular place to play bughouse on the internet¹.

The same happens to many other titled chess players, who start playing their first bughouse games on the Internet. The most recent and popular example is Grandmaster Gadir Guseinov. With a fide rating of 2571 he started a discussion about his estimated bughouse strength, but then he lost 3 games in a row against a below average bughouse team. His provisional bughouse rating is 1340. Unfortunately he is probably lost to the bughouse world forever.

In some aspects, bughouse is a more complex game than chess. Of course you have all dimensions of an orthodox chess game, but additionally you must consider:

- Your own material in hand
- The material in hand on your partner's board
- The clock on your partner's board
- Your partner's board position

Strong players have their own methods on how to find the next move. Zon Juan Jan (WhoAmI on FICS), was one of the top 5 players until 2002. He had an estimated chess rating of about 1500 and a steady bughouse rating of 2200-2400. That shows

¹ See also the chapter on Internet Bughouse [Not in this preview]

that he *must* know something about the special strategies which apply to bughouse. He said:

“I consider my position first; then possible actions within my position next. Part of my position evaluation involves recognition of piece placement's weakness/strength...”

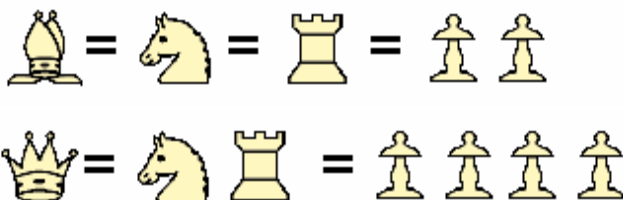
Now I know that to the novice bughouse player (and even some veteran players!) the above statement is confusing. It is confusing because he tries to explain how to consider all the extra dimensions at once. Doing so without any bughouse experience is difficult, to say the least.

The conclusion one should draw is that bughouse must be approached with some basic strategic ideas in mind. In this chapter we will detail some of those basic ideas, starting with the strategic differences to chess, continuing with how to include your partner's game in your calculations, and finally some brief hints on the opening stage of a bughouse game.

Main strategic differences to chess

The value of the pieces

The value of the pieces in bughouse differs from chess.



These values may be surprising to you, but a rook doesn't count more than a bishop or a knight. So giving a queen for 2 pieces is a trade, not a sacrifice. And giving a knight for 2 pawns is a trade, too.

Why are queens not as important? Why are rooks devalued as well? With the ability to drop a piece on any unoccupied square on the board (with the lone exception that pawns can not be placed on the 1st or 8th rank), it is easier to effectively use the lower valued pieces. A bishop in hand has the same "mobility" as a queen in hand!

Pawns can be dropped on the 7th rank and promoted the next move. Two pawns can be very dangerous if dropped side by side on the 7th rank. Knights can be effectively used in contact checks (see below). They can be used in the common N@h5 drop, threatening the usually weak g7. Bishops are effective at attacking and defending at the same time. Dropping a bishop on the 1st or 8th *files* with

check covering a vulnerable square near your own king is often the best move in a position².

The queen on the other hand can often be chased by pawn, knight or bishop drops³. Remember, there is rarely an endgame phase in bughouse, making the rooks and queens not as domineering in bughouse as in normal chess.

The importance of contact checks

To quote Ross F. Amann (RossA on ICC): "A contact check is one that forces the enemy king to move. i.e., the opponent cannot interpose a piece (or take the checking piece). This stops the opponent from dropping pieces to defend. In many cases, you can drop one piece after another using contact checks until you mate; while your opponent accumulates more and more useless pieces he could drop if he was not in check."

Because of their importance we list the contact checks:

1. All knight checks (hence the importance of knights)
2. Bishop, pawn, rook and queen checks one square from the king
3. Double checks (do not forget this one - it comes in handy at times.)

To some extent the enemy king can defend itself from contact checks of type 2. But note it depends on other pieces to cover knight checks (yet another reason for the knight's importance in attacking). Also note one common tactic: forcing the king to take pieces towards the middle of the board where other pieces already on the board can mate it; it is most dangerous when the king has to defend itself. "

Initiative

Initiative is the ability to force your opponent to react. For instance, when you place the king in check, he must react to your move, therefore you have the initiative. Your opponent cannot further his own attack. Ten checks in a row can make a materially superior opponent defenseless. A common use of initiative is to utilize a "piece storm" where a player drops pieces turn after turn, forcing a king to run for cover. Given enough material from your partner's board, checkmate is often the result.

² The same idea can be found in one of the puzzles [not in this preview].

³ Referring to one of the articles no in this preview.



Interview with GM Levon Aronian

GM Aronian is rated **2756 Elo** on the April 2006 FIDE list, making him number three in the world. He was born on 1982-10-06 in Armenia. In December 2005 Levon beat Ruslan Ponomarev of Ukraine in the final round to win the World Cup in Khanty Mansiysk, Russia. After a draw in two regular games, Levon won both Rapid games to take the crown and emerge undefeated in seven rounds. In March 2006 he took sole first place at the annual Linares chess tournament, half a point ahead of Teimour Radjabov and FIDE World Champion Veselin Topalov. [...] GM Aronian has played more than **5000 bughouse games**.

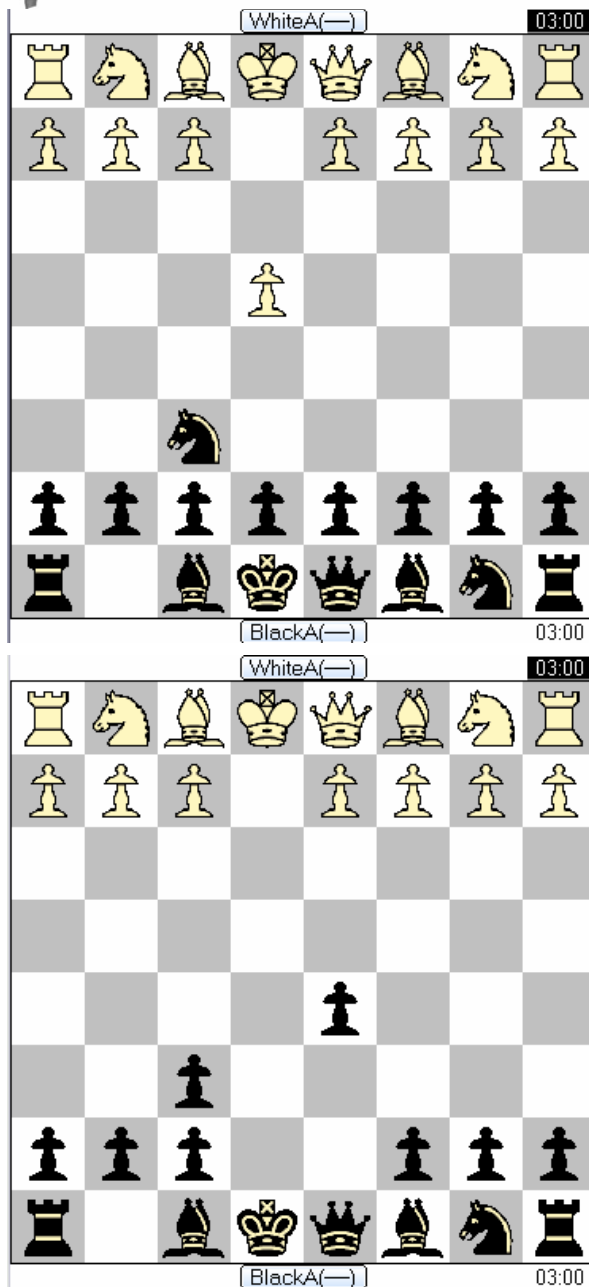
[...] In the Interview he talks about why he plays bughouse chess, where he learned the game, chess and bughouse, his future plans and more.





Igor Bjelobrk :

The 1.e4 Nf6 Opening



Here are the first 2 pages of Igor's 9-page opening article:

1. e4 Nf6 (Diag 1)

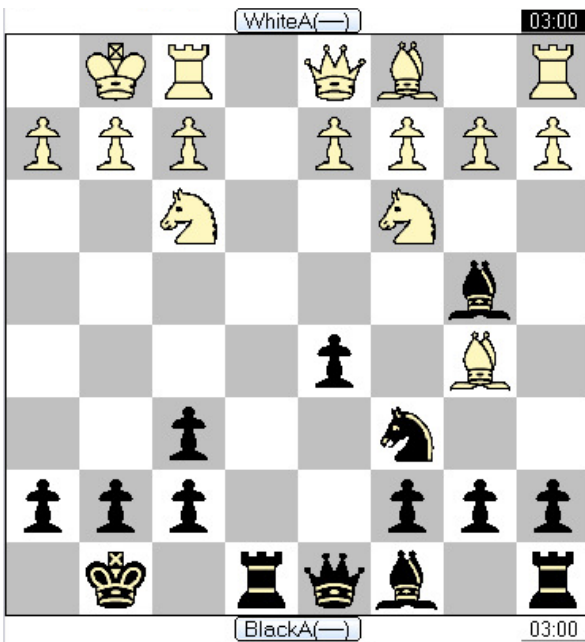
Igor Bjelobrk analyses 2. e5, and, as main continuation, 2. Nc3 (→ starting from Diag 4) in this opening.

Most good players will avoid playing 2.e5 because black can sacrifice a knight for a pawn on f6 and obtain an easy game without being under any real pressure.

2. e5 ?! d5 3. exf6 exf6 (Diag 2)

Black has won a tempo (d5 is already played), and e5 is protected (a white knight on f3 will not do too much).

1. e4 Nf6 Opening



This could follow with black being slightly better:

4. Bb5+ Nc6 5. Nc3 Bb4

Maybe white should play d4 earlier, but that will only make the point that e5 is protected by black, while e4 is not protected by white more apparent.

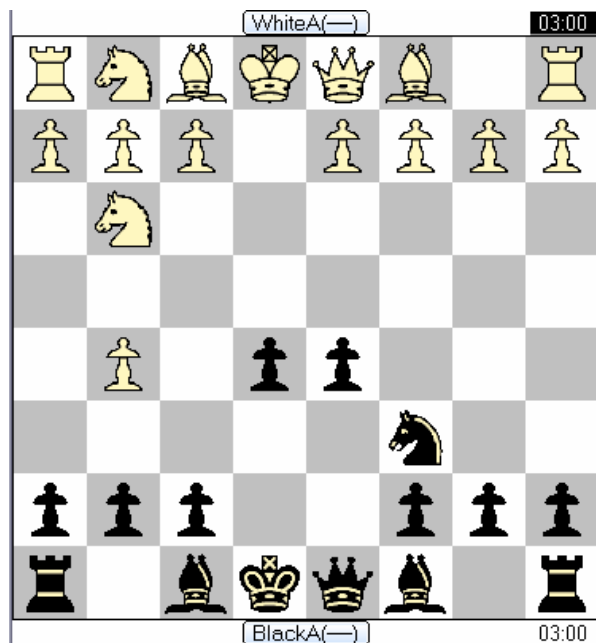
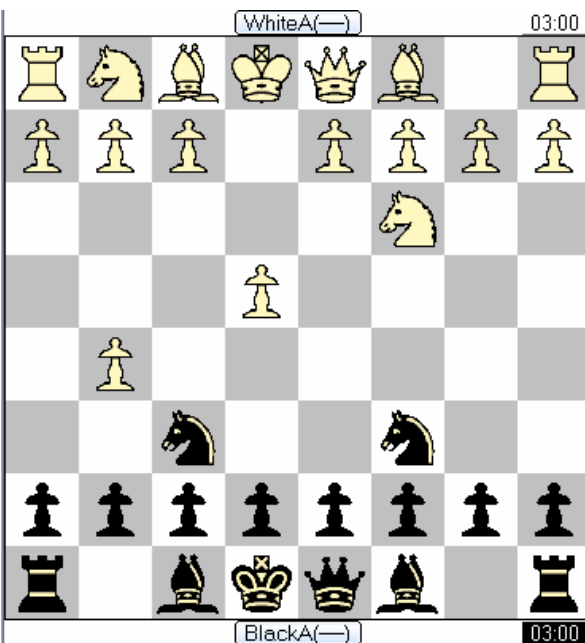
6. Nf3 0-0 7.0-0 ?! Re8 ?! (Diag 3)

7. 0-0 runs into p@h3 trouble depending on material, but black is fine in either case.

(main continuation after 1. .. Nf6) 2. Nc3 Nc6

After the suggested 2. .. Nc6, 3.Nf3 (→ starting from Diag 14) is best, 3. d4 (→ Diag 6) very playable. An early 3. p@g5 is unfavorable for white because black can sacrifice a knight on e4 to gain central superiority:

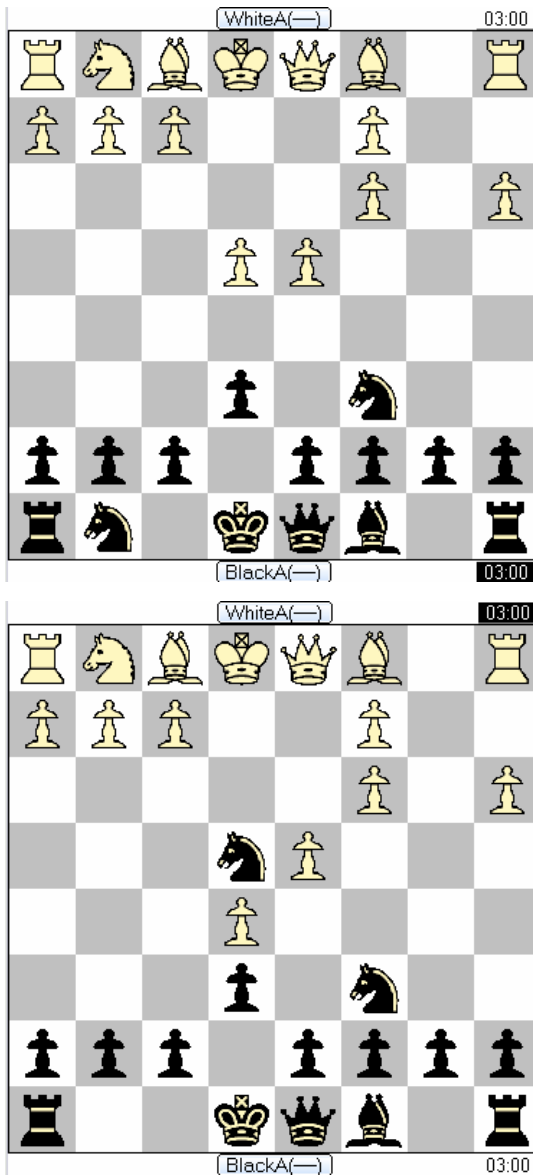
3. p@g5 ?! (left Diag 4) 3. .. Nxe4 4. Nxe4 d5 5. Ng3 e5 (right Diag 5). White has the idea of 6. p@f6, though: 6. p@f6 gxf6 7. gxf6 Qxf6 8. Nh5 ... Of course 8. .. Qxf2+ might be dangerous.





Jeremy Keller :

1... e6 main structures



For a change here is an extract from the middle of an article:

4.. Bxc3+ 5. bxc3 (Diag 3) Now White has d4 protected by a pawn, so the Nc6 has been blunted. The g7 square is quite weak, the c8 Bishop has no foreseeable future, and White has the center. I would have to give White the advantage here, although Black does have some initiative in attacking e4 and c3.

5.. Nf6 The three moves here are Bd3 (→ Diag 11), developing the Bishop and preparing e5, e5 immediately, or pinning the Knight with B@h4 (6.Bg5 Nxe4!). After B@h4 if Black plays B@e7 (assuming he has the Bishop, as often the Bh4 was exchanged for a Knight on the other board, not a Bishop), Black has covered his dark squares weaknesses and should be okay. If no Bishop is in hand then d6 should be played to prevent e5. The immediate 6. e5 is most forcing and best.

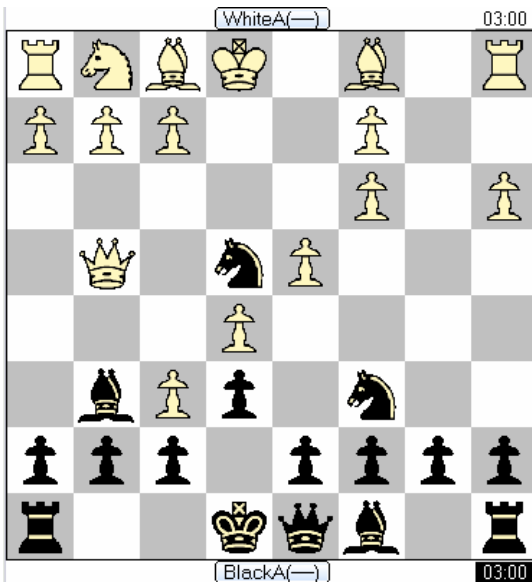
6. e5 Now Black must choose between the more aggressive Ne4 and the more solid Nd5 (although using the word "solid" to go along with Black's position here just doesn't seem right). After 6.. Nd5 White can defend with p@b2 or B@d2, or directly attack with N@h5 or p@f6/h6. Qg4 (or Qf3) remains a

good response to Nxc3.

6.. Ne4 (Diag 4) This is more in the spirit of the opening. The Knight really dominates the board, as it eyes c3, d2 and f2, while covering g5, d6 and f6. The

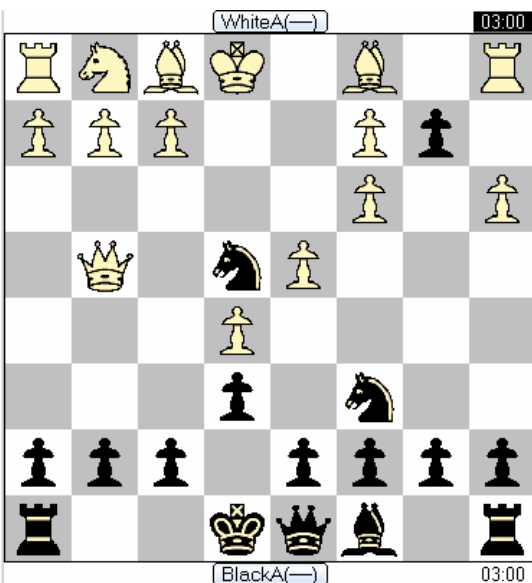
1. ... e6 structures

problem is that the Knight is unprotected and Black still has a weakness on g7. White has many more options for moving pieces already on the board and Black will depend primarily on placing pieces, so the material flow coming from the other board will be crucial.



The main moves here are Qg4 (main variation below), Bd3 (→ Diag 9), Qf3 (→ Diag 8), p@f6, p@h6 and N@h5. I would only recommend the pawn placements if there is a Rook in hand (or coming) for h8 or f8, or if White has a Knight in hand (or coming) for f6 and his partner needs a Queen.

7.Qg4 Now Black needs a Bishop to place on g6 to cover g7 and the Ne4, which underscores Black's dependence on off board material in this line. White does have a few holes in his position, on b2 and d2 for example, so if Black has some material he can drop p@b2 followed by dropping at d2 with check (→ Diag 6 below). Nxc3 is only an alternative if Black has or is expecting to get very soon a heavy piece for d1. The problem is, even if he is, White's Qg4 still covers, so even in that case White can continue with p@h6/p@f6/N@h5 with the stronger attack. Once again Black needs material to hold the balance in this line. In general, White should do well with this variation.

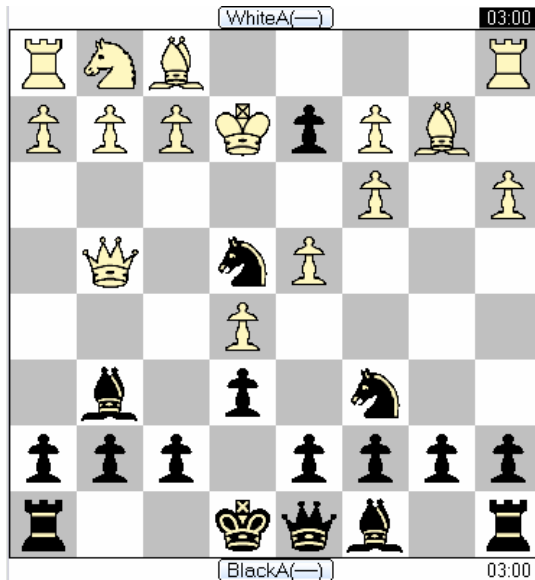


8.. B@g6 9.p@f6 (Diag 5) Now everything depends on what material is in hand, so I will leave it to your imagination or you can view games played in this variation. Common themes for Black include p@b2 followed by p@d2, Nxf2, Nxc3, B@h5,

B@f8, and Rg8. White's idea is mainly to get a pawn on g7 and place a heavy on either f8 or h8 and maybe a Knight on f6. Another idea here is B@g5/h4 with the threats of p@e7 and pxg7. Of course development with Nh3/f3 and Bd3 is best in many situations (where there is little off-board material). Qxe4 to eliminate the powerful Ne4 is correct in some situations, too.

Variation after **7. Qg4: p@b2!?** (Diag 6) This seems strong, and it certainly is with a Queen in hand for d2, but it requires having at least two Diags in hand at this very

early stage of the game. But it is worth it to remove the Bishop from the c1-g5 diagonal, and displace the King to an awkward position. White has the option to play Bxb2 or Qxe4. After Qxe4 White really needs a Bishop after 8.. bxa1Q to place on b2. Then Black will win piece against pawn, but White has the better attacking chances. **8. Bxb2** Obviously Q@d2# is best, if Black has it to place! **8.. p@d2+**
9. Ke2.



One possible option for Black is to take Nxf2. If White retakes Black has some decent chances, although he will need material. If White can finish development with Bd3 and Nf3/h3 he will have an easy position. Therefore it is probably better to place the Bishop if he has one:

9. .. B@g6 (Diag 7) White can play Nf3 or p@f6. After p@f6 an attack on the Qg4 can be met with Qxe4.

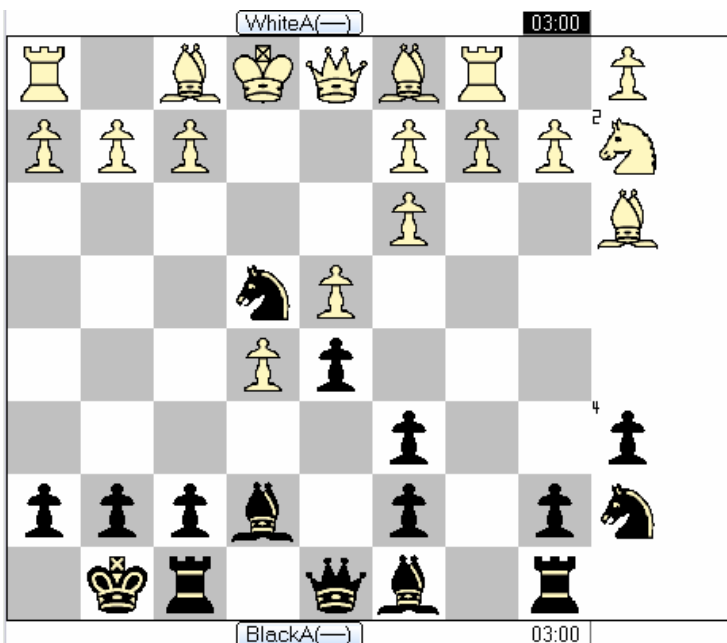
The article continues on more than 15 pages.

We now skip a number of excellent articles, see the Contents page for what you miss should you not read the book. One of my personal favorites is the short but excellent opening overview article "My openings" by YScorpion.



Maarten Aronsson : Defensive Strategies

Let us now continue with two example pages from Maarten Aronsson short but instructive articles on Defensive Strategy (this page) and Mating techniques (next page).



Study the position. **(Diagram)**

As you can see black's threat is to sack his knight on f2. How should white deal with this?

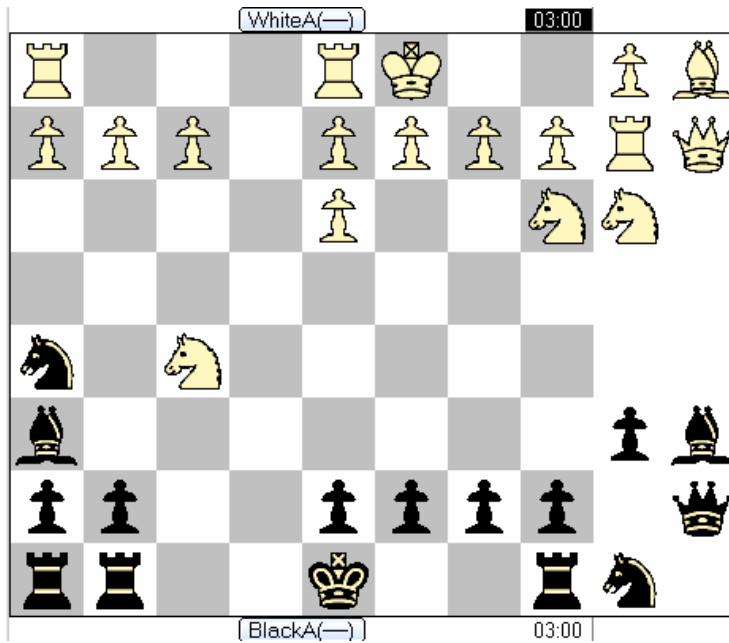
Well, he has several valid options here and it's beyond me to say that one is better than the other. So, what move is white going to choose and why?

There are a number of different moves here and which one you choose depends on your style of play and what is happening on the

other board. Some people would want to guard f2 in order to stay safe, others would prefer to let black sack in order to gain material. Yet another style of player might want to ignore the whole threat and just launch his own attack instead. Let's take a look at the various options these styles have.

1. Defending f2

There are a few different moves that defend the f2 square. B@g1, B@e3 (Be3), Qe2, N@d3. What are some of the advantages/disadvantages of these moves? This is advisable if you prefer having a safe king or if big trades are coming but not big enough for you to win on a counter-attack. [...]

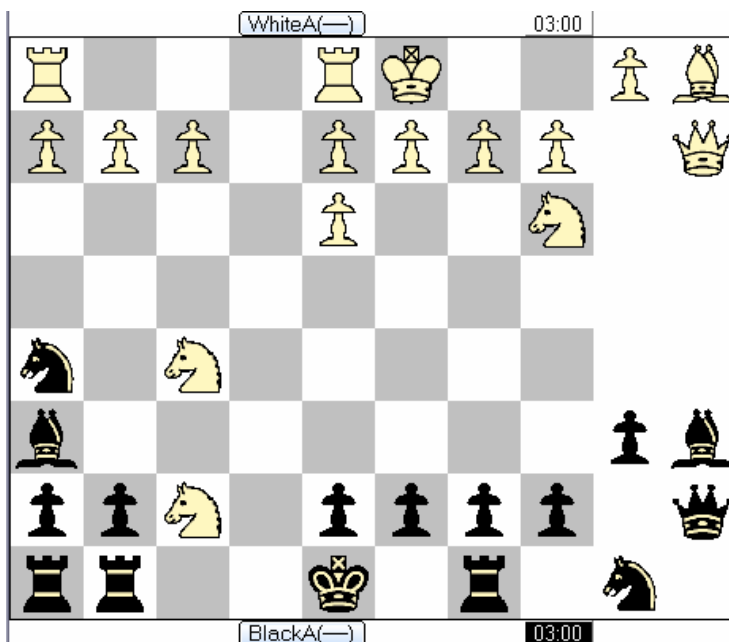


[...] (Diagram)

We see that with N@f7+ we can force the black king to c8 (Ke8, Q@e7#) and then N@e7+ forces the king to b8, but then we need another knight to continue the attack with N@a6+ but we may not get it.

So the black king managed to find an escape route. Was there any way to cut it off? Yes, he needed to retreat all the way to b8, so what if we block the b8 square? But, how can we do that? Simple, we put a piece there!

R@b8+! (A very nice move that Bugzilla found and played in the game).



Now black has to take Rxb8 **(Diagram)** and then the b8 square is blocked so N@f7+, Kc8, N@e7#.

Once again we sacrificed a heavy piece to block a retreat square with check.

In my opinion this is one of the best ways to learn how to mate in bughouse. Look at one type of mating technique at a time and look through a

lot of games and when you see a potential to mate using this technique try to find the proper move order. Eventually mates such as these will become second nature to you and your bughouse game will have improved.



YScorpion : Climbing the bughouse ladder

Again, we are diving right into an article. The first version was written by YScorpion, edited by Georg v. Zimmermann and others and expanded again by Jeremy Keller. This way it has become – in my humble opinion – very well thought out. The advantage of having multiple authors (“eight eyes see more than two”) work on one contribution equally well shows in the commented games.

Time

[...]

The morale of the story: **don't stop moving when under an attack**, even under a deadly one. You have to keep trying, even if your move is just to place a queen somewhere near your king in the hope it will cover all important squares. If you freeze, you just make things too easy for your opponent: he will have time to think. Your opponents partner can stop moving, look at your board also, and often times four eyes see more than two. Your opponent can also get even more pieces for his attack, if the other board plays on.

Before you ask your partner for a piece, for whichever purpose, make sure you are up on time. Generally **time should always be measured before any risky move or attack**. That way you can sit for pieces when needed or when your partner gets into trouble. Sometimes I will only sit and ask for a piece when I am up on time and it forces mate. Even if I have a completely winning position I may keep moving so I won't risk losing my time advantage if my partner cannot force the exchange.

Remember, you can always play a chess move. Use the pieces you have on the board. Develop your existing pieces while waiting for more. Find chess moves that keep the pressure on rather than sitting with near even time and racing in the last few seconds (or losing time advantage). This is most important when your partner is sitting. Whether he is sitting for a certain piece or pieces, or letting you gain a good position or even mate by avoiding certain mate or preventing trades, you need to be able to move and keep moving quickly, and often that entails moving the pieces you already have on the board. Even in normal situations it is important to keep moving to avoid losing time. Unless I am playing a matchup which requires me to attack,

such as if my partner's board is trading an obscene amount or my opponent is *much* better attacking than defending, I prefer to simply play moves without sitting. I will only sit to starve my partner's opponent, and prefer my partner to return the favor by not sitting unless I ask him to.

While in this 'chess mode' material is of paramount importance. If there is a big time gap then material will decide the game because you can always have your partner sit and "chess" your way to a win. If you don't have the material/position advantage then you will need to sit for pieces therefore nullifying your time advantage. It is important to keep a good "bughouse" position, but not at the expense of too much material. One very commonly needed but overlooked skill is the ability to force a trade when up time, usually for mate on the other board.

Initiative and defence

Initiate when you are given the chance to. This is a golden rule in bughouse. Having the initiative in your game is the first priority, **some attacks are inevitably winning when played ideally, this is why you should always seek to be on the attacking rather than the defending side.**⁴

Among the highest priorities in bughouse is to keep your king *safe*. Do not play overly aggressive unless the position justifies it as this often creates drawbacks on your part while your attempts yield futile and inefficient results. Don't attack, attack, attack and neglect your defense. As soon as you lose check you may be dead. Try to defend yourself while attacking, covering vulnerable squares or capturing your opponent's attacking pieces. Often it's better to stop attacking and defend a bit than to sacrifice all your pieces in an attack that doesn't mate. **Make the last move that loses initiative a defensive one.**⁵

Secondly, keep your pieces close to your king, and **always prefer placing a piece (optimally at the king-side) rather than moving your static pieces** (this is relevant for attacking as well). Of course, this depends on the dynamics of the actual game you are playing. Specifically, I am referring to the positional and tactical nature of the position, how much material flow is usually coming from the other board, and the style of both you and your opponent. In some cases if you can make a move on your board that is equally effective as a placement would be, it is better to conserve the off-board piece for a more effective placement.

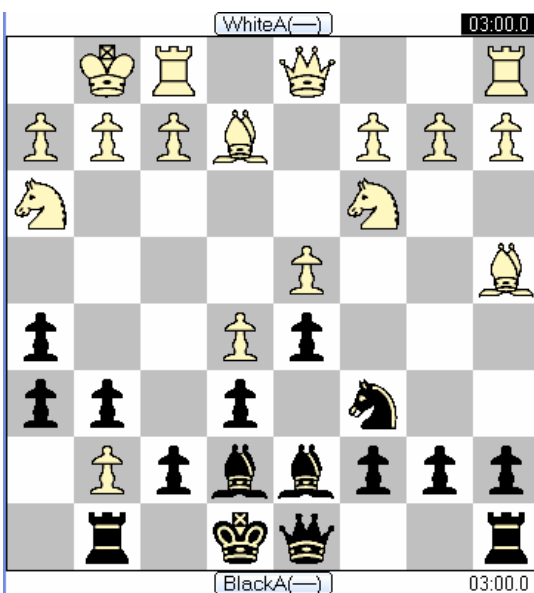
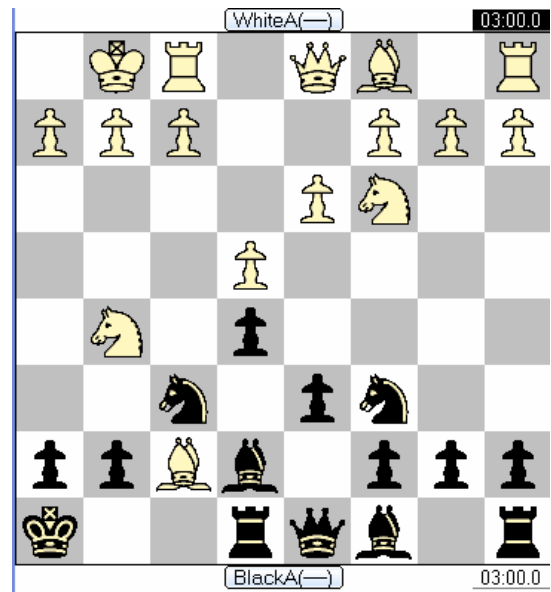
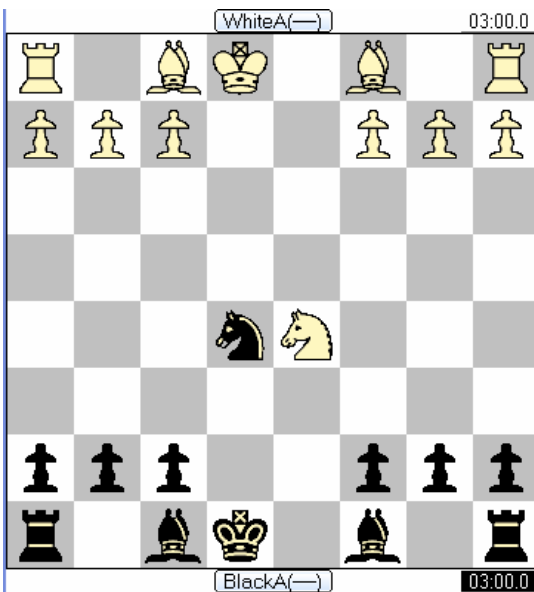
⁴ For some ideas on how to achieve that goal see "An attackers perspective", [not in this preview]

⁵ Also see "a defender's perspective", [not in this preview].

Bughouse Tactics

Tactics which are special to bughouse include dropping forks, dropping pins and bishop-drop-forks. Let us look at some examples:

(Diag 1 left below) 1. ... B@a5+ This Bishop drop is one of the most important ideas for attack/defense. It is very common in high-level games, and essential to maintain initiative by defending an attack and attacking (or checking) at the same time.



(Diag 2 right above) 1. Bb3 This is a clearance-type move. The idea is to vacate a square so that a more effective piece can be placed on that same square. Here, for example, 2.N@f7+ can not be stopped because the Knight on g5 also supports that square.

(Diag 3 left) 1. p@h7. This is the 7th rank pawn drop with idea of queening move. No matter what Black does, White will queen with material gain. It is also good versus an unprotected knight when the knight is on the bank rank and the queening square is also unprotected. [...]

The article continues on 6 more pages.



NN: The Gatherings

The book includes accounts of the Gatherings in Berlin, Geneva and the US Gatherings. Here is one page each from the Berlin and US Gatherings article:

As one of the „established“ bughouse gatherings next to Geneva and Los Angeles, the Berlin bughouse gathering was held for the fourth time and was bigger than ever. Players from seventeen countries headed for Berlin. Some of them had to pass rather high obstacles, like Yuri (xvand). Coming from Ukraine, he suffered from a recent scandal involving the German embassy in Kiev. A lot of Ukrainian prostitutes got German visa at rather questionable conditions, resulting in the German visa policy being rigidly shut down, especially in the Ukraine. Yuri, unsuspecting, went into the German embassy and tried to tell them that he wanted to visit Berlin, for a weekend, to play some weird variation of chess. For...money? Not really – only for fun. Suspicious, isn't it?

The ambassador, being an active chess player, decided to put him to a test. He happened to have both a set and a clock in his office (!). But – Xvand did make it to Berlin, and the ambassador is probably still trying to figure out what hit him there.

Another guy who had a tough start this year was Marcus, who was one of the few buggers to show up at each of the four gatherings in Berlin so far. He thought he had it all figured out this year. After he had an accident when driving home from the traditional Sunday night dinner in 2004, he decided that it would be much less stressful for him if he just flew to Berlin this time.

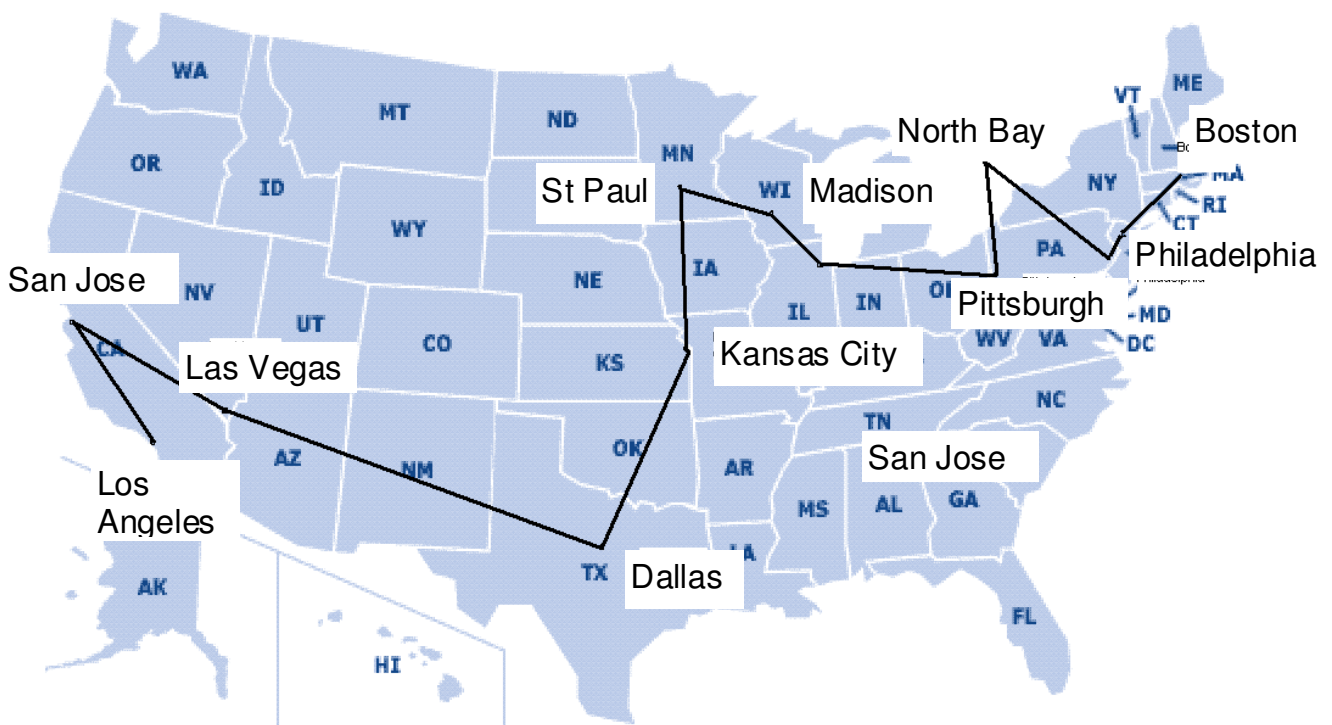
When he showed up at the airport just in time, he was a bit surprised that the personnel sent him back, telling him to show up again in 15 min even though that would be well after check in time. So he looked around a bit and when he returned to the counter, they told him that the plane was overbooked and he had to stay out! Furiously he wanted them to figure out another connection for him; he was told that he forfeited that right when he didn't check in in time... Not very hard to imagine Marcus' mood when he finally, after a long drive straight through Germany arrived and hardly found time to practice with his habitual partner Firefly! Looking back, this may have had an impact on Saturdays tournament...

What follows is a merry account of each day of the Gathering, tournament results and pictures.

[...] An extract from the US Bughouse Road trip:

We begin our road trip in **Boston**, 2001. The U.S Open Chess tournament is in town and with it comes the U.S. Open Bug tournament. Boston doesn't seem to draw a lot of bughouse players and I had to work to get decent games going before the tournament. I got to partner a great guy from San Diego whose handle is (WhoWasI). If that looks familiar, and it should, he knows Zon (WhoAmI) Jan. They played bug many years back. He related a few stories about the 'old days.' We didn't get to practice much before the tournament due to his coaching some kids that were entered in the Denker tournament but we decided we still had chances. It looked good for us when we won against the GM team. Unfortunately, we ran into a determined team of (Edgecrusher) and (Dragonxxer) who ended up taking first place.

We move the bus south to **New Jersey**. The United States Amateur Team East has been held in New Jersey for many many years. It is one of the largest chess tournaments in North America and always has been great for bughouse. I recommend it highly, as the strength of the bughouse is considerable every year. The strongest was a few years ago with participants from Dallas (Ghostshell), Los Angeles (WhoAmI), Philadelphia (Pminear) as well as (Insanemaniac), (Blackcomb), and others. (Insanemaniac) and I tied for 1st one year for the open prize (they base teams ratings on an average uscf rating) with (TrumpetX).





NN Annotated games

We have tried hard to make those games as useful and fun to read as possible. Many contributors looked over each game, four, six, eight or more eyes simply see more than two.

The comments are mainly centered around the diagrams, so that you can enjoy the game even if you decide not to take two boards and play it through. Should you want to do that: the notation for the left board is on the left side of the line, the notation for the right board on the right. Since bughouse depends so much on the clock, we also included the time left after every single move.

*To learn most from these games, after each move or diagram position **think for yourself** what you would have moved, what your assessment of the played move and the position is, and only then read the comments.*

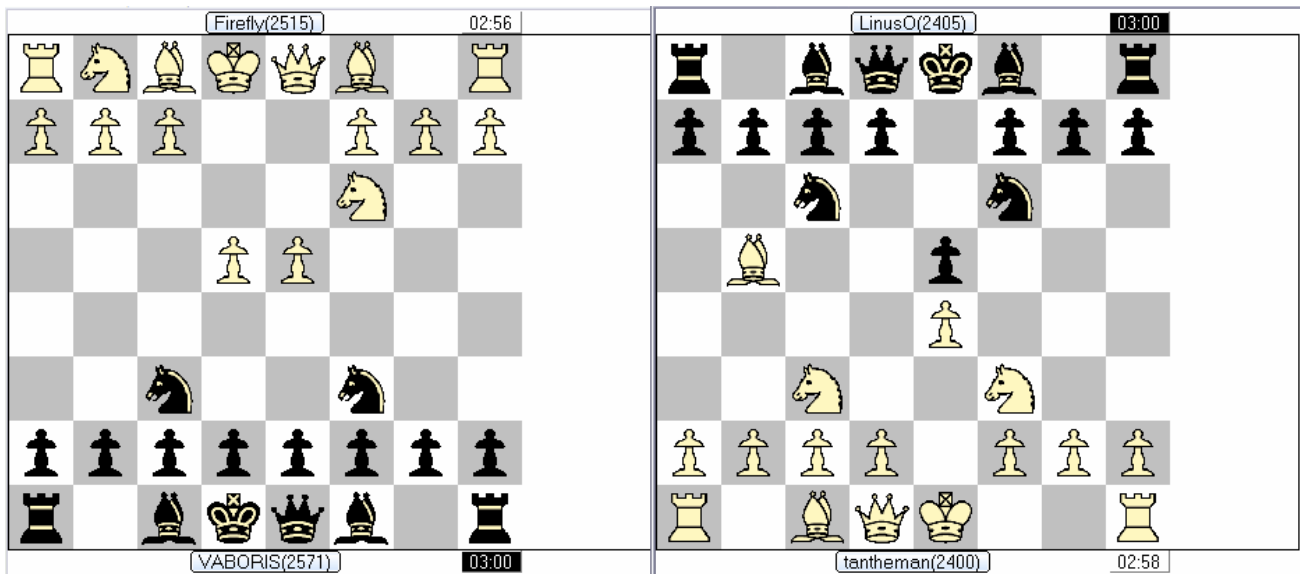
Game # 1

The following game between Firefly and LinusO (upper side) vs. Vaboris and Tantheman (lower side) was played on the FICS in March 2003. Linus Olson, Mark Polak, Igor Bjelobrk and Georg v. Zimmermann have commented on this game.

				1B. Nf3	03:00	e5	03:00
				2B. Nc3	03:00		
1A. e4	02:58	Nf6	03:00			Nc6	03:00
2A. Nc3	02:58	Nc6	03:00	3B. e4	02:59	Nf6	03:00
3A. d4	02:56			4B. Bb5	02:58		

Igor: After 1. Nf3 e5 best of course was Nxe5 but both Tantheman and LinusO played the opening too quickly to notice that a pawn is en pris.

Annotated Games

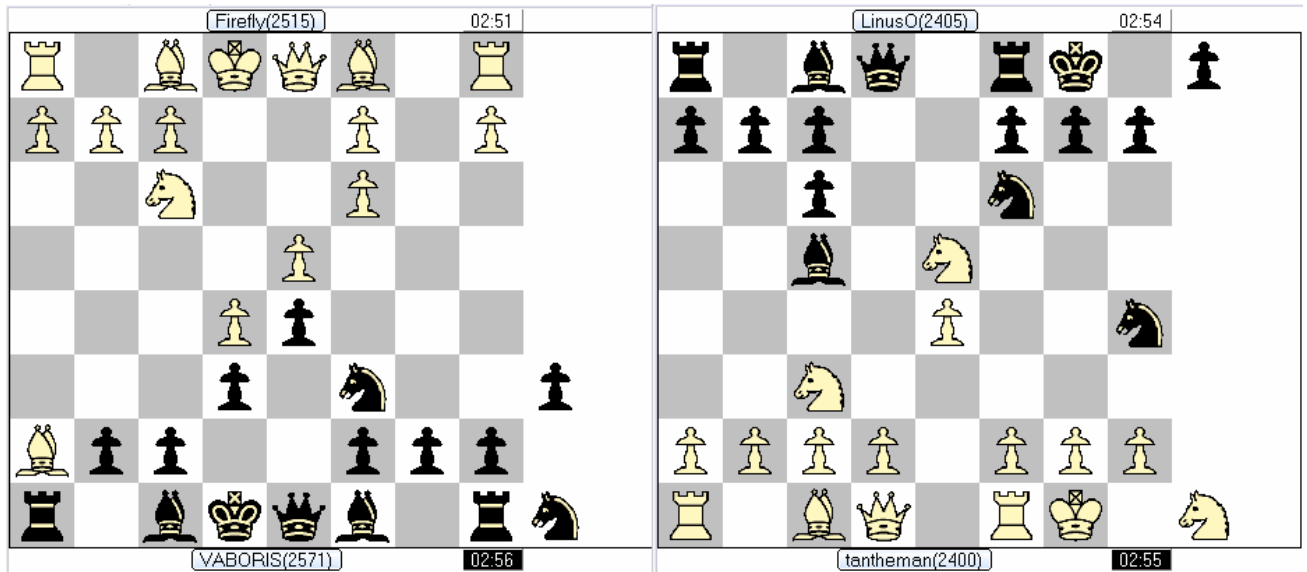


Linus: Tantheman chooses to play Bb5 with the obvious idea to win the e5 pawn. I don't think that is a good idea. Because black enjoys rapid development with dxc6 if white takes the Knight. Bc4 or Be2 are the normal moves.⁶

		e6	03:00		Bc5	03:00	
4A. e5	02:56	Nd5	02:59	5B. O-O	02:57		
5A. Nf3	02:56					O-O	03:00
		d6	02:58	6B. Bxc6	02:57	dxc6	02:59
6A. B@e4	02:55	Nxc3	02:57	7B. Nxe5	02:57		
7A. bxc3	02:53	d5	02:56			N@h4	02:54
8A. Bxh7	02:51	Rxh7	02:56				

⁶ see Linus' article on 1.e4 e5 [not in this preview]

Bughouse Chess



Mark: The idea of 8A. Bxh7 is to weaken the light squares on black's kingside, namely g6 and soon following f7. Perhaps it's a bit early to attack, but since the Bishop needs to be moved anyway, a tempo can often be worth at least a pawn in the opening. Also, Bd3 will be answered with p@e4, so the material is lost anyway.

Linus: Firefly play a nice idea that sometimes happens in variations where Nf6 is played, white takes exd5, black answers Nxd5, and moves that knight to b4. White plays Be4 and after P@d5 finally sacrifices on h7. The idea is to attack on the white squares on the kingside. More usual is attacking f6 with N@h5 and P@h6, but Bxh7 is very effective if white gets material.

Both Firefly and LinusO sacrificed a little in the opening. Those were solid sacrifices, they acquired good attacking chances. But as bughouse is a team game, there is a risk that if both attack they will run out of material. It is therefore important that both trade a lot to keep the other players attack going. If they do that and are fast, they have every chance of succeeding.

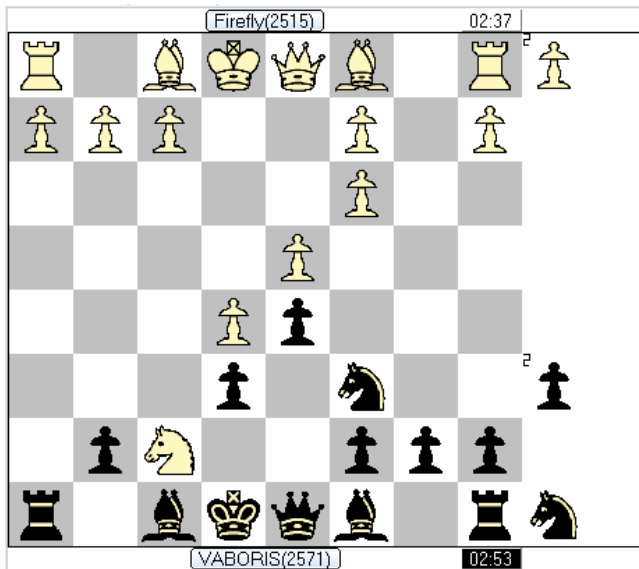
		Rxh7	02:56				
9A. Ng5	02:51	Rh8	02:55		8B. d4	02:53	P@h3 02:53

Linus: Tantheman's d4 is a typical sacrifice to get the bishop out, so you can put a pawn on h6. But black was first with his P@h3. Most often this is not dangerous, you just play gxh3 and Ng5. But here when black has already played N@h4 it is dangerous and white must defend carefully.

					9B. gxh3	02:50	Bxh3 02:52
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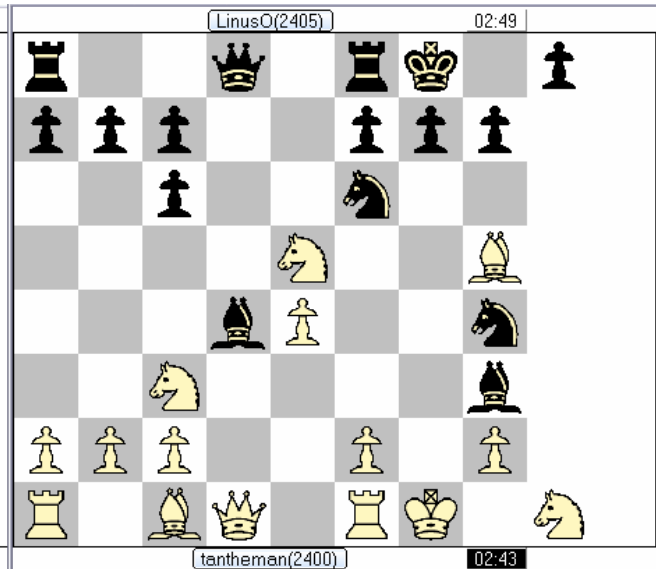
Annotated Games

10A. Nxf7 02:37



10B. B@h5 02:43

Bxd4 02:49



Linus: Firefly was sitting for pieces and Tantheman as well. I would have preferred to continue Firefly's attack with P@g6, but Firefly judges the position correctly as he is down 6 seconds. Vaboris would just have taken the pawn and Firefly would have nothing to put on f7 then. Nxf7 gets Vaboris king out on the board. It is in no danger of getting mated but it gives Firefly an enduring initiative.

Mark: Firefly managed to weaken the light squares and break a hole in Vaboris' defense. Nxf7 is a classic moment, some players might hesitate, pondering whether to take this knight. They probably think it's poisoned and taking it simply invites an attack on their exposed king. Needless to say, Vaboris makes the correct choice.

Now, while this is true it's not the whole truth. If black doesn't capture Kxf7 a natural move would be Qe7. White will most likely answer with Nxf8. So Black has lost a free rook (and the pawn on f7), and only his queen is defending the weak square of f7. Now, a queen is a piece that is quite easily chased further. So Black can't claim to have a completely solid position and he has lost material. In that particular position a rook is very useful for LinusO, as mate threats on the back rank are quite obvious to arrive.

Just in general though, one is usually better to choose between better position and gaining/keeping material. Losing them both makes the game futile.

In the meanwhile on the right board, both players seem to attack. The two most common anti-castle attacks are either on f2/7 or g2/7. Each player is trying a different method here.

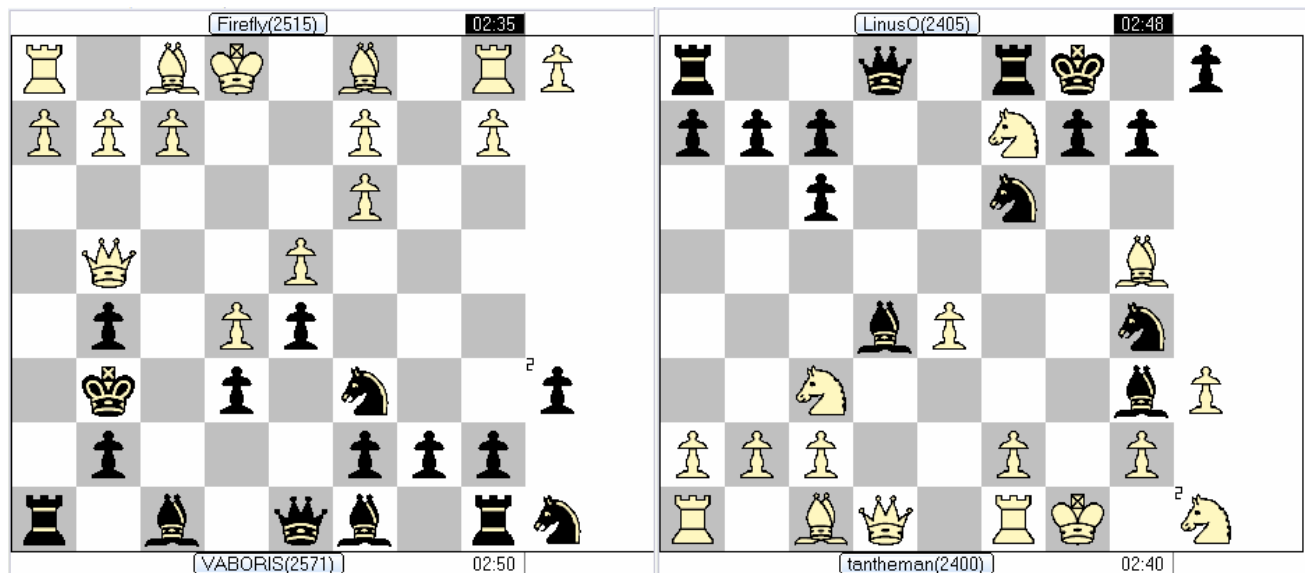
Bughouse Chess

Igor: Vaboris plays very quickly during this game while Firefly takes his time. A general advice is that a player should play as quickly as possible when defending in order to minimize the amount of pieces that their opponent can sit for. On the other hand a player with a strong attack can take their time and think about the moves that they play. This way if the other board stalls to deny the attacker any pieces then the attacker does not lose time due to thinking, but if the other doesn't stall then the attacker will get pieces to fuel his attack.

Linus: LinusO took on d4, maybe he should have done so last move already because now he threatens Bxf2+ forcing queen trades which is good for Firefly.

		Kxf7	02:51
11A. P@g6+	02:36	Kxg6	02:50
12A. Qg4+	02:35	P@g5	02:50

11B. Nxf7	02:40
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Linus: This is a typical situation when time is everything in bughouse, if LinusO and Firefly would have been up on time, they would have had an easy win. Easiest of course if Firefly had played Qxg5 forcing queen trades to mate on g2. But also then LinusO would have had time to feed Firefly's attack.

13A. h4	02:34
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12B. Kxf2	02:38	Bxf2+	02:48
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Linus: Tantheman took with the king instead of the Rook on f2 because he did not want black to be able to take the queen on d1 with check and then take on f7. If black plays Qxd1 now, white mates with N@e7#.

Annotated Games

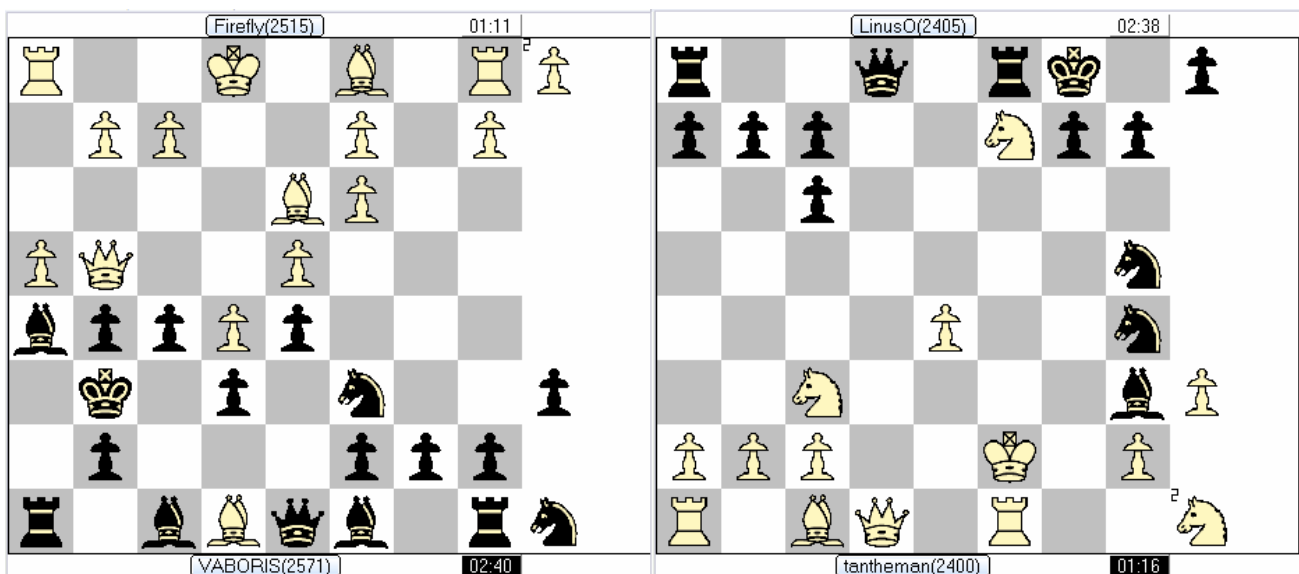
Mark: The next move by Vaboris is really good. After thinking for 10 second he makes a wise strategic decision. Vaboris position has too many holes to try tailoring it. If the position on the other board was a closed one, perhaps a more passive defense was possible as well. Yet the other board is very dynamic at the moment, with many trades expected to come. Vaboris makes a move which is sound both defensively and attack-oriented: creating immediate mate in one threats on d1 if Firefly choose to move his Queen.

Linus: I agree. Here Vaboris makes a really good defensive move. It not only threatens the queen, if it moves he mates with a rook or queen on d1. The next move by LinusO, N_xh5 is also very strong. It pins the white knight on f7 and black's king is safe. Not even a rook is dangerous because after R_@h8 K_xf7 the next move by black's king is a discovered check.

Firefly wanted to win time with his next move, B_d3+. He was sitting for a knight so he could play N_@f4+ K_f7 N_xh5.

		B@h5	02:40
14A. Bd3+	02:04	P@f5	02:40
15A. B@e8+	01:11		

		Nxh5	02:38
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Mark: B_@e8 !! Great move by Firefly. It takes away potential escape squares from the black king.

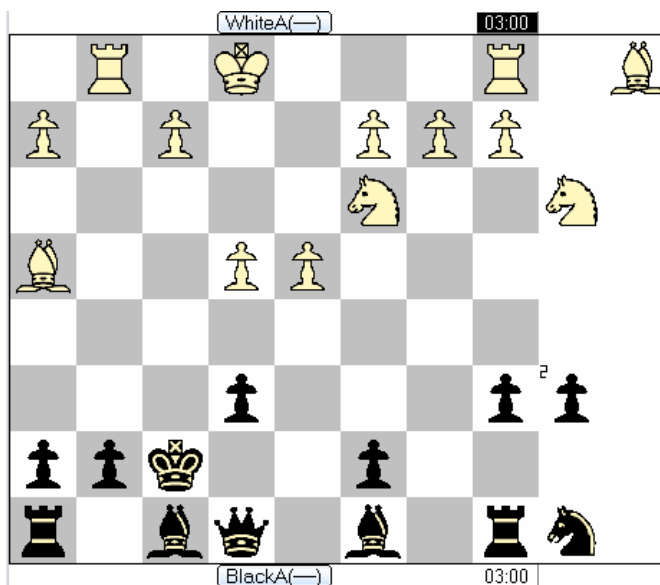
[...] Read the book to find out how the game continues, and see two more annotated games.

www.bughouse-book.com



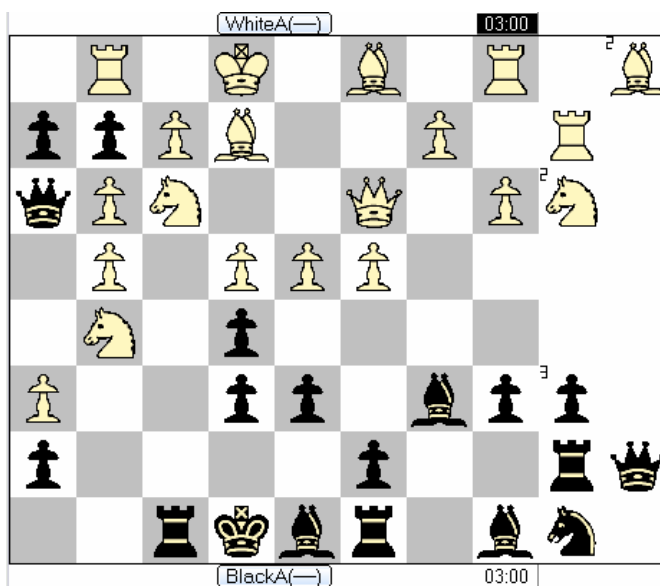
Fabrice Liardet, Dusan Skalous et al Puzzles

The first 18 puzzles are a good mix of Fabrice Liardet's brilliant compositions and missed checkmates from real games, so that you never know what kind of move to look for.



The last few puzzles are from a unique experiment. I let my bughouse playing program⁷ crunch away at hundreds of games to automatically find interesting mates.

Some of them are probably too hard to find for us feeble human minds. But do not despair! To make the puzzles interesting for a wide skill range I added a hint section (starting right after the last puzzle). In case you do not want to search for the solution any longer, or think you have found it but want a chance to try again if you are wrong, look there first.



No. 1 (above)

white to move mates. (easy)

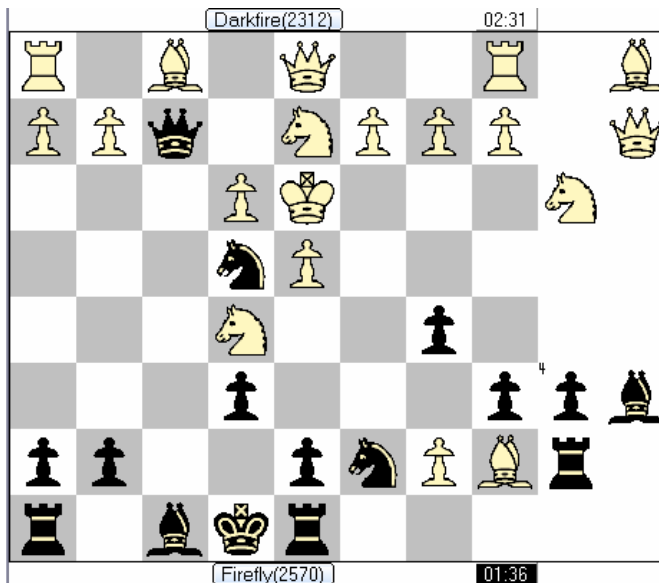
No. 2

white to move mates. (easy)

[...]

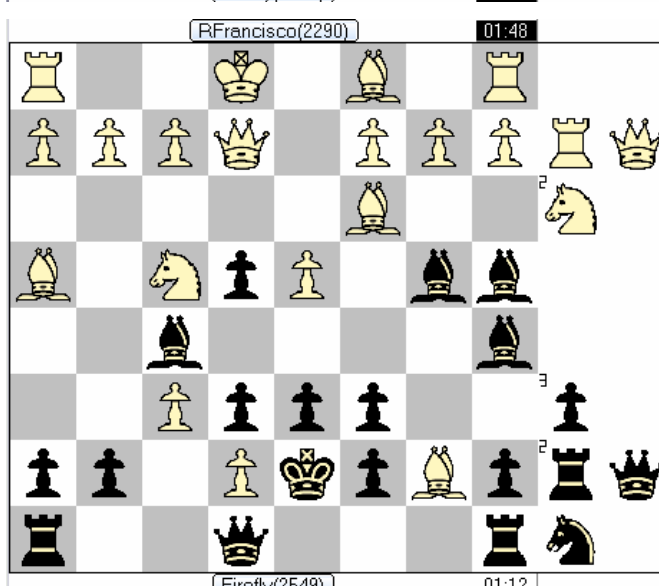
⁷ Visit sunsetter.sourceforge.net

Puzzles



No. 20

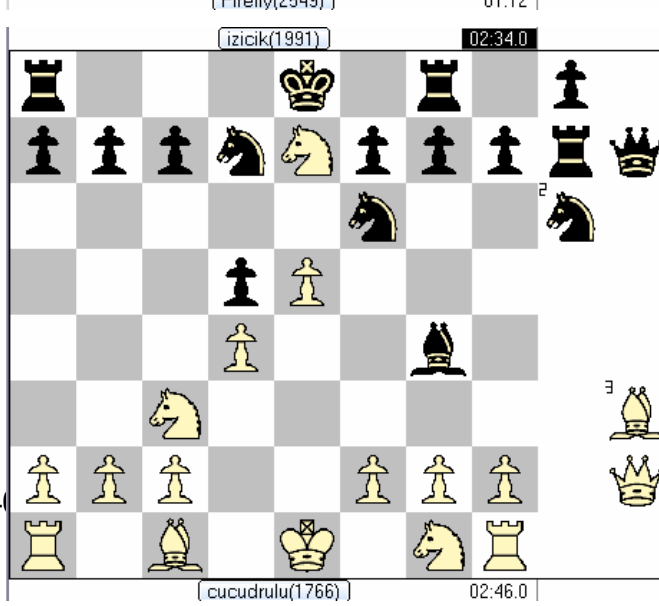
black to move mates. (medium)



No. 21

black looks completely safe.

Still white mates in just 5 moves. (medium)



No. 22

black mates. (easy)

4)

[cucudrulu(1766) 02:46.0]

Hints

No. 1

It is a mate in two. How would it be mate in one if the black king was on g8 ? How would it be mate in one if the black king couldn't go to g8 ?

No. 2

This one is from a game, and not a composition. Only the first move is "tricky". It is 1. B@c6+ !

[...]

No. 20

A perfect harmony of knight and rook. Queens, who needs queens ?

No. 21

The solution starts with 1. R@d8+ ! Rxd8 2.exd8Q Qxd8 . Now it is a mate in 3, but still not that easy !

No. 22

Black starts with a knight check. The second move looks obvious too, but it is not!

Solutions

No. 1 (F. Liardet, 1999)

Two moves suffice: **1.B@g8+! Kxg8 2.N@h6#** or **1...Rxc8 2.N@e5#**.

No. 2 (solution by M.Polak)

1. B@c6+ (1. ... Q@d7 2. N@g7+ Ke7 3. N@g8+ Rxc8 4. R@f7#; 1. ... Ke7 2. N@g8+ Rxc8 3. R@f7#) **1. ... Bxc6 2. N@g7+** (2. ... Ke7 3. N@g8+ Ke7 4. R@f7+ Rxf7 (4. ... Q@e7 5. Nf6#; 4. ... Be7 5. Nf6+ Kd8 6. Nxe6#) 5. B@e8#) **2. ... Kd7 3. B@e8+ Rxe8** (3. ... Ke7 4. N@g8+ Rxc8 5. R@f7#) **4. R@f7 Be7 5. N@f6+ Kd8 6. Nxe6#**

No. 3 (F. Liardet, 1999)

When attacking with knights and rooks, the possibility of a smothered mate should always be kept in mind. Even in this position where the black king seems to have enough breathing space (1.N@e5+ Ke8 2.P@f7+? Kd8 3.R@d7+ Kc8!), White mates with **1.Ne5+ Ke8 2.R@c8+!!** Checks from a distance are always more difficult to see, aren't they ? **2...Rxc8** Dropping on d8 would allow 3.P@f7#. With the c8 square blocked, what is now left is an easy smothered mate position. **3.P@f7+ Kd8 4.R@d7+! Nxd7 5.Nc6#**.

No. 20 (Darkfire – Firefly, 2005, solution found by Sunsetter)

1. .. Qxe3+ ! 2. Kxe3 Nd5+ ! 3. Kf3 (3.Kxe4 or Ke2 or Kd3 R@e3#) and now there is more than one option, for example **3.. R@e3+ 4.Kg5 h5+ 5.Kh5 g5#**

1. .. Nc5+ does not work: 2.dxc5 ! p@e4+ 3. Nxe4 p@c4+ 4.Nxc4 bxc4+ 5.Kxc4 and the white king is rather safe on b4.

1. .. p@c4+ as played in the game should not work as well, unless white plays 2.Ndxc4 bxc4+ 3. Kxc4 ?? which is what happened ...

No. 21 (RFrancisco – Firefly, 2005, solution found by Sunsetter)

1.R@d8+! Rxd8 2.exd8Q+ Qxd8 (2. .. Kxd8 3.Q@c8#) **3.Q@f7+! p@e7 4.N@b8+ Qxb8 5.Qxe7#**

No. 22 (cucudrulu – izicik, 2005, solution found by Sunsetter)

1. .. N@d3+ 2.cxd3 (else 2. .. Q@e1+ and mates) **2. .. R@d1+! 3.Nxd1 N@c2+ 4.Kd2 Q@e1+ 5.Kxc2 Bxd1+ 6.Kb1 p@c2#**

The book concludes with an article on Internet Chess and a Bughouse Dictionary: Bughouse Terminology in multiple languages.

More than 220 pages, more than 160 diagrams, 12 illustrations and pictures.

www.bughouse-book.com