

Xiangqi Basic Tactics

Chinese Xiangqi Association

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Preface

Xiangqi is a game of long history. With infinite changes and variations, Xiangqi can afford the people with the greatest delight. It can help us to temper the ability of thinking, will and ideal of overall strategy, to enhance the ability of discovery, analysis and solving the problems, it can also help us to regulate our spirit and life. Along with the vigorous development of sports activities, there are more and more xiangqi fans and frequent exchanges of xiangqi activities in the world. Xiangqi has become one of most popular sports and leisure activities nowadays.

A xiangqi game can be divided into the opening, the mid-game and the end-game. These three stages are closely linked. At the stage of opening, both sides deploy their troops in a battle array, and each vies to occupy the strategic points. A mid-game can be directly affected by the opening. The victory is often decided upon in the end-game, when the climax of the battle is over. If one side has the initiative at the opening stage, he can rely on his strength to expend the initiative and wrest the superiority. Though someone has lost the advantage at the opening, if he could respond with correct moves in the mid-game, he still can regain the initiative and enter into the end-game with a superior position. Even that he can take a surprised attack and win the victory before the mid-game is over.

The mid-game is the climax of a game, in which the battle is most fiercely fought. It is full of creativity and the power of attraction. The mid-games have great amount of cream. But, comparing with the opening and end-game, the mid-game still is a blank area as far as the xiangqi theory is concerned. Therefore, many people believe the mid-game is the most difficult part for the people to learn, as it is changeable, complicated and no fixed law can be followed. It is true that almost all the xiangqi texts, whether the ancient or the contemporary, are related to the full games, the end games or the composed games. Even some books do touch upon some mid-games, they are limited in number and fail to give a comprehensive analysis on the tactics.

In reality, there exist various kinds of basic and concrete tactics in the mid-games. They are similar to the "formulas" as that in "Go" game. It is very important for us to master these "set

patterns" and their developments. The ordinary people can only cry out "good play" when they see a brilliant move, they can not tell what kind the tactics is and its features. It prevents them from being promoted from the height of the perceptual knowledge to the height of the rational knowledge.

We often see some well-known players can play fast and are farsighted in their play. This is not because that they are really "genius", but they have spent much time in practice. They are very familiar with various kinds of tactics, have the creativity, and are good at application of these tactics.

We have included in the book 10 categories of the mid-game tactics, their features and development, as well as 170 concise and practical examples, hoping our readers and xiangqi fans can use them as a reference in their mid-games practice.

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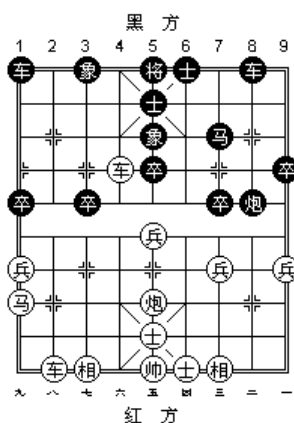
Chapter One Shifting

Shifting refers to the tactics of dividing the forces for launching an attack on the enemy, when the forces of both sides are entangling each other on the same rank or file. The basic feature of shifting is: one side makes a move to attack two different pieces of the opponent simultaneously, cutting off his vanguard from the rear. By doing so, the attacking side can capture the enemy's piece and gain the initiative or the superiority. This attacking method is aggressive. However, as the movement of such a tactics is not clear, and usually an ordinary player may not be well versed in it, he may be thrown into a difficult position if his opponent can take advantage of it. This tactics can be divided into two types, that is, shifting with Chariot as the "basic piece", or shifting with Cannon as the "basic piece", and they can be re-divided into four types: "shifting Cannon for challenging Chariot ", "shifting Horse for challenging Chariot", "shifting Chariot for exposing Cannon" and "Shifting Horse for exposing Cannon". Now, We analyze them one by one as follows:

1. Shifting Cannon for challenging Chariot

This is a most common method. When Cannon and Chariot of one side is in alignment with the opponent's unrooted Chariot (that is, unprotected Chariot), both side must pay attention to such a tactics. Following are 5 examples in different situations.

The first example is typical and simple. At the situation as shown in diagram 1, Red attack on the central-file proves unsuccessful, now, what should he play?



(Red plays first)

1. C5=8! R1=2?

Red plays Cannon to the flank, attempting to take a checkmate at the enemy's bottom rank, and to sound out Black's response. If Black plays A5-4, then C8+7, A6+5, K5=6, (try to capture Advisor with Cannon), R8+3, R8+8, it lies hidden a move of R8=5 for capturing Advisor, followed with aggressive and successive checkmate (If Red plays Cannon to take Advisor, Black could play R1+2 for exchanging Chariots. Black could relieve himself from the besiege). Abandoning the attack on the central file, Red changes his tactics flexibly in accordance with the situation. Black falls into the trap when he plays Chariot!

Fig. 1

2. C8=2! ...

By making a feint to the east and attacking the west, Red has captured Black Chariot. While attacking Chariot on the left, Red Cannon is menacing Black Chariot, followed with a checkmate. Black can hardly protect his two pieces at the same time and is doomed to lose his Chariot. This is an example of "Capture with discover check".

Following is the example of the tactics of "play Cannon to challenge Chariot". As shown in Diagram 2, both sides are equally balanced in strength when Red Chariot and Cannon are in a

cramped position, while Black has a disordered formation.

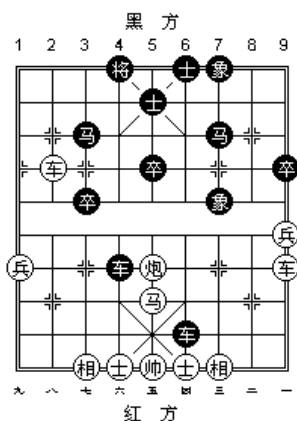


Fig.2

(Red plays first)

1. R8=7 H3-1?
2. R7=9 R1-3
3. R9+3! E7+5

The retreat of Black Horse and advance of Elephant are bad moves. Black has lost his vigilance on the tactics of Red. Black's first move H3-1 should be changed into R6-6. With a material advantage of Pawn, Black is in superior position.

4. C5+4! R4=9

Red drives Cannon forward, sacrificing his Chariot to make an assault. At the same time, he is attacking Black Horse. With this move, Red has secured a winning position. Black has no choice but to take Red Chariot. If he changed it into other moves,

he is sure to lose the game too.

5. R9=7 K4+1
6. H5+6! A5+4

When Black captures Red Chariot, Red Horse takes the opportunity to station itself at the riverbank, posing a menace to the enemy.

7. R7=5 Red is sure to win.

If Black retreats his Advisor in his next move, Red Horse could take a checkmate with his Chariot. It must be pointed out that, when Red shifts his Cannon, Black must need one to respond to the challenge of Chariot. So, he has already lost the initiative. We all understand that the initiative of one move can be the decisive factor for winning the victory.

The above is an example of "shifting Cannon for challenging Chariot" to gain the initiative.

In order to help you understand the variations of this tactics, we'd like to give you some more examples.

Diagram 3 shows a position developed from the opening of "central Cannon, promoted Chariot vs. Screen Horses, left-rank-Chariot".

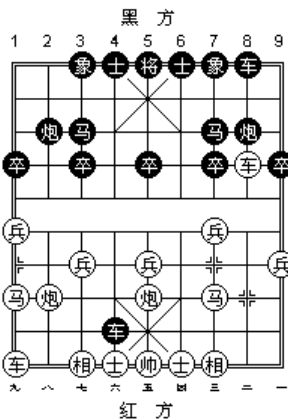


Fig.3

Now, Black has the turn to make a move:

1. ... C8-1
2. C8=7?

Red plays Cannon for paving the way for his Chariot. It seems a good move but in reality it is a bad one. The correct move is to play right Advisor.

2. ... C8=4!
3. R2+3 C4+8!

With the exchange of Chariot, Black has virtually made two moves. Now, he sacrifices his Chariot to capture Red Advisor, and at the same time, he is also attacking Red double Chariots. Black has secured a winning position.

4. R9+1

If Red changes it into H9-8, then Black would play R4=2 (it lies hidden the move C4=2 for

checkmate), K5=6, H7-8 (Black should refrain from playing C2+7, as Red could play R9=8 to take Cannon), Black is in a winning position.

4. ... R4=1

By capturing Red Chariot, Black has built up the initiative in his offensive. Now, If Red plays R2=3? Black could respond with H3-5, then R3=1, Red Chariot is in a stranded position. Red is trying to make an escape of his Chariot, and he can hardly ward off the fierce attack from Black's C2+7.

Our readers must be familiar with another kind of this tactics. Taking Diagram 3 for example, if Red plays C8=7 first, then Black would play C8-1, then R9=8, Red left Chariot is chasing Black's 2nd-file Cannon. At this time, Black can employ the tactics of "shifting Cannon for challenging Chariot" with C8=2 in order to extricate himself from the difficult. Now, the game leads to the position as shown in Diagram 4. In such a circumstance, Red has to abandon Chariot for exchanging Black's double Cannons. In no case should Red play C2+3, as after Black's C2+8, Black 7th-file Horse is menacing Red Chariot, and his 4th-file Chariot can take a check with the aid of Cannon after the Red Advisor is taken. Red has no ability to protect both pieces. Such a situation we must pay attention to.

Following is an example of "capturing with discover check".

The position of Diagram 5 is developed from the opening of "Opposite Direction Cannons". Now, Red has the turn to make a move:

1. H3+4 C8+5!

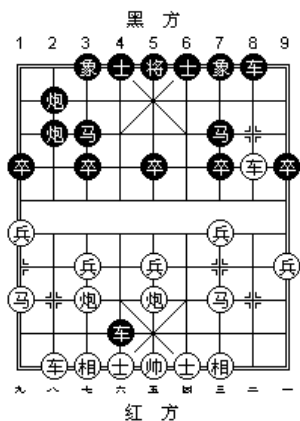


Fig. 4

The move of Red Horse results in "lose of protection" of 2nd-file Chariot. Black Cannon can take the advantage of it to chase Red Horse. Red will lose the initiative if he retreats Horse with H4-3, which means that Black has made two moves while Red remains in the same place.

2. H4+5 H3+5 3. C5+4 A4+5

4. P5+1? C8=5!

After two rounds of moves, when Red carelessly pushes the central Pawn forward, Black Cannon strikes a sudden attack to capture Red Cannon (If Red plays R2+9, then Black plays C5-4 to take a check, Red will lose his Chariot). Even if Red doesn't play P5+1, he still can not cope

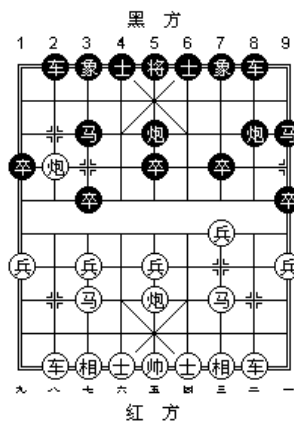
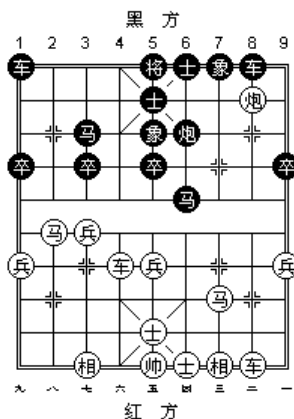


Fig.5

with the situation, as he can neither play Advisor nor Elephant. If Red played C5=1 (to guard against Black C8=5, Red could play C5=2), Black could play P7+1, then C5+1, P7+1, now Black has a promoted Pawn, Red comes to grief. At such a situation, the better move for Red is R2=1, keeping clear of the enemy's cutting-edge. Though having lost the initiative, Red still has enough strength to in defence.

Diagram 6 shows the position of "check for challenging Chariot", another example of this tactics. (Red moves first)



1. H8+7 C6+1?

Black's unprotected Chariot is suffering from the suppression of Red Chariot and Cannon. It goes without saying that Black should guard against Red tactics of "play Cannon to fight Chariot". However, Black drives Cannon forward to chase Red Horse.

2. C2=4! R8+9

Red now launches the offensive with Cannon to challenge Black Chariot, and at the same, it blocks the Elephant's eye. Black has no choice but to capture Red Chariot, while Red Horse has the opportunity to take a check by attacking Elephant!

3. H7+5 R1=3 4. H3-2

Fig.6

Of course, Red shouldn't play hastily H5+7. Now, Red has gained great superiority.

2. Shifting Horse for challenging Chariot

This is another position of the method of shifting in which Chariot is used as the basic piece. When an unprotected Chariot of one side is in align with Chariot and Horse of the other side, both sides must pay attention to this tactics. Following are two examples:

Diagram 7 shows the position of a mid-game when the stage of opening is just over. Now, Red moves first:

1. P3+1 P7+1 2. C2=3 R4=8

Red sacrifices his Pawn for attacking Black Elephant, bringing about the conflict.

3. C3+7 A6+5 4. H2+4 R8=6

5. R4+1 R6+2?

Red Chariot has now "stricken root" at the corner of the Palace. It lies hidden a move of H4+5, menacing the enemy's Cannon and challenging Chariot (R6+6, H5+7, K5=6, A5+4), while Black responds carelessly, thinking that he has got the initiative and there is no harm if he captures Red Chariot.

6. H4+6! R6+4 7. H6-8! ...

Though Red does have the initiative, but now his Horse is menacing Red Chariot, so the initiative is now in the hands of Red, as Black has to waste one move to drive 6th-file Chariot

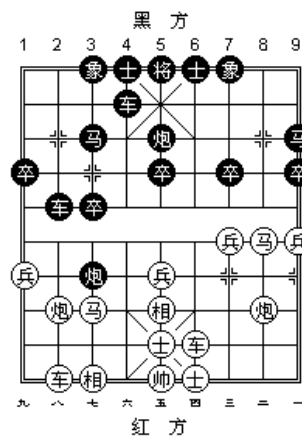
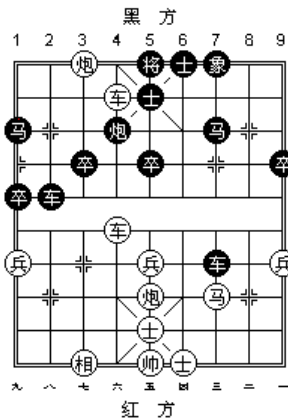


Fig.7

Fig. 9

Now, Red can gain a piece, as Red will play R3=8 to take a checkmate and at the same time, Red Cannon is menacing Black Chariot. Black can hardly cope with the situation. Following is the development of Black's three variations: (1) Black A5-4, R3=6! Black has lost the Chariot; (2) Black R7=6, C3+2, R6=7. Red mounts a checkmate with R3=8, extricating himself from the containment; (3) B C1=2, R3=8, H7+9, E3+1, Red has gained an enemy piece (At this time, Red shouldn't take a checkmate hastily, as Black Horse could play H9+7 to capture Red Cannon and mount a checkmate).

The above is an example of "shifting Chariot for a checkmate and exposing Cannon to capture an enemy piece". Now, let's see the example of "exposing Cannon for a checkmate, and shifting Chariot for capturing an enemy piece". At the situation as shown in Diagram 10, Red is ready for taking an offensive. What will be his next move for defeating the enemy?



1. C5=6! R2-4

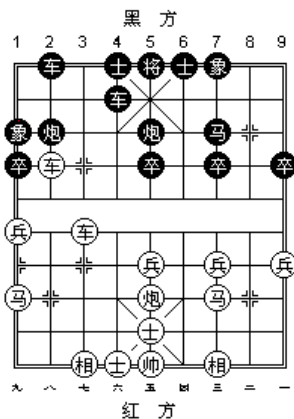
Red plays Cannon sideward, posing for capturing the enemy's Cannon with C6+5. If Black plays R7+1, then C6+5, R2-4, C6=5, A5+4, RR+3, R2=3, C5=9, Red stands better. However, now, Black retreats Chariot to chase Red Cannon, thinking that if Red plays C7=4, Black could play K5=6, then C6=5, R7+1, what a misjudgement.

2. R6=3 !

Making a feint to the east while attacking in the west, Red moves Chariot to challenge Black Chariot, at the same time, his Cannon is exposed for taking a checkmate. Black has no choice but to discard his Chariot, facing the defeat.

Fig. 10

Following is an example showing the tactics of "exposing Cannon, shifting Chariot for capturing enemy's two pieces. At the situation as shown in Diagram 11, now Red makes a move:



1. C5=8 R4+1?

It is a bad move that Black plays Chariot to protect Cannon. The correct move is R2+1, lying hidden the move C2+5. When Red plays C8+5, Black can respond with R4+1.

2. R8=6! R4+1

Red moves Chariot to expose Cannon. Black Chariot is under the attack by Red two pieces. Black has no alternative but to take Red 6-file Chariot.

If Red plays R7+5 hastily, Black would play R4-3, asking for an exchange. Red can not get any advantage. So, Red releases his Horse with the aim to render assistance in the attack. Now, Red has gained a superior position.

Fig.11

4. Shifting Horse to expose Cannon

This is one of the tactics of "Shifting method", in which Cannon is used as the "basic piece". Following are two examples:

At the situation as shown in Diagram 12, both sides are equal in strength. Now, Red has the turn to make a move.

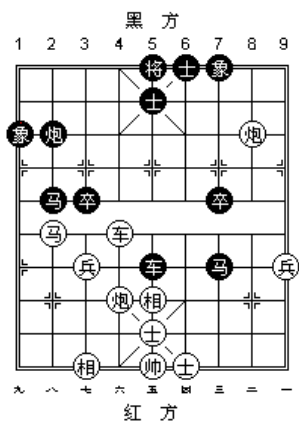


Fig.12

1. C6=8 P3+1

Hoping that Red Horse can have an exchange with Black Cannon, Red plays R6=8 to launch an attack, while Black sacrifices his Pawn, luring Red Chariot into an ideal position.

2. R6=7? H2-4!

Red covets capturing of Black Pawn. However, his situation will be worse if he played R6+1, as Black could gain a piece with H2-3. The better move for Red is R6=4. Now, Black seizes the opportunity to move his Horse for exposing Cannon and mounts an attack.

3. R7+2 C2+5

If now Red changes it into C8=5, Black would play H4+3, then P7+1, R5-4 to attack two pieces.

Taking the initiative, Black wipes out the enemy's Cannon and mounts an offensive with Chariot, Horse and Cannon.

Diagram 13 shows a position developed from the opening of "5th-and 9th-file Cannons vs. screen Horses, right rank-Chariot". Now, Red double Chariots and Cannon are enforcing the control in the front, reinforced by the central Cannon and Pawn in the rear, and Red Horse is ready to drive out, Red offensive is so fierce. As for Black, except one Chariot, other pieces are in a cramped position. How can Black seize an opportunity to make a break-through from the besiege? Now, Black makes the move.

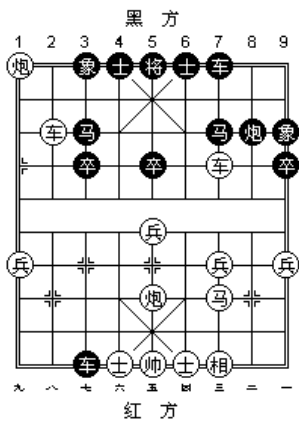


Fig.13

1. ... H7-5!

Black shifts Horse to expose his Cannon, chasing and challenging Red Chariot, bringing about the change of the situation.

2. C5+4 ...

Red Cannon bombards on Black central Pawn, hoping to frustrate Black's plan.

2. ... H5+4!

Black steadily releases Horse for retaining his original tactics.

3. R3+3

If Red plays R8=7, then R7+3, C5=7, H4-3, Black

ingeniously get out of the predicament.

3. ... C8=2

Black Cannon moves to the right to assist in the attack, while Red Chariot has to make an escape. Red has lost the initiative no matter his Chariot retreats and advances.

4. R3-3 H4+3 5. A4+5 C2+7

The situation on board is radically changed. Black has gained much superiority.

2. ... R6=9 3. C1=4 R3=8
4. R2=3 (Red stands better)

At the situation as shown in Diagram 17, Red position is not optimal. Whether he can use the tactics of taking discover check and achieve a better situation? (Red moves first)

1. C8=1 R2+2

Red sacrifices his Chariot first in exchange for Cannon. After that, he takes a discover check to capture a Black Horse. If Black changes it into R2=5, then E7+5, C9+8, R2-5, C9+1, R8+1, H7+6, R2-1, P7+1, R8=2, Black will lose his Cannon.

2. C1+8 A6+5 3. R2+3 H7-6

If Black changes it into A5-6, Red would play R2=3! Red still can get a Horse back.

4. C5+4 R4=5 5. R2-2!

Black is forced to offer his Horse. No matter Black plays H6+8 or H6+7, Red still can capture his Horse and take a discover check in his next move. Black dares not to take Red Cannon. Now, if Red changes it into C5-2, Black R2-3, Red would be in an unfavorable situation.

The tactics of discover check is often used for "relieving oneself from check by returning the opponent with a check" and for reinforcing his defense line. At the situation as shown in Diagram 18, both sides are engaged in a counterattack. Black has a material advantage and is ready for taking a checkmate. Let see how Red will respond.

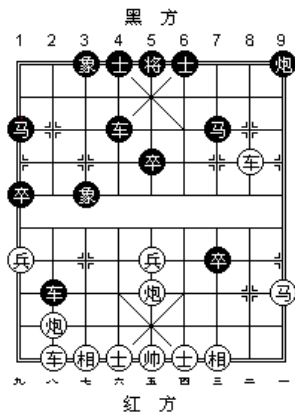


Fig. 17

1. K5=6 C7+1

It is the only move for Red to move his King. Black is pressing forward step by step. First of all, Black makes an escape of his Cannon from the mouth of Red Elephant. In his next move, Black is ready to take a check with Chariot, forcing Red to have an exchange. He can maintain the winning position if he has the material advantage. In such circumstance, Red can not find a way for him to take a check, nor he can keep away from the exchange of Chariot. Let see how Red will react and turn the losing position into a winning one.

2. R6+2 K5+1 3. R6-1 K5-1
4. H5+7!

Red drives his Horse forward, a move for both offensive and defensive! As Red can play the discover check to strengthen the defense on the 6th file, Black dare not to challenge Red for an

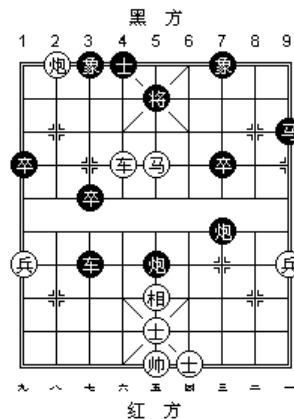


Fig.18

exchange of Chariot. Following are the lines of the development of these two variations:

(1) R3=2, R6+2, K5+1, R6-2, K5-1, R6=4 to take a checkmate.

(2) K5=6, R6+1, A4+5 (If Black changes it into C5-5, then H7+6 to take a check, Cannon will fall into the mouth of Chariot), R6=5, K6+1, C8-2, E3+5, H7+6, E5-3, R5=4 to take a checkmate.

2. Discover check for capture

The second kind of "capture with discover check" is: When the King and his piece(s) of one side are on the same rank or file (or be brought to the same rank or file), another side often mount a checkmate first, forcing the pieces of his opponent unable to move, and then seize the opportunity to take a check with Chariot or Cannon and capture the piece behind the King. The most common case is to capture the opponent's Chariot. Following are four examples.

At the situation as shown in Diagram 19, Red moves first:

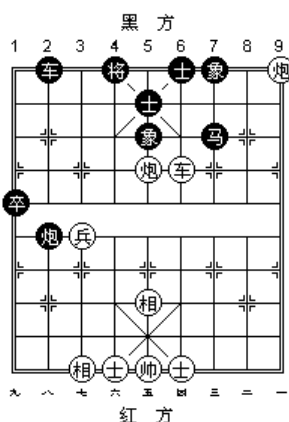


Fig. 19

Diagram 20 shows a position, in which Red seizes the opportunity to capture with a discover check when Black carelessly execute a weak move.

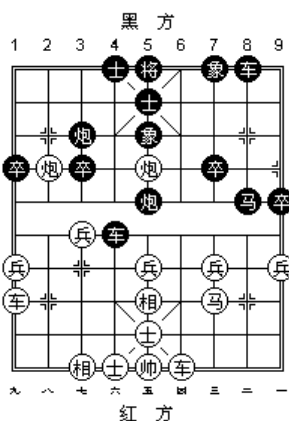


Fig.20

With the lost of his forces, Black is totally defeated and dispersed on all fronts.

There are also several variations. It proves that Red is the winner in these variations.

(1) Black C5=6, Red R6+7, then K6+1, C5=7, E5+7, R6-1, C8-2, Red wins;

1. C5+2! R2+1 2. C5=3 R2=7?

With Red Cannon, it can curb the movement of the enemy's Horse and attack Advisor, and lure Black into the trap. While Black kills Red Cannon with Chariot, mistakenly thinking that the development of the game will be: Red R4+3, then K4+1, R4=8, Black could play R7=9 to capture Cannon and gain one piece from the enemy. However, Red has his follow-up moves, concealing a "capture with discover check".

3. R4+3 K4+1 4. R4=6! K4=5

5. R6=8 E7+9

If Black changes it into K5=6, Red would play R8-5, then R7=9, R8+4, H7-5, C1=2, Red is in a superior position.

6. R8-1 (By capturing the enemy's Chariot, Red is sure to win).

(Black moves first)

1. H8+6?

Black Horse is attacking Red two pieces. It seems a good move, but in reality it is a bad one.

2. R4+4!

Being full of confidence and with an accurate calculation, Red sacrifices the Chariot. When Black Chariot is out of the strategic point, Red mounts an attack step by step.

2. ... R4=6 3. C8+3 C3-2

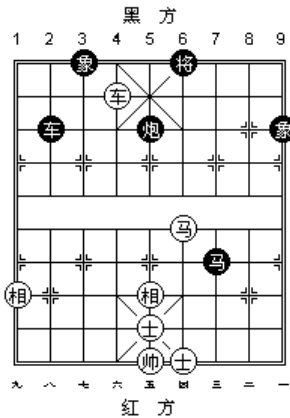
4. R9=6 K5=6 5. C5+2!

It is a tough play that Red Cannon bombards Black Advisor. Now, Black can hardly resist. Following are the lines of the

development: C5-3, R6+7, C5-1, R6=5, K6+1, R5=4, K6=5, R4-5,

- (2) Black E5+7, R6+7, K6+1, C5=7, R6=8, R6-1, C5-3, C8-1, R6=5, Red wins;
- (3) Black K6=1, C5=7, K6=5, R6+7, E5+7, R6=7, Red is sure to win.

Following is an example of the method which Cannon is used in capturing with discover check. At the situation as shown in Diagram 21, Black is in a superior position as he has a material advantage. However, his rear is not so stable. He must guard against exchange of piece with which Red could make a draw. What is the most stable tactics for launching an attack and reducing the changes it into less extent? Now, Black moves first.



1. ... H7+5!

2. H4-5

Black boldly sacrifices his Chariot. If Red changes it into R6+1, then K6+1, H4+3, K6=5, H3+5, R2+7, A5-6, H5+7, K5+1, R2-1, R6-8, H7-6 is a common method for taking a discover check and capturing the Chariot.

2. ... R2+7 3. R6-8 C5=8!

4. A5+6 C8+7

Black captures Chariot with a discover check. After that, Black Chariot can play R2-2 to attack Red two pieces. After taking one Elephant, the game leads to the end of "Single Chariot vs. Horse and two Advisors", in which Black can easily win the

Fig.21 game.

"Attacking from the back" is a common method used for capturing the enemy piece with a discover check in the competition.

Following is an example of "capture with discover check" when one's Chariot and King are on the same line. At the situation as shown in Diagram 22, Red is going to play R8-1 for capturing Black Horse in his next move. If Black played H1+3, Red would play R8=7 to attack Black's two pieces. If Black played C3=6 to take a check, Red could play C5=4, returning Black with a check and gaining a piece. It seems that Black will lose a piece. Now, let see how Black deal with the situation:

(Black moves first)

1. ... H1+3 2. R8=7 C3=8!

3. R7-2?

Without due consideration, Red hastily retreats Chariot to capture Black Horse, resulting in lost of his Chariot when Black takes continuous check with the joint attack of Chariot and Cannon.

3. ... C8+7 4. E3+1 R7+5

5. K4+1 C8-3! 6. A5+6 R7-1

Black wins the game when Red has lost Chariot under Black's discover check.

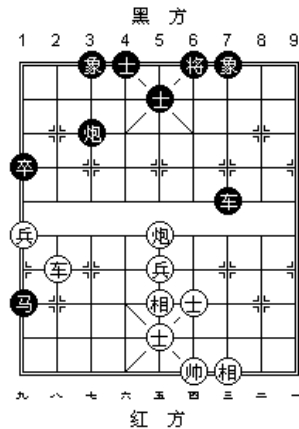


Fig.22

3. Discover Check for An Escape

This is one of special kind of "capture with discover check": one side often uses Cannon to chase the enemy's pieces, creating confusion among them. It may lead to a "mutual chase" situation. Then, taking the initiative of checking first (sometimes taking the initiative of checkmate or capture), his Cannon makes an escape, resulting in material advantage. This tactics is often neglected by the beginners. Following are the four examples.

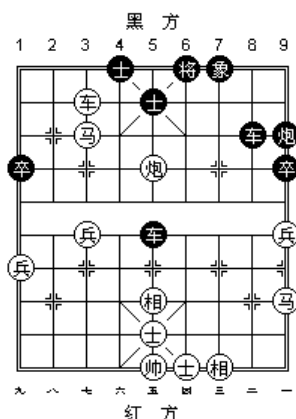


Fig.23

Cannon easily makes an escape, thus the lost piece is retrieved.

Diagram 24 is another example of the employment of such a tactics. It seems that both sides are now equal in strength and the situation is quite calm. If Red plays R4=8, Black will play K4=5. Now, let see what tactics Red will employ in launching a successful attack.

(Red moves first)

1. R4=8! R4=2

If Black changes it into C1=2. Red will play R9=8 to chase Cannon and occupy the strategic file. Red has the initiative. The situation will be quite unfavorable to Black, as Red could play R8+5, then K4+1, C4=6, A5+4, C8=6, Black Chariot would be lost.

2. C8=6 C1=2

C8=6 is a move of great implications. By doing so, it has "laid the mines", at the same time, it can guard against Black's move of R2+3 to protect Cannon. If so, Red would play C6+2 to attack Chariot and gain a piece. And if Black played R2+5, Red could play C6+4, Black would be in hard position.

3. C4=8! C2=1

If Black changes it into R2=5, Red will play R9=8, menacing with a checkmate and capture Black Cannon.

4. C8=6 K4=5 5. R9-1 Red has captured an enemy piece.

At the situation as shown in Diagram 25, Black has the material advantage. Now, let's see how Red use this tactics to make an escape of his pieces and achieve a favorable situation.

(Red moves first)

The first example is a typical one. At the situation as shown in diagram 23, one Black Chariot covets on Red Cannon, while another Chariot and Cannon are targeted at Red Horse. It looks that Red is sure to lose a piece. But in reality, Red still can retrieve back one piece. Following are the lines of the development:

(Red moves first)

1. C5=8 C9=3 2. C8+1! C3+1

3. C8=2 K6+1 4. R7-2

By using the tactics of "abandoning first and gaining later", Red abandons his Horse first, and makes escape of Cannon. Then, he attacks Black Chariot with Cannon, cutting off the link between Black Chariot and Cannon. By taking a check, Red

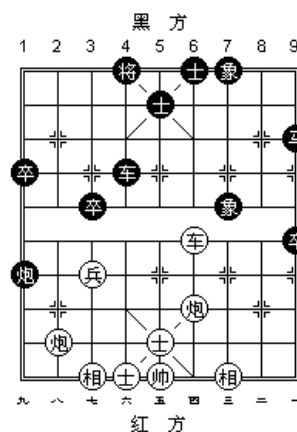


Fig.24

1. R9+2 K5+1 2. R9-1 K5-1

Red Chariot has virtually taken the initiative and put Black Cannon under its control.

2. C2-5! R3=7 4. C2+6! ...

It would be a great blunder if Red carelessly play C2=9! as Black can launch a fetal attack with C3+8 and R7+3, by sacrificing the Cannon.

4. ... R7-6 5. R9=7 R7=8

6. R7-5 H1+2 7. R7=8 The game will be a draw when Black has lost Horse.

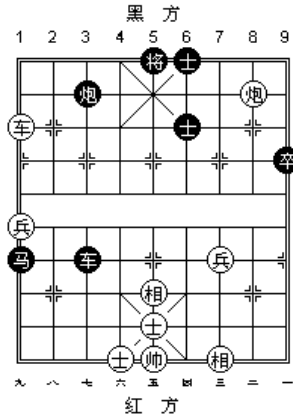


Fig. 25

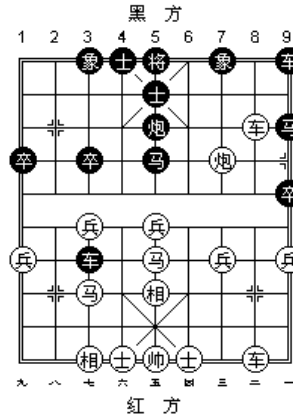


Fig. 26

Diagram 26 shows a game in which, when the attacking side takes a check or chases the enemy's pieces, his Cannon makes an escape. Now, Red makes the move.

1. C3=1! H9-8

If Black changes it into R9=8, Red could play C1=7, then R8+2? C7-3 to take a smothered checkmate, Black will lose his double Chariot.

2. C1=7 R3=4

Red Cannon is chasing Black Chariot, creating confusion in Black's battle formation, then moves sideward to chase Chariot again and make an escape. If Black changes it into R3=5, H7+5, H5-7, R2+1, C5+4, A4+5, Red still can gain a piece by playing Cannon to attack Black Horse.

3. FR+2 R9=8 4. R2+9 H5+4

5. C7-1

Now, Red is in a superior position as he has the material advantage. If Black plays C5+4, Red could respond with H7+5. As Black has to guard against the "capture with discover check", he dare not to take Red Horse.

Chapter III Chase

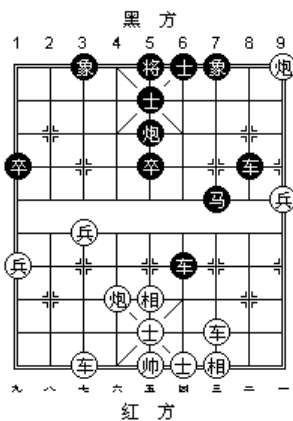
"Chase" often refers to the battle process of menacing, attacking, pursuing, or capturing an enemy's piece(s). It is a common tactics used in the mid-game. Its main purpose is to reduce the enemy's strength. Though most of the methods are simple and plain, we must have a good knowledge of some special application methods and their features.

We'd like to stress on the chasing methods in three special occasions: (1) to force one's way into the "forbidden area" to chase the enemy's piece; (2) to enter into "pitfall" to chase the enemy's pieces; (3) chase the enemy with the aid of check or checkmate.

The first two occasions are related to the so-called "army entering into a dangerous situation". As we know, according to the military strategy and tactics, "the army should be abstained from entering into the dangerous area". While on the xiangqi board, every piece has its own sphere of influence, has the control on certain "spots or lines". As far as his opponent is concerned, these spots or lines can be regarded as "dangerous area or restricted area", where one side should avoid to enter into rashly. However, one shouldn't refrain from entering into these areas for fear of the risk. In the competitions, one must give actual situation a correct analysis and adopt appropriate measures.

1. Force one's way into the "forbidden area"

Sometimes, the "forbidden area", seems "a dangerous zone", can be regarded as "a safety area". Some unexpected moves into these areas often produce excellent results, as "entering the tiger's lair to catch the tiger cubs". The following three examples will give you the account on three different natures of this tactics. At the situation as shown in Diagram 27, Red has the turn to make a move:



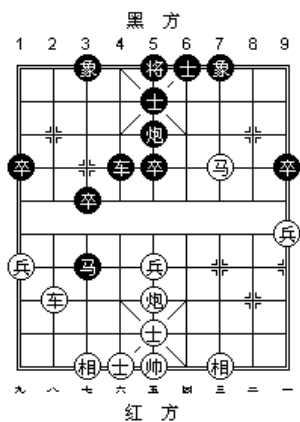
1. ... H7+8 2. R3+8? R8-3!

Black Horse is chasing Red Chariot and menacing with a checkmate, trying to lure the enemy into the trap. It seems that the move of Red Chariot-capturing-Elephant is good for defense and offense. However, Red never gives the thought that Black could retreat Chariot to attack his two pieces. If Red continues with R3=2? then H8+7, K5=6, Black will play C5=4, followed by R6=4 to win the victory. As Black can mount a checkmate with his Horse at any time, Red Chariot has to stay on the third-file. It is a blunder that Red kills the Elephant with Chariot. The correct move should be 2. R3=2 to have Black Chariot and Horse fastened together.

Fig. 27 Note: In the competition, one side may use a "piece" to enforce containment on the piece(s) of the opponent, making it lose "the sphere of influence". He can also

use "checkmate" to menace his opponent or to reduce area of his mobility.

Diagram 28 shows a simple and clear example:



(Red moves first)

1. C5=3! C5+4? 2. R8=5!

Red is attacking Black's weak flank. Black has misjudged the situation that he captures Red Pawn with Cannon. Black is going to link his Elephants together, never giving the thought that Red drives Chariot into the mouth to chase Cannon, and capture it. If Black keeps on playing C5=7, then R5+1, C7+3, R5=7 to capture Black Horse, while Black Cannon can not take Red Horse.

Therefore, when one side is going to take a checkmate, and his opponent has taken a check prior to him, one can make a forced chase or of kill that piece of the enemy.

Fig.28

At the situation as shown in Diagram 29, Black has the turn to make a move. Red Chariot is well positioned, while Black Horse has no way for advance. If Black plays R6-1?, then H7+5, H6+5, R2=5 Red stands better. If Black uses the method of "forced chasing" with the aid of checking, the correct move for his should be K5=6! his next move is H6+4 or H6-8 to make a forced chase and checkmate. With the aid of his King, Black's attack becomes so aggressive and powerful. Red may have several variations. Following are lines of the development of these variations:

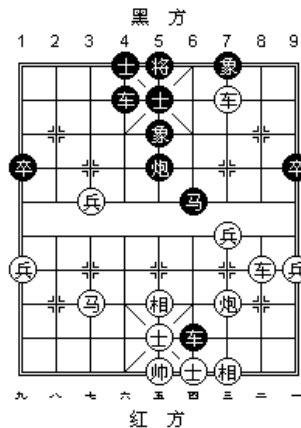


Fig.29

(1) Red R3-2, H6+4! No matter Red plays R2=5 or H7+5 in his next move, Black can respond with H4+5 to win the game. If Red plays R3=5, Black will play H4-5, Black will win after capturing Red Chariot.

(2) C3=4, R6-1, R3-2, H6+4, R3=5, H4+3! It conceals the move of "sacrificing Chariot to take a checkmate".

(3) H7+5, C5+4, no matter Red plays A5+6 or A5+4. Black will play R4=2! Black is sure to win as he has gained great superiority.

The chasing method as Black's H6+4, that is, to attack two different spots simultaneously, is also of the nature of "maneuvering".

2. Chasing the enemy into its "pitfalls"

It is risky for the army when it has "entered into the dangerous area". If someone takes it lightly and falls into the trap, he will be under the attack of the enemy. Following are three examples:

At the situation as shown in Diagram 30, Red King is ready to return to his base, for freeing itself from the containment and giving full play to his Horse. With the aid of Cannon, Black

Chariot makes a forced capture of Red central Advisor, trying to put Red Horse under his control. But in reality, Black's move is indiscreet. Red takes the opportunity to attack Black in his rear, mounting an offensive on Black 6th-file Cannon. Black has been thrown into a passive position.

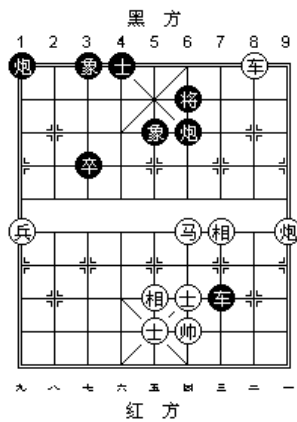


Fig.30

Now, Black has the turn to make a move:

1. ... R7+1 2. K4-1 R7=5?
3. R2-1 K6-1 4. R2-1! C1+2
5. C1+3! C6+2

If Black changes it into C6+5, it would render Red Horse some mobility, bringing about great menace to Black. Or if Black changes it into C6=9, Red would play R2+2 to take a check, followed with A4-5 to capture Black Chariot, Red is sure to win. Of if Black changes it into A4+5, then C1=4, C1=6, R2=4 to capture Cannon and take a check. Red still can have a material advantage.

6. R2+2 K6+1 7. C1=9 E3+1
7. C1=9 E3+1 8. R2-1! K6-1
9. R2-3

Red is pressing on for capturing Black Cannon, while Black find it hard to make an escape. If the game continues: (1) C6-3? Red R2+4 to take a checkmate; (2) C6-2, Red R2=4 to attack both Black Chariot and Cannon; (3) C6+3 to capture Advisor, Red would play H4+5. Red is sure to win.

Note: When one side uses one piece (piece A) to cover another piece (piece B) entering into a spot where the guard is lost temporarily, his opponent should try to attack piece A, as it can create a favorable situation of menacing both pieces (A and B).

Let's see how this tactics can be flexibly used. At the situation as shown in Diagram 31, Black has a material disadvantage. How he can retrieve back the lost piece? Now, Black has the turn to make a move:

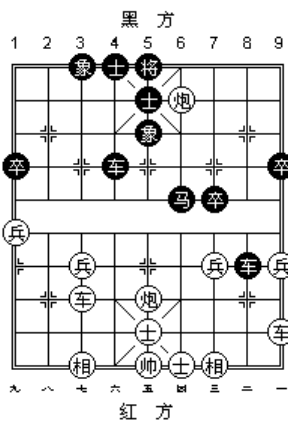


Fig.31

(Black moves first)

1. ... P3+1 2. R7+1? ...

Black pushes his Pawn forward to clear the way for Chariot, luring the enemy into the trap.

1. ... R8-5 2. C4-1

If Red changes it into R1=4, then R8=6, R4+2, Black can play H6+4 to chase Chariot, asking for an exchange. If Red plays R4=6, Black would play H4-2.

2. ... H6+5! 3. R7=8 A5+6

Note: Taking the initiative, Black drives Red piece into the "dangerous area", then uses the tactics of Chase to cut off the link of the enemy's containment piece, resulting in attacking the enemy's two pieces.

Diagram 32 shows a battle of another kind in the "dangerous area".

Coveting on capturing Black, Red Chariot enters into "dangerous area" without further thought and falls into the sphere of influence of Black Elephant. Taking the opportunity, Red gains a material advantage with the method of chasing.

2. ... H9+7!

Black is waiting for an opportunity to make an assault! If he changes it into R2=7? Though Red can not capture the central Pawn (If Red R7=5? R7+3, H3+5, H9+7 to attack two pieces), Red can play R7=8! to take a check and escapes from the danger.

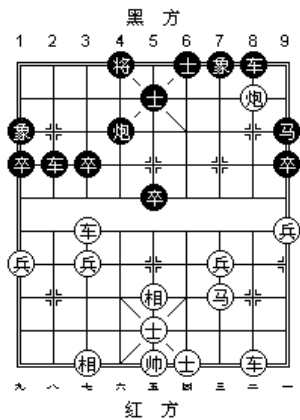


Fig.32

3. C2=3 ...

Now, Red can hardly ward off the attack of Black. Red may respond with several variations. Following are the lines of the development of these variations:

(1) Red C2-6, then H7+6, C2=1, R8+9, H3-2, Black H6+5! Black is in a superior position after taking the Elephant; If Red plays E7+5? Black would play R2+6 to take a check. Red Chariot is lost.

(2) Red C2-1, Black E7+5! (Black Chariot is chasing Red Cannon, if Black changes it into play H7+6? Red would play C2=9!), Red R7=6, Black H7+6 to attack Red two pieces;

(3) Red C2-2? H7+6, C2=6? R2=4, Black has succeeded in capturing a Red piece.

(4) Red C2=1, R8=9, C1=3, R9+1, C3-1, After that, Black still can play E7+5 to make an attack.

3. ... R8+9 4. H3-2 H7-5!

5. C3=1 R2=6 6. R7=8 R8-2!

Red is sure to lose a piece as his two pieces are under Black's attack.

Note: When a piece of one side enters into the enemy's formation, resulting in a self-blocking situation and can not display its role, one should consider moving "the blocking piece" away so that he can attack the enemy's two pieces or launch an attack from the two places.

3. Chase the enemy with the aid of check or checkmate

With the aid of check or checkmate, one side can chase and capture an enemy's pieces. This tactics is often used in the mid-games (Diagram 33, 34 and 35). Sometimes, one side can take the advantage of check to deploy his force for controlling the opponent's piece, then chase it and capture it (Diagram 36).

At the situation as shown in Diagram 33, let see how Red can capture Black Cannon:

1. E9-7! C2=1

2. C1+5 K4+1 3. R8=6 A5+4

4. R6=9!

By taking a checkmate, Red Chariot has captured Black Cannon. He is sure to win.

At the situation as shown in Diagram 34, it seems that both sides are equal in strength. But in fact, Red has a series well-knit and powerful moves. He can wipe out Black's Horse and Pawn at

one stroke. Following are lines of the play:

(Red moves first)

1. R4=6 K4=5 2. R6=8 K5=4
3. R8+5 K4-1 4. R8-2! K4+1
5. R8=6 K4=5 6. R6=9 K5=4
7. R9+2 K4-1 8. R9-3!

Red has the initiative in taking a checkmate and capturing Black Horse. He is sure to win.

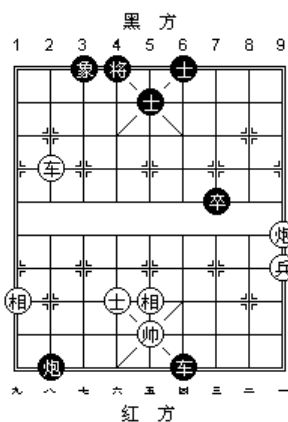


Fig. 33

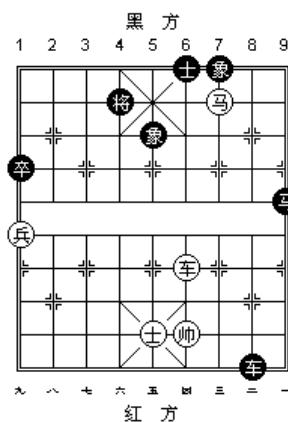


Fig.34

The tactics of "Abandoning first and gaining later" can also result in "checking and capturing".

At the situation as shown in Diagram 35, Black has the turn to make a move:

1. ... R9=8 2. R2=1?

Black drives his Chariot out, inviting for an exchange and to test Red how to answer. As Red covets capturing Black Pawn, he has suffered heavy losses. If Red has accepted the exchange, he still can equal Black in strength.

2. ... R8+9
3. A5-4 R8-2!

By chasing Cannon,

Red Chariot has succeeded in

capturing the enemy's piece. In the next move, if Red plays A4+5, Black would play R8=6, then A5+4, Black H4+3 to kill Horse, and at the same time, it takes a check and chases Red Chariot. Red is doomed to lose as he has the material shortage.

At the situation as shown in Diagram 36, how can Red capture the Black Cannon? (Red moves first)

1. R1=5 A4+5 2. C1=5 A5-6

If Black changes it into K5=4, Red would play R5=9, then R8+9, K4+1, C1=4, R9+5, K4+1,

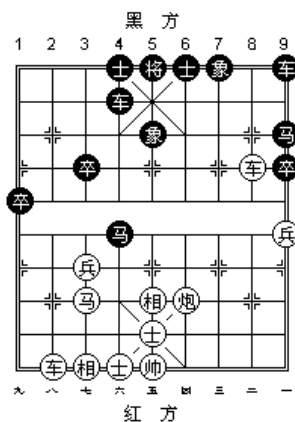


Fig.35

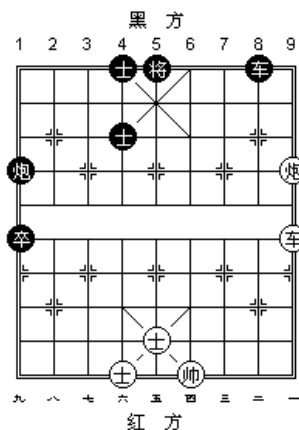


Fig.36

R9-3, Red can capture Black Cannon too.

3. C5=8 A6+5 4. R5=9 Black Cannon is lost.

Chapter IV Exchange

Exchange means the exchange of pieces between two sides. It is most basic tactics in the mid-game that we should master. During the actual competitions, if a player can seize the opportunity to use the tactics of exchange, he can gain the initiative in attack or occupy an advantageous position, or have the material advantage if he uses a weak piece in exchange for a strong one.

The exchange of pieces can be divided into three kinds: direct exchange, indirect exchange and exchange of a weak piece for a strong one. Now, we analyze them one by one:

1. Direct exchange

This is the basic method of exchanges between the forces of two sides during the battle. When these pieces are under containment or get entangled each other, both sides often like to have direct exchange for "shaking off the containment", or using it to relieve one's force for the crisis. Following are six examples on different occasions:

At the situation as shown in Diagram 37, Black Chariot and Horse are under control of the enemy. How can they shake off the control? Suppose, if Black plays C2=6. Red C1=4? Of course Black can play R6=3 to free himself from the control (As Red R4+1, C6+5, R4-3, R3-4, the game will be a draw after the exchanges). However, if Red plays P5+1 instead of playing C1=4, Black is sure to lose when he has the material disadvantage. It seems that such a method of shaking off the control is only one's wishful thinking and cannot hold water.

Black must find another way out. Now, Black has the turn to make a move:

1. ... R6-3 2. C1-4 C2=6!
3. R4+1 C6+5

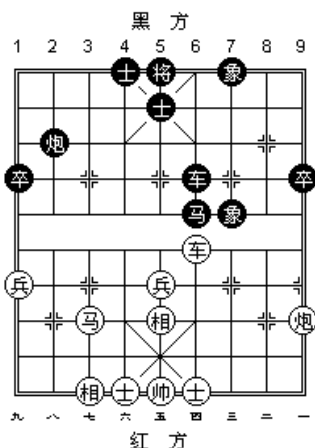


Fig.37

Black withdraws Chariot for "striking the root". His Horse is ready to have an exchange with the enemy. Red plays Cannon sideward, trying to put more pressure on Black. However, Black plays Cannon sideward too, using the method of direct exchange and shakes off the containment. However, we must point it out here, if the Red Cannon has a "root" (Suppose Red has played Advisor), such a method will be useless.

At the situation as shown in Diagram 38, Black has lost one Elephant, while Red has a Pawn more than his opponent. Now, Red Pawn is being caught by Black Chariot, and Red Chariot and Horse will be under control of Black Chariot after Black moves R8-2. As Red can not muster enough forces, it can not constitute a checkmate position, Black can defend himself easily. Now, let's see what variation Red will take:

1. R8=9 R8-2 2. P9+1 C9+1
3. H6+4! R8=1 4. H4+2 K6=5
5. P9+1

By killing Black Pawn with Chariot, Red has expanded the initiative. Then, he pushes the Pawn forward to protect Chariot, and advances Horse to chase Chariot, asking for an exchange. Red is in a winning position when he has shaken off the containment.

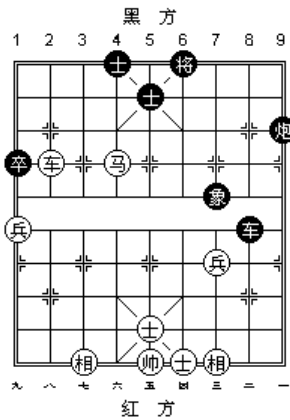


Fig.38

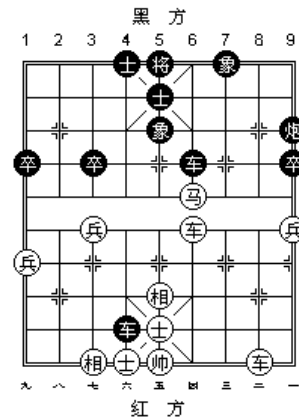


Fig.39

There are varied methods of "exchange for shaking off the containment". At the situation as shown in Diagram 39, Black has the turn to make a move. If Black plays C9=6, Red could play R2+6 asking for an exchange and be set free. However, If Black plays R4-4 first, Red would play R2+5, then C9=6, H4-6! The game now leads to a position of "4-Chariot Rendezvous". In such a case, Red can also have an exchange to shake off the containment. However, we must pay attention to the following situation, in which Red shouldn't play his Horse indiscreetly. For example, Red Horse should refrain to jump into the crossing points of the opponent's two Chariots or that of its own (that is, to play H4+6 or H4-2, otherwise, Red will lose pieces), and he shouldn't play H4+2, as Black could play C6+3 to take a check and capture a Red piece.

Diagram 40 shows another example:

(Red moves first)

1. C2-3 R3-2 2. C2+2

Employing the tactics of containment, Red is planning to play H9+7 in his next move, then R3+1, C2=5 to take a check and capture an enemy's piece, or at least he can force Black to exchange double Chariot. But in reality, he has let slip a golden opportunity (Please refer to the following note).

2. ... A6-5
3. H9+7 C5=6 4. K4=5 C6+4!
5. C2=4 H5+7 Black cleverly shake of the containment with the method of exchange.

Note: While we are discussing the tactics of direct exchange, we must pay attention to "use Chariot in exchange for two pieces". Chariot is the most powerful piece in xiangqi play. The people use to say, " One Chariot can make ten pieces terrified". Usually, the one using a Chariot in

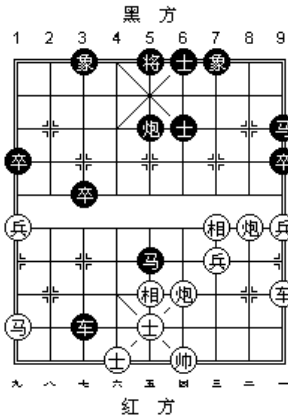


Fig.40

exchange of the enemy's Horse and Cannon or double Horses, may suffers. Take the previous game (Diagram 40) for example, if Red forces Black to make an exchange of Chariot with his two pieces, Red could play H9+7! right away, to chase Black Horse, at the same time it can play C2+3 to capture the Chariot. However, Black was forced to withdraw Chariot (R3-1) in exchange of Black's two pieces. However, the situation can be changed. We can find many examples using Chariot in exchange of enemy's two pieces. Using this tactics, one side can easily provoke conflicts in the game and break the balance of strength, or find an opportunity for attack;

while in a defensive situation, one can use the tactics to seek for a draw.

Diagram 41 shows another example. Now, Black has the turn to make a move.

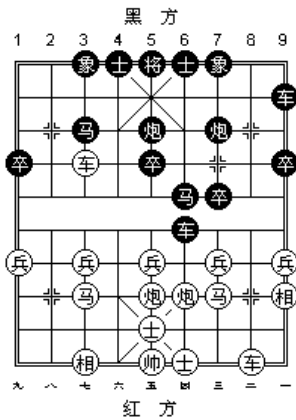


Fig.41

1. ... H6+4 2. R7-2 R9=2

If Black changes it into R9=4, Red would play C5=6, then C5+4? C4=5, Black has lost a piece.

3. P3+1? R6+2! 4. A5+4 H4+3
5. A4+5

Black resolutely exchanges Red two pieces with his Chariot, mounting an attack. Red is lagging behind in several moves due to wasting his time in playing the Advisor.

5. ... P7+1

Red is beset with crisis. Following are the lines of the development of Red variations:

(1) Red E1+3, C7+5, R7+3, C5+4, R7-1, R2+8, R7=5, E3+5, R5-2, R2=3, Black wins.

(2) Red A5-6, P7+1, R7=3, P7+1, R3+3, P7=6, Black has gained much superiority.

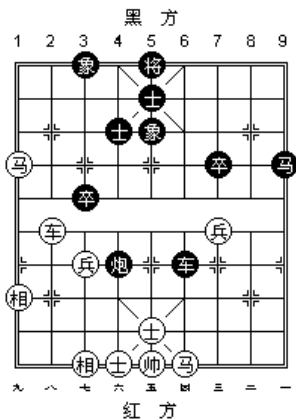
At the situation as shown in Diagram 42, Black is on the attack, while Red right flank is weak. If Red plays E7+5, Black would play H9+8, then P3+1, H8+9, R8=3, C4=5? R3-2, K5=6! H4+2, Black H9+7 to sacrifice the Horse and take a checkmate. Let's see how Red can turn the danger into safety at this critical situation:

1. H4+3 R6=7 2. R8=6 H9+8
3. R6-1! R7=4 4. H3+2

By using the tactics of exchanges, Red exchanges Black's two pieces with his Chariot and succeeds in making a drawing with his opponent.

Fig.42

his opponent.



2. Indirect Exchange of Pieces

The indirect exchange of pieces is a more advanced tactics than the direct exchange. When one's forces are threatened by the enemy, he shouldn't play defense passively; On the contrary, he must have a positive attitude and fight flexibly. The indirect exchange means to abandon a piece temporarily, and try to retrieve the lost piece from another place. With such an exchange of pieces, it can help to dissolve the crisis and to wrest initiative. We should master the most common methods of this tactics. Following are seven examples which can be divided in three different categories.

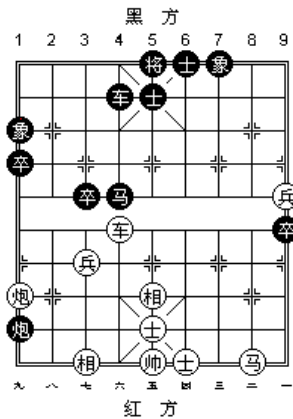


Fig. 43

The first two examples deal with the indirect exchange for shaking off the containment:

At the situation as shown in Diagram 43, Red Chariot has a control over Black Chariot. If Black plays R4-1, Red would play C9=6, Black C1-4 is a passive defensive play, as it makes his forces constrained. Black is sure to lose after his pieces are captured. Now, let us see how Black uses the tactics of indirect exchange for lessening the tensions.

1. ... C1+1 2. A5-6 A5-4
3. A4+5

Black withdraws his Advisor, intending to play R4=5 in next move, and to have an exchange of pieces by sacrificing the Horse or having the mutual capture. It is a bad move that Red plays Advisor. If he changes it into C9-1, Black still can have the pieces exchanged with R4=8.

3. ... R4=5 4. R6+1 R5+6
5. C9=6 R5+1 6. K5=4 R5+1
7. K4+1 R5=8

Through the indirect exchange of pieces, Black now stands better.

Diagram 44 shows an example in which Red asking for an exchange of pieces to shake off the containment:

- (Red moves first)
1. C7=2 C6=22

Black intends to wipe out the Red cramped Cannon, but it is too hasty. The correct move for Red is to play C6=8 to intercept the Cannon, so that Red can not withdraw his Cannon to attack Black Chariot. Now, his tactics comes to nothing.

2. C2=2! R2+1

Red drives Black Chariot away first for reducing the area of its activity. The order of such a play is very important. If Red plays C2-4 straightly, he will be in a difficult position.

3. R8+1 C2-4

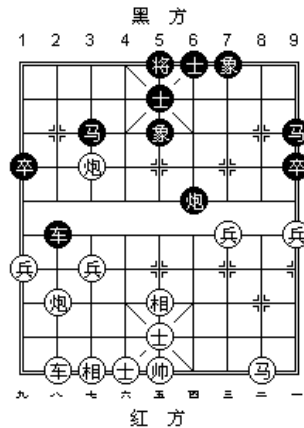


Fig.44

For increasing his sphere of activity, Black withdraws the Cannon, and Chariot. If he changes it into R2=3, then C8=6, R3=8, H2+3, H9+7, P3+1, Abandoning the Pawn, Red Cannon makes escape unhurriedly.

4. C2-3 C2+7

Red withdraws Cannon for protecting Chariot, and is going to play C8=7, asking for an exchange and shake off the containment. Black's plan of withdrawing the Chariot is frustrated.

5. C2+1

Red now can retrieve back the lost piece. Red is in a superior position when he has the material advantage and complete arms of service.

At the situation of Diagram 45, Black Chariot is chasing Red Cannon. If Red plays C3-2, it will reduce the pressure on Black Horse when his right flank is weak, liable to the attack from Black Chariot, Horse, Cannon and Pawn. If Red has the idea of "indirect exchange of pieces", but mistakenly makes the move P3+1, then R8=7, C8=3, E5+7! As Black can protect itself with Elephant, Red can not retrieve the lost piece. However, Red can have another scheme: C8+3! If Black R8=7? Red H7+5, resulting in the position that Black Chariot is under the attack of Red Horse and Cannon, Black R7+3 (If Black changes it into C9=5, Red C8=3, Red stands better), Red H5+3, K5=6, H3-1 to kill Cannon. After the indirect exchange of pieces, Red has gained the superiority.

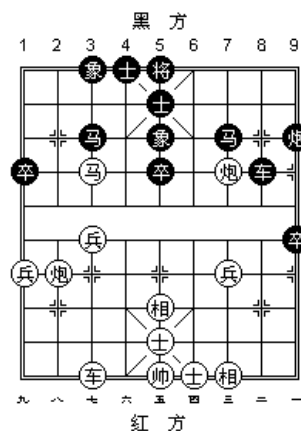


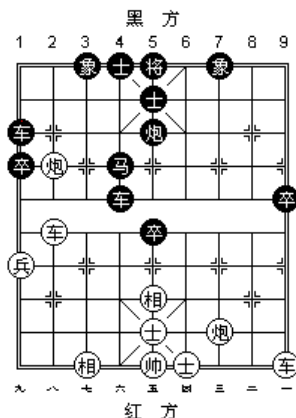
Fig.45

At the situation as shown in Diagram 46, Black is in an offensive position, as his pieces are quite active and his central Pawn has crossed the river. Under such circumstances, Red resolutely abandons his Cannon, captures the Pawn, make a hot pursuit. Red has succeeded in making a draw after the exchange of pieces. Following are the lines of the development:

1. R8=5 R4=2

If Black changes it into play R4+5, then A5-6, H4+5, A4+5, Red still can easily resist.

2. R5+2 R2-1 3. C3-5 R1=4



If Black changes it into play C5=8, Red would play R1=5, then R1=4, Red R1+1, Red still can retrieve one piece. However, Red mustn't play R1=6, as Black could play H4+2! The game will lead to a 4-Chariot rendezvous, and both sides will have the pieces exchanged. If so, Red plan of the indirect exchange will come to nothing.

4. R5+1! H4+2 5. R5=6 A5+4

The game will become a draw.

In the tactics of indirect exchanges, many players like to use the method of "one Chariot for two pieces". Following are the two examples relating to "exchange for an attack" and "exchange for rescue one's pieces".

Fig.46

At the situation as shown in Diagram 47, Black has the turn to make a move. As Red strength on the central file is weak, Black may employ the tactics of "one Chariot for two pieces" by playing R8+5 to kill one Red Cannon first. After Red play of R2+4, Black could play R2+5. If Red plays C5+1? Black could play R2=5 to capture another piece, and build up a strong offensive. Following Red play of E3+5, Black would play H3+5. In his subsequent moves, Black would play H5-6 to chase Red Chariot, while his central Cannon is attacking Red Horse. If Red plays R2-1, Black can play E7+9, and executes a series fierce moves.

At the situation as shown in Diagram 48, relying on his strong forces, Black has the offensive. In such circumstances, Red can flexibly adopt the tactics of "one Chariot for two pieces", his crisis would be dissolved. Following are the lines of the development:

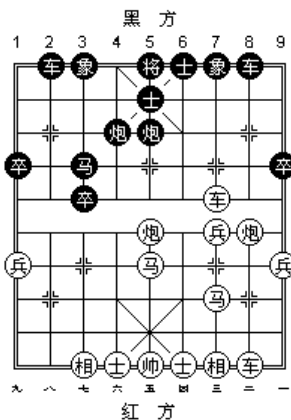


Fig.47

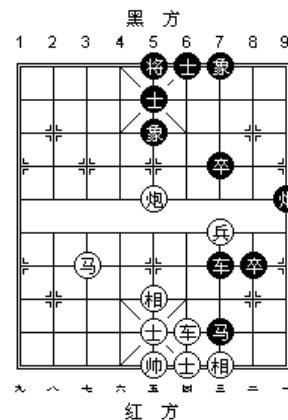


Fig.48

1. H7+9 C9+4

With full confidence, Red drives his Horse forward. He has decided to use Chariot in exchange of enemy's two pieces. If Black does not play C9+4, but changes it into R8+1, Red still has the chance in having the pieces exchanged and making a draw with Black. (Please see the note)

2. R4=3 R7+2 3. H9+8 K5=4

Red plays H9+8, and is ready to play H8+6 in his next move for taking a Horse-Cannon checkmate. Black has to move the King out. If Black errs in playing C9-6 to guard against the check of Horse at the corner of the Palace? Red could play K5=6! It will lead to a fatal checkmate.

4. C5=6 K4=5 5. C6-4 R7-2 6. C6=1 (The game has become a draw)

Note: If Red changes it into P8+1, Red would play H9+8, then K5=4 (If changes it into C9-2, then R4=3! to make a forced capture of Black Horse. If Black plays R7+2 to capture Red Chariot? Red is sure to win with K5=6), C5=6, K4=5, H8+7, K5=4, H7-6, K4=5, H6-4! Following a well-knit play, Red Horse is asking for an exchange of pieces, as it is now menacing both the Chariot and Cannon. If Black plays R7=9, then C6=1, R9-2, R4=3, the game will be a draw too.

3. Exchange of a weak piece for a strong one

The exchange of a weak piece for a strong one is the exchange between two pieces of different strength. Though the tactics looks simple, it is of the nature of a surprise attack. We must pay special attention to it, especially when one side is asking for an exchange and both sides are locked themselves in entangle. Otherwise, a careless play might cost someone in losing pieces and even the entire battle. What we are going to discuss here will be "murder the root to have the exchange" and "four-Chariot rendezvous" , two typical phenomenon of this tactics.

We all understand that, when piece A of one side is protecting another piece B, then, A can be called B's "root". When one side takes one piece as "root" and asks for an exchange of another piece, first of all we must make an observation to see if the "root" is safe or not.

At the situation as shown in Diagram 49, 50, 51 and 52, if Black moves his Chariot, asking for an exchange in the direction as pointed by the head of the arrow in the diagram, it seems that they are good moves. But in reality, Black has committed a big blunder! as Red can uses his another to attack Black Chariot immediately. (In Diagram 49: play R1=3, In Diagram 50: play R1+2, In Diagram 51, play R4+1, and in Diagram 52: R7+5) These exchanges all turn out that Black has lost his pieces.

We can make an analysis on the above four examples: Red double Chariots all "are targeted" at Black Horse in Diagram 49 and 50. So, this Horse can be regarded as the "root piece" asking for an exchange. Otherwise, it can render Red the opportunity of "the exchange of Chariot as well as its root". The example in Diagram 51 represents another situation. It proves that if one's two pieces (Black Chariot and Horse) are under protection of one root piece(that is, the Pawn), it will easily bring about the mistakes. Diagram 52 shows the example of "exchange of the weak for the strong", when the four Chariots meet at one spot, and Black has lost its root.

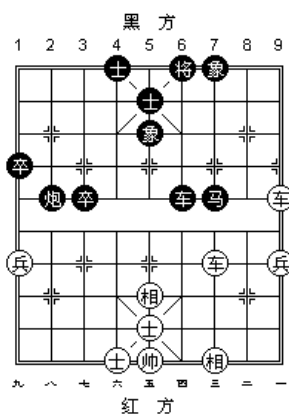


Fig.49

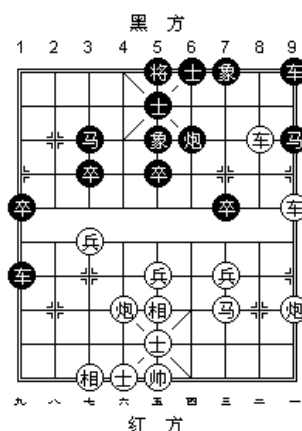


Fig.50

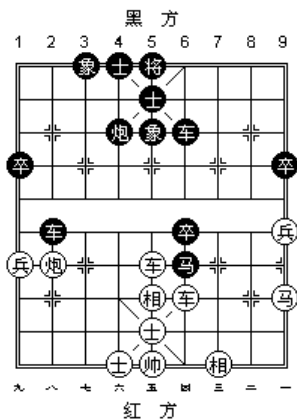


Fig.51

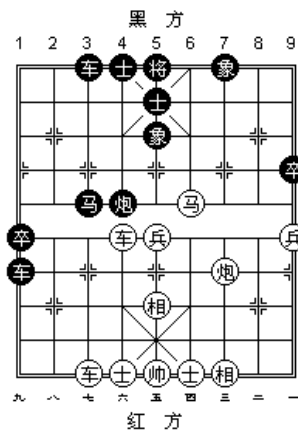


Fig.52

In this paragraph, we shall discuss various tactics of the "four-Chariot rendezvous". The "four-Chariot rendezvous" is the position that the double Chariots of both sides are confronting with each other. This tactics is often used in tactics of the exchanges for "shaking off the containment", (please refer to Diagram 39, and the third move of Diagram 46). It is also used in taking a surprised attack for the exchange of strong pieces with weak ones.

Following are the examples:

At the situation as shown in Diagram 53, now, Red begins to make a move.

1. P5+1 R3=5?

Red pushes his Pawn forward. It lies hidden C1=5 to take a check, followed with R6-3 to chase two Cannons. Black plays Chariot forward to chase Red Pawn, hoping to play Chariot sideward to take a check, and play C8=5 to capture Red Chariot after taking a discover check. But, it is a bad move.

2. R6-3! R3=5 3. E3-5 C8=5

4. R6=5

It now leads to "four-Chariot rendezvous", Red has gained a piece.

Diagram 54 shows another example, Red is now gathering a large force to mount an attack on Black right wing. If Red played H6+8 in the first move, he could easily win the game. However, with a poor understanding of the "four-Chariot rendezvous", Red has adopted a totally mistaken attacking method. In no time, Red has lost two pieces, and defeated. Now, Black makes the move:

1. ... R9+1 2. C8+7 R9=4

3. R7+3? R4=3 4. R7-4? R1=2.

It now leads to "four-Chariot rendezvous", Suddenly, Red loses the game.

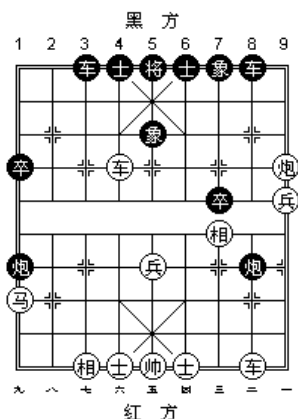


Fig.53

Following are some examples, showing the method of attacking for wiping out the enemy's pieces and defending his own.

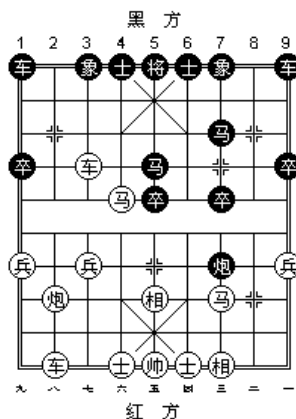


Fig.54

At the situation as shown in Diagram 55, both sides are equal in strength. Now, Red has the turn to make a move. If Red plays R4+6, then R8=6, C5=7, R3=2, Red hasn't got any advantage from the equal exchange of pieces. Following are the lines of the close combat between the two sides:

1. C5=7 P3+1 2. R8+4 ! R3=5

The move of Red Chariot affords much food for thought. If Black moves 3-file Pawn sideward for capturing Red Cannon, Red could play R8=7 to take a checkmate, followed with C7+3 to take a discover check and capture the Black Chariot. Black can not find a way to ward off the attack and has to use Chariot in exchange for Cannon.

3. R4+6 R5=2

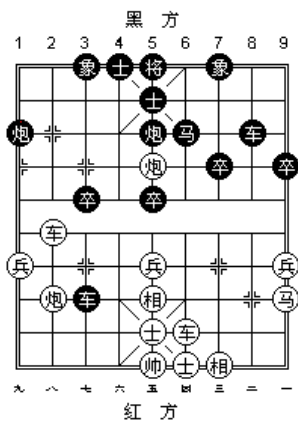


Fig. 55

Red Chariot captures Black Horse, while Black Chariot takes Red Cannon. In appearance, Black has attained the state of "four-Chariot rendezvous", hoping to have an equal exchange of pieces. The plan of Black is, if Red played R8=7 to take a check, Black would play A5+6 to capture Red Chariot. However, what Red has played is 4. R4=5! to take another Cannon.

By now, the game leads to the situation of "four-Chariot rendezvous". Red has the material advantage. What we should mention is, If Red played R8+3 in the second move, it could not produce a "weak for strong exchange" any more. Even if Red will not play R4=5 in move 4, Black can link his two Chariots together with R2=5 and will have the material advantage.

Chapter V Containment

The containment is a common tactics in the mid-game, which means "cramping on and controlling over the movements of the enemy's forces". If one side can master this technique, and seize an opportunity to use it, he can put the enemy's pieces under his control. Such a tactics often refers to that one side uses less number of forces or minor forces to control over enemy's greater number of force or important forces, and to put his opponent in a passive position, thus creating favorable situation and removing the crisis of his own. He can also obtain a material advantage after killing the enemy's effective forces.

The methods of containment can be divided into three types, that is, containment of Cannon, containment of Chariot and King, and containment of Horse and Elephant. We now discuss them one by one:

1. Containment of Cannon

Among all pieces, the containment of Cannon is most powerful. It can enforce a direct control over enemy's two or three pieces. The containment of Cannon can be used widely. Following are 6 examples taking place in different occasions:

In the first three examples, the containment of Cannon is targeted at the opponent's Chariot.

Diagram 56 shows a concise and simple example. Red can play P7+1. If Black plays R2-2, Red would play C2+2. Black's three pieces at the riverbank are fastened together by Red Cannon. Black is in a difficult position. Following are the lines of the development of Black's variations:

- (1) Black P7+1, P7+1, R2=3, R7+8, Red has gained material advantage;
- (2) Black P9+1, P7+1, R2-1 (If R2+2, Red C2-2), C2+1, Red is in a superior position and his Pawn has crossed the river;

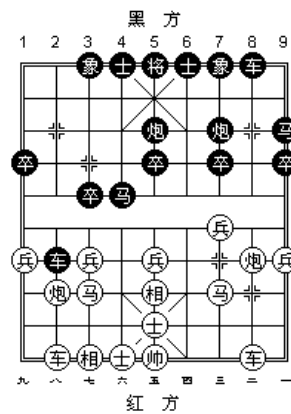


Fig. 56

- (3) Black R2+2, P7+1, R2=8, P7=6, R3+1, C8+7 Red has the initiative in offensive.
- (4) Black E3+1, H7+6, P6+1 (If P7+1, P7+1, R2=3, C8+7, take a check), P7+1, R2+1, C2-1, lying hidden H6+4 to attack Chariot and chase on Cannon, Black can hardly resist. If Black continues with H4+6, then H3+4, R2=4, C8+7, E1-3, Red H4+5 to attack Black's two pieces.

At the situation as shown in Diagram 57, Red has the turn make a move: If Red P3+1, it lies hidden C2-1 for capturing Black Chariot. Now, if Black plays C5+4? Red would play R4+2 to cramp on Black;

It seems that Black's play R3=2 or R3=4 are dull and flat. In such circumstances, Black may

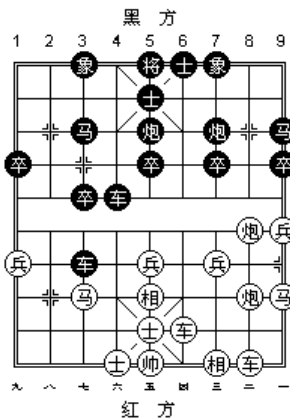


Fig.57

play H3+2 for gaining the initiative and clearing the way of Cannon, with an aim to attack the weak wing of Red. If Red plays C2-1 to capture Black Chariot, Black would play C7=8 to take a cramping on Red, throwing Red into a passive position. Following are the lines of the development of the variations:

- (1) Red C2=7, C8+7, H1-2, H2+3, E5-7, R4=8, R4+1, P3+1, H2+1, P3=4, Black stands better;
- (2) Red RC+5, R3+1, Red can hardly resist Black's offensive, as Black can muster his forces to launch an attack from the flank with C5=2 in his next move.
- (3) Red R 2=1, C8+5, C2=7, C8=3 Now, Black has captured a Red piece. If Red tries to make an escape, Black can take a smothered checkmate with R4+4, and Red Chariot will be lost.

At the situation as shown in Diagram 58, Red has the turn to make a move: If Black plays R7=9 or P3=4 in his next move, Red would be in a critical position. Let see what tactics Red will take to turn the danger into the safety.

- 1. C6=9 P3=4

Red plays Cannon sideward. In his next move he can capture an enemy's piece with the discover check. If Black plays K5=6, Red can drive Black Cannon away with C9=5, then P3+1, C9+7, Red takes a check and captures an enemy's piece.

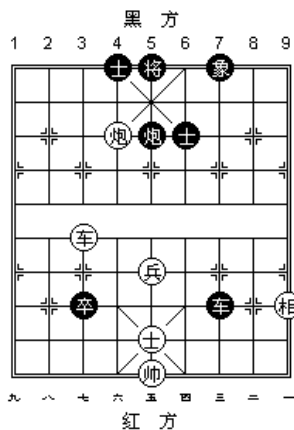


Fig.58

Or if Black plays C5=2? then C9+2, C2-2, Red R7+5 to capture Black Cannon.

- 2. C9+2 A4+5 3. R7+5 A5-4
- 4. R7-7 A4+5 5. C9-7

Relying on the tactics of containment, Red is trying to make a draw with Black. Black should abstain from playing P4=5 or R7=7 in his next move, as Red could play R7+7 to take a check and win the victory after capturing Black Chariot with Cannon.

The method of sacrifice is often used for attaining the tactics of containment. Following are two examples in which one side uses the opponent's King as "the target" for containment.

At the situation as shown in Diagram 59, Red has the turn to make a move:

- 1. P5+1? P5+1 2. H7+5 H4+5
- 3. H3+5 P5+1 4. C5+2 C3+1
- 5. R2=3 C3=5!

It is a hasty play that Red pushes his Pawn and Horse forward. Black abandons the central Pawn, making an exchange of Horse. After that, he can capture Red Chariot with his Cannon. The entire tactics is smoothly performed.

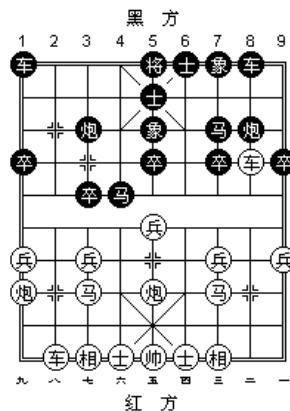


Fig.59

Now, Red is in a passive position. If Red plays R3+1 in his next move, Black would play C8+4, then P3+1? C8=7! Red 3-file Chariot can not make an escape. Or if Red plays A6+5, Black would respond with C5+3 for capturing Red Horse and take a check. After that Red launches an attack with C8+7, Black can hardly resist.

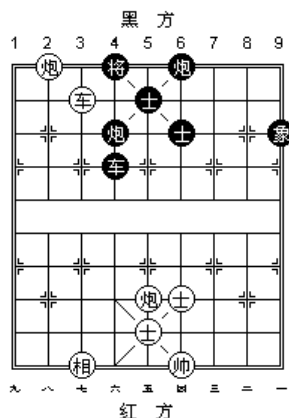


Fig. 60

Red boldly plays Cannon to enforce a containment. If Black plays R4+4 for an exchange of Cannon, With double Cannon and single Elephant, Black can hardly resist the attack of Red Chariot and Cannon; Or if Black plays C4+5, Red could play R8=6 to cramp on Black Chariot, while his Advisor is attacking Black Cannon. Taking the opportunity when Black plays R4-1, Red Advisor captures Black Cannon. In this circumstance, Red shouldn't hasty to capture Black Chariot, but to maintain the initiative of containment. When his Chariot and King are transferred to the appropriate position, Red could win the game by having an exchange of Black Chariot with his Cannon and capturing a Black Advisor. If Black intercepts with his Cannon, Red could play A6-5. It will put Black Cannon under control.

At the situation as shown in Diagram 60, both sides are equally matched in strength, while Black has a fast and solid defense. Sizing up the situation, Red has grasped Black's weak points. Red correctly uses the method of containment to make a breakthrough from the front. Following are moves:

(Red moves first)

1. R7+1 K4+1 2. C8-8 C6=7

If Black changed to R4+5? Red could play C5=6 to take a check, followed with C8+2 for a checkmate. Red could capture Black Chariot.

3. C5=6!

3. ... C7+4

Black drives Cannon forward, followed with C4+5, then Red C8=6, C7=4. By asking for an exchange, Black can shake off the containment.

4. R7-7 ...

If Red hastily play C8=6 to chase Chariot, Black could play R4+4, then A5+6. C4+6, Black uses one Chariot in exchange for Red two Cannons. After losing double Cannons, even if Red can capture Black Cannon with R7-8, the game will be a draw. Further more, Black can link his Cannons together with C7=4. Therefore, Red must withdraw Chariot first to protect Cannon. After that, he can play C8=6. Then, he can defeat Black at one stroke.

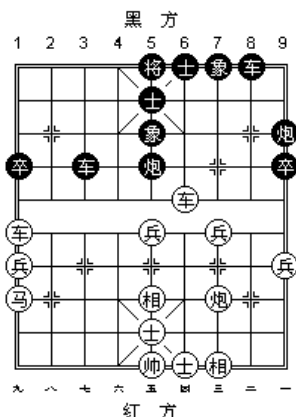
4. ... C4+5 5. C8=6 C7=4

6. R7=6

Red Chariot and Cannon is cramping Black Chariot and Cannon. If Black plays C4=6, Red would play K4=5. Or if Black makes an escape of his Chariot, Red could capture Black Cannon and take a check. After that, Red attacks Black Advisor with his Cannon. Or if Black plays A5+4, Red could play C6+4. The victory still belongs to Red.

In the containment of Cannon, the attacking side can take the opponent "bottom Elephant" as the "target".

At the situation as shown in Diagram 61, due to a careless move, Red has fallen into the trap of Black. Now, Black makes a move:



1. ... R8+7 2. R4-3? ...

Black is attacking Red Cannon with his Chariot with an aim to find out how Red will respond. Red is reluctant to play C3=4, as he could lose the menace on Black 7th-file Elephant. Or if Red plays P5+1 or C3+1, Black could play C5+4 to make an assault. So Red withdraws his Chariot with an aim to protect Cannon. It lies hidden the move of C3+7 to attack Black Elephant and take a check. Black might lose his Chariot. If Black plays R8-3, Red could play R4+6 to block the Elephant's Eye. It seems that with this move, Red can gain the initiative. However, Black can launch an attack when he has seen that there is a flaw in Red play.

Fig.61

2. ... R8=7! 3. R4=3 C9=7!

4. P5+1 ...

Abandoning a Chariot first, Black aims his target at enemy's "bottom Elephant" and plays Cannon for cramping Red Chariot. If Red plays R3=4? then C7+7, E5-3, Black could take a checkmate with R3+6.

4. ... C5=7, Now, Black makes an escape of his Cannon, and has his containment strengthened on Red Chariot and Elephant. Black is sure to have the material advantage.

2. Containment of Chariot and King

It is quite often that Chariot and King are used in the tactics of containment. Following are two examples:

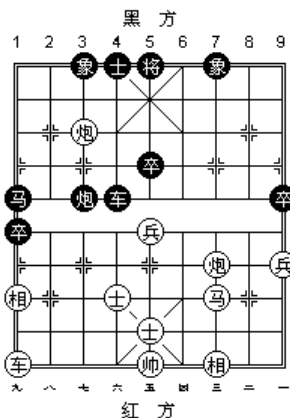


Fig. 62

The containment of Chariot is a common method. It can become very powerful when the game is approaching the end game when there are more pieces being left "unprotected" on board.

At the situation as shown in Diagram 62, Black has a material disadvantage and has a single Advisor. By using the tactics of containment, he can make a draw with Red.

(Black moves first)

1. ... R4=7 2. R9=7

If Black attacks Red Cannon with R4+2, Red could play R9=7, then C3=7, C3=5 to ward off the attack. So, when

Black plays R4=7 to chase Red Cannon, Red can play Chariot to chase Black Cannon too. If Black continues with C3-1, Red could play R7+3 to protect his Cannon.

2. ... R7+2 3. R7+5 H1-2!
4. R7=8

Black withdraws Horse to chase Red Chariot, creating conditions for carrying out his tactics of containment.

4. ... R7+1 5. R8+2 R7-5

The game becomes a draw due to the containment.

In some circumstances, King can also play an important role in the tactics of containment.

At the situation as shown in Diagram 63, Red has a material shortage. His Cannon and Horse are under the attack of Black's gunfire. If he plays H4+5, then R9=1, R3+7, R1+8, Black is sure to win the game in the end. Or if Red plays R3+7 to capture Black Horse, Black might play R9+8 to take a check, and attack Red Chariot with his Horse. However, if Red is good at using the tactics of King's containment, Red can succeed in his scheme. Following are lines of the development:

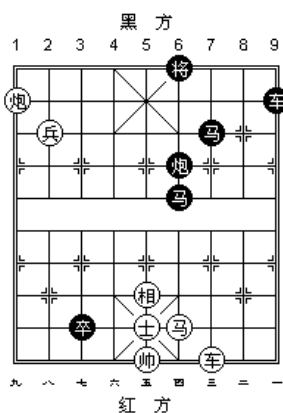


Fig.63

is powerful.

1. R3+7 R9+8

Now, Black can not play R9=1 to capture Cannon, as Red could play Chariot to take a discover check and capture Black Chariot. Black would be badly defeated.

2. H4-2 P9=8 3. E5-3 C6=5
4. K5=4!

Red sacrifices his Horse, withdraws his Elephant and moves his King out to cramp Black Horse. The game now leads to a checkmate position of Chariot, Cannon and Pawn. If Black continues with K6=5, then Red R3+2, K5+1, R3-1, K5-1, P8+1, C5=6, K4=5, H6-4 (If Black P3=4, R3=5, K5=6, A5-4 Red wins), R3+1, C6-3, Red could attack Black Horse with R3-3. Red attack

3. Containment of Horse and Elephant

If Horse and Elephant of one side are correctly used, they can cramp enemy's two pieces. Following are some examples showing containment of Horse and Elephant on the enemy's Chariot and Cannon, or double Chariots, and Chariot and Horse.

At the situation as shown in Diagram 64, Black has a Pawn advantage, but has a single Advisor. Both sides are equal in strength. Now, Black has the turn to make a move. Black can play R8-5 to attack Red Cannon. If Red play R4-2, then Black P7=8, Black's central Pawn can stride forward easily. As Red Chariot and Cannon can not shake off the containment, Red has to play C3+3 to capture Black Elephant and chase Pawn. Black could play H7-8! With the co-operation of Black Elephant and Horse, it can firmly cramp Red Chariot and Cannon. Furthermore, Black can

play Chariot sideward to the 7th-file to catch Red Cannon. Red can not extricate himself from the predicament. If Red continues with K5=4, Black could respond with A5+6, then R4=3, P7=8, Red is always under the control of Black.

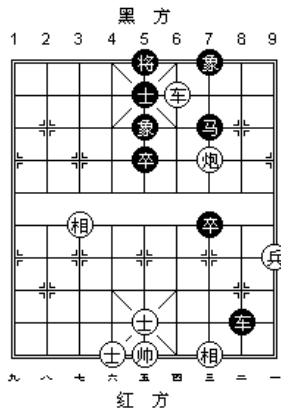


Fig.64

At the situation as shown in Diagram 65, Red has the turn to make a move. Red has the material advantage, while Black has the initiative in offensive. Red can employ the tactics of containment to dissolve Black's offensive and maintain the material advantage. Let's see how the game is developed.

1. A4+5 ...

Black plays his right Chariot for blocking Red Elephant Eye.

Red responds with the play of Advisor, showing that he is quite confident in his play. If Red changes it into H7+6, then Black would play R4=7 to retrieve back the lost piece.

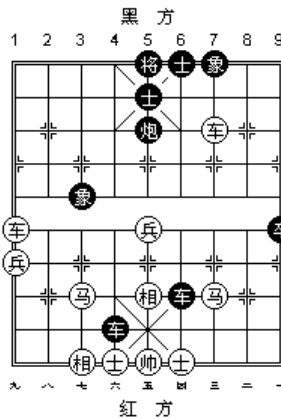


Fig.65

1. ... R6=5? 2. R9+5 ...

It is a hasty play that Black captures Red Elephant. The better play for him is R6-4. Now, Red drives his Chariot forward to take a check, with the aim of sacrificing for initiative. Red should refrain from playing R9=6.

2. ... A5-4 3. R3=5 E3-5
4. H7+5!

Red sacrifices Chariot for killing Black Cannon. Then he has his two Horses linked together. Black's double Chariots are under the containment of Red double Horses and Elephant. Following are the lines of the development: Black P9=8, R9=8, P8=7, R8-6, P7+1, Red H3-4 to chase Chariot. Red is sure to win after he has retrieved the lost piece.

At the situation as shown in Diagram 66, Black Cannon and Horse are menacing Red Horse and Elephant. If Red plays R2=5, using the same tactics as above, then Black could capture Red Elephant with H3+5, menacing with a check. If Red plays K5=6, Black could play R6+1 to capture Advisor and take a check. It seems that the above method of containment will not apply in this game. However, Red can flexibly adopt another kind of containment, that is: H5+7! It seems that Red is forced to make an escape of his Horse. But in reality, it can lure the enemy into the trap. Being stationed at the riverbank, Red Horse can play offense as well as defense. If Black carelessly plays R3+5 to kill Elephant, Red could respond with H7-6! With the co-operation of the

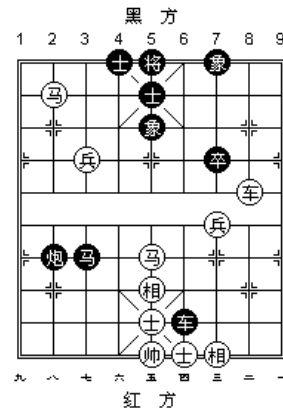


Fig.66

third-file Elephant, it can cramp Black's Chariot and Horse. Black will not be able to extricate himself from the predicament. If the game continues, then Black C2=5, Red R2=5, H5+7, K5=6, as Black's Chariot and Cannon are under attack, one of them will be surely lost. Or if Black plays C2=7, Red could play R2-3 to chase Horse (However, he should refrain from playing R2-2, as Black could play C7+1 to chase Horse, and to shake off the containment), H5+7, R2=3, C7=5, K5=6, Red still has the material advantage.

Chapter VI Obstruction

This chapter deals with the application of the method of "obstruction". Obstruction means blocking, interception, including the method of penetration for cutting off the links between the enemy's two pieces and their control line, and to create obstacles on the strategic passage of the enemy's force. These methods are often used in the mid- and end game. The obstruction in an attack is often demonstrated by the action of assault, sowing disorder on the enemy's defense line. The obstruction is also widely used in defense. Sometimes, it can produce good results for both offense and defense.

Obstruction can be divided into three types, that is "obstruction with aid of checkmate", "intercept with check or discover check" and "laying obstacles". We now discuss them one by one.

1. Obstruction with aid of checkmate

Such an obstruction can be re-divided into "protected" and "unprotected", two situations. The first situation refers to that the attacking side uses a "protected" piece to cut off the control line of an enemy's piece and wrests the initiative. Following are two simple examples:

At the situation as shown in Diagram 67, exploiting Black's one careless play, Red uses Chariot to protect his Cannon, and seizes the opportunity to cut off the control line of Black Chariot, and captures an enemy's piece. Following are moves:

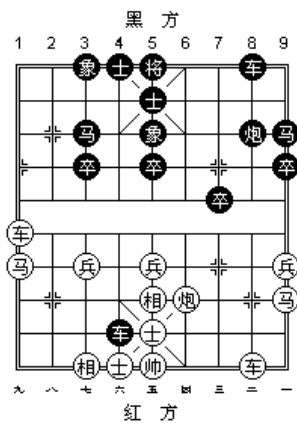


Fig. 67

(Black moves first)

1. ... C8+5 2. C4+2 P3+1?
3. C4=2 C8=7 4. C2=1 ...

Now, Red is to capture an enemy's pieces, As if Black plays:

- (1) Black R8+9, then Red H1-2 to attack Black's two pieces;
- (2) Black R8=9, then Red R2+7 to capture Black Horse;
- (3) Black E5-7, then Red C1+3, R8+9, H1-2, Red still can capture a Black piece.

The above are the examples of capturing through "obstruction" for gaining the initiative. The following diagram shows an example of attacking through "obstruction".

At the situation as shown in Diagram 68, both sides are locked in heated mid-game and Black has the turn to make a move. In his subsequent moves, Red can take a series of continuous checkmate (Red C9=6, K4=5, R4+3, K5=6, R5=4, A5+6, R4+1, K6=5, C6=5, K5=4, R4=6 for checkmate).

Now, let's see how Black will play:

1. ... R2=4 2. R5=6 H2-4

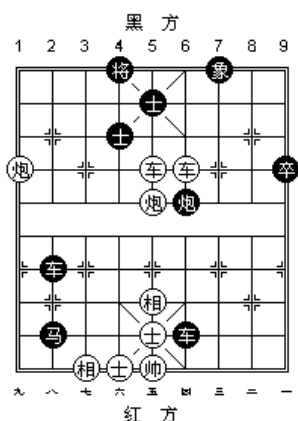


Fig. 68

The second type of "obstruction with the aid of checkmate" is: to deploy one's forces first for a checkmate, then drive an "unprotected" piece onto the enemy's control line to enforce a blockade. As the movement of this kind of checkmate is not so obvious, we must pay attention to it.

Diagram 69 shows another example of the tactics of "obstruction with aid of checkmate". Red has the turn to make a move, while Black can play C8=9 to clear the way for Chariot, landing Red a fatal attack. If Red plays R8=2 to link his two Chariots together for an exchange, Black 3rd-file and 7th-file Pawns can push forward straightly after his Chariot is exchanged, and Black is sure to win. If Red is well-versed in the tactics of obstruction, he may easily find a method for defense as well as for offense:

1. R8=6 C8=9 2. C3=2

Red deploys his Chariot to the 6th file for taking a checkmate, then plays Cannon sideward to block Black Chariot. After that, the Cannon can move forward to attack the central file. Following are lines of Black's variations:

- (1) P3+1, C2+2, P3=4, R6-4, each has his own strong points;
- (2) P3+1, C2+2, P7+1, C2+1, In his next move, Red will play C2=5 to take a check. No matter Black plays Advisor or King, Red can take a check with his 1st-file Chariot, and then R6+1. Red is sure to win.
- (3) R3-2, C2+4, both sides has scruples to each other.
- (4) P9+1, C2=5, P9=8, C2=5,A5=4, R1=5, Red is in a winning position.

Diagram 70 shows an example of "obstruction with aid of checkmate" in the mid-game. Now, Black Cannon is going to attack Red Horse and take a checkmate. Red has the turn to make a move:

By playing R2=4, Black can easily ward off the checkmate of Red and return him with a checkmate. After the exchange of Chariots, Red is led to a self-blocking position of his Cannon.

3. A5+6 R4=8 4. R4=2 C6=8

Using the simple obstruction tactics, Black abandons his Horse first and takes a check, forcing Red to play Advisor, and then uses Cannon to intercept Red Chariot's exchanging line. Black wins in the end. If Red plays R4+3 at move 4, Black would play K4+1, then R6=2, R8-3, C5=6, R8=4, R4-3, R4+1, C9=6, R4-1, R4=6, Black is sure to win when he has a Cannon advantage.

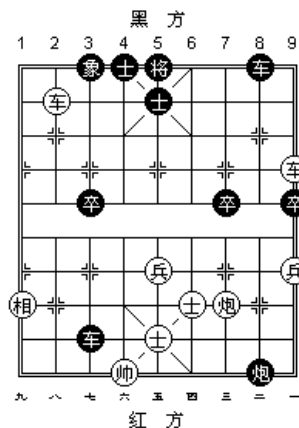


Fig.69

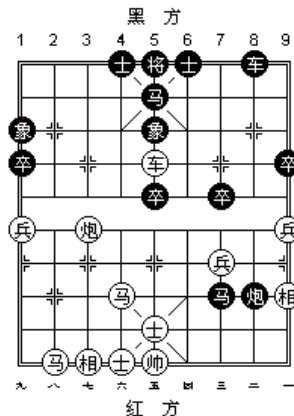


Fig.70

1. H6+4 C8+2 2. H4+5 C8=9

If Black changes to E1-3, Red could play R5+1 to capture Elephant by force. It leads to a fetal checkmate.

3. R5=2 H5+7 4. C7=5

With the aid of checkmate, Red plays Chariot sideward to intercept Black Chariot. Without any haste of exchanging Chariot, Red moves his Cannon to take a check in the central file, so that he could maintain the mobility of his Chariot. In such a situation, Black can only has one move to make: K5+1, but it can not help to dissolve the superiority of Red.

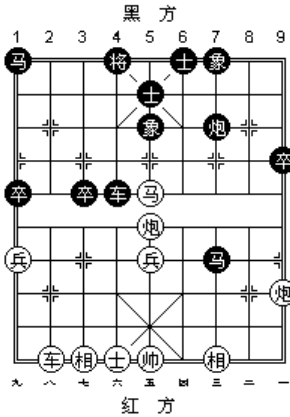


Fig.71

Black plays Elephant to clear the way of left Cannon for protecting the King. If he changes to K4+1, H5+7, K4+1, R8=9, E5-3, R9-1, C7-1, H7-5, Red wins.

5. C5+3!

Red sacrifices his Cannon at the mouth of Elephant. The defense line of Black Cannon is cut off. Red Cannon has made another contribution to the tactics of "Tiger Silhouette Checkmate". If Red plays in his next move:

(1) E7+5, R7-2, K4-1, R7=8, K4-1, R8+2, Red wins.

(2) R4-4 (R4+2, K5+1, R4-6, following moves will be identical with below), R7-2, K4-1, R7+1, K4+1, R7=6, K4=5, R6-2, Red wins after capturing Black Chariot.

2. "Intercept with Check or discover check"

Using check or discover check to intercept directly is a well-knit attacking method (Fig.72-75).

At the situation as shown in Diagram 72, Black Chariot is menacing Red Elephant. If Red plays H7+8, then R8=7, K4+1, R9=6, C5=4, A5+4, Black stands better. Now, Red has the turn to make a move:

1. R6=4 R8=7 2. K4+1 R7-4

If Black Changes to R9=6? R4+6, H7-6, H7+8, Red wins immediately.

3. H7+6 R7=4 4. H6+4 K5=6

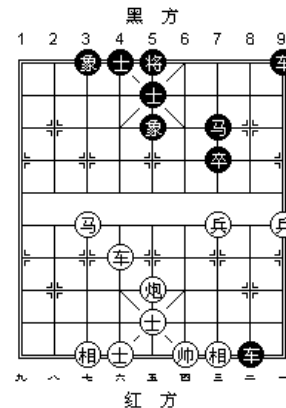


Fig.72

5. H4+3! K6=5 6. R4+6! H7-6
7. H3-4 to take a smoothed checkmate!

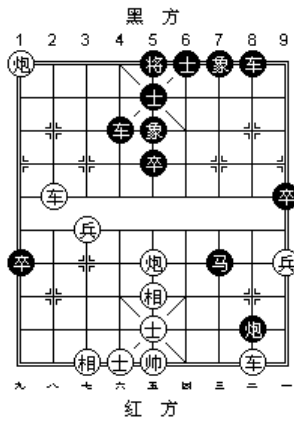


Fig.73

Red play is so aggressive. Taking the opportunity of check, Red Horse cuts off the defensive line of Black Chariot on the bottom rank. By sacrificing Chariot, it has created an obstacle for Black King. In the end, Red Horse returns to the corner of Palace to take a checkmate.

Diagram 73 is an example of "interception with discover check":

(Red moves first)

1. R8+4 A5-4 2. R8-6 A4+5
3. C5=9 H7+9

Red Cannon is attacking Black's edge Pawn, lying hidden a checkmate. However, Black still drives his Horse to attack Red Chariot, mistakenly believing that the defense of his right Chariot is impenetrable.

4. R8+6 A5-4 5. R8-2 A4+5
6. FC=8 Red wins.

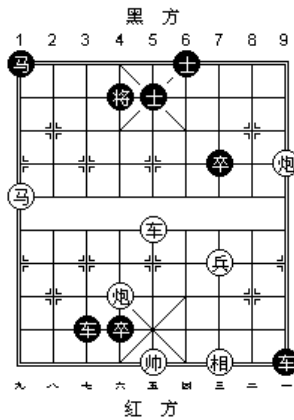


Fig.74

6. R6=7 A4-5 7. H7=6 K4+1 8. R7=6 Red wins.

Red plays Chariot sideward to put the enemy's King under control, and then, take a discover check to cut off the defense line of two Red Chariots and screen Black Cannon and Horse in the attack. Red Chariot moves to the right and then the left. The entire process of checkmate is completed at one stroke.

Following is another example of "obstruction for defense". At the situation as shown in Diagram 75, Red has the turn to make the move.

1. R4=5 K5+1 2. R3-1 K5-1
3. FC+3 A6+5 4. R3+1 A5-6

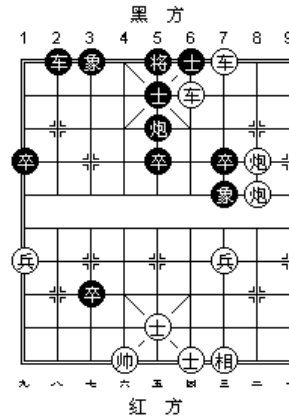


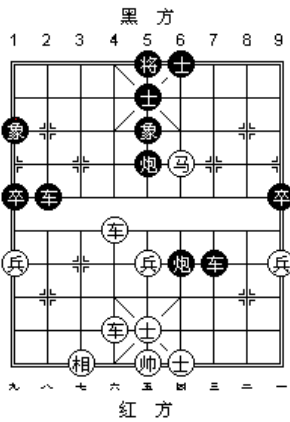
Fig.75

5. R3-3 A6+5 6. R3+3 A5-6
7. R3-4 A6+5 8. R3+4 A5-6
9. RC=8!

Red plays Cannon for obstruction, lying hidden a discover check. Red is sure to win at the position of Chariot, double Cannons vs. Chariot, Cannon and Pawn.

3. "Laying Obstacles"

In this section, we shall discuss the tactics of "laying obstacles", that is how to make use of "interception" to restrict the sphere of influence of the opponent's pieces, to limit their activities and to increase burdens to their action. (Diagram 76-80)



At the situation as shown in Diagram 76, both sides are locked in the heated mid-game. Red has the turn to make a move. Where should be the target of his attack?

1. C7+7!

Red sacrifices his Cannon for taking a checkmate, with an aim to laying obstacles for the retreat of Black's 2nd-file Chariot. This is the key for winning the victory. It can create conditions for Red to execute continuous checks without any interruption.

1. ... E5-3 2. K5=6 A5+6
3. FR+5 K5+1 4. RR+7 K5+1
5. RR-1 K5-1 6. FR-1 K5-1

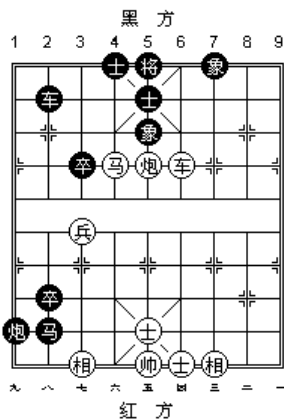
Fig.76

7. RR=5 A6+5 8. R6+1

Red wins.

Following is another example of laying obstacles on the passage of the opponent's pieces.

Diagram 77 shows a position of a mid-game. Both sides have scruples in their play. Let's see what tactics Red will use:



1. C5-2 C1-6 2. P7+1 ...

Red retreats his Cannon and pushes Pawn forward. These two moves can afford us much food for thought. By retreating Cannon, on the one hand it can clear the way for Horse to take a check, forcing Black to withdraw Cannon for defense; On the other hand, it can lay an obstacle on the riverbank. When Black Chariot and Cannon are in a cramped position, Red pushes his Pawn forward to block the passage on the enemy's riverbank. It has created conditions for Red to launch an attack with his Horse at enemy's left flank (If Red plays H6-4 directly, Black would play R2+3, then H4+2, R3=7, Black can ward off the attack).

Fig.77

Following are the lines of the development:

2. ... E7+9 3. H6-4 E9+7
4. R4=2 K5=6 5. C5=4 ...

Now, no matter Black plays Advisor or moves his King to the centre, Red can play his

Chariot take a checkmate for capturing Black Chariot and win the game.

At the situation as shown in Diagram 78, Red has the turn to make a move: H5+7, E5+3, C6=2, E3-5, C2-3!

Seeing that Black left Horse is liable to get stranded, Red takes the initiative to have an exchange of pieces and take a check, and employ the tactics of obstruction, forcing Black Horse confined in a corner. Red has gained the absolute superiority. After that, Red 9th-file Pawn can easily cross the river to wipe out the enemy's 9th-file Pawn. His two Pawns can steadily press forward. When there is an opportunity, Red can make a breakthrough with the central Cannon or bottom Cannon to win the victory.

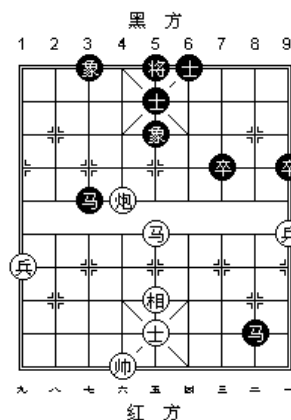


Fig.78

Diagram 79 shows the position of a game between two well-known xiangqi masters. Now, Red has the turn to make the move. According to the present situation, Red can not take a hasty assault, but to adopt a series of tactics of obstruction. While Black is eager to capture Red Pawn, so Red has the chance to intercept Black Chariot on the bottom rank. Red succeeded in his tactics in the end. Following are the lines of the development:

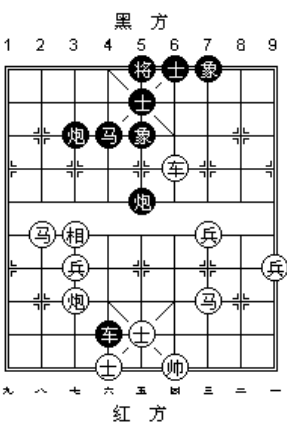


Fig. 79

1. C7=6 R4=3 2. H8-9 R3+1
3. H3+4 C3+4 4. H4-6 C5=3
5. C6+5 A5+4 6. H6-7!

Now, Black Chariot is under confinement. Red will play Elephant to capture Black Chariot in his next move.

The tactics of "restricting the sphere of activity" is often used when taking a checkmate.

At the situation as shown in Diagram 80, both sides are locked in a close combat. As Black can play R7=3, a ferocious move, Red has adopted a series of methods, including sacrificing, interception to take the checkmate. (Red moves first):

1. R1=3 R7+3 2. R8+6 K4+1
3. R8-1 K4-1 4. C6+5 A4+5

Red advances his Cannon to block the movement of Black King. If Black changes to K4=5, then R8+1, K5-1, C9+8, A4+5, C6+2 to take a checkmate.

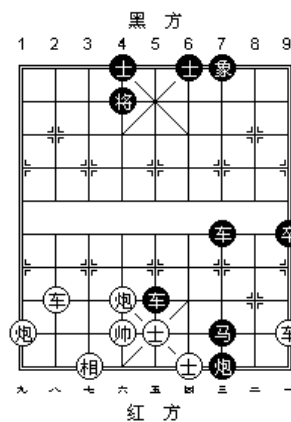


Fig.80

5. R8+1 K4-1 6. C6+1 K4=5

If Black changes to A5+4, then C6=7, R5=1, E7+9, R7-2, C9=8, C7-1, A5+6, C7=2 to exchange Cannon, Red is in a winning position as he has the material advantage.

6. C6+1 K4=5 7. R8+1 A5-4

8. C6=7

Now, Black is doomed to defeat. In his next move, Red will kill Black Advisor to take a checkmate, while Black can not play A6+5 as what is waiting for him is a smoothed checkmate. If Black King moves upward, Red can play C9+7 to win the victory.

Chapter VII To Expel

To expel means to drive away the enemy's piece. It is a tactics that merits our study. It is often used during the battle for occupying a line, wresting the initiative, taking a check and capturing the enemy's pieces. Some expelling methods can produce the tactical results of "gaining the initiative in a passive situation". Sometimes, when two sides are locked in an entanglement or the mutual attack, the situation of the initiative and the passive can be reversed. As the movement of this tactics is obscure, it might be overlooked by some players.

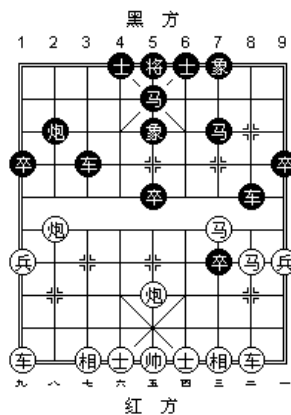
What we should mention here is the role of Cannon's attack. Among Chariot, Horse and Cannon, the three main forces, Cannon can produce more tactics than other two, as it can harass, assault and ambush. Most examples in this chapter shall deal with the tactics relating to Cannon.

The method of expelling can be divided into "direct expelling", "expelling with the aid of checkmate" and "remote ambushing". Now, we discuss them one by one:

1. "Direct Expelling"

The direct expelling means that one side uses the tactics of harassment to cut off the links of the enemy's pieces for gaining a checkmate position or gaining the material advantage. The deployment of pieces is simple and can be easily perceived (Diagram 81-86).

Diagram 81 is the position of a game played between two well-known xiangqi masters. With a solid battle array, Black will ferry his Pawn to cross the river for retrieving the lost piece. Black's forces are very active. Now, Red has the turn to make a move. Let's see how Red can make a break-through at Black's defense line:



1. C8+1 P5+1 2. H3+5 R8=5

Red advances Cannon first to chase Black Chariot for cutting off the links between Black Chariot and Pawn, and then drives his Horse to join in Cannon at the key point. Black is threatened by a checkmate and Black Chariot is under the attack of Red Horse and Cannon. Black has no choice but to use the Chariot in exchange of Red Horse. If Black changes to R8+2, then R2+3, P7=8, H3+5, R3=4, H5+4, C2=6, C8+5 to take a checkmate.

3. C5+3 R3+1 4. C5+3. Black has captured the Red Chariot.

Fig.81

At the situation as shown in Diagram 82, Black has a material advantage. How can Red retrieve the lost piece? Red moves first:

1. H7+5 H6+5 2. R8+3 H5+7

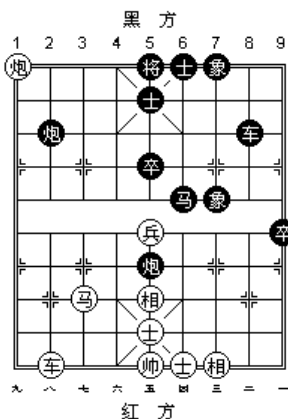


Fig.82

If Black plays H5+3, then Red would play R8=7 to capture Black Horse.

3. C9-2 C2-1
4. C9-5

Red plays Cannon first to drive Black Chariot away, cutting off the links between Black Chariot and Cannon, and then withdraws it to chase Black Horse, resulting in a double-capturing position. Red has retrieved back the lost piece.

The tactics of expelling is often used for occupying a line in making an assault.

At the situation as shown in Diagram 83, Black is in a winning position as he has the material advantage and is ready to take a checkmate. However, due to his negligence in Red tactics, Black has committed an error, costing him in losing the whole game. (Red moves first)

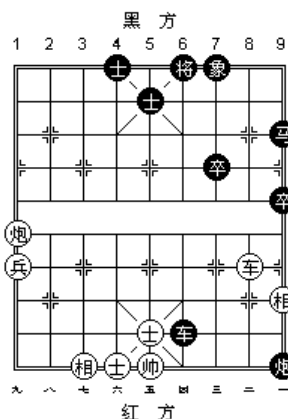


Fig. 83

1. A5+4 R6-1

It seems that Red plays Advisor for relieving him of the checkmate. But in reality, it has laid a trap (the people are often misled by the false appearance). In the following moves, Red is pressing on step by step. Red Cannon takes a check at the bottom and drives Black Chariot away from the 4th-file.

2. C9-5 K6+1
3. R2+5 K6+1
4. C9-1 A5+4
5. C9=4 R6=7
6. R2-5

Following is another example explaining this tactics:

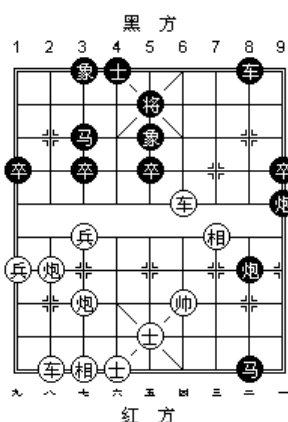


Fig. 84

Diagram 84 shows a position of a game between two well-known xiangqi masters. The King of both sides is dislodged. Both sides are contesting each other in the speed of assault. The key of attack is that Red left Chariot can not reach the bottom, so the two Chariots of Red can not fully display their power. With the following moves, Red can skillfully expel Black Chariot away from the bottom: (Red moves first)

1. C8-1 C8=2
2. C8=9 R8+6
3. P9+1 R8=3
4. C9+1 R3+1
5. E7+5 C2+1
6. C9-1!

Now, Red is going to drive out his left Chariot, Black can hardly resist.

Note:

- (1) To guard against the attack of Red left Chariot, Black can play C9+4. If Red plays C9+1, then C2+2, Black can still resist.

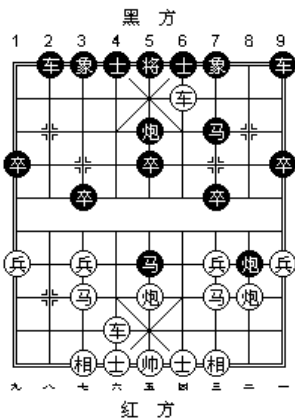


Fig.85

Diagram 85 shows a game between two well-known xiangqi players in which the tactics of expelling Chariot with Cannon is used: (Red moves first)

1. R6+7 R2+2

Without playing R3+5 for an exchange, Red drives Chariot forward to curb the movement of Black central Horse (Otherwise, Red plays C5+5, forcing Black play Chariot to protect the central Cannon, Black has lost the initiative).

2. H3+5 C8=5 3. A6+5 A4+5

The better play for Black is R9=8.

4. H7+5 C5+4 5. C2+5 R2+1

6. K6=5 H7+6

If Black plays R9=8, Red would play C2+1 to capture Black's central Advisor.

7. R4-3 R9+2 8. C2-1

Black Chariot is expelled. In his next move, Red will play Cannon to capture the central Pawn and win the victory.

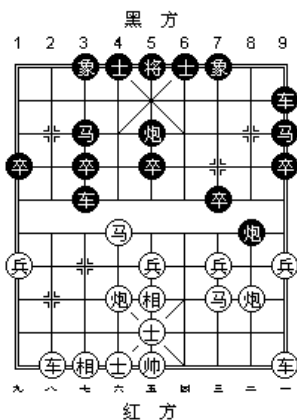


Fig.86

At the situation as shown in Diagram 86, with his left Cannon stationed at the riverbank, in his next move, Black will push the 7th-file Pawn forward to expel Red Horse. Red Horse will be in a dilemma (If Red play H6-4, then R3=6, P3+1, R6+2, H3+2, P7+1, Black Pawn has crossed the river). How can Red solve the problem? The better move for Red is R8+6, posing for capturing Black Pawn. If Black continues with P7+1 for expelling Red Horse, Red could play H6-8! to expel Black's 3rd-file Chariot and gain the initiative. Then, if Black makes an escape of Chariot, Red could play P3+1 to capture Black Pawn and attack the Cannon. This is an example of "warding off the expelling with an expelling".

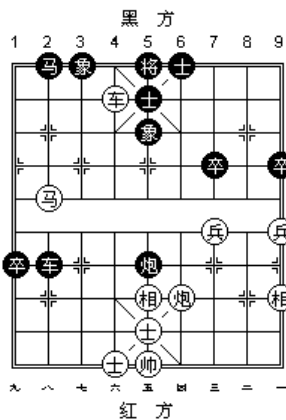


Fig. 87

2. "Expelling with the aid of checkmate"

With the aid of a discover check or a checkmate position, one can expel the opponent's piece. Such an expelling is more exciting than the former one. During the process of preparation, its intention can not be easily detected. (Diagram 87-91)

Diagram 87 (Red moves first)

1. R6=8 R2-1 2. C4+4 C5=2

3. C4=8 ...

In his next move, Red can play C8+3 to take a discover check and expel Black Chariot. If at move 2, Black plays A5-4,

Red can play R8+1, if Black continues playing C5=2, Red could play C4=8, then R2-1, C8=5 to take a check and capture the Chariot. However, Red can refrain from

playing C4=8, as Black can sacrifice his Horse with R2=6, if Red C8+3, Black A6+5, Black can take a "Iron Bolt checkmate" with K5=6, Red has no method to ward off the attack. The subsequent moves will be:

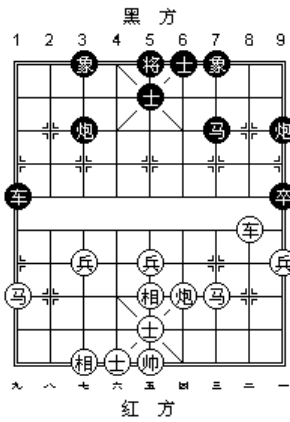


Fig.88

3. ... R2=6 C8=3 A5-4

5. H8+6 Red is in a winning position when he has the material advantage.

Diagram 88 is another example of "expel with the aid of checkmate" (Black moves first)

1. ... H7+6 2. R2+1 C3+2!

2. R2+1 C3+2!

Red plays Chariot, intending to cramp Black Horse. It looks a good move, but Red has lost the initiative. The better move for Red is R2-1, with which Red still can have the material advantage. Taking the opportunity, Black drives out his Chariot. If Red plays

R2=3, Black would play C3+5 to take a check and capture the Red Chariot. The correct move for Red should be R2+2, to guard against Black's attack on his Elephant with C9=3, and Black play of H6+5 for capturing Red Pawn, by which Black can even Red in strength.

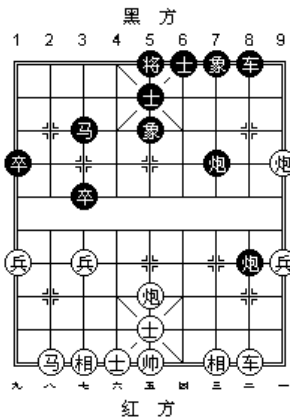


Fig.89

Diagram 89 (Black moves first)

1. ... P3+1 2. P7+1 C7=8

Black sacrifices his Pawn first, forcing Red to capture it with his Pawn and exposing the weak point of Red 7th-file Elephant. Then, Black plays Cannon sideward for shaking off the containment of Black Chariot (if Red plays R2+3, Black would play C2=3 to take a checkmate and capture Red Chariot).

3. R2=1 FC+3 4. A5-4 RC=5

Black is in a superior position.

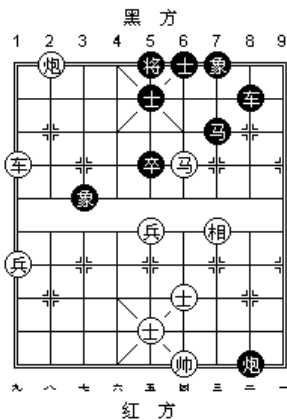


Fig.90

Diagram 90 (Red moves first)

1. C8-1 A5-4

Black Chariot can not make an escape, as Red Horse can take a check, followed with R9=6. Or if Black plays Advisor, Red would play R9+3 to take a check, and win the victory after capturing Black Chariot with Cannon.

2. H4+5! R8+1

Red Horse moves forward, serving as "the support" for Cannon. Black Chariot dares not to capture Red Horse, as Red can take a smothered checkmate with C8+1.

3. H5-6 ...

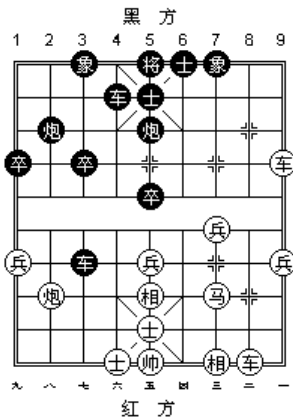


Fig.91

By playing his two Cannons, Black expels Red Chariot first and then Red Cannon, hoping to make a breakthrough. Red may have two variations. However, they can not help him to extricate himself from the difficult position:

- (1) C8=6, FC+6, E5-7, R3+3, K5=4, R3-1, K4+1, R4+6.
- (2) C8+5, C2+6, E5-7, R3+3, K5=4, R3-2, K4+1, R3=7.

3. "Remote Ambush"

This tactics is of elasticity. In appearance, it is aimed at protecting one's own pieces, but in reality it lies hidden the opportunity of attack. Using this tactics, one can wrest the initiative by expelling the opponent's pieces. This type of expelling has the features of "transferring". As its intention can not be easily detected, it can produce the result of "passive in appearance, but initiative in reality" (Diagram 92-95).

At the situation as shown in Diagram 92, both sides are locked in intense mid-game. Red has the turn to make a move:

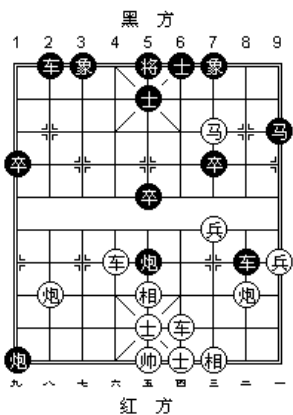


Fig.92

can play H3+5, to attack Chariot with Cannon. If Black Chariot makes an escape, Black will lose immediately: R8+5, R6+5, E5+3, C8=5, C5-4, R4=5, A6+5. R6=5 a checkmate. The above is an example of Cannon's ambush.

Red has fulfilled his strategic deployment of transferring the right Horse to the left. With three strong pieces on one flank, Red has built up his offensive.

- 3. ... R8-1 4. C8+1 A4+5
- 5. H6+7 K5=4 6. C8-1!

In his next move, Red will play R9+3 or R9=6 to take a checkmate, Black is doomed to defeat.

At the situation as shown in Diagram 91, Black has mustered heavy forces on the right wing. How can Black make a breakthrough from the Red left flank?

(Black moves first)

- 1. ... C2+1 2. R1-1 C5=2

- 1. K5=6 E3+5 2. R4+7 R8-4

Red moves his King out, menacing with a checkmate (R6+6), followed with a move of Chariot to block Black's Elephant Eye. In his subsequent moves, Red can play R6+5 to capture the central Advisor with his double Chariots and take a checkmate. Therefore, Black withdraws his Horse immediately, trying to expel Red Horse. But, Black has thought that Red has the following move:

- 3. C8+5 ...

Red plays Cannon to protect his Horse, at the same time, laying a remote ambush at Black Chariot. It looks like a defensive play, but in reality it is an offensive play. In his next move, Red

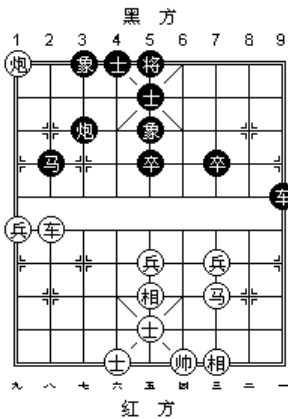


Fig.93

Diagram 93 shows another example of Cannon's ambush for gaining the initiative: (Black moves first)

1. ... H2+4 2. R8+1

The better play for Red is R8=7. With the material advantage, he can have some superiority. But now, Red advances his Chariot to cramp Black Chariot and Horse, hoping he can capture a Black piece with C9-4. It looks a good, but it is really a bad one.

2. ... C3+2 3. R8-3 H4+6

Black moves Cannon forward to block the line of Red Chariot. It lies hidden H4+5, followed with RC3+5 to take a check and capture Red Chariot. Red Chariot has to make an escape first. Now, Black Horse has a chance to move forward.

Black has gained the initiative in his offensive.

Chariot is often used in taking a remote ambush for expelling the enemy's pieces.

Please refer to Diagram 94 (Black moves first):

Black R5-8, R8-4, R8+3!

Black Chariot is chasing Red Cannon. It looks hasty that Red retreats Chariot to chase Black Horse. The correct move is C2=1, then Red can play R8=7 and R8=3, etc. Red can have enough strength to resist Black. Now, Black will take a check with H4+3 or H4+6 to expel Red Chariot. Red Cannon will be lost, if Red chariot makes an escape. If Red plays K5=4, Black would play C1=6, Red can hardly defend himself. All these passive position is brought about due to the unfamiliarity to the expelling tactics.

At the situation as shown in Diagram 95, Red Chariot is menacing Black Horse, Red can play R2+4, then E5-7, R2=3, K6+1, P3+1, R3=2 to take a checkmate. How will Black respond?

1. ... H8+9 2. R2-3 R2+7
3. A5-6 R2-2

Black's tactics is: By capturing Red Elephant first, Black can take the offense as the defense. And then, he takes a remote ambush at Red Chariot (with Black Pawn in between). In his subsequent move, Black can play P5+1, taking discover checkmate for capturing Red Chariot and wrest the initiative after the Red Chariot is expelled.

If Red continues with R2+7, then E5-7, R2-8, Black is sure to win. The subsequent moves are Red R2-1, Black K6=5, Black is winning.

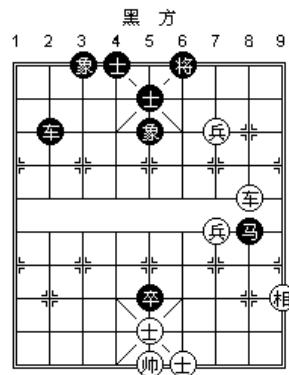
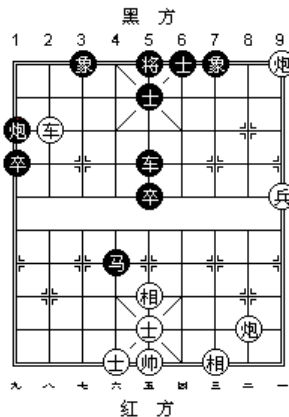


Fig.94

Fig.95

Chapter VIII Transferring

During the process of the intense and fierce battle of the mid-game, we must give much thought on the movement of the piece, and carry out a meticulous analysis on the tactics and design a scheme for wresting the initiative. The situations in the mid-games are changeable. Sometimes, the game looks plain and stable; Sometimes, both sides have their swords drawn; Sometimes, they are locked in a stalemate, And sometimes, the fight turns to white-hot. How can we create turbulence to break the balance, how can we size up the situation and have a correct judgement, and how can we have an accurate calculation for gaining the initiative. These are the subjects for us to study.

The methods of movement of the pieces in the mid-games are too numerous to be recounted. What we shall discuss here are four common methods, that is, "conceiving", "transferring with aid of checkmate", "movement of Pawn" and "calculation of moves".

1. "Conceiving"

As the forces of both sides remain fairly strong and the situation is still complicated in the mid-games, each side must take the methods of "conceiving" to give a correct analysis of the situation. We must see through the appearance of the things in order to gain its essence, so that we can adopt the appropriate strategy and tactics (Diagram 96-100).

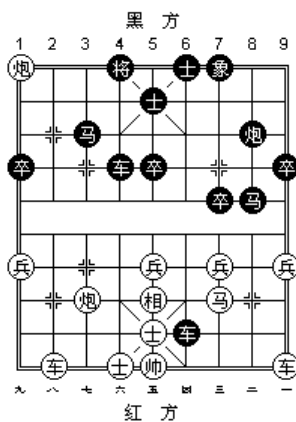


Fig.96

At the situation as shown in Diagram 96, Red can launch fairly strong offensive from the left flank. But the attack is single-handed, as the right Red Chariot is not activated (If Red moves C7=6, then K4=5, R8+9, R4-3, R8=7, E7+5 to have an exchange of Chariot, Red offensive is disintegrated). After correctly analyzing the situation, Red has adopted the following tactics:

E5+7 E7+5
R1=2!

By playing Elephant, Red can "kill two birds with one stone". He is attacking Black Horse and guarding against Black's play of H8+7 for attacking Red Elephant. The more important thing is that Black Cannon has lost its role in sealing off Red right Chariot (If Black captures Red Chariot with C8+7, Red could play C7+5 for taking a fetal checkmate. If Black changed to play R4-1, Red could attack Black with C9-2 and capture Black piece). By "making a feint to the east and attacking in the west", Red drives his right Chariot out. Now, Black is unable to ward off Red attack. So the plan of Red is to launch an attack with his 7th-file Cannon first, then Black's Horse and Cannon, and his own right Chariot.

At the situation as shown in Diagram 97, following the Cannon opening, both sides have their two Chariots exchanged. The situation seems calm. Now, let's see how Red takes the tactics of "making a feint to the east and attacking in the west" to

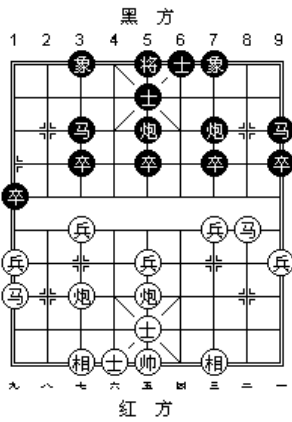


Fig.97

provoke the conflicts:

1. P7+1 P3+1 2. P3+1 P3+1 •
3. H2+4 C7=6 4. C5=3 A5-4
5. C3+7 A6-5 6. H9+7 ...

Red sacrifices his 7th-file Pawn first, adding burden to Black Cannon of protecting his Horse (Black Cannon can not move vertically). Then, Red sacrifices 3rd-file Pawn, forcing Black Cannon to move horizontally and exposing Black's weak point of the 7th-file Elephant. After that, Red can play H7+6 to launch an offensive.

Note: • The correct move for Black should be H3+4 to abandon his Pawn. If so, he still can equal Red in strength.

Diagram 98 shows the position of a game between two well-known xiangqi masters. Now, Black's 7th-file Pawn is confronting Red 3rd-file Pawn. As Red 8th-file Chariot has the task of guarding against the attack of Black's edge Cannon, it can not move horizontally. Taking this opportunity, Black resolutely sacrifices his Pawn and launches an attack with H9+7! (If Red plays P3+1? then H7+5, R8=5, C1+3, R5+1, R4+2 to take a fetal checkmate). It is really a well-conceived strategy.

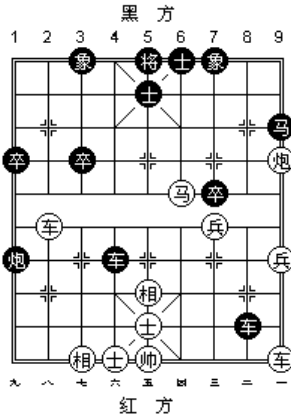


Fig.98

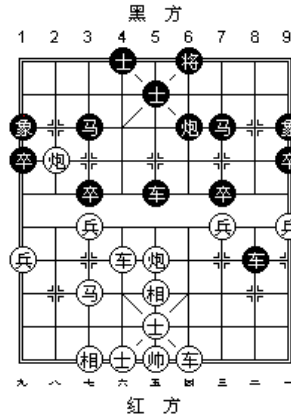


Fig.99

Diagram 99 shows the position of a game between two well-known xiangqi masters. The game is full of climaxes (Red moves first).

1. R6+4 H7+6

Seeing that Black's central Advisor can only protect his Cannon, Red resolutely drives his Chariot into the enemy's hinterland. Now, the battle becomes fierce and intense. If Black changes it into R5+2, then R6=4, A5+6, R4+7, K6=5, H6+5, Red stands better.

2. C8=4 K6=5 3. R6=4 H6+5
4. R4=7 H5+3 5. C4=8 R8=2
6. R7=1 A5-6 7. C8=3 H3-4
8. R1=4 A6+5 9. R4-3

Adopting a series of tactics of guerrilla war by "making a feint to the east and attacking in the

west", Red has secured the initiative. Now, Black can hardly protect himself. Red has the material advantage and is sure to win the game.

Diagram 100 shows a game between two well-known xiangqi masters. Now, Black has the turn to make a move. It seems that Red position is stable and his pieces are well linked. Seeing that Red 4th-file Horse is in a poor position, and Red 8th-file Cannon is protecting the Horse, while the 8th-file Chariot is protecting the Cannon, the 7th-file Horse is protecting the Chariot, and the 7th-file Cannon is protecting the Horse, Black has reached a conclusion that Red 7th-file Cannon and Horse constitute the main root. If the 7th-file Cannon is attacked, it will bring about a

"chain reaction" to the Horse and other pieces. Therefore, Black can take the following tactics:

1. ... R2+3 2. C7+3 H3-1
3. C7-4 ...

If Red plays P7+1 at move 2, then Black would play H3+5, Black can still be in a superior position. If Red plays C7=9 at move 3, Black would play C5=3 to attack Red 7th-file Horse immediately.

3. ... C5=2 4. C8+6 C9=2

Now, By making a breakthrough on the enemy's defense line, Red has built up his offensive.

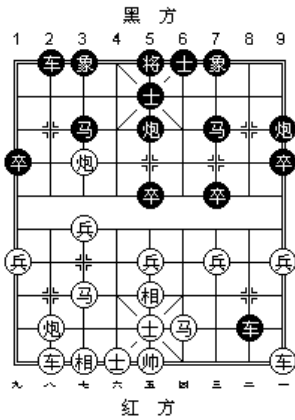


Fig.100

2. "Transferring with the aid of checkmate"

What we shall discuss in this section is the technique of gaining the initiative by transferring pieces through repeated checks or checkmates (Diagram 101-104).

First of all, we can give you a simple example: At the situation as shown in Diagram 101, both sides are competing each other in their speed for deciding the winner of the battle. Now, Red has the turn to make a move:

1. H5+7 K5=6 2. R3+5 K6+1
3. R3-1 K6-1 4. H7-5 K6=5

By taking repeated checks, Red has virtually gained the initiative and succeeded in transferring his Chariot to a favorable position on the second rank. In his next move, Red will play R3=4 to take a checkmate and win the victory.

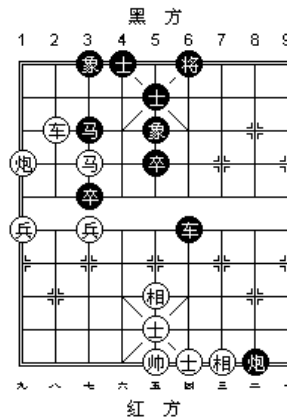
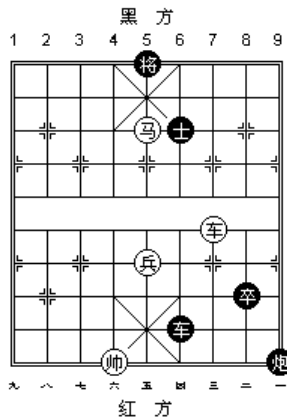


Fig. 101

Fig.102

At the situation as shown in Diagram 102, both sides are equal in strength. Black has the turn to make a move. As Black Horse is being chased, of course, Black can play C8-7 to protect it. If Red plays C9+3, Black would play K6+1. Black is always in a passive position. Then, how can Black size up the situation and wrest the initiative from his opponent:

1. ... C8-3 2. R8=7 ...

It is a hasty play that Red captures Black Horse, as his Chariot has fallen into dangerous position.

2. ... C8=5 3. K5=6 R6=4
4. K6=5 R4=3 5. K5=6 R3=4
6. K6=5 R4=1 7. K5=6 R1-2

By taking one check and one checkmate, Black has succeeded in killing the enemy's two Pawns and one Cannon. Now, Red Horse is trapped. In his next move, Black will play C5=3. Black is sure to capture enemy's another piece. If Red continues with R7+1, then C5=3, H7+8? R1=4 to take a check.

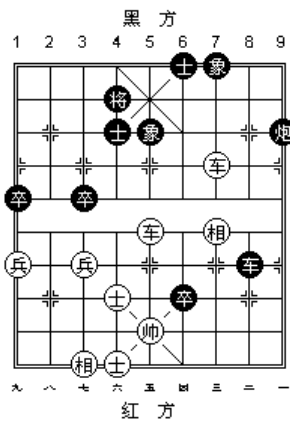


Fig.103

At the situation as shown in Diagram 103, Black is weak in his strength, but has the initiative in his offensive. How should Black make use of the initiative?

1. ... C9+6

If Black changes it into play (1) C9+7? Red would play R3=1. Red danger is removed. (2) R8+2, K5-1, P6+1, E3-1! Black's offensive is curbed.

2. K5=6 R8=3 3. K6=5 ...

With a precise calculation, Black is not eager to take a discover check for capturing Red Chariot, but taking the initiative to kill Red Pawns and to force Red King return to the centre.

3. ... R3=8 4. K5=6 R8=1
5. E7+9 ...

Red plays Elephant to test how Black will respond. However, Black does not covet the Red Elephant as he must keep on his original strategic plan.

5. ... R1=2 6. K6=5 R2=7
7. K5=6 R7+2 8. R5-3 R7-3

Taking the opportunity of checkmate, Black kills Red Elephant and Chariot. If Red continues with play R5+5, Black would play R7+3 to take a discover check for capturing Red 3rd-file Chariot. Now, Black has secured a winning position.

In some circumstances, it is not necessary to take continuous checks. The most important thing for us is to have the correct analysis of the situation and know how to transfer his pieces. At the situation as shown in Diagram 104, Black has the turn to make a move. Now, Red Cannon is threatening Black King, and Red Chariot is cramping Black's Chariot and Horse. How Black will respond?

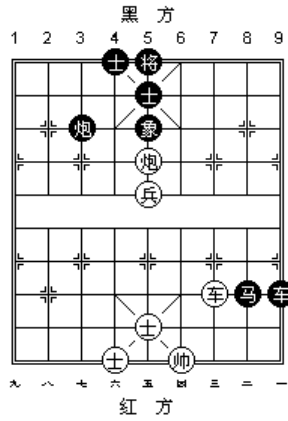


Fig.104

1. ... C3+7 2. K4+1 ...
- Black forces Red to move his King, so that his Horse can enforce a counter-cramping on Red Chariot.
2. ... C3-2
- Black will commit a big blunder if he takes a check immediately. After Red Chariot is taken, Black is sure to win. If Red continues with K4-1, Black would play R9+2, then K4+1, R9-1, C3=7 to capture Red Chariot and win the victory.

3. " Transferring of Pawns"

The application of the tactics of Pawn shouldn't be neglected in the mid-games. The abandoning of a Pawn can not be regarded as a great lost. However, if a Pawn can be promoted, it can display a fairly great power. Therefore, the tactics of sacrificing one's Pawns is often used in the mid-games for wresting the initiative or for provoking the conflict and leading the game to the complicated situation (Diagram 105-108).

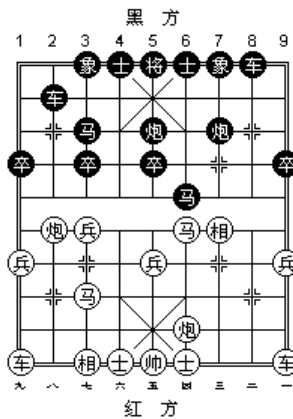


Fig.105

Diagram 105 shows the position of a game between two well-known xiangqi masters. Both sides have taken a stable opening. Now, Red Cannon is chasing Black's riverbank Horse. Black makes a surprising move of P3+1, trying to gain the initiative. If Red plays C4+4 to capture Black Horse, Black would play P3+1. After retrieving the lost piece, Black stands better. Or if Red plays P7+1, Black would play H6+4 to launch the offensive. Black still is in a superior position. Or if Red plays E3-5, then P3+1, E5+7, R2+3, Black 's pieces are quite active.

Diagram 106 shows the position of a mid-game between two well-known xiangqi masters. Now, Black Horse is at the mouth of Red Chariot. If Black plays H4+3 or H4+5, Red would play H1+2. Both sides are even in strength. Unexpectedly, Black sacrifices his two Pawns, trying to expend his initiative.

1. P3+1 2. P7+1 P7+1
3. R4=3 C5=3 4. E7+9 E3+5
5. R3-1

After that, Black can play H7+6 to take up a strategic position. Black's pieces are very active.

In his subsequent moves, Black can attack Red two pieces with C3+5 and H4+5. The sacrifice of Pawn has brought Black a good result.

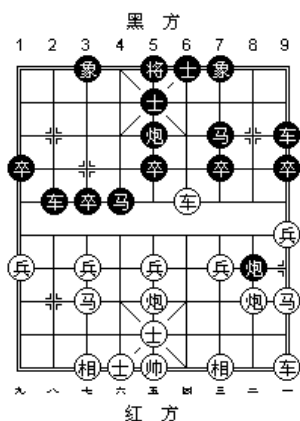


Fig. 106

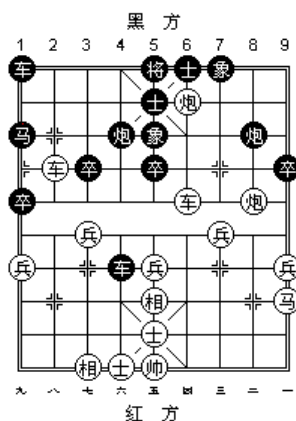


Fig. 107

The tactics of sacrificing Pawn is often used for launching an attack. Diagram 107 shows the position of a game played between two xiangqi masters. As the eye of Black Elephant is blocked by Red Cannon, the links of Black two Elephants has been cut off. If Red plays C2=2, then R4=5, C2=3 to attack Elephant, Black can play C8=7 or E7+9 to ward off the attack. Therefore, Red has decided to sacrifice his Pawn for an attack first with P7+1. Black may respond with the following two variations:

(1) Black E5+3, Red answers with C2-2 when Black Elephant is removed from the central file, then R4=5, C2=3, E7+9, C4=2, E3-5, R4+3. Red has built up his offensive while Black has lost several moves by playing the Elephant.

(2) Black P3+1, Red R8=5 to attack Black central Elephant. Black can hardly ward off Red offensive.

Therefore, Red Pawn's advance is the key move. If Black changes it into play R4=5, instead of capturing the Red Pawn, Red could play P7+1, Red still has the initiative in his offensive.

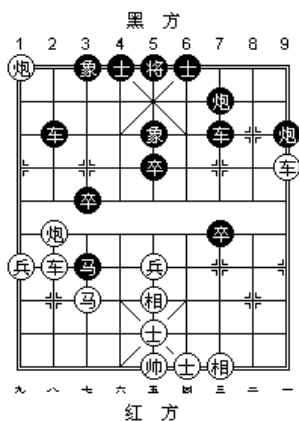


Fig.108

Diagram 108 is another example of sacrificing Pawn for gaining the initiative. Black moves first.

1. ... P3+1 2. E5+7 P7=8

Black sacrifices his 3rd-file Pawn first. In his next move, Black will attack Red Elephant with P7=8. Red can not retreat his Chariot as it is blocked by his own Elephant.

3. E7-5 H3+5 4. E3+5 C7=9
 5. R1=5 FC+7 6. E5-3 RC=7
 7. K5=6 C7+8 8. K6+1 C9-1
 9. A5+4 R7+6 10. K6+1 R7=3
 11. R5=1• C7-2 12. A4-5 R3-1

Note: • If Red changes it into R5=3, then R3-1, K6-1, C7-1, K6-1, R3+2, Black wins.

4. Calculation of Moves

Calculation of moves is a most important basic technique for the beginners, especially during

the transitional stage from the opening to the mid-game. Sometimes, as the tracks of the movement of pieces is too complicated, the players unconsciously overlook the calculation of moves that will be taken. Some people believe that they won't suffer any losses if the exchange is at an equal value. However, it often results in losing of the initiative (Diagram 109-113)

Following shows an example that how an initiative-lost player can regain the initiative. The moves from the opening to the mid-game are as follows (Red move first):

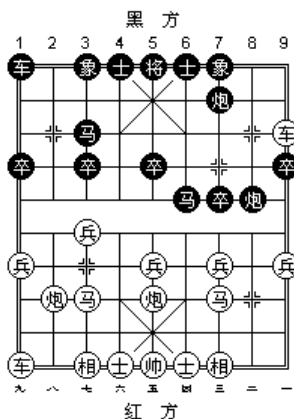


Fig.109

There is no doubt that Black will be in a superior position if the game keeps going on.

Following is an example showing that how Red takes advantage of the initiative in exchanging piece for expending his initiative. Red moves first:

1. C2=5 H8+7 2. H2+3 P3+1
3. R1=2 R9=3 4. H8+9 H2+3
5. R9+1 C8+4 6. C8=7 H3+4

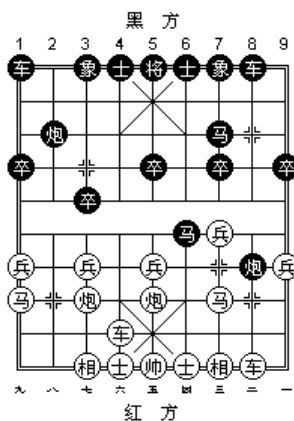


Fig.110

Following is another example. Red moves first:

1. C2=5 H8+7 2. H2+3 P3+1
3. R1=2 R9=8 4. H8+9 H2+3
5. C8=7 H3+2 6. R9+1 C8+4
7. R9=6 E3+5 8. R6+5 H2+1

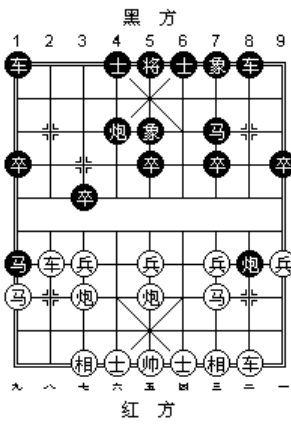


Fig. 111

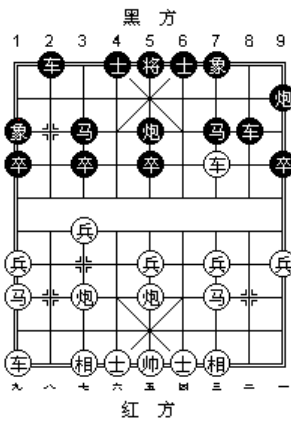
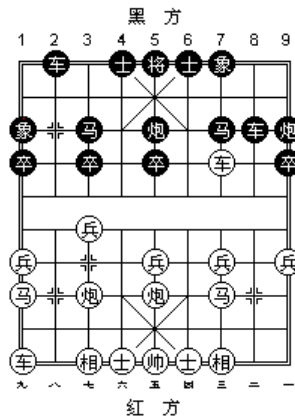


Fig. 112

Now, the game leads to the position as in Diagram 113. Same as in Diagram 112, Red has the turn to make a move. However, we can see that Black has gained the initiative as he has made one more move than Red - his edge Cannon is withdrawn a step backward. It tells us that in Diagram 112, since Red Chariot is defending at the riverbank, it is not appropriate for him to capture Black Pawn and curb Black Horse. So, one should refrain from taking a zigzag track as it may lose paces.



8. R6=8 C2=4 10. R8-3 R8-4

Now, the game leads to the situation as shown in Diagram 111. Due to continuous play of a certain piece, and the track of its movement is so tortuous, Red has rendered Black the opportunity for taking a counterattack. For example, Black now can play C4+4, then P7+1, C4=7, R8-1, Red has lost the initiative to a great extent.

By using different methods of piece movement for setting up an identical battle formation, we can detect the number of the paces that he has lost.

Following is an example. Red moves first:

1. C2=5 C2=5 2. H2+3 H8+7
3. R1=2 R9=8 4. H8+9 H2+3
5. C8=7 R1=2 6. P7+1 E3+1
7. R2+4 C8=9 8. R2=4 R8+6
9. R4=3? C9-1 10. R3+2 R8-4

It looks like a good play that at move 9, Red plays R4=3 for protecting his Pawn and attacking Black Pawn. But in reality, it is a bad move as Red has lost some paces invisibly. Now, the game leads to the situation as shown in Diagram 112. However, it looks like that Red hasn't lost any initiative.

However, If we compare it with Diagram 113, we can find the difference.

The first six moves are identical to that as in Diagram 112, at move 7, if Black plays :

7. R2+6 C8=9 8. R2=3 R8+2

Fig.113

Chapter IX Abandoning

Abandoning is the tactics most widely used in the mid-games. It plays very important role in the process of gaining the initiative, attacking, creating a checking environment and relieving from a siege. It can bring about radical changes it into the war situation. Its main idea is “constantly seeking changes”. When taking the overall situation into consideration, a player can make minor sacrifice in order to safeguard major interest, displaying the style of “I fight the battle of my own, and you fight yours”. The prerequisite of this tactics is to destroy the enemy’s strategic plan. The tactics of abandoning represents a positive, unconventional, flexible and changeable style of play. Conversely, if one’s nose is always led by others, he will always land himself in a passive position, and he is doomed to defeat. By “abandoning for the initiative”, one can assume the offensive throughout the game. When one is in a difficult position, it is better for him to fight his way out than waiting for the death”. Abandoning is often organically related to and integrated with other tactics. The concrete measures are too numerous to be mentioned one by one. We can find them in many xiangqi books, as well as in other chapters of this book. Therefore, we just raise some examples which have certain specific features, and give brief analysis on their tactical features and the points for attention.

1. Abandoning for launching an attack

When abandoning for launching an attack, one must seize the opportunity, be bold, dare to conceive in his plot, and have an accurate calculation. His opponent has no other alternative but is forced to respond to what he has played. Only then, he can be successful in his tactics (Diagram 114-115).

Diagram 114 shows a game selected from the actual competition. Now, Red has the turn to make a move. As Black Chariot and Cannon are stationed near the edge of the board, it is not enough to drive them back by one move. As Black Horse is stationed at the centre of the Palace, Black’s battle formation has some defects. Seizing up the situation, Red takes the opportunity to launch an attack with abandoning. Following is the record of this game:

1. R8+1 R5=2 2. H4+6 H5+7

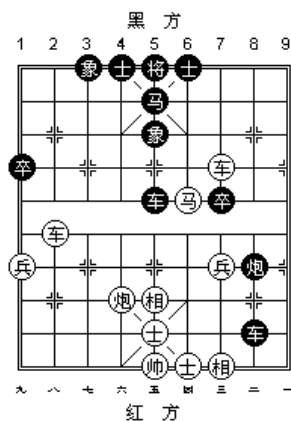


Fig.114

Abandoning his Chariot, Red takes a surprised attack with his Horse at the enemy’ elbow and the corner of the palace. If Black changes move 2 into C8-5, Red could play R3+2, rendering Black a fetal checkmate!

2. H6+7 K5+1 4. R3+1 K5=4

Instead of capturing Black Chariot, Red drives his Horse forward to take a check, showing that he is an experienced player. Red is pressing on with a check. If he changes it into R2=6, then R3+1, R6-3, H7-6, K5-1, R3=4, Red also wins.

5. R3+1 K4+1

If Black plays A4+5, then H7-6, R2=4, H6+8 to take a double checkmate.

6. H7-6 R2=4 7. H6+8

Red will take a checkmate with R3=6 in his next move.

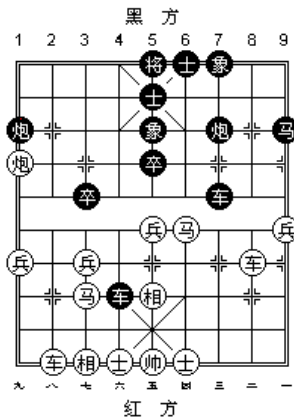


Fig.115

At the situation as shown in Diagram 115, Black Chariot is going to capture Red Horse. Red will be in a passive position if he tries to make an escape of his Horse. Can Red abandon the Horse with A4+5? Let's see how the game is developed:

1. A4+5 R4+3 2. R8+9 A5-4
3. R2=6 A6+5 4. H4+5 R7+4
5. H5+3 R7-6 6. C9=5 K5=6
7. C5+2! Red wins.

Now, Black can hardly resist. Black has to answer each move of Red passively. Red play is very clear, trying to maintain the initiative. Such an abandoning for attack proves to be very successful.

2. Abandoning for taking checkmate

When someone is gathering heavy forces to menace the enemy's King, one should consider abandoning for taking a checkmate (One must guard against that his enemy may also use the tactics of abandoning for a check), especially abandoning his Chariot, as a Chariot can move swiftly and take a check straightly. On the contrary, if one play carelessly, without giving any thought to tactics of abandoning, always believing that he still need some moves to make, he might bungle the chance of winning a battle or "be attacked surprisingly by the enemy" (Diagram 116-117).

At the situation as shown in Diagram 116, both sides are locked in a mutual attack and Black has the turn to make a move:

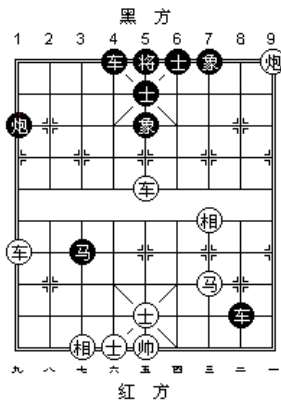


Fig.116

1. ... H3+2

Black drives his Horse forward, lying hidden the move of R4+9. Black can sacrifice his Chariot to take a check (A5-6, H2-4, K5=4, R8=6, checkmate).

It looks like that Red play R9=4 is to protect the gate of his King and relieve himself from the checkmate. But in reality, it lies hidden R4+6! then, A5-6, R5+2, Red can sacrifice his Chariot to take a checkmate. However, Red has overlooked that Black can abandon his right Chariot to take a checkmate. Therefore, the better move for Red should be R9-1.

2. ... R8=5 3. A6+5 C1+7
4. A5-6 R4+9 5. K5+1 C1-1
6. K5+1 R4-2 a checkmate!

Diagram 117 shows the position of a game between two well-known xiangqi masters. Now, the game is in the white-hot battle. Red has the turn to make a move:

1. R3-4 R4+4

Red withdraws Chariot to the riverbank. As expected, Black Chariot falls into the trap set by Red. If Black played R4=3, the game would be a draw.

2. R7=6!

Red boldly sacrifices Chariot for taking a checkmate. Black may have several variations, but they can not save Black from the defeat.

(1) A A5-4, H7-5, K6+1, H5-3, K6-1 (If black plays K6=5, H3+2, Red also wins), H3+2, R8-8, R3+5 to take a checkmate.

(2) A5-4, H7-5, K6=5 (If Black changes it into A4+5, then R3+5, K6+1, H5-3, It will lead to a position of Silhouette Tiger Checkmate), R3+5, K5+1, H5+3, R8-8, H3-4, K5+1, R3-2 to take a checkmate.

(3) K6+1, R3+4, K6+1, R6=3, Red is in a winning position.

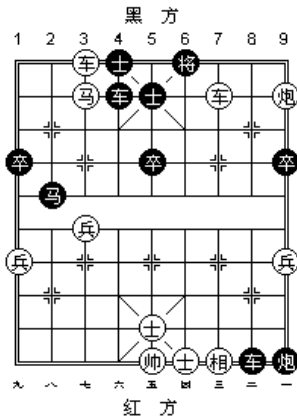


Fig.117

3. Abandoning first and Gaining Later

“Abandoning first and gaining later” is one of the common methods used in the mid-games. It looks like abandoning but it isn’t. For example, when a certain piece is being chased, one can use the tactics of “abandoning first and gaining later” to extricate himself from the passive position (Diagram 118-119)

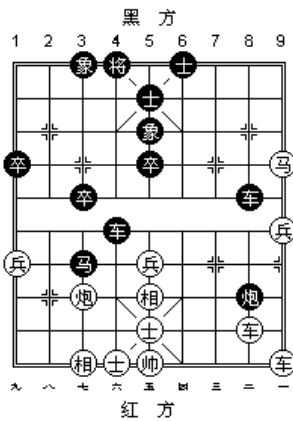


Fig.118

At the situation as shown in Diagram 118, Black is in a passive position when his Cannon is being chased (If Black plays R8-1, then P1+1, C8-2, R1+4 followed with P1=2 to capture an enemy’s piece). The tactics of abandoning first and gaining later can be used here:

1. ... C8=3
2. R2+4 H3+5
3. R1+1

If Red changes it into E7+5, Black would play R4+3, then K5=4, C3+2, Black stands better after he has captured the Red Chariot.

3. ... H5+3
4. K5=4 R4=6
5. A5+4 R6+2
6. R1=4 C3+2
7. A6+5 H3+5
8. K4=5 R6+1

Black is in a superior position.

The tactics of “Abandoning first and gaining later” can be used not only for dissolving the crisis, but also used in the attack.

Diagram 119 shows the position of a game between two well-known xiangqi masters. Now, Black has the turn to make a move. Let’s see what tactics Black will use for making a breakthrough on the Red defensive line:

1. ... C1=2!
2. C8+6

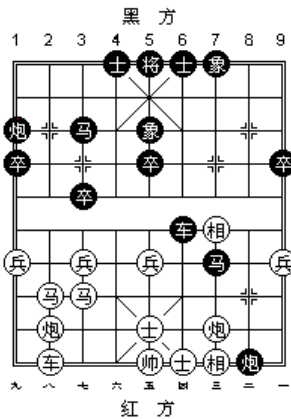


Fig.119

If Red changes it into C3+1, then C2+6, R8+1, R6+3, Black is in a winning position.

By abandoning his Cannon first, Black tries to create confusion on the enemy's line and to cut off the link between Red two Cannons, so that Black can put more pressure on the enemy's right wing.

Red is forced to offer Black a Cannon. If he changes it into C3+1, Black would play R6=7, then C3=4, R7+1, Red can hardly resist.

4. Nominal Abandoning

The nominal abandoning is an indirect defensive tactics for keeping the initiative to the greatest extent. When a piece is being chased, usually one can respond with an escape, or strengthening his defense, making a counter-attack, or abandoning first and gaining later or abandoning for gaining the initiative, etc. Besides all these measures, sometimes, a player may not make an escape of or defend his pieces, this kind of ambush tactics can be called "nominal abandoning".

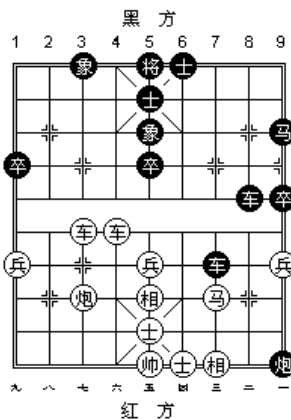


Fig.120

At the situation as shown in Diagram 120, Black's right wing is under the attack of Red double Chariots and one Cannon. Especially, Black Elephant is threatened by Red Cannon. The common practice for Black is:

(1) If Black makes an escape of Elephant with E3+1, Red would block Elephant eye R6+4, followed with R7+3 to attack Black's edge Elephant. If Black continues with E1+3, Red would attack with C7=8. The passage of Black Chariot is blocked by his own Elephant.

(2) If Black plays A5-4, Red would play R6+4, then, E3+1, R7+3, R8=3 (If Black H9+7, Red R6=3 gain the initiative in his offensive), R7=5, A6+5, C7=6, Red has captured Black Elephant and has the initiative in his offensive.

Therefore, the better move for Black is to "sacrifice" Elephant and play R8=2, adopting the indirect defensive tactics, echoed with the containment on the outer line. By doing so, Black can maintain an orderly battle array. The vacancy on the right wing can be filled by the left Chariot. In this case, Red Cannon dare not attack Black Elephant. If Red plays C7+7, Black would play R2-4, then C7=4, A5-6. After that, Red right Horse will lose its root, while Black will have the material advantage and be in a superior position.

At the situation as shown in Diagram 121, Black Cannon is menacing Red Elephant at the bottom. The common practice for Red is E3+1, then C7=8, R4=2 to ward off Black's attack. However, Red battle formation looks disorderly. Another

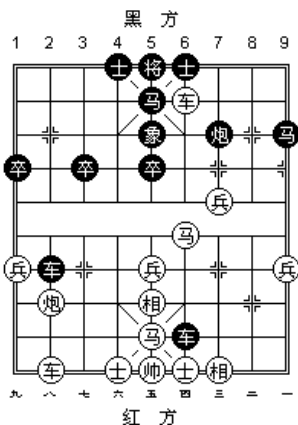


Fig.121

flexible tactics is "to abandon Red Cannon first, and attack Black later" with H5+7 to adjust the battle formation and protect right Chariot. Now, Black dare not to capture Red Elephant, as following Black C7+7 and Red A4+5, the game will be developed as follows:

- (1) C7=9, C8-1, R6-2, H7+6 to attack Black's double Chariots.
- (2) R2=3, C8-1, R6-2, E5-3, R3+1, C8+8 to launch an attack.

5. Trapped Abandoning

The trapped abandoning is a premeditate sacrifice. During the preparatory stage, it has a false appearance (pretending that he has miscalculated in his play or he is forced to make a sacrifice), or he plays the moves so swift that his opponent can not detect his tactics (Diagram 122-123).

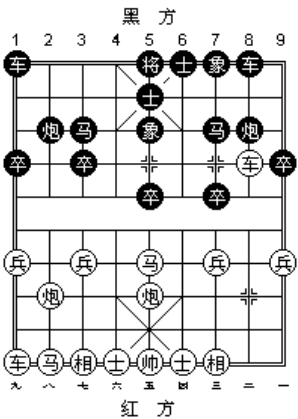


Fig.122

At the situation as shown in Diagram 122, Red moves first:

1. H5+6 R1=3 2. R2=3 P3+1

It is a hasty play that Red moves his Horse and Chariot, as he has fallen into the trap of Black's sacrifice for an assault. At move 2, if Red played R2=7, Black would play H3+5 to have an exchange. Black could gain the initiative.

3. H6+7 R3+2 4. R3+1 R3+1
5. R3+1 C2-1

Black Cannon chasing Red Chariot is a good move, as it can keep Red Chariot on an idle spot. In the next move, Black will launch an attack with C8+7. It will soon lead to a checkmate position as Black double Chariots and Cannon can be transported to the front quickly and smoothly.

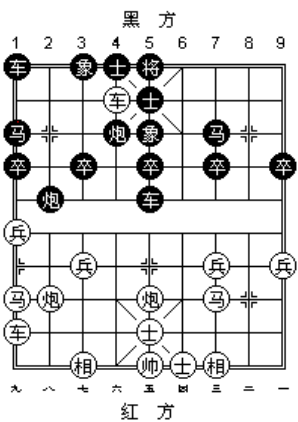


Fig.123

Diagram 123 shows the position of a game between two well-known xiangqi masters. Red has the turn to make a move. Now, Red has set a trap to lure Black Cannon to attack Red double Chariots, and then to abandon his Chariot for a surprised attack at Black King. Red checkmate method is so aggressive and well-knit.

1. R9=6 C2=4 2. R6+4 R5=4
3. C5+5 K5=6 4. H3+5 R4+2
5. C8=4! R4=5 6. C5-4 R1=2
7. C4-1

Red makes a sacrifice for taking an assault, pressing on at every move. Now, all the Red pieces are very active. Red can play R6-1 to capture Black Cannon. Black is thrown into a difficult position.

6. Counter-sacrifice

The counter-sacrifice is the tactics that one side captures the opponent's sacrificed piece first, and then sacrifices his own piece, or "chasing a piece but not capturing it", or "not capturing the sacrificed piece but sacrificing his own piece. This special sacrificing method also merits us to learn (Diagram 124-125).

Diagram 124 shows a perilous situation that each side is going to launch an attack from one flank. Red is mounting his double Cannons, Horse and Chariot for attacking Black's right wing. In his next move, Red will kill the Black Elephant, followed with several methods of attacking, such as, capturing Black advisor, or driving Horse forward. As for Black, his central Cannon can not display its power for the time being. Black Horse is curbed by Red 6th-file Cannon. As the strength of the attack of Black Chariot and Cannon is limited, so Black has decided to take the tactics of sacrifice for making a breakthrough on Red defensive line. Now, Black has the turn to make a move:

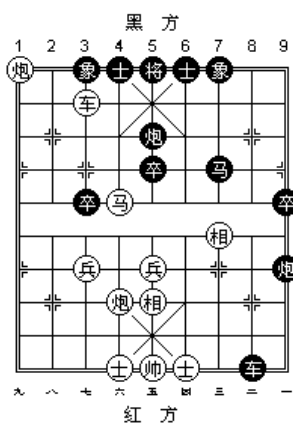
1. ... H7+6!

With the central Pawn as his target, Black sacrifices his Horse to draw away Red 6th-file Horse. If Red plays H6-4, Black would play C5+4. Red may have the following variations:

(1) Red A6+5, then C9+3, K5=6, R8-8, Black will win the victory when he has captured Red Chariot.

(2) E5-3, C5-1, K5+1, R8-1, K5+1, C9=5, K5=4, R8-2, Black wins.

2. R7+1! ...



Ignoring Black's sacrificed Horse, Red captures Black Elephant with Chariot and makes a counter-sacrifice. The plot is ingeniously designed.

2. ... H6-4 3. R7=2! A4+5

4. C6=8

Discarding the common practice of capturing Pawn first and taking a discover check for capturing Horse later, Red takes a discover check to block Black central Cannon, and then plays Cannon sideward for a checkmate. Black has no way to ward off the attack. The following move will be: (1) Black A5+4, C8+7, K5+1, R7+1 a checkmate; (2) Black K5=4, R7+2, K4+1, C8+5, Black is doomed to defeat.

Fig.124

Sometimes, when one side is trying to sacrifice his piece for gaining the initiative, while the other side, as he has the material advantage, has the chance to sacrifice his piece too. This is the phenomenon that we must pay attention to. Diagram 125 shows a mid-game position between two well-known xiangqi masters. Now, Red has the turn to make a move.

1. C2+5 C5=8 2. R5=2 R9=8

3. P5+1 ...

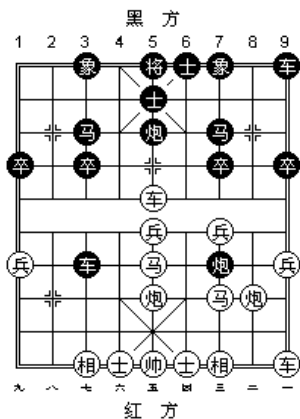


Fig.125

After sacrificing his Horse and playing the Elephant, Black is in a superior position. If Black Horse tries to make an escape, Red could play R3-4, Black would be in a difficult position.

7. Sacrifice Combinations

At the stage when the opening of the game is just over and it begins to enter into the mid-game, we often see some brilliant sacrifice combinations. As these combinations have been designed prior to the start of competition, so the plot is more profound and complicated. Sometimes, they are executed at a fast pace, or with false illusions. During the competition, a player shouldn't pay too much attention to these unexpected sacrifices, as he may lose the time, or commit mistakes (Diagram 126-127).

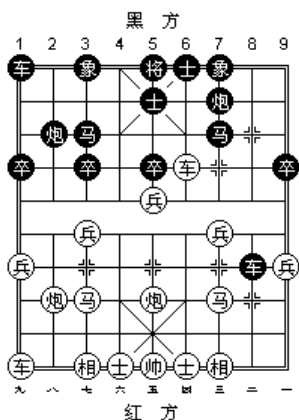


Fig.126

1. ... H7+8
2. P3+1 C7+6
3. C5+4 H3+5
4. C8=3 R8=7
5. P3=2 R7+1
6. H7+5 R7-1
7. H5+4

After retrieving back the lost piece, Red will have the material advantage and be in superior position.

Diagram 127 shows the position of a mid-game between two well-known masters at move 14. The game is started with the opening of "5th- and 9th-file Cannon, file- and rank-Chariot vs. Screen Horses". Now, unexpectedly, Black sacrifices his Chariot with R4+8! However, Red doesn't capture the Black Chariot. Because, if Red played R1=6, Black would play R8-1, then A4+5, R8=7 (Black could take a checkmate with C7=8 in his next move).

Red boldly sacrifices his Cannon for the initiative. But the move P5+1 is too hasty. The correct move is R2-2, to adopt the tactics of "sacrificing first and gaining later".

3. ... P7+1
4. R2+1 P7+1
5. E3+1 C8=9
6. R1=2 R8+3
7. R2+6 R3+3
8. P9+1 P7=6

Black plays Pawn sideward for gaining the initiative. In the following moves, Black intentionally offers Red a piece for dissolving Red offensive.

9. R2=3 P6+1
10. H5+6 R3-2
11. C5-1 R3+7
12. R3+1 R7=9

When the attack of Red central Cannon is diverted, Red has lost the momentum in his offensive.

13. C5=3 E3+5

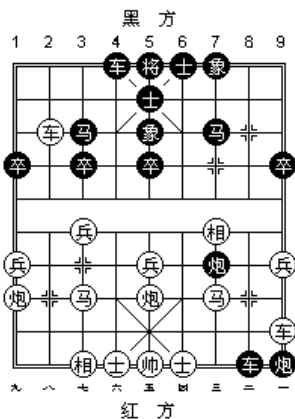


Fig.127

1. H7+6 E5+3 2. P7+1 R4=3
3. R8=5 H8+6 4. C7+7! R3-4
5. R5+2 H6+5 6. R5-3

Red is sure to win. After taking continuous sacrifices, Red will render Black a fetal checkmate.

If Red continues with the move:

(1) H3-1, R7=9, C5=3, R9=7. K5=4, C7=8, C3=2, H7+8, Black's offensive is powerful.

(2) A5+6, R7=4, A6+5, H7+6, Black will have much superiority if the game develops.

The brilliant and vivid tactics of sacrifice is often brought about by the skillful checkmate methods and the mastering of the knowledge of xiangqi theories. Following are three examples (Diagram 128-130):

Diagram 128 shows the position of a mid-game between two well-known masters. Now, Red makes a sacrifice for launching an attack:

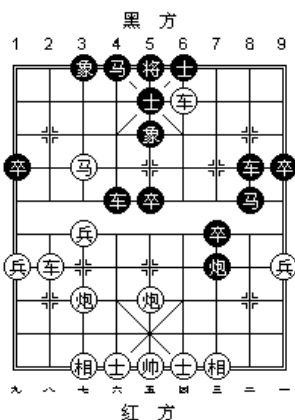


Fig.128

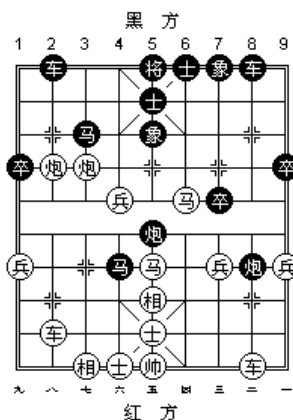


Fig.129

Sometimes, in order to create a double-checkmate position, one can resort to the method of sacrifice.

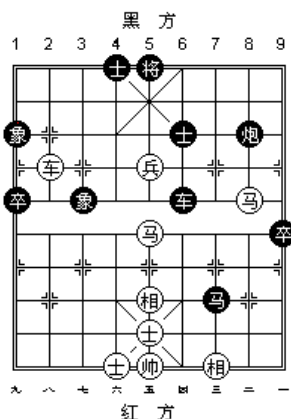
Diagram 129 shows the position of a mid-game between two well-known masters. Now, Black has the turn to make a move.

Unexpectedly, Black sacrifices his Chariot to capture Black Cannon with R2+3! In appearance, Black Horse can take a check, but it can not execute a continuous mating check. However, if Red plays Chariot to capture Black Chariot in his next move, Black would play C8=5 to attack Black Horse and sacrifice another Chariot! It is really breathtaking. If Red continues with the move:

(1) H4-5, then R8=9, A5-4, H4+3 to take a check and withdraws Chariot for a checkmate.

(2) R2+9, FC=6! Now, Black can take a checkmate with H4+3 or H4+6. Red can't stand the tactics of "double strikes".

Diagram 130 also shows an example of "double strikes" following the sacrifice.
(Red moves first)



1. H5+4 C8+1

Full of confidence, Red drives his Horse forward. Black has fallen into the trap when he plays Cannon, trying to cramp Red Horse. The correct move for Black is H7-6. Then, both sides are still even in strength.

2. P5+1 C8=2 3. H4+6 K5=6

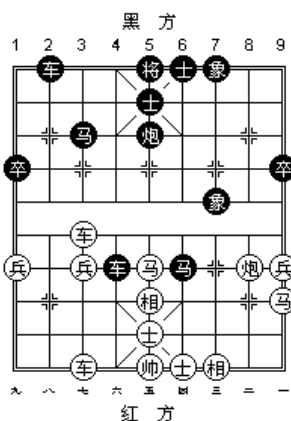
4. P5+1

Now, the game is led to a fetal checkmate – Red can play P5=4 or H2+3. As any two pieces of Red double Horses and Pawn can constitute a checkmate position, Black is doomed to be defeated.

Fig.130

In complicated situations when there are many variations, and especially when a player is short of the time, unable to make a comprehensive calculation, he may resort to the method of estimation, that is, to give an analysis on the strength of both sides after sacrificing, the general gain and loss, and then take measures in accordance to the practical situation (Diagram 131-132).

At the situation as shown in Diagram 131, Black has the turn to make a move. Whether can Black play H6+5 for an exchange of Chariot and sacrifice Horse for launching an attack?



We can estimate that following Black's move of H6+5, Red will play C2=6, then H5+3, R7+3, after that there are many variations, and we can not make a correct calculation in a short time. But we can give an analysis on the general situation: Black has captured a Red Advisor, and his 5th-file Chariot is very active and can render a powerful attack; while Red edge Horse and Chariot is in a poor position, and can not display their power for the time being. So, such a sacrifice should be regarded as a good one. Black H3-4, K5=6, R2=4, C6+2, H4-5, C6-4, C5+4, R7-3, C5=4, K6=5 (If C6+8, H5+4 a checkmate!), H5+4, A4+5, C4=5, R7=8, H4-2, Black stands better.

Fig.131

Diagram 132 shows the position of a mid-game between two well-known xiangqi masters. Now, Red 3rd-file Pawn is attacking Black Horse. Black has the turn to make a move.

Black can respond with quite a few variations. Now, Red forces are jammed at its right wing. Whether can Black play H5+7 to sacrifice his Horse for taking Red Pawn? The exchange of the Horse for a Pawn shouldn't be considered as a big loss. Furthermore, after capturing Red Elephant with his Chariot, Black can launch an

offensive on the Red right wing, while Red doesn't have any time to move his Chariot to the right for reinforcement. No matter what the development will be, Black will have some compensation in his play. So, this kind of sacrifice is tenable. During the actual competition, when Black played H5+7 to capture Red Pawn, Red didn't take the Black Horse.

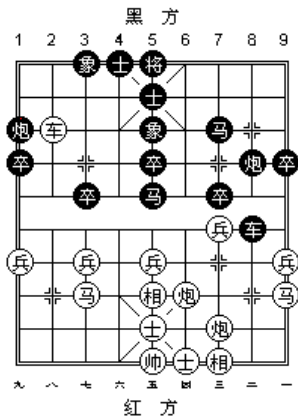


Fig.132

Chapter X Checkmate

The methods of checkmate can be considered as the basis for winning the victory in the competition and is the most important basic tactics in the mid-game. If a player is unfamiliar with the methods of checkmate, he may miss some good opportunities for taking a checkmate, or be "killed in the dark". In the mutual attacking position, the methods of checkmate prove to be very important. There are many cases showing that, due to the fact that one player is lagging behind his opponent by one move, he may lose the whole game. Therefore, it is quite necessary for us to master the checkmate methods in the battle of offensive and defensive of the mid-games.

The checkmate methods can be widely used. As there are many variations in the methods, we can enunciate them one by one. What we are going to discuss in this book are some most basic and common checkmate methods. They can be divided into central Cannon checkmate, double Cannon checkmate, bottom Cannon checkmate, Horse checkmate and Elbow Horse checkmate. We now discuss them one by one.

1. Central Cannon Checkmate

The central Cannon checkmate is the most common checkmate method. Stationing on the central file, the Cannon can control the general situation and exert a mighty power. There are many methods for taking the checkmate. With the co-operation of other pieces, it can take a mating check quickly (Diagram 133-142).

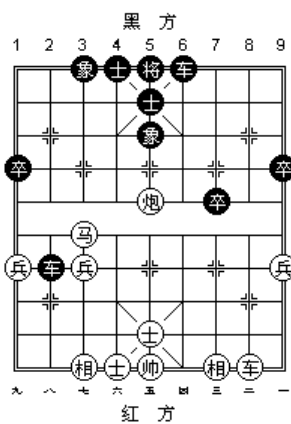


Fig.133

Diagram 133, Red moves first.

1. H7+6 R2=3 2. R2+9! R6=8

If Black plays R3-3, Red could play H6+4 to take a checkmate.

3. H6+4 K5=6

4. C5=4 (Horse-Cannon checkmate).

In Diagram 134, Black moves first.

H7+8! Red may have the following four variations:

(1) R1=4, then H8+7, R4+1, R7=8, R4=3, R8+3 to take a checkmate.

(2) C7-1, R7+3! R1=3, H8+6, K5=4, C5=6 to take a checkmate.

(3) K5=4, C5=6!, R1+2, R7+3, K4+1, R7-1, K4-1, H8+6 to take a checkmate.

(4) R1=2, H8+7, K5=4, R7=6, A5+4, R6+1, C7=4, C9=6 (Black wins).

In Diagram 135, Black moves first:

1. ... C6=7 2. C3=4 • H4+5

3. R9=6 R3=4 4. C4+7 A5-6

5. R6+7 K4+1 6. C4-7 H5+3 to take a double checkmate.

Note: • If Red changes it into R2-9, then Black C7+8, R2=3, H4+5, Black wins too.

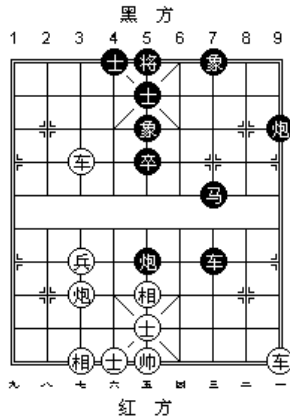


Fig. 134

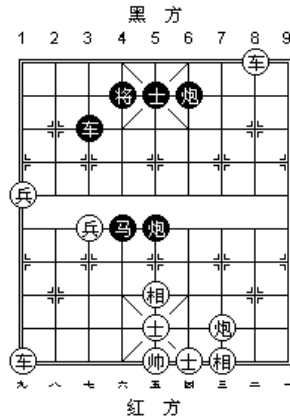


Fig.135

In Diagram 136, Red moves first.

1. R2+9 R6-6 2. R2-1 E3+1

3. R7=8 E1-3 4. R8+5 R6=9

5. R2=5 K5=6 6. R5+1 K6+1

7. R8-1 K6+1 8. R8-4 Black wins.

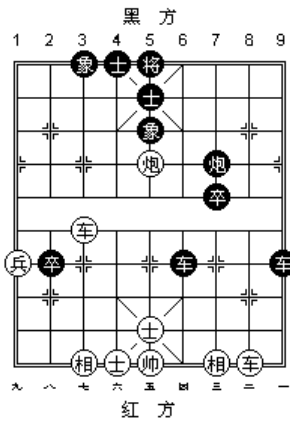


Fig.136

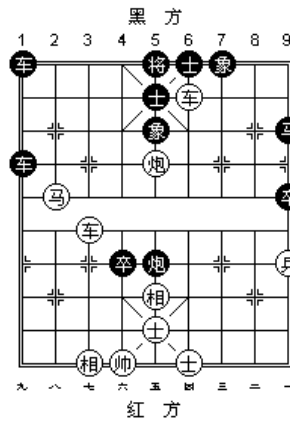


Fig.137

In Diagram 137, Red moves first (Now, Black Chariot is attacking Red central Cannon. If Red plays H8+7, Black would play H9+7, then R4-1, R1=4, The game is now led to a mutual-attacking position).

1. H8+9 R1-1 2. R7=4 K5=4

3. FR+1 K4+1 4. RF=6 A5+1

5. R4-1 K4-1 6. C5=6! A4-5•

7. C6=9 8. R6+3 K4=5•

9. C9=5 Black wins.

Note:

- If Black plays K4=5, Red would play R6=3 to win the game.
- If Black plays A5+4, Red would play R4+1 to capture Black Chariot and win the game.

In Diagram 138, Red moves first.

1. R1+1 R6-6 2. R2+9 R4=6
3. C8=3 R6+1 4. K5+1 H2+4
5. R2=4 R6-9 6. C3+6 R6+3
7. C3=6 R6-3 8. C6=4 Red is sure to win.

At the situation as shown in Diagram 139, any side who moves first, can play Chariot to capture the opponent's Advisor to take a checkmate, for example, Red can play R4+9, or Black can play R4+9. After that, one side can play Horse to check again. Not a single move can be delayed. Otherwise, he is certainly to be killed by his enemy.

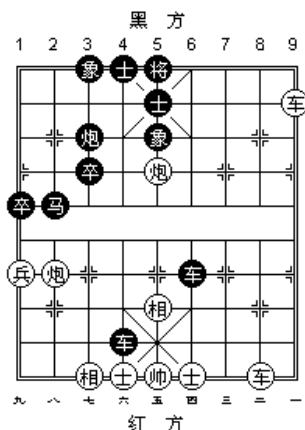


Fig. 138

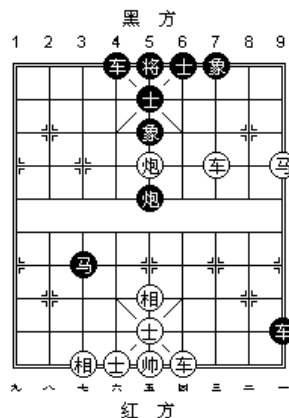


Fig.139

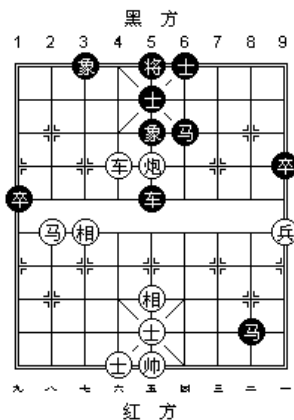


Fig.140

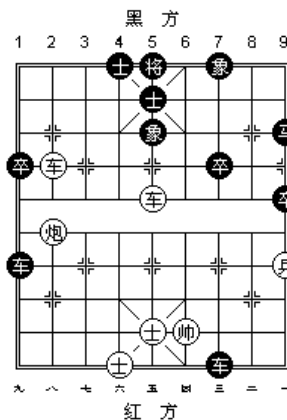


Fig.141

Diagram 140, Red move first.

1. H8+9! H6+7 2. R6+3 K5=4
3. H9+8 K4+1

If Black plays K4=5, Red would play H8-6, then K5=4, C5=6 to take a checkmate.

4. C5=9 Red wins.

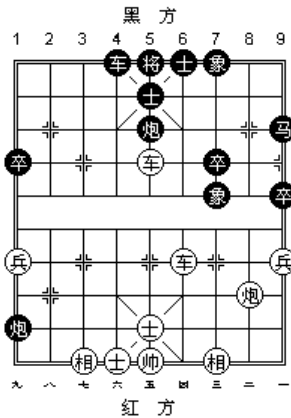


Fig. 142

In Diagram 142, Red moves first.

Same tactics can be used as above. In such circumstance, the better move for Red is K5=4, After that, Red can play C2=5 in next move. Black Cannon can not capture Red Cannon. While Red can play R5+2 to attack Black Cannon by force. Now, no matter how Black will respond, he can not ward off the attack of Red.

2. Double Cannons Checkmate

As the double Cannons checkmate is invincible, it can create vivid and brilliant checkmate methods. Following are seven examples (Diagram 143-149):

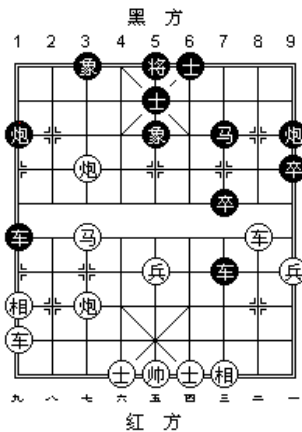


Fig. 143

In Diagram 143, Red moves first:

"Replaced central Cannon" checkmate is also common tactics is xiangqi game.

Diagram 141, Red moves first.

1. R8=4 R1=2

Red moves Chariot to the 4th-file, menacing with the move C8+4. After taking a check, Red would play R4+3 for a mating check. So, the move of Black Chariot chasing Red Cannon is a bad one. The better play for him is A5+6.

2. R5+2! E7+5
3. C8=5 Red wins.

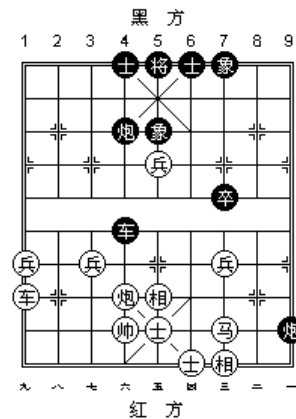


Fig.144

1. H7+8 R1=8 2. H8+7 R5=4
3. R9=6 C1=4 4. R6+6 A5+4
5. C7=6 A4-5 6. C6-5 R7+2
7. A6+5 Red wins.

In Diagram 144, Black moves first:

C9-7! Red may have several variations, but they all are ended in defeat of Red.

- (1) H3+4, R4+2, K6+1, C9=4 checkmate;
- (2) A5+4, R4+2, K6=5, R4=1 to capture Red Chariot and win.
- (3) E5+7, C9=4 to capture Red pieces and win.

In Diagram 145, Red moves first:

R4+3! C8+1, R4=5, C8=6 (If R7=6, R5=4 a checkmate), R5+1, K5=6, R5+1 to take a checkmate.

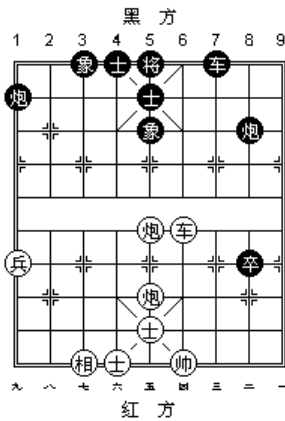


Fig.145

In Diagram 146, Red moves first:

1. R4=5 A4+5 2. R2=5 K5=4
3. C4=6 R2+7• 4. C6+1 R2-2
5. E9+7 R2-1 6. C5-2 Red is sure to win.

Note: • If Black changes it into H1+3, Red would play C5-2, then H3+5, C6+3, R2-2, E9+7 (Red wins).

In Diagram 147, Red moves first:

1. R7+4 K5+1 2. R7-1 K5+1
3. R7-1 K5-1 4. C8+2 Red is sure to win.

Following the check by his Chariot, Red can take a double Cannon checkmate If Black continues with K5=6, Red would play C6-1 to win the game.

In Diagram 148, Red moves first:

1. R7+1 R4-5 2. C2=9 E7-5
3. C9+5 E5-3 4. C9=7 to take a double Cannon checkmate!

If Black plays Advisor at move 3, Red would play R7=6 to win the game.

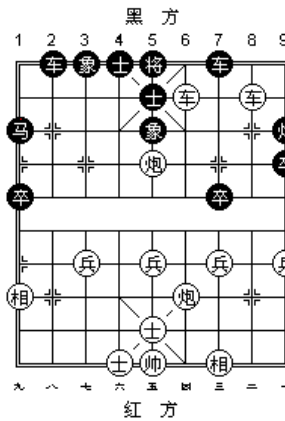


Fig.146

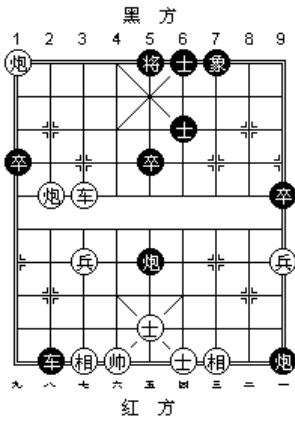


Fig.147

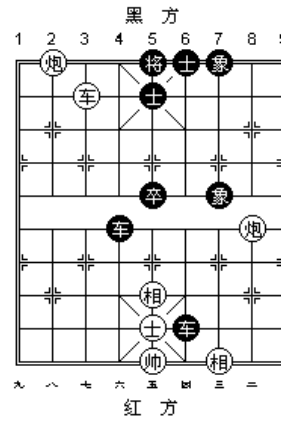


Fig.148

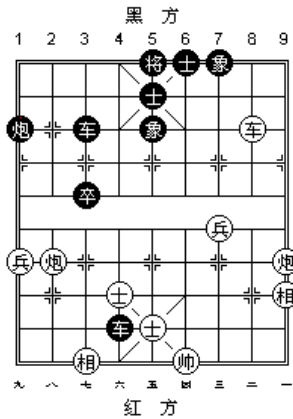


Fig.149

3. Bottom Cannon Checkmate

With the co-operation of double Chariots or Chariot and Horse, the Cannon at enemy's bottom rank can launch a powerful offensive. Following are eight examples. The first four examples refer to double Chariots and Cannon checkmate, and the remaining four examples refer to Chariot, Horse and Cannon checkmate (Diagram 150-157).

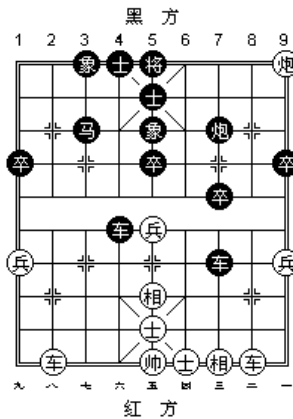


Fig.150

Diagram 149, Red moves first:

1. C8=3! R4=3

As Black Chariot passively takes an escape, so Red can immediately take a checkmate. The correct play for Black is R3+1, Red would play R2=5, then E7+9, C3-2, R3=6, K4=5, R6+5, Black is in a winning position.

2. R2=5 K5=4 3. C3+6 K4+1

4. C1+5 A5+4 5. R5+2

Red will take a double Cannon checkmate in his next move.

In Diagram 150, Red moves first:

1. R2+9 A5-6 2. R8+8 A4+5

If Black changes it into C7-2, Red would play R8=4 to win the game.

3. R2-1 C7-2 4. R2=4 K5=4

5. R8=5 H3-5 6. R4+1 K4+1

7. R4=6 checkmate. Red wins.

In Diagram 151, Black moves first:

1. ... C1=2 2. R3=7 R2=4
3. A5-6 C2+7 4. R7-4 R4+1
5. K5+1 R4-1 to take a checkmate. Black wins.

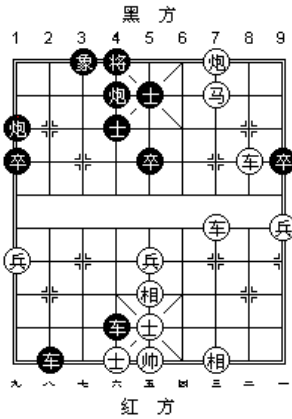


Fig. 151

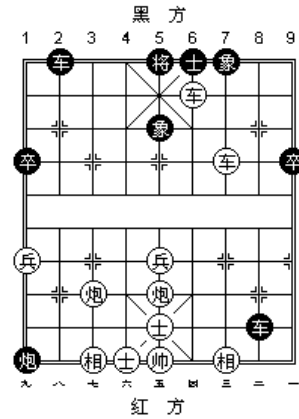


Fig.152

In Diagram 152, Black moves first:

R2+9. Red may have two variations:

- (1) E7+9, R8=5, K5+1, R2-1 checkmate.
- (2) A5+6, C1=3, A6+5, C3-1, A5-6, R8=4, Black wins.

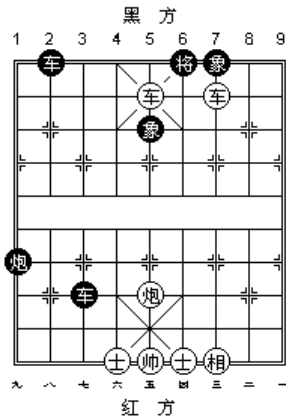


Fig. 153

In Diagram 153, Black moves first:

1. ... C1+3 2. A6+5 R2+9
3. A5-6 R2-1 4. A6+5 R3+2
5. A5-6 R2=5 6. A4+5 R3-1 checkmate.

Note: If Red changes it into play K5+1 at move 6, Black could take a checkmate with R3-1.

In Diagram 154, Red moves first:

1. R2+6 K5-1 2. C9+3 E3+1
3. H9+8 R3=2

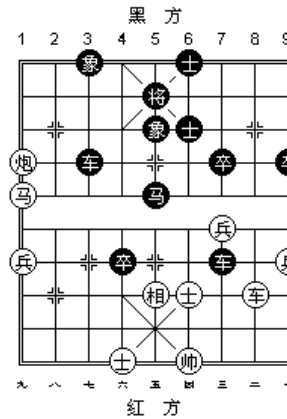


Fig.154

If Black plays R3=4, Black will lose his Chariot.
 4. H8+7 R2-3 5. H7-6 a double checkmate!

In Diagram 155, Red moves first:
 1. H6+4! R4+4 2. C3+1 A6+5
 3. H4+3 A5+6 4. H3+4 checkmate.

In Diagram 156, Black moves first:
 1. ... R7=5 2. K5+1 R4+2
 3. K5-1 R4+1 4. K5+1 R4-1 checkmate.

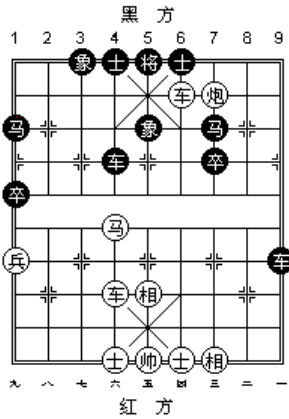


Fig. 155

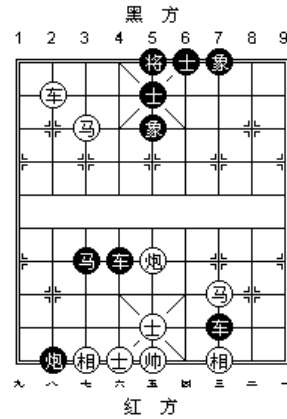


Fig.156

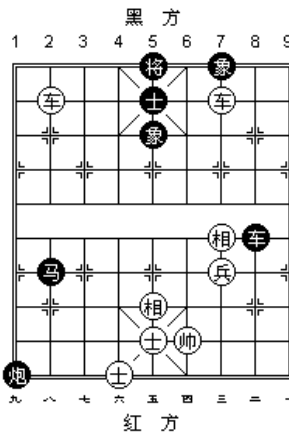


Fig.157

In Diagram 157, Black moves first:
 1. ... R8+3 2. K4+1 R8-1!
 3. K4-1 C1-1 4. A5+6• H2+3
 5. A6+5• R8=6! 6. K4+1 H3-4 checkmate

Note:

- If Red plays A5+4, Black would play H2+3, then R8-7, R8+1. K4-1, H3-5, A6+5, R8+1, K4+1, H5-6, R8=9. H6+7, Black wins.
- If Red plays R8-7, Black would play R8+1, then K4-1, H3-5, E3-5, R8+1, Black wins.

4. Tiger Silhouette Checkmate

As other chapters have already touched upon the methods of Tiger Silhouette checkmate, Palcornor Horse checkmate and Angler Horse checkmate, we only raise three examples here (Diagram 158-160).

Diagram 158 (Red moves first)
 1. R4+1 A5-6 2. H2-4 Red will take a checkmate in his next move.
 (Black moves first)

1. ... R4+1 2. K5=6 R2+4
3. E5-7 R2=3 4. K6+1 H5+3 checkmate.

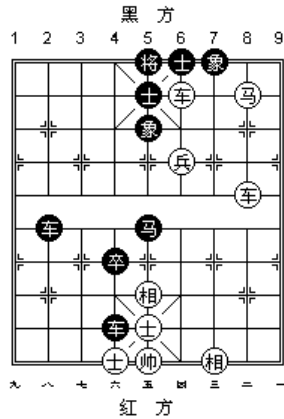


Fig.158

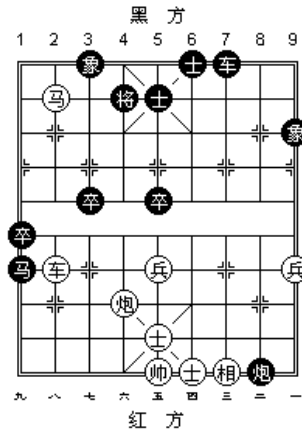


Fig.159

Diagram 159, Red moves first:

1. R8=6 A5+4 2. H8-6 K4=5
3. H6-4 K5-1 4. R6+6! K5=4
5. H4+6 checkmate.

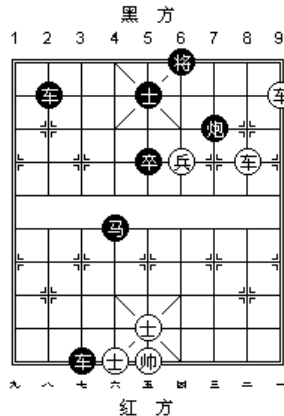


Fig. 160

Diagram 160, Black moves first:

1. ... R3=4 2. K5=6 R2+8
3. K6+1 R2-1 4. K6+1 ...

If Red changes it into K6-1, then H4+3, K6=5, R2+1, A5-6, R2=4 checkmate.

4. ... H4+6 5. K6=5 R2-1
6. A5+6 R2=4 checkmate.

If Red changes it into A5-6 at move 1, Black would play C7=5, then K5=4, H4+5, K4+1 (If Red A6+5, R2+8, K4+1, H5-7, K4+1, R2-2 checkmate), H5+4, K4-1, H4-5, K4+1, H5-7 followed a checkmate by his Chariot.

5. Elbow Horse Checkmate

There are various kinds of Elbow Horse checkmate. Following are 11 examples of common checkmate methods. The first 4 examples refer to continuous checkmate. The remaining examples refer to forced checkmate.

In Diagram 161 (Red moves first)

1. R4=5 K5=6 2. R5+1 K6+1
3. R7+6 A4+5 4. R7=5 checkmate.

(Black move first)

1. ... R4+5 2. K5=4 R5+1
3. K4+1 C2+7 4. A6+5 R5-1
5. K4-1 R5+1 checkmate.

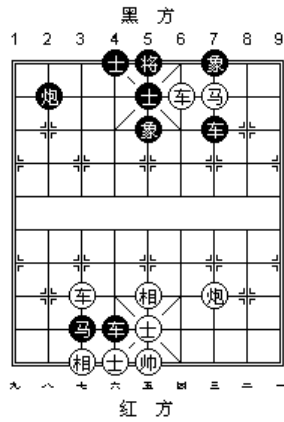


Fig.161

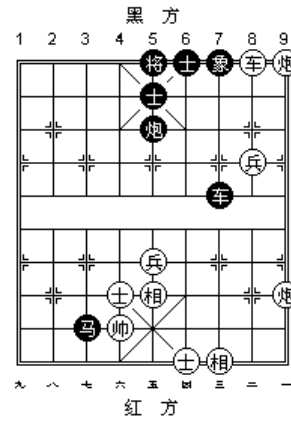


Fig.162

In Diagram 162, Black moves first:

1. ... C5=4 2. A6-5 R7=4
3. A5+6 R4+3! 4. K6=5 R4+1!
5. K5-1 R4=6 6. K5=6 R6+1
7. K6+1 H3-4 checkmate.

In Diagram 163, Black moves first:

1. ... C5=4 2. K6=5 H2+3
3. R6-1 R2+6 4. A5-6 R2=4!
5. K5+1 R4-1 6. K5-1 R4=6
7. K5=6 R6+1 8. K6+1 H3-4 checkmate!

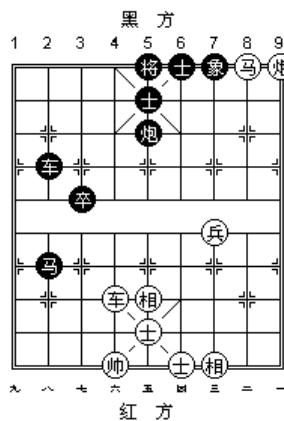


Fig.163

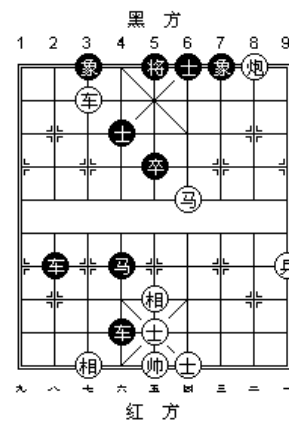


Fig.164

Diagram 164, Black moves first:

1. ... R4=3 2. R7=4 R3=5

3. A4+5 ...

If Red changes it into K5=6, Black would play R5+1, then K6=5, H4+6, K5+1)K5=6, R2=4 checkmate), R2+2 checkmate!

3. ... H4+3 4. K5=4 R2=6 checkmate.

Diagram 165. Black moves first:

H9+8, Red may have the following three variations, but they all are ended in defeat of Red.

(1) R1=3, R8+1! A5+4, H8+6 Black captures Red Chariot to win the victory.

(2) R1=4, H8+7, R4+1, R8+1, A5-4, R3=6! Black sacrifices Horse to capture Red Advisor and is sure to win.

(3) A5+4, H8+7, K5=4, R3=6, A6+5, R8-1 to capture Advisor and take a checkmate, at the same time, it is also attacking Red Chariot. Black is winning.

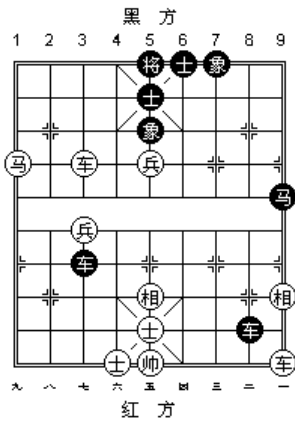


Fig. 165

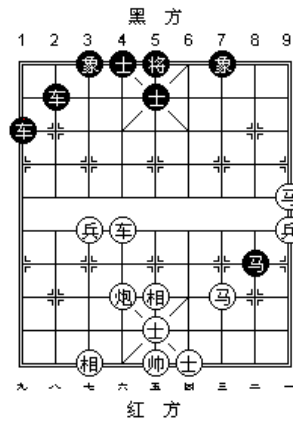


Fig.166

In Diagram 166, Black moves first:

1. ... H8+7 2. K5=6 H7-5
3. R6-1 R2+8 4. R6=7 R1=4
5. R7-1 R2=3 6. R7-2 R4+5
7. K6=5 H5+7 checkmate.

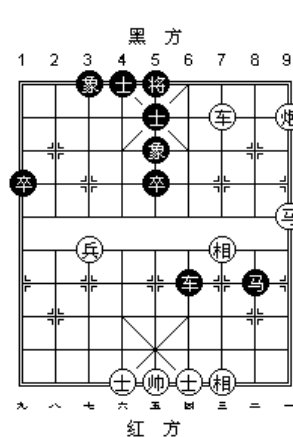
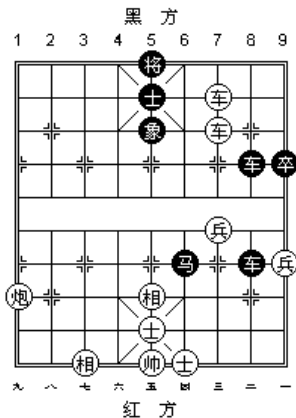


Fig. 167

In Diagram 167, Black moves first:

1. ... H6+7 2. K5=6 RR=4
3. C9=6 R8=4 4. K6+1 K5=4
5. FR=5 FR+1 6. A5+6 R4+4
7. K6=5 R4+1 checkmate.

In Diagram 168, Black moves first:

1. ... H8+7 2. K5+1 K5=6
3. K5=6• R6=4 4. K6=5 R4=3
5. K5=6 R3+2 6. K6+1 H7-6
7. K6=5 R3-1 to take a checkmate.

Note: • If Red plays E3-1, Black would play R6+2, then K5-1 (K5+1, R6-1, K5-1, H7-6, R3-5, R6+2, K5+1, H6-4, Red wins) R6+1, K5+1, H7-6, K5+1, H6-4, K5-1, H4+3, Black wins.

In Diagram 169, Red moves first:

1. H2+3 K5=6 2. H3-4! A5+6
3. R1+8 K6+1 4. R1=5 R2=6
5. H4+2 to take a double checkmate.

In Diagram 170, Red moves first:

1. H4+3 K5=4 2. C9=6 K4+1
3. R3=6 A5+4

If Black changes it into C3=4, Red would play H3-4, then A5+6, H4+6, K4=5, R6=3, to take a checkmate.

4. R6=8 A4-5 5. H34 A5+6
6. H4+6! K4=5 7. R8+2 to take a checkmate.

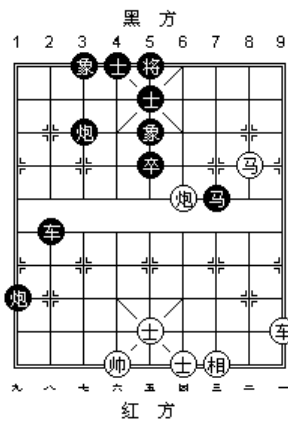


Fig.169

Fig. 168

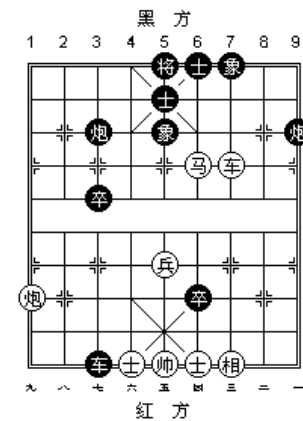


Fig.170