

Morphy,Paul
 Dukes of London
 Opera House
[Hicks,E]

C41

1855

1.e4 e4! This is probably the most famous game in Chess history. Paul Morphy, on his fast rise to world champion, plays two Dukes at the same time in an opera box during a performance. **e5** Preventing whites pawn center. **2.Nf3** Develop with threats! **d6** Blocks the f8 Bishop. A little slow. **3.d4!** Morphy Plays like a tiger! Grabs the center, and threatens PXP then QxQ after Black can't castle! **Bg4** Pinning the knight. A fancy way to preserve his castling rights. **4.dxe5** Hoping that black takes with the d pawn. **Bxf3** If de then qxq and he can't castle. **5.Qxf3** Although it is usually not a good idea to take the queen out early, white does this during a recapture so he does not waste any time. Also the queen is not blocking the knight, since it is gone, and black has no quick way to attack the queen. **dxe5** Now he can take the pawn safely **6.Bc4** Developing a piece with a major threat... The four move checkmate theme! **Nf6** The standard defence to the four move checkmate. Note that Paul Morphy anticipated this response. You must always assume your opponent will find the best move. **7.Qb3!** Usually it is not a good idea to move the same piece twice...but this is a fork...the pawn on f7 and the pawn on b7. **Qe7** This move is positionally weak because it blocks in the f8 Bishop and dooms the black king to staying in the center. It does prevent both pawns from being taken. See variation by clicking "Qxb7" box to the right to see how this variation plays out. **8.Nc3** Renewing the threat on the b7 pawn. [8.Qxb7 Qb4+ 9.Qxb4 Bxb4+ White is up a pawn but with no good positional advantage. White decides against this simple line.] **8...c6** Doesnt develop but necessary to hang on to the b7 pawn. **9.Bg5** Pinning blacks only developed piece. Blacks development is really awkward! **b5** Neglecting development again. Black hopes white will retreat the c4

bishop and therefore justify the wasted move. **10.Nxb5!** The Sacrifice! Blacks development is awful and is asking for punishment! **cxb5** Take the offered free piece. Let your opponent prove his combination unless you see a definite refute. **11.Bxb5+ Nbd7** The only playable move. Now look at Blacks position. Both knights are PINNED. **12.0-0-0** Castling, developing the rook, and attacking the knight all with one move! Now white has two attackers on the knight, and black has not enough when you consider two of the defenders are too valuable (the queen and the king) and the f6 knight is pinned. **Rd8** The only move to help save the knight. **13.Rxd7** The fastest way to activate the a1 rook. **Rxd7 14.Rd1** The last piece is developed! **Qe6** Look at this. Black has no moves. Black's attempt is useless. Look at "QxQ to the right and see another easy win for white than the one that was played. **15.Bxd7+!!** The black knight is PINNED. If it moves, the rook checkmates on d8. [15.Qxe6+ fxe6 16.Bxf6 gxf6 17.Rxd7+- This is an easy win for white, but white sees a more beautiful finish!] **15...Nxd7** Notice that the knight on d7 is pinned. If he moves black will be checkmated on d8. **16.Qb8+!!** Brilliant! Forcing the black knight to move. Now the path is wide open. **Nxb8 17.Rd8#** A beautiful and famous finish. White has only two pieces left...but enough to win. Notice Morphy used all his pieces in this attack.

1-0