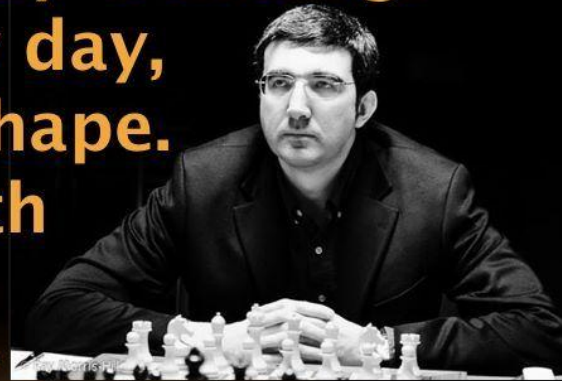


**“Chess is like body-building.
If you train every day,
you stay in top shape.
It is the same with
your brain –
chess is a matter
of daily training.”**



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-Vladimir Kramnik



VLADIMIR KRAMNIK CHESS TRAINING 2019:-

Vladimir Kramnik - Immortal masterpieces. **Vladimir Kramnik**, the 14th Chess Worldchampion (2000 to 2007) belongs to the strongest chessplayers **ever**.

A:-DAY 1:-IMPORTANT WORKOUT.

1. *It was so amazing to understand and learn endgames from one of the greatest endgame players of all time.*
2. One of the key ones being - you don't have always have to do something. Often the opponent will help you find a plan in the position.
3. The Champions house is bumming with chess and the reason is pretty simple! Everyone simply loves chess here! And chess is the most important thing in their life!
4. *-No time to waste! Kramnik reading the Dvoretsky's Endgame Manual and telling the kids some interesting facts about queen endgames!*
5. If you look at it carefully, throughout the day, the kids are always doing something. And this is also true about our life! We are doing things most of the time. Because if we weren't doing something, we wouldn't be getting the work done! This constant nature of 'doing' something often conditions our mind that in order to make progress we must 'do' things.
6. *They are playing blitz and when someone wins or loses they just arrange the pieces and begin again! It's as if an opponent doesn't exist and both of them are enjoying this chess + music combo!*
7. *And we thought chairs are meant for sitting!*
8. *Gentlemen, always remember the concept!*

9. *Gentlemen, this is going to be serious work today!*
10. *Don't have fear in chess.*
11. *Chess is like bodybuilding, try to practice everyday with consistency to stay in top.*

an example:-



Kramnik asks the class - What would you do here?

One of the students says $Bd6-e5$ relocating the bishop on a strong square, while another said ...h4 fixing the kingside pawns. Which move is better? Usually trainers do not want to go into such discussions because they themselves do not understand which move is better and why. But Kramnik would often analyze such positions trying to explain his thought process. And perhaps as per the computer this wasn't the most precise, but when one of the greatest endgame players of all time chooses a plan, an idea or a move and you can understand his thinking, this is already a huge learning for the youngsters.

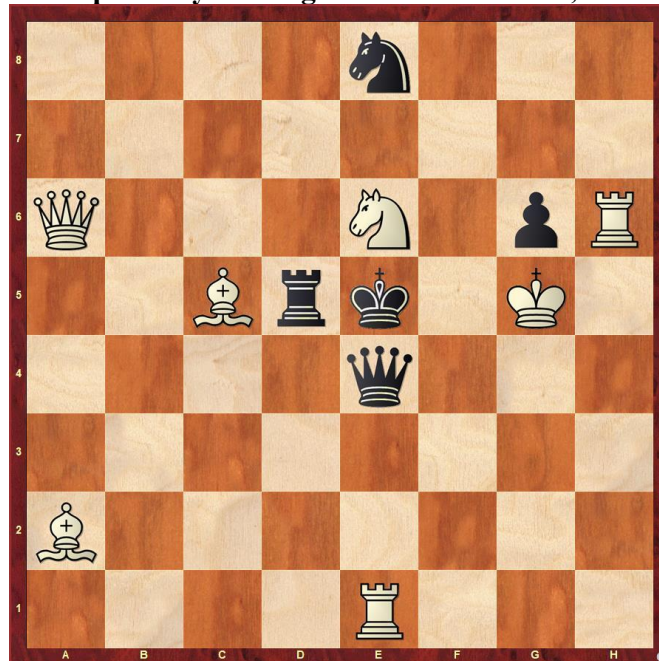
B:-DAY 2:-IMPORTANT WORKOUT.

Kramnik Microsense Chess India Program Day 2: Can you solve the mate in two?

On the second day of the Kramnik Microsense Chess India Program, the endgame grind continued. Kramnik showed ten of his endgames where he had beaten some of the best players in the world from slightly better endgame positions. His trick is always to keep improving his pieces and at the right moment strike with accurate calculations. While this is

easy to speak about, it is extremely difficult to execute it on the chess board. That's what makes Kramnik one of the greatest endgame players alive on the planet as of today! In the camp he is training the kids on how they can imbibe some of his endgame skills. Before day two began Vlad posed the class with a mate in two position. We ask you to solve it as well, and narrate to you a very interesting story related to it.

Composed by Gilberg Charles Alexander, 1877



White to play and mate in 2

So what's the answer? **1.Qf1!** said Gukesh. And suddenly it became clear to everyone what the idea was! Isn't it beautiful? Black takes 1...Kxe6 and White mates with? Yes, you got that right! **2. Qf5#!!**

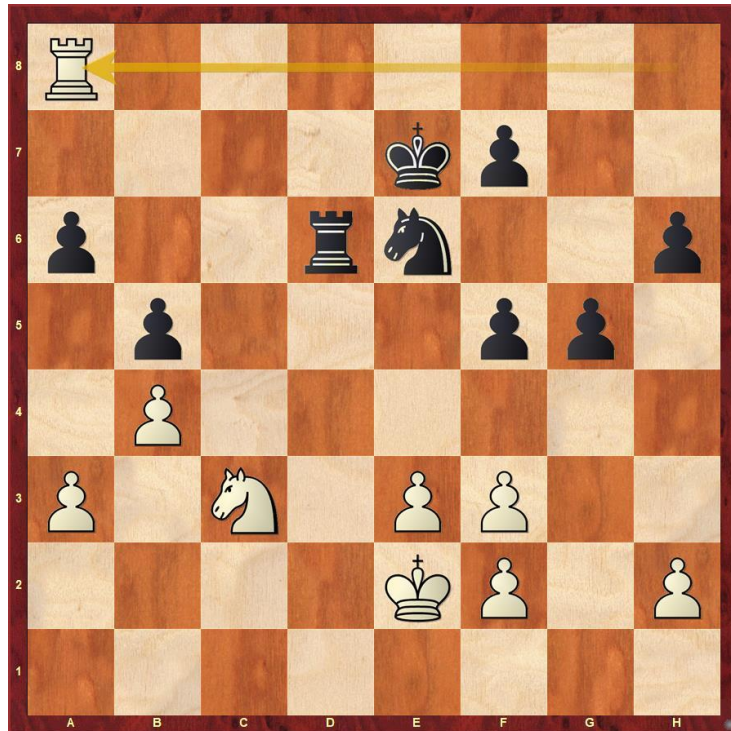
Mate in 2 - Gilberg Charles Alexander *

1877 1998.08.??

Sagar,Shah

1. ♕f1! 1. ♖d4 ♗d6! 2. ♕xd6+ ♖xd6 This is not a mate in two. **1... ♔xe6+ 2. ♕f5#** What a pretty mate. The white queen can be taken in three ways, but all of Black pieces are pinned! *

Salem Saleh vs Vladimir Kramnik, Qatar 2014



Black to play. What would you do if you were in Kramnik's shoes?

Day 3: Mastering the Grind:-

What are the ingredients to create a good endgame player? Witnessing three days of heavy endgame lectures of nearly six hours has convinced us that becoming a great endgame player like Kramnik requires many qualities to come together. What are those qualities? IM Sagar Shah explains in this article. We also bring you some of the most interesting pictures from day three of the Kramnik Microsense India Chess Program to give you a feel of what is happening in the Champions house in Chens Sur Leman, France. Lastly we have a puzzle for you to solve. Very interesting and perhaps slightly difficult! It took one participant around 30 minutes to solve, while one of the youngsters has been thinking about it for nearly 3 months, without success!

Who is an endgame master? After witnessing Kramnik's three days of intensive endgame grind, I have come to realize that an excellent endgame player is a synthesis of many qualities. Here are a few:

1. He is a patient person who waits for the right opportunity to strike.
2. He is always thinking about opponent's plans and is trying to stop them
3. Every move for him is a part of a bigger story unfolding. Nothing is useless.
4. He often lets the opponent go wrong and doesn't always think he is the one in charge
5. When required he can put his head down and calculate like a monster and finish off the game.

Do you see how many contrasting qualities lie in there? You have to be patient and at the same time have the killer instinct to calculate and finish off your opponent. You need to sometimes do nothing, yet often you have to make those little moves to improve your position! This is all quite confusing for youngsters attending the camp and you can often see them going wrong. When nothing has to be done, you can see them making a committal move. When it's time to finish off the game, they are trying to improve the position. Well, that's why Vladimir Kramnik is an amazing teacher. He has played hundreds of games rich in such endgame content where a student who is learning from him can slowly and steadily master the art. But then why not go through his games, or read his books? Why do you need to learn from him in person? Well, because he is present there, the youngsters can instantly ask questions to him and Vlad in return tells his opinion about their question. This often results in your thinking getting adjusted almost instantly and the learning process which might take months or years starts rolling almost instantaneously.

Just to show you how difficult endgame technique is at the highest level. Here's a position:

Kramnik vs Adams, Wijk Aan Zee, 2000

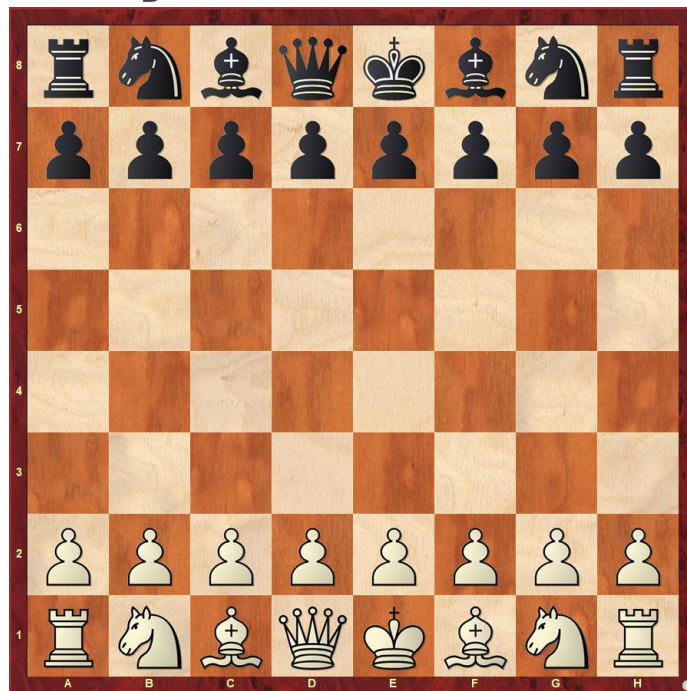


White to play. Would you offer the queens for exchange with Qc3 or not?

These are the types of difficult questions you need to solve if you want to become an endgame expert. And somehow there is no right or wrong answer. Because if you give this position to an engine, it will think that Qc3 is a good move and it will also give other positions without Qc3 as also fine. How do you decide what is good or not? This is where the experience of Kramnik comes into the picture. According to him, White hasn't really reached the stage in this endgame where he should be exchanging the queens. He still needs to improve his position and keep the option open with regards to exchange. And that's the reason why **27.b4!** was played. One may argue that 27.Qc3 was also good, and Kramnik himself is quite cautious in putting down a move as bad, but when you see how the game progressed you will realize that keeping the queens was definitely a much better decision. That's how your intuition develops! Kramnik also makes an important point - If you remove the pawns on d3 and d5 then the queen exchange makes complete sense because the board is much more open and the chances of reaching an opposite coloured bishop endgame are much less.

So there you see, that's one difficult decision to think about. Imagine a day where you have 50 such decisions to make and each time you do it, you get feedback from Kramnik. This is definitely going to help you improve!

Question for the day:-



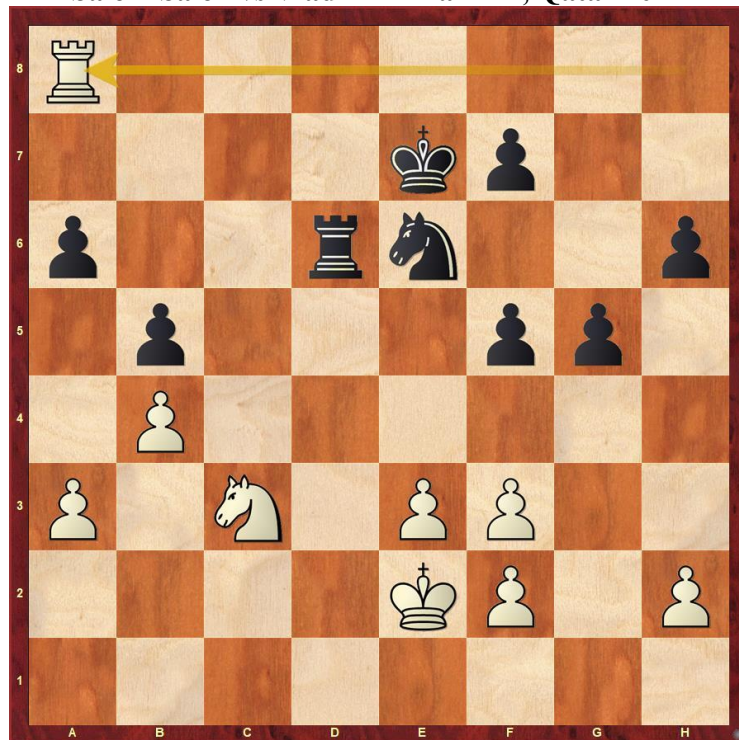
Today's challenge is quite tricky and comes from the co-founder of ChessBase Frederic Friedel. After Kramnik's training on day two he spoke to all six participants via Skype and he gave them a *simple* problem. From the starting position (above) both sides make moves and the game ends with $6.gxf8=N\#$. So, your task is pretty simple. You have to play moves from both the sides in such a way that the sixth white move is $gxf8=N$ and results in a mate! Easy?

Gukesh has been trying to get the answer to this position for over three months now! He was given this position by Frederic when he was in Hamburg and he was unable to find the answer till date. Raunak Sadhwani tried very hard for a couple of hours and even reached mate in seven moves, but wasn't able to get past the final barrier of making it happen in six moves. The nice thing about this problem is that you cannot use an engine nor can you find the answer on Google. So once you don't get it, either you give it up or keep trying!

Praggnanandhaa heard the challenge and thought about it for a few minutes. Next day at the breakfast table he stood there in a trance. I asked him to have his breakfast, but he didn't seem to be interested. After around ten minutes he shouted out loud! I have got it! And yes, he had got it! The answer to this will be revealed tomorrow!

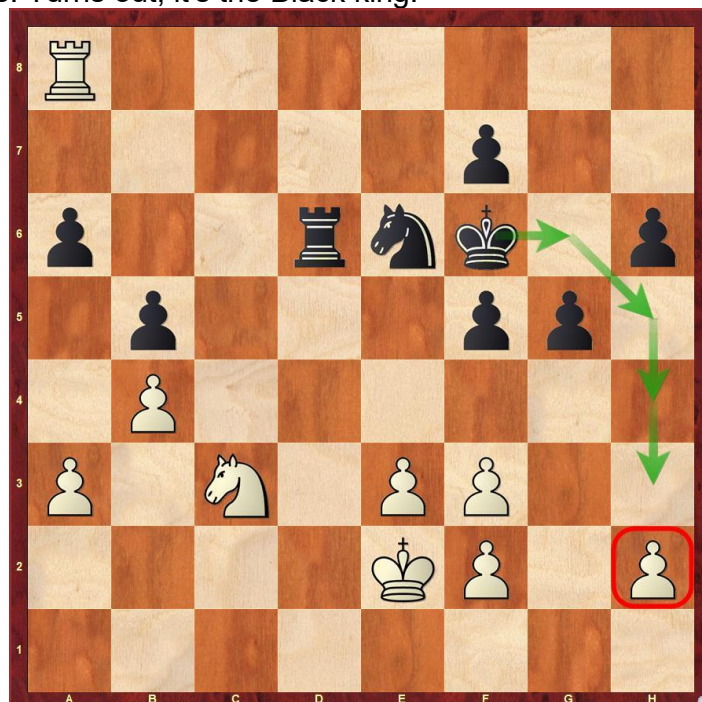
Answer to yesterday's question:-

Salem Saleh vs Vladimir Kramnik, Qatar 2014



Black to play. What would you do if you were in Kramnik's shoes?

Some of the readers replied saying that h5 was the best move. While this may not be bad, what Kramnik did was more aesthetically pleasing. He tried to find the weakness in the position and thought about which was the most effective piece who could do the maximum damage. Turns out, it's the Black king!



Just like the famous game Rubinstein-Cohn, Kramnik made a dash towards the h2 pawn with his king! It was a great win for the ex-World Champion

Here's the entire annotated game:-

Salem, AR Saleh 2586 - Kramnik, Vladimir 2760 0-1

Qatar Masters op 2014.11.26

Sagar Shah

1. d4 ♘f6 2. c4 e6 3. ♘f3 d5 4. ♘c3 ♗bd7 This is a small tweak in the opening. Main moves are of course Be7 which leads to the QGD and Bb4 which leads to the Ragozin. With this move Nbd7, Black keeps the game in QGD territory but gets some additional options. **5. ♙g5. ♙f4 c6 6. e3 ♗h5** Though only tried in blitz by Carlsen and Kramnik, it could be possible that Kramnik was intending to play this today and that is the reason why he chose 4...Nbd7 move order.**5... h6 6. ♙h4 ♙e7 7. e3 O-**

O 8. ♖c1 c5 9. cxd5 ♗xd5... exd5 10. ♙d3± is a definite edge for White from the opening.**10. ♙xe7 ♗xe7** White should be slightly better here. Black has played the opening quite unambitiously. But White's advantage is not very threatening as Kramnik proves over the next few moves. **11. ♙e2** The bishop looks much better placed on e2 than on d3.**11. ♙d3 b6 12. O-**

O ♙b7 13. ♖e2 13. e4 cxd4 14. ♗xd4 ♗g6 13... ♙xf3! 14. ♖xf3 cxd4 15. exd4 ♗f6 In this IQP position where two pairs of minor pieces have been exchanged and also the d5-square is under the control of the knights, Black shouldn't be worse.**11... b6 12. O-**

O ♙b7 13. dxc5 ♗xc5 14. ♗d4 14. ♖xd8 ♗fxd8 15. ♖fd1 ♗d5 15... ♖ac8 16. ♗b5 ♖xd1+ 17. ♖xd1 ♙d5 16. ♗xd5 ♙xd5 17. b3 and in this symmetrical position I wonder how Kramnik would have won. But I am nowhere near Kramnik's technique so it's better that I do not get into it! The position however looks completely drawish.**14... ♗f5!? 15. ♗xf5 exf5** Why would Kramnik voluntarily double his pawns? Maybe he just wanted to unbalance the position in some way or the other, no matter how little. **16. ♙f3?!** I dislike this move. It might be objectively fine but if White wanted to play safely then why not just exchange the queens and play

Rfd1? 16. ♖xd8 ♗fxd8 17. ♖fd1 16... ♖xd1 17. ♖fxd1 ♙xf3 18. gxf3 ♖fd8

19. ♖f1 Bringing the king into the centre is natural.**19. ♖xd8+ ♖xd8 20. ♖d1 ♖xd1+ 21. ♗xd1** This position might not hold any advantage for Black but it is a very timid decision of trying to exchange both the rooks and bringing your knight to an unfavourable square. Something that Salem Saleh being an aggressive player would dislike. Also

White has no reasons to resort to such exchanging operations. **19... g6 20. ♖e2 ♖g7 21. ♗b5 ♖f6 22. ♜xd8 ♜xd8 23. b4** 23. ♗xa7 I like this variation because it is quite unusual. ♜a8 24. ♗c8!?

This is the surprising move. ♜xa2 24... ♜xc8 25. b4 ♜a8 25... ♖e5 26. bxc5 bxc5 27. a4 ♖d5 28. ♖d3 ♜a8 29. ♜a1 ♜a5 30. ♖c3 h5 31. h4 26. bxc5 ♜xa2+ 27. ♖f1 bxc5 28. ♜xc5 and even the best technique in the world cannot win this. 25. ♜c2 ♜a6 25... ♗a4 26. ♖d2 ♜a1 27. b3 ♗c5 28. b4 ♗d7 29. f4 ♜h1 30. ♜c7± 26. ♗xb6 ♜xb6 27. ♜xc5 23... ♗e6 24. ♜c6 24. ♗c7 ♜d7 24... ♜c8 25. ♗d5++- 25. ♗xe6 fxe6 24... ♖e7 25. a3 ♜d7 26. ♜c8 a6 27. ♗c3 b5 28. ♜a8 ♜d6 29. ♜h8 29. ♗b1 with the idea of placing the knight on b3 via d2 is a good idea. It would tie up the knight on e6. ♖f6 30. ♗d2 ♖g5 31. f4+ ♖h4 32. ♗f3+ ♖h3 33. ♗e5 And it is White who is creating some dangerous play. **29... g5!** 29... h5 was also possible but the move g5 has a very deep idea behind it. Kramnik wants to keep the h5-square free for his king which would embark on a journey to attack the h2-pawn. 29... ♜c6!?

30. ♖d3 ♗g5 31. f4 ♗h3 32. f3 ♗f2+ 33. ♖d2 ♜d6+ 34. ♖e2 ♗d3 Black has an edge. **30. ♜a8** 30. ♜xh6? ♗f4+-+ **30... ♖f6!** Kramnik now starts a king march towards the weakest point in White's camp. Any guesses? Of course the h2-pawn! **31. ♜a7 ♖g6 32. ♗a2 ♗d8 33. ♖e1?** Why waste time? It would have been better to execute the manoeuvre of putting the N on c5 via Nc1-b3-c5. **♖h5** As Lasker said, "It is better to follow out a plan consistently even if it isn't the best one than to play without a plan at all". Here Black has a clear-cut plan of attacking the h2-pawn while White is doing nothing much. That is the main reason why his position slowly goes downhill. **34. ♗c1 ♖h4 35. ♗b3 ♖h3** Doesn't this king route remind you of the game Cohn-Rubinstein that was played in St.Petersburg in 1909 where the God of endgame play marched his king to the h3-square in a pure pawn endgame to attack the weak pawn on h2. It could be possible that Kramnik was motivated to find this idea from that game of Rubinstein. **36. ♗d4** 36. ♗c5 ♖xh2 37. ♜xa6 ♜xa6 38. ♗xa6 ♖g2+-+ The h-pawn queens easily. **36... f4 37. ♜a8** 37. ♗f5 also doesn't really help. ♜f6 38. e4 38. ♗d4 ♖xh2 is also possible. 38... ♖g2 39. ♜a8 ♗c6 40. ♜xa6 ♜e6 41. a4 41. ♖e2 ♗d4+-+ 41... bxa4 42. ♜xa4 42. b5 ♗e5 43. ♜xe6 fxe6 44. ♗d4 a3 45. ♖e2 a2 46. ♗c2 46. ♗b3 ♗xf3 47. b6 ♗d4+-+ 46... ♗xf3+-+ 42... ♗e5 43. ♖e2 ♗xf3+-+ **37... ♖xh2 38. ♗f5 ♜f6 39. e4** 39. ♗xh6 ♜xh6 40. ♜xd8 ♖g2 is a scary position, particularly because Ke2 doesn't work here. 41. ♖e2? 41. ♜g8! would lead most probably to a draw. ♖xf3 42. ♜xg5 fxe3 43. ♜f5+ ♖e4 44. ♜xf7 exf2+ 45. ♖xf2 ♜h3 46.

♖e2 ♜xa3 47. ♔d241... g4! 42. fxg4 f3+--+39... ♜c6 40. ♜xa6 ♜g6 You can bank on the fact that in this technical phase of the game, Kramnik will be the most accurate. 41. ♜f1 Trying to lock the king in on h2. ♜e5 42. ♜a542. ♜xg6 fxg6 43. ♜d4 h5 44. ♜xb5 g4 45. fxg4 hxg4--+42.. ♜xf3 43. ♜xb5 It is a race between the pawns now but Black's pawns supported by the king are way faster than the white pawns. Also there will be mating nets being formed around the white king. g443... h5 was the more accurate way to start. 44. a4 h4 45. a5 h3 46. ♜b6 ♜d2+ 47. ♖e2 ♖g2--+43... ♜d2+ 44. ♖e2 ♜xe4 45. ♜e5 gives White unnecessary counterplay.44. ♜d544. a4 ♜c6!44... g3 45. ♜xg3! ♜d2+ 46. ♖e2 fxg3 47. fxg3 ♜xe4 48. ♖f3 ♜xg3 49. ♜c5⚡ White has some drawing chances because the black forces are not coordinated.45. ♜c5 ♜xc5 46. bxc5 g3 47. fxg3 fxg3 48. ♜xg3 ♖xg3 49. c6 ♜d2+ 50. ♖e2 ♜xe4 51. c7 ♜d6 52. a5 h5 53. a6 ♜c8--+44... h5 45. ♜g3 h445.. . fxg3 46. ♜xh5+ ♜h4 47. ♜xh4# would be horrible!46. ♜e2 g3 47. fxg347. ♜xf4 g2+ 48. ♜xg2 ♜xg2--+47... fxg3 Now it is just winning for Black. 48. b5 ♜f6 49. ♜f5 ♜xf5 50. exf5 g2+ 51. ♖f2 ♜d4 52. ♜g1 ♜xb5 53. a4 ♜c3 54. ♜f3+54. a5 ♜e4+--+54... ♖h1 55. a5 h355... h3 56. a6 h2--+

A nice technical achievement by Kramnik. The thing that was impressive about this game was that even though Vladimir was in a must win situation and he was facing an opponent who was rated 200 points below him, he wasn't afraid to go into equal positions. He found those little imbalances like the h2-pawn weakness which would help him to put pressure on the opponent. Using all his technical superiority he ground out a win!0-1

Day 4: Learning the art of being:-

before I begin my article today, I would like you to think about the following position. It's White to play.

Vladimir Kramnik vs Georg Meier, Dortmund 2011



Black has just moved his bishop back to f8. What would you do here as White?

But when it comes to the chess board, it is not always about doing something. Often it is only about just "being". I learnt about the art of doing and being from Jonathon Rowson's famous chess book "Chess for Zebras" and on day four of the camp with Vladimir Kramnik this concept was fortified further in my head. If you think about the position above, you realize that White doesn't have a clear cut plan in the position. And hence it is important to just wait. The right move is...



21.h3!

The engine may not agree with this move, but for Kramnik it was absolutely clear that for now he had to give his opponent a chance to go wrong. Kramnik explained, "When I was young and analyzing with Karpov, he would often make the moves a3 and h3. I would be surprised and asked him why he was doing that. And Karpov would reply, Vladimir give the opponent a chance to go wrong!" And this concept was quite new to the youngsters who are always so engrossed in doing things. A natural question was, "Sir, what if the opponent also does nothing and just waits!" Kramnik had this smile on this face, as if half expecting the question. "It is possible. But in general it is very difficult for your opponent to wait and do nothing in a position." Through all the years of experience of playing at the highest level, Kramnik has understood that chess is often a practical game. You can theoretically argue about his decision of playing h3. However, practically it has worked for him and he is now passing these tools over to the youngsters at the camp! To end this position, a final question was asked by Iniyana, "Sir, what if you were playing with the black pieces! What would you do?" "Well", said Kramnik, "I would also wait with the black pieces as well! But somehow it seems to me that White has more useful waiting moves in the position than Black!" Deep insights!

Kramnik, Vladimir 2781 - Meier, Georg 2656 1-0

Dortmund SuperGM 39th 2011.07.21

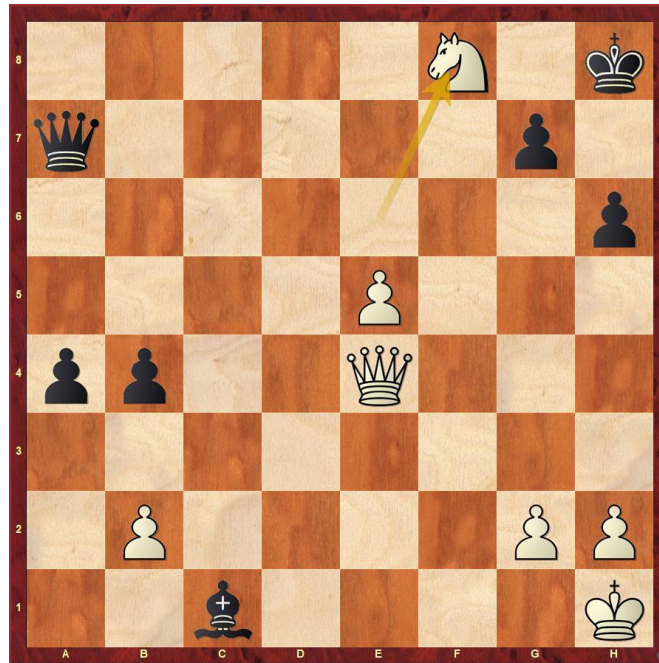
Sagar,Shah

1. ♖f3 ♗f6 2. c4 e6 3. g3 a6 4. ♖c3 d5 5. cxd5 exd5 6. ♗g2 ♗e7 7. O-O O-O
8. d4 c6 9. ♖e5 a5 10. ♗f4 ♗f5 11. ♖b3 ♖a7 12. ♖fd1 ♖bd7 13. ♖ac1 h6 14. a3 ♖b6 15. ♖xb6 ♖xb6 What should White

do? **16. f3 ♖e8 17. e4 ♗h7** What should White do? **18. ♗e3!** Improving the bishop's position is a good idea. It will stand well on f2. **♗aa8 19. ♗f2 ♗ad8 20. ♗e1 ♗f8 20... ♗d6 21. h3!** Once Karpov was analyzing with Kramnik and he was making moves like h3 and a3 and Kramnik asked him why are you doing this? Karpov said, "Vladimir, sometimes you should let your opponent play!" And this is exactly what Kramnik does here. He plays h3 quickly and lets his opponent do the thinking and this is exactly what happens with Meier. He does something concrete and Kramnik's task of playing becomes much easier. **dxe4 22. fxe4 ♗fd7 23. ♗d3 ♗c4 24. ♗e2!** Once again just an improving move. What Kramnik is doing requires very high level of prophylactic thinking because he knows Black has no concrete threats. And that's when he can make moves like Be3-f2 or Rd1-e1 or h3 and now Re2. **♗b8 24... f6** The computer likes this move. **25. ♗a4!** Once you realize that Black has an active plan like in this case (Na6-c7-e6), then you begin playing actively. **♗d6 26. ♗dc5 ♗e7 27. ♗b6 27. ♗ee1! 27... ♗c8 28. ♗c4 28. ♗xc8 ♗xc8 29. ♗ee1 ± 28... b6 28... ♗d6 29. ♗xd6 ♗xd6 30. g4! 30. e5 ♗d8 30... ♗d8 31. ♗g3 ± 29. ♗b3 a4 30. ♗bd2 ♗b7 31. e5 ♗a7 31... ♗f5 32. ♗e4 ♗e6 32. d5! ♗c5 32... cxd5 33. ♗d6 ♗d3 34. ♗ee1 ♗b5 35. ♗2c4 ♗xc4 36. ♗xc4 dxc4 37. ♗xb7 33. ♗xc5 bxc5 34. e6! 34. d6 ± 34... ♗f8 34... fxe6 35. ♗xe6 35. dxe6 ♗b5 35... cxd5 36. ♗d6 ♗xd6 37. ♗xd6 ♗d7 38. ♗xd5+ ♗f8 39. ♗f1+ ♗e7 40. ♗2c4 ♗g6 41. ♗e1 ++ 35. ♗a5 35. ♗e5 ± 35... ♗c7 36. ♗xc5 fxe6 37. dxc6 ♗e7 38. ♗dc4 ♗d1+ 39. ♗h2 ♗d3 40. ♗e3 ♗xc4 41. ♗xc4 ♗d2 42. ♗ce4 ♗bxc6 43. ♗xe6+ ♗f7 44. ♗c4 ♗c2 45. ♗d6+ ♗g8 46. h4 g5 47. ♗f5 gxh4 48. ♗h3 ♗c5 49. ♗g6+** After the game Iniyar asked Kramnik, if you were Black how would you have played? And Kramnik was like I would also have waited with Black, but it is clear that somehow White has more useful waiting moves than Black! 1-0

Question for the day:-

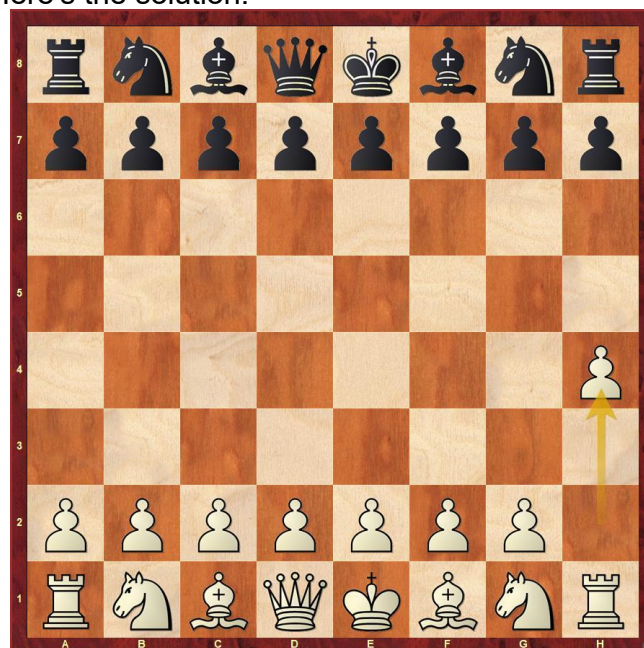
Deep Fritz 10 vs Vladimir Kramnik



The machine has just played its knight to f8. We have two questions for you. 1. What should Black play in this position, and 2. what do you think Kramnik played here?

Solution to the previous question

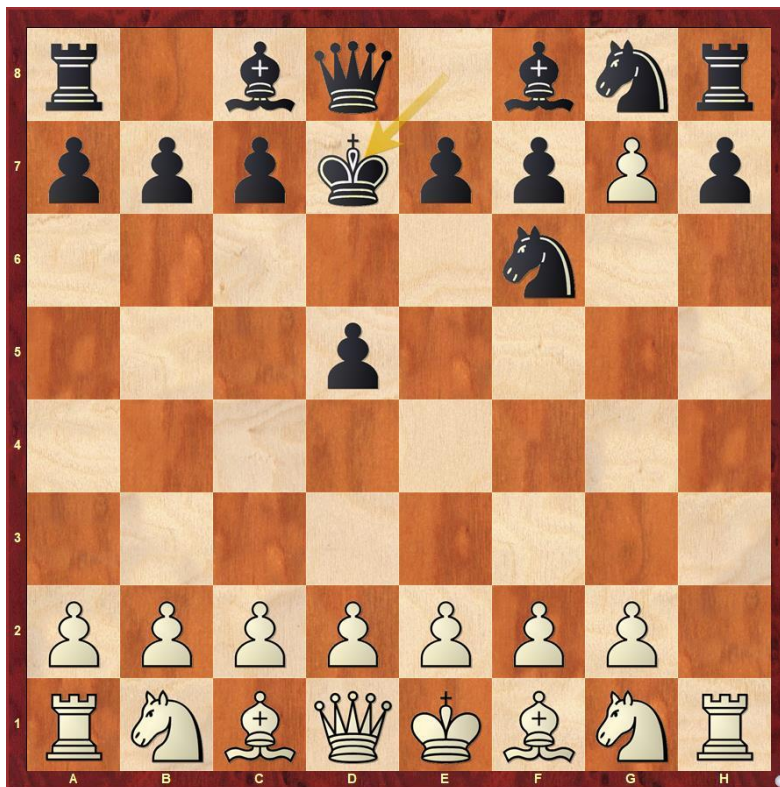
In our last article we had asked you a question - Construct a game from the initial position where white deliver $gxf8=N\#$ on the sixth move. After we posted the problem I had at least two solvers who told me that they got the answer between 15-25 minutes - one of them was our ChessBase India Juniors editor 11-year-old Arhan Anand and the other was WIM Rakshitta Ravi. We would like to congratulate both of them for finding the answer so quickly! Here's the solution:



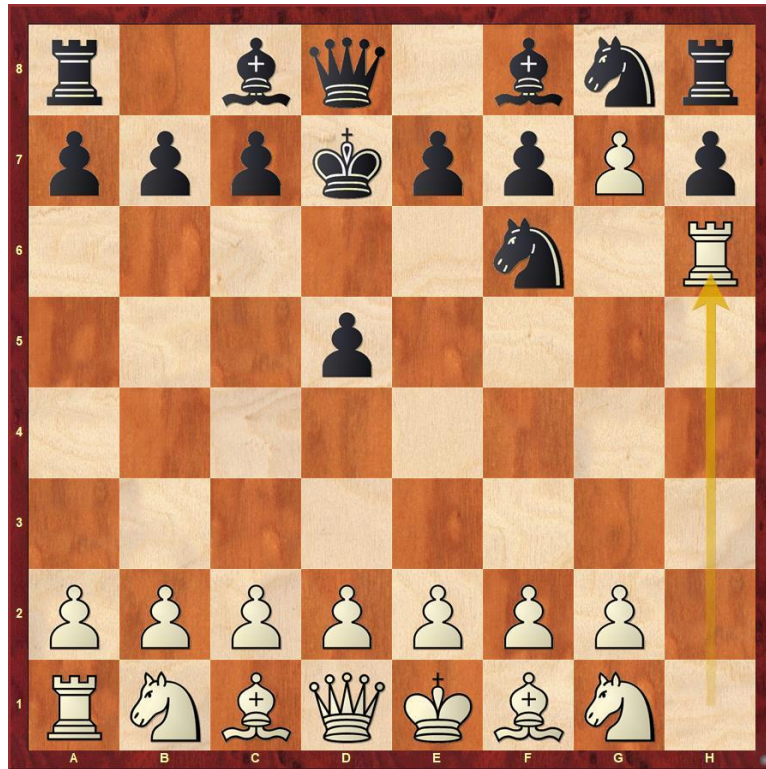
You begin with 1.h4! Black goes d5, then 2.h5



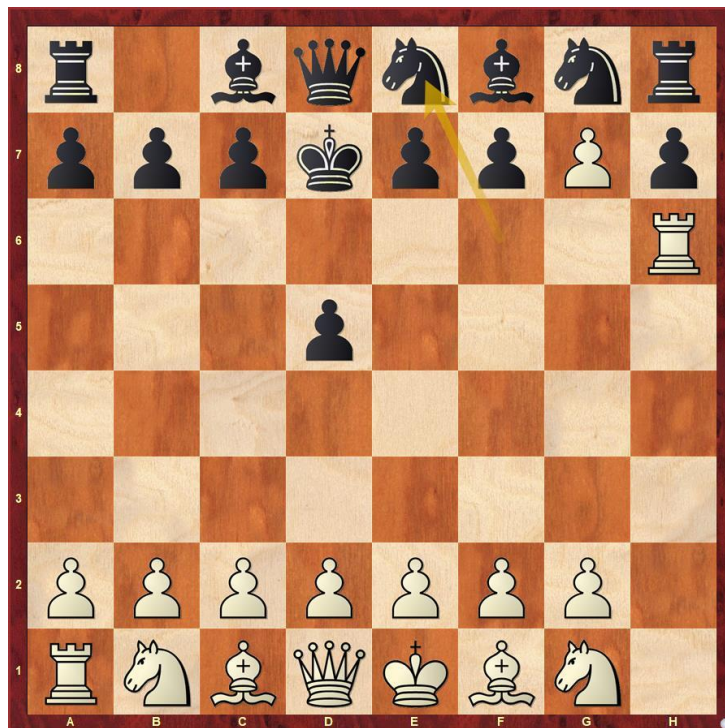
Now it is important to find 2...Nd7. 3.h6 Ndf6 4.hxg7



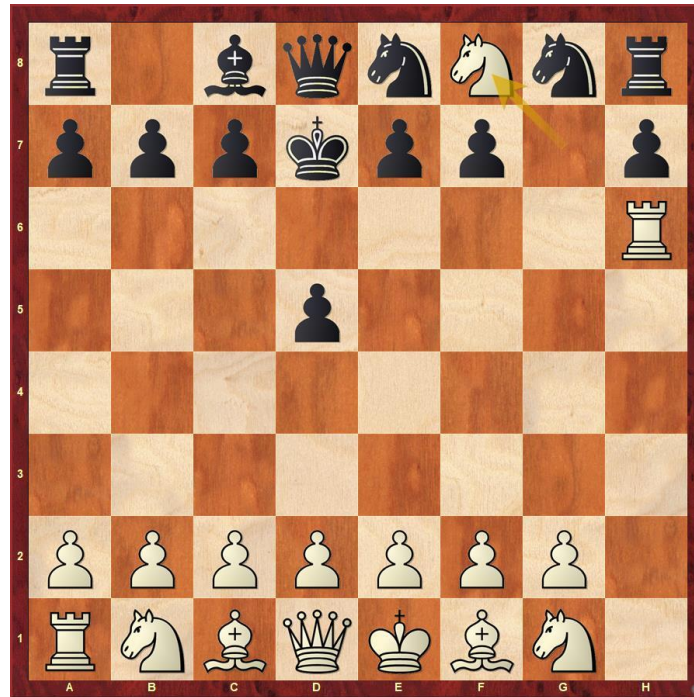
4...Kd7



A nice cutting off move! The rook comes to h6



The knight on b8 was meant to go to e8!



And there you have it gxf8=N#! Beautiful, isn't it?

Mate in 6 with gxf8=N *

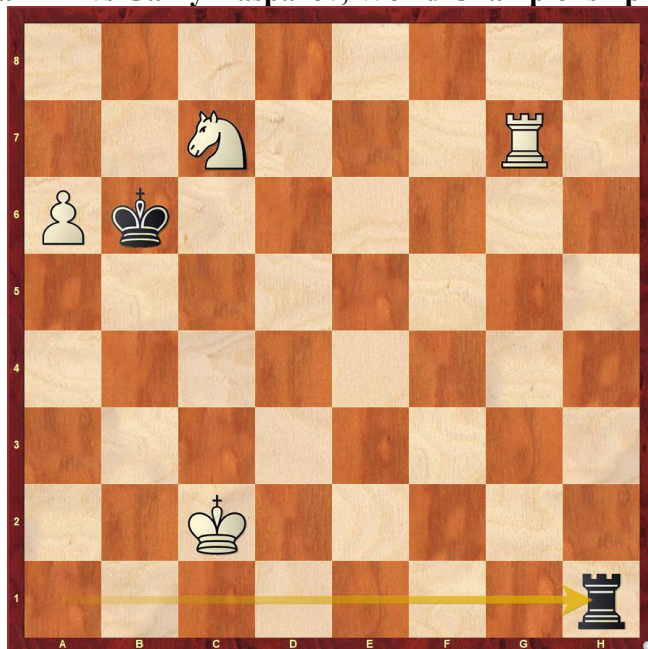
1. h4 d5 2. h5 ♘d7 3. h6 ♘df6 4. hxg7 ♖d7 5. ♔h6 ♘e8 6. gxf8=N# *

Day 5: Working on your weaknesses:-

Chess is a tough game and the stronger the player is, the better he understands this. But shouldn't the better player find chess easier? And shouldn't weaker players think chess is tough? Well, that's the paradox the chess world suffers from, and seeing Kramnik work has made me understand how top players respect the game. The first thing that Kramnik said after meeting the youngsters is, "There is no golden way of improving at chess. Everyone can have his own method. What I am about to do is present the method I believe in and what has worked for me as a player. As a player it is for you to decide how much you want to take and integrate in your game." Coming from an ex-World Champion and one of the finest players that the chess world has ever seen, one cannot help but simply admire Kramnik's humility. He sees in these young kids, a young him. He treats them as he would liked to be treated by someone when he was 14.

Kramnik showing one of the toughest games of his chess career - his missed win against Kasparov from 2000 World Championship Match in game four

Vladimir Kramnik vs Garry Kasparov, World Championship 2000, Game 4



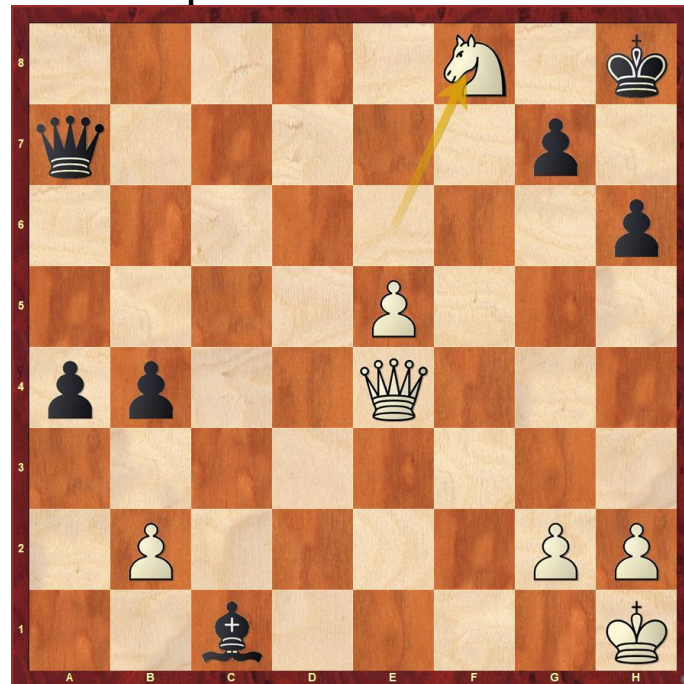
In this position Garry blundered with his last move 58...Rh1. How should White win the game?

White could simply play the move 59.Rg8! Kramnik hadn't missed this move. He had thought about it but had rejected it because after 59...Rh7 60. Rb8+ Ka7 61.Rb7+ he thought that the king would be somehow stalemated after 61...Ka8. Yes Ka8 is not possible, and after 61.Rb7+ it is a checkmate! But somehow Kramnik hallucinated at this point in the game and he didn't go for the line. Instead he played **59.Kb2** and after this the game was drawn. When Kramnik was going towards press centre someone came and asked him - Why didn't you play Rg8? "Well, but the king is sort of stalemated on a8" and while saying this he stopped in his tracks! He had just missed the mate.

When Kramnik narrated this incident to the youngsters at the camp, they were all rivetted in their seats. The first question for Raunak was, "Sir, how did you recover from such an incident?" After all it was the World Championship Match. Kramnik then went on and told them about how he tries to recover after these results.

While showing this game, Kramnik also spoke about another blackout in his chess career, his game against Deep Fritz in 2006.

Deep Fritz vs Vladimir Kramnik



This was also the Question of the day yesterday and we asked you two things: 1. What was the best move for Black here, and What did Kramnik play?

Well, the best move is quite clear - Black should have played 34...Kg8. (Congratulations to Shivakumar Sundaram, Amit Mishra, Aradhya Garg and Kramnikstudent for commenting the right answer in [our previous article](#)). Kramnik played 34...Qe3 and got checkmated in one move with Qh7#. He spoke about this blackout in great detail with the youngsters. In fact Kramnik took nearly 10 minutes for his move. He saw that ...Qe3 was winning for him and tried to find a defence for White. Computers don't usually blunder in such positions, he said to himself. And with this thought he began looking at all the individual moves in the position, like h3, h4, g3, g4 and so on! He went over all the moves in the position for nearly ten minutes and saw nothing wrong with 34...Qe3. "Perhaps the operator made some error on the previous move it seems", Kramnik thought to himself. With this in his mind, he played 34...Qe3 and got up from the table. He could hear some noises in the crowd, but decided to ignore them. From far he saw the Fritz operator was completely puzzled. He was looking at the position on the board, and then on the screen. Mathias Feist - the operator and one of the lead programmers of ChessBase, whom I had met at the ChessBase Office, had told me that he was absolutely shocked to see 34...Qe3 on the board. After some time, he executed the move 35.Qh7# Kramnik came back to the board and was equally stunned. How did he miss such a move after thinking for nearly ten minutes?

Experiences like these when shared with the youngsters, makes them believe that no failure is final. It also helps them to take the blunders and the losses in their games with a feeling of neutrality. If a World Champion can make such errors then so can we. It was a great gesture by Kramnik to talk about these episodes in his chess career which were definitely not pleasant for him. But he sees the educational value in them and that's why he included them in his training.

Solving the issues of the youngsters-

Another extremely important part of the training session is Kramnik trying to solve the issues faced by the youngsters. Here Kramnik is very careful and he takes this part of the training very seriously. For eg. One of the boys asked him, "Sir, I am very bad at converting winning positions." I had expected some detailed reply on this subject by Kramnik, but instead he first asked the youngster. "What sort of positions are you bad at converting? Is it an issue of technique or calculation." He then went on to further interrogate this statement and asked him to supplement it through couple of his games. It was only after nearly thirty minutes that Kramnik could confidently say what was the problem that the youngster faced and how he can try to solve it. Chess players lack objectivity when seeing their own games or weaknesses and hence it is important to actually check the games to understand if that specific weakness actually exists. According to Vladimir, it is critical to make the right diagnosis of the weakness of a player. Sometimes it is even better not to find the weakness than to find the wrong one! And that's why he took special care that he just didn't shoot out his opinion.

Day five was all about Rook Endgame and Kramnik began with a few positions from the Dvoretsky's Endgame Manual to check the knowledge of the youngsters before moving to his own games!

Kramnik is of the opinion that the Dvoretsky's Endgame Manual is one of the finest books written on chess and uses it quite often as a reference point.

The Dvoretsky's Endgame Manual is now available in the ChessBase India shop and you can buy it from here:.....

Question for the day:-

Keres, 1944



White to play and win. Please take good time on this one and try to figure out the intricacies. You have to be as nimble as a ballerina in order to win.

Day 6: World Champion's positional understanding-

The first half of the Kramnik Microsense India Chess Program was dedicated to the study of endgame play. In the second half Kramnik has now shifted his attention to middlegame play and has begun with the art of positional chess. Many experts in the chess world believe that when it comes to positional, strategic and technical chess there is no one better than the 14th World Champion Vladimir Kramnik. On the sixth day Kramnik shared some of the secrets of what has made him one of the finest positional chess players on the globe. In this article we bring you an interesting game from Linares 1998 and also give you a couple of positions to solve as tests!

Topalov vs Kramnik, Linares 1998



Black to play

Don't start calculating moves. Try to understand the position. What is going on, what is your plan, what is opponent's plan, what are the pieces you want to keep, what are the pieces you want to exchange and so on. Only when you have done the general survey of the position, try to indulge in concrete calculations. Usually you have to be doing one of the two things:

1. Stop your opponent's plans
2. Improve your pieces

In the above position, White's plan looks like he wants to go g4 and Ng3. Sometimes he wants to even try and break in the centre with e4. But these are not plans which are something that you need to be really worried about and try stopping them. Hence, we start to think about how to improve our pieces and we realize that although the bishop on a8 is bad, it does two important functions. It defends d5 and it stops White from going e4. So let's for now keep the bishop on a8. The piece that can really go to a better position is the bishop on f6.



Kramnik played 24...Be7! The knight will move to g7 covering the f5 square if required, the queen will move away from d6 and the bishop will place itself on b4 where it puts meaningful pressure on the knight and also on the central squares!



A few moves later, we reach this position. White has just played Bh3. How should Kramnik continue?

I felt that this was the most instructive part of the entire lecture on positional play. While everyone wanted to do something Kramnik suggested the move **28...Bb7**. "But what does the bishop do on b7 was the question." Well it doesn't really do much now, but it is much better than when it was on a8. Improving your pieces forms a big part of positional play. The bishop on b7 can sometimes move to c8 and try for the f5 break if possible. But for Kramnik, it wasn't about this move doing something for the position. He just felt that the bishop on a8 should be improved and went ahead with it!

I have lightly annotated the entire game below. If you go through it, you will realize how sometimes just stopping opponent's plans and improving your pieces can give you points in your games, making it look like you did nothing special!

Topalov, Veselin 2740 - Kramnik, Vladimir 2790 0-1

Linares 15th 1998.02.22

Sagar,Shah

1. d4 ♖f6 2. c4 e6 3. ♖f3 d5 4. ♖c3 ♗e7 5. ♗g5 h6 6. ♗h4 O-O 7. e3 b6 8. ♗e2 ♗b7 9. ♗xf6 ♗xf6 10. cxd5 exd5 11. b4 c6 12. O-O a5 13. b5 c5 14. ♜e1 ♜e8 15. ♜c1 ♖d7 16. g3 ♖f8 17. ♖a4 c4 18. ♗f1 ♜d6 19. ♗g2 ♜ad8 20. h4 ♖e6 21. ♖c3 g6 22. ♖d2 ♗a8 23. h5 g5 24. ♖f1

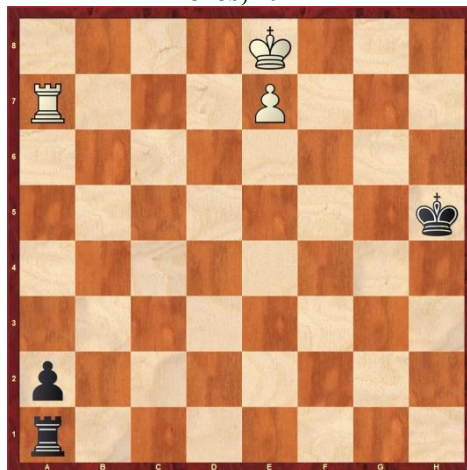
Black to play ♗e7! The bishop will stand well on b4. Sometimes such simple regrouping is enough to get an excellent position. 25. g4 ♜d7 26. ♖g3 ♖g7 27. a4 ♗b4 28. ♗h3 ♗b7! Just improving. No real plans. It's just that the bishop on b7 is better than the one on a8. 29. ♜c2 ♗d6! A tactical

opportunity. 30. ♖f5 ♖30. ♖f1 ♖xh5+ ♖30... ♖xf5 31. gxf5 ♜xf5 ♜xf5 32. gxf5 ♗b4+ ♖31... ♗b4 32. ♜g2 ♜d6 33. f3 ♜e7 34. ♜e2 ♜de8 35. ♜ce1 ♜f6 36. ♗g4 ♗d6 37. ♜d1 ♗b4 ♖37... ♗b8 38. e4 ♖37... ♜g7 38. e4 dxe4 39. ♖xe4 38. ♜c2 ♜d8 The idea is now to play Bc8. Just defending the d5

pawn. 39. ♜d1 ♗c8 40. e4 ♖40. ♖a2 ♜de8 41. e4 ♗xf5+ ♖40... ♗xc3 41. e5 ♖41. ♜xc3 dxe4 42. fxe4 ♗b7 43. ♗f3 ♖441... ♜xe5 42. dxe5 ♖42. ♜xe5 ♗xd4+ ♖42... ♗xe5 43. ♜de1 ♗c7 44. ♜e8+ ♜g7 45. ♜xd8 ♗xd8 46. ♜d1 ♗b7 47. f4 d4+ 48. ♗f3 ♖348... d3 49. ♜xc4 ♜b2+ 50. ♜g3 ♗xf3 51. ♜xf3 ♜e2+ 0-1

Solution for the previous question:-

Keres, 1944

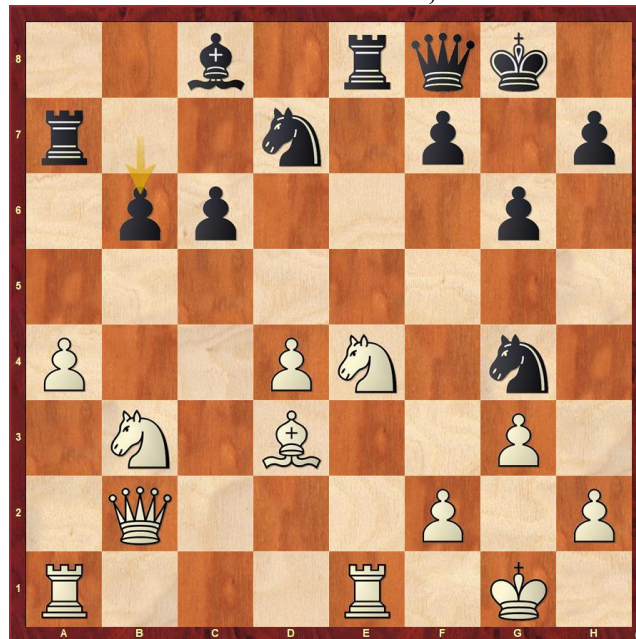


White to play and win. This was the position given to you to solve in our day five article.

Question for the day:-

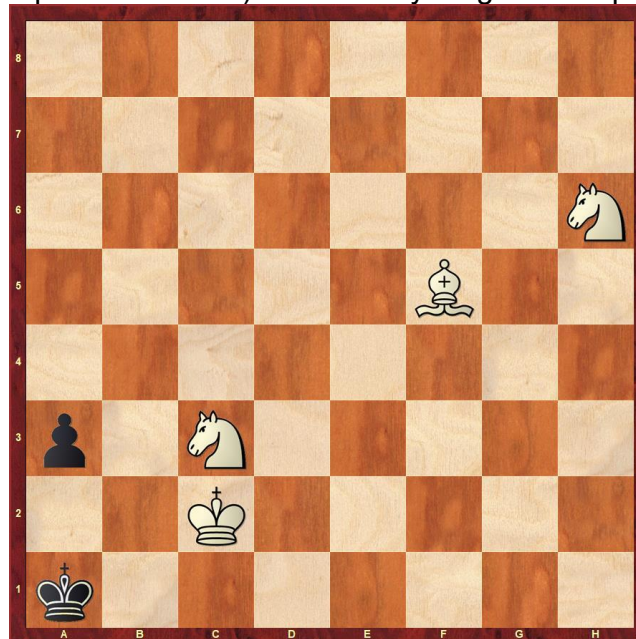
We have two questions for you today. One is based on positional chess lessons of Kramnik and the other is just a cute little study!

Kramnik vs Timman, 1995



White to play. Use the tools you have learnt in this article to solve this one

Here's a position that was given to the youngsters to solve by the guest greeting Kramnik (in one of the pictures above!). It's not very tough but is quite beautiful:



White to play and mate in 8

Day 7: Secrets of top level opening preparation-

"Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime!" This is a very famous proverb and it is exactly what we are trying to achieve at the Kramnik Microsense India Chess Program. Instead of Kramnik teaching an opening variation which maybe useful for a couple of games, what he decided to share was his technique of opening preparation. How does Kramnik prepare for an opponent? On the 7th day of the camp, he sat down with a laptop, with the six youngsters huddling around him and he practically showed secrets of top level opening preparation. It was an eye opening session for the kids as they understood how a World Champion readies himself for a serious game.

Day seven of the training camp was divided into two parts. In the morning session, the players discussed positional play in great detail, while in the afternoon, it revolved around opening preparation! Let's first discuss about Opening Preparation!

Learning opening preparation from the master-

Garry Kasparov was considered as the best opening expert the world had ever seen. So many players were literally knocked out against him right in the opening. But in comes Vladimir Kramnik, who plays a 16-game World Championship Match with Garry and literally outplays him in the first phase of the game. Kramnik's opening preparation was simply brilliant. During the year 2000, the Berlin wall wasn't considered as solid as it is right now. But Kramnik somehow could sense that the opening was much better than its reputation. He could feel that Kasparov wouldn't be in his comfort zone after this opening and he was 100% correct. Not only did he beat Kasparov in the match, without losing a single Berlin game, but also the Berlin went on to become one of the most popular chess openings in the chess world. Clearly, Kramnik was ahead of his time. Later on, Kramnik

revived the Catalan and brought so many nuances in it that made it one of the most popular openings in the world of chess. It still is.

It is pretty clear that rather than learning concrete moves, it was more important to learn Kramnik's art of preparation and how he gets ready for a specific opponent. For this Vladimir asked the youngsters to choose a player who he was not aware of. Once the player was chosen, Kramnik sat down saying, "I am now going to prepare against him as if I am playing a game tomorrow and I have a couple of hours in hand to figure out." The next two hours were just amazing as Kramnik showed how a World Champion prepares.

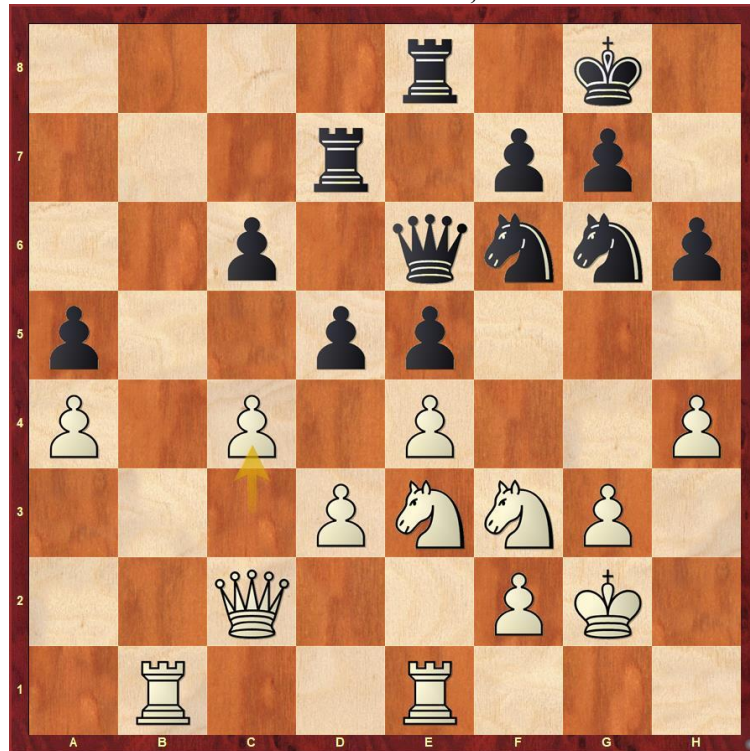
After two hours the youngsters understood that it was not just important to prepare against specific moves for an opponent, but the key also lay in understanding your adversary's playing style. If you look through the entire games and try to understand the player's style then it would help you to take critical decisions in your games. Let's assume that your opponent loves to play tactical positions and is pretty poor at endgames, then you could decide to go for a line that involves the early exchange of queens. And Kramnik gave great importance to this part of preparation before moving into concrete lines. You could say that from the two hours that he prepared, one hour was spent in understanding the opponent's style and the other one in choosing the concrete variation that he wanted to play.

In terms of general preparation and building a repertoire, Kramnik's advice was pretty simple - work on lines that are solid and well known. Look at your opening lines from a long term point of view rather than short term surprise value. For eg. it is well known that an opening like Najdorf is sound and is played at the highest level. It makes sense to put your efforts in this direction rather than preparing an opening like the French or the Pirc. Of course, Kramnik's advice to the youngsters stemmed from the fact that he sees them as potential world top players and not just average grandmasters.

The art of positional play

At the highest level there are certain decisions that need to be made which are extremely complex. It is a synthesis of understanding the general points of the position and also involves concrete calculations. Here's a position that is also our question for the day:

Kramnik vs Michael Adams, Shamkir 2017

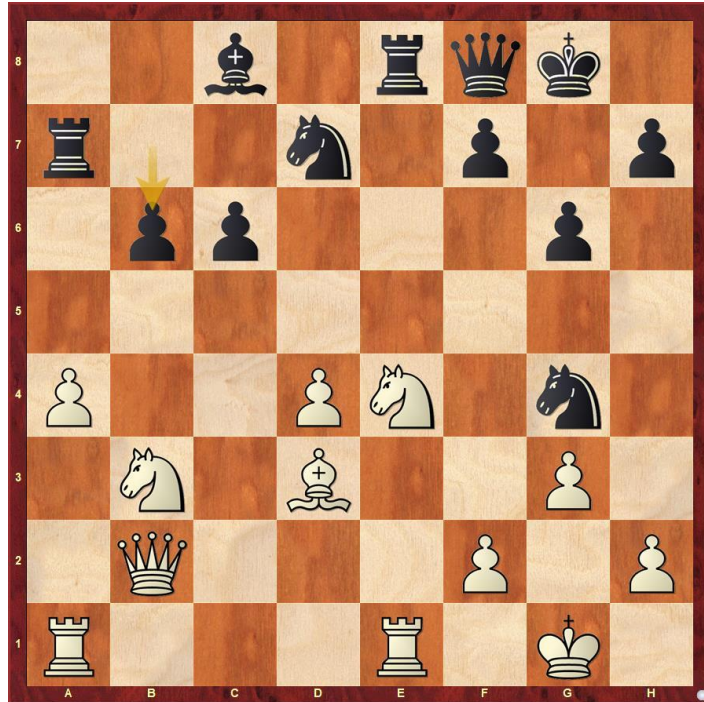


This position arose from the Italian opening and things are around even. Kramnik had been trying his best to pose a few problems to his opponent. Michael Adams is one of the finest positional players in the world. To outplay him from such a position requires Kramnik to put Adams into situations where he has to make tough decisions. Vladimir's last move 26.c4! posed Adams with three options:

1. Would you keep the tension intact in the position with 26...Red8
2. Would you take on e4 with 26...dxe4
3. Would you go for closing the position with 26...d4

Black to play. What would you do here?

Kramnik vs Timman, 1995



It's White to play in this position. What would you do here?

Whenever you look at a position the first thing that should cross your mind is - What is your opponent's plan? In this position Kramnik very quickly realized that Timman wants to play Ngf6 and then control the d5 square in a better way. Hence, he went for the move 23.Nbd2! The knight can go to c4 in future, but more importantly now Ngf6 is no longer possible as after taking on f6, the b6 pawn is hanging. Finding 23.Nbd2 wasn't difficult, but it's one of those moves when made makes your opponent's life extremely difficult.

Kramnik, Vladimir 2730 - Timman, Jan H 2590 1-0

Belgrade Investbank 1995.11.??

Sagar,Shah

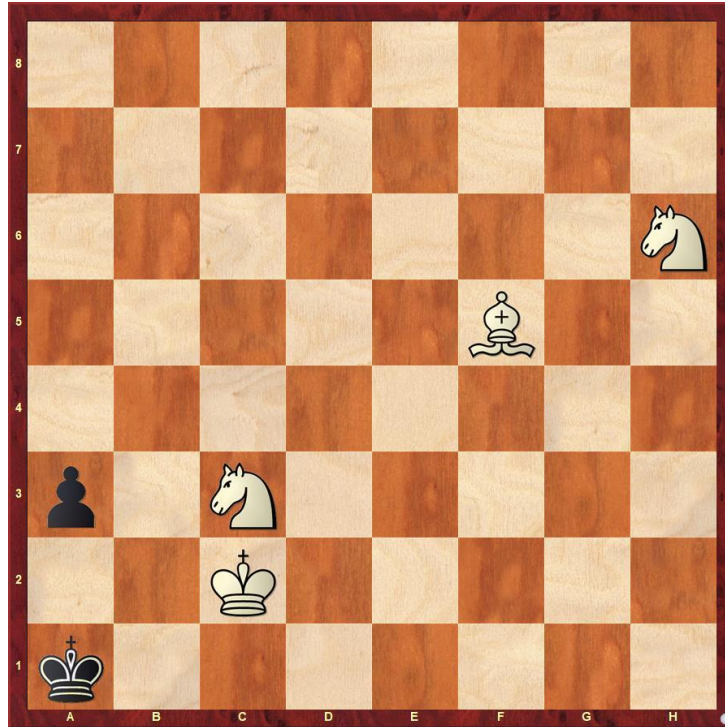
1. ♖f3 ♗f6 2. c4 e6 3. ♖c3 d5 4. d4 ♗bd7 5. cxd5 exd5 6. ♗g5 c6 7. e3 ♗e7 8. ♗d3 ♗h5 9. ♗xe7 ♖xe7 10. O-O O-

O 11. ♖b1 ♗hf6 12. b4 ♖e8 13. ♖c1 a6 14. a4 g6 15. ♖b2 a5 16. bxa5 ♖xa5 17. ♗d2 ♗g4 18. ♗b3 ♖d6 19. g3 ♖a7 20. e4 dxe4 21. ♗xe4 ♖f8 22. ♖e1 b6

What should White play? 23. ♗bd2! Stopping ...Nf6 and Black is in trouble. 23. a5 bxa5 24. ♗bc5 ♗xc5 25. dxc5 ♖ae7 23. ♗d6 ♖xe1+ 24. ♖xe1 ♖xd6 25. ♖e8+ ♗f8 26. ♖xc8 ♖xa4 23... ♗a6 24. ♗c2! Stopping Nf6 and in future the bishop can be activated on

b3. 24. ♗c4 ♗xc4 25. ♗xc4 b5 26. ♗cd6 ♖e6 24... ♖b7 25. ♗b3 ♗gf6 25... ♗df6 26. h3 ♗xe4 27. ♗xe4 ♖be7 28. ♗c2 26. ♖ac1! Keeping the

pressure. ♖c8 26... ♕d3 27. ♕xf7+!+-27. ♘xf6+27. ♗g5 ♗d5 28. ♖xc6 ♖xc6 29. ♕xd5 ♖f6 27... ♘xf6 28. d5 ♘xd5 29. ♘e4 ♖d8 30. ♖xc6 ♗b4 30... ♗g7 31. ♗a3 ♗f8 32. ♗a1+-31. ♘f6+ ♗f8 32. ♘h7+ ♗g8 33. ♘f6+ ♗f8 34. ♖e4 1-0



White to play and mate in 8

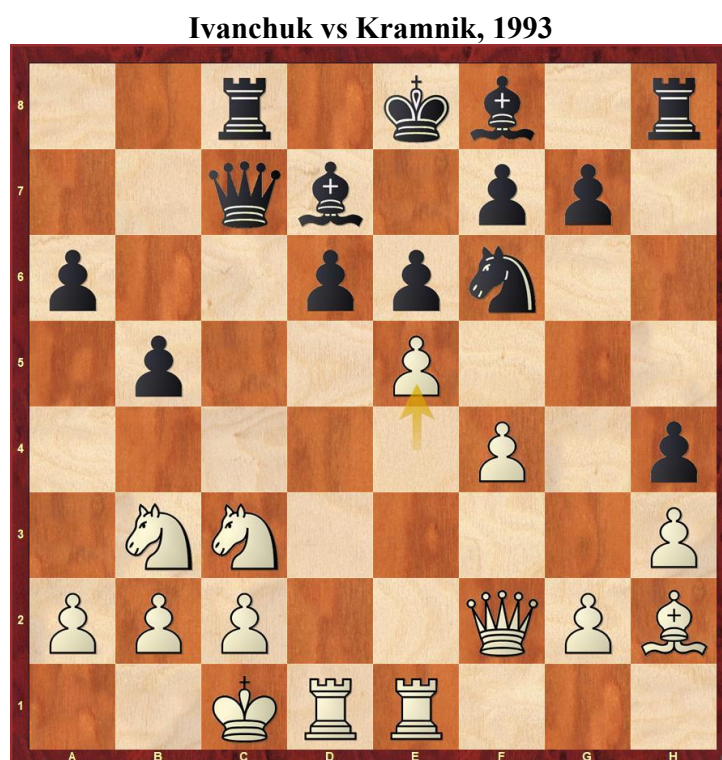
This position was given by Frederic Friedel to the kids. I tried to find the source, but have been unsuccessful. Maybe a reader can help me with it. The solution to the study is quite cute. When you have three pieces on the board, the last thing on your mind is to sacrifice two of them! White begins with 1.Na2! Kxa2 2. Bc6+ Ka1 3.Ba2! Kxa2 4.Nf5! The knight comes back via d4-e2-c1 and executes a mate on the b3 square!

Day 8: The Labyrinth of Dynamic Play-

"You are going to fall at my feet and ask me to go back to positional chess and endgame!" said Vladimir Kramnik jokingly after an extremely intense session on day 8 of the Kramnik Microsense India Chess 2019 on Dynamic Play. What exactly does dynamic play mean? Does it mean tactical play? Does it mean aggressive play? In

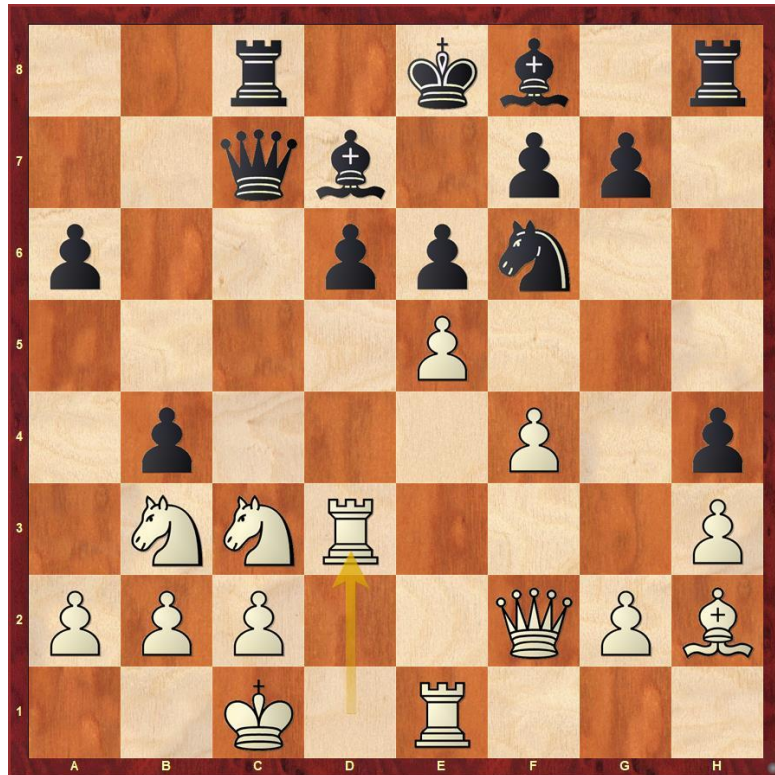
this article we tell you all about what Dynamic chess means with the help of an example from the game Ivanchuk vs Kramnik, 1993. We also give you a fresh question for the day, which Kramnik posed the students during the lunch session. It is not related to chess. No one was able to solve it! We hope that you, dear reader, would fare better than these young prodigies!

When one thinks of Dynamic play the first thing that comes to mind is tactics. However, there is a difference between dynamic play and tactical play. You could say that tactical play is a subset of dynamic play. Because apart from tactics, there are a lot of things that make up dynamic thinking. The best way is to show you with an example, like Kramnik did on the eighth day of the Kramnik Microsense India Chess Program 2019:



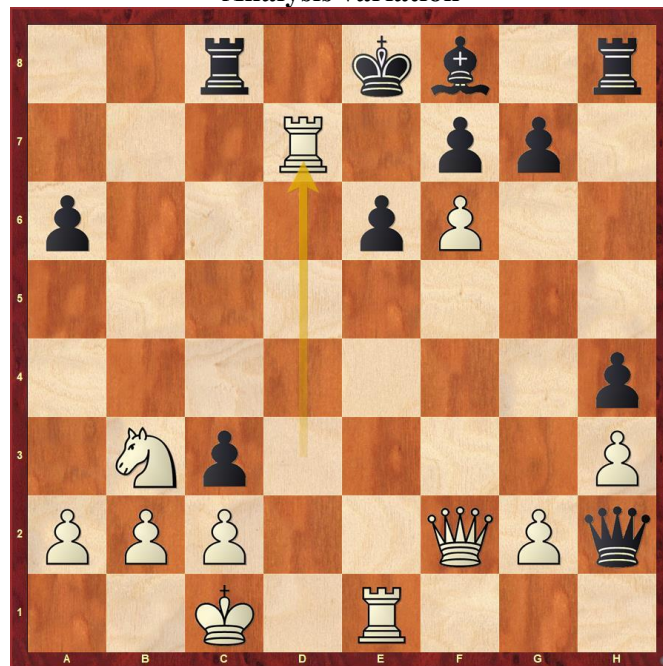
White has just played the move 19.e5 - a very typical idea in the Sicilian. How did Kramnik react?

It makes absolutely no sense to move your knight from f6. First of all it doesn't have a good square to go to, and even if it did have a square, usually in the Sicilian the move e5 is more often than not countered by b4! So Kramnik played **19...b4!** Here is where Kramnik asked the youngsters to get a bit serious and check the possibilities for White.



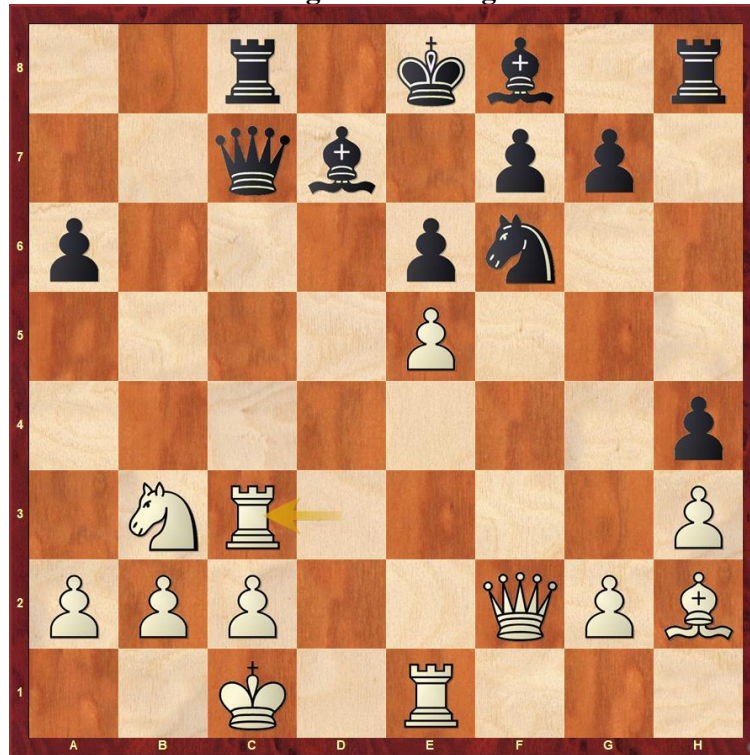
After quite some thought the move **20.Rd3!** was found! Perhaps, this was not the best move, but it was surely creative play by Ivanchuk. He would like to take back on c3 with his rook, before capturing the f6 knight. Kramnik, now decided to take on e5 with his pawn **20...dxe5 21.fxe5 bxc3**. Here the game continued with **22.Rxc3**. However, it was important to check **22.exf6 Qxh2 23.Rxd7!**?

Analysis variation



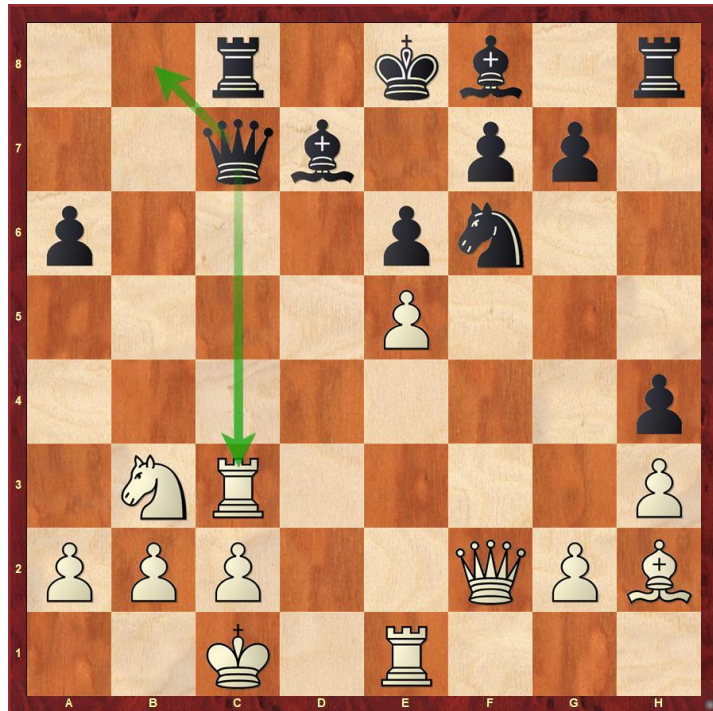
Here it is necessary for Black to find the idea 23...Qg3! Note how important it was to have the pawn on c3 and not prematurely take on b2 as then the white queen could have moved to the d2 square. You can check the variation in the notes below, but after 23...Qg3! Black is doing fine.

Coming back to the game



White took on c3 with his rook. What would you do as Black?

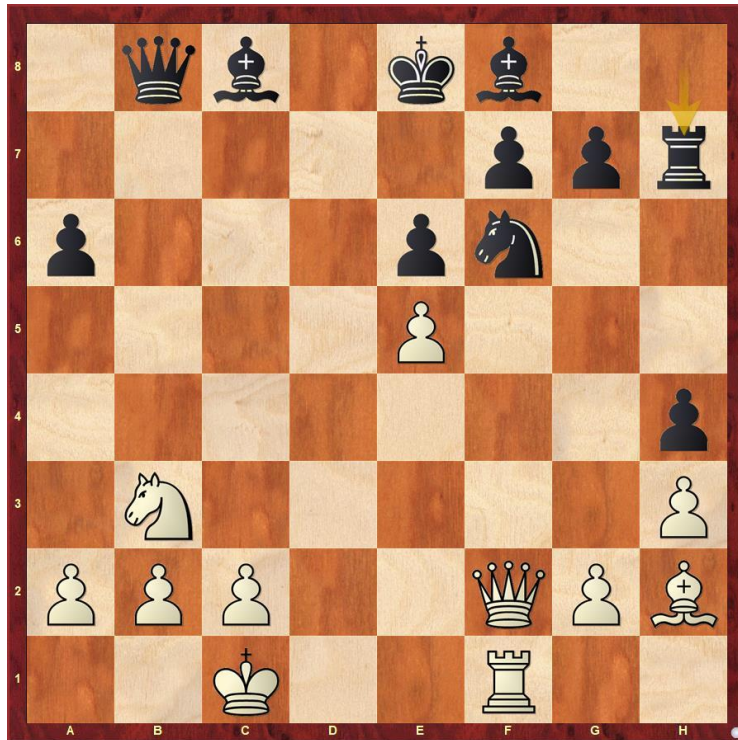
If you played the move 22...Qxc3 you have a good news waiting for you and a bad one! The good news is that you played just like Vladimir Kramnik. The bad news is that there was a stronger alternative at your disposal. This is what Kramnik wanted the youngsters to find.



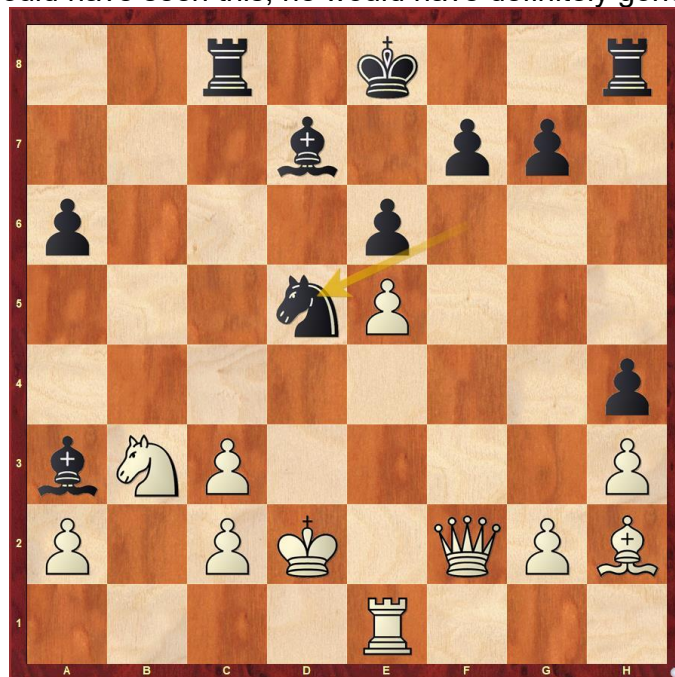
Kramnik took on c3 with his queen. However, the better move was 22...Qb8. After 23.Rxc8 Bxc8 White now plays the only move in the position 24.Rf1!



Kramnik had seen until this point but had missed the next move for Black. Can you find it?



24...Rh7!! What a brilliant defensive move. Once you see it, it becomes completely clear that after 25.exf6 Qxh2 White has nothing up his sleeve because the rook defends the f7 pawn! If Vladimir would have seen this, he would have definitely gone for this variation.



One more problem for Kramnik was that the compensation after the queen sacrifice was so good that he didn't look too deeply into the other line. As it turns out that Black has excellent play in the above position as well. But if he would have played 22....Qb8 then he would have won the game easily.

Ivanchuk, Vassily 2710 - Kramnik, Vladimir 2685 0-1

Linares 11th 1993.02.??

Sagar,Shah

1. e4 c5 2. ♘f3 ♘c6 3. d4 cxd4 4. ♘xd4 ♘f6 5. ♘c3 d6 6. ♘c4 ♖b6 7. ♘b3 e6 8. ♘f4 ♘e5 9. ♘e2 a6 10. ♘g3 This was a novelty during that time.

What should Black play here?10. ♘e3 would be the normal way to

play.10... h510... ♖c710... g5 11. ♖d2 ♗g8 12. O-O-O Somehow the move g5 looks more weakening than achieving something

concrete.11. h311. f3 ♖c7 12. ♖d4 b511... ♖c711... g5 12. ♖d2 ♗g812... ♘h6 13. O-O-

O g4 14. ♘f4±13. h412. f4 ♘c4 13. ♘xc413. ♖d4 b5 14. ♘xc4 bxc4 15. ♘d2 ♘b713... ♖xc4 14. ♖f3 Kramnik: I would have preferred my pawn to be on

h7, but you cannot get everything in life! h414... d5 15. exd515. ♘d2 dxe4 16. ♘cxe415. O-O-O15... ♘b4 16. O-O-O ♘xc3 17. bxc3 ♘xd515. ♘h2 The bishop went to h2 so that the threats of e5

are kept alive.15. ♘f2 e515... ♖c715... ♘d715... d5!? This might well be the strongest move objectively. 16. exd5 ♘b4 17. O-O-O!16. O-O-

O ♗c8 17. ♗he1 b5 White to play. 18. ♖f218. e5 b4 19. ♗d4 ♖c7 20. ♗xb4 ♘d518. a3!?18... ♖c7 19. e519. a3 a519... b4 20. ♗d320. f5 bxc3 21. exd6 ♖b7 22. bxc320... dxe520... bxc3

21. ♗xc3 ♖b8 22. ♗xc8+ ♖xc8 23. exf6 gxf6 24. ♘d4 ♘e7∞ is a safe choice in the position. So if dxe5 doesn't work then we go for this variation.21. fxe5 bxc3 22. ♗xc322. exf6 ♖xh2 23. ♗xd723. ♖d4 ♖c7 24. fxg7 cxb2+ 25. ♖d2 ♘g7 26. ♖xg7 ♖xc2+ 27. ♖e3 ♗f8—+23... ♖g3! 24. ♖xg3 cxb2+ 25. ♖xb2 hxg322... ♖xc3!?22... ♖b8! 23. ♗xc8+ ♘xc8 24. ♗f124. exf6 ♖xh2—+24... ♗h7!! This is the move that Kramnik missed and hence

he didn't go for this variation. Pragg found it.24... ♘d5 25. ♖xf7+ ♖d8 is also better for Black but not as clear as Rh7!!25. g425. ♘d2 ♘b725. ♖f4 ♘b7 26. exf6 ♖xf4+ 27. ♘xf4 gxf6—25... hxg3 26. ♘g3 ♗xh323. bxc3 ♘a3+ 24. ♖d224. ♖b1 ♘d5 25. ♘f4 Getting the bishop back to c1.24... ♘d5 25. ♗e4 ♗xc325... O-

O25... ♘xc3 26. ♗xh4 O-O26. ♗g4?26. ♗d4! a5!! Only resource to have an unclear position.26... ♘b2 27. ♗xd5 exd5 28. ♘c5 unpleasant.26... O-O 27. ♗xd5 ♘b427... ♗fc8 28. ♗xd7! ♗xc2+ 29. ♖e1+—27. ♘f4 ♗c8 28. c4 a4 29. ♘c1∞26... O-O 27. ♖xh4 ♗fc8 28. ♘d4 ♘b4 Black's attack is decisive. 29. ♖e229. ♖c1 ♗d329... ♘b5+ 30. ♘xb530. ♖f2 ♗xc2+ 31. ♘xc2 ♗xc2+ 32. ♖f3 ♘e2+30... ♗xc2+ 31. ♖f3 axb5 32. ♗xb4 ♘xb4 33. ♖xb4 ♗8c3+ 0-1

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29. ♖e229. ♖c1 ♗d329... ♘b5+ 30. ♘xb530. ♖f2 ♗xc2+ 31. ♘xc2 ♗xc2+ 32. ♖f3 ♘e2+30... ♗xc2+ 31. ♖f3 axb5 32. ♗xb4 ♘xb4 33. ♖xb4 ♗8c3+ 0-1

So you see dynamic play is not just about tactics. It is about looking at all the options carefully, finding creative solutions, looking at complex defensive ideas, basically understanding the entire picture and the demands of a chess position.

After the above game, Kramnik showed another one of his extremely complex duel against Alexei Shirov from 1994. Those were the good times when I played the Sicilain, Kramnik exclaimed. After lunch, the session just rose to another level when Kramnik decided to show his game against Magnus Carlsen from Wijk Aan Zee 2010. This is a game that was analyzed for nearly three and a half hours. The kids got a taste of what analysis at the highest level looks like. As Gukesh mentioned after the class, "The biggest difference I could feel was that once Kramnik starts a variation, he has the discipline to look at it all the way until the end. This is what we have to develop!"

Solution to the question for the day:-

Kramnik vs Adams, 2017



The question asked to you was - What would you do here with Black. Would you take on e4, would you keep the tension with Red8 or would you close the position with d4.

The right move is the anti-intuitive **d4!** At first sight it seems like a positional error. But it is infact the strongest move in the position. The logic behind it is that other moves are

not so great. Keep the tension with Red8 means that White can play cxd5 cxd5 and Rb5! putting a lot of pressure on Black's position. And in the above position taking on e4 is also not as appetizing option because the knight on e3 is clearly superior to the knight on g6. After the first move d4, Black has to play very accurately and launch a kingside attack. This is shown by our two youngsters Prithu Gupta and Raunak Sadhwani in the video below:

Question for the day:-

We have been asking you chess questions for the last seven days. Today it's time to take a short break from that and give you a puzzle which Kramnik posed to the youngsters during one of the lunches. Here's the puzzle:

You have two bags of 100 coins each. You have to make just one operation so that the coins in one bag is exactly the double of coins in the other bag.

Mind you:

1. You cannot cut the coins
2. You have to work with these 200 coins itself.
3. You cannot make more than one operation.
4. Coins cannot be thrown away. They have to be in one of the bags.

Day 9: Kramnik's soup theory-

What is Kramnik's soup theory and what is its relevance for a chess player? The ninth and final day of the Kramnik-Microsense India Chess Program had arrived. It had been a great learning experience for the kids right from the first day. Kramnik ensured that his lessons of dynamic chess continued in full flow on the last day as well, as he showed two of his wins against Levon Aronian. We spoke to Vladimir about the program and got his thoughts on how he felt about this entire event. We also interviewed each of the six participants to understand what is it that they had learnt

the most from the 14th World Champion. We also bring you some interesting pictures from Chens-Sur-Leman, and last but not the least, we have a final logical puzzle by Vladimir Kramnik for you to solve.

Kramnik's soup theory-

"You all have to prepare your own soup," said Kramnik on the first day of the camp. The youngsters were confused. Aren't we here to learn about chess? "The soup", Kramnik continued, "is your thinking process in chess. Each chess player has his own recipe to make his own soup. Your aim should be to keep refining your recipe all the time to make the best possible soup. And in the process you should make sure that you use the finest of ingredients!"

If you think about it Kramnik's soup theory is quite deep. You have to constantly try and improve your recipe of the soup so that you get a better final product. The same is with chess. Your thinking process is made up of tactical ability, positional acumen, decision making skills, endgame knowledge, ability to control your nerves and so much more. You have to keep on working on them in order to create an excellent final product. In the process while you are doing so, you have to make sure that you use good ingredients to make your soup taste better. Hence, it is critical that you make use of good books, good softwares and in general high quality material. Because if you use lower quality ingredients, it is for sure that your soup will turn out to be of an inferior quality. And added benefit of this way of thinking is that you are not really fixated on the result and are all the time thinking about how you can improve as a player!

On the final day Kramnik continued with his lessons on dynamic play. He began with his game against Levon Aronian from his Zurich match in 2012. He then went on to show his game against Levon from the Candidates 2018. This was a powerful display by Kramnik where he showed how in order to play for a win in a must-win situation, you do not have to go for aggressive openings. You can play normal chess and then just keep the play going by looking at interesting plans and ideas. Here's the game annotated in the Mega Database by GM Michael Roiz. After attending Kramnik's lessons I have begun to realize the sheer depth in which these top players analyze. In the below analysis where at many places Roiz doesn't even pass a comment for a move, Kramnik made the boys go over 4-5 options. You begin to understand how much these world class GMs actually see in any given positions. It's just mind boggling!

Kramnik, Vladimir 2800 - Aronian, Levon 2794 1-0
 Candidates Tournament 2018.03.10
 Roiz,M

1. e4 e5 2. ♘f3 ♘c6 3. ♙c4 Recently the Italian has been successfully employed by Kramnik on the highest level. In particular, Carlsen, Anand and Radjabov were defeated in great style. ♙c5 4. ♘c3 This time Vladimir takes the game into relatively unexplored territory. ♘f6 5. d3 a6 This natural move is only Black's 4th choice according to statistics. It is always vital to secure the bishop's retreat. All 5... d6 5... O-O and 5... h6 are equally good. 6. ♘d5 ♘xd5 The centralised knight should be liquidated sooner or later. Black can also afford to waste another tempo for prophylaxis: 6... h6 7. O-O 7. ♙e3 d6 8. c3 ♙xe3 9. fxe3 ♘xd5 10. ♙xd5 ♘e7 11. ♙b3 O-O 12. O-O ♘g6 Nikitenko, M - Kovalev, V Minsk 20157... d6 8. c3 O-O 9. ♙e3 ♙xe3 10. fxe3 ♘a5 11. ♘xf6+ ♙xf6 Fedoseev, V - Mamedyarov, S Sochi RUS 20177. ♙xd5 White reasonably prefers not to lock in the light-squared bishop 7. exd5 ♘d4 8. ♘xd4 ♙xd4 9. c3 ♙c5 10. O-O O-O is absolutely fine for Black. 7... d6 This innovation doesn't change the assessment of position - it's equal. The previously played 7... O-O might lead to sharper

play: 8. ♖g5 ♖e7 9. ♖e39. h4 d6 10. ♖d2 ♖g4↔ Benda,H - Kilgus,G Austria
 20079... d6 10. O-O ♖h8 11. c3 f5↔8. ♖e3 This move is aimed at opening up
 the f-file.8. c3 ♖f6 9. O-O ♖a7 10. h3 h6 11. ♖e3 O-
 O 12. ♖xa7 ♖xa78... ♖xe3 9. fxe3 O-O 10. O-O ♖b8! Levon manages to
 find an excellent plan - the knight is heading to f6, where it would neutralise
 White's pressure along the f-file.Less precise
 was 10... ♖e7 11. ♖b3 ♖g6 12. ♖e1 ♖e6 13. ♖xe6 fxe6 14. ♖g3± and the
 Ng6 is misplaced.11. b4 Quite a risky decision - now White's pawn structure is
 getting somewhat shaky.I guess, Vladimir rejected the most natural 11. ♖e1 in
 view
 of ♖d7 12. a312. ♖g3?! c6 13. ♖b3 ♖c5 14. ♖f2 a5↔12... ♖f6 13. ♖a2 ♖e
 6 Now, when Black's knight is comfortably placed on f6, Black has nothing to
 worry
 about.11... ♖d7 12. ♖d212. ♖e1 c6 13. ♖b3 a5 14. a3 ♖f6 15. ♖g3 b512...
c6 13. ♖b3 a5! 14. a3 Now it is Black to decide when to open up the a-
 file. ♖f6 15. h3 h6 16. ♖ab1 A slight concession. b5!/? This ambitious move
 keeps the position tense.16... ♖e8 17. ♖f2 axb4 18. axb4 ♖e617. ♖c3 The
 idea behind this somewhat awkward move is provoking 17...Qb6, after that the
 typical sac on f6 would be on the
 cards.After 17. ♖f2 ♖e8 18. ♖bf1 axb4 19. axb4 ♖e6 20. ♖xe6 ♖xe6↔ Whi
 te's kingside attack is questionable, whereas Black has taken control over the
 open a-file.Objectively, Vladimir should have simplified matters by means
 of 17. a4 bxa4 18. ♖xa4 ♖c7 19. bxa5 ♖xa5 20. ♖b3 but such a decision
 wouldn't suit his aggressive mood!17... ♖d7 Levon isn't in a hurry. Indeed, the
 Qc3 is misplaced anyway.However, a more energetic move
 was 17... ♖b6! 18. ♖e1 ♖e6 19. ♖h4 a4! 20. ♖xe6 fxe6↔ and the failure of
 White's approach is obvious.18. ♖f2?! Vladimir's brave play in the event made
 the Candidates tournament much more attractive. However, this time it could
 have backfired.More to the point
 was 18. ♖e1 axb4 19. axb4 ♖e6 20. ♖xe6 fxe6 21. ♖a1 maintaining the
 balance.18... ♖b6 19. ♖e1 A sad necessity - there is no better way of
 protecting the Pe3. ♖fe8 20. ♖h4 c5?! After losing few games in the previous
 rounds, Levon feels like he has nothing to lose.A safer way
 was 20... a4! 21. ♖a2 ♖e6 22. ♖xe6 ♖xe6 23. ♖ef1 ♖h7 24. ♖f5 d5↔ elimi
 nating any danger and claiming superiority in the centre.21. ♖ef1! This move is
 connected with a pawn sacrifice.Black's king would be safe in the event
 of 21. ♖xf6 gxf6 22. ♖d2 ♖g7 23. ♖d5 ♖a7 24. ♖f1 ♖d8↔ though
 converting the material advantage into a full point isn't an easy task
 here.21... cxb4 22. ♖e1 Now all White's forces are focused on attacking the
 opponent's king.Of course, not 22. axb4? a4 23. ♖a2 ♖xe3↔+22... d5 The play

is extremely sharp now!22... a4!? deserved serious attention 23. ♖xf6!Only not 23. ♕a2? d5! and now White is in troubles: 24. axb424. ♖xf6 gxf6 25. ♕xd5 bxa3--24... dxe4 25. c4 ♕e6 26. c5 ♖d8≡23... axb3 24. ♖g3!The timid 24. ♖xf7? runs into ♖d8! 25. ♖g3 ♖g5 26. ♖xg5 hxg5 27. ♖xd7 ♖f8! 28. ♖xf8+ ♔xf8 29. ♕g6+ ♔g8-- , and Black will promote one of his q-side pawns.24... ♖f8 25. cxb3 bxa3 26. ♖xh6 and the game should end in a draw: a2 27. ♖a1 ♖c5 28. ♖h5 ♖c3 29. ♖g5 ♖xa1+ 30. ♔h2 ♖e1 31. ♖xg7+ ♔h8 32. ♖g5 ♖xh4 33. ♖xh4+ ♔xg7 34. ♖g5+**23. axb4 dxe4 24. bxa5 ♖xa5 25. ♕g6!?** Vladimir is continuing to complicate matters.The immediate 25. ♖xf6 gxf6 26. dxe4 ♖f8 would offer White sufficient compensation for an exchange, but not more than that.**25... ♕e6** Levon is playing with fire!25... ♖a6 26. ♖xf6 gxf6 27. ♖g3 looks extremely scary for a human eye, though the cool-blooded ♖d6! 28. dxe4 ♔g7 29. ♕h4+ ♔f8∞ hardly gives White anything special.Another possible way of handling the position would be 25... exd3!? 26. ♖xf6 gxf6 27. ♖g3 ♖a7! 28. cxd3 f5 29. ♕xe5+ ♔f8∞**26. ♕xe5**It looks like 26. ♖xf6! would pose Black the major practical problems: gxf6 27. ♖g3 Now it would be very difficult for Levon to find b4!The more natural 27... exd3 28. ♖xf6 d2 runs into 29. ♕h4+ ♔f8 30. ♕f5 d1=Q+ 31. ♔h2 ♖e7 32. ♖g7+ ♔e8 33. ♕xe6 ♖xe6 34. ♖xe6 ♖xe6 35. ♖g8+ ♔d7 36. ♖xf7+ ♔d8 37. ♖xe6 and Black is in serious danger28. ♕xe6 ♖xe6 29. ♕f4+29. ♕xe5+ ♔h7 30. ♕c4 ♖g5 31. ♖xg5 hxg5 32. ♕xb6 ♖xb629... ♔f8 30. ♕xe6+ ♖xe6 31. ♖h4 ♖a6 32. ♖xe4 ♖d6 and a draw seems the most probable result.**26... exd3 27. ♖xf6 gxf6 28. ♖xf6** The best practical try.28. ♖g3+ ♔f8 29. ♕g6+ ♔g7 30. ♕f4+ ♔h8 31. ♕xe6 ♖xe6 32. ♕xe6 ♖xe6 33. cxd3 b4**28... d2!** This move is aimed at depriving the Qe1 of the g3-spot.28... dxc2? would yield White a decisive attack: 29. ♕xc2 ♔g7 30. ♖f2+-**29. ♖g3**+Of course, not 29. ♖xd2? ♖a1+ 30. ♔f2 ♖a5! 31. ♖xa5 ♖xa5≡**29... ♔f8 30. ♖f1** The d2-passer is very strong now. ♖a7 31. ♕g6+ ♔g7 32. ♕f4+ ♔h8 33. ♕h5 f6 After this move White has no risk at all.The situation would be double-edged in the event of 33... ♕g4!? 34. ♖xg4 ♖xe3+ 35. ♔h1 ♖g8 36. ♖h4 ♖a6↖**34. ♕xf6 ♖f8** There was the equally good 34... ♖d8 35. ♕xe635. ♖f4 Or ♕f5! 36. ♖xf5 d1=Q 37. ♖f4 ♔g7 38. ♖g3+ ♔h8 39. ♖f435... d1=Q 36. ♖f4 ♖h7 37. ♕xh7 ♖xe6 38. ♕f6 ♖xf1+

39. ♔xf1 ♕c4+ 40. ♔xc4 bxc4 with a drawish endgame. 35. ♖f4 ♗h7 The only, but sufficient defence! 36. ♖e5 ♖c7?? Alas, Levon doesn't manage to withstand the time pressure...After 36... ♗g7 this spectacular encounter should end in a draw. For instance, 37. ♗xe6 ♗g5 38. ♗h5+ ♗xe5 39. ♗xf8+ ♔h7 40. ♗f7+ ♔h8 40... ♔g6? 41. ♗g7+ ♔xh5 42. ♗f7+ ♔h4 43. ♗g4#41. ♗f8+ 37. ♗e8+! A very dramatic end! 37. ♗e8+ ♖xe5 38. ♗xf8+ ♗g8 39. ♗xg8#1-0

Kramnik's list of suggested books-

Keeping in mind the analogy of the soup and its ingredients in mind, Kramnik told the youngsters that it is important to read from good books. Here are some of his recommended books:

1. Dvoretsky's Endgame Manual
2. All Kasparov books starting from the My Great Predecessors Series
3. Positional Decision Making and Dynamic Decision Making by Boris Gelfand
4. A book on Rubinstein by Yuri Razuvaev
5. Fire on Board books by Alexei Shirov
6. Books written on minor piece endgames by John Nunn and Karsten Mueller
7. Dvoretsky books in general
8. Practical rook endgames by Korchnoi

What did the youngsters learn from Kramnik?

After the camp ended I sat down together with all the youngsters and asked them what they learnt from the camp. It was interesting to see how everyone learnt something different.

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Speaking to ChessBase India Kramnik said, "I am quite satisfied with the amount of material that I covered in the camp and the attention that was shown by the students. My main aim of the session was to let these youngsters know how top level players think in strategic and tactical situations, to enrich them with serious high level experience. A lot of it comes with years, but it's better when someone teaches you general strategic things as to how people play at the highest level. The kids will start implementing it in their games once they learn and so the sooner they learn about it the faster their path will be

to the top." When asked whether he had spotted a future World Championship level player among these talents, Kramnik said, "I have given a lot of material to these kids over the last few days. It is up to them to digest the material, to think about it and to use it future. This has only been the first camp, I hope that there would be more camps in the future. But in any case, the initial and very important seeds of development have been sown in the kids."

"I am thankful to Microsense and ChessBase for initiating this. I think it is my moral responsibility to help these talented kids. I am glad that there are some forces who are thinking in the same way, about our future, about our kids! When kids have a talent in chess, I think it is our duty as adults to help them realize it. In future these players would become the best in the world or even World Champions and I would be happy to know that my work contributed towards their success. It's tough work, but I enjoy it. Physically and mentally it was difficult for me, but emotionally it was very pleasant and the kids somehow became like a small family already!"

solution to the previous question:

In the previous article we had asked you the following question:

You have two bags of 100 coins each. You have to make just one operation so that the coins in one bag is exactly the double of coins in the other bag.

Mind you:

1. You cannot cut the coins
2. You have to work with these 200 coins itself.
3. You cannot make more than one operation.
4. Coins cannot be thrown away. They have to be in one of the bags.

Answer:

According to Kramnik, the answer is very simple once you get to know about it, but somehow thinking about it in a linear way would get you nowhere. You have to creative with your thinking. The right answer is that you put one bag of coins inside the other! This would mean that the outer bag would have twice the number of coins of the inner bag! Simple isn't it!



In order to explain the answer of the puzzle, Kramnik picked up one chess set... | Photo: Amruta Mokal



And placed it inside the other chess set! Frederic Friedel, who was present there when Kramnik gave the puzzle, was quite impressed with the elegant simplicity of the solution! | Photo: Amruta Mokal

To all our readers who found the answer, congratulations! You did better than six of the brightest talents in Indian chess. To all those who couldn't solve it, don't despair! Here's another one by Kramnik! The final one!



Kramnik used these pins for the question - It's basically six (in roman numbers) = two. How can you move one pin from one place to another to get the equation working? Let us know your answers in the comments section below!

it was mostly about endgames. But before the day began Vlad gave the class a problem to solve. We ask you to solve it as well — it is quite breath-taking.

Gilberg Charles Alexander, 1877

Mate in two moves

Gukesh was going to the washroom to get ready for the day. I asked him to come and have a look at the this position, which Kramnik had sent via WhatsApp a few minutes ago. Just as a warm up for the day. He wanted the youngsters to crack this one before he arrived. Gukesh looked at the position for around 30 seconds and then went on for his shower.

I assumed Gukesh had forgotten about the position, and when he turned up at the breakfast table, with his new t-shirt and looking fresh, I asked him to join us in solving the position. "I found the solution", he exclaimed. But when? "While getting ready!" Gukesh had memorized the position and was thinking about it in his head under the shower!

So what's the answer? 1. ♖f1! said Gukesh (you can move the pieces on the diagram above to follow the solution). And suddenly it became clear to everyone what the idea was! Isn't it beautiful? If Black takes 1... ♜xe6 and White mates with...? Yes, you got that right! 2. ♖f5#! That is a square that is attacked three times, but all the attacking pieces are suddenly pinned. And if Black tries to defend by moving the knight, 2. ♖f6 mates; if he moves the

rook it is 2. ♖f4#; and if he moves the queen it is mate by rook or queen on the e-file. What a pretty position!



