



SKITTLES ROOM

From the Archives

Hosted by
Mark Donlan



Chess Mazes
by Bruce Alberston

From the Archives...

Since it came online over eight years ago, ChessCafe.com has presented literally thousands of articles, reviews, columns and the like for the enjoyment of its worldwide readership. The good news is that almost all of this high quality material remains available in the [Archives](#). The bad news is that this great collection of chess literature is now so large and extensive – and growing each week – that it is becoming increasingly difficult to navigate it effectively. We decided that the occasional selection from the archives posted publicly online might be a welcomed addition to the regular fare.

Watch for an item to be posted online at least once each week, usually on Thursday or Friday. We will update the [ChessCafe](#) home page whenever there has been a “new” item posted here. We hope you enjoy *From the Archives*...

C.J.S. Purdy: An Unconventional Chess Thinker

by Amatzia Avni

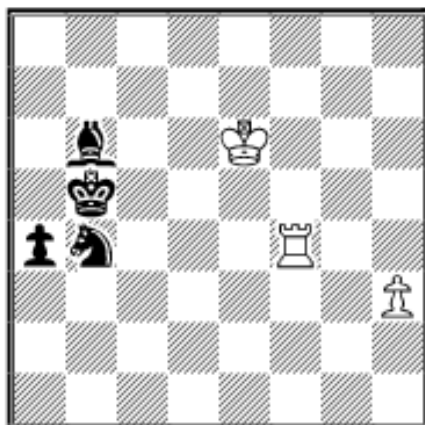
Cecil J.S. Purdy (1906-79) was a prominent Australian player. He held the IM title and that of World Correspondence Chess Champion from 1953 to 1958. His reputation, however, largely derives from his writing.

Purdy was very interested in the game's logic, in discovering the hidden principles and rules of positional play, tactics, the endgame, and so on. He had an open mind. Although well versed in the works of Emanuel Lasker and Nimzowitsch, he was not dazzled by these “big names” and had strong views of his own which sometimes went against prevailing opinion. Even today his ideas and theories have lost none of their freshness. Here are some of his unique views:

1. Combinations, says Purdy, can arise at any time: “Most of us are influenced by the utterly mad advice...that it is useless to look for combinations until you have a positional advantage.” However, the possibility of executing a (sacrificial) series of forcing moves is not dependent on the assessment of positional factors. Here is a fascinating example by Purdy to substantiate his claim:

Purdy – Hamilton

Australian Ch., Brisbane 1967



White certainly seems to be dead lost.

73 h4 Nc2?

73...a3 74 h5 a2 75 Rf1 Bd4 was winning.

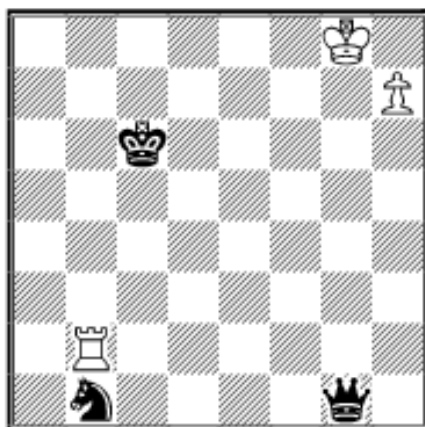
74 h5 a3 75 Rf1 a2 76 h6 Bd4 77 h7 Na3

77...a1(Q) 78 Rxa1 and 79 Kf7 is insufficient, but now it seems that White can resign.

78 Rd1 Bh8 79 Kf7 Nb1 80 Kg8!

This lucky escape springs from nowhere. Logically, Black should be winning, but he is not! If 80...a1(Q) 81 Rb1+! draws.

80...Bb2 81 Rd8! a1(Q) 82 Rb8+ Kc6 83 Rxb2! Qa8+ 84 Kg7 Qa7+ 85 Kg8 Qg1+



86 Rg2

I'm not sure whether this brilliancy is essential to save the game but it does stress the "illogical" side of chess.

86...Qxg2+ 87 Kh8 1/2-1/2

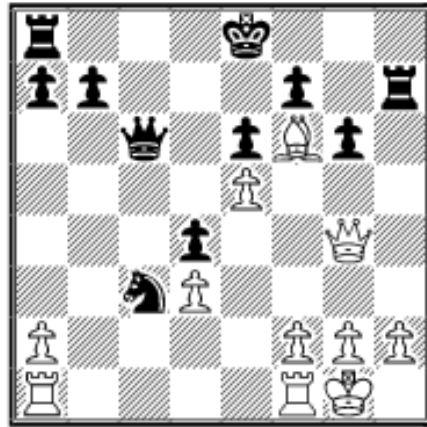
2. Forming a plan is desirable but not absolutely necessary. "Most writers insist that we should always have a plan... [but] the ultimate aim, after all, is simply to find

the best move in each position, and if we could find it without the trouble of making a plan many moves deep...why not do so?" Purdy puts tactics and avoidance of mistakes before planning. He advocates the modest approach of improving the position of one's pieces, making a "good forcing move" and strengthening one's position.

"Don't always plan" and "Avoid planning when there is something else" are two of his bold statements. He likes to cite examples in which no forward thinking is apparently called for. Purdy not only preached this philosophy but also played by it, and with considerable success. The following effort illustrates his practical approach:

Purdy – Miller

2nd Australian CC Ch. 1946-48



22...b5!

With the simple idea of promoting this pawn.

23 a3 a5 24 Rae1 Qc5 25 f4 Rh5

Black is careful: 25...Qxa3? 26 f5!

26 Qf3 Qd5 27 Qf2 Kd7 28 h3 Rb8? 29 Kh2

Typical Purdy there is nothing concrete for White to do, so he waits, putting his pieces on better squares.

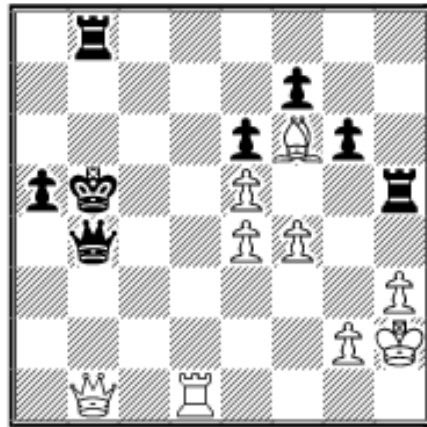
29...b4?

On his previous move Black should have played 28...Rc8!, to meet White's next with 30...Rc4. Now Purdy gets his chance.

30 Re4! Nxe4 31 dxe4 Qc5 32 Rd1 b3 33 Rxd4+ Kc6 34 Qb2 Qc2

White threatened 35 Rd3!. On 34...Qxd4 35 Qxd4 b2 comes 36 Qc3+ Kd7 37 Qc5!

35 Rd6+ Kb5 36 Qd4 b2 37 a4+ Qxa4 38 Qxb2+ Qb4 39 Qc2 Qc4 40 Qb1+ Qb4 41 Rd1!!



This game creates an impression of unrelated moves and ideas, not a carefully planned operation (and in a correspondence game of all things!). Maybe this is what chess is all about.

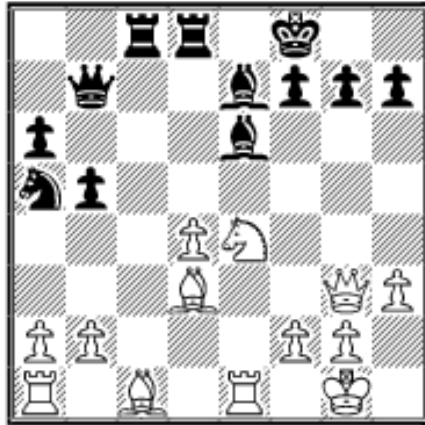
41...Kb6 42 Qc2 Ka7 43 Ra1 Ka6 44 Qc7 Qb6 45 Qxf7 Rb7 46 Qe8 Rhh7 47 Bd8
Where has this come from? **1-0**

3. The well-known device of "double attack" is explained by Purdy in an original way. The rules of chess state that the players shall play alternately, one move at a time. This is one factor which distinguishes chess from war. (By the way, Purdy thinks it is wrong to try to explain chess with analogies from other spheres; it is better to look at chess within the framework of the game itself.) No one expects war to be fair, and each side will make as many successive

moves as it can; but in chess, one can make only one move at a time. This, observes Purdy, is a formidable element of the game, in that the chess player is constantly “trying to force his enemy into the often impossible task of doing two things at once.” Here is Purdy employing the double attack theme, in a most artistic way:

Purdy - Sarapu

Australasian Ch. 1952



23 Nc5! Bxc5 24 dxc5 Rxc5 25 b4

The first double attack, to which Black has an antidote.

25...Rc3 26 Be4!

Attacks three pieces. If 26...Rxc3 then 27 Bxb7 wins material.

26...Qc8 27 Be3!

Another double threat: 28 bxa5 and 28 Bc5+.

27...Rd4! 28 Rec1!!

Against this killer Black can no longer find salvation. See the theme of “forcing him do two (or more) things at once” occur once again.

28...Rxe4

28...Rxc1+ 29 Rxc1 Rc4 is met by the lethal 30 Rd1!, e.g. 30...Rxb4? 31 Qd6+; or 30...Nc6 31 Bc5+; or 30...Rxe4 31 Qd6! Ke8 32 Bc5!

29 Rxc3 Nc4 30 Rd1 f6 31 Rcd3 Kf7 32 Rd8 Qc6 33 Bc5 g6 34 Qb8 Re5 35 Qa7+ and Black lost on time.

The **ChessCafe** would like to extend its thanks to *Kingpin* and Anthony Kosten for permission to reprint the above article. *Kingpin* is a humorous chess magazine which contains entertaining and instructive articles by masters on all aspects of the game.

“The joy of chess is nowhere celebrated to such climactic excesses as in *Kingpin*...” IM William Hartston, *The Independent*



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