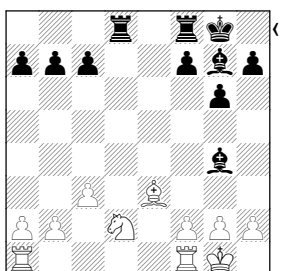


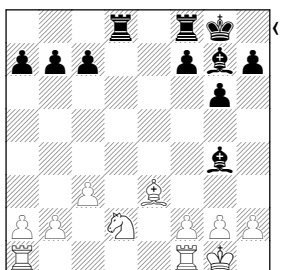
BISHOP PAIR IN THE ENDGAME



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The first world champion Wilhelm Steinitz was the first who told about the advantage secured by a pair of bishops. He worked out a method of play for the player with the bishop pair: by advancing his pawns along all the front, he gradually deprives the opponent of squares for knight's maneuvering. Steinitz won many memorable games with the bishop pair; the following two are real classics.

SIMPLE CASES



SIMPLE CASES

In this section we will examine the most simple cases when the player with a bishop pair wins without any visible efforts - it may even seem that the two bishops win by themselves!

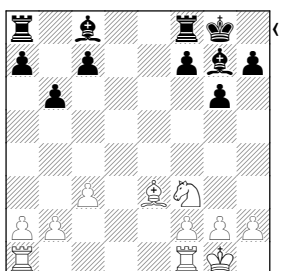
Black is better. In a very instructive way Steinitz magnifies his advantage, step by step restricting White's pieces, first of all the knight. 1... Rfe8 2. Nb3 b6! (depriving the knight of the c5-square) 3. h3 Be6 4. Rfd1

[Necessary was 4. Nd4 Bd7 5. a4 , retaining chances for a draw.]

4... c5! Now the knight at b3 is completely out of play. 5. Bg5 f6 6. Bf4 Kf7 7. f3 g5 Having seized space on the Q-side, Black is doing the same on the K-side. 8. Rxd8 Rxd8 9. Be3 h6 10. Re1 f5 11. f4 Black threatened 11... f4, severely squeezing White's position. 11... Bf6 12. g3 a5! 13. Nc1 a4 14. a3 Bc4 Soon White will have no moves at all. 15. Kf2 gxf4 A specific approach.

[15... Rd5 , followed by an advance b5-b4, was good also.]

16. Bxf4 Bg5! This is the point: the bishop exchange reveals White's weaknesses. 17. Bxg5 hxg5 18. Ke3 Kf6 19. h4 This loses by force, but White's position was defenseless in any case. 19... gxh4 20. gxh4 Re8+ 21. Kf2 Rxe1 22. Kxe1 Ke5 23. Ne2 Bxe2 24. Kxe2 Kf4 25. c4 Kg4 26. Ke3 f4+ 27. Ke4 f3 28. Ke3 Kg3 White resigned. In the same tournament, and in a similar fashion, Steinitz won the following ending.



1... c5! (depriving White of the important d4-square) 2. h3 Be6 3. Rfd1 Rfd8 4. a3

White can hardly manage without this weakening. 4... Bb3 5. Rxd8+ Rxd8 6. Nd2 Ba4 7. Re1 h6 Black prepares a pawn advance on the K-side. 8. g4 As it was shown in the previous example, a passive defense could not save White.

8... Bf8 9. Ne4 Bc6 10. Nd2 f6 Black does not hurry and calmly improves his position, while White does not have any counterplay. 11. h4 Kf7 12. f3 Rd5 13. Kf2 f5! 14. g5 h5 15. Bf4? This is definitely a mistake, but one can hardly advise White something better. 15...

Bd6! 16. c4 Rd4 17. Be3

[17. Bxd6? Rxd2+ 18. Re2 Rxd6°]

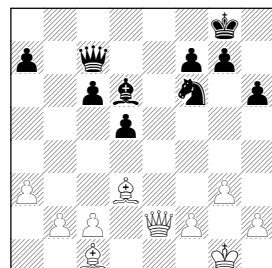
17... Rxh4 18. Nf1 Rh3 White resigned.

Steinitz's games perfectly demonstrate a winning plan with the bishop pair: a pawn advance on both flanks, a seizure of space, and a final squeeze of the opponent's pieces. In the middlegame, when there are many pieces on the board, it is difficult for the player with the bishop pair to use this method due to the exposing of his own king's position. Besides, in the middlegame, many other

factors should be taken into account while evaluating a position and working out a plan: attack on the king, pawn structure, open files - these are more important than the bishop pair. That is why, while speaking about the bishop pair, we will further mean only the bishop pair in the endgame.

As a rule, the player with the bishop pair wins easier when there are no other pieces on the board, and so he can make the best of his bishops.

Spielmann R. - Vidmar M., New York, 1927

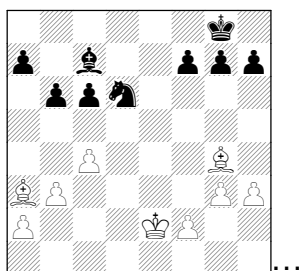


Many chessplayers, even masters and grandmasters, underestimate the power of a bishop pair. Here are two examples taken from the games by Rudolf Spielmann, one of the strongest grandmasters in the beginning of the 20th century.

In this position a draw was agreed, though White has a clear advantage. He can play c2-c4, after which Black is faced with a difficult choice: either to advance his d-pawn, thus allowing White to create a passed pawn, or to create himself a weakness on c6. In both cases Black's

defense is difficult.

Spielmann R. - Capablanca J., New York, 1927



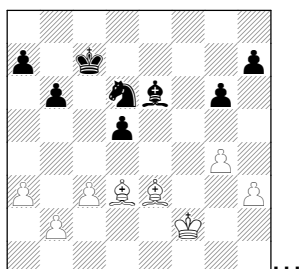
In this position too, the players agreed a draw, though after 1. c5 it was difficult for Black to hold on.

[or 1. Kd3 c5 2. b4]

Thus in one prestigious super-tournament Spielmann lost at least half a point, and this is all the more incomprehensible because he could play for a win without any risk.

Let us now study some examples that prove the bishop's pair power.

Bronstein D. - Levenfish G., Moscow, 1949



Black is in trouble. White threatens to

break with his king to the g6- and h7-pawns. Besides, the black Q-pawns are also weak - sooner or later White will get to them. The d5-pawn is of no importance, and White will exchange it by playing c4 in order to open up diagonals for his bishops. 1. Bc2 White does not have to hurry. 1... Nc4 2. Bc1 Kd7 3. Kg3 Ke7 4. Kf4 Kf6 Black succeeds in blocking the white king's way, but only for a while. 5. h4 Bd7 6. b3 Ne5

[Better is 6... Nd6]

7. c4! (bringing the dark-squared bishop into play) 7... Ke6 8. Bb2 Nf7 9. cxd5+ Kxd5 10. Be4+ Kd6 11. Bg7 White's bishops control all the board. 11... Be6 12. b4 Ke7 13. Bd3 Nd6

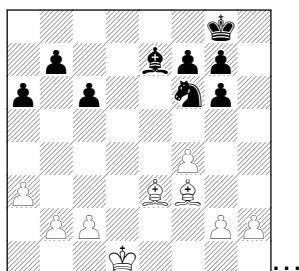
[If 13... Bb3 or 13... ♞d5, preventing h4-h5, then 14. Be5! Nxe5 15. Kxe5 Be6 16. g5 followed by a bishop's transfer to d5.]

14. h5 Bf7 15. Kg5 gxh5 16. gxh5 Bg8 17. h6 White has fixed the weakness on h7, and now his task is to penetrate with his king to g7. 17... b5 18. Bd4 Nc4 19. Bc5+ Ke6 20. a4 a6 21. a5! (fixing another weakness - the a6-pawn) 21... Ke5 22. Bf8 Ne3 23. Bg7+ Kd6 24. Be4 Nd5 25. Bf8+ Kc7

[25... Ke5 26. Bf5 followed by ♞c8]

26. Kf5 The king finally breaks to the h7-pawn; the rest is clear. 26... Nc3 27. Bc2 Nd5 28. Ke5 Ne3 29. Be4 Ng4+ 30. Kf5 Nf2 31. Bc2 Bc4 32. Kf6 Bd3 33. Bxd3 Black resigned.

Panchenko A. - Bykhovsky A., Nevinnomyssk, 1971



Here too, White's bishop pair is the main factor. By the way, pay attention that this position is similar to the one occurred in Spielmann - Capablanca, New York 1927.

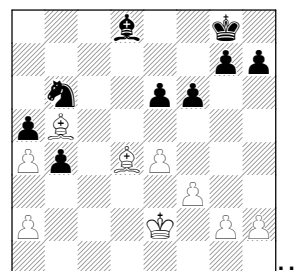
White's plan is typical: to advance pawns on both flanks in order to restrict the opponent's pieces and to create weaknesses in his camp. 1. c4 Kf8 2. b4 Ke8 3. Kc2 Kd7 4. Kb3 Kc7 5. g4 (according to the plan) 5... Ne8 6. a4 Kc8 Black is forced to wait passively for what White will undertake. 7. b5 Kc7 8. bxa6 bxa6 9. c5 (tightening the squeeze) 9... Kb7 10. Kc4 Nc7 11. Be4 Ne6 12. g5 Nf8 Black is unable to find a good square for his knight.

[If 12... Bd8, then 13. h4 Bc7 14. f5] 13. Bf3 f6 This simplifies White's task, but in case of a passive defense Black was also gradually losing. 14. h4 Ne6 15. Be2 Bd8 16. Bd3 f5

[16... Nf8 17. Bd4, threatening 18. gxf6 ♗xf6 19. ♗xf6 gxf6 20. f5] 17. h5 Bc7

[No better is 17... gxh5 18. Bxf5] 18. h6 gxh6 19. gxh6 Nf8 20. Kd4 Nh7 21. Bc4 Nf6 22. Bg8! Black resigned.

Boensch U. - Chekhov V., 1985



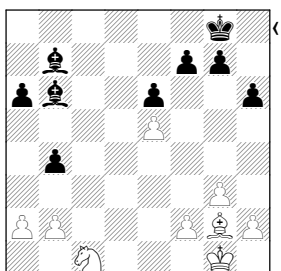
Black seems to have a firm position, but it is not the case; rather quickly White converts his advantage into a win. 1. Kd3 Kf7 2. Kc2 Bc7 3. Kb3 h5

[Black is unable to approach with his king by 3... Ke7 in view of 4. Bc5+] 4. h3 e5 5. Be3 h4 Black managed to "freeze" the K-side, but White breaks through on the Q-side.

[5... Ke6 does not work due to 6. h4, threatening 7. ♗e8] 6. Bd2! (threatening 7. a3) 6... Nc8 This is forced, but now the white king penetrates to the a5-pawn. 7. Kc4 Bb6 8. Ba6 Nd6+ 9. Kd5 Ke7 10. Kc6 Bd4 11. Bd3 g5 12. Bc1 Bf2 13. Bb2 Be1

[After the more stubborn 13... Be3 14. a3 Bd2 15. axb4 Bxb4 White wins by 16. Bc1 followed by ♗e3-c5.] 14. Kb6 Nc8+ 15. Kxa5 b3+ 16. Ka6 bxa2 17. Bc4 Kd7 18. Bxa2 Ne7 19. Bc4 Nc8 20. Ba3 Black resigned.

Sosonko G. - Karpov A., 1979

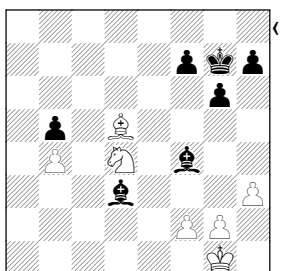


1... Bc8!

[Of course, not 1... Bxg2?]

2. Be4 Bd4 3. Nd3 a5 4. Kg2 f5 5. exf6 gxf6 6. g4 White is trying to set up a fortress, but against a bishop pair this attempt is usually doomed to failure. Here Black's task is to prepare f6-f5. 6... Kf8 7. b3 Ke7 8. Kg3 Kd6 The king has come to the center. 9. Kf4 Bd7 10. h3 Bb5 11. f3 Bd7! (zugzwang) 12. Kg3 f5 The plan is fulfilled, and White's position is falling apart. 13. gxf5 exf5 14. Bb7 Bb5 15. Ne1 Bc3 16. Nc2 Bd3 White resigned.

Vize H. - Yudovich M., Varna, 1972



In order to reach a draw, White needs only one move, ♣c6, but Black prevents this. 1... Be5! 2. Nc6 Bc3 3. Na7 (again, 4. ♣c6 is threatened) 3... Bd4 4. Nc6 Bb6 5. g3

[On 5. Ne5 there follows 5... Be2 6. Nxf7 Bc7 (threatening 7... ♣c4) 7. Ng5 Bd6 8. Ne6+ Kf6 9. Nc5 Ke5μ]

5... f6 6. Kg2 Kf8 7. Na5 If White defends passively, Black transfers his king to d6. 7... Ke7 8. Nb3 Bc4

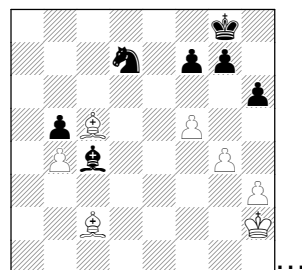
[This forces a transition to a bishop vs. knight ending, but 8... Kd6 would have been even stronger: after 9. Bb7 f5! White does not have any good move.]

9. Bxc4 bxc4 10. Na1 Kd6 The passed c-pawn is extremely dangerous. 11. Kf3 Kd5 12. Nc2 c3 13. Ke2 Kc4 14. f3 Ba7 The b-pawn is doomed. 15. g4 g5 16. b5 Bc5 17. Na1 Kxb5 18. Kd3 Kb4 19. Nc2+ White's last hope is to set up a fortress, but the black king penetrates to his camp from the rear. 19... Kb3 20. Na1+ Kb2 21. Nc2 Bb6 22. Nb4 Bc7 23. Nc2 Be5 24. Ne3 Kc1 The rest is clear. 25. Nc2

[25. Ke2 Bf4°]

25... Kd1 26. Ne3+ Ke1 27. Nc2+ Kf2 28. Ke4 Ke2 29. Na3 Bd6 30. Nc2 Kd2 White resigned.

EXCHANGE OF ONE OF THE BISHOPS



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Quite often, while playing with a bishop pair, a situation occurs when, in order to utilize an advantage, it is both necessary and sufficient to trade one of the bishops for an opponent's knight or bishop. So it is not without reason that chessplayers joke: "a bishop pair is good just because one of the bishops can always be favorably exchanged". Nevertheless, it is the bishop pair that allows the stronger side to obtain some advantage before such an exchange. As a rule, the bishop exchange is aimed either to break down an opponent's fortress, or to simplify a position.

White is better, but so far he has not achieved anything real. In order to obtain some more serious advantage, he must use his bishop pair. 1. Bd6 Nb6 2. Kg3 Bd5 3. Kf4 Nc4 4. Bc5 Bg2 Black has built a fortress which White is unable to take without an exchange of the light-squared bishops. But before this White improves his position. 5. Bd3 f6

[5... Bxh3? 6. Kg3□]

6. h4 Bc6 7. h5 (fixing the black pawns, which will further play an important role) 7... Kf7 8. Be4 Bd7 9. Bd4 Ke7 10. Ba8 (the safest square for the bishop) 10... Be8 11. Ke4 Bf7 12. Ba7 Kd7

[If 12... Ne5, then 13. Bc5+ Ke8 14. Kd4 (or 14. Bd6)]

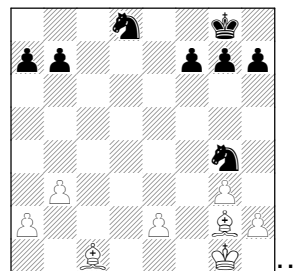
13. Kd4 Ne5 14. Bd5 Black has a dismal choice. 14... Nc6+

[Black loses after both 14... Bxd5 15. Kxd5 Nxc6 16. Bc5 Ke8 17. Kc6; and 14... Be8 15. Bc5 followed by 16. ♣f8]

15. Bxc6+ Kxc6 16. Bc5 Bc4 17. Ke4! , and Black resigned. He is unable to prevent White from playing ♣f8xg7xh6,

after which the bishop is transferred to d4. Then, diverting the black king by h5-h6-h7, White wins the f6-pawn and obtains a pair of connected passed pawns.

Petrosian A. - Panchenko A., Vilnius, 1978



Black is on the verge of defeat. He would like to settle his knights on e4, e5, or e6, but his last hope is dashed against the power of White's bishop pair. 1. Bf4 Kf8 2. Bf3 Nf6 3. Kf2 Ke7 4. Ke3 Nd7 5. Kd2 Nf8

[After 5... Nc6 6. Kc3 too, Black's defense is difficult.]

6. Be3! (forcing a decisive weakening of the black Q-side) 6... a6

[6... b6 is no better.]

7. Kc3 Now White brings his king to b6; Black is unable to prevent this. 7... Nfe6 8. Kb4 Kd6 9. Ka5 Kc7 10. Bb6+ Kc8 (it seems that Black still holds on, but...) 11. Bxd8! By exchanging his bishop, White invades the key b6-square, after which Black will be completely paralyzed.

11... Nxd8 12. Kb6 Kb8 13. Bd5 Even one bishop is too strong. 13... h6 14. e3

Before decisive actions White reinforces his position. 14... Kc8 15. a4

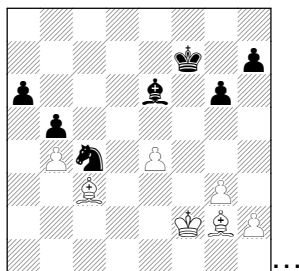
Kb8 16. a5 Kc8 17. e4 Kb8 18. e5 Kc8 19. b4 Kb8 20. h4 Kc8 21. h5 Kb8 22. Be4 f6

[If 22... Kc8 , then 23. Bf5+ Ne6 (or 23... Kb8 24. Bd7) 24. Bxe6+ fxe6 25. b5 , and White wins the pawn ending thanks to his extra tempo, g3-g4.]

23. e6! Nxe6 24. Bxb7 f5 25. Bxa6 f4 Black resigned.

We have already seen some examples of the bishop exchange previously, so in this section we content with the last two.

BISHOP PAIR WITH A PASSED PAWN



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A bishop is a long-range piece, therefore a bishop pair excellently supports a passed pawn. It is important that the pair of bishops can take control over all squares on the pawn's way. The defender has a hard job of stopping the pawn; his only chance is to block it on the square of his own bishop's color. The blockade, however, is usually removed with the help of zugzwang.

So far Black reliably blocks the e4-pawn, but by subtle play White manages to advance it. 1. Kf3! It is useful to provoke g5. 1... g5 2. Ke2 Bd7 3. Kd3 Ke6 4. h4! (opening the position) 4... gxh4

[If 4... g4 , then 5. h5! , and the pawns at g4 and h7 become weak.]

5. gxh4 Kd6 6. Kd4 Bg4 7. Be1 Via g3 the bishop is transferred to g5 where it will support an advance of the e-pawn.

7... h5 8. e5+ Ke6 9. Bd5+ Kf5

[After 9... Ke7 10. Bb7 the a6-pawn is lost.]

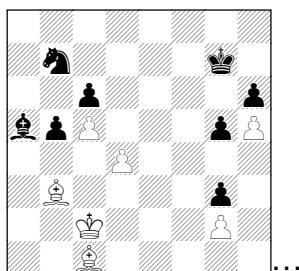
10. Bg3 Nd2 11. Bg8! The pawn is ready to advance. 11... Bd1 12. e6 Kf6 13. Be5+ Ke7 14. Bf4 Nc4 15. Bg5+ Kf8 16. e7+ Ke8 17. Bh7 Nd6 Black has fortified his last defensive position, but he is powerless to hold it for a long time.

18. Ke5 Kd7 19. Kf6 White tries to penetrate with his king to f8. 19... Bb3 20. Kg7 Ke8 21. Kf6 Kd7 22. Bg6 (threatening 23. e8) 22... Ne8+ 23. Ke5 Bd1 Black is powerless to defend all his weak points. 24. Bf5+ Kc6 25. Be3 Bf3 26. Bc5 Be2

[If 26... a5 , then 27. Bg6 Kd7 28. bxa5]]

27. Kf4 Bc4 28. Bg6 Kd7 29. Kg5 Black resigned.

Karpov A. - Seirawan Y., Brussels, 1986



1. d5! (creating a passed pawn) 1... Nxc5
2. Bb2+ Kf8 3. dxc6 Na6

[Black has to watch over the passed c6-pawn, at the same time protecting his weak pawn at h6. That is why he now could not play 3... Ke8 4. Bg7□]

4. Ba3+ Ke8
- [4... Bb4? 5. c7□]
5. Be6 Bb4 6. Bb2 Bf8

[Black is also in trouble after 6... Kf8 7. Bc8! Nc7 8. Be5 Ba5 9. Bxg3]

7. Bd7+ Kd8 8. Be5 Nb4+ 9. Kd2 Nd5 10. Be6 Nc7 11. Bf7 Ne8

[Black is in zugzwang. He cannot move with his bishop due to ♔g7, nor he can

stick to waiting tactics by 11... Na6 in view of the following piquant line: 12.

Be6 Nc7 13. Bf5 Na6 14. Kd1 Nc7 15. Bf6+ Ke8 16. Bg6#]

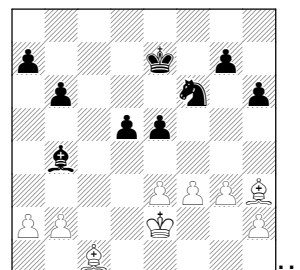
12. Bxe8! By exchanging his bishop White transposes into a won bishop ending. 12... Kxe8 13. Bf6! It's all over now. Black's king must watch over the c6-pawn, while his bishop is powerless to defend two pawns at once, b5 and h6. 13... g4 14. Kc3 Bd6 15. Bg7 Bf4 16. Kb4 Kd8 17. Kxb5 Kc7 18. Kc5 Bd6+ 19. Kd5 Bf4 20. Bf8

[20. Be5+ also wins.]

- 20... Kb6 21. Bd6 Bg5 22. Bxg3 Black resigned.

Panchenko A. - Azmaiparashvili

Z., Dnepropetrovsk, 1980



So far White does not have a passed pawn, but it will appear soon. 1. b3 Bc5

2. Bb2 Bd6 3. f4! exf4 4. exf4 Kf7 5. Kf3 Ng8

Black is powerless to hold his knight on f6. 6. Bd7 Nf6 7. Bf5 Ng8 8.

g4 Ne7 9. Bd7 g5 This simplifies

White's task, Black is better to stick to waiting tactics. 10. f5 Being supported

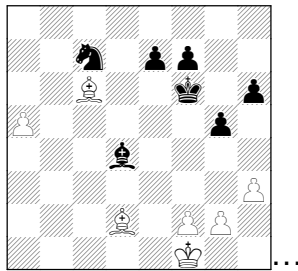
by the bishops, this pawn decides. 10... Bxh2 11. Be6+ Ke8

[11... Kf8 12. Ba3 followed by 13. f6□]

12. Bg7 Nc6 13. Bxd5 Ne5+ 14. Ke4 Nxd5 15. f6 Ne5 16. Kf5 Nf7 (17. ♔e6 was threatened) 17. Bc6+ Kd8 18. Ke6 Kc7 19. Bf3! The simplest. From h5 the bishop supports the f-pawn, at the same time stopping the opponent's pawns. 19... Nd8+ 20. Kd5 Bd6 21. Bh5 Nc6 22. f7 Nb4+ 23. Kc4 Be7

[23... Nxa2 24. Be5!□]

24. a4 Nc2 25. f8=Q The rest moves were not obligatory. 25... Ne3+ 26. Kb5 Bxf8 27. Bxf8 Nf5 28. Bg6 Nd4+ 29. Kc4 Nf3 30. Kd5 Nd2 31. b4 a5 32. b5 Nf1 33. Bxh6 Ne3+ 34. Kd4 Black resigned.



The farther from the center is a passed pawn, the more difficult is a defense.

White has a large edge: his passed a-pawn is extremely dangerous, while the black K-side pawns are weak. 1. f4!

Ke6

[After 1... gxf4 2. Bxf4 the pawn at h6 is doomed.]

2. Ke2 Kd6 3. Bf3 f6 4. fxg5 fxg5

[In response to 4... hxg5, unpleasant for Black is 5. g3 followed by h4 - against two lateral passed pawns Black is defenseless.]

5. Kd3 Kc5 6. Ke4 Nb5

[A desperate attempt of active counterplay. On 6... e6 White plays 7. Bg4, transferring then his other bishop to g3.]

7. Kf5 e5 8. Kg6! White has precisely calculated all consequences of Black's counterplay involving an advance of the e-pawn. 8... Nd6 9. Kxh6 e4 10. Be2 e3 11. Be1 Ne4 12. Bf3 Nf2

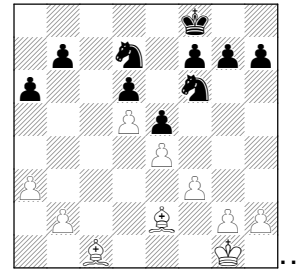
[An ending with opposite colored bishops after 12... Nd2 13. Bxd2 exd2 14. Kxg5 is hopeless for Black.]

13. Be2 Bf6 14. a6 Kb6 15. Kg6 Be7 16. Kf5 Nh1 17. Ke4 Bc5 18. Kf5 (a move repetition in time trouble) 18... Be7 19.

Kg4 Bf6 20. Ba5+ The rest is clear.

20... Ka7 21. Bb4 Bd4 22. Kf3 Nf2 23. Be7 Black resigned.

MORE COMPLEX EXAMPLES



MORE COMPLEX EXAMPLES

Let us now examine several examples in which a win with a bishop pair was complicated and required good technique. The greatest difficulties arise in closed positions when the bishop's power is depreciated, and the defender obtains good chances to set up a fortress. In such cases, after long-lasting maneuvering, gradual improving of his position, and putting the opponent in zugzwang, the stronger side usually employs one of the already examined methods: creation of a passed pawn, bishop exchange, etc. The stronger side's king plays a very important role here.

1. Kf2

[Stronger is 1. b4! preventing the maneuver 1... ♞c5 2. b4 ♞a4 followed by b7-b5. If 1... Nb6, then 2. Bd1! Ke7 3. Bb3 Ne8 4. f4, and further play

continues as in the game.]

1... Ke7 2. Be3 Kd8 3. Ke1 Kc7 4. Kd2 Nc5 5. b4 Ncd7?!

[More stubborn would have been 5... Na4!? 6. Bd1 b5 7. Bxa4 bxa4 8. Kc3 Nd7 9. b5 a5]

6. g3

[More precise is 6. a4 , preventing ♖b6-a4]

6... Nb6 7. Kc2 Nbd7

[Black misses his last chance to play 7... Na4]

8. a4! Nb6 9. a5 Now the a6- and b7-pawns are fixed, constantly requiring protection. 9... Nbd7 10. Bc1 Kd8 11. Bb2 Ne8 12. Kd2 Nc7 13. Ke3 Ke7 14. Bf1 White improves his position. 14... Nb5 15. h4 Nc7 16. Bh3 Ne8 17. f4 (threatening 18. ♔d7 followed by 19. fxe5) 17... f6 18. Bf5 This forces Black to weaken his K-side. 18... g6 19. Bh3 h6 (with the idea of playing g5 in response to f5, but it was better to keep the pawn on h7) 20. Bc1 Ng7 21. fxe5! dxe5

[Bad is 21... Nxe5 due to 22. Bc8; whereas after 21... fxe5 22. Kf3 h5 23. Bg5+ Ke8 24. Ke3 Black is paralyzed.]

22. Kf3 h5 23. Be3 Kd6 24. Bh6 Ne8 25. g4! (opening the position) 25... hxg4+ 26. Bxg4 Nc7 27. Be3 Nb5 28. Ke2 Nc7 29. Kd3! (zugzwang) 29... f5 This creates White a passed h-pawn which quickly decides the game,

[but no better is 29... Nb5 in view of 30. Be6 Ke7 31. Bc5+ Nxc5+ 32. bxc5 followed by ♔c8]

30. exf5 gxf5 31. Bxf5 The rest is simple. 31... Nxd5 32. Bd2 N7f6 33. Kc4 Kc6 34. Bg6 b5+ 35. Kd3! Ne7 36.

Be4+ Ned5

[36... Nxe4 37. Kxe4 Kd6 38. h5 Ke6 39. h6 Kf6 40. h7 Kg7 41. Kxe5□]

37. Bg5 Nh5

[If 37... Kd6 , then 38. Bxf6 Nxf6 39. Bb7□]

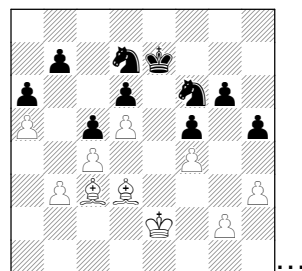
38. Bf3 Ng3 39. Bd2

[The immediate 39. h5 could have given Black chances for a draw after 39... Nxe5 40. Bxe5 Nxb4+]

39... Kd6 40. Bg4 (with the idea of ♔c8)

40... Nf6 41. Bc8 Kc6 42. Be1! e4+ 43. Kd4 Ngh5 44. Bf5 Kd6 45. Bd2 Black resigned.

Uhlmann W. - Gligoric S., Hastings, 1971



The position is closed, which makes White's task difficult. In order to win, he must conduct two breakthroughs, b3-b4 and g2-g4, but only under favorable for him circumstances. 1. Be1 Kf7 2. Ke3 Ke7 3. Bc2 Kf7 4. b4! cxb4 (otherwise White plays 5. b5 with the idea of 6. bxa6) 5. Bxb4 Nc5 6. Kd4

[After 6. Bxc5 dxc5 followed by ♖e8-d6 White is unable to win.]

6... Nfd7 7. Bd1 Having fettered the black knights on the Q-side, White prepares a breakthrough on the K-side.

7... Ke7

[7... h4? 8. Be1]

8. g4! hxg4 9. hxg4 Kf6 10. Ke3
(threatening to attack the f5-pawn after
11. ♣c3 ♠f7 12. gxf5 gxf5 13. ♣h5) 10... b6

[A dubious decision. Better was 10...
fxg4 , though Black's defense would be
difficult in that case too.]

11. gxf5 gxf5

[On 11... bxa5 possible is 12. Bc3+
Kxf5 13. Bc2+]

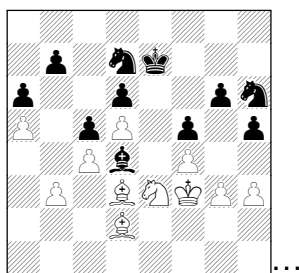
12. Bxc5 Nxc5

[After 12... bxc5 13. Ba4 Nb8 the white
king's raid to h4 is decisive.;

Bad is also 12... dxc5 due to 13. Ba4]

13. axb6 a5 14. Bc2 Ke7 The f5-pawn
is doomed. 15. Kd2 Kd8 16. Bxf5 Na4
17. b7 Kc7 18. Bc8 Nc5 19. f5 Black is
hopeless. 19... Ne4+ 20. Kc2 Kb8 21.
Kb3 Nd2+ 22. Ka4 Nxc4 23. f6 Ne5 24.
Kxa5 Black resigned.

Polugaevsky L. - Uhlmann W.,Amsterdam,1970



This example is similar to a previous one,
with the addition of a couple of knights.
White's plan is the same - to conduct g4
and b4. 1. Nc2 The best square for
the knight is h4, but so far White fails to
find it. 1... Bb2 2. Ke3 Nf6 Black's

fortress seems impregnable. 3. Ne1

White switches to a preparation of the
g3-g4 advance, leaving the b3-b4
breakthrough in reserve. 3... Bd4+ 4.

Kf3 Bb2 5. Ng2! Nd7 6. Nh4 Kf6 7. Ke3
Nf7 Black believes he is in safety. 8.
Bc2 Ba1 9. Ke2 Bb2 10. Be1 Ba1 11. g4!

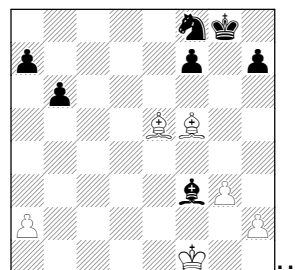
If Black kept his knight on h6, preventing
g4, then White would break by 11. b4
cxb4 12. ♣xb4 ♠c5 13. ♣xc5 dxc5 14. d6.

11... hxg4 12. hxg4 fxg4 13. Nxg6 Kg7
14. Nh4 Kf8 15. Bf5 The position has
been opened, and the white bishops
begin to work. 15... Nf6 16. Bc8 Nd8 17.
Nf5 Nh5

[17... Ne8 18. Bh4]

18. Bd2 Bd4 19. Nxd4 Black resigned.

Chernin A. - Petursson M.,Norway,1979



In open positions a bishop pair may
compensate for small material losses. For
example, in the following ending White
managed to win, being a pawn down.

White has an edge, but he must prevent
Black from exchanging the Q-side
pawns. 1. Bb8 a6 2. Bc8!

[But not 2. Bc7 b5 3. Bc8 b4! 4. Bxa6
Bd5=]

2... Bd5

[2... a5 3. Bc7]

3. a3 Bc4+ 4. Kf2 Ng6

[Bad is 4... Ne6 in view of 5. Ba7]

5. Ke3!

[5. Bc7? Ne7! followed by 6... ♞d5=]

5... Ne7 6. Bb7 a5 (White threatened 7. ♞d4 followed by 8. ♜a7 or 8. ♜c7) 7. Kd4 Be6 8. Bc7 Nc8 White forced his opponent to completely turn to defense, and now he reinforces his position on the K-side. 9. Ke5 Kg7 10. Bd8 Bh3 11. Be4 Be6 Black has to stick to waiting tactics. 12. Bd3 Bh3 13. Be2 Be6 14. g4! Bb3 15. Ba6 Be6 16. Be2 Bb3

[After 16... h6 17. g5 White creates a passed pawn on the h-file.]

17. g5 Be6 18. h4 Bh3 19. h5 Be6 20. Bd3 Bg4 21. h6+ Now the black king will be tied to the defense of the h7-pawn.

21... Kg8 22. Bc7 Bf3 23. Bc4 Bg4 24. a4?!

[This move does not miss the win, but 24. Kf6 was simpler.]

24... Bd1 25. Kf6 Bh5 26. Bb5 Bg4 27. Bc4 Bh5 28. Bd5 Bg6

[Black is in zugzwang. On 28... Kf8 there follows 29. Be4 Bg6 (30. ♜f5 was threatened) 30. Bb7□]

29. Bb7 Bc2! Black's only chance is to set up a fortress. 30. Bc6

[30. Bxc8 wins also, but under time pressure Chernin does not dare to capture the knight.]

30... Bd3 31. Bd7 Bc2 32. Be8 Bb3 33. Bd7 Bc2 34. Ke5 Bd1 35. Kd4 Bb3 36. Kc3 Be6?!

[Black could have sacrificed the knight by 36... Bd1, transposing into the ending, which he permitted on move

29. Still, after 37. Kb2 Bf3 38. Bxc8 Bc6 39. Ka3 b5, as it was pointed out by Dvorietsky, White would have won.]

37. Bxe6 fxe6 38. Kc4 Kf7 39. Kb5 Kg6 40. Bxb6 Kxg5

[No better is 40... Nxb6 41. Kxb6 Kxg5 42. Kxa5 e5 43. Kb4 Kf4 44. Kc3! Kf3 (44... Ke4 45. Kd2□; 44... e4 45. Kd2□) 45. a5 e4 46. a6, and the white pawn promotes with check.]

41. Kxa5??

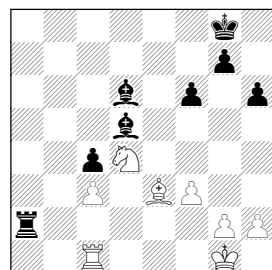
[A blunder. White could have won by 41. Bc5, trapping the knight.]

41... Kf6??

[A blunder in response. After 41... Nxb6 42. Kxb6 e5 the pawn ending is drawn.]

42. Bc5! e5 43. Kb5 Ke6 44. Kc6 e4 45. a5 Ne7+ 46. Kc7! Nd5+ 47. Kb7 Black resigned.

BISHOP PAIR WITH ROOKS ON THE BOARD



BISHOP PAIR WITH ROOKS ON THE BOARD

In endings with rooks, a plan of utilizing a bishop pair is the same as without rooks:

the stronger side advances his pawns, creates weaknesses in the opponent's camp, and then attacks them. Moreover, creation of a passed pawn, bishop exchange, as well as all other already examined methods work also with rooks on the board. Of course, the stronger side should not be afraid of exchanging rooks.

Black's plan involves a pawn advance on the K-side, but first of all he transfers his bishop to d3 where it will restrict the white rook. 1... Bf7! 2. Rd1 Bg6 3. Nc6

[Perhaps, it makes sense to sacrifice a pawn by 3. Nf5 Bxh2+ 4. Kxh2 Bxf5, transposing into an ending with opposite colored bishops.]

3... Bd3 4. Bd4

[Necessary is 4. Nb4 Bxb4 5. cxb4 Rb2 6. Bd2, and though White's position is clearly worse, it is playable, for example 6... Be2 7. Bc3]

4... Rb2 5. Re1 Kh7 6. Ne7 h5!

Preparations are over, and Black begins a final storm. 7. Nd5 h4 8. Ne3?

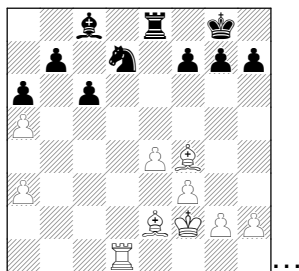
White should not have allowed 8... h3.

8... h3 9. g3 f5 10. f4 (this is forced) 10... Be4 11. Ra1 Kg8 12. Re1 g5! (a decisive blow) 13. Rd1

[13. fxe5 Bxe5]

13... gxf4 14. Ba7 fxe3 White resigned.

Kasparov G. - Smyslov V., Vilnius, 1984



In this example White also magnifies his advantage by means of a pawn advance on the K-side. 1. g4 Nc5

[After 1... h6 Black should consider the h4-h5 advance, which will sooner or later reveal the weakness of the black pawns at g7 and h6.]

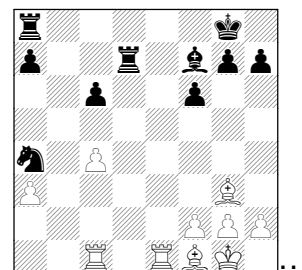
2. Be3 Nd7

[2... Ne6 3. g5]

3. g5! (fixing the black K-side pawns) 3... Ne5 4. Bd4 Ng6 5. Kg3 Nf8 6. h4 Rd8 7. f4 Be6 8. Bc3 The rook exchange will not make Black's life easier. 8... Rxd1 9. Bxd1 Nd7 10. f5 Bc4 11. h5! (preventing 11... f6, which would be met by 12. h6!) 11... h6 12. gxh6 gxh6 13. e5

Black's position is hopeless: his king is tied to the defense of the h6-pawn, while White threatens to break with his king on the Q-side. 13... Nc5 14. Kf4 Bd5 15. Bc2 f6 This simplifies White's task. 16. e6 Kg7 17. Bb4 Nb3 18. Ke3 c5 19. Bc3, and Black resigned, because he is unable to prevent ♞e4 followed by a breakthrough of the white king.

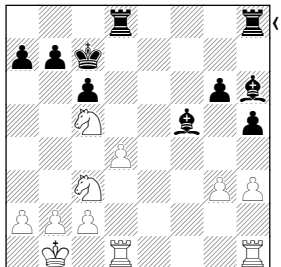
Kasparov G. - Smyslov V., Vilnius, 1984 2



1. c5! Black is clearly worse: his knight is shut out of play, while the white bishop

has an excellent outpost at d6. 1... Re8
 2. Rxe8+ Bxe8 3. Bd6
 [Worse is 3. Rc4 due to 3... Rd1! 4.
 Rxa4 Bg6 5. Rxa7 Bd3 , and White's
 win is doubtful.]
 3... Bf7 4. Rb1 Bd5
 [Stronger is 4... h5]
 5. Rb8+ Kf7 6. Rf8+ Ke6
 [Dangerous is 6... Kg6 because of 7.
 Bd3+ Kh6 8. Bf4+ Kh5 9. Bf5 with
 mating threats.]
 7. g3 g6 8. Ba6 Rxd6 (this is forced) 9.
 cxd6 Kxd6 10. Rxf6+ Ke5 11. Rf8 c5 12.
 Re8+ Kd4 13. Rd8! Ke5 14. f4+ Ke4 15.
 Bf1 Bb3 16. Kg2 Nb2 , and Black
 resigned.

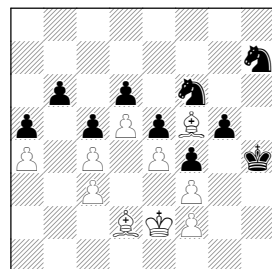
Belavsky A. - Ivanchuk V., Linares, 1995



Despite being a pawn down, Black is
 better, because his bishops are obviously
 stronger than the white knights.
 Besides, the white K-side pawns require
 a protection. 1... Be3 2. Rde1!?
 [Weak is 2. Nb3 due to 2... Bf2]
 2... Rde8!
 [Of course, not 2... Bxd4 3. Ne6+ , and
 White retains good drawing chances.]
 3. Nb3 Bf2 4. Rxe8 Rxe8 5. g4 (there is
 nothing better) 5... hxg4 6. hxg4 Bxg4 7.

Rh7+ Kd6 8. a4 Re7 9. Rh2
 Exchanging rooks also could not have
 saved White. 9... Be3 10. a5 Bf5 11.
 Ne2 Kd5! 12. Nc3+ Kc4 13. Re2 Bg5° 14.
 Rg2 Bf4 15. Ka2 g5 16. Rf2 b6 17. Ka3 ,
 and in this hopeless position White lost
 on time.

SUCCESSFUL FIGHT AGAINST BISHOP PAIR



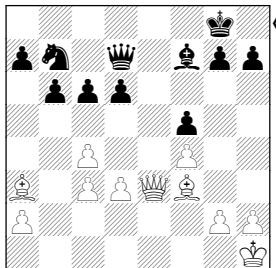
SUCCESSFUL FIGHT AGAINST BISHOP PAIR

Sometimes a pair of bishop turns out
 weaker than a bishop and a knight or two
 knights, though such cases are very rare.
 This usually occurs in closed positions
 when the bishops are restricted by their
 own or opponent's pawns. Here are some
 typical examples.

In this position the knights are obviously
 stronger than the bishops. The game
 continued: 1... g4! 2. fxg4

[If 2. Bxg4 , then 2... Nxg4 3. fxg4 Ng5]
 2... Ng5 3. f3 Kg3 4. Be1+ Kg2 5. Bh4
 (the bishop is released, but...) 5... Nxf3! 6.
 Bxf6 Ng5! 7. Bxg5 f3+ 8. Kd2 f2 , and
 Black went on to win.

Suba M. - Smyslov V., Las Palmas, 1982



Black is better because of White's problem bishop at a3 and weak pawns at c3 and c4, but a win is difficult. 1... Nd8 2. Bd1 c5 (further restricting the bishop) 3. Bc1 Kf8 4. Qe2 Qc6 5. Qc2 d5 6. Bf3 Qd7 7. cxd5 Bxd5 8. Be2 (avoiding a bishop exchange after which Black's advantage would be apparent) 8... Ne6 9. Be3 Ke7 10. Qd2 Qc6 All Black's pieces are placed excellently. 11. Bf1 c4! 12. d4 a5 13. Qb2 Nc7 14. Bc1 Nb5 15. Qc2 Kf6 16. Kg1 Be4 Black step by step intensifies his pressure. 17. Qf2 Kf7

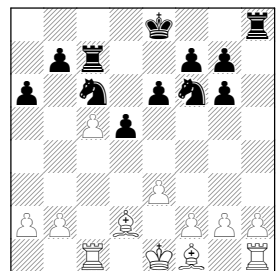
[But not 17... Nxc3 in view of 18. d5, enlivening the bishop.]

18. Bd2 Nd6 19. Qh4 h6 20. Qh5+ Kg8 21. Qg6 Bd5! (with the idea of hiding the king at h7) 22. Be1 Bf7 23. Qg3 Qe4 24. Qh4 Kh7 25. Bf2 Bd5 (perfect harmony) 26. Qd8 Nb5 (starting decisive actions) 27. Qxb6 Nxc3 28. Qxa5 Ne2+ 29. Bxe2

[29. Kh1 c3°]

29... Qxg2# A brilliant victory.

Dorfman J. - Panchenko A., Cheliabinsk, 1975



The position is closed, and White lacks development. Black has an advantage, but he must play boldly. 1... Ne4 2. a3

[2. f3 loses a pawn due to 2... Ng3 3. Rg1 Nxf1 4. Kxf1 Rxh2]

2... Ke7 3. b4 Ne5 The knights dominate over the bishops. 4. Be2 a5! (threatening 5... axb4 6. axb4 la8) 5. Ra1 f6

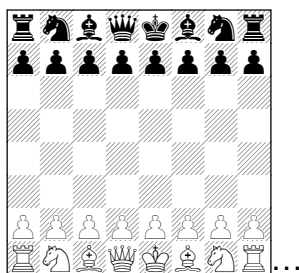
[On 5... Ra8 there follows 6. Bc1 axb4 7. Bb2 f6 8. axb4]

6. Bc1 Ra8 7. f3

[This loses a pawn. Better was 7. Bb2]

7... Nc3! 8. Bb2 axb4 9. axb4 Rxa1+ 10. Bxa1 Na2! (this is the point) 11. Kd2 Nxb4 12. Rb1 Na6 13. Bd4 Nxc5 14. Bxc5+ Rxc5 15. Rxb7+ Kf8 The rest of the game does not relate to the subject, and therefore is given without annotations. 16. Bb5 g5 17. Rb8+ Ke7 18. h3 Rc7 19. Rg8 Kd6 20. Bf1 Ra7 21. Kc3 Ra3+ 22. Kd2 Ra1 23. Be2 Rg1 24. f4 Nc4+ 25. Bxc4 dxc4 26. g4 Rg2+ 27. Kd1 Kd5 28. fxg5 fxg5 29. e4+ Kxe4 30. Rxc7 Rh2 31. Rg6 Kd3 32. Ke1 c3 33. Rxe6 White resigned.

HOW THE POSITIONS WITH A BISHOP PAIR ARISE?



HOW THE POSITIONS WITH A BISHOP PAIR ARISE?

In opening theory there are many systems in which one of the players obtains a bishop pair: the Nimzo-Indian, the Cambridge Springs variation in the Queen's Gambit Declined, The Ruy Lopez, the Rauzer system in the Sicilian, the French, and others. Not always the player with the bishop pair has an advantage after the opening, because the opponent usually gets some compensation: development lead, attack on the king, better pawn structure, and so on. The possessor of the bishops dreams about the future endgame, but, as it was picturesquely said by Tartakower, "between the opening and the endgame the gods created the middlegame". That is why the player with the bishop pair sometimes strives for the endgame even at the cost of a pawn, relying on the bishops' power.

Here are some examples.

In a well-known line of the Rauzer

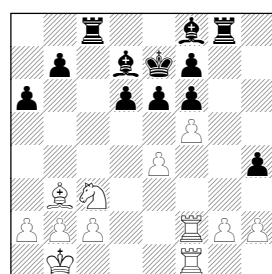
system, after the introductory moves 1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 d6 6. Bg5 e6 7. Qd2 a6 8. O-O-O Bd7 9. f4 b5 10. Bxf6 gxf6 11. f5 Qb6 12. Nxc6 it was previously considered that Black is forced to recapture at c6 with the queen, because on 12... Bxc6 there follows the unpleasant 13. fxe6 fxe6 14. Qf4, and in the case of 14... ♞e7 15. ♜f4 White is better. Nevertheless, later on it was discovered that Black has an interesting possibility: 14... h5! , and after 15. Qxf6 Qe3+ 16. Kb1 Rh6! 17. Qf3

[Or 17. Qh4 Be7]

17... Qxf3 18. gxf3 Rf6 followed by ♞e7 and ♜h6, the game transposes into an endgame where Black's chances are not worse, despite being a pawn down.

In the next game Black conducted a similar pawn sacrifice.

Suetin A. - Botvinnik M.,1952



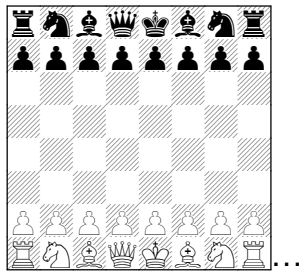
1... Bh6! [... 2... ♞e3 3. ♜e2 (or 3. ♜f3) 3... ♞d4] 2. fxe6 fxe6 3. Rxf6 Rcf8 4. Rxf8 Bxf8! One rook should be preserved from being exchanged. 5. Rf2 Bh6 6. Bc4 Be3 7. Re2 Bg1 8. g3

[After 8. h3 Black keeps better

chances, and so White gives up his extra pawn, hoping for a draw.]

8... hxg3 9. hxg3 Rxd3 Black regained a pawn and retained the advantage thanks to his pair of bishops; then, by exact play, Botvinnik converted it into a win.

Huebner R. - Smyslov V., 1983



1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nf6 3. Nxe5 d6 4. Nf3 Nxe4 5. d4 d5 6. Bd3 Be7 7. O-O Nc6 8. c4 Nb4 9. cxd5 Nxd3 10. Qxd3 Qxd5 11. Re1 Bf5 12. Nc3 Nxc3 13. Qxc3 Be6! By sacrificing a pawn, Black completes his development. 14. Qxc7 Bd6 15. Qc2 O-O 16. Bd2 Bf5 Black's bishop pair completely compensates for the sacrificed pawn; the game ended in a draw.

The examined examples confirm that in open positions a bishop pair has an advantage over a bishop and a knight, as well as over two knights, which can be roughly evaluated as half a pawn.