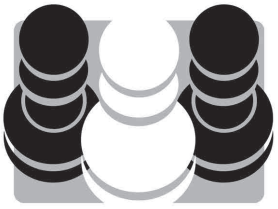
Opening Simulator

King's Indian Defence

By

Esben Lund & Andreas Skytte Hagen



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Preface

The idea for this book was brought to life sometime in 2016, during several conversations about how to optimize chess training. Andreas wondered if his daily half hour of exercise solving could somehow be more focused – and why not train a specific opening while getting on with the daily task? The overall concept was very much Andreas's idea – and with the help of Silas's writing experience, the book is now a reality.

Andreas's idea was to solve a vast number of exercises in the King's Indian Defence and then repeat these exact same exercises over and over again. The concept of repeating the same exercises is known as the Woodpecker Method, named after the Swedish Grandmaster Hans Tikkanen (Tikkanen means woodpecker in Finnish). Together with his compatriot Axel Smith, these ideas were finally put in print in *The Woodpecker Method*, published in 2018 by Quality Chess.

Andreas's idea was to use the Woodpecker Method but only use exercises from one opening at a time to improve focus. The underlying idea is based on a 'know-how' as opposed to a 'know-that' approach (Ryle/Davies/Rowson). This is designed to avoid 'reading and nodding' (Nigel Davies) – understood as the passive intake of knowledge that turns out to be inadequate in the face of the actual problem solving over the board.

This is all very much in line with *Deliberate Practice*, which has been our guideline throughout the project. We will talk more about this concept in the Introduction to this book, and we also have a few suggestions on how you can use it in your training. Overall, we view our book as an optimized form of the Woodpecker Method, in the sense that the 400 exercises are all from the same opening. Obviously you are not bound to the Woodpecker style of solving, and can tackle the exercises in any manner you see fit.

The idea of solving exercises in your favourite opening is not new. Before writing this book, we first set out to find out what other authors had produced in this field, in order to build and improve upon previous ideas. The first book we came across was Nikolay Minev's *King's Indian Defense: Tactics, Ideas, Exercises*, which contains a lot of good stuff. Minev also chose the King's Indian as his theme, but his idea from 1993 didn't seem to inspire any similar efforts from other authors. We noticed that Minev did not divide the exercises in his book according to difficulty, whereas we have sorted our exercises into five levels. We agreed on this as a good and practical choice, inspired by John Emms' *The Ultimate Chess Puzzle Book*.

To mention one more example, *Mastering The King's Indian Defense* by Bellin & Ponzetto has an excellent introduction in which the typical pawn structures such as the 'Mar del Plata Centre' and others are explained with diagrams and comments about typical plans. The authors call their method 'Read and Play' – but to our taste, this is still too much reading and nodding.

Instead, our credo is 'read, solve and play'. The reading part of this book is the thorough Introduction, which is designed to provide a framework of understanding and thus prepare the reader for the exercise section. After the initial reading, followed by the solving of exercises, the reader is truly ready to play the King's Indian!

The title of the book – Opening Simulator – was coined by Andreas, and it sums up the concept very well: the training you get from studying this book is as close to a practical game as a book can get.

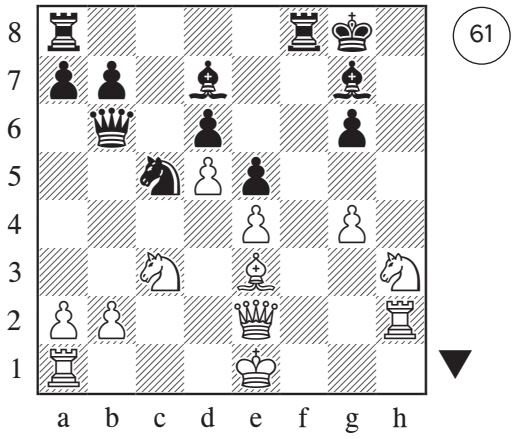
Before moving on, here is a summary of the division of labour between us.

Andreas did most of the research into previous books and training materials, which served as preparation for the book. As a King's Indian player with Black, Andreas naturally has a better overview of the opening than Silas; after all, White usually focuses on one pet line against it, whereas Black has to know about all kinds of set-ups. Most of the theoretical content in the Introduction is provided by Andreas.

Silas, on the other hand, has played numerous games in the King's Indian sitting on the White side. He has written the Introduction, with the main goal of giving the reader a complete understanding of the opening. This is not only from Black's perspective, but also discussing topics such as White's space advantage, and the question of whether the King's Indian can be considered a strategically suspect opening.

Silas also wrote the solutions to the 400 exercises, whereas Andreas has solved them all (or at least tried to) and given valuable feedback from the reader's point of view. Overall, it is the deep cooperation and sharing of ideas over many years that has moulded the book into what you now hold in your hands. We truly hope that you will enjoy working with it!

Silas Esben Lund & Andreas Skytte Hagen
New York/Copenhagen, June 2019



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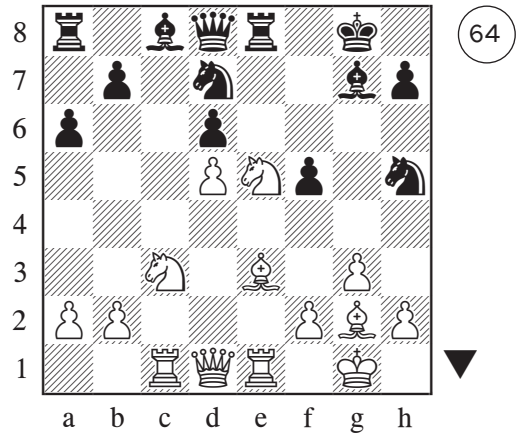
Black to move



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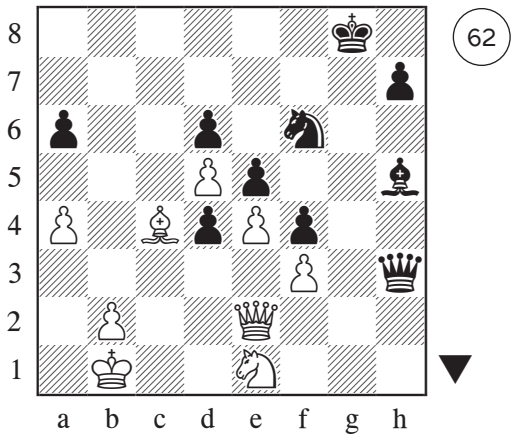
Black to move



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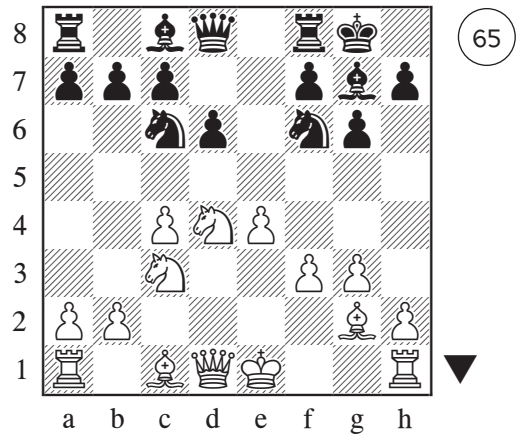
Black to move



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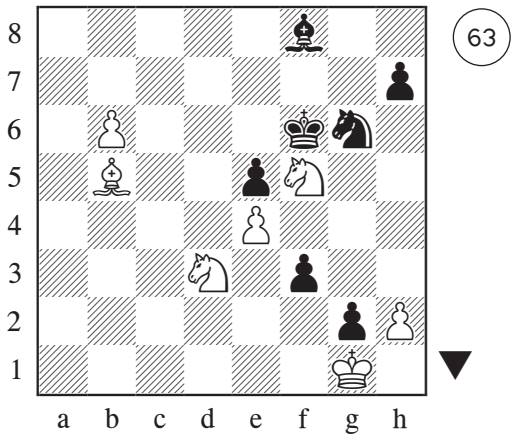
Black to move



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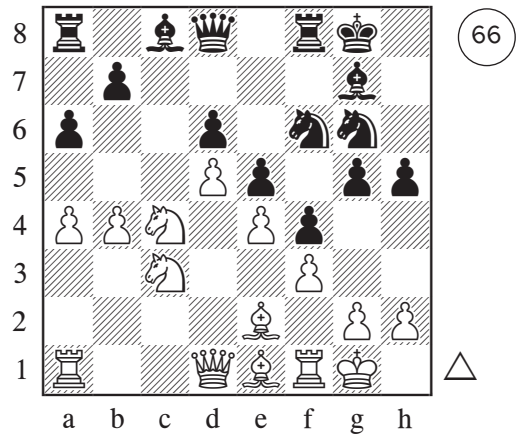
Black to move



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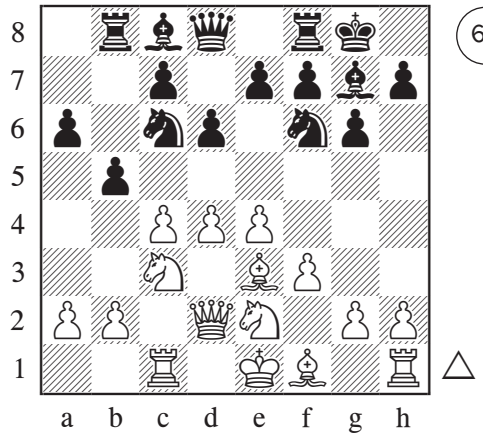
White to move



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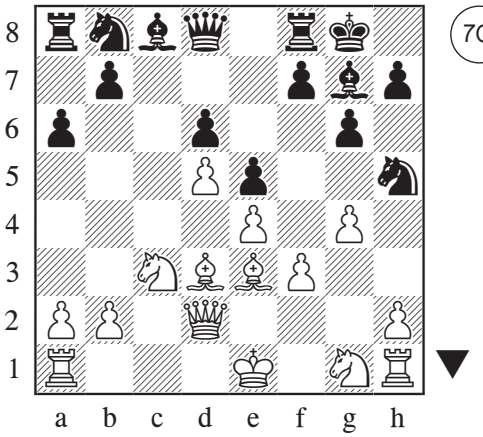
White to move



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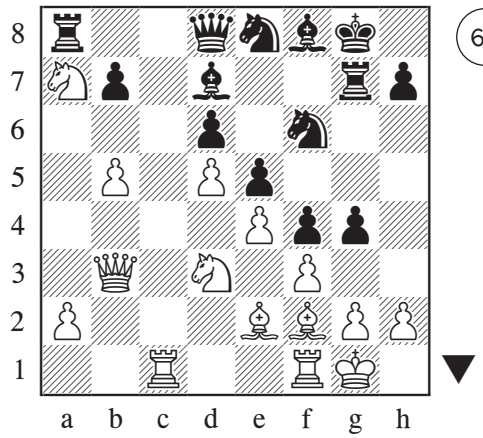
Black to move



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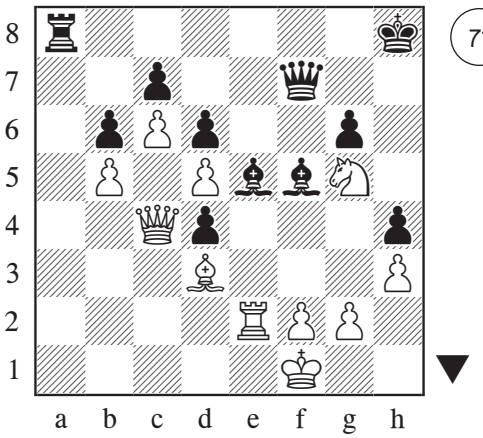
Black to move



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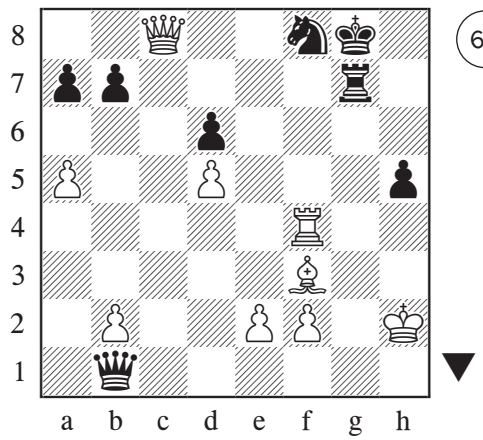
Black to move



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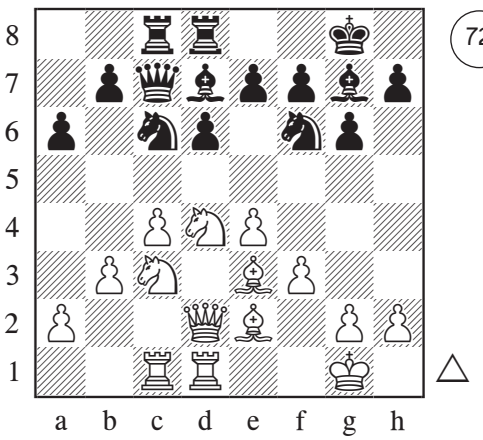
Black to move



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White to move

Solutions to Level 2

61. Jouri Goriatchkin – Andrey Zaichko, Ekaterinburg 1996 (E73)
19...♕xb2! 19...♗xg4? doesn't work: 20.♕xg4 ♘d3† 21.♔d2! (or 21.♔e2!) 21...♕xb2† 22.♔xd3 ♕xh2 Although Black is materially okay, White can play 23.♘g5!+– with a decisive attack, while his own king is surprisingly safe on d3. **20.♕xb2 ♘d3† 21.♔e2** It is important to have seen that the attempt to guard b2 with 21.♔d1 runs into 21...♘xb2† 22.♖xb2 ♖f1†!–+ followed by picking up the undefended rook on a1. **21...♘xb2∓**

62. Vitaly Chekhover – Genrikh Kasparian, Yerevan 1936 (E87)
34...♘xe4!–+ Black wins an important central pawn and breaks through White's defences. The game ended: **35.♗xa6** You should have spotted that the knight is untouchable, with 35.fxe4 ♗xe2–+ and 35.♕xe4 ♗g6–+ being the key variations. **35...♘c5 36.♗b5 e4 37.♕g2† ♕xg2 38.♘xg2 ♗xf3 39.♘xf4 d3 0–1**

63. Alexander Kliche – Thomas Mager, Germany 1997 (E86)
38...♘f4! Reversing the move order with 38...♗c5†? 39.♘xc5 ♘f4 doesn't work because of: 40.♘d7†! ♔e6 (both 40...♔f7?? and 40...♔g6?? are answered by 41.♘xe5†+– picking up the f3-pawn) 41.♘c5† Black must settle for a draw: 41...♔f6 (41...♔f7?? leads to disaster after 42.♗c4†! ♔e8 43.♔f2! ♘h3† 44.♔xf3 g1=♕ 45.b7!+– and curiously enough, Black has no good way to stop the b-pawn without losing his queen) 42.♘d7†= **39.b7** 39.♘xf4 ♗c5† soon leads to mate. **39...♘h3 mate! 0–1** To solve the exercise, you did not need to see all the analysis in the note to move 38 – just as long as you made the right choice on the first move and spotted the mates after 39.b7 and 39.♘xf4.

64. Oswald Gutt – Uwe Lutterbeck, West Germany 1989 (E68)
White's last move (17.♘f3xe5) was a mistake due to: **17...♖xe5! 18.♕xh5 f4!∓** With this discovered attack on the queen, Black wins material.

65. Max Green – Martin Green, Sydney 1939 (E72)
9...♘xd4! The most precise move. The game continued: 9...♘xe4!? This reversed move order allows White to avoid the worst with: 10.♘xc6! (but not 10.fxe4? ♗xd4–+) 10...♘xc3 11.♘xd8 ♘xd1 12.♔xd1 ♖xd8 Even though this is excellent for Black, he is not completely winning as in the main continuation, so this does not count as a correct solution. **10.♕xd4 ♘xe4!** Black wins a pawn and keeps a winning attack going. The point is: **11.♕xe4 ♖e8–+** You should have seen this main line in order to solve the exercise.

66. Yannick Pelletier – Andreas Skytte Hagen, Poland 2013 (E97)
20.a5!± White plans to exchange off Black's light-squared bishop on c8, after which Black's attack on the kingside loses most of its power. To solve the exercise, you should have seen this. The game continued **20...g4 21.♘b6 ♖b8 22.♘xc8 ♕xc8 23.♖c1** with some advantage for White.

67. Marcin Tazbir – Manuel Perez, Warsaw 2016 (E84)
10.cxb5 axb5 11.♘xb5! ♖xb5 12.♖xc6± White has won an important pawn.

68. Otto Benkner – Wolfgang Uhlmann, Leipzig 1953 (E91)
21...g3! 22.hxg3 fxg3–+ After **23.♗e3 ♘h5** the queen will go to h4, with a decisive attack. To solve the exercise, you should have spotted the idea of the queen landing on h4.

69. Wolfgang Rohde – Rainer Gackstatter, East Germany 1972 (E62)
32...♕g1†! 33.♔h3 ♕f1†! 34.♔h4 ♕xf2†! 35.♔xh5 35.♔h3 ♕g3 is mate. **35...♕h2†! 36.♖h4** So far, Black's moves were forced. However, he now has two ways of forcing mate in in three moves, so you should have spotted at least one of them in order to solve the exercise. **36...♕e5†** The other mate is 36...♖h7† 37.♔g5 (37.♔g4 gives Black an additional option of 37...♖xh4† when both 38.♔f5 and 38.♔g5 are met by 38...♕f4 mate) 37...♕xh4† 38.♔f5 ♖f7 mate. **37.♔h6** 37.♕f5 only postpones the mate by one move. **37...♕g5 mate!** Other options are 37...♖h7 mate and 37...♖g6 mate. **0–1**

70. Gata Kamsky – Garry Kasparov, Manila (ol) 1992 (E88)
11...♘f4! To solve the exercise, you need to have found this move and evaluated the position after 12.♗xf4 exf4 13.♕xf4∓ in Black's favour. In return for the sacrificed pawn, he has eliminated White's dark-squared bishop while also opening the long diagonal for his own on g7. This piece exerts pressure towards the white queenside (b2 and c3 in particular), and Black can combine this with an advance of the b-pawn or bringing the queen to a5, among other ideas. Rather than go down this path, Kamsky tried **12.♗c2**, but after **12...b5 13.♕f2 ♘d7 14.♘ge2 b4 15.♘a4 a5 16.♘xf4 exf4 17.♗xf4 ♘e5** Black had the initiative and excellent compensation for the pawn (0–1, 41).

71. Gata Kamsky – John Nunn, Monte Carlo 1995 (E97)
39...♕xd5!–+ By deflecting the queen from the defence of the bishop on d3, Black wins an important pawn. In the game, White played 40.♕c2 to keep the game going. To solve the exercise, you should have seen that **40.♕xd5?** leads to mate after: **40...♖a1† 41.♖e1 ♗xd3†** This is why the queen had to be diverted. **42.♔g1 ♖xe1 mate!**

72. Alexey Dreev – Patryk Galaszewski, Warsaw 2011 (E80)
16.♘d5! ♘xd5 16...♕b8 17.♘xc6 ♗xc6 18.♘xe7†+– **17.cxd5+–** The black knight is pinned on the c-file, and he will lose material. To solve the exercise correctly, you should at least have seen this far, including the sideline at move 16. The game continued: **17...♗xd4 18.♗xd4 ♘xd4!?** Black tries a desperate queen sacrifice to change the dynamics of the position. **19.♖xc7 ♘xe2† 20.♕xe2 ♖xc7 21.e5** White went on to win (1–0, 40).