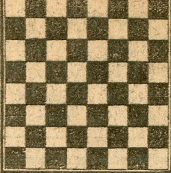


chess

6/8/69

by richard shorman



Opening traps depend for their effectiveness upon an opponent's superficial appraisal of a plausible continuation. When they crop up in sound positions, such traps merely promise suitable retaliation for unwarranted aggression. Deliberately playing a bad move in hopes of eliciting a similar response from the other side, however, can lead to disaster if the intended victim fails to cooperate.

White: Julius Loftson. Black: Sid Rubin.

Oakland YMCA Chess Club, Aug. 28, 1969.

Irregular KP Opening

1 P-K4	P-K4	11 R-K1ch	K-Q2(h)
2 N-KB3	N-QB3	12 Pxp (i)	P-KR3
3 B-B4	N-Q5(a)	13 B-R4	B-Q3
4 P-B3(b)	NxNch	14 N-B3	R-K1
5 QxN	N-B3	15 N-K4	Q-B2
6 0-0(c)	P-B3(d)	16 NxB	RxRch(j)
7 P-Q4	Pxp(e)	17 RxR	QxN
8 P-K5	P-Q4(f)	18 B-N3	Q-N5(k)
9 PxN	PxB	19 R-K7ch	K-Q1
10 B-N5	P-KN3(g)	20 B-B7mate	

(a) Unsound, but only if White avoids the traps.

(b) Correctly punishing Black for violating opening principles. Many an unwary novice has fallen prey to the tempting snare of 4xN P? Q-N4 5 NxBP? QxP 6 R-B1 (or 6 NxR QxKPch 7 B-K2 NxPch 8 K-B1 QxRmate) QxPch 7 B-K2 N-B6mate! If White tries to escape the consequences of 5 NxBP by retreating the Knight, then Black wins the exchange and stifles White's position after 5 N-KB3 (of course not 5 N-N4? P-Q4, losing a piece) QxP 6 NxN QxRch 7 B-B1 QxPch 8 N-K2.

After 5 BxPch K-K2 6 0-0! QxN 7 BxN RxB 8 P-QB3 N-B3 9 P-Q4, White has two pawns for the piece plus attacking chances against an uncastled King. Black improves somewhat with 5...K-Q1, but the situation remains unclear following 6 0-0 QxN 7 P-QB3 N-B3 8 P-Q4 Q-B3 9 B-N3 (Boris Weinstein, *Combinations and Opening Traps*, Moscow, 1965, pp. 7-9 and 78-79).

Besides the textmove, White can profitably capture the Knight, 4 NxN PxB, and now 5 P-QB3! guarantees a lasting advantage.

(c) More precise is 6 P-Q4 P-Q3 7 B-KN5 B-K2 (7...B-N5? 8 BxN! costs Black a piece) 8 N-Q2.

(d) Simply 6...B-B4 forces White to continue preparing P-Q4.

(e) Open lines favor the side ready to exploit them through better development. At least 7...P-Q3 maintains a strong point in the center.

(f) Equally unattractive is 8...N-Q4 9 BxN PxB 10 QxP.

(g) A solo sortie by the Queen, 10...Q-N3, runs aground after 11 Pxp!, and White far outpaces his opponent in development whether or not the pawn offer is accepted.

(h) Interposing with 11...B-K3 loses the Queen to 12 RxBch PxB 13 P-B7ch.

(i) Calmly making way for the reserves.

(j) A spite check?

(k) Black prefers mate to parting with his only developed piece.