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Attacking the King: Castling on the Same Side

In the present chapter, the second revolving around an attack on the king, we shall examine cases where both players have castled on the same side, i.e. they have – theoretically speaking – safeguarded their king.

The evaluation of one's potential for an attack against the king will play a significant role in this case. When the opponent's king is stuck in the centre or when the two players have castled on opposite sides, things are somewhat easier, at least where evaluation and calculation are concerned.

In the present case however, things are hardly clear since, in order to succeed in an attack, we often have to neglect the safety of our own king – though this is not always the case.

First of all we have to mention that the set of rules, requirements and conditions mentioned in the previous chapter also applies, almost in its entirety, to this chapter as well. However, the relative importance of these guidelines changes somewhat. More specifically, the most significant elements in this particular case are:

- 1) Space advantage, in general, and more specifically on the flank on which we intend to attack.
- 2) Ability to transfer forces to the flank on which we will attack.
- 3) Material superiority in that flank.
- 4) Presence of pawns and/or targets in the opposing king's defensive cover.
- 5) Absence (permanent or temporary) of the opponent's defensive forces.

Naturally, an attack of any kind does not necessarily aim at checkmating the king; it can also lead to significant material or positional gains.

The defending side must organize its defence always keeping in mind the possibility of counterattacking. The weaknesses possibly created

by the opponent during the prosecution of the attack can serve as targets. Moreover, the player on the receiving end of the attack often seeks activity on the other flank or the centre. This leads to very interesting games, where the winner is determined by the correct realization of each side's plans.

To quote one fundamental principle of chess: "a weakness is a liability (positional or tactical) that can be attacked; otherwise it is not considered a weakness". Consequently, if we are compelled to move the pawns protecting our king we have to judge whether this makes our king accessible to the opponent's forces and to what extent. This will help us determine whether by acting so we are really creating a weakness. The reader should note that while there are be rules and generalities, there will always be exceptions, and in chess the specific considerations will always trump the general ones.

Hebden – Grivas

Iraklion 1984

1 e4 e5 2 f4 d5 3 exd5 c6

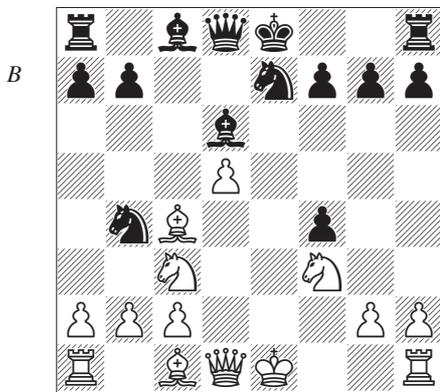
White has opened the game with clearly aggressive intentions by playing the King's Gambit. Black does not evade the challenge, offering a countergambit of his own.

4 ♖c3

One should beware of the typical error 4 fxe5?? ♖h4+ 5 ♖e2 ♗e4+ 6 ♖f2 ♙c5+ 7 d4 ♙xd4+ 8 ♖g3 ♙xe5+ 9 ♖f2 ♙d4+ 10 ♖g3 ♗g6+ 11 ♖f4 ♗f5+ 12 ♖g3 ♙f2# (0-1) Perenyi-Grivas, Athens 1984.

4...exf4 5 ♗f3 ♙d6 6 d4 ♗e7 7 dxc6 ♗bxc6 8 d5 ♗b4 9 ♙c4 (D)

9...♙f5!?



This move was suggested by Henley after he tried 9...0-0 in Hebden-Henley, New York 1983, which proved slightly better for White.

10 ♖b3! 0-0 11 0-0

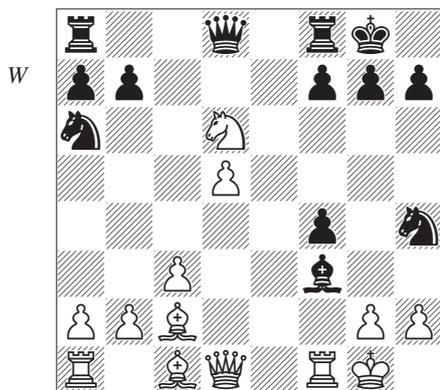
White's plan is to play a3, ♘d4 and then capture the f4-pawn. Black must tread carefully.

11...♙g4! 12 ♗e4 ♘f5 13 c3! ♗a6 14 ♙c2 ♗h4?!

An initial inaccuracy. 14...♗c5! is correct. After 15 ♗xd6 ♜xd6 16 c4 (16 ♙xf5 ♙xf5 17 ♗d4 ♙e4 is unclear) 16...♗h4! 17 ♙xh7+ ♖h8! Black has compensation for the pawn in a complex position that offers plenty of possibilities to both sides.

15 ♗xd6 ♙xf3? (D)

Black definitely had to play 15...♜xd6 16 ♙xh7+ ♖h8 17 ♙c2 ♜ae8! with unclear consequences. Now his king turns out to be very exposed.



16 ♗d3! f5

16...g6 17 ♙xf4 ♙xg2 18 ♜f2! is also losing for Black.

17 ♙xf4

White's superiority is obvious. His pieces cooperate well and his initiative is irresistible.

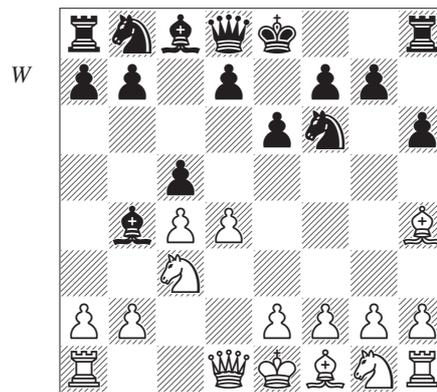
17...♙xg2 18 ♜f2 ♗g6 19 ♗xf5! ♙xd5 20 ♜e1! ♙f7 21 ♙d6 ♜b6 22 ♙xf8 ♜xf8 23 ♜e3! 1-0

Black resigned due to 23...♗c5 24 ♗e7+ ♖h8 25 ♜xg6!.

Grivas – Skembris

Athens 1984

1 d4 ♗f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♗c3 ♙b4 4 ♙g5 h6 5 ♙h4 c5 (D)



6 d5

The only move promising White any advantage. 6 ♜c1 cxd4 7 ♜xd4 ♗c6 8 ♙xf6 ♗xd4 9 ♙xd8 ♖xd8 10 e3 ♗c6 11 a3 ♙e7 (11...♙xc3+ 12 ♜xc3 b6 13 ♗f3 ♙b7 14 ♙e2 ♖e7 = Grivas-Dawson, Oakham 1984) 12 ♗f3 f5!? 13 ♙e2 ♙f6 14 0-0 ♖e7 15 ♜fd1 b6 16 b4 ♜d8 17 ♗d4 ♙b7 18 ♙f3 ♜ab8 = Grivas-Leko, Iraklion ECC 1997.

6...♙xc3+ 7 bxc3 e5 8 ♜c2

8 d6!? is an interesting move.

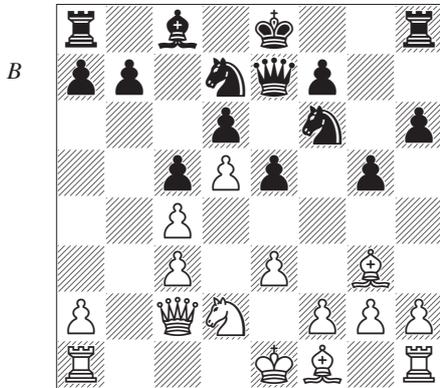
8...d6 9 ♗f3 ♗bd7 10 e3

10 e4 is also often played, but with entirely different ideas from the text-move.

10...♜e7 11 ♗d2

The battle revolves around the e4-square. The side that gains control of this square will be able to claim the advantage.

11...g5 12 ♖g3 (D)



12...♗h5?!

Inaccurate. 12...e4! is much better: 13 h4 (13 0-0-0!? can also be considered, as in Spassky-Kholmov, Moscow 1957) 13...♖g8 14 ♖e2 ♗b6 with unclear play.

13 ♖e2!

13 ♖d3?! ♗f4! would be a bad idea for White.

13...♗df6

13...♗xg3?! 14 fxg3! or 13...♗f4?! 14 exf4 exf4 15 ♖xf4 gxf4 16 0-0! would be clearly inferior. Black must keep the position (and the f-file in particular) closed.

14 0-0 0-0 15 ♖ae1

Preparing to push f4. Black has lost the fight for the e4-square and has problems coming up with an active plan.

15...♖g7 16 ♖d3

After the careless 16 f4?! exf4 17 exf4 ♗xg3! 18 hxg3 ♖e3+ 19 ♖h2 ♖e8 Black would be fine.

16...♖d7 (D)

17 h3!?

Planning ♖h2, g4 and f4. Once again, 17 f4?! is premature, due to 17...♗xg3 18 hxg3 ♗h5.

17...♗g8

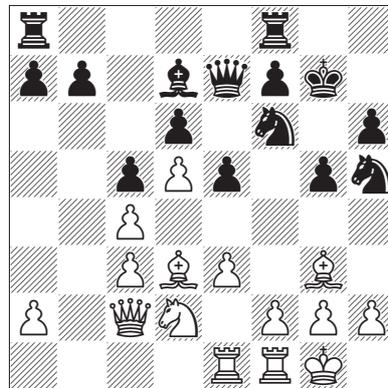
17...♗xg3?! would now be erroneous, in view of 18 fxg3 g4 19 ♖f5!. Black should probably have preferred 17...♖ae8 18 ♖h2 ♖h8 ±.

18 ♖f5!

Black was threatening 18...f5!.

18...♖h8! 19 ♖g4!

W



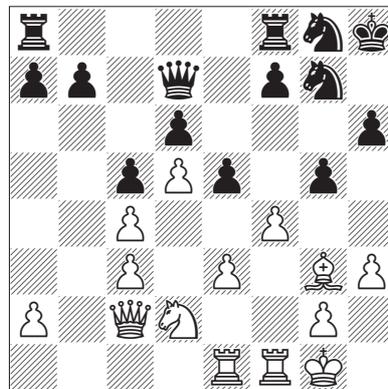
Again practically forced, to meet the threat of 19...♖xf5 20 ♖xf5 ♗g7 21 ♖c2 f5.

19...♗g7?

Black should have consented to a slightly worse ending after 19...♖xg4 20 hxg4 ♗xg3 21 fxg3 ♖d7 22 ♖f5. White will place his knight on e4 and then play on the queenside with ♖b1 and a4-a5, securing some advantage. After the text-move, White has the opportunity to open up the kingside and whip up a menacing attack against the black king.

20 ♖xd7 ♖xd7 21 f4! (D)

B



Finally!

21...exf4

Forced, as 21...f6 22 fxe5 dxe5 (22...fxe5 23 ♖g6!) is definitely not to Black's liking.

22 exf4 f5

Other moves do not diminish White's advantage: 22...g4 23 f5! or 22...♗f5 23 ♖h2 ♖ae8 24 ♗e4.