



Novice Lecture – Good Knight against Bad Bishop

by Tim Broome

This highly instructive game was played between two strong Russian players in the 1950s. White sacrifices a pawn to set up a position in which he can force off two pairs of minor pieces, leaving him with an unassailable knight on d5 against Black's dark squared bishop, hemmed in by pawns on squares of its own colour. White's magnificent steed completely dominates the centre of the board and severely restricts the movement of the Black queen, but will this be worth the sacrificed pawn? When White starts to advance his kingside pawns, the attack on Black's castled position almost plays itself.

I. Boleslavsky v G. Lissitzin

Moscow, 1956

1	e4	c5
2	Nf3	d6
3	d4	cxd4
4	Nxd4	Nf6
5	Nc3	g6
6	Be3	Bg7
7	f3	O-O
8	Qd7	Nc6
9	O-O-O	Nxd4
10	Bxd4	Qa5
11	Kb1	e5
12	Be3	Be6
13	a3	Rfd8

When White castles on the queenside against the Dragon Variation of the Sicilian, it often leads to an exciting game with attacking chances against the king for both players. Black has played e5 in order to secure his bishop in an attacking position on e6. He now wants to free his game with the key move d5.





14 Nb5! Qa4

Black cannot afford to play Qxd2, because after Rxd2 White has a duel threat of Nxd6, winning a pawn, or Nc7 and Nxe6, giving him the 2 bishops and an advantage.

After 14...Qa4 White cannot capture the d pawn with his knight because of Ne8 winning the pinned knight.

15 c4

White's plan is to establish his knight securely on d5. To achieve this, he finds a great pawn sacrifice, which is difficult to refuse. With the White pawn on c4 Black's backward d-pawn would have to remain on d6. 15. c4 would warrant an exclamation mark, except that White missed an even stronger move 15.Nc7, winning the exchange in view of the threat of 15...Rc8; 16. Bb5 trapping the queen and forcing him to give up a piece with 16...Nxe4.

15 Bxc4

16 Nc3 Qb3

17 Bxc4 Qxc4

In return for the pawn he has won, Black has had to give up his vital light-squared bishop. Next White has his sights set on pinning, and then exchanging, the f6 knight, the only other piece that can control the hole on d5.

18 Bg5 Qe6

19 Bxf6 Qxf6

20 Nd5

Objective achieved. Time to see if it was worth that valuable pawn.

20 Qh5

21 Qe2!

Now his first goal has been achieved, White needs a new plan for the next phase of the game. His plan is to storm the kingside with his pawns, starting with g3. First though he wants to place his queen on f1, in order that he can deprive the white queen of the square h3.





21 Bf8

This weakens f6, but protects e7 so that Black can move a rook to c8

22 Qf1! Rac8

23 g3 Qg5

24 h4! Qh6

The knight is seriously restricting the range of movement of the Black queen. Black cannot play Qxg3 because the reply Rh3 traps the queen. The white pawns are now storming forward and Black has no satisfactory defence.

25 h4 g5

26 hxg5 Qxg5

27 Rh5 Qg6

28 g5!

The h-file is now open, and White is going to force Black to open the g-file as well. The rook cannot be captured by the queen because of the fork on f6, and White threatens Nf6+ and Rxh7.

28 h6

29 Rxh6! Qxg5

Forced because if 29...Bxh6, the knight fork on e7 this time is decisive

30 Rh5! Resigns

Again the rook cannot be taken. If Black continued with 30...Qg6; 31Qh1 threatening Rg1 wins.

