

Richard Shorman

Chess

ACCELERATING THE DRAGON

By JEREMY SILMAN

The following opening analysis was assembled as a study program intended to improve my game (As bad as it is, anything will be an improvement.) by soring my past games into opening categories, going over the strategic concepts and plans coming out of them and looking for improvements.

Of course, the reader probably could not care less about my games, but he can get three things out of this article:

(1) He can learn how to play the White side of the Accelerated Dragon Variation of the Sicilian Defense and crush me when we meet over the board;

(2) He may acquire some new ideas on how to study openings by approaching opening systems from the point of view of middlegame plans and possible endgame situations;

(3) Eyestrain.

I will regard this article as worthwhile if the reader achieves (1) and (2), since it will improve the quality of his play. And should he only achieve (3)? Well, I have never been afraid of a blind opponent.

1 P-K4	P-QB4	4 NxP	P-KN3
2 N-KB3	N-QB3	5 P-QB4!	...
3 P-Q4	PxP		

Another possibility that Black has to consider is 5 NxN NPxN 6 Q-Q4 N-B3! (better than 6... P-B3 7 P-QB4 N-R3 8 B-K2 B-KN2 9 0-0 0-0 10 P-B5 P-B4 11 Q-R4 P-R4 12 N-B3 R-N1 13 P-QR3 Q-B2 14 Q-B4ch, with a small plus for White) 7 P-K5 N-Q4 (An excellent alternative runs 7... N-R4 8 B-K2 N-N2 9 N-B3 N-K3 10 Q-K3 B-KN2 11 P-KB4 0-0, Adams — Bisguier, USA, 1954, the main point of 7... N-R4 being that if White plays 8 P-K6, then Black has 8... B-KN2. Also reasonable is 7... N-N1 followed by B-KN2 and P-B3.) 8 P-K6 (On 8 P-QB4 Black responds with 8... Q-N3! 9 Q-K4 N-B2 10 N-B3 B-KN2 11 P-B4 0-0 12 B-Q2, and now either 12... P-Q4 or 12... P-Q3 yields a slightly superior game.) P-B3. (Black comes out well after 8... N-B3 9 PxBPch KxP 10 B-K2 B-KN2 11 P-KR4 Q-N3 12 Q-R4 P-K4, Buzka — Gurgenzidze, Sofia, 1958.) 9 PxPch BxP 10 P-KB4?! (White's idea is to stop P-K4, complete his development and post his rooks on the central files, after which he would stand much better. So Black must find a way to utilize his temporary lead in development to attack on the kingside before White can consolidate. The value of time is an extremely vital part of chess and must be exploited at once, since it represents a dynamic, not a static advantage. Other tries here have also turned out badly for White, e.g., 10 B-K2 P-K4 11 Q-Q1 B-N2 12 P-QB3 0-0, Vestol — Botvinnik, Sverige, 1956. White's best may be 10 B-QB4 P-K4 11 Q-K4, with the idea of N-B3.) B-N2 11 B-Q3 0-0 12 0-0 P-K4!, S. Little — Silman, 1974 (0-1, 23).

A. 5 . . . B-N2

6 B-K3	N-B3	9 Q-Q1	N-K3
7 N-QB3	N-KN5	10 R-B1!	...
8 QxN	NxN		

The most accurate way of coping with 10 Q-Q2 is 10 . . . Q-R4 11 R-B1 P-Q3 12 B-K2 B-Q2 13 0-0 N-B4 14 B-R6 (or 14 P-B3 N-R5, with equality) 0-0 15 BxB KxB 16 P-QN3 B-B3 17 KR-K1 QR-B1 18 Q-N2 P-K4 19 P-QN4 Q-N3 20 B-B1 P-B4, with chances for both sides.

10...	0-0	14 P-QR3	PxP
11 P-QN4	P-N3	15 PxP	R-R6
12 B-Q3	B-N2	16 Q-Q2	B-Q5!?
13 0-0	P-QR4		

Although White stands better, Black has counterchances.

B. 5 . . . N-B3

6 N-QB3 P-Q3!

A precise move order that cuts down White's options considerably. Notice that 7 B-K3 now is bad, due to 7 . . . N-KN5 and B-N2, with a very good game for Black. Also, 7 N-B2 leaves Black with no real problems: 7 . . . B-N2 8 B-K2 N-Q2 9 P-KR4?! (Best is 9 B-Q2 0-0 10 0-0 N-B4 11 P-B3 P-B4! 12 P-QN4 N-K3 13 PxP PxP 14 K-R1 KN-Q5 15 NxN NxN 16 B-Q3 K-R1, with a level position. Possible improvements are 11 . . . P-QR4! and 13 R-N1!?) N-B4 10 P-R5 P-B4! 11 PxNP PxNP 12 RxRch BxR 13 PxP BxP 14 N-K3 Q-Q2 15 NxB QxN 16 B-K3 N-N5!, with advantage to Black, T. Taylor — Silman, Lone Pine, 1976 (0-1, 21). White's kingside pawn pushes waste too much time.

7 B-K2

A critical line to test is 7 P-B3 NxN 8 QxN B-N2 9 B-K3 0-0 10 Q-Q2 B-K3 11 R-B1 Q-R4 12 N-Q5 QxP 13 NxPch K-R1 14 B-K2! N-N1 15 N-Q5! BxN 16 BPxB KR-B1 17 0-0 P-QR4 18 B-Q4 Q-R5 19 B-B3 Q-N6, with an interesting game in prospect in which White has a small edge.

7...	NxN	9 B-N5!	...
8 QxN	B-N2		

One of White's best continuations. Too passive would be 9 0-0 0-0 Q-Q1 B-K3 11 B-K3 11 B-K3 P-QR3 (Equality results from 11 . . . Q-R4 12 R-B1 P-QR3 13 P-B4 P-QN4.) 12 B-Q4 R-B1 13 P-QN3 Q-R4 14 R-B1 P-QN4, D. Gratz — Silman, 1976 (0-1, 40).

9...	0-0	11 R-QB1!	Q-R4
10 Q-Q2	B-K3	12 0-0	...

Probably the best way to play this position consists in 12 P-B3 KR-B1 13 P-QN3 P-QR3 14 N-R4 QxQch 15 KxQ R-B3 16 N-B3 R(1)-QB1 17 N-Q5, and White has all the chances.

12 . . . KR-B1?!

More accurate is 12 . . . P-QR3!, in order to answer 13 P-B4 with 13 . . . P-N4!

13 P-QN3	P-QR3	14 P-B4	P-N4?
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An unusual but apparently good resource here may be 14 . . . R-B4, stopping White's P-KB5, threatening P-N4 and leaving open the possibility of R(1)-QB1.

15 P-KB5	P-N5	17 PxPch	K-B1
16 PxB	PxN		

An instructive order of moves. In many of the lines coming from 5 . . . N-B3 Black should leave his KR on KB1 until White plays his pawn to KB3, which is why 12 . . . P-QR3! was correct: Black threatens 13 . . . P-N4, taking advantage of White's underprotected KP, e.g., 12 . . . P-QR3 13 P-B4 P-N4 14 PxP PxP 15 BxP NxP! Thus, White would play 13 P-B3, and only then does Black reply 13 . . . KR-B1! It should be added that if Black's rook were still on KB1 here he could play simply 17 . . . RxP with a good game.

18 Q-B4 QxP,

as occurred in D. Levy — Silman, Lone Pine, 1975 (0-1, 29). And now the correct move to win is

19 BxN!

As can be gleaned above, 5 . . . B-N2 leads to positions clearly favorable to White, whose chances lie in the middle-game, combining his spatial advantage with a kingside attack. Black usually does best in an endgame, especially when he has a good knight on QB4 versus a bad white-squared bishop. Unfortunately, such an ending can occur only if White errs. All in all, after 5 . . . N-B3 Black possesses a fluid position with a clear strategic plan (P-QN4). Here it is White who often does well in an endgame in which his extra space confers an edge, though quick draws are common. Even with White's slight advantage, however, Black's position is extremely defensible, and he has good equalizing chances in spite of few winning chances.

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