

Deceptive Play in Xiangqi Openings And Countermeasures



Asian Xiangqi Federation
Chinese Xiangqi Association

Deceptive Play in Xiangqi Openings And Countermeasures

Preface

As rising and falling mountains, the art of xiangqi contains abundant knowledge and wisdom. It is also like a boundless ocean, on which the magnificent waves are rolling and foaming.

Dear readers, when you are facing myriad and various kinds of books on xiangqi openings, you might feel how difficult it is to master these techniques. Do you know that Yan Wenqing and Zhang Qiang, two great young masters, have already given the same thought with you?

Yes, there are plenty of xiangqi books in the bookshops, someone may call them “secrets”, “flying knives”, or “guided missiles”, claiming that the readers could acquire mysterious skill from them. Some people might think that they have found a short cut, thus having fallen slaves of these books. They often have a dream of becoming “top players” in a short time and believe that they can defeat the enemy at one stroke. Due to such self-confidence, they are often feeling complacent. However, the things are always against their wishes. Being beset and shrouded in the shadow of the defeat, they might be perplexed and have a sigh with all kinds of feelings. They might curse that there is no such a move in the books, the “secrets” are not effective, the “flying knives” have killed the owners, or the “guided missiles” have missed the targets. When you are at a loss, you might ask yourself where is the way to decode the ciphers of the openings?

You may have read some fine books on the xiangqi openings. However, as the bad ones are often intermingled with good ones, you would lose your interest in reading these books. Some xiangqi books are merely scrapbooks of odds and ends, or collections of data. In no case, they must be treated as creative works. If you bury yourself in the mountains of these books, how can you overcome the obstacles in the openings and find a right way?

While you are at a loss, Yan Wenqing and Zhang Qiang, the two young masters, have displayed their wisdom by writing this series of books.

With a strong sense of responsibility and mission, the two authors, taking the readers of elementary and middle level as the object, approach the world of opening from the high plane of xiangqi masters. Regarding xiangqi as a pure art and a culture, they have examined the present books on the xiangqi openings. For creating something new and different, with a keen and penetrating insight, they have sifted the problems that have often occurred in the xiangqi openings. They even have touched the subjects as yet untouched by many people. We can say without any exaggeration that this series of books is of dynamics in changing the culture of xiangqi. Thanks to their unique insight, our readers can assimilate the nutrition of xiangqi theory from the book of "Fixed Xiangqi Openings and Theory of Combat". They can appreciate the joyfulness from the book of "The Deceptive Play in Xiangqi Openings and Countermeasures", and be rendered with happiness from the book of "Misleading Battle Formations in Xiangqi Openings and Assault". The exquisite titles and the penetrating analysis will enable you to improve the strength of your play and help you to find the answers for your defeats in previous competitions.

The fixed xiangqi openings have been extracted from the practice of the xiangqi masters through the ages, representing the reasonable play in the stage of opening within certain bouts of play. In the book of "Fixed Xiangqi Openings and Theory of Combat", the authors have made a systematic and thorough analysis on a wealth of books left over by the predecessors, by weeding out superfluities, reducing to bare essentials. The authors also have made reasonable inducement and analysis on the typical openings. With a clear arrangement and thorough analysis of the ideas, it will help the readers to look for the ways in breaking the traditional modems.

The deceptive play refers to that within several bouts during the stage of the opening, one side voluntarily cast aside the "fixed opening", and suddenly take the measures of deception and harassment, inducing his opponent into the trap or making mistakes. The book of "Deceptive play in Xiangqi Openings and Countermeasures" has provided us with plentiful of contents and new and unique ideas. By eliminating the false and retaining the true, the authors will help you to take away the mysterious veil covering the deceptive play, and return the opponent with the most effective counterattack.

The misleading battle formation refers to that during the opening stage, due to one

of the contestants lacks of a tactical motivation and a reasonable play, or has responded subconsciously with a customary method, the game has become a structure concealing a weakness. In the book of "Misleading formations and Assault", the authors has made a brilliant exposition on the misleading formations and made clear how to prevent them and how to attack them. The book can help the readers to know how to seize the opportunity in building up the superiority in the xiangqi play.

With the unique style of writing, the series of books has presented the broad xiangqi fans with a splendid and mysterious world of the xiangqi opening. The professional researchers can also benefit from it when using it as a reference.

By taking the fixed openings as the reference material, the correct moves as the fixed quantity, the deceptive play and the misleading formation as the variable, the xiangqi theory as the equation and the antagonistic mechanics as the principle, the readers can find the correct solution between the attack and the Countermeasures. This is the golden key presented by the authors, with which you can open the gate to the xiangqi kingdom.

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce to you the co-authors of this book, Messrs. Yan Wenqing and Zhang Qiang. Both are young xiangqi masters, who have achieved outstanding results not only in xiangqi competitions in recent years, but also in the study of the xiangqi theory. Since the plan of writing this book was conceived out two years ago, they have met me on many occasions to discuss the contents of this book. It always made me concern about them during the process of the writing. The accomplishment of the book is the result of the authors who are so dedicated to the art and aesthetics value of xiangqi, and a reflection of their industrious work in the field of xiangqi for many years. It is also a crystallization of their collective wisdom and the characteristics in their xiangqi play, and a landmark showing that "the Wenqiang Xiangqi Classroom" now has matured.

As their elder brother and an intimate friend , I have the great pleasure of writing the preface for this book. I shall be very happy if the publication of the book could bring a revolution in the field of brilliant and rich xiangqi art and culture.

Li Laiqun
In Shijiazhuang,
On 18th Nov.1998

Introduction

Through the meticulous study of the xiangqi players in the past ages, the xiangqi art and culture, as a simulation of the warfare, is now entering an unprecedented booming period. Especially the rapid development has been witnessed in the xiangqi openings. The emergence of various kinds of new variations and continuance renovation of the fixed openings has led the elementary and medium xiangqi fans into a dazzling xiangqi world. How to guide them in having a correct understanding of the fixed openings, how to use them in the competitions and to improve their ability in appreciation of the new variations, these work will be the bounden duty of our professional researchers.

The opening takes the most important strategic position in the xiangqi games. To the great extend, the winning or losing of a game between the high-level players hinges on the depth of their study of the openings. The gap between the professional xiangqi players and amateurs is mainly embodied in the opening. Thanks to his efforts of weeding through the old to bring forth the new in the field of the openings, Mr. Hu Ronghua, the great master of our generation, achieved remarkable results in the sixties and seventies of the 20th century. At that time, owing to the limitation of the time many fields of the xiangqi openings remained to be undeveloped virgin lands. At present, the xiangqi opening has been developed to a great extend and depth; and is now growing in the direction of a new height, more precision, depth and delicate.

The formation of the fixed xiangqi openings is the result of the untiring study of the xiangqi masters in the past. To have a good knowledge of the fixed openings constitutes the foundation for mastering the openings. However, they must be treated with the viewpoint of the time and development. Otherwise, they will become rigid if we look upon them with an invariable viewpoint.

The appearance of the deceptive play is closely linked to the development of the fixed openings. Generally speaking, the deceptive play is of the nature of covertness and initiative. When a player of higher caliber uses it against a player of lower level, it implies that he is prepared and in a planned way in testing the correctness of the "new variation produced in his study room". He is thinking that his opponent can not find out a correct method for making a counterattack, and if the responding move is correct or is close to correctness, he will not land himself in a passive position immediately as he is well prepared in his subsequent moves. When using the deceptive play against a player

of the same caliber, though he is prepared, he is not sure in his play. He is expecting that his opponent would fail in detecting his plot or has a blind spot in the fixed opening as such. If his opponent has a correct countermove, he can not necessarily have a good command of the development of the situation. When using the deceptive play against a player of the higher caliber, the player has the idea of leaving things to chance and is expecting that his opponent would commit a mistake. Once his opponent has a powerful countermove, he would be utterly routed. As the elementary players find these "flying knives and traps" from the text books and lack a thorough study on them, they are often misled and thrown into a passive position if using them in the competition.

The background of the misleading formation differs from that of the deceptive play. Any player of the high caliber may possibly produce a misleading formation during the competition. The misleading formations come into being due to the carelessness, sedulously striving for a change or the customary mentality of a player when he has not well prepared and planned in the game. As the weakness of the misleading formation is indistinct and concealing, it is not easy to be detected and decoded. Because the pieces have comparatively strong inner links in the misleading formation, it often can be detected only after several bouts of play. Only a player has a keen sense of judgement, a strong ability of analysis and prediction, can he have a correct assessment of misleading formations in the games.

The theory of xiangqi play refers to the objective laws within the mould structure during the game, reflecting the inner link among the pieces. The objective laws must be observed when taking Countermeasures to the deceptive play or launching an attack on the misleading formation. The player must fully display his subject initiative. Any violation of the objective laws of the xiangqi theory will result in defeat in competitions.

With a new viewpoint, we have made an experimental exposition on the fixed opening, the deceptive play as well as the misleading formation in this book, hoping that it can help the players of the elementary and medium level to raise the combat effectiveness. Despite the fact that we have taken an attitude of "pursuing the perfection of the opening" as the starting point, there is still a big gap between what we have expounded in this book with the xiangqi art and its cultural connotation, as it is so abundant, rich and splendid. If this series of the books can help to promote the development of the xiangqi openings in the direction of more perfection, we are wealthy of the heavy

responsibility placed on us by the time.

A Brief Introduction to the Author: Yan Wenqing

Born in the city of Tangshan, China in 1967. Since 1983 when he became a member of Hebei Provincial Xiangqi Team, Yan Wenqing has been trained under the guidance of Liu Dianzhong, a well-known xiangqi coach in China and Li Laiqun, a world Grand Master. Due to his diligence and strong power of understanding, he has made rapid progress in xiangqi skill. In 1988, he was awarded the title of National Master. He won the fourth place in the National Xiangqi Individual Tournament in 1990 and the fifth place in 1991, and also the third place of the Asian Individual Xiangqi Tournament in the same year, thus becoming the International Master. In 1998, he was placed second in the National Xiangqi Individual Tournament. Together with Li Laiqun and Liu Dianzhong, he distinguished himself in winning the title of the National Xiangqi Team Tournament on three occasions.

While receiving the guidance from his teachers, he had already developed a style of his own in xiangqi play. Conceived ingeniously and with a strong imaginative power, his play has a natural grace and great momentum. He is especially good at the xiangqi openings, displaying his style of “weeding through the old to bring forth the new”. His theory on the xiangqi opening has become the new trend in the xiangqi play of today. The books written by him include “Commentaries and Annotations on Games of Xiangqi Masters”, “Cream of Tactics in Popular Xiangqi Openings” (in collaboration with Mr. Zhang Qiang) and “Battle between Kings – Selected Games from Five-Ram Cup Xiangqi Championships”(in collaboration with Liu Dianzhong, Zhang Qiang and others). Many xiangqi specialists speak approvingly of him. He was awarded the national prize of “Best Commentary and Annotation on Xiangqi Games” in 1995.

A Brief Introduction to the Author: Zhang Qiang

Born in the city of Beijing in 1971. Nurtured by his family, he has been fond of playing xiangqi since his childhood. He began to show his talent when he was still a boy, won the third place in the National Junior Xiangqi Championships in 1985 and in the same year, he was recruited into Beijing Xiangqi Team. In 1991, he was awarded the title of National Master. In 1992, he won the fifth place in the National Individual Xiangqi Championships. In 1994, he was the runner-up in the "Gold Xiangqi King" National Xiangqi Masters Tournament. Now, he is a xiangqi coach and concurrently a player in Beijing Team, as well as a student of Department of Chinese Language,

Beijing Normal University.

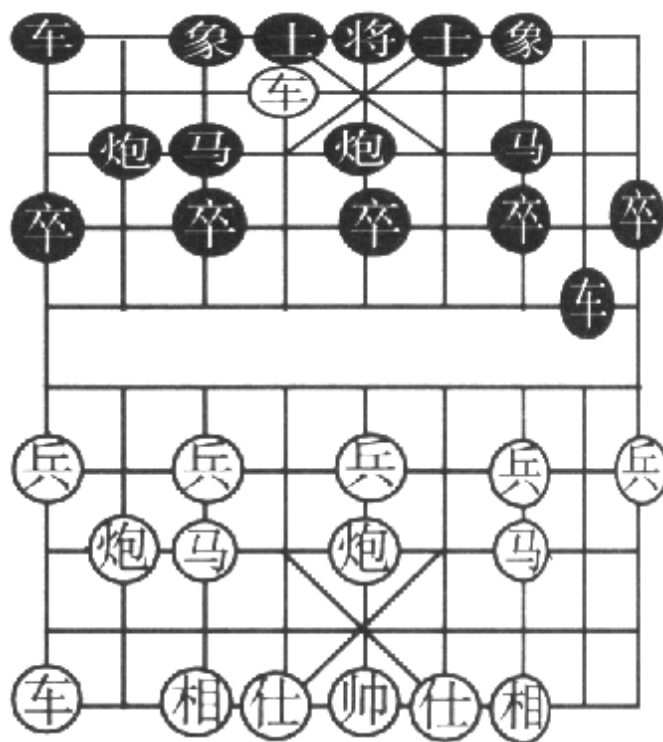
Being in the prime of his life and full of enterprising spirit, Zhang Qiang is well known for his quick and acute train of thoughts. There is strength as well as grace in his plays. He is well versed in the theory of xiangqi and has a profound knowledge of openings, especially the Pawn opening (仙人指路) and Horse opening (起马局), etc.. Together with Mr. Yan Wenqing, he has become one of the outstanding representatives in the theoretical faction, which is so fashionable of nowadays. The books written by him include “Selections of Practical Xiangqi Tactics”, “The Cream of Tactics in the Popular Xiangqi Openings” and “The Battle between Kings – Selected Games from Five-Ram Cup Xiangqi Championships”. He was awarded the national prize of “Best Commentary and Annotation on Xiangqi Games” in 1995. Now he is also invited as the main commentator for the programs of “The World of Xiangqi”, “Zhongli Cup Xiangqi Tournament” by China Central TV Station (CCTV) and is warmly welcomed by the broad TV viewers.

Chapter I Same Direction Cannon (顺手炮类)

Game 1: Premature Penetration

1. C2=5 C8=5
2. H2+3 H8+7
3. R1+1 R9=8
4. R1=6 R8+4
5. H8+7 H2+3
6. R6+7 (as shown in the diagram)

The above is the opening of “**Same Direction Cannon and Ranked Chariot vs. Filed Chariot**” (顺炮横车对直车). Now, the Red Chariot is penetrating hastily into the Black’s second rank. It is a deceptive offensive move. Despite the fact that it involves some tactics, as an isolated piece, Red Chariot is apt to meet a counterattack from Black. The normal Red continuation is P3+1, or C8+2, or R6+5.



In the situation as shown in the diagram, Black can have the following three variations in responding to the attack of Red: (1) P3+1; (2) C5=6; (3) C2+2. They may be developed into the following possible lines:

(1) P3+1

6. ... P3+1 7. R6=7! H3+4?

Black's conception is pure and simple, that is to "move the piece forward". He has not anticipated the danger that is looming ahead. Now the better play for him is H7-5. However, Red can play R9+1, which will also throw Black into a passive position.

8. C8+3! P3+1

When Red drives his Cannon to the riverbank, Black is too late to repent, as his Chariot and Horse are under containment of the Red Cannon, like **"a horse is drawn by a monkey"**. For gaining some compensation, Black has to make a sacrifice by advancing the Pawn. If Black played A4+5, Red would play P7+1 (If Red played R7-3, Black would play E3+1), then C2=3, R7-1! Red has gained the material advantage.

9. C8=6 P7+1 10. P3+1!

This move is simple but powerful, ensuring that Red is in an advantageous position.

10. ... R8=4 11. R9=8 C2=4

12. P7+1

After eliminating the only weak point on the board, Red will advance forward with brisk steps.

(2) C5=6

6. ... C5=6

A passive defense. It can only weaken the strength of his formation.

7. P5+1!

Following the principle of "when the enemy retreats, we advance", Red takes the opportunity to push forward.

7. ... A6+5

Due to the weakness on the central file, Black has to strengthen his defense. If Black played C6+5, he would meet the Red tactical strike of P5+1! R8=5 (If Black played A6+5, Red would play R6=7 and would be in a superior position), H7+5, R5+2, C8=4, Black is now in danger as his formation is unstable and crisis-ridden.

8. H7+5

By now, Red has further expanded his initiative and has a bright future.

(3) C2+2

6. ... C2+2!

A flexible manoeuvre, with which Black can play offence as well as defense.

7. P7+1 C2=8 8. H7+8

In order to maintain "the initiative", Red plays toughly by driving his Horse to block the Red Chariot. If Red changed to play H7+6, Black would be in a satisfactory position: R1=2, C8=7, P3+1 (a good move for deploying his forces)! P7+1, C7+3, C7=3, R8=3.

8. ... R8+1!

A powerful and good move, as it can force Red to move the Elephant to the edge. If so, the formation of Red is weakened. If Black played C7+3 for exchanging the Horse, it is a mediocre move, as Red would be superior in the disposition of forces after the following moves: C8=3, R8=2, H8-7.

9. E7+9 R8+1!

Now, Black is ready to launch a counterattack. If Black played P3+1, he could also gain a good position. However, this move is not so fierce and tough as the former one.

10. P3+1 C7+3 11. C8=3 R8=7

12. C3=4 R7+3

As "the backyard of Red is on fire", Red hasn't gained any profit. His deceptive play is now declared bankruptcy.

Summery: With a hue of premature, the penetration of Red Chariot on the 6th move is a play of deception. In variation (1), Black has committed a primary mistake, thus offering Red a winning position. In variation (2), Black's play looks weak and has fallen into the trap of Red. In variation (3), Black plays positively in meeting Red's attack and is ready for making a counteroffensive, thus achieving satisfactory results. Especially, the two moves of the Chariot are ingeniously designed, which merits us to ponder over.

This game tell us that Red is too hasty in launching an offense, therefore, his tactics is premature. Red would suffer a disastrous defeat if

Black makes a correct counterattack.

Game 2: Being Anxiousness for Gaining Immediate Interest

1. C2=5 C8=5 2. H2+3 H8+7
2. R1+1 R9=8 4. R1=6 R8+4
5. H8+7 H2+3 6. R6+5

To drive the Chariot into the forest of Black's Pawns is a kind of the methods of Red for making an attack. Red can also have the play of P3+1, or C8+2 or R9+1, etc..

6. ... C2+2

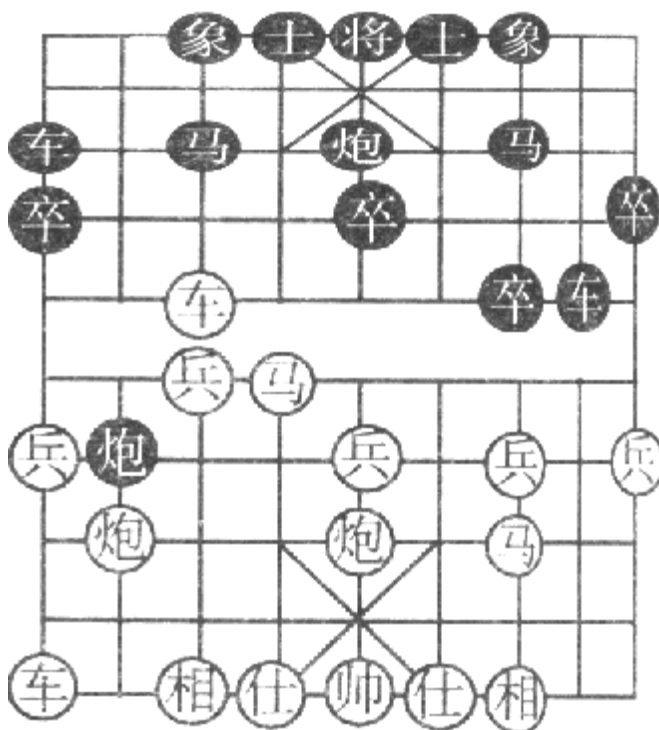
A correct move. Had Black changed to play E3+1, Red would play C8+2, then P3+1, C8=5, H3+4, C5+3, E7+5, R9=8, C2=3, R8+7, Red would stand better in his offensive play.

7. P7+1 P3+1

The normal variation is C2=7, H7+8, P3+1! Black can have enough strength to contend with Red. Now, Black is forcing to make the exchange. It is the play of deception with certain purpose.

8. R6=7 R1+2 9. R7-1

To withdraw the Chariot for taking the Pawn is the move that fits in with the actual situation. If he changed to play P7+1, Black would have the chance for making a counterattack by playing C2-3.



9. ... P7+1 10. H7+6 C2+2 (as shown in the diagram)

In the situation as shown in the diagram, Black purposely shows the flaw by playing Cannon, with an aim of luring Red into the trap. Now, Red can have the following two variations: (1) H6+7; (2) H6+4, which may be developed into the following possible lines:

(1) H6+7

11. H6+7

It seems to be a good move. However, it is too hasty to be played.

11. ... R1-1!

12. H7+5

Red has fallen into the trap. The correct move is R7=6. If so, Red has no major losses.

12. ... C2=3!

An excellent move. Red Chariot can not escape from his doom. Black has gained the initiative.

(2) H6+4

11. H6+4

It is a steady and safe play. The powerful move is P3+1. The subsequent moves will be Black P7+1, R7=2, H7+8, P7+1, Both sides are

locked in a position for gaining the initiative.

11. ... C2=3

If Black changed to play H7+6, Red would play R7=4, then C2=7, E3+1. Red Pawn on the 7th file is so aggressive. After crossing the river, it will constitute a fetal menace to Black.

12. H4+3 C3-2 13. H3-2 C2=8

14. C8=7

By now, the situation is quite clear that Red is in a superior position.

Summery: On the 7th move, Black is forced to make an exchange of the Pawn, with the aim of luring Red into his trap. However, it can not be considered as a good move. At the situation as shown in the diagram, in variation (1), due to the fact that Red is overanxious for gaining an immediate interest, Black's deception is paid. In variation (2), as Red has seen through the plot, he secured his superior position by exchanging the Horse with Black.

Though there are not many variations in this game, and responding lines are not so complicated, it fully proves that the anxiousness for gaining an immediate interest must be avoided in our play.

Game 3: Prelude to the Counterattack

1. C2=5 C8=5 2. H2+3 H8+7

2. R1=2 R9+1 4. P3+1 R9=4

5. H8+7 H2+1

By placing the Horse on the edge, Black can have more flexibility than the 3rd file. In such a position, Black can play C2=3 for threatening the Red Horse. The weak point of this play is that Black's central file proves weak.

6. R2+6

Red hastily drives the Chariot to attack Black Horse. The better play for Red is A6+5 for strengthening the defense or H3+4 for threatening Black's Pawn on the central file.

6. ... C2=3 7. R9=8 R1=2

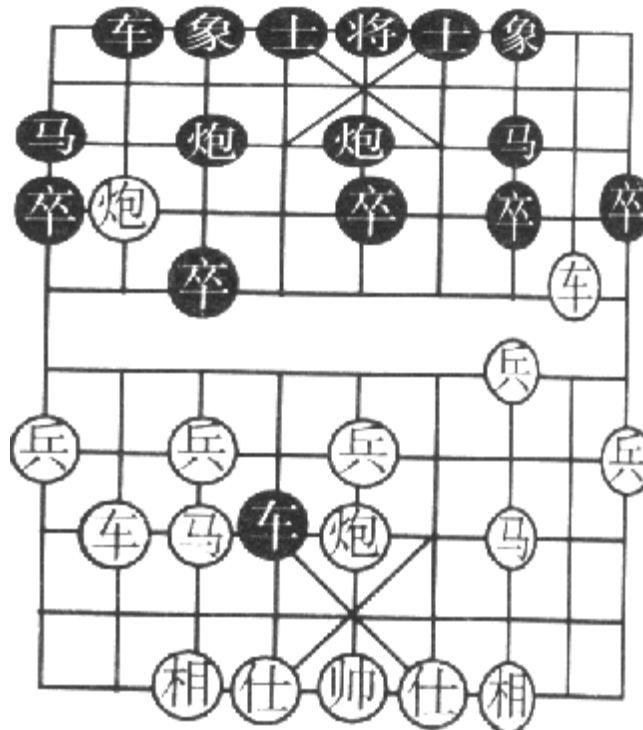
A correct move. It looks hasty to play P3+1, because Red could play R2-1, P3+1 (If Black played R4+2, Red would play C8+5), R2=7, C3+1, C8+5! Black will find it difficult to cope with the situation.

8. C8+4

It is imperative for Red to advance Cannon for blocking Black Chariot. Had Red played R2=3, Black would play R2+6, then C8=9, R2=3, R8+2, P3+1, C5=4, R4=6! A6+5, H1+3. After that, Black could play H3+5. Black would be in a superior position.

8. ... R4+6! 9. R8+2 P3+1

10. R2-1 (as shown diagram)



The safe and stable play for Red is E7+9, for strengthening his defense. Both sides are still entangled together. Now, Red retreats his Chariot, hoping that Black would play P3+1, which can be considered as a sinister deceptive move.

In the situation as shown in diagram 1, Black may have the following two variations: (1) P3+1; (2) P7+1, which may be developed into the following possible lines:

(1) P3+1

10. ... P3+1

Black sticks to the old way in making the attack. Had he played R4-4? Red would play R2=7, then R4=2, R8+4, R2+3, R7+2, R2=3, R7-1, H1+3, P7+1, Red would come out better as he had got a material

advantage.

11. R2=7 P3+1 12. R7-2

A move of accuracy. Had he erred in playing R7+2, Black would play P3+1, then C5=7, H7-5! Red would lose the advantage. If Red played R7-3, Black would play R4=7, then C7+7, R2=3! Black could have gained the pieces after the encounter of the Four Chariots.

12. ... C3+5

Black is making one blunder after another. He has fallen into the ambush of Red. He is better to play C3=4. If so, he still had enough strength in his game.

13. C5=7! R4=7 14. E7+5 R7-1

15. C7+7 K5+1

Black has no other choice but to make this move. Had he played A4+5, Red would play C8=3. Red would win quickly.

16. C8+2 C5+4 17. A6+5

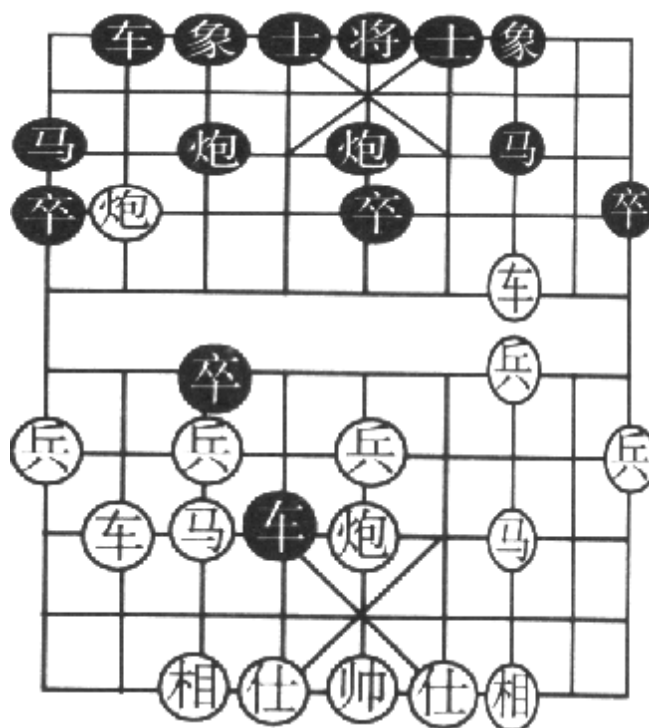
Black is utterly routed. Red has secured a winning position.

(2) P7+1

10. ... P7+1!

A farsighted good move. It can be considered as the prelude to the counterattack. As Black stays clear of the menace of Red discovered play C8=3, Red has no chance of gaining any profit.

11. R2=3 P3+1 (As shown in diagram)



In the situation as shown in diagram 2, after sacrificing his Pawn on the file 7, Black charges forward with another Pawn. It is an ideal move! The situation of Black is quite different with that in diagram 1. To respond, Red can have the following two variations: A6+5 and R3=7:

(2.1) A6+5

12. A6+5 R4+4

The move is simple and clear-cut that Black retreats Chariot to take Red Cannon. Another powerful line for Black is R4-2, by which Black's superiority is secured.

13. R3=7 P3+1! 14. H7-6 R4=2

A desirable move. If Black tried to preserve his strength and make the situation complicated by playing C3=4, Red would play C8+2, then P3+4, P3+1, P4=5, C5=7, Red could have the chance in the tangled fighting.

15. R8+4 R2+3 16. R7+2 R2=3!

17. R7-1 H1+3 18. P3+1 H3+4

19. P3+1 H7-5

By now, Both sides have one promoted Pawn. However, Black is obviously in a superior position as his pieces are more active than that of Red.

(2.2) R3=7

12. R3=7 P3+1 13. R7+2

If Red still take the old road as in variation (2.1), Red can not succeed. For example: R7-2, C3+5, C5=7, R4=7, E7+5 (If Red played C7+7, Black would play R2=3), R7-1, C7+7, A4+5! Black will be in a superior position as he has the material advantage.

13. ... P3+1 14. R8+1 R4-4

15. C8+2 R4-2 16. R7=9

Had Red changed to play C8-2, Black would play P3=4, then C5=4, H7+6, Black obviously comes out better.

16. ... R2=1 17. R8+5 R4=2

18. R9=6 R2+4 19. E3+1 H7+6!

20. C5+4 A6+5

Losing no time, Black resolutely launches an attack with his Horse. By now, with an unstable formation, Red has landed himself in a passive position as Black can have several offensive plays: H6+4, or H6+5, or R2-2.

Summery: On the 10th move that Red retreats his Chariot to take the Black Pawn is a play of deception but with a tactical motive. In variation (1), due to Black's ignorance of the trap set by Red, Red has succeeded in securing a winning position by making a sacrifice. In variation (2), as he has seen through the intention of Red, Black makes a sacrifice of his Pawn on 7th file for relieving the menace of the discovered attack of Red. After that, he launches a counterattack along the 3rd file, thus reversing the position of winning and losing.

By following the correct orientation, Black launches the attack along the 3rd file. Prior to this, the sacrifice of the Pawn on the 7th file is an important interlude as it has wiped out the hidden danger. With such a key move, it is quite enough for Black to shatter the deceptive play of Red.

Game 4: A Tit for Tat Fight

1. C2=5 C8=5 2. H2+3 H8+7

3. R1=2 H2+3 4. H8+9

By stationing his left Horse on the edge, Red can speedily dispatch his pieces into action. Red can also play H8+7, or P7+1.

4. ... R9+1

Black drives his left Chariot forward for strengthening his combat effectiveness. He can also play P7+1, which is also a normal variation.

5. C8=7 R1=2

6. P7+1 (as shown in diagram)

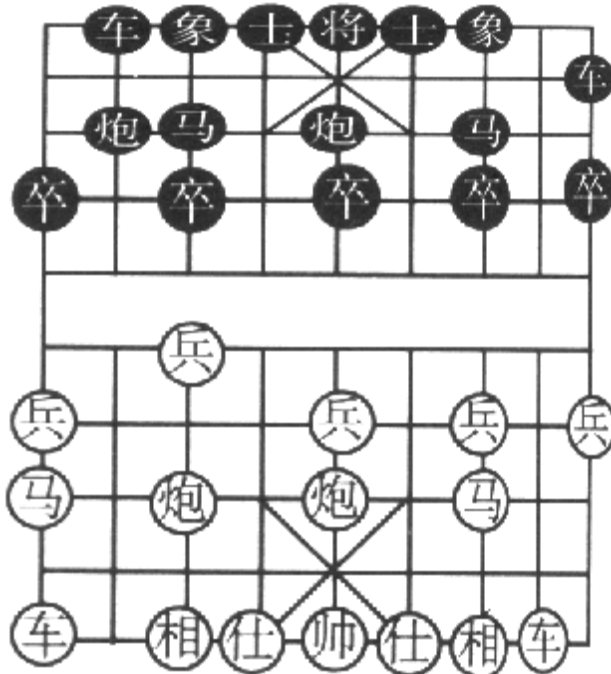


图 5

The 7th file Red Pawn has posed direct menace to Black Horse. It is an offensive play but with deceptions. The most common move is R9=8 to drive the strong piece into action.

In the situation as shown in diagram 1, Black can have the following three variations: (1) E3+1; (2) C2+5; (3) R9=4, which may be developed into the following possible lines:

(1) E3+1

6. ... E3+1

A pure passive defensive plays. It has weakened the strength of his formation.

7. R2+6!

Red can gain advantage from both sides when his right Chariot is pressing in. It can be considered as a good move for gaining the initiative.

7. ... R9=4 8. R9=8

It is a move of precision and accuracy. If Red changed to play R2=3, Black would play C5-1 and have a chance to extricate himself from his

cramped position.

8. ... P7+1

If Black changed to play R4+3, Red would play R8+6. Or if Black changed to play R4+6, Red would play R8+2. In both cases, Red could maintain the initiative.

9. R2=3 C5-1 10. R8+6 C5=7

11. R3=4 H7+8 12. R8=7

Red has secured a superior position.

(2) C2+5

6. ... C2+5

It is premature that Black drives his Cannon forward to make a forced exchange, though it can be considered as a counterattack to some extent.

7. R9=8!

It is a simple but powerful move. Had Red changed to play P7+1, Black would play P3+1 (It is a strong move, while other moves will throw Black in a poor position), then C7+5 (If Red played C5=8, Black would play R2+7, then C7+5, H7-5 or R2=7. Red could stand better after having captured the Black pawn on the central file), C2=7, C7=3, C5+4, A4+5, R2+2. After making the sacrifice, Black will be in offensive position, while the fate of Red is unclear.

7. ... R9=2

If Black played C2=5, Red would be happy with it: R8+9, H3-2, E3+5, P7+1, R2+4, Black lags behind in dispatching his pieces.

8. R2+6

Red drives his Chariot forward to attack the Black Horse. Black is forced to make an exchange of pieces.

8. ... C2=5 9. R8+8 R2+1

10. E3+5 P5+1

Pushing the central file Pawn forward is the best choice. Otherwise, Black will fall into a passive position as his both Horses are under the attack.

11. P7+1! H3+5 12. P7=6 P5+1

13. P5+1 C5+3 14. A4+5 E3+5

15. R2-2!

In face of Black's counterattack, Red has obtained the initiative step by step by making best use of the situation. With his Chariot on the riverbank, Red can play offense as well as defense. He has already gained a major superiority.

(3) R9=4

6. ... R9=4

Despite the fact that Red Pawn will cross the river, Black drives his Chariot to **the armpit file**. The move is implicit but powerful, conforming to no conventional pattern.

7. P7+1 P5+1! (as shown in diagram)

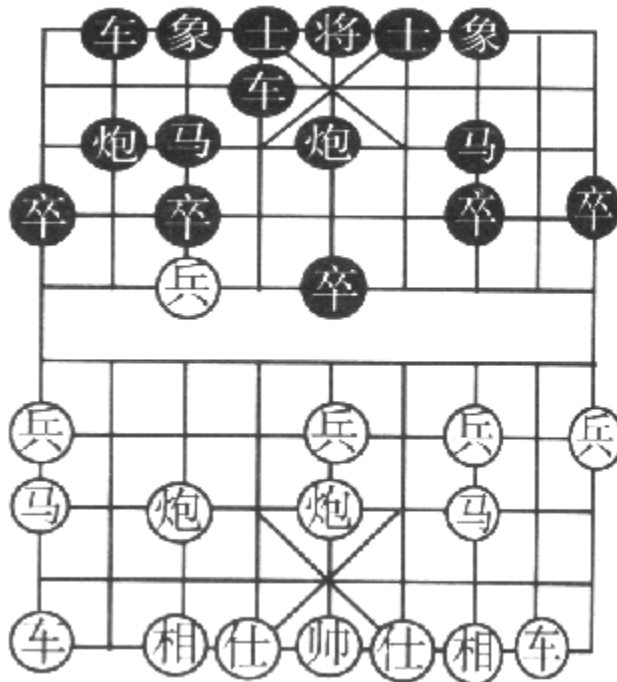


图 6

To take a counterattack from the central file makes the people feel fresh. It is a brilliant countermove that Black launches a tit for tat attack against Red.

In the situation as shown in diagram 2, Red may have the following two variations: (1) P7+1; (2) P7=6:

(3.1) P7+1

8. P7+1 H3+5 9. R9=8 P5+1!

A good move. By making a forced breakthrough, Black will have a new prospect.

10. C5+2

By playing Cannon for taking Black's Pawn, Red can slow down the pace of the opponent's offensive. Had Red played P5+1, Black would play H5+4, then C7+7, R2=3, R8+7, H4+5, E3+5, H7+5, there is a possibility for Black to launch a counterattack.

10. ... R4+6 11. R8+2 A4+5

By playing the Advisor, Black can accumulate enough strength for attacking. It is quite obvious that R4=7 is a bad move as Red can play C7+7 to take the Chariot.

12. E3+5 H5+4 13. H9-8 R4+2!

It is an ingenious move that Black sacrifices his Chariot to take Red Advisor. Black can also play C2+7, which will also lead to a winning position.

14. K5+1

Red has no other alternatives. If he played K5=6, Black would play C2+7, then R8-2, H4+3, K6=5, R2+9, Black has secured the winning position as he has gained the material advantage.

14. ... C2+7! 15. R8+7 H4+3

16. K5=4 R4-1 17. K4+1 H7+5

Now, Black is at the zenith of his offensive. Red is unable to ward off the attack. For example, if Red played R8=7, Black would play A5-4, then P7=6, H3+4! A4+5, R4-4, Black is sure to win.

(3.2) P7=6

8. P7=6 R4+3!

It is an ingenious move that Black makes a sacrifice of his Horse for gaining the initiative. If Black changed to play H3+5, Red would play P6=5, then H5+3, R9=8, the situation would become complicated and unclear.

9. C7+5 H7+5 10. C7+1 C2+5

11. R9=8

It is a forced move for Red. Had he played C7=1 for making a counterattack, Black would play C2=7, then C1+1, H5+3, R2+9, C5+3, A4+5, E3+5, Red cannot get any advantage.

11. ... R2+4

Another feasible line for Black is R4-3. Had Red played R2+6 (If

Red played C5=7, Black would play P5+1. It would lead to a strong offensive), Black would play R4=3, then R2=3, H5+3, C5+3, A4+5, R3=6, R2+6. After that, Black could play R2=4, or H3+4, etc. Black would be in an optimistic situation.

12. C7-1

Red is playing tenaciously. Had he played H3-1, Black would play R4-3 and be in a superior position.

12. ... C2=7 13. R8+5 R4=2

14. H9+7

If Red played C1+1, Black would play H5+3, then C5+3, C5+4! Red will lose quickly.

14. ... R2=3

A correct move. Had he played R2-3, Red would play C1+1, then C5=3 (If Black played H5+3, Red would play H7+6), C5+3, A4+5, R2+2. Black can hardly gain any advantage.

15. H7+9

Red Horse has no other choice. Had Red changed his move to H7-6, Black would play R3+4; Or if Red played C1=7, Black would play H5-3, Black would have the initiative in both situations.

15. ... R3=2 16. H9-7 R2=3

17. H7+9 R3=2

Red has to make a change, otherwise he has breached the rule of **“Two captures vs. One capture”** (两打一还打). Afterward, Black can have the follow-up moves of C5=3 and H5+7. Obviously, Black is in a superior position.

Summary: Due to Black’s passive defense and incorrect counterattack in the first two variations when responding to the deceptive play of Red that his Pawn is menacing Black’s Horse,, Red has succeeded in his plot. In variation (3), by taking a tit for tat fight, Black has broken the defense line of Red at one stroke in both games (3.1 and 3.2), thus gaining the superior position.

Because of his unstable formation in this game, Red has met the strong counterattack of Black along the central file, which is so orderly and powerful.

Game 5: A Powerful Play

1. C2=5 C8=5 2. H2+3 H8+7
3. R1=2 P7+1 4. H8+7 H2+3
5. P7+1 C2+4

Black Cannon crossing the river is a well-known variation in the opening of “**same direction Cannon and filed Chariot vs. slow-action of Chariot**” (顺炮直车对缓开车布局), after which Black can have the tactical play of C2=3 or C2=7. Black may also have the choice of R1+1.

6. H7+6

Driving Horse to the bank of the river is an outmoded play. In recent years, there is some development in this opening. Red can also play H7+8 to block Black’s right Chariot, which will lead to a more complicated situation of defense and offense.

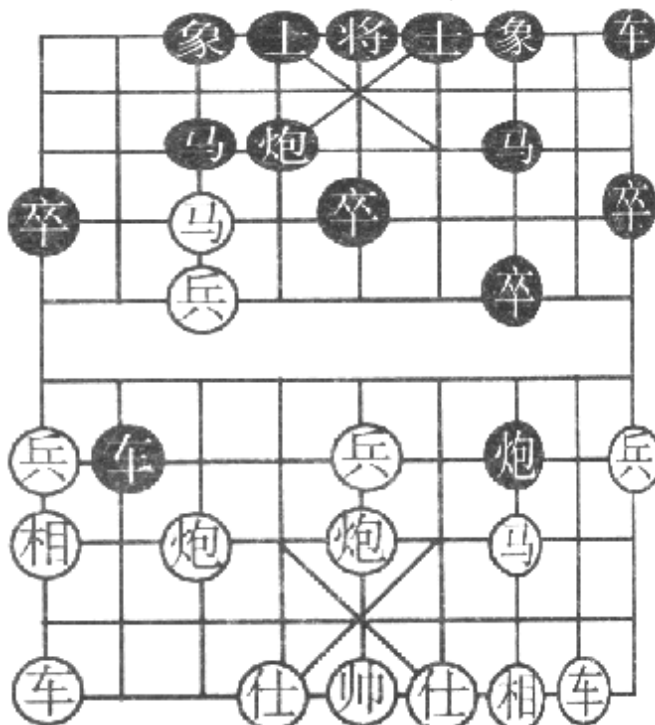
6. ... C2=7 7. C8=7

Another steady move for Red is R9=8. After that, Black can play R9+1 (or play R1=2, which is also a correct move), then C8=7, R9=4, H6+7, R4+2. Both sides are locked in an entangled position.

7. ... R1=2 8. H6+7

It is a correct move. P7+1 may not be a good one, as Black can play R2+5 to make a counterattack.

8. ... C5=4 9. P7+1 R2+6
10. E7+9 (as shown in the diagram)



It is a move of deception that Red drives his Elephant to the edge. His intention is to lure Black Chariot into moving sideways for taking two pieces by one stroke, so that Red could succeed in his tactical scheme. The common play is C7+2, C4+5, H3-5, R9+1, which will lead to a situation that both sides are locked in attack.

In the situation as shown in the diagram, Black may have following two variations: (1) R2=3; (2) R9=8. They may be developed into the following possible lines:

(1) R2=3

10. ... R2=3

Black hasn't seen through the intention of Red. When he moves Chariot sideways in an attempt to take the two pieces, he has fallen into the trap set by Red.

11. R9=7 R3-2

Black has thrown himself willingly into the trap, making the situation more deteriorating. Had Black waken up timely by playing A4+5, he still could have enough strength in resistance, though he had lost the initiative.

12. C7+2!

Now, everything is clear. When his Cannon is driven forward, Red can have the follow-up tactical moves of C7=5 and C5=7. Black's defense line will be broken.

12. ... A4+5 13. C5=7 R3=4

14. C7+3

Now, Red is in an advantageous position as he has the material gain.

(2) R9=8

10. ... R9=8!

A powerful play. Without the least hesitation, Black forces Red to exchange Chariot with him.

11. R2+9

If he changed to play P7=6, Black would play R8+9, then H3-2, H3-1 (he can also play R2=3), R9=7, A6+5. Both sides have some scruples in their play. Black's formation is more stable and has a potential of development.

11. ... C7+3 12. A4+5 H7-8
13. P7=6

Had Red changed to play C5+4, Black would play C4=7 (If he played C4=8, Red would play C5-1, then P7+1, It would lead to a complicated situation), then C5-1, C7+5. Black would be in a superior position as he has the material gain.

13. ... C4=8

It is a well-knitted play that Black makes a sacrifice for mating. Had he played R2=3, Red would play R9=7, then C4=8, H7-6. Black would find it hard to control the situation.

14. C7+5 C7=9 15. H3+2

Red has no other alternatives. Otherwise, he will lose his Chariot.

15. ... R2=5 16. E9-7 A6+5

By playing the Advisor, Black can strengthen his defense in the central file and activate the central Chariot. It proves that Black is an experienced player. If he changed to play P7+1, Red would play R9=8, then A6+5 (If Black played P7=8, Red would play R8+3, then P8=7, A5+4, R5-1, R8+1. Red would have enough strength in resistance), R8+4, R5=7 or R5=8. It would lead to the situation that both sides have scruples in their play.

17. R9=8

Had Red played H7+5, Black would play E7+5 (It is a steady play), then C7=2, H8+6, C2-1, P7+1, Black would be in a superior position as he could have the initiative of launching an attack. Or if Red played A5+6, Black would play R5=8, then H2+4, R8+3, K5+1, R8-1 (C8+6 is also a good move), K5-1, C8+5. Black is sure to win.

17. ... R5=8 18. A5+4

If Red played H2+4, Black could play R8+3 (R8=2 is also a good move, but this move is more aggressive), then A5+4, C8+5! C5=3, R8=7, Black wins by taking **an unconditional mating** (绝杀) .

18. ... R8-1

Black has retrieved the pieces that he has lost. With a powerful offensive, Black has secured a winning position.

Summary: In variation (1), as he fails to see through the plot of Red deceptive play, Black has committed one big blunder after another, when he retreats his Chariot for taking the opponent's Pawn. He is thrown into a

hopeless position. While in variation (2), Black plays positively by making an exchange of Chariot with his opponent, thus winning the victory.

Red 10th move is a play of deception that he drives his Elephant to the edge. As his left Chariot is stalled and can not be driven into the battle quickly, his formation lacks real worth. These are the weak points that Red can not overcome. In variation (2), Black's play is powerful, which has inflicted a heavy blow on the Red deceptive play.

Chapter Two Central Cannon Vs. Screen Horse

Game 1 : Trust to Chance and Windfalls

1. C2=5 H8+7 2. H2+3 R9=8
3. R1=2 H2+3 4. P7+1 P7+1
5. R2=6 C8=9 6. R2=3 C9-1
7. H8+7 A4+5 8. H7+6

It is one of the main methods in launching an offensive that Red drives his Horse to the riverbank. If he changed to play C8=9, it would lead to the typical position of **“5th and 9th file Cannons, cross-river Chariot Vs. Screen Horse, Cannon played sideways for exchanging of Chariot”**(五九炮过河车对屏风马平炮兑车).

8. ... C9=7 9. R3=4 R8+5

The most stable play for Black is to play Chariot to take the Red Horse. Other lines for Black are E3+5, E7+5 or H7+8. All these variations will make the situation more complicated. From the prospect of its development, Red will stand better.

10. C8+2

When Red moves his Cannon for protecting the Horse, both sides has entered into the rivalry at the riverbank. It is inadvisable for Red to play H6+5. If so, Black would play H3+5, then C5+4, H7+5, R4=5, C2=7, Red would be under the attack of his opponent and lose the initiative.

10. ... E3+5

It is quite necessary for Black to strengthen his defense by playing the Elephant. If Black hastily made the counterattack by playing P3+1, Red would play H6+5, then R8=3, C8=9! E3+1, H5+7, Red would be in a superior position as he had the material superiority.

11. R9+1 (as shown in the diagram)

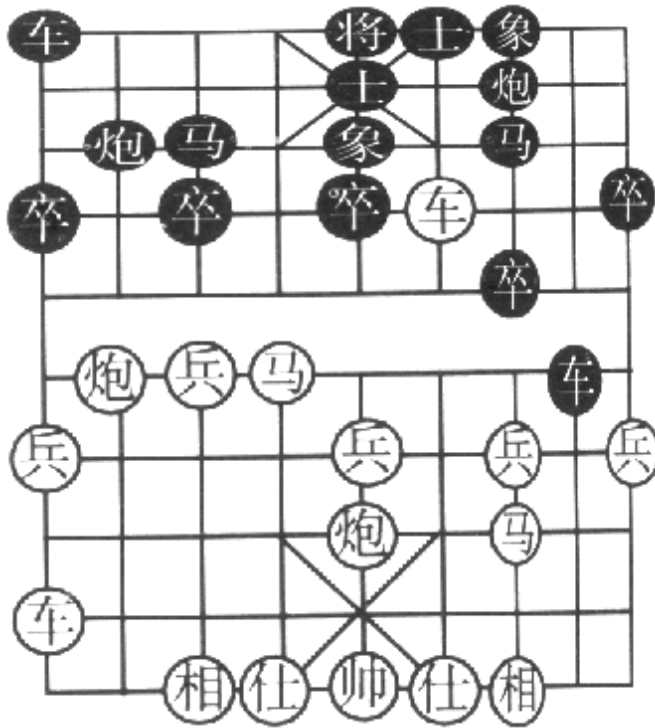


图 8

Had he played H6+5, Black would play R8=3, then C8=9, R1=3, Red could not have any advantage.

In the situation as shown in the diagram, Red plays his left Chariot sideward, “trusting to the chance and windfalls” – awaiting errors made by Black. The play has a comparatively strong sense of deception. In responding, Black may have the following four variations: (1) P3+1; (2) C2+1; (3) R1=3; and (4) P7+1. They may be developed into the following possible lines:

(1) P3+1

11. ... P3+1

Being impatient in making a counterattack, Black has hurled himself into the net.

12. H6+5 R8=3 13. H5+7 R3=2

Had he played R1=3, Red would play H7+5 to take Advisor and be in superior position.

14. R4+2 C7=9 15. H7+5!

It is an earth-shattering move that Red drives his Horse to take the Advisor.

15. ... C9=5

This is only move that Black can make. Had he played A6+5, Red

would play C5+5, then K5= 4, R9=6, C2=4, R4=5! C4+3, R5=4, Red would be in a winning position.

16. C5+5 C5=1 17. C5-3

Red has secured immense superiority after making a sacrifice for launching an attack.

(2) C2+1

11. ... C2+1

The play is not effective as Red can take the opportunity to array his formation.

12. R4-4 R8-1 13. C5=6 C2-2

14. E3+5 P7+1

By sacrificing his Pawn, Black could activate his left Chariot. If he changed to play C2=3, Red would play R9=8, then P3+1 (If Black played R1=2, Red would play C8+3 and be in superior position), P7+1, E5+3 (If Black played C3+3, Red would play R4+6 to gain the initiative), C8=9! R1=3, R8+6! Red has secured the superiority.

15. P3+1 P3+1 16. R9=7

It is a move of exquisiteness, with which Red left Chariot can be driven out.

16. ... P3+1 17. R7+3 H3+2

18. C8+4 C7=2 19. R4+4

The situation for Red is quite excellent, as he has gained the material advantage in pawns and they are on the very good position.

(3) R1=3

11. ... R1=3

The conception is good that Black drives the Chariot sideward to the position of Elephant for protecting the right Horse and making a counter attack by playing the 3rd file Pawn. However, after Red has succeeded in arraying his troop for the battle, his conception will come to nothing.

12. R9=6

It is a good move, though it looks clumsy, as it has a latent move of P7+1 for attacking. Red is tempted to play C5=7. However, under the strong counterattack of Black, Red might find it hard to control the situation: P3+1! P3+1, R8-1 (It is a correct move. If he played R8=7, Red

would play E3+5, then R7+1, C8-1 to take Chariot; Or if H3+4, H3+2. (The move is simple and clear. If R4+2, then R8-3, R4=3? C2-1!) H4-6, P3+1, C7+3, R9=3, H6+8, C7+3! Red has secured the superiority.), P7+1, P7+1 or R3=4, Black still has the chance to tie down the enemy.

12. ... R8+1

Had he played R8-1, Red would play H6+7; or If he played R3=4, Red would play C5=6. Red would be in a superior position in both situations.

13. C5=7 R3=4 14. C7=6 R4=3

15. E3+5

By now, Red has gained superiority.

(4) P7+1

11. ... P7+1

By pushing his 7th file Pawn forward, Black can implement the counterattack immediately. It is the best move in responding to Red play, though it can not be easily detected.

12. H6+7

If he changed to play P3+1, Black would play R8=7, then H3-5, R7+1 or R7+3. Black's play would be of some elasticity.

12. ... R1=4 13. P3+1

If he changed to play C8=3, Black would play C7+4, then P3+1 (If Red played R4-2, Black would have a good move of C2+5), R8=7, R9=8, R4=2 (It is a correct move. If Black played C2-2, he would be harassed by the Red play of H7+9), the initiative would be reverted to Black.

13. ... R8+1 14. R4-4 R8=7

15. R9=7 R4+6

It is a good move. By driving his Chariot forward, Black is ready to launch a counterattack.

16. E3+1 R4=2 17. R7=2 C2-1

By now, Black has enforced the containment of Red. His pieces are so active that it is enough to compensate the loss of losing a pawn.

Summary: Red 11th move is of deception that he drives Chariot forward, waiting for an opportune moment to go into action. The correct move is C5=6, by which Red still can maintain the initiative. The

subsequent lines of this variation are: P3+1, P3+1, R8-1 (a correct move. If he erred in playing R8=7, Red would play E7+5, then R7+1, C8-1! Black would lose his Chariot), P7+1, E5+3, C8=7, H3+4!, C6+3, P7+1, C6+3, C7=4, C7=3, R8=7, E7+5, E3-5. This position would be acceptable to Black.

It proves that Black's responding lines in the first three games are not correct, so Red has succeeded in his deceptive play. In variation (4), as Black has seen through the plot of Red, so he pushes his Pawn forward in making a counterattack. In the end, it is Red who has suffered.

Game 2: Kill Two Birds with One Stone

1. C2=5 H8+7 2. H2+3 R9=8
3. R1=2 H2+3 4. P7+1 P7+1
5. R2+6 C8=9 6. R2=3 C9-1
7. H8+7 A4+5 8. H7+6 C9=7
9. R3=4 R8+5 10. C8+2 E3+5
11. H6+5

It is a move of deception that Red drives his Horse to take Black's central Pawn. The normal play for Red is C5=6, with which he can maintain a slight initiative.

11. ... R8=3 12. C8=9 R1=3
13. R9=8 (as shown in the diagram)

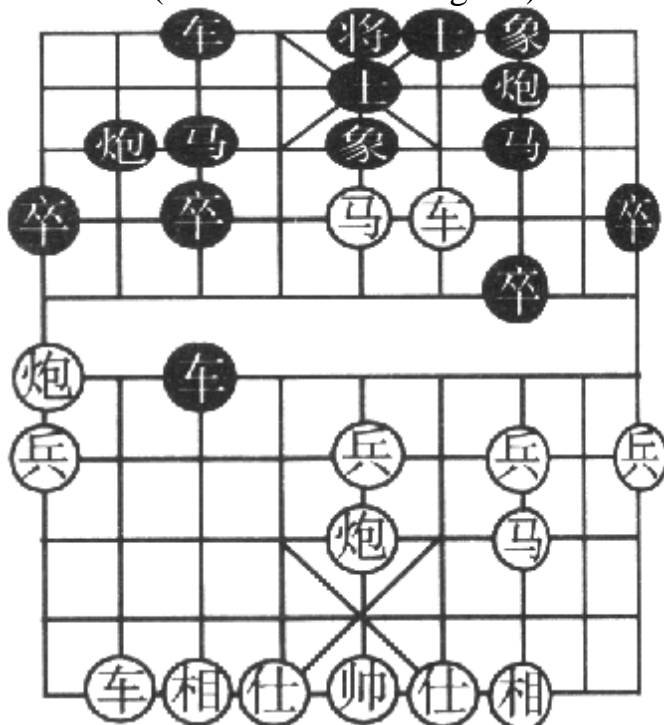


图 9

The above moves of both sides are of compulsory nature. In the

situation as shown in the diagram, in face of the attack of Red, Black mainly can have three variations: (1) C2-1; (2) H3+5; (3) H7+5. They may be developed into possible lines:

(1) C2-1

13. ... C2-1

To retreat his Cannon is passive defensive play, as it gives Red a good opportunity for attack.

14. E7+9 R3+1

15. C9=7!

The move is clear-cut, simple and powerful that Red plays the Cannon sideward for gaining the initiative after an exchange.

15. ... H7+5

16. C5+4 P3+1

It is a bad move, as Black has overlooked that Red has a good move in hand. Now, Black has no other alternative but play C2=4. Despite the fact that he is in a passive position, Black still can manage to cope with it.

17. C7+3 R3+2 18. R4+2!

Red has succeeded in separating Black's two Cannons and gained the material advantage.

(2) H3+5

13. ... H3+5

There is a hidden peril in Black's formation as his Cannon is in a cramped position, despite the fact that he has captured the enemy's Horse with his right Horse.

14. R8+7 R3=6 15. R4=2!

It is quite nature that Red doesn't want to make such an exchange with Black.

15. ... H5+3 16. R2+2! H3+4

Black was forced to make the sacrifice reluctantly for releasing his Horse into the battle. If he changed to play C7=6, Red would play C5+5, then K5=4, C5-3, Red would be in an excellent position.

17. R2=3

It is quite nature for Red to take the enemy's Cannon with his

Chariot.

17. ... H4+3 18. K5+1 R3=4
19. C9=5!

Red plays his Cannon sideward for protecting the central file, and at the same time, for containing the movement of Black's right Chariot. Red has secured a winning position.

19. ... H7+5 20. R3=4!

The play is so ingenious. In the subsequent lines, if Black played C6-4, Red would play C5+3, then A5+4, C5+4, It would lead to a **Double Cannons mate**.

(3) H7+5

13. ... H7+5

It is the best countermove that Black drives his left Horse to take the opponent's Horse.

14. R8+7 C7+1!

It is a good move that serves two purposes. On one hand, it can relieve of the menace of losing a Horse. On the other hand, it can stop Red Chariot from taking Cannon. Black has successfully fortified his defense. If he changed to play R3=6, Red would play R4=3, then C7+1, R8-1, Black can hardly avoid the fate of losing materials.

15. R8-1 P1+1 16. C9=8 H5+3

Now, Black is in a satisfactory position.

Summary: It can be considered as a typical deceptive play that on the 11th move, Red drives his Horse to take Black's central Pawn. In such jigsaw pattern warfare as shown in the diagram, Black may suffer losses if he responds it incorrectly. In the first two variations, Black has landed himself in a predicament due to his improper play. While in variation (3), as he has seen through the enemy's plot, Black has secured a satisfactory position.

Variation (3) is the best of all variations. Black's 14th move can be considered as an ingenious play, which merits us to learn. By dispatching his Cannon, it lends a protection of the Horse on the central file, for "killing two birds with one stone".

Game 3: Abandoning before Gaining

1. C2=5 H8+7 2. H2+3 R9=8
3. R1=2 H2+3 4. P7+1 P7+1
5. R2+6 C8=9 6. R2=3 R8+2
7. H8+7 E3+5 8. H7+6 C2+4 (as shown in the diagram)

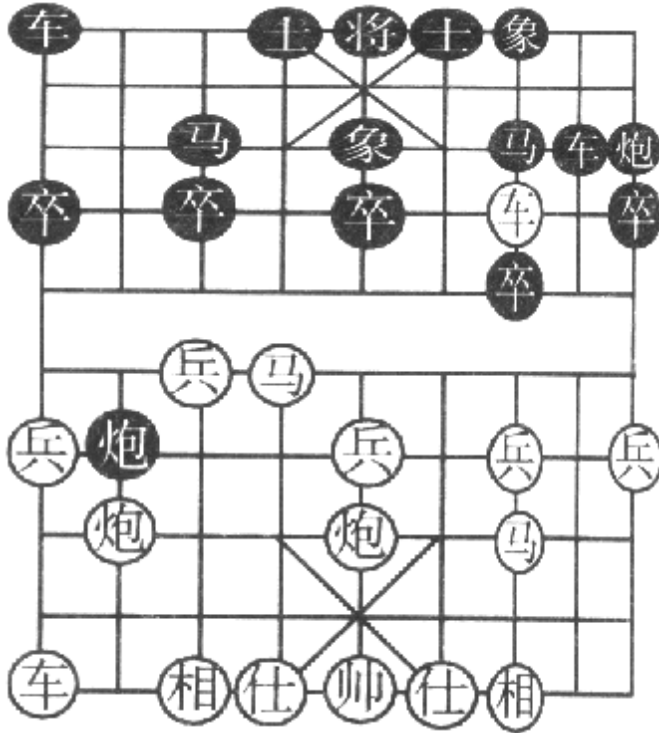


图 10

The above shows a line in the opening of “**Central Cannon, Cross-River Chariot vs. Screen Horse, High Chariot protecting Horse**” (中炮过河车对屏风马高车保马).

In the situation as shown in the diagram, Black ferries his Cannon across the river for spying on the enemy’s pawn. In responding to Black’s counteroffensive, Red may have two variations: (1) P3+1; (2) P5+1. They may be developed into the following possible lines:

(1) P3+1

9. P3+1

To exchange the 3rd file Pawn is just what Black is hoping for. It is the mistake often committed by the elementary Xiangqi fans.

9. ... C2=1

To retreat the Cannon by one step is a clever move, which strikes Red unexpectedly and throws him in a dilemma. If Black played P7+1 carelessly, Red could gain the initiative by playing P7+1.

10.P3+1

That is only move for Red. If Red Horse took the flight, Black would take the Pawn with his Cannon. Looking like a stone killing two birds, it would render a strong momentum in his attack.

10. ... C2=4 11. P3=2 C4-2

It is a clear-cut and simple move that Black withdraws his Cannon to take the Red Chariot, proving that Black has the overall situation in mind. If he changed to play H7+8, Red would play H3+4, Red still could maintain the initiative to some extent.

12. P2+1 C4=7 13. P2+1 C7+6

14.A4+5 R1=2 15. C8=6 R2+4

Black has secured a great advantage.

(2) P5+1

9. P5+1 C2-1

Isn't Red dread of Black Cannon's attack when he pushes the central file Pawn forward? No, not at all, as Red already has a countermove in mind.

10.H6+7 C2=5 11. H3+5 C9+4

Through the forced exchanges, Black has gained the "advantage" of an exposed Cannon. If he changed to play R1=2, Red would play C5+2, then R2+7, C5=4. After that, Red could play C4+3 or H5+6. It is obvious that Red would be in a positive position.

12. C5+2

It is not suitable for Red to play P3+1, as Black can have the countermove of R8+4.

12. ... C9=5 13. P9+1!

It brooks no delay for Red to push the edge Pawn forward, as it gives Black no chance of using the exposed Cannon.

13. ... P5+1 14. R9+3 P5+1

15.C8+2! A4+5 16. C8=5

By abandoning first and gaining later, Red has secured a superior position.

Summary: It is a deceptive play that Black drives Cannon forward to take the Red Pawn on move 8. As the move is premature, if Red had

seen through the plot, Black would have fallen into a passive position. However, the move of Black C2-1 is of some elasticity, as both sides still can have the equal chances in their play.

In variation (2), Red has played so skillfully by “offering Black an exposed Cannon” in responding to Black's deceptive move. Finally, Red has gained the initiative after making the sacrifice. It is a game with a lot of fun.

Game 4: Both Sides Having Scruples

1. C2=5 H8+7 2. H2+3 R9=8
3. R1=2 H2+3 4. P7+1 P7+1
5. R2+6 H7+6 (As shown in diagram)

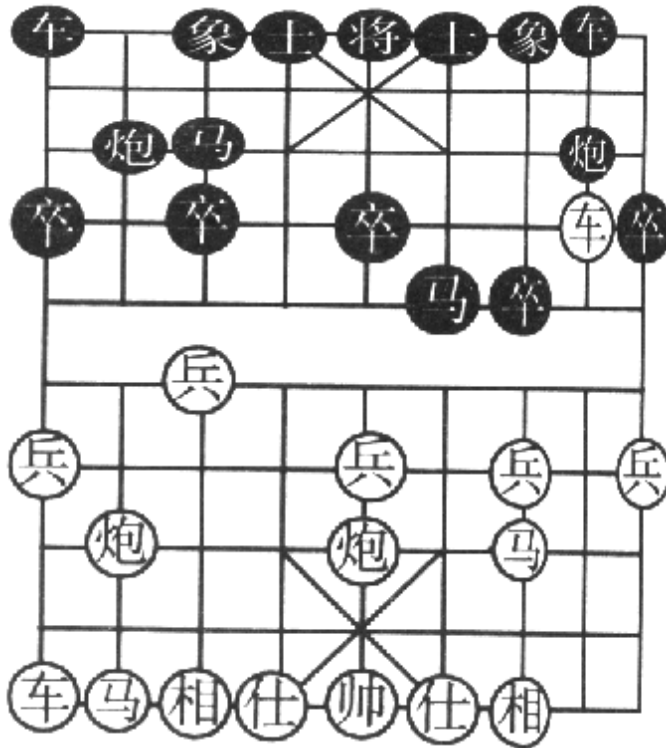


图 11

The diagram shows a common position of “**central Cannon, cross river Chariot vs. screen Horse, left Horse at the riverbank**” (中炮过河车对屏风马左马盘河). In face of the menace of Black's P7+1, if Red is dread of Black's attack and takes a passive and defensive play, it will lend Black an optimistic situation.

(1) R2-2

6. R2-2

When retreating his Chariot, Red has virtually lost the initiative. It also gives Black an opportunity for adjusting his formation. If Red

changed to play R2=4, Black would play H6+7. Red would make a futile effort.

6. ... C2-1

It is a move of flexibility and elasticity that Black retreats his Cannon for playing sideward. It is also a powerful move for supporting the Horse at the riverbank.

7. P3+1

If Red changed his move to R2=4, Black would play C8+2. After that, Black could play C2=6. Black is quite confident in his play.

7. ... P7+1

It is a correct move. If he changed to play C2+4 (The move is flashy, as it offers the opponent the opportunity to deploy his forces), Red would play H8+7, then P7+1 (If Black played C2=7, Red would play E3+1, then C7+1, R9=8. Red would have the initiative), R2+1, H6-7, R2=8. Black is at the risk of losing pieces.

8. R2+1

It is a powerful move for “safeguarding” of the initiative. Had he changed to play R2=3, Black would play C8=7, then R3+1, E7+5! R3=4, C7+7, A4+5, C7=9, K5=4, R1+1, By sacrificing his Horse, Black has gained a strong offensive. His formation is quite active.

8. ... H6-7 9. R2=3 C8+4

10. R3-1

If he changed to play R3+2, Black would play C8=7, then R3=7, C7+3, A4+5, E7+5, Black would make a sacrifice to launch a powerful attack.

10. ... R8+2

Now, Black has secured the initiative.

Does Red Chariot have to stay away after crossing the river? Is the move P7+1 of Black so powerful? Now, let's have a look at the correct lines played by Red.

(2) H8+7

6. H8+7

To maintain the initiative, Red should dispatch his pieces naturally and keep a watch for the variation of his opponent.

6. ... P7+1

It is a typical deceptive play that Black pushes his Pawn forward prematurely. The correct move for Black is to play E3+5 for strengthening his formation.

6. R2=4 (As shown in diagram)

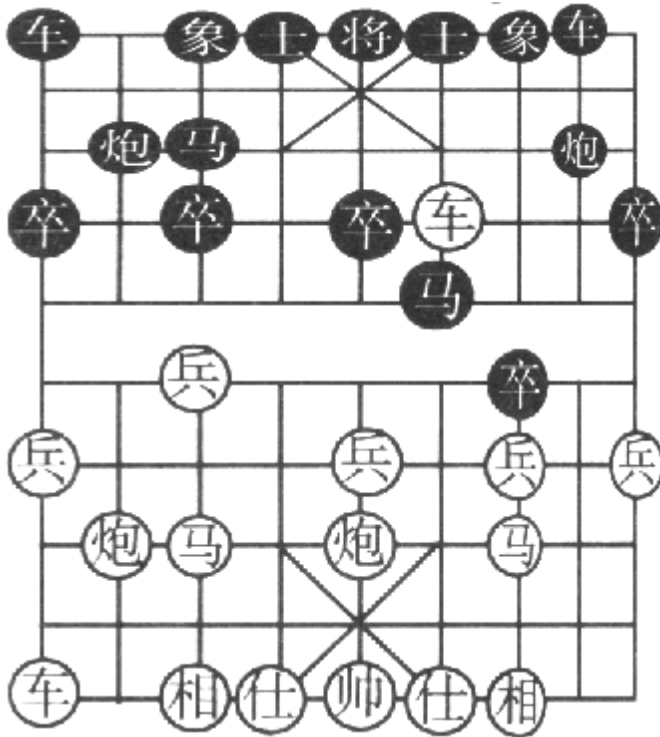


图 12

By playing the Chariot to take the enemy's Horse, Red can easily control the situation. If he changed to play R2-1, Black would play H6-7, It would lead to an entanglement of tactics. After that, if Red played R2-2, Black would play C2+4; Or if Red played R2=3, Black would play C8-1. It is uncertain whether Red could get any advantage.

In the situation as shown in diagram 2, Black may have three variations: H6+7, H6+8, or P7+1. They can be developed into the following possible lines:

(2.1) H6+7

7. ... H6+7 8. C5=6

It is quite necessary for Red to move his Cannon away, as Black wants to make the situation simplified. If he changed to play R4=3, Black would play H7+5, then E7+5, E3+5, R3-2, C8=6, The game would be stable and smooth.

8. ... E7+5 9. R4=2

If he changed to play R4=3, Black would play R8=7 to exchange Chariot.

9. ... R1+1 10. C8+2 R1=7

11. E7+5

After the Black Pawn is taken, Red has secured the initiative and a sound battle formation.

(2.2) H6+8

7. ... H6+8 8. P3+1!

It is an unexpected good move that Red makes a forced sacrifice of the Horse. If he changed to play H3-5, Black would play P7+1, and gain a satisfactory position.

8. ... H8+7

If he played C8=7, Red would play H3+5. By taking retreat as advance, Red would be in a superior position.

9. C5+4 H3+5

Red has hit Black's strategic point when he takes Black's central Pawn with his Cannon, proving that Red has successfully employed the tactics of "abandoning before gaining". In such a position, Black has no other alternative but to have the Cannon exchanged. Otherwise, Red offensive would be more powerful as he has the exposed Cannon.

10. R4=5 C2=5 11. C8=3 C8=7

12. A6+5

Red plays the Advisor to strengthen his position, giving the opponent no opportunity. Now, Red has the superiority in the number of pawns as well as in arms of service. If he can combine both offense and defense in his play, and hold back any premature attack of the opponent, the situation would be quite optimistic for him.

(2.3) P7+1

7. ... P7+1 8. R4-1 P7+1

9. H7+6

After several moves, Black can only have the advantage of a cross-river Pawn. However, with a single Pawn, he can get nowhere. Seizing this opportunity, Red takes the preemptive measure by driving his

Horse forward to make the assault first. The move is clear-cut and simple. If he changed to play R4=2, Black would play P7=6, then C5=6, R1+1, Red could not gain any profit.

9. ... C8=5

Black has to reinforce the central file with his Cannon. If he played P7+1, Red would play C8=7, then E7+5, R9=8, R1=2, P7+1! P3+1, R4=2. The situation would be in favor of Red, as Black's pieces were in a cramped position.

10. P7+1 R8+5

If Black played P3+1, Red would play R4=7 and be in superior position.

11. P7+1 R8=4 12. P7+1 C2+4

13. C8=3

Now, Red has secured the winning position.

Summary: In variation (1), as Black Horse is at the riverbank, Red is dread of the immediate attack of Black' Pawn. Red has lost the initiative when he withdraws his Chariot. In variation (2), Red has made a correct choice that he drives his left Horse forward, showing that Red has enough strength to cope with the deceptive counterattack of Black's Pawn and maintain the initiative.

Black's riverbank Horse has caused containment to Red as it is menacing Red Chariot. However, Black has the weak point that his Chariot and Cannon on the left side are not protected. It can be said that both sides have scruples. Through the above analysis, we can have a better understanding that there is no reason for Red to be dread of the counterattack of Black's Pawn and to make an escape of his Chariot.

Game 5: Turn the Enemy's Weapon Around and Strike

1. C2=5 H8+7 2. H2+3 R9=8

3. R1=2 H2+3 4. P7+1 P7+1

5. H8+7 C2+4

Black responds positively that he drives his Cannon across the river, in an attempt for a counterattack. Black can also play E3+5 to fortify his defense.

6. P5+1

Red pushes his central Pawn forward for launching the offensive. On

the other hand, it can prevent Black Cannon from taking his Pawn. Red can also play R2+4, H7+6 or P3+1. All these variations will lead to a more complicated situation.

6. ... C8+4

It has become a well-known variation of “**Central Cannon, 7th file Horse vs. screen Horse, double crossed-river Cannons**” (中炮七路马对屏风马双炮过河). It often leads to the situation in which both sides have tactical schemes and are locked in a fierce mutual offensive.

7. R9+1

If Red changed to play P5+1, Black would play A4+5, then P5=6, E3+5, Black would be in a satisfactory position, as Red pieces were sealed off and short of follow-up forces.

7. ... C2=3 8. E7+9 R1=2

9. R9=6 R2+6

Black drives his right Chariot forward for strengthening the blockade and is ready to make a sacrifice for gaining the initiative. Black can also play C3=6. If Red played R6+6, Black would play C6+1. Both sides would be locked in a close and acute combat.

10. P3=1 (as shown in diagram)

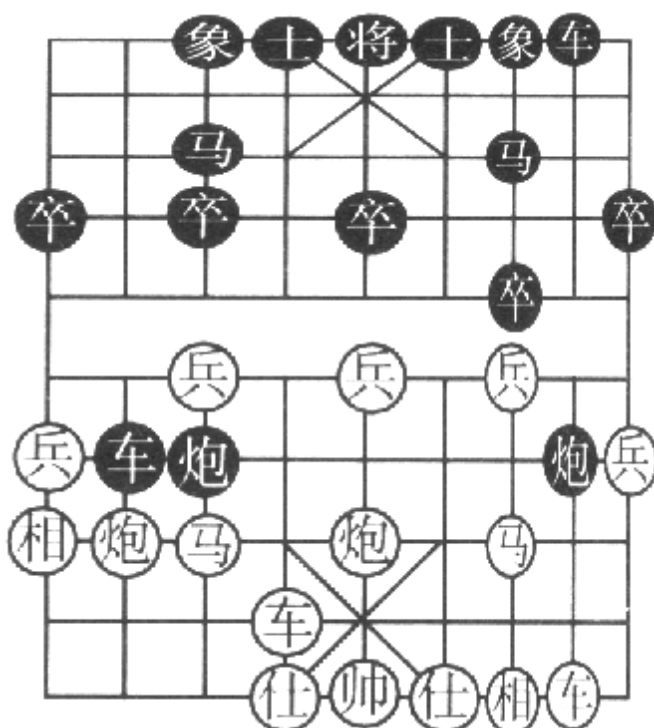


图 13

The most common offensive play is R6+6, Black may play E7+5, then R6=7, A6+5. It will lead to the situation that Red has the material

gains, while Black has the initiative. It is can be considered as a typical deceptive play that Red pushes his 3rd file Pawn forward, voluntarily taking a variation.

In the situation as shown in diagram 1, both sides having their swords in hand, a fierce batter is imminent. Black may have the two variations: (1) P7+1; (2) C3=6, which may be developed into following possible lines:

(1) P7+1

10. ... P7+1

The deceptive play of Red has paid off. It seems that Black is in an upper hand when he has a promoted Pawn. However, Red has an ingenious tactical scheme in hand.

11. R6+2 R8-2

When two things come to harm, it is usually to choose the one that is suffered lightly. The expedient measure is to withdraw his Cannon. If Black changed his move to H7+6, Red would play P5+1, then H6+7, P5+1, A4+5, P5=6, E3+5, R6+1, C3=5! Black would have the chance for making a counterattack. However, Red could seize the initiative easily with the following move: R6=2! R8+6, R2+3, P7+1, R2+2, H6+4, H3-5, P7=6, R2=6, H4+3, H5+7, P6+1 (If Black played C3=5, Red would be in a superior position by playing C5=1), R6-2 (The move is a clear-cut and powerful. If Red played C5=6, Black would play C3=5 to take the offensive), P6=5, C8=5. Black could hardly make a resistance to Red next move of C5+1.

12. P5+1

Red pushes his central Pawn forward for taking the offensive. It is also correct to choose the move E3+1. After that, if Black played C8=7, Red would play R2+9, H7-8, H3-2, E7+5, C8-2, P7=6, A6+5, P6=5, C8=7! Red has secured a superior position as he has the material advantage.

12. ... A6+5 13. H3=5 C3=5

14. R6=5 R2=5 15. H7+5 P7=6

It seems that after several moves of fight, Black has tided over the crisis, with nothing lost. However, as Red will make the forced exchange of pieces in his next move, it will throw Black into a dilemma.

16. H5+6! C8=4

Black is reluctant to make such a painful choice. If he changed to play H3-1, Red would play C5+4!, H7+5, P5+1. Red would be in an upper hand, as Black's Cannon and Chariot had lost protection.

17. R2+9 H7-8 18. P5=6

Now, the situation on board is quite clear. Red has a bright future. Black's inactive right Horse will be under attack.

(2) C3=6

10. ... C3=6! (as shown in diagram)

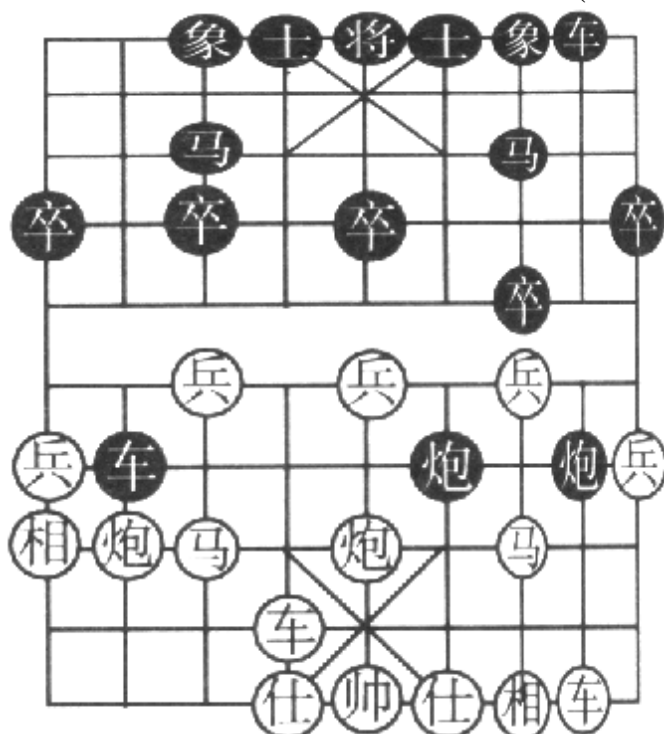


图 14

Being not cheated by Red Pawn, Black plays his Cannon sideward to take the position on the armpit file for making a counterattack, preventing Red from playing R6+2. It is an excellent move with a far-sighted calculation.

In the situation as shown in diagram 2, Red can have two variations: (2.1) H7+6 and (2.2) P3+1, which may be developed into the following possible lines:

(2.1) H7+6

11. H7+6

If Black played C2+1 to take the Cannon in his next move, Red would play P3+1 to make the offensive. But Black plays very carefully, and does not give Red any chance.

11. ... P7+1! 12. C8=7

If Red played C8-1, Black would have the following counter measures: C6-1! H3+4, C8=5, C5=8, R2+1, R2+9, H7-8, H4+3, H8+7. In the subsequent moves, no matter Red played P5+1 or C6+2, what is waiting him will be Black's C5=7 !

12. ... P7+1 13. P7+1 R2=3

14. P7+1

The result of the mutual attack reveals that the initiative is always in the hands of Black. Or if Red played H6+8, Black would play R3+1, then H8+7, A6+5, H3+5, R3-1 or R3-3, Black has secured the initiative.

14. ... P7=1 15. P7+1 C6-1!

After that, Black can launch the offensive by playing C6=4, or C8=5, which will throw Red in the mire.

(2.2) P3+1

11. P3+1

Despite the fact that Red can exploit the fork trick by playing C6+6, Black can retrieve what he has lost with the play of E7+5, R6=7, C6+1 and maintain the superiority.

11. ... C6+1 12. H3+4 C8=6!

For reducing the momentum of Red offensive, Black plays his Cannon sideward to make a forced exchange of pieces. On the other hand, Black will have the material superiority. It can be considered as the best choice in such a complicated situation. However, the following two variations have offered Red a loophole: (1) C6=3, R2+3, R8+6, H4-2, R2=8, R6+6, Black's superior position has become an inferior position. (2) C8-1, R2+3! C8=5 (If Black played R2=8, Red would play H4-2, C6=3, R6+6, C8=7, H2-4, C3=6, C8=4, H3-2, P3+1, Red is in a superior position), R2=5! R2=5, H7+5, C6=2, C5+2, E7+5, H5-3, P5+1, C5-3. Black is in a passive position.

13. R2+9 H7-8 14. H4+5 H3+5

15. C5+4 R2+1 16. H7+6 FC=1

17. H6+7 C1+2 18. K5+1 R2-1

It is inevitable that Red will lose one piece in the above play. Therefore, Red will make all efforts in making a counterattack by placing his hope on the exposed Cannon. However, Black has combined offense with defense and has the scheme of C6=5, Black can easily repulse the

enemy's attack.

19. H7+6 E7+9

It is necessary for Black to strengthen his defense. Now, Red is at his wit's end.

20. H6-4 H8+6

Black is in a superior position as he has the material advantage.

Summary: In answer to the Red deceptive play of P3+1, as Black sticks to the old conventions in variation (1), Red has succeeded in gaining the initiative by driving his Chariot forward to capture Black Cannon, and throwing Black into a difficult position. While in variation (2), Black resolutely plays his Cannon sideward to the armpit file for making a counterattack and finally has repulsed the enemy's premature offensive.

In this game, in a complicated situation when both sides are locked in a heated fight, it is quite necessary for Black to have a good understanding of the deceptive play of Red as such.

Game 6: Minor Change

1. C2=5 H8+7 2. H2+3 R9=8

3. R1=2 H2+3 4. P3+1 P3+1

5. C8=7 (as shown in diagram)

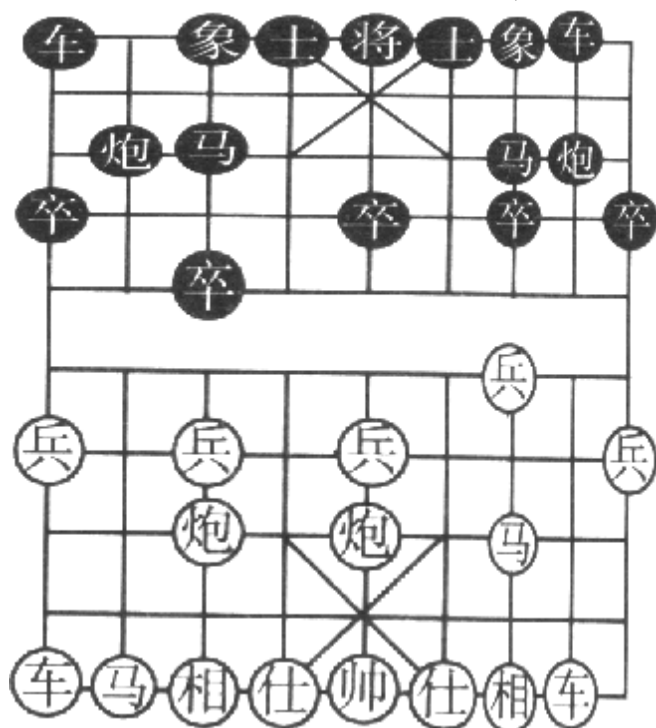


图 15

The most common play is H8+9, P1+1, C8=7, H3+2, R9+1, which

will lead to the popular formation of “**5th and 7th file Cannons, 3rd file riverbank Pawn vs. screen Horses**” (五七炮进三兵对屏风马).

In the situation as shown in diagram 1, Red has made a minor change in the playing order by playing the Cannon to the 7th file first. It seems that there isn't much difference, but in reality it is a move with deception, on which Black shouldn't lose his guard. Here, Black can have four variations: (1) H3+2; (2) P1+1; (3) E3+5; (4) A4+5, which may be developed into the following possible lines:

(1) H3+2

5. ... H3+2

This is a weak move. When his Horse is moved to the 2nd file, the Black's strength of defense in the central area is weakened.

6. H3+4

It is a powerful move that Red drives his Horse out timely.

6. ... E3+5 7. H4+5 C8=9

Black plays tenaciously. If he changed to play H7+5, Red would play C5+4, then A4+5, R2+5! After that, Red could have the dual play of R2=7 or C7=2. The situation would be in favor of Red.

8. R2+9 H7-8 9. H5-7 A4+5

10. H7-5 R1=4 11. P7+1

Red is in a superior position as he has the material advantage of Pawns.

(2) P1+1

It is a move that follows the rules. As Red Horse has not been driven to the edge, Black fails to attain his hope by playing this move.

6. R9+1

It is a good move of flexibility. If Red changed to play H8+9, Black would play H3+2. It would become the same popular opening as mentioned above.

6. ... H3+2

7. H3+4 (as shown in diagram)

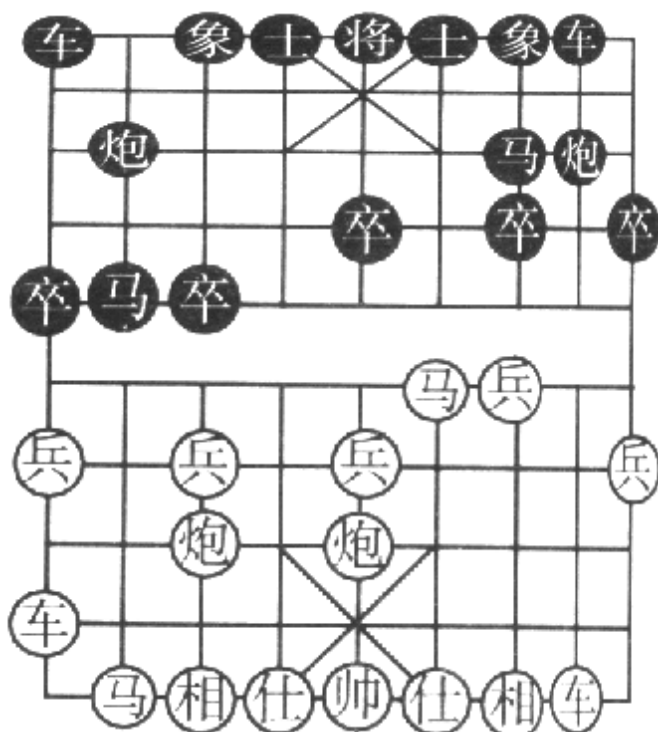


图 16

In the situation as shown in diagram 2, Red attack is a positive and powerful when he drives Horse out. Now, Black can have variations of: C2+7, R1+3 or E7+5, which may be developed into the following possible lines:

(2.1) C2+7

7. ... C2+7 8. R9=8 H2=1
 9. R8+2 P1+1 10. C7=9 C2=1
 11. H4+5 H7+5 12. C5+4 R1+3
 13. C9=5 P9+1 14. R2+5

Red uses the Horse on the bottom rank as the bait. If Black is trapped, Red can have an exposed Cannon. The situation would be in favorable of him.

(2.2) R1+3

7. ... R1+3 8. P7+1!

It is a well knitted and powerful play that Red pushes his Pawn forward to launch the attack.

8. ... P3+1

Black is also making an attempt for gaining the initiative. If he changed to play C2+7, Red would play P7+1, H2+3, R9=8, C2=1, R8-1, C1-1, R2+1, R1=4, H4+6! Red can retrieve what he has lost and has an optimistic situation.

9. C7+7 A4+5 10. R2+5 H2+4
11. R9=8

Red will stand better in the mutual attack.

(2.3) E7+5

7. ... E7+5 8. H4+5 C8=9

Black hopes to relieve himself of the pressure by exchanging Chariot with Red. If he changed to play H7+5, Red would play C5+4, then A6+5, R2+5! C2+7, R9=2, Red would be still in a superior position.

9. R9=2!

It is a well-knit move, which has put more pressure on Black. If he changed to play R2+9, Black would play H7-8, then H8+9, A6+5. Black could have enough strength to resist Red offensive.

9. ... R8+8 10. R2+1 H7+5
11. C5+4 A4+5 12. C7=2 C9=8
13. H8+7 H2+3

If he changed to play R1+3, Red would play C5=1, Red would be in a superior position as he had the material advantage.

14. C2=1

Now, the situation for Red is quite optimistic. And there is much potential in the development of his play.

(3) E3+5

(Please refer to diagram 15)

5. ... E3+5

The idea of fortifying the defense is correct, but it should be calculated very accurately. After playing his Elephant, the right Horse will become unrooted. Therefore, there is some hidden peril in his formation.

6. P7=1 H3+2

Black has no other alternative but to move his Horse to the 2nd file. If he changed to play H3+4, Red would play P7+1, then E5+3, R2+5! C2+2, H8+9. Black would be in a difficult position.

7. P7=1 E5+3 8. R2=5

It is well-knit and powerful move, which has deprived Black of the

opportunity of playing E3-5 to return the Elephant to the best position. Otherwise, Red can find a way to make a breakthrough.

8. ... E7+5 9. H3+4

Red drives his horse out for an attack. Red can also play R2=6 to maintain the initiative.

9. ... A4+5

If Black changed to play P7+1, Red would play R2-1, then P7+1, R2=3, C8-1 (If Black played A4+5, Red would play H4+6 and still maintain the initiative), H4=5, C8=7, H5+3, R8+9, R3-4, C7+8, R3-4, R8=7, H4+6, C2=4, H6-8. Red is in a superior position as he has the material advantage.

10. H4=6 C8=9 11. H6+5!

It is a fierce and tough move that Red plays his Horse to capture the central Elephant. It will help Red to expand his initiative.

11. ... C9=5

This is the only way for Black. If he changed to play R8+4, Red would play H5+7, then K5=4, H7+9, Red would be in a superior position after taking the Elephant.

12. R2=7 H2-1 13. R7=2 C5+4

14. A6=5 C2+6 15. R9+2

It is a correct move, as it can curb Black's momentum in his offensive. If Red was impatient in retrieving the lost piece, Black could make a powerful counterattack. For example, R7=3, R8+4! R3-1, R8=4, R3=5, R4+2. Black could kick back.

15. ... C2-4 16. R9=8 C2+5

17. R8-2 R8+4 18. R8+3 C5-1

19. R8=5

After making an exchange of Cannon with Black, Black's offensive is totally wiped out. It proves that Red is an experienced player.

19. ... C5+2 20. E3+5 H7-8

21. R5+3

Though Black has the material advantage, he is weak in defense as he has a single Elephant. Red can get the absolute superiority by suppressing Black Horse with his Double Chariots, or deploying his Cannon on the central file after withdrawing his Elephant.

(4) A4+5

(Please refer to diagram 1)

5. ... A4+5

This move serves two purposes. On the one hand, it can help to reinforce Black's defense in the central area, on the other hand, it can curb Red Pawn's attack. It is a stable and correct move.

6. H8+9 H3+2

Now, it is the time for Black to seal off Red Chariot with his Horse.

7. R9+1 E3+5 8. R9=6 C8+4

To seal off Red Chariot with his left Cannon, Black can effectively contain the movement of Red. If Black changed to play R1=4, Red would play R6+8, then A5-4 (If Black played K5=4, Red would play R2+1), R2+6. Red stands better.

9. R6+5 P3=1 10. R6+8 H2+4

11. R8+1 H4+3 12. P7+1 R1=3

Now, both sides are evenly matched in strength. Black should be satisfied with the situation.

Summary: In the first three variations, Black has been fooled by the "minor change" made by Red on his 5th move. It is enough to arouse our vigilance on the "change". However, in variation 4, Black has seen through the trick of Red, so he plays his advisor to strengthen the defense, giving Red no chance to implement an attack. After several moves, the formations of both sides return to the common position.

Game 7: Peril on the Central File

1. C2=5 H8+7 2. H2+3 R9=8

3. R1=2 H2+3 4. P3+1 P3+1

5. H8+9 P1+1

Black's countermove of pushing his pawn forward is directed to suppress the movement of Red Horse and on the other hand, is to activate the movement of his edged Chariot. Black can also play E3+5, or E7+5, or A4+5. All these are common variations.

6. C8=7 H3+2

7. H3+4 (as shown in the diagram)

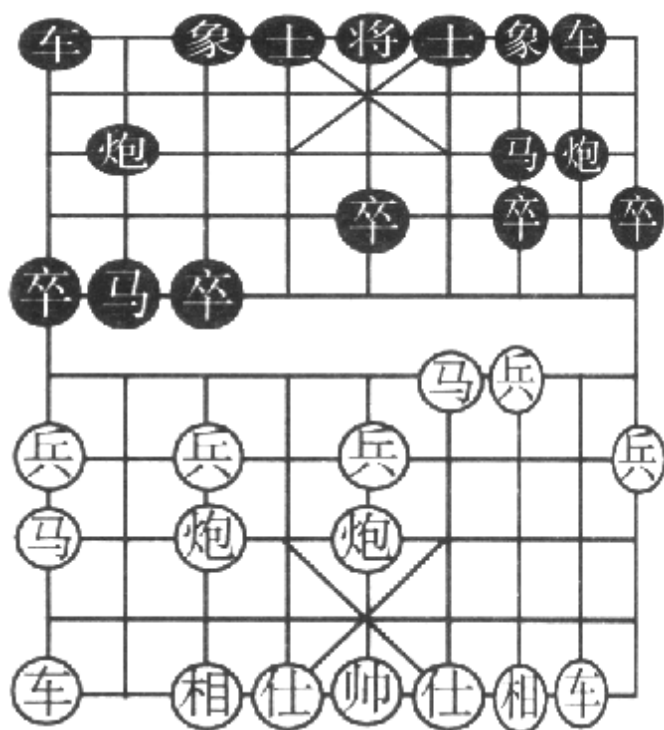


图 17

It is an old style deceptive play that Red hastily drives his Horse to the riverbank. Few people like to use it now. The reason is that, if Black responds correctly, Red can hardly succeed in his offensive, and will be thrown in perilous situation as he lacks of follow-up forces. Nowadays, the most common play is R9+1. If so, Red can evenly deploy his pieces and make progress step by step.

In face of the menace of Red H4+5 as shown in the diagram, Black mainly can have two variations: (1) E3+5; (2) R1+3. They may be developed into the following possible lines:

(1) E3+5

7. ... E3+5

It is a soft move. Due to Black's passive defense, it enables Red succeed in his scheme.

8. H4+5 C8=9

Black attempts to reduce the pressure by making an exchange of pieces. If he played H7+5, Red would play C5+4, then A4+5, R2+5. After that, as Red can play R2=7 or C7=2, Red will be in a superior position.

9. R2+9 H7-8 10. C7+3!

It is an excellent move for making a breakthrough. If he changed to H5-7, Black would play A4+5, H7-5, R1=4. Though Black has lost two pawns, his pieces can be dispatched out quickly. It can be considered as a

compensation for him.

10. ... E5+3

If he changed to play A4+5, Red would play C7=2, after that he can launch an attack by playing P3+1 or C2+3, Black is still in a passive position.

11. H5+7 E3-5 12. H7-8 R1+3

13. P7+1 R1=2 14. P7+1!

As Red Horse is not in an ideal position, he drives his Pawn forward for gaining the initiative by making an exchange, showing that his tactics is flexible.

14. ... C2+2

If Black changed to play A4+5, Red would play H8-7, then E5+3, H7+5, E3-5, H9+7. Red double Horses can be driven out alternatively. Red is still in a positive position.

15. P7=8 R2+1 16. H9+7 R2+2

17. H7+6

It is obvious that the situation is in favor of Red.

(2) R1+3

7. ... R1+3!

The play is well knit and powerful that Red drives his Chariot forward for protection of his central Pawn.

8. H4+5?

Being indulging in his “beautiful tactics” and the illusion that Black is weak on his central file, Red has little knowledge of the tricks played by Black.

8. ... H7+5 9. C5+4 R1=5

10. C7=5 R5-2!

When Red is trying to capture Black Chariot, he has forgotten that his own Chariot is in a perilous position.

11. C5+6 C8=5! 12. E3+5 R8+9

13. C5=8 H2-3

Black is in a superior position as he has the material advantage.

Summary: In variation (1), as Black’s play is so weak in responding

to Red deceptive play of attack on the central file, Red has succeeded in his plan and gained the initiative. In variation (2), Black's play is positive. His defensive play has set a trap for Red. Even if Red would not be caught in the trap, Black could build up a stable position and have an optimum situation.

Despite the fact that Red attack H3+4 is premature, however, Red may play this move casually during the actual competitions, especially when his opponent is a new hand and is not quite familiar with such a variation. Red may achieve satisfactory results.

Game 8: Chain of Killing

1. C2=5 H8+7 2. H2+3 R9=8
3. R1=2 H2+3 4. H8+9 P7+1
5. C8=7 C2+2

It is a stable choice that Black has his Cannon stationed at the riverbank. In this way, Black can achieve a balanced deployment of forces and build up a strong defense system. Here, Black may also play R1=2, then Red R9=8. After that, Black may play C2+4 or C8+4. Both variations will lead to complicate offensive and defensive lines.

6. R2+6 H7+6 7. R9=8 R1=2
8. R8+4 E3+5 9. C7+4

It seems that it is premature for Red to play his Cannon for taking the Black Pawn. However, many players like to do so. The more safe and stable play is P9+1. Only after his left Chariot has stricken the root, can Red make further development in his offense.

9. ... P7+1 10. R2=4 H6+7
11. C5-1

By withdrawing his central Cannon, Red can maintain the complicated situation. If he changed to play R8=3, Black would play H7+5, E3+5, R2+3, C7-2, C8+6. Black's pieces are more active. Red would not be satisfied with the situation.

11. ... C8+5

Black drives his Cannon forward, looking for the chance of taking mutual offensive. The more stable play for Black is to take Red Cannon by playing R2+3. If Red responded with R8=3, Black would play R2=3, then R3-1, C8+5, The situation is in favorable of Black.

12. R8=3 C8=1 13. E7+9 C2+5

14. E9-7 (as shown in the diagram)

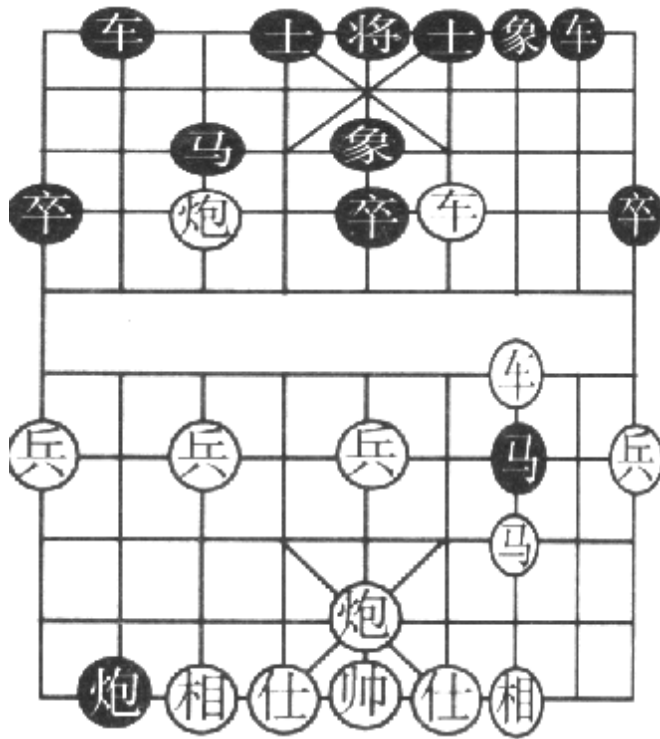


图 18

In the situation as shown in the diagram, Black Horse has fallen into dire straits. However, Black can launch an attack through his Cannon at enemy's bottom rank. Now, Black can have two variations in his attack: (1) R2+7; (1) R2+6. They may be developed into the following possible lines:

(1) R2+7

14. ... R2+7

It is a move with a strong temptation. However, Black has fallen into the trap painstakingly set by Red.

15. R3-1 R2=4 16. C5+4 H3+5

17. A4+5 R4+1 18. K5=4

Perhaps, Black is now still indulging in his "beautiful" tactics of sacrifice. But Red has gained the initiative when he moves King out to take the checkmate. In no time, Black's offensive has come to nothing. If Red erred in playing R4=5, Black would play R8+8, then K5=4, R8=5! H3-5, R4+1, K4+1, R4=6. It is a mate.

18. ... A4+5 19. R4=5 R8+8

20. R5=4 R8=5

Black plays like a desperado. If he changed his move to K5=4, Red would play C7=5. Red is still in a winning position as he has the material

advantage.

21. R4+3! A5-6 22. C7=5 K5=4

23. C5-5 R4+1 24. K5+1

By making the sacrifice first and having the gain later, Red is sure to win as he has the material advantage.

(2) R2+6

14. ... R2+6

It is a practical that Black drives his Chariot forward to the rank of the Pawns, when Black has seen through the trick played by Red.

15. R4=2

That is the only solution. Otherwise, Red will collapse in no time.

15. ... R8+3 16. C7=2 R2=3

17. R3-1 R3+3 18. C5=1 H3+2

Now, the position has become more complicated, in which Red has the material advantage, while Black has superiority in his offensive. Each side has his strong points.

Summary: The variation of Red in this game can be considered as normal offensive play, though it has strong nature of deception. In the situation as shown in the diagram, Black may credulously play R2+7 to take Red Horse for gaining the “initiative”. At the end, Black has fallen into the trap set by Red. With a chain of powerful killing moves, Red has got the superiority at one stroke. Black’s move of R2+6 is powerful and is the best countermove against Red. At this time, the only move for Red is R4=2. After that, both sides are entangled in a fit of attack and are scrupulous in their play. Generally speaking, it is not tactful for Red to play his Cannon for taking the opponent’s Pawn on Move 9. The stable and safe play is that Black drives his Chariot to take Red Cannon on Move 11 by playing R2+3. If so, Black can also achieve a satisfactory result.

One of the methods in cheating is to create a false appearance. The deceptive play of Red in this game is the false appearance that Red advances his Chariot to take Black Horse. When Black has seen through the trick played by Red, he can make an escape from the trap.

Chapter III Central Cannon Vs. Opposite Direction Cannon or Make-up Opposite Direction Cannon

Game 1: Deception in Attacking Horse

1. C2=5 H8+7 2. H2+3 R9=8
 3. R1=2 C8+4 4. P3+1 C2=5
 5. P7+1 H2+3 6. C8=7 (as shown in diagram)

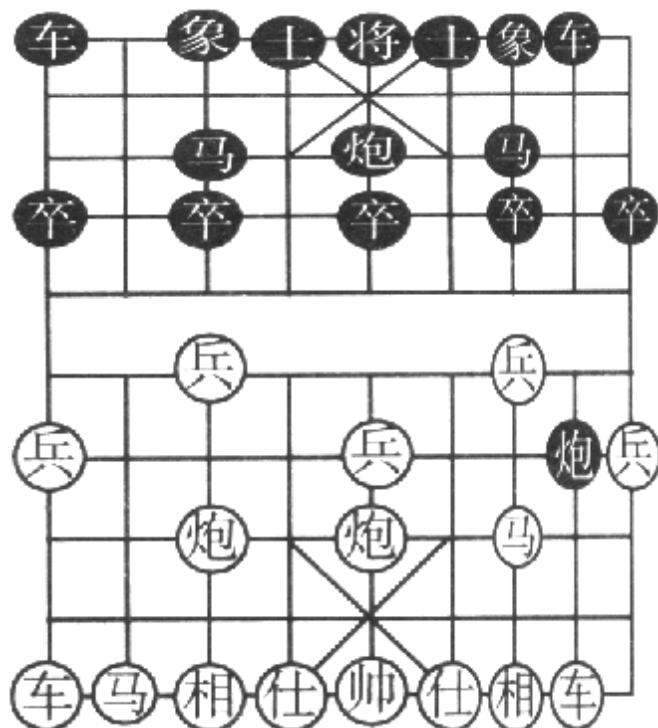


图 19

The above play of both sides has formed the typical formation of “Central Cannon vs. Make-up Opposite Direction Cannon” (中炮对后补列炮).

In the situation as shown in diagram 1, it is a deceptive play that Red moves his Cannon sideward to attack the opponent’s Horse. To respond to the menace of Red play P7+1, Black mainly can have two variations: (1) E3+1; (2) R1=2. They may be developed into the following possible lines:

(1) E3+1

6. ... E3+1

This is a pure defensive play, looking that the nose leads Black.

7. C7+4!

It is a practical move and the best way for Red to gain a superior position.

- 7. ... R1=2
- 8. H8+7 R2+4
- 9. R9=8 R2=8
- 10. C7=3

With several moves, Red has easily secured the superiority.

(2) R1=2

6. ... R1=2 (as shown in diagram)

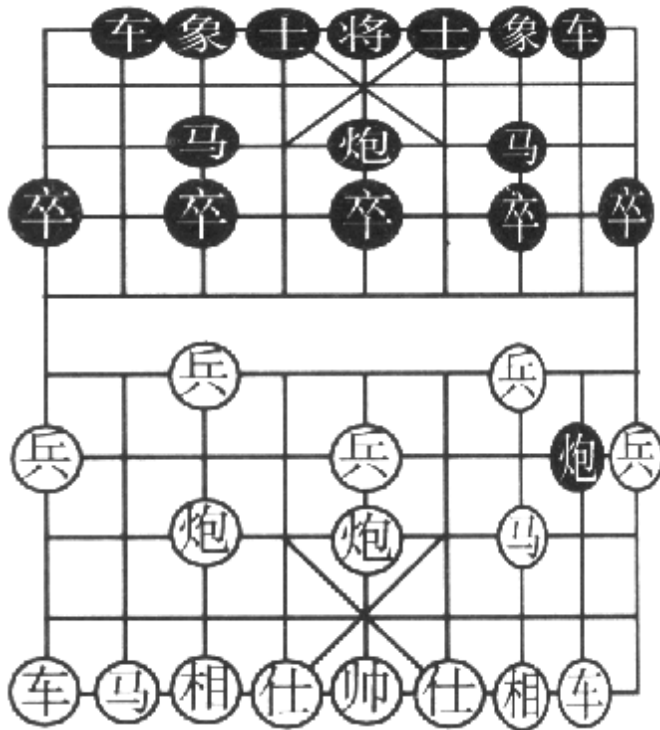


图 20

Losing no time, Black drives his Chariot out to implement a counter offensive. In the situation as shown in diagram 2, Red can have two variations: P7+1 or H8+9. They may be developed into the following possible lines:

(2.1.) P7+1

- 7. P7+1 R2+8!

Ignoring the fact that Red Pawn is going to cross the river, Black drives his Chariot to curb the advance of Red Horse. It is the most effective counterattack played by Black.

- 8. P7+1 H3-1 9. H3+4 C5+4

If Black changed to play C5=2, Red would play P3+1. The situation would be unclear.

10. A4+5 C5-1 11. C7+1

Red advances his Cannon, in case Black makes a discovered attack by playing C8=3.

11. ... C8=5 12. R2+9 H7-8

Now, Black is in a superior as Red pieces on his left side are cramped.

(2.2.) H8+9

7. H8+9 R2=5

It is a correct move that Black drives his Chariot to the riverbank. If he changed to play R2+4, Red would play R9=8, E2=8, R8+6, C8=7, R2=1, C5=6, R8=7, E7+5, P7+1. The 7th file Cannon can fully display its power, and Red is in a superior position.

8. R9=8

If he changed to play P7+1, Black would play R2=3. Or if he changed to play C7+4, Black would play E3+1, then C7=3, R2=3, C3+3, R8=7, R2+3, R3=7. The initiative would be reverted to Black.

8. ... R2=3 9. R8+2 H3-5

Black retreats his Horse for launching an attack when his defense line is strengthened. After that, Black can play C5=3 or R3=7, which will render him the initiative. Black has a bright position.

Summary: Red 7th move C8=7 can be considered as a typical deceptive play. Its aim is to threaten the Black Horse and force Black into a defensive play. If Black takes the lines as in variation (1), Red can easily dominate the game. In variation (2), Black adopts a tit-for-tat policy by implementing the attack against enemy's offense. At the end, Black has turned the passive position into the positive position, thus frustrating the Red scheme.

It is premature for Red to play C8=7, though it is of some deception. It is too early for Red to expose his plan. If Black had not fallen into the trap, Red himself would be thrown into the passive position. The correct move is H8+7 or H8+9. If so, the initiative will be still in the hand of Red.

Game 2: Single-handed Attack

1. C2=5 H8+7 2. H2+3 R9=8
3. R1=2 C8+4 4. P3+1

It is a tit-for-tat play. If Red played P7+1, Black would play P7+1, then H8+7, E3+5. Black has succeeded in implementing his initial strategic scheme of sealing off the right wing of Red.

4. ... C2=5 5. H8+7 H2+3
6. P7+1

Red can also play R9=8. If so, Black may play P3+1. After that, Red may have the following possible lines: (1) C8+4, C8=7 (It is a correct move. If he played R1=2, the formation of both sides are the same. Red would be in a superior position by playing C8=7), C8=7, E3+1. The two sides are confronting each other with a well-balanced strength. (2) H3+4, C8+1, H4+5! H7+5, R2+2, R8+7, C5+4, H3+5, C8=2. Red's position is slightly better than Black's as he has the central Pawn. However, the situation on the whole becomes comparatively simple.

6. ... R1=2 7. R9=8 R2+6

Placing the stress on the attack, Black ferries his Chariot across the river for provoking conflicts. In this variation, both sides are locked in tactical conflicts and Black is possessed of more deceptive methods. Red must have a clear understanding of the traps set by Black. The stable and common play for Black now is R2+4, C8=9, R2=8, by which Black can enforce a blockade. After that, Black may play C8=7 for gaining the initiative. Black still has enough strength to take up the challenge of Red.

8. H7+6!

It is a positive play that Red drives his Horse to the riverbank for gaining the initiative. If he changed to play C8=9 and then to play the Cannon sideward for exchanging of Chariot, Black would play R2=3, then R8+2, R3-1! After that, Red may have the following two possible lines: (1) C5-1, R3=7, R8+2 (It is not suitable to play H7+8, as Black can play C8+1), P7+1, H3+4, P3+1, E7+5, C8=6! R2+9, H7-8. Black stands better as he has the material advantage of pawns. (2) C5=6, P7+1 (He can also play P5+1 to make a counterattack directly), E7+5, R3-1, P3+1, R3=7, R8+4, C8-3. Black is in a satisfactory position as he can play defense as well as offense.

8. ... C8=7 (as shown in the diagram)

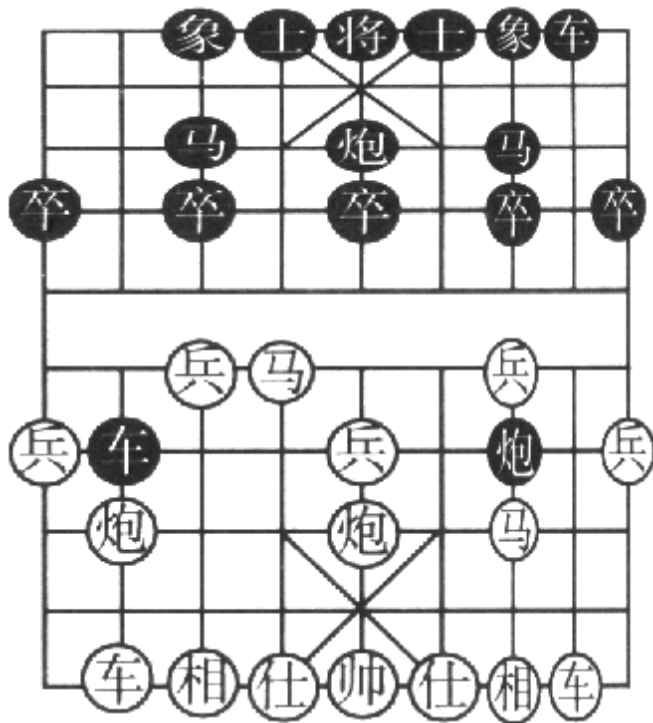


图 21

To parry the menace of Red P7+1, Black usually plays R2-2 or R2-1. Now, ignoring the attack of Red, Black plays his Cannon sideward to freeze the movement of Red Horse in an attempt to launch a counterattack.

In the situation as shown in the diagram, in face of Black's tough move, Red mainly can have two variations: (1) P7+1. (2) H6+4. They may be developed into the following possible lines:

(1) P7+1

9. P7+1

It looks a strong move, but in reality, it is a move of short-eyesight, as it caters to the Black's scheme of gaining the victory during the disturbance. If Red changed to play R2+9, Black could also attain the desired results by playing C7+3, then A4+5, H7-8, P7+1, R2-1, P7+1, R2=4, P7+1, H8+7 or C7=9. It would lead to a mutual-offensive position in which both sides have scruples.

9. ... R8+9 10. H3-2

It is obvious that Red can not play H6-8, as Black will play C7+3, then A4+5, C7=4! H3-2, C4=2. Red will suffer a material loss.

10. ... R2-1 11. H6+4 P3+1!

When Red is still indulging in his happiness of "capturing", Black has gained the initiative by making a sacrifice after capturing the Red

Pawn, from which, Black has got enough compensation.

12. H4-3 C5+4 13. A4+5 H3+4!

It is an important move for control of the situation. The tempting move is R2=7, then H2+3! C5-2 (If Black played R7+1, Red would play H3+5, R7=5, C8=7. Red has gained the initiative), FH-1, R7=2, H3+5, Red is in a superior position as he has gained the material advantage.

14. H2=3 C5-2

After making a sacrifice, Black has secured the initiative. A bright future is looming up.

(2) H6+4

9. H6+4

By driving his Horse forward, Red can exploit the fork trick. It can be considered as the best choice among so many variations.

9. ... R8+9 10. H3-2 P7+1

Forcing his 7th Pawn forward is a good move in a partial warfare. Otherwise, Black can not get relevant compensation.

11. H4+3! C5+4 12. A4+5 P7+1

13. H3-4 P7=6

Black has no other choice. If he played C5-2, Red would play H4+2 to take the Black Pawn. After that, Black must not play P7=6. Otherwise, Red would make a discovered attack to take Black's central Cannon by playing H2+4.

14. H2=3 C5-2 15. H4+2! A6+5

16. E3+1

It is quite necessary to strengthen his defense. If he played directly R8+1, Black would play C7+3. After that, Black could play C7-1 and R2=8. Red would have scruples in his play.

16. ... E3+5 17. R8+1!

It is a grave menace to Black that the single-handed Red Horse is galloping in the Black's backyard. Now, Red left Chariot is driven forward, which is ready to join in the battle at any time.

17. ... P6+1

Even if Black changes to play C5=7, the situation can not be improved, as Red still can have the same brutal move of R8=6. After that,

Black may have the following possible lines: (1) R2+1, R6+2! RC+3, R6=3. Red offense is kept growing. (2) P6+1, C8=9, R2+1, R6+3, RC+3, C5+5! E7+5, C9=3. In the follow-up moves, Red can play the Elbow Horse for a mate. Red has secured a winning position.

18. R8=6! R2+1 19. H2+3 K5=6
20. R6+3

Now, Red has gained a superior position after sacrificing his Cannon.

Summary: To respond to the tough and deceptive move of Black, as there are loopholes in the play of Red in variation (1), Black has succeeded in his scheme. While in variation (2), the single-handed Red Horse has charged into Black's backyard. Red has made a timely sacrifice, thus gaining the superior position.

Black's deceptive plan is based on "making a sacrifice for gaining the initiative". Red must have a correct judgement of it. If Red is not misled by Black's play and refrains from playing the customary offensive move of P7+1, and makes a "single-handed attack" as in variation (2), Black can not succeed in his deceptive play.

Game 3: Get Caught in His Own Trap

1. C2=5 H8+7 2. H2+3 R9=8
3. R1=2 C8+4 4. P3+1 C2=5
5. P7+1 H2=3 6. H8+7 R1=2
7. R9=8 R2+4 8. C8=9 R2=8
9. R8+6 P7+1 (as shown in the diagram)

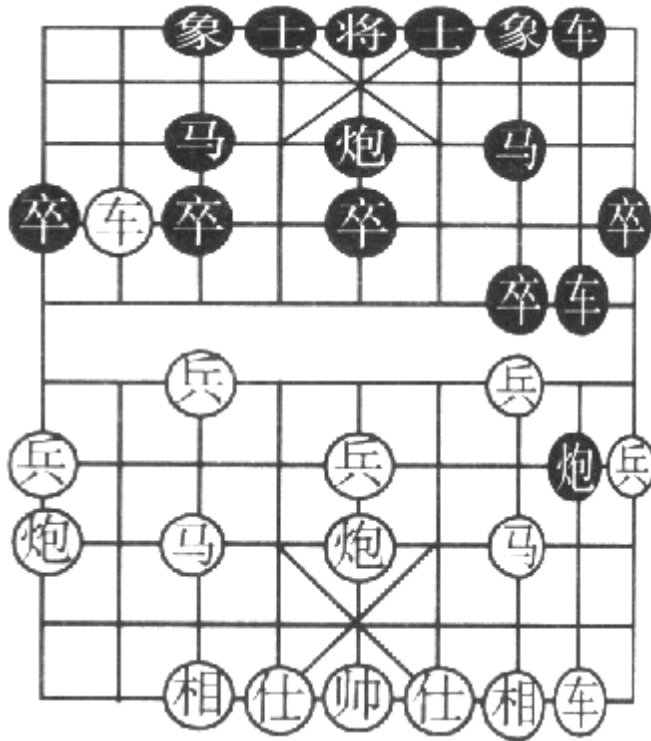


图 22

The diagram 1 shows one of the lines leading to the opening of “Central Cannon vs. Make-up Opposite Direction Cannon”. It is a tough, play that Black pushes his Pawn forward, inviting an exchange. However, it can be considered as a typical deceptive play. In responding, Red mainly can have two variations: (1) P3+1. (2) R8=7. They may be developed into the following possible lines:

(1) P3+1

10. P3=1

Red is liable to be a cat's-paw as his play caters to the combat scheme of Black, when he accepts the exchange of the Pawn.

10. ... R8=7

11. C5-1

If he changed to play H3+4, Black would play C8+1. The initiative is now reverted to Black.

11. ... C5=6

It is a correct move that Black timely adjusts his battle formation by playing the Cannon. Black can also play C8=7. If so, the subsequent moves might be R8=7, H3-5, E3+5, R8+9, H3-2, C7+2. Both sides will have scruples in their play.

12. C5=3

If Red makes a hasty attack by playing H3+4, Black will play C8-3, H4+5, H3+5, C5+4, C6+1! Black has gained the material advantage. Or if Red changed to play R8=7, Black would play E7+5. Then, H3+4, C8-3, C5+4 (If H4+5, then C8=3, R2+9, H7-8, H5-3, C6+6. Black has the material gains), H3+5, R7=5 (if H4+5, then C6+1), C8=7, R2+9, C7+6, A4+5, H7-8. Black would be satisfied with the situation.

12. ... C8=7 13. R2+9 H7-8
14. C3+2 R7+2 15. R8=7 E7+5

Though Red has the material advantage of one Pawn, he can get nowhere as his Horse and Cannon are in a cramped position.

(2) R8=7

10. R8=7

Red takes a positive attitude in meeting the challenge of Black. The play is powerful.

10. ... P7=1

To make a sacrifice for gaining the initiative does Black premeditate a tactical method. If he changed to play H3-5, Red would play P3+1 (It is a simple and practical move). Then R8=7, H3+4, C8+1, H4+5, R7-1, H5-6, R7=3 (If C8=3, then R7=3, R8+9, H6-7, Red would be in a superior position), C5+5, E7+5, H6+7. Red is in superior position as he has the material advantage of Pawns.

11. R7+1 P7+1 12. R2+2 (as shown in diagram)

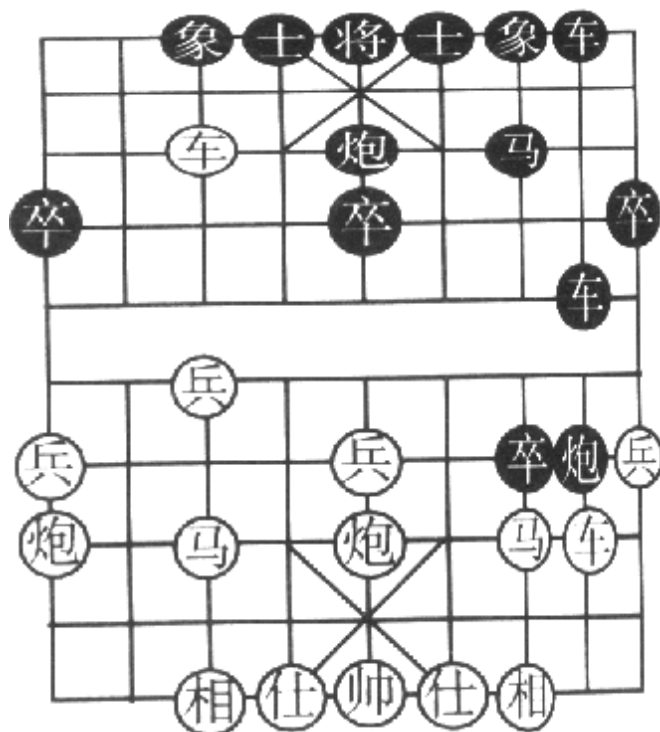


图 23

Driving Red Chariot forward to protect the Horse is an excellent move, showing that Red has taken the situation as a whole into account. If he changed to play H3-5, Black would play C8=5 (or A6+5, which is an implicit play), R2+5, H7+8, H7+5, C5+4. The centered Red Horse is a serious hidden trouble for Red. Black will have a bright future after he makes the sacrifice for gaining the initiative.

In the situation as shown in diagram (2), in face of the counter-sacrifice of Red, Black can have three variations: (1) P7+1; (2) C8=5; (3) R8=7. They may be developed into the following possible lines:

(2.1.) P7+1

12. ... P7+1 13. R2=3 R8+2
14. R7+2

It is obvious that Red is in a superior position, when he strikes first.

(2.2) C8=5

12. ... C8=5 13. H3+5

It is quite clear that Red can not play H7+5. Otherwise Black would play FR+3, then C5=2, P7+1. The initiative is now reverted to Black.

13. ... FR+3 14. R7+2 FR-3
15. P7+1

Red pushes his Pawn forward to reinforce the attack of Red Horse. Now, Black finds it difficult in resisting the increasing offensive of Red.

(2.3.) R8=7

12. ... R8=7

It is the best choice for Black to make the sacrifice, as it can maintain the menace on Red.

13. C5-1

It is a wise choice for Red to maintain the initiative.

13. ... P7+1 14. R2=3 P7+3

15. C9=3 C8+3 16. R7-2

By withdrawing Chariot to the riverbank, Red can play defense as well offense. Black finds it hard in launching an attack. Now, Red has secured an advantageous position. If Red changed this move to R7+2, Black would play R8+7! then C3+7, A6+5. It would be hard for Red to control the situation.

Summary: Due to the unwise play of Red in variation (1) when responding to the deceptive play of Black, it has rendered Black a chance for attack. While in variation (2), Red plays positively by striking first and timely making a sacrifice, ensuring that the initiative is always in his hands.

Black's play of exchanging Pawns on Move 7 is of deceptive nature. Though it can lead to a complicated battle, it can not be considered as the successful scheme if we take the whole situation into consideration. Once the opponent has seen through the plot, Black will be thrown into a passive position. Therefore, the correct choice for Black is to play C5=6 to extend the battle line. If so, both sides will be evenly balanced in their strength.

Chapter IV Central Cannon Vs. Sandwiched Horse

Game 1: Track the Tiger to its Lair

1. C2=5 H2+3 2. H2+3 C8=6
3. R1=2 H8+7 4. P3+1 P3+1
5. H8+9 E3+5 6. C8=6

It leads to the common formation of “5th and 6th file Cannons, advancement of the 3rd file Pawn vs. sandwiched Horse, advancement of 3rd file Pawn and of right Elephant” (五六炮进三兵对反宫马进三卒飞右象). It is a stable and safe play that Red moves his Cannon to the palcorner. Red can also play C8=7 or C8=4 for launching an offensive. Both variations have their own features.

6. ... R9+1 7. R9=8 R1=2
8. R8+4 R9=4 9. A4+5 A4+5
10. R2+8 (as shown in diagram)

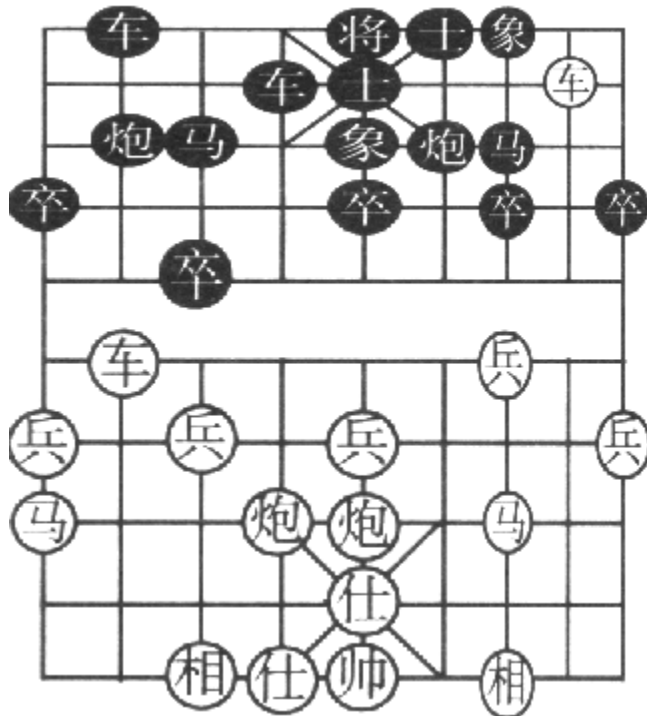


图 24

It is a typical deceptive play that in the situation as shown in diagram 1, Red pushes his Chariot forward to the 2nd file and has the follow-up play of R2=3 to menace the Black Horse. To respond, Black mainly may have three variations: (1) C2-1. (2) C6+2 (3) P3+1. They can be evolved into the following possible lines:

(1) C2-1

10. ... C2-1

Black has fallen into the trap. If Red had the **formation of 5th and 7th Cannon**, it would be a correct move.

11. R2=3!

Red ignores the discovered attack of Black, showing that Red is quite confident in his play.

11. ... R4+6

If Black changed to play R4+4, Red would play R3=5, then A6+5, R8+6. Red would be in a superior position when the Black Advisor was captured.

12. R8+4! R2+1 13. A5+6 R2+4

14. E3+1

Red drives his Elephant forward for protecting his Pawn. Now, Black left Horse can not find a way in making an escape, and will be unavoidably lost.

(2) C6+2

10. ... C6+2

It looks like that Black can play both defense and offense with this move. However, it can not be considered as a good one, as it has weakened the battle formation.

11. R8=4!

The move is simple but powerful, throwing Black Cannon into a hard position.

11. ... C6=5

If Black changed to play R4+3, Red would play P9+1 and with H9+8 to follow-up H9+8. Black is liable to the attack of the enemy.

12. R2-1 C5+3 13. E3+5 H3+2

If he changed to play C2+6 to make a counterattack, Red would play R2+7, then R2+7, R4+4. Red would be in a superior position when he strikes first.

14. H3+2 P5+1 15. R2-1

It is obvious that Red has gained the initiative when Black has a loose formation.

(3) P3+1

10. ... P3+1 (as shown in diagram)

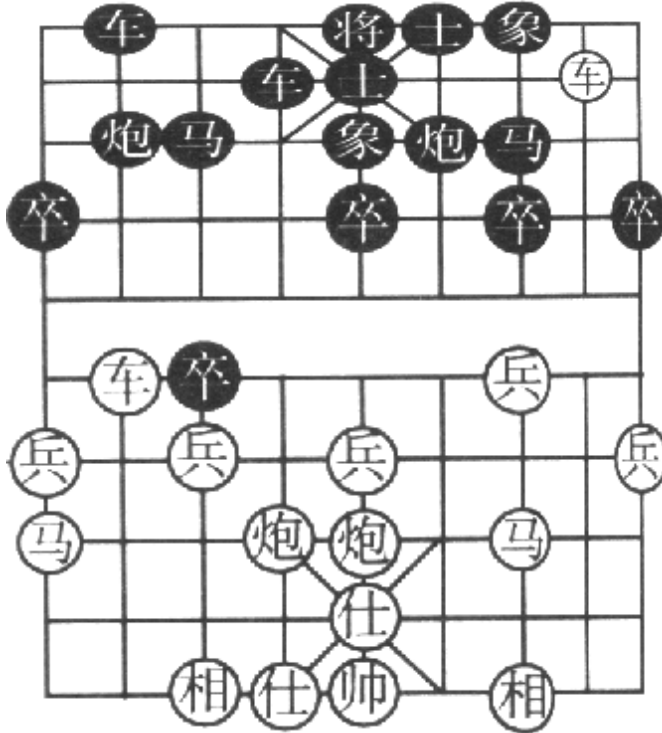


图 25

Black sacrifices his Pawn for exploring the responding move of Red and waiting for the opportunity to make the counterattack. It is a powerful move in answer to the deceptive play of Red.

In the situation as shown in diagram 2, in face of the sacrifice of Black Pawn, Red mainly can have two variations: (1) P7+1. (2) R8=7. They may be developed into the following possible lines:

(3.1) P7+1

11. P7+1 R4+4

12. P2=3

Red is bent on capturing the Black Horse. However, such a “stubborn” act will bring him the risk. As a qualitative change has taken place in the game, Red should switch to a stable and safe play of P9+1.

12. ... C6+2 (as shown in

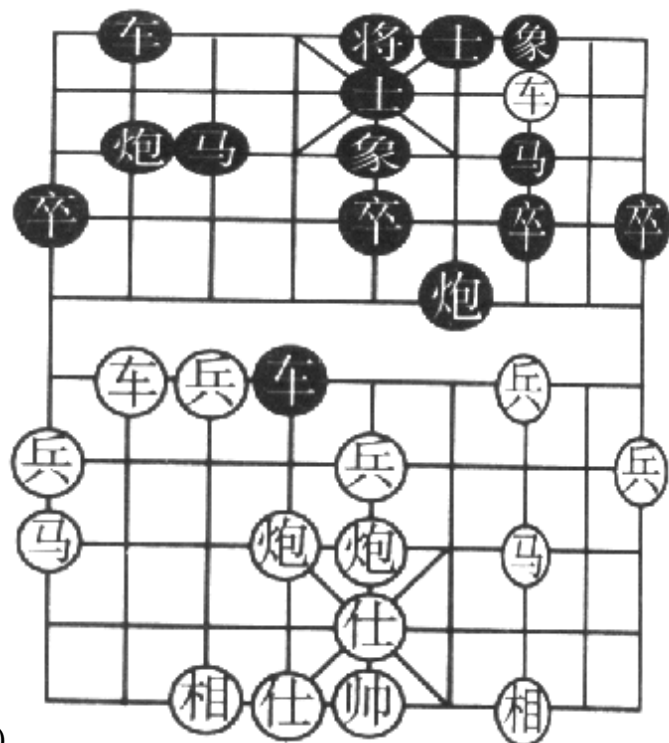


diagram)

图 26

In the situation as shown in diagram 3, when Black Cannon is stationed at the riverbank, Black can have a series of means of counterattack, such as C6=2. It can be considered as a maneuver of vitality. To respond to this move, Red mainly can have the variations of R3-1 and R8+2, which may be developed into the following possible lines:

(3.1.1.) R3-1

13. R3-1 C6=2

14. R8=9 H3+4

By driving his Horse forward, Black aims at launching an attack. It is also a good move if he changed to play RC=1, which could be developed into the following lines: P7+1 (Red has no other choice. If Red played R9=8, Black would play H3+4, Red would lose his Chariot), C1+3, P9+1, C2-3, P7+1, C2=3, C6=7, C3+2! C7+5, R4=7, H3-4, R2=3, C5=7 (If Red played C7=8, Black would play R7=3), C3+6! C7-7, R3+7, E3+5, R7=1. Black has retrieved what he has lost and is in a superior position, while Red has the chance to draw the game.

15. R3-1

If he changed to play C6=8, Black would play P7=1 (It is a well-knit play. If Black played C2+5, Red could play P7+1)! R9+1, C2+5, C5+4, R4=7. Black is now in a superior position.

15. ... P7+1! 16. R9+1 RC=3
17. C6=7

In addition to that, Red may have other too responding moves. However, both can not retrieve him from falling into the inferior position: (1) H9-7, R4=3. Black can get back what he has lost by making a discovered attack. (2) K5=4, C3+7, K4+1, H4+6, H3+4, C2+4, H9-7, R4=6, C5=4, C2=1, R9=6, R2+8. Black is sure to win.

17. ... C3+5 18. C5+4 C2+3

It is an accurate and powerful move that Black transfers his Cannon forward to take Red Horse. During the mutual attack, Black will be in the winning position as he can strike faster than Red.

19. H3+2 C3=1 20. E7+9 C2+2
21. E9-7 C2=1 22. R9=7 K5=4
23. C5=6 H4+6 24. R7=4 R2+9
25. C6=7 R2-1

After that, Black can have chain killing by playing R2=5! K5-1, R4+3, K5-1, R4+1, K5+1, R4-1. Red will find it difficult to resist Black's ferocious offensive.

(3.1.2.) R8+2

(Please refer to diagram 3)

13. R8+2 R4=3!

When Red Chariot is in flight, Black has brutally captured Red Pawn. If he changed to play C2=1, Red would play R8=7 (if Red played R8+3, Black would play H3-2, then C5=4, R4=7. The initiative is in the hands of Black), R2+2, R7=9. Both sides are entangled together.

14. C5=4

If Red were covetous of taking Black Horse by playing C3-1, Black would play H3+4, then R8-5 (If Red played R8-6, Black would play H4+2, then C6=8, H2+1! C8+7, H1+3. It would entail a chain of killings), H4+2, C6=8, C6=2! R3+1, C2+3. Black has secured immense superiority.

14. ... H3+4 15. R8-5 H4+2!

It is a positive play that Black drives his Horse forward to capture the Red Horse for gaining the initiative. If Black changes to play R3-5, he can also have a satisfactory position. But this move is not so powerful as the former one.

16. C6=8

Red puts up a stubborn play. If he changed to play E3+5, Black would play C2+6, then E5+7, C6=3! E7-5 (If Red played H9-7, Black would play C3-2, Black would be also in a superior position), H2+1, R3-1, H1+3, K5=4, C3=6, H3+4, R2+5! Black is sure to win.

16. ... R3=7!

Black is trying to maintain a complicated situation and to make progress. Black can also play: (1) C2+5, E3+5! R3=4, R8+1, C6=2, R8=6, R4+2, A5+6, C2-2, Both sides are evenly balanced in their strength. (2) R3+4, C8+5 (If Red erred in playing R3-1 or E3+5, Black could have a powerful move of H2+1), R2+2, E3+5 (If Red played R8+2, Black would play R3-2, then H9-8, R3-2. If the game kept going on, it would do Red no good, as he has a single Elephant), H2+1 (If Red played R3-7, Black would play R8+2), C4=9, R2+6, E5-7, R2-1, R3-1 (Red is striving to draw the game. If he played H3+4, Black would play C6=3. After that, Black could play R2=3 and C3-2. He would be in a better position as he had the material advantage of Elephant), R2=7, R3-1. Black stands slightly better, but it is difficult for him to win the game.

17. E3+5 R7+2 18. R3-1

It is a correct move. If he changed to play C8+5, Black would play R2+2, R3-1, R7-1, R8+2 (to prevent Black from playing H2+1), C6-2, Black is in a superior position as he has the material advantage of Pawns.

18. ... C6=2

It is a move of ingenuity, which helps Black to extricate himself from the containment of Red.

19. R3+1 H2-4 20. C8+5 R2+2

Now, the situation is tending towards calm. Black has a bright future as he has the material advantage in pawns and the positional advantage.

(3.2) R8=7

11. R8=7

It looks like that Red has gained some advantage after capturing one of Black Pawns, but Black can have enough time to adjust his battle formation by attacking Red Chariots.

11. ... C2-1 12. R7=8 (as shown in diagram)

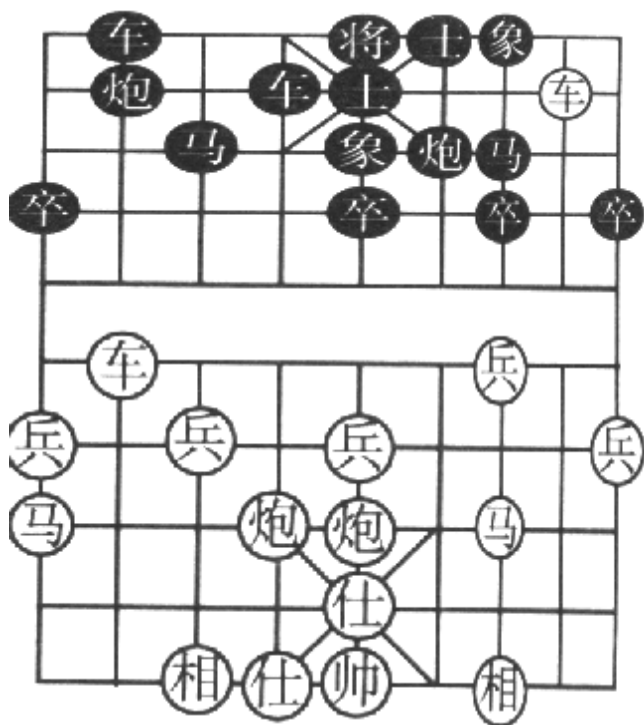


图 27

In the situation as shown in diagram 4, Black has got the advantage in tempo after sacrificing his Pawn. In the subsequent moves, Black can have two powerful moves: P7+1 or C2=1. They may be developed into the following possible lines:

(3.2.1) P7+1

12. ... P7+1

Making use of the discovered attack, Black left Horse can gallop out. It is a move of vitality.

13. R2=3

Red is trying to make the situation more complicated. If he changed to play P3+1, Black would play R4+3, then R2-4, R4=7. Black would be satisfied as his pieces are more active.

13. ... H7+6 14. P3+1 R4+4

15. R8+4

Red uses one of his Chariots in exchange of Black's two pieces. If he changed to play R8=6, Black would play H6+4, then R3-1(He should refrain from playing R3-2. Otherwise, Black would play C2+2 and then C2=3 to attack the Elephant), C2=3. Black is in a superior position.

15. ... R2+1 16. P3=4 R2+4

17. E3+1 R2-1 18. P4+1 C6=9

Now, each side has his own strong points in his play.

(3.2.2) C2=1

12. ... C2=1

When Red right Chariot is in an inactive position, Black plays his Cannon sideward for an exchange of the active Red left Chariot. It is a very practical move.

13. R8+5 H3-2 14. C6=7

Red has no other alternative. Otherwise, Black could play R4+6 or C1=3, which would put him in peril position.

14. ... R4+4 15. R2-4 H2+3

Black has a solid battle formation with his riverbank Chariot commanding the whole board. The situation is quite optimistic for him.

Summary: In variation (1), in responding to the deceptive play of Red on Move 10, Black was taken in when he uses the play that should be used for “**5th and 6th Cannons opening**” in answer to the “**5th and 7th Cannon opening**” of Red. In variation (2), Black’s play is proven to be not effective, as it has weakened his own battle formation. In variation (3), when Red has a impending “**Cannon Smothered Mate**” and his left Chariot is not in a proper position, Black timely launches a counterattack and makes a strike at the enemy's weak point, to secure a satisfactory position.

Despite the fact that the Red play of “tracking the tiger to its liar” is of some deception, Black can easily make use of the situation when Red force is fighting in isolation. If Black has adopted the strategy as in variation (3), Red can not succeed in his play.

Game 2: Seize the Opportunity for Counterattack

1. C2=5 H2+3 2. H2+3 C8=6

3. P3+1 P3+1

Each side pushes his Pawn forward to build up his own strength. Black can also play H8+7. If Red played P7+1, Black would play R9+8. As Black's left Chariot comes out earlier than that of Red, it can be served as the compensation for the cramped situation of his two Horses.

4. H8+9 E7+5

Black plays his Elephant for strengthening his defense. When Red plays his Cannon sideward, Black right Chariot can come out earlier. If

Black played H8+7, Red would play C8=7, then E3+5, R9=8, R1=2, R8+4, R9=8, R1=2! R8+9, H3-2. Red has gained the initiative to some extent.

- 5. C8=7 R1=2 6. R9=8 C2+4
- 7. R1+1 H8+7 8. R1=7

After playing his Chariot, Red places his Chariot placed behind the Cannon, putting much pressure on Black's 3rd file.

- 8. ... R9=8 9. P7+1 (as shown in diagram)

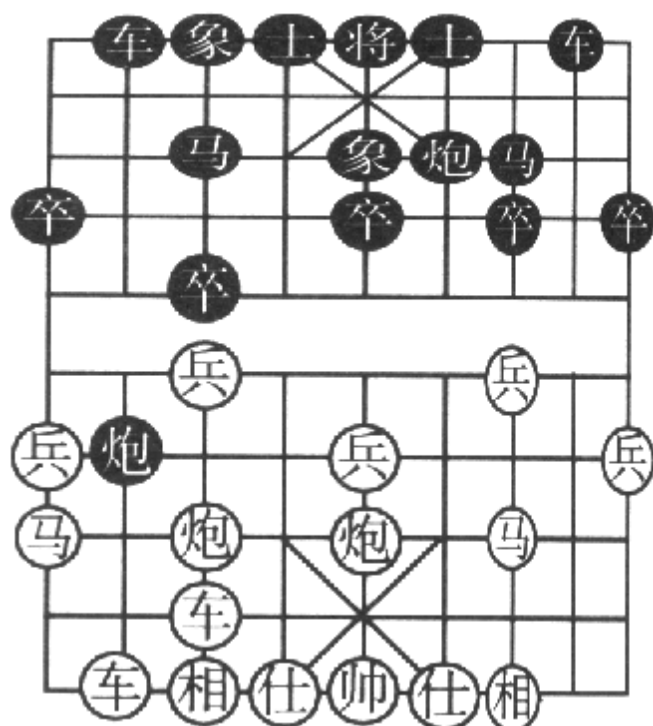


图 28

In the situation as shown in the diagram, when Red pushes his Pawn forward to launch the attack, Black can respond it with two variations: (1) C2=3. (2) R8+4. They may be developed into the following possible lines:

(1) C2=3

- 9. ... C2=3

Black plays his Cannon sideward for capturing Red Chariot. It seems that this move can help Black to get the initiative, but in reality, it has fallen into the trap of Red.

- 10. R8+9 C3+2
- 11. R8-9!

By returning to the bottom rank, Red Chariot can lend protection to

the Elephant. It is an excellent move premeditated by Red, by which Red will have got precious time in attacking Black's 3rd file.

11. ... C3-3 12. C5=6!

By playing the Cannon sideward, Red can have his battle formation adjusted. After that, he is going to drive Black Cannon away with his Elephant. The pressure on Black's right wing is bulging on.

12. ... R8+4 13. E7+5 R8=4

If he changed to play C3=4, Red would play R8+7, then H3-5 (If Black played H3+4, Red would play R8-3! Then C4+1, R8=6, Black would lose pieces), R8+1! Red would be in the upper hand as his offensive is strong.

14. A6=5 R4+2 15. H3+4 R4-1

16. H4+3 R4+1

Black has no other alternative. If Black changed his move to C3=7, Red would play E5+3, then R4=7, C6+4, R7+4, R8+7, H3+4, C7+7, Black would find it hard to cope with the situation.

17. C6-2 C3=4

If he changed to play C3+1, Red would play H9+7, then R4=3, R8+2, H3+4, C6=7, R3=4, FC+7, E5-3, C7+9, A4+5, R8+7. Red has gained the initiative in his offense after making a sacrifice.

18. C7=6 R4=1 19. C6+4 R1+1

20. C6+4

By now, Red is noticeably in a superior position and his pieces are more active.

(2) R8+4

9. ... R8+4

It is a safe and stable play that Black drives his Chariot forward and is waiting at ease for the chance to come.

10. P7+1

Red pushes his Pawn forward for gaining the initiative. If he played C7=6, relatively speaking, the game looks calm and smooth.

10. ... C2=3!

It is the right time for Black to play his Cannon sideward. If he changed to play R8=3, Red would play C7+5, then C6=3, R7+4, E5+3,

H3+4, Red will stand better.

11. R8+9

If he changed to play C7=6, Black would play R2+9, H9-8, R8=3, Red can not get any advantage.

11. ... C3+2 12. C7+5 C3-6

13. C5+4 A6+5 14. E3+5 R8=3

Now, the game is calm and smooth and both sides are evenly balanced in strength.

Summary: Red play on Move 8 belong to the normal offensive play. However, it is of great deception, as it conceals some deceitful tricks. In variation (1), in face of the attack of Red Pawn on Move 9, Black plays his Cannon for attacking Red Chariot, believing that it is the best responding move. However, he has fallen into the trap set by Red. After exchanging the Chariot, Red returns his Chariot to the bottom rank, concentrating the fire on Black's right wing, thus gaining a superior position. In variation (2), Black drives Chariot to the riverbank. It can be considered a steady and safe play. After Red Pawn is pushed forward, Black plays his Cannon sideward to force an exchange of pieces. The plot is so ingeniously conceived that it doesn't give Red any loophole for attacking. At end, the game has been developed into a well-balanced position, in which each side has his strong points. Red has the material advantage of the central Pawn, while Black has a stable battle formation. Black should be satisfied with the situation as he plays black.

Many xiangqi fans deserve commendation for their strong sense of counterattack. However, we must have a correct judgement in seizing the right opportunity for the attack. It proves that in the second variation, it is Black who has seized the right opportunity in making a counterattack, thus frustrating the scheme of Red.

Game 3: Well-matched in Strength

1. C2=5 H2+3 2. P7+1 C8=6

3. H8+7 (as shown in diagram)

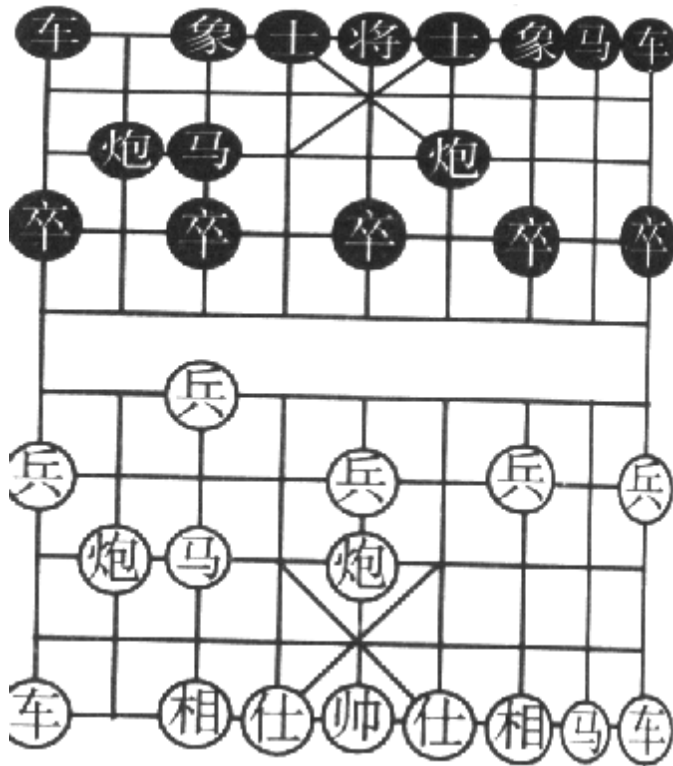


图 29

In face of Black's **Sandwiched Horse formation**, after pushing his 7th file Pawn first, Red drives his Horse forward for occupying the strategic post at the riverbank and threatening Black's central file. This offensive play was quite popular in the middle of 1980s. It has become one of main attack methods of the central-Cannon side.

In the situation as shown in the diagram, is Red in dread of the attack of Black Cannon when he drives his left Horse forward? To respond to it, Black can have three variations: (1) C6+5; (2) P7+1; (3) H8+7. They may be developed into the following possible lines:

(1) C6+5

3. ... C6+5

If the opponent is deliberately showing some flaws in his play, there must be a trap behind. It may not be a good thing to make an attack immediately.

4. R1+2!

It is a well-knit play. If he changed to play R9+2, Black would play C6=3, then C8+4, C3-1, C8=5 (If R9=7, then C3+3, R7-2, E3+5, Both sides have scruples in their play), H3+5, C5+4, H8+7, C5-2, R1=2. Despite the fact that Red has an exposed Cannon, he has no strong moves to follow-up. Therefore, Black has enough strength in resistance.

4. ... C6=3 5. C5-1 C3-1
6. R1=7 C3+3

Black has to make a sacrifice. If he played C3=4, he would meet the severe tactical strike of Red: P7+1, P3+1, R7+3, R9+2, C8=7, E3+1, R7+1, Black's central file would be affected when his right Horse is under the attack of the enemy. Black would be in a dire position when his defense line is broken.

7. R9=7 E3+5

After the exchanges of pieces, Red can have at least 5 effective moves, while Black can only have 2. Red's superiority will be shown more clearly if the play keeps going on.

8. FR=6 H8+7 9. R6+4 R9=8
10. H2+3

Black will find it difficult in resisting the offensive of Red, whether Red launches the attack from the 7th file or from the central file.

(2) P7+1

This is an undetectable weak move, as Black has overlooked the speed of the play, while putting undue emphasis on activating the Horse.

4. H7+6

Red makes a timely assault, forcing Black to make some moves in strengthening his defense. Red has gained the valuable time.

4. ... E3+5 5. H2+3 H8+7
6. R1=2

By driving his Chariot out earlier than Black's, Red has increased his initiative in the play.

6. ... A4+5 7. C8=6 C2+3

This is the tactical move taken by Black for driving his armpit-file-Chariot out. If Black changed to play R1=2, Red would play R9=8, Black's pieces would be in a cramped position.

8. H6+5

The play is simple and clear-cut. If he changed to play H6+7, Black would play H6+7, then R1=4, A4+5, C2+1, Black still could cope with the situation.

8. ... H3+5 9. C5+4 R1=4

10. R9=8 C2-3

It is an excellent move that Red drives his Chariot for capturing Black Cannon. If Black changed his move to R4+7 (If Black played C6+3, Red would play C6=5, Red has gained the initiative), Red would play R8+4, K5=4, A6+5, R4=7, R8+5, K4+1, R2+6, R9=8, R2=3. After that, Red could withdraw his Cannon to make a way for his Chariot, forming a checkmate position.

11. A6+5

Now, with the material advantage in Pawns, Red will launch an offensive with his central Cannon. He has a bright future in his play.

(3) H8+7

3. ... H8+7 4. H7+6 A4+5
5. C8=7 E3+5 6. R9=8 C2=1
7. H2+3

If Red made a hasty attack by playing H6+4, Black would play C6+1, then P3+1 (Otherwise, Black could play P7+1), R9=8. Red hasn't gained any advantage.

7. ... R9=8 8. R1=2

If he changed to play P3+1, Black would play R8+4, then H6+7, P7+1, P3+1, R8=7. Despite the fact that Black has lost one Pawn, he still has enough strength to contend with the opponent, as his pieces are more active.

8. ... R8+9 9. H3-2 P7+1

By now, both sides are evenly matched in strength.

Summary: The hasty attack of Red left Horse belongs to the normal play, though it is of some deception. In variation (1), due to poor calculation in his play, Black hasn't gained any advantage. In variation (2), because Black is slow in action, Red has succeeded in extending his initiative. Black's play in variation (3) is desirable. Despite the fact that Red has several initiative moves, if he played correctly, Black could build up a solid battle formation, possessing the same strength as Red.

Generally speaking, in responding to the fast attack of Red central Cannon, Black should try to dispatch his pieces out quickly for strengthening his defense, so that he can have enough strength to contend with Red.

Chapter V Pawn Opening

Game 1: Bait a Trap

1. P7+1 C2=3 2. C2=5 E3+5
 3. H2+3 R9+1 4. H8+7

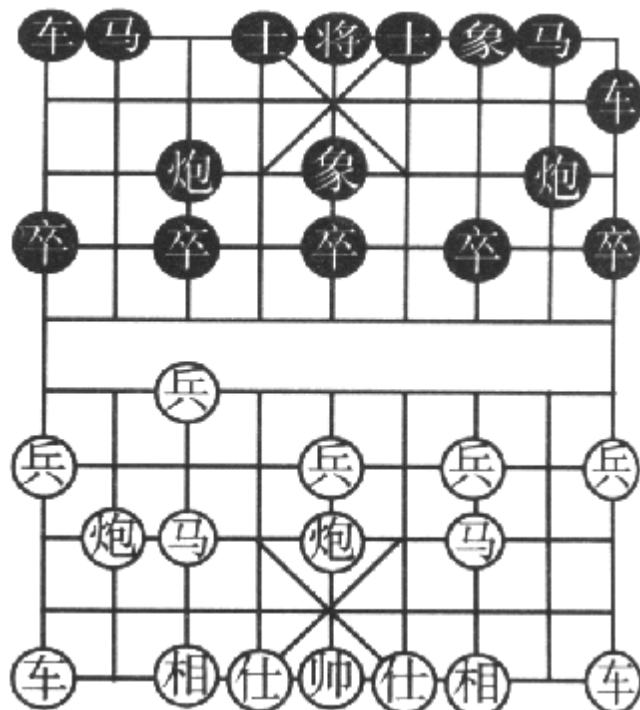


图 30

The diagram shows the position of the game which has been developed from **Pawn opening vs.PR Cannon** (仙人指路对卒底炮). Now, Black mainly can have two variations: (1) P3+1; (2) R9=2. They may be developed into the following possible lines:

(1) P3+1

4. ... P3+1

It is a strategic mistake. The seriousness of this mistake will be fully shown in the development.

5. P7+1!

This is a move of daring spirit. If he changed to play R7+6, Black would play P3+1, H6+5, H8+9. Black stands better.

5. ... C3+5 6. R1=2 R9+1

If Black changed to play R9=8, Red would play R2+4, then H2+4, H3-5, C3-1, R9=8, R1=2, C8+6, A4+5, C5=2. Red would have retrieved what he had lost and be in a superior position.

7. C8+2!

Stationing on the riverbank, the Red Cannon can attack the

opponent's Chariot. At the same time, it has cleared the way for the edged Chariot. It is a good move of "using one stone to kill two birds".

7. ... P9+1 8. C5+4 A6+5

If Black changed to play A4+5, Red would play C8=9, H2+1, C9=3, K5=4, R9+1 (If Red played R9+2, Black would play C8+5), C3=4, R9=6, C4-5, R6+5. Despite the fact that he has lost a piece, Red is still in a superior position as he has the initiative in his offensive.

9. C8=9!

It proves that the order of play is very important here. By forcing the Black Horse move to the edge, it can weaken Black's strength of defense in the central area.

9. ... H2+1 10. R2+6 H8+7

If he changed to play P1+1, Red would play R2=3, then C8=7, C9=2. After that Red has two powerful follow-up moves, that is, R9+2 and R3=2. Black would find it difficult to resist Red's offensive as his battle formation is in disorder.

11. C5-1 P7+1 12. R9+2 C3-1

13. R9=4

After moving his left Chariot to the right for reinforcing the offensive, Red is ready to launch the general attack.

13. ... C3=7 14. R4+6 P1+1

15. C5=9!

Black has no other alternatives but to push his edged Pawn forward. It is simple and clear-cut that Red plays his Cannon to take Black's edged Pawn, thus having retrieved back what he has lost.

15. ... R1=3 16. RC+3 R3+4

17. RC-1 R3+5 18. RC=5

Now, with a powerful offensive, Red has secured the victory.

(2) R9=2

4. ... R9=2

It is a correct move. If he changed to play R9=4, Red would play R1=2, then H8+9 (If Black played R4+5, Red would play C5=4. Red battle formation would be a perfect and be of potential), R2+4. Red has secured the initiative.

5. C8=9 H2+4

It is a correct move. If he changed to play H8+9, Red would play C5+4, then A4+5, C5=9! Red stands better.

6. R1=2 H8+9 7. H7+6 A4+5

With a consolidated battle formation, Black is waiting at ease for the chance to come. If he changed to play P9+1, Red would C9=6, then A4+5, A6+5, R1+1, C6-2, R2+3, R2+6, C8=6, C5=6. Red has gained the initiative.

8. C9=6

Red can also play C5=6. If so, Black would play R2+6, then A6+5 (If Red played C6+6, Black would play R1=4. Red couldn't have any advantage), H4+2, H6+5, R1=4, R2+4, R4+6, P9+1, R4=1. Black would be satisfied with the play when both sides are entangled in the battle.

8. ... R1+1

Black drives his Chariot forward to protect his armpit Horse. It is an important move for strengthening his defense as it can activate his 2nd file Chariot for a counterattack.

9. A6+5 R2+4

By destroying the opponent's stronghold at the riverbank, Black can deploy his pieces.

10. H6+5 H4+5 11. C5+4 P9+1

It is a necessary move. If Black played R2=3 to capture Red Pawn, Red would play E7+5, then R3=2, C5=1! Red position is slightly better than Black's.

12. E7+5 R1=4 13. P3+1 R4+3

14. R2+6 C8+6 15. C5-2 R2-1

16. P1+1 C3=1

With a solid battle formation, Black has enough strength in combating the opponent.

Summary: It can be considered as a slight improvement of the normal play R1=2 that Red drives his Horse forward on Move 4. It is also a deceptive play to lure Black into pushing his Pawn forward. In variation (1), Black has fallen into the trap when he makes a pre-matured counterattack. Making use of the opportunity, Red ingeniously sacrifices his left Horse. At the same time, he concentrates his force to launch a powerful air-attack on Black's position. Despite the fact that he has

gained a piece, Black finds it difficult in resisting the offensive of Red as his position is in disorder. At the end, Red has retrieved back the lost piece and has gained a great superiority. In variation (2), Black responds correctly by moving his Chariot to tie down Red Cannon. After two moves of play, the game is switched to a popular variation, in which both sides have their own strong points.

As mentioned before, in responding to the bait of Red, if he refrains from obtaining a quick success and instant benefit as in the variation (2), Black can avoid being trapped. In variation (1), Red attack with a chain of excellent moves can be considered as a good example of sacrifice for attack.

Game 2: Lock Cannon in Calabash

1. P7+1 C2=3 2. E7+5

It is a stable and safe play that Red plays the Elephant. However, it is not so powerful in relation to the offensive. The most common variation is C2=5 or C8=5, which is of menace to Black to some extent.

2. ... H2+1 3. H8+7 R1=2
4. H7+6

Red pieces are not well coordinated when Red drives his Horse for an attack. However, this deceptive play of Red can be served as a "test" on Black. The correct move is R9=8 to evenly deploy his pieces.

4. ... H8+7 5. R9=8 R2+4

Believing that the Red Horse will not find any way to move forward, Black drives his Chariot to the riverbank and is going to force Red Horse back by playing R2=4 in his next move. However, this is the scheme planned by Black himself. When the Chariot is on the riverbank, it is in a perilous situation, rendering Red an opportunity to exploit. The better move for Black is R2+3, a move looking weak but strong. Black would be in an optimistic position.

6. P7+1 (as shown in the diagram)

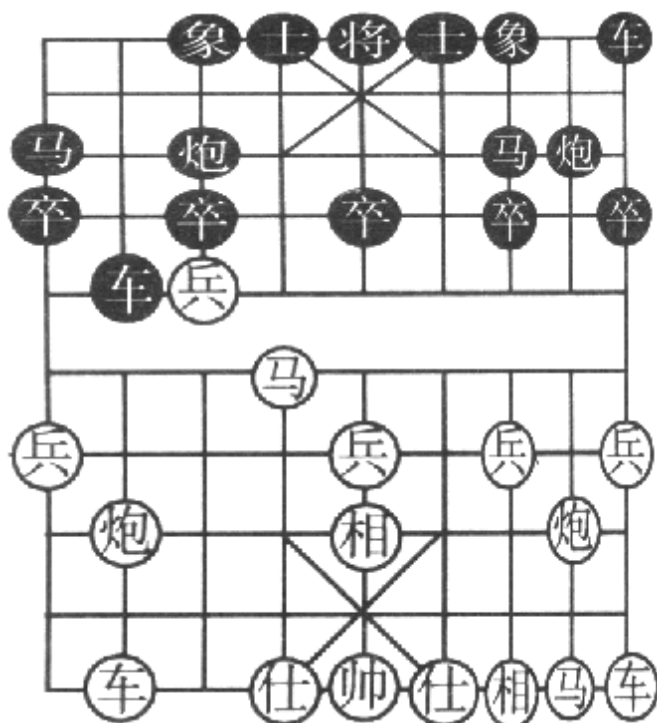


图 31

Red forces a sacrifice of his Pawn. It is a deceptive play with hidden traps.

In the situation as shown in the diagram, Black mainly can have two variations: (1) R2=3; (2) R2+1. They may be developed into the following possible lines:

(1) R2=3

6. ... R2=3

Being ignorant of the impending peril, Black mistakenly think that Red has "no alternative", so he drives his Chariot to take Red Pawn.

7. C8+5!

Red has succeeded in his deceptive play. Now, his Cannon is going to make an assault.

7. ... E7+5 8. H6+8 C3+4

If he changed to play H7-5, Black would unlikely lose materials. However, Red could play C8+1! then C3-1, R1+1, H5-7, R1=6. As Red strong forces are concentrated on one wing, Black would be faced with Red attack.

9. C8+1 H1-3

He has no other alternatives. If he changed to play H1-2, Red would play H8+9. After gaining a piece, Red would be in a superior position.

10. H8+9! C4=2 11. R8+7 H7-8
12. R8=7!

It is a powerful and accurate move that Red presents his Chariot to the tiger's mouth. If he played R8=6, Black would play H3+2.

12. ... A6+5 13. R7+1

It is a wise choice. If he changed to play H9+7, Black would play K5=6. While having a temporary enjoyment, Red Chariot would be cornered in enemy's position, finding it hard in making an escape.

13. ... C8=1 14. C8=9

Black finds it difficult to make a counterattack when his Cannon is in a cramped position. Red has secured a winning position as he has the material advantage.

(2) R2+1

6. ... R2+1

Timely coming to realize the situation, Black pushes his Chariot forward to take Red Horse.

7. P7+1

It is a correct move. If he changed to play H6+4, Black would play E7+5, then P7=6, P7+1, H4+3, C3=7, R8=7, C8+4. Red could not get any advantage.

7. ... R2=4

If he changed to play C3=2, Red would play H6+4, R2=6, C8=7, R6-1, C7+7, A4+5, C7-2, C2+2 (If Black played C8=3, Red would play R8+7. Red would be in a superior position), C7=2, H1+3, C2-3. Red would be in a superior position as he has the material advantage of Elephants.

8. P7+1 C8=3 9. R8=7 C3-1

By now, Red still has the initiative in his hands, while Black has enough strength to contend with Red.

Summary: In variation (1), to respond to the deceptive play meticulously designed by Red, due to his greediness in capturing the Red Pawn, Black has suffered irretrievable losses. In variation (2), as Black has seen through the scheme of Red, he has timely made up what he has lost.

The deceptive play of Red in the opening is known as "**Lock the Cannon in Calabash**"(锁葫芦炮). Its scheme is to launch a sudden attack by making use of the opportunity when Black pushes his Chariot forward to check the advancement of Red Horse. The tactics is ingeniously planned. From this point of view, it can be regarded as the typical example of making break through from the flank.

Game 3: Daring to Face the Exposed Cannon

1. P7+1 P7+1 2. C2=3 E7+5

It is a stable play that Black plays the Elephant. Black can also play C8=5 or C2=5. All these variations can be evolved into complicated position of offensive and defensive play.

3. H2+1 C8+4 (as shown in the diagram)

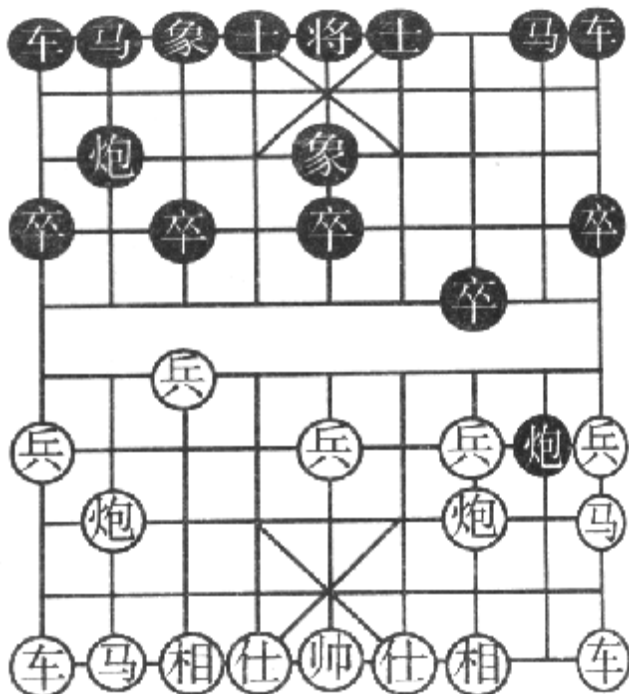


图 32

It is a typical deceptive play that Black drives his Cannon across the river. It aims at sealing off Red right Chariot when it is menacing the central Pawn of Red. The most common play is H8+7, R1=2, R9=8, R2+4. Red has gained the initiative.

In the situation as shown in the diagram, in face of the attack of Black's C8=5, Red mainly can have two variations: (1) H8+7; (2) R1=2. They may be developed into the following possible lines:

(1) H8+7

4. H8+7

It is a move of dogmatism that Red drives his Horse to protect his Pawn, enabling Black to succeed in his scheme.

4. ... H8+7 5. R9+1

It is a move for seeking variations. If he played E7+5, Black would play H2+1, P1+1, C2=3, R9=8, R1=2, C8+4, P3+1! P7+1, E5+3, Black could be in a satisfactory situation.

5. ... C2=3 6. E3+5 H2+1

7. R9=4 R1=2 8. C8=9 R2+6

9. A6+5 P3+1!

It is a powerful play for counterattack that Black pushes his Pawn forward, as it will menace Red left Horse. At the same time, his left Cannon is ready to capture Red central Pawn.

10. R1=2 R9=8 11. R4+3

It is a correct move. Red must not play P7+1. If so, Black would play C3+5, then C3=7, R2=3, C7=6, C8=5. The initiative would be reverted to Black.

11. ... P3+1 12. R4=7 C3+5

13. C3=7 C8=5 14. R2+9 H7-8

After some exchanges, Black has captured Red central pawn. He has an optimistic position.

(2) R1=2

4. R1=2!

Being not misled by Black's play, Red boldly offers his opponent an exposed Cannon. The play is powerful.

4. ... C8=5 5. H8+7

Red dispatches his left Horse forward to drive away Black Cannon. He should avoid making the move R2+8 hastily. Otherwise, Black could play A6+5, which would put Red in a difficult position.

5. ... C5-2

If he played C5-1, Red would play C8+2. Black could not get any benefit.

6. H7+6 H8+7 7. H6+7 H2+1

It is a premeditated tactical scheme that Red plays his Horse, targeting at Black Cannon. Black drives his Horse out for dispatching his pieces quickly. The move of C5+2 is of no significance, as Red can drive the Black Cannon away by playing R2+4 and R2=5.

8. H7-5 P5+1 9. R2+6

After making a forced exchange of Cannon, Black's offensive is frustrated. Now, Red pushes his right Chariot forward, leaving no time in launching the offensive. The play is powerful.

9. ... R9=8 10. R2=3 C2+4

Ignoring his left Horse, Black drives his Cannon forward, hoping he will have another exposed Cannon. However, this play is not tactful. However, if he changed to play A6+5, Red would play P7+1. Red still could have the initiative.

11. R3+1 C2=5 12. R3-1 R1=2

13. C8+4

It is reasonable for Red to capture Black Horse. Now, Red drives his Cannon forward for sealing off Black Chariot. After the exchanges and annihilations, Red has gained great advantage.

13. ... R8+7 14. R9+2 A4+5

15. P7+1

Red dispatches his Pawn into the battle for expending his sphere of strength. At this time, Red should avoid playing C8=5 for exchanging Cannon, as he would be under the containment if Black plays R2+3.

15. ... H1+3 16. P7=1

Now, Black's offensive is of no significance. Red is in a superior position as he has the material advantage.

Summary: It is a typical deceptive play that Black plays his Cannon for capturing Red Pawn on Move 3. In the variation (1), as Red follows the old rules, so he is passive in his defensive play. Black has succeeded in his scheme. While in variation (2), Red plays positively, daring to face an exposed Cannon and turning Black's tricks against Black himself. In the end, Red has succeeded in dispatching his Horse quickly and forcing an exchange of Black Cannon. It has laid a solid foundation for Red to win the victory.

Because there is no strong pieces to cooperate with, Black's exposed Cannon can not get the desired result. Once he has failed in his trick,

Black will find himself in the mire, as he can not dispatch his pieces out quickly.

Game 4: Understand the Intention

1. P7+1 P7+1 2. H8+7

Following the Pawn's opening of both sides, it is a common play that Red drives his left Horse out. Red may have other variations, such as, C2=3, C8=6 and C2=5.

2. ... H8+7 3. R9+1 E3+5

4. E3+5 H2+4 5. H2+4 R1=3

6. C2=3 (as shown in the diagram)

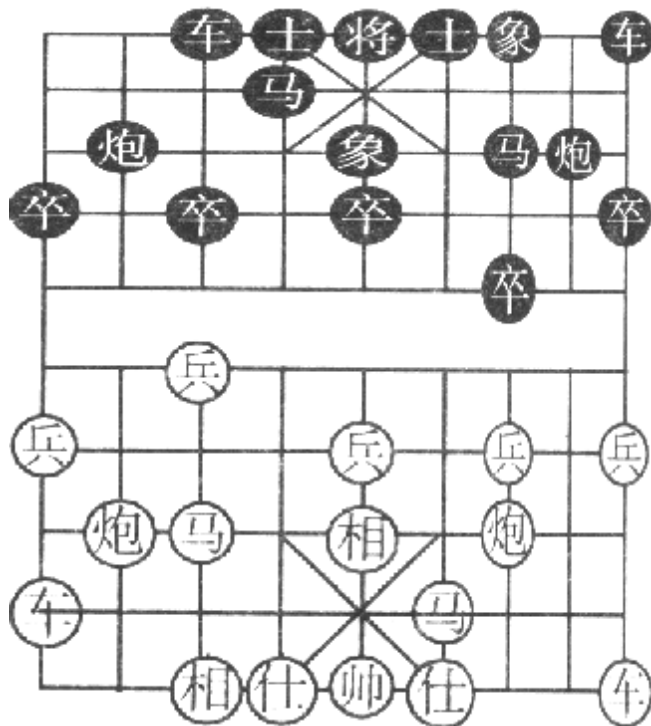


图 33

After several move of deployment, both sides are confronted each other with a similar battle formation. Outwardly, the game looks quite calm, but in reality, it contains many traps and delicate changes. The actual strength of each side is usually shown in the flat game.

In the situation as shown in the diagram, the move looks quite plain that Red plays his Cannon sideward to the 3rd file. However, it is the move painstakingly thought out by Red, which is to lure Black into errs. In responding to it, Black mainly can have three variations: (1) R9=8; (2) H7+8; (3) P3+1. They may be developed into the following possible lines:

(1) R9=8

6. ... R9=8

It looks quite reasonable for Black to dispatch his Chariot out. However, it will result in that Black has a disproportionate battle formation. This is what Red hopes for.

7. R9=6 R3+1

When Red drives his Chariot sideward for capturing Black Horse, Black is feeling awkward (If Black hadn't played R9=8, Red could have a coordinated battle formation by playing R9+1). Now, an expedient measure for Black is to drive the Chariot forward for protecting his Horse. If he changed to play H4+6, Red would play H7+6. In his next move, he is going to capture the central Pawn.

8. R1=2 C8+4 9. P3+1! H7-9

It is excellent play that Red pushes his Pawn forward for making a breakthrough. In such a circumstance, Black has no other alternatives but to retreat his Horse. If Black erred in playing P7+1 (If Black played H4+6, Red would play R6+6), Red would play R6+6! Black would find it difficult in resistance to the enemy's attack.

10. P3+1 E5+7 11. R6+6 C2+4

12. H7+6

As Black's formation is in disorder, Red is obviously in a superior position.

(2) H7+8

6. ... H7+8

This move is slightly better than the move in variation (1). However, Red can still take advantage of it.

7. R9=6 R9+1 8. R6+4 P3+1

9. H4+6! C2+2 10. R6+1

It is obvious that Red stands better in the confrontation.

(3) P3+1

6. ... P3=1!

Being not misled by Red play, Black pushes his Pawn forward for achieving a smooth deployment of his piece. After that, he will drive forward his "Chariot from the position of the Elephant" (象位车) to carry out his battle plan. It is the correct move in responding to the

deceptive play of Red.

7. R1=2 H7+6

With his Horse driven out, Black can make flexible assaults. His battle formation will be of elasticity.

8. R9=6 R9+1 9. P7+1

If Red played R6+4, Black would play C2+2! And his next move would be C8=6. Red couldn't have any advantage from the play.

9. ... R3+4

Now, the situation is quite clear that the initiative has been reverted to Black.

Summary: In variation (1) and (2), as Black's play is not targeted at the deceptive play of Red C2=3 on Move 6, Red has succeeded in his scheme. In variation (3), being not misled by Red play, Black continues to dispatch his Chariot out according to his plan. In the end, Black has achieved desired results in his play.

The move of Red Cannon on move 6 is not so effective and nor of any practical significance. The correct move is R1=3 or H7+6. If Black has a clear understanding of this point and continues to carry out his plan by dispatching the Chariot out, Red can not get any advantage.

Game 5: A Horse is Running Wild

1. P7+1 H8+7 2. P3+1 E3+5

To respond to **the 3rd file and 7th file Pawn opening** (两头蛇) of Red, Black is planning to adopt the battle formation of **Palcorner Horse** (拐角马) after playing the Elephant. This variation "looks gentle but firm in reality". If he changed to play C8=9, Red would play H2+3, R9=8, R1=2, P3+1 (If Black played R8+4, Red could play C2=1 to gain the initiative by), P7+1, R8+4, P7+1, P7+1. By sacrificing his Pawn, Black has gained the initiative. After several moves, both sides are engaged in a close combat. The battle is becoming more acute.

3. H8+7 H2+4 4. H7+6

Red drives his Horse forward immediately. On the one hand, it can weaken Black's counterattack of Chariot at Elephant position after sacrificing his 3rd file Pawn. On the other hand, it can enforce a remote control over Black's Palcorner Horse.

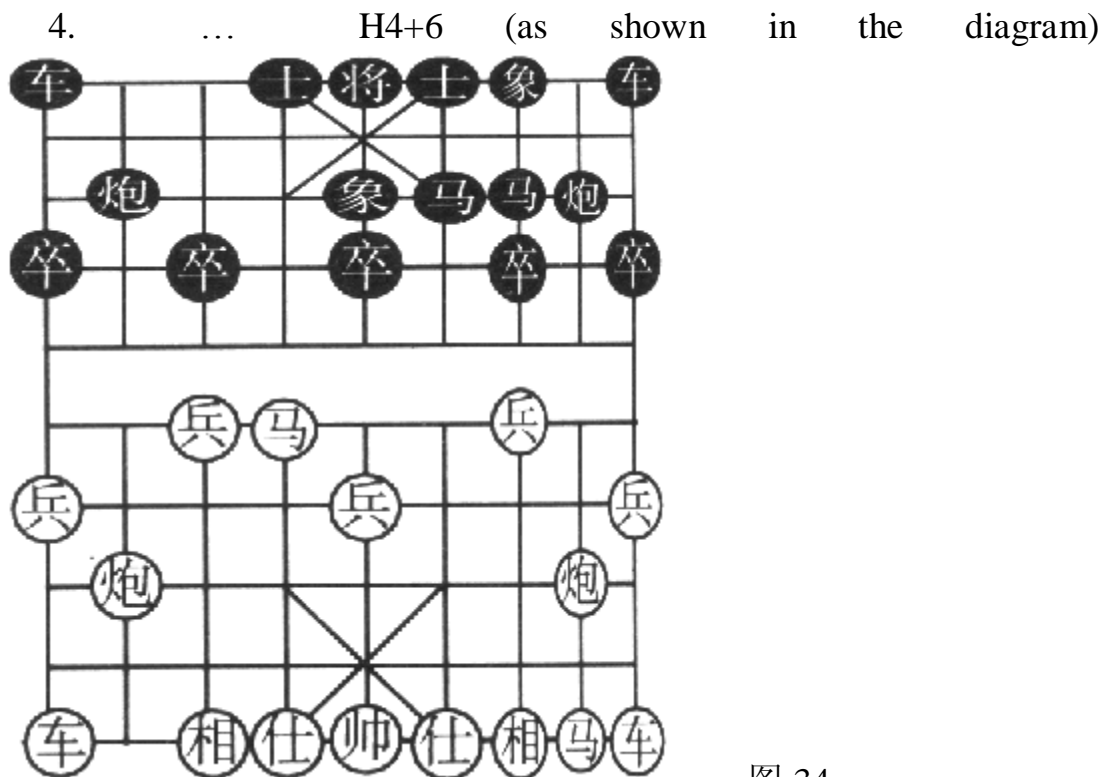


图 34

It is a typical deceptive play that Black drives his Horse to the palcorner, luring Red Horse to take the central Pawn. The common play is P3+1 and then R1=3, or play R9+1 directly.

In the situation as shown in the diagram, Red mainly can have two variations: (1) H6+5; (2) C8=5. They may be developed into the following possible lines:

(1) H6+5

5. H6+5

It is an indiscreet move, resulting in that the Red Horse will become an isolated force in the enemy territory. The beginners are liable to commit such a mistake as they often covet minor advantage and fail to take the general situation into account.

5. ... H6+5!

Black's palcorner Horse jumps to the central file, inviting Red Horse to make an exchange and also glaring at the opponent's position. It looks like a runaway horse, that no force can bring it under control.

6. P5+1

In face of the new force of Black, Red can only parry Black's attack

and has no strength to hit back. If he changed to play H5+3, Black would play H5+6, then C2=4, C2=7, E7+5, C8+4! P5+1, R1=2. Red would find it hard in resistance, when Black's pieces are occupying the strategic position.

6. ... H5+7 7. C2=5 A4+5
8. H5+3

If he changed to play H5-4, Black would play C2+3 or C8+3. Black would be still in a superior position.

8. ... C2=7 9. H2+3 R1=2
10. C8=6 R9=8 11. R1=2 C8+4

Now, Black is in a superior position while Red has an inert battle formation.

(2) C8=5

5. C8=5!

When Red plays his Cannon to guard the central file, Black's scheme is immediately frustrated.

5. ... P7+1

Ignoring the attack of Red, Black pushes his Pawn forward for activating his pieces. Besides that, Black has no other good methods. For example, if he played H6+5, Red would play C5+3! P5+1, R9=8, C2=4, C2=5, Black's formation would be weakened when his central Pawn was pushed forward. He had no enough strength in offense nor defense.

6. R9=8 C2=4 7. H6+5 H7+6

Now, the move of H6+5 is not so effective as before, as Red can play C5+3 (It is simple and clear-cut move. It is not proper for Red to play H5-3 as Black can play H5+6), H7+5, P3+1, A6+5, P3=4, H5-7, P4=3. Red has secured a superior position.

8. P3+1 FH+7 9. P3+1

Red shouldn't lose any vigilance when he is in a superior position. If Red played H2+3, Black could make a counterattack by playing C4+5.

9. ... H7+5

Black has no other alternatives but to exchange the Red Cannon with his Horse which has come from afar. He has lost the advantage as far as the number of the moves is concerned. If he attempted for a counterattack by playing H7+6, it would come to no avail, as Red could play C2=4,

then C4=5, R8+1!

10. E3+5 H6+5 11. H2+4

It is a correct move that Red sacrifices his Pawn for gaining the initiative. However, the move of P3+1 is also a good one. Following that, if Black played H5+6, Red would play H2+4 (Don't play C2=4 hastily. Otherwise, Red would lose the initiative as his two pieces are under attack when Black plays H6+8), C8=9, R1=3. Red would have secured a superior position.

11. ... H5-7 12. R1=3 H7-6

13. H5-6

Now, Red has gained immense superiority.

Summary: In variation (1), as Red covets to small advantage when responding to Black's deceptive play of palcorner Horse, Black Horse runs wild that no force can bring it under control. In variation (2), as Red has seen through the scheme of Black, Black is unable to get the desired results and his pieces are jammed together. In the end, in face of Red offensive, Black has been thrown into a difficult position.

Despite the fact that the palcorner Horse is in an unfavorable position, when it has broken to the bridle, it can bring unexpected results. The two variations of Red, one is to "set free" the Horse and another is to "restrict" it, can produce quite different results.

Chapter VI Elephant Opening

Game 1: Escape from being captured

1. E3+5 C8=5 2. H2+3 H8+7
3. R1=2 R9=8 4. P3+1 R8+6

For realization of his tactical scheme, Red pushes his 3rd file Pawn forward so that he could bring the game on the track designed by him.

It is inevitable that Black drives his left Chariot forward. If he changed to play R8+4 (Black's thinking is correct that he plays the Chariot forward. Otherwise, Red would seal off the advancement of the Chariot by playing C2+4), Red would play H8+7, then P7+1 (If he changed to play P3+1, Red would play C8+2, Red has potential in his development), P3+1, R8=7, H3+2. Red has gained the initiative.

5. H8+5 R8=7

It is a correct move. If he changed to play H2+3, Red would play H3+4. The situation would be in favor of Red when his left Horse is at the riverbank.

6. R2=3 H2+3 7. P7+1 R7=8
8. C2=1

It is a flexible maneuver. If he changed to play R3=2, Black would play P5+1, then C8+1, R8-2. After that, Black would play his Horse. Black's play will be of elasticity.

8. ... P5+1 9. P3=1

It is a deceptive attack that Red makes a forced sacrifice of his 3rd Pawn. Here, the most common play is C8+1, R8+1, C1-1. Each side can play defense as well as offense in the game.

9. ... P7+1 10. H3+4 (as shown in the diagram)

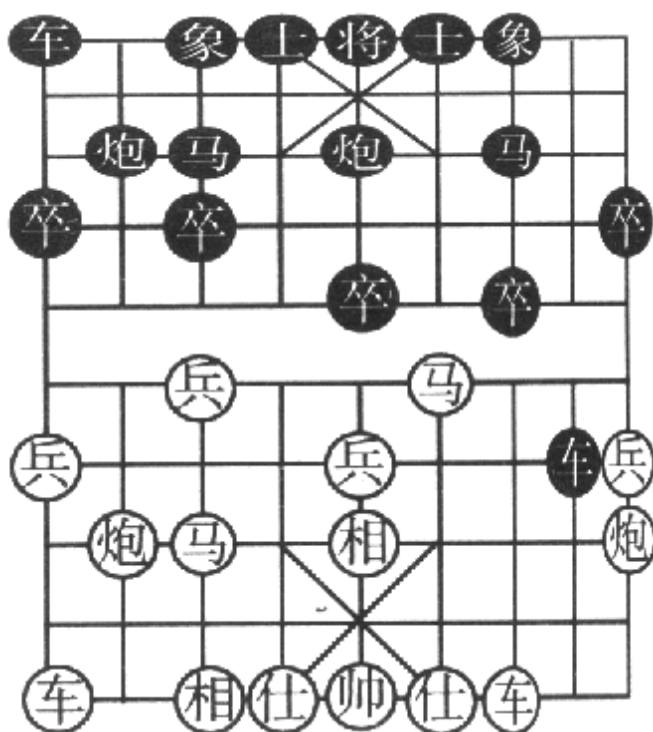


图 35

In the situation as shown in the diagram, in responding to the attack of Red Horse, Black mainly can have three variations: (1) R8=6; (2) R8+1; (3) C5+4. They may be developed into the following possible lines:

(1) R8=6

10. ... R8=6

It is a customary practice that Black plays his Chariot sideward for capturing Red Horse. However, it does not fit in with this game.

11. H4+6 H3+5

12. C8+1

For gaining the initiative, it is an important measure for Red to force the Black Chariot to leave the key passage.

12. ... R6+1 13. C1=3 R1+1

14. A4+5 R6+1 15. C8=6!

By playing the Red Cannon sideward, it can seal off the movement of the Black Chariot (The riverbank Horse can display its power as Black Chariot can not play R1=4). On the other hand, it can clear the way for his left Chariot. It is a good move for developing the initiative.

15. ... P5+1

Black attempts to make a breakthrough in the central file. However, Black has no other alternatives.

16. R9=8 C2=1

That is the only move for Black. He must not play P5+1. Otherwise, Black would suffer from the lose of materials, as Red could play C6-2!

17. C3=4!

If he changed to play P5+1, Black would play C5+3. Red couldn't have any benefit at this moment. After that, if Red made a forced attack by playing R8+7, Black would play R6-4, then C6=5, E7+5, C3+5, H5-7, H6+5, C1=5, C5+4, R6-2! C5=7, R1=8. Red would have trouble at home.

17. ... R6=8 18. P5=1

If the position had been simplified, Black could meet the attack calmly. For example, If Red played H6+5, he could play E7+5 (or P5+1), then P5+1, H5+6.

18. ... C5+3 19. H6=4 C1=5

20. C6=5

Now, Red has a good chance in the mutual attack, as Black is now under the control of Red.

(2) R8+1

10. ... R8+1

Black attempts to capture Red Cannon for gaining the initiative. Unfortunately, Black's play is totally ignored by Red.

11. R3+5!

The move is simple but powerful. After the exchanges of the pieces, Red has control of the whole situation on board.

11. ... R8=9

The situation could not be improved even if he stationed his Horse in the central file. For example, If he played H3+5, Red would play H4+5, H7+5, R3+1, R8=9, R3=5, R9-1, C8+1, R9-1, C8=7. Red will have a bright future.

12. R3+2 R9-1

The tricky move of C5+4 is untenable, otherwise Red would play H7+5, then C2=7, C8=1, P5+1, H4+2. Black will have the material deficit.

13. R3-1

Now, the situation is clear that Red is in a superior position.

(3) C5+4

10. ... C5+4!

It is an unexpected good move, which can only be made out after Black has made a careful analysis.

11. A6+5

As Red still has the initiative, he doesn't want to have the situation simplified. If he played H7+5, Black would play R8=5, then H4+6, R5=4, H6+7, R4-4, R3+5 (If Red played H7+8, Black would play E3+5. Red couldn't get any advantage), R4=3, R3=5, A4+5. Both sides will be evenly matched in strength.

11. ... R8=6 12. H4+6

This is the most menacing move. If Red changed to play H7+5, Black would play R6-1, then R3+5, H3+1, E3+5. Red couldn't get any advantage.

12. ... C5-1! 13. R3+5

If he played H6+7 for capturing Black's piece, Black would play E3+5. There is possibility that Red Horse would be captured at any time as it is cornered in the enemy's territory. Furthermore, Black has the material advantage of two pawns.

13. ... H3+5 14. R3=5 R6-2!

It is a clever exchange of pieces. Now, the initiative is reversed to the hands of Black.

15. R5-1 R6=4

After that, Black has the play of C2=5 for making a counterattack. The situation is optimistic for him.

Summary: It is of great deceptive nature that Red makes a forced sacrifice of his Pawn on move 9, and then drives his Horse to take Black Chariot. In variation (1), when Black follows the conventional pattern by playing his Chariot sideward for capturing the Red Horse, Red has seized the opportunity to make a mating assault, thus has gained the initiative. In the mutual attack, Red has a good opportunity, as his pieces are more active. In variation (2), when Black drives his Chariot forward to capture

Red Cannon for gaining the initiative, Red makes a simple but powerful exchange of pieces, thus putting the whole situation under his control. In variation (3), Black ingeniously conceived a plan of playing the Cannon to take Red central Pawn. Following that, he executed several beautiful moves for reducing the strength of Red, thus the situation became optimistic for him.

It is obvious that Black's passive play in variation (1) and (2) is very harmful. In variation (3), Black makes a positive assault by playing his Cannon to attack the enemy's central Pawn, turning the unfavorable factor into the favorable one. It can be considered as the best counter measure.

Game 2: Make the choice resolutely

1. E3+5 C8=5 2. H2+3 H8+7
3. R1=2 R9=8 4. H8+7 H2=1
5. P7+1

It is an age-old popular opening that Black plays his left Cannon to the central file in responding to the Elephant opening of Red. It features that Black can have a balanced deployment of his pieces and make a counter attack from his two wings while using the central Cannon as the containing force.

One of the main variations is that Red pushes his Pawn forward for clearing the way for his Horse. Red can also play P3+1. After that, Black can play C2=4, then R9=8, R1=2, A4+5, R2+6, C2+1, R8+4. Both sides are closely matched in strength.

5. ... P3+1

It is a deceptive play that Black sacrifices his Pawn for gaining the initiative. The most common play is C2=4 or R8+4. If so, they can be evolved as follows: (1) C2=4, C2+2, R8+4, H7+8, P3+1, P3+1, R8=3, A4+5, P7+1. The position of Red is slightly better than that of Black. (2) R8+4, C2=1, R8+5, H3-2, R1+1, R9+1, R1=8, H2+4, R8+3. Both sides are evenly balanced in strength.

6. P7+1

It is a correct move. If Red changed to play C2+4, Black would have chance of making a counterattack by playing P3+1, then E5+7, R1+1, P3+1, R1=4, E7-5, R4+5, R9+2 (If Red played C2-3, Black would play R4+2, then A4+5, R8+4. Black has the initiative), C2=3, C8+4 (Red must not play H7+8, as Black could have the aggressive moves of R4=2 and C3+5), R4=3, H7-5, H1+3, R9=6, A6+5, H5-3, H3+5! Red will not be

satisfied with the situation).

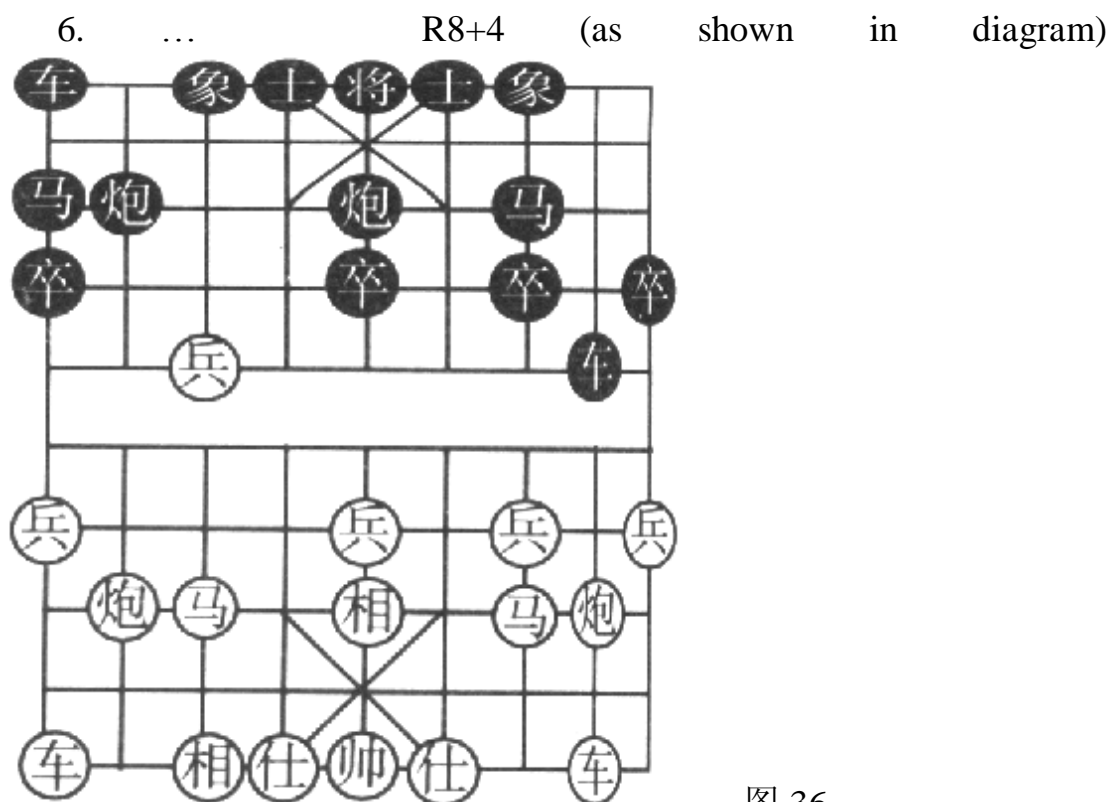


图 36

At the situation as shown in diagram 1, Red mainly can have two variations: (1) P7+1; (2) H7+6. They may be developed into the following possible line:

(1) P7+1

7. P7+1

It is unwise for Red that he is reluctant to give up the promoted Pawn.

7. ... R8=3 8. H7+6 C2=4

9. P7=8

It is imperative for Red to play the Pawn sideward to seal off the Black Chariot. If he changed to play A4+5, Black would play R1=2, then R9+2, R2+5! Red will find it hard to resist the attack.

9. ... C4+7!

The move is very aggressive. The stable and safe play is R3=4, then H6-7, R4=2, R9=8, R2-1. Black can easily capture the promoted Pawn.

10. R9+1

If Red Played K5=6 to capture the Black Cannon, Black would play R3=4, then P8+1, R4+1, K6=5, R4=2. Black would be in a superior

position.

10. ... C4-2 11. A4+5

If Red hastily played P8+1, Black would play C4=7, then C8=3, C5+4, K5=6, R1+1! Black could make a sacrifice for attacking and be in a superior position.

11. ... R3=4 12. A5+6 R4+1

13. A6-5 R4=2 14. C8=6 R2-2

Now, Black is in a superior position as he has the material advantage of Advisors.

(2) H7+6

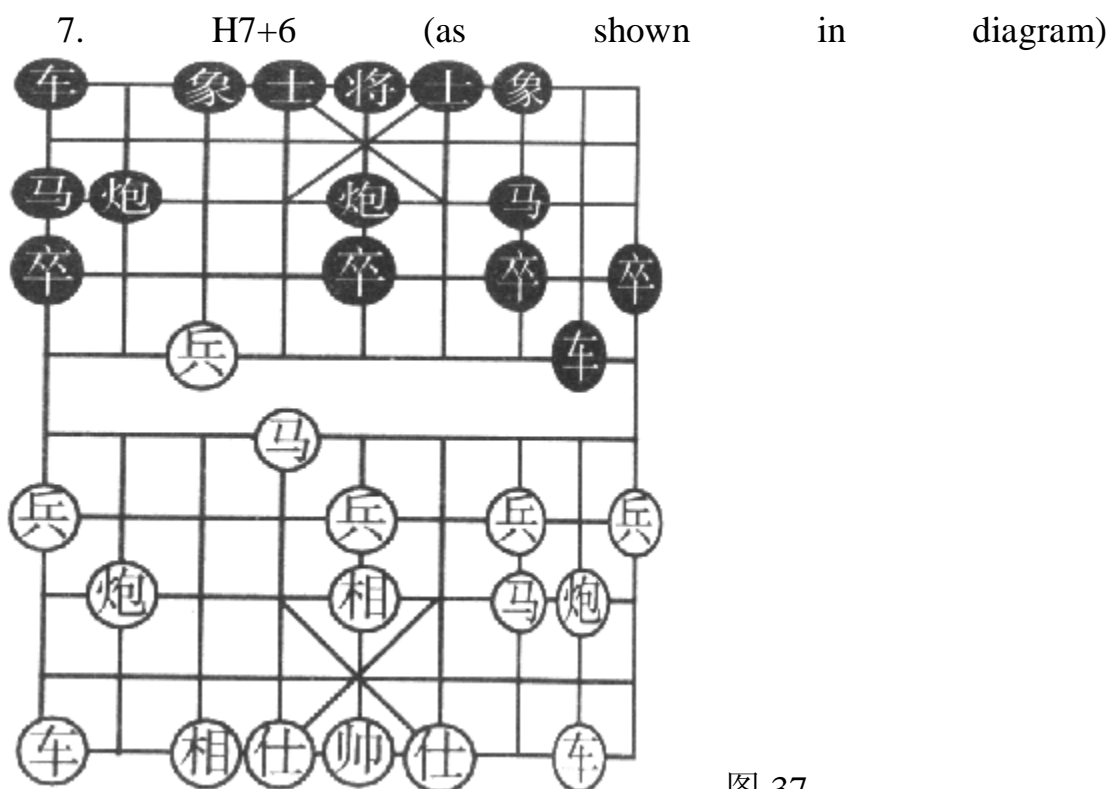


图 37

Being not misled by the promoted Pawn, Red timely drives his Horse into the battle. The play is flexible.

In the situation as shown in diagram (2), Black can have two variations: R8=3 or C2=4. They may be developed into the following possible lines:

(2.1) R8=3

7. ... R8=3

Though Black has easily retrieved the lost Pawn, he fails to see that Red can have the following ingenious stratagem.

8. H6-8! R3-2

9. H8-6

By exploiting the initiative of capturing the Chariot and Cannon, Red Horse can return to the palcorner. His next step is to seize the position of the Elephant at the riverbank. Red can also play C8+5 for exchange of the Cannon. If Black played C3=2, Red would play H8+6, then P7+1, C2+4. Red will have the initiative.

9. ... C5=4 10. H6+7 C4+4

11. E7=9 C2+4 12. R9=7 C4=7

13. H7+8

Despite the fact that Black has made the assault with his double Cannons, Red Horse stands fast at its post. Now, as the time is ripe, Red makes a forced exchange. No matter how he will react, Black will be thrown into the inferior position.

(2.2) C2=4

7. ... C2=4 8. H6-8

Since Black hasn't taken the promoted Pawn, it is necessary for Red to withdraw his Horse to protect it, and safeguard his initiative.

8. ... C4+4 9. P3+1 C4=9

10. H8+6

It seems that Black could retrieve what he has lost by playing his Cannon. However, there is a hidden peril when his battle formation has been weakened. By driving his Horse forward, Red is attempting for another attack. Red can also play C2+1, if Black played C9=5, Red would play A4+5.

10. ... C9-1 11. H6-8 C9+1

12. H8+6 R8=3 13. C2+4! R3=4

14. C2-2

Moving Cannon ingeniously forward and backward, Red can gain the initiative by playing C8=6 to take Black Chariot.

14. ... C9-1 15. R9+1 P7+1

If Black played his Chariot for capturing Red Cannon, his situation still could not be improved: R1=2, C8=6, R4=8, R9=4, P7+1, P3+1,

R8=7, C2-3. Following that, Red could play C2=3 to launch an attack. It would be hard for Black to handle with the situation.

16. C8=6 R4=3 17. H6-8! R3=2
18. P3+1 R2=7

It is a move of stubborn play. If Black changed to play R2+2, Red would make an attack by playing P3+1, then H7-5, R9=4, H5+3, P3+1, Black would find it difficult in defense as he is weak in the left wing.

19. C2-3 R7=8 20. R2-1! P9+1
21. C2=3 R1=2 22. H8+6

Now, Black's left Horse is under attack, while Red is obviously in a superior position. In the following moves, if Black played R8+4, Red could play R9=5!

Summary: In variation (1), in responding to the deceptive play of Black on Move 5 that after sacrificing his Pawn, Black plays his Chariot to take the Red Pawn, Black has succeeded in his scheme, as Red is reluctant to give up to the promoted Pawn. In variation (2), after driving his Horse forward, Red could make the countermoves flexibly in responding to Black's play. In variation (2.1.), despite the fact that the promoted Red Pawn has been taken by Black, as Red has a skillful deployment of his forces, and Red Horse has taken up a strategic position at the riverbank, so the initiative is still in the hands of Red. In variation (2.2.), when Black plays his Cannon sideward seeking for a change, Red withdraws his Horse for protection of the Pawn. Black Cannon is forced to disengage itself from the defense line. In the end, Red has gained the initiative and the superiority.

The best variation for Red in dealing with the deceptive play of Black is to sacrifice the 7th file Pawn. If he is resolute in making his decision and flexible in his play, Red can have enough strength in frustrating Black's deceptive play.

Appendix: Selected Games from Competitions

Game 1: Huang Yong (Shenzhen) vs. Sun Yongzheng (Shanghai) (Kunming, 3rd April, 1998)

1. C2=5 H8+7 2. H2+3 R9=8
3. R1=2 H2+3 4. P7+1 P7+1
5. R2+6 C8=9 6. R2=3 C9-1
7. H8+7 A4+5 8. H7+6 C9=7
9. R3=4 R8+5 10. C8+2 E3+5
11. C8=9 (as shown in the diagram)

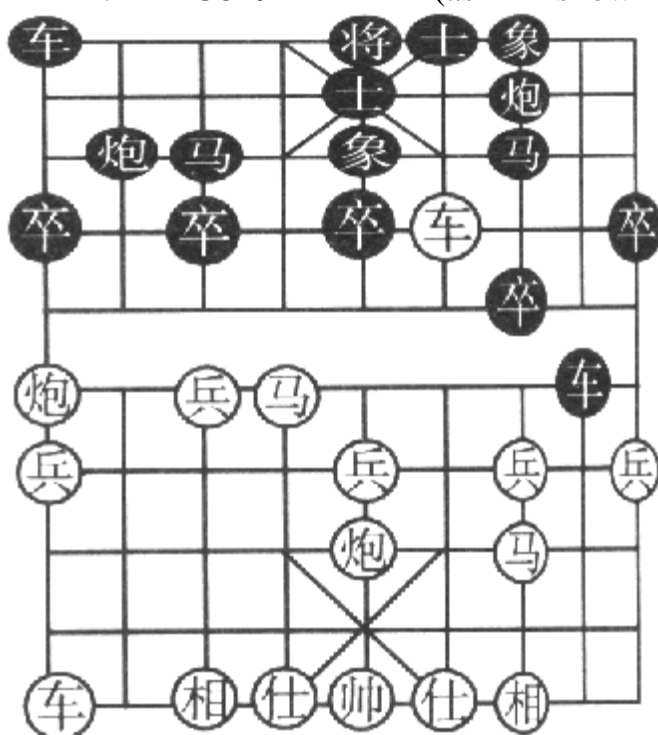


图 38

Both sides are quite familiar with the conventional opening in the first 10 moves. After that, the game becomes the common opening of **"Central Cannon, Cross-river Chariot and Riverbank Horse vs. Screen Horse, Sideward-play Cannon for exchange of Chariot"** (中炮过河车河口马对屏风马平炮对车). It is a typical deceptive play that Red plays his Cannon sideward for attacking Black Chariot, which can be also considered as a test to young player Sun Yongzheng for his ability in meeting the change. If he changed to play C5=6, Black would play P3+1, then P3+1, R8-1, P7+1, E5+3, C8=7, H3+4, C6+3, P7+1, C6+3, C7=4, C8=3, R8=7, E7+5. It would lead to a conventional variation, in which both sides are evenly matched in strength.

11. ... R1=3

In the situation as shown in the diagram, Black plays Chariot to protect his Horse, proving that he is very calm in face of the sudden assault of Red. The following two variations will put Black in an unfavorable position: (1) R1=2, H6+5, R8=3, H5+7, R2=3, R4+2. Red is in a superior position as he has the material advantage. (2) R2=1, C9+3, R8=4 (If Black erred in playing R1+2, Red would play H6+7, then R1=2, R4+2, Red could make the dual assault on the Black Cannon or Elephant. Black will be immediately routed), C9=8, after that, Red could play R4+2. Red will have the initiative in his offensive.

12. R9=8 C2-1 13. H6+5 R8+3

Having failed in one stratagem, Red has brought out another one, that is, to capture Black's central Pawn with his Horse. Being not misled by Red play, Black drives his Chariot to the second rank, where it can play defense as well offense. If Black played R8=3 for taking 7th file Pawn, Red would play E7+9! Then FR+1, C9=7, H7+5, C5+4, P3+1, C7+3, RR+2, R4+2! Red has gained the material advantage.

14. H5+7

After taking a long journey, Red Horse is reluctant to make the exchange with Black's weak Horse. However, he has no other alternatives. Otherwise, Black would take the cornered Cannon by playing P1+1.

14. ... R3+2 15. R8+6 R3=4

16. C9=8 C2+4 17. R8-2 H7+8

After the exchange, the 3rd file Red Horse has become an irremediable weak point. Black can take the opportunity in making an assault to gain the superiority.

18. R8+5 A5-4 19. C5=9

By moving the Cannon away, Red could readjust his battle formation. If he changed to play R4=3, Black would play H8-9! Then R3+1, R8=7, H3-5, R4+6, Red is in a difficult position as he has a cramped Centroid Horse.

19. ... C7+5 20. E3+5 P7+1

21. R4=2 R8=4

By playing his Chariot sideward for taking a checkmate, Black could shake off the control of Red Chariot. His next move would be to drive the Horse into the battle. Black's offensive is so aggressive.

22. A4+5 H8+6 23. H3-4 C7-1

24. R8-6

If he changed to play C9+4 for counterattack, the situation will become complicated. However, Black will be still in a winning position. The game can be evolved into the following lines: C9+4, H6+4, H4+3, C1+3! C9+3, FR=5! K5=4 (H3-5, H4+3, K5=4, R4+7, K4+1, R4+6, K4+1, R4=6. Black wins), H4+3, R8-9, E5-3, Following that, Black can play R4+7 or R4=6 to take a mating check. Red has no other choice but to surrender.

24. ... R4-2 25. R8=6 R4+4
26. E5+3 R4=5 27. H4+5 H6+4
28. C9+4 P9+1 29. R2=7

This move will lead to a quick defeat of Red. If he changed to other variations, Black would be still in a winning position.

29. ... H4+3!

It is a fetal strike. In the subsequent moves, Black will secure his winning position after capturing the Red Chariot.

30. H5-7 C1=3! 31. H7+8 C3-3
32. H8-6 R5=9 33. E3-5 R9=4
34. C9-1 C3=5 35. K5=4 P9+1
36. E5-3 A4+5 37. C9-4 A5+4
38. E7+5 A6+5 39. C9=8 R4=6
40. K4=5 C5+3

Black wins.

**Game 2: Xu Tianhong (Jiangsu) Vs.
Hu Ronghua (Shanghai)
(Guangzhou, 7th January 1991)**

1. C2=5 H8+7 2. H2+3 R9=8
3. R1=2 H2+3 4. P3+1 P3=1
5. H8+9 P1+1 6. C8=7 H3+2
7. R9+1 E3+5

As both sides are familiar with their play, the game is quickly turned into the opening of "**5th and 7th file Cannon, advancement of 3rd file Pawn vs. Screen Horse, using outward Horse to seal off Red Chariot**" (五七炮进三兵对屏风马外马封车). After that, the most popular play of Black is P1+1, then P9+1, R1+5, R2+4, E7+5, R9=4, A6+5, R4+5. The situation has become more complicate as both sides are locked in the attack on one wing. Now, Mr. Hu Ronghua switches to his favorite variation of playing his right Elephant. His purpose is to strength

the ranks of Pawn by playing R1+3 in his next move, and adopting the strategic policy of "overpowering the firm with the gentle, and gaining mastery by striking only after the enemy has struck".

8. R2+6

After crossing the river, the right Red Chariot can put more pressure on Black's forces in his left wing. If he changed to play R9=6, Black would play H2+1, then R6=8, C2=4, R8+2, P1+1, H9-8, C8+4. Black would find himself in a satisfactory position.

8. ... P1+1

By breaking with the conventions, Black pushes the Pawn forward to clear the way for his Chariot, hoping that he can defeat his enemy with a surprised attack. However, the play has a deceptive nature. The safe and stable play should be R1+3.

9. P9+1 R1+5 (as shown in diagram)

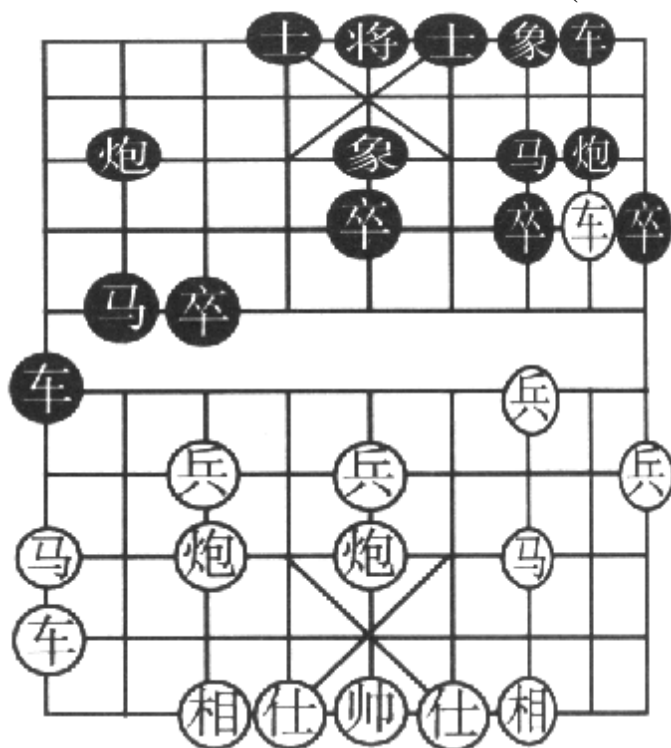


图 39

10. R9=4

Black's "careless play" must not be treated lightly. In the situation as shown in the diagram, with the aim of gaining the initiative, Red plays the Chariot sideward and then sacrifices his Pawn. If he changed to play E3+1, Black would play H2+3 to get back the initiative quickly. Or if he changed to play R2=3, Black would play C8+4, then C5+4, A6+5, E3+5, C8=7, R3=4, H7+5, R4=5, H2+3. Black has succeeded in taking the

Pawn.

10. ... R1=7

11. H3+4 A4+5

If he changed to play A6+5, Red would play H4+6, then C2+1, C7=8! C2=4, H6+4, C4=6, R4+5, R7+4, H9+8, H2-3, H8+7. Red will be in a winning position with his follow-up moving of H7+9.

12. H4+5

With a flexible tactics, Red takes Black's central Pawn with his Horse. It is not appropriate for Red to play H4+6 any more. As Black has played his right Advisor, Red Chariot can not cause any menace to the Black King.

12. ... C8=9 13. R2+3 H7+8

14. E3+1 R7+1

Red plays his Elephant for expelling the Black Chariot and at the same time, for sounding out how Black will respond. It is unwise for Black to capture Red Pawn with his Chariot when Red Horse is galloping at will. Black should change to play R7=8, despite the fact that Red would be still in a superior position after playing H5-4.

15. H5-6! P3=1

16. H6+4 R7-2

17. P7+1 C9=6 (as shown in diagram)

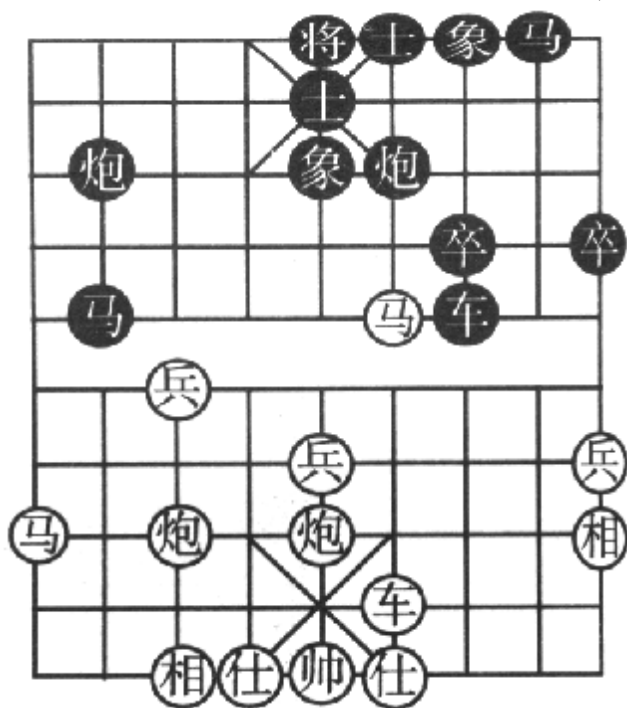


图 40

In the situation as shown in diagram, Black is fully aware that he is taking risk when he plays the Cannon sideward for taking the Chariot. However, he has no other alternatives. Otherwise, Black will find it difficult in resisting Red attack, as Red has the material advantage in Pawns and his pieces are taking a better position. For example, if he changed to play H2+1, Red would play C7-1, then H1-3, H9+7, Obviously, Black would be in a losing position. Following that, Red could launch a fierce attack by capturing Black's two Elephants with his Horse.

18. H4+5 E7+5
 19. C5+5 K5=4
 20. R4=6 C2=4 21. R6+2 C4-1

Black stubbornly resists Red attack by withdrawing his Cannon. If he changed to play C6+3, Red would play P7+1, then R7=3, C7=6, K4+1, A4+5, R3+1, R6+2, H2+4, E7+5, R3=1, H9+7, R1=2, C5=2. After that, Red could make more aggressive attack by playing C2+1 or C2-3.

22. H9+8 A5+4 23. R6=9 K4=5
 24. R9+5 C4-1 25. R9=2 R7=4
 26. A4+5 C6+2 27. C7=2 C6=8
 28. C5-2

Due to his correct offensive play, Red has expended his superiority step by step. Now, Red withdraws his Cannon to block Black Chariot. He has secured a winning position.

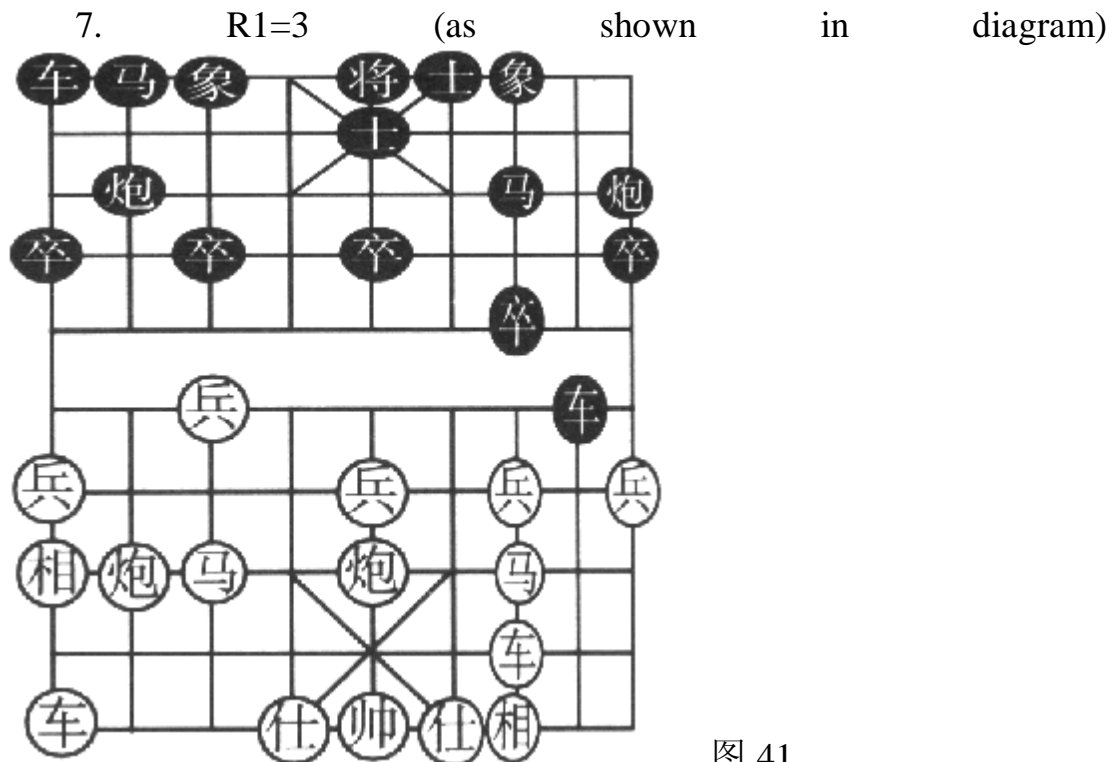
28. ... H2+4 29. H8+7 H4+6
 30. R2-3 K5+1 31. R2+3 H8+6
 32. C2=5
 Red wins.

**Game 2: Lu Qin (Guangdong) vs.
 Zhao Guorong (Heilongjiang)
 (Dalian, 3rd September, 1990)**

1. C2=5 H8+7 2. H2+3 P7+1
 3. P7+1 R9=8 4. H8+7 C8=9
 5. R1+1 R8+5 6. E7+9 A4+5

The game is now turned into the opening of "**Central Cannon, sideward-played Chariot and 7th file Horse vs. 3-step Tiger defense and riverbank Chariot**"(中炮横车七路马对三步虎骑河车). The stable and safe play for Red is to play the Elephant for protection of his Pawn. If he changed to play P5+1, Black would play C2=5. The game is in a state

of mutual attack. After the play of the Advisor, Black is ready to makes variations.



To place Red Chariot behind the Horse is a move of deception. Its aim is to present himself in an unfathomable manner, so as to put psychological pressure on his opponent and to win the game with a surprised attack.

7. ... C2+4

Being not misled by the tactical menace of Red play P3+1, Black takes the initiative first by sending his Cannon to the other side of the river. With a vigorous and meticulous play, Black has shattered Red attempt at one stroke. In the situation as shown in diagram 1, if Black erred in playing E3+5, Red would play P3+1, then R8-1 (R8=7, E3+1, R7+1, C8+1, Black would lose his Chariot), H3+4, Red would have the material gains. If he changed to play R8-1, Red would take the opportunity to make an assault by playing H7+6 and build up his initiative.

8. P5+1 H2+3

9. R9+1

It is a correct move that Red plays his Chariot for strengthening his formation. If he changed to play R3=6, Black would play R8+1 or C2=9. Red battle formation would be in a state of imbalance when his left wing

is under attack, while Black is in a superior position.

9. ... E3+5 10. R9=6 C2=9

By taking the edged Pawn with his Cannon, it can contain the offensive of Red in the central file and clear the way for his right side Chariot. The play is simple and clear-cut.

11. H3+1 C9+4 12. C8+2 R8+4
13. E9-7 C9+3 14. C5=2 R1=2
15. R6+5 R2+4

The above are the inevitable responding moves played by both sides. Now, Red Chariot has crossed the river with the aim to make a counterattack. However, the actual competition proves that such a plan can not be realized. Due to the hasty play, the unfavorable situation of Red is now turned worse. It is better for Red is to play R6+2 for strengthening his defense. When Black drives his Chariot to the riverbank, Red will be thrown into the mire.

16. E7+5

Red has no other alternatives but to play the Elephant. If he changed to play R6=7, Black would play R2=6! There are many opportunities for Black to launch an attack. For example, if Red played A6+5 (R7+1, R6+5! K5=4, R8=7, Red is losing quickly), Black would play R6+4, then C8-3, R6=7, C8=3, R8-2 (It is a move of precision. If R8-1, then FC+3! Red would have an opportunity for the counterattack), FC=6, R8=7, R7+1, R7+1, E7+5, R7-2 or H7+6, Black will be always in a superior position.

16. ... P3+1

By playing 3rd file Pawn for an exchange, it can activate all other pieces on board. It can be considered as a timely and powerful play. If he changed to play R2=6 for making a hasty attack, Red would play C8-3, an excellent move for defense. After that, Black may have two variations: (1) R6=5? K5=4, R8-1, K4+1, C9-1, K4+1, R8=7, H7-5! Red has turned the defeat into the victory. (2) R8-4, A6+5, R8=5, C8+1, R6=2, R3=1. Red has freed himself from the cramped battle formation.

17. R6=7 P3+1 18. R7-2 H3+4
19. C3=4 H7+6 20. A6+5 R8-3
21. P5+1

With his two Horses taking the position at the riverbank and other pieces at strategic positions, Black is ready to launch an all-round offensive. Red can only sacrifice his Pawn to stop the advance of the

Black Horse, attempting to postpone the crisis. Otherwise, when Black could make an invasion by playing H6+7, Red will be routed immediately.

21. ... P5+1 22. R7=4 H6-7
23. C8=6 H4+2

Black advances his Horse to make a forced exchange of pieces, thus making a breach in the enemy's line. The play is simple and powerful.

24. C6-4 H2+3 25. C4=7 R2+2
26. R4+2 P5+1 27. C7+5

When Red sees that there is no hope in his defense as Black Pawn can penetrate deep into his territory, Red plays his Cannon to capture Black's Horse for making a desperate struggle.

27. ... H7+8 28. R4=1 R8+3
29. R1=2 P5+1 30. R3=1 R2=1

Red is waiting for the chance that he can use his Chariot for an exchange of opponent's two pieces, hoping that he could draw the game by playing defense. Except this hopeless attempt, Red has no alternatives. When Black plays his Chariot to capture the Red Pawn, the idea of Red has been stamped out.

31. C7=9 R1=2 32. C9+2

Red has no other choice but to play his Cannon to the bottom rank, waiting the opportunity for a strike.

32. ... P1+1

Black's move is too leisurely and carefree. When Black has lost his guard, it might become the cause of ruin in Black's Play. Here, Black should play P5+1. If Red played E3+5, Black would play R2=7. After that, Black could make a chain of checkmate by playing R8=6 to make a sacrifice of his Chariot. When Red uses Chariot for an exchange of two pieces, Black has secured his winning position.

33. R1+7

Being in a hopeless position, Red suddenly hits upon an ingenious idea of driving his Chariot to the Black's second rank, planting a "time bomb" without turning a hair. With the Cannon at the bottom as its fuse, the bomb can be detonated at any time.

33. ... P5+1 34. E3+5 (as shown in diagram) E2=6

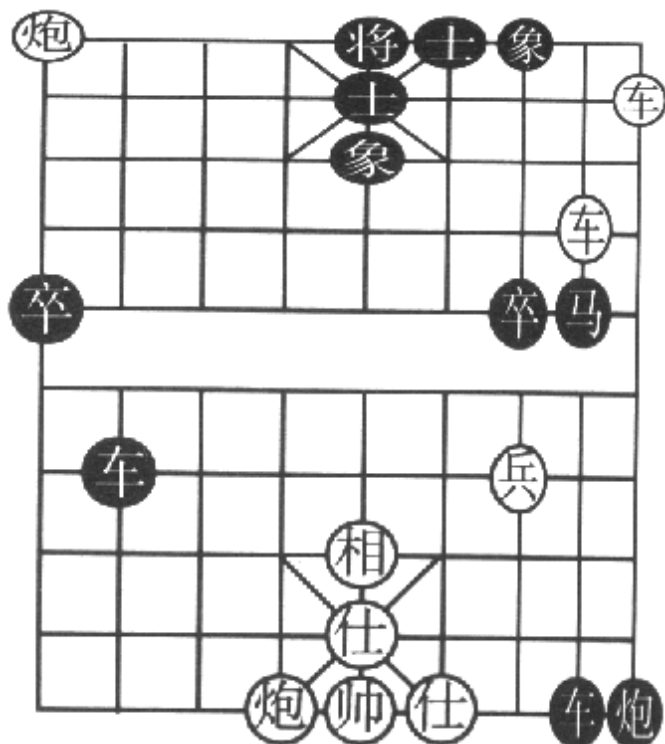


图 42

In the situation as shown in diagram 2, Black plays his Chariot sideward for a mating. As Black is eager to win, he has overlooked the strong counterattack of Red. The negligence of Black will lead to his defeat. If Black changed to play R2=7, Black will be still in a winning position.

35. C6+9

By taking this opportunity, Red ingeniously makes a sacrifice of his Cannon and wins the game with the suddenness of a thunderbolt.

35. ... E5-3

36. C6-1 E3+1

37. R1-8 R8=9

38. C6=8

Red wins.

**Game 3: Liu Dianzhong (Hebei) vs.
Lin Hongmin (Shanghai)
(Emei, 16th May, 1995)**

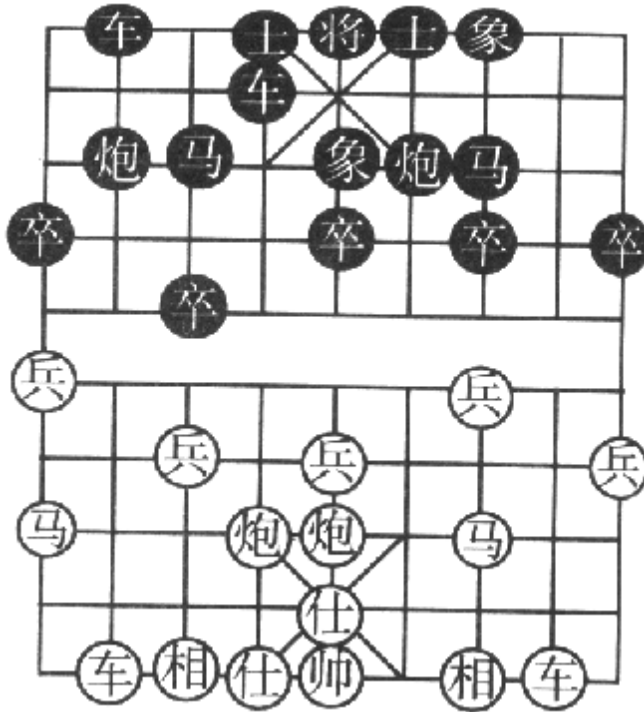
1. C2=5 H2+3 2. H2+3 C8=6

2. P3+1 P3+1 4. H8+9 E3+5

5. R1=2 H8+7 6. C8=6 R1=2

7. R9=8 R9+1 8. A4+5 R9=4

9. P9+1 (as shown in diagram)



1)

In the Xiangqi manuals, the most common play here is R8+4, then A4+5, P9+1, C2=1. After that, Red can play R8+5 or R8=4. Each variation has its own characteristics. Now, Red has broken the old conventions and is calmly waiting for the change by pushing his Pawn forward to activate his Horse. The move looks plain in appearance, but conceals many tricks.

9. ... R4+4

In the situation as shown in the diagram, Black responds positively by driving his Chariot to the riverbank. It can be considered as the best play of all variations. If he changed to play C2+4, Red would play R2+6. The initiative is in the hands of Red. Or if he changed to play A4+5, Red would play R2+8, then C2-1, R2=3, R4+6, R8+8! R2+1, A5+6, Black will suffer the materials.

10. R2+8 P7+1

Red Horse is advancing forward threatening Black Horse. The move is ferocious. If he changed to play E3+1, Black would play A4+5, then R2+8, C2-1, R2-2, C2+2. Red hasn't got any advantage. Black responds ingeniously by sacrificing his Pawn to rescue himself from the siege. Each side is displaying his skill in the play while one is playing defense and the other is playing offense.

11. R2=3

Red should be resolute to play Chariot for catching the Horse. If he

played carelessly by pushing his Pawn forward to take Black Pawn, Black would play R4=7. Black would stand better.

11. ... H7+6
 12. P3+1 R4=7
 13. R8+4 (as shown in diagram) R7=2

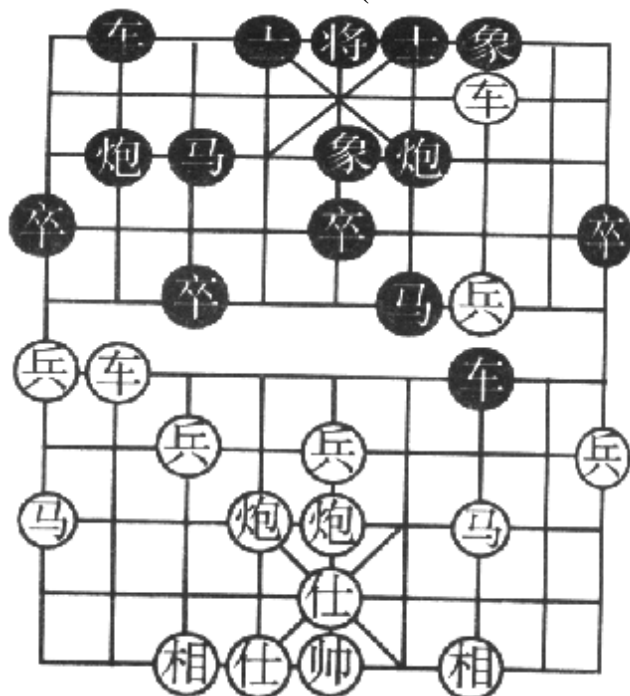


图 44

It is an important link in the play that Red moves his Chariot forward for an exchange in order to gain the initiative, and it is also a test to Black. If he changed to play R3=4, Black would play E5+7, Red will fail in his plan. In the situation as shown in diagram 2, Black has to make the decision at this important juncture. To accept the exchange of Chariot is obviously wrong as it has been proved by the competition. The result of the play demonstrates that such a responding move is the direct reason that has led to Black's defeat in the play. The correct move is R7+1. After that, the game may be evolved into the following lines: E3+1, A4+5, R8=3, R7-1, E1+3, C2-1, R3-2, C2+2, R3+2, H6+7, C5=4, R2=4. Black will be satisfied with the result. In the situation as shown in the diagram, Black could make a mistake by playing R7-1, Red play would R3-3, then E5+7, H3+2, H6-7, C5=3, E7-5, C3+4. Red has secured a superior position.

14. H9+8 H6+4 15. P3=1 C2=1
 16. P3=4 R2+5

The play of Red is well knit that Red plays his Pawn sideward for catching Black Cannon. Black has no other alternative but to accept the

exchange. If he changed to play C6=9, Red would play H8-6, then H4+2, C6=8, C1=2, C8+5, R2+2, C5=8, R2=1, R3=8. Red has the material gains.

17. P4+1 A4+5 18. P4+1 C1-1

Black's position besets with crisis as Red Pawn is now threatening the castle. There is a mistake in the order of the play of the Cannon. The correct move for Black is to play H4+5 to take Red central Cannon, and then C1-1. Black still can have enough strength in resisting Red offensive despite the fact that Red has got the upper hand.

19. C5=4 P5+1 20. H3+4

When playing the Cannon sideward and releasing his Horse, Red is smashing the enemy's resistance and advancing victoriously. Black's defeat is inevitable. The remaining moves are:

20. ... H4-6 21. H4+2 H6+5

22. H2+4 R2=4 23. R3+1 R4=6

24. H4+6 C1=4 25. C6+6 R6=7

26. C6=8 K5=4 27. R3-5

Red wins.

**Game 4: Liu Dahua (Hubei) vs.
Yan Wenqing (Hebei)
(Shanghai, 17th August, 1997)**

1. P7+1 C2=3 2. C2=5 E3+5

3. H2+3 P3+1

It becomes a popular opening of "**Pawn advancing vs. PR Cannon**" (挺兵对卒底炮). Black responds positively by pushing his 3rd file Pawn forward, which can lead to a complicated situation. In addition to that, Black can have the variation of R9+1, in which Black puts the stress on defense and counterattack. In responding to that, Red may have the following two lines: (1) R1=2, R9=2, H8+7, H2+4, C8=9, H7+6, A4+5, C9=6. Red is slightly in an advantageous position. (2) C5+4, A4=5, E7+5, H2+4, C5-1, R1=2, H8+6, R9=6, P3+1, R2+4, P5+1, R6=5. It will lead to the situation in which Red has the material advantage in Pawns, while Black can speedily deploy his pieces.

4. H8+9 P3+1 5. R1=2 R9+1

6. A6+5 R9=4 7. R2+4 (as shown in diagram)

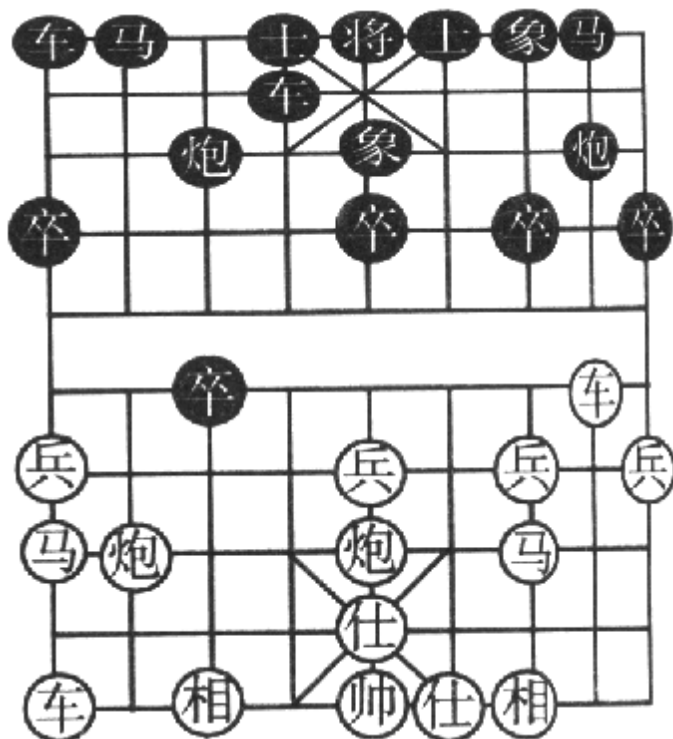


图 45

Red drives his Chariot to the riverbank for catching the Pawn. It is a move for seeking variations and also a test to Black. The most common play for Red is C5=4, A4+5, C5=1, H8+9, R2+4. After that, Black may respond with the play of R4+4, or P7+1, or P3+1. All these variations will lead to complicated situations.

7. ... R4+4

In the situation as shown in diagram, it is the best choice of all variations that Black drives his Chariot forward for making an exchange. The following two lines will put Black in a disadvantageous position: (1) R3+1, C8=6, R4+5, P9+1, H2+1, C5+4, A4+5, H9+8, R4-3, C5=1, P7+1, C1+3. Red has secured the initiative in attacking. (2) R4+2, R9=8, H2+1, C8=6. Red stands better.

8. C8+2 R4-2

It is the premeditated strategy that Red drives his Cannon for capturing the Black Chariot, and it is also a deceptive play. By retreating his Chariot, Black has ingeniously removed the risk. It seems that Red is in an upper hand, but in reality, Black is in an advantageous position as Red Cannon is dislodged. Black should refrain from playing R4=8, as Red could play C8=2, then H8+7, P3+1. Red will succeed in his scheme.

9. C8=9

It is inevitable for Red to take Black Chariot with his Cannon for taking the Chariot. If he changed to play R2=7 for taking the Pawn, Black

would play H2+4. As Red pieces are out of strategic position, the situation is in favor of Black.

9. ... H2+1 10. R2=7 P1+1
11. C9+3 R1+2 12. R9=8 H8+7
13. C5=6

After the exchange of the pieces, Red has lost the initiative. When he is aware of this, Red removes the Cannon immediately for adjusting his battle formation and makes preparations for making a protracted positional warfare. If he changed to play P3+1, Black would play C8+4. Red couldn't have any advantage.

13. ... P7+1 14. E7+5 C3=4

By playing Cannon sideward for an exchange, Black can gain the superiority in the arms of service. The move is clear-cut and powerful.

15. C6+5 R1=4 16. R8=6

It is a soft move, which has increased the difficulty for seeking a draw. The correct move is P9+1 or P3+1 for an exchange of the Pawn and for activating the Horse.

16. ... FR+6 17. A5-6 H7+6
18. P3+1 P7+1 19. R7=3 R4+4
20. R3=4 H6-4

Taking retreat as advance, Black is playing meticulously. If he carelessly played H6+4, Red would play A4+5. Black couldn't have any advantage.

21. R4+2 H4-2 22. R4=5 H2+3
23. R5=1 R4=1 24. H9-8 R1=4

It is an important move. Being in the armpit file, the Black Chariot can check the advance of the Red Horse.

25. R1=2 C8=6 26. R2-5

After taking the Black Cannon, Red withdraws his Chariot to the second rank for strengthening defense. Red is playing stubbornly.

26. ... P1+1 27. H8+6 H3=2
28. H6+8 R4=3 29. H3+4 R3+1

By driving his Chariot forward to take the Red Horse, Black is storming the enemy's position. If he changed to play R3=5 to take the Red Pawn, Red would play R2=6, then R5=6, H4+6, Red feels relaxed.

30. H8-7 P1+1 31. H7+9 R3=1
32. H9-7 R1=3 33. H7+9 H2+3
34. R2=6 R3-1 35. E5+3

Red has misjudged the situation when he plays the Elephant. The correct move is H4+6. If Black played R3-2, Red would play H6-4, P1+1, H9-7. After that, Red could play H4-6 to make a forced exchange of pieces. Black will find it difficult in winning the game.

35. ... H3=1

It is an unexpected move. Red is caught unprepared when Black plays his Horse to the edge. After that, Black's position is becoming more promising.

36. R6+2 R3-1 37. H4-5 P1+1
38. R6=9 P1+1 39. R9-2 R3+4

It is not an ideal move that Black plays the Chariot for protecting the Horse. It is better to play R3=7. After that, if Red played R9-1, Black could play R7+4. As Red has lost double Elephants, Black has more chances of winning the game.

40. A4+5 C6-1 41. P5+1 C6=5
42. K5=4 C5+4 43. H5+3 C5=6
44. E3-5 R3=2 45. H3+4

Red has misjudged the play when he drives the Horse to the armpit file. The correct move for Red is to play H3+5. After that, he could seek a draw by ferrying his Pawn cross the river when there is an opportunity.

45. ... A6+5 46. H4-6

It is unwise to retreat his Horse an exchange. The correct move is P1+1 to ferry driving his Pawn across the river as quickly as possible.

46. ... C6=8 47. E3+1 C8=5
48. K4+1 C5=6 49. E1+3 K5=6
50. K4-1 (as shown in diagram)

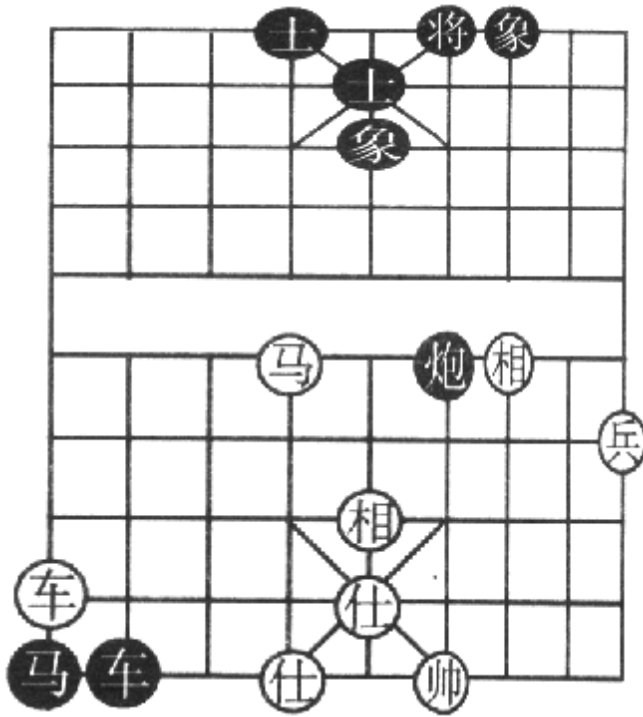


图 46

51. ... R2-6

When Black's King is exposed, it renders Black an opportunity of making a checkmate. It is unwise for Red to play K4-1, as it will make him to lose quickly. The correct move for Red is to play P1+1. In the situation as shown in diagram 2, Black ingeniously retreats Chariot, making Red difficult to respond.

51. R9+4

Red has no other choice but to make this move. If he changed to play R9-1 to take Black Horse, Red would play R2=6, then E5-7, C6=5, A5+4, R6+4, K4=5, R6=5, After that, Black could win very quickly by playing R5=1 to take the Red Chariot.

51. ... E5+3

It is a good move that Black plays his Elephant to block Red Chariot. For relieving the imminent menace of Black's play of R2=6, Red is forced to take the Elephant. Now Black Horse is set free, it is quite clear to see who is in the winning position.

52. R9=7 C6-3 53. R7+1 R2+2

54. R7-2 R2-2 55. R7+2 R2+2

56. R7-2 R2-3

Black shouldn't play carelessly when he is in the winning position. If Black erred in playing R2+1, Red would play R7-4, Red could have a favorable turn.

57. P1+1 R2=4 58. A5+6 H1-2
 Red resigns.

**Game 5: Li Laiqun (Hebei) vs.
 Tao Hanming (Dalian)
 Xiaogan, 4th April, 1988**

1. P7+1 P7+1 2. C2=3 E7+5
 3. H2+1 C8+4 (as shown in the diagram)

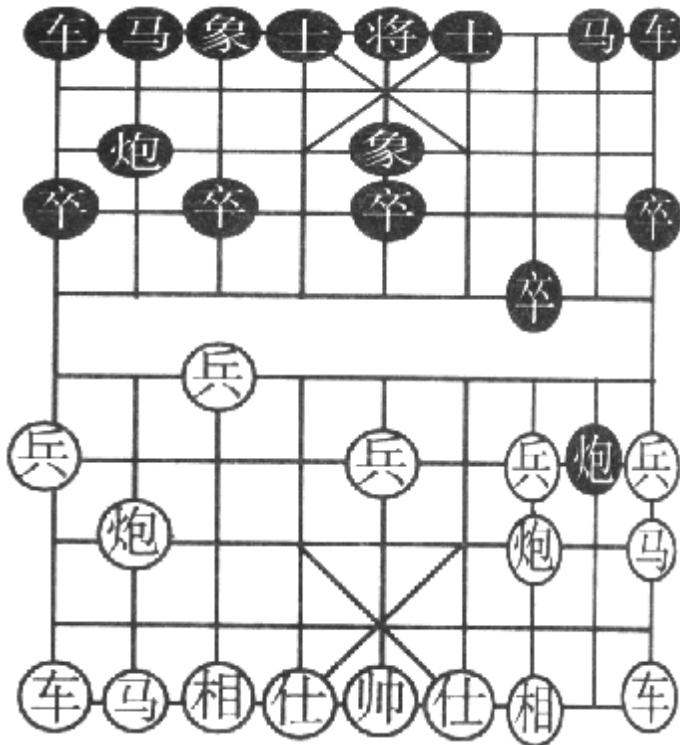


图 47

The most common play is H8+7, R1=2, R9=8, R2+4. It is a normal opening for both sides. Theoretically speaking, Red has the initiative in the play. Now, Black drives his Cannon across the river, with the aim of sealing off the Red right Chariot. Black's unconventional play has made the situation complicated and confusing.

4. R1=2

In face of the challenge of Black, Red resolutely sacrifices his central pawn by playing his Chariot to take the Cannon and makes a tit-for-tat play, displaying a lofty bearing. In the situation as shown in the diagram, if Red made a compromise by playing H8+7, Black would play H8+7, then R1=2, R9=8, E7+5, H2+1, P1+1, C2=3, R9=8 (C8+2, R1=2, H1+2, P3+1! Black has the upper hand), R1=2, C8=4, P3+1, P7+1, C3+5,

C3=7. Black could play C8=5 to make a checkmate and to exchange the Chariot and then play E5+3 to wipe out the Red Pawn. Black would be in a satisfactory position. If Red changed to play P3+1, Black would play P7+1, then R1=2, P7=8, P1+1, C2+2, H1+2, C2=8, Black can easily respond.

4. ... C8=5 5. H8+7 C5-2
6. H7+6 H2+1

When Black is slowly dispatching his pieces, Red leaves no time in driving his Horse forward. Red's play is well knit. It is a wise choice that Black places his Horse on the left edge for clearing the way for his pieces. If Black were reluctant to give up the exposed Cannon by playing C2+4, Red would play H6+7, then C2=5, H7-5, P5+1, P9+1, H8+7, R9+3, C5-1, R9=6, H2+3, C8=7. After that, if Black played H3+5, Red would play R6+2. Or if Black played R1+2, Red would play P7+1. In both variations, Red will be in a superior position.

7. H6+7 H8+7 8. H7-5

Red has a clear-cut tactics that following the exchange of Red Horse with Black Cannon, he drives the Chariot into the enemy's forest of Pawns.

8. ... P5+1 9. R2+6 P9+1
10. P7+1 E5+3

It is a good move that Red sacrifices his Pawn for gaining the initiative. Black is unwise to take the Red Pawn with his Elephant, as it will put Black under the control of Red on all fronts. The correct move is R9+3 for seeking an exchange of Red Chariot. If so, Black still can have strength in resistance.

11. C8=5 E3-5 12. R9=8 R1=2
13. R8+5 R9+3

Red offensive is increasing when he drives his left Chariot into the battle. Now, it is too late and useless for Black to exchange the Chariot with Red. Furthermore, it will weaken the defense in his left wing, thus giving Red the opportunity for making a breakthrough. It is better for Black to play A6+5 for strengthening his defense.

14. R2=1 H7+9 15. R8=5 A6+5
16. R5+1 H9-7 17. R5=3 K5=6

Black has no other alternatives but to play his King. If he changed to other moves, Red would make assault by playing C3+3. Black can hardly make any resistance.

18. P3+1

It is a prelude for Red to enhance his initiative and make a checkmate. If he played hastily A4+5, Black would play C2=3, then P3+1, R2+5. Some side issues might be cropped up.

18. ... P7+1 19. A4+5 H7-8
20. R3=4 H8+6 21. K5=4 A5+6
22. C3=4

Now, Black's position is torn to pieces. Black has no other alternatives but to resign, and Red wins.