



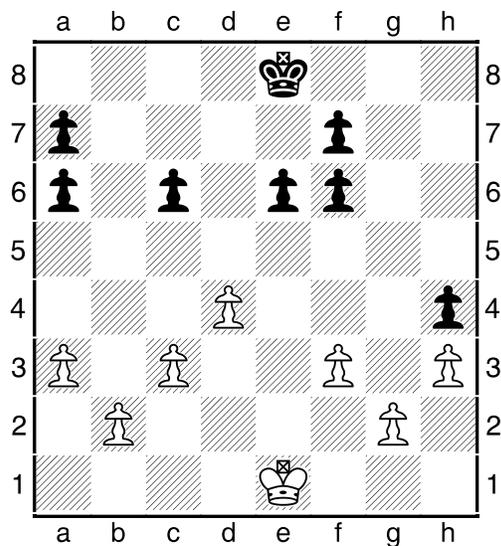
Elite

Building Mental Muscles™

Monday 8th February
Trial Lesson 1 (David Cordover)

Today's lesson: Pawn Structure

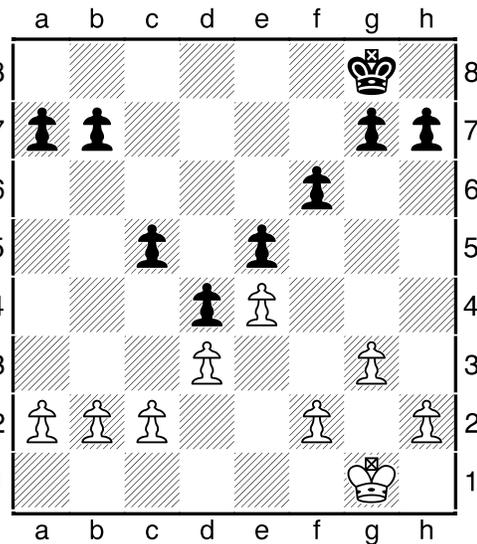
How do you work out whose pawn structure is better? (#234)



Identify the Strong Pawns and Weak Pawns

- Pawn Chain (b2-c3-d4)
- Pawn Wall (e6, f6)
- Granite Pawn (d4)
- Islands (fewer is better)
- Backwards Pawn (b2, g2)
- Isolated Pawn (a6/7, c6, h5)
- Doubled Pawn (a6/7, f6/7)

Pawn Breaks are Attacking Moves (#333)



White's Pawn Breaks are f2-f4 or c2-c3
 Black's Pawn Breaks are c5-c4 or f6-f5

Consider what happens to the Pawn Structure, Central Control and Open Files after each of the 4 possible breaks. Which is the best Pawn Break for each side? A Pawn Break is an attacking move because it creates an Open File for your attack.

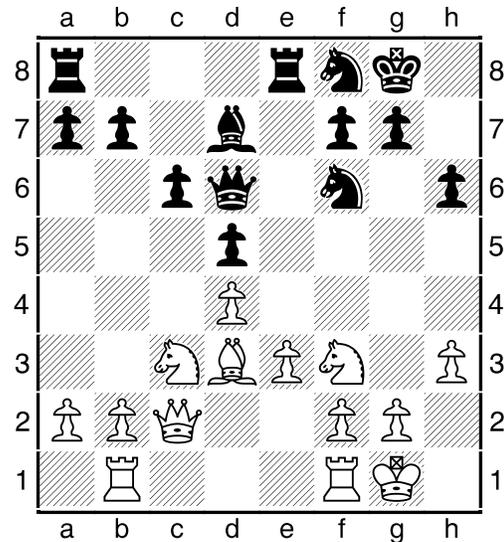
Now we are going to see how knowledge of strong and weak pawns and of Pawn Breaks plays out in a real game.

Game Analysis – Master v. Amateur

Minority Attack (#147)

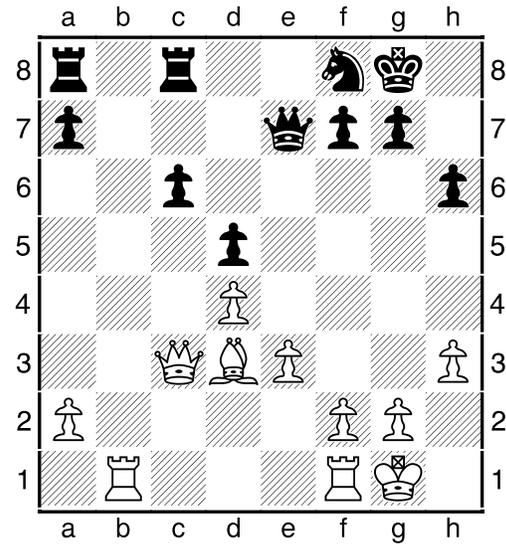
1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.cxd5 This may seem like a surprise as it allows Black to recapture with his e-pawn, thus releasing his bishop from its cramped position. White makes the exchange in order to use the half-open c-file. A half-open file is one where the attacker's pawn has been removed, but an opponent's pawn is still on the file. Sometimes open files can be useless as both players can control them with a Rook. The possession of a half-open file is undisputable. Practice has shown that in this position it is far easier for White to attack along the half-open c-file than it is for Black to use the half open e-file. 3...exd5 Obviously the move as Qxd5 would allow Nc3 and e4 with a crushing centre. 4.Nc3 Nf6 5.Bg5 Be7 Normal developing moves. 6.e3 0-0 White has two courses of action here. To O-O-O and go for an attack on Black's King. Or, as in this game, to go for the minority attack. 7.Qc2 This move controls both the half-open file and the b1-h7 diagonal. 7...c6 At some stage this must be played to protect the d-pawn. 8.Bd3 White now threatens to play Bxf6, followed by Bxh7+ winning a pawn. 8...Nbd7 Also possible was h6. This move does weaken the Black King, but only in positions where White can use it to help his attack (eg. with g2-g4-g5) this is not likely in this position. 9.Nf3 Re8 If White decided to go for a tactical attack against the King he could play O-O-O and then advance his K-side pawns. This is attacking against his pawn chain, a difficult task. 10.0-0 Clearly White is going for the more positionally sound idea; to attack on the Q-side. 10...h6?! Perhaps too late. Black should have played this much earlier. 11.Bf4 From here the bishop plays a very important part in the Q-side minority attack. 11...Nf8 Not... [11...Nh5 12.Nxd5 cxd5 13.Bc7! Winning the queen.] 12.h3 In order to save his bishop after ...Nh5. 12...Bd6 Black does well to exchange bishops, on one hand to clear the field and try to start a K-side

attack, and secondly to eliminate White's active bishop and relax the pressure against his Q-side. 13.Bxd6 Qxd6 White still has a slight advantage as he swapped his "bad" bishop for Black's "good" one. 14.Rab1 Preparing for the minority attack. 14...Bd7



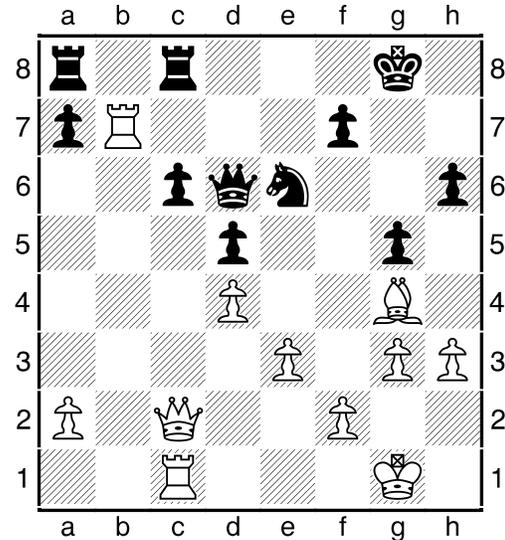
15.b4 The first active thrust against Black's c6 pawn. 15...Qe7? Black aims to increase his space with ...Ne4, and help his attack. In general there is little that can be done against a minority attack, although here Black could have delayed matters with Rac8 when White's Queen will be in the same line as the rook. He then needs to play some preparatory moves before b5. 16.b5 The purpose of the minority attack is to weaken the enemy pawn formation. There are 4 possibilities: a) If Black exchanges his Q-pawn will be isolated. b) If White exchanges and Black recaptures with his pawn, he will have a backward pawn on the half-open file. c) If Black recaptures with his bishop his d-pawn will be isolated. d) If the Black pawn moves past with ...c5, White can exchange with the result that Black has an isolated d-pawn and White has a strong outpost on d4 (for the knight). Thus, no matter which way the minority attack goes, Black ends up with a weaker pawn structure. 16...Ne4 A good move. 17.Ne5 Threatening to win a pawn on e4. 17...Nxc3 18.Qxc3 Rec8 The threat of ...c5 and then taking on d4 forces

White to make a decision. **19.bxc6 Bxc6**
 ...bxc6 would invite Rb7 to tie Black down.
20.Nxc6 bxc6 Forced....if ...Rxc6 then Qb3
 wins a pawn.



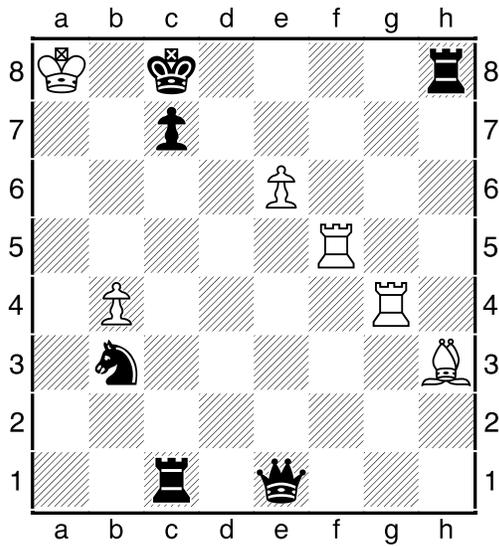
At last we see the definite pawn structure which White has been aiming for. Black has a backwards pawn on c6 and a new phase of the game is about to start. White must now apply pressure on two fronts, that is, he must be able to attack the vital weak point (c6) and also be able to start action somewhere else. This is the secret of realising a positional advantage. When pressure is brought to bear from two directions Black will find it difficult to defend on both fronts, and will eventually crumble. **21.Rfc1** Keeping up the pressure on the c-file. Also preventing Black from eliminating his weakness with ...c5. Indirectly it also controls the b-file as Black can't play ...Rb8 now. (Rxb8, Rxb8 and Qxc6). **21...Qe6** In order to protect his c-pawn Black offers White a second front. The 7th rank! **22.Qc2** Threatening Bf5 winning the exchange. White could have played Rb7 immediately, but wanted the bishop attacking first. **22...Qd6 23.Rb7!** The force of this keeps all Black's major pieces tied down to the defence of their pawns. **23...Ne6** The only piece that can move. The idea being to advance c5 and get rid of

his weak pawn. Not only is it weak, but it obstructs Black's rooks from any attacking possibility. At least having a weak d-pawn will not block any pieces. **24.Bf5!** This puts Black into a kind of Zugzwang position. He cannot move a piece without losing at least a pawn. **24...g5 25.Bg4** Making room for the Queen to enter, and maintaining the Zugzwang. **25...Kg7 26.g3** Just waiting because Qf5 is stronger when Black's King is on g8. g3 is a waiting move which doesn't weaken the position at all. **26...Kg8**



27.Qf5 White switches the attack seeing the opportunity to get a decisive advantage on the K-side. **27...Nd8 28.Rd7 Qe6 29.Qf3** Stronger than the alternative. QxQ, fxQ, Re7, Kf8, Rh7 winning a pawn. **29...Qe4 30.Qf6 Qg6 31.Qxg6+ fxg6 32.Rxd5! cxd5 33.Bxc8** Since White's rook is stronger than Black's he chooses not to swap them off. **33...Rb8 34.Rc7 a5 35.Rc5** White is attacking both Black's pawns, but can't take either yet. However Black can't move his rook without losing one. **35...a4 36.Bd7** Ahh...now the pawns ARE attacked. **36...Rb2 37.Bxa4 Rxa2 38.Bb3 Ra1+ 39.Kg2 Kf8 40.Bxd5** Black's knight cannot move and in any case White is two clear passed pawns ahead. **1-0**

Warm-up Tactical Exercise



White to play and mate
in 5 moves (#323)

Answer:

- | | |
|----------|------|
| 1. Rg8+ | Rxg8 |
| 2. Rf8+ | Rxf8 |
| 3. e7+ | Rf5 |
| 4. Bxf5+ | Qe6 |
| 5. Bxe6# | 1-0 |

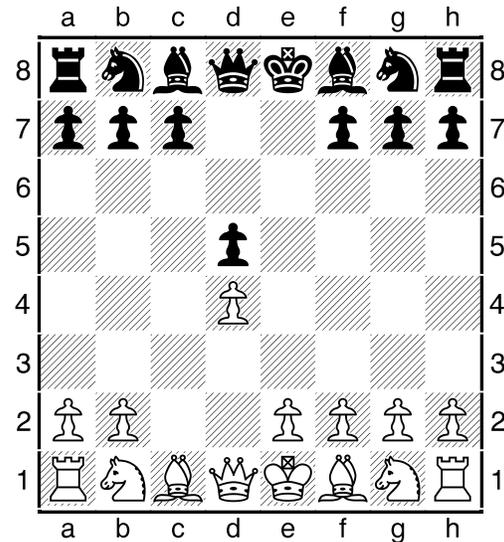
You can solve this by imagining the position as you would like it to be.

Your Homework

To play games online at one of the following sites:

- ChessCube.com
- Chess.com
- ChessClub.com
- FreeChess.org

Play the first 3 moves as 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3. cxd5 (or transpose into a game with the same pawn structure):



Practice the Minority Attack as a plan for a pawn break.

Email elite@chesskids.com.au when you have played a 'perfect game' with a copy of the PGN.