



BOOK REVIEWS



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ChessCafe.com is pleased to have this week's book review of the recently released Dvoretsky's Analytical Manual submitted by none other than grandmaster and three-time U.S. Champion Lev Alburt...

Another Dvoretsky Masterpiece

Lev Alburt

Dvoretsky's Analytical Manual by Mark Dvoretsky, 2008 Russell Enterprises, Inc., Figurine Algebraic Notation, Softcover, 419pp., \$34.95

Since I first read an article by Mark Dvoretsky on opposite-color bishop endings some forty years ago, I have eagerly followed his writings. In Mark's previous effort, Dvoretsky's Endgame Manual - already recognized as a classic - he noted that he tries to conform to Einstein's recommendation that "Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler" - with strong emphasis on the first part of that sentence. In his newest release, Dvoretsky's Analytical Manual, it seems that he is trying (successfully) to demonstrate something which in fact is somewhat different, even opposite: The enormous complexity of our chess world.

I can only wish I had this book thirty or forty years ago! Then, after investing some thousand hours (actually just 2 1/2 hours per page of Dvoretsky - not too much at all for this book), I would have definitely added a lot to my chess and perhaps even 100 Elo points to my rating.

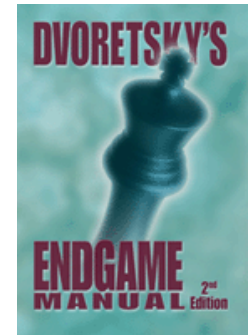
Dvoretsky's Analytical Manual is, in short, a godsend, and a must for every grandmaster and every aspiring grandmaster (still young - under 40?), with high hopes and ambitions.

For the rest - those simply curious - it is a way, in Mark's words to "peek into the world of high-level chess." You may start this process by looking at the Table of Contents and choosing a theme such as Zwischenzugs in the Endgame (Ch. 9), Castling on Opposite Sides (Ch. 17), Snatch a Pawn or Attack? (Ch. 23), or How to Play a Pawn Down (Ch. 27). The book is divided into five major parts (Part 1: Immersion in the Position; Part 2: Analyzing the Endgame; Part 3: Games for Training Purposes; Part 4: Practical Psychology; Part 5 Lasker the Great) comprised of thirty-three separate chapters.

And throughout, the reader is encouraged to spend time on many test positions, often requiring a sophisticated blending of objective evaluation skills with psychological considerations. Some of the solutions are not too long or difficult, while others will be a challenge even to very strong players.

Take, for instance, the following position (from Chapter 6, Surprises in Calculating Variations):

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Dvoretsky's Endgame Manual by Mark Dvoretsky



Victor Bologan: Selected Games 1985-2004

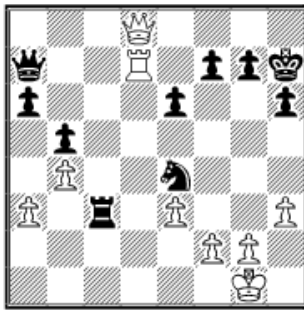
by Victor Bologan

Read an excerpt here.



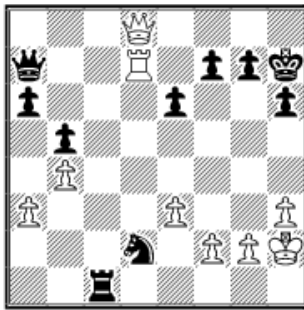
A Practical Guide to Rook Endgames (CD) by Nikolay Minev

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It is Black to move. 1...Qxd7? 2 Qxd7 Kg6 3 f3 Nf6 4 Qd2, or 2...Rc1+ 3 Kh2 Nxf2 4 Qxf7 Rh1+ 5 Kg3 Ne4+ 6 Kh4 are favorable for White. Dvoretsky discusses a number of lines, all favorable for White, while along the way making several helpful general observations (e.g., "... queen plus knight in the vicinity of the opposing king makes a powerful force" – These "rules of thumb" should benefit practically every chessplayer, from novice on up, and this alone justifies all players getting this book.)

After a thorough discussion of the possibilities in this position, Mark leads us to the logical, and indeed simple, solution: **1...Rc3-c1! 2 Kg1-h2 Ne4-d2!!**

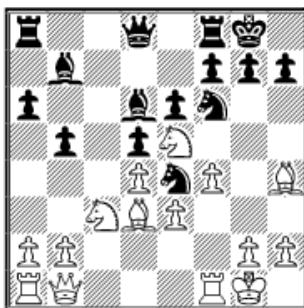


And Black holds, for example: 3 h4 Rd1!! On 3 Rxd2, 3...Rc7 is the best and "White has next to nothing."

The sources for the chapters are quite varied: Masters, unknowns, studies, grandmaster encounters, even world champion clashes. They are often annotated by both the players involved and other greats. For example, Dvoretsky draws upon some of Kasparov's notes when taking an in-depth look at game 5 of the 1961 Reshevsky-Fischer match, which, among other things is an excellent specimen of the 'isolani' and its handling.

Perhaps because I personally knew and admired both players, I was immediately attracted to Chapter 24, A Battle of Opposites, which featured the third game of the [1960 Tal-Botvinnik](#) world championship match. And my visit there was richly rewarded, with the material completely justifying its inclusion in the section on practical psychology (Part 4).

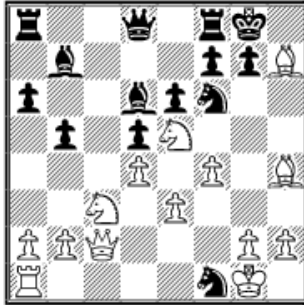
Now you can try your hand – From Chapter 21, An Invitation to Analysis, in Part 4: Practical Psychology (page 219):



“Evaluate 14...Nd2.”

The answer:

“The critical position arises after **14...Nd2?! 15 Qc2** (15 Bxh7+?? Nxh7) **15...Nxf1 16 Bxh7+**.



“16...Kh8 is extremely dangerous: after 17 Rxf1, there seems to be no satisfactory defense to White’s mating attack. For example: 17...g6 18 Bxg6! fg 19 Qxg6 Qe7 20 Qh6+! Kg8 21 Rf3;

or 17...b4 18 Rf3! bc 19 Rh3 (Shirov).

“On 17...Be7, I analyzed 18 Bxf6! (the quieter 18 Bd3 was not bad either) 18...gf (18...Bxf6 19. Rf3i) 19 Qe2! fe 20 Qh5 Kg7 21 fe Bg5 22 Rf3. Although the continuation 22...Qe7 23 Rg3 Rh8 24 Rxc5+ Kf8 allows Black to ward off the immediate threats, his position remains difficult.

“So Black must give up the queen: **16...Nxh7! 17 Bxd8 Nxe3 18 Qf2! Bxe5** (18...Nxc2? 19 Bb6, and the knight has nowhere to go) **19 fe Ng4 20 Qg3 Nxe5 21 Be7 Rfe8+/=** (Shirov). Black has obtained rook, knight and pawn for the queen, but he still stands worse.

“Since the simple 14...Qa5 15 Rc1 Rfc8 maintains the balance, in Shirov’s opinion, there was no reason for him to go in for 14...Nd2.” [Seirawan-Shirov, Buenos Aires, 1993]

This high-octane, excellent instructional material is nicely enhanced by the author’s erudition and wit. All this is presented in a very well designed format, making *Dvoretsky’s Analytical Manual* a true gem!

[Order Dvoretsky’s Analytical Manual](#)
by Mark Dvoretsky

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