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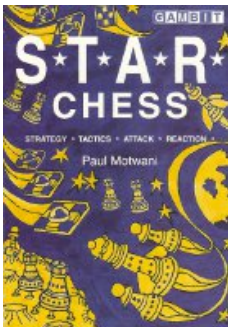
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H.O.T. Chess by GM Paul Motwani

When this book first arrived, we looked at the title and grimaced: "H.O.T. Chess"? What is going on here? Is someone manipulating the title simply to increase sales? Of course, it would not be the first time. There are a few books that have come out with a reference to Bobby Fischer in the title that have little or nothing to do with him.

Upon further examination, it appears that the author, Scotland's first grandmaster, is employing a teaching technique – mnemonics – to help the student/reader enjoy and therefore better learn the subject matter. "H.O.T." is an acronym standing for "Highly Original Thinking." As the author states in the Introduction: "I know, from eleven years so far of teaching mathematics in schools, that, with the presentation of a concept, the methods of teaching should be interesting...I have found...mnemonics to be particularly helpful aids to assist learning. Lots of my own mnemonics in a chess context appear in the chapters ahead, and you may well think of others which can further help your own thought processes."

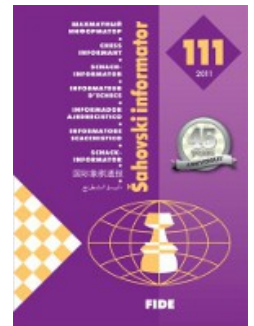
Thirty-eight deeply annotated games are given by Motwani, along with several dozen additional references, positions and puzzles to stimulate the reader's chess acumen. The emphasis seems to be on exciting, attacking chess, rather than slow positional squeezes. The games are current, well annotated and without stressing any particular opening lines, thereby maintaining general appeal to most readers. It all sounds a bit hokey, but in fact it works. An excerpt...

Your experience of the previous chapter tells you that T.O.D.O. is a mnemonic, but what does T.O.D.O. represent, and when and how is it useful? Well, T.O.D.O. is my personal favourite of the many concepts in H.O.T. Chess. The four letters stand for the words Tenacious, Objective, Dangerous, Original. These are characteristics which I always try to strengthen in my own chess style. Prior to playing any game, I also try to assess which of the four qualities my opponent possesses, and to what degree.

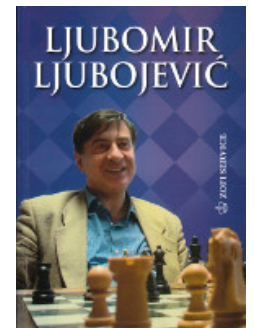
Before I explain how I have made effective use of T.O.D.O., I will elaborate on the meanings of our four new key words in a chess context. By the word Tenacious, I mean how firmly a player can hold fast, sticking to the tough struggle in progress. Tenacity is a very important quality for a chess player to develop. For example, it may mean stubbornly defending a difficult position for a long time, but eventually being rewarded with a half point, or sometimes more, if you can wear the opponent down. Conversely, you may be sitting with an advantageous position, but meeting resistance from your opponent.

Then you need to be tenacious in order to nurture your advantage patiently, keep your opponent under pressure, and finally break down his resistance...It is time for more examples of T.O.D.O. in practice. I have great respect for English grandmaster William Watson as a friend and as a chess player. He is particularly strong in the D.O. elements of T.O.D.O. So, when I faced the

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1994 British Champion in a British Club Team Championship match, I endeavoured to play with particular emphasis on the T.O. parts.

Game 10
W. Watson – P. Motwani
Darlington 1995
Reversed Pirc

1 g3

There are some subtle differences between this move and 1 Nf3. For example, 1 g3 d5 2 c5 3 f4!? is possible, like playing a Leningrad Dutch system with an extra tempo. Note that, in that variation, 2 f4 could be answered aggressively by 2...h5!? 3 Nf3 h4 4 Nxh4 Rxh4 5 gxh4 e5, with a dangerous initiative for the sacrificed exchange.

1...e5 2 Bg2

During 1990, I had a long conversation with the deep-thinking grandmaster Mihai Suba, including discussion of this opening. He felt strongly that White should play 2 c4 instead of allowing Black to establish two pawns in the centre so easily with 2...d5. However, as grandmasters like Azmaiparashvili and Chernin have demonstrated frequently, the Modern Defence is playable, so, when White employs it with an extra tempo, it should not be taken lightly.

2...d5 3 d3 Be6

Recommended by Suba. Black develops his light-squared bishop to the best square while remaining flexible with the rest of his army.

4 Nf3

4 c4 is comfortably answered by 4...c6.

4...f6 5 c3 Qd7!

So that 6 Qb3 can be met by 6...c6 or 6...c5.

6 Nbd2 Nh6 7 e4

Four months later, McNab-Mannion, Grangemouth 1995, deviated with 7 0-0. The game continued 7...Nc6 8 b4 a6 9 Nb3 Nf7 10 Be3 Bh3 11 a4 Be7 12 Nc5 Bxc5 13 bxc5 0-0 14 Rbl Rab8 15 Rb2 Bxg2 16 Kxg2 f5 17 Qbl Nfd8! 18 Bd2 Ne6! 19 Rxb7 Rxb7 20 Qxb7 Nxc5 (20...Rb8? 21 Nxe5!) 21 Qbl Nxa4 22 Qa2 Nb6 23 Qxa6 e4 24 Ngl (24 Nd4 Ra8 25 Qb7? Nd8 and Black wins, but even 25 Qb5 Nxd4 26 Qxd7 Nxd7 27 cxd4 Ra2 is uncomfortable for White) 24...Ne5 25 Bf4 Ng6 26 Qa2 Nxf4+ 27 gxf4 Qc6!, and Black stood better.

7...Nf7 8 0-0 Be7 9 Nh4

An alternative is 9 d4 Nc6, and Black should have no serious problems, since he is well-developed with a harmonious position.

9...g6 10 Nb3

Realising that 10 f4 exf4 11 gxf4 dxe4 12 dxe4 Nc6 leaves Black with excellent piece play and the safer king, White changes plan.

10...Nc6 11 Be3 0-0-0



[FEN "2kr3r/ppqbn1p/2n1bpp1/3pp3/4P2N/1NPPB1P1/PP3PBP/R2Q1RK1 w - - 0 12"]

White's last move might have discouraged me from 'castling long' if I had started to worry about the pawn on a7. However, objectively White has no serious threats, and therefore I tenaciously stuck to my previous castling intentions, and to my overall 'T.O. game-plan'.

12 Nc5?!

Missing a tactical point. 12 Qe2 was better.

12...Bxc5 13 Bxc5 dxe4 14 Bxe4

The point is that after 14 dxe4 Qxd1 15 Rfxdl Rxd1+ 16 Rxd1, Black can take the a-pawn safely.

14...g5! 15 Ng2 f5 16 Bf3 g4 17 Be2 Ng5

White's position is suddenly critical, having lost three tempi in being pushed back on moves 15-17.

18 Qa4 Bd5!

Threatening 19...Bxg2 20 Kxg2 Qd5+.

19 Bxa7? This loses by force, but White was under extreme pressure. However, 19 b4 b6 20 Be3 f4! 21 gxf4 Nh3+ 22 Khl exf4 23 b5 f3! is also hopeless for White.

19...Nxa7 20 Qxa7 Qc6! 0-1

White resigned, since his knight cannot be satisfactorily shielded or defended, and moving it to e3, e1 or h4 would allow 21...Nh3#.

Many players, particularly weaker ones, emphasize three things in their tournament preparation: Openings, openings, and openings. They memorize lines and then are puzzled when, after coming to the end of a line, they are outplayed by their opponents. This book will help raise the consciousness of those players and give them some idea of how to approach their games when at the end of lines learned by rote. And, although not promoted as such, it will not do badly either as a text for teachers who wish to use it with instruction of some of their higher rated students. It is a very useful guide to play in general, especially for those rated below master. Nice job, Paul.

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