

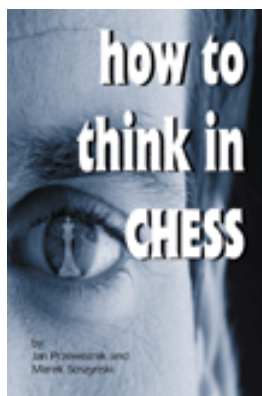


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COLUMNISTS

The Instructor Mark Dvoretsky



The True Meaning of "Quality"

"That's not a boy talking any longer - that's a man."
- Alexander Pushkin

Nearly every gifted young chessplayer has energetic attacks, crowned with spectacular combinations, to brag about. Such games bear witness to a youngster's talent; but they generally say nothing about his maturity, or the high quality of his game. For *the class of a player has everything to do with his versatility - the ability to make independent judgments in the different situations that may arise in the course of a game.*

In the preceding installment, "A Chessplayer - And How He Grows", I spoke of Alyosha Dreev's preparation, crowned in 1983 by his conquest of the title of World Cadet (Under 16) Champion. The following year, in Champigny, France, Alyosha repeated this success, becoming two-time Cadet Champion. And finally, in the World Junior Championship in Kiljava, Finland, the 15-year-old Dreev, with 10 points out of 13, outdistanced nearly all opposition - many of whom were some years older than he - to take the silver medal. (The winner, with 10½ points, was Curt Hansen.) It is worth noting that in all three of these World Championships, Dreev did not lose a single game!

Analysis of Alyosha's games from Champigny showed that he was not yet fully skilled in endgames. At the training camp prior to Kiljava, we did some serious work on the theory and technique of endgames. Our work yielded immediate results (you will notice this in the game presented below). But far more importantly, from that time forward, technique became one of the strongest points of Dreev's play, and almost never let him down.

Thorsteins - Dreev World Junior Championship Kiljava 1984
1. d4 d5 2. c4 c6 3. Nf3 Nf6 4. Nc3 a6!?

Black chooses a system suggested by the well-known Kishinev trainer, Vyacheslav Chebanenko. Today it is regularly employed by Alexey Shirov, Vladimir Epishin, Julian Hodgson and other famous grandmasters; but at that time, it had not yet become popular.

While preparing for this World Championship, Dreev and I decided to enlarge his opening repertoire by adding a few such "sideline" setups. The advantages



of this approach were obvious: while we required relatively little time to study these new systems, our opponents might be less than fully prepared to defend their flank against such modern variations.

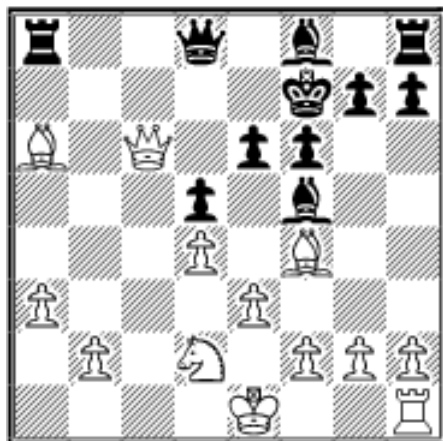
On the whole, such a means of developing an opening repertoire is debatable, and should not become one's mainstream method; but as a temporary means of preparing for specific events, it's acceptable.

The first time the 4...a6 system was played in this tournament was in the game **Wells - Dreev**, at a point when both players had 3 out of 3. The game, though it ended in a quick draw, was quite tense:

5. cd cd 6. Bf4 Nc6 7. Rc1 (7. e3!? Bg4) **7...Ne4! 8. a3!?** The idea behind this move becomes clear in the line 8. e3 Nxc3 9. Rxc3? e5!, followed by 10...Bb4. In the game Belyavsky - Gavrikov (USSR Chp., Frunze 1981), White preferred 8.Ne5, but after 8...Nxc3 9. Rxc3 Bd7 10. Qb3 f6! 11. Nxc6 Bxc6 12. e3 e6 13. Bd3 Be7 14. 0-0 Kf7!, Black had equalized.

8...Bf5 9. e3 e6 10. Qa4!? f6! **11. Nxe4 Bxe4 12. Nd2 Bf5 13. Rxc6!?** After 13. Be2, the game would be about even. The young Englishman goes for complications.

13...bc 14. Qxc6+ Kf7 15. Bxa6 What does Black play now?



One must think not only of defense, but also of the coming counterattack. So the strongest line, in that light, appears to be the pawn thrust 15...g5! White can't play 16. Bc7? because of 16...Rxa6; and on 16. Bb7?! gf 17. Bxa8 fe 18. fe Bh6, White's position grows dangerous. A possible continuation might be: 19. Bb7 Bxe3 20. Qc3 (20. Nf3!?) Bxd2+ 21. Kxd2 Qb6 22. Bc6 Rc8 (22..Rg8!?) 23. Rc1 Rxc6! 24. Qxc6 Qxd4+, etc.

The only remaining try is 16. Bg3 Ra7!. Black threatens 17...Qa5 (let's say, in answer to 17. 0-0) On 17. b4 Qa8 is strong; and if 17. Nb3, then besides 17...Qa8, another line worth consideration is 17...h5!? 18. h4 gh 19. Rxh4 Rg8, threatening 20...Rxg3 21. fg Qb8.

Unfortunately, Dreev played less actively, leaving his opponent with the initiative.

15...Be7?! 16. Bb7 Ra7 17. 0-0 (17. Bc7? Qe8 18. Qb6 Qd7!) **17...Qa5 18. Nb3 Qa4 19. Qb6?!** Trading queens means a better endgame for White: 19.

Qxa4!? Rxa4 20. Rc1 Rc4 (20..Ra7 21. Rc7; 20...Bd3 21. Nc5) 21. Rxc4 dc 22. Na5.

19...Bd8 20. Bc7 Bxc7 21. Qxc7+ Kg6 22. Qg3+ Kf7 23. Qc7+. Drawn. Perhaps Peter Wells was too quick to agree to the draw - he might still have tried to win after 23...Kg6 24. Nc5! Qa5 25. Qc6! Rb8 26. b4! (but not 26. Bc8? at once: 26...Rc7 27. Qe8+ Kh6) 26...Qxa3 27. Bc8 Qxb4 28. Bxe6 Bxe6 29. Qxe6, and White's position remains preferable.

Dreev used the variation again in Round 8, this time against the eventual bronze medalist, Karl Thorsteins.

We were able to guess our opponent's choice of opening. It wasn't hard to predict that, searching for a weapon against 4...a6, the Iclander would check the most recent "Informators" (The recent article written by a Chebanenko student, GM Viktor Gavrikov, "A New System in the Slav Defense", published at the end of 1983 in "Shakhmaty v SSSR", which served as our chief source of information, was probably unknown to him.) In Informant No. 36, Vladimir Tukmakov presents a game he won with White, with his notes - it was precisely this game that Thorsteins decided to use as the basis of his arsenal.

Studying the game *Tukmakov - Bagirov (USSR 1983)* ourselves, Dreev and I came to the conclusion that Black could achieve a fully equal game. The result was an interesting opening duel.

5. Bg5 Ne4 6. Bf4 Nxc3 7. bc dc 8. g3

In reply to 8. e4 b5 9. Ne5, Gavrikov recommended 9...Be6, intending 10...f6.

8...b5 9. Bg2 Bb7 10. Ne5

A move which serves as prologue to interesting tactical complications. White goes for them, as otherwise, his opponent plays 10...Nd7, and his compensation for the pawn becomes quite problematic.

10...f6!

Black accepts the challenge. On 10...Qc8, Tukmakov gives the line 11. Rb1 Nd7 12. Nxc4! bc 13. Qa4 e5 14. de Nc5 15. Qxc4, and 15...Qe6? fails to 16. Qxe6 fe 17. Rxb7.

11. Nxc4!

What does Black play now?



In the source game Tukmakov - Bagirov, Bagirov continued 11...bc?! 12. Rb1 e5 13. Rxb7 ef; and after 14. Qa4?! Qc8 15. Rb6 Bd6 16. Qxc4 Ke7, he managed to fend off the first wave of the attack, and obtain a promising position. However, as Tukmakov pointed out, White had a stronger continuation: 14. Qb1! Be7 (14...Bd6 15. Rxc7) 15. Qe4! Qd6 16. 0-0 Nd7 (Black does no better with 16...fg 17. hg g6 18. Rfb1) 17. Qxc6 Qxc6 18. Bxc6 0-0-0 19. Rfb1 Bd6 20. Ra7, with

advantage.

And Black's position also is not easy after 11...e5?! 12. de Qxd1+ 13. Rxd1 bc 14. e6! Bc8 15. Rb1.

As it happens, just as in critical moment of the game Wells - Dreev above, the key to the position is the *zwischenzug* ...g7-g5!, improving Black's chances in the coming struggle.

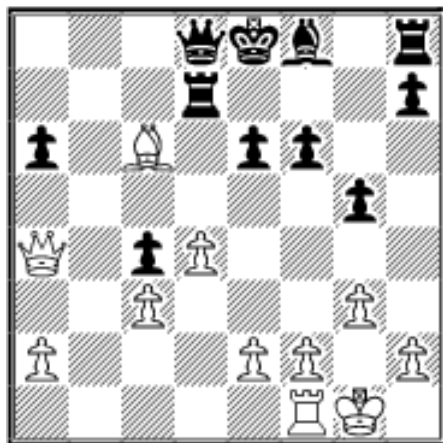
11...g5!! 12. Bxb8

Many years later, Vishy Anand would try 12. Be3! bc 13. Rb1 Qc7 14. h4 against Alexey Shirov, with good compensation for the sacrificed piece.

12...bc!

Unexpectedly, White's bishop is caught - how to sell him most dearly? Sergey Dolmatov offered the paradoxical 13. Be5!, aiming to avoid further exchanges, and also to weaken the Black's king's shelter on the kingside. A sample line: 13...fe 14. Rb1 Qc7 15. Qa4 Kf7 (or 15...Rc8 16. de) 16. Qxc4+ e6 17. d5! ed 18. Bxd5+ Kf6 19. f4! It's hard to tell whether White has better attacking chances here or in the above-cited line of Anand's: only practice can tell us the answer.

13. Rb1 Rxb8 14. Rxb7 Rxb7 15. Bxc6+ Rd7 16. Qa4 e6 17. 0-0



In his commentary, Tukmakov examined this line, and continued it as follows: 17...Ke7 18. Bxd7 Qxd7 19. Qxa6 Bg7 20. Qxc4 Rc8 21. Qd3. In our preparation for this game, we decided that the final position was acceptable for Black; we also noted that Black could develop his bishop on another, superior diagonal by 19...Kf7!? (instead of 19...Bg7) 20. Rb1 Be7.

At the board, however, Dreev, instead of blindly repeating the moves we had prepared, sank into thought, and came up with the most accurate scheme of development for his pieces:

17...Bd6!

Such decisions show not only good positional understanding, but more importantly, independence of thought and confidence in one's own powers. Having developed these qualities in himself, Dreev, at a young age, had already become a mature player of superior quality - which, of course, I take pride in as his trainer. For me, after all, the whole point of working with young players is not to stuff them full of endless opening variations, not to pursue quick victories in second-rate competitions, but to develop their individuality, character and chess thinking, which will guarantee them great sporting and creative achievements in the future.

18. Qxa6

Clearly, Dreev has won the opening duel: White is unable to continue his attack, and must now make a draw. And he has every right to expect one: for the absent bishop, he has the sufficient material equivalent of three pawns.

It's not easy to give a proper evaluation of what follows - the positions are quite unusual. All the more so, for the participants themselves. To calculate the variations accurately did not seem possible, so both sides had to rely on intuition. In such a battle, the higher class player should win out - and in the case of Dreev, he did so, thanks to those technical skills he had worked on at the training camp prior to the World Championship.

Instead of the text, White could also have chosen 18. Rb1 Ke7 19. Bxd7 Qxd7 20. Qxa6 Rc8 21. Rb7!? Rc7 22. Rxc7 Qxc7. Now the direct 23. a4? is a mistake, in view of 23...Bb4!! 24. cb c3 25. d5 (25 Qd3 c2 26. Qxh7+ Kd6) 25...ed 26. Qd3 c2 27. Qe3+ Kd7 28. Qc1 Qc4, and the pawn will soon queen. 23. Qb5! is necessary, and then Black should harry the enemy king by 23...h5! 24. a4 h4 (readying h4-h3 and Qb8). If 25. Kg2, then either 25...Qb8 26. Qxc4 Qb1 at once, or 25...f5 first - in either case, White will not

have an easy defense.

18...Kf7!

From here, the king can defend the h7-pawn, if necessary. After 18...Ke7 19. Bxd7 Qxd7 20. Qxc4 Rb8 (or 20...Rc8) 21. Qd3 Kf8 22. c4, the Black queen is the one tied to this pawn.

19. Bxd7 Qxd7 20. Qxc4

We have already seen the position arising after 20. Rb1 Rc8 21. Rb7 Rc7 22. Rxc7 Qxc7, but with the king at e7, where it stands a bit better. The difference appears in the line 23. a4!? Bb4?! 24. cb c3 (24...Kg7? fails to 25. b5 c3 26. b6 Qc6 27. Qa7+ Kg6 28. Qc7) 25. Qd3 Kg7 26. Qc2 Qc4 27. b5 (but not 27. Kf1? Qxb4 28. Ke1 Qb2 29. Kd1 Qa1+ 30. Qc1 Qxa4+ and 31...Qxd4) 27...Qxd4 28. Qb3, with a likely draw.

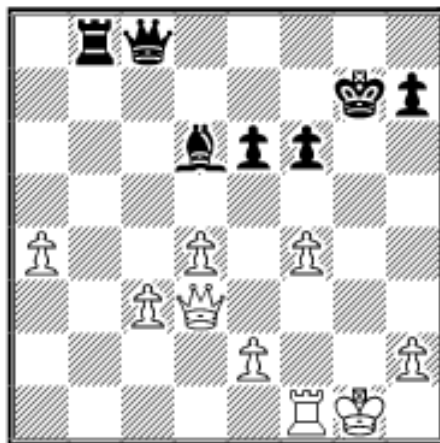
20...Rb8 21. a4

Another possibility is 21. Qd3 Kg7 22. c4, as occurred 9 years later, in the game Rashkovsky - Rublevsky, Kurgan 1993. Black will most likely win the a2-pawn, but it would be hard to say whether this gives him realistic winning chances, since the pawn chain h2-g3-f2-e3-d4-c5 limits the mobility of the Black bishop.

21...Qc8 22. Qd3 Kg7 23. f4?

Here, at last, is a positional error! White, fearing the incursion 23...Rb3, prepares to defend the pawn with his rook from f3. However, this move weakens the king's field, and gives Black an attacking opportunity. He should have stayed with his a-pawn: 23. Ra1 Rb3 24. a5; or 23. c4 Qa6 (this was the idea behind Black's move 21...Qc8) 24. Rd1 Qxa4 25. c5.

23...gf 24. gf



Here Black has to deal with the threats of e2-e4 or f4-f5 by immediately blocking the enemy pawns.

24...f5!

Now, after 25...Qc6, Black will control the entire board. So Thorsteins decides to give up some material, in order to exchange off as many pawns as possible.

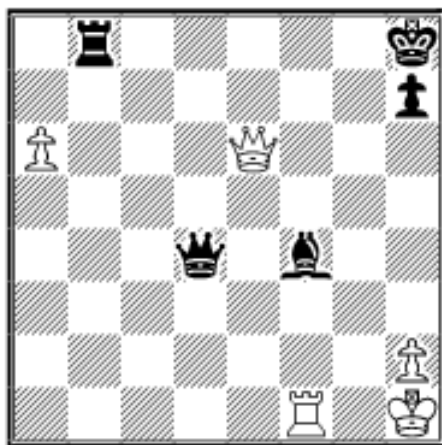
25. e4 fe 26. Qxe4 Qxc3 27. Qxe6

Qxd4+ 28. Kh1

Dreev has only one rook-pawn left, and it's the wrong color for his bishop. That would assure White a draw, if he could only exchange off all the heavy pieces. Thus, Black must play for the attack, and avoid exchanges. That's easier said than done, since Black's king is also exposed, and there's the advance of the a-pawn to consider, too. In many variations, Black will have to accept the exchange of queens after all - so it's important to allow this only after achieving the optimum placement of his remaining pieces.

28...Rf8

Of course not 28...Bxf4?? 29. Qg4+. The most natural move appeared to be 28...Kh8, when 29. f5? allows 29...Rg8 30. f6 Bc5, forcing mate. Dreev was worried about the reply 29. a5, when 29...Rg8 30. a6 Bc5 is bad because of the exchange of queens: 31. Qe5+ Qxe5 32. fe, with a likely draw. And after 29...Bxf4 30. a6, White threatens 31. a7. How does Black continue?



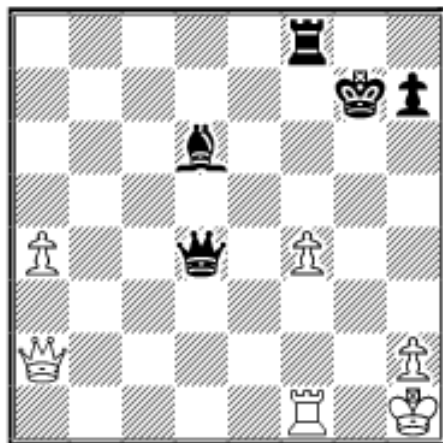
It's tempting to play 30...Be5, with its threat of 31...Qe4+. However, White answers 31. Re1!, when 31...Rb1 fails to 32. Qe8+ (32 Qc8+? Kg7 33. Rxb1 Qe4+ 34. Kg1 Bd4+ 35. Kf1 Qf3+ 36. Ke1 Bc3+) 32...Kg7 33. Qe7+ Kg6 34. Qe6+ (or 34. Qe8+) 34...Kg5 35. Qg8+!, which draws (not 35. Qe7+? Bf6, when Black wins).

The solution is 30...Qb2! 31. Qh3 (31. Rf4? Qc1+) 31...Be5, when White can't continue 32. a7? Qb7+. On 32. Qg2, the exchange of queens might be premature (32...Qxg2+?! 33. Kxg2 Rb2+ 34. Rf2, or 33...Ra8 34. Re1, when the a6 pawn restricts Black unduly); but 32...Qd4! is much stronger: if 33. Qf2 Qxf2 34. Rxf2 Rb1+! 35. Kg2 Ra1, and having put his rook behind the passed pawn, "according to the rules," Black must win.

Dreev's choice wasn't bad, either.

29. Qa2

An unexpected reply! On 29. a5!?, Black planned 29...Bc5 30. a6 (30. f5 Kh8, followed by 31...Rg8; 30. Qg4+ Kh8 threatens 31...Rg8; and 30. Re1 Rxf4 31. Qe5+ Qxe5 32. Rxe5 Bf8!? and 33...Ra4) 30...Rxf4 31. Rb1 Rf7!, and White has a hard time defending himself. And on 29. f5, then either 29...Kh8 or 29...Rf6 30. Rg1+ Kh6.



29...Bb4!

Excellent technique! Black prevents the passed pawn's advance: 30. a5 Qe4+ 31. Qg2 Qxg2+ 32. Kxg2 Bxa5. And 30. Qa1 Bc3 is useless, too.

30. Qf2

White forces the exchange of queens - but here, the a-pawn is not very far advanced.

30...Qxf2 31. Rxf2 Ra8 32. Ra2 Ra5!

The passed pawn must be blockaded, before White can get in 33. a5!

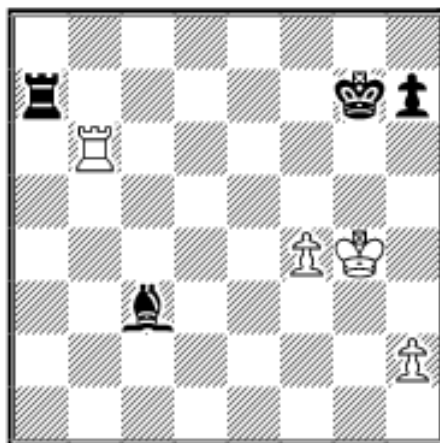
33. Kg2 Kf6 34. Kf3 Kf5 35. Re2

Otherwise, Black picks off the f-pawn with 35...Bd6. If I were in White's shoes, however, I'd let him have that pawn, retaining the a-pawn instead to restrict Black's rook. In any case, however, Black's win is only a matter of time.

35...Rxa4 36. Re5+ Kf6 37. Rh5 Ra7 38. Rh6+ Kg7 39. Rb6

39. Rc6 would hold out a little longer.

39...Bc3 40. Kg4



40...Ra5!

By holding the scary threat of 41...h5+ over him, Dreev wants to convince his opponent to advance the pawn to f5, where it will make Black's task of converting his advantage significantly easier. The tactical basis of Black's move is the variation 41. Rb7+ Kg6 42. f5+ Rxf5 43. Rxh7 Rg5+ 44. Kh4 Bf6!, and wins (but not 44...Be1+? 45. Kh3 Kxh7 - stalemate).

41. f5 Ra4+

Here, the game was adjourned.

42. Kh5?!

Right into the mating net! True, White was in a bad way anyhow. On 42. Kf3 Be5 is strong. And on 42. Kg5, our analysis convinced us not to put the pawn on h6, but to play 42...Bd2+ instead: 43. Kh5 Be3! (not 43...Be1? 44. Rb7+ Kf6 45. Rb6+ Kxf5 46. Rb5+ Kf4 47. Rb7) 44. Rc6 (44. Rb7+ Kf6 45. Rxh7 Bf2, forcing mate) 44...Bf2 45. f6+ (45. Rc7+ Kf6 46. Rc6+ Kxf5, and the c5 square isn't available) 45...Kf7, with the decisive threat of 46...Rh4+ 47. Kg5 h6+ 48. Kf5 Rh5+ and 49...Rxh2.

42...Bf6! 43. Rb7+ Kg8 44. Rb8+ Kf7 45. Rb7+ Be7 46. f6

The only way to stop mate.

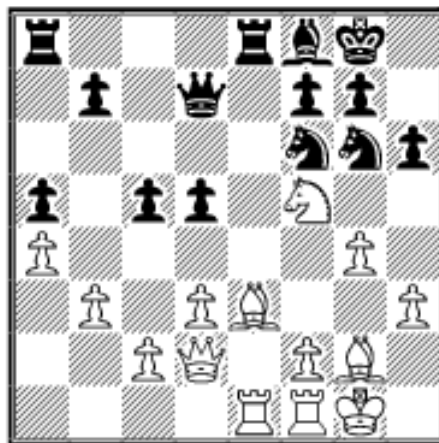
46...Kxf6 47. Rb3 Kg7 48. Rg3+ Kh8 49. Rh3 Re4

49...Rf4 would have ended it a move quicker.

50. Kh6 Re5 51. Rf3 Bc5

White resigned.

I present for your consideration two more examples of Dreev's play from the same World Championship. Try to come up with Black's choice on your own first, before comparing it with what happened in the game.



(1) *Black to move*



(2) *White to move*

(1) Oll - Dreev World Junior Championship, Kiljava 1984**19...d4! 20. Bf4 Rxe1 21. Rxe1 c4!**

A deadly blow. The threat of 22...Bb4 causes the immediate collapse of White's position.

22. Qc1 cd 23. Bd2 (23. cd Rc8) 23...Rc8 24. Bf1 dc 25. Bc4 d3 26. Bxa5 Rc5 27. Bd2 Ne5. White resigned.**(2) Dreev - Kir. Georgiev World Junior Championship, Kiljava 1984**

For the exchange, Black has a decent amount of material: a pawn - or, more accurately, two pawns, since the f6-pawn is doomed. But the main factor is Black's positional achievement. His central pawns will soon start moving, while White's rooks are incapable, for now, of generating any activity.

White's position must be considered difficult - if it were not for the brilliant reply which Dreev had already foreseen.

38. c4!! Nxc4

There's nothing better.

39. Rxa4

And, having opened a line for his rook, White has nearly equalized.

39...Nd6 (White threatened 40. Ne4!) 40. b3 Kxf6 41. Ra5 c4 (41...Rc8 42. Rc1 c4 43. bc Rxc4 was a little better) 42. bc Nxc4 43. Ra7 Nd6 44. Rb1 Re7**45. Ne2!** (45. Rb6 Bc8 was worse)
45...Rd7

Or 45...Bc6 46. Rf1+ Nf5 47. Rxe7 Kxe7 48. g4 Nd6 (..Ne3 49. Ra1) 49. Nd4 Bd7 50. Nf3, with a likely draw.

46. Rb6 Ke7

After 46...Ke5 47. Nc1! Black would be tied hand and foot.

47. Nd4 e5 48. Nf3 e4 (48...Ke6 49. Ng5+ Kf5 50. Nxb7

gives White the better chances) **49. Nd4 Bc8**. Draw.

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Translated by Jim Marfia

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