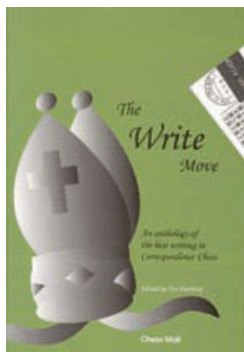




## COLUMNISTS

### The Kibitzer

Tim Harding



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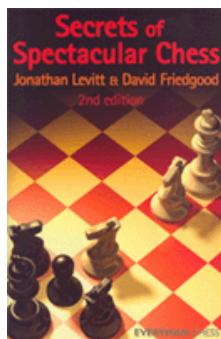
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## Summer Books and a New Chess Library

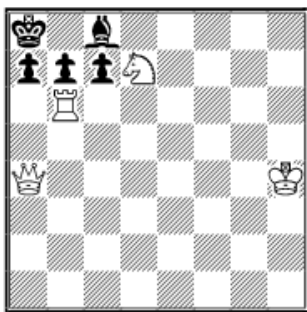
Summer in Dublin has been wet, so novels for the beach have not been much in demand this year. A pile of chess books has been growing taller in recent weeks, mostly from Everyman and Olms. Sunbathing not being an option, it is time to reduce the book pile; another book review column will probably follow before Christmas.

Some publishers are no longer sending me chess books since I stopped editing a magazine, but if anyone at Batsford or Gambit is reading this and think they have a book that would particularly interest Kibitzer readers, please send it along and it will be reviewed in the next batch.

Jonathan Levitt and David Friedgood (but mostly Levitt) have rewritten a classic: [Secrets of Spectacular Chess](#), 2nd edition (Everyman, ISBN 978-1-85744-551-0), which explores the meaning of beauty in chess, through problems, endgame studies and practical play. There is an additional chapter, some new examples in earlier chapters, including Kasparov's famous combinative game against Topalov from Wijk aan Zee 1999, and also some of the older examples from their 1995 edition have been re-examined with the aid of a computer. One good selling-point of this book is that it hardly matters whether you are a master or a novice; you can enjoy the thrilling examples of play, even if you are unable to solve the positions for yourself.



They define four elements in chess beauty, although usually not all four will be present in the same example. These are Paradox, Geometry, Depth and Flow. Here is one example to illustrate each, starting with Paradox, which means rule-breaking, especially normal material values of the pieces. The first position to illustrate Paradox is irresistible, although it is clearly artificial. It is the equivalent of going all-in in poker: in order to checkmate in two moves, White must put all his pieces *en prise*.



V. Aleksandrov, special commendation, Kubbel Memorial Tourney 1991

After **1 Qc6!** it is checkmate next move, and there are five different mating patterns depending on Black's reply. Find them all.

Depth can mean long variations having subtle differences between a 'try' that does not quite work and the real solution that does. For the solution to this one (a first prize winner by Y. Hoch in 1980), you must either solve it yourself or buy the book.

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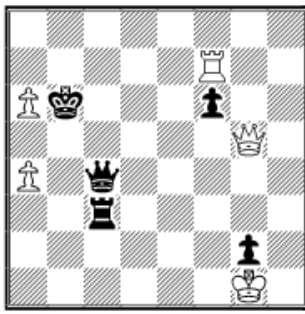
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 & Tim Harding

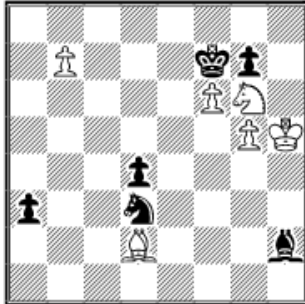


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White to play and win. One clue: find out why 1 Rxf6+ is the wrong answer.

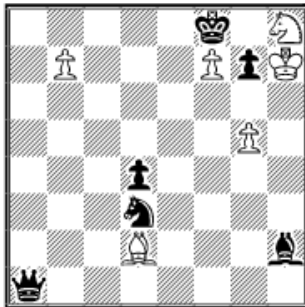
The next example illustrates Geometry; this chapter in the book is mostly illustrated by examples from mate problems and studies.



In this composition by ex-world champion Smyslov, White's problem is how to draw when Black's a-pawn will be queened once he has two free moves. The main line of the solution goes:

**1 Nh8+ Kg8 2 f7+ Kf8 3 Kg6! a2** (one square to go...) **4 Kh7 a1Q**

Now Black has queened; what has White been aiming at?



**5 g6!**

Now it becomes clear: the knight went into the corner because White is trying to stalemate himself. The threat is 6 Bb4 + Nxb4 7 b8Q+ Bxb8 draw. So Black threatens mate in one:

**5...Qh1**

Threatening 6...Bf4 mate, but White responds by:

**6 Bh6!**

Now if 6...gxh6 7 g7+ when White queens with check and probably wins, and otherwise White threatens Bxg7+, so Black threatens checkmate again.

**6...Bf4**

Now get out of that?

**7 b8Q+! Bxb8 stalemate**

None of White's pieces can move; the downside of Black's sixth move was that it pinned White's only mobile piece, the bishop. The others had been effectively immured by the earlier moves.

Now for an example of Flow, by which they mean a sequence of aesthetically satisfying moves, undistracted by many side-variations. This was a study by Y. Afek in 1972. White's task is to force a win although he cannot maintain his material advantage in the starting position, and has to beware of stalemate tricks.



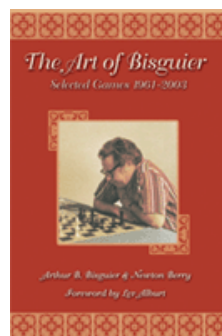
White wins by **1 Rxb5+! Kxb5 2 Ne5+ Ka4** (else 3 Nd7+ and 4 Nxf8) **3 Nd7!** (threatening two mates) **3...Be2!** (the stalemate try) **4 Bxe2 Rb8+! 5 Bb5+!! Rxb5 6 Ka2!** and wherever the rook goes, it is lost.



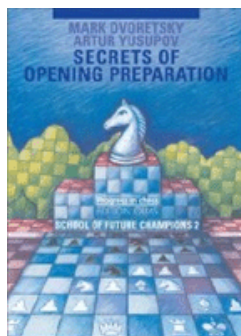
I hope you have now been convinced to buy this book; even if you have the original edition. Give that to the charity shop or a friend, and get this one as a

replacement.

The next book is probably of interest chiefly to American readers, as it deals with the career of one of Fischer's contemporaries. [\*The Art of Bisguier: Selected Games 1961-2003\*](#) by grandmaster Arthur B. Bisguier & Newton Berry (Russell Enterprises, ISBN 978-1-888690-36-1). It is quite surprising to see a book about Bisguier appearing so late.



This is a standard type of career collection, with 100 games from over forty years (1961-2003), during which time opponents included many of the world's top players as well as leading American masters and experts. Among the people Bisguier beats in this book are giants of the game like Benko, Geller, Keres, Larsen, Najdorf, Portisch, and Timman – many of them in the early 1960s. Draws with Karpov, Korchnoi, Petrosian, Smyslov and Tal are also included. The shape of the book gives a clue to his career trajectory: after initial successes on the international scene, either his standard declined or the top grandmasters got his measure and his ambition declined to seeking draws with them. Fischer he could not handle – but then very few could. The annotations are sufficient, but do not go into the depth of analysis we often see nowadays; I suspect many of the game notes originally appeared in columns or magazines. The book also contains some photographs. Still, this is a useful collection and makes a companion to Joel Benjamin's book, which comes from the next generation of American chess. An excerpt can be read [here](#).



Mark Dvoretsky and Artur Yusupov have been producing high-quality training manuals for years. Progress in Chess: Edition Olms have just produced volumes 2 and 3 in their series *School of Future Champions*. The first volume was *Secrets of Chess Training* and two more volumes are to come. Volume 2, [\*Secrets of Opening Preparation\*](#) (ISBN 978-3-283-00516-0) includes sixteen chapters, some by other Russian masters: Dolmatov, Kosikov (2), Razuvaev, Vulfson, and Zlotnik. Some are very wide-ranging; others deal with ideas in specific

openings, such as the King's Indian Attack for White or ...g5 in the French Defence.

Some of the contents list rang a bell. Several of my older chess books are away in storage, but on my shelf I still have a book that sounded similar. This edition is translated and edited by Ken Neat, but in 1994 Batsford published *Opening Preparation* (translated by John Sugden). The list of chapters is identical, although some are translated differently. There is only one example in this book dating from later than 1990, except in the concluding chapter consisting of some games by pupils from their school, but even here the latest is 1992.

Where is that one example? Well, at the end of Dvoretsky's Introduction, he states that:

*For this new edition the text has been checked anew, many analytical corrections have been included, and the chapter on the King's Indian Attack has been considerably expanded.*

I compared that chapter in the two editions and the only substantial

difference I could see was the inclusion of one new example: on pages 151-2 the game Fang-Dvoretsky, Philadelphia 1991 has been added.

So this is essentially the same book, albeit perhaps slightly rewritten. The publisher is deceiving the reader by not making this clear by saying, as is customary in small print in an early left-hand page, by stating that an earlier edition had appeared under a different title. Some of the book was not even new in 1994, since at the end of Razuvaev's chapter he says 'several years have passed since the publication of this article' – and that was in the 1994 edition!

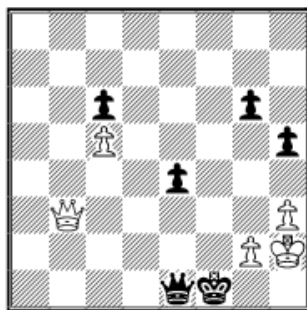
I am not saying this is a bad book, and it is certainly more handsomely produced than its predecessor, which was very fresh and original when I first read it. But if you have the older one then you certainly do not need to buy this edition. Also one is bound to wonder whether nothing has changed in fourteen years in the coaching of promising young players with regard to the openings. For example, should not the publisher have obliged the authors to add a chapter on the use of computers in opening preparation?

Turning to the other (third) volume with low expectations, therefore, we find *Secrets of Endgame Technique*, where (surprisingly in view of the above), Dvoretsky does admit in his Preface that 'this book was first published in 1990'. The title of the original English edition (Batsford 1995) was *Technique for the Tournament Player*. This volume has a bit more new material than the other, and the translator again was Ken Neat.



In Part One, Endgame Theory, there is a new chapter (six pages) on 'The Arithmetic of Pawn Endgames'. The old Chapter 2, 'Improving Your Technique' (seventeen pages) has been dropped. In Part Two, an extra four-page chapter on knight endgames has been added. The chapter on resuming games after adjournments is retained although nobody adjourns tournament games any more. In Part Three, on Technique, there is indeed a new long chapter by Dvoretsky on 'Grandmaster Technique', of thirty-four pages, and it almost entirely consists of new examples. So this, replacing the chapter dropped from Part One, is a considerable improvement in this edition. Finally the book concludes with examples from the authors' chess school, which are the same as before.

Here is a nice example from Dvoretsky's new chapter: a might-have-been from the game Szily-Ozsvath, Hungarian championship 1954, which would not have been out of place in Levitt & Friedgood's book. Black missed a win at move forty-four in the following queen endgame position.

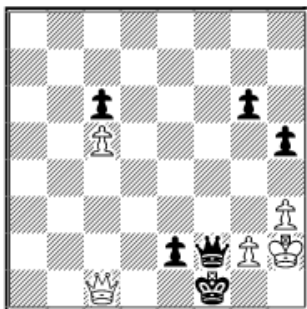


Dvoretsky says Black should carefully examine the consequences of pushing his passed pawn and only try other moves if this does not work. Ozsvath apparently rejected 44...e3 on the grounds that it would lead to perpetual check, but his choice **44...Qc1? 45 Qf7+ Ke1** soon led to a draw after **46 Qxg6 Qf4+ 47 Kg1 Qf1+ 48 Kh2 Qf4+ 49 Kg1 Qf1+ 50 Kh2 Qc4 51 Qxc6 e3 52 Qd6 ½-½**. Black would have done

better to try 45...Ke2 46 Qxg6 Qf4+ 47

Kg1 Qe5 when White must find 48 Qd6!, which draws according to Dvoretsky, not 48 Qxc6?? Qa1+ 49 Kh2 Kf2→.

The correct line, though, was 44...e3! 45 Qc4+ e2 46 Qf4+ Qf2 47 Qc1+



Ozsvath probably rejected this because after 47...e1Q, White has perpetual check despite being a queen down!

However, Dvoretsky found 47...e1N!! 48 Qc4+ Qe2 49 Qf4+ Nf3+! and Black wins the king and pawn endgame after 50 Qxf3+ Qxf3 51 gxf3 Kf2 (or 51...h4).

To conclude, if you do not have the earlier edition, this book is worth

buying. There is some substantial new material, improving on what was omitted, and anyway age does not wither endgame books in the same way as opening books. I advise you, however, to avoid the one on opening preparation; maybe borrow the older version from a library or pick it up second-hand if you must.

Moving on now to a book that really is new, German international master Christoph Scheerer is the author of *The Greatest Ever Chess*

*Opening Ideas*, (ISBN 978-1-85744-561-9),

which I understand is the first of a new 'greatest ever' series on the way from Everyman. It is a curious hybrid of an openings book and chess history book, with a lengthy biography of works ancient and modern, including Internet articles (several from the Chess Café), CDs and DVDs. I was flattered to see several of my articles cited; less pleased that he borrowed one of my previous Kibitzer article titles, '[One small step for a pawn](#)', for one of his chapter titles without attribution.



Scheerer used my correspondence game database (albeit quite an old version) too. Some readers may wish to note that my latest version, UltraCorr2, should be available in early September and an order form has now been posted at [www.chessmail.com](http://www.chessmail.com).

Many years ago GM Raymond Keene attempted to trace the development of chess theory from Philidor to Karpov; a difficult task that perhaps has still not been done as well as it might be. Scheerer's book is not really a contender in those stakes; it jumps too much from ancient to modern and back again, and it is not reliable as history. To do a proper job on this subject, one would have to spend several days working through many manuscript pages in Harold Murray's collection at the Bodleian Library.

Dealing with the Evans Gambit, on page 80, Scheerer makes use of some information about Captain Evans from Kibitzer 119. I have since established that the vessel he commanded when he invented his gambit was almost certainly the "Vixen"; I shall keep my proofs of this to myself for now.

Sometimes he seeks early anticipations of modern opening variations (such as the Nimzo-Indian); at other times makes no real attempt to do so. Alekhine's Defence, 1 e4 Nf6, was first played by Edinburgh Chess Club against Berwick in an 1850 correspondence match – unless you believe it was first played by Napoleon Bonaparte against Madame de Remusat in 1802! Scheerer does score a palpable hit against the over-rated *Oxford Companion to Chess* on pages 164-5. He points out that Hooper and Whyld claimed in that book that the Meran variation (of the Semi-Slav) was named on account of Rubinstein and Tartakower's use of it during the 1924 international tournament at Merano. As Scheerer observes, this statement is imprecise since Tartakower did not play in that tournament. So this is a rather strange, occasionally historical, but quite entertaining book.





Another mini-series from Progress in Chess: Edition Olms comes from the pens, or computer keyboards, of German grandmasters Rainer Knaak and Karsten Müller: *222 Opening Traps after 1.e4* (ISBN 978-3-283-01004-1) and *222 Opening Traps after 1.d4*, and all other moves except 1.e4 (ISBN 978-3-283-01004-1). A trap is a plausible move with a hidden flaw. The titles are self-explanatory, so what do you get for your money? Clearly these books are aimed at the average player rather than the improving or advanced players who would consider buying

the Dvoretsky offerings.

These are not beginners' books, however. There is some quite detailed analysis, and the authors have used computers a lot, both to find their examples (in ChessBase's databases) and to analyse critical positions with Fritz. Examples are preferred where the databases show a trap has often occurred in recent practice.

Here is a simple example. **1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 a6** Now what is wrong with **5 Bf4?** The answer is that Black wins a piece by **5... e5** and if **6 Bxe5 Qa5+**.

The following game, Nassert-Mbye, occurred in a low-table match from the Dubai Olympiad in 1986.

**1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 d6 4 Nc3 Bg4?! 5 h3 Bh5?!**



This position occurred sixty-one times in ChessBase's Mega database 2005, but only in twelve of those games did White find:

**6 Nxe5! Bxd1?**

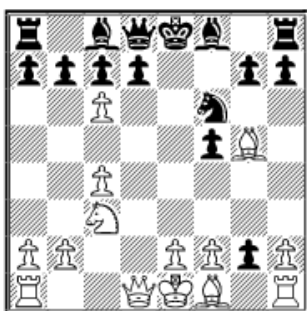
Now the game will end in the classical Légall's mate. Black can fight on in an inferior position after **6...Nxe5 7 Qxh5**.

**7 Bxf7+ Ke7 8 Nd5# 1-0**

Many of the traps occur later on, but here, from the second volume, is a beastly one in a plausible variation.

*Doroshkevich-Tukmakov*, 38th USSR Championship, Riga 1970

**1 c4 e5 2 Nc3 Nc6 3 Nf3 f5 4 d4 e4 5 Bg5 Nf6!? 6 d5?! exf3 7 dxc6 fxg2**



Now White, say the authors, should sacrifice a pawn by **8 Bxg2 dxc6 9 Qxd8 +** and **10 0-0-0+** with compensation. Instead Doroshkevich played the plausible move:

**8 cxd7+?**

Presumably he expected Black to recapture on d7 with the bishop, after which **9 Bxg2** is fine, but Black won a

piece by:

**8...Nxd7! 0-1**

You should definitely check your opening repertoire against these books.

You might get a nasty surprise (better than losing points unnecessarily) or find an idea to win a game or two.

### New chess library opens in Hastings

To conclude, I just received the latest *Chess Moves*, the newsletter of the English Chess Federation. It announces the opening of the National Chess Library, situated at the Hastings campus of the University of Brighton, which took place on 10 June 2008. The library is based on bequests (from Harry Golombek, Sir Richard Clarke, G. H. Diggle, and others), which were for years sitting in boxes awaiting a home. You can read more about this project [here](#).

At present the collections are only partially catalogued. Currently a keyword search for 'chess' in the online catalogue of the University Centre Hastings finds 1,919 hits; this could increase soon. I understand the contents are primarily twentieth century volumes, but includes a complete set of *British Chess Magazine* going back to 1881. The British Library does not have the first three volumes.

I may go next year to Hastings and report on this library, as I have done with others, but researchers are unlikely to want to make a special visit unless they are sure the library contains items they wish to see and cannot more readily find elsewhere. Meanwhile, the E.C.F. is appealing for more donations (and bequests), which are more likely to be forthcoming once it becomes easier to see what is currently missing.

There is also the issue that there is a big difference between a *collection* (which gradually loses value) and a *library*, like those in The Hague and Cleveland, to which the latest titles and periodicals are constantly being added. If the English National Chess Library is to become a true library, it will need pro-active staff and a budget for acquiring new items on a selective basis. Publishers already have to donate numerous copies of new works to various copyright libraries in Britain and Ireland; they are unlikely to be willing to donate a further copy.

It is also important, if students at the university are to be able to make use of it for future research projects, that people deposit manuscripts (for example letters, scoresheets, old club minute books), scrapbooks of chess columns etc., as these, rather than published books, are the material out of which future chess histories will be built.

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