

**Jurgen Kaufeld & Guido Kern**

# **Grandmaster Chess Strategy**

What Amateurs Can Learn from Ulf Andersson's  
Positional Masterpieces

**New In Chess 2011**

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## PREFACE

One of the best methods of improving your playing strength is to choose as a model a top player and then to analyse in depth the latter's games. By asking questions such as 'What is typical about this player?' and 'Why is he so successful?' you will work out what characterises his chess style. By imitating this in your own games, you will have practical successes to celebrate.

In this book, the world class Swedish player Ulf Andersson is taken as such a model and his games are investigated. Andersson's best days as an over-the-board player (before in later years he successfully devoted his time to correspondence chess) were in the 1970s and 1980s, that is to say before my own time as a chess player. In the mid 1990s I, as an up-and-coming young player, had the opportunity to cross swords on two occasions with the experienced veteran. Our first game was played in 1996 and I had to admit defeat after 91 moves – without really understanding what I had done wrong! I simply felt that my only problem was that I had had to defend that particular ending against Andersson and not against some other player.

Therefore I was extremely motivated when it came to our next encounter. I had to wait almost a year before it took place and on that occasion I had the white pieces! I tried to put as much pressure on him as I could, but I felt as though I was banging my head against a brick wall. All my efforts were in vain and the game ended in a draw.

Of course, before these face to face encounters with him, I had made an intensive study of Andersson's games. In addition to his almost proverbial endgame technique, there are many other facets to his play. It is remarkable for its clarity, and yet he also knows how to get the upper hand in complicated situations, as for example is shown by the games in the chapter 'The Art of Defence'.

A further characteristic theme, the positional exchange sacrifice, would become a lasting component of my own chess repertoire through the games of Andersson as well as those of my absolute favourite chess player – the 9th world champion Tigran Petrosian.

It gives me great pleasure to see that on one hand this work honours the creative efforts of Andersson and on the other lays before the reader the most outstanding training material. I find it particularly important that subtleties are dealt with which will advance your future chess development: nowadays, people are far too used to the opinions of computer programs, and every book which moves us to do some thinking for ourselves is an important supplement to that. This book opens our eyes to what really makes a world class chess player!

Guido Kern and Jürgen Kaufeld have selected the games with great care and present a many-faceted insight into 'world class chess strategy'. The important ele-

# INTRODUCTION

You will perhaps be wondering why we have written a manual on strategy that contains exclusively the games of Swedish grandmaster Ulf Andersson. The answer: as we analysed many games, we realised that the clear and purely positional playing style of Andersson is superbly well suited to the illustration of strategic themes. For those who wish to improve their positional play and technique, these games will be of great benefit.

In our years of experience as chess trainers, during which many of our talented young players earned titles, we have always noted how extremely necessary it was to bring up to a high standard their technique and positional understanding in order for them to achieve success in their chess praxis. When training players who are ambitious and who have the capacity to make progress, one often notices a certain stagnation of their playing strength when the main focus of the chess training has been only on openings and middlegame tactics. Tactics do play an enormous part in modern chess nowadays and work with chess programs (which almost every club and tournament player is able to take advantage of) has conferred on the calculation of variations a greater value than was the case in the pre-computer era. But every chess player who takes part in tournaments appreciates the difficulty of converting to a win the advantages which have been achieved (be they positional or material). It is mainly lack of technical skills which makes victory difficult or impossible.

And yet it is not as difficult as is commonly believed to acquire the technical and tactical methods which aid the realisation of advantages in chess. In this connection the present book is aimed at plugging a gap. It is therefore very well suited for use with up-and-coming players.

As you play through the games it is fascinating to recognise the facility and precision with which Andersson achieves his goals. Chess players of varying strengths and styles will enormously improve their abilities and simultaneously increase their positional sense as a result of careful study of the annotated games, which have been classified according to various middlegame and endgame themes.

Andersson is considered to be one of the most important endgame experts. His chess style resembles that of the legendary world champion Capablanca and in his ability to handle closed positions in masterly fashion also that of the later world champion Tigran Petrosian. Among chess masters 'endgame technique à la Andersson' has been given the status of a trademark.

His significance as a player can be seen at first glance from the long number of years he has spent among the absolute world chess elite. His most successful period was at the beginning of the 1980s, when he occupied 4th place in the world ranking lists. Another highlight of his career was his nomination to the place of first board in the 'USSR versus the rest of the world' match in 1984. In recent years Ulf Andersson has also turned to correspondence chess, reaching the first place in the world rank-

ing list in 2002. In Germany Ulf Andersson was for several years a successful member of the SG Porz team in the top division of the Bundesliga.

If you are a fan of strategic openings such as the English, the Catalan or the Hedgehog, you will find in this book valuable information for your opening repertoire. There are even two chapters devoted to areas connected with these openings, namely the Catalan and the Hedgehog, and these provide instructive comments on middlegame strategy and on the transition to the endgame.

We have generally preferred to present complete games in order to render more transparent the individual transitions from one phase of the game to the next. This way the reader will acquire a noticeably better understanding of the flow of the whole game than he or she would if only parts of games were shown.

Of course, in Andersson's games important tactical elements play just as important a role as the positional ones. This will be made clear above all in the chapters on the 'positional queen sacrifice' and the 'positional exchange sacrifice'. Generally speaking, it is far from easy to attribute individual strategic themes to games, though when we were dealing with the subject of the 'positional queen sacrifice' this created no difficulties whatsoever, since this creative motif is abundantly present in Andersson's play. Here too, we can once more find a parallel to ex-world champion Tigran Petrosian, who was a recognised specialist in this area.

Because Andersson's play was marked by practical and technical considerations, it is certain that many of his games ended as draws. The justification for this is that for many years he was in contention with the very top players in the world and at that level positional and technical capabilities are extraordinarily high. Nevertheless, as we have already emphasised, his games are of great instructional value for ambitious players who want to achieve a higher level of competence in strategy and endgame technique.

If you wish to test your ability to find good plans, ideas and forcing tactical variations, we invite you to work on the questions which we have asked at particularly exciting and instructive stages of the games. These questions have been highlighted in the text. A white square next to the diagram indicates that White is to move, a black one means that it is Black's turn. We recommend that you use a sheet of paper to cover the game continuation and not to read on until you have thought things through deeply by yourself.

We hope that the playing through of the games will help you make important discoveries for your own praxis and that in doing so you will improve your positional understanding.

*Guido Kern and Jurgen Kaufeld*

## CHAPTER 4

# PROPHYLAXIS

Prophylactic thinking is certainly one of the most important themes in positional play. Aaron Nimzowitsch indicated in his day that the prevention of the opponent's counterplay, or prophylaxis, is of supreme importance.

Prophylactic thinking is required in every phase of a chess game. This is not only true for defensive positions where you have to try and see through the attacking efforts being made by your opponent, but also in the attack when you have to take into account the latter's defensive resources. When realising an advantage, it is also very important to limit the possibilities open to the defence, to construct your search for a plan on that basis and to foresee possible tactical obstacles. In almost all of his books the outstanding Russian grandmaster trainer Mark Dvoretsky has highlighted the importance of prophylaxis and illustrated this with examples drawn from his praxis as a trainer. If you study this theme in depth, then your tactical abilities will automatically improve. You will pay increasing attention to the resources available to your opponent and to do that you have to penetrate into the subtleties of the related tactics. Tigran Petrosian and Anatoli Karpov made excellent use of prophylaxis and their playing style is similar. When one gets down to it, probably all the great chess champions studied this absolutely fundamental theme in order to further their chess development.

In the first example, Christiansen-Andersson, in a Hedgehog Black demonstrates the flexible defensive possibilities of that particular set-up. At the time the game was played, the strategic methods to be used in the Hedgehog had not yet been completely worked out. White somewhat optimistically extended his kingside pawn phalanx and tried to overrun the black position. Andersson stopped the attack with an original and subtle regrouping of his pieces and then went over to the counter-attack in the centre. White's slightly too dynamic set-up was drastically punished.

The game Andersson-Sokolov is a model example of the minority attack. White prophylactically anticipates his opponent's attacking efforts, then takes over the initiative before going on to cash in on his advantage by capturing the backward c6 pawn.

After a favourable opening in Ahlander-Andersson there arose a blocked position with a bad white bishop. By targeted, prophylactic defensive moves, Black nipped Black's attempts at attack in the bud before moving over to a successful counter-attack.

The game Andersson-Markowski is proof that prophylactic thinking is even possible when attacking. The poor move 18...h5 palpably weakened Black's king position. Andersson found a profound prophylactic move which led, after forced exchanges, to a strong attacking position. Black tried in vain to hold his position together, but finally lost the game to a nice piece of tactics.



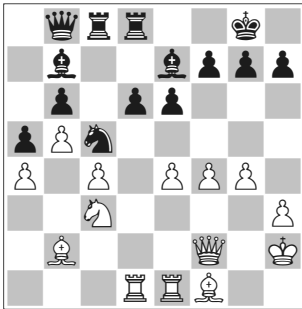
## No. 17

Larry Christiansen  
Ulf Andersson

Hastings 1979/80

English Opening

1.c4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.♗c3 e6 4.g3  
b6 5.♙g2 ♙b7 6.0-0 ♘c6 7.e4 d6  
8.d4 cxd4 9.♘xd4 ♗xd4 10.♖xd4  
♙e7 11.b3 0-0 12.♙b2 ♖b8 13.h3  
♗d8 14.♗ad1 ♙f8 15.♙h2 ♘d7  
16.f4 ♙c6 17.b4 a6 18.a4 ♖c7  
19.♗c1 ♙b7 20.♗fe1 ♗ac8 21.♙f1  
♖b8 22.♖f2 a5 23.b5 ♘c5  
24.♗cd1 ♙e7 25.g4



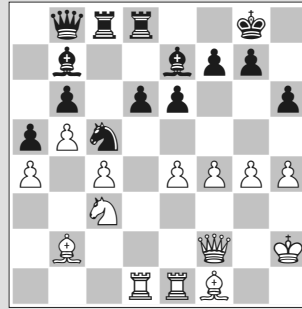
Here we have a typical Hedgehog formation, which White has noticeably weakened by his rash proceedings on the queenside with a4 and b5. In particular, the c5-square and the c-file are in Black's hands.

White will now attempt to obtain counterplay on the kingside. It is instructive to follow the way Ulf Andersson reacts in prophylactic fashion to all of White's options.

**25...h6**

Black is planning an interesting regrouping in order to take the wind out of the sails of White's attacking efforts.

**26.h4**



*Black finds an extremely imaginative defensive set-up which draws the teeth from Black's attempts to attack. How does he proceed?*

**26...♗h7!**

Black is planning to play the rook to h8 in order to counter White's opening of the h-file by means of g4-g5. At the same time he is preparing the profound regrouping ...♗c7 and ...♖d8, after which White will have problems with his pawn on h4.

**27.♙h3 ♗c7! 28.♗e3 ♗h8!**

A beautiful prophylactic move.

**29.♙g1**

A possible variation after 29.g5 would be 29...hxg5 30.hxg5 ♙g8 31.♙g1 ♘xe4! 32.♘xe4 ♙xe4 33.♗xe4 ♗xh3 34.♖g2 ♖b7! 35.g6 ♗g3! 36.♖xg3 ♖xe4 37.gxf7+ ♙xf7 38.♖xg7+ ♙e8♯. The black king gets to d7 in safety, the white pawn structure is ruined and the white king is in a worse position than its counterpart.

**29...♖d8**

A dangerous response to the advance with pawns on the kingside. This example shows how an advantage in space does not always bring about the desired result if the hinterland is not well organised.

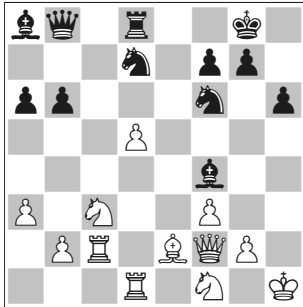


31.♖d1 ♘b6 32.♘e3 ♘bxd5 33.♘cxd5 ♙xd5 34.♘f5 ♖e8=.

**28...♙xh2 29.♘f1**

29.♘f5 ♙f4 30.♘e7+ (30.♖c2 ♖e5! 31.♙d3 ♘c5 32.g4 ♙xd5 33.♘xd5 ♖xd5∞) 30...♙f8 31.♘c6 ♙xc6 32.dxc6 ♙xc1 33.♖xc1 ♘c5∞ or 29.♙xa6 ♙g3 30.♖e2 ♖e5 and despite White's material superiority Black has tactical counterplay. An enormously complicated position!

**29...♙f4 30.♖c2**



**30...b5!**

This makes space for the knight, after which Black puts pressure on the passed pawn on d5.

**31.♙d3 ♘b6 32.♙e4 ♘c4**

Black could have exchanged on d5, but that would have simplified the position in White's favour: 32...♘bxd5 33.♘xd5 ♙xd5 34.♙xd5 ♖xd5 35.♖xd5 ♘xd5 36.♖d4±/±.

Instead, he looks for tactical complications.

**33.a4 ♖e8 34.axb5 axb5 35.♖e2 ♙e5**

Intending ...♘xb2 and ...♘h5.

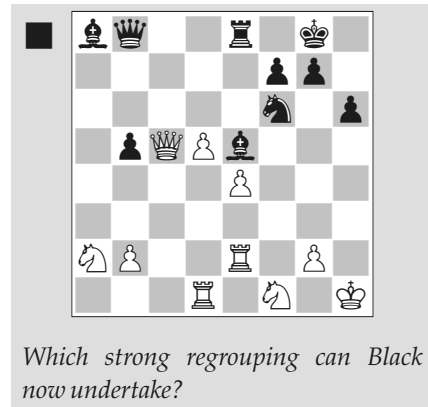
**36.♖c5 ♘d6**

This reliably blockades the passed pawn and protects b5. The black pieces have occupied important key squares and White's advantage of the exchange can hardly be felt.

**37.♘a2?!**

Karpov's wish to bring the knight via b4 to c6 is understandable. But he overlooks the subsequent regrouping which gives Black an excellent game. 37.♙b1 ♖c8 would have led to unclear play.

**37...♘dxe4! 38.fxe4**



*Which strong regrouping can Black now undertake?*

**38...♙d6! 39.♖c2 ♖e5!**

That is the point! The rook will come into the attack in a very dangerous fashion via the 5th rank. Since the passed pawns are completely blockaded and the white position has been greatly weakened on the dark squares, Karpov is already having to fight for the draw here.

**40.g3**

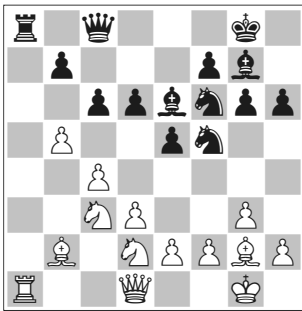
40.♘g3 ♖g5 41.♘f5 ♖h5+ 42.♙g1 ♖xf5! 43.exf5 ♖a7+ 44.♙h1 ♖xa2±; 40.♖e3 ♖h5+ 41.♖h3 ♖xh3+ 42.gxh3 ♖e8±.

**40...♖e8!**

**No. 74**  
**Ulf Andersson**  
**Boris Gulko**

Interzonal Tournament Biel 1976  
 English Opening

1.c4 e5 2.♘c3 ♘c6 3.g3 g6 4.♙g2  
 ♙g7 5.d3 d6 6.♖b1 a5 7.a3 ♘f6  
 8.♗f3 0-0 9.0-0 h6 10.b4 axb4  
 11.axb4 ♙e6 12.b5 ♘e7 13.♙b2  
 ♗d7 14.♗d2 c6 15.♖a1 ♖c7  
 16.♗c2 ♗f5 17.♖fc1 ♗f6 18.♗d1  
 ♗d7 19.♖xa8 ♖xa8 20.♖a1 ♗c8



This interesting middlegame structure arose from an English Opening, in which Andersson finds a way to exploit to his advantage the diagonal pressure on the c6- and b7-pawns.

**21.♖xa8 ♖xa8**



*The strongest move is obvious here, or is it?*

**22.♗a4!**

The exchange of queens mercilessly exposes the weaknesses in the black camp. It is amazing how quickly the black position goes on to collapse.

**22...♗xa4**

The exchange of queens is forced: 22...♗b8 23.♙a3 c5 24.b6 and ♖a7±.

**23.♗xa4**

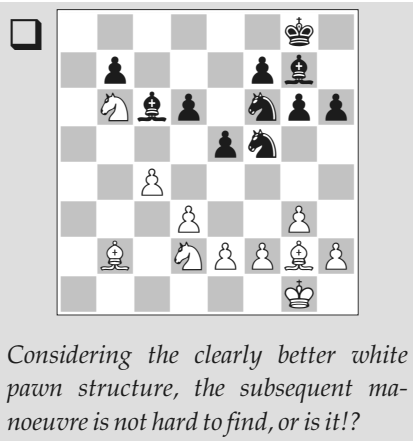
Now we have a minor piece ending which is very unpleasant for Black, since the queenside pawns on c6 and b7 are hard to defend. Furthermore, it will be difficult to meet the positional lever c5.

**23...♙d7**

Things are also difficult for Black after alternative continuations, e.g.: 23...cxb5 24.cxb5 ♙d7 25.♗c3 ♗d4 26.b6 ♙c6 27.♗c4 ♗d7 28.♙a3 ♙f8 29.♙xd6 ♙xd6 30.♗xd6 ♗xb6 31.♗xb7± or 23...♗e7 24.bxc6 bxc6 25.c5 ♗e8 26.cxd6 ♗xd6 27.♙a3±.

**24.♗b6 ♙e8 25.bxc6 ♙xc6**

25...bxc6 26.c5!±.



*Considering the clearly better white pawn structure, the subsequent manoeuvre is not hard to find, or is it!?*

**26.♗b3**